

Conte algo que não sei

'Precisamos respeitar nossos professores'

Tony Chan, presidente da Hong Kong University of Science and Technology

"Tenho 52 anos, dois filhos e sou casado. Acredito que todos nascem com o mesmo potencial e a mesma inteligência. As conjunturas e condições de vida é que diferenciam cada um. Para mim, é dever daqueles que tiveram mais oportunidades tornar o mundo um lugar melhor para todos."

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SIMONE MARINHO

● Conte algo que não sei...

Na Ásia, há um grande respeito pelo professor, mais do que no Ocidente. Desde pequenos, ouvimos nossos pais falarem que precisamos prestar atenção ao que os nossos professores dizem e respeitá-los acima de tudo. Eles são os profissionais pelos quais temos a mais alta estima. Há, conseqüentemente, um respeito muito grande pelo saber.

● O EMBA (Executive Master of Business Administration) em Business de uma universidade está entre os dez melhores do mundo pelos cinco últimos anos. Aonde vocês querem chegar?

Nosso foco é em ciência, tecnologia e negócios. Estamos na Ásia, mas somos uma universidade internacional. Nossos alunos de EMBA em Business pegam avião para ter aulas conosco. Queremos criar as pessoas mais bem preparadas, futuros líderes para o mundo.

● É uma meta ambiciosa. De onde vem a sua vontade por formar líderes mundiais?

Há alguns anos, se você queria ter uma educação internacional, era muito difícil ficar na Ásia. Eu saí por conta disso. Passei 40 anos fora de Hong Kong, trabalhando principalmente nos Estados Unidos. Voltei em 2009. Não tínhamos opção. Hoje, é possível. A ciência e a tecnologia não têm fronteiras. Não faz o menor sentido sermos os melhores em Hong Kong. Por isso recrutamos os melhores professores do mundo.

● De que maneira vocês veem uma parceria com o Brasil?

Os estudantes de Hong Kong sabem de futebol, Pelé, Neymar... mas não sabem nada sobre pesquisa científica que o Brasil possa estar fazendo. Meu palpite é que assim que eles souberem, eles vão estar interessados. E vice-versa. O estudante brasileiro é muito criativo, que-

remos criar esse diálogo.

● Que tipo de estudante vocês querem?

Queremos alunos comprometidos com os estudos acadêmicos. Não somos uma universidade para festas. Mas procuramos pessoas de mente aberta. Queremos alunos que vão criar o próximo Google, o próximo Facebook. Somos uma universidade pública e o governo nos obriga a ter 80% dos alunos de Hong Kong. Dentro dos 20% restantes, 10% são chineses e 10% são de todas as partes do mundo. É nessa fatia que queremos os alunos brasileiros.

● Como conjugar desenvolvimento econômico e social com a crise ecológica?

Tecnologia e ciência são parte da solução, mas não toda. Precisamos de cientistas sociais, humanistas... Se você trabalha em qualquer esfera do setor público, você precisa sa-

ber, além das políticas públicas, ter conhecimento da ciência por trás da política. Carbono, aquecimento global... Sabemos que a China, como segunda maior economia do mundo, ao mesmo tempo que produz muito, polui demais. Queremos que nossos alunos façam parte dessa solução.

● O que um país precisa fazer, em termos de políticas públicas, para a formação de melhores estudantes?

Duas coisas são fundamentais: primeiro, investir em pesquisa científica. Sem ela, não existe tecnologia. Sem tecnologia, não há crescimento econômico. Em segundo lugar, investir em intercâmbios de alunos. Eles são a base disso. Sem alunos preparados, não é possível fazer pesquisas científicas inovadoras. Não podemos optar entre uma coisa ou outra. É como ter que decidir se cortamos a mão direita ou a esquerda. As duas são extremamente importantes.●

Translation

Headline: 'We respect our teachers,' says President of the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology Tony Chan

[Rio de Janeiro]- Passing by Rio, President of Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST) Tony Chan visited the Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ) and the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro PUC, to discuss the possibility of exchanges with these institutions. Founded in 1991, the University, led by Prof Chan, has among its achievements an Executive Master of Business Administration that has ranked first in the world over the past five years, according to the *Financial Times*.

In an interview with *GLOBO*, Prof Chan spoke about a new initiative for the university to reach out to the community called 'Tell me something that I do not know'. "All people are born with the same potential and the same intelligence," he said. "It's just the situation and circumstances of life that differentiate one from another. For this reason, I believe it is the duty of those who have more opportunities to make the world a better place for all."

Tell me something I do not know ...

In Asia, there is a great respect for teachers, more so than in the United States and the West. Since young, our parents told us that we need to pay attention to what teachers said in school and respect them above all. They are the greatest examples to be followed and the professionals for whom we have the highest esteem. Even if parents did not attend a university themselves, they want their children to go to one.

The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology is a relatively young university, but your EMBA course has been ranked No.1 in the world by the *Financial Times* for the past five years. What are you trying to achieve?

We want to be among the best universities in the world. Our focus is science, technology and business. Therefore, we want to provide the best training in these fields for students from all over the world. We are in Asia, but we are an international university. Hong Kong is a unique city. It was under British administration for more than 150 years. Although we are part of China, we have autonomy in many areas because of this. For example, our classes are all in English. English is the language of the world. Only 20% of our faculty members are from Hong Kong. Our EMBA students include Europeans and Americans and many fly in on a weekly basis to take classes with us in Hong Kong. We want to create the most well prepared, future leaders for the world.

It is an ambitious goal. Where does the aspiration for HKUST to become a world leader come from? Have you always had this goal?

I have a very international background. I was born and raised in Hong Kong. I went to Queen's College in Hong Kong. Although we are in Asia, the teaching was half in Chinese and half in English. I took my PhD in Mathematics and Computing at Stanford and became a faculty member at California Institute of Technology (Caltech). In the old days, you could not really stay in Asia if you wanted to have an international education. I left because of this. I spent 40 years outside Hong Kong, working mainly in the United States. I returned in 2009, to become President of HKUST. Today, there are no borders for science and technology. It is necessary to travel, expand, keep abreast of what's happening in the world. We don't only aspire to be the best in Hong Kong. These days, this is not sufficient. For this reason, we recruit the best teachers from around the world. You need to think globally.

What do you want to achieve by forging a partnership with Brazil?

I think Asia and Brazil have much in common, especially China. The two are part of the so-called BRICS, and are the two most important developing countries in the world. In the next 40 years, they will have many partnerships. I have been to PUC-Rio and UFRJ. We discussed possibilities, such as undergraduate, graduate and faculty exchange. Students in Hong Kong know football... but don't know much about the scientific research that is being undertaken in Brazil. My guess is that once they know, they will be interested, and vice versa. Brazilian students are very creative so we are keen to start a dialogue. In addition, there are large companies here, such as Petrobras, which invests in technology. There is not so much of this kind of investment in Hong Kong at present.

What is the profile of the student of HKUST? What type of student do you want?

As a growing institution, we want students who are committed to their academic studies. But we are looking for people with open minds. We want student entrepreneurs. We want adventurous students with international vision. We want students who are going to create the next Google, the next Facebook. It is important to emphasize that we are a public university and, as a consequence, the government requires us to have 80% of our students from Hong Kong. Within the 20% remaining, 10% are Chinese and 10% are from all parts of the world. In that segment, we want to see Brazilian students.

What is the government's investment in its universities?

Government subsidies make up roughly two-thirds of our money, the other one-third is from contract work we do with companies. The investment is proportional to the number of students (HKUST has around 13,000 undergraduate and graduate students in total). We also have courses, such as the EMBA, that provide us with money to invest in our faculty. The Hong Kong government spends about one quarter of its budget on education, out of which 25% is for higher education.

Last week, during an Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change press conference, President Rajendra K. Kumar Pachauri said: "No one on this planet is safe from the impact of climate change." How do we balance the need for economic and social development with ecological damage? Is it possible to stimulate industrial growth without causing further impact on the environment?

First of all, we agree with this thought. Technology and science are part of the solution, but not all. We need social scientists, humanists... One of our recent moves is to create an Energy Institute, with almost 100 faculty members. In addition, we have built a School of Sustainable Development, in partnership with the University of Xian (China). We have also started a partnership with Oxford University in the UK to launch a program for the public sector because no matter which sphere you work in the public sector, you also need to know the science behind the policy. Carbon, global warming ... we know that China, as the second largest economy in the world, causes a great deal of pollution. We want our students to become part of the solution to this problem.

What does a country need to do, in terms of public policies, to develop the best students?

Two things are essential: first, invest in scientific research. Without it, there is no technology. Without technology, there is no economic growth. Secondly, invest in student exchange. They are the foundation. Without helping students to be prepared for the future, it is not possible to make scientific research innovative. We cannot choose between one thing or another. It is like having to decide if we cut the right hand or the left. Both are extremely important.