

# Myths, Mystiques, and Mistakes in Overseas Assignments: The Role of Global Mindset in International Work<sup>1</sup>

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*"Most companies are trying to pursue third-generation strategies, using second-generation organizations, staffed with first-generation human resources" (Christopher Bartlett 1989).*

## INTRODUCTION

With the ever-accelerating speed of change and the ever-increasing demands placed on global business, our world is both expanding and shrinking – expanding by promoting broader, more extensive contacts among countries and individuals, and simultaneously, shrinking through faster and easier access to information and people from different cultures around the world. While these paradoxical forces provide increased business opportunities, they also create more occasions for cross-cultural conflict and misunderstanding. Misinformation about international business dealings abound and an aura of the exotic and unknown develops among managers unfamiliar with the global environment. The resulting myths, mystiques, and mistakes that have grown up around globalization and foreign assignments can be daunting for the individual at best and detrimental to the company profits and reputation at worst.

As the opening quotation for this article from Christopher Bartlett of the Harvard Business School indicates, it is not easy to be successful in a bound-aryless, networked world, if we insist on maintaining rigid hierarchical organizational structures designed for the command-and-control management style of the industrial age, using ill-equipped, uninformed human resources, better suited for individual,

task-oriented work of the craftsman age. HR, like most corporate departments, is still largely structured as a centralized, top-down function. And, individuals' skills and competencies are still looked upon as sets of unidimensional "things" that people develop, "collect" throughout the course of their careers, and add to their résumés.

Yet these models were appropriate in their time, when capital was the scarce resource and people were seen as interchangeable components on the assembly line. But today, people have become the scarce resource, and the information and knowledge residing in the heads of individuals, along with how it is connected and transferred across social networks, is the key to building an organization's competitive advantage. And this is nowhere more important than when working on international projects or assignments. The ability for individuals in a global setting to communicate well, to understand one another clearly, and to work together effectively is the key to ultimate success.

Success on global assignments has been difficult to achieve. Numerous studies have shown that failures in international business most often result from the inability of individuals who are working abroad to understand and adapt to the local country's way of doing things. Failure rates on international assignments of up to 10 percent for Australian companies, 14 percent for Japanese companies, and 76 percent for U.S. companies have been reported throughout the literature (Ferraro 2002). While researchers may quibble over the actual numbers and

how exactly to define failure (Harzing 1995), the impact on company growth, profits, morale, and employee retention is clearly enormous.

The reasons for failure are varied. The individual may be unable to adapt to the new physical or cultural environment or lack the linguistic, communicative, people or functional/technical skills required for the position. The position definition may be unclear, or there may be a lack of clarity around the goals/objectives of the assignment. There may not be sufficient support from the family, or the spouse may be unable to adapt to the international situation. The individual may lack the maturity or motivation for foreign work or may have an overly narrow or parochial perspective when working in other cultures.

But when we say "failure," failure by whose interpretation? How should success or failure be evaluated? Inadequate research, lack of empirical data, methodological problems, and conflicting interpretations of success/failure abound in the literature. As with most things, there are many different ways to look at the problem. Did the assignment end early or was it extended? What was the supervisor and/or employee's subjective evaluation? Were the specific objectives met? Was there improvement in the organization's performance? Was the assignment purely for the development of the employee, and if so, how did the employee progress?

And herein lies the challenge for human resources in the global digital age. How do we determine success and mitigate failure in international assignments? How do we uncover the skills



and attributes required for success and move our organizations to an integrated, multi-dimensional approach to global human resources management? How do we promote, leverage, and diffuse a new mindset – a global orientation – to develop more effective international leaders and foster healthier teamwork on global projects?

First, we must dispel the myths, unravel the mystiques, and understand the mistakes that have too often occurred, damaging reputations, derailing business opportunities, and hurting company profits. Most importantly, we need to recognize the role of “global mindset” in selecting individuals for international assignments and in building effective multicultural teams that have the maximum likelihood for success. Next, we need information about what works and what factors affect international experiences. This article provides background information from the literature on expatriates and international assignments and then presents the findings from a study on global mindset with 100 international assignees. In closing, we discuss some preliminary thoughts on building a multi-dimensional model of the international experience to aid in the selection and management of the next generation of global leaders.

### MYTHS

Let's begin by dispelling a few of the common myths surrounding expatriate work and overseas assignments.

*Myth #1: Any smart employee can be a successful expatriate.*

Common sense might tell us that, in general, smart people tend to be successful people. Yet repeatedly, experience has shown that success in an international setting is much more complex – and, in fact, may have nothing to do with being smart at all. The common assumption that if someone is successful in their home environment, they can be successful anywhere has created many unsuccessful expatriates and derailed many otherwise promising careers. Adaptation to different environments requires flexibility and accommoda-

tion skills, as well as a desire to experience new things and a willingness to take risks, which may not necessarily be the same skills needed to be successful in the home environment. In fact, international success appears to have much more to do with an individual's emotional quotient (EQ) than with their intelligence quotient (IQ). Emotional intelligence, as Daniel Goleman describes it, is the ability to effectively perceive and manage social relationships through self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills (Goleman 1995).

*Myth #2: HR professionals handling expatriate administration are effectively managing the overseas assignment.*

Truth be told, successful expatriate management has much more to do with effective selection techniques and ongoing professional and management support before, during, and after the assignment than with managing the administrative details such as relocation, training, compensation and taxation. More often than not, international assignments are decided by someone raising their hand, rather than by assessing the individual's global perspective, personality characteristics and personal situation. Once the assignment is made, the expatriate is quickly “forgotten” by corporate HR until just before their tour of duty is up. If HR would provide more coaching and management support throughout the assignment, we would see much higher success rates. In addition, repatriation services once the individual returns could stem the large number of expatriates who leave their companies within two years of returning from an international assignment (said to be close to 80 percent!).

*Myth #3: There is one unique trait – a sine qua non – that makes a successful expatriate.*

In reality, the propensity of an individual to adapt and accommodate to new situations is affected by a multitude of factors, including personal attributes and characteristics (e.g., flexibility, accommodation, motivation, risk-taking, extroversion), learned skills and competencies (e.g., communication, language abilities), as well as the context and circumstances of the particular job or func-

tion to be performed (e.g., alignment with the organization's vision, management support, individual's family situation and career aspirations). In order to select successful expatriates and build effective global teams, HR must take a multi-factorial approach, evaluating candidates' suitability on a variety of different dimensions.

### MYSTIQUES

Precisely because the details and dynamics of international work are not well known, a mystique has grown up around foreign assignments and about those who go overseas for work. To demystify the international experience, let's unveil the truth behind some of these mystiques.

*Mystique #1: International assignments are glamorous.*

The allure of exotic, foreign travel is enticing and does appear glamorous to the inexperienced and uninitiated. Indeed, international work can be quite stimulating and certainly eye opening. Yet, for all the excitement it brings, foreign travel can also bring danger, exhaustion and even alienation. Particularly since 9/11, international travel has become more perilous, wearing, and frustrating – schlepping through airports, living out of suitcases, struggling to communicate, dealing with constant strangeness and newness, working with colleagues who may question or even undermine the best of efforts. The expatriate is treated as “a foreigner” by the locals and as “a deserter” by their home country colleagues: in the words of A. E. Housman, “I, a stranger and afraid, in a world I never made.” For all the glamour an international assignment brings, the hurdles are considerable and hence not something to be taken lightly or undertaken by the faint of heart.

*Mystique #2: Foreign cultures are inscrutable.*

We are often mystified as to why people act the way they do, and this is nowhere more apparent than with people from another culture. “Foreigners” often encounter difficulties comprehending the underlying intentions of people from a different culture, and thus have trouble putting their actions into the appropriate con-

text. Nevertheless, every culture has its own internal meanings and rationales, and there are commonalities of purpose and practice that are well-nigh universal. Working effectively in another culture requires the expatriate to move beyond the superficial differences and understand basic motivations. Cultivating an ability to see the world through the eyes of the other culture is vital to success on the international stage.

*Mystique #3: Hollywood portrayals of other peoples and cultures are realistic.*

Hollywood and the media are clearly responsible for considerable hype and mystique around foreign cultures, such as crocodile hunters in Australia, gun-slinging cowboys in America, vodka-drinking Russians, and French and Italian lovers. The fear and apprehension fabricated by this mystique create images that all Americans carry guns and join in daily drag races, that all Germans eat sausages and sauerkraut, and that all Eskimos live in igloos. While certainly there's some truth to the portraits promoted by Hollywood, we must beware of stereotyping and realize that cultures are unique and different, yet they are also made up of humans with different customs and belief systems – each to be valued in their own right.

### **MISTAKES**

Unfortunately, there have been far too many egregious mistakes in international encounters, many of which have brought financial damage to the company and career derailment for the individual. Failure to understand the influence that culture and language can have on business dealings has led to miscommunication, misunderstanding, marketing blunders, undermining of corporate goals, and even lawsuits.

**Mistake #1:** *If it works well enough here, then it'll work well anywhere.*

Probably the worse mistake international managers can make is to assume that if something works well in one location, it will automatically work well in another location. Mistakes like building a bread factory in south China (where the people primarily eat rice) or offering incentive bonuses where there is a cultural

taboo against paying people extra just for “doing their job” (considering it bribery) can be costly – financially, socially, professionally and emotionally. While not every practice, product, and/or service, needs to be customized for every different location, each one should be evaluated for appropriateness and applicability in the new context.

**Mistake #2:** *There's no need to learn the local language because “everyone speaks English.”*

All too often American, British, and Australian managers believe that English is the only language they need to know to work internationally because English is the “company language” or the “world language,” so everyone “should” speak it. Yet, it is only by learning the local language that one can truly understand the culture and hence comprehend the many contextual factors affecting the local business environment. Miscommunications and mistranslations are numerous – for example, the American airline that advertised its “rendezvous lounges” in its business class section, failing to realize that the word rendezvous in Portuguese refers to a room for illicit sexual encounters (Ferraro 2002). While they may sometimes be humorous, such stories only perpetrate the ignorance and ethnocentrism of expatriates, particularly Americans, who fail to even make an effort to accommodate or understand. Two essentials for effective, two-way communications are the motivation to learn the local language and the willingness to use it. Even without attaining competency, the expatriate gains the locals' respect just by making the effort.

**Mistake #3:** *Fitting into the new place means forgetting the old ways.*

In contrast to the ethnocentric approach propagated by mistakes one and two above, there is the “gone native” approach, in which the expatriate plunges so deeply into the new culture and new way of doing things that they leave all the old ways behind – sometimes to the detriment of fulfilling corporate objectives. Many expatriate assignments are made with the express intent of carrying out a corporate mis-

sion, such as teaching the locals a new way of doing business or bringing an errant business unit in line. To be effective it is important for international managers to balance the sometimes competing objectives of corporate headquarters with the needs of the local business unit.

### **BACKGROUND**

Before delving any deeper into this subject, let's define what we mean by an “expatriate.” An expatriate is someone who has been assigned by their company (either willingly or unwillingly) to live and work outside of their home country in another country or culture for an extended, predefined period of time (generally, two to four years). The word “predefined” is key. Expatriates – or international assignees – have a fixed time period for their assignment (which may or may not be extended) in contrast to host country nationals or migrants (who immigrate permanently) or international business travelers (who visit the host country only on short business trips).

The research that has been done on international assignments and expatriates is immense, covering a plethora of topics, such as personality differences, cultural differences, national origin, the context or situation of the assignment, the job or role the expatriate is assigned to do, global orientation or mindset, and organizational structure. The following paragraphs briefly review some findings from previous research.

### **PERSONALITY**

Many studies have stressed the importance of personality characteristics – particularly traits such as flexibility and accommodation – as predictors of assimilation and success in a new culture or environment. Caligiuri (2000) has looked at the importance of the “Big Five” personality characteristics – extroversion, emotional stability, conscientiousness, openness or intellect, and agreeableness – in determining an individual's suitability for international work. Brinkmann and van Weerdenburg (2003) developed a Multicultural Personality Question-

naire (MPQ) covering five domains critical in international work – cultural empathy, flexibility, open-mindedness, social initiative and emotional stability. Hoffman (2001) has constructed a Cultural Adaptability Inventory (HCAI) covering four key personality characteristics (used in subsequent sections of this article):

*Intercultural-Liking* defines an individual's degree of openness to other cultures and the extent to which they enjoy cultural differences when it comes to cuisine, music, art, etc. Individuals with a high degree of Intercultural-Liking enjoy traveling abroad and meeting people of different nationalities.

*Extroversion* defines the degree to which an individual draws energy from being around other people, initiating conversations with strangers and being the center of group attention. Highly extroverted individuals prefer to avoid solitude and tend to be easy to read from their facial expressions.

*Amiability* defines the degree to which an individual is friendly, empathic, and easy to get along with. Highly amiable people are good listeners and focus on building close relationships. They also tend to be optimists, rarely dwelling on past upsets or worrying about the future.

*Risk-Taking* measures the degree to which an individual trusts their intuition and likes to take risks, seeing life as an adventure. Individuals with a high degree of Risk-Taking get bored easily by routine and structure, and so are continually seeking out new opportunities and initiating new projects.

The work of Hoffman and many others demonstrate that personality plays a key role in the international work experience and can significantly affect the performance of individuals working abroad.

## CULTURE

Numerous studies have documented the integral role that culture plays in international assignments. Most notable are the works of Geert Hofstede (1980, 2001) and Fons Trompenaars (1998) and their many associates and followers. Hofstede defines culture as “the collective pro-

gramming of the mind that distinguishes one group or category of people from another. This stresses that culture is (1) a collective, not an individual attribute, (2) not directly visible but manifested in behaviors, and (3) common to some, but not all people” (Hofstede 2001).

Hofstede's work, based on extensive empirical surveys, classifies cultures along five major dimensions:

*Power Distance* defines the extent to which less powerful members of the group accept that power is distributed unequally (such as in the family, in business, in political institutions). The level of power distance in a culture begins in the family based on whether children are raised to be “obedient followers” or to demonstrate “individual initiative.”

*Uncertainty Avoidance* defines a group's tolerance for ambiguity and the extent to which people feel comfortable or uncomfortable in unstructured situations. Uncertainty-avoiding cultures tend to be more emotional, believe in one absolute “Truth,” and attempt to control their environment by implementing strict laws, rules and safety measures.

*Individualism versus Collectivism* defines the extent to which individuals are integrated into groups. In collectivist societies people are integrated into strong, cohesive groups, often extended families. In individualist societies, the ties between individuals are loose, and people are expected to look after themselves and their own immediate families.

*Masculinity versus Femininity* refers to the distribution of emotional roles between the sexes from very assertive and competitive, typical male values, to modest and caring, typical female values. “The women in feminine countries have the same modest, caring values as the men; in masculine countries they are somewhat assertive and competitive, but not as much as the men, so that these countries show a gap between men's values and women's values” (Hofstede & McCrae, 2004).

*Long-Term versus Short-Term Orientation* defines the extent to which a culture tends to take a shorter or longer-term view of the world. The val-

ues associated with a long-term orientation are thrift and perseverance, whereas those associated with a short-term orientation are respect for tradition, fulfilling social obligations and saving face.

The work of Hofstede and others on culture strongly suggests that success in international assignments is largely influenced by the degree and types of cultural difference between the expatriate's country of origin and their country of destination. The most recent studies in this area are uncovering how personality characteristics and culture interact to influence the behavior of individuals and social groups (McCrae 2000, Hofstede & McCrae 2004). Jonkeren (2004, in this issue of the IHRIM Journal) continues this approach by looking at the impact that culture plays in integrating and managing cross-cultural global, virtual teams.

## CONTEXT

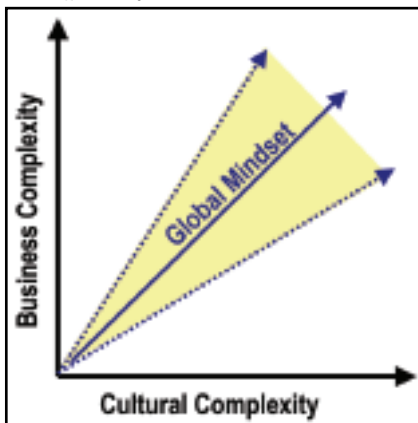
Other studies have indicated that a critical factor in expatriate success is the “context” of the international job. The level of difficulty expatriates encounter is a function of how different the new context is from their own. Many things may take longer, and the old ways of doing things may no longer work. The expatriate may feel awkward and lack credibility; people may not understand him/her, and he/she may not understand them. When working in another culture, “the whats remain the same, but the hows are different” (McCall & Hollenbeck, 2002). Working as an expatriate presents more than just a cognitive, intellectual challenge: it is an “all-out assault” on the identity of the person, forcing the individual to transform their old ways of thinking, as well as many of their most deeply held beliefs and values.

McCall and Hollenbeck (2002) contend that global work is difficult because it combines complexity from two different dimensions: business complexity with cultural complexity (see Figure 1). As business complexity increases, managerial abilities must also increase. Naturally, it requires much greater management talent to manage a large number of diverse



functions, products, suppliers, business units, locations, etc. Likewise, as cultural complexity increases, facility dealing across cultures must similarly increase. The greater the difference between geographies, languages, customs, values, habits, etc., the greater the skills the individual must possess to effectively work across cultures. Combining these two dimensions – an increase in business complexity with an increase in cultural complexity – creates an intensely complex global environment, requiring a broader global mindset (further discussion of global mindset follows in subsequent sections). More highly developed global management abilities are needed, as both business and cultural complexity increase.

**Figure 1. Increasing Contextual Complexity.**



Source: McCall & Hollenbeck, 2002.

**DUAL IDENTITIES**

The work of Sanchez, Spector, & Cooper (2000) indicates that the success or failure of an expatriate is a factor of the amount of stress in the environment. They contend that to reduce the stress in the environment, individuals need to develop and maintain “dual identities” – one identity with their home culture and a second with the new local culture (see Figure 2). Individuals who identify strongly with their home culture and are unable to make the transition to the new culture find themselves in a high stress environment and may not have the skills or motivation to deal with the complex business environment they are now in. Individuals who are able to identify well with both the parent and the local

cultures are considered “bicultural” – able to easily move between the two. It is these well-adjusted individuals who experience the least amount of stress in the international situation and thus have the greatest likelihood for success on their assignment.

Sanchez et al. present a model to

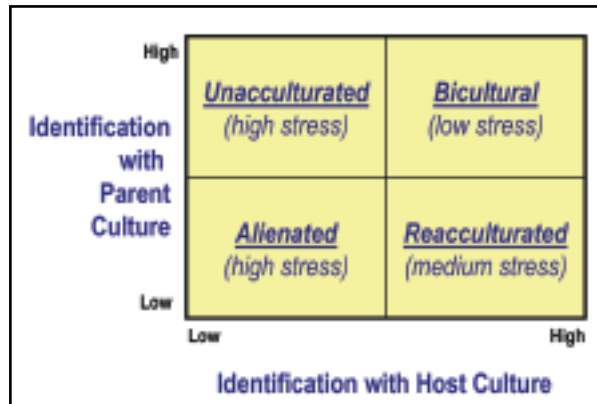
master the experience, only to become disappointed upon repatriation – now the disappointment is with the inability of their former colleagues to “understand” the “new” mindset and the change that has taken place within the repatriated individual. Whatever the evolution, it is clear that cultural adaptation and assimilation are processes and that individuals evolve through over time in learning to deal with foreign cultures.

**ROLE**

Caligiuri (2002) and others maintain that many international assignments have met with failure due to the lack of a structured expatriate selection process. In particular, little attention has been paid to the role or job function that the expatriate is to perform and whether the individual selected has the skills to perform the required function in the specific local environment. Jobs differ in the extent to which they require intercultural competence; in addition, the difference between some cultures is greater than it is between others (e.g., French and Italian versus French and Japanese).

Caligiuri holds that international assignments generally fall in one of two dimensions: (1) assignments requiring the need for intercultural

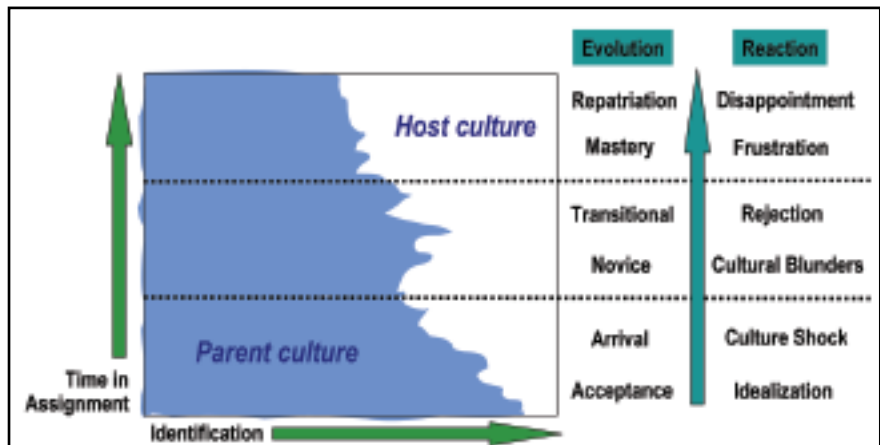
**Figure 2. Developing Dual Identities.**



Source: Sanchez, Spector, & Cooper, 2000.

explain the stages that individuals go through in developing this dual identity (see Figure 3). When an expatriate first accepts an assignment, they may go through a period of idealization about the foreign environment. Upon arrival they may experience culture shock and, while still a novice in international work, they may make cultural blunders as they learn and adapt. During this transition, they may reject either the foreign culture or their home culture, becoming frustrated with the other’s inability to “understand.” Successful expatriates learn to

**Figure 3. Evolution of Dual Identities.**



Source: Sanchez, Spector, & Cooper, 2000.

competence and (2) assignments intended as developmental opportunities for the employee. Within these two dimensions, she identifies four general categories or roles that expatriates typically fill:

*Technical Assignees* (e.g., programmers, engineers) are selected purely based on the need to get a specific technical job done. Because they require little human interaction to be successful, the individual does not need to have extensive intercultural skills; in addition, with technical assignments, little focus is placed on professional development for the employee.

*Functional or Tactical Assignees* (e.g., sales, marketing, production, and legal jobs) are also chosen based on the need to get a specific job done; however, because they tend to require extensive interaction with people in the local country, these individuals need to possess a well-developed set of intercultural communication skills to be successful.

*Development or High-Potential Assignees* are designated based on the desire to develop a high-potential employee, whether or not there is a specific need to get a specific job done or not. Because of the long-term career development focus, considerably more intercultural communication skills are required.

*Strategic or Executive Assignees* (e.g., integration of an overseas acquisition, standardization of foreign business operations, general management role) are usually assigned based on both the need to get a specific job done and on the developmental focus for the executive; hence, they require excellent intercultural skills, as well as significant global experience.

The different roles that expatriates are expected to fill have implications for the selection, management, and training of the individual before, during, and after the assignment. For example, with functional, developmental, and strategic executive roles, more emphasis should be placed on selecting individuals based on personality characteristics (e.g., cultural empathy, flexibility, open-mindedness, sociability and emotional stability).

## GLOBAL MINDSET

Previous work has shown that international success appears to be a function of "Global Mindset" – an individual's orientation to the international experience (Guy & Beaman 2003, 2004). The model characterizing global mindsets is based on Sullivan's (2001) three-way typology, distinguishing ethnocentric, polycentric and geocentric orientations (see Figure 4). Individual mindsets are best suited for different types of assignments:

*Ethnocentric Mindsets* take the home country as the basis for beliefs and evaluations, holding that one's own culture and values are intrinsically superior to those of others, to the point even of assuming national superiority. It might be characterized by the expression: "the sun never sets on the British empire." This type of mindset is effective when there is a need to standardize operations around the world or to protect the company's intellectual property.

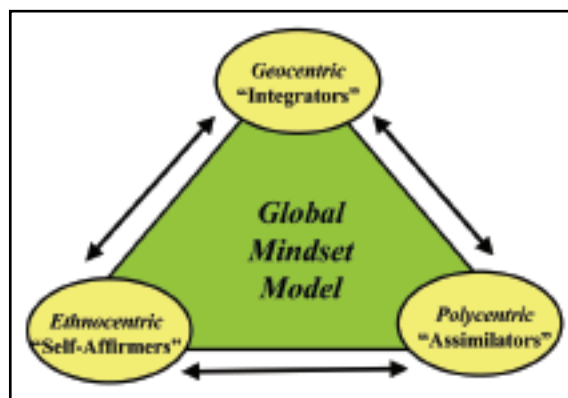
*Polycentric Mindsets* are ones that adapt well to cultural differences and are effective at bridging the gap between home and host culture and company objectives. The polycentric mindset entails accommodation or assimilation with the foreign culture, sometimes even to the extent of "going native." It might be characterized by the expression: "when in Rome, do as the Romans." This type of mindset is appropriate when there is a need for intense focus on the local market or regulatory situation.

*Geocentric Mindsets* are ones that seek universals and commonalities across cultures and are effective at tying diverse groups together toward a common goal. A geocentric orientation implicitly assumes that a universal set of values govern human interaction, downplaying the importance of cultural differences. This mentality can best be summed up by the famous words of John Lennon,

"Imagine all the people sharing all the world." This type of mindset is appropriate for individuals who work at a global level, responsible for integrating the ideas and practices of different businesses and functions into a unified approach.

With respect to international work experiences, like Caligiuri, Sullivan (2001) claims that an individual's global mindset is directly related to his or her effectiveness depending on the nature of the job. In his view, ethnocentric individuals tend to excel in environments that call for significant standardization of methodology or technology, while polycentric individuals thrive in situations that require considerable sensitivity to local conditions, and geocentric individuals excel in positions that require identifying commonalities and integrating different approaches. Sullivan's line of thinking concurs with Caligiuri that the role or job the individual is to perform is vital in determining the type of individual needed for the assignment.

Figure 4. Global Mindsets.

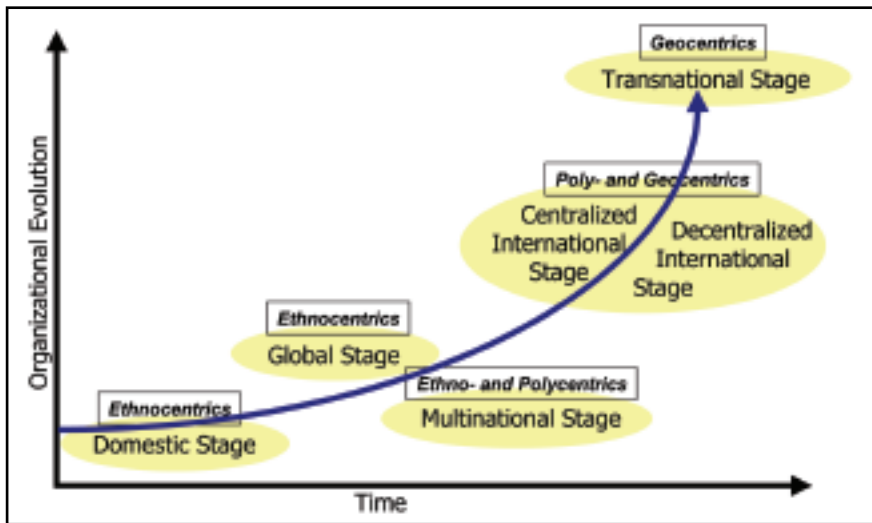


Source: Guy & Beaman 2003, Sullivan 2001, Permuter 1969.

## TRANSNATIONAL LEADERS

Bartlett and Ghoshal (1989), in their seminal work on the different types of structures found in international business organizations, suggest that international success is dependent on the fit between the individual's orientation and the type of organization they work for. Working in a "Transnational" organization typically requires an ability to balance multiple perspectives, manage complexity, and build commitment through a highly networked, widely dispersed global organization (Beaman &

**Figure 5. Global Mindset and Organizational Evolution.**



Source: Adapted from Beaman & Walker 2000, Beaman & Guy 2003.

Guy 2003, 2004). They identify four different types of leaders that are required to successfully manage the global organization:

*Business Managers* strategize globally, focusing on achieving global efficiencies, coordinating activities across borders and allocating resources across the world in best manner possible (cf. "Ethnocentric").

*Country Managers* focus on building local resources, meeting local customer needs, satisfying host government requirements, interpreting local laws and regulations and maintaining market position in country (cf. "Polycentric").

*Functional Managers* specialize in specific functional areas, scanning for information worldwide within a functional domain, increasing global knowledge and sharing, cross-pollinating ideas and championing innovations (cf. "Geocentric").

*Corporate Managers*, generally based at headquarters, focus on finding, developing and deploying talent across the globe to respond to demands of the transnational environment (i.e., "Executives").

While truly transnational organizations need all four types of leaders, organizations at other stages of global development will generally have a

stronger need for one type of manager over the others (see Figure 5). Purely domestic companies need primarily ethnocentric, while multinational companies need more polycentric. International and transnational organizations need all three types of managers, including the corporate executives to manage the interactions between the others.

**GLOBAL MINDSET STUDY**

In order to better understand the dynamics involved in an international work situation and to unravel the threads that make up the fabric of global leadership, I have been conducting a study, in partnership with Dr. Gregory R. Guy from New York University, to evaluate the role that global mindset plays with individuals working internationally (see Guy & Beaman 2003, 2004). The objective of this study is to evaluate how global mindset may be linked to attitudes, identity, personality, gender, family situation, nationality, linguistic accommodation, and so on, and hence play a role in the success (or failure) of an international assignment.

**Study Population**

The study population currently comprises 100 individuals working primarily in the field of human resource information systems, as well as some academics. We targeted indi-

**Figure 6. Population Demographics.**

Nationality	N	%	Destination	N	%	Intl Experience	N	%
United States	50	50.0%	United States	15	15.0%	< 6 months	23	23.0%
Canada	10	10.0%	Europe	54	54.0%	6-12 months	10	10.0%
Europe	28	28.0%	Latin America	7	7.0%	1-2 years	16	16.0%
Latin America	3	3.0%	Asia Pacific	20	20.0%	3-5 years	18	18.0%
Asia Pacific	8	8.0%	Africa	3	3.0%	> 5 years	33	33.0%
Africa	1	1.0%	Middle East	1	1.0%	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0%</b>			
Education	N	%	Age Group	N	%	Gender	N	%
Some College	8	8.0%	Under 30	4	4.0%	Male	73	73.0%
Bachelors Degree	34	34.0%	30-39 years	33	33.0%	Female	27	27.0%
Masters Degree	48	48.0%	40-49 years	25	25.0%	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Advanced Degree	10	10.0%	Over 50	38	38.0%			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0%</b>			

Note: n=100

Source: Guy & Beaman 2003, 2004.

viduals with substantial international experience; consequently, our results must not be construed as representative of the general population, but rather as indicative of an experienced international, primarily hi-tech, population. Figure 6 shows some basic information on the make-up of the sample population and their international assignments. Half of the respondents are from the United States, with the rest coming from a broad range of other countries; over half of them spent their international assignments in Europe, with another 20 percent in the Asia/Pacific region. The durations of their international assignments range from less than six months to more than five years, and their ages show a preponderance of people over 30. Seventy-three percent are male and 27 percent female – a substantial female representation in comparison with previous studies that have shown less than 15 percent females in international work (Tung 1998). The respondents are fairly evenly distributed across post-secondary educational levels.

**Questionnaire**

Each participant was asked to complete a questionnaire consisting of two parts – a survey of the individual’s international work experience and a personality test to assess the individual’s aptitude for work in a foreign environment. The survey comprises 123 questions covering information about the respondents’ own backgrounds, their language abilities (and how this changed while they worked abroad), their employers, the place and duration of their international work assignments, their attitudes and orientation toward international experiences, and their evaluation of the experience and its outcome (e.g., impact on their career, etc.).

The second part of the questionnaire consists of a personality test to assess individuals’ intercultural adaptability and hence probability of success in an international environment. Of the many available approaches to personality assessment, we relied on Hoffman’s Cultural Adaptability Inventory (HCAI), developed based on Hoffman’s experience as a clinical psychologist working with expatriates in the United States. The HCAI comprises four subscales: Inter-cultural Liking, Risk-Taking, Amiability, and Extroversion/Introversion. The individuals’ scores on these subscales are totalled to generate a composite measure that serves as a general predictor of suitability for international work.

The results of the Beaman-Guy studies reveal that there are a number of factors that significantly affect certain aspects of individual performance and, hence, the outcome of an international assignment. The following paragraphs briefly review some of the highlights from these previous studies (Guy & Beaman

2003, 2004) and from our ongoing work.

**Findings – Global Mindset**

We first looked at Global Mindset as a factor in the international setting and found a number of key learnings about how different types of mindsets react to the experience (see Figure 7).

*Polycentrics.* The employees who are most positively oriented towards the particular country they went to are those with a polycentric mindset. These individuals have the most overall international experience ( $r=.165, p<.05$ ), end up staying the longest in the international job ( $r=.216, p<.05$ ), show the best linguistic accommodation ( $r=.196, p<.05$ ) (evidenced by acquiring or improving their command of the local language), maintain their language skills better upon returning home ( $r=.209, p<.05$ ), and find the overall experience the most educational ( $r=.257, p<.005$ ). They demonstrate the strongest attitude towards the importance of learning the local language ( $r=.306, p<.005$ ) and hence integration in the local community.

*Geocentrics.* The geocentric orientation is associated with an overall positive attitude towards other countries and cultures, and a generalized mindset of multiculturalism and universality of values. Our geocentric respondents have considerably shorter stays on average ( $r=-.214, p<.05$ ) and tend to find their experiences the most frustrating ( $r=.318, p<.005$ ). We surmise that this is probably due to their intense dedication to internationalism, which is not satisfied by a single international locale. They also show the greatest amount of prior language ability ( $r=.172, p<.05$ ) and are the least likely to make local friendships ( $r=-.238, p<.01$ ). Finally, the geocentrics demonstrate the greatest need

**Figure 7. Global Mindset Findings.**

Measures	Ethno	Poly	Geo
<b>ASSIGNMENT:</b>			
Satisfying	-0.171		
Successful			
Frustrating			0.318
Educational		0.257	
<b>EXPERIENCE:</b>			
Amount of Experience		0.165	
Duration of Stay		0.216	-0.214
Stay Extended			
Time Since Completed	-0.347		
<b>LANGUAGE:</b>			
Linguistic Accommodation		0.196	
Prior Language Ability			0.172
Language Improvement	-0.169		
Language Maintained		0.209	
<b>MEMBERSHIP:</b>			
Home Comm/Social Orgs		-0.196	
Home Prof/Acad Orgs	0.181	-0.230	
Global Comm/Social Orgs			
Global Prof/Acad Orgs			
<b>ATTITUDE:</b>			
Local Language		0.306	
Local Friendships	-0.201		-0.238
Home Management Support			0.219
Spousal Support			

Note:  $p<.05 (r=.164)$ ;  $p<.01 (r=.230)$ ;  $p<.005 (r=.254)$ ;  $n=100$

Significant Coefficients of Correlation. Source: Guy & Beaman 2003 & 2004.



for home country management support ( $r=.219, p<.05$ ), most likely due to the nature of their positions which requires considerably more integrated linkages between home and local country businesses.

**Ethnocentrics.** An ethnocentric orientation is characteristic of individuals who are most deeply attached to the ways of doing things from their home country. Not surprisingly, such respondents in our survey show the lowest levels of satisfaction with the international experience ( $r=-.171, p<.05$ ) and exhibit the least language improvement ( $r=-.169, p<.01$ ). The ethnocentrics also show the strongest reliance on membership in home professional organizations ( $r=.181, p<.05$ ) in direct contrast to the polycentrics who tend to reject home-based community and professional associations ( $r=-.196, p<.05$  and  $r=-.230, p<.01$ ). The ethnocentrics also depend on fewer local friendships ( $r=-.201, p<.05$ ), probably both because of a lack of desire and due to their shorter stays. Interestingly, however, our results also indicate that international experience tends to reduce ethnocentrism over time: the longer the time that has elapsed since the international assignment, the less ethnocentric our respondents appear to be ( $r=-.347, p<.005$ ). This finding indicates that “mindsets are malleable,” based on experience, which does broaden the mind, albeit gradually (Guy & Beaman 2003).

**Findings – Personality**

Another perspective revealed by the Beaman-Guy study can be seen in the results of the Hoffman Cultural Adaptability Inventory (HCAI) scale assessing personality traits that favor cultural adaptability (see Figure 8). Higher scores for cultural adaptability (HCAI Total) on the Hoffman scale are significantly correlated with amount of experience ( $r=.194, p<.05$ ), longer stays abroad ( $r=.213, p<.05$ ), and extended assignments ( $r=.200, p<.05$ ). Most significantly, we see that the Hoffman test does appear to be a good predictor of more successful experiences ( $r=.258, p<.005$ ) – if we can agree that one valid measure of

**Figure 8. Personality Findings.**

Measures	Cultural Liking	Risk Taking	Amiability	Extroversion	HCAI Total
<b>ASSIGNMENT:</b>					
Rewarding		0.307			
Successful	0.197	0.271			0.258
Frustrating		0.183			
Educational	0.205				
<b>EXPERIENCE:</b>					
Amount of Experience	0.206	0.189			0.194
Duration of Stay	0.175	0.235			0.213
Stay Extended		0.252			0.200
Time Since Completed					
<b>LANGUAGE:</b>					
Linguistic Accommodation					
Prior Language Ability			-0.165		
Language Improvement			0.207		0.187
Language Maintained					
<b>MEMBERSHIP:</b>					
Home Comm/Social Orgs					
Home Prof/Acad Orgs					
Global Comm/Social Orgs					
Global Prof/Acad Orgs					
<b>ATTITUDE:</b>					
Local Language					
Local Friendships					
Home Management Support	0.271				
Spousal Support					

Note:  $p<.05$  ( $r=.164$ );  $p<.01$  ( $r=.230$ );  $p<.005$  ( $r=.254$ );  $n=100$

Significant Coefficients of Correlation.

success is whether the individual’s assignment was extended or not.

Breaking down the Hoffman scale into its subscales, we see several strong correlations for Intercultural-Liking and Risk-Taking, indicating that desire to interact with other cultures, as well as predisposition to take risks, play key roles in the international experience. Individuals who score high on Risk-Taking tend to find the experience rewarding ( $r=.307, p<.005$ ), yet at the same time frustrating ( $r=.183, p<.05$ ). Most importantly, they tend to be more successful – as measured by the number of extensions ( $r=.271, p<.01$ ). They also have more international experience overall ( $r=.189, p<.05$ ), tend to stay longer abroad ( $r=.235, p>.01$ ), and are more likely to have their assignments extended ( $r=.252, p<.01$ ). Individuals scoring high on the Intercultural-Liking subscale exhibit similar tendencies, also valuing the importance of making local friendships ( $r=.271, p<.005$ ).

Another interesting finding can be seen in the correlations with the Amiability subscale and language abilities. While the individuals in our

study show a negative association with Amiability and an ability to speak the local language before leaving on their overseas assignment ( $r=-.165, p<.05$ ), they show the greatest amount of language improvement during the assignment ( $r=.207, p<.05$ ). This underscores the fact that language is an intensely social phenomenon and that ability to learn other languages is enhanced through the desire to socialize and make friends in that culture.

**Findings – Culture**

In order to look at the effect of culture on the international assignment, we divided the population into two groups – Americans and non-Americans – and ran a series of two-tailed t-tests to evaluate the differences (see Figure 9). By coincidence the two groups were evenly divided in the current population – 50 American and 50 non-Americans. The current sample is not sufficiently large enough to be able to break down other nationalities, but this is an area we intend to look at in future work.

Surprisingly to us, the Americans in this study tend to be more geocen-

tric than the non-Americans (mean of 7.9 versus 7.4). We had expected to see a more ethnocentric predisposition in the Americans; however, we must consider the population under study: the current population is not a representative sample of the American public, but rather a group of experienced human resources professionals and academics who have considerably more international experience than the average American. We suspect that, based on America's dominant political and economic position on the global stage, that the higher geocentric predisposition of the Americans is because it takes a higher level of geocentricity for Americans to climb out of the "hegemonic gravity well" of their home country and get involved in international work (Guy & Beaman 2004).

In evaluating their international experiences, Americans rate them more frustrating (mean of 2.7 versus 2.0), but also more rewarding (mean of 4.4 versus 4.0) than other cultures as a whole. Not surprisingly, linguistically, the rest of the world surpasses America on language ability prior to their overseas assignment (mean score of 2.8 versus 1.2) and on total number of languages spoken (on average 2.7 languages spoken versus 2.1). Finally, while non-Americans feel that local TV/radio is important to a successful experience (mean of 4.2 versus 3.7), Americans attach much greater importance to getting support from their employers at home (mean of 4.2 versus 3.6).

**Findings – Context**

In further work being reported on in this article for the first time, we analyzed the individual's position level and job type in order to determine the effect of contextual factors on the international experience. According to Caligiuri and Sullivan

**Figure 9. Culture Findings.**

Measures	USA n=50	Non-USA n=50
<b>MINDSET:</b> Ethnocentricity Polycentricity Geocentricity	7.9	7.4
<b>ASSIGNMENT:</b> Satisfying Successful Frustrating Rewarding	2.7 4.4	2.0 4.0
<b>EXPERIENCE:</b> Amount of Experience Duration of Stay Stay Extended Time Since Completed	No Significant Differences	
<b>LANGUAGE:</b> Linguistic Accommodation Prior Language Ability Language Improvement No of Languages Spoken	1.2 2.1	2.8 2.7
<b>MEMBERSHIP:</b> Home Comm/Social Orgs Home Prof/Acad Orgs Global Comm/Social Orgs Global Prof/Acad Orgs	No Significant Differences	
<b>ATTITUDE:</b> Local TV/Radio Local Friendships Home Management Support Spousal Support	3.7 4.2	4.2 3.6

Note: All significant at *p* < .05 level and most at *p* < .01 by *t*-test.

Significant Differences in Mean Scores. Source: Guy & Beaman 2004.

(as discussed earlier), research has indicated that the level and type of international position that the individual holds has a strong influence on success. The general hypothesis is that the lower the level and the more technical the position, the less of an impact cultural differences have on the individual's success. This is particularly applicable in the world of international business, where the lower the position, the more likely the individual is to be doing heads-down technical work, dealing to a much lesser extent with the cultural differences and communication challenges inherent in working across cultures.

In order to test this hypothesis, we divided the individuals in our sample in two different ways. The first subdivi-

vision is based on the level of the position:

11% are academics (students and professors),  
31% are in staff or line positions,

34% hold supervisor or management positions; and,  
24% are in director or executive level positions.

The second subdivision is based on the type of job, i.e., on how much external focus and intercultural communication the job requires:

11% are academics (students and professors),  
16% are in technical/development roles,

11% hold in financial/accounting positions,  
43% are in functional or project management roles,

6% are in sales or marketing roles; and,  
13% are in executive general management roles.

We found several significant correlations, which can be seen in Figure 10. First, the higher the level of position the person holds, the more likely the individual is to have a polycentric mindset (*r* = .174, *p* < .05). That is, for the individuals in our sample, we see more poly-

centrics in the executive and director-level roles, indicating that expatriates at this level require a strong identification with the local culture and a deep understanding of local market conditions. With respect to job type, we also see a positive correlation with being polycentric and the types of the jobs that require more extensive intercultural communication skills (*r* = .191, *p* < .05). Similarly, we see a negative correlation between job type and the ethnocentric mindset (*r* = -.220, *p* < .05); that is, the more outwardly focused the position, the less ethnocentric the individual is likely to be. As a corollary to this, with respect to personality factors, we find that the higher the level of position and the more outwardly focused type of job,

**Figure 10. Context Findings.**

Measures	Position Level	Job Type
<b>GLOBAL MINDSET:</b>		
Ethnocentric		-0.220
Polycentric	0.174	0.191
Geocentric		
<b>PERSONALITY:</b>		
Intercultural-Liking		
Risk-Taking		
Amiability	0.204	0.177
Extroversion		
<b>ASSIGNMENT:</b>		
Satisfying		
Successful		
Frustrating	0.200	
Educational		
<b>EXPERIENCE:</b>		
Amount of Experience		
Duration of Stay		0.178
Stay Extended		
Time Since Completed		
<b>LANGUAGE:</b>		
Linguistic Accommodation		
Number of Languages Spoken	-0.224	
Language Improvement		
Language Maintained		
<b>ATTITUDE:</b>		
Local Friendships	-0.186	
Family Accompaniment	0.203	0.198
Home Country Standards	-0.174	-0.260
Home Management Support		
Spousal Support	0.379	0.274

Note:  $p < .05$  ( $n = 164$ );  $p < .01$  ( $n = 230$ );  $p < .005$  ( $n = 254$ );  $n = 100$

Significant Coefficients of Correlation.

the more extroverted the individual is likely to be ( $r = .204$  and  $r = .177$ , respectively,  $p < .05$ ).

Several other interesting findings also emerge with respect to the job context. The higher the position level, the more educational the individual tends to find the experience ( $r = .200$ ,  $p < .05$ ) and the less likely they are to speak a number of different languages ( $r = -.224$ ,  $p < .05$ ), indicating that international work experience provides an excellent opportunity for the development of globally alert business leaders. Individuals in jobs requiring more outward intercultural contact tend to stay longer on their assignments ( $r = .178$ ,  $p < .05$ ), confirming the assumption that individuals on technical assignments go overseas for a short duration to get a job done and then return home.

With respect to individual attitudes towards the international experience, the results of the Beaman-Guy study show that the higher the level of position, the less likely the individual is to value the importance of making local friendships ( $r = -.186$ ,  $p < .05$ ) and maintaining home country standards ( $r = -.174$ ,  $p < .05$ ), and the more likely they are to value the importance of

the family coming along ( $r = .203$ ,  $p < .05$ ) and having spousal support ( $r = .379$ ,  $p < .005$ ).

These findings on position level and job type support Caligiuri and Sullivan's work implicating the relevance of global mindset and personality factors in selecting the right individuals for the right types of jobs.

**Findings – Situation**

Regardless of the personal propensities affecting the intercultural experience, there are situational aspects of every environment that impact the assignment. Individuals may have family ties that facilitate or hinder their performance in an international setting. The circumstances surrounding a particular job may also vary: more or less support from home may be available; performance on the job may be facilitated or impeded by the political or economic circumstances of the host country, and so on.

In order to analyze the impact of the family situation on the international assignment, we divided the sample into three subgroups: those with family who accompanied them on the assignment ( $n = 44$ ), those with family who did not accompany them ( $n = 32$ ), and those with no family ( $n = 24$ ). Using a series of two-tailed t-tests, we systematically analyzed these three subgroups to uncover the factors affecting the international experience. The results can be seen in Figure 11.

Individuals with family who accompanied them on the assignment tend to be the most satisfied:

they score 4.6 (on five-point scale), followed closely by individuals with no family at 4.5. Not surprising, those individuals with family left back home tend to be the least satisfied with their experience at 4.1. Consequently, we find that individuals with family who accompany them stay the longest (3.8), followed by individuals with no family back home waiting for them at 2.7. Not surprisingly, individuals with family left behind stay the shortest amount of time on their assignment at 2.1 ( $p < .005$ ) – undoubtedly out of an eagerness to get back home. Similarly, we also find that individuals with no family members to be cognizant of are significantly more willing to take on another foreign assignment in another country – 1.7 for those with no family versus 1.0 and 1.1 ( $p < .005$ ) for those individuals with family members to consider.

Interestingly, we also find that the most successful individuals are those with no family. Without personal considerations at home, they presumably have fewer distractions and so can focus solely on their work. Their success score is 2.6 compared to 2.2 for those with family who went along and 2.0 for those with family who didn't go. These findings clearly indicate the

**Figure 11. Situation Findings.**

Measures	Family Went n=44	Family Didn't Go n=32	No Family n=24
<b>ASSIGNMENT:</b>			
Satisfying	4.6	4.1	4.5
Successful	2.2	2.0	2.6
Frustrating			
Educational			
<b>EXPERIENCE:</b>			
Amount of Experience			
Duration of Stay	3.8	2.1	2.7
Stay Extended			
Willingness to Go Again	1.0	1.1	1.7
Time Since Completed	2.5	3.4	3.3
<b>LANGUAGE:</b>			
Linguistic Accommodation			
Prior Language Ability			
Language Improvement			
Language Maintained			
<b>MEMBERSHIP:</b>			
No of Comm/Social Orgs	1.8	1.3	0.8
No of Prof/Acad Orgs	1.4	1.5	0.6
Global Comm/Social Orgs	2.1	1.4	1.6
Global Prof/Acad Orgs	2.3	1.9	1.3
<b>ATTITUDE:</b>			
Local Language			
Local Friendships	4.5	4.4	4.8
Home Management Support			
Spousal Support			

Note: All significant at  $p < .05$  level and most at  $p < .01$  by t-test.

Significant Differences in Mean Scores.

strong impact that the family situation plays on the success, satisfaction, and duration of an international assignment, as well as on the individual's desire to return for another tour of duty.

We also find congruent findings with regard to group identity and participation in various local, social, civic, and religious organizations, i.e., local communities of practice. Individuals with family who accompany them are significantly more likely to participate in a larger number of community organizations, 1.8, than those with family who do not accompany them, 1.3, followed by those individuals with no family, 0.8. Similarly, individuals with family, both those with and without accompanying family members, are significantly more likely to participate in professional and/or academic organizations than those individuals with no family, 1.4 and 1.5 versus 0.6. We surmise that this is the case because individuals with family are probably older and so have more connections. The younger people are probably spending their spare time on social activities and personal development rather

than participating in community groups (to socialize their children) and professional organizations (to further their careers).

In addition, those with family are more likely to participate in global professional organizations rather than in local or home country organizations than those with no family (2.3 and 1.9 versus 1.3). In contrast, individuals with no family appear to feel that it is more important to develop local friendships, 4.8, than those with family, 4.5 and 4.4.

### **TOWARDS A MULTIDIMENSIONAL MODEL OF INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE**

The results reported in this article have important implications for the selection and development of globally competent leaders, and hence, organizational success on the international stage. The findings from the Beaman-Guy study, as well as many others, demonstrate that a multi-factorial analysis is required in order to fully interpret the picture of an individual's international effectiveness and hence predict global success. It should be clear that there is no single

predictor of success in the international setting, no *sine qua non* for selecting effective global leaders. Nor is it true that any successful leader can be successful internationally. Rather, to achieve success in international work requires a conjunction of many interdependent factors. To move beyond the myths, mystiques, and mistakes and better explain the expatriate experience requires a multi-factorial approach.

This article has attempted to sketch the basic elements of such an approach. Figure 12 presents a schematic for a multidimensional model of the international experience. The principle factors affecting international success involve a plethora of individual characteristics, cultural facets, contextual features, and situational aspects.

#### **Individual Factors**

*Global Mindset.* An individual's orientation and attitudes regarding international cultures and experiences strongly influence their performance in a global setting. As we've seen, different types of jobs favor different mindsets: polycentric mindsets are appropriate for assignments which require intense local knowledge; ethnocentric mindsets are effective for assignments that require enforcing standards and one common way of doing business; and, geocentric mindsets are ideal for those positions responsible for seeking commonalities and integrating business practices holistically across the globe. "In fact, the 'best' global teams are built by mixing complementary mindsets, because an eclectic group of mindsets is at lower risk of failure due to poor fit between the job and the mindset" (Guy & Beaman 2003).

*Personality.* Also as we've seen, there are certain personality characteristics that favor successful adaptation to foreign cultures, such as flexibility and accommodation, intercultural-liking and empathy, sociability and amiability. The ability to take risks – or the desire for adventure – is a personality factor positively correlated with rewarding and successful international experiences. Hence, pre-screening candi-

**Figure 12. Multidimensional Model of International Experience.**





dates for these types of personality traits can enhance the success rate of overseas assignments.

### **Cultural Factors**

*Nationality.* Cultural differences, especially the distance between the home country and local country culture, affect the capacity of expatriates to accommodate, adapt, and succeed in the new environment. Prior language ability and the willingness to learn a new language are indications of an individual's predisposition toward appreciating and valuing other cultures. Thus, training expatriates to understand these differences and appreciate them can improve success in the international setting.

### **Contextual Factors**

*Position and Job.* The level of position and the type of job the individual is expected to perform present varying challenges in the international experience based on the amount of intercultural communication and adaptation that is required. Higher level positions (e.g., directors and general managers) and more outwardly focused jobs (e.g., project management, sales and marketing) require different personality traits and different global mindsets than heads-down, more internally focused jobs (e.g., programmers, financial analysts, operations specialists). Thus, the suitability of the individual for the specific position and job must be taken into consideration when making international assignments.

### **Situational Factors**

*Family.* Some aspects of the expatriate assignment may be beyond control, such as the local business climate, local attitudes towards foreigners, current events such as political crises, wars, and so on. Others, however, can be addressed, such as providing adequate home management support, maintaining home country contacts, and assuring that the individual's family situation is taken into account. In developing global leaders, careful consideration must be given to the family situation, as satisfaction with the experience

and success of the assignment are tightly intertwined: successful people tend to be happy; happy people tend to be successful. Situations in which the family is not being appropriately cared for can distract the individual's attention from his/her work and hence encourage an early departure – both with potentially adverse effects on the organization's performance and the individual's future career opportunities.

### **CONCLUSION**

In summary, successful international management must be sensitive to the various components of the global experience so as to:

- select candidates with the appropriate individual characteristics to be successful, matching personality traits and global mindset with the goals of the position;
- manage the acculturation process through professional development, training, social integration, and repatriation; and,
- foster a motivating environment through organizational alignment, with appropriate professional, managerial, and personal support for the international employee.

In closing, there is no better maxim on selecting and hiring successful employees – no matter what the assignment, whether domestic, international, or intergalactic – than these words of Dee Hock, founder and chairman emeritus of VISA International:

"Hire and promote first on the basis of integrity; second, motivation; third, capacity; fourth, understanding; fifth, knowledge; and last and not least, experience. Without integrity, motivation is dangerous; without motivation, capacity is impotent; without capacity, understanding is limited; without understanding, knowledge is meaningless; without knowledge, experience is blind. Experience is easy to provide and quickly put to good

use by people with all the other qualities" (Hock 1999).

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#### ENDNOTES

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