

Grand plans afoot for GrandWork

The interior design and furniture company, which aims to excel in all areas in its industry, is eyeing a stock listing. **EMILYN YAP** reports

GRANDWORK Interior Pte Ltd hopes to list the company someday and winning the Singapore Quality Class (SQC) certification might just help speed up the process.

Spring Singapore gives the SQC certification to companies which display business excellence across seven dimensions – leadership, planning, information, people, processes, customers and results.

“Being part of the elite group of SQC companies (allows) us to gain recognition as a valuable enterprise and a well-rounded business,” says GrandWork Interior founder and managing director Jay Chiu. “With such prestige, we can then better place ourselves for branding and, in turn, further reach out to various businesses and gradually (list) the company.”

Set up in 1996, the interior design and furniture company has taken on numerous retail, commercial and residential projects. Early on, it won the bid to build Kinokuniya’s first bookstore in Singapore. That led to more local and regional projects with the chain in countries as far away as Japan and Australia.

Some of GrandWork’s more recent projects involve the Dolce & Gabbana and Giorgio Armani duplex stores in Ion Orchard and the Vertu store at Raffles Hotel. It has also done up designer boutiques in Malaysia and Indonesia.

Being an SME has not stopped the company from partnering big names. That has also not kept the firm from improving its systems and processes to win the SQC certification for the first time.

“When we first learnt of the SQC many years ago from the media, it was something (we felt) we simply could not ever hope to achieve,” says Mr Chiu. “Eventually, however, we decided to embark on the journey to challenge ourselves.”

“Applying for the award gave our company the opportunity to move beyond the comfort of what was familiar and to widen our exposure to the high-performing group of SQC (companies). This would open up many more opportunities for us to grow and mature as an SME.”

The certification will motivate GrandWork to set new benchmarks for itself and the industry. It also believes that the certification will boost the morale and confidence of those who seek to do well in the profession.

GrandWork has adopted several best practices to ensure that the company runs smoothly and efficiently, and it reckons that this helped it obtain the SQC certification. For one thing, it emphasises good corporate governance, transparency and strong internal controls in the company.

It also implemented the enterprise re-

source planning system – the increased automation in its business operations has helped save time and effort.

Ensuring customer satisfaction is also key. GrandWork emphasises that it offers ecologically-friendly furniture and interior fittings and delivers them to clients promptly. The company has a facility in Ang Mo Kio which manufactures formaldehyde-free products, allowing it to position itself as a builder for environmentally- and health-conscious people.

Formaldehyde – a colourless and flammable industrial chemical used in the manufacture of building materials – can take up to five years or more to completely dissipate. It is potentially carcinogenic and can lead to negative short-term effects such as coughing, tearing and nausea.

“We understand our clients’ needs and problems and we give our best to cater to their requirements. Here, we build trust and reliability so that our clients can always count on us,” Mr Chiu says.

After-sales service is also a critical part of GrandWork’s business. By providing maintenance services, there could be opportunities to form stronger relationships with clients.

The company credits its staff for winning the SQC certification. “Everyone plays a role and each role is significant and important. The spirit of team effort is exercised and reinforced in the organisation simultaneously by our strong management team and leadership,” Mr Chiu adds.

For instance, GrandWork got all its employees together before the certification assessment to brainstorm for ideas. “We became more united as we stood stronger, more determined to overcome the obstacles together,” says Mr Chiu.

“This further strengthened our company cohesion as various departments came to understand each other better to work hand-in-hand in the direction the company is headed. Here, everyone gives their best so that now, and in the future, we are able to function more efficiently as one body.”

GrandWork is committed to continual improvement even after receiving the SQC certification. “We are always looking for new or different methods of increasing the efficiency and productivity of our operations so that we can excel in all areas in our industry,” Mr Chiu says.

“We also believe that our people are the main driving force of our success and thus, we will continue to invest in them, retain and grow the pool of talent.”

GrandWork is also looking to expand locally and globally. “This would mark the beginning of the journey as there is still a long way to go to be the best in other areas in our profession.”



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