

Recruiting And Working Globally

The idea of working globally covers a number of situations, from the relatively straightforward to the much more nuanced. Maybe you are working globally or have employees who may be an expatriate working for part of a large organisation, or you are a self-employed worker on contract to another organisation; or part of a team of people from different nationalities and may be based in different places; or you could just be a regular traveller who travels on business.

As we all are aware there are many types of people who work and reside overseas, including seasoned executives who are hired for the short- or long-term to fill strategic management positions. There may be new jobs, created to establish a base of operations in a particular country or already established job holders. Expatriates also include global travellers who have made a career of pursuing job opportunities around the world, specialists and professionals who reside in their home country but do regular business overseas, employees who are working abroad to develop their experience, knowledge and skills, and adventurers seeking income to finance their travels around the world.

From many years of research there is definition of four forms of international working:

- **Expatriate posting or assignment:** defined as an assignment where the employee and family move to the host country for a specified period of time, usually over one year and likely to be for three to five years; thereafter could be employed on a 'local' basis
- **Short-term contract:** an assignment with a specified duration usually less than 365-days and unaccompanied with regular return home based visits
- **An overseas commuter** based in country for less than 183 days subject to home and host tax and immigration regulations. Usually on unaccompanied basis with one or two return trips back to home base
- **Regular business traveller** who undertakes frequent international business trips although does not relocate. Most global organisations have a structured policy for all the above types of employment status and contracts to ensure the organisation is compliant;

obviously contracts will vary depending on whether the assignment is permanent or temporary, or self-employed/consultancy. For most companies who have employees on short-term assignments, it is usual for the employee to retain home base pay and benefits, per diem allowance subject to the timeline of the contract and other benefits, such as relocation, if applicable, and pension contributions, tax and social security liabilities. It is important to ensure that the home base employment law versus the local labour is reviewed i.e. mandatory employment law of either the home or host country could have an impact on the terms of employment.

There are plenty of practical ideas, lessons and information from working in a global environment that we learn each day:

- Together with understanding varying aspects of global operations and globalisation
- Understanding cultural differences and global influences each day
- Managing from a distance and global leadership.

We also need to examine other areas which will include organisation cultural drivers and building long-term market leadership, global management structure, entering into new revolutionised economy, and getting to global alignment with the global HR model.

There are many factors that influence the world of international employee recruitment and mobility and are as true today as it was many years ago.

So far research has indicated a variety of opinions and suggestions in recruiting employees. It is stated that it is the means of getting better results from the organisation, team and individuals by understanding and managing assignments within an agreed framework of planned objectives, standards and competence requirement. The expatriate recruitment posting is not just a structure of identifying key talent and giving the job holder a 'to do list' – it is essentially about the actions people take to achieve the day-to-day delivery of results and manage the business, and a positive approach to recruiting and meeting both employer and employees working around the world.

This reinforces the strong business needs for expanding globally and moving towards a consistent but flexible approach

to mobility and adapting too many cultures within the organisation.

There sometimes appears to be limited integration across global companies and long-term strategic planning and how global companies are continuously improving with new recruitment process through technology e.g. LinkedIn. The process of recruiting effective employees to work internationally and be flexible in mobility with their partners/families is critical in developing world class people who instantly recognise the capabilities of the future.

Companies, who are seeking international growth and to deliver a short- or long-term plan, should ensure that the numbers of employees working from their home base must increase their global perspective and communicate effectively with people from around the world.

On occasion, the process of relocating employees to work internationally from initial selection and recruitment, monitoring effectiveness throughout employment to completion of the work assignment can sometimes be a little fraught with anxiety for all parties concerned.

The selection and pre-meetings have a very positive effect on adaptation to a new working environment, even though the effectiveness of these is strongly influenced by other factors. From previous research it transpires that employers highlight that a mobile workforce can represent a significant investment in future organisational capability. Of course, it is perfectly true that factors other than a failure of the career development process are at play in the issue of workforce retention. A mobile workforce have family issues which companies must not ignore; the family has to adapt to working and living in a different culture and the problems 'reverse culture shock', for example, are all important consideration. Some staff encounter difficulties and there is evidence of negative effects on both personal and family life. However, there is strong evidence that issues associated with career development, promotion and redeployment planning, are central to the retention of valuable employee resources.

Cultural differences within a multi-national workforce has to be carefully managed and appropriate induction, cultural awareness training etc., should be

put into place to build a successful working team in-country, irrespective of differences.

As companies grow globally and more companies enter the international marketplace, the reasons for international assignments continually change with greater expectations for all parties concerned. All global companies search the best talent in their workforce from wherever the talent is located and, as a result, assignments are no longer predominately assigned from the Head Office, and can be identified from any of the local organisations worldwide locations. In all mobility cases it is important to ensure that the international assignment is perceived as an important part in career development and talent management. This leads into the process of mobility and how this is managed. Today's technology keeps employees in touch with Head Office so they feel that they are part of the bigger picture.

The possible cause for concern for most employers, and the intention, is to develop a more strategic perspective within global companies. As research has highlighted over the years that a mobile workforce can be more damaging to the organisation and be more difficult to resolve than managing employees in an equivalent home country position; as we all know managing employees from the home base has improved with communication and technology although there are possible places in the world that on occasion is much more difficult to manage 'at a distance'. Monitoring deliverables, building performance and developing others are key skills, which are necessary for success in any business.

The dilemma is that the business requires a consistent approach i.e. the process of managing a global workforce should be embarked on broadly the same way everywhere, but there must be sufficient flexibility to tailor goals, objectives and an approach to specific business needs that are operating overseas in a variety of usually international markets.

The desire to have a united employer around the world underscores the need for an integrated approach, which provides consistency across companies whilst providing flexibility, in terms of applicable, to accommodate the differing needs of company units.

It is apparent that any steps to remedy this situation have to be part

of the company integrated strategy for employee mobility. The stages must encompass all the elements in the global employee cycle:

- From recruitment and selection for mobility across many locations
- Training and development
- Tracking and monitoring
- Compliance and managing risks, and
- The challenges that the global employer and employee faces every day.

It is also clear that all global organisations will have to be responsible in making the mobility process efficient and impactful to the development of the employee.

The organisation will emphasise a high level of commitment, particularly in utilisation of the process of global management, with senior leadership being prepared to act as 'coach and role models' for the success of the mobility process and willing to act on results, as well as comprehensive positioning, marketing and communication of the process of mobility programmes from commuter to short- and long-term assignments, and permanent local to local transfers. Design and implementation of the recruitment programme and mobility agenda, should be managed as shared responsibility between Line Manager and Human Resources Management; consultation and involvement are key to design and implementation of the components if the process is to be managed globally.

Employers should ensure that the mobile employee is highly committed to the organisation's global activities and is able to move from country to country as managers, gaining valuable experience.

The objectives of the company can be achieved to ensure that the global management style can initially be measured by pre-assignment on-boarding programmes being implemented as the process of initiation into different culture. Understanding cultures and local workforce can help to build a strong business with a diverse organisation and both the employee and employer can gain. The ultimate goal is to achieve a global corporate culture sharing experiences and learning from each other, which encourages all employees to play an increasing role when based in any location. The way forward is to build a framework of objectives and strategy to add value to your organisation.



Kim Smart has over twenty-five years experience in the capacity of senior HR generalist specialising in multi-international role; over 15 years at senior management level within global organisations and SME's. Kim is an accomplished and successful Human Resources specialist who has gained considerable experience in the all fields of Human Resources, embracing all levels of general management; with a solid understanding of business management with experience of being accountable for all areas of Human Resources. Kim's key strengths is her expertise in M&A, TUPE, Trade Unions, Works Council, managing global mobility, international employment law, international total reward and Senior HR generalist. Kim is currently a consultant specialising in providing HR specialist resource to enhance the organisation growth and capability. Contact: kim-smart@outlook.com – LINKEDIn profile.

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