

Idiom by Lon Yan

相得益彰

xiang1 de2 yi4 zhang1

Hong Kong and Shenzhen have signed a memorandum of understanding to build a new innovation and technology park at the Lok Ma Chau Loop.

The facility, the biggest of its kind in Hong Kong and four times bigger than our existing Science Park at Tai Po, is designed to help boost the technological development of both cities.

Chief Executive Leung Chun-ying described the park as a collaborative project to bring more top enterprises, research institutions and higher-education institutes to Hong Kong.

Shenzhen Mayor Xu Qin emphasized the project's mutual benefits to the two cities, saying Hong Kong and Shenzhen can take advantage of each other as Shenzhen has a desirable business environment for the development of advanced technology, while Hong Kong has the international talents.

The project is a clear case of “相得益彰” (*xiang1 de2 yi4 zhang1*). “相” (*xiang1*) means “mutually,” “reciprocally,” “each other,” “one another,” “得” (*de2*) “to get,” “to gain,” “to result in,” “益” (*yi4*) “to benefit,” “to increase,” “beneficial” and “彰” (*zhang1*) “clear,” “evident,” “conspicuous,” “obvious” or “to praise,” “to extol,” “manifest.”

Literally, “相得益彰” (*xiang1 de2 yi4 zhang1*) is “each shining more brilliantly in the other’s company.” “相得” (*xiang1 de2*), as a term, means to get along well. And the idiom means “each complements the other,” “to bring out the best in each other,” “to complement each other” and “each improves by association with the other.”

Words like “synergy” and “win-win” describe situations and relations of “相得益彰” (*xiang1 de2 yi4 zhang1*). In essence, they all mean doing things that are beneficial to all parties concerned.

Terms containing the character “益” (*yi4*) include:

益友 (*yi4 you3*) – a helpful friend, especially one exerting good influence

益智 (*yi4 zhi4*) – to grow the intellect; beneficial to the intellect

公益 (*gong1 yi4*) – public welfare

利益 (*li4 yi4*) – benefits; interests; advantage