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**THE NEED FOR U.S. MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS
TO PROVIDE EXPATRIATES WITH LANGUAGE AND CULTURAL
TRAINING SERVICES**

BY

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**Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
Requirements of the Degree of Master of Arts in Corporate and Public Communication
Seton Hall University**

1998

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

This study will attempt to determine whether there is a need for U.S. based multinational corporations (MNCs) to provide language and cultural training services to employees who currently or will soon face an overseas assignment. In order to know more about what influences the decision for overseas assignments, the author will analyze several key factors, including the increasing trend of interdependence between national economies, the need for U.S. corporations to expand revenues from international sales, and the need for American corporations to compete on a global scale. Given that these appear to be major needs of American corporations today, then how important is it for those employees representing their companies to be culturally sensitive? Why should the American expatriate learn, to some extent, a foreign language? How important is it for the U.S. MNCs to conduct business in a different culture and a language other than English? These questions will be addressed throughout this study. Consequently, this research should serve as a resource to U.S. corporations and expatriates who are facing, or will face in the near future, the challenges of doing business overseas.

Advances in technology in the form of telephone, video, cable, satellite and computer equipment have made it much easier for people across the world to communicate with one another. Whether you're communicating with family or friends or conducting business in other countries, the use of technology to communicate across borders has become a powerful tool in facilitating communications. The author views this as the primary driver of the evolution of a global economy. It is the author's opinion that the current Asian financial crisis, which has caused economic havoc in most parts of the world, including the U.S., as evidenced by the recent decline

in Wall Street securities, is proof that world economies can no longer survive in isolation. Based on that fact, American companies seem to need to look outside U.S. boundaries for the higher returns their shareholders require. In order to stay competitive in this fast paced economy, American companies look for new opportunities outside the major financial centers of London, New York City, and Tokyo (Dolainski, 1997). Additionally, subsidiaries and joint ventures abroad are becoming increasingly popular. According to the Commerce Department, U.S. direct investment abroad has continued to climb, rising from \$640 billion in 1994 to \$796 billion in 1996 (Knowlton, 1998). Globalization opens opportunities for all nations who have been able to adapt to a rapidly changing economy. "Despite the many advances in communications made in the past twenty years...the overwhelming number of different languages and cultures in the world can prevent understanding and hinder cooperation, even as national economies become more and more interdependent" (Doran, 1998, p. 163.). Walter Bacak Jr., executive director of the Association of the American Translators Association states, "The pressure on U.S. businesses to grow has driven them overseas to new markets" (Doran, 1998, p. 163.). Additionally, he comments, "At first, they (U.S. businesses) were trying to market using American knowledge, but they've discovered that to be successful, you need to market in the local customs and languages"(Doran, 1998, p. 163.). The advantages will come into play only if the countries can adjust to the growing competition. Therefore, in order to compete effectively overseas, corporate executives need to develop an international perspective (Blocklyn, 1989).

The globalization process has been responsible for a large numbers of Americans being sent out of the country by their companies on expatriate assignments all over the world. An estimate by the National Foreign Trade Council puts the figure at more than 250,000 individuals on overseas assignments (Dolainski, 1997). In 1998, the Society for Human Resource

Management estimates that statistic to be around 350,000 (Sommer, 1998). If both of these figures are right within their respective time periods, then one can easily calculate that there was a 100,000 or 40% increase in personnel of American companies going overseas. Approximately 90% of 196 multinational corporations surveyed by William M. Mercer Companies Inc. of New York City predict that their number of expatriates will increase over the next 2 years in order to position their companies for greater global competition (Boles, 1997). Based on Dolainski (1997), Sommer (1998), and Boles (1997) facts, the author believes it is becoming more and more evident that U.S. MNCs must prepare themselves and their employees to be able to conduct business anywhere around the globe. Additionally, the author feels that those MNCs who proactively prepare their expatriates with a standardized training program will be more likely to succeed in a global competitive environment. Thus, those employees wishing to represent and broaden their company's horizons in other parts of the world vis-à-vis an expatriate assignment should learn to some extent, to be both multilingual and multicultural.

In conducting this analysis, the author believes that in order to gain a better understanding of the roles and responsibilities of an expatriate, it would be advantageous to present a historical perspective. Malone (1993) indicates that although U.S. managers have been running foreign subsidiaries since the 1940s, the concept of expatriate training for business personnel is a relatively new phenomenon. Prior to World War II, the volume of international business was small in comparison to that of domestic business. Expatriates, not being in great demand were, therefore, individuals whose upbringing was international, or to be more specific, "the sons of internationally experienced military, diplomatic or business fathers who already have lived abroad" (Hays, 1971, p. 46.). Investment overseas rapidly increased after World War II, but filling the

demand for expatriates was not a problem for U.S. firms. Veterans, with the experience of living overseas and dealing with foreigners, made up a group of willing expatriates (Malone, 1993).

Malone (1993) writes that by the 1950s, expatriate personnel were increasingly in demand, however, firms could no longer solely depend on veterans to staff their overseas offices. U.S. companies during this time first experienced the dilemma of expatriate failure among "seemingly suitable" managers while concurrently dealing with the pressure put upon them by foreign governments to hire more local employees. What resulted when these events occurred simultaneously contributed, in part, to the present state of apathy that has developed over the years with regard to expatriate training. As companies appeased foreign governments by hiring more foreign nationals to run their overseas subsidiaries they noticed that costs were cut. It became clear that the financial expense of maintaining an expatriated manager abroad was far more costly than that of maintaining a local manager (Malone, 1993).

Hays (1971) noted that in the 1970s U.S. MNCs began selecting expatriate managers on the basis of their domestic performance or technical competence rather than on the traditional criterion, international exposure (i.e. Americans who were reared overseas). Malone (1993) indicates that the reasons to account for this approach to expatriate selection are aptly summed up by one respondent in Baker and Ivancevich's 1971 study: "Managing (a) company is a scientific art. The executive accomplishing the task in New York can surely perform as adequately in Hong Kong." (Baker & Ivancevich, 1971, p. 40.). The author believes this attitude is still commonplace in the 1990s. According to Napier and Peterson (1991), expatriates are chosen to work overseas primarily on the basis of their favorable domestic employee ratings. This means that high performing and successful employees would be likely candidates to become expatriates. As a

result, those expatriates selected will succeed in their foreign assignment because of their success in their domestic assignment.

Research Question

Is there a need for U.S. based multinational corporations to provide language and cultural training services to their expatriates? Through a review of the literature, the author will examine this question.

Subsidiary Questions

In an attempt to determine whether American MNCs should provide expatriates with language and cultural training before taking an overseas assignment, this study will address the following additional questions:

1. Can providing these services to their workforce help MNCs succeed in the global environment?
2. What is the risk to MNCs if they do not provide language and cultural training services to their expatriates?
3. What are some of the main causes of failed assignments?
4. What methods of training are available to MNCs?
5. Which of these training methods generate the best results?
6. What U.S based corporations today provide some sort of training to their expatriates?
7. What foreign-based corporations can serve as a model for U.S. based MNCs with regards to their success overseas?

Need for the Study

Having worked for a multinational corporation most of her professional career, the author has aspired to take an international assignment. Over the past 5 years, an increasing amount of overseas opportunities have presented themselves. As a result, international economics, international travel, and management of human resources have always been fascinating to of the author. In identifying what one would need to prepare and succeed as an expatriate, the author found a huge void within her own corporation's internal resources. Could it be that the company didn't offer its potential expatriates any training? Maybe it was only the author's company that lacked information, maybe not. Tung and Miller (1990) indicate in their study of U.S. management succession policy and practice that American multinationals do not consider the expatriate assignment as a means toward career advancement. Without adequate support within the organization to guarantee the expatriate an equal or higher position upon returning, American employees are reluctant to take a job overseas for fear that they will be isolated from opportunities back home. This might be the reason that MNCs tend not to incorporate a global perspective into their management policies and practices (Malone, 1993). U.S. based corporations and expatriates who are facing, or will face the challenges of doing business abroad may learn some valuable lessons from this analysis.

Objectives

The author has identified two main objectives of this study. First, the study hopes to determine whether U.S. based MNCs need to provide language and cultural training to their expatriates in order for MNCs to be more successful in the global marketplace. Second, the author aims to develop a valuable resource to make MNCs aware of the issues surrounding expatriate training. The author believes that the success or failure of an expatriate assignment reflects highly on a corporation's reputation. Additionally, this study might serve as valuable insight for aspiring expatriates who want to be well prepared before taking an overseas assignment and have a better understanding of some of the issues associated with such an assignment.

Definition of Terms

1. Culture shock. The trauma that individuals experience when they are trying to contend with a new culture and the expectations that go along.
2. Expatriate. A person who works and lives in a foreign land.
3. Language training. The act of teaching a second language to an individual.
4. Multinational corporations (MNCs.). Designating or of a corporation with branches in a number of countries (Webster's New World Dictionary of the English Language, Second Edition).
5. Multicultural manager. It is someone who is deeply convinced that all cultures are equally

good, enjoys learning the rich variety of foreign cultures and most likely has been exposed to more than one culture in childhood (Beeth, 1997).

6. Repatriation. Re-entry into the United States.

7. Sufficiency gap. The difference between an employee's expectations of company provided services and the actual support provided (Berlitz, 1996-1997).

Limitations

The main limitation of this study is that only a few U.S. based multinational corporations were examined. It would be a much greater challenge for the author to include foreign-based corporations within this analysis. The fact that the author lives in the United States is the most obvious reason why she chose not to include foreign-based MNCs. Ironically, language and cultural barriers could impede the author from gathering and researching data on foreign-based expatriates. Another limitation to this study is that primary research in the form of a survey was not conducted due to the overwhelming amount of secondary data available to support the analysis. While the author did not conduct an official survey, she interviewed several former expatriates from AT&T, Citibank, and Goldman Sachs. Additionally, the author engaged in discussions with employees from Windham International, Berlitz International Inc., Syracuse Learning Center and the Fujitsu International Human Resource organization. Those discussions proved to be extremely valuable to this study by providing the author with general and unique insight about this topic. The final limitation in this study is time. United States based multinational corporations and their expatriates are analyzed from 1965 to 1998.

Chapter II

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

Most of the author's research was conducted by reading periodicals found at the Seton Hall Library. Various database searches led the author to an abundance of material related to the subject matter. The internet was also searched for data. However, very few articles associated with the topic were actually useful for the purposes of this study. Interviews with several former expatriates from large MNCs were a helpful source of information for the author. The author was able to gain valuable insight of realistic experiences, which reinforced some of the facts within the reading material. In addition to discussions with expatriates, the author was able to make several contacts with key training personnel from large training companies and human resource organizations. These companies and organizations were willing to share key survey information, marketing information and related articles based on their own research on the subject. One of the most significant findings of this study is the criteria used by human resource organizations to judge training programs. This criteria was developed by Berlitz International. It can be used as a tool by which to evaluate any company's current or future training methodology.

Training Program Evaluation Criteria

The rapid evolution of technology has brought the world closer together in both our personal and professional lives. As a result, countries' borders and boundaries have disappeared. U.S. multinational corporations represent a large part of the highly competitive global marketplace. These corporations can not afford to be careless in their efforts to identify, select,

develop, train, place, relocate, measure performance, and reassign potential expatriates. The author believes it is vital for U.S multinational corporations clearly understand the requirements of the personnel that represents them overseas. Once the awareness is clear, the MNCs must rapidly implement training and support programs to help expatriates succeed. Additionally, this study has pointed out, it's just as critical to keep spouses and children involved with regard to the decision making and training.

What makes some cross-cultural programs superior to others? What makes a program more effective than another? What are the criteria to judge such programs? What questions should be asked to get the most out of an organization's cross-cultural investment? Berlitz International Incorporated is the world's premier language services firm, providing quality language instruction, cross-cultural training, translation, and publishing services throughout the world. Berlitz suggests the following criteria (cited in Foster, 1998) for judging any cross-cultural training program:

1. It must provide deep culture awareness. Culture has been described as an iceberg in which the visible part is the least important part. You must become aware of what is under the surface. For that reason, programs must go beyond stereotypical do's and don'ts. Any list of 20 quick tips only reinforces stereotypes and is not a prescription for success. It is far more important to understand the values, beliefs, and traditions of the culture in which one operates. The best programs also provide an understanding of cultural dynamics, so those individuals can apply cultural information to their own patterns of behavior. Head learning, cognitive taking of facts, is no guarantee of behavioral

change. The best programs help participants translate cultural facts into personal action plans.

2. It must be comparative and reflective. To learn about someone else, we must study ourselves. Before leaping into an investigation of the target culture, we need to hold up a mirror to the reference culture. The dynamics that result when Americans work with Chinese are very different from when Chinese work with Italians. Good programs help participants to see themselves and to examine their own cultural baggage.

3. In design, method, and content, it must be driven by concerns for adjustment and adaptation. Whether at work or in a social setting, the employee must be comfortable in his or her overseas surroundings. This means adapting to day-to-day living and working needs. Relocation programs need to be focused on the concerns of the non-working partner and be parent-centered when families are involved. They should take into account that the greatest source of failed overseas assignments is spousal dissatisfaction. The employee hit the ground running, with contacts and network in place and clear motivations and incentives. However, the spouse is often uprooted from his or her contacts, has no network in place, and may have given up his or her own career in order to support the partner's.

4. It must be administered in a counseling context. Before people can hear the important information they need to know, they must be opened up to hearing it. Individuals who relocate must have their fears and anxieties addressed. The best programs provide a counseling context, where skilled trainers impart cultural information in ways

that can be heard by participants who may see their experiences abroad very differently. This process requires trainers with special skills, professional cross-culturalists who hold advanced degrees in fields related to cross-cultural communications, such as the human sciences and education. These specialists should have significant experience living and working abroad, professional education in training and development, and experience working in counseling formats. Lead trainers should always be accompanied throughout the program by local country-resource professionals, individuals from the target culture who have relevant, recent experience living and or working in the target culture. Their role is to support the lead trainer with nuts and bolts cultural data to enrich the discussions with their personal experience.

5. It must be designed to meet the needs of all stakeholders including the employee, partner, family, and company. The employee's children must be encouraged to explore their feelings about leaving and changing home and school environments. Near the completion of the assignment, every member of the family should be trained to anticipate the challenges of returning home, which are sometimes even greater than those involved in leaving. To meet all these needs, the program can not be off the shelf. It must be customizable each and every time, and training providers must fill the larger role of human resource consultants to the organization. It is essential to create a pre-program assessment process for each program participant as well as sequential post-program that tracks adjustment. At both ends of the process, those who provide training must be able to step up and recommend appropriate professional interventions for all situations.

6. It must focus on the applicability of information. Cultural information must be immediately usable and must build behavioral skills. It must minimize anecdotal information, and must present researched, objective facts. It should help participants create personal action plans for living and working.

7. It must employ adult learner interactive methodologies, teaching through a dynamic combination of mini-discussions, video analysis, role-playing and only a minimal amount of lecturing. Exercises must be self-reflective, emphasizing change in personal behavior. While it must be elegant in its efficiency, it must be fun.

8. It must be an integral component of the company's global strategy. Thus, cross-cultural training must be a part of a larger menu of services related to relocation, training and development, education, and support. Training providers should provide or be able to recommend and work with:

- Assessment and selection services that help the organization develop a candidate pool for international work.
- Language learning services that begin, preferably, before the overseas assignment.
- On-site programs that continuously monitor the success of the mission for as long as the employee is abroad.
- Repatriation services that address family and professional needs. These should begin at least six months prior to return.

9. Its providers of training should have a core-competency in education and training, rather than in expatriate services such as housing, moving, relocation, or

insurance. They must be individuals dedicated to cross-cultural research that may or may not also offer added-value features as expertise about housing, relocation, and insurance.

10. The program must be global. Every aspect must fit within a larger global context or philosophy. A global provider has the resources to provide information that is continuously and immediately updatable. It can offer programs that are universally dependable, locally adaptable, and components of a seamless network. Finally, only global training providers can design programs that solve the global needs of an organization (Foster, 1998, p. 1.).

Even the best cross-cultural training programs can not transform a foreign land into the expatriate's familiar domestic environment. But a well-conceived program can provide employees with a certain degree of control to allow both individuals and their companies to succeed and thrive. The goal of every cross-cultural program should be to make the expatriate comfortable in the new environment, so he or she is able to succeed in his or hers assignment for the good of the corporation.

Chapter III

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The Expatriate

While many of us share Dorothy's sentiments in the "Wizard of Oz" film when she stated, "There's no place like home, there's no place like home," more and more U.S. businesses are globalizing their operations, thereby requiring more of their employees to travel and to communicate with colleagues abroad. Most U.S. based multinational corporations select their expatriate candidates primarily on their technical competence rather than on the possible adaptation of the individual to a foreign environment (Mendenhall & Oddou, 1985). Studies by Harvey (1983) suggest that in addition to possessing the necessary technical expertise required to work effectively in a foreign environment, individuals are also selected on their willingness to work abroad.

The literature indicates that American corporations do not take into account the personality traits of an individual. The author believes that this may translate into how effectively the person can work with business members of another culture. The author further maintains that an understanding of a foreign language can help an individual relate to a person of a different culture. Wyatt (1996) reports that culture exists in language and its transmission medium is conversation. Your own culture can disempower you in a foreign culture. You can only be fully empowered by the culture in which you find yourself. Culture can only be fully experienced in the language in which it was originally formulated and expressed. In the author's view, it is important for people who are assigned to a foreign country to receive some sort of language or cultural training. Without any language training, expatriates cannot adequately participate and function in

the culture and society to which they are thrust. Insufficient language training will substantially contribute to their failure or if not, prevent them from achieving their full potential. "Reality lives in language and is created by our speaking" (Wyatt, 1996, p. 2.). Knowing a foreign language can open doors that are normally closed to foreigners.

The literature also reveals that individuals possessing top management positions are usually responsible for the selection and training improvements of expatriates. Since most of these managers do not have significant cross-cultural experience themselves, they do not understand the needs of expatriates. As a result, the managers do not implement and upgrade training programs. On the other hand, human resource managers do appear to understand the expatriate and their needs. In this capacity, human resource managers require a great deal of interaction with them. Unfortunately, human resource managers in general do not have the capability nor the authority to revise or in some way alter these hiring policies.

Failed Expatriate Assignments

The author feels that when expatriates are not prepared properly for an overseas assignment, they possess a greater risk of failure. Mendenhall and Oddou (1986) suggest that the first couple of months are very difficult for an expatriate because the home office places the greatest amount of pressure to perform in this period. Accordingly, the first few months are crucial because it can set the tone for the rest of the assignment. Research has shown that expatriates who receive language and cultural training are more successful compared to those who have not received adequate training (Mendenhall & Oddou, 1986). Additionally, cross-cultural orientation should be provided to the spouse and family of the expatriate because if the

family is not adjusting well, it can also have a negative impact on the performance of the worker. The author believes that when the family of the expatriate receives some sort of support in the form of training, all will become more adaptive, flexible, and comfortable with their new surroundings. Malone (1993) says that evidence indicates that most MNCs do not place much importance on cultural training for expatriates or their families.

Estimates for failed expatriate assignments range anywhere from \$250,000 to a \$1,000,000 according to Shay and Bruce (1997). Another study puts that estimate for U.S. MNCs at over \$2 billion a year (Shay & Bruce, 1997). According to those studies, the authors define expatriate failure as the premature return from an overseas assignment. Curiously, the rate at which expatriate assignments were terminated prematurely, was different between developed countries as compared to still-developing countries. Cross-industry studies have estimated U.S. expatriate failure at between 25 and 40% when the expatriate is assigned to a developed country and about 70% when the expatriated is assigned to a still-developing country (Shay & Bruce, 1997). It is estimated that up to 50% of managers sent abroad return prematurely from their overseas assignment, resulting in great costs to multinational firms (Tung, 1981). One American manager stationed in Indonesia, for example, unfortunately discovered that when firing an oil rig worker, the proper approach is to inform the employee privately of the firing, rather than publicly, which resulted in the employee chasing the manager around the oil rig with a fire ax (Ricks, 1993). The author believes though, that in this example, training would have been inconsequential. Common sense should have prevailed.

Money is only one element lost in failed assignments. "These are very expensive mistakes to make, and the money is only the tip of the iceberg," says Linda Kuna (cited in McClenahan, 1992), global assignment manager for Motorola's two-way radio business. "By sending the

wrong kind of individual you can damage your relationships with the host country, you can lose business opportunities, and [you] damage career paths for individuals who probably should not have been sent overseas" (McClenahan, 1997, p. 69.).

With so much at stake, it is critical for both MNCs and the expatriates themselves to understand why expatriates fail. Tung (1981) conducted a study examining expatriate failure and success in several industries. She found that the three most common reasons for American expatriate failure were that the spouse couldn't adapt to the host culture, the manager couldn't adapt to the host culture, and there were severe family-related problems that stemmed from the international assignment (Tung, 1981). On the other hand, Tung (1981) also found that the three most desirable attributes for expatriate managers were adaptability, flexibility, and good communications skills. Other surveys of multinational managers conducted by McClenahan (1987) and Zeira and Banai (1987) found that the most important reasons for failure to function effectively in a foreign country include the manager's (a) inability to adapt rapidly to a different culture; (b) personality or emotional characteristics; and (c) inability to cope with the complexity of work responsibilities posed by the overseas assignment. Both of these studies point to the adaptability of managers or lack there of.

Is cultural training the answer? The author strongly believes so. Tung (1982) while not providing research that is statistically strong, argues that there is clear negative correlation between lack of training and expatriate failure. Another valuable study conducted by Black and Mendenhall (1990) also points to that defense. Empirical evidence reviewed by Black and Mendenhall (1990) found a positive relationship between cross-cultural training and the development of appropriate perceptions relative to members of another culture. In addition, it

was found that training was positively correlated with adjustment and that there was a positive relationship to performance.

What can U.S. MNCs do to guard against the failed assignments? Sommer (1998) has several high-level suggestions that can improve American corporations' success rate for overseas assignments:

1. Involve the spouse in the decision to go. Too often a business decision is made with scant input from the spouse or other family members.
2. Provide for pre-departure language and culture training. While this suggestion may appear obvious, such training may be neglected amid the rush to relocate.
3. Support the spouse in the host country. A mentor family or similar "how to" device will go a long way toward ensuring a less stressful adaptation to the new culture.
4. The benefits of communication cannot be overemphasized. Faxes, e-mail, the Internet and subsidized telephone calls can lessen the isolation from what is happening "back home".
5. Plan ahead for repatriation. Re-entry into the United States may seem to be an easy move, but it is far from it. (Sommer, 1998, p. 21)

Foreign Based Success

Because the Japanese have been so successful in foreign markets, the author believes that American corporations should study the way they handle the expatriation process. Unlike most U.S. businesses, Japanese human resource organizations are empowered to make decisions. According to Tung (1984), Japanese employees who are placed on a foreign assignment possess both technical and people skills. An equal amount of emphasis is placed on cross-cultural training as in marketing. Japanese expatriates are not expected to work to their full potential the first year because allowances are made for their adjustment to the new environment. Tung (1984) indicates that the Japanese corporations also provide a support network and mentoring to foster communications between the home office and host country. Other Japanese employees in the host country assist the new expatriate in both personal and professional needs. In return, the expatriate has a sense of loyalty to the corporation (Tung, 1984).

Another finding based on the literature was that many European multinational corporations are also very successful in a foreign environment because of their willingness to adapt to other cultures. In turn, they promote language and cross-cultural training. Since revenues from most of the European multinational corporations are generated overseas, international experience is viewed as a valuable skill by top management for their employee's career path. Tung (1988) notes that the European multinational corporations budget a great deal of funding for career development and expatriate training programs. This is due to the special obligation relationship the employee has for the employer, which is in contrast to the current American corporate culture of high turnover in the workplace. Like the Japanese, many European expatriates are given time to adjust to the new environment before expecting to

produce immediate results. Tung claims that this approach benefits companies functioning on the basis of lifetime employment.

The Sandoz Group, which has its corporate base in Switzerland, is a Swiss corporation that manufactures chemicals. Ninety-five percent of its sales come from overseas markets (Tung, 1988). From interviews with Sandoz employees, Tung finds that expatriates come from top to middle management and international experience is seen as an important career opportunity for promotion. Sandoz employees are eager to take on international assignments. They are prepared for their international assignments by receiving cross-cultural, language and management training. External agencies provide the cross-cultural training. Consequently, by taking on foreign assignments, Sandoz expatriates are usually rewarded in the form of promotions and bonuses (Tung, 1988). Based on interviews with several former and current AT&T expatriates, they all confirm the author's belief that this is in stark contrast with U.S. MNCs where the most upward movement and rewarding positions are located at home in corporate headquarters.

Interviews with current Goldman Sachs expatriates further reveal that American multinational corporations' expatriate training is basically inadequate compared to the cross-cultural training of other countries. Other indications based on the literature are that most assignments from U.S. multinational corporations are short-term, that immediate results are expected from management in headquarters, and that expatriates are not given enough time to become familiar with their surroundings. Based on these indications, the author believes that businesses based out of the U.S. could increase the success rate of their expatriates, if they were to implement comparative support programs to Japanese and European firms. Additionally, the author feels that those employees, who do accept overseas assignments on behalf of their company, should be supported in finding matching career opportunities upon their return.

Unfortunately, it appears from the AT&T interviews that expatriates are on their own in finding employment when they are ready to return. In her interview with several former Citibank and AT&T expatriates, the author determined that job placement is not an easy task when you have been out of touch with the home office for some time. Furthermore, the pressure of producing immediate results, or lack thereof, can label the expatriate as a failure early in the assignment. The author thinks that expatriates have enough pressure already in trying to adapt to a foreign society, much less try to produce immediate results.

In 1992 the Wall Street Journal reported that 57% of U.S. corporations had no formal training programs for expatriates. Out of the remaining 43% that did offer formal training, 13% offered programs only to employees moving to certain locations, while 30% provided formal programs to employees prior to a foreign assignment. The various types of formal programs involved 50% foreign language training, 60% to predeparture orientation, 7% career path counseling, 57% involved speaking with former expatriates, and 79% considered historical and cultural background (Lublin, 1992, p. 657.). The author feels that based on this Wall Street report, U.S. MNCs are still behind their Japanese and European counterparts with regard to providing the necessary tools and training to their expatriates to succeed internationally.

Three Approaches of Cross-Cultural Training

Callahan (1989) suggests that in order for a corporation to survive in a foreign land, they must be familiar with the culture and language. Globalization of the world economy means that business risks and opportunities transcend cultural and national boundaries. As in any business, expatriate managers must learn to maximize opportunities and minimize the risks. To successfully

complete those tasks required of them, managers need to understand their foreign customers, partners, and competition. As evidenced in the prior section, proper language and cultural training is crucial to success of expatriates in the marketplace. In return, the expatriate will possess a wealth of international knowledge that will make the corporation wiser as it takes advantage of the learning obtained from the expatriates (Callahan, 1989).

Mendenhall and Oddou (1986) created three types of cross-cultural training necessary for an expatriate to function overseas. The three approaches are the Information Giving Approach, the Affective Approach, and the Impression Approach. The Information Giving Approach is the most basic of the three approaches. It is designed for the expatriate who will stay in the host country for less than 1 month. Training is performed in less than 1 week and consists of general culture and location briefings through the use of books, films, and interpreters. Basic language training is offered for the expatriate to become familiar with the language. The Affective Approach is moderately rigorous and is from 1 to 4 weeks long. This program is designed for expatriates who will be overseas from 2 to 12 months. Training methods involve role-playing and cultural assimilator exercises. Case studies are discussed to make the expatriate aware of various kinds of issues that they may encounter while working overseas. In addition, stress reduction training is provided to help the expatriate cope with difficult situations. Because the level of integration is moderate, language training is necessary and should extend beyond learning simple phrases and greetings. The Impression Approach is recommended for the expatriate who needs extensive training. Typically, this individual will serve overseas for 1 to 3 years and will be expected to have a high degree of integration within the host culture. Therefore, the level of training should run for about 1 to 2 months covering topics from field experiences, sensitivity training and extensive language training during this time. Callahan (1989), Mendenhall and

Oddou (1986) report that training reflects that these types of programs have a positive impact on the performance of the expatriate. A more detailed summary of several other approaches to expatriate training is covered in Chapter IV.

Culture Shock

The literature also indicates that cross-cultural trainers should themselves have lived for some period abroad. Kohls (1984) suggests that a valuable qualification for any trainer is the experience of having lived overseas for at least two years. With this background, the trainer understands culture shock and is, therefore, better able to prepare the expatriates for the changes that they will encounter while living in a foreign country. The trainer is able to relate to the numerous emotions that the expatriate might be going through. Accordingly, the trainer has an understanding of the foreign country's culture, political system, values, ethics, laws, social customs, and most importantly business practices. The author believes that an appreciation for different cultures is shared along with the stress that automatically goes along with an international assignment. The literature indicates that for the expatriate, self-esteem is at its lowest because their cultural norms and expectations are perceived differently. This may lead to what is known as culture shock.

The following summarizes Earley's (1987) research on culture shock. "Culture shock is a trauma that individuals experience when they are trying to contend with a new culture and the expectations that go along with it" (Earley, 1987, p. 686.). Torbion (1982) says that culture shock occurs during the time of cultural adjustment when an individual has been living overseas

for awhile. In addition, Torbion states that culture shock does not occur the first minute the person steps on to foreign land. Rather, it occurs between the second and third phase of the four stages of cultural adjustment. Torbion's four stages of cultural adjustment are described as follows:

1. The individual initially undergoes a fascination with the new culture.
2. After several weeks of living overseas, the individual typically feels anger and frustration toward the host country and its people because he/she recognizes that previous behavior is not appropriate in the foreign culture.
3. Culture shock results when the individual has not learned what constitutes appropriate behavior but receives high doses of negative feedback for his/her past and current action. Culture shock subsides with the acquisition of language skills, which facilitate learning and expressing expected behaviors.
4. The levels of adjustment are incremental but complete where the individual is able to acquire and perform expected behavior without feeling anxious. (Torbion, 1982)

Peace Corps as a Model

While the Peace Corps is a non-profit organization, the author feels that it would serve this study well as an example of an organization who requires vigorous language and cross-cultural training for its employees. Malone (1993) writes that it is an institution that is referred to in the literature for its rigorous cross-cultural training consisting of a thirteen week program. This program involves 10 hour days, 6 days per week. The intensive training program is the foundation for selecting candidates. The Peace Corps screens out individuals who have difficulty with the training program. Individuals are exposed to a wide variety of situations that they may encounter in the other culture (Malone, 1993). The author believes that in spite of the fact that the Peace Corps process is both lengthy and costly, American businesses may want to utilize some of their tactics. Henry (1965) notes:

I think we have to admit that it isn't feasible for business to develop a large pool of qualified job candidates such as the Peace Corps has. But surely a company can develop little pools of qualified candidates. (Henry, 1965)

Henry's (1965) research indicates the fundamental difference between business and the Peace Corps is that the Peace Corps' selection team is made up of individuals who are trained to make predictions about behavior, namely clinical psychologists, educational counselors, personnel specialists, and social workers. Conversely, human resource personnel within U.S. MNCs do not typically have similar professional expertise nor do they have international experience themselves,

qualities that would lend them well to choosing individuals for overseas assignments. Tung's (1984) research supports a similar notion that professional expertise may be helpful in selecting individuals because the selection process is just as important as having the technical knowledge.

Human Resources and Its Involvement

The literature also reveals that individuals possessing top management positions are usually responsible for the selection and training improvements of expatriates. Since most of these managers do not have significant cross-cultural experience themselves, they do not understand the needs of expatriates. As a result, the managers do not implement and upgrade training programs. On the other hand, human resource managers do appear to understand the expatriate and their needs. In this capacity, human resource managers require a great deal of interaction with them. Unfortunately, human resources managers, in general do not have the capability nor the authority to revise or in some way alter these hiring policies.

According to Black and Mendenhall (1989), human resource organizations within U.S. multinational companies typically do not provide their own cross-cultural training to employees who are assigned an international assignment. As a result, they look to outside consultants for expertise. Additionally, the literature indicates that some cross-cultural and language training is procured from high schools, universities and outside agencies. Harvey (1983) notes that in-house cross-cultural training programs focus mainly on company issues with a brief overview of the cultural and social differences between the behavior and values of the native and foreign country. The in-house training programs have a format of discussions lead by former expatriates and audiovisual presentations. Cross-cultural training programs that come in forms of role-playing,

simulations, or case studies are rare even though expatriate managers indicate that their needs would be better served with cultural training that is immersion oriented (Bird & Dunbar, 1991).

Adult Learning is Different

Knowles (1987) reports that adults are more receptive to learning through experience and participation than the traditional teaching methods that are used with children. Experience and participation may involve discussions or simulations in which the student actively takes part in developing the learning experience. Both teacher and student are on an equal playing field. On the other hand, the traditional method of teaching is where the teacher is in control and transmits information to the submissive students to learn. The traditional form of teaching is not suitable for adults, for they have a higher learning curve when they are actively engaged in the classroom. Also, adults voluntarily choose to learn, so the environment should be self-paced, taking into account their various backgrounds, abilities, and learning styles. Adults are more open to learning when they are part of the decision making process. So, the adult student is actively learning rather than being taught like a child. The traditional classroom setting is widely used because of its convenience and low cost. Adult students, employed by corporations, are highly motivated by the rewards of success, which may turn into higher income, and fulfillment of their career goals, not to mention the penalties for failure.

Chapter IV

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The Expatriate and Training

The Importance of Culture

A top-performing employee does not reach his or her optimum level of performance as an expatriate unless he or she can communicate effectively. You cannot motivate anyone, especially someone of another culture, until you have been accepted by that person. A multilingual salesperson can explain the advantages of a product in other languages, but a multicultural salesperson can motivate foreigners to buy it. That's a critical difference (Beeth, 1997). Freivalds (1992) points out that a misconception frequently made in American business is that language and culture are separable. Language is a path to understanding a culture, and if we do not know the languages, we cannot comprehend the cultures of our market (Freivalds, 1992). Most U.S. multinational corporations seek the same qualifications as their domestic positions. Some may require the ability to speak another language. In addition to communication, the manager must be able to motivate others, become accepted, and penetrate them emotionally (Beeth, 1997). People educate themselves about other cultures, but fail to cross cultural barriers by participation and acceptance. According to Schein (1968), culture is the acquired knowledge people use to interpret experiences and to guide their behaviors. It is manifested at three levels: behaviors and artifacts; beliefs and values; and underlying assumptions. Perhaps most important, culture affects how people think and behave. Consequently, culture plays a significant role in the decision making actions of expatriate managers (Schein, 1968).

The literature reveals that the common set of ideals that the people of a nation share is indicative of their national culture. Although culture influences managers at all levels, special attention to the influence of culture on expatriate managers at the national level is important because culture affects the underlying socialization and adjustment to the foreign workplace (Black, 1992). Hofstede (1980) focuses on the role that national culture plays in setting management practices. Many factors lead to the development of a national culture, including government, legal systems, family structures, religion, sports clubs, literature, architecture, and even scientific theories. All of these reflect traditions and common beliefs that are the focus of a nation's culture. National characteristics are more clearly distinguishable to foreigners than to the nationals themselves (Hofstede, 1983).

Socialization is the systematic means by which firms bring new members into their culture (Berlew & Hall, 1966). The socialization process assists expatriate managers in learning the appropriate national culture of the subsidiary. It encompasses the process of being made a member of a group, "learning the ropes," and being taught how one must communicate and interact to get things done (Pascale, 1985). Therefore, Katz and Seifer (1998) write that organizational socialization is an important process by which employees are transformed from organizational outsiders to participating and effective members. During organization socialization an employee acquires a set of appropriate role behaviors, develops work skills and abilities, and adjusts to the work group's norms and values (Katz & Seifer, 1998).

1996-1997 International Assignee Research Project Supports Author's Premise

In 1996-1997, Berlitz International and HFS Mobility Services conducted a study called the International Assignee Research Project. To capture the problem and needs of international assignees in detail, the International Assignee Research Project conducted of a written survey and several in-depth focus group discussions with more than 400 expatriates randomly selected from a diverse set of companies and industries. Nearly 40% of respondents stated that they would not take another international assignment. Project participants listed symptoms of a failed overseas assignment, which included premature ending of assignment, employees leaving the firm within 24 months after return, employees not fully utilized during the assignment, damage to overseas business relationships, and not recognized or missing overseas opportunities (Berlitz International, 1996-1997).

The Berlitz and HFS project noted that while 31% of international transferees were satisfied with the language training for relocation they received, a significant percentage were not offered any instruction (44%). Furthermore, 66% of respondents were not offered any pre-departure language training before the assignment. Likewise, the project found that the spouse and family were not likely to receive any company-sponsored language instruction either before or during the assignment. While the survey data suggests that almost half of these respondents were not offered language training, nearly all focus group participants had access to some type of program. Interestingly enough, most indicated they did not make use of the opportunity because of time constraints. There was a clear lack of training for family members beyond the employee, and many felt the best time for language training was immediately before and then upon arrival at

the new assignment (Berlitz International, 1996-1997). These data clearly substantiates the facts regarding failed expatriate assignments outlined in Chapter III of this study.

Another important aspect of the Berlitz and HFS study was evaluating the "sufficiency gap" found in the cultural orientation support service provided to the international assignees. Berlitz defines sufficiency gap as the difference between an employee's expectations of company provided services and the actual support provided. Fifty-two percent of the respondents were satisfied with the cultural orientation service provided, but 72% claimed the service to be important (Berlitz International, 1996-1997, p. 8.). Therefore, the "sufficiency gap", according to Berlitz was 20%. According to Berlitz, the cultural orientation service was made up of several elements: (a) cultural self-awareness training; (b) understanding your own behavior and that of your international counterparts; (c) understanding the adjustment and adaptation process; (d) relevant information on the challenges of living and working in the target culture; (e) routine survival tips for functioning and communicating in your new culture; (f) understanding background issues, (i.e. religion, schooling, economics, politics, family, customs, and social structure); (g) action plan for personal life and (h) training for spouse and family. Based on these elements, Berlitz found that 55% of the international transferees that participated in the project were not offered any type of orientation training to facilitate the adaptation process.

Consequently, the study discovered that only half of international transferees were offered services to assist in working in the target culture and only 56% were offered any routine survival tips (Berlitz International, 1996-1997, p. 9.). In general, the study found that where cultural orientation training was offered, an overwhelming 74% of respondents did not participate in a program until they reached their new destination. Furthermore, less than one-third of international transferees were offered and were satisfied with the training they received in the

following elements: cultural self-awareness, adaptation processes, working within the culture, routine survival tips and understanding background issues. Another interesting finding within the Berlitz study was that only 19% of international transferee spouses or families received any cultural orientation training, a service that was offered by 48% of corporations (Berlitz International, 1996-1997, p. 9.). The author was unable to identify any reasons why only 19% of spouses and families received training when almost half of the companies offered it. Were the remaining 30% of spouses and families unaware of the company training or did they know about it could not attend because they were constrained by time or some other factor?

The largest "sufficiency gap" found within the Berlitz (1996-1997) study was interestingly centered around career planning support. Eighty-six percent of the respondents said that this service was importance to them while only while only 27% were satisfied with the services that represents a "sufficiency gap" of 59%. (Berlitz International, 1996-1997, p. 9.).

With regard to repatriation, Berlitz found that most companies fail to provide international transferees with the needed support. Ninety-one percent of the respondents said that it was an important service to have while only 66% were satisfied with it, leaving a 25% "sufficiency gap". The study also found that 86% of the companies did not offer re-entry cultural training for the employee, 88% did not offer counseling for the family and 69% failed to provide international transferees assistance in addressing children's school requirements upon their return. Finally, only 24% of the companies in the study provided any career counseling for their employee after his or her return (Berlitz International, 1996-1997, p. 10.).

Berlitz International (1996-1997) writes that a changing business climate, including shifting employee demographics, a concentration on globalization and frequent corporate restructuring have greatly impacted overseas assignments. Over the last 15 years, the number of

women, dual career families, and technically skilled employees have greatly increased in the workforce, and these sub-groups are accounting for a larger percentage of the international assignee population. However, companies have been slow to address the special needs of these employees, which range from spousal career support and educational counseling for children, to using the skills obtained overseas upon repatriation. Consequently, because overseas operations have become a significant part of U.S. MNCs' top line revenue, corporations must prudently invest in assigning the most talented personnel and then give them the resources to succeed. Data from the 1996-1997 International Assignee Research Project suggests that companies can increase its over-all success of their overseas ventures by providing programs that adequately address the changing needs of these employees.

Training Methods

The literature indicates there are a variety of outsourcing language training methods available to multinational corporations such as immersion programs, private instruction, manuals, audiotapes, videotapes, CD-ROM's, and internet based learning. Berlitz, Audio-Forum, and Syracuse Learning Systems, to name only a few, are corporations that offer language training. Each is flexible enough to meet the needs and schedules of fast-paced corporate managers. Manuals, audiotapes, videotapes, and CD-ROM's may have the extra advantage of being accompanied by a live instructor.

Berlitz reports that the most popular method used by corporations is private instruction followed by total immersion, a program allowing participants to immerse themselves in a language for two to six weeks either in the U.S. or in the host country (Jossi, 1998). Total immersion in a

host country enables the expatriate to automatically receive hands-on cultural and language training by living in the new environment.

"The value of self-directed programs is they are portable and can be used whenever and wherever you happen to be," says John Freivalds (cited in Jossi, 1998) Audio Forum's spokesman and a language training consultant. "It's just-in-time language training. You can study in the car, on a plane or on a treadmill. They do require a lot of self-discipline but even those people who don't learn to speak a language fluently from using tapes can become proficient in making themselves understood," Freivalds says (p. 68.).

Syracuse Learning Systems offers a CD-ROM/internet training program in which sound files can be sent to a Syracuse instructor for pronunciation checks. David Morton (cited in Jossi, 1998), a team leader in the international business division of the United States Postal Service, learned Spanish through Syracuse Learning System by using it on a laptop during business trips. "The ability to skip back and forth, log on to an internet site with learning exercises, and send sound files made the interactive training more effective than audiotapes," says Morton (p. 68-69). While he liked the interactivity of CD-ROM/internet based learning, he says students who use this method must be computer literate and extremely self-motivated.

Clearly, many corporations prefer the one-on-one tutoring arrangement, usually provided by a variety of local language training companies or Berlitz in most cities. If a teacher in every office is too costly or difficult to provide, companies can use ALTA Language Services Inc., which offers language instruction to employees' desktops by having classes sent through Intel's Proshare, a videoconference system (Jossi, 1998, p. 68.).

The literature reveals that there are very few companies that provide cultural training. Berlitz is the most widely recognized in its field of both language and cultural training. Most of

the cultural training is in the form of immersion programs that are hosted by private individuals or small companies. According to the literature, native-born private instructors offer cultural training in the U.S.

A Glance at Several Corporations Providing Training Today

According to the literature, there are a small number of U.S. MNC's that provide language and cultural training to their employees and recognize the value of it. BASF Corporation, which has its headquarters in New Jersey, promotes such training for its expatriates and their families. According to Jim Carroll (cited in Jossi, 1998), manager of international human resources for BASF, believes that language training "is one of the biggest and most important factors that contribute or take away from assignment success" (p. 68.). Employees usually get about 6 months to prepare for an assignment ranging from 4 to 8 years at the company's German headquarters. Also, BASF provides assignees with in-house, one-on-one instruction for German and Spanish and contracts with Berlitz for other languages. "Assignees take from two to five classes a week, depending on their pre-existing ability in a language," says Carroll (p. 69.), noting BASF has about 75 Americans abroad at any one time. If employees are assigned to the company's headquarters several miles outside Frankfurt, they will also receive immersion training for the first four weeks after arrival.

Fredda Walters, relocation manager for Dallas based Fujitsu Network Communications Inc., quickly learned that videotapes and cassettes only go so far. Walters (cited in Jossi, 1998) says, "Even if you're having them work with a video, employees should be able to stop it and ask questions of a teacher" (p. 69). The company offers 200 hours of training to employees and their

spouses, although Walter says that no one has ever used that much time. Employees have options for language training ranging from classroom sessions in small groups to one-on-one training.

A more elaborate training program is sponsored by the 3M Corporation, which boasts a "language society" of 600 members at its St. Paul office. The program has 50 volunteer instructors teaching 13 different languages over lunch once a week to groups of four to six people. Many participants either are pursuing an overseas assignment, simply love language or have returned from a foreign country or want to keep up their skills. The corporation also provides employees and spouses' 100 hours of private tutoring before assignments. Learning is bolstered by Berlitz's self-study books, tapes, and attendance at 3M's language society meetings. Especially ambitious employees can receive even more instruction if they wish but cannot devote more time than 100 hours (Jossi, 1998).

Jossi (1998) points out that earlier this year, United Airlines embarked upon an ambitious pilot project to determine how to train flight attendants in a second language. Part of the airline's strategy was to provide customers a more bilingual staff who could become a point of differentiation between United and other carriers. Flight attendants tested training methods such as foreign immersion, accelerated learning through classes, CD-ROM, CD-ROM/internet, and textbooks augmented by audiocassettes. Flight attendants were taught Spanish, German, and Japanese using the various delivery methods. The individuals who participated in the immersion training gained both language and cultural training while being enthusiastic and excited. Not far behind were the accelerated classes. Next in line came audiocassettes and textbooks because they could be taken on long trips. The CD-ROMs and CD-ROM/internet training turned out to be a hassle for employees since the tools could not be taken on trips without a fairly expensive laptop

computer. The flight attendants did not enjoy this type of learning process (Jossi, 1998).

Whichever strategy United selects, it can certainly aid them in their foreign markets.

Chapter V

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSION

In order to survive in this global economy, American multinational corporations must begin to think and act globally. The author believes that our domestic business practices should not extend past our borders. The starting point of a successful expatriate is in the selection process and training of expatriates. Unfortunately, U.S. multinational corporations select expatriates primarily on their technical expertise with little emphasis placed on adaptability, knowledge of a foreign language or previous international experience. Rather, expatriates are given general reading material about the foreign country they will be living in for the next year or so. This is the kind of training to prepare anyone to succeed. The author believes that prior to language and cultural training, a series of issues must be addressed that might impact the effectiveness of the training program. In the author's mind the first step is to formalize the expatriate process by developing a career path program in which an individual follows in order for him/her to be eligible to become an expatriate. By formalizing the expatriate process, it ensures that all employees in this program have the same opportunity to receive language and cultural training. To formalize such a program, support and commitment are necessary from upper management to empower the human resource organization. This organization, the author feels, should have the responsibility of developing, administering, and maintaining the process to interview and test potential expatriates to determine if they possess the necessary attributes to succeed based on certain criteria. If human resources are given the commitment and support from

high-level management, they would be empowered to select an overseas workforce with the capabilities of their counterparts from Japanese and European countries' MNCs.

The author feels that since it has been illustrated that Japanese and Europeans based expatriates are successful, they should serve U.S. MNCs well as role models in overseas operations. In Japan and Europe, for example, an individual can not become a top level manager without having international experience. That's not to say that U.S. MNCs should follow exact suit, but it does point out how important it is for the Japanese and Europeans to maintain a satisfied overseas workforce. Successful companies like Fujitsu and BASF provide their expatriates with superlative cultural training and support in order of them to succeed.

In addition, the author feels that improvements should be made in cross-cultural training such as foreign language development, role-playing, and mentoring by individuals who were successful in previous foreign assignments. Consequently, the author believes that language and cultural training should be taught by individuals who have actually spent time in a foreign country. With that experience, the instructor is able to share and communicate specific examples and personal stories of his/her stay abroad. There appears to be no data to suggest whether the trainer should be an employee of the corporation or an employee who is outsourced by an agency.

The author also feels that another important factor to consider when trying to increase the expatriate success rate is for the corporate office to remain in constant communication with their assignees. While the expatriate and his/her family are living abroad, the corporation should communicate with them on a regular basis, possibly daily. This can be accomplished easily via e-mail over the internet or within a company's intranet. Sending short e-mails inquiring about the project, can go a long way in attaining feedback in real-time. Another simple way to stay connected is for the company to distribute an on-line newsletter to all of its employees

summarizing key corporate issues and events with a feedback section. By staying in touch, the author believes it will enable the expatriate to feel connected and part of the organization which he or she left behind.

The author believes that one of the reasons American expatriates do not readily volunteer for overseas assignments is because U.S based MNCs do not perceive international experience as a qualification for advancement or even as an advantage on one's resume. Consequently, MNCs do not reward international experience. Unfortunately, U.S. expatriates must think about how they will get their jobs back upon their return. Many times there are no guarantees that they will have the same position as when they left, leaving them to search for other opportunities without the support or help of their original organization. The author strongly feels that upon their return, expatriates should at least be provided with career opportunities in which their knowledge gained overseas is useful to the corporation.

Finally, the author believes that U.S. based expatriates must become a part of a corporation's over-all international strategy to enhance their overseas presence if they want to remain competitive with the rest of the world. Executives need to develop an understanding and appreciation of the work of their expatriates. The author feels that once that is achieved, the first step has been taken in initiating the support for the appropriate training requirements. The inclusion of the expatriate within the U.S. corporation's over-all international strategy will allow MNCs to maintain, strengthen and compete in today's global economy.

Possible Future Areas of Study

Women Versus Men

The author remains curious about men expatriates versus women expatriates. While the distinction may seem basic, the author could not help but to wonder what the success rates of both of these groups are on a side by side comparison. Currently, there appears to be very little data about the subject, but the author thinks that understanding and comparing the two groups would be valuable for any U.S. based MNC who is seeing an increase in their female workforce. Some of the questions to be answered that the author felt were important are: What is the success rate between men and women expatriates? Why is one group more successful than the other? What countries would MNCs be more inclined to send women? Men? Who is more likely to take on an overseas assignment given the opportunity? Do families travel along more of the time when men or women take on an assignment? These and probably other issues would make for an interesting study not to mention valuable data for MNCs.

Business School Curriculums

The author believes that an analysis of current undergraduate or graduate curriculums would also be valuable to any U.S. based MNC trying to gain a better understanding of potential expatriates. Some issues to address may include: What schools provide an international concentration within their various business majors? Of those schools that do have international concentrations, do they require studying a second language? Do they offer or require the study of another culture? If so, what cultures and languages are most popular? Do some of these

curriculums offer foreign exchange opportunities? If so, what countries participate in these exchange programs? The author believes that understanding some of these issues can help improve U.S. MNCs in their hiring and selection process of potential expatriates early on. Knowing what schools offer international curriculums can give an MNC an advantage over those companies that do not. In turn, better prepared employees can make a world of difference in the fast paced competitive global environment.

At the onset of her research, the author sought out to learn if there is a need for United States multinational corporations to provide expatriates with language and cultural training services. Through a comprehensive review of the literature and discussions with current and former expatriates, she was able to draw conclusions as to how language and cultural training affects expatriates. Both the literature and discussions reveal that effective language and cultural training are key components to the success of the expatriate. Expatriates need to be informed and feel comfortable about the changes at hand otherwise they may not produce successful results. In closing, as the number of expatriates continues to grow, researchers should use this opportunity to obtain additional information for further analysis

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