



# **Doing business in, with or versus China**

## **China's Strategic and Managerial Impact on Global Companies**

---

**Cross-Country Synthesis Based on Client Executives' Interviews  
(Sept 2025 – Feb 2026)**



**EIM delivers business breakthrough differently**

## EIM Global Talks

EIM Global Talks is an approach developed by EIM when listening to our clients.

We regularly gather the testimonies of our usual counterparts within companies (primarily CEOs, CFOs and HR Directors) on a major topic that regards them (and sometimes concerns them).



Our aim is not to build a theory on a subject such as China, but to identify pragmatically how these executives tackle the issue and organize themselves to deal with it. We therefore sought to understand the impacts on their business and to catalogue as accurately as possible the actions or mechanisms they have been able to devise to respond. Ultimately, “EIM Global Talks” aims to build a form of collective intelligence around this topical issue, without, however, providing consultancy (which would require a level of analysis and detail that falls outside the scope of this initiative).

While this approach offers a wide range of perspectives, we do not claim to be exhaustive or to provide any kind of statistical representation.

We listened to these business leaders. We noted their words. And we present them to you as they were, exactly as they were told to us. We simply organize these testimonies by theme.

Our success would be for you, the readers, to find even a single idea that could be useful to you. We therefore present, at the end of this report, a list of decisions, ideas or “tips” that seemed relevant for pragmatic leaders who must manage their business as effectively as possible with limited resources.

## About this synthesis

This report synthesises executive interviews conducted by EIM across multiple industries and geographies, focusing on the strategic and managerial consequences of China's growing strategies influence. Our interviewees requested anonymity to speak openly; their identities are therefore masked, and quotes are reproduced without identifying details.

## Interview set covered

- Argentina - Lithium production; CFO
- Germany / China - Industrial equipment for hygienic applications; Head of Asia Pacific
- Italy – Automotive; Europe Special Advisor
- France – Chemicals; CEO
- France – Consumer goods / Creative materials; CEO
- Spain - China M&A advisor
- Switzerland - Electronics manufacturing; CEO
- Spain - Automotive supplier; Group Operations Vice President
- France – Automotive electronics supplier; Asia Managing Director
- France – Consumer goods; China CEO

## About this document

- Sections 1-2 provide macro context and cross-cutting themes.
- Section 3 turns patterns into a practical managerial agenda.
- Section 4 contains case vignettes grounded in interview verbatims.
- Section 5 outlines how EIM can support companies facing China-linked strategic and managerial pressure.

## Executive summary

Across industries as different as lithium, automotive, industrial equipment, chemistry, electronics and consumer goods, the interviews converge on a clear message: China is no longer a single variable in the global equation. It is simultaneously a market, a supplier base, an investor, a standards-setter and a competitor – often within the same value chain. This multi-role position creates strategic upside (scale, speed, technology, market access) and material managerial strain (governance, culture, talent, compliance and geopolitics).

### What has changed in the last five years

- Speed became even more decisive. Product cycles, sourcing cycles and decision cycles compress; China sets a tempo that many Western organisations struggle to match.
- Competitiveness is no longer explained by subsidies alone. Interviewees point to exacerbated domestic competition, high productivity and rapid scaling as core drivers.
- Local customers' preferences shifted. In key categories (notably automotive), local brands increasingly win the domestic market, forcing foreign firms to rethink positioning and localisation.
- Geopolitical fragmentation turned operational. Investment decisions, supply chain routing and even customer perception can shift based on 'friend vs enemy' narratives.
- Governance became the differentiator. Joint ventures, minority partners, capital controls, data rules and local compliance are now executive-level concerns.

### Five recurring strategic patterns from the interviews

- China is simultaneously partner, customer, supplier, investor and competitor.
- Technology is increasingly developed in China, not merely transferred to China. State of the art industrial equipment allow to compete severely with Western companies.
- Localisation is mandatory: products, channels, and operating models must be adapted to local needs and speed.
- Supply chains are being rebalanced (China-for-China, plus selective diversification to ASEAN/India/near-shore) rather than abandoned wholesale.
- Strategic optionality matters: leaders build 'plan A/B/C' because geopolitics can rewrite economics.

### Five recurring managerial patterns from the interviews

- Cross-cultural leadership is not 'soft': it affects transparency, decision rights, negotiation outcomes, and pace of execution.
- Operating rhythms must be redesigned (regular governance, short feedback loops, bilingual reporting) to avoid slow drift and misalignment.
- Talent models need adjustment: local leadership depth, retention, and 'HQ trust' are critical constraints.
- Control and compliance must be engineered (finance, IT, HR, procurement) - formal shareholder rights do not guarantee operational control.
- Communication infrastructure becomes a productivity lever (translation, digital tools, local market sensing).

## 1. Macro context: why China is a strategic and managerial variable

### 1.1 China in the electrical vehicle and industrial transition: scale sets the pace

Several interviews converge on industrial 'speed' and electrification as the most visible manifestation of China's system-level advantage. Public data corroborates the scale effect: the EVinfo.net reports that electric car sales reached around 20.7 million in 2025 and that the vast majority occurred in China, Europe and the United States. It also tracks a continued growth trajectory through 2026 and beyond, reshaping supply chains, standards and technology roadmaps.

This matters because many China-related tensions experienced by interviewees are not China-specific in isolation; they are downstream consequences of a fast-moving industrial transition that China currently executes at scale.

### 1.2 Critical materials and the lithium case: strategic dependence meets local realities

The lithium interview illustrates a dual reality: upstream resources are geographically diversified, but downstream conversion, technology and financing often link back to China. USGS (US Geological Survey bureau) data indicates that worldwide lithium production in 2024 increased significantly year-on-year, reflecting battery demand growth. In parallel, companies operating in Argentina, Chile and Australia increasingly interact with Chinese customers, shareholders, technology providers and equipment suppliers.

For management teams, the strategic question becomes less 'whether' China is involved and more 'how' to govern a multi-stakeholder ecosystem without losing control, speed or compliance.

### 1.3 Trade and geopolitics: variable geometry becomes an operational constraint

Interviewees describe an increasingly fragmented geopolitical environment. Public policy is evolving: the European Commission imposed provisional and then definitive countervailing duties on battery electric vehicles imported from China in 2024, while continuing discussions with China on alternative solutions, including price undertaking mechanisms.



At the macro level, the WTO's Global Trade Outlook highlights how tariff measures and uncertainty can alter trade forecasts and contribute to fragmentation. For companies, these shifts translate into tangible operational questions: where to invest, where to source, which markets to prioritise, and how to preserve optionality.

### 1.4 Innovation and standards: China as an innovation engine, not only a market

Multiple interviewees highlight China's innovation acceleration. WIPO's World Intellectual Property Indicators show patent activity reaching record levels and underscore the growing weight of Asian innovation systems. Even when firms do not seek Chinese R&D directly, they often compete with products developed in China or must comply with standards shaped by Chinese ecosystems (digital platforms, software-defined products, EV components).

### 1.5 Data governance and operational compliance: a new layer of managerial exposure

China's data governance framework has matured rapidly. Legal and advisory sources summarise a multi-pathway approach for cross-border personal information transfers and a broader

network data security regime. In practice, this affects multinational operating models: IT architecture, reporting processes, HR data flows, customer data practices, and vendor contracts.

The managerial implication is clear: compliance is increasingly embedded in operating design, not handled only through one-off legal reviews.

---

## 2. Cross-cutting themes from the interviews

### 2.1 China as partner, customer, supplier and competitor - simultaneously

In the Argentinian lithium-factory case, China appears as shareholder, customer, technology source and supplier base at once. In industrial equipment, China is both a production site and a growth market. In automotive and consumer goods, it is an innovation engine and a source of intense competitive pressure. This multi-role position changes the nature of strategic risk: exposure is not confined to one function (sales, sourcing or finance) but spans the operating model.

*"Our main shareholder and key customer are the same Chinese company. In addition, we work with several Chinese suppliers and have our holding company personnel collaborating directly with our team in Argentina."*



**Argentina - Lithium producer CFO**

*"Somehow all 3."*



**Germany / China - Industrial equipment Head of APAC**

*Context: the interviewee describes China as 'partner, competitor, and system-shaper' at the same time.*

Managerial implication: organizations need an 'exposure map' that cuts across functions: where China sits in the value chain, what decisions are influenced by China-linked stakeholders, and which dependencies are reversible.

### 2.2 Technology and innovation: 'developed in China' becomes normal

Interviewees note that Chinese ecosystems are a source of extraction technology (lithium), EV and software innovation (automotive), and rapidly evolving industrial standards. For multinationals, this creates a new pattern: China is not only a production base; it became a global R&D node and a standards arena.

*“Yes, most of the technology used for lithium extraction from brine — both direct and indirect methods — comes from China. Our local teams have been trained to operate and maintain these systems, benefiting from Chinese R&D and technical know-how.”*



**Argentina - Lithium producer CFO**

*“I keep saying whenever I have a microphone in front of me that waging war on China, or specifically on BYD — or on Chinese automakers in general — is completely pointless. On some technological drivers, the competition is already lost. As the British would say, “the train has left the station.” This applies to electrification and to what we call automotive intelligence, from basic driver assistance all the way to autonomous driving and in-car infotainment. On these fronts, the competition is lost.”*



**Italy – Automotive Special Advisor**

Managerial implication: technology roadmaps and competitive intelligence must be 'China-aware' even for companies that do not operate in China directly, because Chinese-developed product cycles can reset global benchmarks.

### **2.3 The speed gap: cycle time as a competitive weapon**

Several interviewees emphasise speed - not as a slogan, but as measurable cycle time: how fast quotations arrive, decisions are taken, product changes are engineered, and factories adapt to new standards. Speed also reshapes governance: long approval chains and 'HQ-first' models become liabilities.

*“Ten years ago, technical expertise was the most important factor. Today, speed is paramount — the ability to develop and produce a functioning component in a short period of time. Competition among local brands is intense in terms of price, time, technology, and design. Chinese suppliers are often preferred partners, especially when their technology is equivalent to that of foreign suppliers.”*



**Spain – Automotive supplier Vice President**

*“In China, there is a very strong culture of speed.” A meeting report? In Korea, it’s done the next day. In China as well. In Germany, “it takes a week just to say when the report will be delivered.””*



**France – Automotive supplier Asia Managing Director**

Managerial implication: leaders should treat speed as a KPI (decision lead time, quotation lead time, engineering change lead time, issue-resolution lead time) and redesign operating cadence accordingly.

### **2.4 Localization is not optional: products, channels and value propositions must be reinterpreted**

China’s domestic competition and consumer preferences force localisation. In consumer goods, 'premiumisation' is not automatic. In industrial categories, niche positioning may still work - but only with a clear value proposition and local market sensing. Advisors stress that 'being in the market' is essential: China is not one market; it is the sum of many markets.

*“The Chinese consumer is fully digital and mobile-centric: they pay, handle procedures, and inform themselves through their phone. China is vast; to scale, digital marketing is the path. Social media, social commerce, and e-commerce are three critical pillars. China was already doing social commerce in 2016–17; that’s where platforms we know today originated.”*



**Spain – M&A Advisor**

Managerial implication: localization requires empowered local teams, in-market digital capability, and a clear statement of what the company will not compromise (brand identity, safety standards, ethics, IP).

## 2.5 Capital, cash and control: repatriation constraints and governance realities

Beyond competitive pressure, some interviewees highlight financial mechanics: break-even economics, cash constraints, and limitations on repatriation. These realities interact with governance: ownership structure, JV dynamics, who controls critical functions, and how decisions are made in practice.

*“We are just at break-even, and on top of that we have cash issues that we are unable to repatriate... Our local factory is no longer viable. Competitors’ production is of lower quality but is also declining like ours. They also work on private labels for retailers. Everyone is overcapacity by 40–50%, everywhere.”*



**France – Consumer goods CEO**

*“We remain positioned as “Premium.” Large volumes are produced by local brands, with prices at 30% of ours, gigantic factories, and a pure market-share-at-all-costs logic. Local competitors aim for critical mass without integrating ESG rules into their accounts and operate with far more automated factories.”*



**France – Consumer goods CEO**

Managerial implication: CFO and COO agendas converge. A China strategy cannot be separated from working-capital discipline, transfer pricing, and governance of cash movements.

## 2.6 Joint ventures, IP and 'real power': governance beyond contracts

The French Consumer Goods CEO’s interview adds a governance lens: joint ventures are back, but the rules of success are unforgiving. Formal governance does not necessarily reflect real operational power; misaligned agendas and control of key functions can erode strategic intent.

*“The joint venture is indeed back in the spotlight, but not for the same reasons as twenty or thirty years ago. At the time, it was often imposed by Chinese regulation. Today, it is chosen again, which fundamentally changes the nature of the topic.”*

*“We need to be extremely clear: a JV is not a miracle solution. It is a heavy strategic tool that only makes sense in very specific contexts. It can enable faster market access, a fine understanding of local networks, greater speed of execution, or a way to bypass certain administrative complexities. But it also introduces structural dependence.”*

*"The model that has seemed most effective to me in several situations is the double joint venture. It consists of clearly separating IP ownership from operational execution."*



#### France – Consumer goods CEO

Managerial implication: JV design must be treated as 'advanced governance'. The exit must be designed from day one, and the operating model must ensure control over sensitive functions (finance, procurement, IT, HR). Alignment and conflict management with key people of JV parties are crucial.



## 2.7 Geopolitics becomes economics: fragmentation shapes investment choices

The Italian Automotive Special Advisor describes how geopolitics directly alter investment allocation: companies differentiate between 'ideal' and 'pragmatic' plans based on the political stance of host countries. This is not a theoretical risk - it is a real constraint on location, supply chain design and scale economics.

*"I'll put it bluntly. Every time we look at investment decisions — keep in mind that when I presented our Strategic Plan for Europe for approval, it amounted to roughly €20 billion over the next three years, across plants, vehicles, components, and so on. We created an initial "ideal" shortlist of how to spend that money, and then we had to create a pragmatic shortlist, dividing friends from enemies."*



#### Italy – Automotive Special Advisor

Managerial implication: boards should request 'geopolitical stress tests' alongside business cases - including contingency plans for tariffs, investment screening, reputational effects and country-level policy shifts.

### 3. The managerial agenda: what leaders must redesign

#### 3.1 Operating cadence: from monthly reporting to weekly steering

In high-speed China-linked environments, monthly steering is too slow. Interviewees describe a gap in responsiveness between Asia and Europe. Companies that perform install short feedback loops: weekly governance, clear escalation paths, and fast decision rights.

*“The Chinese refer to Europe as “old Europe.” The continent suffers from two major handicaps: its relationship with time and its relationship with failure. There, “trying and making a mistake is far better than doing nothing.” He explains that he went to China “to help them,” and admits that “he was the one who learned.””*



**France – Automotive electronics supplier Asia Managing Director**

#### 3.2 Decision rights and 'real control': who controls the levers?

Several interviews imply that control is often lost through function ownership rather than shareholding. In JVs and minority-partner setups, the control points are finance (cash visibility), procurement (supplier selection and compliance), IT (cybersecurity; data and systems), HR (appointments and culture), and quality (standards). The French consumer goods CEO warns that majority equity and veto rights can still lead to a gradual loss of operational control if human governance (appointments, key roles) is not designed properly.

*“Formal governance never tells the whole truth about real power. You can have a majority equity stake, veto rights, very well-drafted clauses - and still gradually lose operational control.”*

*“In many cases, loss of control does not happen through capital, but through people: who appoint key executives, and who controls sensitive functions like finance, procurement, IT, and human resources.”*



**France – Consumer goods group China CEO**

#### 3.3 Cross-cultural leadership: transparency, 'saving face' and trust

Cross-cultural issues are repeatedly described as practical obstacles: agreement does not always mean shared understanding; transparency can clash with 'saving face'; negotiation styles diverge; and trust is built differently.

*“The biggest challenges are in leadership: cultural differences—especially the Chinese need to “save face”—make transparency difficult. At the beginning there were also major language barriers; agreement often did not mean real understanding. Overall, it takes a lot of time to transfer the Swiss leadership mindset to the China site; that happens over decades, not months or years.”*



**Switzerland – Electronics manufacturing CEO**

*“Yes, particularly in areas like decision-making processes and people management, where cultural expectations and styles can differ.”*



**Argentina - Lithium producer CFO**

Managerial implication: culture needs to be translated into routines. Examples: written decision logs; pre-reads in both languages; meeting minutes within 24 hours; and explicit alignment checks (what was decided, by whom, by when), clear task management.

### 3.4 Talent and leadership depth: building a global management bench

The Italian Automotive Special Advisor highlights a leadership constraint from the inside of a Chinese company expanding abroad: a top team that is 'too Chinese' can limit global scaling. Conversely, Western multinationals in China often struggle with HQ trust in local leadership, resulting in slow decisions and missed opportunities.

*“But if I had to name a limiting factor: we want to become a major global player by 2028. When I explained to our top shareholders what I see as the biggest roadblock, I said it’s having a management team that is too Chinese. I’m the only foreigner in top management meetings, and that’s a limitation.”*



**Italy – Automotive Special Advisor**

### 3.5 Negotiation and contracts: the contract as a living document

The JV interview stresses a deep cultural difference: in China, contracts are often perceived as renegotiable frameworks when circumstances change. This influences supplier management, JV governance, and dispute resolution.

*“We must understand a fundamental cultural difference: in China, contract is not perceived as an intangible framework but rather as an evolving basis for discussion.”*



**France – Consumer goods group China CEO**

## Case vignettes: what 'China impact' looks like in practice

The vignettes below illustrate how 'China' becomes tangible in governance, operations and leadership decisions.

### Argentina



### Lithium: China inside the cap table and the plant

In this case, China is embedded in ownership, commercial flows and technical collaboration. Managerial focus areas include cross-border coordination, compliance alignment, and operational communication. A practical pain point is language tooling.

- Strategic stake: China shapes financing and offtake as well as technology access.
- Managerial stake: build routines that connect Shanghai and Argentina without slowing operations.
- EIM angle: interim leaders can stabilize governance, align reporting, and install cross-cultural execution cadence.

### Germany



### APAC / Industrial equipment: China for China, but Asia as the next horizon

The industrial equipment interview describes a niche business with global presence and long-term China adaptation. The leader reports a performance pattern: "Very successfully, even in Covid times; 2024 was problematic, 2025 was successful again."

Competitive pressure is acknowledged but framed as manageable: "The local competition became stronger and price aggressive; quality not as good as ours." The interview emphasizes co-development with customers: "Our business is niche: we develop with customers together according to customers' requests."

Strategically, the company seeks growth in China while also considering ASEAN as a regional platform. The managerial implication is to build scalable regional structures without losing the quality and service edge that differentiates the niche player.

- Strategic stake: defend premium positioning while China competition improves.
- Managerial stake: regional structure design (China + ASEAN) and customer co-development governance.
- EIM angle: interim growth and operations leaders can professionalize regional go-to-market and execution.

### Italy



## Automotive: bringing a Chinese champion into a fragmented policy landscape

The automotive interview is framed around Europe's need for industrial renewal and the complexity of aligning with Chinese investment. The interview highlights fragmentation: different European countries take different postures, complicating long-term industrial planning.

A recurring theme is the strategic gap in Europe's ecosystem - for example around batteries and power electronics - and the need to build supply chains that can 'follow' new industrial projects. The managerial challenge is not only market entry, but stakeholder alignment across governments, suppliers, unions and communities.

- Strategic stake: industrial ecosystem building (suppliers, skills, infrastructure) alongside market strategy.
- Managerial stake: multi-stakeholder governance, time-to-decision, and risk narrative alignment.
- EIM angle: interim program leadership to coordinate site set-up, supplier localization and stakeholder engagement.

## France



## Consumer goods: China as a profitability and make or buy dilemma

In consumer goods (specialty retail distribution), China is described as structurally harder than it was: overcapacity, congestion, and limited ability to reach critical scale. The interview describes working-capital and direct access to retail and data as key constraints.

The CEO frames China as requiring a long horizon, clear non-negotiables (brand identity, ethics), and strong alignment with local leadership.

- Strategic stake: 1) keep local manufacturing footprint vs switch to contract manufacturing; 2) decide how much to localize; 3) how to preserve market access and commercial traction if we delocalize production.
- Managerial stake: joint-venture governance, cash discipline, and brand/non-negotiable management.
- EIM angle: interim turnaround and governance reinforcement, including marketing and channel strategy.

## Spain



## Strategy & M&A advisory: China is no longer a 'subsidiary'

From an advisory vantage point, the M&A advisor observes a shift: Chinese clients increasingly hire Western advisors, and Chinese companies seek partners outside China for international expansion. The interview underlines a key structural insight: “In short, China stops being “a subsidiary” and becomes a fundamental part of any multinational’s business.”

The interview stresses the need for in-market presence, local management and a strong digital strategy, especially in consumer sectors where 'arriving late and without a plan' no longer works. Alliances and joint ventures are described as critical for commercial reach and for combining standards inside and outside China.

- Strategic stake: treat China as core, not peripheral, and plan for outbound China expansion.
- Managerial stake: build local teams, digital capability, and partner governance.
- EIM angle: interim strategy, integration and partnership leaders to structure and execute China-linked growth.

### Switzerland



## Electronics manufacturing: ownership control, culture transfer and China+1

The Swiss company entered China in 2004 to follow a customer's relocation and built a 100% owned production site in Shanghai. Leadership and culture transfer are identified as the hardest issues.

Besides, geopolitics and tariffs drove supply-chain redesign. The company reports that U.S. customers increasingly rejected China-made products, and the group responded by opening a site in Thailand and shifting a large share of U.S.-bound production there.

- Strategic stake: balance China market opportunity with export-market acceptance and tariff risk.
- Managerial stake: long-term leadership development, cultural transfer, and rigorous commercial discipline (e.g., payment terms).
- EIM angle: interim supply chain and operations leadership to execute China+1 transitions and stabilize plant performance.

## Spain



### Automotive supplier operations: agility, localization and innovation loops

The company's Chinese story evolves from a purchasing office (2005) to manufacturing (from 2014) and a multi-site footprint. The interview emphasizes that responsiveness and proximity to customers are essential conditions for leadership in China.

The operational environment is described as one of extreme competitive pressure, forecast volatility and rapidly rising standards among local OEMs. The interview argues that foreign suppliers must define clear differentiation (innovation, perceived quality, cost) and invest in R&D and innovation in China to remain relevant.

A strategic opportunity is using China as an innovation engine: technology is increasingly developed directly in China, and Chinese operations can accelerate deployment of solutions elsewhere.

- Strategic stake: compete and innovate at China speed while maintaining global quality expectations.
- Managerial stake: strong R&D, flexible production systems, customer transparency, and fast cross-functional decision-making.
- EIM angle: interim R&D, operations and transformation leaders to install agility mechanisms and stabilize performance.

## France



### Automotive electronics supplier: speed as culture, competitiveness as urgency

The Asia Managing Director's experience running multiple Asian sites highlights a cultural gap around time and execution. He observes: "In China, there is a very strong culture of speed."

He challenges the 'subsidy-only' narrative and emphasizes internal competition, productivity and quality improvements. He also notes that Chinese consumers increasingly buy Chinese brands, and that European suppliers are losing share in China as local standards rise.

The managerial lesson is twofold: align the organization's relationship with time (faster cycles) and its relationship with failure (test-and-learn). In his words, "trying and making a mistake is far better than doing nothing."

- Strategic stake: China sets a new competitiveness baseline in cost, quality and speed.
- Managerial stake: leaner organizations, faster reporting and decision cycles, and a learning culture.
- EIM angle: interim transformation leaders to drive competitiveness programs and cultural acceleration.

## 5. Turning insights into action: a practical playbook

### 5.1 A CEO/Board checklist: the 12 questions that should be answered

1. Where does China sit in our value chain today (customer, supplier, technology, investor, competitor)?
2. Which of these dependencies are reversible in 6, 12 and 24 months?
3. What is our China-for-China plan, and what is our outside-China plan (ASEAN, India, near-shore)?
4. Which cycle times are decisive in our sector (sourcing, quotation, engineering change, time-to-market, hiring)? What are our current baselines?
5. Where do we need local R&D or product adaptation to remain competitive?
6. What are our non-negotiables (quality, safety, ethics, ESG, brand positioning) and where do we accept adaptation?
7. How resilient is our cash and working-capital model in China (repatriation, payment terms, currency controls)?
8. Do we have a partner strategy (JV, alliance, distributor) and a partner risk framework (agenda alignment, governance, exit)?
9. Who owns sensitive functions (finance, IT, HR, procurement, quality) in China-linked operations?
10. Are we compliant with data governance, export controls, sanctions, and trade rules in each jurisdiction?
11. What is our geopolitical stress test (tariffs, investment screening, reputational risk, sudden policy shifts)?
12. Do we have the leadership bench to operate at China speed (local empowerment + HQ trust + global diversity)?

### 5.2 Operating mechanisms that reduce China friction

- Weekly steering committee with bilingual minutes and a decision log (who decided what, by when).
- 24-hour reporting rule for critical meetings (minutes, actions, owners).
- Escalation fast lane for quality/cash/safety issues with pre-agreed response times.
- Shared KPI dashboard across HQ and China teams: speed, quality, delivery, cash, compliance.
- Supplier segmentation and dual-sourcing roadmap with clear triggers for diversification.
- Local market sensing loop: monthly customer intelligence memo from China teams to global product/R&D.
- Governance health checks every quarter: agenda alignment, control points, talent risks, partner behavior.

### 5.3 What EIM can bring: executive transition management as an accelerator

The interviews consistently describe situations where strategy alone is insufficient: success depends on execution under uncertainty, across cultures and jurisdictions. In such contexts, executive transition management can provide three advantages: speed, neutrality and operational depth, combined with local expertise and experience.

### 5.4 EIM value levers in China-linked situations

- Rapid diagnostics and exposure mapping (value chain, governance, compliance, stakeholder landscape).
- Interim leadership to stabilize operations (COO, GM, Supply Chain, Finance, HR) and deliver measurable outcomes within 90-180 days.
- JV and partnership governance reinforcement: alignment, bridging cultural gaps, decision rights, control points, escalation, deadlock resolution, and exit preparedness.
- Supply chain rebalancing programs (China-for-China, ASEAN diversification, near-shore options) with rigorous cost and lead-time modelling.
- Commercial and digital acceleration: channel strategy, go-to-market reset, local customer journey improvements, and pricing discipline.
- Culture-to-routines translation: cadence design, communication protocols, and leadership coaching to reduce friction and increase speed.
- Crisis management: tariff shocks, compliance incidents, quality breakdowns, supplier failures, reputational events.

### 5.5 Typical mandates EIM can support

- Restructuring of a China factory or JV to restore profitability and cash discipline.
- Post-tariff supply chain redesign (e.g., shifting part of production to Thailand/Vietnam/Europe while keeping China competitiveness).
- Acceleration of a Chinese company's market entry into Europe with localized operating model and leadership bench.
- Governance reinforcement for a new JV: partner due diligence, agenda testing, contract architecture, and operating control points.
- China market reset: localization of portfolio, digital go-to-market, and talent upgrade.
- Integration after M&A involving Chinese and Western assets (systems, culture, governance).
- Accident, compliance or sudden vacancy; CEO, CFO; COO etc. take over the reign within days
- Closing a factory or company, or company relocation within China: Interim CEO / Interim HRD facilitate the moving / exit through experience
- Reshaping R&D activities in China
- Supplier development support through EIM experts in China or from around the world
- Digital marketing made in China: leading through the China specifics
- HR: train the trainer approach to develop local teams

A low-angle, upward-looking photograph of several modern skyscrapers with glass facades, set against a clear sky. The buildings are dark and their lines converge towards the top of the frame.

EIM Group empowers organisations to strengthen performance, elevate leadership and create lasting impact for stakeholders worldwide. As the inventor of Interim Management (IM), EIM is a leading advisory firm specialising in guiding businesses through strategic transformation, operational disruption, and accelerated growth.

With over 35 years of experience, EIM delivers agile leadership, breakthrough solutions, and bespoke advisory services that drive measurable results and long-term value creation.

EIM operates globally and serves clients across a broad range of industries, including manufacturing, consumer goods, health care, financial services, technology and private equity. Its cross-sector expertise enables rapid and effective responses to critical business challenges.

EIM continues to shape the future of executive leadership, combining speed, precision and impact to meet the evolving demands of global business.

