

# Tom Canellakis

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## China lean sourcing practitioner



- **Fluent Mandarin Chinese**
- **China since 1981**
- **Operational and consulting experience**

### Experience Highlights:

American companies:

**China supply chain procurement professional with experience in improving operations and in implementing lean.**

- **Quality.** US customers of the American import company which I co-founded required consistent quality. Over a period of many years, I achieved unmatched quality performance: zero customer-verified quality issues through on-the-ground management of suppliers and oversight of production.
- **Process.** Slow new product development contributed to a mid-size American importer missing delivery windows at Wal-Mart, JCPenney, Federated, Sears and other big box retailers. I standardized work process and stabilized communication between manufacturers in China and designers in NYC spanning 6 degrees of separation. This enabled supplier to fully understand designer's requirements from the initial request. It also resulted in better performance for product development — increased volume and velocity of transactions.
- **Sourcing.** I sourced 3 home textile product categories in 6 months for WestPoint Stevens, Inc. I surveyed and analyzed market, identified and pre-qualified factories, and led senior executives on several trips to top-tier manufacturers. I delivered final report with strategic sourcing “road map.”

Chinese companies:

- **Standard Work.** Ineffective execution in sourcing caused a fast-growing Chinese brand to miss delivery commitments to its 400 outlets in China. I improved on-time sourcing capabilities by guiding a project team in implementing a cross-functional, boundary-spanning continuous improvement pilot to standardize work. I further prepared business case and project toolkit enabling them to further strengthen their delivery capabilities.
- **Retail Sales.** Against the background of a stagnating Chinese fast-food chain with 200 shops in Beijing, one of three pilot shops improved its operations in two months to achieve sales growth 14% above the company's average year-over-year same-store sales growth – thus, turning an under-performer into an over-performer. We developed kaizen events based on team work with shop managers and stakeholders that improved communication between management and the bottom of the hierarchical pyramid to provide customer satisfaction solutions. People development is key to sustaining the results through continuous improvement.

### Methodological competence

- **Lean**
  - Improve operations
  - Lead lean transformations in non-production environments (eg. sourcing)
  - Lead capability development for internal resources and select external stakeholders
- **China sourcing**
  - Source products from China
  - Lead China sourcing teams
  - Identify and qualify suppliers
  - Develop and manage suppliers
  - Work selectively with Chinese-owned suppliers and foreign-invested suppliers
- **Build collaboration** among stakeholders

### Industry competence

- **Discrete production:** apparel, home textiles, foot & hand protection, sporting goods
- **Continuous production:** pharmaceutical
- **Service:** fast food restaurants (QSR)

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- Entrepreneurial:** ALPHA ULTIMA / LEAN PROCUREMENT CHINA -- Beijing, Dongguan  
Lean Sourcing Consultant from 1995 to present
- BEIJING TRADE EXCHANGE -- Beijing, Nanjing, New York City  
China Sourcing Director / Sourcing Consultant / President from 1985 to 1995
- Select Entrepreneurial Clients:**  
WESTPOINT STEVENS, NORCROSS SAFETY PRODUCTS, MITRE  
SPORTS, ALPHARMA, RAINFAIR
- Corporate:** FISHMAN & TOBIN -- Conshohocken, Pennsylvania; Panyu, Guangdong  
Worldwide Sourcing Manager from December 2006 to August 2007
- THE ECONOMIST GROUP -- Beijing  
Business Development Senior Manager from April 2000 to December 2003

## EDUCATION

Graduate studies, Ancient Chinese Thought  
PEKING UNIVERSITY, Beijing,  
1982 – 1986

Chinese language  
BEIJING LANGUAGES INSTITUTE, Beijing,  
1981

B.A., Philosophy  
VASSAR COLLEGE, Poughkeepsie, NY,  
1981

## AWARDS

Maguire Fellow, 1984 and 1985;  
Adolf Sutro Fellow, 1983  
VASSAR COLLEGE Fellowships

## TRAINING

Various workshops and annual summits:

LEAN ENTERPRISE CHINA, Shanghai, 2007- 2012  
LEAN ENTERPRISE INSTITUTE, USA, 2010- 2012

INSTITUTE FOR SUPPLY MANAGEMENT (ISM),  
ISM, USA, Beijing, Shanghai, HK, 2006 – 2012

Annual Asian Executive Purchasing Roundtable  
CAPS RESEARCH, Shanghai, 2008, 2011  
North American Research & Teaching Symposium  
on Purchasing & Supply Chain Management (NART)  
CAPS RESEARCH & ISM, Tempe, AZ, 2010

CPSM Teach the Trainer Instructor, Charlotte, NC  
ISM, Charlotte, NC, 2009

## VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES

Established pro bono several China sourcing and lean discussion groups for industry leaders to share insights about best practices and lessons learned, including at the American Chamber of Commerce in China in Beijing.

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