

Unique challenges of international staffing

Life



HR managers are responsible for staffing operations globally. There are three main ways of staffing internationally. First, the company can send people from its home country. These employees are often referred to as expatriates, or home-country nationals. Second, it can hire host-country nationals, natives of the host country, to do the managing. Third, it can hire third-country nationals, natives of a country other than the home country or the host country. Expatriates cost companies, on average, \$1 million over a three year period. This can be three to five times what a domestic assignment cost.

This is very costly for the company and a disadvantage for a company. There has been a trend with companies in the recent years to send expatriates for only two - twelve months. There are three main advantages to this: 1. Hiring local citizens is generally less costly than relocating expatriates. 2. Since local governments usually want good jobs for their citizens, foreign employers may be required to hire locally. 3. Most customers want to do business with companies (and people) they perceive to be local versus foreign. HR departments must also be aware of cultural, political, and legal environments when recruiting internationally.

Also, HR manager's need to make sure that work permits and visas are applied for early in the relocation process. There are so many aspects of hiring abroad that it is nearly impossible to be perfect at making all the arrangements, especially the language barrier to overcome. Also, finding ones with core skills for the assignments is very hard. Training ones to have these skills can take a longer time than it should at times. Hiring local

citizens with certain qualifications could be very difficult especially if it is in a poor country that is not used to working with certain qualifications.