

development of a multinational personnel selection system



Mr Koch works as an expatriate in Hong Kong for ComInTec AG & Co. He was working for the company in the HR department for 17 years and since three years he is the HR director. One day he got the assignment to form a cross functional project team in the high profitable APAC States. The company strive to establish a new regional management level in Asia. A new personnel selection system had to be developed internally. In further consequence 25 middle management positions were expected to be filled the region. For the recruiting process the company hired own recruiters as well as head hunters. Furthermore, 90% of the new management positions were filled by individuals from the country they would be working. The process bases on three pillars: First, the application documents had to be analyzed. In a next step structured interviews were conducted by a HR specialist and a department representative. If both came to a positive conclusion, the candidate would come to an individual competence centre to point out his competences. The procedure was conducted by an external consulting company. Koch found some faults in the individual assessment centre for several years.

To develop a new system, Koch formed a team of local and headquarters staff. Though the group was very heterogenic what implied some problems in the past. At the end of the process the situation escalated so that came under high time pressure, which was especially true for Koch. Recently he got a call from Koenig, the founder and owner of the company. Koenig is a little more accommodating person with precise expectations to his employees. He gave Koch an ultimatum to finalize the new recruiting system

at the end of the week. So Koch had to relate the expectations of Koenig with the results and imaginations of his team in three days.

Therefore Koch convened a meeting with the whole project team and a guest from the headquarter. In previous meetings there were some cultural misconceptions especially between the German and the Chinese. Especially Mueller had no sense for cultural differences in discussion situations. The meeting started 30 minutes later due to a long call of Koenig, so that Koch came to late and the pressure even became higher. He urged the group only to present results. At the beginning the Chinese colleagues introduced the topic of the diagnose dimensions and proposed their opinion to this. Mueller encountered in a very typical German behaviour.

So the Chinese was intimidated by her German colleague. She signalled that she did not dare to say anything further. Mueller tried to question the approaches of the Chinese colleagues. So he disgruntles more and more the Chinese colleagues with the result that they back down more and more. The conference was getting more and more tense. Koch did not moderate the meeting very well. Sometimes he lost his patience and interrupted ongoing discussions and fixed a point very sudden. In other situations he gave no concrete feedback about the presented content especially referring the Chinese colleagues.

He was obviously not very content with the Chinese approach to consider cultural differences in such a detailed way. In the further time of the meeting Mueller showed once more in a situation that he had no sense for a mutually respectful interaction. He referred to an objection by a German colleague as nonsense. He furthermore stressed that the professors from whom she

<https://assignbuster.com/development-of-a-multinational-personnel-selection-system/>

learned that, had little idea of the reality. The German colleague left the meeting in tears. A Chinese colleague followed her with the intention of calming her down. This was when the meeting definitively failed.

Koch interrupted the meeting and gave a final overview about the next working steps till Friday. He imposes the trainees to finalize the records very soon. Koch said that he will finalize any unresolved issue. Furthermore, he decided that he would make the decisions' on resolved issues by himself and include them into the report. After Koch finalized the report and sent it to Koenig, he later received a short notice of Koenig. He informed him that important basic conditions and necessary adoptions had not been taken into considerations sufficiently in the new multinational personal selection system.

Most of these conditions and adoptions were worked out very well by the group but not considered enough in his report due of the bad meeting climate, his lack of facilitation skills and his impatience. Koch neglected to create a positive climate and a sense for cultural differences in the further team meetings, when time was not getting so short. The result of all this was that Koenig had handed the case over to the global headquarters and that there would be staff related consequences for his department in Hong Kong.

2. What strengths and what shortcomings do you see in the newly developed multinational personnel selection system?

Justify your answer. The new selection system contains less consideration of cultural backgrounds. This leads to a better international comparability but not to a better job-fit. For instance, the unified procedure of analyzing the application documents can contain some problems. Each country has its own

<https://assignbuster.com/development-of-a-multinational-personnel-selection-system/>

unique economic and education situations. Which would become problematic when creating an universal personnel selection system. Regarding to the following structured interviews unification should be considered. In my opinion there should be an international comparability.

Furthermore, a good indicator is if the candidates meet basic requirements to work for an international company. A standardized system basically avoids high costs caused by special staff and infrastructure. But you have to be very carefully where you use standardized systems. For instance, if you use global standardized systems in a national competence centre you can fail. In the long run some other costs will rise because of not considering special cultural features (question 3). Therefore, especially in the competence centres the cultural background should find enough consideration.

I therefore support Dai Wei's approach. He places an emphasis on the special cultural backgrounds of the candidates. Furthermore he wants to integrate translators into the assessment centres to entirely focus on the candidate's profession. Summarized it is very important to consider the cultural differences also in the competence centres in the single country. But they have to focus on the professional and not on interpersonal competences in the competence centres. Regarding to this it is very important to deploy the right people in the competence centres.

Referring to the feedback discussion I tend to the view of Mueller. While it is important to provide a good feedback to the candidates, but in view of the need of cost reduction I think the existing system suffice. Conclusion: A main weak point is the fact that most standardized personnel selection system ignore cultural differences and culture specific circumstances. 3. What long

<https://assignbuster.com/development-of-a-multinational-personnel-selection-system/>

term implications do the weaknesses impose on the company? If the company don't consider the cultural differences the company would have to challenge a high fluctuation in the APAC subsidiaries.

Due that the recruiting costs will rise because of a worse job-fit rate. Furthermore, it would take a long time to run the APAC market well. This means high losses for short term and can lead to painful setbacks in the Asia-Pacific region. 4. If you were asked to consult with the project team, what would you recommend to them? Obvious team conflicts must be clear clarified by the team leader when they occur the first time. In the final meeting it is definitely too late. It makes sense to organize a workshop regarding to aspects of cultural differences in advance.

At the beginning the team have to set common rules in dealing with each other, that are accepted by all participants, and to which the team leader can appeal for violations. Furthermore, the team leader should collect once a commitment by all in terms of the key points (and APAC headquarters). Subsequently he should try to find step by step a consensus on the future configuration of the modules and national priorities. So step by step, the new procedures are designed and prepared. In my opinion a professional project manager should accompany the process in case of such an important decision.

This expert should also have special social skills and knowledge about the cultural features as well. Obviously Mr. Koch had a lack of such skills. CEO and CFO positions should be first fitted by expatriates of headquarter. Thus, they safeguard a good control over the subsidiary and a good communication with headquarter in the first years. All other positions

<https://assignbuster.com/development-of-a-multinational-personnel-selection-system/>

should be fitted as good as possible with regional staff. If the subsidiary works well over some years and the regional staff meets all the requirements a regional occupation of CEO and CFO position could be conceivable.

5. How would you describe Koch's attitudes and behaviors? Koch had prejudices against Chinese colleagues and found it difficult to understand their culture. He was under immense pressure. It was very difficult for him to bring the necessary energy for the delicate situation. Although initially he tried to create a more open climate for discussion, but relatively soon he had to interrupt the discussion and had to try to fix the "hard facts". He knew that he had to finalize the system until Friday. Finally, he acted similarly in the meeting as his boss.

He also ignores cultural differences, with the result that the Chinese team members withdraw more and more. 6. What influences do Koch's attitudes and behaviors have on the work atmosphere and coordination of his cross-cultural team? What would you recommend to improve the cross-cultural teamwork of this group? He lost the engagement of his Chinese colleagues because he did not show sensitivity to their culture. Furthermore, he ignored team conflicts and didn't moderate the meeting well. He also allowed a relatively rough handling in the group.

Subsequently this lead to the escalating (Goldmann leaves the room in tears). Without doing anything he continued in the agenda. As result he had not a team but some small coalitions they worked against each other. Furthermore he failed to gain control of Mueller. As outlined above, I would recommend organizing a workshop regarding to aspects of cultural differences in advance. It should be the first step in a team building process.

<https://assignbuster.com/development-of-a-multinational-personnel-selection-system/>

Referring to the lack of social and cultural skills of Koch I would recommend to engage an extern expert for such a workshop.

7. What influence does the relationship between Koch and Koenig and the organizational culture established by Koenig have over Koch's behavior and the team's collaboration? Koch knows so far very well how to deal with Koenig. He knows exactly what results he has to deliver and on which issues he has to stress. But he is obviously overwhelmed with the cultural challenges in his group. So Koch passes the pressure of Koenig on the team. He fails to establish a productive atmosphere in the group and pressures the group to force a conclusion.

Accordingly, it looks like he transfers the corporate culture without regard to losses on the team. 8. Would such a personnel selection system work in your organization? Why or why not? In my organization such a personnel selection system should work on a first view. But my organization is a public organization and solely active in Austria and in a broader context in the European Union and third every office recruits its own employees separately. Therefore, we have no international subsidiaries. But there are Regional Management Offices all over Europe.

Every international regional management works independent from other countries and is under national control. The only common issue is that we have to cooperate transnational and have to comply with European specifications from Brussels. So we definitely do not have the same conditions like ComInTec AG & Co. Suppose that the entire personnel selection will be done by an HR headquarter in Brussels a comparable system will not work at least. The employees in the national subsidiaries need to have a <https://assignbuster.com/development-of-a-multinational-personnel-selection-system/>

strong sense of the culture and a huge knowledge about special cultural norms and values.

Furthermore, speaking countries' specific language is much more important than even perfect English skills. For the first stations of the selection the system fits very well. Which consists primarily of viewing application documents. First problems may arise at telephone conferences if they will not be conducted in the candidates' mother tongue. Latest in the competence centre the cultural background of the candidates must find maximum consideration. To cooperate and work with regional stakeholder best the managers must have a broad knowledge about the cultural features.