

Expatriate Training Program Creation and Implementation as a Human Resource Management Strategy Tool to Improve Retention of Human Capital

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Abstract— Historically, employees sent overseas for various types of assignments, whether short- or long-term in nature, they were given training ranging from little to no pre-departure training. As a result, one of the key problems faced by both the employees and the organization was the decreasing rate of employee retention. While some employees were quite motivated by an overseas assignment, some viewed the assignment as a form of punishment or testing to see if they could survive and remain with the organization. Further, many of these employees felt that they were ill-prepared for such a global assignment, as well as felt that such a relocation could hinder their chances for upward mobility as a result of their time and distance from the main headquarters. Further, their overseas location may also pose a variety of problems for them and their workload with other members of their team as a result of this said time and distance issues. However, many of these anticipated and encountered problems have been traced by to cultural issues (Schein, 1986) and lack of proper expatriate training (Dowling & Welch, 2004). With the onset of various academic discussions and written literature about the value of human capital, many Human Resource Management (HRM) professionals are re-thinking their approach to expatriate in the context of three separate phases. First, they are focusing more emphasis on the pre-departure training in terms of not only preparing the employee mentally with more pre-departure information about the overseas location, but also providing the employee with some cultural, language, and practical literature that will help them to better adjust with their surroundings with their global assignment. Second, these HRM professionals are concentrating more efforts on the actual overseas assignment to help improve the retention methods of their human capital assigned to these various global assignments via both with better global management and virtual management methods and strategies. In terms of global management, they help to arrange mentors at the overseas location to help the newly arrived expatriate and monitor their progress with the assignment HRM professionals. In terms of virtual management, many of these new expatriates must interact not only with their current location co-workers, but also virtually with headquarters staff. Therefore, the HRM professionals must ensure that the appropriate technology is made available to these expatriates, so that they can perform their job duties and assignment accordingly, if given the right technological tools. Finally, this paper will address how the HRM professionals can help during the repatriation process when these various human capital members are ready to proceed with the process of returning back to the United States. Most of the employee retention problems occurring during the first 2 phases, however, this last phase can be quite critical. Therefore, this paper will emphasize the critical importance of creating appropriate post-expatriate training to assist the expatriate upon his or her return back to the headquarters areas.

Keywords—Expatriate, global management, virtual management, human resource management, human capital.