

## Cross cultural training

A number of international company's have branches in countries all over the world .Each branch is usually controlled by the mother company and as such the management team may not necessarily be from the host country but from another country. These managers who are sent to other countries travel there with their families. Most of the time they are not familiar with the different cultures of people in this countries as such they have to undergo cross cultural training. Cross cultural training is a form of preparation whereby a person and his or her family are taught the political and social cultures of the countries they are going to stay in. Nowadays there are a number of company's that have professionals who carry out research on different countries cultures to be able to assist in cross cultural training one such company is GLOBE.

Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness (GLOBE) Research is a multi-phase, multi-method project in which investigators covering the world over are examining the inter-relationships between societal culture, organizational culture, and organizational leadership. It generally includes roughly, one hundred seventy social scientists and management scholars from 61 cultures/countries representing all major regions throughout the world who are engaged in this long-term programmatic series of cross-cultural leadership studies. They frequently distribute documents of their research to cross cultural trainers. One common trainer is Hofstede. The information that they acquire enables them to offer better training to individuals and to also give the right information to them. An interesting case of the importance of cross cultural training is seen in Mr. Pilgers move to a country in Africa called Kenya.

Kenya is a polychronic culture. One major reason to support this is that of the time schedule. In Kenya it is seen that when one has invited visitors to ones home. They might arrive earlier by one hour or even later by an hour no one actually cares about time keeping. A second example is the fact that one has to welcome employees who interrupt ones work by welcoming them and offering them a seat. Another major reason is that most tasks are held simultaneously for example social matters such as dinners are held with businesses showing that Work time is not clearly separated from personal time. The government owns part and influences the decisions of most companies implying that tasks are measured as part of overall organizations goal. Mr. Pilgers is not used to such a culture and has to undergo through cross culture training before his departure.

The pre departure training that pilgers undergoes has both advantages and disadvantages. It is advantageous in that it allowed both him and his family to attain information of the political history, business practices, social customs and non verbal gestures of Kenya. They get to learn what to avoid like the dangerous buses in Kenyan cities. It further enabled him as a manager to comprehend cultural differences and handle culture shock changes. It also assisted his family to accept and change their view of other countries especially African countries. (Kreitner, 1992)

On the other hand this training has not been scientifically tested and proven to work efficiently yet it costs a great amount of money. Many people who have in the past undergone it have ended up failing. Such training does not cater for the trainee's personal needs for the move. sometimes the instructors in such trainings do not understand the Kenyan culture or they may forget as in the case of pilgers predecessor who was not advised properly about holding business dinners at Nairobi restaurants and only the men made it to the dinner without their wives for they believed that such places were for prostitutes. Such training may also give the wrong impression about the designated

country and this may make the families scared. A good example is of Mrs. Pilger who is told that busses in Nairobi are dangerous to ride in this greatly scares her on the safety of her two children. She is also scared that the family might get confined to extra secure houses and not be able to socialize there is also a belief that Kenya is full of poverty hunger and diseases which is not the case. (Kreitner, 1992)

The pilger family Might end up having a productive and satisfying foreign assignment due to the fact that they have acquired sufficient knowledge about the Kenya though some information is not true it is still helpful. Their children who at first resisted going to an African country have accepted and they are looking forward to their stay in this country. Even though Mrs. Pilger is hesitant because she believes the place is not safe enough for her children. She has been reassured that they would all be safe .it is also beneficial to their two children as they will get more exposed to other cultures around the world the young boy will not hate Africa if they have a good stay. Mr. Pilger has also learned how to be a good manager and which people not to wrong in order to make her assignment successful.

Cross cultural training has become a very important process especially today. It has helped reduce the number of failed international assignments of most managers who are posted to international countries. It helps prepare the families of these managers too. With proper research companies that carry out this process are able to give the right education to the managers and their families thereby ensuring productive and satisfying international assignments.

## References

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