

Global Human Resources Management

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Global human resource management is the discipline of taking care of workforces in a public or private company, for organizations that operate in more than one country or continent. It means supporting, managing and engaging employees around the world, deploying common policies but also taking into account local legislation, customs and culture.

While an organization may use a single brand and deliver similar products and services all over the world, workforces in different operating countries may have very different needs. Salary benchmarks and typical working hours may be different. Cultural differences may affect workplace facilities, communication protocols and management frameworks. In addition, laws in each country may mean a different approach is needed for taxation, employment contracts, statutory benefits or performance management. This can be a complex set of variables to manage under a single employer brand.

Selection in Global human resources management

The selection process for an international assignment should provide a realistic picture of the life, work, and culture to which the employee may be sent. HR managers should prepare a comprehensive description of the job to be done. This description especially should note responsibilities that would be unusual in the home nation, including negotiating with public officials; interpreting local work codes; and responding to ethical, moral, and personal issues such as religious prohibitions and personal freedoms. Figure shows the most frequently cited key competencies for expatriates. Most of these competencies can be categorized as either cultural adaptability or communication skills. The following discussion examines those ideas.



1. Communication Skills

One of the most basic skills needed by expatriate employees is the ability to communicate orally and in writing in the host-country language. Inability to communicate adequately in the language may significantly inhibit the success of an expatriate. Numerous firms with international operations select individuals based on their technical and managerial capabilities and then have the selected individuals take foreign language training. Intensive 10-day courses offered by Berlitz and other schools teach basic foreign language skills.

But in any language there is more to communication than simply vocabulary. Greetings, gestures, pace, and proximity all are different in various countries. Basic values about other people and interacting with them are at least as important as speaking the language.

2. Family Factors

The preferences and attitudes of spouses and other family members also are major staffing considerations. Two of the most common reasons for turning down international assignments are family considerations and spouses' careers. Nearly three-fourths of expatriates are married, and most are male. Of the expatriates who are married, only about 13% are not accompanied on overseas assignments by their spouse.

With the growth in dual-career couples, the difficulty of transferring international employees is likely to increase, particularly given work-permit restrictions common in many countries. Some

international firms have begun career services to assist spouses in getting jobs with other international firms.

3. Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Concerns

The assignment of women and members of racial/ethnic minorities to international posts involves legal issues, because these individuals may be protected by U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) regulations. Many U.S. firms operating internationally have limited assignments of women and other protected-class individuals in deference to cultural concerns. The Civil Rights Act of 1991 extended coverage of EEO laws and regulations to U.S. citizens working internationally for U.S.- controlled companies. However, the act states that if laws in a foreign country require actions that conflict with U.S. EEO laws, the foreign laws will apply. If no laws exist, only customs or cultural considerations, then the U.S. EEO laws will apply. In a related area, some foreign firms in the United States, particularly those owned by Japan, have “reserved” top-level positions for those from the home country. Consequently, EEO charges have been brought against these firms. Previous court decisions have ruled that because of a treaty between Japan and the United States, Japanese subsidiaries can give preference to Japanese over U.S. citizens.

However, it should be noted that most other EEO regulations and laws do apply to foreign-owned firms. In a closely related area, women have brought sexual harassment charges against foreign managers, and other protected-class individuals have brought EEO charges for refusal to hire or promote them.³⁴ In those cases, courts have treated the foreign-owned firms just as they would U.S.-owned employers.

Selection Technique for Global Jobs

Global companies require the human resource adaptable not only to the job and organizational requirements, but also to the culture requirements of various countries. As such, the selection techniques for global jobs vary from those of domestic jobs. This technique includes;

- Screening applicants background
- Testing the candidates ability to adapt to the new culture and environment

- Testing the abilities of the spouse and family members of the candidates to the foreign culture and environment
- Predicting the adjustment of the candidates.
- Testing the skill of a adjustment with host nationals
- Job duties and responsibilities.
- Technical competence
- Human relations skill

Expatriates: global companies after selecting the candidates, place them in various countries, mostly in foreign countries. Thus, the employees of global companies mostly work and live in the foreign countries with their family members also live in those countries. These are called expatriate.

Developing Your Employees - Global Workforce Development

Helping your employees recognize that they work in a multi-cultural environment or a global environment is an official reminder that there is an expectation that they will attend to cultural differences. ITAP's extensive experience in workforce development can focus on this need. General awareness programs are a good start. In addition, ITAP can provide specific programs targeted to functional needs (global marketing, or global e-learning development), and/or on culture-specific needs, such as Understanding Your Chinese Employees or Presenting to Japanese Audiences.

Localizing Your Employee Handbook and Job Descriptions

The meaning of job titles and job responsibilities vary across cultures. ITAP can help you localize these - make them appropriate for various geographies in which these positions are located. ITAP has depth and breadth of experience in developing global employees.

Performance Management

In many cultures there is a preference for well documented performance systems. Communicating exactly what is expected and defining the levels of behaviors and assessing employees all against the same criteria feels more fair to many employees. Performance systems that depend on manager discretion can be viewed as "favoritism" and "unfair."

Cross cultural Training

Cross-cultural training enables the expatriate to learn the cultural norms, values and aptitude of his host country. He can then use this cross-cultural knowledge to behave according to the cultural requirements of the host country.

Compensation in Global Companies

Compensation is the amount of remuneration paid to the employees. The two issues involved in compensation management are: national economic difference and payments practice. There are significant difference in the compensation levels and structures among different countries. This is because the firms pay the executives of various countries based on local compensation levels.

- **Expatriate pay:** it is mostly based on the balance sheet approach. Under the balance sheet, the composition packages enable the expatriate employees in various countries to maintain the same standards of living.
- **Gratuity:** employees are paid gratuity at a fixed rate for every year of completion of services in the foreign countries. This is the inducement to the expatriate to work for quite longer period in the foreign country.
- **Allowances:** employees are paid various allowances like car allowances, resettlement, housing, hardships, cost living and education allowances etc.
- **Taxation:** some countries pay tax free salary.