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THE CHALLENGING JOB DESIGN OF GLOBAL MANAGER

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ABSTRACT

Many organizations require their managers to spend considerable amount of time managing overseas business. These assignments can range from short business trips to lengthy business assignments. Working in a foreign culture poses its own challenges, which these global managers have to face in addition to their business responsibilities. Some of these challenges include managing in a multicultural environment, which involves managing people from diverse backgrounds. Other challenges include linguistic challenges, culture shock, corruption, The roles of these global managers that are full of challenges and variety in performance is what makes them different. An elaborate Job Analysis therefore is required to draw role specific Job description and specifications that can be utilised by both the management to identify best talent and also by professionals looking to crack international deals

KEYWORDS

Global Manager, Job-Profile, Job-Specification, international assignments

DESIGNING JOB PROFILE FOR THE GLOBAL MANAGERS

 *Globalization has changed us into a company that searches the world, not just to sell or to source, but to find intellectual capital - the world's best talents and greatest ideas."* Jack Welch

Amidst the escalating competitions and uncertainties it is hard to use the word globalization without a certain sense of irony. Driven by ideologies religion and mistrust the world seems more fragmented than at any time before. However, no matter how deep the political divisions may be, business operations continue to span the globe. In such circumstances developing managers who are internationally competent, and know the business can take years. Companies operating across the globe cannot rely on just a few managers with diverse cultural experiences or a few experts from a particular country to succeed. Actually it has become essential that all employees must have exposure to international experiences for better and swift decision making.

The last decade has brought significant changes for most high-level decision makers in business. These changes, stemming from various factors, have created a significant amount of strain on their careers. The economic rise of China with its emergence in the consumer goods market and that of India with its exemplary growth in the service sector and the consequent increase in competition has led companies and organizations to move their operations offshore which in turn have dramatically changed the landscape that executives must navigate through. The rise of shareholder value as a primary measure of company performance and the growing influence of the corporate governance movement have also had a dramatic impact on the way executives think and act.

The growth of a knowledge-based workforce has led to a greater focus on people performance rather than asset performance and has changed the way the companies and its managers will be managing the workplace. Dealing with different age groups of employees will pose severe challenges to these managers as over the next 15 years, there will be three different generations in the workplace at the same time, each with very different needs and aspirations. Baby Boomers will no longer dominate and Generations X and Y will play a much larger role.

The above facts related to changing dynamics of international assignments for professionals indicates towards a need to draft the expectations for these global executives that includes in country executives, expatriates, etc. These may be called Job design for global managers.

OBJECTIVE AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In view of the above facts, I intend to provide an insight to various aspiring professionals as well as management graduates ready to take on the business world, with specific job attributes including job responsibility and skills that recruiters look into prospective global managers. For this data has been compiled through various secondary sources to come out with most common job responsibilities rendered to global managers. Further on the basis of these responsibilities ideal competencies have been drawn. Finally a Profile specifically focusing on the Job description and specification has been designed.

A job description is usually developed by conducting a job analysis, which includes examining the tasks and sequences of tasks necessary to perform the job. The analysis considers the areas of knowledge and skills needed for the job. A job usually includes several roles. The job description might be broadened to form a person specification or may be known as Terms of Reference.

Job specification summarizes the human characteristics needed for satisfactory job completion. It tries to describe the key qualifications someone needs to perform the job successfully. It spells out the important attributes of a person in terms of education, experience, skills, knowledge and abilities (SKAs) to perform a particular job. The job specification is a logical outgrowth of a job description. For each job description, it is desirable to have a job specification. This helps the organization to find what kind of persons is needed to take up specific jobs. The personal attributes that are described through a job specification may be classified into three categories:

1. **Essential attributes:** skills, knowledge and abilities (SKAs) a person must possess.
2. **Desirable attributes:** qualifications a person ought to possess.
3. **Contra-indicators:** attributes that will become a handicap to successful job performance.

JOB- DESCRIPTION OF GLOBAL MANAGERS

While working on an international assignment following are the usual domains of work that are expected to be delivered by the executives:

1. **Managing the Business-** its mission and vision: Transnational organizations are fast replacing the old concepts of multinational, international or globalised companies. The key philosophy of a transnational organization is adaptation to all environmental situations and achieving flexibility by capitalizing on knowledge flows and two-way communication throughout the organization. These transnational organizations aims at building three strategic capabilities namely acquiring global scale efficiency and competitiveness, national level responsiveness and flexibility and cross capacity to leverage on a worldwide base. Global managers are therefore required to play different roles as strategists framing worldwide assets and configuration of resources and coordinating transactions across national borders. From scanning of environment for useful information, to product development and getting it implemented global managers play a pivotal role in all major business decisions and activities. A proper understanding of the economic conditions of the country and the world and the ensuing technological changes and their implications on business requires a sharp mind with a focused approach.
2. **Managing Diversity - its culture, tastes, habits etc:** A global assignment also means learning how different countries are governed, and being able to work with their leaders. To be capable global executives it is desirable to have traveled extensively although it is not mandatory, should have knowledge of foreign languages and preferably have a professional course abroad. Having such background help in managing diversity of ideas, people, systems and norms easily with effectiveness. Flextronics' top management team orchestrates manufacturing activity in twenty-eight different countries and leads sales operations worldwide. The peer group includes a CFO from New Zealand, a CTO from Grenada, a sales executive from Ireland, and business unit heads

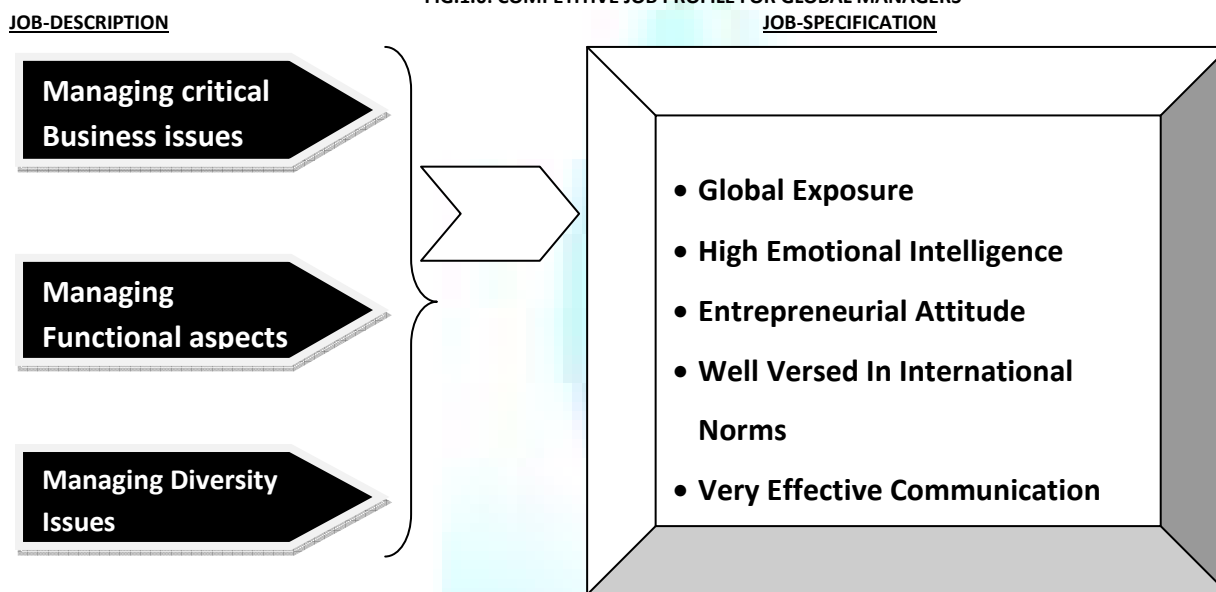
from Sweden, Great Britain, India, Singapore, and Hong Kong. This is a unique way of managing diversity by setting diverse but aligned teams of people.

3. **Managing functions** like Processes, communications, hierarchical structures etc.: Companies like Shell, Pepsoco, and General Electric track their people carefully over the course of many years. GE has systems for examining people's work histories and designing their next steps toward becoming global leaders. And Shell has done a particularly good job of giving people not only major responsibilities abroad but also great opportunities for advancement when they return. Another example is McKinsey consulting, which in 1994 elected Rajat Gupta as the first non-American to run the firm. Gupta is a truly global executive and has shown a great deal of cultural sensitivity. Managers have to retrain their thinking process to become global managers. This is a difficult task as their thoughts are often crafted by 'traditional' practices, home country practices, ethnocentric views, preference of local/home country candidates, process, procedures etc. These 'traditional' thoughts have to be replaced by global thinking.

Attaining cost efficiencies without compromising on the quality of service that the company would provide poses a serious challenge but can be managed with a proper understanding of the prevailing market condition which can best be reviewed by individuals who have wide experiences spanning several functional areas and several countries.

So, what are the specifications companies look for in global managers? This is an important question for consideration. From the above discussed many roles and responsibilities following competencies become unavoidable to succeed.

FIG.1.0: COMPETITIVE JOB PROFILE FOR GLOBAL MANAGERS



COMPETENCIES FOR GLOBAL MANAGERS

Based on the above discussed roles and responsibilities usually bestowed on global managers, the following job specifications can be laid out:

1. **Global Exposure:** A prerequisite to effective execution of international assignments is a hand on experience I global; settings. Those who have travelled to; different countries or learn about the same through various mediums will; provide better results. An understanding of people’s mindset, their priorities, constraint etc helps in designing similar strategies.
2. **High EQ:** Since no execution can happen without people global managers need to be high in Emotional; intelligence thereby countering any interpersonal conflicts arising out of issues related to cross cultures and personal conflicts. High EQ gives an advantage to effective leadership in alien environments thereby increasing trust and commitment of employees from varied backgrounds, uniting to a common goal.
3. **Entrepreneurial Skills:** To succeed in the international endeavors requires an entrepreneurial mindset having self motivated and risk taking approach. Whatsoever the task may be it has a deep impact on every functional aspect and overall goal of the company that signifies a high level of responsibility. Global managers therefore need to have high sense of commitment towards their work that asks for being a keen observer with a positive attitude
4. **Knowledge of International norms:** Successfully meeting the organizational and functional goals depend majorly on the markets that are governed by economic norms different for every country including, restrictions and specifications for functions like Marketing, HR, Production etc Thus, having prior knowledge of laws and regulations will help the international managers to draft proactive strategies for flawless execution.
5. **Communication expertise:** Although a must for every job, this is all the more important in the context of Global managers. Why because when offshore outsourcing or other cross-border business ventures run into implementation difficulties, managers and team members often point to “communication problems” as the root cause. This attribution occurs both in anecdotal responses and in formal surveys. This includes expertise in communication that is marked with high in soft skills able of convincing as well as motivating concerned parties. Also wiring skills include not only content but also knowledge of different languages, syntaxes etc. Is there a preference for explicit communication that spells things out or implicit Communication that leaves much to inference? Do “yes,” “no,” “maybe” and silences have different meanings.
6. **A Management degree, preferably-** This is essential keeping in mind the elaborate exposure received under this one very business oriented course. And having a specialization in international business can make a more promising candidature. Infact those having similar qualification from foreign institutes is always an advantage,

CONCLUSION

Executives who aspire to business leadership positions, particularly in globalizing companies, must take a hard headed look at their level of competence in each of these areas and proactively address their individual developmental opportunities.

As companies continue to expand globally they need managers who understand global business, operate effectively across cultural boundaries and balance strategic integration with adaptation to local markets. The opportunities the companies pursue, and how they deal with the many challenges of a global business approach, depend critically on how good their managers are at interpreting and responding to the dynamic and diverse challenges facing the organizations.

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