



Renee Conklin, Founder of RC HR Consulting

Sia Callum Laing

Renee Conklin came to Asia for a 9-month assignment and 13 years later she is still here running her own HR consulting company.

What’s your story?

I’m an HR and recruitment professional who has spent the last 18 months transitioning into an HR consultant, solopreneur, coach, speaker, and MBA student. I love working with people and understanding what makes them tick, and working with organizations to help them get the most out of their employees.

What excites you most about your industry?

The great thing about working in HR is that you can never know it all. HR is not like other careers (accounting or engineering for example) where things are black and white. In HR, you have to operate in the gray. People are not always rational and they are always inventing new problems. As an HR leader, you have to keep a cool head, consider the legal obligations, your company’s culture, what is best for the employee, and ultimately make a decision – often without all of the facts.

What’s your connection to Asia?

My employer sent me here for a 9-month assignment and I never left. That was 13 years ago. I met my husband here and we love Hong Kong. It’s home.



Favourite city in Asia for business and why?

Tokyo is my favorite city in Asia, hands-down. The food is amazing, the people are incredibly friendly, there are always a ton of things going on, the temples are beautiful and the shopping is great. It’s such a quirky place with nooks and crannies everywhere to discover. I love going back again and again.

What’s the best piece of advice you ever received?

“You can’t find yourself if you don’t look.” I received this advice from one of my old bosses who eventually became a mentor to me. It sounds simple, but it is so true. So many of us just stay on the same corporate treadmill, trying to keep up, but don’t take the time to examine if we are truly happy and doing work that is fulfilling.

Who inspires you?

My grandmother, Beryl Conklin. When I was younger, she was heavily involved in the teacher’s union and was often interviewed in local news media. Wherever we went, she would run into her old students and parents. She had a whole closet full of matching high heels and suits. She instilled in me a love of education. She was always correcting my grammar, so I attribute my writing skills to her!

What have you just learnt recently that blew you away?

That some of my American compatriots *still* can’t understand the concept of time zones. Yes, Hong Kong really is 12 hours ahead of the U.S. No, please don’t send me an invite for a call at 2 AM. I’m dedicated to this life-long struggle of helping them grasp this concept!

If you had your time again, what would you do differently?

Worry less. Laugh more.

How do you unwind?

Hiking. Yoga. Drinking good whiskey or wine (but not whilst hiking or doing yoga!). Hanging out with my amazing classmates at HKUST, where I’m completing my MBA in the part-time program.

Favourite Asian destination for relaxation? Why?

Bali without question. Where else can you invite all of your friends for a week in a gorgeous villa with a private pool, amazing sunsets, fresh fruit and seafood, and wonderful people. I love it!

Everyone in business should read this book:

It may be slightly controversial, but I loved Mark Manson’s “The Subtle Art of Not Giving a F*ck” so much that I read it twice and even gave a speech about it. It’s not exactly a business book per se, but it forces you to really choose what is important to you and what isn’t. It’s practical advice for both life and business.

Shameless plug for your business:

I help small and medium-sized Hong Kong companies prepare for the future of work by attracting, engaging and retaining their employees through training, coaching and project management. I also coach individuals through periods of transition in and out of the workplace.

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Callum Laing is an entrepreneur and investor based in Singapore. He has previously started, built and sold half a dozen businesses and is now a Partner at Unity-Group Private Equity and Co-Founder and CEO of MBH Corporation P.L.C. He is the author of two best-selling books 'Progressive Partnerships' and 'Agglomerate'.

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