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**GLOBAL LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES**

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**ABSTRACT**

This thesis studies the competencies, i.e. the knowledge, skills, abilities and personality characteristics important for global leaders. The objective is to find a generalizable set of competencies that are found crucial for effective global leaders by both literature and practice. The second objective of this study is to identify the most effective developmental methods for the identified competencies.

The theoretical part of this study provides a literature overview of the subject by identifying a framework of a generalizable set of competencies important for global leaders from different authors' perspectives. Also the most effective developmental methods are identified for these competencies. The literature review functions as a basis for the empirical part, which is a qualitative study of the subject. It was conducted by semi-structured interviews of HR professionals and/or managers with global responsibilities and the findings were then compared to and combined with the findings of the literature review in an attempt to form a generalizable set of competencies important for global leaders.

The main finding of this study shows, that the most important competencies for global leaders have to do with one's personality characteristics and are deeper in the core of a person. Thus, the most important competencies for global leaders are also the ones hardest to change. To affect to these kinds of competencies requires more profound, life-changing developmental experience.

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**KEYWORDS:** Global leadership, competencies, development, personality characteristics, skills, knowledge.





# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

Over the past fifteen to twenty years globalization has changed the business scene dramatically. Today's organizations cannot hide from it anymore, globalization is here to stay, and it is even argued that all business is global to some extent nowadays (Hollenbeck & McCall 2002: 1; Morrison 2000). The opportunities and challenges of the new worldwide marketplace force organizations to respond. There is a significant lack of competent global leaders in organizations and even those organizations that do have global leaders lament the insufficient skill level of those global leaders (Black, Morrison & Gregersen 1999: 6-7). In addition it is argued that the leadership skills of the past will not be sufficient in the global future (Gregersen, Morrison & Black 1998).

Organizations face the new global environment more complex and unpredictable than ever (Brake 1997: 2), which creates an urgent need for them to develop their managers' to be successful in the new and growing global environment, and also for managers to develop themselves to succeed. After all, the complexity of the globalization of the business field not only affects the business strategies of the organization, but also to the requirements of the knowledge, skills, abilities and other personality characteristics (i.e. competencies) of the people managing those organizations. This leads to the question: what are the significant competencies that managers need to effectively perform in the global business field and how can one acquire such competencies? Furthermore, are those essential competencies innate, or can they be developed?

## 1.2. Purpose of the Study & Defining the Research problem.

As there are probably as many definitions to the term 'competency' as there are authors in the field, and some of them even make distinctive segregation between the terms competency, competencies and competences, I believe it is not relevant to try to make rhetoric distinctions between the terms, so my main approach is to try to find a more universal and generalized set of competencies, knowledge, skills, abilities and other personality characteristics that are commonly applicable and distinctive to successful global leaders. In other words, my intention is not to try to compile a list of specific skills, abilities and knowledge that successful global leaders must possess, but try to shed a light on the foundational key competencies they should have in order to be effective and to possess the main premises for development in the global business field. Once the key foundational competencies are identified, my purpose is to explore the methods for effective development of these competencies. After this I will conduct a qualitative research to find out what the most important global leadership competencies are in practice.

In summarization, there are two research problems that this study is based upon:

- What are the most important competencies for global leaders?
- What are the most effective ways to develop these competencies?

## 1.3. Structure of the study

The first chapter provides an introduction to the subject, as well as it explains the purpose of this study.

In the second chapter I will explain the factors that drive organizations to going global and the general strategies for organizations to be effective in the global business playground, and how this affects to the need of having competent global leaders. The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the field that those,

from whom global competencies are required, operate in.

After that I will provide an overview of what is meant by a global leader in the leadership literature and how they differ from domestic leaders after which I will introduce the relevant global leadership competency frameworks in order to provide an overview of the key competencies of global leaders as seen by the authors of the field. After identifying the frameworks for key competencies for global leaders I will provide an overview of the development frameworks and methods of how to effectively develop these key competencies for global leaders.

In the empirical part of my study I will try to find out the global leadership competencies in practice, i.e. in everyday global business life. The data collection for the empirical part will be done by semi-structured interviews by interviewing HR professionals with managerial positions and/or global responsibilities in a global service center for a globally functioning organization. The data collected by the interviews will then be analyzed and compared to the findings of the literature review in an attempt to find the knowledge, skills, abilities and personality characteristics that both theory and practice find important for global leaders.

Finally, I will discuss my own insights of the subject and the limitations of this study, and provide some ideas for further research.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. Global Leadership

The purpose of this chapter is first off to shed some background light to the field global leaders operate in, firstly by describing the drivers for globalization and briefly discuss of what is meant by a global organization. Then I will summarize the need for global leaders, after which I will deal with the issue of what is meant by a global leader in the literature.

#### 2.1.1. Globalization drivers

**Table 1.** Globalization drivers.

Black et al. (1999)	Yip (1992)	Bartlett & Ghoshal (1991)
Technology Cost Consumer Competitor	Cost Market Government Competitor	Customers Technology Internal restructuring Competition

There are many reasons why organizations go global. Black et al. (1999) argue that there are several drivers behind the globalization of organizations, the main ones being technology, cost, consumer and competitor drivers. The research and development costs of organizations' new high-tech products raise so high that firms have no choice but to go after global sales in order to get back their investments. Costs have to be kept as low as possible in today's global business world, so organizations must be in constant lookout for suppliers to keep their costs down, and to source for the most cost efficient locations for their production facilities. Also the preferences of consumers around the world are converging more and more, which creates tremendous opportunities for organizations and put the pressure to them to go global. An organization might not even have a choice but to go global in the draft of their major industrial customers. In addition, the pressure from competitors, since they can come

from any country these days, forces organizations to go global if they want to survive, defending ones domestic market simply is not enough. National governments also create opportunities and barriers for globalization. (Black et al. 1999: 12-15)

Yip (1992) also recognizes four sets of globalization drivers that are congruent with the previous, but determine the potential and need for globalization of the industry. The market drivers are dependent on customer behavior, the composition of distribution channels and the nature of marketing within the industry. The cost drivers are determined by the economics of the business. Government drivers depend on the legislation and rules set by national governments and competitive drivers are determined by the actions of competitors. These drivers change over time and are also dependent on the characteristics of an industry. Usually globalization drivers are outside the control of an organization. Convergent changes in these drivers are also increasing the potential for globalization in many industries and motivate managers to pay greater attention to global strategies within organizations. (Yip 1992: 11-15)

Bartlett & Ghoshal (1991) also acknowledge the convergence in customer preferences and needs as a globalization driver for organizations in the past twenty years, aided by major technological innovations, thus allowing organizations to develop and manufacture products on a global basis. Also internal restructuring by managers in organizations in industries that did not have such a powerful external globalization forces fueled the wave of globalization even further by pulling these organizations to the global markets. Another force for globalization has been a competitive strategy, where organizations managed their worldwide operations as interdependent units guided by their coordinated global strategy, in opposition to treating international markets as independent and unique of others. (Bartlett & Ghoshal 1991: 5-6)

### 2.1.2. A global organization

According to Brake (1997), being a global organization does not mean an end state for organizational development, but being global means moving towards being a winning, world-class competitor.

Brake (1997) presents four major drivers distinctive for global organizations that differ a little from the previous. These are integration, flow, leverage and optimization. By integration is meant that while organization and its many units operate worldwide, it still needs to be managed as one global unit. The units of the organization have to be more flexible and dynamic network in order to create synergic advantage. In order to direct resources to wherever in the organization they can add value the most, thus increasing the responsiveness of the organization to opportunities anywhere in the world, organization must be made as boundaryless as possible, i.e. maximize the flow of resources through the organization. By leverage he means the minimization of unnecessary duplication by standardization, thus creating efficiency. Finally, in order to increase long-time performance of the whole organization, it must allocate its resources from a mature success market to an immature potential market, thus optimizing the resources for the sake of long-term viability (at the cost of short-term result maximization). (Brake 1997: 4-8)

Brake emphasizes the utmost importance of having a global strategy, a key feature for a global organization, and presents main roles of a global strategy as the following. It communicates the vision of the organization and the shared mental structure that helps to allocate resources and energy wherever they add value the most. It sees the world as one single marketplace and finds the key operating drivers of a business and the key skills to support those drivers. It helps the organization to distinguish its key products or services, main markets and marketing processes and other important functions, and the ways of competing in those markets efficiently. (Brake 1997: 8-10)

Yip (1992) recognizes five global strategy levers, which are key features of strategy of a global organization and thus help to distinguish a global organization from an international organization, for instance. Setting a strategy for worldwide business requires choices to be made in compliance with these

levers (also referred as dimensions). With each of these dimensions, a global strategy aims to maximize worldwide performance through sharing and integration.

First strategy lever that Yip (1992) determines is market participation. In this dimension an organization chooses the country-markets where it operates and the level of activity it operates with, especially in terms of market share. A global organization selects its markets depending on what has important significance to its global strategy even if the market itself is not extremely attractive, or they may need to concentrate their resources to a few key markets instead of more widespread coverage. (Yip 1992: 15-16)

Second lever is the degree to which a global organization standardizes its products or services in different countries. Some organizations may tailor its products or services to local needs depending on the country, but a truly global strategy aims to standardize the organizations core product or service so, that it will need the minimum amount of local standardization as possible. (Yip 1992: 17)

Third on Yip's list of global strategy levers is the location of value-adding activities. This dimension is about choosing the right locations for the activities of the organizations' value-added chain – from research to production to after-sales services. A multilocal organization may have the entire value chain reproduced in every country, but in a global activity strategy the value chain is in parts, and every part may be located separately in a different country to gain cost benefits. The key of global activity strategy is to systematically disperse the value chain around the globe. (Yip 1992: 17-18)

The fourth dimension is marketing, where a global organization standardizes its marketing strategy worldwide as opposed to a multilocal strategy, where marketing programs are designed for each market separately. Even though the key lies in a uniform marketing program, not all parts of the marketing have to be identical; a little local adaptation may be needed, or even recommended. (Yip 1992: 18)

Finally, the fifth lever in Yip's list is the competitive moves. It describes the extent to which an organization responds to competitors' moves in individual



countries as part of their global strategy. Whereas a multilocal organization responds to competitors' moves one country at a time, a global strategy in this dimension sees the whole world as the 'battle field'. A global organization may respond to a competitors attack in a whole different country; in a market, where it sees the greatest potential for a counter-attack as possible. (Yip 1992: 18)

Rhinesmith's (1996) characteristics of a global organization are similar to Yip's (1992) and he agrees that organizations pursuing global strategies have common strategies; building major share in strategic regions, global product standardization, global activity concentration (i.e. building a global value chain), globally uniform marketing and globally integrated competitive moves against competitors. Rhinesmith emphasizes the fact that "global strategy is a system that requires systems thinking. The environment, the business, the organization, the corporate culture, and the people are all critical elements of a global strategy, which must be managed as an integrated set of activities to achieve business competitiveness." Thus, achieving a globally integrated organization that achieves economies of scale and has responsiveness to global customers and at the same time has flexibility to adapt to the needs of local customers around the world is a great challenge. Deriving from this, when Yip says to 'think global and act local', Rhinesmiths advice to global strategy is to 'think and act global and local'. (Rhinesmith 1996: 55-60)

### 2.1.3. The need for global leaders?

Gregersen, Morrison and Black (1998) conducted a survey for human resource managers responsible for executive development in Fortune 500 -companies about the quantity and quality of their global leaders. Of those companies (108 in total) 85 percent reported that they do not have an adequate number of global leaders, and 67 percent of the companies reported that their global leaders did not have the adequate global leadership competencies. They also found out that almost every company surveyed reported needing more global leaders and most of the companies will need global leaders of higher quality in the future. (Gregersen et al. 1998: 22)

Bartlett and Ghoshal (1992) also acknowledge the fact that the international business environment has changed drastically. Although they argue that a universal global manager is not the key, but a network of highly specialized global managers, the need to develop them and their competencies exists.

It is also widely recognized, that because globalization is here to stay, organizations are developing their global strategies faster than they are developing their global leaders, and that leaves a gap between the competency level needed because of the new global strategies, and the competency levels of the current leaders. According to Morrison (2000), the pattern is simple: because of the fast-paced globalization of the past two decades, the world has a need for competent global leaders greater than ever.

Black, Gregersen, Mendenhall and Stroh (1999) also support the fact that people are the key to success in the organizations. People are the ones implementing and developing strategies and inventing and using technology. They report the results of two studies, firstly a study conducted by the International Personnel Association in 1997, which shows a positive correlation between the ability of a multinational organization to develop its global leaders and the final success of the organization. Second study by the Global Leadership Institute showed a positive correlation between the level of employee internationalization and the organizations return on assets. This supports strongly the fact that globalization of people (especially leaders) gives crucial advantage to a global organization. (Black et al. 1999: 1)

#### 2.1.4. Concept of Global leadership

McCall and Hollenbeck (2002) agree with Bartlett and Ghoshal (1992) on the fact that there is no one type of global executive, but many types. They determine a global executive as one who crosses country and cultural borders. They cross country borders in several areas besides country; business unit borders, market borders, product line borders, functional borders and customer borders. These borders are different from country and cultural borders. The complexity of business problems in global executive tasks adds ambiguity and

uncertainty in his/her daily operations and the impact is mainly cognitive. Dealing with the crossing of country and cultural borders make the problems more personal and demands transformation in the self-image of the executive, in how the executive sees himself and who he is. (McCall and Hollenbeck 2002: 22)

McCall and Hollenbeck (2002) also found out, that executives must fully understand the context they are operating in in order to be effective. They argue that the differences in the context are the most crucial factor, and that the country and cultural differences are the factors that most clearly differentiate the work of domestic and global executives.

As McCall and Hollenbeck (2002) define the two dimensions of global work, business complexity and cultural complexity, they argue that merely crossing the borders of business does not make a job global. According to them, it is the crossing of borders in the cultural dimension is what makes a job global, so global work is something that involves a combination of these two complex dimensions. Thus, the definition of global is determined by the work, not by the incumbent executive. They add that the level to which an executive or a position is global depends upon their roles, responsibilities, goals and again, the extent to which they cross borders. (McCall and Hollenbeck 2002: 30-32)

Caligiuri (2006) points out the fact, that the focus in research of global leaders has mainly been on international assignment management or expatriate management, and accentuates that expatriates are not the only ones performing global leadership activities, but there is some overlap with global leadership activities in expatriate assignments. Caligiuri elaborates, that some global leadership activities may be located domestically, but still require similar global leadership competencies than the ones located internationally. (Caligiuri 2006: 220)

Caligiuri (2006) has also identified tasks and activities that she found to be unique to and in common with those in global leadership positions. According to her study, global leaders interact with colleagues and internal and external clients from other countries, negotiate in other countries with people from other countries and may need to use a foreign language in their daily activities. They also supervise a diverse group of employees (of different nationalities and

cultures). Global leaders also develop strategic plans and budgets, and manage risks on a global basis for their unit. They may also need to manage foreign suppliers. (Caligiuri 2006: 220)

Bird and Osland (2004) determine the difference between domestic and global managers as such, that the work of a global manager requires adapting to demands of greater complexity. According to them, the differentiating factors for global managers include greater need for cultural understanding in diverse environments, need for broader knowledge that crosses the borders of nations and functions, and more frequent crossing of those borders in and outside the organization. They also acknowledge that the work of a global manager differs from a domestic one by involving greater challenges caused by more difficult ethical dilemmas in the global environment, greater amount of ambiguity in decision-making and the fact that there are more stakeholders to be considered in the decision-making process. (Bird and Osland 2004: 61)

Although some authors (e.g. Baruch 2002, Bartlett and Ghoshal 1992) argue that there is no universal global manager, they really mean that it is not possible (or even reasonable) to list a comprehensive set of characteristics that make a successful global leader, they acknowledge the fact that a successful global manager has a 'global mindset'. I have to agree, that there is no point in the ever-changing global business field to try to list the comprehensive set of competencies, but rather try to make frameworks of competencies, knowledge, skills, and personal attributes that help leaders develop a good 'global mindset' in order to become more successful managers in the global arena. The issues of what are considered to be important competencies for global managers and the concept of global mindset will be addressed next.

## 2.2. Global leadership competencies

The research on global leadership competencies is overwhelmingly broad, for it seems that there are as many definitions of relevant competencies for global leaders as there are researchers. Although I agree that it is not possible or reasonable to try to identify an exhaustive list of competencies that make a global leader successful, in this part I will depict some frameworks of competencies and sets of desirable characteristics provided by the literature. After that I will deal with the issue of 'global mindset', an attribute I feel is crucial for anyone operating in the global business arena, especially global leaders.

Hollenbeck (2006) states that trying to develop comprehensive competence models have helped individuals and organizations in developing leadership skills. According to him, they summarize the experience of experienced leaders, and specify a range of useful leadership behaviors, offer a tool for individual self-development and the frameworks are of use in selecting, developing and understanding effective leaders. Organizations benefit also from these frameworks in several ways. They help the organization communicate the leadership behavior held important to its success and appraise the performance of its leaders. They also link the desirable behavior of the leaders to the strategic directions and goals of the organization. (Hollenbeck 2006: 402-403)

### 2.2.1. Competency frameworks

Boyatzis (1982) provides with a comprehensive definition of effective job performance. It is "the attainment of specific results required by the job through specific actions while maintaining or being consistent with policies, procedures, and conditions of the organizational environment". The 'specific actions' are enabled by certain knowledge, skills, abilities and personal characteristics of a person, and thus can be called competencies, and can be defined more as the capability that the person brings to the job situation. (Boyatzis 1982: 12)

Boyatzis (1982) defines job competency as an underlying characteristic of a person. It can be anything from motives, skills and knowledge to the self-image or social role of the person. According to Boyatzis, these characteristics can also be sub-conscious for the person possessing them. The competencies manifest themselves in actions or behaviors of a person in a said job or organizational context, and thus reflect on the person's capability in a given situation. Boyatzis also defines competencies as characteristics, possession of which leads to effective and/or superior performance in a job. (Boyatzis 1982: 20–23)

**Table 2.** Boyatzis' competency dimensions.

Types of Competencies	Levels of Competencies
<p>Associated with human behavior and capability to demonstrate such behavior.</p> <p>e.g.</p> <p>specialized knowledge memory self-confidence adaptability managing skills</p>	<p>Motives and traits (unconscious level)</p> <p>-</p> <p>Self-image and social role (conscious level)</p> <p>-</p> <p>Skill level (behavioral level)</p>

Boyatzis (1982) divides management competencies to two dimensions. First dimension describes the different types of competencies, and are more specific characteristics of a manager associated with human behavior and the ability to demonstrate such behavior. These characteristics are usually determined by studying managers' behavior which show distinguished effective performance and are not unique to a specific product or service of the organization. These types of competencies can include e.g. specialized knowledge, memory, self-confidence, adaptability or skills in managing group processes and relationships. These types of competencies can exist in multiple levels of a person; unconscious, conscious and behavioral level. These levels, which Boyatzis also defines as motive and trait level, self-image and social role level and skill level, form the second dimension of his competency model. Motives refer to a concern for a goal state, which directs the behavior of the person.

Traits on the other hand refer to the characteristic way in which a person responds to events on a general level. These both can exist in the unconscious and conscious levels. Self-image refers to the way a person sees himself and the evaluation of that image in context of others and the environment. Social roles refer to the way people should behave according to the norms and values to the group they belong to. The behavior of a person is usually linked to the characteristics of the person, and thus the competencies of him. These self-image and social role aspects function as mediator for motives and traits, and help to select the actual behavior in a situation. And finally, Boyatzis defines skill as something that results in an observable outcome. To this he adds, that a skill is not a single action, but the systems of behavior, that leads to action. (Boyatzis 1982: 25 – 34)

McCall and Hollenbeck (2002), despite their acknowledgement that there is no universal global job, have put up a mix of competencies based on the differences of domestic and international work, which emphasize the cultural dimension of global work. They found out, that these competencies would be the first priority of basic business skills for those who aspire a global career, and help those persons live and work in other cultures. Firstly they have listed the importance of open-mindedness and flexibility; a global executive must be able to live and work with different kinds of people in different environments and be open to their ideas and opinions. The respect of other people and cultures is important, thus second on their list is interest and sensitivity to other cultures. Third, a global executive needs to be able to deal with complexity and ambiguity, needs to cope well with uncertainty and is not afraid to take risks. Fourth, a global executive needs to have a personality of resilience, innovativeness and optimism, honesty and righteousness, and is eager to take on challenges. Being energetic physically and emotionally and having a stable personal life also helps to cope with stress. Finally, besides these personality characteristics, the person needs to have sufficient expertise to his work functions to be credible. (McCall and Hollenbeck 2002: 34-35)

Bird and Osland (2004) present a more comprehensive competency framework. Their framework of global competencies focuses on the process of global managing, and bases itself on a foundation level that consists of global knowledge. Above the foundation level is four levels of key global competencies. The premise is, that the progress in the development of these

levels (competencies) is cumulative.

**Table 3.** Competency framework by Bird and Osland (2004).

Level 4	System Skills	Boundary Spanning Building community through change Ethical Decision-making
Level 3	Interpersonal Skills	Mindful communication Creating and building trust
Level 2	Global mindset	
Level 1	Threshold traits	Integrity, humility, inquisitiveness, hardiness, openness
Foundation	Knowledge base	

The foundation level of the framework consists of global knowledge, the various types and depth of which managers need to be effective. Bird and Osland (2004) analyzes the knowledge basis in four levels: know who, know how, know what and know why. Know who refers to the network of relationships a person has, and uses as resource in varying situations. Know how is the ability of the person to utilize his skills and knowledge in accomplishing tasks, knowing how best to do work in different situations and environments. Knowing what constitutes of the persons understanding about specific products, services or functions, for example knowledge of a certain product category in a certain market area. Knowing why is the extent to which a person identifies with the organizations culture and strategy, knowing why the organization decides to enter a certain market or knowing why the organization decides to launch a certain product over another in a certain region, for example. Because all four knowledge types are interrelated, an effective global manager needs to possess, develop and utilize all four of them in a harmony. Crucial to the global knowledge foundation is also knowledge about individuals (e.g. human nature, cultural differences), the organization and its strategies, the task at hand and condition of the industry. It is clear that the knowledge base needed is huge, but with time and experience managers can broaden their global knowledge foundation. (Bird and Osland 2004: 65-70)



The first level of the framework are the threshold traits. Bird and Osland (2004) use the term 'traits' because of the enduring nature of these personality characteristics in question, distinct from competencies, which they define as abilities, skills and knowledge that can be acquired through experience. These four threshold traits are integrity, humility, inquisitiveness and hardiness, and the authors argue, that these are crucial for global leaders to succeed in the long run.

The first threshold trait, integrity, is an important basis for other traits and competencies, for managers must maintain their integrity in the various challenging situations of their professional and personal lives in order to remain effective. Having integrity means having a stable, unimpaired and whole personality and sense of self, and conforming to clear set of values in life. It also means being consistent in all actions. Many researchers have found integrity to be a critical factor for success. The second and third threshold trait, which in this framework goes under the category of openness, are humility and inquisitiveness. Bird and Osland (2004) acknowledge, that the trait of openness has been mentioned in every study of effectiveness in global assignments as a key trait, and thus they have divided it into two subcategories to better define it. In the context of global management, humility means showing respect to others and being willing to learn from them, and not to assume that you have all the right answers yourself. In other words, it is a sort of passive openness for learning from others. The other aspect of openness, inquisitiveness, refers to constant curiosity in learning and pursuing knowledge and, especially in the context of global management, vast curiosity about other people and cultures. Finally, the last of the four threshold traits, hardiness, is defined as being courageous, determined, strong, in good health, and being emotionally stable. It is also the ability to 'survive' stressful situations and to cope with ambiguity. Hardiness also helps to cope well with culture shock, a situation typical in living abroad. Bird and Osland conclude the four threshold traits in an image, where integrity is the base for these traits, humility and inquisitiveness are the pillars for the view of the world, and hardiness is the roof that keeps them all firmly together. (Bird and Osland 2004: 70-74)

Level two of the global competency model consists of the attitudes and orientations of the global leader. This is also called the global mindset on which I will elaborate more closely later on in my work.

Level three of the competency model deals with interpersonal skills. Thomas and Osland (2004) argue, that two of the most important of these competencies are mindful communication and creating and building trust. Mindful communication consists of two critical aspects: knowledge of the culture and general communication skills. Mindful communication means keeping one's own assumptions, cognitions and emotions in mind while at the same time thinking about the other person's assumptions, cognitions and emotions. Thus, Thomas and Osland define the competence of intercultural communication as "the heightened mindfulness of communication, which builds on the acquisition of in-depth (cultural) knowledge and the development of communication skills". The other element of mindful communication, communication skills, consists of mindful observation, mindful listening, identity confirmation and collaborative dialogue. Mindful observation means observing, describing and interpreting and evaluating the situation thoroughly before making any (possibly wrong) judgments. Mindful listening means to listen to the communication behind the words; knowing when to read between the lines and checking for mutual understanding of the words spoken. Identity confirmation refers to addressing people by their title, label or identity according to the situation and cultural context, for example knowing when to use Mr. or Mrs. or the formal pronoun until told otherwise. By collaborative dialogue is meant, that one should not make assumptions about culturally different people, but try to understand the behavior of others in their cultural context instead of trying to judge whether it's right or wrong. (Thomas and Osland 2004: 94-104)

The second factor of level three of this competency model, interpersonal skills, is creating and building trust. Creating and building trust between and within organizations is of key significance to leading organizations. Whitener and Stahl (2004) provide with a definition for trust as "a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behavior of another". Trust bases itself in the relationships between people, and the perception of whether or not a person can be trusted is defined by the competence, benevolence and integrity of that person. For example, when a manager is seen to be competent, caring for his subordinates and righteous, he is likely to be trusted. When it comes to global mindsets, it needs to be acknowledged that cultural differences affect people's perceptions for other peoples trustworthiness and the propensity to trust other

people in general. Cultural differences also limit peoples behavioral repertoire and flexibility to act appropriately in situations where trust-building is needed, for example, in a situation of crisis regarding customer satisfaction, managers from certain cultures may try to keep trust by apologizing and taking personal responsibility and actions to fix the situation right away, while mangers from others might wait and take action much later, when they cannot blame anyone else but themselves anymore, for example. (Whitener and Stahl 2004: 109-117)

The top level of the global competency framework is called the systems skills - level. It consists of three system skills that are boundary spanning, creating and building community through change and ethical decision-making. Beechler, Sondergaard, Miller and Bird (2004) define boundary spanning as crossing functional, geographic and external boundaries to move ideas, information, decisions, talent and resources where needed. Global managers face four types of boundaries: vertical, horizontal, external and geographic, and in order to be effective in spanning these boundaries, they must gather, interpret, filter and communicate relevant information within the organization, represent the company to external stakeholders, gain influence over the external environment, and make the organization more responsive to the demands of the changes in the environment. Boundary spanning builds on the four threshold traits mentioned above, and those who possess the three first levels of the global competency model (alongside the foundation level) are likely to be successful in building and maintaining relationships that support boundary spanning in a global environment. Thus, boundary spanning is a systems skill, for it builds and maintains connections within and outside the organization. Through boundary-spanning the flow of knowledge and ideas enhance, and effective global managers also take boundary-spanning as an opportunity to gain and spread tacit knowledge about the internal and external environment. Global managers with effective boundary-spanning skills also know how to function as a mediator in conflict situations. (Beechler, Sondergaard, Miller and Bird 2004: 121-131)

Building the community through change is a critical and challenging part in the work of a global manager. Managing the change process effectively is as important as its first two steps: analyzing the situation and developing ideas to resolve it. Osland (2004) emphasizes the importance of articulating and communicating vision in change management, which derive from the

interpersonal skills depicted above. Managers need the skills to provide with a clear vision for global change, and the skills to communicate it clearly in order to make the community commit to the change properly. Global managers need also to function as the catalyst for the change, they need to point out the gap between the vision and the current situation to make people see the needed change and then get the change process going. Other skills important to change management include, for instance, participating the people at the heart of the change to the process, using supporting HRM practices, symbolic activities to support the change initiative, putting up transition teams and best-practice programs and formal activities that demonstrate support to change. Effective global managers are also able to build an organizational environment favorable to change; they need to be able to get a 'critical mass' behind the change initiative, i.e. the minimum number of people (managers, employees, stakeholders etc.) to get the change going. Cultural differences play a major role in change situations also, an effective manager has the knowledge about how different cultures relate to change, the ambiguity that follows change situations and the participation of employees to the change process itself, for instance. Important notion is also the fact, that the community is also a facilitator of change, not only the outcome of it. (Osland 2004: 134-149)

The third factor on the top level of the global competency framework is ethical decision-making. McNett and Sondergaard (2004) categorize ethical decision-making as a systems skill because "in order to make and implement ethical decisions, the global manager has to understand the environment and to make sense of it at a complex systems level". The difficulty in ethical decision-making in global context often lies at the perception level of a manager, rather than the actual decision made. The complexity in the global context comes from differences in the ethical standards of different cultures. Managers interpersonal skills (explained above) play an important role in decoding the situation right in a particular cultural context. They help managers to getting necessary knowledge and information and ensure an honest, two-way information flow that ensures to understand the environment (local culture and stakeholders involved) accurately. Also, a high level global mindset ensures that managers decode the environment right and understand the local culture and context better. After a manager knows enough about the culture and context to create accurate options for decision-making, he must possess behavioral flexibility to implement the decision. McNett and Sondergaard also point out

the fact that experience is a key factor in developing ethical decision-making skills. A novice manager may not be able to interpret the environment and see the potential ethical dilemmas, and they rely much on more experienced managers from whom they seek advice. As managerial experience increases, managers more and more know what they don't know, and recognize the complexity of the situations. The most experienced managers have a greater amount of tacit knowledge about the environment and the stakeholders, and have built strong relationships with the local culture, which help them to interpret the context more accurately and operate in it more effectively. They also understand the purpose of their business clearly. Most experienced managers also know, that they don't have to 'do as the Romans, when in Rome', but can find alternate and creative solutions to situations, where they feel that they are pressured to make unethical decisions, for example to pay bribes. Global managers also have to draw their values on ethical decision-making on the organizations vision, mission and purpose, in which the ethical values of the organization lie. The authors conclude, that as the ethical decision-making sits on the top of the global competency pyramid, it is an "acid test applied by multiplicity of stakeholders to judge global management competency". (McNett and Sondergaard 2004: 152-167)

Caligiuri and DiSanto (2001) have conducted a study on desired global leadership competencies, and found out three groups of knowledge, skills, abilities and other characteristics (KSAOs) important for global managers to develop in order to be effective. There were two abilities: ability to transact business in another country and ability to change leadership style according to a given situation and three aspects of individuals' knowledge: knowledge of the company's worldwide business structure, knowledge of international business issues and network of professional contacts worldwide. Finally, they identified three personality characteristics crucial to be developed, which were openness, flexibility and reducing ethnocentrism. They also pointed out the importance of possessing the global mindset and the issue of cosmopolitanism for effective global leaders, which support the competences I mentioned earlier in my work. (Caligiuri & DiSanto 2001: 27-32)

Black, Morrison and Gregersen (1999) present a model for global leadership, which describe the central characteristics of an effective global leader. It consists of inquisitiveness, perspective, character and savvy. The central characteristic

for effective global leaders at the core of this model is inquisitiveness, although it is defined to be more of an attitude than a skill. It is the driving force to explore and take advantage of new business opportunities and markets and for continuous learning, similar to previous models. Effective global leaders constantly search for new knowledge, investigate the world and challenge old assumptions rather than take them for granted. Inquisitiveness is also the key characteristic to overcome situations of ambiguity and uncertainty. Black et. al. state inquisitiveness to be “essential leadership ingredient” and “fundamental driving force behind global leadership success”. (Black et. al. 1999: 26-29, 41-47)

The first corner of the Black et al. (1999) model is perspective. It is defined as how leaders look at the world, and consists of two sub-components: embracing uncertainty and balancing tensions. By balancing uncertainty, Black et. al. mean the ability to know when to gather more information and when to act. According to them, the main drivers behind perspective are duality dynamics. Effective global managers embrace the dualities, ambiguities and uncertainties in their business environment instead of avoiding them, and seek out innovative solutions to those situations. The second corner of the model is character, which also has two sub-components: emotional connection and unwavering integrity. It is about the trust and goodwill towards the diverse people and cultures global leaders encounter every day. The third corner of the triangle, savvy, is the business and organizational expertise and profound professional knowledge global managers need to be exceptional in the global arena. It is crucial to have a clear vision what needs to be done and know how to get it done effectively, and also know how to access the resources to get the work done. The know who – know what – know how – know why -factor of the global knowledge level of Bird & Osland’s (2004) global competency framework mentioned earlier is linked very closely to the savvy corner of this model. (Black et. al. 1999: 26-29)

**Table 4.** The Big Five Personality characteristics by Caligiuri (2000).

Characteristic	Explanation	Leads to:
Extroversion	Degree of socialization of an individual	Deeper knowledge of cultures
Agreeableness	Ability to form reciprocal alliances	Likely to make a person more adjustable
Conscientiousness	Ability to gain trust by conscientiousness	Positive correlation between conscientiousness and work performance and progression
Emotional stability	Ability to cope with stress	Better coping with ambiguity and uncertainty
Openness / Intellect	Ability to correctly assess the social environments  cognitive complexity	Accurate perception and interpretation of host culture and the complex environments  Increases the likelihood of accepting new cultures

Caligiuri (2000) studied the effect of the so called Big Five personality characteristics predicting the success of expatriate managers. From this can be derived some general key characteristics predicting also the success of global leaders, not just expatriates. The Big Five personality characteristics are extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability and openness or intellect. Extroversion refers to the degree of socialization of an individual and how an individual navigates through the social environment to achieve success. In context of expatriates, those who establish relationships with both host country nationals and other expatriates are likely to effectively learn the professional and personal culture of a given country. Derived from this, social and extroverted global managers are more likely to gain deeper knowledge and understanding of different cultures. Agreeableness refers to the individual's ability to form reciprocal social alliances. Caligiuri states, that an expatriates ability to form these kinds of work and non-work relationships is

likely to make him more successful. Agreeableness means also the ability to collaboratively deal with conflicts and striving for mutual understanding, which is likely to make an individual more cross-culturally adjustable, an important characteristic for any global leader also. By conscientiousness is meant gaining trust within the organization by being conscientious, thus creating the opportunity to gain status, becoming leader, getting promoted etc. According to Caligiuri, studies have shown positive correlation between conscientiousness and work performance, which is generalizable to both expatriates and global leaders. Emotional stability refers to how individuals cope with stress in the environment. Work of an expatriate or a global leader often comes with ambiguity and uncertainty, so the emotional stability to cope with these situations is crucial for effective job performance. Finally, openness or intellect refers to the individual's ability to correctly assess the social environment one is in. According to Caligiuri, successful expatriates have to "possess cognitive complexity and intuitive perceptual acuity to accurately perceive and interpret the host culture and perform in a more complex work environment", again, compatible characteristic for any global leader. People with higher openness and intellect are also likely to be more accepting of new cultures, an important feature of cross-cultural adjustment. (Caligiuri 2000: 67-85)

### 2.2.2. Global mindset

As mentioned before, global mindset is a key factor in global leadership competencies. Various authors emphasize the importance of possessing a global mindset in building global leadership competencies, and in the Bird & Osland global competency framework explained above, global mindset was the second level above the threshold traits, which also illustrates the importance of having a global mindset in order to be effective in the global business environment. In a general level, Gupta and Govindarajan (2002) define global mindset as "one that combines an openness to and awareness of diversity across cultures and markets with a propensity and ability to synthesize across this diversity".



**Table 5.** Rhinesmith's three levels of global mindset.

	Global mindset
Strategy / Structure	Drive for broader picture Balance contradictions
Corporate Culture	Engage process Flow with change
People	Value Diversity Learn Globally

Rhinesmith (1996) defines mindset as a way of being, an orientation to the world that enables you to see things that others do not see. Rhinesmith also acknowledges that one must broaden ones perspective, examine and modify existing mindsets, in order to become an effective global manager. He adds, that global mindset is a view of the world as a business playground and a school for continuous learning. This leads to the important notion, that global mindset can be developed. Rhinesmith categorizes six skills for success as a global manager, and divides them into three levels – strategy/structure level, corporate culture level and people level. By understanding and cultivating these six attitudes, one can move towards possessing a global mindset and being a globally competent manager.

The first two mindset attributes fall under the strategy and structure management level of globalization. Firstly, people with global mindset strive to always looking at the broader picture. A global manager should be looking at the context in which events are taking place, analyze it and try to learn more about the potential markets and competitors, technology and suppliers. Managers with global mindsets are not satisfied with a simple explanation of things, and always seek opportunities to manage events in a broader context. Secondly, managers with global mindset can balance the contradictions of the global business environment. Like mentioned before, effective global managers have to find harmony in the ambiguous world of global business. A global manager has to find a balance and live with the conflicts and contradictions, instead of trying to resolve them. It takes good analytical, negotiating and

influencing skills to do that. (Rhinesmith 1996: 24-25)

Second level for the mindset attributes required for global mindset concern managing corporate culture. This requires a mindset that balances control and flexibility. Firstly, by engaging process is meant, that a manager with global mindset has to learn to trust the process over structure, and then align it to “ensure consistency of execution of global strategies and the effective deployment of global policies”. Furthermore, global managers must acknowledge the importance of cross-functional processes over hierarchical structure, which sometimes means that they will have to set the interest of their units aside to ensure the success of the overall business. Rhinesmith (1996) thus emphasizes, that the process is more important than the structure, and the key to organizational adaptability, resilience and survival. Secondly, according to Rhinesmith (1996), a global mindset is comfortable in situations of change, ambiguity and surprises, and sees them all as opportunities for success, and this attitude is important to develop to be successful in today’s global business world. (Rhinesmith 1996: 25-26)

The third level are the mindset attributes for managing people. Managers’ people skills ultimately define how well he can develop effective strategy and structure and execute it through corporate culture. Rhinesmith (1996) first emphasizes the fact that valuing diversity and working well with multicultural teams is essential for having a global mindset in order to achieve organizational and professional objectives effectively. In global teamwork, one works with numerous diversity of cultures, backgrounds, values etc., so sensitivity and flexibility to meet the needs and understanding the diversities while going after business objectives is a key factor in developing a global mindset. Secondly, continuously seeking to learn globally by rethinking boundaries and aiming to be the best in the world at their business is typical behavior for those with a global mindset. By being open to surprises rather than trying to be prepared against them is a way of continuous improvement. Continuous improvement, i.e. lifelong learning, is another thing that is essential for a global mindset, which means the realization of the fact, that there is no end point for knowledge and experience for global managers. (Rhinesmith 1996: 26-27)

Rhinesmith (1996) adds as a conclusion, that one does not possess a global mindset instead of a domestic mindset, but the global mindset is in addition to

the domestic one, thus the global context requires additional perspectives. Srinivas (1995) adds two components to the six skills of global mindset Rhinesmith presented. The first skill, or the seventh when considering Rhinesmith's skills, is extended time perspective. It includes long term planning and visioning, and a view to where the organization is going in the long run in terms of results and overall development. The second skill (or eighth) is systems thinking, where the interdependence and cause-effect chain reactions of the organization and its parts are acknowledged. This skill enables managers to anticipate impacts between different parts of the organization and at the same time is prepared to deal with unanticipated situations that occur. The acknowledgement of the information process, i.e. generating, transmitting and harnessing the power of information and knowledge is also an important part of this skill. (Srinivas 1995: 30-32)

In their review on global mindset, Levy, Taylor, Boyacigiller and Beechler (2007) summarize, that a global mindset consists of two perspectives: cultural and strategic. They state, that the foundational characteristic of the cultural perspective is cosmopolitanism, which they say is a state of mind that is focused on the outside of one's own comfort zone and seeks to reconcile the local and the global, the familiar and the foreign. Another feature for cosmopolitanism is openness and an eagerness to learn from others' meaning systems. Foundation for the strategic perspective of global mindset is cognitive complexity. People who possess cognitive complexity usually possess advanced information-processing capabilities; they seek out more extensive and original information and spend more time interpreting it. Cognitively complex people also have higher tolerance of ambiguity, an ability to balance contradictions and to consider more alternative points of view, for instance. (Levy et. al. 2007: 13-23)

Bowen and Inkpen (2009), based on interviews of over 200 persons (professors and alumni of the Thunderbird School of Global Management in the USA) and 17 senior global executives in Europe, found assurance for the previous, and provided a definition for global mindset as "the capability to influence individuals, groups and organizations from different sociocultural systems" and argue that global mindset is comprised of intellectual, social and psychological capital". Furthermore, intellectual capital consists of global business savvy, cosmopolitanism and cognitive complexity. Psychological capital is about the passion of diversity, quest for adventure and the self-

assurance of a person, and social capital consists of intercultural empathy, interpersonal impact and diplomacy. Bowen and Inkpen suggest that these capitals enable a person to accurately perceive, analyze and decode global operating environment, identify effective managerial actions and possess behavioral flexibility and discipline to act appropriately. (Bowen & Inkpen 2009: 242-244)

There is a clear link between the attributes of global mindset and desirable personality characteristics behind them. According to Rhinesmith (1996), one may adopt an attribute of the global mindset more easily because of the personality characteristic one has. The personality characteristics of a competent global manager that are linked to the attributes of a global mindset define the manager as knowledgeable, analytical, strategic, flexible, sensitive and open. Thus possessing these personality characteristics are of advantage in developing a global mindset. Rhinesmith (1996) categorizes the first two characteristics under the strategy and structure level described above. The global mindset attribute of driving for broader picture will lead to being more knowledgeable, and vice versa. Being analytical helps in balancing the contradictions and complexities of global business. The second two personality characteristics are categorized under the corporate culture management level described above. Strategic visioning skill is crucial for aligning processes across the organization, and being strategically aligned will help managers to focus on right issues to add value to the horizontal processes of the organization. Flexibility is a crucial characteristic in the constantly changing, complex nature of global organizations, and supports the need to flow with change, a key attribute of a global mindset. The last two personality characteristics are linked with the global mindset attributes of managing people. Developing sensitivity to cultural diversities is linked in the valuing diversities attribute of global mindset, for, as mentioned before, work in multicultural environment is an everyday thing in global business environment. Finally, the last characteristic of openness is linked to the constant, global learning attribute of a global mindset. Manager must be constantly open to reexamine and adjust their own performance in order to ensure continuous improvement. (Rhinesmith 1996: 29-33)

### 2.3. Developing global leadership competencies

Management development has increasingly gained importance amongst human resource and management development professionals during recent years, and it has been pointed out that it should be incorporated as an integral part of the strategy formulation process. Still, according to McClelland (1994), management development is seen as simply training, an unprofitable function of the organization. In this part of my work I will deal with the methods of developing the competencies of global managers described earlier.

On a general level and linking the development programs to company strategy, as summary, McClelland (1994) argues, that implementing strategic management development programs requires gaining organizational commitment by involving senior management, shifting focus from individual to organizational effectiveness, developing an inventory of readily-available skills talents and knowledge, identifying internal resources who possess required skills, talents and knowledge, focusing on corporate vision and long-term growth emphasizing organizational capacity, renewal, change and human resource realignment and involving management development specialists throughout all stages of strategy formulation. (McClelland 1994: 9)

#### 2.3.1. Competency development models

According to Caligiuri (2006), "offering the right people (those with the requisite individual aptitudes) the right developmental opportunities will produce leaders who can effectively perform global leadership tasks and activities". She adds that if the rather immutable foundation level attributes and personality characteristics of a global manager are present, offering an individual training and development interventions can improve one's effectiveness on global leadership tasks. Caligiuri defines training as individually-focused with a present or near-future time frame, and oriented towards solving short-term performance concerns, while development has a broader, long-term focus with future-oriented time frame. Development also

has a broader focus and is linked to improving organizational competence to fulfill a future strategic need, while training focuses on specific deficiencies in individuals, develops a specific competence and is more focused on tangible aspects of improving performance. Caligiuri categorizes the training and development interventions to three categories: didactic learning programs, experiential opportunities and intensive experience.

**Table 6.** Caligiuri's (2006) three types of developmental interventions for KSAO's.

KSAOs	Level of mutability	Developmental interventions
Knowledge	Possible to develop and change	<i>Didactic learning opportunities:</i> Books Training courses Diversity training Language classes
Skills and abilities	Difficult to develop and change	<i>Experiential opportunities:</i> Immersion programs Coaching and mentoring Global meetings and teams
Personality characteristics	Very difficult to develop and change	<i>Intensive experience:</i> International assignments Life-changing experiences Significant non-work cultural experiences

Didactic learning programs consist of training events to improve person's knowledge, skills, abilities and other personality characteristics in cross-cultural, diversity and language issues. General cross-cultural training aims to help the person cope with the uncertainties involved with working in different cultures and countries, while culture-specific training can help managers perform better in a given culture. Diversity training focuses on giving managers and employees better premises in working with diverse workforce within the company, and language training complements these in providing the language skills needed in these interactions. These didactic learning programs can be considered as formal educational tools that give foundational knowledge to managers in a global environment, and the methods can consist of electronic or

traditional self-study courses, off-site courses by academic institutions, company seminars by experts of the field or company-sponsored management development programs. (Caligiuri 2006: 223)

Experiential opportunities can be used to improve the softer skills and abilities associated with global leadership, which are otherwise difficult to learn from simply didactic learning programs. These can include individual coaching and mentoring or immersion programs, for instance, which should be tailored to the individual's strengths and developmental need considering global leadership tasks. Providing opportunities for contacts to people from different countries or organizing the programs in a foreign culture can also be used as a tool for the mentoring and immersion programs to develop global leadership skills. These experiential opportunities are usually very effective in developing the skills and abilities, but can be very costly and time consuming. (Caligiuri 2006: 223-224)

Finally, intensive cultural experiences are those experienced when living and working in another country. Sometimes called 'rotational programs', the main goal of these experiences is global leadership development, often offered to a manager early in their career. Lasting usually 1-2 years in one country, then moving on to another location, the aim of these programs is to offer the manager the chance to gain the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to successfully manage and lead anywhere in the world. Caligiuri states, that according to reports by those who have participated in these rotational programs, they value greatly the skills learned through these programs and feel that the programs enhance their expertise in both domestic and international context. Appreciation of new things, cultural sensitivity, respect for values and customs different from one's own are amongst the lessons learned by those in rotational programs, and the ability to understand the extent to which ones skills and abilities are culturally bound is one of the most important lessons to be learned through intensive cultural experiences. Caligiuri also points out a cautionary note, that repatriates returning from international assignments with newly acquired career enhancing knowledge, skills and abilities often return to a poorly planned role in the home country. There is a danger of losing the skills and abilities an organization is trying to develop in its leaders if the developmental assignments are not carried out as a part of broader managerial developmental program. There should be a role for the returning managers where they can utilize their acquired knowledge, skills and abilities, so that the

intensive cultural experience does not go to waste. While knowledge and skills and abilities are possible to change through didactic learning programs and experiential opportunities, personality characteristics are extremely difficult to change due to the immutable nature of them. Thus, it takes intensive cultural experience for a person to change their personality characteristics. (Caligiuri 2006: 224-225)

According to Caligiuri (2006), organizations usually have two choices to having a competent global leaders; either to 'buy' (assess and select) or 'make' (train and develop) the people with necessary knowledge, skills, abilities and other personality characteristics to effectively perform global leadership activities. The time available and the importance of the task affects to which option is to be chosen. As mentioned, some attributes of effective global leadership are relatively immutable, such as personality characteristics and cognitive ability, and to develop those takes much longer than is practical for the business necessity. Therefore it is wiser to assess and select available leaders with requisite knowledge, skills, abilities and other personality characteristics to get the competence to the organization. If the organization chooses to make its leaders (the second option), supposing that they have the time, it is to be noted that some basic knowledge, skills, abilities and personality characteristics, for example openness, are necessary for the developmental interventions to be effective. Caligiuri thus suggests that "organizations should consider selection on the basis of personality as precursor to leadership training and development programs". In other words, organization should offer managers with requisite personality characteristics the opportunities of international training and development. Organizations should also have a plan for the development of their managers and how the developed knowledge, skills, abilities and personality characteristics are needed within the organization, and the plans should be integrated to the strategic business goals of the organization. (Caligiuri 2006: 225-226)

Black, Morrison & Gregersen (1999), based on their survey of over 100 additional companies concerning their global leadership development activities, offer an opinion, that global leaders are born, then made. They found out four strategies that can develop global leaders when properly used. These were travel, teams, training and transfers. Also called the "Four T's", they are the developmental tools and opportunities to maximize the capabilities of high-



potential individuals, not an universal way of making anyone and everyone into an effective global leader. (Black et al. 1999: 185-188)

**Table 7.** The Four T's by Black, Morrison & Gregersen (1999).

Tools:	Benefits:	Effective methods:
Travel	Develops global business savvy and emotional connection	Getting out of comfort zone (a.k.a. getting wet) Taking detours
Teams	Develops diversity & cultural knowledge	Intensive co-operation with diverse people
Training	Intensive learning experience in a structured environment	Paying attention to participants, content and the process
Transfers	The most powerful developmental experience	Thorough planning of selection, training, sending and repatriation of high-potential individuals

The first development strategy found out by Black et al. (1999) was travel. Many of the managers they interviewed mentioned the power of travel as critical to developing global leadership characteristics, especially global business savvy and emotional connection. The key is, though, the quality of travel, not the quantity. Travel must still be somewhat frequent if it is to be used as a global leadership development tool. To use the power of travel effectively, it must expose the potential global leaders to the culture of the country, outside their comfort zone of the familiar corporate culture or western luxury hotels. In other words, Black et al. suggest two methods in getting the best out of international travel; taking detours and getting wet. This means to really try to learn about the country and the culture in-depth by getting out of the comfort zone in all that one does in the foreign country. Getting out of the comfort zone means that you'll probably see something that your competitors haven't seen yet. (Black et al. 1999: 189-191)

Black et al. found out through their interviews, that the second development strategy, global teams, is even more effective tool in developing global

leadership competencies than travel. This is due to working together with diverse people from different backgrounds in an intensive and prolonged manner, which presents individuals constant opportunities to encounter and mirror with different values, business models decision-making norms and leadership paradigms. Diverse teams also eliminate, or at least reduce, the comfort zone -factor, which was found obstructing in developing global leadership competencies in international travel. Black et al. also emphasize the importance for adequate diversity and cultural training and experience before jumping into a global team to get the best out of it. (Black et al. 1999: 191-193)

The third development strategy is training, which according to the interviews by Black et al. play a central role in organizations' global leadership development efforts. Formal training seminars and programs can provide an intense experience within the context of structured learning environment, excluding the frustrating real-time nature of the previous two development strategies. Black et al. divides the planning of training programs into three themes: participants, content and process. In thinking of participants, Black et al. suggest that organizations should look for participants from all over the world, not just home region. The value of this is the different perspectives and practices, that helps the participants open their minds and embrace new perspectives and to learn about the customers, competitors and markets of different regions. Also, bringing participants from all over the world provides greater networking and relationship opportunities. In terms of content, Black et al. suggest programs that deal with the issues of 1) how effective global vision and strategy are formulated to gain global business and organizational savvy, 2) designing and structuring organizations to learn to successfully position the organization in the global marketplace, 3) process reengineering to learn about the possibilities of technology in redesigning the processes and adding value, 4) management of change to learn the ability to execute and implement change effectively and 5) global team leadership and effectiveness to get the ability to lead cross-cultural and cross functional teams effectively. The analysis by Black et al. on training programs also revealed two trends in the processes. Organizations use customized programs instead of "canned" programs to get the desired content. Secondly the programs are more and more likely to be connected to some project, case or real problems of the organization to get so called "learning by doing". (Black et al. 1999: 193-199)

The most powerful experience, according to the study by Black et al., in developing global leadership capabilities was working and living in a foreign country. This result was given by eighty percent of the diverse respondents of their study. That is the fourth development strategy they identified: international transfers. Their explanation to this is that working in a foreign country provides mind-stretching experiences that are nearly impossible to avoid, because international assignments do not provide the safety of a simulated situation, as training programs do, for instance. High-potential global leaders use international transfers as learning opportunities, where they learn to identify variables that seem to change from country to country and have important consequences, and form a "general map" but know, that it cannot be expected to be accurate in all situations. Rather than that, they learn that what works in one country does not necessarily work in another, and vice versa. High potential individuals can learn this in both intellectual and behavioral level, and can change their behavior and worldview accordingly. Since the costs of international transfers can rise up to considerable amounts, the process of selecting, training, sending and especially repatriating managers needs to be planned extremely well. Without effective repatriation, the advantages of the international assignments to global leader development are very limited. Different kinds of repatriation programs might help those returning from international assignments to adjust back to home country and planning the role of a repatriate in the organization is crucial to get the best advantage out of the acquired knowledge, skills, abilities and other personality characteristics. (Black et al. 1999: 199-211)

McCall & Hollenbeck (2002) state, that the process of development, besides the individual learner, involves the context from which the individual can learn, which can be both positive and negative. Some aspects of this context are under the control of the organization, while others may not be. McCall and Hollenbeck provide a framework for developing global executives, which presumes, that identifying talented people, giving them the appropriate experiences and providing them with the necessary support leads to learning the lessons needed to achieve the business strategy. The business strategy then produces the challenges of leadership, which in turn determines what experiences are needed to develop executive talent further. Those experiences potentially produce the relevant lessons, which are called "the right stuff". The context, which is usually culturally related, plays a key role in shaping these

experiences. McCall & Hollenbeck argue that their process of development is the same for all executives, global, expatriate or local; the specifics applied to developing global executives are significantly different.

As stated before, developing global executives is greatly more complicated and unpredictable than development of domestic leaders, and requires more focus, effort and resources over a longer period of time. According to McCall and Hollenbeck, learning "the right stuff" lessons is dependent upon the global business strategy of the organization, which leads to broader range of more challenging experiences, which in turn develop more talented executives. Thus, the context impacts the whole development process. McCall and Hollenbeck argue, that although an organization cannot make someone develop, it plays a critical role in creating a context for learning, that supports (or inhibits) the development of an individual. The "throw them in and see who floats" -method of development of the past clearly does not work, so McCall and Hollenbeck call for a partnership, where organization provides a context where the possibility of development is maximized while the individuals responsibility of participating in managing their own careers is respected. (McCall & Hollenbeck 2002: 172-174)

The role of business strategy is considered important, for the major differences between developing global and domestic executives are determined by the business strategy and structure of the global organization. It determines how many and what kind of executives from what kind of mix of nationalities will be needed and what are the lessons needed for those people to become effective global leaders, and what kinds of experiences are available to provide those lessons. Thus, the strategic intent and the organizational design determine the foundations of an global leadership development process, and that it is not reasonable to create an universal "one size fits all" leadership development program or process. The business strategy determines how many and what kinds of global leaders are needed and into what kind of roles, and what kind of assignments are available and where, and what cultures need to be understood, i.e. what knowledge, skills abilities and personality characteristics need to be developed. McCall and Hollenbeck also emphasize the importance of moving the people around the organizations different domains to minimize the so called silo effect, i.e. to prevent too narrow specialization of the leaders they want to develop as global leaders. Besides the strategy, the structure and

design of the organization affects to the perceived needs and methods for global leadership development. For example, an organization with a small home market may use broader methods of developing and utilizing their global leaders to achieve growth, while an organization with a large home market may just think it's enough to send an country manager overseas to learn to run the business in a specific country, and thus not fully utilize the possibilities (experiences) of developing competencies of their global leaders. (McCall & Hollenbeck 2002: 174-178)

Getting the right people into the right experiences is referred as the mechanisms of the development process. It consists of generating a contingency plan, i.e. a process for planning the selection processes for critical jobs in advance, and planning a successor (replacement) program for those jobs, if something happens to the current incumbent. This process focuses more on finding existing skills on those critical jobs rather than developing those skills. Discovery and development processes of new skilled persons are another important part of these development process mechanisms, which focuses on the process of developing talent for the future. Lastly, as part of these mechanisms McCall & Hollenbeck use the term 'recovery' to point out the problems of repatriation, and that as part of the development process, an organization needs to have a plan for repatriating global managers, because the development of them does not stop when they return from overseas. (McCall & Hollenbeck 2002: 188-191),

As noted above, various authors acknowledge the importance of having a global mindset in becoming a successful global leader. Gupta & Govindarajan (2002) argue that the proper definition of developing a global mindset is cultivating it on an endless journey. According to them, four factors affect to the pace on which a person develops, or cultivates, a global mindset. These are the (1) curiosity about the world and commitment to becoming smarter about how the world works, (2) an explicit and self-conscious articulation of current mindsets, (3) exposure to diversity and novelty and (4) a disciplined attempt to develop an integrated perspective that weaves together diverse strands of knowledge about cultures and markets. Curiosity (and openness) about the world is heavily a personality characteristic and the organization itself has little power in affecting this characteristic in a person. But what it can do is to emphasize this characteristic in the selection processes as a requirement. Self-

conscious and explicit articulation of current mindset means the realization of one's own mindset about the world and its incompleteness and the fact that it is only one of many alternatives enhances the likelihood of new learning significantly. Exposure to diversity and novelty (i.e. new cultures and markets) is a great way to cultivate the global mindset, and according to Gupta & Govindarajan it can happen on the individual level and organizational level. Facilitating such knowledge building at the level of individuals can happen for example by formal education (courses, seminars or management development programs), utilizing cross-border teams and projects and meetings taking place in different locations, cultural learning programs that immerse the people in new cultures for a certain period of time, usually two-to-three months, or at the most effective and intensive level: expatriate assignments lasting several years. Other methods can be, for example, job rotations through geographic regions, business divisions and functions. In addition, the approaches complement each other, from the individual level cultivation to cherishing the whole diversity of the workforce of the organization. (Gupta & Govindarajan 2002: 120-125)

#### 2.4. Theoretical framework

In this chapter I will summarize the findings from the literature review in order to create a framework which will work as the basis for my empirical study. It's main purpose is to find the recurring global leadership competencies found by various authors, and to find a set of universal, or more generalizable, competencies that according to the literature review 1) function as the core competencies of global leaders and 2) can be generalized as to be the most essential competencies for global leadership. In my opinion, concluding the found competencies into a more generalizable form is necessary for the empirical study due to the fact that there seemed to be as many views on essential global leadership competencies as there were authors. One author seemed to have similar approach to them as myself, and the author also handled the subject on a more generalizable level than some others, which is why this framework is mostly based on the findings of Caligiuri. Views from other authors have of course been taken into account, but in my opinion Caligiuri's views recaps most of them, this author's views is a good basis for the

framework.

As the framework depicts the essential global leadership competencies to be researched in the next chapter, those competencies' developmental methods will be researched as sub-category in the empirical study. The competencies essential for global leaders as found by my literature review, and divided into four sub-categories: knowledge, skills, abilities and other personality characteristics, are depicted in the table below and thus will function as the basis for my empirical research.

**Table 8.** Summary of KSAO's for global leaders.

	Caligiuri & DiSanto (2001)	Bird & Osland (2004)	Black, Morrison & Gregersen (1999)	McCall & Hollenbeck (2002)
Knowledge	Knowledge of: -company's worldwide business structure -international business issues -network of professional contacts	Global knowledge: know who – know how – know what – know why Knowledge of individual, organization and industry	Business savvy: Possessing business & organizational expertise and profound professional knowledge	Work expertise
Skills		Interpersonal skills System skills		Interest and sensitivity to other cultures
Abilities	-ability to transact business in another country -ability to change leadership style according to a given situation			Ability to cope with ambiguity, uncertainty and complexity
Personality characteristics	Openness Flexibility Reduced ethnocentrism Global mindset	Threshold traits: Integrity, Humility, Inquisitiveness, Hardiness, Openness	Inquisitiveness Perspective Character	Open-mindedness, flexibility, resilience, innovativeness, Optimism Honesty Righteousness

Possessing a knowledge base is considered as an important competence for global leaders. The knowledge that a competent global leader must possess consists of profound professional knowledge and a deep understanding of not only the business field and industry one operates in, but also the company's worldwide business structure, strategy and culture. Effective global leaders have also established a wide network of professional contacts. In other words, global leaders need to know who to turn to as a resource in their network of



contacts, know how to best utilize their skills and knowledge in their work, know what they are selling (understanding the products, services and functions) and know why their company operates the way it does (understanding and identifying with the organizational culture, strategy and vision). In addition to this, effective global leaders also have a profound cultural knowledge base; knowledge of individuals in general, the human nature and cultural differences.

Competencies defined as skills in the literature review were interpersonal skills and system skills (Bird & Osland 2004) and interest and sensitivity to other cultures (McCall & Hollenbeck 2002), which I would label as cultural skills. Interpersonal skills were further divided into mindful communication and creating and building trust, which implies to the importance of well-developed social skills needed from effective global leaders. System skills were divided into boundary spanning, building community through change and ethical decision-making. These are skills that ensure effective leadership in situations where internal and external, vertical and horizontal, geographic and cultural borders are crossed, a typical situation in global leader functions. Possessing good interpersonal, system and cultural skills are likely to make a person better in building and maintaining cross-border connections, enhancing the flow of knowledge and ideas in a multi-cultural environment, ensure the effective communication of organizations global vision and strategy and leading the change process towards the vision, participating employees and stakeholders, and having the needed skills to perceive and interpret complex cultural context to ensure ethical decision-making.

Although abilities, in my opinion, somewhat overlap with skills and personality characteristics, some competencies defined as abilities were found in the literature review. Probably as the most important was the ability to cope with the ambiguities, uncertainties and complexities of the global business world. In order to have these abilities, one needs the underpinning skills and personality characteristics. Two of more specific abilities were also identified, which were the ability to transact business in another country, and the ability to change leadership styles according to a given situations. In my opinion these abilities are included in the main ability mentioned first, the ability to cope with ambiguity, uncertainty and complexity of global business issues.

Most of the key competencies for global leaders identified in the literature review were affiliated with personality characteristics. They were the essential building blocks for the development of the rest of the competencies, and since personality characteristics are most difficult to develop or change, it is important to possess them to as great extent as possible from the beginning. Most frequently found personality characteristic for effective global leader was openness, which is affiliated with responsiveness of a person to new things, most of all in global work, cultural issues. Closely linked with this was the characteristic of inquisitiveness, also noted by majority of the authors of the field. This was affiliated with continuous development, insatiable willingness to learn new things and explore the unknown. Another characteristic that was popular in describing competent global leaders was flexibility. Flexibility allows persons to respond better to complex situations of the global work and conform to unfamiliar solutions to those situations. On the other hand flexibility supports openness, for it makes a person more adaptable and accepting to unfamiliar environment. Strength of character was also mentioned as a key characteristic for a global leader, although it had many labels amongst the authors, hardiness and resilience, among others. Also, the integrity of a person was mentioned as a descriptive characteristic for a global leader. Humility, honesty and righteousness were considered to be important characteristics in global work. In addition to these, I would point out that an overall positive attitude towards life and optimism were valued characteristics for effective global leaders.

One great characteristic mentioned in almost all frameworks of competencies for global leaders was global mindset. It was seen as the driving force for effective people in global work, combining the personality characteristics mentioned above. There is a clear link between the attributes of global mindset and desirable personality characteristics behind them, in other words, one may adopt an attribute of the global mindset more easily because of the personality characteristic one has. Moreover, global mindset is a cosmopolitan cultural and strategic perspective, a broadened view of the world, people and business.

Caligiuris (2006) statement, that "offering the right people (those with the requisite individual aptitudes) the right developmental opportunities will produce leaders who can effectively perform global leadership tasks and activities" will function as the basis for the research of my sub-question about

the effective and essential developmental methods of global leadership competencies. This implies that some competencies need to be present first before it is reasonable to start building more competencies on top of them via developmental interventions. In other words, some competencies are more immutable than others and therefore it should be determined to which competencies should be tried to develop and what the best developmental methods for their development are.

### 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1. Introduction

As the previous chapters explained the theoretical background and findings from the literature review, the purpose of this chapter is to explain the methodology behind the research methods used in this study and to provide the findings of my research. Firstly I will explain how the interviews used to collect data for this study were conducted and what the interviewees' profiles were. Then I will provide information on how the collected data was analyzed. Finally, I will provide details about the reliability and validity of my research.

This study was conducted as a qualitative study first and foremost due to the nature of the subject. My conclusion was that using qualitative methods instead of quantitative is the most suitable method to find out interviewees' opinions about the subject of global leadership competencies, for it allows more freedom for thought to think about and generate answers about this subject, thus not constraining the scope of possible answers, as if the study would be conducted in a quantitative manner would do. The purpose of this empirical research was to find out the most important global leadership competencies in practice, and then compare them to the findings from the literature review, and in my opinion using a qualitative method in the research would allow the respondents to speak more freely about their opinions about the matter, thereby giving deeper and more insightful information, also enabling unexpected answers to arise.

It has been argued that there are not that many truly global organizations in the world, for example by Alan Rugman (Rugman 2003: 1), who refers to a study of the sales data of the top 500 companies in the world, that only 9 of them are truly global. For the purpose of finding a potential organization and interviewees, in my study I have determined that to qualify as a global organization, the company needs to function and be genuinely present in more than three continents. After researching potential organizations I have ended up with a globally functioning Finnish paper, pulp, timber and energy corporation.

It employs over 24 000 people worldwide, has production plants in 16 countries, reaching four continents, in addition to which it has sales offices around the world making the company operate in every settled continent.

Like I have mentioned above, the purpose of this qualitative research was to find out and identify the competencies, i.e. knowledge, skills, abilities and personality characteristics, that are being considered most important in practice in today's globally functioning organization, and this has been executed through semi-structured interviews with people from the aforementioned organization. I will describe details about the interviews and interviewees next.

### 3.2. Data collection

The data for this study was collected via semi-structured interviews. The interviews were conducted in the organizations Global HR Service Center located in Kraków, Poland, where the organization has lately been centralizing its human resources functions. I believe this was the best way to find relevant people with great experience about this subject. The main criteria for the persons to be interviewed was that they either have experience from and/or are currently working in a global leadership position, therefore having gained relevant and versatile knowledge and competencies about global leadership competencies. The main point of the interviews was not to find out the global competencies relevant to their current job, but to find out what they held the most important competencies for global leaders based on their professional experience altogether. There were five interviewees with different backgrounds, all in managerial positions and/or with global roles and responsibilities. Because of the versatility of the backgrounds, organizational level and personal global professional experience of the interviewees I felt that this was a sufficient number of interviewees to get valid, versatile and comprehensive data for the study. The interviewees' names will not be disclosed at their own request. One of the selection criteria for the interviewees was to get a representation from different level global managerial positions, so the interviewees chosen held titles of HR Director, IT Director, HR Manager, Service Owner (managed a team of around 20 located globally) and Global Service Center Team Leader. All of

the interviewees had minimum of 5 direct subordinates, but for example under the directors there were between 40-250 depending on the unit. I believe taking one interviewee from the IT organization was in place to bring versatility and hopefully insights different and fresh from the HR organization.

The interviews were conducted in-person, and each interview lasted between 40 to 60 minutes. Four of the interviews were done in English, one in Finnish because the native language of the interviewee was Finnish. They took place in conference rooms to minimize disruption. Interviews were recorded for the purpose of efficient capture of all the relevant knowledge, and were later transcribed for analysis of the gathered knowledge. All of the interviewees were asked the same questions, in addition to which some additional questions were asked if needed in order to clarify a point or ask the interviewees to open up the answer, if they have brought up an interesting topic, which would not have come otherwise up in the set of questions. The set of questions consisted of 15 questions subcategorized into three sub-categories. The sub-categories were 1) questions about the competences, 2) questions about the developmental methods and 3) questions regarding the global versus local -dichotomy. During the interviews my focus was to let the respondents answer freely, and moving on to the next question only when it's clear that the interviewee has finished answering and all the clarifying questions were asked. The questions were asked in an open form to ensure the versatility of the answers and to fully bring out the interviewees opinions and experience of the matter.

### 3.3. Data analysis

After the interviews were completed, they were transcribed word-for-word to help capture all that was said in order to process and analyze the data. This was done also to ensure that no relevant information, like examples that might reveal the true meaning of the answer, would be included in the analysis process.

Like mentioned earlier, the set of questions was divided into three sub-categories. This was done not only to structurize the interview, but above all to

clarify the data analysis process. The first sub-category consisted of questions about the competences important for global leaders and its purpose was to find out the interviewees opinions about what were the key competences for global positions. The second sub-category focused on to find out what the interviewees opinions about the most effective developmental methods of these found out competencies, while the last sub-category concentrated on to find out the respondents opinions about the global versus local dichotomy, in other words to find out if a point where local becomes global can be determined. Naturally I will discuss these matters in more detail in the next chapter titled Findings from the Interviews.

After all the interviews were on paper word-for-word, the collected material was analyzed by comparing the answers to each other, firstly on the question level and secondly on a subcategorical level. The purpose of this was to find out similarities between the interviewees opinions and thus find out a more generalizable set of competencies and their developmental methods which would be later on compared to the findings of my literature review. In more detail, my intention was to find out recurring themes and even exact competencies from the interviewees answers and then to comprise a more generalizable set of knowledge, skills, abilities and personality characteristics which was found the most important in practice in today's global organization.

My secondary purpose was to find out themes and competencies that global HR professionals find important, that did not come up in my literature review. In the interview phase, if such matter rose up, I would ask clarifying questions to ensure that this secondary data was also captured. In the analysis phase I have noted these issues and if possible, linked them with my existing themes. Due to the fact that these interesting topics might have come up only from one interviewee, thus not being recurring, but still a relevant and/or critical competence for a global leader, I had to use my own evaluation whether or not to include them in my findings.

### 3.4. Reliability and validity of the study

Reliability and validity assess the accuracy, trustworthiness and reality of the study. By reliability is meant that the study is repeatable. In order to be reliable, the study should give the same results when replicated regardless of who conducts the research. In other words, reliability makes the study generalizable. The reliability of this study was ensured by using the same set of questions, derived from the literature review, to all interviewees. The questions were asked the same way, in the same order. All interviewees were explained before the interview what the interview was about and what was its purpose, and the interviews were also explained the glossary about the terms used (and their meanings) in the interview. This makes this study reliable and generalizable.

By the validity of a study is meant whether or not the study succeeds to measure what the researcher intended to measure. In qualitative research it is generally said that if the study truly examines the subject which it claims to have examined, the study is valid. There is two categories to validity, external and internal. In qualitative research external validity generalizability and transferability of the study, which in my opinion somewhat overlaps with the reliability. By internal validity in qualitative studies is meant the precision (i.e. the study's design, the decision what was studied and what wasn't, and the thoroughness of the measures). The validity of this study was ensured also by focusing on the reliability explained above, but also by carefully choosing the interviewees and the organization. The interviewees were chosen according to their professional experience in the global arena, thus providing relevant source for global leadership competency issues. The organization and the interviewees being somewhat familiar to the researcher also increased the validity of the interviewees and their answers. Of course the professional experience of the interviewees varied (some were more experienced than others), which influences the validity, but this fact was kept in mind during the analysis process to ensure that the validity will stay in sufficient level. The organization within which the interviews were conducted was also more global than was set in the beginning (i.e. truly present in at least three continents), which on its part also ensures the validity. The validity was also ensured during the interviews by clarifying the questions if the interviewee clearly understood the question wrong and answered off-topic. In conclusion, taking the aforementioned into



account I claim that the reliability and validity of this qualitative study is in more than sufficient level, which leads to the generalizability of the results and the reproducibility of this study.

## 4. FINDINGS FROM THE INTERVIEWS

### 4.1. Introduction

In this chapter I will present the findings from my interviews and try to bring out the opinions of the interviewees as thoroughly as possible by also providing some quotes from the interviews to illustrate my findings. The structure of this chapter will try to follow the structure of the literature review, and also the structure of the interviews by firstly providing my findings about key competencies of global leaders found out in the interviews. Secondly I will discuss about the developmental methods found most effective in developing these methods. Thirdly I will handle the opinions of the interviewees about the global versus local dichotomy after which I will provide some additional findings from the interviews that I considered to be important and interesting regarding global leadership competencies, but weren't necessarily recurring topics from the interviews. After this, in the final chapter I will conclude my study by comparing my empirical findings to the findings of my literature review.

### 4.2. Global leadership competencies

Before the interview started it was explained to the interviewees that in my literature review I had summarized competencies into four main sub-categories, them being knowledge, skills, abilities and personality characteristics. The interviewees were also given a few examples of competency types of each category. After that, as a pre-question, I wanted to find out what category the most important global leadership competencies fall into according to the interviewees. The answer to this question was very clear, since every one of the interviewees replied almost without hesitation it to be personality characteristics. Personality characteristics and competencies requiring soft skills were identified to be more tightly connected with global roles than for example

specific knowledge, who the interviewees felt could be learnt faster and anywhere. One interviewee also concluded the personality characteristics to be the most important competency sub-category, but added that that the other categories are needed as well, which in my opinion points out that the competencies from other categories, for example, are not to be underestimated in this study.

*"I would say it's a mix of the personality characteristics and the specific knowledge and skills. You definitely need to have certain characteristics of your personality to be able to even get familiar to learn certain skills and to get certain knowledge.. so definitely I would say that a certain personality is required. Especially that, having a global role you are dealing with a lot of stress and a lot of uncertain situations and if you don't have strong personality you will not be able to cope with these in the long term."*

At the beginning of my interview, in accordance with my literature review, my goal was to find out what are the factors that make a role or a position global. This was to identify in practice what makes such a position or a role where the specific global leadership competencies can be identified. The main finding was that the responsibilities, processes and relationships with people (also networking) need to be on a global level. One in a global role tackles universal matters specific to the company but not specific to the country one is located in. In addition these processes are usually globally standardized. Another key factor that makes a role global according to the interviewees was dealing with different cultures. Interesting point found out from one interview was that these different cultures need not necessarily be around the world, since according to one interviewee a position can be global when it includes relationships with people from different cultures located even in the same location. In my opinion, one of the interviewees managed to summarize the concept of global position rather well:

*" It [a global position/role] needs to be touching multiple countries and nationalities and processes which are performed across the borders in different countries."*

There were three personality characteristics that came up in every interview amongst the first ones to be mentioned, that the interviewees felt to be the most important global leadership competencies, these being openness and flexibility and openness/sensitivity to other cultures. Openness was found to be related to

both in global roles in general and to cultural issues as well. Openness towards other cultures came up as a key issue in the interviews. It came up in many forms, for example cultural awareness and being able to cope with and collaborate with different cultures and realizing cultural differences, and being able to process and work together in spite of these differences. This issue was also mentioned as respect to other cultures and cultural sensitivity, which in my opinion summarizes the characteristic very well. One interviewee added to this openness toward cultures, that a global leader needs to be open towards other cultures in a way where he/she is able to take other cultures seriously. A quote from the interviewee explains the point:

*"..What I learned in Russia is that you have to take people serious, so my point is that.. .. Don't believe that people just want to cheat, they just want to do it their own way, or find their own way to do it and do a good job basically. The problem is very often that they don't have the methods or the knowledge or the skills or experience to make it work like a western company wants to have for example, and then they're acting quite strange... from an outsiders point of view. For the outsider it looks kind of amazing [=unbelievable] what's happening, but then if you start to talk to the people and you ask them why did they do certain things, then there's a logic reasoning behind. And then you have to take that reasoning seriously."*

In the interviews, constant change was defined as one of the key elements and a typical situation in global business field, so openness to change was naturally mentioned as a key characteristic to a global leader. Being open to change, new challenges and new situations was perceived as a very important feature for a global leader. In my opinion this is very closely linked, and brings us to the next important competence identified by the interviews: flexibility.

Flexibility was perceived to be one of the most important key characteristics for global leaders. According to the interviewees global roles very often include unexpected situations and ambiguities, so flexibility was identified as the key competence to be able to cope with the stress caused by these types of situations.

*"First thing that people holding this global role is that immediately you are exposed to these situations that you don't expect. You need to expect the unexpected in a way. If you are not flexible you will have lot of trouble and stress with this so obviously you*

*need to have certain stress resistance, and to be stress resistant you need to have this flexibility."*

Flexibility was also perceived key characteristic in cultural issues mentioned above. According to the interviewees you need to be able to navigate through and find compromises in situations that include cultural differences, and you need to be able to empathize with different cultures, i.e. understand and adjust to other people's opinions and ways of working, and this requires flexibility.

These personality characteristics were also identified competencies that global leaders look for in recruiting situations. By asking the interviewees what are the key competencies they look for in a person when recruiting to a global leadership position my aim was to identify competencies that should function as a basis for a global leader. In addition to valuing openness, flexibility and cultural sensitiveness, a few other competencies could be identified. Even though it might be self-evident, but language skills were stressed in every interview. Good English skills were perceived as a prerequisite, but also language skills were mentioned to be useful for a good global leader; it was said to help communication and building relationships in general if one was able to say a few words in someone's own language.

*" Any other language additional quality, especially if you go out and speak to people in their own language they perceive you totally different, so its really a great value if someone speaks other languages"*

Communication skills in general, especially in a multicultural context, were emphasized important in the interviews as well. Another thing that the respondents sought after in recruiting situations was the international experience of the candidates. The minimum requirement was for the candidates to at least show interest in getting to know other cultures, i.e. interest to internationality, but most of the respondents emphasized that the ideal candidate for a global leadership role should have some international experience. The interviewees held valuable, that the candidate had lived in another country or preferably several countries, or at least travelled around the world. I think the answer of one respondent explains the ideology behind this requirement rather well:

*"It's good if you have people who know a bit about other countries already, so basically who have shown in their CV that they're interested in other countries and other locations, that's good. They should have been travelled a bit, they should have an understanding of life in different circumstances and be aware that people react differently."*

Of course professional experience in general was valued due to the various abilities it generates, for example being able to think outside the box, and being able to critically assess processes of the organization based on the professional expertise and knowledge created by the earlier experiences of the person. More of the findings on these types of issues will be discussed later in chapter 4.5. titled Additional Findings.

Based on my own assumption that networking in a global context would require some additional or specific kind of competences, I included a question about what the interviewees found important in networking situations and power relationships, like for example building and using networks, negotiations and situations where one needs to affect to another's opinions, e.g. trying to "sell" ones ideas. In general the respondents viewed networking as a very important skill for global leaders. In networking the same competencies mentioned before, like cultural sensitiveness, flexibility and communication were considered important, but some other competencies were also identified. In global communication skills, besides being able to listen and communicate well, a few of the interviewees stated that it's very important to be able to start a conversation with different kinds of people in different situations (chit chat), and also function as a conversational linkage between people from other cultures. Deriving from this, as one interviewee mentioned, openness comes along once again, but also good extrovertedness should be pointed out as important factor in global communication skills. What comes to power relationships itself, one interviewee noted that in today's lower matrix organizations power doesn't necessarily come with the title but has to be earned with own actions and own example. In my opinion this example refers to the important traits of integrity and righteousness and keeping your promises. One of the interviewees talked about the importance of authenticity, i.e. being yourself in power relationships; not trying to play a role but being yourself in every situation. Of course there are situations, where you have to adapt to the tone of conversation, but still it was noted important to be authentic in those

situations as well.

Even though not covered in the literature review, I wanted to survey the opinion of the interviewees about motivational factors in the global field, whether or not they had identified matters that motivate people seeking global leadership positions, and can this motivation be mapped or surveyed, or developed by organizational interventions. While it was a common opinion among the interviewees, that there's no particular way to map or survey exactly about global motivation; it does not differ from any other questions to find out about a person's motivation, certain factors could be identified, that are motivational for people seeking global leadership positions, and most of these were closely linked to attributes of a global position mentioned earlier in this study. Most commonly noted motivational factor in global positions was the challenge they offer. Global roles usually offer challenges in the form of constant learning, lots of new things and ambiguities and varying situations that people that seek into global roles find motivating. One factor that could be identified was that people who are inquisitive usually are motivated by global positions. Possibilities to learn about other cultures was also brought up by many interviewees, so people willing to learn new things would be the ones that are motivated for global roles. When asked whether or not you can develop the global motivation for people, especially by organizations developmental efforts the answers varied. The basic premise was that organization can not affect to the global motivation directly, people either have it or not. But the side note was that it can be influenced. The opinion was that you can offer things (within the offered role) that motivate people, but if they are totally lacking the motivation, then you cannot build it.

*"So yes, i think you can influence that [motivation], but if there's a person who is definitely not interested you will not do anything visible, so if you have, let's say, good material you can influence them, but not everyone, definitely"*

The previous quotation encapsulates the opinions of the interviewees about developing motivation, in my opinion. In other words, if you have people who have the potential to be motivated by global roles you can influence them, but surely not someone who does not find global challenges motivational at all.

### 4.3. Developmental methods

After finding out the opinions of the interviewees about what are the most essential competencies for global leaders, I wanted to study what were the most effective developmental methods for these competencies. Presuming there would be a sufficient level of global leadership competencies that one needs to possess in order to be ready to work in a global leader position, I wanted to check this assumption in practice and asked as a basis question for my developmental part of the interview whether this level could be easily identified.

Surprisingly the interviewees did not think this sufficient level of global leadership competencies would be very easy to identify. The general opinion among the interviewees was that to a certain extent it might be possible to identify such a level, but since each global role is different and has different set of required competencies, identifying a sufficient level depends on the requirements of the position and the person. According to the interviewees, what makes the total assessment of the sufficient level difficult is the difference in measurability of competencies. For example, language skills are obviously easier to measure than openness, both critically important to global leaders. Also, the moment of measurement of the competencies also affects to this; with one interviewee came up a valid point, that if you measure these competencies for example in the interview phase, there is a greater possibility for misassessment, than after knowing the candidate for a longer period of time and seeing them work.

*"I think it would be possible, yes, like find personalities who can cope with that, combination of CV, combination of certain attitudes towards new things, sure, language skills its easy at the end of the day, for sure it would be possible."*

*"You can identify to a certain level, so certain knowledge, and let's say, ability to learn and things like that you can identify in the course of interview and first weeks of work but there's always possibility of mistake.. ..but in general i would say it's possible to identify at least this skills and sometimes know this stress level,... you can never really say how the person will act in a certain situation, so you never know for sure until you see the person in work actually, because it can happen that someone can work for a few*



*months before a really stressful situation comes and you will then now how they act"*

There was a very strong unanimity amongst the interviewees when asked which competencies were the hardest to develop. It must be noted that by development of the competencies in this study meant the efforts and actions that can be taken within the organizational context, i.e. where the organization is the facilitator. All interviewees agreed that the hardest to develop are the personality characteristics and so called soft skills. It was claimed, that the closer to the core personality characteristics one goes, the harder they are to develop. The general opinion was that it is probably possible to affect to and develop these kinds of core competencies, but whether or not it should be done in the organizational context, was a different question. It was felt that the core personality characteristics are so close to the person itself, that the change in these need to come from within the person. Interviewees stated that organization can try to affect to develop these competencies, but they can't make the person change them unless they are willing and able.

*"Well yes of course, ... , but the training will not teach you, the training can show you how to manage yourself or how to work on your personal skills, it may show you some weak points.. They can show you the way but they can't make you go the way" On whether or not it's possible to affect to these core personality competencies, and whether it can be done in organizational context.*

One interviewee presented an interesting case which applies both to these hardest-to-develop competencies, and to the most effective developmental methods that will be presented next. The interviewee had a personal experience in working with a graduate program where graduates were rotated between different countries and different sales and marketing positions every three months. Every time they moved the graduates, they had three factors that changed: country, language and job task. Their key learning was that three changing factors were too much to handle for the people. They learned that they can change two of the factors to facilitate effective learning. The key learning applied to this study from the example was that it is possible to affect to the hard-to-change competencies, but it can be done step-by-step and very carefully.

This brings us to our next point of study, the most effective methods of

development of the essential competencies. There was a general consensus that the most effective way to develop global leadership competencies was exposure to global work. It came up with all interviewees that participation to global projects was the key developmental methods for global competencies; some even encouraged an almost sink-or-swim style throwing into a global task and to feel one's own skin, so to speak. Theoretical background and conventional training (classroom training, courses and seminars etc.) were of course credited as a good start but really living through a global project was seen as the most essential learning field for global leadership competencies. Conventional trainings were seen as a good way to develop the more shallow competencies, i.e. knowledge and skills, but to make a difference in a different level one needs to be immersed in a global project, preferably in a country & culture other than their own. This was seen as the most cost-effective way for development, if such a thing can be measured. In other words, the respondents felt that this way one gets best results in developing global leadership competencies in shorter period of time.

*"I think at the end of the day you need to send people out of the old culture zone to another culture zone. That's the most effective way, because in the shorter period of time you get the best result. "*

Learning from others as a developmental method was also mentioned by few of the interviewees as a good way to develop skills and abilities. Being with other people was seen as a good opportunity to learn for example cultural competencies (ability to cope with other cultures, for example). Learning from peers was seen as a good way of broadening ones perspective by learning new approaches to things and broadening ones view. Aside learning from peers, mentoring was seen to be a very effective way to develop global leadership competencies. It was seen as a way of connecting a potential global leader to the experience they need, but do not yet have themselves. It was felt that no training can give as effective result as working with someone with experience. Interesting topic that came up was also, that mentoring is a great way of speeding up the developmental process:

*"..certain skills you cannot learn in a classroom, you need to experience themselves, you can speed up this process of growing into this global position by having some kind of mentor, It's actually the same, you're not using your own experience, you are using the*

*experience of someone else, so you can speed up this process of growing."*

When it comes to developing global leadership competencies, one of the things I wanted to research was if it is possible to identify a time-span of how long it takes to develop firstly a sufficient level of global leadership competencies where one can cope in a global role, and secondly, a very good level of global leadership competencies, where one successfully functions in a global environment. To this I did not get as clear of an answer as I would have wanted to, because most of the interviewees stated, that it is not possible to identify such a time-span. It was a general consensus that it depends on the person, the position and the organization. The time range the interviewees mentioned was from six months to few years, but even the few years of experience was seen a good starting point. The difficulty in this question was that it is difficult to define the starting point of the measurement, because it depends on the person, and the measuring points themselves (sufficient versus excellent) and the challenges in competencies' measurability. Aside from the fact mentioned above, that a mentor can greatly speed up this process, the time taken to develop as a good global leader was seen to be dependent on such factors as openness, ability to learn quickly and experience, for example.

When asked what are the competencies that organizations today focus their developmental efforts to, the most common answer from the interviewees was competencies related to change management. Change being probably the most predominant factor in global organizations, it was seen that organizations also focus to develop their leaders' competencies on this field as well. Being able to act in an environment that is constantly changing is thus an important competence for global leaders. According to the interviewees, other competencies that organizations focus to develop today were general leadership skills and communication and collaboration skills. These, especially change management skills, were seen also as the competencies organizations should focus their developmental efforts to. Aside from these, the interviewees felt that organizations should focus to competencies such as project management skills, skills and abilities related to working with different cultures and global values, and personal effectiveness skills. Also system skills, i.e. knowledge of technology were mentioned important, even though it might seem self-evident. These additional competencies will be handled in more detail later in Additional Findings chapter.

#### 4.4. Global vs. Local

In my study I also wanted to research the global versus local dichotomy mentioned earlier in my work. This being the third part of my set of questions, I wanted to find out if it was possible to identify the factors that separate global leaders from local leaders, and whether or not a distinction between global leadership competencies and local leadership competencies can be made. This distinction was not that easy. According to the interviewees many of the competencies required for global leaders and local leaders are the same, and it was very hard to distinguish anything additional that needs to be added on local leadership competencies in order to make them global. From the interviewees answers it was possible to distinguish the attitude that the competencies do not stack up on top of another, meaning the more competencies stacked, the closer to global it gets, nor does it function like a slide button, where the top level is global and bottom level is local. It was argued that global and local leaders have a bit different set of competencies, but no general opinion about what the different competencies are were not found. Some of the factors mentioned were those mentioned before in this study, like flexibility and openness, and according to the interviewees the weight on these competencies are bigger for global leaders and local leaders, but still also local leaders need them. Other distinguishing features for global leaders mentioned were the scope of different issues, which was seen to be larger for global leaders than local, different type of learning capabilities, and ability to cope with uncertainties. Networking abilities were also distinguished different for global than local leaders. Cultural sensitivity was a competence more easily distinguished important for global leaders, but not necessarily local leaders. One opinion that prevailed in most interviews was, that even the great local leaders do not very easily qualify as great global leaders, and the other way around; the great global leaders do not automatically make good local leaders, which in my opinion encapsulates the general opinion amongst the interviewees about this question: global leaders not necessarily have more competencies than local leaders, the competencies are just a bit different and might be needed in different amounts and have different weight, but in the end the competences needed for global and local leaders are very similar. A quote from one interviewee makes my point, in my opinion:

*"Basically I would say that you may have people who are brilliant leaders in a local position and on the other hand if you put them on the global role they will be totally lost, they will not be able to stop thinking from the point of view of their own position, they will not be able to think from another angle, on the other hand you may have very great global leaders but if you put them on a very local position they will be lost with number of details and they will not be able to manage they will not be focusing on this task that is happening on the local environment so... but obviously there is a lot of local leaders who are growing to this global roles, so if it's just a little bit different competences, additional competences"*

#### 4.5. Additional Findings

There were some additional competencies that were mentioned in separate interviews. Because they did not come up recurrently, they might not be generalizable, but some of them were very relevant and interesting to the subject, so in my opinion it would also be appropriate to discuss these additional competencies identified important for global leaders.

One competence, which I would categorize under abilities, that was mentioned by one interview, and could also be derived from other answers, was one's ability to function in a matrix organization. Today's global organizations are more or less matrix organizations these days and the ability to effectively work and find your way around in such an organization was seen also critical for global leaders. Another thing derived from the complex organization models was that sometimes the interaction and networking is also virtual, so one needs to be able to effectively function in this virtual world as well, and this is in my opinion a fact that gets more and more attention every day. One of the interviewees pointed out also a risk to this that is in my opinion important to note. In his opinion virtuality, especially social media, might also eat peoples skills in networking and other social interactions, for example, because people might become too trustful that everything will be found online, you can find persons by just clicking, and nobody has to think for themselves anymore, because someone else has already thought about it, and you can find it/them online. So there might be a false sense of security in that someone has thought

something on behalf of us already, and this might make some social competencies obsolete.

With two of the interviewees, skills related to personal effectiveness were emphasized as important competence for global leaders, and regarding the hectic atmosphere of today's business life, especially in global roles, I felt this to be an important factor to be mentioned in additional competences crucial to global leaders. Having good time management skills, like being able to prioritize, choose your own tasks and take more responsibility on organizing one's own day, for example, was mentioned to be very helpful for any global leader. Somewhat related to this was also good project management skills, which was mentioned to be important in a global organization.

*"...if you want to achieve anything in the global company you need to have certain project management skills and also a lot of companies are now putting emphasis to project management trainings as they see the need that whatever you do in a global company it's not a single thing that you can do easily and you need to learn how to manage the projects"*

Since change was seen to be an underlying feature for global organizations, competencies regarding the abilities to cope with change, or master the change to put it better, were seen very important to global leaders. This consists of not only managing change, but the readiness, willingness and openness for change in particular. A good global leader needs to be able to accept change and be able to learn and gain the valuable experience from change.

One factor that surprised me during the interviews was that the emphasis on competencies one would consider self-evident. Good language skills were mentioned in almost every interview, but also technology skills were considered to be very important for global leaders. Fluency with technology is relevant especially in global organization where one needs to be able to handle all kinds of technology, for example teleconference equipment, because they are present in everyday work for global leaders. The technology is also constantly changing, so one needs to be able to keep up with the changes and learn new technology skills fast and easily.

Even though global positions usually require a lot of teamwork, independency

was stated to be a required competence for a global leader. Several of the interviewees emphasized that a global leader also needs to be able to think independently, take tasks independently, be able to think outside the box and propose improvements if they see room for improvement, and take initiative. In a global role one needs to be able to take initiative, because the roles usually require this "self-service mode", as one interviewee put it, because even though global roles require a lot of teamwork, they have a characteristic of independency as well.

In my research I have also mentioned the term 'global mindset', and I wanted to research this term via the interviews. This did not turn out to be a very easy task, since in practice this term seems to have a somewhat rhetoric function. When asked what a global mindset comprises of, the most typical answer was that all of these things already mentioned. The main conclusion from the interviews was, though, that particles of a global mindset are more on the personality characteristics side of the competencies mentioned in these findings.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

### 5.1. Conclusions

In my work I have presented a thorough view on global leadership competencies by firstly describing by a literature review the drivers for globalization, secondly presenting what is meant by a global organization and thirdly explaining why these create the need for competent global leaders. After that I have provided a review of different authors' perspective on what are the most important competencies for global leaders also affected by my own view of the subject. In the empirical part of my study I have taken these theoretical points of view into practice by interviewing human resources professionals from a global organization about their opinions of the same subject in order to find out what are the most important global leadership competencies in practice in today's global organization.

In this chapter I will present the answers for my two research problems stated in the beginning of my study. This will be done by summarizing the global leadership competencies by combining the findings from theory and practice. This way I will try to compile a more general set of competencies that both theoretical and practical schools find important for effective global leaders. I will also summarize the findings on which developmental methods were seen the most effective in developing these competencies. Finally I will discuss the limitations of this study and provide my suggestions for further research.

The main research problem of my study was *what are the most important competencies for global leaders?* This was researched by a literature review of global leadership competencies and by interviews with leaders in global organizations. The main finding of this study was that the most important global leadership competencies are the ones to do with personality characteristics. The two most important competencies in this category were openness and flexibility, which were both identified in the literature review and with the interviewees. Inquisitiveness was also seen as an important trait. The literature identified a personality characteristic titled global mindset, but this could not be confirmed in the empirical study, because it was seen to be mainly



the combination of all the important competencies, especially skills, abilities and personality characteristics. Ability to cope with uncertainty and complexity were also identified important. Other competencies that could be categorized as abilities found important in this study were ability to create relationships (networking) and ability to effectively function in matrix organization. Ability to interact and work with other cultures was also identified crucial, but this could be categorized also as a skill, according to the literature review, since interest and sensitivity to other cultures were identified one of the most important competences in both theory and practice. Also categorized as skills and identified both in literature and empirical study and acknowledged as important competencies were interpersonal skills (communication), personal effectiveness skills and change management skills, which in the theory part of my work were identified as 'system skills'. Competencies categorized as knowledge were also emphasized important for global leaders, especially in the empirical research. The most important competencies in this category were professional expertise and experience and contacts in network (which overlaps with skills and abilities) according to the literature, but in addition to these the empirical study highlighted the great importance of language skills (defined as knowledge in this study) and knowledge of technology (computers and programs, mobile phones etc.). The most important global leadership competencies by category are summarized in the table below.

**Table 9.** Summary of Most Important Global Leadership Competencies

Knowledge	Skills	Abilities	Personality Characteristics
-Professional expertise and experience -Network of Professional Contacts -Language skills (English) -Knowledge of technology	-Cultural sensitivity -Interpersonal Skills -Change Management Skills (System Skills) -Personal effectiveness	-Ability to cope with uncertainties and complexity -Networking -Ability to effectively function in a matrix organization -Ability to cope with other cultures	-Openness -Flexibility -Inquisitiveness -Global Mindset

The second research problem of my study was *what are the most effective ways to develop these competencies?* Firstly it must be noted that the competencies identified most important for global leaders by this study, i.e. personality characteristics, were also found the most difficult to change. In developing competencies connected with personality characteristics the most effective methods were the most intensive ones like international experiences, immersing oneself in another culture (getting out of the comfort zone), and other life changing experiences. Although the personality characteristics were seen very difficult, but still somewhat possible to change, there was debate whether or not they should be developed by organizational interventions, and the outcome was that most likely not. For example openness was seen as something someone either is or is not. Skills and abilities were seen as little easier to change than the pervious, but still difficult. The most effective methods to develop these competencies were global meetings and teams, and coaching and mentoring. Mentoring was also seen as an excellent way of speeding up the development process in general, for it was seen as a way to utilize the experience of someone more experienced as a way of helping the learning and developmental process of oneself. Competencies related to one's knowledge were seen the easiest to change. Interventions in developing the knowledge-related competencies of a global leader can include some of the more traditional and didactic learning opportunities, such as books, classroom training and training courses. The four T's of Black et al. (1999), to which I referred earlier in my work in, is also a great summarization of the developmental opportunities: Training, Teams, Travel and Transfer are great methods of developing ones competencies; training is an intensive learning experience in a structured environment, teams develop diversity and cultural knowledge and requires intensive co-operation with diverse people, travel develops global business savvy and emotional connection and includes methods such as getting out of one's comfort zone and "taking detours", whereas transfers are the most powerful developmental experience that reaches the closest-to-the-core competencies in a global leader.

## 5.2. Limitations of the study

Due to the large amounts of authors in this particular field of leadership there

are probably as many definitions to the terms 'global' and 'competencies' as there are authors, this study has been made on a more general level without arguing the ultimate definitions to those terms and is thus concentrated on a more general level of competencies for global leaders. Also the terms 'international', 'multinational' and 'global' are to some extent treated interchangeable, although the focus has been tried to kept on the global level. This is also due to the restricted length of this study, since defining those terms elaborately would make a study on its own. The sources for the study might not all be as fresh as possible, but due to the universal nature of the competencies identified, the sources still are not outdated. Furthermore, the sources are mainly from a western point of view, which might affect to the results found. All in all, it seems to me that generally different authors talk about the same half-a dozen competencies in different names, some even arguing they have different meaning, but in my opinion they ultimately talk about the same attributes. This makes the field of the study even more confusing and broad.

The amount of interviewees could have been larger in this study, but in my opinion this is not a limitation as such, for I feel I still got answers from which can be held valid and reliable, and from which generalizable conclusions could be derived from. In addition the experience base and managerial level of my interviewees was versatile, which could bring variation to the results, but did not do that in my opinion. Increasing the number of interviewees would lead to some additional competencies to be found, while the most important competencies found by this study would presumably stay the same. Thus the results of this study are not affected critically by the limited number of interviewees in my opinion. Interviewing one person outside of the HR organization brought also versatility to the interviewees' insights but still brought similar answers, which proves my point of the number of interviewees being sufficient.

Like mentioned earlier, the main sources both in theory and empirical part of my work were western, so one might get varying results by including more cultural base to the interviewees and literature.

### 5.3. Suggestions for further research

The previous limitations function also as ideas for possible further research. It might provide more insight to global leadership competencies to conduct a study also from a non-western point of view. Also it would be good to research if there are differences between men and women, and/or between different cultures in the responsiveness for the development process, i.e. is some demographic more receptive for the global leadership competencies and their development?

One suggestion for further research is the whole process of a global leadership developmental program. What constitutes a good and successful global leadership developmental program, how is it planned, implemented and followed-up? What are / were the major pitfalls of a successful global leadership developmental program, and how can they be proactively yielded?

Deriving from this, and from the experience of my empirical study, another suggestion for further research is how long does it take to develop a fully competent global leader or how long does it take to develop someone's competencies to a sufficient enough level of global leadership, when one can (only) cope in the global field? In addition, what are the costs of developing one's competences to either of these levels? These were questions included in my interview that the interviewees had trouble answering to. Is it possible even to determine a sufficient enough competency level or can an end point (to competency levels) be defined? Another interesting topic for further research would be the question if there are differences between men and women, and/or between different cultures in the responsiveness for the development process, i.e. is some demographic more receptive for the global leadership competencies and their development?

Measurability of competencies and the methods for measuring different kinds of global leadership competencies should also be researched further in order to answer the questions above. Measuring the aforementioned "sufficient enough level of competencies" or "fully competent global leader" requires the tools to measure the competency levels of people and studying the development of these kinds of tools or systems would help greatly in further measuring the

levels of competencies of global leaders. Thus a development program could be created, for example, where first the starting level of competencies could be measured and after that an individual developmental program could be developed based on the measured levels and needs for development.

Also due to the fact that this study had to be kept on very general level, a more in-depth study about some of the factors should be required, for example the term 'global mindset' was not answered properly in the empirical part in my opinion and needs further research. Also, a more in-depth analysis about the differences between the set of competencies of a global leader and the set of competencies of a local leader should be made, for this study was not able to make a clear distinction about those differences.

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