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Towers Perrin Managing Principal Ravin Jesuthasan's clients are grateful that he "gets under the skin" of their company.

"He has a very easygoing demeanor combined with a highly focused approach to his work," reports Matt Herzberg, director of organizational effectiveness, talent, and diversity for Ameren Corporation. "He excels at cutting through all of the activities we perform and focusing us on what we're trying to accomplish and how we create value. He's extremely comfortable to work with and very thoughtful."

Herzberg was one of two clients — United Airlines Executive Vice President and COO Peter McDonald was the other — who nominated Jesuthasan for Top 25 recognition this year. Both clients described Jesuthasan as the embodiment of a "trusted adviser" on their nomination forms.

That respect and his keen focus are by-products of Jesuthasan's self-described "intense desire to get under the skin of the company" by learning what makes it tick. He is also characteristically thoughtful in explaining what he means when he credits "outstanding client leadership" and his "awesome team" with his success.

"The leadership teams at United, Ameren, and other client companies refuse in any way to be defined by the constraints of their competition or their industry," he notes. "They really want to redefine the rules of the game. When you have client leadership like that, it makes the job so much more interesting and really unleashes your creative juices."

Jesuthasan, whose work includes the design and implementation of reward and performance management systems, credits his own firm's senior management for investing in the recruitment and development of top consulting talent. "Any consulting firm has bright people who can develop reports and analysis and then present conclusions," he explains. "Our team members take ownership for various parts of the project ... and they demonstrate the passion for a particular piece of work and see it through — not just to the conclusion of the project but to the realization of the results that the client desires."

Born in Malaysia, Jesuthasan grew up in the U.K. and has lived in the U.S. for the past 15 years. He has worked with clients — including



ABN Amro, Qantas, Unilever, Iberia Airlines, Malaysia Airlines, UBS Warburg, and numerous other global giants — on every continent except Africa. "I've always prided myself on assimilating very quickly with a culture, whether it's in a country or a client organization," he notes. "I work hard to really understand how an organization does business and how its people relate to each other. I have always made that a priority in working with a client."

Jesuthasan pores over business trade articles and the financial journals, as well as through conference slide presentations, to glean the culture of his clients before setting foot in their offices. His inability to distinguish client relationships from personal relationships also enriches his understanding of client organizations and their challenges.

"I love spending time personally with clients," he says. "In this business, I don't think that you can have a purely professional relationship, because that does not allow you to effect the sort of change your client is looking for."

This is important, given that the human resources function is ripe for change right now. "I really think that we are approaching the golden age of how organizations manage people," says Jesuthasan, whose clients are well positioned to cash in on the change efforts he has helped them to shape.

— Eric Krell