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### Brain Drain!

The emergence of a global economy has made international exposure and experience a normal part of work life for employees. If a company wants to perform better financially, it needs to make sure the money spent on giving an employee international exposure is worthwhile. In reality, these programs often fail to meet expectations, and the returns are meager.

Employees are usually sent abroad to:

- Set up a new business unit
- Facilitate international exposure and to be groomed for leadership positions
- Participate and gain international experience

Whether employees volunteer or are asked to go, organizations have to take steps to see that the program yields returns. Organizations need to consider three elements for an effective expatriate program:

**Selection:** Cross-cultural issues, management styles, and communication process affect an individual's performance abroad. Hence, it is advisable to evaluate the employee before sending him or her on a foreign assignment.

**Training.** Most organizations train their employees on things like business etiquette abroad, but these sessions are often not comprehensive. When an employee is going abroad for the first time, he or she needs detailed information. The training sessions need to be long enough to allow him / her to comprehend the information.

**Repatriation.** Organizations need to make necessary arrangements to accommodate the employees after their return and update them about the latest developments in the organization.

### Avert Brain Drain

An expatriate program, more popular as overseas posting / foreign postings is successful when organizations benefit from it. Often when the employees return, organizations are unable to accommodate them in the right place, which results in high turnover.

To avoid losing a valuable employee, organizations have to put some systems in place:

**Policy.** Organizations should set up a policy that takes care of all the issues of relocation. It should be flexible enough to accommodate the unique requirements of the host country.

**Training.** The employee, along with his family, must be trained to adjust to the foreign atmosphere. This enhances the employee's productivity.

**Record performance.** The performance appraisal of the employee should take into consideration the recommendation of both the reporting authority abroad and the base company.



## TenStep Supplemental Paper

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**Keep in touch.** To evaluate the employee's progress, organizations must keep in touch with him or her through weekly or monthly reports via the Internet, fax or telephone and arrange for short-term progress reports.

**Mentor.** Assigning a senior member as a mentor is of great help. Besides keeping the employee abreast of the parent company's developments, the mentor can chalk out a suitable career path for the employee.

**Tracking systems.** It is necessary to keep track of employees who have left to know where they are and what they are doing, and to identify the reasons for their departure.

To make the program a success, organizations ought to take necessary steps to benefit from the skills, knowledge and perspective of the expatriate employees.