

John L. Holden

Managing Director

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Education

MA and all Ph.D. coursework, Chinese Language and Literature, Stanford University
BA magna cum laude, Chinese Language and Literature, University of Minnesota

Affiliations

Senior Associate (Non-resident), Trustee Chair in Chinese Business and Economics, Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS)
Life Member, Council on Foreign Relations
Member, National Committee on U.S.-China Relations

Languages

Mandarin

John L. Holden, Managing Director, leads the China practice at McLarty Associates in Washington, D.C. Holden's China career spans more than four decades, twenty-eight years of which he spent on the ground in Beijing, Hong Kong, and Taipei.

Holden brings a broad array of industry experience to his advisory work for clients, which ranges from government relations, market entry, and ESG, to crisis management and U.S.-China relations.

Prior to joining McLarty Associates in 2019, Holden was President and CEO of the US-China Strong Foundation. Previously, he served at Peking University as Associate Dean of its Yenching Academy, a graduate center for elite college graduates from around the globe, and concurrently as Professor of Management Practice at the university's Guanghai School of Management, where his teaching focused on business ethics, corporate social responsibility, and communications.

Holden was the Beijing-based Senior Counselor and Managing Director of Hill+Knowlton Strategies from 2008 to 2013, and before that was Chairman of Shaklee (China) Ltd., a wholly owned subsidiary of Shaklee Corporation, that he established in Beijing in 2005.

From 1998 to 2005, Holden was President of the National Committee on United States-China Relations, where he created legacy programs such as the Public Intellectuals Program (PIP), the U.S.-China Young Leaders Forum, and the U.S.-China Foreign Policy Colloquium.

Holden was employed by Cargill, Inc., from 1986 to 1998, where he played key roles in establishing the firm's first businesses in China and served as chairman of its China holding company. During that time, Cargill's China operations grew to include oilseed crushing, animal feed, hybrid seed, fertilizer, malt, financial services, and commodity trading businesses. He also



served as the manager of Cargill's energy futures brokerage in Geneva, Switzerland, from 1989 to 1990.

From 1980 to 1986, Holden served as general manager of BankAmerica World Trade Corporation's PRC business; general manager of the Asia subsidiary of Alimenta S.A.; China trading manager of Unison International; and marketing manager of a translation company. He also served as interpreter for National Geographic teams researching stories on the Yellow River and Tibet in 1981.

Holden is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and the National Committee on U.S.-China Relations and is Senior Associate (Non-resident) of the Trustee Chair in Chinese Business and Economics at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. From 2013 to 2019, he was Nonresident Senior Associate of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. He has been active in the American Chambers of Commerce in both Hong Kong and Beijing and served as chairman of the board of governors of the latter organization in 1997.

While at Peking University, Holden received a national award for "Outstanding Service and Contribution to Education in China" as well as the Friendship Award, the most prestigious honor granted by China to foreign experts. Holden is also known by his Chinese name 何立强.

