

Taiwan's Gou turned loan into multi-billion dollar empire

February 25 2016

Terry Gou, founder of the world's biggest electronics supplier, hasn't shied away from a gamble since turning a loan from his mother into a multi-billion dollar empire.

The 65-year-old chairman of Taiwan's Hon Hai group, the parent of Foxconn, is now applying that same aggressiveness with a proposal to take control of Japan's ailing Sharp.

The firm said they had accepted the multi-billion dollar bailout Thursday—marking the first foreign takeover of a major Japanese electronics company.

Gou was born in 1950 in Taipei county to Chinese immigrant parents, who had fled the Communist victory in China's civil war. He studied shipping management in college while supporting himself with part-time jobs.

He started his business in 1974 making television parts with an investment of Tw\$100,000 (\$3,005) from his mother, and later began producing computer parts.

Gou—known for being a demanding and harsh boss—faced one of his toughest challenge when high-profile suicides at his China plants forced him to reassess his management style.

"I've slept very little in the past 40 days... This is a trial for us," he told

investors in 2010.

One of the richest men in Taiwan—the fourth wealthiest, according to Forbes, with a net worth of \$5.7 billion—his words are widely publicised by the media and have sometimes sparked controversy.

He reportedly had to apologise in 2012 after he was said to have compared workers to animals.

Gou, who lost his first wife and a younger brother to cancer, is known for his charitable endeavours in cancer research and says he intends to donate most of his assets to charity.

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Citation: Taiwan's Gou turned loan into multi-billion dollar empire (2016, February 25) retrieved 28 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2016-02-taiwan-gou-loan-multi-billion-dollar.html>

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