Multinational companies (MNCs) recognize that human resources play an important role in developing and sustaining a competitive advantage in today’s highly competitive global business environment (Brewster, 2002; Schuler, Budhwar, and Florkowski, 2002; Dowling, Welch, and Schuler, 1998; Stroh and Caligiuri, 1998a, 1998b; Taylor, Beechler, and Napier, 1996). As a result, MNCs increasingly use expatriates on short-term and long-term international job assignments for a variety of purposes, such as to acquire and transfer knowledge,
to manage a foreign subsidiary, to fill a staffing need, to maintain communication, coordination, and control between subsidiaries and corporate headquarters, and to develop global leadership competence (Gupta and Govindarajan, 2002; Bender and Fish, 2000; Mendenhall et al., 2002; Au and Fukuda, 2002; Bonache and Brewster, 2001; Mendenhall, 2000; Harzing, 2001; Downes, 2000; Torbiorn, 1994, see also Chapter 10). Given this, successful expatriate assignments are indispensable to MNCs for both developmental and functional reasons (Adler, 1983; Brake et al., 1994; Mendenhall and Oddou, 1985; Stroh and Caligiuri, 1998a, 1998b; Tung and Miller, 1990).

An expatriate’s success in the host country is largely determined by his or her cross-cultural adjustment to the host country (Black and Mendenhall, 1990; Kealey and Protheroe, 1996; Sappinen, 1993). While immersed in the new culture, expatriates are ‘removed from the comfortable environment of their parental culture and placed in a less familiar culture’ (Sanchez et al., 2000: 96), and are susceptible to adjustment problems because of numerous challenges that inhibit their cross-cultural adjustment like the need to speak the foreign language, to cope with culture shock, to understand different laws and customs, and to interact with local nationals (Black et al., 1999; Tung, 1981).

Scholarly research that has been conducted in recent years suggests that expatriates who are not prepared to confront the challenges (e.g., to cope with culture shock) find it difficult to adjust and hence incur, and impose on others, costly implications. For example, expatriates who are unable to adjust are more likely to perform poorly (Caligiuri, 1997). Poor performance on the assignment has costly implications for expatriates (such as low self-esteem, self-confidence, and loss of prestige among co-workers), for the parent firm (such as lost business opportunities), and for the host company (such as damaged company image) (Aycan, 1997; Mendenhall and Oddou, 1985; Tung, 1987). Thus, improving cross-cultural adjustment has been the focus of many international HR interventions. Since cross-cultural adjustment can be facilitated if the expatriate has an awareness of the norms and behaviors that are appropriate in the host country (Black and Mendenhall, 1990), many MNCs offer cross-cultural training (CCT) to teach their expatriates the host country’s appropriate norms and behaviors.

Cross-cultural training is defined as any planned intervention designed to increase the knowledge and skills of expatriates to live and work effectively and achieve general life satisfaction in an unfamiliar host culture (Kealey and Protheroe, 1996). For more than 20 years, CCT has been advocated as a means of facilitating effective cross-cultural interactions and cross-cultural adjustment (Brewster, 1995; Caligiuri et al., 2001; Katz and Seifer, 1996; Kealey and Protheroe, 1996). There has been a positive trajectory of growth with respect to MNCs who are offering CCT. For instance, in the early 1980s, Tung (1981, 1982) found that only 32% of MNCs offered CCT. Almost 20 years later, the 1998 Global Relocation Trends Survey Report indicates that 70% of the 177 MNCs surveyed provide CCT of at least one day’s duration (Windham International and National Foreign Trade Council, 1998).
A vital aspect of any CCT program involves determining how training effectively enhances expatriates’ cultural knowledge and skills and facilitates expatriates’ adjustment to the host country’s culture. Cross-cultural training effectiveness is reflected by the cognitive, affective, and behavioral changes that occur during the CCT event. In order to improve the effectiveness of CCT programs, or to maximize the change that occurs during training, it is important to follow a systematic approach to designing effective CCT programs. Research has shown that a well-designed CCT program can enhance the learning process of the expatriate and thus facilitate effective cross-cultural interactions and cross-cultural adjustment (Black and Gregersen, 1991; Caligiuri et al., 2001).

This chapter focuses on the systematic process for designing effective CCT programs. The process for designing effective CCT programs consists of five distinct phases:

1. Identify the type of global assignment for which CCT is needed.
2. Determine the specific cross-cultural training needs.
3. Establish the goals and measures for determining training effectiveness.
4. Develop and deliver the CCT program.
5. Evaluate whether the CCT program was effective.

This process for designing effective CCT programs is presented in Figure 11.1. Each phase in this process will be described in greater detail in this chapter.

**2 PHASE 1 – IDENTIFY THE TYPE OF GLOBAL ASSIGNMENT**

The type of global assignment should be taken into consideration when designing CCT programs. As many authors point out (e.g., Caligiuri, forthcoming; Caligiuri and Lazarova, 2001; Hays, 1974; Oddou, 1991), there are different types of global assignments – and expatriate practices, such as selection, cross-cultural training, and repatriation will differ depending on the type of global assignment being managed. Based on the performance goals for expatriate assignments, Caligiuri (forthcoming) describes a classification of global assignments into four categories:

1. Technical
2. Functional/tactical
3. Developmental/high potential
4. Strategic/executive
FIGURE 11.1

Systematic process of designing effective CCT programs
Using this typology, CCT programs will vary based on the goals required for the successful completion of each assignment. Below we briefly describe these four types of global assignments, referring interested readers to Caligiuri and Lazarova (2001) and Chapter 13 for a thorough description of the entire typology.

The technical assignment is similar in content to the assignee’s domestic position. Technical assignees are in an organizational setting fairly typical of the setting of the home country. Many of the global assignees on technical assignments describe their work experience as ‘quite similar’ to what they were doing back home. When technical skills do not exist in one geographic region, a global assignment may be necessary to fill a technical need. It is not expected that these global assignees will have significant interactions with the host nationals working at the subsidiary location – and those interactions that inevitably will occur, will not greatly affect the outcome of the assignment. In other words, the person is being sent for his or her technical skills. It is those technical skills that will determine the outcome of the assignment. These assignments include technicians on an oil refinery, systems engineers on continuation client sites, systems analysts interfacing with a computer system, and the like.

The functional/tactical assignment is similar to the technical assignment with one distinct difference – significant interactions with host nationals are necessary in order for the assignment to be deemed successful. As with the technical assignments, functional assignees are sent to fill technical or managerial gaps in host countries. Unlike technical assignees, functional assignees will need to interact with host nationals in order for the assignment to be deemed successful. Given their interaction with host nationals, cross-cultural skills are needed in order for functional assignees to be successful. This type of global assignment is the most common global assignment.

For some MNCs, sending expatriates abroad on a developmental/high potential assignment is consistent with their overall strategic human resource plan. Most organizations which utilize this type of global assignment do so within the context of their managerial development program. These programs are often rotational – with one of the rotations being in another country. While on this type of assignment, the goal is individual development.

Strategic/executive assignees tend to be high profile (e.g., general managers, vice-presidents) and very senior in the organizational hierarchy. Unlike the more junior developmental assignees, the executive assignments are viewed as both developmental and strategic. These strategic assignees are the core ‘critical’ group of assignees and considered a competitive resource for the organization. They may have the task of entering a new market, developing a country’s market base, being the general manager of a joint venture, and the like.
A cross-cultural training needs analysis is conducted across three levels:

1. The organizational level, to determine the organizational context for CCT;
2. The individual (or expatriate) level, to determine any special needs that have to be addressed in CCT for a given person; and
3. The assignment level, to determine the cross-cultural knowledge and skills required to effectively complete the given assignment.

**Organizational analysis** considers the role of CCT within the context of the organization’s (e.g., headquarter and/or subsidiary) culture, politics, structure, and strategy. This analysis considers how CCT can assist both the headquarters and the subsidiary in supporting its global strategy. In addition, organizational analysis considers the availability of training resources, such as trainers and equipment required to effectively design and offer CCT. To illustrate, organizations with a higher proportion of strategic or developmental assignees are more likely to need higher CCT budgets, are more likely to use professional cross-cultural trainers, and are more likely to conduct CCT, compared to organizations with more of their expatriates on technical assignments. Finally, organizational analysis should determine the expected cost and the expected benefit of a CCT program. Based upon this organizational assessment, HR decisions are made as to whether an organization is ready, able, and willing to offer effective CCT.

**The individual expatriate analysis** examines the level of the individuals who are on the receiving end of the CCT, the expatriates themselves. The expatriate analysis examines the extent of the individual’s prior international experience, their experiences with earlier CCT (Pusch, 1994), and their existing levels of cross-cultural knowledge and skills. In addition, the expatriate analysis examines how expatriates perceive the issues the CCT program is designed to address (e.g., expatriates may be opposed to CCT or may be opposed to a specific CCT method such as role playing), and their intercultural communication style (e.g., they may have specific problems in communicating with individuals from cultures other than their own). Finally, this analysis examines the needs of the expatriate’s entire family. Recent research has shown that a maladjusted spouse is an important reason why expatriates do not succeed on global assignments (Caligiuri et al., 1998).

**Assignment analysis** identifies the important tasks required on the global assignment, and the type of cross-cultural knowledge and skills needed to perform those tasks effectively. As far as the assignment analysis of each type of
global assignment is concerned, Caligiuri (forthcoming) provides a broad range of tasks that are carried out by each type of assignee and identifies the general level of cross-cultural knowledge and skills required to successfully complete the assignment. Given that a global assignment is a job context (and not a job description) there are numerous position-specific competencies which could be included in CCT as needed.

4 PHASE 3 – ESTABLISH CCT GOALS AND MEASURES

After cross-cultural training needs have been identified, short-term and long-term goals for the training outcomes must be developed. Short-term goals specify what the expatriate should be able to accomplish on completion of the CCT program. Long-term goals, in contrast, reflect the expected outcome of the expatriate assignment, such as cross-cultural adjustment and success on the assignment (Kealey and Protheroe, 1996).

Cross-cultural training goals should be stated in detailed and measurable terms. As discussed by Noe (1999), detailed and measurable training goals help develop appropriate outcomes for training evaluation (we will discuss this in phase 5). Short-term CCT goals can bring about cognitive, affective, and behavioral changes (Gudykunst et al., 1996). Cognitive goals focus on helping expatriates understand the role of cultural values on behavior in the destination country, in both social and business contexts. Specific examples of cognitive goals include: increased understanding of the purpose, value, and benefits of the assignment, increased knowledge about managing stress, and increased awareness of norms required to effectively interact with local nationals. Affective goals aim at helping expatriates effectively manage their attitude toward the new culture and successfully handle negative emotions. Affective goals include modifying an expatriate’s perception about the host culture and increasing his/her self-confidence to communicate with individuals from other cultures. Behavioral goals help expatriates form adaptive behaviors by emphasizing the cross-cultural skills expatriates require in order to successfully interact with individuals from other cultures. Examples of behavioral goals include developing intercultural skills, negotiating skills, and relationship building skills.

Although these three types of changes (cognitive, affective, and behavioral) are relevant to most CCT goals, the type of global assignment determines which type of change is required. For example, CCT for people sent on a technical assignment, which does not require significant interactions with the host nationals, needs to focus on cognitive goals (e.g., providing practical information such as information on the shopping and the transportation system in the host country). In contrast, CCT for people sent on the developmental/high potential assignments, and on strategic/executive assignments, which require...
significant interactions with host nationals to successfully complete the assignment, must concentrate more on behavioral goals (e.g., developing their intercultural effectiveness skills).

While the short-term goals of CCT will vary from assignment to assignment, the long-term goal of many CCT programs is to improve the rate of cross-cultural adjustment. Improving cross-cultural adjustment is important for all expatriates and would generalize across assignments. Likewise, improved success on the global assignment may be another generalized long-term goal – with the specific dimensions, of course, being job specific.

**PHASE 4 – DEVELOP AND DELIVER THE CCT PROGRAM**

Once the training needs have been determined and translated into short-term and long-term goals, the next step is to develop and deliver the training program that achieves the training goals. This phase involves determining the specific instructional content needed in order to achieve the stated goal, the methods to deliver the instructional content, and the sequencing of the training sessions.

**Instructional content**

Harrison (1994) presented a framework that enables researchers and practitioners to identify appropriate training content. Based on the cross-cultural interaction research (e.g., Brislin et al., 1986; Copeland and Griggs, 1985; Harris and Moran, 1991), Harrison suggests that content structure should follow an integrated approach consisting of both general cultural orientation and specific cultural orientation. The purpose of cultural general orientation is twofold. The first purpose is to understand factors that may influence one’s receptiveness to effective cross-cultural interactions, such as resistance to change, clear understanding of the purpose, value, and benefits of the global assignment, and the ability to manage stress. The second purpose is to understand how cultures differ and the impact of these differences on expatriates. (See Chapter 6 for details about the various cultural dimensions).

The objective of specific cultural orientation is to help expatriates understand more about the specific culture to which they are being assigned. To provide this cultural context, expatriates will learn about a country’s language, customs, diversity, history, geography, etc. In addition, expatriates learn about appropriate cultural behaviors and suitable ways of performing necessary job tasks in the host country (Black and Mendenhall, 1990; Kealey and Protheroe,
1996), and about creating realistic expectations about living and working in the host country (Black and Mendenhall, 1990; Black et al., 1991; Caligiuri et al., 2001).

**Instructional methods**

Gudykunst et al. (1996) suggest that CCT methodologies available for CCT can be categorized according to two issues: learning approach (didactic vs. experiential) and the content of the training (culture-general vs. culture-specific). Based on these continua, CCT methodologies can be categorized into four categories:

1. Didactic culture general training
2. Didactic culture specific training
3. Experiential cultural general training
4. Experiential cultural specific training

A didactic approach to training emphasizes knowledge acquisition and is based on the assumption that a cognitive understanding of a culture is necessary to appreciate the norms and behaviors of that culture. Didactic culture general training methods provide cultural general information to expatriates and include lectures, seminars, reading material, discussions, videotapes, and culture-general assimilators. Didactic culture specific training methods, in contrast, present information on a particular culture. Methods used in this category include area studies, videotapes, orientation briefings, case studies, and the like.

The experiential approach to training stresses skills acquisition and is based on the assumption that individuals learn best from their experiences in the host country or from interacting with individuals from other cultures. Experiential cultural-general training methods help expatriates experience the impact of cultural differences on their behaviors. Methods in this category include immersion programs or intensive workshops. In contrast, experiential culture-specific training methods help expatriates experience and learn from interactions with individuals from the host culture. This approach generally includes methods like role-playing, look-see trips, in-country cultural coaching, and language training.

A recent development in the use of written or reading methodology is the notion that good fiction can provide a type of virtual learning (Fox, 2003), particularly in situations where trainees are separated from the realities of life in the new country, such as in predeparture CCT. Fox describes several travelogues, missionary biographies and autobiographies, and intentional collections that can be used to facilitate the learning process (see Fox, 2003 for details).
Selecting instructional methods

It is obvious from the above classification system that, within each category, expatriates may be trained in a variety of ways. Black and Mendenhall (1989) presented a theory-based contingency framework for selecting an appropriate CCT method. Using Social Learning theory, they suggest that learning is a sequential process involving three components: attention (i.e., gaining awareness), retention (i.e., acquiring knowledge), and reproduction (i.e., developing skills). They argue that CCT needs to be differentiated by the level of ‘training rigor’ required to successfully train the expatriate. Training rigor is the degree of cognitive effort necessary to grasp the cultural knowledge and cross-cultural skills in order to successfully live and work in a new country.

According to Black and Mendenhall three contextual factors influence the level of rigor necessary for training success: culture novelty, degree of interaction with host nationals, and job novelty. Culture novelty is the extent to which the expatriate’s home culture differs from the host culture. The authors argue that the greater the novelty, the more difficult the learning challenge because ‘the more difficult it will be for the individual to attend to and retain the various models of appropriate behavior’ (p. 523). Degree of interaction with host nationals is defined as ‘the degree of expected interaction between the individual and members of the host culture’ (p. 524). Finally, job novelty refers to the fact that ‘the more novel the tasks of the new job in the new culture, the more assistance the individual will need through rigorous training to produce the desired and necessary behaviors to be effective in the new job’ (p. 525). In summary, the various types of training methods within each of the four categories (e.g., experiential cultural specific) can be differentiated according to the degree of training rigor which depends upon the situational factors of the global assignment (e.g., degree of cultural novelty, degree of job novelty, and the degree of interaction with local nationals).*

Sequencing of training sessions

The sequencing of CCT refers to the timing of training sessions. Training sessions can take the form of predeparture CCT (provided before departure), in-country CCT (provided after arrival in the new country), or sequential CCT (combination of the two) (Bennett et al., 2000; Black et al., 1999).

Cross-cultural training sessions may be provided prior to departure (predeparture CCT), after arrival in the destination country (post-arrival CCT or

*In general, training methods of high rigour include simulations, field trips, role-plays, and interactive language training. Training methods of moderate rigour include sensitivity training, culture assimilators, case studies, classroom language training, and films. Finally, training methods of low rigour include books, lectures, and area briefings (see Black and Mendenhall, 1989 or Mendenhall and Oddou, 1999: 442–69 for more details).