



Executive needed to find balance and reduce risk

A private firm in the risk mitigation business seeks a leader who is self-confident and mature

■ Elizabeth Horscroft

IT'S James Bond for the white-collar world. From political risk to corporate fraud to analysing IPO candidates, there is a huge need for private sector organisations to handle these issues. That is why there are firms to advise on crisis management and containment.

One leading firm is **International Risk** – a team of business risk and security analysts – which was originally the investigations arm of a Big Four accounting firm. Now a subsidiary of FTI Consulting, its Hong Kong office has 30 staff.

The company's president and CEO, Steve Vickers, described the firm as being in the "risk mitigation business", which he likened to a set of legal scales with two key elements: preventative measures and reactive measures.

"A considered balance of preventative and reactive measures

is necessary to reduce companies' risk, especially in the real world where 'off-balance sheet risk' is often the primary threat," said Mr Vickers, a former head of the police force's Criminal Intelligence Unit.

Due to expansion, four senior project managers are being hired to deal with issues across a broad spectrum. They will handle larger cases and co-ordinate the activities of the company's research staff and other internal professionals. They will also be responsible for co-ordinating the activities of International Risk's contracting network throughout the region.

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Steve Vickers,
President and CEO, International Risk

"These are hands-on responsibilities requiring dedication, commitment and a genuine urge to help clients resolve difficult situations. If you would like a comfortable nine-to-five job please don't apply," Mr Vickers said.

People from large commercial organisations might find the work challenging, as there is a lot of critical decision making involved, making everyone accountable for their actions.

The right education and technical qualifications are essential, but perhaps more important is self-confidence, maturity and the ability to lead teams under stressful circumstances. Many of the company's senior management staff come from the highest ranks of government, military and police services.

Mr Vickers said the ideal candidates were: "Real people with real

experience in real situations as well as bright, young, highly educated professionals.

"We need rounded people and have little time for 'cubical warriors' who sit next to their colleagues and write them e-mails rather than talk to them."

The ability to generate revenue through quality case work, and by working closely to understand clients and anticipate their needs is an important requirement.

"All our key senior managers have three key qualities: the ability to find the work, grind the work and bind the work," Mr Vickers said.

"A truly excellent consultant can easily do all three, although most people, at the onset will only be able to manage 1.5 of these attributes."

Training will be provided, and managers must be willing to travel.