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The Path to Made-in-China: How This Was Done and Future Prospects

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Abstract

Over the past decade, there has been increasing interest in manufacturing practices in China. By the end of 2012, China was the world's leader in manufacturing operations and the second largest economic power on the globe. This paper offers three essential insights. First, the study provides a taxonomy of China's economic development in the past thirty years. Second, the study has identified the most important and relevant attributes that contribute to the rise of a manufacturing powerhouse. Finally, the study offers a few guidelines for the practicing managers and policy makers who are interested in formulating strategies to face the challenges of dynamic global competition. The study also discussed three important phases that constitute the path to Made-in-China. Phase One, Incubation Years, focused on economic reforms and the structural shifting from a planned economy to an economy of socialism with Chinese characteristics. In the second phase, Navigation Years, China developed a modern manufacturing infrastructure. In the third phase, Dynamic Years, China adopted a proactive manufacturing strategy which emphasized soft power development. Based on the synergistic analysis provided in this study, manufacturing managers and policy makers will be able to expand their perspective on the restructuring of global manufacturing supply chains.

Keywords: Made in China, economic reform, manufacturing supply chain, global competition, conceptual paper, soft power, special economic zones, structural shifting, infrastructural investment

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