

Re-engineer International Resourcing (part 2)

The international competition for talent continues to increase in complexity; for example, at the same time the UK is changing its immigration rules to attract highly skilled scientists and researchers, New Zealand is trying to attract UK construction workers to support a recognised skills gap to support its investment in new infrastructure works.

The challenges this will present to HR business partners and talent management teams in any organisation are varied, but are best supported by an international talent management system. Here are some of the ways that this can be best approached:

Build An International Resource Framework

Take time away from global mobility compliance management and training and instead take time to reflect on why you have internationally mobile employees rather than local hires, how you resource those needs and how you ensure you have the best available resources in the right roles and locations:

- Recognise that international resourcing is neither talent management nor global mobility
- Develop a global resource plan rather than disjointed local resource plans
- Identify knowledge, skills and competencies required by the international organisation now and into the foreseeable future
- Identify the international business critical roles: be clear on who and where in the world the demand is and is likely to be
- Determine the business value of these critical roles
- Develop a cadre of key talent with international leadership experience and a global mind-set.

Map The Implications Of Your International Business Strategy

Conduct a complete review of 'As-Is' to highlight the people implications of your core objectives. Map the critical areas that are likely to include:

- Capturing resourcing profile requirements (numbers of people, new and different skills and competencies)
- Evaluating geographical spread requirements
- Identifying critical roles to match the

- international business strategy
- Articulating clearly the value of critical cross-border roles (e.g. revenue potential from an account manager, product developer – loss of market share etc.)
- Determining key organisation competencies for leadership roles (e.g. global mind-set, international business management)
- Reviewing the performance management approach for critical cross-border roles
- Identifying core knowledge management priorities
- Auditing the central and local management strength and weaknesses against future business needs
- Identifying succession planning gaps
- Reviewing the degree of capability to attract people to the organisation in all locations
- Clarifying competencies required across the business
- Mapping the competencies required for different functions/business units in all geographies.

Communication of international strategies is a key challenge to successful outcomes.

Conduct An 'As-Is' People Review

A review of the current status of the resources available to meet an organisation's international business plan is critical. This review might cover the following areas:

- Identifying all central, regional and local HR and international mobility policies
- Building a detailed profile of all people including:
 - Critical roles established (rationale for and existing critical value link to the business strategy for each location)
 - Skills and competencies audit, including CPD updates
 - Resourcing profile (i.e. level of people and location)

- Total internationally mobile population (roles, numbers, assignment rationale, reward costs)
- Payroll costs/fees paid (including outsourcing costs) in each location
- Key measures adopted such as turnover/retention rate (depending on employment status etc.).

Develop An International Leadership Cadre

At a time of increasing uncertainty and accelerating change there is a critical need to focus on global leaders and not just international managers who can operate in different environments. There is a need to select and develop people with a global mind-set.

The criteria that may define a global mind-set could include:

- Cultural awareness and sensitivity
- Global outlook
- Global communication skills
- Ability to learn fast
- Self-reliance and emotional resilience
- International strategic awareness.

There are various assessment and development techniques that could be applied depending on your exact needs and capability.

Surveys have shown that 85% of companies admitted to having insufficient numbers of managers that they considered suitable to operate in the global market place. International projects often underachieve or fail because of this skills gap.

Development Strategies To Create Global Leverage

The communication of international strategies is a key challenge to successful outcomes. Some key actions in this area could cover:

- Implementing world-wide cross-company forums and workshops to allow knowledge sharing and skills development for identified talent. This would bring together people from different divisions, creating networks and relationship building for the future
- Running global specialist workshops that could bring together specialist professionals across the group to introduce new thinking and practice
- Creating global networks or clubs of managers or senior professionals
- Creating centres of excellence for multi-business units, multi-disciplinary rotations across a number of group companies
- Running cross business unit programmes.

Create A Global Learning Organisation

It would be important to build a knowledge management system to capture intellectual capital from across the global group. This involves reviewing how knowledge moves in the international organisation and arranges incentives to make the best use of it:

- Ensure knowledge sharing is the cornerstone of creating value for international resourcing
- Build a knowledge management portal on the company intranet
- Hold people accountable for both transmitting and learning knowledge
- Develop professional knowledge communities for specific skills, which can share insights, case studies and best practice
- Success of these mechanisms requires creativity and commitment from leadership, as well as participation and trust from the employees who interact with them
- You may need to convince people to reject the old-school thinking that they are being measured by what they know and do individually
- Adopt programmes that also measure how much information people share cross-border and how willing they are to reuse knowledge received from others
- Use methods to motivate and reward cross-border collaboration on knowledge sharing and creation.

Develop A Global Mind-Set

Managing globalisation and achieving benefits from a global group demands a totally new mind-set – the global mind-set. This is crucial part of any international talent management development activities, you should consider developing an international cadre of high calibre management talent by managing international assignees across a global group. A global focus requires paying attention to the following hurdles:

- Establishing a workable global structure
- Hiring global 'super-managers'

- Ensuring key talent is viewed from a group wide perspective for targeted areas of the global business
- Defining the skill and behaviours of a global mind-set
- Managing and rewarding global mind-set behaviours
- Using performance management to determine development to support the global mind-set.

Developing A Global Remuneration Strategy

To support the development of an international cadre with the relevant global mind-set you will need review your global remuneration strategy to:

- Identify scope and rationale for remuneration strategy review in each location
- Develop global remuneration strategy to support the achievement of the global business strategy
- Highlight the gap between the global strategy and divisional/regional/local practice
- Create clarity on variations in policies and practices required across the global group
- Define a set of reward principles that can be embraced and consistently applied across the group.

Plan For Cross-Border Careers And Succession Planning

Various surveys consistently demonstrate that around 20% of international assignees leave within one year of repatriating and 50% within three years.

Why is this? Career succession planning is often locally focused, but a global focus broadens career opportunities and assess the extent to which the current management teams have the capability required for the future. To carry out this assessment an approach might be to:

- Use performance management to focus on key skills and development needs for critical roles

- Reduce overall business risk by planning proactively for successors to fulfil critical rules and skills
- Develop an international cadre of high calibre management talent by managing work experience across a group of companies
- Ensure there are career development plans in place for internationally mobile employees.

Where Next?

What does 21st century international resourcing look like in your organisation? It is perhaps neither talent management nor global mobility compliance but somewhere in between. By building out into that space you will increase your chances of successful assignments and international growth objectives and enhance the strategic relevance of global mobility.

With increasing varieties of international mobility and greater diversity in the modern international workforce how do you improve the employee cross-border experience? Certainly not with a generic approach, you need to know your people as individuals.



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