

MANUFACTURING AT THE NORWEX CHINA FACTORY



We regularly receive questions as to why Norwex microfibre products are manufactured in China, and we're sure you do as well! China produces some of the highest quality textiles in the world, and producing products there does not have to mean exploiting the work force.

Did you know that a lot of Chinese factories today have no heat in the middle of winter and that staff working hours are at the whim of the factory owner with no overtime pay? This can mean that some staff work an average of six to seven days per week. Did you also know that a lot of factory staff dormitories are in such a poor state that most people in the Western world could not even begin to imagine living in them. While this may be commonplace in China, it is not the world of Norwex China. We chose a totally different path. In the past Norwex contracted its production of microfibre products to many different textile factories. This changed in 2009 when Norwex opened its own factory. Since then we are proud to say that we practice daily our core values of integrity, trust and respect in organising and running our factory.

"Our Chinese factory demonstrates each and every day that we abide by our core values of integrity, trust and respect – regardless of cost – we "walk the talk". We could, I suppose, have chosen to cut corners and save money to produce our products cheaply and reward our staff accordingly,

but it was a matter of conscience not money that dictates our decisions to treat our Chinese staff with the respect they deserve, which obviously includes paying them fairly. The result is an outstanding and unique Chinese textile factory. We choose to run our factory the Norwex way regardless of where it is located!" wrote Norwex Chairman Bjorn Nicolaisen when the Norwex factory opened in 2009.

The results to date are:

- Norwex China provides clean and tempered working conditions to all staff.
- Norwex provides ergonomic working conditions.
- Norwex provides a clean and well catered cafeteria for all staff to use. In fact management and staff all eat from the same lunch menu in the same place and have the same regulations to abide by. Treating everyone equally has been an important part in showing our manufacturing workers that they are respected and valued in the same way as any and all other staff at Norwex.
- Norwex pays salaries on time all the time.
- Norwex pays overtime pay.
- Norwex has regulated, maximum working hours during the week.
- Norwex pays all the mandatory social benefits and employee insurances.
- Norwex provides sick leave pay and a guaranteed minimum number of annual vacation days. This is certainly not normal for most factories' waged staff in China.
- All Norwex China staff has access to healthcare. By providing additional healthcare insurances to all of our staff, we have ensured that anyone working for Norwex in China has the financial means to get the care they need. One example of this in practice was a lady who finally had the means to get the medical attention she badly needed for many years. I am pleased to see that she is now in hospital recovering well from her surgery and being well attended by medical professionals.



Norwex Chairman Bjorn Nicolaisen with Norwex China employees



Quality control department at the Norwex factory

In addition:

Norwex pays its taxes correctly and on time – many Chinese factories have a rather ambivalent attitude towards paying taxes correctly.

Norwex China has committed itself to the UN Global Compact and the 10 principles within this framework and we are actively encouraging our suppliers to do the same.

These four areas form the basis for the 10 principles in the UN Global Compact:

- 1) Staff must be treated fairly
- 2) Staff must have security in basic human rights
- 3) Norwex is committed to considering the environmental impact of the business, and
- 4) Norwex is committed to the fight against corruption.

More information on the UN Global Compact can be found at www.unglobalcompact.org.

The result of the above is that our Norwex factory in China is truly unique.