

*In conversation with... Lawrence Ma*



**Q: How long have you been involved in the diamond industry and where and how did your involvement begin?**

**A:** I was born into a family of diamantaires and jewellers and started learning the business by sorting and buying diamonds – the basic skills –when I was a teenager, some 45 years ago. After graduating from college, I joined the management of our family business.

**Q: What is your company called and what do you enjoy most in your daily work environment?**

**A:** My company is called Lee Heng Diamond Group and what I enjoy most is when clients leave our office with a smile, it shows me that they are satisfied with our service and products.

**Q: Are you married and do you have children, if so what do they do?**

**A:** Yes, I ‘m married and have two children. My daughter is working as a lawyer in the US while my son, who is the youngest, is an associate lawyer in Hong Kong.

**Q: What has been your greatest achievement so far?**

**A:** There is the following Chinese saying: “Setting up a business is not easy but sustaining it is even more difficult”. For over 60 years now the family business has grown into an unconventional one. I am proud that I’ve contributed to this evolution.

**Q: In what way has the industry changed over the years?**

**A:** The advancement of technology has brought drastic changes in terms of productivity, the flow of goods and products and the means and speed of communication. These changes facilitate the evolution in the dynamics of the existing markets and opens up new ones.

**Q: Are you optimistic about the future of the diamond industry and would you encourage young people to get involved?**

**A:** As the economy develops more people have the ability to enjoy owning diamonds which is an expression of emotion and achievement. I’m very optimistic about the future of our

industry and definitely encourage young people to get involved as they add creativity and innovation.

**Q: What advice would you give a young person thinking about entering the diamond industry?**

**A:** Honesty and simplicity is most important. A wise man once told me: “Money has legs. If you do everything for money, you will find that it runs so fast that you cannot catch it. However, if you do the right things to help your clients and make their lives better, money will come running towards you.” To be successful, integrity, inquisitiveness, hard work, purpose and persistence are the five musts.

**Q: If you had the choice, would you consider any other profession?**

**A:** No, I thoroughly enjoy the industry.

**Q: Do you hold any position in any other club or association other than the WFDB?**

**A:** Besides being the founding president of the Diamond Federation of Hong Kong, vice-chairman of Shanghai Diamond Exchange, honorary vice-president of the Gems and Jewellery Trade Associations of China, I have also served as the chairman of the Jewellery Advisory Committee and I am the present chairman of the Jewellery Fair Organizing Committee of the Hong Kong Trade Development Council as well as a director of the Chinese General Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong.

**Q: Who is your role model and who in the world would you most like to meet?**

**A:** My father and my two older brothers are heroes and I would most like to meet anyone who can shed insight into my life.

**Q: Is there anything you can tell us about yourself that your colleagues might not know about you?**

**A:** I like to lay back a bit and relax every now and then.

**Q: Do you have time for a hobby and if so what do you do?**

**A:** I'm a keen golfer and play once or twice every week.