



Thought Leadership

Why International Diversity Matters in Recruiting

By recruiting internationally diverse candidates, companies may eliminate the need for expensive expatriation programs.

By Chris Roberts

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The war for talent continues to intensify as baby boomers begin to retire in vast numbers at a time when most companies are focused on growth in the wake of the recent recession. These organizations are increasingly global and are competing for the same talent in a candidate-driven market. Faced with such challenges, companies have no choice but to adapt their recruiting models, which includes becoming more internationally diverse.

Business is Increasingly Global

Each one of us is a citizen of today's global community. Countries may have physical borders that separate us from one another but, in today's world, we are exposed to other languages, cultures and people in ways that were unimaginable even 20 years ago. This global community was created thanks to more affordable travel, the advent of 24-hour news, the prevalence of the Internet and other technological advances. Many of these advances, particularly the ever-increasing number of social media platforms, have revolutionized how information is shared around the world -- often in real time. This world-without-borders has resulted in consumers demanding a greater array of goods, services and opportunities that need to constantly evolve. Companies in virtually every sector -- including real estate, manufacturing, media, entertainment, technology and financial services -- have responded by becoming increasingly global. Companies in these sectors **need to be internationally diverse in order to stay relevant to their consumer base**, attract new customers, and develop new products and services. Becoming more diverse will also enable them to better communicate with their own service providers, who are likely to operate in many different geographies.



International diversity also offers companies, including public accounting firms, a competitive advantage on various levels. First, **internationally diverse teams instinctively understand how to conduct business** in other cultures, as they have first-hand insight encompassing communication styles, establishing credibility, negotiating and managing meetings. These teams can also serve as the bridge between two different countries dealing in global markets. In addition to their unique cultural background, international teams can reduce the risk of doing business via their knowledge of government or professional regulations and restrictions. Armed with this skill set and knowledge, internationally diverse teams approach client problems with a more well-rounded approach and can add additional value.

World Citizens

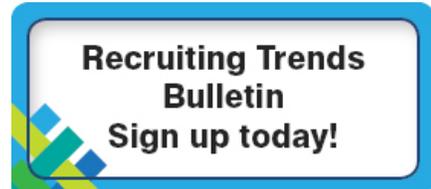
One of the benefits of our global community is that the candidate pool is international. Universities are witnessing increasing numbers of foreign students who are opting to study overseas in the hope of greater opportunities upon graduation. These students have a more global mindset given that they grew up elsewhere and in the middle of the technological and communication revolution previously described. They've had constant exposure not only to students of many different nationalities on college campuses, but also via Internet chat and the media. This global talent pool means companies have to be more internationally diverse in their hiring if they wish to attract and retain the best and brightest.

The technological revolution and increasingly diverse talent pool has reduced the need for companies to invest in **expensive expatriation programs** that were prevalent not so long ago. These programs usually required a steep learning curve for the expatriate, who often became most productive shortly before she was due to return to her home office at the end of her tour of duty. This trend is also influenced by the fact that most millennials are attracted by short-term opportunities to experience work and life overseas exposing them to more diversity than ever before.

For these reasons, companies in all industries have little choice but to become more internationally diverse in their



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recruiting efforts. Whether working in the United States or abroad, the workforce needs to be able to adapt to working with others from various countries, understand multiple languages and be exposed to different cultures.

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