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Hildegard M. Vary
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Reentry: Procedures and strategies necessary to achieve greater capitalization of human assets in international business repatriation

Vary, Hildegard M., Ph.D.
Iowa State University, 1992

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Reentry: Procedures and strategies necessary to achieve greater capitalization of human assets in international business repatriation

by

Hildegard M. Vary

A Dissertation Submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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1992

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES vi
LIST OF TABLES vii

CHAPTER I. REENTRY: A TIME OF CHANGE 1
  Reentry as a Problem 5
  Rationale 11
  Scope of the Problem 11
  Research Questions 12
  Delimitations 15
  Sampling 15
    The population 15
    The sample 15
  Organization of this Study 18
  Definition of Terms 18

CHAPTER II. LITERATURE REVIEW OF REENTRY 22
  Definitions of Concepts for Evaluation of Overseas Performance 22
  The Transitory Context of Reentry 28
    Recruitment and selection 29
    Orientation to cross-cultural entry 35
    Characteristics of reentry 44
  Managing the International Career Path 49
    Cross-cultural entry 50
Corporate Reentry 53
  International career issues 55
  Cross-culturally acquired skills and knowledge 57
  Maximizing benefits from the international experience 61

CHAPTER III. THE STRATEGIC CROSS-CULTURAL REENTRY MODEL AND HYPOTHESES 68
  Population and Sample 70
  The Data Collection Design 73
  Developing the Measures and the Questionnaire 75
  Developing the Data Analysis 77
  The Development of the Reentry Model 83
  Evolution of the reentry model 85
  Review of Questionnaire Responses 88
  The final model of reentry strategies 90

CHAPTER IV. RESULTS: THE ANALYSIS OF THE DATA 94
  Description of the Sample 94
  Description of the Variables 96
    Providing reentry orientation prior to international assignments (QUEST 1) 97
    Description of corporate planning for reentry assignment (QUEST 2) 101
    Reentry preparation is repatriates' responsibility (QUEST 3) 102
    Management provides reentry literature (QUEST 4) 105
    Home-office stays in contact with the expatriate (QUEST 5) 106
Debriefing/reentry sessions are provided after repatriate's return (QUEST 6) 107

Repatriates' international experience/skills are seen as a plus (QUEST 7) 108

Home-office management reacts negatively if repatriates are viewed as drastically changed (QUEST 8) 108

Foreign assignments benefit executives' careers (QUEST 9) 109

Statistical Data Analysis of the Relationship between Various Variables 110

Correlation of QUEST 1 with QUEST 3 111
Correlation of QUEST 1 with QUEST 7 113
Correlation of QUEST 1 with QUEST 9 113
Correlation of QUEST 3 with QUEST 7 114
Correlation of QUEST 3 with QUEST 9 114
Correlation of QUEST 7 with QUEST 9 114

Analyzing Cross-Tabulation 115
Testing the Hypotheses 117

Corporate Reentry Orientation and Debriefing Topics 123

Construct: Professional issues 124
Construct: Cultural adjustments 126
Construct: Social adjustments 128
Construct: Communication barriers 130
Construct: National and political adjustment problems 130
Construct: Educational problems 133

Evaluation of Reentry Orientation Effectiveness 135

CHAPTER V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 139
### LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Figure 2.1</td>
<td>The international career cycle</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 2.2</td>
<td>Culture shock mood swings</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 2.3</td>
<td>Reentry shock mood swings</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 3.1</td>
<td>Reentry strategy implementation cycle</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 4.1</td>
<td>Corporation assessed mean value of questionnaire items:</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bar chart sorted in descending order</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 4.2</td>
<td>Mean and dispersion about the mean as a measure of importance attributed to questionnaire items</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 4.3</td>
<td>Dimensions of construct: Professional issues; distribution of means and standard deviation</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 4.4</td>
<td>Dimensions of construct: Cultural adjustments; distribution of means and standard deviation</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 4.5</td>
<td>Dimensions of construct: Social adjustments; distribution of means and standard deviation</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 4.6</td>
<td>Dimensions of construct: Communication barriers; distribution of means and standard deviation</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 4.7</td>
<td>Dimensions of construct: National and political issues; distribution of means and standard deviation</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 4.8</td>
<td>Constructs addressed during reentry orientation; item means listed in ascending order</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 4.9</td>
<td>Construct: Educational issues addressed during reentry orientation</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 4.10</td>
<td>Evaluation of current reentry programs</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 4.11</td>
<td>Success indicators for evaluating program effectiveness:</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage listing on order of magnitude</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Table 4.1</td>
<td>Description of the sample</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 4.2</td>
<td>Assessed measure of importance corporations attribute to international skills/knowledge and the reentry process: Frequency distribution</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 4.3</td>
<td>Corporate measure of importance attributed to international skills/knowledge, and the reentry process: Collapsed frequency distribution</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 4.4</td>
<td>Pearson correlation of variables QUEST 1, QUEST 3, QUEST 7, and QUEST 9: Correlation coefficients</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 4.5</td>
<td>Guilford's suggested interpretation for values of r</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 4.6</td>
<td>Contingency table displaying the relationship between corporate assessment of reentry provision and corporate response/no response group membership</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I.
REENTRY: A TIME OF CHANGE

It is not unusual for executives embarking on an overseas assignment to anticipate some stress as they make the adjustment to life in a new and different culture. Many corporations with staff on overseas deployment provide programs to assist their employees and often even their families with this initial time of adjustment. However, there appears to be a lack of recognition that these same employees and their families need comparable assistance when faced with return to their own country (Wallach & Metcalf, 1980).

Cross-cultural reentry is the period of transition from a foreign environment back into one's own culture. It is the experience of returning to an environment that was previously familiar after having lived in foreign surroundings for an extended period of time (Adler, 1986). The problem of reentry has only slowly gained attention, in part because it is a hidden problem. Until recently, the prevailing belief was returnees should be able to adjust easily to their own culture. Even today managers and repatriates sometimes believe this to be true—thus preventing the acknowledgment of problems. Furthermore, those affected represent only a small minority of the organization they reenter, and therefore have not been seen as a problem group. Some researchers point out that repatriates often have an idealized view of life in the U.S. They expect people and places to be just the way they remember them. When they find they have changed, returnees get dismayed, angry, disoriented, and feel out of control. A high percentage of respondents to Harvey's (1970) survey said the reentry transition presented high to extreme levels of tension and reported that the reentry process was hard or harder than the
adjustment overseas. Respondents stated that reentry readjustments took one year or longer.

Because repatriates do not expect things to be different, the fact that their home environment as they knew it has changed, hits them especially hard (Wallach & Metcalf, 1980). In the article "Preparing the new global manager," Gary Wederspan (cited in Callahan, 1989, p. 29) points out that cross-cultural know-how offers a competitive business advantage effecting the bottom line of an organization. He maintains that the only way business will survive is to establish linkages between the corporate mission statement and the recruitment and training of people.

The globalization of the world economy means that business risks and opportunities transcend cultural and national boundaries. Therefore, middle and upper managers who deal with the global economy need to be able to maximize the opportunities and manage the risk. In order to do that, they need to understand foreign customers, officials and so on (Wederspan, cited in Callahan, 1989, p. 29).

Wederspan supports Adler's (1986) and Laidlaw's (cited in Callahan, 1989, p. 30) contentions that selecting the right person at the right time in the development of his or her career is extremely important for the individual and the corporation.

Harris (1980) argued that knowledge of cross-cultural factors and influences should supplement a cosmopolitan manager's learning of foreign languages, international economics, and future studies. He believes this will empower corporations to become more competitive in world markets, and, furthermore, cut cost and waste during international assignments. Harris cited the example of two multinational corporations working in the Middle East who reported, respectively, a 50% and 85% premature return rate of their American employees. The estimated costs for this debacle on average were one-third of a manager's annual salary.
These figures did not include replacement costs for substitute personnel or damages done to the image of the corporation.

Harris viewed the price for establishing a foreign deployment system to be a minuscule investment in comparison to the exorbitant waste and damage caused by unsuitable personnel who must be brought home from foreign assignment prematurely. He argued that organizations might benefit most from their investment in international personnel, when they monitor and document the performance of their high-achieving employees abroad.

Part of the job of today’s human resource managers is to be aware of trends in the external environment, to identify those of particular relevance to their organization, and to design possible responses to these pressures; however, organization factors also play an important role, maintained Milkovich & Boudreau (1991). They interpret environmental scanning as systematically surveying, identifying, and interpreting relevant events and conditions:

Its purpose is to answer the question, 'What is coming and what will it mean to us?' With a diagnostic approach, managers assess the conditions of the organization before they make human or material resource decisions. This role makes human resource management and human resource development departments ideal starting points for the change of corporate culture (p. 25).

Presently, most companies staff top positions in their overseas operations largely with nationals from the parent country, rather than the host country or third-country employees (Milkovich & Boudreau, 1991). International competition in domestic as well as foreign markets may therefore be the key external condition affecting human resource management in the 1990s, asserts Harris (1989). This researcher contends that inside U.S. companies there is a debate over the effect of international assignments on a manager’s career. In some companies, global experiences enhance the likelihood of promotion into senior management
positions. In others, however, an overseas assignment takes a manager out of the mainstream of company decisions. To make matters worse, there may be no procedure in place when managers return from their overseas post to capitalize on their experience and knowledge gained. Milkovich and Boudreau (1991) claim internationalization parallels many problems faced by companies when dealing with issues of valuing diversity in the workforce.

Researchers have recognized the difficulties inherent in making adjustments to a foreign culture. International sojourners often experience feelings of helplessness, withdrawal, paranoia, irritability and a desire for home which have been identified as part of culture shock (Adler, 1986; Bennett, 1977; Furnham, 1984; Furnham & Bochner, 1986). But researchers concerned with international exchange have also documented reverse culture shock which occurs when the individual makes the transition from a foreign culture to the home culture. Gullahorn and Gullahorn (1963), for example, described a W-curve of intercultural transition which includes adjustment first to the foreign life and again, to the home culture. Corporate executives (Adler, 1986; Howard, 1974, 1979, 1981; Kendall, 1981), returned Peace Corps volunteers (Razak, 1981), missionaries (Curryer, 1982), students, and the military (Koehler, 1980) are groups whose reentry problems have been documented.

Most researchers of the cross-cultural relocation cycle consider the nature of the reentry transition to be unique. Brislin and Pedersen (1976), for example, suggest that readjustment to the home environment is likely to be more difficult than going abroad in the first place—a view, corroborated by many repatriates during conversations with this author. One source of difficulty during this transition has been identified as the changes in attitudes, values and behaviors which the
sojourner made when adjusting to the foreign culture. Often, the individual has
identified with friends and work colleagues from the overseas setting. Both result in
significant disruptions when returning home (Adler, 1986), requiring the repatriate
to change behavior patterns with family, friends, and colleagues (Gullahorn &
sojourners who experience the greatest difficulty in the home readjustment may be
those who were most successful in adapting to the foreign culture, a view
corroborated and expanded upon by Adler (1981).

Many returnees do not anticipate difficulties during reentry, leaving them
unprepared for the pressures of the readjustment period. In addition to the
difficulties of the psychological reentry, the practical issues of living—employment,
housing, schools, and finances—also require immediate attention upon the
sojourner's return, assert Théoret, Adler, Kealey and Hawes (1979).

An investigation of the problems returning foreign students experience with
family and friends, in particular, and daily life, in general, indicates that culture
shock may not be as universal as generally assumed in the literature. Furthermore,
it may be alleviated by home visits, and may be more problematic for females than
for males (Brabant, Palmer, & Gramlin, 1990).

**Reentry as a Problem**

Adler (1989) identified reentry as a major issue of corporate international
personnel. She drew the following conclusions about the readjustment process of
400 returning managers:

- reentry was more problematic than the initial adjustment to the
  foreign culture
the region of the assignments made no difference in terms of reentry shock

the enhanced skills of repatriates were, in general, neither recognized nor utilized by home country organizations

the perceptions of effective reentry behavior by home country managers and by returning repatriates were strongly at variance.

Galagan (1990) contended that "even after many American companies became multinationals, a foreign assignment was not meant to enrich corporate understanding of doing business in a broader context" (p. 23). An American Society for Training and Development (ASTD) Symposium on Executive Development (1989) found, that

men ... who were sent abroad for long assignments came home a little too foreign for Illinois or wherever headquarters happened to be. They came back with plenty of cultural sensitivity and no career prospects. Quickly they learned that they were on the fast track to oblivion (Adier, cited in Galagan, 1989, p. 25).

Nancy Adler, one of the co-chairs of the symposium, pointed out that "an expatriate assignment meant you should get your resume in order" (cited in Galagan, 1990, p. 27). Business International Corporation (1978, March 3) also recognized reentry as a major personnel issue:

Repatriating executives from overseas assignments is a top management challenge that goes far beyond the superficial problems and costs of physical relocation (Business International Corporation, 1978, March 9, p. 65).

This article also points out that, contrary to the process of expatriating employees which is handle reasonably well by many corporations, very little attention is paid to repatriating them. Corporations have the opportunity to deepen their managerial talent base through successful repatriation, but run the risk of
losing that talent either because it is not well used in the domestic setting or because former expatriates leave the firm, many researchers believe.

The crux of the matter is the assumption that since these individuals are returning home—that is, to a familiar way of life—they should have no trouble adapting to either the corporate or the home environment. However, experience has shown that repatriation is anything but simple (Business International Corporation, 1978, March 3, p. 67).

During a personal interview, the director of international resource allocations of a major electronics corporation, under assurance of anonymity, echoed problems pointed out by *Business Week* ("How to ease," 1979, pp. 82-84) more than ten years earlier. He maintained:

Our company (like other companies) does a terrible job when it comes to the return process; the problems of coming home have made executives reluctant to go abroad....Often, our executives returning from overseas assignment are penalized for being out of the domestic scene when it comes to practical matters, like buying a home in a real estate market that has skyrocketed during their time out of the country. Managers know that there is always the risk of a downward move *jobwise* when they return, at least temporarily; we have frequently lost good managers because we did not have adequate job vacancies here in the home-office when they were ready to return. Furthermore, the home-office does not consider the overseas assignment to enhance our international executives' abilities; to the contrary—it is the biggest risk of *top-notch* candidates. Benefits from a foreign assignment are personal growth, and financial gains while abroad. But these short-range gains might quite possibly be paid for with reduced chances for promotion in the long run (personal interview, 1989).

Schermerhorn, Hunt, and Osborn (1991) found that, in many instances, little thought is given to assigning repatriates to jobs that match their current skills and abilities. Secondly, while overseas, expatriates often develop the ability to function with a great amount of independence. However, as this may or may not be permissible at the home-office, this issue becomes an important concern for serious international employers. Buckley (1991) asserted that even a successful international tour has been found by General Electric to be accompanied by
varying degrees of reentry problems. "Sometimes the reentry process isn't as smooth as you'd like it to be...it's still a problem for us, and for U.S. industry in general" (p. 78). However, he believed progress is being made in this area.

Gray (1982) maintained reentry problems for the corporations consist mainly of their inability to keep key personnel on their staff as well as difficulties to select sufficient numbers of effective and successful employees for overseas assignments. Reentry difficulties for repatriates have focused on personal finances, readjustment to the corporate structure, and the big fish in a small pond syndrome (Noer, 1974), apprehensions and anxieties of the individual executive and his family (Murray, 1973; Wallach & Metcalf, 1980), and re-acclimatization to the U.S. life style (Slind, 1985). Howard (1974) studied the effects of reverse culture shock among repatriates and their families. His descriptive study features the following topics as appropriate for reorientation programs:

Work-related problems:
- reduced income
- loss of prestige and status
- inadequate or obsolete job skills
- difficulty finding suitable job placement
- disillusionment with home-office climate
- inadequate domestic operations
- resentment by peers

Personal and family-related problems:
- differences in the educational system
- loss of servants
- fear of being swallowed up in the old rat race.
In his article *The hazards of coming home*, Smith (1975) claims that the toughest part of an international assignment is the reentry process. "When they [management] send you overseas, they do it with great enthusiasm and many inducements . . . they have no idea what they are going to do with you when it comes time to bring you home" (pp. 71-73).

Smith argues that few, if any, executives ever come out ahead financially when transferring back to the U.S., even with a promotion—but most take what amounts to a pay-cut. In general, executives indicate it would take a 50% increase in salary to match their overseas style of living back in the U.S. Furthermore, Smith found that re-adaptations to corporate life is seen as difficult; members of the management team have probably changed since the international executive left; sponsors may have transferred to a different part of the company; peers may have been promoted ahead of the repatriate.

Smith conjectured that the more outstanding the executive performed overseas, the more troublesome the reentry. He claimed that one of the most attractive features of a foreign post for an ambitious executive is the autonomy it allows. "Left on his own, he is able to demonstrate what he, as an individual, can accomplish. When he returns, he becomes a member of an organization again and must measure his steps carefully" (p. 72).

Smith researched the 50 largest multinational corporations to find out how many of their top executives had worked overseas for their companies; of the 87 chairmen and presidents, only a handful qualified as *career nationalists*, 69 of the 87 top executives had, with the exception of inspection tours, no overseas experience at all. As one management consultant pointed out, international experience is great; executives need to make sure, however, that they get
international exposure in the international division at headquarters—right down the corridor from the chairman of the board (Galagan, 1990). Smith (1975) corroborated what many repatriates pointed out in personal or phone interviews with this researcher, the foreign assignment does not improve executives' career chances.

The final, big adjustment problem for the returning executive is simply to get used to life in the U.S. again. "Because he has become accustomed to foreign ways, American customs may seem strange, even irritating. . . . Acute problems of reverse culture shock usually include the family. . . . You don't realize that coming back requires a period of adjustment too" (Smith, 1975, p. 73).

While there is limited research that adequately describes the returning corporate repatriate, some general statements can be made about characteristics they have in common: Generally, they see themselves as transformed in some conspicuous way because of their overseas experiences. Often, this feeling of transformation is accompanied by a feeling of uniqueness that sets them apart from their colleagues. Corporate repatriates often express frustration over the lack of opportunity to talk about their international experiences, or use their newly acquired skills and knowledge, argued Adler (1986) and Weaver (1987).

Even though they are returning home from different cultures, returnees face a common set of intellectual and psychological challenges during the reentry process. Communication during reentry does not involve a confrontation with a foreign culture, but rather with their own culture. Patterns of interaction that were predictable before are no longer predictable. Unexpectedly, out-of-awareness culturally-determined symbols of verbal and non-verbal communication may not be decoded correctly (Porter & Samovar, 1988).
Rationale

While most corporate sponsored programs for working overseas include orientation to prepare international candidates for the challenges of culture shock, few include orientation for reentry. Researchers of organizational behavior maintain, however that unless greater emphasis is given to reentry briefings and orientation, a potentially positive learning experience for the returning executive and the organization will be turned into needlessly prolonged stress and adversity (Kenny & von Klemperer, 1986).

Thomas (1991) pointed out that many managers are finding the traditional approach of assimilating individuals into the dominant, homogeneous corporate culture to be ineffective. Recent organizational behavior studies indicated that an effective management of diversity offers a competitive advantage that empowers organizations to be more competitive nationally and globally. Repatriates bring back a wealth of new and improved cross-cultural skills and knowledge. They can be an invaluable resource for home-office management in dealing with an increasingly multi-cultural workforce, and for international candidates to proactively develop skills for success in the global arena.

Scope of the Problem

Repatriates and scholars of organizational behavior consider reentry to be a major issue of corporate international personnel. In order to improve this area of executive development, the survey documented the strategic directions available to executives returning from overseas posts. This research had two purposes—(1) to conduct a survey of current corporate reentry practices, and (2) to propose a model of reentry management strategies. The investigation of current practices explored
three areas: (a) corporate reentry strategies currently in use (questionnaire-part one), (b) the scope of topics organizations address during reentry orientation and debriefing (questionnaire-part two), and (c) a self-reported evaluation of corporations' reentry practices (questionnaire-part three). Respondents were asked to indicate program satisfaction, as well as its perceived effectiveness.

The literature review assessed the field of published accounts of reentry and issues directly related to the theoretical foundation of this study's second purpose—the development of a model of reentry management strategies. The model suggests management strategies to improve corporate excellence.

To aid in the development of the reentry model, 170 documents on the international career cycle of corporate executives were reviewed. The research for this study was conducted during 1991/1992.

Research Questions

The investigation sought to find answers to the following question: what is the nature and scope of organizational reentry strategies and philosophies currently favored by U.S.-based multinational corporations in repatriating international executives?

Sub-questions to answer included:

• Who is held responsible for successful reentry?
• Do corporations value repatriates' cross-cultural skills and knowledge?
• Is the international assignment viewed as career enhancement?
• What specific reentry issues are currently addressed?
• How do respondents evaluate their program?

The following hypotheses sought to elucidate the corporate philosophy about reentering international expatriates:

**Hypothesis I:** Relationship of firms providing reentry programs and the locus of responsibility.

Providing pre-departure training that includes reentry preparation is hypothesized to be negatively correlated with delegating the responsibility for successful reentry mainly to the repatriate.

**Hypothesis II:** The relationship of providing reentry programs and valuing repatriates' skills and knowledge.

MNC's that see repatriates' cross-cultural skills and knowledge as valuable are hypothesized to be positively correlated with providing pre-departure training that includes reentry preparation.

**Hypothesis III:** The relationship of firms providing reentry programs and their perception of international assignments as career enhancement.

MNC's that provide reentry preparation during pre-departure training are hypothesized to be positively correlated with perceiving international assignments as benefiting an executive's career.

**Hypothesis IV:** Corporate perception of the value of repatriates' international skills and knowledge and the locus of responsibility for reentry preparation.
Companies that delegate the responsibility for reentry preparation to the individual are negatively correlated with appreciating international managers' skills and knowledge.

**Hypothesis V:** Delegation of responsibility for reentry preparation and the perception of the international assignment as career enhancement.

Delegating responsibility for successful reentry to repatriates is hypothesized to be negatively correlated with perceiving the foreign assignment as beneficial for executives' careers.

**Hypothesis VI:** The relationship between valuing the international experience and skills, and the international assignment as positive influence on executives' careers.

MNC's that value repatriates' cross-cultural skills and knowledge are hypothesized to be positively correlated with perceiving the international assignment as career enhancement.

**Hypothesis VII:** The difference between the two groups response and no response with respect to their assessment of reentry preparation strategies.

MNCs that indicate on the questionnaire-part one to provide reentry programs are hypothesized to provide information on specific reentry issues addressed on questionnaire-part two.

The second purpose of the research, the development of a model of reentry management strategies is based on an investigation of the field of international management literature, as well as a summary of survey data from respondents' current reentry practices. The model focused on personally and organizationally
beneficial reentry transition strategies that might be strongly correlated with reentry learning and effectiveness. Generally, effectiveness is seen as the extent to which corporate repatriates are assessed as competent, based on standards of their homogeneous home organizations (Adler, 1986). Here, however, its meaning is extended to include synergistic changes in repatriates and the home-office. Effectiveness is measured by how well repatriates, and home-office personnel contribute to corporate excellence, based on organizational goals and employees skills. The suggested management strategies are intended to move beyond the limitations of the fitting-in approach of traditional reentry models, by fostering the development of a highly synergistic corporate learning culture. The suggested model identifies management strategies that will provide the directions to achieve this end.

Delimitations

In determining how broadly the results of this research can be applied, delimitation of this study are as follows:

To narrow the field of research for this study to a manageable universe, the sample was limited to American-owned multinational corporations (MNCs). Domestic firms were excluded as, by definition, they operate on domestic terms only—traditionally, they did not have to look outside the U.S. for additional markets, and even today rarely send their personnel overseas.

Ownership or portfolio investments in a foreign country present different problems from operating in a foreign culture. Therefore, company selection was based on current operations in countries outside the U.S.
Research indicates that executives respond better to questionnaires addressed directly to them by name; therefore, information for titles, names, addresses and phone numbers of those appearing to have responsibility or involvement in philosophy or strategy decisions of the firm's international personnel were acquired from Standard and Poor's Register of Corporations, Directors, and Executives. In cases where names of chief executive officers for personnel were not listed, a phone call to the corporate headquarters helped identify the appropriate person. A few corporations denied information on senior executives' name or position as matter of corporate policy.

U.S.-owned parent-companies were selected from Fortune magazine listings (Baig, 1988; "Fortune," 1990; New shape, 1989), as well as The 100 Largest U.S. Industrial Corporations. American ownership was determined by referring to Moody's Industrial Manual, Moody's OTC Industrial Manual, and Standard and Poor's Incorporation Records. Incomplete information was cross-checked with the Directory of Corporate Affiliations, 1990. This method of purposive sampling of companies allows generalizations to be made only for corporations comparable to those used in this study.

The potential of sampling error for smaller samples is larger than for large groups. In addition to sampling error, the practical difficulties of conducting any self-report survey may introduce other sources of error into the poll. Differences in the wording and order of questions, for instance, can lead to somewhat varying results. In addition, respondents may react to the research instrument in varied ways based upon such factors as experience with the subject area, organizational and personal value systems or biases, corporate policies, and existing time pressures.
Furthermore, a latitude for interpretation of instruction and directions always exists when inviting comments on the questionnaire.

This study is intended to be mainly exploratory, since the predictive or longitudinal validity of the reentry strategies cannot be determined at this point. Although it is hoped that results will indicate great potential for corporate repatriation and beyond, the suggested management strategies must be verified, using standardized instruments in order to establish whether—and under what circumstances—reentry strategies can improve corporate excellence.

**Sampling**

**The population**

In order to best study reentry strategies, it was decided that the population should be limited to MNCs because they deploy executives to international operations on a regular basis. Furthermore, MNCs were selected because many structure the length of international assignments long enough to require cultural adjustments, yet short enough to be concerned with reentry issues.

**The sample**

One hundred top ranking U.S.-based parent companies were chosen from Fortune Magazine listings. This allowed the focus of the study to be centered on one home country organization. All selected companies had diverse operations nationally and globally. Each questionnaire was sent to the parent company's headquarters.

Only corporate representatives with responsibility for the philosophy and strategic directions of corporate executive development were contacted. Of the 100
corporate representatives contacted, 82 percent were male, and 20 percent were
gal female chief executive officers. Of 100 questionnaires distributed, 46 percent
usable replies were returned.

Organization of this Study

Chapter I presents the general nature and purpose of the study, including
the need for the study, its significance and scope, the delimitation of this study, and
clarification of terms used. Chapter II reviews applied and related literature.
Chapter III describes the population and sample chosen, and the methodology and
procedures used in this study. In addition, literature pertinent to the development of
the reentry model is reviewed. Chapter IV presents a description of the sample and
the variables. It gives an analysis of the data and the findings based on the
summary results of questionnaires and the review of pertinent literature.
Chapter V consists of conclusions and recommendations. It includes findings of the
scope of reentry strategies, programs, and philosophies currently favored by
MNCs, with a summary of recommended reentry strategies, conclusions, and
recommendations for future research.

Definitions of Terms

*Intercultural/cross-cultural*: occurring between or relating to two or more
cultures; here, especially communications or interactions between U.S. and non-
U.S. corporate cultures.

*Cross-cultural learning*: overall increase of knowledge about an area of the
world, the country, or the culture (Adler, 1981).
Cross-cultural skills: specific, job-related techniques or abilities which can be associated with success on overseas assignments (Adler, 1981).

Corporate culture and philosophy: the system of shared beliefs and values that develops within an organization and, as such, can have a strong influence on day-to-day organizational behavior and performance. Management scholars and consultants increasingly believe that cultural differences can have a major impact on the performance of organizations and the quality of work life experienced by their members (Schein, 1989). Still, there is no agreement on how corporate culture changes, and whether that change emanates from the top or bottom of the organization (Milkovich & Boudreau, 1991).

Corporate culture and strategy: the notion of culture has been used in separate ways (O'Reilly, 1989):

• Culture as a social control system: shared expectations shape individual behavior.

• Culture as a normative order: norms regarding what is and is not accepted exist around a corporate sense of "how things are done."

• Culture in promotion strategy: the norms of the organization help execute business strategies. A strategy requires an appropriate culture if it is to be successfully implemented. Thus, as companies grow and strategies change, the culture needs to reflect the new direction.

Managers/Executives: leaders of people; define the mission, define purpose, supervise educational and training processes, assess training outcomes. They are distinct from employees sent overseas to perform mainly specific advisory, technical, or skill work as an individual (Schmerhorn, Hunt, & Osborn,
"An organization's culture is translated into practice largely as a result of actions taken by managers" (Milkovich & Boudreau, 1991, p. 62).

**Multinational corporation (MNC):** business organizations that focus on least-cost production with sourcing, manufacturing, and marketing worldwide. Structurally, they often reorganize into global lines of business. At this point of corporate development, cultural differences begin to move into the mainstream and into the organizational culture itself. Cross-cultural dynamics become a critical aspect of organizational functioning. Successful MNCs send their better, more senior managers abroad (Adler, 1981).

**Global corporation:** a company that operates globally, and therefore cross-cultural interactions take place everywhere, both within the company and with clients. It dominates the organization's culture. Flexible strategic alliances define the organization's form and structure. Global thinking and global competencies become critical for survival. Successful companies send promising junior managers and their most senior executives (Casse, 1982).

**Sojourner:** a term frequently used to refer to people who spend a significant length of time in a country other than the one in which they hold citizenship (Brislin, 1981). Used interchangeably with expatriate.

**Expatriate:** Latin *ex*, out of + Latin *patria*, native land. One who lives in a foreign country (Webster's II, 1984). See sojourner.

**Repatriate:** late Latin *re*, back + Latin *patria*, native land. To restore or return to the country of birth or citizenship. One who repatriates (Webster's II, 1984).

**Synergy, Synergism:** new Latin *synergismus*, working together. The working together of two or more people to achieve an effect of which each is individually incapable (Webster's II, 1984). Management scholars define a high-
synergy environment as supportive, resulting in cooperative actions and behaviors, and contributing thereby to the maximum fulfillment of individual and organizational potential. A low-synergy environment is competitive and results in individualistic, *dog-eat-dog* behaviors (Harris & Moran, 1981).
CHAPTER II.
LITERATURE REVIEW OF REENTRY

This chapter includes a review of the literature on issues directly related to the theoretical foundation of this study. The first section in this chapter examines the dynamics and issues inherent in a cross-cultural transition. For this, reentry will be placed in its temporal context within the expatriate's international assignment cycle; literature relating to each phase of the cycle will be reviewed. Furthermore, the inherent characteristics of reentry, the final phase of the expatriate's foreign assignment cycle, will be presented along with the relevant literature background. In the second section of the review, an overall profile of the U.S. international executive is presented. Finally, in the third section, alternatives for corporate reentry strategies are reviewed.

In order to select and prepare candidates for overseas assignment so they will function competently, one must look at certain factors that are important as criteria for successful cross-cultural functioning. They are generally classified into three categories: personality traits, skills, and attitudinal factors. Personality traits are thought of as innate or previously established in a person's life, and therefore relate to the selection process. The last two categories are directly related to the training process, implying that international candidates can develop the necessary skills in order to function in a different culture and that attitudes can change (Hannigan, 1990).

Definitions of Concepts for Evaluation of Overseas Performance

The following review of literature will first examine recent definitions of terms as related to an individual's overseas behavior and performance, with special
emphasis being paid to one population: the corporate personnel. The terms are:
adjustment, adaptation, and effectiveness.

**Adjustment**  English (cited in Hannigan, 1990) sees *Adjustment* as "a
condition of harmonious relation to the environment wherein one is able to obtain
satisfaction for most of one's needs and to meet fairly well the demands—physical
and social, put upon one" (p. 90). English defining *Relative Adjustment*, as "the
process of making the changes needed in oneself or in one's environment to attain
relative adjustment" (p. 90).

David (cited in Ruben & Kealey, 1979, p. 16) argues that *Social Adjustment*
is reflected in expatriates' effectiveness as measured by interacting with host
nationals; he suggested that mere quantity of contact is the single criteria for
defining the concept.

Several researchers conceptualize adjustment as an expatriate's degree of
satisfaction. Ruben and Kealey (1979) define *Psychological Adjustment* as "the
general well-being, self-satisfaction, contentment, comfort with, and
accommodation to a new environment after the initial perturbations which
characterize culture shock have passed" (p. 16). Törbiorn (1982) gives a similar
definition of *Subjective Adjustment*, a concept that suggests expatriates' general
satisfaction with his/her personal situation and position in the host country. These
definitions conceptualize adjustment as a process rather than a state, using the
expatriates emotional state as a measure of adjustment. Rohrlich and Martin (1991)
confirm theoretical speculations of earlier research findings that communication
plays a central role in expatriates' self-reported satisfaction (Brein & David, 1971;
Lysgaard, 1955).
Kim and Gudykunst (1988) equate adjustment with functional health and psychological well-being. These authors propose that expatriates' communication with host nationals contributes in a positive way to adjustment. Kim and Gudykunst state that the degree of intimacy or interpersonalness of expatriates' ties with host nationals can help in understanding the level of adjustment. Rohrlich and Martin (1991) argue that Kim's model may be extended, with modifications, to understand reentry adjustments—the higher the level of adjustment during foreign assignments, the more reentry difficulties one might expect.

Adler (1975) argues Cultural Adjustments to be a field problem in adaptation (i.e., learning the host language; recognizing the names of cities, foods, and historical persons; and having a working knowledge of essential habits of the people). In this model the acquisition of knowledge is stressed and a cognitive view of adjustment is implied without consideration of emotional or behavioral issues. Most definitions rely on the highly subjective input of international personnel. Church (1982) views the term adjustment as too general. In his definition of Sojourner Adjustment, this author complements the basic premise of satisfaction with performance—academic/professional performance and satisfaction. Grove and Törbiorn (1985) expanded the term adjustment to characterize socially acceptable behavior patterns, and an ability to successfully reach outcomes desired in dealing and interacting with host nationals. Its second dimension is cognitive in nature, and is described as confidence that one's view of the environment is "accurate, complete, and clearly perceived" (p. 205). Both authors argue that adjustment consists of two dimensions—one social, the other cognitive. This view corroborates Ruben and Kealey's (1979) research, and expands Törbiorn's (1982) earlier definition.
Tucker and Eaton Baier (1982, p. 9) use the term *Intercultural Adjustments* once Americans were expatriated to their international post. Their research is empirically based, rather than relying on a purely psychological or subjective assessment of the expatriate. Tucker and Eaton Baier define the dimensions of intercultural adjustment as

- acceptance of the foreign culture
- positive emotional response
- shift of reinforcing activities from one's own culture
- taking part in reinforcing activities of the host culture
- avoidance of offensive features of one's own culture
- knowledge of factual information
- language skills
- and, non-verbal communication skills

**Adaptation** Nash (cited in Hannigan, 1990) defines *Adaptation* as "changing and reorganizing the sojourner's subjective world, the process being complete when satisfactory internal balance is restored as characterized by feeling at home in the new environment" (p. 91).

Gao and Gudykunst (1990) generated a communication-based theory to define *Intercultural adaptation*. They maintain that the effect of social contact, cultural similarity, and cultural knowledge on adaptation is positively influenced through the reduction of uncertainty (not being sure how to behave) and anxiety (feeling a lack of security). Gao and Gudykunst isolated eight variables that affect both the reduction of uncertainty and anxiety. They are: knowledge of the host culture, shared networks, intergroup attitudes, positive contacts with host nationals,
stereotypes, cultural identity, cultural similarity, and host culture language competence.

Klein (1979) views adaptation as a process of attitudinal or behavioral change in response to new stimuli (p. 5).

Ruben and Kealey (1979) see adaptation as consisting of three measurements: (a) psychological adjustment (see above), (b) culture shock, and (c) intercultural effectiveness.

Grove and Törbiorn (1985) believe adaptation is a process in which overseas employees reconstruct their mental frame of reference after discovering that its previous quality and organization are not suited to the new environment.


Ruben and Kealey (1979) corroborate Kim and Gudykunst's (1988) conceptualization of adaptation, indicating adjustment and participation with people of the host country as elements of adaptation.

For some theorists, adjustment and adaptation overlap to a large degree or are synonymous. Tucker and Eaton Baier (1982) argue that the terminology in this area is lacking a common definition of adjustment or adaptation to a foreign culture.

Hannigan (1990) conceptualizes adaptation to entail "cognitive, attitudinal, behavioral, and psychological changes in an individual who lives in a new or foreign culture" (p. 92). These changes, he argues, result in the individual moving
from feeling uncomfortable to being at home in the new environment. For this author, adaptation is a broad term which includes adjustment and assimilation.

**Effectiveness** Theorists and practitioners working in the field of cross-cultural training and research use Effectiveness as the term describing the target behavior or performance of persons deployed on a foreign assignment (see Adler, 1975; Adler, 1986; Abe & Wiseman, 1983; Hammer, Gudykunst & Wiseman, 1978; Gudykunst & Hammer, 1984, 1988; Hawes & Kealey, 1981, Harris & Moran, 1990; Thomas, 1991; Tucker & Eaton Baier, 1982). Dinges (cited in Hannigan, 1990, p. 93) argues that many researchers look at sojourners' behavior or performance without paying attention to the job requirements and the environment in which the tasks must be performed. Competence or competent behavior is a term also frequently used (LaFromboise & Rowe, 1983; Ruben & Kealey, 1979; White, 1959) that defines competence as the capacity to make events occur.

Ruben (1976) sees a lack of clarity in the definition of terms as they affect the field of cross-cultural communication. He believes that systematic attempts to define effective, successful, or competent communication behavior are relatively scarce. For a particular interaction to be termed effective or a person to be termed competent, the performance must satisfy the needs and meet the goals of both the message initiator and the recipient.

Success is a term commonly used by researchers evaluating Peace Corps training (Gordon, 1967; Harris, 1972). Tucker (1974) argues that there is a lack of agreement on which factors or characteristics define success or failure because the concept of what it means to be successful overseas has never been sufficiently measured or described. Although the above analysis of terms may be a beginning, a clear definition of their meaning remains to be developed.
The Transitory Context of Reentry

Cross-cultural reentry is the final phase in the international executive's foreign assignment cycle. It is the period of transition from the foreign culture back into a domestic career. The reentry process is an integral part of the expatriation-repatriation cycle, beginning about three months before international executives leave the foreign assignment (Adler, 1986; Kenny & von Klemperer, 1988) and ending six to twelve months (or later) after their return home (Adler, 1986; Wallach & Metcalf, 1980). In transferring from a domestic to an international assignment and back home again, the employee goes through a series of stages. In general, candidates for an international assignment are recruited either from within the organization or as new hires. They are then put through a screening process with the objective to select the best candidates, at least in theory. During this process, the organization decides whether or not to select the candidate for the international post and the recruit chooses whether or not to accept the assignment. Next, in response to the difficulties suffered by many Americans on international assignment, two types of support programs may be provided in the private sector: (1) foreign language training, and/or (2) cross-cultural training. These programs vary in scope and are usually supplemented by briefings to cover the foreign project as well as the logistical requirements of the move (Loewenthal & Snedden, 1986; Tucker & Eaton Baier, 1982).

Tucker and Eaton Baier point out that although these programs can help prepare employees for the international assignment, they do not address the central issue of who should be sent on foreign assignments in the first place. In some instances, after the briefings, international candidates (and their families) may take a trip to the work location before proceeding overseas to accomplish the
assignment; most often, however, the employee arrives overseas with a very general agenda of *start of assignment briefings* only.

Upon return, few organizations provide reentry debriefing sessions (Adler, 1986; Howard, 1979; Howard, 1980; Hazzard, 1981; Smith, 1975; Weaver, 1987). The repatriate arrives back home and either reenters the home organization or leaves the organization altogether (Adler 1986; Lublin, 1989; Martin, 1986; Théoret, Adler, Kealy & Hawes, 1979). The complete corporate international career cycle includes two major transitions: cross-cultural entry (Figure 2.2) and home country reentry (Figure 2.3).

**Recruitment and selection**

Researchers have investigated the various phases of the expatriation-repatriation cycle. Studies of the recruitment and selection process have attempted to document the best selection criteria for international employees. MNCs need to make decisions about who is the best candidate for the international assignment every day. However, Tucker and Eaton Baier (1982) point out that potentially beneficial contributions of the behavioral sciences to the field of personnel screening and selection have not made their way into the international arena in any significant way—a view also shared by Hannigan (1990). In lieu of any proven criteria on which to base selection decisions for international assignments, the selection is often mainly based on technical qualifications of the applicant (Adler, 1980; Tung, 1987). Sometimes, lengthy selection procedures that involve filling out application forms, tests, and personnel interviews are involved; none of these procedures, however, incorporate proven criteria that determine who will be able to successfully function overseas.
Much of the early development of prediction instruments for screening and selection was conducted under the auspices of the United States Navy. Tucker (1974) in collaboration with the Center for Research and Education (CRE), reviewed 245 international documents on selection research, methodology, and selection techniques by government, industry, private organizations, volunteer, and church groups with the explicit purpose to assess the field of screening and selection for international assignments; critique current Navy procedures; and recommend alternative methods to improve selection of Navy personnel. Tucker's major conclusions were that the overseas adjustment as documented in the studies is a significant problem:

- The average failure rate among Americans is estimated to be as high as 33 percent.
- Extreme examples include an average early return rates of 65 percent in the construction industry world-wide.
- The average financial loss of ending an international assignment prematurely can be calculated at two and one-half times annual base salary.

Many who remain overseas function only marginally, at best (Tucker & Eaton Baier, 1982). Even though the financial loss incurred by this group cannot be assessed quantitatively, the detrimental effect on the efficiency of international operations, as well as their negative effect on the mental well-being of employees and their families, makes this a very serious problem (Harris & Moran, 1990; Loewenthal & Snedden, 1986; Tucker, 1974; Tucker & Eaton Baier, 1982).

During structured interviews with representatives from private sector organizations, government agencies, religious groups, and the military, Tucker
(1974) found that none of the selection systems used proven criteria to determine who would be successful in adjusting to life overseas. Of those international organizations that relied on any criteria at all, most relied on what they called the *seat-of-their-pant's method*.

With the help of CRE, the Navy revised its overseas screening and selection process (Yellen & Mumford, 1975) and incorporated it into the enlisted transfer manual in 1979. With the development of the Navy Overseas Assignment Inventory (NOAI), the new system reduced the rate of failure by 40 percent.

Schermerhorn, Hunt and Osborn (1991) assert that to be successful in an era where the international dimension in business and management is pervasive, depends on the ability to perform well—with trans-national responsibility. This competence is a function of cultural sensitivity as well as technical skill. Of the cases which fail in overseas assignments, the majority are due to poor personal adjustments rather than lack of technical skill. This observation seems to indicate that most companies are successful in screening for technical suitability but fail in their assessment of personal suitability (Fontaine, 1983; Harris & Moran, 1990; Holmes & Piker, 1980; Tucker, 1974; Tucker & Eaton Baier, 1982).

Tucker and Eaton Baier (1982) see two reasons for this failure. First, until recently neither MNCs nor the scientific community developed valid indicators of overseas success, or the necessary screening methods to identify these indicators among candidates (Baker & Ivancevich, 1971; Wederspan, 1980). Second, there was a lack of agreement on which factors or characteristics define success or failure. Sometimes, lists of personality traits were used (Kohls, 1984a, 1984b; Harris 1980), that were subjective, tended to be impossible to observe or measure,
and often contained contradictory sets of selection factors (Tucker & Eaton Baier, 1982).

Adler (1980), Harris and Moran (1990), Kohls (1984a, 1984b), Tucker and Eaton Baier (1982), and Wederspan (cited in Callahan, 1989, p. 30) emphasize the necessity to make the right decisions at the outset and recruit the best possible international candidates. Wederspan gives the following guidelines for overseas success:

The best possible route, and the most cost-effective one, is to first select the good people for international training, using validated selection criteria. Do that early. Develop an identifiable career path that includes preparation for foreign assignments. And then re-integrate the expatriates back into the corporation and upper management (cited in Callahan, 1989, p. 30).

Wederspan suggests to develop a synergistic system that makes the corporation smarter as it takes advantage of the learning obtained by its overseas personnel.

Adler (1986) suggests to select effective rather than marginal employees for overseas assignments. "Sending failures abroad will not bring home successes" (p. 210). She claims that employees who are successful and satisfied prior to going overseas are usually successful and satisfied at reentry.

Recognizing the need to assess the suitability of potential expatriates by identifying the characteristics and attitudes these candidates should have, Tucker developed the Overseas Assignment Inventory (OAI). This standardized instrument permits direct, accurate, and consistent measurement of candidates' attitudes and characteristics (and that of their spouses) which are essential to overseas adjustment and performance (Wederspan, 1980). After completing the OAI forms, they are scored and compared with a normed data base. A report is then sent to the sponsoring company, giving the individual's scores, the norm for comparison, and
an interpretation highlighting particular problem areas. This information can guide the screening interview prior to a candidate being selected for an international assignment. Even though this selection instrument demonstrably reduces expatriate turnover, unfortunately, no selection procedure is unfailing. At this time, only one U.S. consulting firm utilizes standardized selection instruments as an integral part of corporations assessment package.

Tucker and Eaton Baier (1982) found the following attitudes and characteristics to be the strongest predictors of successful overseas adjustment (items are sorted in ascending order):

- spouse/family communication
- expectations
- interpersonal interest
- open-mindedness
- trust in people
- interpersonal harmony
- adaptability
- tolerance
- respect for other beliefs
- patience
- personal control
- self-confidence/initiative
- flexibility

- attitude toward drinking/drugs
- motivations
- sense of humor

not validated yet
not validated yet
not tested yet
Miller (1973), in his study conducted with 53 managers in MNCs, found that often selected candidates were overqualified relative to domestic selection criteria—a decision that ignored effective use of company and human resources. Milkovich & Boudreau (1991) state that "Interviewers are seldom rewarded for selecting good candidates, but they are frequently penalized for hiring poor candidates. The logical reaction is to be very conservative" (p. 279). Researchers found that those responsible for the selection of overseas personnel were often unaware of or failed to heed advice from the scientific community to also include personal and family considerations in their selection decisions (Furnham, 1988; Törbiorn, 1982; Tung, 1987; Wederspan, 1989).

Boss, McCubbin and Lester (1979) conducted a pilot study of corporate couples' coping patterns in response to routine husband-father absence. The study indicated that age and marriage interaction may be highly significant on predicting overseas adjustment (Adler, 1984; Wederspan, 1980). To predict suitability for overseas assignments, Acker (1989), a project manager working with cooperants sent abroad by the U. S. Agency for International Development, suggested the use of assessment centers rather than the traditional screening interview procedure.

The review of literature indicated that by far the majority of researchers concentrate on pre-departure and foreign assignment phases of the international assignment cycle. Some researchers stress a holistic approach to overseas assignments (Clague & Krupp, 1978/1980; Fontaine, 1983; Loewenthal & Snedden, 1986), urging companies to provide Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) for their employees at each step of the relocation process: selection, pre-departure, and on-site adjustment, as well as repatriation. Although much has been said about contributions of the behavioral sciences to the field of employee
assistance programs, these contributions have yet to find their way into the international arena (Adler, 1989; Hannigan, 1990).

**Orientation to cross-cultural entry**

Since the 1950s there has been interest in various aspects of the international career cycle, both from a theoretical perspective, such as culture shock (Adler, 1975; Church, 1982; Furnham & Bochner, 1986) and from a more practical perspective such as personnel selection or predeparture training (Brislin, 1981; Guthrie, 1975). Within the international management field, there exists a disagreement between those who emphasize training and those who emphasize selection. International personnel departments who believe that intercultural adjustment, performance, and management skills are innate are focusing on issues of selection; others, who believe that international management skills can be learned are inclined to emphasize training issues. Some organizations try to sidestep the selection issue by hiring personnel with previously successful international experience and language skills, or hire host and third country nationals (TCN). However, even these decisions are not without problems. Zeira and Harari (cited in Harris & Moran, 1990, pp. 197, 210) found that TCN had morale problems centering around blocked promotions, transfer anxiety, unfamiliarity with host culture, adaptability difficulties, and inappropriate leadership styles. Furthermore, TCN's with high potentials and a desire for promotion are not always eager to serve abroad, especially after one or two international assignments. Zeira and Harari (cited in Harris & Moran, 1990, pp. 197, 210) discovered that varying international experiences cannot necessarily be equated
with managerial behavior that is compatible with local environmental needs and headquarters' expectations.

Many researchers have attempted to find the most effective briefing procedures and/or conditions most conducive for effective performance of expatriates when abroad. Loubert (1967) indicates that 25 percent of the Americans selected for an international assignment fail. Tucker and Eaton Baier (1982) corroborate and expand Loubert's earlier findings; they indicate that more than one-third of the Americans selected for an international post are ineffective. In addition to failures who return early from overseas assignments, they suggest a similar number who are hidden non-achievers—marginal performers who remain overseas but whose work barely meets requirements (Adler, 1981; Tucker & Eaton Baier, 1982). "In addition to the direct costs, there is, of course, no way to estimate the amount of damage such a person might have done to the company's reputation in that country before finally being evacuated" (Kohls, 1984a, p. 7). He suggests a failure rate of 40 to 60 percent—including both groups in his definition of failure, those who quit and go home early and those who stay on, but function far below their original stateside level of productivity. During twelve years of research, Tucker and Eaton Baier (1982) found the average failure rate among Americans assigned overseas as high as 33 percent.

Diverse training domains have been isolated with the hope of helping expatriates succeed to adjust in the international environment. Harris and Moran (1990, p. 8) agree with Miller's (1979) earlier postulations that knowledge about cultures, both general and specific, provides insight into the learned behaviors of groups and can help expatriates to "gain awareness of what makes host nationals unique—their customs and traditions, their values and beliefs, attitudes and
concepts, hierarchies and roles, time and space relations, and verbal and nonverbal communication processes" (Harris & Moran, 1990, p. 8).

These researchers suggest that skills in cross-cultural communication increase the sojourners' ability to successfully adjust abroad. Harris and Moran (1990) argue that cross-cultural studies that draw upon data from a variety of behavioral sciences, such as cultural anthropology, psychology, cross-cultural communication and linguistics, will assist multinational managers to cope more effectively abroad, reduce stress, and resolve conflicts more readily. It will empower managers to become more cosmopolitan and to cope more effectively with global competition. Additionally, it has a great potential to reduce costs in foreign deployment. Harris and Moran (1990) further indicate that such competencies need to become the integral aim of management or professional development anywhere in the world. Wederspan (cited in Callahan, 1989, p. 30) argues that intercultural know-how is the only way business will survive. He suggests that middle and upper managers, who deal with the global economy, need to be able to understand foreign customers, colleagues, business partners, and officials in order to maximize business opportunities and manage risks. Harris and Moran (1990) expand and corroborate Lundstedt's (1963) and Kohls' (1984a, 1984b) earlier findings, suggesting that a closed mind and ethnocentrism may limit achievements of effective overseas adjustment. "Ethnocentrism lies at the root of our difficulties in relating to persons of another culture on equal terms. And because we are all equally ethnocentric, we need special training to prepare us to live in a culture other than the one in which we were raised" (Kohls, 1984a, p. 2). He claims that the more effective coping mechanisms are seen as consisting of a sense of humor, good listening skills, open-mindedness, flexibility (including willingness to try new
foods), and the willingness and ability to learn a new language in one's forties. Byrnes' (1966) findings suggested role shock to be the most important dimension that, if addressed during overseas adjustment, will separate successful from unsuccessful expatriates.

Russell (cited in Harris & Moran, 1990, p.198) reviewed literature for the last 20 years to elucidate the factors associated with successful international corporate assignments. The following were the characteristics sought most often in international candidates:

• technical proficiency and competence
• adaptability and flexibility, also of spouse and other family members
• emotional stability
• desire to work overseas
• previous experience overseas
• motivation
• organization abilities
• diplomacy and tact
• ability to train others
• successful domestic record
• promotability
• educational qualifications
• mental alertness
• language ability in native tongue
• cultural empathy and sensitivity
• interest in host culture
• ability to get along with hosts
• tolerance of others view
• good health
• character
• and, leadership (Russel, cited in Harris & Moran, 1990, p.198).

Loewenthal and Snedden (1986) see specific orientation programs for spouses of international candidates as a key element that is too often overlooked. The Bechtl Group realized several years ago that an orientation process that also included the family of the employee was a critical factor in overseas success. The program adopted by the Bechtl Group is fully justifiable on bottom-line terms: the cost of providing orientation for 100 to 300 families is about equal to the cost of sending one family home prematurely (Loewenthal and Snedden, 1986).

Snodgrass and Zachlod (cited in Harris and Moran, 1990, p. 205), and Wederspan (1980) point out that a premature return of expatriates is more related to unsatisfactory family adjustments than unsatisfactory work relationships. There may be a single important factor to be blamed for an unsuccessful adjustment, e. g., women who previously had a career and suddenly find themselves without meaningful identity (Adler, 1986). Studies also found that the problem of U.S. identity becomes quite serious for children and parents after about two to three years. Snodgrass and Zachlod (cited in Harris & Moran, 1990, p. 205) suggest this problem will be compounded when families return to the U.S. involuntarily or when teenagers go home to college.

Loewenthal and Snedden (1986), and Taylor (1990) prefer a holistic approach to an international assignment, where thoughtful attention must be paid to every part of the entire process. The design of career paths, selection, training,
performance on the foreign post, and reentry must be properly understood by the employee, the spouse, and management (Austin, 1986).

Similar to studies on the selection process, there is no definitive work on the second stage in a foreign deployment system—the learning or training aspects of the *culture general* (issues applying to all cultures) and *culture specific* orientation (issues specific to a certain culture). Although different in methods and assumptions, each cultural awareness training is designed to prepare international candidates for life in another culture, and is best accomplished by a variety of methods and techniques, suggest Harris and Moran (1990). Both authors argue that training needs to be designed according to what best fits the situation and what proves to be most effective. This view is corroborated by Horan (cited in Harris & Moran, 1990, p. 200)

Intercultural training programs should meet the expressed needs of participants through research prior to and immediately after the sessions. Data gathered in such needs/attitudes surveys indicated the need for input on difficulties experienced abroad—such as homesickness, confusion, anxiety, difficulty sleeping, knowing expectations of host nationals, intriguing/irritating aspects of life in the foreign culture, and expressions of emotions (p. 200).

Bass and Thiagarajan (cited in Harris & Moran, 1981, pp. 230, 245) argue that the orientation should focus on sensitivity to people in general, the recognition of cultural differences, and the issues of stereotyping.

The Grumman Aerospace Corporation believes that if orientation is to prevent culture shock, it needs to include information of the target country's geography, climate, history, religion, social customs, schools, politics, law, language, working conditions, and standards of living (Harris & Moran, 1990). Morrison Knudson International concluded that the ten most important issues of concern of international employees are: base pay, overseas cost-of-living
allowances, information on housing/food/medical care abroad, married versus single status overseas, foreign premium/differential, work conditions on post, and skills and leadership ability of project supervision (Harris & Moran, 1990).

Schnapper (cited in Harris & Moran, 1990, p. 161) argues that the world of MNCs is too vast, complex, and transitory for one training model to be universally applicable. He believes that multinational executive development should focus on four major areas: managerial, intercultural, local business issues and practices, and language. These, he believes, may prevent unnecessary waste, costly mistakes, and career failures. Schnapper argues that \textit{experiential} training prior to departure is the best way to ready executives for intercultural adjustment and performance (cited in Harris & Moran, 1990, pp. 146, 161).

In intercultural workshops, the methodology can include audio-visual presentations (films, slides, audio/video cassettes); ways of collecting data and sensitizing (inventories on communication, change and personal growth, and a Culture Shock Test); group dynamics (brainstorming and imaging, case studies and critical incidents, diverse simulation games and exercises); and illustrated lectures with various conceptual models and paradigms (DeMello, 1975).

Intercultural training is not a new phenomenon; the Washington International Center (WIC) has provided training since 1950, and the Business Council for International Understanding (BCIU) has been offering preparation to the private sector since 1958. Many other organizations, e.g., the Peace Corps, began providing such training in the 60s (Kohls, 1984b). However, prior to 1961, literature evaluating and describing research on intercultural training focused on international political relations and intercultural artistic exchange programs (Harris & Moran, 1990).
In an effort to provide a framework for the categorization of intercultural orientation programs since the Peace Corps, Downs (1975) listed four models of training—the Intellectual Model; the Area Simulation Model; the Self-Awareness Model; and the Cultural Awareness Model.

The Intellectual Model consists mainly of lectures and readings about the host culture. Its basic assumption is that an exchange of information about another culture is effective in preparing international candidates for intercultural adjustment and performance (Harris & Moran, 1990).

The Area Simulation Model is a culture specific training program and is based on the belief that a person must be prepared and trained to adjust successfully into another culture. It involves simulation of future experiences and practices functioning in a specific culture. The Cultural Assimilator technique, developed by the University of Illinois, is an Area Simulation program. It is culture specific and has a strictly cognitive design (Fiedler, Mitchell, & Triandis, 1971). Its basic goal is to prepare expatriates to respond to particular situations in a specific way (Albert & Adamopoulos, 1976; Brislin, Cushner, Cherrie, & Yong, 1986; Malpass & Salancik, 1977; Randolph, Landis, & Tzeng, 1977; Weldon, Carlston, Rissman, Slobodin, & Triandis, 1975).

The Self-Awareness Model is based on the premise that understanding and accepting oneself is critical to understanding host country nationals. Sensitivity training is a major component of this method (Harris & Moran, 1990).

The Cultural Awareness Model assumes that in order to adjust and perform successfully, the international candidate must learn the principles of behavior that exist across cultures. It is based on the premise that expatriates' effectiveness interculturally can be improved by enabling them to recognize cultural influences in
personal values, behaviors, and knowledge in their own life and that of others. This ability, Kraemer (cited in Harris & Moran, 1990, pp. 149, 162) argues, has several beneficial results: it enhances one's ability to diagnose communication difficulties, suspends premature judgment, makes international candidates aware of their own intercultural ignorance, and increases their motivation to learn about other cultures.

The Contrast-American Method of cross-cultural training is essentially a cultural awareness model (DeMello, 1975; Stewart, Danielian, & Foster, 1973). It consists of role-playing interactions between a U.S. national and a person representing another culture who holds contrasting values. In role-playing, U.S. nationals develop greater awareness of their own values. The technique was developed to simulate psychologically and culturally significant interpersonal aspects of the overseas assignment in a real life role-play interaction.

The Peace Corps training programs last an average of 11 weeks; they vary in content and are eclectic in nature. The four volume manual Guidelines for Peace Corps Cross-Cultural Training (Wight, Hammons, & Wight, 1970) identifies effective methods and materials. In addition to skills, understanding, and knowledge needed for continued learning and adjustment in a foreign culture, Peace Corps training also provides language instruction; training in technical skills, if needed; and interpersonal skills and sensitivities required to live and work effectively with people holding contrasting values. Programs are based on the assumption that trainees will assume the major responsibility for learning (Harris & Moran, 1990). Wight, Hammons and Wight (1970), who designed the Experiential Learning Model, confirm that innovative, experience-based training models are needed to adequately prepare candidates for intercultural adjustment and performance. Programs must be designed to increase participant involvement in and
responsibility for learning. These authors argue orientation should be trainee-centered, with a special emphasis on problem-solving.


**Characteristics of reentry**

The last stage of the international assignment cycle is centered on bringing the executive back into the home environment and domestic organization. Wallach and Metcalf (1980) see reentry as a two-step process: (1) leaving the host community, and (2) returning to the U.S. and getting re-involved in life back home.

The reentry process begins about three months prior to departure with the psychological withdrawal while the expatriate is still at his/her international post (Harris & Moran, 1990), and ends six to twelve months after reentry. Adler (1986) views reentry as both a psychological and physical transition from the international post to the home country. She sees psychological reentry as transferring one's sense of *home* from the foreign to the home culture. Wallach and Metcalf (1980) stress the importance of a careful balance so that repatriates neither disengage too early nor too late.

Research by Harris and Moran (1990) indicates that some organizations provide only assistance in the form of travel and transition assistance during
expatriates' exit. Adler (1986) found that many organizations hold orientation programs that describe the foreign culture and project as well as the logistical requirements of moving.

Upon return, most returnees struggle without support from their organizational sponsor to adjust to lifestyles and the tempo of the changed home and organizational culture. A survey of international personnel programs conducted by Tucker and Wight (1981) in 33 companies and organizations showed that only 12 percent had reentry programs. However, reentry orientation programs should be provided or improved, said 46 percent of those polled.

Repatriates go through a stage of reentry shock, the last phase of the culture shock process, that usually lasts six months to a year or even longer (Adler, 1986; Harris & Moran, 1990; Gama & Pedersen 1977). Some work has been done on end-of-sojourn debriefings (Adler, 1981; Dodd & Montalvo, 1987; Howard, 1980; Murray, 1973). Yet, by far the majority of studies emphasize the pre-departure support phase of the international deployment cycle.

Théoret, Adler, Kealey & Hawes (1979) argue that besides psychological reentry, the practical issues of living, including employment, housing, schools, and finances require immediate attention upon return (Austin, 1986; Brislin & Van Buren, 1974/1986; Clague & Krupp, 1980; Harris & Moran, 1990; Martin, 1984).

Does reentry involve problems? The literature search relevant to this study clearly leads to that conclusion. As stated earlier, in the past, debriefings have generally been viewed from a technical perspective, without taking any personal, family, or cross-cultural aspects into account. Since the 70s, however, reentry studies have reported a variety of problems for employees and their families, focusing mostly on (a) the discovery of reentry difficulties and (b) the identification
of methods to overcome these problems. Their goal is to readapt returnees to the home-office, in particular, and to daily life, in general (Adler, 1986; Kohls, 1984a, 1984b). Noer (1975) argues to integrate repatriates better into the corporation's overall career plan. This view is corroborated and expanded by Adler (1986), Brabant, Palmer, and Gramling (1990), Cagney (1975), Clague and Krupp (1978/1980), Harris and Moran (1990), Howard (1974, 1979, 1981), Murray (1973), and Rohrlich and Martin (1991). Researchers subscribing to this paradigm find it necessary to bring the returnee from a negative state, "with problems," to a neutral state "without problems."

Howard (1974) categorizes reentry problems experienced by corporate expatriates and suggests methods to manage these problems. Adler (1981, 1986) argues that the primary goal in these studies has been to maximize adjustment and adaptation, and to minimize problems. Harris and Moran (1990) assert that these studies disregard the possibility of making cross-cultural transitions a learning experience with advantages for the individual and the organization.

Adler and other researchers argue that a problem orientation is not the only way to look at reentry transition issues (Adler, 1975; Adler, 1981; Davis, 1990a; Harris & Moran, 1981; Harris & Moran, 1990; Theoret, Adler, Kealey & Hawes, 1979). Murray's (1973) major study on corporate personnel repatriation views reentry as a potentially beneficial period if more effectively managed by the organization, a view corroborated by Harris & Moran (1990). To maximize the learning experience, Murray (1973) suggests four guidelines: (1) adequate preplanning, (2) increased communication, (3) appropriate interim assignment, and (4) follow-up audit (p. 245).
Researchers, in general, have recognized the difficulties expatriates experience in making the adjustment to a foreign culture. Several models or concepts have evolved from the study of cross-cultural interactions in general, and have thus been cited in the literature on reentry. The concepts are culture shock, reverse culture shock, the two-way mirror, and the U-curve/W-curve.

Even though culture shock is generally accepted as a characteristic of the cross-cultural experience (Furnham & Bochner, 1986), the definition of the phenomenon is not consistent in the literature. While Oberg (1960) sees culture shock as "precipitated by the anxiety that results from losing all previously familiar symbols of social intercourse" (p. 177), Adler (1975) points out this definition infers a problem with adaptation and adjustment. Adler defines culture shock as "a set of emotional reactions that constitute an important aspect of cultural learning, self-development, and personal growth" (pp. 13-14). Oberg (1960) sees culture shock resulting from the failure to adjust or adapt to new cultural ways, while for Adler, this state is an adaptation or adjustment to a new culture. Adler (1986) perceives culture shock as "the expatriate's reaction to a new, unpredictable, and therefore uncertain environment" (p. 194).

Other writers have examined the process of the cross-cultural experience. One model, the two-way mirror hypothesis (Ibrahim, 1990), postulates that the expatriate's perception of the host country mirrors the way s/he believes host nationals perceive the expatriate's home country. Ibrahim argues that adaptation is enhanced if perceptions are positive, a finding also corroborated by Davis (1990b).

As a proponent of the U-curve hypothesis, Lysgaard (1955) sees time as the most important variable of the cross-cultural experience. Initial, but superficial, adjustments to the new culture are followed by a period of stress, or culture shock
(Bennet, 1977; Church, 1982; Furnham & Bochner, 1986). The final stage is a more integrated adjustment to foreign life (Adler, 1986).

Kim (1988) argues that communication plays a central role in sojourners' self-reported satisfaction, influencing the intensity of culture shock. He suggests that discussing meaningful issues contributes in a positive way to functional health and psychological well-being (adjustment). Rohrlich and Martin (1991) confirmed Kim's earlier findings that the kind of host communication is as important as its frequency. After finding a significant relationship between the degree of intimacy with host nationals and reentry satisfaction, these authors modified and extended Kim's model to include reentry adjustment. Specifically, the more frequently expatriates had engaged in meaningful activities with host nationals, the less likely they were to be satisfied with life in the U.S. upon their return home. According to Kim's conceptualization of adaptation as a cycle of stress-adaptation-growth, an extended international assignment can lead the expatriate to grow beyond the psychological parameters of the original culture. This concept is related to Adler's (1988) multicultural man whose identity is based "not on belongingness which implies either owning or being owned by a culture, but on a style of self-consciousness that situates oneself neither totally a part of nor totally apart from a given culture" (p. 421). Adler describes such a person as one who "experiences differences as an essential and joyful aspect of life" (p. 421). This concept is termed constructive marginality by Bennett (1977).

Many researchers concerned with the international relocation cycle have documented the phenomenon of reverse culture shock that occurs when the individual returns from a foreign to the home culture. Gullahorn and Gullahorn (1963) extended the U-curve hypothesis to include reentry—a model known as the
W-curve hypothesis of intercultural transition. This process includes first, an adjustment to the foreign life and then to the home culture. The validity of the U-curve and the W-curve hypothesis as inevitable processes has been questioned by some (Klineberg, 1980; Klineberg & Hull, 1979; Lundstedt, 1963) and corroborated by others (Davis, 1990b).

Other researchers argue that additional factors may influence or even override more temporal considerations as suggested by U-curve and W-curve hypothesis proponents: attitudinal, personal (Adler, 1981, 1986), situational factors (Kim, 1988; Rohrlich & Martin, 1991) and the type of relationship under consideration (Martin, 1984, 1986).

In addition to these more generic concepts related to the dynamics and issues inherent in a cross-cultural transition in general, some researchers have paid specific attention to reentry issues of international employees, and identified a range of modes for coping with cross-cultural entry and reentry stress.

**Managing the International Career Path**

Adler (1986) notes that expatriate employees go through a predictable series of stages in transferring from a domestic to an international post and back home again (Figure 2.1). As pointed out earlier, organizations recruit international candidates either as new hires or from within the company. After assessment interviewing, the organization selects international candidates, while candidates (and their spouses) decide whether or not to accept the foreign assignment. After an initial orientation, employees and their families transfer overseas to carry-out the assignment. After completion, employees return to the home-office and either continue with a job in the same firm or leave the organization altogether.
Figure 2.1 The international career cycle

Reentry debriefings are rarely offered by organizations (Adler, 1986). The entire expatriate international career cycle includes two major, and therefore stressful, transitions: cross-cultural entry (Figure 2.2) of the international assignment and home country reentry.

**Cross-cultural entry**

As stated above, research reveals that sojourners can generally point to a low point in the cross-cultural adjustment curve in retrospect (Brislin, 1981) at the
top of the curve expatriates are excited as they discover the new culture (Figure 2.2). This initial phase is followed by a period of disillusionment as the curve descends, at which time it is no longer exciting to negotiate with host culture clients without being able to decipher their non-verbal symbols; or to expect some individual initiative from employees, only to learn that it is customary for the manager to instruct them in clear detail. Adler (1986) and other researchers (Bennet, 1977; Church, 1982; Furnham, 1988; Furnham & Bochner, 1986) name the third phase, the lowest part of the U-shaped curve, culture shock. "The

Figure 2.2 Culture shock mood swings
frustration and confusion that result from being bombarded by non-interpretable cues" (Adler, p. 193). In the final phase, expatriates begin to integrate and adapt to the new ways: they begin to feel more positive about their situation, and work more effectively (Adler, 1986).

**Culture shock** Ratui (1983) argues that many of the most effective international managers suffer the most intense culture shock. By contrast, managers evaluated as not being particularly effective by their peers described themselves as experiencing little or no culture shock. Adler (1986), Casse (1982) see culture shock as a positive sign that the expatriate is becoming involved in the new culture instead of staying isolated in an expatriate ghetto. These authors argue that expatriates therefore should view culture shock as a sign that they are doing something right, not wrong. The important question, thus, becomes how best to manage the stress related to culture shock, not how to avoid it.

Some expatriates developed effective stress management mechanisms for coping with culture shock. Copeland and Griggs (1985a, 1985b) found that expatriates sometimes used physical fitness programs, or relaxation exercises, while others preferred journal writing. Ratui (1983) argues that many of the most effective executives create *stability zones*. They spend most of their time involved in the host culture, but sometimes go for intermittent, short periods into an environment, a stability zone, that is reminiscent of home. Examples of stability zones used successfully by managers are watching a video in one's native language, going to the International Club, listening to AFN, or reading a book in English. The specific type of the stability zone or stress management approach is not as important as the realization that moving into a foreign culture is extremely
stressful, and that expatriates need to develop mechanisms that work for them (Copeland & Griggs, 1985a).

Adler (1986) believes managers can reduce the stress level caused by culture shock by first recognizing it and then adjusting their expectations and behavior correspondingly. She believes it is important to establish priorities and focus the limited energy on only the most important tasks. "They can clearly define their responsibilities and educate the home-office concerning the cultural and business differences between foreign and home country operations" (pp. 195-196).

Most expatriates overcome culture shock after three to six months. Successful expatriates learn in small increments what is important. They learn that when a host country national says *one*, it might mean *ten* (Ramsey, 1988). "They learn to differentiate idiosyncratic behavior from behavior reflecting a cultural pattern," says Adler (1986, p. 196). In order to be effective, international managers must recognize that all members of the family experience culture shock, and that often the spouse is affected more intensely by the transition than the employee (Adler, 1986; Copeland and Griggs, 1985a; Harris and Moran, 1990; Kendall, 1981). Adler (1986) does not see cross-cultural adjustment as an individual problem, but maintains it should be viewed as an issue that concerns the whole system—the sponsoring corporation, the expatriate, and his/her family.

**Corporate Reentry**

Many researchers agree that reentry experiences often surprise returnees (Brislin & Van Buren, 1974/1986). Adler (1986) states that most returning executives do not expect to experience reentry shock; they expect to move back into their former job, and style of living; and they want to be successful again.
When arriving home, repatriates describe phases comparable to those of culture shock: first, having a short-lived feeling of being happy and excited, quickly plummeting to a depressed state, and then slowly raising back up to a comfortable coping mode (Figure 2.3). Usually, the initial *honeymoon* phase lasts between a few hours to less than a month (Adler, 1986; Copeland & Griggs, 1985a). The stress phase consequently begins earlier in home country reentry than during the first transition phase. Repatriates' mood usually reaches its lowest point two to three months after arriving back home (Adler, 1986). Some can readjust in six months while others may require a year or more (Guither & Thompson, 1986). After

![Figure 2.3 Reentry shock mood swings](image_url)
the stress phase, repatriates generally accept their current situation (Harris & Moran, 1990) and report feeling average (Adler, 1986).

**International career issues**

Most overseas personnel expect the international assignment to advance their career; however, upon returning they discover that most often it has a neutral or even negative effect (Adler, 1981, 1986; Harris & Moran, 1990; Wederspan (cited in Callahan, 1989, p. 30)). Guither and Thompson (1986) assert that many international managers do not realize the professional risk involved in going overseas before they leave.

If they had, some would undoubtedly have hesitated or decided not to go. As a result of their experience, however, many would consider another overseas assignment but would be more selective and study the situation very carefully before accepting. For most men, their personal gains have outweighed any professional loss. And some have gained professionally as well (Guither and Thompson, 1986, pp. 213-214).

Hazzard (1981) found that fewer than half of the repatriates are promoted after returning home. Hazzard's work expands and corroborates Howard's (1980) earlier findings that the majority of repatriates are affected by what he calls the *out of sight, out of mind* syndrome. Almost 50 percent of repatriates surveyed by Hazzard found their reentry positions to be less satisfactory than their previous overseas assignment. Many felt disappointed, discouraged, and angry about their current job situation. Guither and Thompson (1986) indicated that many repatriates do not feel they have an adequate opportunity to report and discuss their international experiences, observations, and recommendations. They conjecture that "disappointments, frustration, and lack of recognition create a resentment within some of these men so that they seek other jobs or return to overseas assignments" (p. 212).
Adler (1986) suggests that, in addition to facing reentry invisibility as well as diminished job responsibilities, repatriates must reorient themselves to the organizational culture of the home-office. She asserts that whereas the foreign organization may have been very hierarchical and highly structured, risk averse, and individualistic, the home organization may have a very flat, matrixed structure, high tolerance for uncertainty and ambiguity, and strongly emphasize group contributions over those of individuals. This assertion is also proposed by Hofstede’s (1980) four dimensions of national culture.

Adler (1986), and Callahan (1989) argue that to move from one set of organizational assumptions and behaviors to another can be difficult and stressful. These authors maintain that repatriates experience organizational culture shock concurrently with societal culture shock, making reentry a very stressful time for repatriates.

Frequently, supervisors compare repatriates’ reentry performance with their pre-departure performance, and do not realize that the overseas assignment has contributed to returnees’ professional growth and development, empowering them to handle more responsibility than they could in the past. Repatriates, on the other hand, frequently compare their reentry performance with their overseas responsibilities, leading them to conclude they have accomplished relatively little since coming home (Adler, 1986; Guither & Thompson, 1986; Brislin & Van Buren, 1974/1986). Adler (1986) found home-office management often unaware of repatriates’ lower self-assessment and general dissatisfaction, a situation that further complicates reentry transitions.
Cross-culturally acquired skills and knowledge

What expatriate managers learn  Adler's (1986) findings expand and corroborate Guither and Thompson's (1986) research, indicating that repatriates enhanced certain managerial skills while they were overseas, and they were attempting to apply them in their home organization. They improved their managerial skills more than their technical skills, and reported having refined important professional skills.

The most dominant personal change recognized by repatriates was increased self-confidence and improved self-image. Repatriates reported an improved ability to tolerate ambiguity, to see situations from more than one perspective, and to work with a wide variety of people. None of the repatriates noted any recognition from their superiors or colleagues of these new skills.

Business International Corporation (1978) identified the following skills learned during an overseas assignment: enhanced skills in making decisions under ambiguous and uncertain conditions, increased patience, and an improved proficiency to ask the right questions (rather than to know the right answer). However, if these skills are identified with the international experience, repatriates' supervisory effectiveness rating will generally decrease. Adler (1986) and Guither and Thompson, (1986) suggest that organizations rarely transfer managers to develop either the organization or the international executive's career; rather, their goal is to get the overseas project accomplished. "This narrow definition of the expatriate's role in the organization, combined with an inherent parochialism . . . severely diminishes the value of the returnees that can be realized by their home organization," maintains Adler (1986, p. 206).
Application of cross-cultural skills and learning

Adler's (1986) research findings of corporate and organizational repatriates indicate that the use of cross-culturally-acquired skills and knowledge at the reentry job was negatively associated with repatriates' effectiveness ratings as assessed by colleagues and superiors (see also Ruben & Keally, 1979). They frequently assessed as most effective those repatriates who appeared least foreign. Likewise, they often ranked repatriates as most effective if they did not expressly use skills and new ideas from their international experience on their job back home.

Colleagues' reactions to the use of cross-cultural skills indicates that foreign skills are not seen as valuable by home country executives (Adler, 1986). This finding seems to indicate that the home-office does not know how to value cross-culturally-acquired skills and knowledge of repatriates—how to synthesize them with the ongoing demands of the home organization. Colleagues' seem to expect that repatriates will relearn how to function in ways most similar to those of managers who have never been on international assignments (Wederspan, 1989). Adler (1981; 1986) argues that contrary to the perspective of colleagues, repatriates feel they are more effective the more they can use their newly-acquired skills in the home organization. However, a lack of positive reinforcement for the use of cross-culturally acquired skills and knowledge, or even negative reinforcement by decreasing effectiveness ratings, will most probably extinguish the motivation for using this knowledge on the job. The home-office will not be in a position to take advantage of returnees' overseas experience. "Fear and rejection of things foreign severely handicaps organizations who want to gain from the experience of their overseas workforce," contends Adler (p. 204).
Harris and Moran (1990) assert that repatriates should be recognized as a valuable resource. "The corporation can learn much from their cross-cultural experience. The information can be used to improve the whole foreign deployment process" (p. 208).

Adler (1986) states that repatriates who return to positions with lower responsibilities are less effective and use less of their cross-culturally-acquired skills and learning within the home organization. This view corroborates and expands earlier findings by Argyris (1977) and Kindler (1977). Since many organizations do not know how to utilize international experiences, this loss may well go unrecognized, suggests Adler. Again, the organization is systematically losing a potential benefit from their returning overseas workforce.

**Transition strategies of repatriates** Variations of coping mode constructs have been developed to explain the relationship between the reentry situation and repatriates' recognition and use of skills and learning following an overseas experience. The coping mode is the attitude and style in which meaning is given to the home-office milieu in order to be congruent with one's personal identity and world view (Culbert, 1974; Culbert & McDonough, 1977).

Merton (1957) and Parsons (1951) conceptualized the optimism/pessimism dimension of alternative coping strategies, while McKelvey (1969) developed the active/passive dimension that concerns the extent to which repatriates believe they can change their environment. Adler (1981, 1986) combined both approaches and adapted them to the reentry phase. She argues that repatriates exhibit four coping modes depending (1) on their overall attitude toward the reentry transition—optimism or pessimism—and (2) on their specific attitude toward making changes in their reentry job environment—activity or passivity. Active repatriates are seen as
being inclined to change their reentry environment and/or themselves, whereas non-active repatriates are not likely to make such changes. Proactive repatriates are defined as being optimistic and active. They strive to integrate their overseas and their home country experiences, and are highly aware of changes in and around them. Proactive returnees recognize and attempt to use their newly acquired skills and knowledge to create a new way of life.

Moran and Harris (1982) claim that a synergistic approach allows repatriates to work more effectively with their colleagues and clients by basing decisions on a wider range of alternatives. This theoretical conceptualization is related to Adler's (1975; 1985) postulations of the *multicultural man*, and Bennett's (cited in Rohrlich & Martin, 1991, p. 178) description of the *ethnoreative* person. Repatriates' potential for contributing to the corporation is immense; although "the home organization must decide to use the returnee's potential contributions and not simply attempt to fit them back into the organization" (Adler, 1986, p. 208).

Resocialized repatriates are defined as being optimistic but passive, with low awareness of change and high external validation. Alienated repatriates, in rejecting the home culture, see themselves as unable to use their cross-culturally acquired skills and learning in their home environment, while rebellious repatriates, being pessimistic and active—see themselves as capable and responsible for attempting to change the home organization, but not seeing the organization as flexible enough to validate their cross-cultural skills and learning. Therefore, similarly to resocialized repatriates, they contribute little from their international experience to the home organization. In her study, Adler (1986) found 51 percent of the repatriates to be resocialized, 25 percent were proactive, and 12 percent each were alienated as well as rebellious. This distribution is not
surprising, notes Adler; corporate populations tend to favor those employees who rarely recognize or use their cross-culturally-acquired skills and learning. These returnees try to fit back into the organizational environment, generally not even aware of changes in themselves or in their milieu. "The resocialized mode precludes both the individual and the organization gaining very much from the overseas experience" (Adler, 1986, p. 206).

Maximizing benefits from the international experience

The pitfalls  The cost of an overseas assignment for the employer is high. Lublin (1989) estimates, for example, that an executive earning $100,000 per year in the U.S. would cost his/her firm $300,000 in the first year—including compensation and benefits, transfer and other costs—if transferred to Great Britain. Schermerhorn, Hunt and Osborn (1991) contend that while the international dimension in business and management is pervasive, it cannot be assumed that success in international dealings is easily achieved. Success depends on cultural skills as well as technical skills. These researchers agree with Tucker's (1974) earlier findings that failure overseas rarely results from professional incompetence, and that even high achievers with proven skills at home all too often find their style, skills, and attitudes just do not work well overseas. Schermerhorn, Hunt, and Osborn maintain that

Of concern to North Americans, especially, is that these mistakes seem to be less frequently made by our overseas competitors. Perhaps it is because they prepare better for assignments here, or because they are simply building on a base of much greater cross-cultural and international experience to begin with (Schermerhorn, Hunt, & Osborn, 1991, p. 73).

Adler notes that Americans commonly believe they have nothing to learn from other companies.
A study of strategic alliances among North American, Japanese, and European companies found that American companies did not fare as well as their counterparts. Why? Because Japanese outlearned American companies in two areas: individual and organizational learning. Individual Americans working directly with the Japanese learned less than their counterparts, and the U.S. organizations learned little from their returning expatriate managers, states Adler (cited in Galagan, 1990, p. 32).

**International success factors** Opinions vary among experts working in the field of executive development about what changes are essential to leading an organization—what skills need to be learned, and what new paradigms need to be developed in order to survive. Management consultant Geary Rummler (cited in Galagan, 1990, p 24) asserts that executives need to think and operate internationally or even globally, and be able to transform the organization to fit this new paradigm. Porter (1990) postulates that in order to develop a competitive edge, companies must test what they are doing against what others are doing. Thus, corporate leaders must always ask themselves what they can learn from others.

Adler (1986) contends that executives need to do more than be sensitive to cross-cultural issues; they must develop the skills for global competitiveness. When developing cross-cultural skills and knowledge among executives, experts caution against restricting them to a few people at the top of companies (Juechter, cited in Galagan, 1990, p. 34). They perceive a need for a common corporate language when discussing international or global business issues. Global awareness should not be the exclusive concern of managers on expatriate assignment experts maintain. DiStephano (cited in Galagan, 1990) believes Americans must break the
framework of focusing on the individual. "It isn't just executives who will carry all that weight of learning and relearning. Everyone in the organization has to reconceptualize" (p. 36).

Repatriates are an invaluable resource for integrating global awareness into the company; however, it is not enough to learn from experience when managing across geographical boundaries, maintain Adler (1986), and Miller (1972); it is better to be proactive. We must synthesize cross-cultural awareness with a company's total strategy, claims DiStephano (cited in Galagan, 1990). He offers the following guidelines:

Redefine the structure, the key tasks for success, and the kinds of people needed to implement the strategy in light of the new global imperatives; check that the organizational design elements reinforce each other and do not contradict each other; redesign the major administrative systems—recruiting, selection, training and development, information, performance management, and rewards—to serve the new global needs of the company; check that these systems too are congruent with the organizational key tasks, and people as redefined to implement (DiStephano, cited in Galagan, 1990, p 36).

International consultant Rhinesmith (cited in Galagan, 1990, p. 28) maintains that it is impossible to talk about internationalizing or globalizing executives without changing corporate cultures to be more global. He warns, however, that one of the biggest challenges will be to get managers and executives to change their frame of reference. "The nineties are a time to rethink not just boundaries of place, but structural and functional boundaries within the organization" (p. 35).

**The role of the international assignment as a success factor** To benefit thoroughly from their investment, the organization and the repatriate need to better understand the reentry process. Both must ascertain which job skills and cross-cultural learning were acquired or enhanced on the international assignment
and develop strategies to systematically integrate and advantageously use them in a synergetic way (Adier, 1986).

The home-office needs to stay in contact with international expatriates, planning for their repatriation—while recognizing the value of their overseas experience—maintain Harris and Moran (1990), and Wederspan (cited in Callahan, 1989, p. 30). Adler (1986) also suggests that home-office managers visit expatriate managers frequently and, if possible, bring them back home periodically. "Expatriate employees who recognize positive and negative changes in the organization work most effectively when returning home" (p. 211).

Debriefing and reentry sessions may facilitate the transition process back into the home organization, suggests Adler. In the debriefing session the repatriate describes what s/he learned on the overseas assignment. Both, the repatriate and the home-office management team need to endeavor to integrate the new cross-cultural learning to create synergistic, novel approaches to the impending management of worldwide operations.

Reentry sessions may be used to familiarize repatriates with the reentry process on a social and professional level. They learn how they can use proactive approaches to repatriation to manage their own transition. Together, home country management and repatriates can develop synergistic ways of contributing to the organization.

Adler (1986) and Schermerhorn, Hunt and Osborn (1991) maintain that by including home country management in the debriefing and reentry sessions, the organization increases the global sophistication of all its personnel and decreases provincialism, and ethnocentrism. This may help the home-office management of
the sponsoring corporation and repatriates to perceive their organization on a more global level.

The corporate culture is translated into practice largely as a result of actions taken by managers, maintain Milkovich and Boudreau (1991). With a growing emphasis on international business and the global economy, *Fortune Magazine* (Tully, 1990) reports an intense need for a new breed of managers—the global manager. Depicted as a scarce commodity, the global manager is defined as someone who knows how to do business across borders. This manager thinks with a world view and is able to map strategies accordingly. Corporate recruiters are scrambling to find international candidates with these types of skills (Schermerhorn, Hunt & Osborn, 1991). Mitroff (1987) maintains that today, for all practical purposes, all business is global. He argues that global competition is forcing executives to recognize that if they and their organization are to thrive, let alone to prosper, they will have to learn to manage and think very differently.

The need to think and act cross-culturally and globally must serve as constant reminders that attitudes of home country managers must undergo a change, along with the company's strategies for evaluation and rewards, believe Adler (1986) and Schermerhorn, Hunt, and Osborn (1991). International business and management scholars believe that augmenting effectiveness at each phase of the international executive's career cycle takes a major commitment from the organization to its employees.

To help executives broaden their horizon to a more global way of thinking, ASTD's Governors (Galagan, 1990, p. 36) recommend supplementing formal cross-cultural sensitization for executives with some of the following practices:

- rotating junior-level vice presidents in global assignments
• including younger employees in cross-national task forces
• sending executives to visit key competitors in other countries
• sending executives to study foreign companies in the U.S.
• teaching foreign languages on a just-in-time basis
• offering re-entry programs for executives returning from foreign assignments
• and, worldwide electronic study groups.

For future research, ASTD's Governors suggest to include studying perceptions of foreign competitors about U.S. practices in executive development. International human resource management (HRM) must work harder to understand the new role of effective executives, especially its global aspect, claims Yeomans (Galagan, 1990). *Effectiveness*, however, does not simply mean to become assimilated back into the home organization, but rather to contribute the maximum possible to the organization. Using all available skills and a knowledge base, including those acquired overseas, results in the organization and the repatriate benefiting, maintain Adler (1986), and Wederspan (cited in Callahan, 1989, p. 30). Even though placing repatriates back into their former position appears to be a simple answer, companies usually find it an ineffective strategy for the repatriate and the organization (Adler, 1986; Adler & Ghadar, 1989).
Yeomans (cited in Galagan, 1990) asserts that executive developers need to do the following:

provide stronger leadership in getting top management to realize that the job of the executive has changed, and that specific things need to be done to prepare people to be effective executives. Experience is no longer enough, because the work of keeping a company competitive in today's global economy is new; it wasn't there to learn on the way up (pp. 35, 36).
Yeomans suggests that we learn from the few companies that are beginning to make real breakthroughs in executive development, and apply their successful methods across the board in American business.
CHAPTER III.

THE STRATEGIC CROSS-CULTURAL REENTRY MODEL
AND HYPOTHESES

The primary purpose of this study is to gain insight into current organizational strategies used by U.S.-based multinational corporations during the reentry phase of their international executives. Furthermore, the philosophies underlying corporate repatriation are elucidated. Secondly, based on the summary results of questionnaires and a literature search relevant to this study, a model of effective management strategies for bringing executives back into the corporation and upper management is suggested. The developed model is intended to be used as an integral part in the executive development as an identifiable international career path that includes careful recruitment and selection of candidates, preparation for the foreign assignment cycle, support—also for the family—while on assignment abroad, planning for reentry, and lastly, assigning repatriates to jobs according to their proficiencies. The model implies that career planning will be carried out on a global scale (Schermerhorn, Hunt, & Osborn 1991).

While the model focuses on strategies relating to the maximum utilization of international executives during the reentry phase and beyond, it is founded on the understanding that seeking to increase executives' effectiveness at each stage of their international career cycle is neither effortless nor can it be superficially accomplished (Adler, 1984, 1986). It takes a major commitment on the part of the organization to its employees. If they want to remain on the cutting edge of intense international competition, corporations can no longer afford to send any but their most promising executives overseas. To let the best fail would impede a
competitive business advantage effecting the bottom line of an organization (Thomas, 1991).

Organizations seeking to capitalize on doing business internationally must deal proactively with an international workforce by examining their own internal cultures, their mission statement, human resource systems, and management practices in order to identify any practices inconsistent with maximum productivity of repatriates and home-office personnel. After becoming aware of performance gaps, organizational change agents need to respond by planning organizational modifications including various components such as organizational purpose and objectives, culture, strategy, tasks, technology, people, and structure in order to increase the international sophistication of all its personnel and notably reduce the chance of provincial thinking and xenophobia (Adler, 1986; Schermerhorn, Hunt, & Osborn, 1991).

This study is, in part, exploratory and descriptive. However, the predictive, or longitudinal validity of the model at this point cannot be determined. Although it is hoped that results will indicate great potential for easing the repatriation process of international corporate personnel, the proposed model must be tested under predictive conditions at the point of reentry, before it can be used with confidence. The important results of the study will be the limit to which the proposed model will be substantiated and validated in the future, as well as the incidental types of learning about overall reentry transition strategies.

The topic is important to multinational or global organizations in that it permits the study of ways in which organizations respond to the international dimension of organizational behavior. This last decade of the twentieth century promises to be a tumultuous and challenging one—especially in respect to the
world's community of nations and global economy, assert Schermerhorn, Hunt, and Osborn (1991) and no global manager can be effective without admitting and embracing the international aspects of today's work environment. Companies that wish to compete successfully worldwide need to recognize the reality of world markets and develop international links, maintains the Wall Street Journal ("The global giants," 1989). The movement of people from one country to another is having profound implications in many nations and for their work forces (Schermerhorn, Hunt, & Osborn, 1991). At the same time valuable skills and investment potential enter these economies, managers need to change the very essence of what it means to work in the modern organization—thereby changing their organization's culture, maintain these scholars.

"We have to work harder to understand the new role of executives—especially its global aspects," claims Yeomans (cited in Gallagan, 1990, p. 36), a consultant in executive development. Since we have to identify executives' and organizations' developmental needs and find ways to meet them, it is up-to the social science research community to further executives' understanding of ways that will create work environments that recognize, enhance, and integrate skills and abilities of all employees—especially as they pertain to the international dimension, states Yeomans.

Population and Sample

This study focuses on strategies for cross-cultural reentry of corporate executives. In order to best study reentry strategies, it was decided that the population should be limited to American-owned MNCs who deployed managers or executives to their overseas operations on a regular basis. Multinational
organizations (MNCs) whose non-profit missions and operations also span the globe, such as the World Bank and the United Nations, were eliminated from the study to avoid allowing the organization's lack of job commitment at reentry to influence the study. International management systems of MNCs were selected based on the following three criteria:

1) **Special status of MNCs:** They play an extremely important role in international management. Most employees who are employed in more than one location around the world work for an MNC. Most multinationals have affiliates in twenty or more countries. As MNCs are relatively complex organizations in which a diverse network of wholly or partially owned production and marketing affiliates located in some very different countries have to be effectively coordinated, they raise many management problems (Schermerhorn, Hunt & Osborn, 1991). Research has shown that styles of leadership, motivation, decision making, planning, organizing, staffing, and controlling differ among various cultures. Managing across cultures, however, is also a major challenge in the domestic organization, where cultural diversity within the national population is becoming the norm rather than the exception. This research will elucidate strategies through which corporations can and do transfer international management practices across cultures.

2) **Length of assignment:** Many MNCs send their international managers on one to two-year assignments; long enough to necessitate adjustments and acculturation yet short enough to
make the reality of returning back home a significant challenge. One to two months assignments would be short enough for overseas personnel to conduct business-as-usual by acting as if they were still in the U.S.; seven to ten years serial overseas assignments would make the sojourner a permanent expatriate who does not have to be overly concerned with reentry issues.

3) **Task orientation**: Organizational expatriates have definite goals to accomplish overseas, such as: filling a position, transferring technology, managing an investment program, hopefully, all overlaid with considerations for the intellectual, physical, and emotional development of the individual. Thus, they are neither casual *tourists* nor student expatriates.

The following criteria were used to select a sample from the population of all MNCs:

1) **Size of selected MNCs**: Top ranking parent companies were selected from *Fortune Magazine* listings such as *The New Shape of Global Business* (1989), and *Fortune 100 Largest U.S. Industrial Corporations 1989*, (1990). The stringent selection criteria necessitated the use of both listings.

2) **Ownership**: Selecting only U.S. based MNCs, allowed the focus of the study to remain on the home country organization. Ownership was determined by consulting the following reference materials: *Moody's Industrial Manual*, *Moody's OTC Industrial Manual*, and *Standard and Poor's Incorporation Records*. Information was then
cross-checked with the Directory of Corporate Affiliations 1990/91. 'Who owns whom': The family tree of every major corporation in America, and the International Directory of Corporations, (1989/90). 'Who owns whom: The family tree of major corporations in the world. Selection was, furthermore, conditional on whether the organization had current operations abroad. To ensure this requirement, the International Directory of Corporate Affiliation, 1989/90, was consulted.

3) Corporate representatives contacted: Information for titles, names, addresses and phone numbers of chief executive officers appearing to be responsible for philosophy and strategies of the corporation's executive development was obtained from Standard and Poor's Register of Corporations, Directors, and Executives (1990) and the Directory of Corporate Affiliations, 1990/91. In cases where several names were listed, the contact person chosen was the one appearing to have a superior position in the organization as compared to others listed. Most chief executive officers contacted held the title of Vice President or Senior Vice President of Corporate Human Resource Development.

The Data Collection Design

The research was designed to be an investigation of corporate strategies and philosophies regarding the repatriation of international executives into the
home organization. It is a study in which corporate reentry behavior is a naturally occurring phenomenon, not an experimental manipulation.

The data collection was accomplished primarily through mailed questionnaires. Based on extensive unstructured individual and small group interviews conducted in the past with corporate human resource developers, corporate and military repatriates and their families, the researcher developed a questionnaire designed to (a) be an organizational self-evaluative experience, and (b) elicit respondents' own impressions on what strategies are or should be utilized, and what can be done to close apparent gaps in organizational development with regard to corporate repatriates. This information was used in the development of the strategic reentry model.

Self-report data were thought to be the most appropriate mode of data gathering, since the primary purpose of the study was to understand the current situation of corporate reentry and to determine what senior corporate executive developers feel should happen next in the international management community. Harvard's Michael Porter (1990) states that sustainable economic advantage is only possible with the right combination of industries, support institutions, and people.

Receiving a questionnaire implied that somebody was interested to determine if the organization was in tune with the realities of global commerce. This, by its very nature, may have changed the perceptions of some respondents and created a Hawthorne Effect (cited in Schermerhorn, Hunt & Osborn, 1991, pp. 554-556). Since no non-obtrusive measures could be identified to study organizational reentry strategies better, questionnaires remained as the data collection instrument of choice (see the Appendix for questionnaire).
The following steps were taken in gathering the data and maximizing the rate of return:

1) **Questionnaire:** Questionnaires were mailed with a cover letter explaining the significance and purpose of the research and requesting participation. Included was a self-addressed and pre-stamped envelop, as well as a return FAX number.

2) **Follow-up letter:** In order to reduce the effect of non-response bias, a follow-up letter with an identical questionnaire was mailed three weeks after the initial letter, encouraging non-respondents to take the time to fill out the questionnaire.

3) **Follow-up phone call:** All contact persons or their office staff were called either to thank them for participating or to encourage them to fill out the questionnaire.

**Developing the Measures and the Questionnaire**

The questionnaire contains measures created specifically for this research. To this researcher's knowledge, no instrument exists that measures the dynamics of organizational reentry strategies. Over the time of several years, repatriates shared the reentry situation at their respective organization with the researcher during conversations and informal interviews. Based on the material as described earlier, a list of organizational reentry items was developed to explore the following areas:

- scope of corporate reentry strategies used
- specific issues addressed
- corporate self-evaluation of reentry program currently in use.
Constructing the measurement sets took several steps. The questionnaire was separated into three parts. Part one of the questionnaire investigated corporate philosophies regarding cross-cultural knowledge and skills, and the scope of corporate reentry strategies used. Questions for part one were designed to include four-point Likert-scaled items, points which included *always*, *usually*, *seldom*, and *never*. Respondents were invited to make additional comments and suggestions in order to increase the depth of the researcher's understanding and to allow respondents to give additional information not specifically asked for, but thought to be important. Second, the intent of part two of the questionnaire was to elucidate specific organizational reentry topics currently addressed. Constructs of these orientation topics were previously identified and defined operationally. For example, the construct *Professional Issues* was identified and circumscribed as "the extent to which job-related issues, both intra-personal and on-the-job, affect the repatriate during the reentry transition." Third, informal interview questions were developed to provoke responses. Fourth, questions were used in individual, group, and telephone interviews with corporate, and military repatriates and their families, as well as with corporate human resource developers, to gather responses. Fifth, subtopics intended to determine which specific areas experts might find necessary to address during reentry were grouped together from responses. Sixth, overlapping items were removed to reduce the size of the measurement sets. Seventh, based on information gained during the aforementioned interviews, the third part of the questionnaire was developed by the researcher, eliciting respondents' evaluation of the perceived effectiveness of and satisfaction with their corporate reentry strategies. Eighth, the researcher's advisor, as well as three experts from the field of management training and communication, and the Human
Subjects Committee of Iowa State University reviewed the questionnaire and the proposed research project involving human subjects, and made minor modifications in the wording. Ninth, questionnaires were distributed to the sample chief executive officers, and the raw data were collected (see the section on the data collection design for a full description of the collection process).

**Developing the Data Analysis**

The primary objective of the survey was to describe the prevailing corporate practices and perceptions with regard to the repatriation process. The design utilized was a descriptive-evaluative survey approach—mainly quantitative in character. Once data were collected, a number of statistical and descriptive tools were used for analysis. This section provides a summary description of these techniques.

In the questionnaire-part one, nine items were included to measure corporate attitudes toward the repatriation experience and its reentry strategies provided. Initially, all items were scaled from one to four using a Likert-type scale. Frequency of responses to each item was established, tabulated into four categories and weighted. The responses marked never were given the numerical value of (1). Other responses with their assigned values were: seldom (2), usually (3), and always (4). This type of variable measurement has an inherent ordering that corresponds to the values of a variable. The numbers assigned to the values match the order of the values. However, the specific numbers assigned are not important. The analysis appropriate for an ordinal variable depends only on the order of the values, not on the numeric value of the variable (Schlotzhauser & Little, 1989). The level of measurement is important, since some methods of summarizing
or analyzing data depend on the level of measurement. For the ordinal level of measurement, appropriate methods for analyzing data are descriptive statistics, frequency tables, and bar charts. For nominal data, descriptive methods for summarizing data are not appropriate, however, frequency tables and bar charts are acceptable.

With nominal or ordinal variables, the actual values (and differences between values) do not have a real meaning. However, this study took advantage of some exceptions that occur for ordinal variables, where descriptive statistics—summarizing the ranking of values—is appropriate. Correlational research methods were used with the understanding that if two events are correlated, then a knowledge of one of those events allows the prediction of the other occurrence. Since some variables were nominal and others were ordinal or interval, different methods of analysis were used to (a) summarize classification data, (b) test for independence between the classification variables, (c) use measures of association between classification variables, and (d) for hypotheses testing. An alpha error level of .05—the probability of rejecting the null hypothesis when we should have accepted it—was used to establish statistical significance for all statistical tests. Probabilities of less than or equal to .05 were reported.

Weighting allowed the researcher to determine the sample mean for each of the nine items on the questionnaire-part one which reflected the overall or average importance allotted to that particular item by all participating MNCs. The sample mean is the arithmetic average score and was calculated as the sum of scores or values (where the sum is \( \Sigma x_i \) from \( i = 1 \) to \( i = n \)) divided by the total frequency of responses to the particular item \( N \).
Higher mean scores on items indicated that corporate executives were more willing to invest time, money, and/or training for that particular issue than on items whose mean scores were lower. The evaluation of every item can be expressed as the numerical value of importance (weights) times the frequency level of each criterion. A comparison of mean scores allowed a hierarchical arrangement of each items' perceived importance.

Secondly, all raw data were summarized using frequency tables and descriptive statistics. A data list file was created on SPSS in WYLBUR, the University of California's interactive computer language. Value labels for variable items 1 to 9 were listed as never (1) seldom (2), usually (3,) always (4). Value labels response (respondents gave description of their current reentry strategies) received a numerical value of (2), the no response group received a (1). No values had missing cases. The summary of the data set was checked for errors:

- were the correct number (10) of variables listed
- were the correct number (46) of cases listed
- were there too many value labels
- and, was there a numerical maximum or minimum value error.

The created data set contained frequency, percent of each value label for all ten variables, the sample mean, minimum and maximum value of value labels, valid and missing cases, and the standard deviation.

The standard deviation is the square root of the variance, and like the variance, it is a measure of dispersion about the mean. The variance is the most commonly used measure of dispersion, or variability, about the mean. The variance must be zero or larger; it is zero only in cases where all the values are the same
(Schlotzhauser & Little, 1989). However, the standard deviation was used because it is easy to interpret—its units of measurement are the same as those for the data.

For part one of the questionnaire, the analysis of the mean and dispersion about the mean gave general information about corporate reentry philosophies or strategic directions, and the measure of importance they attribute to each variable item. For example, data for variable 2—employees are provided with a clear idea of how they will fit back into the domestic operation upon return—indicated that approximately 68%, or one standard deviation on either side of the mean, showed values from 1.601 to 3.269.

Even though these data give information concerning the degree to which the numerical data tends to spread about an average value—or in this example, that most respondents selected the value labels seldom or usually—however, as there exists no value of 1.601, the precise percentages of value labels cannot be established with this method. For the exact distribution of values, the data Valid Percent on the computer print-out gave the necessary information. Analyzing variable 2, 78.3% of respondents believed their organization provided international candidates seldom (45.7%) or usually (32.6%) with a clear picture of their reentry status. To elucidate the two extremes of the data, the four rows of the frequency table were collapsed into two rows, combining always with usually, and never with seldom.

For organizations currently providing reentry orientation, respondents were asked to fill out part two of the questionnaire, outlining organizational reentry topics currently addressed. Next, corporations were classified into two groups according to whether they indicated having reentry programs. This means there now exist several variables classifying the research data (classification variables), making it
necessary to use a two-way table for cross-tabulation in order to draw conclusions about the independence of respondents' group membership in the no response or response group to their answers, for example, variable item 9.

Cross tabulation of the value labels never, seldom, usually and always with the two columns no response, and response for this variable was used to compare nominal level variables, and yielded information on the conditional probability of each cell. The conditional probability asked questions such as: what is the probability of assessing that international candidates are seldom provided with a clear idea of how they will fit back into the domestic operation upon return—conditional upon respondents indicating no repatriation strategies are in place. Conditional probability is especially important in reading cross-tabulated data because it will show, for example, if proportions of respondents' answers are the same across both groups.

Next, testing for the independence between classification variables was attempted. This determined if the variables that form the rows and columns of the table are related or not. For this research data, the question asked was—is the absence of reentry strategies related to the respondents' information given in part one. In other words, does knowing respondents indicated having a reentry program (by giving information for questionnaire part two) tell us, for example, about their likelihood of providing reentry literature.

In statistical terms, the null hypothesis (H₀) states that the row and column variables are independent. The alternative hypothesis (or proposition) is built on the basis that the row and column variables are not independent. To test for independence, the observed cell count was compared to the cell count that could be expected if H₀ of independence were true.
A chi-square test was used to test the hypothesis of independence. The test statistic was calculated and compared to a critical value from the chi-square distribution to determine its significance. The type I error level, alpha, was set at .05. Low chi-square values were interpreted as indicating an absence of relationship—statistical independence. High chi-square values indicated the assumption of statistical independence could not be accepted, there was less than a 5 percent chance that a systematic relationship of such strength would exist between the variables by chance alone. The *Statistical Packages for the Social Sciences, Release 4.1* (SPSS) cross-tabulation programs were used to compute the contingency tables and the chi-square statistics.

The strength of the relation between variables—questions 1, 3, 7, and 9—was measured, calculating the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient $r$. This provided the basis for testing the hypotheses. The bivariate correlation provides a single number which summarizes the relationship between the two variables. The correlation coefficients indicate the degree to which variation in one variable is related to variation in another variable.

The Pearson product-moment correlation $r$ serves two purposes. First, it is a measure of the goodness of fit of the linear regression line. When there is a perfect fit, $r$ takes on the value of +1.0 or -1.0, where the sign is the same as the sign of the regression coefficient. A positive $r$ denotes a direct relationship and a negative $r$ denotes an inverse relationship. When the linear regression line is a poor fit to the data, $r$ is close to zero. A relative large positive value of $r$ corresponds to plots that have a clear upward trend, and a large negative value of $r$ represents a plot that has a downward trend (Schlotzhauser & Little, 1989). If the value of $r$ approaches +1.0 or -1.0, it can be assumed a strong linear relationship exists—the two
measures associate perfectly. The regression coefficient $b$ denotes the slope of the linear regression line.

The correlation analysis table contains the correlation coefficient $r$ and the $p$-value. The $p$-value is the significance probability for testing $H_0$ that the true correlation in the population is zero. The $p$-value of .05 in the output gives evidence that the true population correlation is not zero. When interpreting correlations, one needs to remember, however, that correlation is not the same as causation; the correlation coefficient shows only that some sort of relationship exists.

The intention of part two of the questionnaire was to elucidate the scope of topics organizations address during reentry orientation and debriefing. The data were analyzed by establishing frequency counts and percentages, and using line graphs to delineate the mean and the standard deviation about the mean; additionally, some pie-charts were used to depict the data.

Questionnaire-part three asked MNCs to evaluate their current reentry program. They were asked to indicate program satisfaction, as well as its perceived effectiveness. The method for summarizing the data was a frequency table of value labels; pie-charts illustrated the percent analysis of data.

The Development of the Reentry Model

In pursuit of the secondary objectives of this study, the development of a strategic corporate reentry model, the following methodology was used:

Three areas of literature seemed to be specifically relevant to this study. These were:
1) Literature dealing with the temporal context of expatriates' international assignment cycle in general and the reentry phase in particular; various cultural training models for human resource development were reviewed.

2) Sources providing a profile of international executives, the impact of culture shock and reverse culture shock on effectiveness and efficiency of operations; transition strategies used.

3) Literature identifying alternative reentry strategies for human resources and corporate development.

Due to the diversity of subject areas and expected equally diverse library sources dealing with the above phenomena, the search for literature was approached from several angles. First, a library search was undertaken. When it became apparent that the available resources were limited, at best, the author corresponded directly with a number of scholars in the area of cross-cultural reentry, asking for research information and suggested sources. Scholars or their spokesperson contacted by phone or in person included Margaret Paulson for Copeland Production, Lynn Witham for Clifford Clarke Consulting, and Paul B. Pedersen—leading to the discovery of several literature sources and up-to-date information on social science research as it pertains to the MNC dimension.

Second, informal interviews were conducted with faculty members specializing in human resource management, anthropology, and adult education at Iowa State University, Ames. Literature sources not available through the Iowa State Library were obtained through the Iowa State University Inter-Library Loan Service. The
author conducted parts of her research at the Stanford Graduate School of Business Library at Palo Alto, California.

**Evolution of the reentry model**

Although there is a growing literature on the stressful aspects of international mobility, few studies have investigated the potential benefits that take place during such transitions. The majority of writings in this area are descriptive in nature and among the few empirical studies, a major portion is concerned with subjective evaluation of re-adjustment.

Witham (1989, personal communication) who has been engaged in extensive research of relocation issues faced by international business executives, especially as it pertains to relocating to Japan, contends to be aware of only a few consulting firms in the U.S. who provide reentry training, and does not know of any instrument that measures the effectiveness of such training. Copeland, co-producer of the award-winning film series *Going International* (with her latest video *Welcome back Stranger*—a short introduction to the issues faced by repatriates) also offers no widely accepted or even moderately well accepted measures of reentry training effectiveness.

**The initial list of strategic management recommendations**

Success at home or in the international arena depends on corporate excellence. However, many researchers point out that organizations frequently fail to value or use their employees' overseas experience and skill. In order to better understand the reentry transitions, and reap benefits from the investment in their international personnel, the organization and the repatriate must incorporate educational and intervention strategies into their daily operations. The development of the following
list of management strategies was based on the literature reviewed. These reentry strategies are intended to make that synergistic learning process possible.

**Selection and assessment**
Select only successful and satisfied candidates for international training. Develop an identifiable career path that includes preparation for foreign assignments as early as possible in an employee's career. Select only those employees whose careers will be advanced through the international assignment. As an integral part of a corporation's assessment package, utilize a standardized and validated selection procedure to assess attitudes and characteristics of candidates and their spouses essential to overseas adjustment and performance.

**Pre-departure orientation**
Help international managers successfully adjust abroad and deal with foreign colleagues, customers, and officials by providing pre-departure training. Specific orientation programs for spouses and children of international candidates are strongly advised. Data gathered in a needs/attitudes survey will indicate which cultural awareness training methods and techniques best fit the situation, and what proves to be most effective. Pre-departure orientation should draw upon data from cultural anthropology, psychology, cross-cultural communication, and linguistics. Furthermore, a focus on the international dimensions of management, and local business issues and practices is needed. Training needs to be flexible, experiential, individualized, participative, and integrated with home and onsite situations, with special emphasis on problem-solving.

**Career pathing**
During pre-departure orientation, provide overseas candidates with a clear picture of how they will fit into the organization upon repatriation to avoid job-related problems at the point of reentry. Discuss how
they will fit into the domestic operation on return. What effect will the international assignment have on their careers, can they expect a promotion, an equivalent position state-side–or a lateral overseas assignment? Who will be the contact person responsible for finding the state-side position–a home country manager, or the international personnel manager? Will the job search be mainly repatriates' responsibility?

Make international career planning a collaborative undertaking, creating synergy between the demands of the overseas project and the employee's perspective. Send employees to a foreign post only after an explicit reentry agreement has been signed by the employee and the sending unit.

**Overseas support and monitoring**  
Provide expatriates and their families with various human resource support services that (a) help reduce culture shock and facilitate their integration into the host country work environment and culture, (b) conduct needs and performance analysis to establish individual need, and foreign deployment policies and practices, and (c) encourage morale and career development. To counteract alienation, loneliness while overseas, and ease reentry, establish vital communication links. Inform expatriates of current organizational policies, projects, plans, and staffing changes. As a follow-up to the pre-departure training, provide an on-site acculturation program soon after arrival that helps new arrivals in adjusting to the local situation. This program must be pragmatic and meet the needs of the expatriate family. Program resources may be found in the foreign community or from consulate staff.

**Recognition and use of repatriate’s skills and learning**  
The higher the decision-making authority at reentry–within the repatriates' proficiency–the more competent repatriates perform; do not give low responsibility
staff positions to managers who had extensive responsibilities overseas. Assign repatriates to jobs in line with their abilities. In debriefing sessions, home country management must aid repatriates in establishing what newly acquired or enhanced skills or country specific cross-cultural knowledge they have, and find ways of using them within the home organization. Furthermore, after analyzing the data, the international office of personnel and repatriates can integrate the new information by creating synergistic approaches to the ongoing management of worldwide operations.

In reentry sessions, have experts familiarize repatriates with the reentry transition on a social and occupational level, emphasizing how a proactive approach can be used by repatriates to manage their own transition.

Development of home country management  To increase the international sophistication of home-office executives and significantly decrease the chance of provincialism, include state-side management in the reentry and debriefing sessions. Empower home-office managers to understand and expressly value repatriates' international knowledge and skills. Train home-office executives and staff to develop ways of using cross-cultural skills in the home-office environment.

Review of Questionnaire Responses

The final model of reentry strategies

The initial list of management strategies collected from the literature review was supplemented by strategies evaluated by respondents as successful in reintegrating repatriates. In order to further refine and complete the list of reentry
strategies into its final form, these summary results were added to the initial list of strategies.

**Support for host country entry**  After pre-departure briefing, send international candidates and their families on a survey trip to the work location. Provide local orientation (designed by host country nationals) and assist in locating schools, housing, etc. Also, discuss job related matters with onsite management. Communicate and integrate planning with line management of receiving unit.

**Additional onsite support and monitoring**  During the international assignment, have a home country career manager maintain regular contact with the employee, monitoring progress of the assignment and keeping the employee aware of activities at home. Hold expatriate responsible to meet and review his/her status with the career manager during home leaves; make career manager responsible for employee's reentry planning.

**Evaluation of onsite/reentry strategies by repatriates**  Some respondents stated that more feedback from expatriates/repatriates was needed on what executive development divisions could or should have done to improve the expatriate's situation while on foreign assignments. To accomplish this, data collection could be accomplished using questionnaires, inventories, or check-list type surveys.

In addition to the review of questionnaire responses, information for the development of the reentry model was gained from lectures, workshops, and discussions with specialists in the fields of anthropology, sociology, international human resource management, and program design and evaluation.

In order to capitalize on corporate human assets, organizations need to develop a system to evaluate the effectiveness of their pre-departure orientation.
After the expatriate and the sponsoring organization establish goals to be reached during the international assignment, and determine the role pre-departure orientation has in reaching these goals, they need to determine why the program is or is not realizing its goal. Furthermore, they need to determine if the program is meeting key stakeholders' organizational development needs ("Design and evaluation," 1980). They need to do this by assessing overseas adjustment of the expatriate and other family members six months after arriving at the foreign post, when most expatriates have overcome the phenomenon of culture shock. The baseline survey can be carried out by corporate human resources development staff or an external consulting firm—to ensure anonymity. Its purpose is first, to recognize issues or problems experienced by expatriates, identifying special concerns, and establish advantages of their overseas assignment, following the steps of the Reentry Strategy Implementation Cycle (Pudsey, 1985), shown in Figure 3.1. Next, information is analyzed to define the problem. After formulating solutions to the problem and defining objectives to be reached, alternative strategies can be developed to improve the quality of working life for the expatriate, as well as to address concerns relative to foreign deployment policies and practices at a particular foreign post.

It is advisable to make compiled and stored group data accessible for computer searches so foreign deployment strategies and policies can be constantly adjusted. This information will improve the future development of pre-departure, onsite orientation and training, and reentry debriefings and orientation—helping the organization to plan for its global development needs. Data analysis will also help the home-office to monitor its international relocation system.
Figure 3.1 Reentry strategy implementation cycle (adapted from Pudsey, 1985)
To close the loop of the international assignment cycle, upon reentry into the home organization, a standardized questionnaire or interview data should be collected in debriefing sessions. If the data call for policy modification, these changes should be implemented in consultation with corporate international human resource developers. Moreover, policy changes might be needed to make concerted efforts to bring repatriates and their families back into the home organization and culture. Additionally, public relations in the host country is an area that needs to be of concern to international personnel offices. The results of this proactive approach will have implications for international human resource policies, especially with regard to the increased efficiency of overseas operations. Furthermore, it will reduce the personal anguish suffered by employees and their families (Davis, 1990a).

Skills and knowledge gained overseas must be recognized as being valuable for home-office work performance. Data analysis of repatriates' new or improved cross-cultural knowledge and skills has corresponding applications in human resource development programs of the domestic operation, especially in organizations seeking to develop proactive strategies to capitalize on the demographic changes of their corporate human assets. Organizational cultures and characteristics that increase managers' effectiveness when interacting with people from other cultures are those lauded as effective when looking at the critical interrelationships of affirmative action, valuing differences, and managing diversity, argues Thomas (1991). Special programs to take full advantage of *domestic multiculturalism* (Adler, 1986) may be stimulated by the findings and recommendations of analysts of the international deployment cycle—impacting domestic management practices and development. For most companies and particularly global
corporations, managing diversity is not just a business issue for tomorrow; it is a
today and even a yesterday issue, asserts William George, Executive Vice
President of Texas Instruments (cited in Thomas, 1991, back cover).
CHAPTER IV.
RESULTS: THE ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

This chapter presents a series of analyses outcomes. It begins by presenting descriptive information about the sample and each variable. Second, statistical data describing the relationship between various variables are presented. The third part presents data describing the independence of classification variables. Next, it presents the results of the hypotheses testing. Lastly, a brief description of reentry topics currently used by corporations and the perceived program effectiveness are given.

Description of the Sample

Of the 100 questionnaires distributed, 46 percent usable replies were returned; additionally, there were six percent unusable returns. Two percent of letters were unopened due to personnel change, and four percent declined to participate in the study (due to policy considerations). As outlined in Table 4.1, the sample was made up primarily of male (71.8 percent) with a small percentage (15.2 percent) of female chief executive officers. A few corporations had a policy against publicizing the names of their executive officers (6.5 percent) while others (6.5 percent) gave only first and middle initials of the executive's name. This made a gender identification impossible. If it is assumed that respondents with unidentified gender had a comparable male/female ratio to those with identified gender, it can be stated that 81.1 percent of respondents were male, and 18.9 percent were female.

All respondents had strategy and policy responsibilities for corporate resource development. The majority held the title of Vice President of Corporate
Table 4.1. Description of the sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Percent of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sex</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>81.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>18.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Positions held</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sr. Vice President, organization &amp; HRD</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sr. Vice President, engrng, tech. &amp; HRD</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exec. Vice President, HRD</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VP, HRD and/or</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intl. compensation &amp; policy</td>
<td>58.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director, global personnel &amp; training</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager, intl. assignment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy/compensation</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No position indicated</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Resource Development and/or International Compensation and Policy (58.7 percent). While some respondents held the title, Director of Global Personnel and Training (13 percent), an equal percentage were managers of international assignment policy and/or compensation, or corporate HRD. Two respondents held the position of Senior Vice President of Organization and Human Relations (4.3 percent), another was Vice President of—it seems, unrelated areas—Engineering,
Technology and HR (2.2 percent). One respondent held the position of Executive Vice President of HRD (2.2 percent).

A few companies did not publicize names of executive officers, or give information on the exact position of the officer in charge of executive development, due to policy considerations (6.5 percent).

Some respondents (3.3 percent) found it difficult to reflect in detail on current practices of their corporation as a whole. In general, MNC's are made up of several diverse business units, some of which have more organized approaches to corporate repatriation than others. However, respondents felt their answers reflected the general policies of their company. All participating companies were Fortune 100 corporations with diverse operations nationally and globally. In each instance, the questionnaire was sent to the parent company's headquarters.

**Description of the Variables**

Schermerhorn, Hunt and Osborn (1991, p. 71) and a growing number of researchers of organizational behavior believe it imperative for all people to admit and embrace the international aspects of today's work environment. They have posited that:

- we all live in an increasingly worldwide economy
- and, international work is increasingly becoming part of our careers.

Studying U.S. industrial competitiveness, the Congressional Office of Technology Assessment reported that companies that operate on a worldwide basis may have advantages over those that restrict themselves to a domestic
market, even one as large as the U.S. (cited in Schermerhorn, Hunt & Osborn, 1991, p. 72).

Lawrence Buckley, a personnel manager at General Electric Company maintains, "sometimes, the re-entry process isn't as smooth as you'd like it to be . . . it's still a problem for us, and for U.S. industry in general" (cited in Schermerhorn, Hunt & Osborn, 1991, p. 78).

Providing **reentry orientation prior to international assignments**

(QUEST 1)

Today, corporate leaders widely accept the notion that global thinking and global competencies become critical for survival. With increasing frequency, they send their most promising junior managers, and their most senior executives overseas (Casse, 1982). Scholars and practitioners of HRD view reentry into the organization as a critical period in the repatriation of executives that may adversely impact productivity—if not endanger the survival of the corporation. Therefore, a widespread interest in and use of reentry strategies and policies—permeating all components of the organization—might be expected. This was not found to be the case. Analyzing the provision of corporate reentry preparation indicated that a slight majority of polled corporations (54.3 percent) seldom or never provide pre-departure training that includes reentry preparations. The results of the classification data are provided in Table 4.2, and Table 4.3. Variables 1 to 9 assess MNCs use of reentry strategies as a measure of corporate attitudes toward the repatriation process in general. Determining the sample mean for each of the nine variables on a Likert-type scale indicated the overall importance allotted to that particular item by all participating MNCs. Higher mean
Table 4.2. Assessed measure of importance attributed to international skills/knowledge and the reentry process: Frequency distribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable Description</th>
<th>Valid Frequency</th>
<th>Frequency (N = 46)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>QUEST 1 Pre-departure/reentry preparation provided</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value labels:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>always (weight of 4)</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>usually (weight of 3)</td>
<td>26.1</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seldom (weight of 2)</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>never (weight of 1)</td>
<td>32.6</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUEST 2 Return status of employee is clear</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>always</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>usually</td>
<td>32.6</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seldom</td>
<td>45.7</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>never</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUEST 3 Reentry education is employee's responsibility</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>always</td>
<td>26.1</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>usually</td>
<td>43.5</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seldom</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>never</td>
<td>08.7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUEST 4 Reentry literature is provided</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>always</td>
<td>08.7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>usually</td>
<td>23.9</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seldom</td>
<td>28.3</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>never</td>
<td>39.1</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUEST 5 Home-office keeps expatriates &quot;up-to-date&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>always</td>
<td>39.1</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>usually</td>
<td>41.3</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seldom</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>never</td>
<td>04.3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUEST 6 Reentry debriefing sessions are provided</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>always</td>
<td>08.7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>usually</td>
<td>30.4</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seldom</td>
<td>28.3</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>never</td>
<td>32.6</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.2. (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable Description</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Frequency (N = 46)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Returnee's overseas experiences/skills are seen as a plus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>always</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>usually</td>
<td>60.9</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seldom</td>
<td>23.9</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>never</td>
<td>00.0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home-office reacts sensitive to change</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>always</td>
<td>00.0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>usually</td>
<td>26.1</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seldom</td>
<td>63.0</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>never</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign assignment benefits career</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>always</td>
<td>26.1</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>usually</td>
<td>58.7</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seldom</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>never</td>
<td>00.0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

scores on variable items indicated the corporate human resource department was more inclined to invest time, money, and/or training into that particular item rather than into items whose mean scores were lower. A comparison of mean scores allowed a hierarchical arrangement of each variable item's perceived importance (see Figure 4.1). As shown in Figure 4.2, corporations' mean for QUEST 1 was above the midpoint of the scale with an item mean of 2.326 on a 1 to 4 scale, but below the mean of means of 2.570 for all nine variables. The variability analysis of the data
Table 4.3. Corporate measure of importance attributed to international skills/knowledge, and the repatriation process:
Collapsed frequency distribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable Description</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>QUEST 1 Pre-departure/reentry preparation provided</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>always/usually</td>
<td>45.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seldom/never</td>
<td>54.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUEST 2 Return status of employee is clear</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>always/usually</td>
<td>43.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seldom/never</td>
<td>56.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUEST 3 Reentry education is employee's responsibility</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>always/usually</td>
<td>69.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seldom/never</td>
<td>30.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUEST 4 Reentry literature is provided</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>always/usually</td>
<td>32.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seldom/never</td>
<td>67.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUEST 5 Home-office keeps expatriates &quot;up-to-date&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>always/usually</td>
<td>80.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seldom/never</td>
<td>19.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUEST 6 Reentry debriefing sessions are provided</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>always/usually</td>
<td>39.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seldom/never</td>
<td>60.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.3 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable Description</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>QUEST 7 Returnee’s overseas experiences/skills are seen as a plus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>always/usually</td>
<td>76.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seldom</td>
<td>23.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUEST 8 Home-office reacts sensitive to change</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>usually</td>
<td>26.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seldom/never</td>
<td>71.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUEST 9 Foreign assignment benefits career</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>always/usually</td>
<td>84.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seldom</td>
<td>15.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

yielded a standard deviation of 1.136. This valuable descriptive information indicated that corporations vary widely in their practice of providing reentry programs prior to the overseas assignment. Contrary to expectations, respondents used the full 4-point scale with assessments varying from *we never provide reentry preparation prior to leaving* (1) to *we always do so* (4).

**Description of corporate planning for reentry assignment (QUEST 2)**

Research indicates that providing international candidates with a clear picture of how they will fit into the home organization upon return, reduces job-
related problems. Corporations were almost equally divided in their current use of international deployment cycle strategies as clearly identifiable international career pathing that includes planning for reentry. As Table 4.3 shows, 56.6% of the corporations never or seldom discuss with international candidates what will or will not happen to them at the point of reentry. Only 10.9% always clarify international candidates' reentry situation (see Table 4.2).

As shown in Figure 4.1, corporations' frequency rating for clarifying international executives' return status—with an item mean of 2.435—was above the midpoint on the 1 to 4 scale but below the mean of means of 2.570 for all nine variables. The variability analysis of the data yielded a standard deviation of .834. This extremely useful descriptive tool indicated that corporations are less divided about the need to establish a clear picture of repatriates' reentry situation. Respondents used more of the middle range of the scale for their assessment, varying mostly from we seldom provide information (45.7 percent) to we usually provide information (32.6 percent).

**Reentry preparation is repatriates' responsibility (QUEST 3)**

Many researchers point out that organizations frequently fail to benefit from their employees' overseas experiences because both sides, repatriates and home-office management, do not understand the reentry transition. To remedy this shortcoming, they agree that both must incorporate educational and intervention strategies into their daily operations.

As Table 4.3 shows, a strong majority of corporations view reentry preparation to be the responsibility of returning executives. Seventy percent of the respondents indicated their firm usually or always leaves the reentry process up to
Reentry literature provided
Home-office resists change
Reentry debriefings held
Reentry prep. provided
Return status clear
Reentry prep. is repat's charge
Intl. experience seen as plus
Foreign assignment helps career
Home-office keeps contact with expat.

Figure 4.1. Corporation-assessed mean values of questionnaire items: Bar chart sorted in descending order
Figure 4.2. Mean and dispersion about the mean as a measure of importance attributed to questionnaire items.

M = mean.

M of M = mean of means.

SD = standard deviation.

* = standard deviation.

Number of variables 1 to 9 represent QUEST1 to QUEST9 respectively.
repatriates, only nine percent of firms always accept responsibility for reentry education.

As shown in Figure 4.1, corporations' central tendency rating for delegating responsibility for reentry preparation to the international executive was assessed to have an item mean of 2.870. It rated above the average of 2.570 for all nine variables. In general, companies delegated the responsibility for reentry education to the repatriate. The standard deviation of .909 indicated that corporations are less divided about this issue than they are about the decision to provide reentry programs prior to departure. Respondents' assessment of the locus of responsibility for reentry clustered in the upper middle range.

Management provides reentry literature (QUEST 4)

Researchers of adult learning behavior point out that, in order for individuals to acquire knowledge and skills, methods and techniques need to be flexible, experiential, individualized, and participative. In the case of entry or reentry, they need integration with the foreign assignment and home-office situations—with a special emphasis on problem-solving. The strategy to provide only reentry literature is based on the intellectual model (Downs, 1975) that assumes that an exchange of information about other business cultures is effective preparation for working in these cultures. Reentry literature should be an integral part of reentry programs; by itself, it has not proven to be very effective. As shown on Table 4.2, slightly more than 67 percent of corporations never or seldom provide reentry literature; only 24 percent usually do so.

As shown in Figure 4.1, corporate decision whether to provide reentry literature or not (QUEST 4), showed an item mean of 2.022—the lowest mean of all
variables, and below the mean of means (2.570) for all nine variables. This seems to indicate that corporations are least often providing this service to their international executives. The variability analysis of the data yielded a standard deviation of 1.000. These data indicated that the 68 percent of corporations' responses were dispersed between 1.00 and 3.57, occupying the lower three quarters of the scale. The majority of responding corporations adopted the strategy to never or seldom provide reentry literature.

**Home-office stays in contact with the expatriate (QUEST 5)**

Research of organizational behavior indicates that, in order to provide overseas support and monitoring and ease reentry, it is vital to establish communication links. Expatriates must be kept up-to-date by informing them of current organizational policies, projects, plans, and staffing changes. Corporations seem to appreciate the importance of this strategy. Slightly more than 81% usually or always keep in touch with their expatriates; only 4.3% do not seem to find it necessary to keep communication channels open at all.

As shown in Figure 4.1, corporations' mean of 3.152 on a 1 to 4 scale for QUEST 5 was the highest mean of all nine variables. The findings indicated that corporations used this strategy more frequently than any other reentry strategy. The variability analysis of the data yielded a standard deviation of .842—indicating that corporations' responses were not widely dispersed; a large majority of corporations pointed out they stay usually or always in contact with their international executives.
Debriefing/reentry sessions are provided after repatriate's return (QUEST 6)

Debriefing and reentry sessions may facilitate the change process back into the home organization by identifying job skills and cross-cultural knowledge acquired or enhanced by the international assignment. Researchers of organizational behavior found it helpful when home-office management teams debriefed repatriates on what they learned on the international post and attempted to integrate the new learning—thus, creating synergistic approaches to the impending management of global operations. Reentry sessions empower repatriates on a social and professional level to use a proactive approach to repatriation that can be used in managing their own transition.

As Table 4.3 shows, 60.9 percent of responding corporations do not seem to perceive the international assignment as a success factor that may empower the home country management and repatriates to help their organization in functioning on a more global level. They never or seldom provide debriefing/reentry sessions after repatriates return.

As indicated on Figure 4.1, corporations' average frequency rating of providing reentry debriefings and orientations at the point of reentry (QUEST 6) showed an item mean of 2.152. This was below the mean of means of 2.570 for all nine variables. It was also lower than the average for providing reentry preparation prior to departure.

The variability analysis of the data yielded a standard deviation of .988, thus, indicating that corporations are almost equally divided in their assessed frequency of providing reentry training. As Table 4.2 shows, most respondents used the lower
three points of the 4-point scale with assessments ranging mainly from we never provide reentry programs (1) to we usually provide such programs (3).

**Repatriates' international experience/skills are seen as a plus (QUEST 7)**

As the majority of corporations have no strategies established that utilize repatriates as valuable resources for integrating global awareness into the firm, a negative assessment of international experiences and skills might be suggested. This was not found to be the case. Contrary to expectations, 76.1% rated overseas experiences and skills to be usually or always advantageous; none of the respondents felt that international skills and experiences were never helpful.

As Figure 4.1 shows, the central tendency of corporate value assessment of international skills and knowledge (QUEST 7) showed an item mean of 2.913, above the midpoint of the 1 to 4 scale, and above the mean of means of 2.570 for all nine variables. The variability analysis of the data yielded a standard deviation of .842. This result indicated that corporations, in general, perceived this issue quite favorably—a strong majority of respondents usually view overseas experiences as a plus.

**Home-office management reacts negatively if repatriates are viewed as drastically changed (QUEST 8)**

Similarly to corporations' assessment of repatriates' international experiences and skills, implementing those skills also seemed to be appreciated. As Table 4.3 shows, 73.9 percent rated their corporation to never or seldom react negatively to changes brought about by repatriates based on the cross-cultural
experience. Only 26.1 percent of respondents assessed their firm to usually react sensitively to these changes (see Table 4.2).

As shown in Figure 4.1, corporations' assessed appreciation of repatriates changes brought about by cross-cultural experiences and utilization of their new skills and knowledge (QUEST 8), showed an item mean of 2.152—a central tendency that was below the mean of means for all nine variables. This seems to indicate that corporations seldom reject repatriates' use of newly acquired or enhanced skills or country specific cross-cultural knowledge.

The variability analysis of the data yielded a standard deviation of .595. This indicated that 68% of corporations' responses were dispersed between 2.747 and 1.557 on a 1 to 4 scale. Corporate assessments ranged from 1 to 3—the home-office never reacts negatively (1) to the home-office usually reacts negatively (3).

**Foreign assignments benefit executives' careers (QUEST 9)**

The research of literature relevant to this study and repatriates describe the international assignment as harmful or neutral at best to executives' careers. This opinion was not shared by corporate chief executive officers. As shown in Table 4.3, 84.8 percent of respondents pointed out that their home-office management usually or always views international assignments as benefiting executives' careers. This finding was very surprising, keeping in mind that the majority of MNCs tend not to have any plans for returning executives, nor do they have strategies to establish or benefit from changes in repatriates' proficiencies.

As Figure 4.1 shows, with an item mean of 3.109, corporations assessed the function of the international assignment as career enhancement (QUEST 9) to be
above the midpoint on the 1 to 4 scale. The tendency of this assessment was significantly higher than the mean of means of 2.570 for all nine variables.

The variability analysis of the data yielded a low standard deviation of .640. This indicated that corporations are little divided in their assessment of the international assignment benefiting executives' careers. Respondents did not use the lower portion of the 4-point scale; assessments ranged from seldom beneficial (2) to always beneficial (4).

Statistical Data Analysis of the Relationship between Various Variables

Although the focus of this section will be on correlation as an inferential procedure (Table 4.5), the correlation coefficient can also be viewed simply as another descriptive statistic. As a descriptive measurement, the correlation is used to portray the relationship between the two sets of scores; the findings are then concerned only with the observed data and the variability being represented by that data. For this research, however, the importance of the correlation was found in its usefulness to generalize, not in its straight description (see section on hypotheses testing for more details).

In order to ensure that the observed correlation, as shown by the sample, could be extrapolated to MNCs in general, as represented by the polled corporations, $r$ was tested at the probability levels of the test for significance of $p < .05$ or $p < .01$ with 44 degrees of freedom. Guilford's (Sprinthall, 1987) table of suggested interpretation of $r$-values (Table 4.5) was used as a guide in establishing the measure of the correlation between the variables, and their degree of relationship.
Correlation of QUEST 1 with QUEST 3

To evaluate whether or not these bivariate measures changed together in some systematic fashion, they were correlated. QUEST 1 analyzed if, and to what extent corporations provide reentry preparation prior to departure. QUEST 3 assessed whether or not corporations assume reentry preparation to be the employees' responsibility. This produced a relatively large negative value of the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient $r = -0.6245$, denoting an inverse relationship between the two variables as was predicted (see Table 4.4). Even though one cannot interpret correlation studies in assuming that merely because two events are associated, one of the events must necessarily be the cause of the other, it is still a very useful device for establishing better than chance predictions of how frequently responding corporations who provide reentry preparations in general assign major responsibility for this process to repatriates. This correlation coefficient is the measure of the assessed association between corporations' acceptance of responsibility for reentry and their strategy to also make employees responsible for this action.

The value of the correlation was assessed for significance at the .01 level, before being extrapolated to the population of MNCs. The $r$-value of -0.6245 indicated a moderate correlation, and a substantial negative relationship between the two variables. These data of association between the two measures indicated that corporations' lack of providing reentry preparation is substantially related to their leaving this responsibility mainly up to returnees.
Table 4.4. Pearson correlation of variables QUEST 1, QUEST 3, QUEST 7, and QUEST 9: Correlation coefficients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>QUEST 1</th>
<th>QUEST 3</th>
<th>QUEST 7</th>
<th>QUEST 9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>QUEST 1</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
<td>-.6245**</td>
<td>.3842**</td>
<td>.3166*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUEST 3</td>
<td>-.6245**</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
<td>-.5275**</td>
<td>-.4711**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUEST 7</td>
<td>.3842**</td>
<td>-.5275**</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
<td>.7997**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUEST 9</td>
<td>.3166*</td>
<td>-.4711**</td>
<td>.7997**</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

QUEST 1 = Pre-departure/reentry preparation provided.

QUEST 3 = Reentry education is executive's responsibility.

QUEST 7 = returnee's overseas experience/skills are see as a plus.

QUEST 9 = Foreign assignment benefits career.

*Significant at .05 level.

**Significant at .01 level.
Table 4.5. Guilford's suggested interpretation for values of \( r \)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>( r )-value</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt; .20</td>
<td>Slight; almost negligible relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- .40</td>
<td>Low correlation; definite but small relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- .70</td>
<td>Moderate correlation; substantial relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- .90</td>
<td>High correlation; substantial relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- 1.00</td>
<td>Very high correlation; very dependable relationship</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Correlation of QUEST 1 with QUEST 7

Corporate provision of reentry preparation shows a low correlation, and a definitive but small positive relationship with how corporations perceive repatriates' overseas experience and skills. The obtained correlation coefficient equals .3842 and the probability of alpha error was assessed to be less than one in a hundred (Table 4.4). These data of association between the two measures indicated that corporations' lack of providing reentry preparation is substantially related to a low level of appreciation of the international experience and cross-cultural skills and knowledge.

Correlation of QUEST 1 with QUEST 9

Findings indicated a low but significant correlation between providing reentry preparation or not and viewing the foreign assignment as beneficial \((r = \)
.3266). The definite but small relationship, as shown in Table 4.4, was significant at the .05 level. This finding is similar to corporate reentry provision assessment as correlated to the perceived value of cross-cultural knowledge and skills.

**Correlation of QUEST 3 with QUEST 7**

Corporate assessment of holding employees' responsible for successful reentry showed a moderate correlation with whether or not they valued repatriates' overseas experiences and skills. The substantial negative bivariate relationship of $r = -.5275$ was significant at the .01 level. It appears that corporations valuing repatriates' overseas skills and knowledge do not delegate responsibility for reentry preparation mainly to returnees.

**Correlation of QUEST 3 with QUEST 9**

Similarly, the issue of holding repatriates responsible for successful reentry, correlated moderately—although not as highly as employees assessed responsibility for reentry—with whether or not MNCs view the foreign assignment as beneficial. As was shown on Table 4.4, the bivariate analysis showed a substantial negative relationship of $r = -.4711$. The data seem to indicate that corporations that delegate responsibility for the reentry process predominantly to returnees do not see the foreign assignment as benefiting expatriates' careers.

**Correlation of QUEST 7 with QUEST 9**

Responding corporations assessed international skills and experience to be highly correlated with how they perceived the influence of the international assignment on executive's career development. The data showed a marked
positive relationship that was in line with the hypothesized relationship. As shown in Table 4.4, the r-value of .7997 attained a significance level at .01. There seems to be enough evidence to suggest that corporations that recognize repatriates' international skills, knowledge, and abilities, also see the foreign assignment as an enhancement of executives' career prospects.

**Analyzing Cross-Tabulation**

In analyzing the raw data, it became apparent, that there was conflicting information of corporate assessment between questionnaire-part one: we provide pre-departure training that includes reentry preparation and information given on questionnaire-part two—the description of reentry program currently in use.

For this research data, the question to ask was "is the reported absence of information on currently used reentry strategies (in questionnaire-part two) related to respondents' assessment given in questionnaire-part one." The conditional probability asked questions such as: what is the probability of respondents' indicating never, seldom, usually, or always to provide expatriates with reentry preparation prior to departure, conditional upon whether corporations give information on reentry strategies currently favored.

The test used for this analysis was the chi-square, the most popular test for nominal data. However, this test does not characterize the strength of affiliation to one variable or the other. In cross-tabulating the assessment of corporations' strategic approaches to reentry preparation with their response or no response to questionnaire-part two, lead to the intuitive conclusion about the independence of the two groups (see Table 4.6.). In comparing the observed cell frequencies of MNCs in the response and no response group with their expected cell frequencies
Table 4.6. Contingency table displaying the relationship between corporate assessment of reentry provision and corporate response/no response group membership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable RESPONSE</th>
<th>No response 1</th>
<th>Response 2</th>
<th>Row total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>QUEST 1</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value label</th>
<th>Count 15.0</th>
<th>0.0</th>
<th>15.0</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Never (1)</em></td>
<td>Exp Val 10.4</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>32.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Residual 4.6</td>
<td>- 4.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Seldom (2)</em></td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>21.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- 1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Usually (3)</em></td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>26.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- 2.3</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Always (4)</em></td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>19.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- 1.3</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Column</th>
<th>32.0</th>
<th>14.0</th>
<th>46</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>69.6%</td>
<td>30.4%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Chi-square (3, N = 46) = 9.999, p < .05.

Exp Val = Expected value.
(the frequency due to chance, or \( N \) divided by the number of categories \( k \)), led to the intuitive conclusion that the assessment of strategic decision to provide reentry preparation or not was not independent of MNCs group membership in the response (giving information on the scope of reentry issues covered) or no response (not giving information on the scope of reentry issues covered) group. A chi-square value of 9.9986 indicated that the observed frequency differed significantly from that expected. The assessment of the frequency of providing reentry preparation prior to departure (questionnaire part I) is significantly different from the number of corporations providing information on reentry issues addressed (questionnaire-part two.

While the chi-square value prompted the assessment that significant differences did occur, to establish their precise location, an inspection of the contingency table indicated the major source of the difference occurred in the first row; that is, among MNCs stating to never provide reentry preparation and the response group. Respondents in the no response group assessing their firm to never provide reentry also show divergence from the chance hypothesis, however, to a lesser degree. It may be concluded, there is a significant discrepancy between corporations reported frequency of providing reentry programs as compared to those corporations' that also describe the kind of reentry issues addressed.

Testing the Hypotheses

In this section, the results of the testing of each hypothesis will be described. The hypothesized relationship will be restated and the results presented. To ensure the observed correlation observed in the sample could be extrapolated to MNCs in general, its significance was tested at probability levels of \( p < .05 \) or \( p < \)
.01 with 44 degrees of freedom. If the absolute $r$-value obtained was equal to or greater than the critical value of $r > .304$ at $p < .05$, or $r > .393$ at $p < .01$, the null hypothesis was rejected. In determining the significance, the following outcomes were evaluated:

- Reject $H_0$ at the .01 level.
- Reject $H_0$ at the .05 level.
- Fail to reject (or, accept) $H_0$.

For the Pearson $r$, the null hypothesis states that $\rho$ equals zero; this signifies there is no correlation in the population of MNCs in general, regardless of the obtained value for the sample.

**Hypothesis I:** The relationship of reentry programs and the locus of responsibility.

Providing pre-departure training that includes reentry preparation is hypothesized to be negatively correlated with delegating the responsibility for successful reentry mainly to the repatriate.

The correlation coefficient is the measure of the assessed association between corporations' acceptance of responsibility for reentry to their holding the international executive responsible for this process. The $r$-value was assessed for significance at the .01 level, before extrapolating it to the population of MNCs. As shown in Table 4.5, the data indicated a moderate correlation and a substantial negative relationship between the two variables. Since the obtained correlation coefficient equals -.6245, its probability is less than .01 of occurring by chance when the assumed population correlation is zero. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected, and it was concluded there is a significant negative relationship between the two variables.
The result indicates what was hypothesized: the stronger corporations are inclined to provide reentry preparation prior to departure, the less they delegate the responsibility for this process to repatriates.

Hypothesis II: The relationship of firms providing reentry programs and their valuing repatriates' skills and knowledge.

MNC's that see repatriates' cross-cultural skills and knowledge as valuable are hypothesized to be positively correlated with providing pre-departure training that includes reentry preparation.

Corporations' willingness to provide reentry preparation correlated substantially with their appreciation of the international experience and cross-cultural skills and knowledge. A correlation coefficient of .3842 indicated the probability is less than .01 of occurring by chance when the assumed population correlation is zero. Therefore, based on the results of the analysis, the null hypothesis was rejected and it was concluded there is a significant relationship between the two variables. As hypothesized, there is a strong association between corporations' providing reentry orientation and debriefings, and their valuing of repatriates' overseas experience and skills.

The results provide the necessary evidence to suggest that corporations with reentry programs tend to appreciate the changes in repatriates brought about by the international assignment.

Hypothesis III: The relationship of firms providing reentry programs and their perception of international assignments as career enhancement.
MNC's that provide reentry preparation during pre-departure training, are hypothesized to be positively correlated with perceiving international assignments as benefiting executive's careers.

Whether to provide reentry preparation or not had a low but significant correlation with viewing the foreign assignment as beneficial ($r = .3266$). As shown on Table 4.4, the definite but small positive relationship, was significant at the .05 level. A similar correlation was found between the corporate reentry provision assessment and the perceived value of cross-cultural knowledge and skills. The data leads us to reject the null hypothesis.

The results indicate that corporations which provide reentry preparation programs, in general perceive the foreign assignment to benefit executives' careers—as was hypothesized.

**Hypothesis IV:** Corporate perception of the value of repatriates' international skills and knowledge and the locus of responsibility for reentry preparation.

Companies that delegate the responsibility for reentry preparation to the individual are negatively correlated with appreciating international managers' skills and knowledge.

Corporate assessment of employees' responsibility for reentry indicated a moderate negative correlation with their assessment of repatriates' overseas experiences and skills. They revealed a substantial, bivariate relationship of $r = -.5275$; the probability of an alpha error was assessed to be less than one in a
hundred. This evidence led to the conclusion to reject the null hypothesis of independence.

As was hypothesized, these results indicate that corporations that value repatriates' overseas skills and knowledge, chose to monitor the return process. Thus, they do not delegate responsibility for reentry preparation mainly to returnees.

**Hypothesis V:** Delegation of responsibility for reentry preparation and the perception of the international assignment as career enhancement.

Delegating responsibility for successful reentry to repatriates is hypothesized to be negatively correlated with perceiving the foreign assignment as beneficial for executives' careers.

The assessment of MNCs strategy to delegate responsibility for successful reentry to repatriates correlated moderately with the assessed benefit of foreign assignments to executives' careers. As was hypothesized and is shown in Table 4.4, the analysis indicates a substantial, but negative relationship of $r = -.4711$. The data analysis results provided the necessary evidence to reject the null hypothesis.

These results suggest that corporations which delegate responsibility for the reentry process primarily to returnees do not perceive the foreign assignment as beneficial to expatriates' careers.

**Hypothesis VI:** The relationship between valuing the international experience and skills, and the international assignment as positive influence on executives' careers.
MNC's that value repatriates' cross-cultural skills and knowledge are hypothesized to be positively correlated with perceiving the international assignment as career enhancement.

The appreciation of international skills and experience was highly correlated with whether or not corporations perceived the international assignment to enhance executive's career development. The data indicated a marked positive relationship. As shown in Table 4.4, the r-value of .7997 with an attained significance level at .01 prompted the decision to reject the null hypothesis.

As the relationship was hypothesized, there seems to be enough evidence to suggest that corporations which recognize repatriates' international skills and abilities as an asset, also assess the foreign assignment as an enhancement of executives' career prospects.

**Hypothesis VII:** The difference between the two groups *response* and *no response* with respect to their assessment of reentry preparation strategies.

MNCs that indicate on the questionnaire-part one to have reentry programs established are hypothesized to provide information on specific reentry issues addressed on questionnaire-part two.

Cross-tabulating corporate assessment of the prevalence of reentry preparation in their company with their *response* or *no response* to questionnaire-part two lead to the conclusion of independence of the two groups (see Table 4.6). Comparing the observed cell frequencies of MNCs in the *response/no response* group with their expected cell frequencies led to the intuitive conclusion that the two groups differed. A chi-square value of 9.9986 further indicated the frequencies
observed differed significantly from those expected. The data presented were sufficient to prompt the statistical decision to reject the null hypothesis of independence at an .01 alpha error level. Frequencies were not the result of an independent selection from the same population of MNCs. Thus, it was concluded there is a discrepancy between the number of corporations stating to provide reentry preparation and those giving specific information about the type of reentry issues covered during the program.

Contrary to the relationship hypothesized, data suggest there is a significant difference between corporations' assessment whether they provide reentry preparation prior to departure—measured on a scale from 1 to 4, ranging from never to always—as compared to the frequency of their response or no response to questionnaire-part two.

**Corporate Reentry Orientation and Debriefing Topics**

Part II of the questionnaire assessed the importance companies assign to specific corporate reentry issues. The following data gave a descriptive analysis of the dimensions currently addressed during reentry orientation and debriefing. Data were analyzed by establishing frequency distributions, and percentages. When appropriate, the data were presented in graphic form, such as line graphs as measures of central tendency. The mean and the standard deviation about the mean were computed. This method established the prevalence of specific reentry topics. Additionally, pie-charts and bar graphs were used to depict the data.
Construct: Professional issues

As shown in Figure 4.3, the professional dimensions of corporate reentry included on the questionnaire were: placement in inappropriate field (1), facing a glutted job market (2), dual career relocation advising (3), inability to communicate skills and knowledge learned abroad (4), resistance to change by colleagues (5), and a feeling of superiority due to overseas experiences (6). A mean of 6.33 indicates professional issues to be the most frequently addressed area during corporate reentry orientation. Respondents assessed to spend on the average between 30 minutes to 2 hours on this section.

Placement in inappropriate field The issue of placement in an inappropriate field was the most frequently addressed corporate reentry concern. Of corporations giving specific information about reentry program, 64% dealt with this topic, making it the most frequently included item.

Facing a glutted job market Job market considerations were not of concern for most respondents. Only 29 percent included this issue in their reentry orientation.

Dual career relocation advising This item was ranked akin to job market considerations. Only 36 percent of corporations found it necessary to include career relocation advising for the repatriate and his/her spouse into their reentry orientation.

Inability to communicate skills/knowledge learned abroad This stumbling block to corporate development was included in reentry orientations by half of the responding corporations.

Resistance to change by colleagues Respondents ranked this item identical to the communication difficulties dimension (see above); these items are
Dimension

1. Placement in inappropriate field 9 64
2. Facing a glutted job market 4 29
3. Dual career relocation advising 5 36
4. Inability to communicate skills/knowledge learned abroad 7 50
5. Resistance to change by co-workers 7 50
6. Feeling of superiority due to overseas experience/travel 6 43

N = 14; SD = standard deviation; M = mean.

Figure 4.3. Dimensions of construct: Professional issues; distribution of means and standard deviation
the second most often addressed issues. Data indicate that half of the corporations recognize these issues which negatively affect operations and have decided to do something about it.

**Feelings of superiority due to the overseas experience and travel**

Often, repatriates do not realize that the home-office values team play above all. Thus, this dimension was considered essential to be included in reentry orientations. With 43 percent, it was the third most often addressed dimension of the construct related to **professional issues**.

**Construct: Cultural adjustments**

As shown in Figure 4.4, the cultural adjustment dimensions of corporate reentry included in the questionnaire were: Identity problems (1), insecurity (2), adjustments to home, family, and friends (3), and adjustments to a daily routine (4). A mean of 6.20 for this construct indicated that corporations assessed this area to be almost as necessary for successful reentry as the construct professional issues. Respondents indicated spending between 30 minutes and 2 hours on this section.

**Identity problems**

This dimension was included in corporate reentry orientation by 50 percent of the respondents.

**Insecurity**

Only 29 percent of respondents included this issue into their reentry program, making it the least frequently addressed cultural adjustment dimension.

**Adjustments to changes in lifestyle**

The majority of respondents felt this issue to be essential to their orientation program. More respondents included this dimension in their program than any other cultural adjustments topic.
Figure 4.4. Dimensions of construct: Cultural adjustments; distribution of means and standard deviation
Adjustments to home, family, and friends

Less than half (43 percent) of participating corporations felt it necessary to include the interpersonal re-adjustment dimension into their program.

Adjustments to daily routine

This item was assessed identical to the interpersonal re-adjustment dimension. The majority of corporations do not address this issue during reentry orientation. Data indicate that corporations are more often willing to help repatriates negotiate external changes—such as a changed standard of living than internal changes—such as insecurity, or interpersonal adjustment difficulties.

Construct: Social adjustments

As shown in Figure 4.5, the social adjustment dimensions of corporate reentry listed on questionnaire-part two were adjustment to individualism of U.S. life (1), social alienation resulting from the foreign assignment (2), and frustration resulting from conflicting attitudes (3). The data indicate that corporations assess this area to be of medium importance (mean = 5.33). Respondents indicated spending between 15 minutes and 2 hours on this section in their reentry program.

Adjustments to individualism of U.S. life

This dimension was assessed to be important enough to be included in reentry programs by half of the respondents. It was the most frequently offered subtopic of the social adjustments dimension.

Social alienation resulting from the foreign assignment

Most participating corporations assessed social alienation too negligible an issue to spend orientation time on it. Only 29 percent found it essential to be included in
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Adjustment to individualism of U.S. life</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Social alienation resulting from foreign sojourn</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Frustration resulting from conflicting attitudes</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 14.
M = mean.
SD = standard deviation.

Figure 4.5. Dimensions of construct: Social adjustments; distribution of means and standard deviation.
reentry orientation. This result is consistent with corporations' assessment of the insecurity item.

**Frustration resulting from conflicting attitudes** As Figure 4.5 shows, only 36 percent considered repatriates' frustration caused by conflicting attitudes to be significant enough to be addressed during reentry orientation.

**Construct: Communication barriers**

As Figure 4.6 shows, the communication barriers dimensions listed on part two of the questionnaire were adoption of verbal or non-verbal codes which are not appropriate for the U.S. culture (1), and unfamiliarity with new types of expressions (2). Corporations, on the average, allotted little importance to this area (mean of 5.0). Respondents indicated spending from 5 to 60 minutes on this section.

**Adoption of verbal or non-verbal codes which are not appropriate for the U.S. culture** Only 21 percent of the respondents allocated time to this issue. Of all dimensions listed, this item was assessed to be the least essential for reentry orientation.

**Unfamiliarity with new types of expressions** To become familiarized with new types of expressions was assessed as essential for reentry by 50 percent of the corporations providing reentry program information.

**Construct: National and political adjustment problems**

As shown in Figure 4.7, the national and political adjustment dimensions of corporate reentry listed on questionnaire-part two were shifts in national policies,
Figure 4.6. Dimensions of construct: Communication barriers; distribution of means and standard deviation.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Shifts in national policies/priorities/political views</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Politicization of colleagues</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 14

M = Mean, SD = Standard deviation

Figure 4.7. Construct: National and political issues; distribution of means and standard deviation
priorities, and political views (1), and politicization of colleagues (2). This area was not found to be very essential for reentry orientation. Corporations indicated its mean importance to be identical to that of the social adjustment construct (Figure 4.8). Data indicate that respondents who offer this topic spent an average of 60 minutes on this section in their reentry orientation program.

**Shifts in national policies, priorities, and political views**  
Data indicate that 43 percent of responding corporations spend some time on this topic.

**Politicization of colleagues**  
Few (29 percent) of the polled firms indicated spending reentry orientation time on this topic. In general, corporations do not seem to find it essential to familiarize repatriates with the political climate of the home-office culture.

**Construct: Educational problems**  
The educational issue dimension of children of corporate reenterers included in the questionnaire was the difficulty of attempting to mesh foreign education with that of the U.S. Corporations least often assessed the difficulties faced by student reenterers to be an essential part of reentry orientation. As shown in Figure 4.9, only 29 percent addressed educational reentry issues during reentry orientation; furthermore, they seem to spend only 10 minutes on this subject. This topic was assessed to be least essential for reentry orientation.

Those corporations assessed as currently having an established formal reentry orientation program stated their programs were in existence from one to ten years; some asserted to have reentry programs for many years.
Figure 4.8. Constructs addressed during reentry orientation; item means listed in ascending order
Corporations addressing repatriate students' education issues.

No education problems addressed during reentry orientation.

Figure 4.9. Construct: Educational issues addressed during reentry orientation

Evaluation of Reentry Orientation Effectiveness

Elements of the reentry orientation program evaluation addressed in this study serve two primary purposes:

1) to determine why the reentry program is or is not realizing its goal;
2) and, to determine if the program is meeting key stakeholders' organizational development needs ("Design and evaluation," 1980).

For the purpose of this study, self-report data were used to assess the corporate level of satisfaction with their current reentry program. The first step in evaluating the program was to assess corporate satisfaction with the established
program; and, secondly, to determine the reasons for their satisfaction or dissatisfaction.

As shown in Figure 4.10, 50 percent of the responding corporations assessed their reentry orientation program to be adequate. An almost equal percentage (43 percent) indicated they do not know if their program is effective or not. Only 7 percent found their reentry orientation somewhat lacking.

Corporations indicated that a lack of planning was the most important cause for dissatisfaction with reentry orientation. Both, lack of commitment to the program by corporate leadership, and lack of skilled trainers to present effective reentry orientations, were assessed by 14 percent of corporations to be causes of program dissatisfaction. Other reasons, mentioned with equal frequency (7 percent) were lack of time, of money, and of understanding from domestic managers with no international experience.

Identifiable factors for satisfaction with corporate reentry orientation were volunteered in the form of comments. They included:

- good, thorough organization;
- positive feedback from repatriates and their families;
- monitoring reintegration of employees into the organization, and the family into the community;
- and, flexibility on the part of repatriates and the organization.

In order to measure the success of reentry programs, objectively verifiable targets must have been set ("Conducting," 1984). Currently, there is no known research instrument to measure the effectiveness of such training. In lieu of direct, accurate, and consistent measurements to assess program effectiveness, respondents specified the type of success indicators used. As shown in Figure 4.11, almost
Level of program satisfaction | Frequency | Percentages
--- | --- | ---
Do not know | 6 | 43%
Disappointing | 0 | 0%
Somewhat lacking | 1 | 7%
Adequate | 7 | 50%

Figure 4.10. Evaluation of current reentry programs

one-third of responding corporations measured their program's effectiveness primarily by looking at data from grievance reports to or from higher level management. A smaller proportion primarily evaluated profit levels of operation and production; utilization of available counseling and other Employment Assistance Programs (EAPs); and questionnaires.
Profit level of operation/production.
Utilization of available counselling/EAP's.
Questionnaires.
Grievance reports.
No program effectiveness evaluation indicated.

Figure 4.11. Success indicators for evaluating program effectiveness:
Percentage listing in order of magnitude
CHAPTER V.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter starts with a brief profile of respondents. Second, type and frequency of reentry strategies and philosophies currently favored by participating multinational corporations are discussed. Next, organizational reentry programs currently favored, and recommendations for corporate management of overseas transitions are presented. Lastly, future research is suggested.

The study, based on 46 responses from Fortune 100 corporations with U.S. headquarters, found that 18.9 percent of the chief executive officers in charge of strategy and policy decisions for human resource development are women. This compares very favorably with data presented by Adler and Yates (1992), suggesting that the general representation of female chief executive officers in the corporate workforce is merely 5.1 percent. Adler and Yates predict that 20 percent of top executives may be woman by the year 2000. Thus, this research indicates that women's penetration to officer levels in human resource divisions is much higher than average—a representation level, approaching general predictions for the year 2000. Labor Secretary Lynn Martin (1992) maintains that corporate attitudes are slowly beginning to change. "We have found that there is a corporate awakening to issues surrounding glass ceilings and diversity," she states (p. D7). Martin's finding parallels findings of this investigation—MNCs are slowly changing their doors to non-traditional perceptions and approaches. Yet, findings of the study indicate that serious roadblocks remain.
Scope of Corporate Reentry Strategies and Philosophies

Do multinational corporations use reentry strategies to achieve maximum benefits from executives' international experience and skills? Who is held responsible for successful reentry? Are the skills and knowledge gained overseas recognized as being valuable for home-office work performance? Is the foreign assignment seen as a part of an identifiable career path that includes planning for reentry? Is the overseas assignment seen as a form of help or hindrance to professional advancement? What management strategies do policy makers in the field of executive development, and current researchers of organizational behavior suggest as being more effective than others in creating an individually growth promoting and organizationally advantageous reentry transition period?

These were the salient issues addressed in this study. Although the research was exploratory, some definite patterns did emerge. MNCs provide reentry preparation more frequently than they did in the early 80's (Tucker & Wight, 1981); the international experience is generally viewed as valuable, and as career enhancement. Overall, it appears that the majority of MNCs tend not to provide reentry preparation prior to the international assignment. Furthermore, they neither debrief repatriates, nor provide orientation sessions at the point of reentry.

As anticipated, respondents' ratings of corporate involvement in the reentry process are negatively correlated with their holding the repatriate responsible for successfully negotiating this difficult transition. Nearly three out of four companies believe it is the repatriates' responsibility to learn to adjust to the home-office environment.

Moreover, this research indicates that more than half of the MNCs never or seldom provide international candidates with a clear idea of their return status.
Analysis of the data suggests that corporations that do not provide reentry programs prior to the international assignment or at the point of return, in general, also have no long-range plans for executives' careers. Surprisingly little attention is paid to international executives' career or personal issues.

In addition, the study revealed that corporations with little involvement in the reentry process have a low appreciation of the international experience, and have difficulty recognizing cross-cultural skills and knowledge gained overseas as being valuable for home-office work performance. Findings of this study suggest the level of corporate reentry process involvement is positively associated with their assessment of the foreign assignment as an explicit promotion factor. The positive correlation between corporate involvement in the reentry process and the perceived value of overseas knowledge and skills for home-office work performance, as well as promotion criteria, may be the most important finding in the entire study.

The data support earlier findings that organizations respond to the international dimension of organizational behavior according to their internal value system. In order to be effective and deal proactively with the international aspect of today's work environment, corporations must first examine their mission statement, their own internal cultures, human resource systems, and management practices. This will highlight practices inconsistent with topmost effectiveness of repatriates and home-office personnel. In order to increase the sophistication of all its personnel, corporations must first become aware of performance gaps affecting the international dimension. Secondly, change agents need to respond by planning organizational modifications of components that hinder internationalization of their
firm, such as organizational purpose and objectives, culture, strategy, tasks, technology, people, and structure.

The new role of executives—especially its global aspect—is only slowly emerging. In order to identify executives' and organizations' development needs and find a means to advance them, this research attempts to further the understanding of ways that will create a work environment that recognizes, enhances, and integrates skills and abilities of all employees, especially as they pertain to the international scope.

Based on the study of literature within the context of this investigation, the following recommended reentry management strategies will be discussed:

Reentry orientation and debriefing  Since the loss of profits due to underutilized, dissatisfied, and less productive employees can be enormous, organizations should provide reentry programs for repatriates and their family members.

Career pathing  International candidates who have a clear idea of how they will fit into the firm upon repatriation, can avoid job-related problems at the point of reentry. Therefore, they should collaboratively work out an explicit reentry agreement, and discuss how the overseas assignment might affect their career.

Overseas communication  Expatriates who are kept informed of organizational policies and strategies, projects, technology and staffing changes experience less stress to integrate into the host country work environment and culture. In addition, they tend to be more competent at reentry. It is recommended that vital communication links be established.
Cross-cultural skills and knowledge  

Research indicates that, in general, neither the repatriate nor home-office leadership are aware of the extent of newly acquired cross-cultural skills and knowledge, nor of their applicability to the home-office environment—especially as it pertains to diversity in the workforce. It is recommended that home office leadership assist repatriates in identifying and inventorying new or enhanced skills and knowledge, and train to apply them within the home organization.

Each of the major findings in the study will be discussed below.

Reentry orientation and debriefing

In debriefing sessions, home country management must guide repatriates in establishing what newly acquired or enhanced skills or country specific cross-cultural knowledge they have, and find ways of utilizing this invaluable resource within the home organization. Furthermore, after analyzing the data, the international office of personnel and the returning executive can integrate the new information by creating synergistic approaches into the ongoing management strategies of their global operations.

In reentry sessions, have experts familiarize repatriates with the reentry transition on a social and occupational level. Stress how repatriates can prepare themselves to manage their own reentry transition by using proactive approaches. Many repatriates indicate that the reentry transition is difficult—a phenomenon also reported by numerous researchers of organizational behavior and echoed by respondents of this study:
Our company, like other firms too, does a terrible job when it comes to the return process; the problems of coming home have made many of our executives reluctant to go abroad.

As is true in most companies, the reentry process can be difficult.

Even though MNCs are becoming more aware of the difficulties inherent in the reentry process, this study found that more than half of the MNCs pay little attention to repatriating their employees. Both, Figures 4.1 and 4.2 show that the majority of the corporations do not provide reentry debriefings or orientations. Some do not find it essential, whereas others seem to be somewhat slow in providing needed services, but are planning to do so in the near future.

We have not found it necessary to introduce mechanisms for cross-cultural reentry orientation or input information on strategic directions....

We don't currently do anything. We probably should poll our reenterers <sic> to see what is needed.

We are unaware of any family reentry problems, possibly because typical ... (name of corporation) assignments do not last longer than two to three years.

We are feeling the need, something will be done for sure, shortly.

We have just begun giving cultural orientation <to individuals> going to a foreign assignment. Reentry has not really been addressed yet.

Other corporations address only job-related issues in their reentry programs: Information discussed addresses primarily career-related issues not culture.

We address issues such as housing, tax, etc.

Some corporations subscribe to the philosophy of assigning responsibility for the reentry process to the organization as well as the international employee:
Employee and the home organization share the responsibility for the re-entry process.

Shared: We provide advice but the individual must recognize and prepare.

The majority of the MNCs seem to assign responsibility for the reentry process in general to the returnee. They usually have neither reentry debriefings to establish repatriates' newly gained or improved international skills or knowledge, nor do they provide reentry orientations to familiarize the home-office management and repatriates with the reentry process:

Reentry preparation is limited to the personal networking done by the expatriate.

Career pathing

During pre-departure orientation, both the home-office management and the international candidates must clarify executives' status upon repatriation to minimize job-related problems. Discuss how repatriates will fit back into the domestic operation; what will or will not happen to them as far as their careers are concerned. Clarify if they can expect a promotion, an equivalent position state-side—or a lateral overseas assignment. Make clear who will be their sponsor responsible for finding a state-side position—a home country manager, or the international personnel manager. Consider whether the job search should be mainly the repatriate's responsibility.

International career planning needs to be a collaborative undertaking. Thus, create synergy between the demands of the overseas project and the employee's perspective. Send employees to a foreign post only after an explicit reentry agreement has been signed by the employee and the sending unit.
The majority of respondents reported their corporation rarely clarifies the return status of international candidates. It appears that corporations do not view the overseas assignment as part of an identifiable, international career path.

An appropriate job is not necessarily open when the re-entering expat is available.

(Foreign assignments) are not a formal part of any career development program.

There usually is some conversation in a generic way (about repatriates' reentry status) but nothing in specific terms.

Method is informal and unstructured when it does occur.

As shown in Table 4.2, only a small fraction of corporations work out an explicit reentry agreement, or discuss how the overseas assignment might affect the international candidate's career. But, corporate assessment of whether or not reentry agreements were established had only a low correlation with respondents' evaluation of the foreign assignment as an explicit promotion factor.

It appears that most MNCs see the foreign assignment as enhancing executives' careers—indicating, international skills and knowledge are beneficial. Yet, the majority of corporations seem to have no provisions to establish what new insights and skills repatriates acquired while overseas nor an organized approach to assign returnees to jobs commensurate with their abilities.

Insights and knowledge of expats are not utilized by (name of corporation is intentionally omitted) in any organized way—neither for its foreign service deployment, nor for its domestic operation.

Summary results of questionnaires and a review of literature relevant to this study indicate that career planning needs to be carried out on a global scale. Corporate resource development must provide support for international managers through careful recruitment and selection of candidates, preparation for the
international post, assistance—also for the family—during the foreign assignment, planning for reentry, and lastly, after repatriation, assigning executives to jobs corresponding to their abilities.

**Overseas communication and monitoring links**

Expatriates and their families need various human resource support services (a) to cope with culture shock and facilitate their integration into the host country work environment and culture, (b) perform needs and performance analyses to establish individual need, and establish international assignment policies and practices, and (c) encourage morale and career development. To minimize alienation, loneliness while overseas, and ease reentry, frequently communicate with expatriates. This can be done by electronic means or in person. Keep them informed of current organizational policy and strategies, projects, technology and staffing changes. As a follow-up to the pre-departure training, provide an on-site acculturation program soon after arrival to helps new arrivals in adjusting to the host country. Its content should be pragmatic to meet the needs of the expatriate and his/her family. Program resources may be discovered in the foreign community or provided by the staff of the U.S. consulate.

To keep expatriates informed seems to have priority over all other reentry strategies. Findings indicate that nearly all MNCs keep expatriates informed of major changes that have taken place at the home-office. Corporations often use a *buddy* or *sponsor system*. This home-office contact person often aids repatriates in identifying reentry jobs. Furthermore, it was found that expatriates are frequently held responsible to meet and review their status with the career manager, who may be held responsible for employees' reentry planning:
Expat has at least one designated sponsor at a high management level in the organization which he or she is leaving.

Employee is urged to keep each sponsor informed of his or her progress during the assignment along with other managers in the organization who will be key to identifying a re-entry job.

Other MNCs do not rely on long-distance communication, but prefer, periodically, to bring expatriates back to the home-office environment. Comments included:

Trips to the field by senior personnel; visits back to home base.

Annual home leave involves a visit to home-office also.

Some respondents indicated that more feedback from expatriates and repatriates was needed on what corporate executive development divisions could or should have done to improve conditions of the international assignment. Researchers of organizational behavior also point out that expatriates and their families are in need of various human resource support services prior to and during the international assignment; needs and performance analyses should be conducted to establish individual needs and adjust foreign deployment policies and practices.

Research indicates that organizations can evaluate the effectiveness of their pre departure orientation by assessing overseas adjustment of the expatriate and other family members after they have overcome culture shock (about six months after entry). As shown in Figure 3.1, a baseline survey can highlight practices which are inconsistent with topmost effectiveness of expatriates by identifying their special concerns, but also advantages of the assignment. After defining objectives to be reached, alternative strategies can be developed that improve the quality of working life for expatriates. This information can also address concerns relative to
foreign deployment policies in general, as well as practices at a particular foreign location.

**Recognition and use of cross-cultural skills and knowledge**

Repatriates with higher decision-making authority at the point of reentry—within the proficiency of the executive—are reported to be more competent. Thus, do not give positions with low responsibilities to managers who had extensive freedom to make decisions overseas. Assign repatriates to jobs in line with their abilities.

As was gleaned from the literature, home-office management often does not value the foreign experience of repatriates. However, respondents in this study indicated their corporation generally values cross-cultural knowledge and skills. One needs to interpret these data with caution—most corporations have no organized means to establish what cross-cultural knowledge and skills repatriates newly acquired or improved upon, or how these skills can be applied within the home organization.

These findings seem to give strong indications that home-office management is undergoing a major shift in how they perceive the international assignment and the changes it brings about in the international manager. Commenting on *Returnees' overseas experience skills are seen as a plus*, respondents indicate recent changes of perception:

- Historically . . . did not see it that way but ideas are changing.
- Recently, *the answer is* yes; a few years ago the answer would have to be *no*.
Studies of organizational behavior show that repatriates whose international experience is recognized and valued by the organization are more effective; they use their cross-cultural skills and knowledge to a greater degree. The data of this research indicates a shift not only in how corporations perceive the international assignment and the changes it brings about in the international manager, but also in the way corporations validate those experiences externally. "Foreign assignment is of benefit for career, more so now than formerly," commented one respondent," "it is becoming more significant," stated another. A third respondent commented this issue was being debated by management. "We have no track record that foreign assignment has helped people's career," he insisted. However, three out of four MNCs seem to believe that international assignments advance executives' careers.

Scope of Current Reentry Programs and Evaluation of Reentry Orientation Effectiveness

Whereas 46 percent of the respondents claimed their organization always or usually provides reentry preparation, only 30 percent reported which reentry issues their program addresses. The correlation between the two groups was significant at the .05 level. The discrepancy between corporations stating they provide reentry preparation and those failing to give specific information for the content of their reentry program, could, at least in part, be explained by the different frames of interpretation of the terms reentry debriefing sessions and reentry preparation. Some corporations were probably interpreting these to include both formal and informal approaches. Ten percent of the corporations indicated they provide reentry programs, and then explained they do not provide reentry preparation formally.
Reentry orientation is done by the *Home Country Career Manager*, rather than in formal classroom training.

One organization stated they tailor the reentry program to the special needs of repatriates' and the organization, thus making a generalized description of reentry issues impossible; others claimed to use outside consulting firms and were therefore not able to specify the content of their programs.

**Professional issues**

Research findings indicate that organizations consider professional issues to be the most important topic for corporate reentry orientation. Based on their need, *placement in an inappropriate field* appears to be the most frequently addressed corporate reentry concern (64%). *Not being able to communicate skills and knowledge learned abroad* is included in reentry orientations by half of the corporations with reentry programs. Half of the corporations also recognize that *resistance to change* affects operations in a negative way, stimulating them to include this topic in their orientations. Areas less often included were *feeling superior due to overseas travel; dual career relocation advising*; and, lastly, *how to face a glutted job market*.

**Cultural adjustments**

The study found that organizations might consider the task of repatriates fitting back into the home and work environment to be almost as important for successful reentry as dealing with professional issues. Corporations were more likely to include *adjustments to changes in life-styles* in their reentry program, while...
they tended to address other cultural adjustments topics—such as identity problems, interpersonal adjustments, or adjustments to daily routine—less frequently.

**Social adjustments**

The research data indicate that corporations assess social adjustments to be of median importance for successful reentry. Adjustment to individualism of U.S. life is included in reentry programs by half of U.S.-based MNCs. The majority of corporations found social alienation due to the foreign assignment, and frustration resulting from conflicting attitudes too negligible an issue to allot reentry orientation time to it. These data seem to indicate that few organizations find intrapersonal adjustment issues, in general, essential enough to be included in reentry programs.

**Communication barriers**

It appears that half of the MNCs with reentry programs include the topic unfamiliarity with new types of expressions in their orientation. However, they indicate they spend very little time on this issue.

**National and political adjustment problems**

This area was not found to be very essential for reentry orientation. It was rated identically to the assessment of the construct communication barriers.

**Educational issues of reentering children**

It appears that organizations assess difficulties faced by student reenterers least frequently as an essential part of the reentry orientation. These data mirror the
general neglect of the repatriate's family during entry and reentry orientations as reported by many researchers of organizational behavior. Often, corporations do not believe that an international assignment of two to three years will create very different problems and challenges than a domestic assignment of the same duration.

The study of literature relevant to this research suggests that management needs to become aware of the important role the repatriate's family plays in the success of international executives entry and reentry process. Many researchers of organizational behavior found the family's dissatisfaction and adjustment difficulties to be the single most important reason for premature return from an overseas assignment. No data are available for its affect on the reentry process; however, one can speculate that the world of work and family overlaps (Renshaw, 1976) in a similar fashion during the entry and reentry process. Returning home is often more difficult than the initial move overseas. Thus, human resource management might consider to provide reentry assistance also for the family of repatriates. It is recommended that the organization, the corporate reenterer and the family work together to create an entry and reentry climate that empowers all involved to grow and benefit from the international experience.

The scope of reentry orientations and debriefings varied from viewing a 30-minute video tape on reentry, to attending a two-day program that was tailored to individual needs of the organization, and repatriates—a few also included family members. The study found that organizations were more likely to talk in informal meetings about reentry issues, or organize social events with former repatriates, while relatively few provide formal programs with group meetings and lectures.
Evaluation of reentry orientation effectiveness

As shown in Figure 4.11, half of the organizations believe their reentry preparation to be adequate. An almost equal number gave no data on program effectiveness. Only seven percent of the corporations providing reentry orientations and debriefings are dissatisfied with their strategies. In order to evaluate what criteria are used to establish whether—and under what circumstances—reentry orientation can improve the reentry process, 50 percent indicated they had no evaluation criteria, almost one-third utilized grievance reports to and from reporting officials, the rest applied data from questionnaires, frequency of counseling sought, or changes in production or profit levels of operation.

Findings of this study indicate that, although much has been written about potential contributions of the behavioral sciences to the field of organizational behavior, few MNCs seem to benefit from these findings in the international repatriation arena. In lieu of any proven criteria on which to base reentry strategy decisions, informal methods have been adopted by most international organizations.

Due to the general absence of planning for reentry, most provisions for reentering international executives seem to translate into reentry slot filling—without planned utilizing repatriates' overseas experiences. In other cases, reentry procedures are established; however, only half of the corporations providing orientations, use any form of reentry program effectiveness evaluation, and none of these reentry procedures incorporate proven criteria to determine which strategies will be successful in reaching the goals of (a) combining repatriates' former home-office experiences with the newly acquired or improved overseas experiences, and, thus empowering them to create new, synergistic ways of functioning in the
home-office culture; and (b) empowering the organization to utilize repatriates' contributions, rather than merely trying to fit repatriates back in. Even though most corporations perceive the foreign assignment to improve executives' career chances at least somewhat, home country chief executive officers need to complement this shift in perception with creating a reward system that is in tune with this shift in the corporate mindset.

**How to Cope Effectively with Corporate Reentry:**

**Summary of Recommended Strategies**

The following management strategies are suggested by executive development policy-makers in this study, along with current researchers of organizational behavior as being more effective than others in creating an individually growth-promoting and organizationally advantageous reentry transition period. Thus, they are recommended for a cross-cultural reentry model:

- First, examine the internal corporate culture, the mission statement, the human resource system, and management practices to identify components that hinder internationalization of the firm. Secondly, have change agents plan organizational modifications of those inhibiting components.
- Home-office management and the repatriate must be encouraged to take steps to become more knowledgeable of the reentry process.
- Repatriate's newly acquired or improved overseas knowledge and skills must be established and recognized as being advantageous for home-office work performance. External validation procedures for repatriate effectiveness must be established (i.e., promotions, reentry
positions in line with the repatriate's abilities and corporation's goals).

- Systematically develop a means to productively integrate skills and knowledge gained overseas.
- Be aware of the importance of home-office contacts with the international executive while on overseas assignments.
- Make international career planning a collaborative endeavor, creating synergy between the requirements of the overseas assignment and the executive's future career plans.
- As early as possible, discuss how the international executive will fit into the domestic operation upon return.

It is the contention of this author that the field of literature on the cross-cultural relocation cycle as well as organizational culture change elucidated the issues pertinent for the development of corporate strategies that may foster successful repatriate/home-office synergy. What is needed and can be accomplished is the utilization of the reentry model as part of a broad-based foreign deployment system. After evaluating the appropriateness of their organization's mission statement and adjusting the internal corporate culture, executive developers can make international or global management recommendations, design debriefings and reentry training sessions—thereby facilitating the effective transition back into the home organization.

The model does not equate effectiveness simply as fitting back in, but rather with the topmost productivity of all employees and their maximum contribution to the organization. This necessitates assigning employees/repatriates to jobs
commensurate with their abilities. To accomplish that, repatriates must receive external validation.

As corporations become more diverse in their workforce and more international in their clientele, the need for cross-culturally proficient executives will increase. Thus, management and the corporate repatriate need to work collaboratively to sensitize home-office leadership. They must develop organizational strategies that enhance the reentry process.

Research indicates that styles of leadership, motivation, decision-making, planning, organizing, staffing, and controlling differ among various cultures. Managing across cultures is a major challenge in the domestic organization, where cultural diversity within the national population is becoming the norm rather than the exception. With the expertise of cross-culturally proficient executives, corporations can transfer international management practices to the domestic setting. Thus, overseas knowledge and skills are becoming more transferable and valuable than ever before for home-office work performance.

**Future Research**

This study maps an initial understanding of the type and scope of corporate reentry strategies currently favored. In recognition of the need for more successful reentry of overseas executives, further research will begin by developing a standardized instrument that permits direct, accurate, and consistent measurement from one corporate repatriate (and his/her family members) to the next. Large scale trials are needed to go beyond intriguing hints and establish whether—and under what circumstances—reentry strategies can improve corporate excellence.
As the understanding of corporate reentry is enhanced, it will be possible to put it within the context of the entire cross-cultural relocation cycle that also includes strategies that deal with the transition experience of the spouse and other family members. It is essential to determine which reentry strategies work or whether they are a waste of time and money. Moreover, to be valid, this must be done on the basis of reliable data from controlled longitudinal field research.
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In completing a study of corporate reentry, it is only befitting to begin with the people who made the search for knowledge both possible and exciting.

The report starts with sojourners and with friends. In the jargon of research, I conducted in-depth interviews. My thanks to Peter for sharing his return from Germany; to Marsha for her return from Israel to Jordan, to Christa and Steve for their return from Japan; to James for his return from Argentina; and to Joy for her thoughts on returning to Australia.

Out of anecdotal information, distinct patterns slowly began to emerge. Transformation from an unspecified, personal quest for knowledge to the idea for a dissertation was initiated during a conversation with Lynn Witham at the Clifford Clarke Consulting Group. Without her inspiration, the study would not have been started.

Possibly the dissertation should be dedicated to WYLBUR, U.C.L.A.'s interactive computer language. For getting the data from questionnaire to mainframe, my thanks go to Sana Abou Daga. For getting me from computer novice to a computer user, Mack Shelley deserves a hero's award.

Transforming a study into a dissertation takes more than inspiration and data. For initiating me into the research process and guiding me through the rigors of the dissertation, I first and foremost, owe many thanks to my committee. As a major professor, William Wolansky was terrific; one of the few people whom I have met who knows how to share his insight without limiting my freedom. To each of the committee members, a special thanks: to Mike Warren for sharing his knowledge of international project management as well as his personal experiences as a returnee; to Bud Kniker for sharing his experience with research in a way that I
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APPENDIX A.

QUESTIONNAIRE
PART I: STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AT (____) FOR CROSS-CULTURAL REENTRY OF EXECUTIVES

The intention here is to learn what your corporation is doing to prepare staff assigned to overseas operations for their return home. Please, check appropriate boxes; additional comments are appreciated (use extra pages, if needed):

We provide pre-departure training that includes reentry preparation
always _____ usually _____ seldom _____ never _____
COMMENTS:

Employees are provided with a clear idea of how they will fit into the domestic operation upon return, before being assigned overseas.
always _____ usually _____ seldom _____ never _____
COMMENTS:

Reentry education is up to the individual
always _____ usually _____ seldom _____ never _____
COMMENTS:

Reentry literature is provided
always _____ usually _____ seldom _____ never _____
COMMENTS:

The home-office stays in contact with overseas staff members to keep them "up-to-date"
always _____ usually _____ seldom _____ never _____
COMMENTS:

Reentry debriefing sessions are provided after the executives' return
always _____ usually _____ seldom _____ never _____
COMMENTS:
Returnees' overseas experience/skills are seen as a plus
always _____ usually _____ seldom _____ never _____

COMMENTS:

The home-office reacts negatively when the returning executive has changed very much
always _____ usually _____ seldom _____ never _____

COMMENTS:

Foreign assignments are viewed as being of benefit for one's career
always _____ usually _____ seldom _____ never _____

COMMENTS:

If your company is currently providing reentry orientation, please go now to Part II.

PART II: REENTRY ORIENTATION TOPICS

The intention of this part is to learn what difficulties or problems your corporation addresses during reentry orientation.
Please, check the boxes you feel to be essential; additional comments are appreciated (use additional pages, if needed):

1. Professional:
(Time spent on this section? ____________)

_____ Placement in an inappropriate field
_____ Facing a glutted job market
_____ Dual career relocation advising
_____ Inability to communicate skills/knowledge learned abroad
_____ Resistance to change by co-workers
_____ Feeling of superiority due to overseas experiences/travel

2. Cultural adjustments:
(Time spent on this section? ____________)

_____ Identity problem
_____ Insecurity
_____ Adjustments to changes in life-style
_____ Adjustments to home, family and friends
_____ Adjustments to daily routine
3. Social adjustments:
(Time spent on this section? __________)
______ Adjustments to individualism of U.S. life
______ Social alienation resulting from foreign sojourn
______ Frustration resulting from conflicting attitudes

4. Communication barriers:
(Time spent on this section? __________)
______ Adoption of verbal/non-verbal codes which are not "appropriate"
      for U.S. culture
______ Unfamiliarity with new types of expression

5. National and political problems:
(Time spent on this section? __________)
______ Shifts in national policies/priorities/political views
______ Politicization of colleagues

6. Educational problems (of children):
(Time spent on this section? __________)
______ Inability to mesh foreign education with U.S. education

7. In your opinion, what other topics are needed?

PART III: ASSESSMENT OF YOUR ORIENTATION PROGRAM

Results
How long has reentry orientation been in operation? __________
Results are:
______ adequate
______ somewhat lacking
______ disappointing

Based on your personal experience to date, what changes in your companies reentry orientation should be made (please, explain):
Measurements of program effectiveness (please, check)

Primarily:  
______ profit level of operation / production
______ grievance reports to/from higher level management
______ utilization of available counseling/EAP
______ other/explain:

If dissatisfied, what are causes?
Lack of:
______ time
______ money
______ planning
______ commitment to program by leadership
______ access to information
______ skilled trainers to present effective reentry orientations
______ other/explain:

If satisfied, what have been identifiable factors/explain:

Do you care to make additional comments?

______ Check if you want summary of findings.

Thank you so much.
APPENDIX B

LETTERS
OBJECTIVE: Request for information of strategic directions at .........., regarding cross-cultural reentry orientation for executives.

Dear Mr ...............,

Executives' reentry into the home organization following an extended stay in another culture is generally found to be both problematic and painful. Surely, you have considered making this transition more beneficial for your company as well as for returnees. Unfortunately, the expertise of HR-professionals working in the international arena, like yourself, has not been adequately documented.

In order to improve this area of executive development, I am conducting a study of possible strategic directions available to you and your colleagues. This survey is intended to establish (a) where the field of international executive development stands now, (b) where experts, like yourself, wish it stood, and (c) your impressions on how to fill that gap.

To keep your time investment at a minimum (max. 2-10 min.), I have attached a check-off-type questionnaire but also welcome additional comments (use an additional page, if needed). Is a reentry program description or literature for your company available? If your organization does not offer reentry orientations, please, fill out only Part I of the questionnaire.

I am affiliated with the Iowa State University, and may use part of the information for a doctoral dissertation, but any material you share with me will be published reporting group data and only with your permission.
Your response on behalf of .......... is of vital importance for the validity of this study. For participating in this survey, I will send to you a summary of the findings, if you wish.

Please, respond by September 10, 1991 either by FAX to #515-294-0269 c/o Bill Wolansky, or with the enclosed, self-addressed envelope. For further information, please contact me at 515-225-1506 or 515-294-9550. Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Hildegard Howell
Executive Development Counselor
Principal Investigator

Prof. William Wolansky
Investigator

Attachment
FOLLOW-UP LETTER

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
Professional Studies in Education
Ames, Iowa 50011-3160
515 225-1506
FAX 515 294-0269/Wolansky
January 15, 1991

Attn.: Vice President of Executive Development

OBJECTIVE: Request for information of strategic directions at .................
regarding cross-cultural reentry orientation for executives.

Dear Mr..........,

Are you willing to share some of your experience in exchange for a summary of what
other multinational corporate executives say about reentry orientation programs?

Several weeks ago you received a 3-page questionnaire requesting information of
strategic directions available to your executives returning from overseas posts. The
purposes of this survey are to establish (a) where the field of international executive
development stands now, (b) where experts, like yourself, feel it should be, and (c)
your impressions on how to fill apparent gaps. To date, we are pleased to report, 40
of the Fortune 100 multinational corporations have responded. Before data collection
is concluded and summarized, we would like to invite you again to share your
information with us so your corporation may be represented in the summary.

Perhaps the first questionnaire reached your desk at an inopportune time. We are
enclosing another copy—reading time: 2-10 min. May we suggest you turn to it
now, check off answers which come to you easily, and send it back with the
enclosed, self-addressed envelope, or by TELEFAX 515-294-0269/Wolansky.

We are very much looking forward to your response within the next 6 to 8 days.

Sincerely,

Hildegard Howell
Executive Development Counselor
Principal Investigator

Prof. William Wolansky
Investigator