



Adventure Expansion

Becoming internationally or even globally active is getting increasingly easier for companies – from a superficial view. New markets can be opened up at rapid speed, distances are lessening. But what is needed to make the expansion truly a success in the long run? Read more on the topic in this HILL Management Mailer.



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Editorial

No matter how exotic the holiday destination, consumers today can find almost everything on location that they are accustomed to from home: cosmetics from Nivea and L'Oréal, drinks from Coca-Cola and Red Bull, restaurants from McDonald's and Starbucks.

This is not really surprising, because being internationally or even globally active is becoming increasingly simple for companies – from a superficial view. New markets can be opened up at rapid speed. Distances are lessening. Global financial services, communication technologies, logistic and trade services make this possible. But what is necessary to make the expansion truly a success in the long run?

The complexity is increasing, and with it also the requirements towards organizational structures and personnel, especially leaders. Decisions about central versus decentral management, the selection and development of adequate international managers, the assignment of locals or expats must be made. Building up the necessary infrastructure is one thing, but it is much more difficult to win and optimally position those persons who will make business profitable for customers, company, and employees.

The current edition of the HILL Management Mailer deals with all of these topics. Enjoy the read!



International Challenge

Answers from the Practical Experience of Our Readers

What were the most incisive realizations in the framework of internationalisation for you? The feedback of our readers' show that the issue of expansion and internationalisation is very present in debate, and there are versatile ways of approaching the subject.

Ewald Grünzweig, Department Manager Export and Investment Financing of the **Bank Austria AG** realizes that of course, Austrian companies profit from the rapidly growing export. It is the secret of success of the »foreign participation of Austrian companies« to think »beyond the horizon«.

»A business plan with exact definition of the strategic specifications is necessary«, but also »internal service departments must be prepared sufficiently in order to offer adequate process support of the newly created business offices abroad«, adds **Klaus Scheitz**, Area Manager Real Estate of the **Investkredit Bank AG**.

»Complexity management is required more and more with every further geographical expansion«, says **Christian Wurditsch**, Manager Strategy & Corporation Development, **Österreichische Post AG** (Austrian Post). »Not only intercultural aspects must be controlled, but rather further complex topic fields, like for example national regulation or political situations are added«.

Alexander Schaffer, Branch Manager of **Schenker & Co. AG**, sees the massive change in the dislocated management: In earlier times, locally responsible decision-makers were located locally, »today, corporate decisions are increasingly made transnationally in the headquarters. It is noticeable that the headquarter locations do not have to be identical with the locations of the decision-makers«. Schaffer assumes a lack of specialists as the background, »so that it is accepted that the place of labour is not identical with the locations of the headquarters«.

For **Maria Hofstätter**, Department Manager ABI/Labour market research of the **Public**

Employment Service Austria, not only »companies are faced with the relatively early decision to go along with the growth within the international markets, or to remain a small local player on the market. The internationalisation of the economic relationships and the labour market« also demands »a more definite internationally oriented vocational education. The labour market in Austria is no longer imaginable separated from the labour market of other countries«.

The Head of the Practical Training & Overseas Programme of the **University of Applied Sciences Krems, Maximilian Schachner** is of the opinion that as before, »international internships pose to be door openers for the career entrance«. However, students are becoming »more selective and market conscious« in the sense of reflected career planning. The most important factors for them, among others, are »intercultural competence expansion«, the increase of their »own employability«, as well as the »challenging field experience as integrated team member on location«.

Current question to the reader

Would you like to share your experiences with other readers of the next HILL Management Mailer? Our question to the topic of talent management is: »**Which role does employer branding play for you in drawing the attention of the best heads to your company, and what is your secret for binding these to your company?**« Please send your comment to marketing@hill.co.at – we are looking forward to your answer.



Centralize or Decentralize?

Human Resources in the Focus of Company Development

The decision about which functions are located centrally in the (regional) headquarters, and which are positioned in the individual countries, is impending in numerous companies. After years of rapid growth in Central, Eastern, and Southeastern Europe, issues like restructuring and consolidation are the order of the day – companies must adapt structures and processes to their quality requirements, and consider the very inhomogeneous market situations in CEE/SEE at the same time.

The relevance of HR tasks in the headquarters varies strongly, as also in other services. In general, the trend leans towards slim structures in the headquarters, and an increasing number of responsibilities outsourced to the branch offices. However, hardly any company headquarters entirely hands over the HR responsibility.

Basic decisions

The adequate level of centralization is dependent on numerous company-specific factors, and beyond that is a dynamic element, which should keep pace with company development. This decision is influenced by several factors, among others by

- > Company strategy
- > Quality requirements
- > Relevance of knowledge workers and specialists
- > Customer structure
- > Distribution in the region
- > Existing, grown structures
- > Local economic conditions
- > Market position of the company (growth, but also brand name image, etc.)
- > Cultural factors

Certain decisions must be made in the headquarters in any case. Like the total strategy of the company, the derived strategic personnel planning, for example, should take place centrally. This allows the derivation of a company competence model and the budget for new recruiting and personnel developments. It also uncovers which per-

sonnel resources will be important in the future, or which may become scarce.

Strategy and values

The value set of a company should not only be mirrored in the competence model, but be lived throughout the entire company, if possible. Especially in post-merger situations it is a central task to regulate the handling of the different company cultures. It should be clearly defined which positions are filled by the headquarters in order to ensure the high quality of the strategy-based personnel decisions and the value structure (therefore the performance) also in the branch offices. It is beneficial to define by which categories high potentials are to be identified within the existing teams, and can be recruited as future key-players. Which processes and selection criteria should be given for structured personnel selection? Which recruiting decisions remain in local responsibility, also with the target of quality improvement respectively under the aspect of profitability?

After the highly qualified employees are on board, the key issue is to bind them to the company in the long run, and to show them perspectives. A main question to be answered centrally is: Shall there be uniform career paths, which also work beyond borders? Does a uniform remuneration system make sense – and for what »price« can it be realized? Which personnel development measures are offered centrally (all those that have to do with company specific know-how respectively involve the company

About the person

Elisabeth Leyser is Managing Partner of HILL International. She is active in the company since 1999, and is responsible for the business areas Finance, Sales, Marketing, and Corporate Communications. Moreover she manages international and large scale projects for key accounts.



Optimal level of centralization is dynamic

Elisabeth Leyser



values and strategy), and which are organized locally?

Employee retention

In labour markets in which employees let themselves be enticed away for a few more Euros, climatic factors and employee retention receive increasing importance. A good image as employer can be influenced by some key factors, and therefore also be promoted in the branch offices. The basic appreciative behaviour towards employees, as well as the distinct consciousness towards intercultural issues is especially critical. Lived diversity and active usage of the cultural variety could very well be advantageous for the companies as an ambitious goal. Here again, the course can only be set centrally.

During the next years, the developments already beginning to show will intensify: We expect the increased formation of competence centres in the individual countries, and – in the course of the maturity of today's structures – an increasingly equal exchange of know-how and human resources between headquarters and branch offices. Companies that begin to prepare for this event now are able to use the potentials in this development to their advantage, and will adapt the apparent controversy between centralizing and decentralizing to the new conditions in a timely manner.



Intercultural Management

International Integration Ability as Requirement for Managers



Requirement specifications become more complex

Ralph Spangenberg



Mr. Spangenberg, in your opinion, what are the requirements posed to the managers of tomorrow?

In the current process of globalization and consolidation, the requirements and expectations posed towards the responsible managers change. In the past, professional competence, experience, and conviction have often sufficed. The requirement specifications for managers of tomorrow are significantly more complex. The ability to develop and communicate visions, lived integrity, and result-orientation belong to the success factors of a modern manager. International integration ability will surely pose to be a further criterion for the completion of the requirement specifications.

How important is intercultural understanding of future managers in the challenge of internationalisation for you?

Without a doubt our world is becoming more global every day, therefore also more transparent, and networked. The requirements towards employees, especially towards managers, are changing. Just a few years ago, they were able to fulfil their task without foreign language skills, or simply with English; tomorrow already two or three foreign languages will be needed. These will be necessary to guarantee a smooth intercultural adaptation process, which connects the objective target of the company with the expectation and the cultural conditions on location. Next to sufficient knowledge of the respective country customs, social competence, distinct communicative skills, and especially the willingness to delve into the new culture and its effects, as well as internalize these are essential requirements for successful work.

This should be examined in depth prior to the assignment of so-called expats, especially to Eastern Europe or Russia.

Which experiences have you made in the selection of local Armstrong-Managers in the markets of Eastern Europe and Russia?

We have passed through numerous search and employment processes in almost all countries of this region in the framework of the continuous expansion of our business activities. Especially the experience and the dedication of the contracted local personnel consultants, mainly from HILL International, were able to ensure that these processes were completed promptly and successfully.

This way we were able to improve our sales organization in a sustaining manner, and also find and integrate the right employees.

The use of so-called expats was fully omitted, which gave local competence and culture affinity clear priority. Next to the positive view we do however notice that – caused by the significant increase of demand for qualitative employees in the region – the tendency among the candidates to sign several labour contracts, cancel shortly after receipt of an offer, or not assume the position in spite of signed labour contract is increasing. Of course, this is bothersome, but all in all not a reason to leave our path towards Eastern Europe.

Which concept is Armstrong following in international personnel development?

As globally active corporation, our personnel development is internationally oriented right from the start. The established activities in the areas performance management, succession planning, and development are conducted and examined business unit comprehensive and independent of the country. Qualified management seminars, initiated for example by the Chicago University, offer an excellent platform to continue to develop the management quality within the company, and strengthen a uniform company culture.

The training need in the developing markets Eastern Europe and Russia does not differ much from the Western countries. Apart from lacking product knowledge, which is partially understandable, training programs for the integration in international business units are necessary, which are meant to contribute to the rapid efficiency of new employees. Apart from that one can draw from a disproportionately high number of qualified specialists and managers especially in these markets.

Thank you for the interview!

Company profile

Armstrong World Industries, Inc. is worldwide leader in the manufacture and sales of floor covering and ceiling systems.

- > Turnover 2007: 3.5 billion Dollars.
- > Headquarters: Lancaster, PA. 40 plants in 10 countries, 13,000 employees worldwide.
- > Controlling of the Europe-wide activities of the floor area from Bietigheim-Bissingen (Germany), further production locations among others in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia, Romania, Slovenia, and the Ukraine.

Ralph Spangenberg, member of the Management Board responsible for HR at Armstrong DLW AG since 2000, has the global responsibility for all human resources activities of Armstrong outside of the USA for the business areas floors and ceiling since 2003.

www.armstrong.com



Dismissal without image loss

Outplacement is much more than application training

Company mergers that are realized as a consequence of an expansion often necessitate a cutback of employees. It is no secret that a fair and human cancellation culture is especially important for the company image in times of aggravated competition on the international labour market. The discharge of employees is a sensitive topic in many respects. Many factors need to be considered in dismissal concepts, and the process needs to be clothed in a socially acceptable extent for the involved employees. Professional dismissal management costs money, but it does save unpleasant consequential costs many times over, which frequently occur through not handled emotions on part of the leaving as well as the remaining employees.

Outplacement is much more than application training, because this measure brings a transfer into a new work surrounding for the dropped out employee, and is therefore to be regarded as a »new placement«. Current information about the labour market, the creation of professional application documents, an individual occupational self concept for orientation concerning the next career steps, the realization of own strengths and success strategies, the immediate support in the application process, as well as need-oriented coaching in order to moderate difficult situations caused by the job loss are priorities.

A successful (out) new placement project for released employees can proceed as follows:

- > Relief of the emotional concernment through coming to terms with the job loss
- > Location analysis incl. competence collection as basis for the recognition of new chances
- > New target definition and career planning
- > Analysis of the labour market and determination of matching job offers
- > Professionalizing of application strategies and processes
- > Accompaniment of a qualified application process
- > Preparation for job interviews and assessment centre

- > Need-based support in the decision process
- > Preparation of contract and salary negotiations
- > Entrance coaching

Practical experience has shown that the process of new occupational positioning can be shortened in time by more than 60% with these directed accompanying measures. Beyond that, the professional support in this – mostly even perceived as existence threatening – crisis situation is of great emotional value for the involved persons.

On part of the company it quickly becomes apparent that an appreciative separation process serves the image of the company, the motivation of the remaining employees, and the concentration on the core tasks. Professional separation management protects against possible legal disputes, and shows social responsibility, not only as company credo, but also as lived company culture.

Compared to the advantages that outplacement brings, the costs are irrelevant and



New occupational positioning shortened by more than 60%

Ursula Tatzber <<



infinitesimally small. Because already by the positive signals in the company and an active contribution to an appreciative handling of employees they have amortized themselves several times.

*Ursula Tatzber is business trainer, coach and mediator at HILL International. She has already accompanied numerous companies as consultant in their outplacement processes, as well as a broad range of personnel development processes. Ms Tatzber is available to you for a free unbinding counselling interview and further information:
E-mail: tatzber@hill.co.at
Phone: +43 650 67 40 300*

Checklist Outplacement

Do you meet all the requirements for a proper separation process?

- Plan extent and time framework for the personnel cutbacks
- Determine principles and strategic criteria of the personnel cutback
- Make decisions about an external accompaniment
- Involve the works council as early on as possible
- Form a core team, and assign realization plan
- Clarify legal labour law related regulations & other framework conditions (e.g. service leave, whereabouts of company vehicle, mobile, laptop)
- Provide budget means
- Determine social plan for employees to be released in agreement with the works council
- Determine company internal process regarding
 - > Internal/external communication (wording!)
 - > Support of the remaining managers through coaching
 - > Maintaining stability of the remaining employees, e.g. through team supervisions
 - > Handling of possibly occurring conflicts, e.g. use of mediation
 - > Watching, controlling and evaluating process course

From East to West

Change as Chance in the Turkish Sabancı Group



Global Players need Diversity Management

Merve Ergun

The Sabancı Group, international conglomerate with approximately 55,500 employees worldwide and a turnover of about 14.9 billion USD, is active in almost

all regions of the world (e.g. Belgium, Germany, France, UK, Romania, but also China, Thailand, Indonesia, Egypt, Brazil or USA), next to the activities in the country of origin, Turkey. The target is to use further opportunities for organic and inorganic growth in the existing international markets, as well as the neighbouring regions, and to continue the strategic expansion within a 10 years perspective in the areas finance services, tire, tire reinforcement materials and automotive, cement, retail and energy business. HR Director Merve Ergun talks about experiences with internationalization in an interview.

Ms. Ergun, how do you realize personnel development internationally in the Sabancı Group?

Our employee development activities take their orientation from the Sabancı Group's vision and strategies: we have internalized our core values and management approaches, and combined them with competence and behaviour models. In tailor-made employee development programmes we assess, train, and develop our local and international employees. We also use international assignments as an important tool in personnel development. Our aim is not just to develop our managers of today, but also future's employees/managers who have a global business perspective.

How do you characterize the mentioned future managers?

Actually within our rapid changing environment it is very hard to define the picture of the future manager. However we can clearly

say he or she should be more competent in understanding, adapting to, and the managing of change processes. Dealing with ambiguity and common sense are other important assets. In the Sabancı Group we define our managers, no matter whether locals or expats, as leaders who listen, understand, empower their team members, and manage these as one »team«. Emphasis lies on

- > communication of vision, mission, and strategies in order to communicate a clear picture
- > strengthening and enabling through coaching and constructive feedback
- > hiring and retaining of the right talents
- > contributing to team success, creation of synergies, and a positive climate

How important will intercultural understanding be for managers in the future?

As already mentioned, we define the readiness for change and the sensitivity as core competencies in our development models. From this perspective we can surely say that the understanding and adaptation to different cultures are key elements for the openness for change. Effective management in a current and future multicultural business environment requires cultural understanding and sensitivity. This is why companies and their actors that wish to be global players should also carry diversity management in their skill sets.

Which experience have you had with the selection of local managers in the countries you invest in?

For certain managerial roles and for certain periods, we prefer to assign our Turkey based managers as expats in order to support and strengthen the new international organizations. In line with our business needs we also employ local managers in our international locations. Dependent on the economic, social, cultural, business and legal environment of the country, we mostly prefer to benefit from personnel consultants' experience and specializations. We experienced that benefiting from these professional companies helps us to better express the Sabancı Group to candidates and get effective solutions in a short time.

In your opinion, what is special about the expansion from »East to West«?

The Sabancı Group has developed and pursued fruitful relations and alliances with many foreign partners, through which we have gained very important experiences for our own internationalization. While continuing to invest in our own country, we are seeking for new opportunities internationally, we want to become a global player this way. This again is the natural result of our »achievement motive«, which has shaped the culture of the Sabancı Group in a significant way.

Thank you for the interview!



Events from and with HILL

Investments in Romania

Munich, June 19, 2008

Chances and risks in CEE comparison: very promising business fields, profitable production conditions. The interest of foreign investors in the Romanian market is undaunted. A joint event of HILL International and Nörr Stiefenhofer Lutz for the preparation of such a foreign investment. Further details: www.hillinternational.de. Registration by June 12, 2008 to Claudia Wieneke at wieneke@dialogatelier.de.

HR-Management in Central and Eastern Europe

Frankfurt, August 20, 2008

A practice seminar of the FORUM Institute for Management in cooperation with HILL International about chances and risks in personnel search and development in CEE with exemplary experiences of internationally active companies and useful tips. Further information: www.hillinternational.de or www.forum-institut.de.



Written Contracts Protect

Legal Aspects of Employee Assignments Abroad

Cross-boundary activities are part of the decisive elements of entrepreneurial action in times of economic globalization. In this relationship, also transnational labour force positioning is becoming increasingly important in international economy.

Labour law

There are different contractual options for assignments abroad for employees, as for example the founding of a new service relationship abroad upon simultaneous finish or unpaid leave of the previous employment relationship, or the »classic« assignment. This selection is to be made already under consideration of the legal framework conditions. Assignment in a classic sense is given if an employee is sent abroad under maintenance of the previous employment relationship. The assignment in a foreign country is reasonable, and because of the labour-law related connection, the centre of life shall remain in the home country.

The conclusion of an assignment contract is indispensable. Depending on the assignment purpose, place and duration, the following issues should be clarified:

- > Assignment duration (concrete end, or only assumed end)
- > Place of assignment
- > Moving questions (moving costs, leave for preparations like for example medical provisions, visa issues, etc.)
- > Area of activity abroad
- > Expense compensation
- > Remuneration (raise, company car, deviating settlement period, currency, etc.)
- > Holiday/travel home (intervals of the paid travels home, special regulations regarding the agreement of the consumption of holiday rights, travel home in case of sudden events within the family, etc.)
- > Insurance protection (additional health and accident insurance, continuing insurance in the Austrian social insurance, especially the pension insurance)

Another important (often forgotten!) question concerns whether and how the cancella-

tion options during the assignment are handled. It is important to clarify in which relation the cancellation stands with the »local« employment relationship. To create transparency, the task/position of the employee after his/her return should be determined prior to the assignment, if possible. This aspect is sometimes (also legally) critical. A clearly defined assignment contract not only prevents misunderstandings and lengthy disputes in retrospect, but also promotes the acceptance of the conditions by the employee.

In general, the legal Austrian regulations are applicable to the employment relationship between the employer and the employees sent abroad from Austria. The »EU-assignment guideline« does state that as a minimum, equal labour and employment regulations must be valid for assigned employees as for comparable employees in the country of assignment, for assignments within the EU. If this includes certain obligatory labour law-related standards, these must be kept in any case (e.g. maximum working hours/minimum leisure times, employee protection regulations, minimum holiday periods etc. common in the country of employment).

Social insurance law

Assignments within the EU are relatively unproblematic regarding social insurance. The law of association includes a release from the

»»
Assignment contract is indispensable
 Wolfgang Kapek ««



obligation for social insurance in the country of employment for the duration of 12 months (extendable to 24 months). Assignments to non-EU countries that have corresponding bilateral agreements (e.g. USA, Canada, Chile, Tunisia) are relatively easy to conduct. However, if there is no corresponding agreement with the country of assignment, an obligation for double insurance may come into existence.

Tax law

Fiscal aspects also need to be considered when contemplating assignments abroad. For example, even if the salary of the assigned employee is not changed by the assignment, the assignment may still have immense financial effects for the employer as well as the employee, due to the fiscal consequences. The where and how of the taxation of salaries of assigned employees is to be evaluated by national tax law, as well as by existing double taxation agreements, whereas possible tax exemptions and benefits as well as simplification measures are »common«. Therefore tax considerations should play a role in the design of the assignment contract, in order to achieve a tax-optimal result for both parties.

About the person

Wolfgang Kapek, Partner at eInIwlc, is expert for labour law, (international) procedural law and insolvency law. Founded in 1986, eInIwlc Attorneys is one of the leading Austrian attorney associations today with eight offices in six CEE countries, and is partner of INTERLAW. With approximately 60 jurists, eInIwlc advises prominent national and international companies from the branches banking, trade, industry, and service, as well as insurance.





Growth Accelerator

HILL Kazakhstan Celebrates 10 Successful Years on the Market

The story started in 1998, when the first HILL branch office of Central Asia was founded in Almaty. »Today, we look back onto 10 successful years on the market, and are proud of being market leader in the area of personnel consulting«, says Kristina Kravtsova, Managing Director of HILL Kazakhstan.

As generalist in HR-consulting, HILL Kazakhstan currently counts about 40 customers, and mainly fills positions of the top and middle management level. »It is very important to us to support companies in their market entrance in a professional manner«, says Kravtsova, and adds that customers frequently recruit the entire staff of an office with HILL. Currently mainly management positions in the areas of finance, marketing, sales, and technology are being placed for customers.

Kazakhstan is profiting from a rapid economic growth. The activity on the market is illustrated by large investments and social stability, which makes the country attractive for foreign companies and NGOs/NPOs. Within the region, an increased expansion of large and international companies is more and

more noticeable from year to year.

During the last five years alone, HILL Kazakhstan has accompanied nine European companies in the opening of their branch offices in the country. The requirements of the companies have changed massively in the course – especially in the fact that experienced HR managers, who also choose their partners in a very selective manner, meanwhile support many companies.

»It is a special challenge for us to identify and ultimately solve the problem«, says Kristina Kravtsova. HILL offers its customers a unique approach in personnel search and selection, objective methods and processes, a high level of customer orientation, and innovative products.

»Our team is small, but very active and ambitious – and this is exactly why we reach our goals. Our customers enjoy working with us, because we handle their personnel challenges



Natalia Kravchenko, Kristina Kravtsova, Mariya Tikhonova, Alexandra Popova, Valeriya Talashkina (v.l.n.r.)

passionately, identify with their problems, and solve them!« says the HILL Kazakhstan Manager.

The next goals? »Yet this summer we will provide new products for our customers on the market, and offer Management Audits and HILL_Online Matching among other things in addition to our previous portfolio. Next to that, we are preparing our 10-year anniversary, with Dr. Othmar Hill, our customers, and extensive media presence«, says Kravtsova.

Further information at www.hill.kz

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