

UNIT: II

International Assignment

An international assignment is a time limited staffing across national borders mostly with the target of knowledge-transfer and for establishing a uniform corporate management. Employees who work abroad are called assignees or expatriates, but there exist many definitions of an expatriate.

An **international assignment** is an overseas task set by a company to an employee. Companies that engage in international assignments are mainly multinational corporations (MNCs). MNCs send employees from the home country to a different country for business operations at overseas offices or subsidiaries. These employees are called expatriates. International assignments can fulfill a number of key organizational functions and are viewed as development opportunity for organizations to build a global and mature workforce. As a result of globalization and the saturation of domestic markets, international assignments are a strategic tool for organizations to compete successfully on the global stage and achieve specific organizational objectives. These organization missions are a key way of developing global perspectives. They can encourage diverse inputs into decision and develop shared values within the Headquarters, home country and subsidiaries. International assignments are a component of the training and development activities of international human resource management. Other main activities include human resource management in the global environment, selection, performance management, compensation and repatriation.

Types of Expatriate Assignment or Types of International Assignment

Regardless of the reason, two major challenges face expatriate assignments: costs and family considerations. To overcome these issues, HR needs to design flexible expatriate assignments that match company needs, as well as those of the employee and their family.

Short Term Expatriate Assignment

Many companies are turning to short term expatriate assignments as an answer to cost and family issues. Employees work overseas for a fixed term, usually for a period of three months to one year, on an unaccompanied basis. Home leave allowances are an integral part of the assignment to enable regular trips back to the home country, or family visits to the host country. The benefit for the employee is that there is no need to uproot the entire family and relocate them overseas. The company makes considerable savings from the absence of costs associated with relocation like school fees, shipping of goods, vehicle transportation and furniture storage. However, even if the employee is only overseas for three months, HR needs to manage the assignment effectively to make it a successful undertaking on both sides. There are a number of factors to incorporate into a package, even for a short term posting overseas:

1. Pre-assignment preparation- language and culture training, orientation, work permits and visas
2. Settling-in assistance

3. Housing - e.g. serviced apartments or company (found) properties
4. Home leave and family visitation allowances
5. Host country transportation
6. Telephone and internet allowances
7. Support for child care and house maintenance in the home country
8. Tax assistance and equalization
9. Repatriation support

Long term Expatriate Assignments

Typically overseas for three to five years, long term expatriate assignments are the traditional form of overseas placements. An employee and family members relocate to a host country for the duration of the assignment. This requires company support and payments for the housing situation in the host and home countries, school allowances, dual career support or spousal assistance, shipment of goods, storage of belongings, pet relocation, relocation service provisions, tax assistance, cost-of-living adjustment and expatriate allowances.

Whilst there are many justifiable and cost effective business reasons for sending staff on long-term expat assignments, particularly in situations requiring continuity and a transfer of skills, family issues can make these types of assignments notoriously harder to manage than other forms of expatriate postings.

Many surveys indicate that families feel HR adopt an "out of sight, out of mind" attitude to its expatriate staff; ensuring that employees cannot say the same about your HR team increases the chances of a successful overseas posting.

Home Commuters

Living in one country during the week, and travelling home for the weekends is another popular form of expatriate assignments. A home commuting arrangement allows companies to send talent where the business needs it most, on a short-term basis, without relocating an entire family. In addition to the same advantages offered by a short-term assignment, a home commuter arrangement offers a better work life balance for the employee with weekly trips home. However, home commuting is not sustainable in the long-term, unless there are no family considerations.

Staff Selection for International Assignment

1. Adaptability to Cultural Change

Overseas managers must be able to adapt to change. They also need a degree of cultural toughness. Research shows that many managers are exhilarated at the beginning of their overseas assignment. After a few months, however, a form of culture shock creeps in, and they begin to encounter frustration and feel confused in their new environment. One analysis noted that many of the most effective international managers suffer this cultural shock. Organizations examine a number of characteristics to determine

whether an individual is sufficiently adaptable. Examples include work experiences with cultures other than one's own, previous overseas travel, knowledge of foreign languages (fluency generally is not necessary), and recent immigration background or heritage.

2. Physical and Emotional Health

Most organizations require that their overseas managers have good physical and emotional health. Some examples are fairly obvious. An employee with a heart condition would be rejected for overseas assignment; likewise, an individual with a nervous disorder would not be considered. The psychological ability of individuals to withstand culture shock also would be considered, as would the current marital status as it affects the individual's ability to cope in a foreign environment.

3. Age, Experience, and Education

Most Multinational Corporations strive for a balance between age and experience. There is evidence that younger managers are more eager for international assignments. These managers tend to be more "worldly" and have a greater appreciation of other cultures than older managers do. By the same token, young people often are the least developed in management experience and technical skills; they lack real-world experience. To gain the desired balance, many firms send both young and seasoned personnel to the same overseas post. Many companies consider an academic degree, preferably a graduate degree, to be of critical importance to an international executive; however, universal agreement regarding the ideal type of degree is nonexistent. MNC's, of course, use formal education only as a point of departure for their own training and development efforts.

4. Language Training

One recognized weakness of many Multinational Corporations is that they do not give sufficient attention to the importance of language training. English is the primary language of international business, and most expatriates from all countries can converse in English. Those who can speak only are at a distinct disadvantage when doing business in non-English-speaking countries.

5. Spouses and Dependents or Work-Family Issues

Spouses and dependents are another important consideration when a person is to be chosen for an overseas assignment. If the family is not happy, the manager often performs poorly and may either be terminated or simply decide to leave the organization.

One popular approach in appraising the family's suitability for an overseas assignment is called adaptability screening. This process evaluates how well the family is likely to stand up to the rigors and stress of overseas life. The company will look for a number of things in this screening, including how closely knit the family is, how well it can withstand stress, and how well it can adjust to a new culture and climate.

6. Organization-Specific Requirements

The human resource practitioner needs to consider the organization's requirements before selecting a candidate, host country governments can stop the transfer of expatriates. The host government, is the ones

that issue the working permits and visas to the expatriates, therefore, the parent country need to prove that there is no available host national country. Legislations and changes of the employee must be addressed; assignments abroad means that the expatriate must move to another country with family to remote or war-torn environments, where living conditions can be challenging. Some host countries do not issue work permits to females, this can make it difficult, for the spouse to adapt. An organisation-specific requirement is implemented during the formation of an independent relationship flanked by computer resources, which includes the evaluation of the comparative precedence between default recommendation and alternative recommendation; and using the highest precedence recommendations to set up a link among the computer resources.

Head Hunters

A headhunter is a company or individual that provides employment recruiting services on behalf of the employer. Headhunters are hired by firms to find talent and to locate individuals who meet specific job requirements. Headhunters may also be referred to as executive recruiters and the function they perform is often called executive search. Headhunters may have a pool of candidates for specific positions or may act aggressively to find talent by looking at competitors' employees. Employers tend to enlist headhunters when there is a sense of urgency and they are unable to find the right person to fill a role on their own.

Roles of Head Hunters

- A good headhunter will contact you knowing ahead of time that you are a good fit for a role based on your skills and experience.
- If a headhunter asks for your past or current salary, this is a red flag. Rather, they should tell you the salary range of the opportunity they are calling about and then ask you whether it is a good fit.
- An unprepared headhunter will not have done proper homework on your background and may try to interview you on the fly once you are on the phone.
- Quality headhunters are easy to reach and communicate with, and they conduct themselves professionally. It is a bad sign if a headhunter talks fast, is rude, makes too many demands, is hard to reach, or neglects responding to messages.

Cross national advertising

Cross national advertising is a recruitment process for posting job advertisement through various media across various nations to attract perfect employee for the vacant position.

Cross National Advertisement contain Job description, salary, other benefits, job location, etc

E-Recruitment

E-recruitment, also known as online recruitment, refers to the use of web-based technology for the various processes of attracting, assessing, selecting, recruiting and on boarding job candidates.

Through e-recruitment employers reach larger number of potential employees. Companies may build their e-recruitment platforms in-house, use e-recruitment HR software or employ recruitment agencies that utilize e-recruitment as part of their package.

E-Recruitment, also known as “Online -Recruitment”, is a method used by HR professionals to assist the recruitment process by using technology or web based tools. It is an automated process of tracking, attracting, interviewing, and hiring candidates by utilizing online stages and HR software.

Methods of E-Recruitment

Sourcing and Attracting Potential Candidates

Sourcing is the process of searching for qualified job candidates for a current or pending position in the company. In order to recruit candidates efficiently, it becomes important to know where the pool of interested candidates lies. Which is why, using social media for sourcing and attracting potential candidates is one of the most common methods used for online recruitment. Social media is an effective tool for building employer brands and hiring potential candidates. Platforms like Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram have been commonly visited sites for finding, tracking and recruiting candidates online.

Using Applicant Tracking System

An Applicant Tracking System is a software that uses an algorithm to sort out resumes of the potential candidates and simplify the process of recruitment for the hiring HR managers. When a lot of candidates apply for a job opening, this software helps to segregate under qualified resumes and qualified resumes during the hiring process. So, this enables the recruiters to see the resumes that are filtered and as per their criteria asked in the job profile. Thus, an Applicant Tracking System is a useful method for E-recruitment.

Interviewing Candidates Online

Thanks to the internet, it is not mandatory to have job interviews in a physical space anymore. By using free interview video tools like Skype, Google meet, Zoom etc., HR managers can recruit the qualified candidates by interviewing them online. Nowadays, most of the companies use an automated online interviewing system where the candidates are asked questions and are given a certain time limit for thinking and speaking the answers. This is also the reason why this method of E- recruitment has become very common in the corporate world.

Using Job Boards

Job boards are the websites used by the recruiters for advertising job offerings specifically. On the contrary, Job seekers can use job boards to search for new job opportunities in their area and profession. Some job boards use applicant tracking systems to help streamline the application process while in others, individual job postings redirect interested candidates to company websites to complete the application process. For example, sites like Glassdoor and Indeed allow candidates to post their resumes for the recruiters to find them.

Now that we know what are the possible methods used by HR recruiters to hire potential candidates, let's talk about the advantages these methods serve to them.

Advantages of E-Recruitment

Saves Time

If we look back at the time when HR managers used to publish job vacancies and depend on word of mouth for finding job seekers, we'd see how time consuming it used to be to hire a single potential candidate and that too, in a small locality! With methods of E-recruitment where resumes of under qualified candidates can be separated and a larger pool of job seekers can be found, the recruitment process has just got simplified in case of time usage.

Minimizes Hiring Cost

Costs in recruiting are usually high in terms of advertising, travel expenses, third-party recruiter fees etc. Which is why, the hiring process usually takes up too much time and its cost increases subsequently. However, with the use of online recruitment methods, labor costs like these can be minimized by implementing software which allows both, the job seekers and recruiters to post free job openings on multiple social platforms just by one click.

Broadens Scope of Candidates

With the use of digital tools and the web, HR recruiters can also increase the scope of candidates. When they post about a job vacancy, it allows them to dive into the larger pool of potential candidates which also broadens their selection decisions. As a result, they are able to select the appropriate candidates both locally and internationally.

Filters According to Criteria

Recruitment systems have filtration tools to help recruiters to find the ideal candidates with competencies that match the job position. Therefore, the filtration tools provided by E-Recruitment systems speed up the process of sorting the candidates according to experience, education, competencies, and many more criteria.

Disadvantages of E-recruitment

Rise in Competition

One of the downsides of recruiting online is that there is also a pool of recruiters waiting to hire the perfect candidate for their specified job role. As a result, the job post can quickly become buried under a mountain of other job offers, forcing the HR manager to either pay more for extra exposure or risk not

being seen. When it comes to social media, it is also the decision of the platform's algorithms, to reach the audience the manager wants.

Technical Issues

During online interviews on the free video platforms like Skype or Zoom video calls, it is possible to encounter technical faults. It can be quite embarrassing for a recruiter to be suddenly switched out of a conversation or call due to an electrical outage, while having an unstable internet connection can be awkward. This also means if the company isn't good at technology, they might encounter such glitches more often.

Attraction of Bad Candidates

With the ease in the process of applying for a job online, it also means that under qualified and fraud candidates might apply for the job role. With hundreds of applicants, many of them will not be suitable for or serious about the role, thus diluting the quality of your talent pool.