

Developing a Cadre of Successful Global Managers: The Critical Roles and Skill-Sets

¹Shankar Chelliah, ²Tek-Yew Lew, ²Chin Yee-Ai, ²Yeoh Siu-Mei and ²Lim Siew-Ket
¹School of Management, Universiti Sains Malaysia,
11800 Gelugor, Pulau-Pingang, Malaysia
²School of Business, Curtin University Sarawak Malaysia,
Miri, Sarawak, Malaysia

Abstract: The purpose of this research report is to explore and analyse on the global manager's role in global organisations and the important skill-sets of global managers must acquire in order to fulfil their role. The major findings on the roles of global managers are based on two frameworks which are the seven global managerial roles and Caligiuri's ten tasks of global leaders. The seven global managerial roles are divided into three categories which are informational roles, interpersonal roles and action roles. Furthermore, Caligiuri's ten tasks of global leaders are the roles that a global manager must fulfil in order to understanding and operate in the global business environment. As for the findings of the important skills-sets of global managers, four skills-sets were identified which are global mindset, adaptability, cultural and cross-cultural awareness and ability to lead and motivate a diverse workforce towards organisation's goals and objectives. For the conclusion, the findings on the roles of global managers and the important skills-sets of global managers were summarised and concluded that all global managers must possess the identified skills-sets in order to fulfil their role effectively. Based on the four identified skills-sets of global managers, several recommendations were discussed to cultivate the four identified skill-sets in order to develop a cadre of global managers. The recommendations are track the effectiveness of the global mindset inventory developmental process international experience and experiential opportunities, didactic learning programs and leadership development program.

Key words: Global managers, roles, skill-sets, workforce, global organization

INTRODUCTION

In today's global business, globalisation of business is changing the nature of business in various fields. Globalisation has created a more complex and dynamic business environment in which most organisations must adapt to compete effectively to achieve sustainable growth in the global business (Tarique and Schuler, 2010). Adler and Bartholomew and Mendenhall *et al.* (2008) stated that global managers are responsible for understanding and operating in the global business environment. Therefore, global managers play a significant role to manage and lead their subordinates to overcome challenges and adapt to the changing global business environment. It is essential for global organisations to have global managers as they are the role model to motivate, encourage and inspire their subordinates to successfully achieve the organisation's goals and objectives and significantly potential for the growth of global organisations. Global managers must also have essential skill-sets which are

vital for them to carry out their role effectively and efficiently to successfully operate in the global environment.

The purpose of this report is to explore on the global manager's role in global organisations and also to identify the important skill-sets of global managers must acquire in order to fulfil their role. A conclusion will be written to summarize this report and several recommendations will be suggested to help global organisations to cultivate the global manager's skill-sets and to develop a cadre of global managers.

ROLES OF GLOBAL MANAGERS

Global manager's roles are significant in managing and leading their subordinates to overcome challenges and adapt to the changing global business environment. Based on the study, we found that two frameworks on the roles of the global managers are applicable for this report which are the seven global managerial roles and Caligiuri's ten tasks of global leaders.

Seven global managerial roles: Based on the basis of Mintzberg's work and the data of a research team at the Center for Creative Leadership they have developed and used seven managerial roles in their research on global managerial roles (Mendenhall *et al.*, 2008).

The seven global managerial roles are divided into three categories which are informational roles, interpersonal roles and action roles. In informational roles, global managers receive information and act as a channel to transmit this knowledge both internally and externally in the organisations (Pearson and Chatterjee, 2003). The role of monitor is where the global manager regularly monitors units, review and seeks information, scan the environments and also act as a channel to receive incoming information (Mendenhall *et al.*, 2008). The spokesperson role is the global manager advocate and represents the organisation and transmitting information with multiple levels of the internal and extra-organisation system (Mendenhall *et al.*, 2008).

Interpersonal roles evolve from position authority and are involved with duties that are of developing and maintaining work relationships with colleagues and subordinates (Pearson and Chatterjee, 2003). The leader role is global managers providing leadership to subordinates by motivating building teams, supervise the subordinates' work and maintain organisation climate and culture (Mendenhall *et al.*, 2008). The role of liaison is the ability of global managers to coordinate, link entities and network with internal and external organisational boundaries (Mendenhall *et al.*, 2008).

Action roles are also known as decisional roles which involve managers in making significant decisions that will affect the organisation (Pearson and Chatterjee, 2003). Global managers have the role of decision maker which is to make significant decision in taking action and use power to get the job done (Mendenhall *et al.*, 2008). Innovator is the global manager who is visionary, create new ideas and attempt new approaches in leading the organisations into a successful direction (Mendenhall *et al.* 2008). Negotiator's role is global managers negotiate contracts and deals, manage conflict and convert strategy into action (Mendenhall *et al.*, 2008).

Caligiuri's ten tasks of global leaders: Mendenhall *et al.* (2008) commented that some global managers may also be global leaders if they are change agents and form a global community with unified purpose. Therefore, Caligiuri had listed ten common tasks of global leaders must perform as to effectively manage through the complex and changing global business environment.

Caligiuri (2006)'s ten tasks of global leaders:

- Global leaders work with colleagues from other countries

- Global leaders interact with external clients from other countries
- Global leaders interact with internal clients from other countries
- Global leaders may need to speak in a language other than their mother tongue at work
- Global leaders supervise employees who are of different nationalities
- Global leaders develop a strategic business plan on a worldwide basis for their unit
- Global leaders manage a budget on a worldwide basis for their unit
- Global leaders negotiate in other countries or with people from other countries
- Global leaders manage foreign suppliers or vendors
- Global leaders manage risk on a worldwide basis for their unit

These are the roles that a global manager must fulfil in order to understanding and operating in the global business environment. To effectively perform these roles, global managers must have acquired a certain important skill-sets to produce cadre of global managers.

GLOBAL MANAGER'S SKILL-SETS

As mentioned earlier, global managers must have essential skill-sets to tackle the global environment challenges in today's business. The four identified skill-sets are global mindset, adaptability, cultural and cross-cultural awareness and ability to lead and motivate a diverse workforce towards organisation's goals and objectives.

Global mindset: Global mindset can be defined as having personal qualities and attributes that can affect the manager influence through group, organisation and individual that from other part of the world (Javidan and Bowen, 2013). Global mindset is essential because it can minimise cultural barriers, knowledge, network and skills of a global manager (Lachyani, 2013) which causes a global manager to be thoughtful of the cultural differences and cultural sensitivity through the integration of communicate and collaborate in order for a global manager to understand more on diversity. In addition, global mindset is a vital skill-set for global manager to guide and motivate the diverse subordinate and people in the global business in order to lead the global organisation to a successful direction.

There are three main types of global mindset which are global intellectual capital, global psychological capital and global social capital in the structure. These are

essential for the global manager to fully understand and manage well on the subordinate as well as the success in the global organisation.

Adaptability: Adaptability is known as a personal quality that is significant in managing with uncertainty and ambiguity in the changing environment of global business (O'Connell *et al.*, 2008). According to global managers need to have the potential skill-sets of adapting and reacting to the changes in global business in order to perform effectively across functions. O'Connell *et al.* (2008) concluded that if an individual with high adaptability can have the ability to perform effectively in the process of goal-setting, initiating effort and achieving psychological success. Hence, it is crucial for global managers to understand their surroundings well as to develop contingency plans to adapt and manage the complex and changing business environment.

In terms of cultural adaptability, it is essential competency for global managers to understand and adapt to the cultures of different countries in order to effectively lead in the global business environment. Cultural adaptability is the motivation and capability to adapt one's behaviour to the establish customs, values, norms, beliefs and expectations in a specific geographical location (Deal *et al.*, 2003). If the global managers do not have the ability to cultural adapt, it will cause stress as the norms and beliefs are unfamiliar that will affect the global managers' performance in managing globally (Ang *et al.*, 2007). For instance, Peace Corps, a US government volunteer program, face some difficulties where their volunteers must relocate and adapt living in different cultures as the role of teachers and helpers (Ang *et al.*, 2007).

Cultural and cross-cultural awareness: The next skill-set that global managers must possess is cultural and cross-cultural awareness. In today's, multicultural society and interconnected business world, global managers often face different challenges to manage their workplace diversity as different people have different work practices, values and attitudes in the workplace (Cappellen and Janssens, 2008). For example, global managers need to know how to communicate, delegate, lead their subordinates and present their ideas in right and effective ways which does not raise any cultural issues in the workplace. Besides that a global manager who is culturally aware can bring benefit to the business as huge unintentional mistakes can be avoided during the communication among people from other countries (Pies *et al.*, 2010). For example, a global manager will need

intercultural business skills to understand the culture of all their clients who are from other countries, so that they can work together in a peaceful environment. Thus, it is important that global managers have the ability to understand other cultures and communicate effectively with their overseas constituents as this can contribute towards the organisation's goals and objectives (Caligiuri, 2006).

Ability to lead and motivate a diverse workforce towards organisation's goals and objectives: Due to the nature of working environment, leading and motivating a diverse workforce is specifically for global managers as their subordinates or team members are located in different parts of the globe. Their task is not only to lead and motivate their subordinates or team members but also to assist them towards the organisation's goals and objectives (Derven and Frappolli, 2011). This task can be very difficult as various leading methods are needed to facilitate the diverse workforce. For instance, an effective global managers need to lead in a behaviour that is consistent with all team member's cultural expectation while at the same time developing standard rules that are agreed by all different social-interaction preferences (Derven and Frappolli, 2011).

Additionally, global managers must have the ability to inspire and build trust amongst the diverse team members so that they are able to cooperate with each other in order to pursue the organisation's goals and objectives (Petrick *et al.*, 1999). Beforehand, global managers must articulate all the organisation's goals and objectives to all team members so that they understand all goals and objective of the organisation (Novicevic and Harvey, 2004). Thus, leadership skills is essential to global managers as they need to build trust, inspire and motivate diverse workforce in the achievement of the goals, evaluate and assign responsibly accordingly in order to ensure future success of the organisation's goal and objectives.

Hence, it is important that global managers have developed the right and positive skill-sets in order to ensure the success of organisation's goals and objectives. Global organisations should begin to realize that global managers with strong global mindset skills are flexible in dealing with the constant changing global market demands. In addition, global manager with adaptability skill-set are able to develop contingency plans during any change in the business environment. Furthermore, global managers that are aware of the cultural sensitivity are able to get the very best from the culturally diverse teams and workforces. Lastly, the success of organisation to achieve their goals and

objective are highly dependent on the ability of global managers to lead and motivate their diverse workforce. Thus, it is essential that all global managers must possess the identified skills-sets in order to fulfil their role effectively.

CONCLUSION

It is important that global managers have developed the right and positive skill-sets in order to ensure the success of organisation's goals and objectives. Global organisations should begin to realize that global managers with strong global mindset skills are flexible in dealing with the constant changing global market demands. In addition, global manager with adaptability skill-set are able to develop contingency plans during any change in the business environment. Furthermore, global managers that are aware of the cultural sensitivity are able to get the very best from the culturally diverse teams and workforces. Lastly, the success of organisation to achieve their goals and objective are highly dependent on the ability of global managers to lead and motivate their diverse workforce. Thus, it is essential that all global managers must possess the identified skills-sets in order to fulfil their role effectively.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the four identified skills-sets of global managers, several recommendations were discussed to cultivate the four identified skill-sets in order to develop a cadre of global managers. The recommendations are as follow:

Track the effectiveness of the global mindset inventory developmental process: Today's global organisation has developed a road map of best practices for their global managers in order to develop competent leaders and to achieve sustainable competitive advantage among competitors. Firstly, global organisation must develop a valid and reliable approaches and program for the development of a manager's global mindset so, the objectives of the program and approaches can be reached (Javidan and Bowen, 2013). For example, Global Mindset Inventory (GMI) has been used widely in most of the global manager's development programs in several countries and industry. In order to use this Global Mindset Inventory, global managers have to complete an Internet-based questionnaire which is used effectively to measure the Global Mindset profile of a manager.

Besides that it is equally important that the organisation initiate and track the effectiveness of the

Global Mindset Inventory developmental process so that risk and complexity that slow down the development of global managers can be reduced (Kedia and Mukherji, 1999). This tracking process includes identifying the performance gaps, identifying potential workforce and track effectiveness of the training provided to the workforce. Thus, monitoring the development process effectively can increase the number of global managers with high levels of global mindset.

International experience and experiential opportunities:

Deal *et al.* (2003) stated that an individual can change their understanding of the global environment through their own international experiences. For global organisations to develop a cadre of global managers, global managers should be sent on international business trips with the opportunities to work with skilled international executives and assign on cross-cultural teams which allows global managers to enhance their skill of adaptability to adapt to the global surroundings and different cultural (Deal *et al.*, 2003). With this international experience, global managers are able to mingle and gain knowledge from other cultures which enable the global managers to adapt to other culture easily.

Furthermore, global organisations can implement experiential opportunities to global managers to enhance the skill of adaptability by individualised mentoring, coaching and immersion programs (Caligiuri, 2006). Caligiuri (2006) mentioned that these programs are customised to the global manager individual's strengths and growth needs for global managerial roles and also offer greater opportunities for networking with individuals from different countries such as transferring global managers to live in unfamiliar countries for better understanding of the local culture. In addition, immersion programs not only help global managers to gain cultural sensitivity and cultural knowledge but also used to enhance global managers' other language skills (Caligiuri, 2006). In contrast, to execute these implementations can be likely costly and time consuming (Caligiuri, 2006). Overall, global organisations are suggested to implement these recommendations in order to cultivate global managers' adaptability skill and to perform effectively across cultural borders.

Didactic learning programs: Basically, global organisations can develop cultural and cross-cultural awareness skill-set by providing didactic learning programs to all global managers in the organisation. Didactic learning programs are useful to improve knowledge, skills and abilities related to global leadership tasks such as cross-cultural training, diversity training

and language training that are essential to do business internationally (Caligiuri, 2006). The cross-cultural training can assist global managers to improve their behaviors in a more ethical way when dealing with cultural issues (Osman-Gani and Rockstuhl, 2009). Besides that global managers can also identify the most appropriate ways to perform their responsibilities when dealing with people from a given culture or country which is different from their own culture or country. Through cross cultural training, global managers may also learn methods handling uncertainty when working with people in foreign countries and form realistic expectation for their cross-national communications and experiences (Fischer, 2011).

In addition, global managers who go for diversity training can improve their knowledge and skills involving intercultural interactions. This diversity training can prevent global managers to have negative stereotyping and discrimination attitude towards people from other cultures or countries (Glicken and Robinson, 2013). Lastly, language training can provide global managers with the language skills that are needed to communicate with their foreign co-workers or clients (Lara, 2003). Global managers who know more languages can communicate with people more fluently and confidently when they speak to people from other country. Thus, global organisations are recommended to provide didactic learning programs to build the intercultural management skills that are critical for their workforce to compete in today's global business environment.

Leadership development program: According to Gonin *et al.* (2011) global organisations are committed to the development of their employees and ensure that their leadership skills are developed at every level of management. Global organisations are recommended to organise leadership development program for global managers to align their personal development plans and careers towards the organisation's strategy and goals. The leadership development program includes activities that require global managers to work on real cases and challenges or dilemmas that they need to face in real life (Tsyganenko, 2014). Besides that, global managers can learn from each other experiences throughout this program and link it to their job assignments (Thorsell, 2007). Thus, this leadership development program can effectively develop new skills among the global managers, helping them to improve on their career and employment prospects while ready to prepare themselves with greater responsibility.

REFERENCES

- Ang, S., L. van Dyne, C. Koh, K.Y. Ng, K.J. Templer, C. Tay and N.A. Chandrasekar, 2007. Cultural intelligence: Its measurement and effects on cultural judgment and decision making, cultural adaptation and task performance. *Manage. Organ. Rev.*, 3: 335-371.
- Caligiuri, P., 2006. Developing global leaders. *Hum. Resour. Manage. Rev.*, 16: 219-228.
- Cappellen, T. and M. Janssens, 2008. Global managers' career competencies. *Career Dev. Int.*, 13: 514-537.
- Deal, J.J., J. Lesslie, M. Dalton and C. Ernst, 2003. Cultural Adaptability and Leading Across Cultures. In: *Advances in Global Leadership*, Mobley, W.H. and W.H. Dorfman (Eds.). Vol. 3, JAI Press, Greenwich, CT.
- Derven, M. and K. Frappolli, 2011. Aligning leadership development for general managers with global strategy: The Bristol-Myers Squibb story. *Ind. Commer. Training*, 43: 4-12.
- Fischer, R., 2011. Cross-cultural training effects on cultural essentialism beliefs and cultural intelligence. *Int. J. Int. Relat.*, 35: 767-775.
- Glicken, M.D. and B. Robinson, 2013. *Treating Worker Dissatisfaction During Economic Change*. Elsevier Science, New York, USA., ISBN-13: 978-0-12-397006-0.
- Gonin, D., U. Napiersky and J. Thorsell, 2011. Innovation in Leadership Development. In: *Advances in Global Leadership*, Mobley, W.H., M. Li and Y. Wang (Eds.). Vol. 6, Emerald Group Publishing Ltd., Bingley, UK., England, pp: 155-215.
- Javidan, M. and D. Bowen, 2013. The global mindset of managers: What it is, why it matters and how to develop it. *Organ. Dyn.*, 42: 145-155.
- Kedia, B.L. and A. Mukherji, 1999. Global managers: Developing a mindset for global competitiveness. *J. World Bus.*, 34: 230-251.
- Lachyani, L., 2013. Global market, global mindset. *The Employee Mobility Institute*, Australia, pp: 1-3.
- Lara, W., 2003. Companies in China struggle to train, retain qualified managers: Leadership style, language differ even among recruits from Hong Kong, Taiwan. *Wall Street J.*, Vol. 8.
- Mendenhall, M.E., J.S. Osland, A. Bird, G.R. Oddou and M.L. Maznevski, 2008. *Global Leadership: Research, Practice and Development*. Routledge, Abingdon, England, ISBN-13: 978-0415405232, Pages: 216.
- Novicevic, M. and M.G. Harvey, 2004. The political role of corporate human resource management in strategic global leadership development. *Leadership Quar.*, 15: 569-588.

- O'Connell, D.J., E. McNeely and D.T. Hall, 2008. Unpacking personal adaptability at work. *J. Leadership Organiz. Stud.*, 14: 248-259.
- Osman-Gani, A.M. and T. Rockstuhl, 2009. Cross-cultural training, expatriate self-efficacy and adjustments to overseas assignments: An empirical investigation of managers in Asia. *Int. J. Int. Relat.*, 33: 277-290.
- Pearson, C.A.L. and S.R. Chatterjee, 2003. Managerial work roles in Asia: An empirical study of Mintzberg's role formulation in four Asian countries. *J. Manage. Dev.*, 22: 694-707.
- Petrick, J.A., R.F. Scherer, J.D. Brodzinski, J.F. Quinn and M.F. Ainina, 1999. Global leadership skills and reputational capital: Intangible resources for sustainable competitive advantage. *Acad. Manage. Execut.*, 13: 58-69.
- Pies, I., M. Beckmann and S. Hielscher, 2010. Value creation, management competencies and global corporate citizenship: An ordonomic approach to business ethics in the age of globalization. *J. Bus. Ethics*, 94: 265-278.
- Tarique, I. and R.S. Schuler, 2010. Global talent management: Literature review, integrative framework and suggestions for further research. *J. World Bus.*, 45: 122-133.
- Thorsell, J., 2007. Innovation in learning: How the Danish leadership institute developed 2,200 managers from Fujitsu services from 13 different countries. *Manage. Decis.*, 45: 1667-1676.
- Tsyganenko, M.V., 2014. The effect of a leadership development program on behavioral and financial outcomes: Kazakhstani experience. *Proc. Soc. Behav. Sci.*, 124: 486-495.