

## **BARRISTER, COUNSELOR, SOLICITOR & AVOCAT**

### General Instructions

Barrister, Counselor, Solicitor & Avocat has decided to set up major law offices in Beijing and Shanghai. Barrister and Counselor is a large international law firm. Since the early 1980's when the People's Republic of China decided to permit a few non-Chinese lawyers to work within the country on international commercial problems, various law firms have established small offices in major Chinese cities. Barrister and Counselor is willing now to gamble on the possibility of getting in on the ground floor on this new century of legal work, for many billions of dollars worth of commercial agreements between international companies and the PRC.

The logistical problems are enormous. In keeping with recent practice among some top US law firms, Barrister and Counselor has decided that the administrative head of their new China Division had better be an MBA rather than an attorney. They've been looking for someone young and adventurous. Their China manager needs to take in stride the many frustrations of living and working in this unusual country—and have the energy to help build a major new venture. Also, they need someone willing and eager to start with a small office this year in the expectation of growing by a factor of ten or twenty during the next decade. So they want someone young—but not too young. Appropriate work experience is also a definite requirement.

B&C needs to hire a person or persons with extraordinary skills. The candidate should have Asian experience and, ideally, speak one or more Chinese languages. If possible, this manager would also have considerable information technology experience. B&C wants their China offices to exemplify the latest computer technology in every aspect of their operations, for internal and marketing reasons. First, there are the demands of the firm. As a major law firm in a country only recently redeveloping its legal structure and international legal practices, B&C will need to keep track of new laws and of every relevant new contract and treaty provision they can find out about. They will need access to LEXIS (a legal information data base) and sophisticated word-processing, capable of handling English and Chinese documents. They will also need very sophisticated security provisions—including encrypting and decrypting—their intra-China and international communications. B&C also wants the

latest information processing technology for marketing reasons: they hope to impress their Chinese contacts.

Many other skills are needed. The new manager will have a chance to advise on the business side of various legal negotiations. This person will supervise all the logistical functions of the new offices, from facilities planning to supervision of the human resources officer to financial planning and budget control.

Like everyone else in the firm, the manager will have a chance to help make personal contacts with Chinese officials. There is however a managing partner with extensive relationships among the senior members of government in the PRC.

C.H. Wang has been looking for the right young manager for several months. Several West Coast schools will graduate Chinese-speaking MBAs, but none of them this year seem to have the appropriate technology background. B&C could hire two people (the manager and a computer systems expert), but Wang would rather not do that. There will already be a senior attorney as legal director of the office, and Wang does not want too many different chiefs, in an initially small operation, unless absolutely necessary.

Wang has identified a candidate, Piro Torres, who appears to have all the required skills. Prior to meeting Torres, Wang had been increasingly concerned about whether such a person actually existed.

Piro's maternal grandmother, an American, was a sociologist in Beijing, where she met Santiago Torres. Torres, a very successful international businessman, returned with his wife to Chicago, where he became a US citizen. They raised a very international family. Their son, a lawyer, runs the family business in the Far East. Piro grew up speaking English, Japanese, Mandarin, and Tagalog, and also learned a great deal about commerce, by helping out with the family business.

In Wang's opinion Piro's Chinese is not truly fluent, but Piro speaks idiomatically, with an acceptable North Chinese accent. Moreover, Piro ran the computer system at a government lab. With an engineer's degree in computer science and an MBA in international management science, Piro seems to meet many requirements. Best of all, Piro has that quiet grace of manner that will "fit in"—both with a distinguished law firm and within the proud and ancient culture of China.

C.H. Wang is looking forward to the salary negotiations with Piro Torres, and hopes a satisfactory arrangement can be made.