

## WALL STREET INSTITUTE SPEAKS AT HONG KONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE LUNCHEON SEMINAR

**Hong Kong, 19 October 2005** – Dr. Tony Lee, Academic Director of Wall Street Institute, the largest specialist English language education organization in the world, presents a luncheon seminar to members of Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce (HKGCC) today. At the seminar, he shares his views on how the standard and training of the English language in Hong Kong's business sector may be improved.

English competencies of employees and the newly graduates have always been a top concern of businesses in Hong Kong. As a major business and financial hub in Asia, English competency is vital for the city's international competitiveness. Many companies have taken the initiative to develop their English benchmark(s) to enhance the overall English standard of their employees and to ensure that new recruits are up to company standard.

A major theme of the seminar is Dr. Lee's contention that the business community's adoption of English language benchmarking would represent a major step forward in raising English standards in the business sector. The widespread introduction of benchmarking, he will contend, would help businesses get a better return on their English Language training budgets and, at the same time, contribute to a more competitive Hong Kong.

While encouraging companies to implement their own English benchmarking requirement for training and development purposes, Dr. Lee also advises HR & training professionals to consider course providers carefully and make sure that their employees are sent for real English language training so that the courses can genuinely help employees mastering English fluency. Dr. Lee suggested that courses that are aligned with international standards such as the Council of Europe's Common European Framework would warrant more guarantee on employee's mastery of English ability. Companies should be wary of spurious claims by certain providers and should verify those claims before taking on courses.

Dr. Lee is a world-renowned authority on language assessment and benchmarking and has pursued an illustrious career as a professional linguist and researcher. He is a former advisor to SCOLAR and he established the Government's Hong Kong Workplace English Benchmarks. He is widely regarded as a major figure in his field.

In 2003, the Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce's Business Prospects Survey revealed that the supply of competent English speakers was not meeting the demand in Hong Kong's business sector. Since then, the standard of English has not noticeably improved. Dr. Lee is one of a number of concerned academics trying to remedy that situation.

The seminar is well attended by nearly 100 HR and training professionals in the territory and is highly received.

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***About Wall Street Institute – School of English***

Wall Street Institute is so named because students can “Invest” in their future – the PREMISE behind the famous Wall Street name. Since its establishment in 1972, Wall Street Institute (WSI) has grown into the largest specialist English education organisation in the world and currently operates more than 350 centres in 25 countries worldwide. WSI offers Hong Kong people the most effective English language instruction available using innovation, interactivity and sophisticated technology. Since WSI launched in Hong Kong in 2000, the company has opened 7 centres in key business and commercial areas and has already helped more than 35,000 Hong Kong improved their English successfully. Unreservedly, WSI has already established itself as the market leader in adult English language education. WSI’s international headquarters is in Baltimore, Maryland in the United States; its regional headquarters is in Barcelona, Spain.

Wall Street Institute Hong Kong website: [www.wsi.edu.hk](http://www.wsi.edu.hk)

Wall Street Institute International website: [www.wallstreetinstitute.com](http://www.wallstreetinstitute.com)

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