SELECTED REFERENCES

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS SECTION
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CROSS-CULTURAL TRAINING**


Through the use of case studies and instructional text, the author details ways in which people from different cultural backgrounds develop mutually beneficial working relationships by learning about and adapting to each others' cultures. The first four chapters introduce the relationship between culture and business and highlight specific areas that vary significantly from one culture to another. Some examples of these areas are: the nature of human relationships (emotional involvement, personal versus group goals, and the legitimacy of power and status), the relationship people have to nature (whether they try to control it or simply attempt to adapt to it), and the attitude towards time (the relative emphasis given to past history, present needs, or future achievement). The next five chapters are devoted to case studies from a variety of international locales. The final two chapters focus on the complexities of team building across international boundaries. The author also includes team building and training exercises.


The authors surveyed 280 expatriates sent abroad by 15 U.S. Fortune 500 multinational corporations to determine the link between successful completion of overseas assignments and the policies and actions of the corporations. Downes and Thomas suggest that employees with successful expatriate experiences are valuable assets because they possess first-hand knowledge of international markets. The authors further suggest that corporations should invest in cross-cultural training tailored to each individual situation, adopt flexible expatriate policies, and reward international experience by integrating it into long-term career planning.


Forster discusses the results of a study of 36 UK-based companies that had personnel working in foreign countries between January 1995 and December 1996. This particular study was designed to gauge the effectiveness of cross-cultural training programs and that of their screening and selection processes by interviewing employees (as well as their partners and children, when applicable) before and during their overseas assignments. Human resource managers from the 36 companies were also interviewed. Forster found a great deal of variety

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** Items on this list should be ordered directly from the publisher or obtained through your library.
in the level of support and training provided by the companies, however, there were several common criticisms. Overall, the employees and their families were most concerned with the lack of up-to-date information on local business environments, the lack of follow-up training once they had started their overseas assignments, the lack of advice on dealing with family problems while overseas, and the short duration of the training programs.


In this article, the author outlines a cross-cultural training program based on the three components of the learning process (attention, retention, and reproduction). The program consists of two stages, general orientation and specific development; each of these is further broken down into two phases. The author describes each of the stages in detail and provides suggestions for presentation and practice at each phase (e.g., personality questionnaires for self-assessment and films for area studies). The article also includes potential strategies for marrying training goals with the strategic goals of the organization as a whole and time frames for cross-cultural training programs implemented in different types of organizations.


Mead designed this collection primarily for students of international management who want to develop their cross-cultural skills. The book is made up of 28 chapters, each highlighting a set of key concepts in international management. Each of the first 21 chapters revolves around a real-life case study that illustrates how culture influences behavior in the workplace. These chapters also include a set of questions to give the reader practice in case analysis and a “decision” question which involves applying a similar analysis to a new situation. The last seven chapters of the book each contain a project designed for group research to reinforce and practice the skills learned from the case studies. The author also includes an appendix that explains Hofstede’s model of culture which is the model most commonly used in management studies.


By using the famous Nestle infant formula case as an example, Bahaudin stresses the absolute necessity of providing cross-cultural training to anyone involved in marketing products in foreign countries. The ethical problems faced when marketing products in one’s own country are further complicated by the introduction of other cultures, not to mention the legal complexities of international markets. The author suggests that successful training should be taught by, or at least in consultation with, a person native to the culture that is the subject of the training and that the course should have a hands-on, experiential learning component. Bahaudin’s seven step training model emphasizes identification of objectives, customization to specific trainees and jobs, and evaluation of results in order to refine and improve future training efforts.


The author uses the global training programs of Intel Corporation, Eastman Kodak, and Procter & Gamble to illustrate the link between cross-cultural training and success in the global business climate. Each of these companies has
devised a system to provide the necessary training in language, culture, and business for employees and their families who will be living and working in a foreign country. At Intel, employees and their families are given language training and country-specific orientations that are lead by an external consultant who works in tandem with managers from the host country and employees who have recently returned from assignments in that country. The Corporate Education unit at Eastman Kodak stresses long-term learning rather than one-time training. All professionals and managers at the company whose jobs will eventually bring them into contact with non-U.S. operations and customers are enrolled in a five-segment program, International Business Operations, which includes training in cross-cultural awareness and skills. When Procter & Gamble plans to send a group of American executives to a foreign subsidiary, they not only provide cross-cultural training for the Americans but also for the foreign executives who will be working with the Americans. Odenwald also stresses the importance of targeting the training to the individual and to the responsibilities of the position in order for the program to be effective and cost-efficient.


The authors of this article lament the lack of discussion about cultural paradoxes in management literature and the use of culture stereotyping in the cross-cultural training process. Osland and Bird maintain that in order to prepare anyone (students, executives, researchers, etc.) for working successfully across cultures, they must be made aware of these paradoxes, why they exist, and how to recognize them. They present their “model of cultural sensemaking,” which consists of a series of thought processes used to determine proper behavior when confronted with a cross-cultural situation that does not fit established stereotypes. The authors also explain their theories on the most effective way for managers to learn these sensemaking skills (personal experience, vicariously from others’ experience, and through cultural mentoring) and how best to teach cultural understanding in various contexts.


After reviewing the literature on cross-cultural training and finding a lack of information on Asia and few comparative studies between East and West, Osman-Gani developed a study that he hoped would fill both gaps. Osman-Gani surveyed American, German, Japanese, and Korean professionals working in Singapore as well as a sample of managers from Singapore who had been working overseas. He also conducted interviews with a number of managers from multinational corporations. Osman-Gani designed his survey questions to determine and compare the respondents’ opinions on five aspects of cross-cultural training programs, namely the type of program, the content areas covered, the duration of the program, the delivery method, and who should deliver the program. The results of the survey show significant differences in the views of the expatriates from the different countries. For example, host country language training was rated more important than other types of predeparture training by all of the expatriates except the Americans. Also, the Americans and Germans preferred group training methods, whereas the expatriates from Japan, Korea, and Singapore preferred one-on-one training.

Selmer sees the cause of failure for many expatriate managers as being not only the lack of adequate cross-cultural training, but also the failure to conduct a needs assessment profile to determine what types of training are appropriate for each manager. To illustrate the need for this kind of profiling, the author conducted a study of Swedish managers working in Hong Kong. A questionnaire concerning work values was given both to the expatriate manager and to the local middle managers who report to them. The local managers were asked to respond with their own feelings about the subject and the Swedish managers were asked to respond the way they would expect their subordinates would. Selmer found that, even though the expatriate managers had spent an average of 3.5 years in Hong Kong, they misidentified two-thirds of the work values of the local middle managers. The author recommends that companies employing expatriate managers should use this assessment technique to determine the training needs of expatriates currently on assignment. The data collected can then be extrapolated for further use in creating cross-cultural training programs for new managers with little or no expatriate experience.


This article focuses on expatriates' attitudes toward international assignments and the process of adapting to a foreign culture. The author conducted a study of 409 expatriates working in 51 countries around the world to examine five areas: 1) the importance of international assignments in their career development; 2) their process of adaptation to their host culture; 3) the methods they use to cope with stress; 4) personality traits conducive to effective performance abroad; and 5) the relationship between performance and the "cultural gap" that exists between the home and host countries. The results of Tung's study show that overall the expatriates reacted more positively to their overseas experience than in past studies; however, there were areas that needed improvement. The areas most often found lacking were the repatriation process (specifically the lack of attention by their employers to policies or programs that were outlined to the employees before going overseas), cross-cultural training programs, and realistic descriptions of the nature of the international assignment.


Wederspahn, a "user, purchaser, manager, evaluator, designer, and provider of intercultural services for the past 30 years" has put together this guide to provide novice purchasers and users of intercultural services with the background information that they will need to competently sift through the myriad services available. The early chapters cover the basics such as terminology and jargon, cross-cultural teams, and needs assessment where the later chapters describe actual services, products, and service providers that are available. The last two chapters give suggestions on managing relationships with suppliers and convincing others in the organization of the value of investing in cross-cultural training. Each chapter includes a list of "focus questions" to help readers relate the topics to their particular situation, suggested "action steps" that recommend ways to use the content of the chapter, and a list of resources for further research.