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Training and Development of an International Workforce

Chandana Unnithan

A retrospective view on Human Resource Management from a decade of Globalization, Transnationals and Multinationals
The 1990s was a decade of globalization powered by the Internet and rising transnationals, multinationals and global corporations. The challenge that confronted many corporates were identification of training needs and competencies for an international workforce, and deploying new methodologies to train them. This book provides a retrospective view of these changing times, when different methods were pioneered, by Human Resource Management for adapting to globalization of businesses and developing an international workforce. It provides insights into the training needs for women, who were increasingly becoming part of the global corporations as managers during the decade. The book would be of interest to managers and academics as well as a reference for students of Human Resource Management, particularly MBA.

Chandana Unnithan
Chandana Unnithan, MBA; MBusComp, is a lecturer in Management and Information Systems at Deakin University, Australia. An acclaimed author with more than 50 publications in international journals, she spent a decade in the Information Communications Technologies sector, as Project/Knowledge Manager with IBM and TATA.
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Prologue

In this age of globalisation and international workforce, the training and development of international staff is increasingly becoming an issue in the business world. The dilemmas confronting many global organisations are multidimensional i.e. how to identify the training needs for international staff, how to identify competencies for international staff within the organisation, how to train expatriates and handle repatriation, overall how to recruit, train and develop an international workforce. Since these are poignant issues in the area of Human Resource Management, this project was chosen to value add to the global HRM studies.

'The training and development of international staff is an issue which should be gaining more importance within the field of Human Resource development, as companies develop from purely domestic firms into multinational or even transnational corporations'.. (Harzing & Ruysseveldt, 1995, p 205)

Through this research project, it is desired to identify training requirements, analyse available methods, scrutinise the advantages and disadvantages, practical difficulties etc and find the best methods to training and development of expatriates and an international workforce.

According to Baumgarten (1995), factors such as increasing international competition and the resulting need to market products worldwide, international mergers and acquisitions, and new market opportunities (Eastern Europe, China, the former Soviet Union etc), more and more managers and other staff will be confronted at least once in their careers with an opportunity to take on an international assignment and thus temporarily become an expatriate working and living in a foreign country. She observes that such an assignment not only poses challenges in terms of new tasks and responsibilities, but also in terms of adaptive capabilities and cultural sensitivity.

This project’s worth is in the world which is getting smaller, and especially for those organisations who value their human resources. It is not only valuable for executives...
and management staff of multinationals and transnationals, but also for people with an international perspective in their career to derive an insight into their international outlook.

A new international workforce can be trained and developed from the grass roots level, and can be acclimatised to the organisation. Hence, the crucial factor in this area would be at the selection and recruitment stage. Once the selection is made, the training program can be developed according to the requirements of the organisation.

As the organisation grows and crosses international borders, there may be a stage when the organisation requires its employees to go into different countries and alien cultures. At this stage the organisation has to equip the assignees by imparting the necessary training. Specific competencies required have to be identified for each assignment. An expatriate may be very successful in North America, but can end up a dismal failure in Asia. Hence the competency and training requirements are varied.

It has to be noted that the global organisations are not new, they have been established for decades. Hence they already have a workforce which has grown with an inbuilt corporate culture. Though a set of new international managers can be recruited, trained and developed, it is wiser to research the organisation, identify the competencies available and develop them or identify the competencies which the organisation as a whole lacks, and impart the necessary training to develop these competencies. It is interesting to note that some organisations prefer to recruit a new international manager for a foreign assignment.

This project has tried to analyse the process of training and developing an international employee or expatriates. An in-depth literature review and case study analysis has been conducted, as part of research into various methods for training the international employee or expatriate. A section has been devoted to emphasise the training needs for women international managers and expatriates.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prologue</th>
<th>Page 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 1 The present situation in Training and Development of International staff - an overview</td>
<td>Page 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 2 Identification and analysis of training needs for an International workforce</td>
<td>Page 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 3 Training methods for international workforce</td>
<td>Page 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... Role Plays</td>
<td>Page 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... Case studies</td>
<td>page 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... Instructional games</td>
<td>page 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... Cultural Orientation</td>
<td>page 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... Cultural Assimilator</td>
<td>page 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... Lectures, tutorials, reading assignments, A/V Pres</td>
<td>page 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... T-group</td>
<td>page 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... Drill and practice</td>
<td>page 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... Language training</td>
<td>page 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... Modelling</td>
<td>page 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... Coaching</td>
<td>page 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... Meetings with International Staff</td>
<td>page 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental briefings</td>
<td>page 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Experiences</td>
<td>page 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Rotations</td>
<td>page 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some models of training programs</td>
<td>page 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 4 International Workforce - Orientations in selections, recruitment and training</td>
<td>page 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 5 Expatriation/Repatriation and training programs</td>
<td>page 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... Repatriation</td>
<td>page 33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 6 Women in the international workforce and training</td>
<td>page 36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 7 Role of International Human Resource Management in training and development of international managers</td>
<td>page 44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>page 47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epilogue</td>
<td>page 52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography and references</td>
<td>page 52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendices</td>
<td>page 55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... NEC Case study</td>
<td>page 55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... The Coca-Cola Company - an insight</td>
<td>page 59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... The Shell Internationale Petroleum - a case study</td>
<td>page 66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
List of Figures

Figure 1  Variables that influence training needs  page 9
Figure 2  Training methods, modelling process and relative vigour  page 21
Figure 3  The Mendenhall, Dunbar, and Oddou - Cross Cultural Training model  page 23
Figure 4  The ideal deployment cycle  page 34
Figure 5  HR, Globalisation, component tasks and services  page 44
Figure 6  Model for training and development of an international workforce  page 50

List of Tables

Table 1  Preparing Managers for international postings  Page 30
Chapter 1
The present situation in Training and Development of International staff - an overview

Relatively little attention is paid to human development needs that arise during the evolution from a domestically postured business to one that arise from a truly global perspective says Baumgarten (1995). Most organisations focus primarily on technology transfer, organisational structures, strategic control etc. There have been strategic changes in many functional areas, but most organisations manage their workforce internationally, as if the external environment, technologies and the organisational structure has not been changed. Adler (1986) remarks that many firms conduct their worldwide management of people as if neither the internal structure and organisation of the firm had changed.

Today, organisations are being confronted with increasing global competition, the ardent need to market products worldwide, international mergers and acquisitions and new market opportunities. It is possible that any employee will be assigned to cross borders of his nation and thus become an expatriate. This type of an assignment is not only a heavy responsibility, but also requires adaptive capabilities and cultural sensitivity.

Considering the sensitivity of such assignments, most companies are expected to send a well equipped workforce for such assignments. However, very high estimates of the percentage of failures have been found. According to Baumgarten (1995), studies have shown that 16-50 percent of US expatriates fail on their foreign assignment (Baker and Ivancevich, 1971, Black, 1988; Mendenhall et al, 1987, Tung, 1981), while the failure rates of European and Japanese expatriates are lower, as surveyed by Tung (1981). According to the surveys 59 percent of the European sample reported failure rates lower than 5 percent. Return of the expatriate to the home country before the successful completion of the assignment has been the failure criteria in these.
studies, which means that these rates do not include expatriates who fail to perform satisfactorily, but have not been recalled.

This is indeed a concerning situation and it is evident that the success of international assignments depends on rigorous training procedures. However, it is surprising to note that 70 percent of US expatriates and 90 percent of their families are sent abroad without cross cultural training (Baker and Ivancevich, 1971; Black and Mendenhall, 1990; Lanier, 1979; Tung, 1981). Many organisations do not provide any training at all, and expect the employee to adapt to the situation. Yet other companies offer environmental sumanaries, some culture and language preparation, but concentrate more on technical competence says Lanier (1979). Sometimes, a very technically competent expatriate may end as a failure due to poor communication skills as well as lack of cultural sensitivity.

It is also important to understand the family commitments of an expatriate and if the partner/family is travelling along with the expatriate on an assignment, it is a wise decision to include the partner/family during the training process. According to Mendenhall et al. (1987), the inability of the partner to adapt to the foreign environment is one, if not the most, important causes of expatriate failures. In 80 percent of the cases when training is provided to a foreign assignee, remarks Baumgarten (1995), the partners are not included.

As can be gathered from the earlier surveys, US firms have higher failure rates than Japanese and European firms. One of the reasons could be that Japanese and European firms offer more extensive training and are more inclined towards retaining people, and building a competent international workforce. Around 69 percent of Japanese and European companies sponsor employees for training programs to equip them for foreign assignments, according to studies conducted by Tung in 1982. However, in another study conducted by Baan E Van der in 1992, University of Utrecht [as cited in Harzing and Ruysseveldt (1995)], on Dutch multinational companies, it was seen that only 25 percent of the aspirant expatriates received preparatory training, and thus too only before departure. From the above studies it is...
clear that most organisations favour preparatory training only for expatriates sent on assignments. The result of this attitude is that there will be a lack of an international workforce, which can be transferred freely across borders. Among the studies conducted it was also found that most firms favour even the preparatory training only for expatriates sent on assignments outside Europe and the United States, with an exception on assignees to Eastern Europe wherein 40 percent of the organisations feel that preparatory training is needed for this region. However, these studies are constrained by the fact that these are mostly applicable to the multinationals in the US, Europe, and Japan, where the majority of the multinationals originated. For the multinationals who are spreading into Asian countries, cross-cultural training and language training is an imperative need to be successful.

Most of the American, European, Japanese multinationals who have established a presence in Asia have had one major flaw in that they tend to create an island around themselves. The expatriates are expected to adhere to the corporate culture, and behave differently from the host country people. This does not reflect well on the organisation and ultimately the expatriate has to do the real ‘balancing act’. In most cases whether American, European or Japanese, the multinationals seem to ignore the fact that training and developing an international workforce which is culturally sensitive and adaptable is a crucial factor for the success of the organisation in the long run. There is also a widespread neglect in this regard.

According to the literature [Mendenhall and Oddou(1985), Tung (1981), Hogan and Goodson, (1990)], some of the causes for this neglect can be derived as many organisations feel that training and development of an international workforce is ineffective. They feel that this international expertise can only be acquired through experience and hence the board of managements in organisations do not favour cross-cultural training programs.

On the other hand, since the expatriate is chosen at a short notice, and is sent on a foreign assignment, the time is not sufficient for any training. Some of the assignments are of temporary nature and not warrant huge budgets in training. However, it is
interesting to note that while US multinationals stress on this aspect, in Japan, the need for preparation even for a short assignment, has been long recognised.

Most multinationals ignore the fact that while technical competence is important for a successful international manager, relationship skills and intercultural competence are also equally crucial for long term success. In most organisations, the Human Resource department also feels that they do not have a database of the employee competence, to develop adequate training programs. This is also a crucial factor in training and development of an international workforce.

There is a long-standing belief that technical competence is the most crucial factor in an international assignment. According to the studies conducted by Tung 1981, the main reasons for failure among US expatriates is the inability of the employee or his partner to adapt to the situation. There is also an assumption that an employee who has been a successful expatriate in New York will be equally competitive in Tokyo. International staff cannot perform efficiently without proper training and preparation. This could be summarised as a brief sketch of the present day situation.

According to a study conducted by Kobern (1984), while there is an increasing demand for international expertise, there is a decreasing availability of individuals with such expertise. In the past most managers have acquired international expertise through foreign assignments. However, from the late 1980s there is a need for people with a global understanding. Since experiential learning was and is still considered advantageous, organisations have modelled their training processes on this concept which can be broken down into four modes: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualisation, active experimentation. Punnet (1989) remarks that effective training programs incorporate opportunities to use all these learning styles.

A survey conducted by Rosalie A Tung in 1981 suggested that 32 percent of US based multinational organisations had formalised training programs. Among those who omitted training programs were organisations who employed local nationals.
percent). Around 28 percent of organisations omitted training programs due to temporary nature of such assignments and 20 percent doubted the effectiveness of such training programs, while 7 percent complained of lack of time. As compared to this, 57 percent of Japanese multinationals have formalised training programs, but the others omitted training programs due to lack of time (63 percent) and due to doubt of effectiveness (37 percent). In contrast 69 percent of the West European firms had sponsored their employees for training programs, while the rest omitted training programs due to temporary nature of assignments (30 percent), lack of time (30 percent), trend towards employment of local nationals (20 percent), and doubt of effectiveness of such training programs (20 percent). Among these firms who had training programs, the US and West Europeans tended to have rigorous training programs for CEOs and functional heads rather than trouble shooters and operatives, while Japanese firms stressed on training for operatives. As regards evaluation systems, 32 percent of US firms, 26 percent of West European firms, 33 percent of Japanese firms adopted some form of evaluation process, in which trainee’s subjective evaluation and supervisor’s subjective evaluation was included (Sheth and Esga 1989).
Chapter 2.
Identification and analysis of training needs for an international workforce

A proper training needs analysis consists of three interrelated components: organisational analysis, job/task analysis and person analysis, says Golstein (1986). The analysis of the organisation studies the organisational variables and this will result in potential training needs. The purpose of a training needs analysis is to identify and summarise the discrepancies between the existing performance levels of employees and the desired levels. However, it must be noted that all competencies cannot be developed through training. There may be flaws in the organisation, the corporate culture, attitude and management itself, which require a different solution. Analysing the training needs of an international workforce is indeed a complex exercise. The training process is also complex.

The job analysis describes the job to be carried out by the target population in behavioural terms, and specifies the tasks involved in carrying out the job. In the task analysis, information is collected regarding the competencies needed for effectively carrying out the various tasks. As far as the expatriate is concerned, a logical assumption can be made that certain tasks are to be carried out by all expatriates. Hence the general competencies required by the entire target population can be identified. The situational variables which affect specific assignments like the socio-political environment of the host country may vary with each assignment. Hence the expatriate may require special competencies in a particular situation, which is not a general competency required for the completion of every assignment.

It can be derived that the job/task analysis of international managers can take place at two levels. As a general rule, the general competencies needed for every international manager should be analysed and potential training needs for the entire occupational group can be compiled. On the other hand, the situational variables influencing the tasks of a specific assignee must be taken into consideration by the organisation, specific competencies identified, and training needs must be met.
The figure below is an excerpt from Harzing & Ruysseveldt (1995, p 211) giving an outline of the variables that influence the training needs of the international staff.

![Diagram of variables affecting training needs](image)

*Analysis of training needs*

(Figure 1)

[Variables that influence training needs]

Analysing the training needs of an international workforce is indeed a complex exercise, with the above variables playing their part. However, if this phase in the training cycle is carried out in a sensitive, solid and logical manner, comments Baumgarten (1995), the other tasks in the training cycle will rest on solid foundations and will be relatively easy to perform.

In order to determine the potential training needs of an international employee, it is essential to identify the competencies required for international success. These could be summarised into a basic ideal profile, which can be used to build a training needs analysis for specific assignees. This ideal profile also can be tested against the information gained from an analysis of the organisational, job/task, situational and personal variables of the specific organisation, assignment and assignee (Baumgarten 1995, p 211). Based on this analysis, competencies could be added or deleted from the ideal profile and the remaining competencies translated into specific training needs for the assignee in question.

The literature survey reveals numerous surveys conducted to identify the competencies required for international success. A review of these reports brings to light competencies like sense of humour and sensitiveness. Some of the competencies which were identified in most surveys were, cultural sensitivity, adaptability, intuitive, motivation, emotional stability and ability to handle responsibility. However, based on the geographical setting and functional specialisation, the responses also differ...
Regardless of these factors, interestingly enough, some of the competencies like leadership, emotional stability, motivation, were found in most of the responses. The competencies which differed with functional specialisations like technical, commercial, general management were evidently technical skills, flexibility, cultural sensitiveness and subordinate development skills. A competency which was regarded important in countries like South America was to demonstrate empathy, whereas stress management was considered an important competency in Africa, and in Asia Cultural adaptiveness was considered a major competency in Asian countries. For today's international manager the development of Pacific Rim poses a great challenge, so indeed cultural adaptability should be considered a necessary competency.

As can be seen from the above, there are general competencies and specific competencies required for an international manager. Hence a thorough research of the competencies required, identifying and developing these competencies as an ideal profile, checking these against the competencies present in an organisation and developing a training program based on this is very essential for developing international managers. The specific knowledge, attitude and skills which need to be developed, depends on the training requirements of the workforce or individual. This must be derived from the needs analysis.

The next step is the translation of training requirements into goals and objectives for the organisation. The main indicators for international success have been the degree of personal adjustment, the degree of professional effectiveness and the degree of interpersonal adjustment and effectiveness. According to Cornue Julius (1982) effective expatriates are people who can cope with the situation making successful adjustment to living and working abroad, who can understand the ways of the host nation, but does not give up their own standards and values. They may incorporate some aspects of the new culture into their thinking, as part of the learning process. However, to cope effectively with the situations the expatriate needs to be able to appreciate why things are done differently, even if they do not agree with them.
Hence training for an expatriate may be termed more as 'cross-cultural' rather than technical. While doing the selection technical competence will be part of the criteria, as specific assignments will be based on these competencies. However, in general all international managers or expatriates do require the cross-cultural training, which equips the individual to cope and adapt with the situation. As the world is coming closer, and as organisations are looking into Asia wherein the cultures collide, this training becomes one of the most integral parts of the international manager.

Wiseman and Shuter (1994) comments that multinational organisations have to consider cultural diversity training to a much greater extent than ever before. According to R D Albert, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, even organisations operating in one country have become diverse culturally. In every country in the world, there is an increase in diversity of the labour force. For multinationals, the cost of not having intercultural training is becoming very high. Between 20-50 percent of personnel sent from the American multinationals returned early (Mendenhall et al. 1987), and more than half of US multinational corporations had failure rates of 10% and 20% On the other hand the Japanese and European multinationals had a lesser failure rate. Cross cultural training is indeed becoming a challenging aspect in training an international workforce.

It is important to understand that management in different cultures emphasises different values. While the British culture is obstinately anti-business and somewhat xenophobic, the Americans enjoy a high degree of professionalism and performance related values. In contrast the Japanese stress on human efficiency with a strong emphasis on mentoring. This is also the case with the Germans. However close supervision is accorded in a German context. For an international manager and the multinational it is indeed a predicament to come to terms with this cultural maze. The goal of cross-cultural training should therefore be to equip the trainees with knowledge, skills and attitudes which enable them to come into terms with this cultural maze, make the necessary adjustments, and be effective.
Chapter 3
Training Methods for international workforce

An overview of the training options available has been broken up into two parts by Baumgarten (1995, p 214) Instructional strategies and specific methods. The instructional strategies consist of simulations, programmed instruction, expositive instruction, sensitivity training, behaviour modification methods, field experience and on-the-job training, which can be used for training goals in general. The specific methods comprise the methods suitable for training international staff.

When the cross-cultural training began, a purely cognitive, intellectual, instructional approach was taken, wherein instructional strategy was expositive instruction. However, by the 1960s a humane influence crept into the training and the emphasis shifted to the individual. Presently this training comprises of informational and experiential approaches.

Role Plays
The trainer creates an imaginary environment wherein the participants are asked to imagine themselves in situations. Subsequently they are asked by the trainer to enact the simulated roles/outcomes. The feedback which follows the role play gives an insight into the participant’s ability to cope with the situation. Based on this, the participants can modify themselves.

Case Studies
This approach pioneered by the Harvard Business School assesses the problem analysis skills of the trainee, who is presented with a case and is asked to determine possible course of action, or solution for the problem presented in the case. This analysis is further discussed in a group context wherein the participants become aware of the aspects which they might have overlooked.
**Instructional games**

While in the earlier stages the games focused on basic business skills, today they focus on interpersonal and communication skills which are essentials for an international manager. Usually, the games contain a competition factor and a simplified representation of a real life situation.

**Cultural Orientation**

The trainees are given information about the cultural institutions, values systems of the host country etc by the organisation, thus preparing them for cross-cultural encounters. Dowling et al (1994) suggested that cultural training seeks to foster an appreciation of the host country’s culture so that expatriates can behave accordingly. According to Baliga and Baker (1985) the expatriate should receive training concentrated in the assigned region’s culture, history, politics, economy, religion and social business practices. Harris (1989) comments that it is also important to include family into the cultural training programs. To substantiate this argument, he said that the biggest problem for Americans overseas is not technical know-how, rather it is some kind of a family problem.

**Cultural assimilator**

This method which has been described by Sheth & Esgh (1989) as a brief episodes describing intercultural encounters, is a computer program or written material which aims at increasing the trainees ability to see situations from the perspective of members of another culture. The expected outcome is that trainees learn to make appropriate attributions in a different cultural environment. In order to achieve this aim the assimilator summarizes critical incidents focusing on key problems and differences. Interactions between individuals in two cultures followed by four reasonable alternative attributions to their behaviour is explained in the incidents. However, only one of these is correct from the host culture’s viewpoint. The trainees have to make the choice among the alternatives and are then given feedback.

According to Hodgetts and Luthans (1994), the cultural assimilator has become one of the most effective approaches to cross-cultural training. They call it a 'programmed
learning technique' that is designed to expose members of one culture to some of the basic concepts, attitudes, role perceptions, customs, and values of another culture.

The content of the assimilator is usually critical incidents which meets one of the following conditions: an expatriate and host national interact situation, a situation which could puzzle the expatriate, a situation which can be accurately interpreted if sufficient knowledge about the culture is available, or a situation relevant to the expatriate's task or mission requirements.

According to Fiedler et al (1975), these assimilators improve the effectiveness and satisfaction of those being trained as compared with other training methods. The validity and the cost benefit analysis also provides positive feedback as regards this training technique. This method is increasing in importance in training the international workforce as there seem to be an increasing influx of a multicultural workforce, even in national organisations. Ericsson Australia has around 40 nationalities working within Australia. Hence the international manager has to cope with different cultures, nationalities as well as going into different countries and coping with the situational problems. According to Dowling et al (1994), many global corporations employ specialists in cross-cultural training such as Moran in the United States, or the Farnham Castle in Britain (centre for international briefing). These training programs enable the employee, spouse, and the children to become more flexible and adaptive by obtaining new information and experiences.

Lectures, Tutorials, Reading assignments, Audio/Visual Presentations

These are various methods of transmission or dissemination of information. While lectures offer one way transmission of information, tutorials are a two way participative learning process. In addition reading material on relevant topics are given to the trainee for self education. On the other hand audio/visual presentations transmit information which cannot be completely disseminated through lectures, oral presentations etc.
**T-group**

In this method participants are expected to move away from their habitual roles and adapt to a new situation, by developing creative, unexpected roles. These behavioural changes are subsequently studied by the co-participants. This method is also known as sensitivity training by Sheth and Esghi (1989) in which the trainees develop attitudinal flexibility.

**Drill and practice.**

This method is frequently resorted to in the context of language training. This is an intensive training process wherein practice and feedback are alternated frequently, so that undesired behaviour has no chance of establishing itself.

**Language Training**

There is a general recognition that English is the language of world business by many global corporations. However, language training is a seemingly obvious orientation needed for a successful and productive experience abroad and should form part of any long term management development program for global executives ...Pucik (1985)

The ability to speak a foreign language can improve the expatriate’s effectiveness and negotiating ability. According to Mendenhall and Oddou (1985), willingness to communicate does not refer to level of fluency of foreign language but rather the expatriate’s confidence and willingness to use the host culture’s language. The shift to the global marketplace is forcing companies to come to terms with the demands of international business and one outcome has been a change in emphasis on employee language skills. Major US companies are giving hiring preference to graduates with foreign language skills and a similar trend is evident in the UK and in Australia.

**Modelling**

As the word suggests, the underlying idea of this method is that the trainees learn from a role model, who could be a peer or superior. This training could be on-the-job, by observing the superiors or peers who are awarded for their specific behavioural...
patterns. It is assumed that the trainees will adopt the desirable behaviours in due course.

Coaching
Managers generally who can coach well model the correct behaviours on their own performance, assign challenging and specific roles to employees, and also provide the trainees with immediate feedback.

Meetings with international staff
These meetings are usually set in an informal environment wherein valuable information is exchanged. As experiences are considered the best teachers in management, this information exchange could be very valuable for the trainees in their grooming as international managers.

Environment briefings
Information is given to the trainees regarding the geography, climate, housing and schools during these briefings. This training is generally given prior to departure in many organisations. For any global organisation today, it is possible to impart this training for the target group, which would be an innovative, but in the long term, a practical strategy. If the organisation’s focus is towards Asia, the above type of information could be very useful for the trainees to build their strategies, as well as familiarise themselves with the cultural values and orientations, and build themselves to adapt to the various situational variables present in the environment.

Field experience
The trainees are assigned for a short period in situations wherein they have to interact with people whose lifestyle and values are different. This provides the trainees with a birds eyeview on what to expect. It is also felt that the trainees can undergo some emotional stress of living and working with people from a different subculture.

In some organisations employees are sent on field trips wherein a previsit to the country of assignment is arranged. Ericsson Australia, sends the trainees to different
countries for short period of time, until they are confirmed in their roles. From then on they are assigned to various countries, for a long stretch.

According to Blue and Haynes (1977), sending employees on a preliminary trip to the host country is a very useful developmental technique. A well planned trip overseas for the candidate and the spouse provides a preview that allows them to assess their suitability for and interest in the assignment. The Ford Motor company provides a one week visit to a foreign location for both the employee and spouse, during which time the employee visits the Ford subsidiary to meet future colleagues and discuss job requirements. The Australian latex manufacturer, Ansell International, offers a similar reconnoitre visit when posting staff to its production plants in Southeast Asia. Dowling et al (1984) remarks that effective and comprehensive training programs can ease transition and help to develop productive expatriates.

**Job rotation**

In this system employees spend designated periods of time in different kinds of cultures, countries and business areas. This method is especially advantageous as the trainees develop an appreciation for their role and its contribution to the organisation as a whole. This also develops the trainees adaptability, cultural sensitiveness and flexibility.

Evans et al (1989) suggests that in Philips, job rotation has been the heart of the philosophy of training and developing an international workforce. In this organisation employees are sent into joint venture companies with Philips. These assignments develop an appreciation for company cultures and practices different from the parent company. Transferring people in and out of these ventures contribute to the individual’s professional growth. In short, Philips considers this as on-the-job training, coupled with a multicultural experience, to be the best development tool for a global workforce.
Some models of Training Programs

According to Phatak (1992), the cross cultural training is the purpose of preparation of executives and families to interact and communicate effectively with other cultures. He has given four models in cross-cultural training.

- **Intellectual model**
  This model consists of lectures and reading about the host country which provides factual knowledge about another culture.

- **Area simulation model**
  which is a program tailored to the specific culture in which the executive and family will be immersed. Attempts are made to re-create a variety of situations which the participants are likely to face in the foreign culture.

- **Self awareness model**
  Sensitivity training is the main ingredient in this method.

- **Culture awareness model**
  This technique assumes that for an individual to function successfully in another culture, he or she must first learn universal principles of behaviour that exist across cultures. This program aims at making participants aware of the influence of culture on an individual and how participants differ from the peoples of other countries because of cultural differences. The focus of this program is on improving participants’ ability to recognise cultural influences in personal values, behaviours and cognitions. This enhances the skill of intercultural communication.

Rosalie Tung (1981) divided training programs into five categories namely, area studies programs that include environmental briefing and cultural orientation, culture assimilators, language training, sensitivity training and field experiences. She argued that each of these training programs focus on a different kind of learning process and
the program selected depends on the type of the job, the country of assignment and the time available for training.

While these are the many options in training the international staff, the options for training usually depends on the organisation. Also the organisation has to be aware that all the competencies cannot be obtained in training. While the drill and practice method is suited for basic language skills before the expatriation, time and experience is required in adapting to situations. It is not yet known from the research, what methods are most effective and there are no clear guidelines as to the relative effectiveness of the various training methods.

Normally a combination of these methods or a choice between these methods can be used as training options depending on the training goals. As was analysed in the previous paragraphs the training goals are the result of the training necessities. While choosing the training methods, the variables affecting the training needs may be considered as an important source of information.

The approaches to training methods are usually based on situational variables which are important factors in international training. However, it has to be recognised that all foreign situations are not the same. Certain cultural values enable people to adapt smoothly, while in some regions some employees are more effective than in other regions. The Singaporean may be able adapt, live and work well in Hongkong but, from experience it is known that Australians do not adapt easily to the American culture. In a study conducted by Torbiorn (1982), it was found that Scandinavians find it very difficult to adapt and live in Africa, Middle East and Far East, while they could adapt well into the American and Australian culture.

On the other hand the tasks to be accomplished by the international staff also are varied. While some jobs, mainly the technical category, require very low degree of interaction with the host country nationals, other assignments do require a high degree of interpersonal skills, and interaction with the host country people. If a manager is
assigned to a particular country to develop a subsidiary for the organisation, it involves extensive interaction with the host country nationals.

Tung (1982) presented a contingency framework [as cited in Harzing and Russyveldt, 1995] for choosing the appropriate cross-cultural training method and its level of rigour, using the two factors ie similarity between the host and home culture, and degree of interaction required in the host culture. She argued that where the required degree of interaction is lower, the similarity between the host culture and home culture is greater, the training should focus more on task and job related issues and not culture related issues and level of rigour should be lower. However this framework does not give an indepth analysis of the relative vigour of the various available methods.

There is also an argument by Black and Mendenhall (1991) that a sounder basis for choosing the appropriate training method could be found in Social Learning theory. According to Bandura (1977) learning takes place in two ways ie firstly through the effect of reinforcement of behaviour (appropriate behaviour is rewarded and inappropriate behaviour punished), and secondly through imitation or modelling the behaviour of others. She says that there are also two main forms of modelling, symbolic and participative.

In symbolic modelling the trainee watches the role model and rehearses mentally. There are also two types in symbolic modelling - verbal wherein the trainees hear or read about the behaviour, observes the behaviour in their mind, observational wherein the trainees actually sees the behaviour being modelled. In participative modelling, the trainee actually practises the modelled behaviour.

As in the case of symbolic modelling, participative modelling also has two types - verbal wherein the trainees participate in the modelling by describing what they would do in the similar situation and behavioural - wherein the trainees participate physically in the modelling process. (Harzing and Russyveldt ,1995, p.218).
Within the framework of social learning theory rigour is defined as the trainee's cognitive involvement. Recognising that various forms of modelling requires different levels of cognitive involvement, the various training methods were classified as to their relative rigour by Black and Mendenhall (1991) as depicted in the following figure (figure 2).

![Diagram showing training methods, modelling process and relative rigour](image)

(Figure 2) 

[Training methods, modelling process and relative rigour]

Since all the international assignments are not the same, expatriate training is likely to vary. Tung (1989), argued that the two determining factors for a framework of contingency training approach were the degree of interaction required in the host culture and the similarity between the individual's native culture and the new culture. The related training elements involved the content of the training and the rigour of the training. She argued that if the expected interaction between the individual and members of the host culture was low and the degree of dissimilarity between the individual's native culture and the host culture is low, then the content of the training should focus on task and job-related issues rather than culture-related issues, and the
level of rigour necessary for effective training should be relatively low. If there is a high level of expected interaction with host nationals and a large dissimilarity between the cultures, then the content of the training should focus on the new culture and on cross-cultural skill development as well as on the new task and the level of rigour for such training should be moderately high. The model developed Tung helps the user to determine when to emphasise culture learning along with skill development and task issues, but it does not help the user to determine the specific training methods to use or what might constitute more or less rigorous training.

A more recent model presented by Mendenhall, Dunbar and Oddou (as cited in Dowling et al, 1994) in some ways moves beyond Tung’s model and provides more specific guidelines. While acknowledging the importance of degree of expected interaction and similarity between the native and host cultures in determining the cross-cultural training method, they proposed the addition of three key elements related to training; low, medium, and high levels of training rigour, training methods, duration of the training relative to degree of interaction and culture novelty. The representation is given in the figure 3.

According to this model, if the expected interaction is low and the degree of similarity between the individuals native culture and the host culture is high, the length of the training should be probably be less than a week and methods such as area or cultural briefings via lectures, movies, or books would provide the appropriate level of training rigour.

On the other hand, if the individual is going overseas for a period of two to twelve months and is expected to have some interaction with members of the host culture, the level of training rigour should be higher and its length longer (one to four weeks).

In addition to the information giving approaches, training methods such as culture assimilators and role plays may be appropriate. This method provides a grouping of specific methods by level of rigour and also discusses the duration of training relative to the criteria of interaction and culture similarity.
CROSS CULTURAL TRAINING APPROACH

| Length of | IMMERSION APPROACH | AFFECTIVE APPROACH | INFORMATION-GIVING APPROACH |
| Training  | Assessment Center | Culture Assimilator Training | Area Briefings |
| 1-2 months| Field Experiences | Language Training | Cultural Briefings |
|           | Simulations | Role-Playing | Films and Books |
|           | Sensitivity Training | Critical Incidents | Use of Interpreters |
|           | Extensive Language training | Cases | “Survival Level” Language Training |
| 1-4 weeks |                     | Stress Reduction Training |                     |
|           |                     | Moderate Language Training |                     |
| Less than |                     |                     |                     |
| a week    |                     |                     |                     |
| LOW       |                     |                     |                     |

LOW — MODERATE — HIGH

DEGREE OF INTERACTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of stay</th>
<th>1 month or less</th>
<th>2-12 months</th>
<th>1-3 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

(Figure 3)

[The Mendenhall, Dunbar, and Oddou Cross-Cultural Training Model]

(source: Dowling et al, 1994)
Chapter 4  
International workforce - Orientations in selection, recruitment and training

Global corporations, multinationals and top level management in companies that are expanding internationally subscribe to a variety of approaches in their international staffing. The following paragraphs explore these various approaches namely Ethnocentric, Polycentric, Geocentric, Regiocentric and adhoc approaches. The rationale behind this research is to identify the psychology behind these approaches and ultimately how these reflect on the training and development of the international cohort.

Mendenhall and Oddou claim (as cited in Dowling et al, 1994) that a multidimensional approach is important in the successful selection of expatriates and, considering that the expatriate acculturation is a multidimensional process, the MNCs should shift their focus from the present one-dimensional technical competence criteria. They propose a four dimensional approach including the self-oriented dimension, other oriented dimension, the perceptual dimension, the cultural toughness dimension (a mediating variable which recognises that acculturation is affected by the degree to which the culture of the host country is incongruent with that of the home country). While for assessing perceptual dimension an others orientation psychological tests are used, for detecting the toughness of culture dimension comparison of similarities among cultural backgrounds are used.

During the early stages of internationalisation, the ethnocentric approach (also called the colonial approach by Torrington 1994) is followed, wherein all the Parent country nationals are recruited to all the key positions. This provides common managerial and technical expertise from people of similar experience, as well as close links and tight control from headquarters.

The assumption undermining this approach is that there is dearth of qualified people in the host countries. The compatibility of Parent-country nationals and Host country Nationals becomes an issue here because the expatriates develop a superiority complex, thereby becoming insensitive to host country issues. According to Bartol et al (1995), this ethnocentric orientation is an approach to international management where executives assume that practices which work in the headquarters or home.
country will work elsewhere. The income gaps between them also needs considerable justification. Hence though this selection process is being resorted to in many organisations, it cannot be an approach aimed at developing international managers in the long term.

The polycentric approach (or the protectorates approach - Torrington 1994) takes another dimension. The polycentric (or home-country) orientation is an approach to international management where executives view host-country cultures and foreigners as difficult to understand and believe that the parts of the organisation located in a given host-country should be staffed by local individuals to the fullest extent. (Bartol et al, 1995). Here the Host country nationals are recruited to manage the subsidiaries in their countries, while the corporate headquarters positions are occupied by the Parent country nationals. This eliminates expatriate issues, is less expensive and also gives continuity to the management of foreign subsidiaries. As the key position is occupied by an Host country national, the multinational corporation gets a low profile as a safeguard in sensitive political situations.

However, in this case the major difficulty is bridging the gap between corporate headquarters and the subsidiaries as regards culture, language barriers, differences. The organisation is exposed to the threat of becoming a federation of independent units. There is also limitation on the career path of Host country nationals as they are not exposed to opportunities to gain experience outside their own country. On the other hand the Parent country nationals too have limited opportunity to gain overseas experience, resulting in lack of resource allocation skills between subsidiaries, in the corporate strategic planning. This approach again is not conducive to the growth and development of international managers. A centralised training program can be imparted via the electronic links, but this does not provide the employee with the real life exposure of living and working in a different country.

As against these two approaches, the geocentric (or world) orientation (or the federal approach as suggested by Torrington, 1994) envisages to seek out the best people for the positions throughout the organisation, regardless of nationality. This enables a
global executive development and reduces the national identification of managers. However, this approach is quite expensive as it requires a standardisation of basic pay, involves high level of training and relocation costs, extensive documentation. Most of the western companies require extensive documentation, which requires more time as far as the host countries are concerned. The longer lead times and centralised control which is required in this approach, reduces the independence of the subsidiaries, which may result in resistance. According to Bartol et al (1995), this approach is most difficult to achieve because it requires managers to acquire both local and global knowledge. A geocentric multinational seeks to integrate diverse regions of the world through a global approach to decision making. Assignments are made based on qualifications and all subsidiary managers throughout the structure are regarded equal to those of headquarters. According to Hodgetts and Luthans (1994), IBM is an excellent example of a firm attempting to use this approach.

According to Phatak (1992), the feasibility of implementing the geocentric policy is based on some related assumptions such as

- highly competent employees are available not only at headquarters, but also in subsidiaries,
- international experience is a condition for success in top positions,
- managers with high potential and ambition for promotion are constantly ready to be transferred from one country to another,
- competent and mobile managers have an open disposition and high adaptability to different conditions in their various assignments,
- those not blessed initially with an open disposition and high adaptability can acquire these qualities as their experience abroad accumulates.

He remarks that these assumptions hold true in varying degrees, depending on a company's particular circumstances.

Most global firms manage their workforce in a centralised manner using corporate policies which are relatively specific and influential. The geocentric or federal approach is relevant in these cases. International transfers are used for management development and socialisation to foster commitment to the organisation. This
Corporate culture has reflected successfully in multinational corporations like IBM or Hewlett-Packard.

As compared to these approaches, the mixed policy or a regiocentric approach adopts a mixed policy as regards executive nationality, which varies with the nature of the business and product strategies. The organisations could create regions like the Americas, European and Asia-Pacific and transfers to Asia-Pacific from European region would be rare (Dowling, 1994). However it is a serious dilemma if classification on the basis of regions are possible or not as today no country can really boast of an even national culture. Though similar, each country has its own ethnic subcultures, regional issues etc which cannot be classified as national and into a regional database. Today branding a region as Asia-Pacific may not be really possible as nations are becoming more and more individualistic. India and China, though part of Asia do not have cultural compatibility. The regiocentric approach also limits the control to specific regions of the world. This approach though successful relatively, may have to be reviewed, especially in training an international workforce. Hence a training program based on regional classification is not really a feasible one, to develop international managers.

There are also adhoc approaches used by MNCs, which is a policy by default, wherein there is no conscious decision or evaluation of appropriate policies. The policy is considered an automatic extension of the domestic policy. Dowling et al (1994) terms this policy as a result of corporate inertia, inexperience, or both. This policy results in reactive rather than proactive responses. Ultimately, there is no consistent strategy to fit into the strategic training area. This approach has been used due to short term assignments, basically technical in nature in many global companies. However, the role of training in these situations is very low. Though a technical person may have worked in various environments and countries, he or she cannot be classified as internationally competent.

Selection tests, personality and psychological, have been resorted to in recruiting international staff in many multinationals. However, Willis (1984) comments that these
tests should be selected with care for reliability and validity. While some tests may be useful in suggesting potential problems, a review of a number of studies indicates little co-relation between the test scores and performance (as cited in Dowling et al 1994). There is also a controversial issue regarding psychological tests in countries like Australia. Overall, it can be gathered that while some MNCs use the paper and pencil approach (Nankervis & Compton, 1994), others send the entire family of a prospective expatriate to an overseas location to live like the locals. These MNCs feel that this testing time is a worthwhile expense, as compared to the costs of expatriate failure.

Analysing the above, it can be substantiated that the Geocentric approach has been favoured especially in Multinationals who are aiming at a globalisation or are global corporations. It can be rightly said that all these approaches put a different type of training demand on the organisation. It may also be noted that the training programs also reflect these approaches. According to Hodgetts and Luthans (1994), if the head of the foreign subsidiary is highly ethnocentric, new managers with intercultural training are likely to find little reward or reinforcement for using their ideas.

The reasons for training programs could also be classified into two groups - organisational and personal, says Hodgetts and Luthans (1994). According to them some of the organisational reasons are to overcome ethnocentrism prevalent in most multinationals, to improve the communication between the international subsidiaries. Training can help employees to understand the values and customs of other countries so that when they are expatriated, they have a better understanding. Among the personal reasons, the major one is to improve the employee's ability to interact effectively with other cultures. With training the overall management style improves and the research has substantially proved this aspect. The specific training approach must reflect both the industrial and cultural environment. Today we are living in a globalised world, and hence it must be understood that there are no real 'right ways'. An employee trained in US may find that the training is of no use in Japan. Hence training programs should always maintain the right balance.
Chapter 5  
Expatriation / Repatriation and Training programs

Torrington (1994) notes the difference between international managers who pass through foreign countries and expatriates who go and live in them. Therefore he recommended that the organisations need to manage the process thoroughly, before they go, while they are away and crucially when they come back.

While Lindberg (1991) remarks that most of the Japanese multinationals tend to provide their personnel with a common training and development program, Hodgetts and Luthans (1994) comments that most training programs are generic or standardised. Basic behaviour oriented concepts such as communication, motivation, and leadership often are taught initially with a generic program and then a tailor-made program is created so that the training becomes country or region specific. The tailor made programs address the specific competencies required for the expatriate. Usually these are aimed at a target group. Input for these training programs are obtained from managers who are working or have worked in the country to which the participants will be sent, or from the local managers and personnel who are citizens of that country. These programs are so designed to provide a new set of fine-tuned skills for a new culture.

Most of the time these training programs are conducted before the employees leave for their foreign assignment. However, there are also post departure training programs conducted on site. Hogan and Goodson (1990), suggests that these often take the form of systematically familiarising the individual with the country through such steps as meeting with the government officials, community members, becoming acquainted with employees of the organisation, learning the host country national’s work methods, problems, and expectations, and taking on-site language training.

One of the examples cited in Hodgetts and Luthans (1994) is the Underwriters Laboratories Inc, which has developed an in-house training program for professional members of its staff who travel to Japan, to work with their clients. The program revolves around a series of minilectures that cover topics ranging from how to handle...
introductions to the proper way to exchange gifts to the correct way of interpreting Japanese social and business behaviour. This two day training program consist of lectures, case studies, role plays, language practice, and a short test of cultural terminology; and concludes with a 90 minute question and answer session. At the end of the program the employees have a fundamental understanding of how to communicate with the Japanese and more importantly they know the types of information they lack and how to go about learning more about becoming more effective intercultural communicators.

The following table shows the frequency and diversity of approaches taken by multinational companies in preparing the managers for international posting.

Preparation managers for international postings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approach</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arranging for managers to visit the host country</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language training for managers</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Briefing by host-country managers</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-house general management course</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-cultural training for managers</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-cultural training for family</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General management course at business school</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language training for family</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training in negotiating with business norms of host country</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


(Table 1)

Some of the major expatriate failures can be attributed to the inability of the spouse to adjust. Hence, family is indeed becoming an important criteria in expatriation. Some of the issues which affect the mobility are disruption of children's education and care of aged parents.
Interaction between the new expatriate family and other established expatriate families as well as local employee families in the host country, should be encouraged. These encounters may facilitate the exchange of information, adaptation and serve to build a stable network of relationships. If fluency in the host country language is important for successful adaptation, there should be further training in language, after the expatriation. Orientation training programs and local language programs are some important aspects in expatriate training.

To some extent organisations today are sifting out these family problems during the selection procedure. According to Hollinshead and Leat (1995), a number of multinationals are stressing the need to attract young employees, who are seen as being adaptable and who do not have restrictions placed on mobility through family commitments. However, this cannot be a considered a reasonable solution.

According to Phatak (1992), once the selection is made for the international assignment, it is in the best interests of the company to ensure that this person and family is prepared to handle the assignment effectively. This goal may be achieved by a well planned pre-departure training program. He recommends a phase one training program for the international employee including the study and discussion of the elements like

- characteristics of the economy,
- political structure,
- political stability,
- legal environment of the host country,
- relationship between the subsidiary and the rest of the company, ie, the extent to which the subsidiary's operations are interlocked with the operations of other subsidiaries and of the parent company,
- the economic and political aspirations of the host country as reflected in the government policies and what it expects of the subsidiary in areas such as creation of more jobs, exports and development of local resources,
- management practices peculiar to the host country(for example, the practice of permanent employment and consensual decision making in Japan),
a comprehensive job description that specifies the authority, responsibilities, duties and task of the employee's position in the foreign subsidiary and

- the overall objectives and goals the expatriate is expected to achieve.

In the phase two of the training program as per Phatak (1992), the family should be included, which facilitates the adaptation of the employee to the foreign environment quickly and effectively. To achieve an optimum achievement of this goal Phatak recommends that the training should include the elements of language training, area study and cross-cultural training. He considers that language training is a must for the executive and family, as this training provides them with an elementary knowledge of vocabulary so that they can communicate with other on arrival in the host country. The area study gives an insight into the host country's culture, politics, climate, food, currency, geography and attitude to foreigners. The cross-cultural training prepares the international employees and families to communicate and interact effectively in other cultures. This training could be imparted through the four models explained in the training methods (chapter 3). Phatak (1992) also recommends the model of Mendenhall, Dunbar and Oddou (figure 3, page 23) for cross-cultural training. He suggests that if a foreign assignment involves a great deal of interaction with the local community and if great differences exist between the home and host cultures, the employee should be subjected to as many cross-cultural training programs as possible in addition to language training and area studies. However, only area study may be sufficient if the contact with the local community is low (for example, troubleshooter) and minimal cultural differences exist between the home and host countries (for eg. USA and Canada). Between these two extremes there exist situations involving degrees of cultural differences which needs to be sufficiently addressed by the training programs.

Baumgarten (1995) remarks that training and development should be a process and not an event. The first phase of training should begin after selection which focuses on the abilities required for an international career and the second phase of training, which is the highlight of this chapter should take place after the country of expatriation has been decided. In this phase the focus should be on strengthening all required competencies.
for the fulfilment of the assignment. More rigorous training methods should be applied besides coaching, and modelling should be applied in this phase. The employee should be trained on specific skills needed for his assignment and the necessary knowledge of specific cultural issues in the host country, logistical information and business practices and procedures should then be imparted. According to Adler and Ghadar (1990), ongoing training, and development throughout an employee's career would typically take place in global or transnational companies.

Repatriation

The training process does not end with the expatriate training. There is an increasing concern about the reentry of expatriates into their home country. The expatriates have an increasing level of anxiety as regards their position back at home, adjusting back in the home office, and they suffer also from a sense of lost status as the autonomy of working is lost. Abroad an executive may be a prominent member in the local community, but back home he or she is just another executive.

A specialist repatriated to his or her own home base, may find that the product line of specialisation may have become obsolete. Hence it is crucial to maintain networks, constantly conduct training, upgrade knowledge, which falls within the purview of the training division. The training process can help in preparation of repatriation, transition and readjustment process of the employee and make sure that there is channelling of the expatriate skills in a meaningful manner after repatriation.

Training (coaching!) can play an important role during the re-entry, focusing in the first place on personal re-entry in the form of both practical support (housing, schooling, etc.) and counselling which addresses the natural shock associated with re-entry and the need to re-define personal roles (partner's re-entry, new 'old' social system). On the other hand training can play an important role in validating the expatriate's foreign experience. According to Baumgarten (1995), on one hand the home country managers may need training in order to be able to recognise and utilise the foreign
experience of their returning expatriates; on the other hand, the returnees themselves may be greatly aided by debriefing and re-entry training sessions.

From the above, it can be understood that training and development plays an important role in the international deployment of staff. Training plays an important role in preparing the international employee for the foreign career, repatriating and also during the intermediary phase of the assignments itself such as orientation training, familiarisation with the environment, etc and also through coaching by superiors and colleagues on site.

An ideal deployment cycle as excerpted from Harzing and Ruysseveldt (1995, p.227) is given below.

(Figure 4)

[The ideal Deployment Cycle]

It is very clear that this 'ideal cycle' can only be achieved if the organisation is committed to supporting the international employees throughout their deployment through training and support activities, fitting into the broad development plan. Thus it can be derived that training and development of international staff must be viewed in
the light of the complete deployment cycle, and will be most effective when linked to systematic career development plans.
Chapter 6

Women in the international workforce and training

According to Adler 1994, a number of multinationals have accepted the reality that women managers are indeed performing successfully and have capitalised on this fact. She comments that very different pictures emerge, when the domestic workforce is compared with the international workforce in terms of the patterns of women's participation over the last decade. Fischer (1992) has rightly remarked that the best reason for believing that more women will be in charge before long is that in a ferociously competitive global economy, no company can afford to waste brainpower simply because it's wearing a skirt.

It can be gathered from the above comments that women international managers are indeed becoming a visible phenomenon. Shenkar (1995) comments that women managers have become increasingly visible in many countries where societal forces during recent decades resulted in more women entering managerial positions.

There are various myths attached to selecting women as an international employee such as, women do not want international careers, foreigners are prejudiced against women, which renders them ineffective, organisations do not want to develop and deploy women as managers. A study conducted by Adler in 1986 (as cited in Shenkar 1995), revealed that females are equally interested in international careers as males. Although there may have been a difference in the past, women and men today are equally interested in international management. The myth that organisations do not want to develop or deploy women international managers is indeed true. This attitude is partly due to the concern about the women’s safety issues, dual career issues and many organisations believe that foreigners are prejudiced against women.

However this myth of prejudice may not hold true. In fact there are several advantages for women in international management, as they are highly visible, put people at ease, and are good with their interpersonal skills. Even in countries like Korea and Japan, people are more at ease with women contrary to the belief that these countries are
prejudiced against women, because traditionally women are better in convincing men, and the male does not get threatened. Women usually adapt faster into different environments culturally.

In an interview with a Singaporean women manager, the importance of cross-cultural training was emphasised. She narrated an incident wherein she had to head a delegation to Korea, for negotiations as she worked for the Development Bank of Singapore. Her name did not emphasise the fact that she was a women and in Singapore this was not an issue. However, when she landed in Korea, the people who came to receive at the airport, got a shock. They did not expect a woman to be heading the delegation. Soon she realised that a woman in the business circle is almost a non-existent situation in Korea. In order to make the negotiation process successful, she then had to get the help of her male colleague, the branch manager in Seoul. The image was projected in such a way that he was heading the negotiation process, and the proceeding went on smoothly. This incident made her wiser. However, she remarked that if her organisation had cross-cultural training or sensitivity training programs, the above problem could have been avoided. In this case she was put into an embarrassing situation and a temporary state of flux.

In yet another case an Australian woman manager emphasised this cultural sensitivity training aspect, especially when going into Asia. She was sent to Malaysia on an assignment, and she did not know the customs and practices. As a result of this she did not know that she was not appropriately dressed for the occasion. This resulted in embarrassing situations. She also had a culture shock in some aspects while in USA, though she comes from a similar background culture. She said that each country has some general patterns in culture which are distinct from others.

According to Harris (1995) there are some major advantages faced by women expatriate managers. These are visibility, interpersonal skills, and novelty. Many of the women in Adler’s study came from Pacific Rim countries and generally foreigners are curious about them and also remember them distinctly. This places them in an advantageous situation.
Due to women’s inherent soft qualities men generally tend to feel more at ease with women. Since there are fewer women in international management at this stage, the novelty is predominant and foreign clients tend to assume that the women expatriates who are sent must be the best people in the organisation. A Japanese woman manager remarked that women managers are better at putting people at ease. According to her it is easier for a woman to convince a man. In another case, an Indonesian manager said that she takes advantage of being a woman as clients relax and talk more in her presence.

An American manager who was expatriated to Hongkong said that single female expatriates travel easier and are treated better. Local offices tended to treat her like a lady and a professional at the same time. In another case she said that she was well treated in Japan, as they felt that she must be really good if she was posted as an expatriate to take charge of the branch. She said that in Asia they respect professionalism, so the gender is rarely an issue. (Shenkar 1995)

From the above it can be derived that there are several advantages in developing women as international managers. However, there are also different problems associated with such selection. A Japanese expatriate said that she had the most difficult experiences in America, as they saw her as a ‘geisha girl’. In another case, a women manager at a Thailand petroleum factory remarked that the Americans would not let her drill rigs, as there was no accommodation for her. They gave her something else to do and sidelined her profession to a large extent. She said that it was not the Thai’s but actually the American expatriates who would not let her work. In yet another case, an American women was sidelined in China, as the Chinese people felt that as a woman she had no credibility. The Chinese always wanted a man to act at that level. (Shenkar, 1995).

Women generally have to take into account the ‘dual career’ issue ie having a family as well as managing a career. Presently, there are also problems regarding the partners

Training and development of an international workforce 38
ending up in different countries and following different careers. However, this is not only an issue for women managers.

Harris (1995) remarked that the emotional stress will be greater in case of a male partner having to adjust with a women's career. She comments that despite the changes in the socio-cultural trends, it is very unlikely that a man would leave his career to accompany his partner abroad. It is also interesting to note that women managers today are also unlikely to leave their careers, to follow their spouse abroad. In an interview with a Japanese expatriate women manager, this attitude was reflected. She remarked that she will not leave her career to follow her spouse, but the assignment should be rewarding enough professionally as well as financially. In her opinion, the International Human Resource Management should be able to assist her in case of an emergency back home, and the organisation should be flexible enough to accommodate these situations. An Australian manager was of a similar opinion. She had to travel for 8 months a year and this was affecting her relationships. She said that organisations should seriously take this as an issue and try to support the women managers travelling abroad.

While looking at the training needs especially with women, it was found that 'counselling' perhaps was one of the most important areas to look into. Organisations should also avoid the assumptions that women do not need and cannot manage international careers. Perhaps, women in the international arena needs more awareness training in aspects like sexual harassment rules and regulations prevalent in other countries. The predeparture training should also include socio-cultural aspects which are detrimental to women in other countries. If a female manager is sent on an assignment to the middle-east, there may be cultural norms which she may need to adhere to for a successful assignment.

A Chinese women manager who was expatriated to Kuwait, reflected on this issue in an informal meeting. She was sent to a refinery in Kuwait as an interpreter with no cross-cultural or any other training. She was placed in a crucial position as a translator between the Arabs and Chinese, in this joint venture. According to her, due to
shortages in male translators, the Chinese company did not have a choice but to employ women managers. (Apparently in China most of the translators are women). The work demanded that the employee should work on night shifts. To her amazement she found that women were not allowed to work in this place, at night. Ultimately, after negotiations with her parent company and the Kuwait refinery, she was allowed to work in the night shifts with a Kuwaiti guard as an escort! This was a big culture shock, as well as an emotional trauma for her. She remarked that cross-cultural training as well as pre-departure training would have been of great assistance to her.

The training also should concentrate more on subjects like how to network, how to plan and manage stress, how to manage the dual role of family and career. It is an interesting observation that most of the international employees in the computer software development area, are women. The success rates of these assignments are also high. From a personal experience, at IBM in India, 70 percent of the software programmers are female, and they have at least had two assignments outside India.

The number of women in international management is increasing and their training needs are also slightly varied. While structuring the training programs organisations need to consider the issues mentioned above and offer these in addition to the general aspects. According to Taylor and Napier (1996), training can help women face their own challenges when working abroad. Giving women training on specific challenges in particular countries will go a long way towards enabling them to be successful. For example, in Japan, a woman can enhance her credibility by mentioning her age. They can be trained to use the advantage of greater visibility and host national's curiosity about them to establish important business relationships. Training can also include strategies for meeting challenges to professional competence or sense of self. For western women the environment of sexual harassment in other countries can be a shock. Remarks that people in other countries consider inoffensive have become unacceptable in the USA. Hence, organisations can provide training that not only apprises the foreign women of clients and coworkers potentially harassing conduct, but also help her distance herself from it through understanding and respect for the host
culture. Through experiential exercises foreign women can learn how to respond appropriately to unsavoury advances and comments to preserve both the 'face' of the host national and the woman's sense of professionalism.

During the predeparture training for male expatriates some suggestions for enhancing the adjustment and success of their women colleagues can be added. Most women would appreciate active and overt support from their male expatriate colleagues in establishing their professional credibility with clients and coworkers.

An Indian repatriate women manager mentioned the importance of repatriate support and training. She said that most of the expatriates are in a better position abroad, and when they return, they are at a complete loss. According to her, this is mainly due to the fact that an international career gives a different social status as compared to the normal position in India. In her opinion, organisations should take this aspect into consideration and must create suitable positions or redeploy people into suitable ventures.

A Japanese women manager commented that the repatriates could be a valuable asset in training the new international managers. When she was posted to America for a short while, she felt totally alienated, as she came from a different cultural environment. There were also problems with language, customs and outlook. She felt that she could have handled this assignment in a much better way if she had actually spoken to a repatriate manager, who could have given her first hand knowledge and information.

Harris (1995), suggested some remedies for organisations and women managers to be successful in international careers. She suggested that organisations should avoid assumptions as to the likely motivation for a women to take on an international career. Flexible benefits packages should be provided to women, which will take care of single, married or dual career couples. She also remarked that there should not be ambiguity as to the nature of the assignment, which meant that organisations should be clear about the profile of the assignment and the status (length of the assignment).
In her recommendations to women managers, she suggests that women should take on an educative approach to organisational resistance to women international managers, and should not assume that this is the result of direct prejudice. According to her they must ensure excellence in the professional field to aid selection and should also try to be in the right place at the right time. In her final remarks, she said that women should learn to handle their professional and private life separately.

An interview with an Australian woman manager brought to light a very interesting point. She did not have a higher secondary or tertiary qualification when she started her international career. She was selected on the basis of her ability, capability to adapt, absorb, grow and is today in an enviable position. This should be a lesson to many organisations who insist on women having additional qualifications to enter the international arena. As long as there are innovative, risk taking organisations woman’s participation in the international arena will continue to grow and produce results.

In my opinion, organisations need to change their attitude towards employing women managers and moulding them into male oriented roles. The job design, working conditions for international managers are basically developed with males in mind, and people have a pre-conceived notion that international managers can only be male. If organisations do not provide suitable profiles, working conditions (an example in this instance is providing childcare facilities for expatriate single mothers) to fit in women into the international working arena, women will remain ‘misfit’ in this aspect, and in turn organisations will suffer. Suitable training and assistance should be given to them, in order to encourage women managers to perform in the international sphere with confidence.

The preparatory training and pre-departure training are especially important for women managers crossing borders, which is reflected in many of the interviews with expatriate women managers. It is risky for the organisation and the woman manager to be unaware of the circumstances which she is going to be placed into. She will also need support from the male colleagues while on-the-job. Repatriation for a women is especially a difficult process, as the woman’s sense of social bonding is a bit higher.
than a man. Once she gets adjusted to a culture and place, she tries to blend in with the circumstances. This is an advantage for the organisation as this attitude brings out positive relationships in business. However, breaking up from an assignment, especially a long one, is a real problem for most women. This can also be attributed to the need for stability in a woman's life itself. Hence, the repatriation process should be handled delicately and smoothly by the organisations, taking all necessary precautions and providing support.

As Shenkar (1995) rightly remarks, the extent to which the women will participate in this arena depends on the willingness of both the organisation and the individuals involved to adopt a flexible and positive approach to existing constraints.
Chapter 7
Role of International Human Resource Management in training and development of international managers

An overview diagram of HR globalisation, component tasks and services, as provided by Torrey Orton, the Director of Sinaccord (a consultancy organisation) during his presentation on intercultural training issues, (23/10/96) in the AHRI intercultural seminar depicts some implications of training into the areas of HRM.

(Figure 5)
[HR, Globalisation, component tasks and services]

According to Orton, the change process through this chain is how the international employees develop. The recycling factor is evident here. Most of the international...
employees goes through this chain of processes and deployed into multiple assignments. The role of training can be linked into this cycle.

According to Baumgarten (1995), the training and development of international staff should be integrated into the other activities of human resource management. An instrument which can provide an important contribution to such integration consists of profiles which are described in terms of the key competencies necessary for success for international assignments, covered in the earlier chapters. These profiles can be used as a basis for determining training needs and goals, and also be used as selection and appraisal criteria. This integration creates a common language which can link the training issues to various areas of HRM. As a result there is a uniform process and the international employees are trained in accordance with the same set of competencies. Links between appraisal outcomes and training interventions or selection decisions for eg, becomes more transparent and easier to accept since they can be explained rationally.

In the subject of integrating training and selection Moran (1991) recommends including as much training as possible in selecting expatriates. The first advantage of such an integration is that on the basis of the information received during the training, the candidates can make more responsible decisions on accepting an international career. On the other hand selectors can observe the candidates during training sessions and make informed selections. The cumulative approach proposed above spreads over the career of the manager and hence, such observations can be made on a regular basis and will therefore become increasingly reliable and less threatening.

International Human Resource Management is becoming more crucial in as globalisation is becoming the norm. The major challenges of Human Resource Management in multinationals are finding the right approach in selection, developing a competent international workforce imparting cross-cultural training, supporting expatriation, international liaisons, managing a multicultural workforce across borders as also designing a standard for compensation and performance appraisals.
The recommendation is also that International Human Resource Management division should also work out a standard for training the international workforce and impart a global orientation to the workforce, while supporting them. Cultural education is most crucial for the success of the MNC. IHRM should be involved constantly with cultural training and development of international employees. If conflicts do arise in due to culturally sensitive issues, they should be sorted out using a ‘collaborative approach’, which is most suited in these environments.

A well constructed information system network is a necessity to link training and Human Resource Management. This information system should be linked to the personnel and country databases, which hold employee background information, along with company job profiles. Through this network, the International Human Resource Management can source their required information across the globe (for example, in-country company policies, tax structures, political developments, cost-of living comparisons), impart the right training in the right places for the employees, keep them abreast of the latest technological news development as well as other issues and maintain databases. By linking this system to employee databases, a standard performance appraisal system can be developed as well as international compensation. This in turn can be used in selecting and training new employees and the cycle would continue.

In the model that has been developed (figure 6), the International Human Resource Management division has an important part to play in the training process. Initially the selection and recruitment is done by this division. Then the training needs of the organisation, as well as the employees are identified by them. After this stage, the International Human Resource Management division makes the choice to place employees in various stages of training processes, depending on the identified needs.

The support to international employees all through the processes and deployment cycles is given by this division. In addition it also monitors the progress of training processes through feedback of employees and constantly makes modifications by redesigning the processes.
Summary

Summarising the research it could be said that many organisations are not successful globally and their employees fail in foreign assignments due to lack of proper training. It is indeed surprising to note that many organisations do not even provide preparatory training. Training increases the chances of success. It was also derived from the research that many organisations do not believe in the effectiveness of training and they do not know enough about the individual competencies needed for success in order to be able to design preparatory training.

In order to develop and design effective training programs for international staff, companies must implement a systematic approach which includes complete analysis of the training needs of the organisation and the targeted employees, the translation of these needs into goals and careful design. Profiles in terms of competencies needed for success on international assignments may form an important basis for the development of effective training programs for international staff.

The training and development of an international workforce should be approached as a process and not as a one time event before expatriation. Most of the competencies needed for international success lie in the area of abilities and attitudes, and therefore require development and strengthening over a period of time. Hence it is recommended to prepare employees for international assignments early in their careers, in a phased manner.

Women as international managers should be trained in cultural sensitiveness especially. Some of the key issues like sexual harassment laws should be addressed in training prior to deployment. There is also the need to tie in some issues with the male expatriate training, for example, how to promote and support the female colleague's professional image.
The partner of the expatriate also needs to be part of the training process. He or she should be trained and well equipped to accept the role. In case of dual-career couples, the situation should be addressed linking it with HRM, and providing enough training. Counselling also becomes part of the training process here. The repatriation training should also become an important part of the cycle.

Organisations should choose their training methods in line with the needs, competencies available and with a vision. Various methods of training were illustrated in the research. A combination of the right methods should form the right recipe for the organisation. Then again, training should be blended into various HRM areas. This in turn helps the organisation's corporate planning as well as development of the international employees. Training and development of international staff must be viewed in the light of the complete deployment cycle and will be most effective when linked to systematic career development plans.

With the available research data, past experience, published case studies and on the basis of interviews conducted with various women managers a model for training and developing international managers has been developed, which is depicted in figure 6 (page 51).

This model suggests that the training cycle starts at the selection stage wherein the International Human Resource Management area actually decides who to recruit, using what selection criteria, keeping the organisational stages, goals in mind, and identifies the training needs of the organisation / employee. Then it analyses the needs and facilitates training programs in various stages. In addition the International Human Resource Management (IHRM) division supports the training processes through monitoring feedback, evaluation, making modifications in training programs and redesigning. The link of IHRM and training is a critical factor, in training international staff.

The training has been divided into four stages - preparatory, pre-departure, on-the-job, and repatriate / redeployment. When the employees are new, they will be given the
preparatory training, to equip them to face an international career. Before their departure into specific places, the pre-departure training is given to prepare them for the forthcoming assignment. Once on the job, the training process is different as it is more of experiential learning. When the employees are repatriated, they need to be given training and assistance to re-enter and probably then again they will get a re-deployment or job rotation.

When employees have been through this process, and are re-deployed, they may not need all the stages of training again. However, this will be assessed by the IHRM again and the cycle continues. It is advisable for the employees to get back to a headquarters where they started from prior to re-deployment into a different place, as this gives the employees a basic stability in administering their career.
### Selection & Recruitment

- Identification & Assessment of training needs
  - Job rotations

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#### Stage 1: Preparatory
- Lectures, Audio visual methods, discussions, case studies
- Role Plays and instructional games
- Self awareness through experiential learning processes
- Sensitivity training - T group
- Stress reduction methods
- Cultural awareness and assimilation

#### Stage 2: Pre-deployment
- Pre-departure briefing
- Orientation
- Area studies
- Drill & practice
- Language training
- Area simulation
- Field experience with family
- Women's special awareness training
- Intellectual model - reading /lectures

#### Stage 3: On the Job
- On the Job training via models
- Coaching from experienced staff
- Meetings with experienced staff
- Meetings with repatriates

#### Stage 4: Repatriate Readeployment
- Post arrival training orientation
- Re-entry training

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### Supporting IHRM

- Monitoring progress
- Feedback from employees to IHRM
- Evaluation for effectiveness
- Modifications / Redesign

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(Figure 6)

[Model for training and development of an international workforce]
Epilogue

I would like to conclude, by conveying a sincere thanks to the managers whom I have interviewed towards this purpose, especially Swee Fun Low (Development Bank of Singapore), Roshini S Ajjikutira (Central Park Hotels and NIIT, India), Liz Eades (The Walt Disney Co.(Australia) Pty Ltd) and Kimie Homae (Hitachi / Digital Corporation - Japan).

I would also like to thank my supervisor Dr. Greg Birchall who guided this project and constructively critiqued it through stages. I also acknowledge the efforts of Frans Koomen the project coordinator and RMIT for being my academic platform which made this project a success. I hope my contribution and recommendations would be of use to the academia in future.
Appendices

1. NEC case study

(adapted from Torrington, 1994)

At NEC the internationalisation began as far as back in 1974, when an International Education and Training Centre was established to host trainees from abroad. In October 1980 a new department was set up in NEC’s Tokyo headquarters with a view to integrate company wide international education, to develop and support personnel, to provide management education in Japan to NEC’s expatriate managers, to accumulate and make effective use of international management know-how. The department integrated management development with foreign language training, and coordinated the international education with the requirements of the personnel department. The establishment of a new department was accompanied by two other important policy decisions, the first abolished the distinction between domestic and international careers as far as promotion was concerned and the second involved instituting a sophisticated company wide system for selecting and monitoring personnel involved in working with other cultures.

This system operates today with exception of production workers. Every three years all employees in NEC are rated by two of their seniors on a 5 point scale on 10 factors associated with suitability for work in foreign environments. The company among other factors would want to know the enthusiasm of the employee to learn foreign languages, their cross-cultural adaptability and vitality which is the unalloyed determination to put the company’s business interests first.

The data on employees are used by the company to help select personnel who irrespective of their present position and function, look as if they have the potential to work in foreign environments. The data are ultimately fed into the computers of the personnel division, whose task is then to match the individual’s internationalisability with specific overseas opportunities which cover a wide spectrum of technical, commercial and personnel functions within 5 continents.
The goals of international education or training in NEC has to be seen in conjunction with the overall HDR policy and supporting the organisational structure. The main task of this training division was to nurture 'global business people'. NEC international education emphasises and seeks in potential recruits three personal attributes - international outlook and sensitivity, a mental capacity for self-help and a more flexible, more dynamic ability to perform tasks in different business cultures. Practically the international education or training at NEC concentrates on 3 main goals, internationalising the whole company, supporting international operations and creating an international ethos among NEC affiliates and offices worldwide.

Consistent with the Japanese 'obsession with systemisation' of incompany training, NEC breaks down the target groups for international education as, 'all staff', 'staff handling overseas posts' and 'locally hired staff in overseas offices'.

NEC has developed a suite of 10 broad education programmes.

- international communication programmes focussing on foreign language training
- international management programme which seeks to improve the overall competence of NEC managers in foreign environments through two main courses - management course for staff posted overseas or likely to be posted overseas and the management case study course
- international business programmes which aims at equipping the NEC personnel with the nuts and bolts of knowledge by including topics like trade practices, finance, insurance, law and contracts, marketing, overseas construction projects, production and accounting.
- area study programme - which aims at providing appreciation of cultural, political and connected developments in given regions. NEC breaks up the world into 6 groups.
- orientation programmes for families of staff posted overseas
- programmes for staff on assignment overseas - in the form of correspondence courses for overseas personnel including local staff.
• Returnees programmes - aimed at repatriates who needs to be updated on company developments and reintegrated. These repatriates are asked to record their experiences which forms a basis for future cross-cultural training, and is a valuable information base for future expatriates.

• Overseas study - NEC sends roughly 40 people each year, mainly junior executives to foreign universities and research institutes.

• Overseas operations training - This is an on the job programme for a year for around 10 employees, with selected overseas subsidiaries.

Among these programmes there is a major focus on cross-cultural education and foreign language training. Summarising the aspects of training in NEC the following characteristics can be noted.

• Positioning overseas careers as one of the most valuable career paths.

• Internationalisation attempts are not confined to headquarters, but seek to reach all employees of NEC.

• Long term organisational development is closely related to the identification and selection of personnel, particularly well suited for work in foreign environments.

• Commitment to foreign language training.

• Development of the close relation between the international character of NEC products and grooming of a company-wide international outlook.

• Attempts to integrate manager’s experiences into teaching input for other employees.

• Use of the company vision to underpin internationalisation and international education policies.

The HRM has a big role in establishing training as part of management culture and linking this to strategic objectives of the company.
2. THE COCA COLA COMPANY - an insight into internationalisation in HR processes and training

(Adapted from the article - ‘HR Unites the world of Coca Cola’ By Dawn Anfuso, in Personnel Journal , 1994)

By carrying out a philosophy to "think globally and act locally," Coca-Cola's HR function provides the link that ties the company's businesses together.

In Western Australia, where rural landscapes stretch farther than the eye can see, employees of The Coca-Cola Company travel more than 2,000 miles a week to deliver their company's products. Coca-Cola salespeople in Venice, Italy, don't have as far to go, but must transport bottles and cans by gondola through winding canals. And in Morocco, it's donkeys that carry Coca-Cola salespeople and their products to customer destinations. The obvious difference between these scenarios is the mode of transportation used by the employees. But the differences go deeper than that. Just as the distribution of product in each country varies, almost all elements of employment vary as well. In one country, potential workers may willingly respond to questions regarding their families, while in another these inquiries are taboo. Some cultures value high base pay, while others are motivated by bonus plans. Even holidays vary from place to place. So how does Coca-Cola, which operates in not just these three countries but in more than 195 worldwide, manage its human resources issues? Through a decentralised system that's tied together by a shared vision and central support.

• Coca-Cola is a multi-local company.

Although Coca-Cola's headquarters is in Atlanta, Georgia, USA, the soft-drink giant is more than simply a U.S. based company with some operations overseas. It's truly a global enterprise. Nearly 80% of the company's operating income comes from its businesses outside the United States. These businesses range from wholly owned subsidiaries and bottling companies to independent bottling and distribution centers.
that license its products -- mainly soft drinks. The company also manufactures and markets juice and juice-drink products. The businesses that produce, market and distribute these products span the globe. Coca-Cola manages them through 25 operating divisions making up six regional groups: North America, the European Union, the Pacific region, the Northeast Europe/Middle East (NEME) group, Africa and Latin America (see chart). Each of these groups has a president, accountable for the businesses in his or her area. In other words, each region, although a part of the bigger system, is its own entity. As Michael J. Semrau, assistant vice president and director of international human resources, says: "The Coca-Cola Company just happens to be headquartered in Atlanta. It could just as feasibly be headquartered in any of the other locations [where we do business] and it probably wouldn't make a difference."


The regions and businesses are linked together by a shared mindset to think globally and act locally, a philosophy that Vladimir Pucik, director of international programs at the center for advanced human resources studies at Cornell University, says defines a global enterprise. "If you look at a global company from a business perspective, the emphasis is a combination global integration and local responsiveness," Pucik says. Drawing a parallel to human resources, Pucik says that its role is to get all the different functional capabilities -- such as selection criteria, training processes and performance assessments -- to reinforce the way people can think globally and act locally.

That's exactly what HR at Coca-Cola strives to do. "Coca-Cola always has been known as a multi-local company," says Semrau. It's like a family: Each business, as each family member, has its own unique qualities and can stand on its own, but benefits from being connected to the group. And just like a family, the businesses have a certain bond. "The common thread running through Coca-Cola is its willingness to allow the locations to be different, to conduct the business in ways that are appropriate for the market in which they're operating," says Jeff Peeters, who's currently director of HR for corporate finance and human resources in Atlanta, but previously served as HR
director for the Northwest European division in Brussels, Belgium. "When we sell the same products in Central Africa as in France, the way we sell those products is radically different: the level of sophistication is different, the support systems are different, distribution is different. Coca-Cola has found a way of balancing all of these differences with selling the same products. We don't impose any dominant culture -- we really allow the local people to implement that." Semrau agrees. "Our culture isn't codified," he says. "In fact, a previous president used to say that to do that you might miss something. The culture really is one of diversity." Because of this culture, the role of the global human resources professionals is to maintain the link between businesses and the corporation. The structure of the HR function supports this role and enables businesses to act locally while thinking globally. Each of the 25 operating divisions has a director of human resources, as does each of the six groups. They're supported by HR in Atlanta, but work fairly autonomously.

• The Philosophy Behind Coca-Cola's International Service Program.

Peeters refers to the global human resources practitioners as "custodians for international equity," who make decisions for such issues as benefits, compensation and training based on corporate philosophies. He says that while he was in Brussels, he accomplished this by staying in touch with the policy-making unit in Atlanta by telephone and written correspondence, and tried to visit the head office at least once a year to keep abreast of what was going on and to adhere to general policies as much as possible. Essentially, corporate HR functions by providing the philosophy around human issues while allowing local businesses to apply those philosophies as they see fit for their region. For example, rather than having a standard salary policy for all of its businesses, Coca-Cola has a salary philosophy, which is for its total compensation packages for its businesses to be competitive with the best companies in their markets. "We focus on the end product -- the means to get there might be different in one part of the world vs. another," Semrau says. Differences in laws and cultures play into that. For example, Peters says that the openness that people in the United States have about salaries doesn't exist in Europe. "In Europe we don't discuss salaries. That's something between you and your employer, and you will never breach that level of trust. They
would find it insulting to have to disclose their salary, and they would find it insulting if you disclose their salaries because they consider that to be something very personal."

On the other hand, you can talk about their family backgrounds, their ages, and so on without a problem. In fact, they get offended if you aren't interested in their family backgrounds. In the United States, such inquiries would be in violation of the law. "So certain policies that are perfectly legitimate in the United States, if they aren't applied with the right level of judgment will offend people in other countries," Peeters says.

This can happen with particular programs as well. Peeters says that while he was working in Brussels, he learned about a sales course that was developed at corporate headquarters. The principle of the course, which was to assess where your customer is emotionally before making a sales pitch, made a lot of sense and was universal. But Peeters knew that the teaching approach wouldn't fly in the countries for which he was responsible. "We had to work on the course to not just adopt it but to take the principles and translate them into something that was culturally effective and acceptable," Peeters says. For instance, an example that the American version of the training used showed a financial planner selling insurance. Peeters says that, in Europe, people wouldn't go to a specialised consultant, they would go to a banker. Therefore, a salesperson in the European countries wouldn't understand the example.

Also, the corporate training course included video presentations that, in line with equal opportunity, portrayed people of different nationalities and gender in all types of positions. Peeters says that in certain countries these portrayals can be offensive. A female representing management, for example, would be out of line in an Arabic environment. "The main goal is to take the valuable piece of the Coca-Cola system and optimise its effectiveness in the local markets." Working toward this goal works well for the soft-drink firm. "Through this decentralisation and empowerment, associates can react quickly to market needs," says Semrau. "Also, no one central entity can be as responsive as 25, 50 or 100 local, hands-on entities."

Central support enables international HR to act locally while thinking globally. Although they're fairly independent, human resources professionals around the world
receive support from a core HR staff in Atlanta. One of the support systems available is an HR orientation, held twice a year in Atlanta for international staffers and once for those working at headquarters. The two-week orientation is for people who have recently joined Coca-Cola as HR representatives or for longer-term associates who can benefit. Its purpose is to give an overview of the company's HR perspective. "We try to blend a business overview with a human resources overview," Peeters says. "So we talk about the business, we talk about how the business translates in HR policies and what the practices are that follow from those policies." Participants of the program leave with a much broader view of what the company is doing, not only in HR but in finance, marketing and other aspects of the business. They also learn about HR philosophies, as well as programs and policies already created that can be adopted. "Tools have been developed by people throughout the world and we want to be sure that others don't have to start from the beginning," Semrau says. For example, the company has designed a performance-development system, an industrial-relations negotiation model and regional expatriate programs that HR practitioners throughout the world can adapt. "We want to make sure that anyone coming into HR knows what exists," he says.

Probably the greatest benefit that the orientation participants receive, however, is the framework for an HR network within the massive Coca-Cola system. "We try to involve as many people as possible so that participants get exposure to the specialists in the various areas of the company -- people whom they can call when they're confronted with issues in the field," says Peeters.

The company involves the specialists in various ways. Some of the key figures in functions such as training, compensation or benefits will make presentations to the group, relating what their functions' policies and practices are. Some help the newcomers in workshops. There are also numerous social events scheduled during the orientation periods that give participants a chance to get to know the specialists on a more personal basis. "Establishing that network is one of the most valuable things in that orientation course," says Peeters. In addition to the orientation, Peeters says that the company is planning to roll out a more advanced development program for HR
professionals early next year. It will be targeted specifically at those who aren’t quite at a director level but who have shown the potential of getting there. Its goal will be to build skills, rather than to establish a knowledge base as the orientation strives to do.

"We have noticed that HR as a profession evolves quickly," Peeters says. Also, the marketplace changes, theories change, and Coca-Cola revises policies and practices and tools to cope with these changes, accordingly. For example, a thrust within the company right now is for managers to become better coaches. "We can't automatically assume that HR knows how to teach these skills," Peeters says. So the development program will offer courses on these types of skills on an as needed basis.

"Certain policies that are perfectly legitimate in the U.S., if they aren't applied with the right level of judgment, will offend people in other countries." Another support tool for human resources practitioners in the Coca-Cola system is the HR development committee. The company started using the development-committee model nearly 10 years ago within the finance division. Today, almost every functional area of the company has one. The role of the committees is to identify talent within their particular functions and then take the steps necessary to make sure that that talent achieves its potential. They also look at openings within their accountability to ensure that they're moving people who have the right skills into the right positions. "The goal is to make sure that we have the right competencies in the organisation to help us meet our business objectives on an ongoing basis," Semrau says.

Nancy Shemaria, director of staffing, facilitates the HR development committee. (In other functional divisions, HR doesn't chair the committees. Functional heads do, with support from HR.) Other members of HR's committee are: Semrau, because of his vast knowledge of the international fields people and what the international needs are; Beverly Freeman, who was the vice president of human resources for Coca-Cola USA and has knowledge about the needs in that territory; the executive assistant to Michael W. Walters, vice president of human resources; and Michelle Beale, the vice president of HR for the Foods division. The criteria to be a member is a focus on and a commitment to development, and a knowledge of the people in the field.

Shemaria states that the purpose of the HR development committee is to ensure that the function continues to grow a ready supply of talent for human resources on an international basis by making strategic placements. "We're really not in the business of..."
just filling positions," she says. "We're in the business of making sure that they're strategically based placements and that by putting someone in a particular position we're also developing that person so that he or she can go on to other assignments and continue to grow in the company." The committee examines all open positions in human resources during every meeting and evaluates possible candidates. The main focus of the committee is on placing key talent -- mid-management to senior-level positions -- but because HR is a relatively small function, the placements can run the gamut. Another task of the development committees is identifying key technical or professional skills for their functions' positions. The HR development committee identified key experiences or job knowledge in 10 areas that people in HR need. They are: facilitation skills, an understanding of global business and HR trends, organisation design, HR functional knowledge, employee relations, industrial relations, learning and development, performance development, selection and staffing and total compensation.

In addition to these, the company has core foundation skills that Coca-Cola personnel need. They are a combination of capabilities and skills that the company uses to evaluate any associate in the organisation. For example, foundation skills for managerial people include coaching skills, leadership capabilities and ability to think creatively. "They're quite generic, almost attitudinal," Peeters says.

Add Shemaria: "What you end up with is a comprehensive set of both the general business skills and the function-specific skills. And by putting them together, we get a complete picture of what somebody needs to be able to do the job."

Along with developing key competencies, the HR development committee conducts talent assessments. It slices the organisation either horizontally or vertically to look at a portion of the function. It then determines what skills are required of the positions in that group, evaluates the skills and talents of the people in those positions, and implements strategies to close any gaps.

For example, the committee will encourage and provide the tools to managers in that function to do development planning for their associates. "We play an influencing leadership role for which we may develop some assessment tools, develop the technical competencies and skills, and get those distributed throughout human resources as tools for all managers in human resources to use," Shemaria says. "But the role of the
development committee isn’t to watch over what the managers do. They still need to be managing, coaching and gathering feedback, separate from the development committee."

Essentially what the HR development committee does is reinforce HR’s mission within its own ranks. That mission, says Semrau, is to “Work with all of the associates in the system to enable them to develop their full potential to exceed the expectations of customers, consumers and shareholders. "Quite straightforward, but nonetheless lofty considering the expansiveness of Coca-Cola’s human resources. However, with staff in Australia and Morocco sharing the same mindset and receiving the same support as those in Italy and the United States, it’s a goal that’s certainly.
3. The Shell Internationale Petroleum - a case study

(Adapted from an article 'Expats say : Help make us mobile' by Charles Marmer Solomon in Personnel Journal, 1996)

Expatriates expect to move. But today, Shell Internationale Petroleum, B.V. and its expats are learning how difficult global mobility has become. The company's recent survey explains why and identifies steps for HR to take in making the assignment work for employee, partner and family. Then Kathleen van der Wilk-Carlton sits at her desk these days, she wants her phone to ring off the hook. She expects to be barraged by calls from spouses and partners of expatriates -- and would-be expatriates -- around the world. You see, van der Wilk-Carlton is the spouse employment consultant for Shell Internationale Petroleum, B.V. It's her job to help them with the formidable task of finding a job or suitable educational opportunities to maintain their professional skills as they accompany their spouses anywhere in the world.

It's no easy task as van der Wilk-Carlton offers guidance to people heading out to locales as diverse as Norway, Syria, Malaysia and Nigeria. They present her with a wide variety of questions about their career lives, hoping she can help them. At one end of the spectrum is the open-ended question, "I'm not sure what I want to do." At the other end, she hears, "I know exactly what I want to do and need contacts and interview skills that will help me in the new location." Her challenge arises not from these requests, but from the array of restrictions that may exist in the expat's future host country. In some there are few constraints; in others there are many. For example, many countries don't have comparable work. They may limit work permits or they may have cultural sensitivities that mean women can't work in a particular country. If Shell is sending an expatriate to a country where local unemployment is high, also trying to employ the spouse can create a sensitive situation. "It's often a matter of gently pushing back boundaries and trying to be a little bit creative," she says.

Although Shell's new and existing employees expect to be highly mobile, societal changes -- such as increasingly demanding family lives and the need for double incomes -- are affecting the ease with which these employees and their spouses will transfer
between locations. Van der Wilk-Carlton's position as spouse employment consultant, therefore, is an example of the ways in which progressive global companies are grappling with the tough issues of globalization today. Creativity, sensitivity and awareness are the cornerstone of Shell's approach to its expatriate population.

Ask and ye shall find out.

Shell Internationale, the giant oil and petroleum multinational headquartered in both London and The Hague, The Netherlands, is truly a global company and clearly appreciates the affect of societal trends on international assignments. With as many as 5,600 expatriates, Shell may have more expatriates than any company in the world. It currently operates in more than 120 countries. The lifeblood of Shell Internationale is a mixture of employees at both the central offices as well as in host countries around the world. Company executives believe these expatriates and their partners must be content if the business mission is to succeed. Mobility is critical to the business. Therefore, the company devotes resources and time to scrutinising and analysing what its employees need. "An internationally mobile workforce is a prerequisite to the way we run the expatriate business, and the way we run exploration and production -- in particular," says Andy Johns, who's responsible for Shell Internationale's expatriate terms and conditions development. "With a number of emerging trends, both inside and outside the company, we felt we had to find hard data on what encouraged mobility as well as the factors that block international mobility."

To discover what expats need to remain an effective force in the organisation, Shell embarked upon the largest single survey ever conducted among global employees and their partners. The survey, "Shell Expatnare Outlook," was commissioned and sponsored jointly in 1993 by the Exploration and Production Business along with the Corporate Human Resources group.

It's often a matter of gently pushing back boundaries and trying to be ... creative."--Kathleen van der Wilk-Carlton, Spouse Employment Consultant, Shell Internationale
Shell began its survey by interviewing more than 200 employees and their partners to uncover some of the main issues. Next, it approached a London-based consulting company, International Survey Research, to design and administer a questionnaire. The firm developed a 24-page questionnaire and sent it to expatriates and their spouses in the top 35 countries with expatriates. The employees and spouses answered separately. Questions were phrased to elicit the data the company wanted while ensuring confidentiality of responses. Johns explains why confidentiality in such a huge multinational corporation is important. "When I'm filling out the questionnaire, sitting in the middle of West Africa and filling in my own biodata -- such as how long I've been with the company, what sort of job I've been doing, what level of seniority I have -- that [can still identify me among] the 100,000-plus employees in the Shell group. So if I'm going to give straight answers, I have to be pretty sure it's going to be confidential."

Shell sent out 17,000 forms to both staff and spouses -- including past, present and future expats. It received 11,000 back -- nearly a 70% response rate, indicating how important the issues were to the expatriates. The company culture places high value on getting support for change. Thus it was crucial the main autonomous operating companies within the Shell group agree with the action plan after reviewing the findings. The big wave of policy changes came by mid-1995.

Were there surprises in content? Not really. Because of the number of people who responded, Shell was able to take the hard data and "persuade technically-based management [to take action based on the] hard data and right answers that emerged from that data," says Johns.

The findings: two big blockers.

The company discovered two main impediments to its employees' mobility. First, the reluctance by spouses to move primarily because more women have their own careers and are hesitant to leave them. Many said Shell could accommodate the needs of working spouses more than it currently does, and also demonstrate greater understanding of their problems. Second, concern about the quality of the children's...
education -- including separation from family while attending secondary school (Shell's traditional model had been to support children living at an English boarding school and fly them out to spend school holidays with their parents). Furthermore, 95% of the spouses stated the company would do better if it consulted them and learned from their experiences. They felt their expertise was neither being utilised nor highly valued. They also sent a clear message that people need more up-to-date, firsthand briefing information on the specifics of living in these various countries. On the positive side, expatriates believe global assignments definitely enhance their professional and personal growth as well as their career possibilities. Most view it as an advantage for promotion. After receiving the survey results, Shell moved quickly. The first activity it undertook was notifying the participants about the status of the project. Consequently, even before it had time to complete all of the analysis, Shell published a booklet with a summary of preliminary results and findings. Then, the company established six task forces, led by line managers with strong staff and spouse representation, in the following areas: children's education, spouses' careers, spouses' recognition and involvement, staff planning and consultation, relocation information and assistance, and health.

The most pressing problem was that of dual careers. Shell created a policy that was essentially twofold. The first part was a culmination of advice either received directly through van der Wilk-Carlton's role and networking in The Hague headquarters or through access to both internal and external information networks. The second part was financial support. "It's that combination of advice and money that has moved Shell to be among the leaders," says van der Wilk-Carlton. "The policy had to be flexible enough to respond to the diverse needs of the spouse population in all countries -- both male and female."
These are the specific solutions created by the six task forces:

- Spouses' careers:

Shell decided to put into place several services that demonstrated the company’s acknowledgment of the partner’s contribution. It added services to address their career needs as individuals. How was it done? First, the company created a position of spouse employment consultant -- someone who advises spouses and partners on a broad range of employment issues (paid and nonpaid work). The goal is to help spouses improve their chances of finding career opportunities and aid in their career development.

This isn't a small matter. Shell Internationale clearly is among a small handful of companies that offer this level of support -- recognising the importance of a partner's career and the impact on that career by leaving the workforce for an international assignment. The company decided to put financial -- as well as human -- resources behind the solution.

Second, spouses receive a thorough assessment that ultimately will lead to career planning. Then van der Wilk-Carlton helps them locate employment, aids in acquiring work permits, and when paid employment isn't possible, helps them find appropriate educational and volunteer activities that interest them and will help him or her keep on track. The process can be very difficult because many expatriates who work for Shell Internationale move from one international location to another, and thus, one area may be conducive to paid employment whereas the next destination may not. Shell also provides a financial assistance policy that covers many of the costs associated with transferring employment skills, such as job-search programs, translation and evaluation of diplomas, preparation of curriculum vitae or resume, fees for maintaining professional accreditation if unable to work in professional capacity, other forms of education, tuition for language instruction, and specific fees to cover some of the costs of starting a new business.

- Spouses' recognition and involvement:
In addition to employment, Shell recognised the enormous contribution expatriate partners could make to the company. It took seriously the overwhelming response of partners who said they felt unrecognised and underutilized. It heard two clear messages from spouses: "Give us better, more up-to-date information," and "Learn from our experiences." As a result, it created a network of expatriate information centers around the world. "The survey responses made it clear how much energy there is within the spouse community," says Mechteld Nije, head of expatriate transfer services in The Netherlands. "The question is how you tap into it, and what natural activities can you support that come out of that empowerment?"

The answer to the question arrived in the Information Network Centre, created for the entire expatriate family. Staffed by spouses and partners, it offers information on culture, spouse employment, living and travelling in the host country, and other issues of concern for expats. Shell Internationale also consulted Rita Bennett of Chicago-based Bennett Associates to help kick off the entire spousal project. Bennett helped Shell put the center together, assisting with decisions such as whether to have a full-time director, how to best utilise the spouses in each center and where to draw the line on paying spouses or not paying spouses; she also helped with general training. Today, the model is in The Hague center -- called Outpost -- which is housed in two huge rooms in Shell headquarters. Outpost has a paid staff of expatriate spouses as well as volunteers. Although Outpost in The Hague is the model, each center (there are currently six operational and six more in the set-up phase) serves a different community, and thus offers somewhat different activities around the world. But each group is generated and directed by the interest of local expatriate spouses. Susanne Holtam, director of Outpost, heads a salaried team of four, supported by many volunteers. "When we opened our doors for the first time on November 1, 1995, we were overwhelmed with the interest and support from the families," says Holtam. "We get a spectrum of inquiries -- from 'Can I buy peanut butter in Lagos?' to 'Can my five-year-old wear shorts in Islamabad?"
• Children's education:

After addressing the 'spouses' and partners' needs, Shell wanted to address another serious concern of both employees and their partners -- family separation. In fact, the survey discovered the greatest single factor that would encourage mobility among families is the availability of adequate secondary schooling in the host country. Traditionally, many of Shell's expatriate children attend boarding school for secondary education because many of the typical destinations are inadequate to meet their needs. However, in the mid-1990s, fewer parents than ever before felt comfortable with this option. More and more, their desire is to find a solution that enables the family to live together.

"The policy had to be flexible enough to respond to the diverse needs of the spouse population in all countries." To answer this concern, Shell is supporting additional schools in several locations. Another approach the company is taking is to strengthen and expand the International Baccalaureate Organisation (IBO) -- a nonprofit educational foundation based in Switzerland. It offers the Diploma Program for students in the final two years of secondary school and the Middle Years Program for students in the 11 to 16 age range. The IBO also is beginning to create school programs for primary-aged children. These programs are recognised throughout the world; graduates qualify for university entrance in 70 countries (among them the United States and Canada as well as most European nations). Both of these options not only help the family remain together, but facilitate some of the difficulties that occur upon repatriation when children are faced with returning to their home schools.

• Staff planning and consultation
This task force looked at improving communication between employees, line managers and HR. One outgrowth will be to talk directly to each expatriate family and attempt to match their needs with those of the business. Balancing the needs of these families with the corporation's, as well as the cultural realities of specific destinations, can be daunting. Dialogue with the families is one key ingredient. Shell also is beginning to opt for more unaccompanied assignments. Consequently, although the traditional Shell
philosophy, "keep the family together, and if not, keep the couple together," is still the norm, exceptions will be made if the family and manager believe it's in the best interests of both. The separation sometimes will occur when secondary education or the partner's career make relocating a hardship. If this alternative is chosen, counselling and additional support need to be arranged, and other types of expenses -- for example, increased travel allowance -- often are necessary. The company believes, however, that the more personalised assignment package is ultimately in its favour. Furthermore, there'll be greater emphasis on recruiting and developing an international cadre of staff who'll be willing and able to expatriate.

- Relocation information and assistance:

One radical change from the way in which the company traditionally communicated is it now takes a more direct approach toward the spouse. In the past, the relationship tended to be focused between the employee and company. Now, Shell is beginning to include the partners in communications. Also, in response to the survey's statements, a pilot project is under-way to increase country-specific orientations and provide more consistent predeparture preparation. The major change in this arena will be from the spouse networks, which will provide help and information before and after settling into the destination.

- Health:

Although not affecting mobility decisions, the employees will receive greater communication about medical issues that affect them while on assignment. Furthermore, the company will continue to ensure that a high quality of service is maintained for expats all over the world. Clearly, global companies that hope to follow Shell's lead won't be successful unless they also begin at square one. "The first challenge is to recognise the problem," says Johns. "We've moved that far, and we seem to be recognising the policies we need to develop for accommodating some of those situations. Now, it's a matter of being flexible and moving ahead." Shell Internationale, like so many of its global peers, is struggling with demographic
changes, societal needs and business demands amid its continued growth as a corporation. Policies that reflect the concerns and fulfil the needs of the expatriate population and their partners -- and that systematically question what those concerns and needs are -- are a first step. The continuing challenge will be to monitor changing needs and to assess the population again, soon, to see what does -- and doesn't -- work.
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Training and development of an international workforce 53


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