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ČESKÁ ZEMĚDĚLSKÁ UNIVERZITA V PRAZE

Diploma thesis

A critical analysis and exploration into what type of cross-cultural training is the most useful tool for avoiding expatriation failure

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DIPLOMA THESIS ASSIGNMENT

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Thesis title

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Objectives of thesis

The aim of this thesis is to introduce and explain the issue of expatriation with the stress on training of expatriates and negative phenomenon known as an expatriation failure. Own research will focus on finding the most useful type of cross-cultural training for expatriates in order to avoid expatriation failure.

This thesis intends to uncover issues of concern to expatriate workers with stress on post-departure training, and to identify benefits of cross-cultural training for expatriates.

Methodology

The diploma thesis consists of theoretical and empirical part. The theoretical part will be based on a compilation of academic texts. This part will provide an overview of the field of expatriation. Theories known in cross-cultural management will be mentioned and explained. Theoretical part will cover topics such as expatriation, pre-departure and post-departure training, culture awareness and negative phenomenon known as expatriation failure. An empirical part will be based on qualitative research. E-mail interview will be used as a technique for data collection. Collected data will serve as a main tool for answering research questions. Conclusion will be based on analysis of collected data.

The proposed extent of the thesis
60-90 pages

Keywords
cross-culture training, expatriates, expatriation, expatriation failure, international assignments

Recommended information sources

Berry, D, & Bell, M 2012., 'Expatriates': Gender, Race and Class Distinctions in International Management', Gender Work And Organization, [online], 19, 1, pp. 10-28, Social Sciences Citation Index, EBSCOhost.

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Declaration

I declare that I have worked on my diploma thesis titled "A critical analysis and exploration into what type of cross-cultural training is the most useful tool for avoiding expatriation failure" by myself and I have used only the sources mentioned at the end of the thesis. As the author of the diploma thesis, I declare that the thesis does not break copyrights of any their person.

In Prague on _____

Miluše Masařová

Acknowledgement

I would like to thank to my supervisor Mr. Selby for advices and support during my work on this thesis. My acknowledgement belongs to all participants who were interested in the research and who were willing to take a part in the research.

Kritická analýza a prozkoumání, který z typů mezikulturní přípravy je nejužitečnější nástroj k zamezení selhání expatriace

Souhrn

Tato diplomová práce pojednává o problematice expatriace se zaměřením na trénink a přípravu expatů (lidí, kteří jsou svojí firmou vysláni pracovat v zahraničí) a také na negativní fenomén známý jako selhání expatriace. Diplomová práce vysvětluje problematiku spojenou s expatriací, zdůrazňuje význam kulturního povědomí a představuje různé druhy tréninku a příprav před a po příjezdu do hostitelské země.

Diplomová práce je rozdělena na teoretickou a empirickou část. Teoretická část je založena na kompilaci odborných textů. Tato část poskytuje přehledný obrázek o tématu expatriace a zahrnuje témata jako důvody pro expatriaci, selhání expatriace, kulturní povědomí, příprava a trénink před a po příjezdu do hostitelské země. Empirická část sestává z vlastního výzkumu autora, jež má za cíl nalézt nejužitečnější druh mezi-kulturního tréninku a přípravy pro expaty. Pro tento účel byl zvolen kvalitativní výzkum. Hlavní technikou pro sběr dat slouží e-mailové rozhovory. Sesbíraná data slouží jako hlavní nástroj pro zodpovězení výzkumných otázek. Diskuze a závěr uzavírají tuto diplomovou práci.

Klíčová slova: mezikulturní příprava, expati, expatriace – vystěhování z vlasti, selhání expatriace, mezinárodní úkol/práce, příprava před odjezdem, příprava po příjezdu, kultura

A critical analysis and exploration into what type of cross-cultural training is the most useful tool for avoiding expatriation failure

Summary

This diploma thesis deals with the issues of expatriation with the stress on the training of expatriates and the negative phenomenon known as expatriation failure. Thesis explains issues connected with expatriation, highlights the importance of cultural awareness and explains different types of pre-departure training and post-departure training.

The thesis is divided into theoretical and empirical part. Theoretical part is based on compilation of academic texts. This part provides on overview of the field of expatriation and covers topic such as reasons for expatriation, expatriation failure, cultural awareness, pre-departure training and post-departure training. The empirical part is a result of author's own research about finding the most useful type of cross-cultural training for expatriates. For this purpose, qualitative research is used. The main technique for data collection is e-mail interviews. Collected data serves as a main tool for answering research questions. Discussion and conclusion are provided afterwards.

Keywords: cross-culture training, expatriates, expatriation, expatriation failure, international assignments, pre-departure training, post-departure training, culture

Table of content

List of figures

List of tables

1. Introduction

In today's globalized world, people are used to work, travel and live around the world like never before. The trend of globalisation motivated companies to operate worldwide. To secure qualified staff in all parts of the world, companies tend to assign their employees to international assignments. These people are called expatriates. Unfortunately, expatriation is not as easy at might look like. Expatriates very often face completely different cultures and without appropriate preparation for expatriation, the negative phenomenon known as expatriation failure can be observed. The fail of expatriation can costs up to $1 million per one expatriate. An author of the thesis believes that this topic worth the attention because the knowledge gained from results of the research, can help expatriates to avoid expatriation failure and also help companies to avoid costs connected with expatriation failure.

In order to avoid expatriation failure, companies are organizing trainings for expatriates that cover several topics such as information about cultural differences, customs, law, and religion or provide to expatriates preliminary visit to host country. Preparation for expatriation usually includes some type of cross-cultural training. The training can be provided before or after the arrival to host country (pre-departure training, post-departure training). Some authors tend to stress importance of pre-departure training (Briscoe, 1995, pp. 58-62) but other highlight the value of post-departure training (Harrison and Michailova, 2012, pp. 630-631).

This diploma thesis is aiming on introduction and explanation of the field connected to expatriation and puts the stress on a cross-cultural training and expatriation failure. Author of the thesis believes that this topic is relevant and actual because it is predicted that base of people working as expatriates, will growth to almost 57 million in 2017 (Finaccord.com, 2014).

2. Objectives and Methodology

2.1 Objectives of the thesis

The aim of this thesis is to introduce and explain the issue of expatriation with the stress on training of expatriates and negative phenomenon known as an expatriation failure. Own research will focus on finding the most useful type of cross-cultural training for expatriates in order to avoid expatriation failure. This thesis intends to uncover issues of concern to expatriate workers with stress on training, and to identify benefits of cross-cultural training for expatriates.

In order to be more specific, following objectives of the thesis were set.

Objectives of the thesis
 ➢ Explain the concept and issues connected with expatriation
 ➢ Explain consequences of negative phenomenon known as expatriation failure
 ➢ Analyses possible types of cross-cultural training for expatriates

Research Questions
Author's research should provide answers to following research questions.

RQ 1: *What makes expatriation easier in order to avoid or decrease possibility of expatriation failure?*

RQ 2: *What are factors that help expatriates to adjust to host country culture?*

RQ 3: *What specific type of cross-cultural training is evaluated as the most useful for expatriates?*

2.2 Methodology

This diploma thesis consists of theoretical and empirical part. The theoretical part is based on a compilation of academic texts. This part provides an overview of the field of expatriation. Theories known in cross-cultural management are mentioned and explained. Theoretical part covers topics such as expatriation, pre-departure and post-departure training, culture awareness and negative phenomenon known as expatriation failure.

An empirical part is based on findings from the research. For this research and the nature of research questions best serve qualitative research that might uncover issues and concerns related to expatriation.

Data collection

E-mail interview is used as a technique for data collection. An author of the thesis chose this technique because it was evaluated as a best possible option. Character of expatriates work and busy schedules of expatriates did not allow to conducted personal interviews so e-mail interviews were chosen. Collected data serves as a main tool for answering research questions. Conclusion is based on analysis of collected data.

Participants

All participants in the research are people currently working as expatriates or they are people who had a previous experience of being expatriates. All participants are also assigned expatriates, not self-initiative expatriates.

Author of the thesis is a member of "InterNations" that is a community for expatriates and global staff. Participants were contacted by this community websites or were suggested by members of InterNations. More information about participants, research approach can be found in empirical part.

3. Theoretical Part

3.1 Expatriation

To understand main issues about expatriation it is necessary to be aware of several terms that are connected with this topic. For this reason, this part will serve as a little dictionary with practical explanation for readers who do not have knowledge about expatriation that is needed for understanding the issue and the text itself.

The term of **expatriation** is by many authors explained as a situation when a company sent its employee to work for it abroad in some of its subsidiaries for a certain time period (Brewster, Sparrow and Vernon, 2007, pp.236; Briscoe, 1995, p.51; Kim, 2013, p. 327). Therefore, in case when a multinational enterprise (MNE) is about to open a new branch in the foreign country, it can sent an experienced manager to help a local staff with the opening. Company will also gain some control of the new branch and on the other hand, local people can learn about the company itself. **Expatriates** are therefore people who are assigned for the international assignment by the company (Briscoe, 1995, p.51).

Generally, it is considered that people who are living and working abroad based on their own decision, without being tasked by the company, are expatriates too. In the literature, we can find a distinction between these two groups of people. These groups are called **assigned expatriates** (AE) and **self-initiative expatriates** (SIE) (Andresen et al., 2012, p. 932). The biggest difference between groups is that AE are people who are working for the company and are relocated from home country to host country for a given task. The company usually covers all or majority of costs that are connected with expatriation and with working and living abroad. These costs can include relocation costs, rent of the car and apartment; in case that expatriate has a child, company can pay a kindergarten etc. (Andresen et al., 2012, p. 932). To the opposite, SIE have to pay all mentioned cost on its own, therefore being SIE is financially very demanding. SIE is not contracted by the company therefore he or she does not have any corporate support and is "alone in the game". On the other hand, to AE is provided a full support from the company that may include covering the costs, appropriate training before expatriation etc. (Andresen et al., 2012, p. 932).

Next term that author see important to explain is inpatriation and repatriation. People often wrongly interchange these terms. Inpatriation is the opposite of expatriation in terms of whence and whither is employee relocated. **Inpatriation** is "transferring staff to headquarter" (Kim, 2013, p. 327) while expatriation is relocation of AE from headquarter to company's subsidiaries (Brewster, Sparrow and Vernon, 2007, pp. 236-237). **Repatriation** is the last stage of expatriation; therefore it is a process of returning relocated expatriates back to home country respectively back to the working process in the home company (Brewster, Sparrow and Vernon, 2007, pp. 236-237).

Term **third country national** (TCN) represent a situation of expatriate when he or she is working abroad but he or she is not a citizen of home or host country (Brewster, Sparrow and Vernon, 2007, pp. 236-237; Kim, 2013, p. 327). For example TCN is a Czech citizen working in Vienna subsidiary of a US company IBM.

All referred terms are important for understanding the issue of expatriation. Mentioned expressions will appear in the text very often, hence author placed emphasis on their explanation.

3.2 Reasons for expatriation

Expatriation was very popular in 1990's and some people can think that this trend is over. Nevertheless, the number of expatriates is growing as much as the business is more and more global. The truth is that in 2013 there were about 50.5 million of expats (Finaccord.com, 2014). It is predicted that base of expatriates will still growth. Moreover, source foretells that in 2017 there will be around 56.8 million of expatriates (Finaccord.com, 2014). To bring an objective picture of the trend, author found out report done by different company, which says that only 28% of studied companies will not reduce costs that are connected with international assignments (Brookfieldgrs.com, 2014). The remaining percentages of companies will, in order to save a money, decrease number of assignments abroad or at least they will lower expenses which may cover expatriation costs.

Whatever the truth is on one side or other, base of 50.5 million expats is still a big number therefore it worth an attention (Finaccord.com, 2014). There are basically two main reasons why companies are sending their employees to subsidiaries abroad. The first one is connected with knowledge transfer. It is basically fulfilling the gap or in other word fills

positions (Brewster, Sparrow and Vernon, 2007, pp. 273-274). Example that will help with clarification of the knowledge transfer is from education sector. New York University has a several global centres in cities such as Berlin, London, Prague, Tel Aviv and Shanghai (Communications, 2015). University can send a teacher from one centre to another and fulfil the gap or just basically transfer his/her knowledge. For both sides it is a win-win situation. University will receive a valid feedback about the subsidiary from the expat and teacher will develop his/her professional career by teaching in completely different country and culture. Moreover, manager can create more contacts, explore new market opportunities, and become even more skilled. With all this, he or she will increase his/her value for the company and develop his/her professional career (Brewster, Sparrow and Vernon, 2007, pp. 273-274).

The second reason for expatriation and probably the one which are companies using mostly and from which they gain most is organizational development. This mainly includes control and coordination between headquarter and subsidiary. Example used at the beginning of the thesis about opening new subsidiary is the perfect instance for control and coordination. When a manager is posted to a new subsidiary he or she brings there an experience, knowledge of corporate culture and its functions. Expatriate can guide local staff through corporate policy and ensure that people in the new branch behave in accordance with these policies (Harzing, 2001, p. 367). Expatriate can help with implementation of internal business processes into the reality. On the other hand, local managers can help with adjusting of expatriate to new country and culture. Expat therefore creates a link between headquarter and new subsidiary and serves as an intermediary. Headquarter can easily gain a control over subsidiary and especially in the beginning let it evolve according to its own image (Brewster, Sparrow and Vernon, 2007, pp. 273-274).

On the picture bellow, we can see development of the main objectives for expatriation in last few years. These data come from the latest survey done by Brookfield and it confirms the literature that expat are used mainly for filling the positions (knowledge transfer) – in this case filling managerial and technical skills gaps. The new rising trend that is highlighted by the blue colour in the graph shows that building international management experience is becoming very important for the companies as they realize that setting global mind-set is a crucial for the success in the international business (Brookfield GRS, 2016).
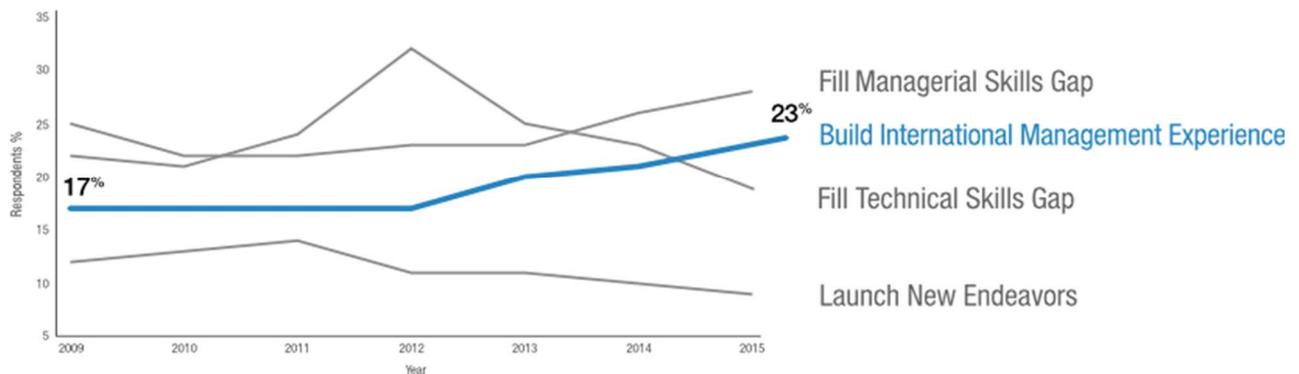
Figure 1, International assignment objectives, Brookfield GRS, 2016

3.3 Global trends in expatriation

It has been mentioned above, that there is about 50 million of expatriates all around the world (Finaccord.com, 2014). The latest survey done by Brookfield Global Relocation Services shows that number of expatriate population will not decrease; oppositely 88% of respondents expect their international assignment population will increase or remain the same. Generally, expatriation is done in industries such as engineering and manufacturing (biggest share of 29% in year 2015), then follows consumer products, financial services, IT, health care and other industries. As we can see on the picture below, the top 5 most challenging countries for expatriates are countries China, Brazil, India, Argentina and Russia (in this order). We can see that these are emerging countries, four of them known as a BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India, and China). Therefore economies of emerging countries attract also companies who are sending expatriates there. BRIC countries placed on top positions for the most challenging countries for expatriates for a longer time period. Therefore it is not a completely new trend; it just really reflects the struggles of expatriates in these countries (Brookfield GRS, 2016).
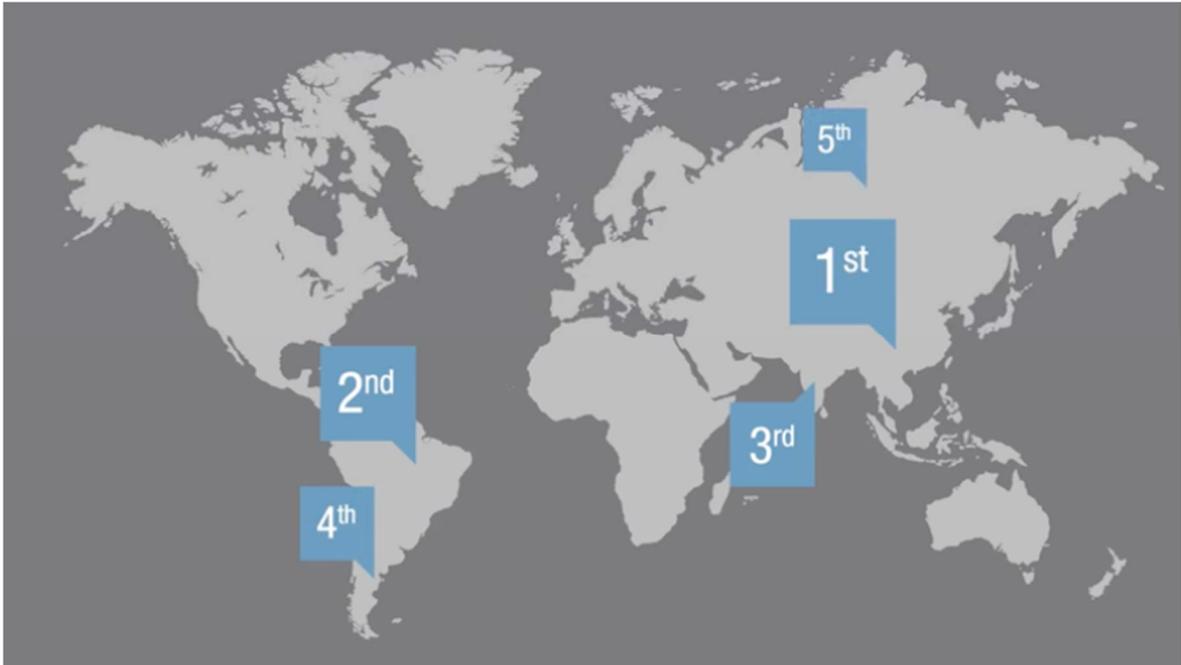
Figure 2, countries presenting greatest challenges for expatriates, Brookfield GRS, 2016

The profile of expat has change during the time slightly. Expatriate used to be white man from the middle-class (Brewster, Sparrow and Vernon, 2007, pp. 236-237). The biggest share of assigned expatriate age group is between 40-49 years old (36%) and 30-39 years old (35%). When we take into the consideration that SIE are usually younger people than AE, the average age of all expat groups is probably lower. Today, expatriates also come from different parts of the world therefore they come from different races, cultures and religions. In past, the biggest share of the length of the assignment was about 1-3 years (Dowling and Welch, 2004, p. 118). Nowadays there is trend of short-term assignments. About 55% of all assignments were short term, therefore from 3 to 12 months. 45% were long-term assignments that last 1 year or longer (Brookfield GRS, 2016).

3.4 Women in international assignments

Interesting fact is that women represents only 19% of all international assignees. Gender disproportion in expatriation has got a great attention in last few years in many researches (Albrecht, 2001; Berry and Bell, 2012; Bruning and Cadigan, 2014; Harrison and

Michailova, 2012; Kooskora and Bekker, 2007; Vance and McNulty, 2014). The development of number of female expatriates is very slow. In the 1990's there were about 13% of female expatriates (Brewster, Sparrow and Vernon, 2007; Briscoe, 1995), in the 2013 about 20% (Brookfieldgrs.com, 2014) and last year it was only 19% (Brookfieldgrs.com, 2016). This trend is probably caused by many prejudges against female sex and beliefs that women are not able to do the same job as men with the same job performance. Some people even think that women are not interested in international assignment. There exists research that confirms that woman are interested in expatriation, they only consider family issues more than men so it may look like they are not so enthusiastic about working abroad (Kooskora and Bekker, 2007, pp. 77-78). Other research showed that female respondents in the study were more motivated and glad for the international experience than men. Moreover, women ask for lower financial reward and appreciated the opportunity for gaining new skills more than their men colleagues (Bruning and Cadigan, 2014, p. 19).

This thesis does not aim to promote one or other sex, or does not tent to write what the gender distribution should look like. Author of the thesis felt that trend of the small percentages of female expatriates worth an attention and therefore it is included in the thesis.

3.5 Why expatriation fails?

Despite that expatriation is much cost demanding to the companies, it is still very useful tool. Company has to decide how it will manage its foreign subsidiary – whether to hire local staff or send an expatriate abroad. Though the popularity of expatriation is high, the negative phenomenon known as an expatriation failure is still observed. **Expatriation failure** referrers to the situation when signed expatriate returns to home country earlier and fails to fulfil task. We are talking about expatriation failure also in a case, when the task is finished in a given time period but it is done with poor expatriate performance. There are several factors that influence expatriate job performance such as technical skills and knowledge, personal and family ability to adjust to local culture. Expatriate is usually fully aware that his or her job performance was poor and he or she can experience strong disappointment and dissatisfaction (Cole and Nesbeth, 2014; Briscoe, 1995; Brewster, Sparrow and Vernon, 2007).

Expatriation failure is big problem because it comes with high costs. Not only is that expatriation expenditure demanding, expatriation failure can have negative consequences on company's reputation. Once a company fails in some strategic market, it is very hard to improve public picture of the company and perceive stakeholders that a company is able and capable to develop its business in a particular region or country (Collings, Scullion and Morley, 2007, p. 203).

There are several factors that may cause expatriation failure. It may be caused by wrong selection of an expat (Bonache Pérez and Pla-Barber, 2005, p.1322), wrong and insufficient (or none) training for expatriation, not setting clear objectives and goals of the expatriation (Dowling and Welch, 2004, pp. 112-113). Research done by Forster revealed that expatriation failure rate in UK based companies is about 8% - 23% (Forster, 2000, pp. 70-72). This research counted with broader version of expatriation failure therefore that expatriation failure includes also poor job performance.

According to several authors, the most frequent reasons causing expatriation failure are inability of assignee or his/her spouse's issues and concerns connected with inability to adjust to local culture (Brisoce, 1995; Brewster, Sparrow and Vernon, 2007, Dowling and Welch, 2004, Harrison and Michailova, 2012).

3.5.1 Inability to adjust to local culture

Having an ability to adjust to new culture is a crucial for successful expatriation. For expatriate it is important to understand new culture norms, customs, beliefs, learn how local people act in different situation and what is and isn't appropriate in a public. Sometimes companies and expatriates underestimate a destination because they think they know the country and the culture. They may have an opinion that their home and host culture is very similar but the opposite is true in real life. For example US expatriate can think that his/her assignment in UK will go smooth and does not need any special training because there is no language barrier. Actually, United Kingdom has one of the highest rate of expatriation failure just because many expatriate from English-speaking countries believed that they cannot be face any extra challenges in this country (Iles and Zhang, 2013, pp. 20-25).

It is surprising that in times when most researches agree with the opinion that expatriation failure is mainly cause by inability to adjust to local culture, companies do not reflect this fact. Companies are sending their employees to work abroad without any proper training or preparation for the international assignment. Proper cross-cultural training can greatly contribute to avoiding negative phenomenon known as an expatriation failure (Brisoce, 1995; Harrison and Michailova, 2012; Lewis, 2006).

3.5.2 Family and spouse issues

Luckily, some companies are providing a cross-cultural training to their expatriates but they sometimes forget about assignee's family. In many cases, whole family is travelling with assignee to the host country and have to deal with the new culture. The latest study about expatriation is showing that 80% of assignees were accompanied by their spouses or partners in 2015. Moreover, 52% of them had children on the international assignment with them (Brookfield GRS, 2016). Unfortunately, only few companies are focusing on spouses and families of expatriate. This is a mistake because accompanying spouses and kids play a crucial role in successful expatriation. Family mood effects assignee significantly and when the family is not happy it has negative influence on the assignee and his/her job performance. It has been proven that a very little training contributes to avoiding expatriation failure greatly (Gupta et.al., 2012; Okpara and Kabongo, 2011). Thus companies should learn from

researches and should provide some kind of training not only to assignee, but also to his/her accompanying family. Without taking family into consideration it will be very hard to achieve set goals.

From the latest report done by Global Mobility Trend Survey it is obvious that companies started to realize that family influence on successful expatriation is bigger than they thought. It has been reported that 38% of possible candidates refused assignment because of family concerns and 17% refused it because of spouse/partner career. Therefore in more than 50% of cases, families and spouses were those reasons for not taking an attractive job abroad. Moreover, almost 70% of studied companies agree with prediction that spouse and families will be issue that they would have to deal with when it comes to company's ability to attract candidates for international assignment (Brookfield GRS, 2016).

On the following chart are displayed main reasons for early returns from international assignments; data are provided by the study done in last year (Brookfield GRS, 2016). As we can see, family concerns are really the main reason that may cause expatriation failure - therefore early return home. These findings are in accordance with the literature (Brisoce, 1995; Brewster, Sparrow and Vernon, 2007, Dowling and Welch, 2004, Harrison and Michailova, 2012) that says that the most frequent reasons for expatriation failure are family and spouse/partner issues and concerns.
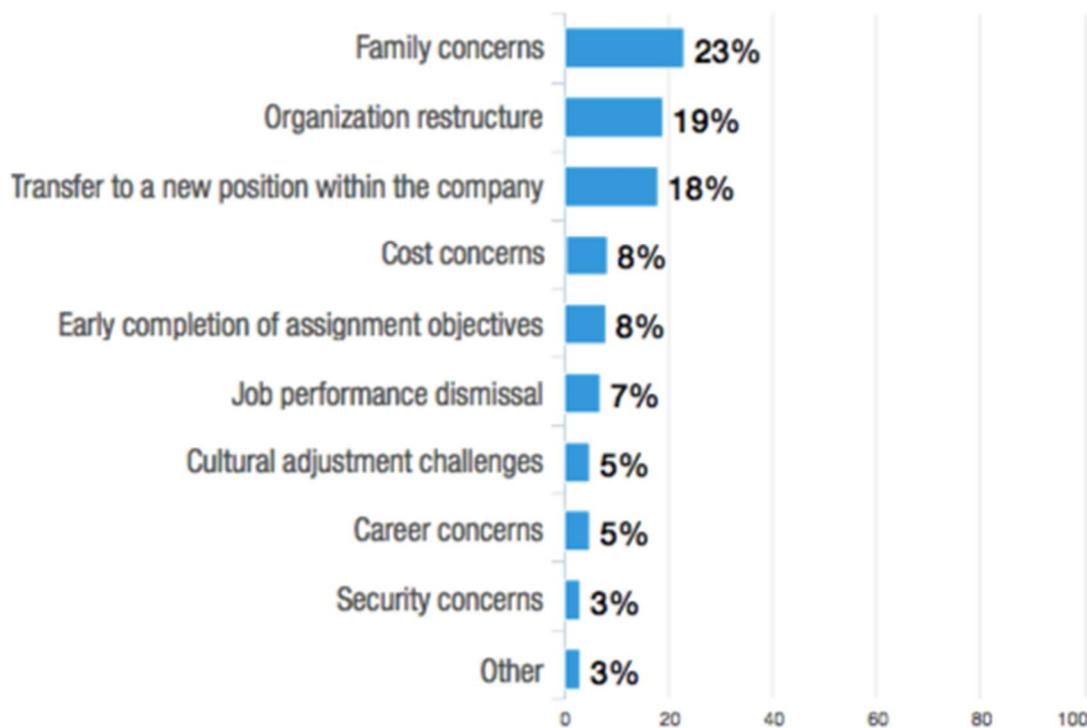
Figure 3, Primary reasons for early returns from international assignments Brookfield GRS, 2016

Next reasons such as changes in organization structure and transferring staff to new position within the company were not really mentioned in any previous literature. On the other hand, from verbatim comments from the study is clear that changes in organization structure were needed because several assignees did not performed well (Brookfield GRS, 2016). Some authors have already mentioned poor job performance as a reason for expatriation failure many years ago (Briscoe, 1995; Brewster, Sparrow and Vernon, 2007). From this point of view, reasons for expatriation failure displayed in the graph are in accordance with the literature.

One surprising finding is a very low percentage of cultural adjustment challenges. Until now, the literature said that family concerns and inability to adjust to local culture are two main reasons for expatriation failure. Author of the thesis explain this low number so that cultural issues might be included in the family concerns. Respondents of the study were companies and assignees but if we could ask the spouses and families, maybe that they would specify

what concerns they had. Unfortunately, the study does not say a word about this that is little limitation of the study. As it was mentioned, literature says that family issues and concerns originate from the inability of assignees and spouses to adjust to local culture (Brisoce, 1995; Brewster, Sparrow and Vernon, 2007, Dowling and Welch, 2004, Harrison and Michailova, 2012). Therefore these two reasons a) family concerns and b) inability to adjust are connected, not a two distant reasons.

Even that the percentage for cultural challenges to adjust to local culture is low in the study (Brookfield GRS, 2016), cultural awareness worth the attention because in other literature it is stated as a critical and crucial part for successful expatriation (Brisoce, 1995; Brewster, Sparrow and Vernon, 2007, Dowling and Welch, 2004, Harrison and Michailova, 2012).

3.5.3 Expatriation willingness

In last few years, there appeared new reason that may contribute to expatriation failure. It is low expatriation willingness of assignee to move (Peltokorpi and Froese, 2009; Kim and Froese, 2012). Willingness to move can vary greatly among expatriates. At the beginning of the thesis, there was explained difference between self-initiative expatriate and assigned expatriates. These two groups can vary widely in expatriation willingness too. Logically, someone who is SIE and decided about moving and working abroad on his/her own, is probably more willing to move and it is probably his/her want. But also in cases of SIE may be exceptions. It corresponds with push factors. Sometimes people are push out from their home country so they decide to move and work abroad. In such a case willingness to move might not be so high but in generally, SIE are usually very highly motivated people (Kim and Froese, 2012; Andresen et al., 2015). Another interesting fact connected with expatriation willingness is age factor. Age factor seems to play a significant role in willingness to move and work abroad. It was found that SIE are generally people with lower average age than their AE colleagues. Author explains the fact that younger people do not usually have any obligations that would hold them in the country of origin (own family, spouse, kids). Therefore without any significant commitment in their lives, it is quite easy to move and work abroad. On the other hand, AE are very often people in managerial positions – therefore usually older with families, thus willingness to move might be logically lower (Andresen et al., 2015, pp. 933-936).

Interesting findings were discovered in the research that revealed that SIE are more successful in adjusting to local culture. This can be explained by the fact that SIE decided about their journey on their own and therefore they could choose the destination. They would probably choose the country that is somehow attractive to them and therefore it is not such obstacle to adjust to the culture. Coping with the new culture is also easier when expats are in a contact with local people. Assimilation is easier and faster and more over expat can find more friends. Oppositely AE are usually living in residences and areas for foreign people. This can make their adjusting more difficult because without contact with local people they won't learn about the culture as such (Peltokorpi and Froese, 2009, p. 1106).

3.6 Culture awareness

Due to the globalisation, companies are sending their workforce into many different countries all over the world. Being global brings company high costs; moreover in case of failing international assignment, costs are growing rapidly while reputation of the company is losing. In order to avoid expatriation failure, companies can undertake several steps. The critical part, selecting the best candidate for international assignment is a first step. Selection of expatriates is not the core of the thesis so it will not be discussed in the details. On the other hand, preparation for international assignment is related to the topic – choosing the most valuable cross-cultural training and will be discussed in the following chapter. Before explaining cross-cultural training, author feels need to highlight important issue connected with cross cultural training and it is culture and cultural awareness.

Understanding culture and cultural differences in the country where expat is assigned for is a crucial part of successfully expatriation. There exist many explanations of the term culture in many different mutations. But the core of the term is the same. Therefore it can be concluded that culture is learned and shared patterns and characteristics of behaviour, beliefs, values, attitudes and customs (Brewster, Sparrow and Vernon, 2007; Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 2000; Harrison, 2010). Different societies act differently. Culture is usually unwritten law how to life. Symbols, religion, language and how societies use and interpret the culture pattern influence the culture and vice versa. A Dutch scientist Geert Hofstede describe culture as a "Culture is the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one category of people from another." (Hofstede, 1984, p. 51). Despite that the definition is more than 30 years old, it perfectly expresses what culture is. There is no doubt that expatriation is for assignee and for accompanying family a challenge and it may bring a high level of stress. Preparation for expatriation can greatly influence how the assignee and family will deal with professional and personal obstacles that will appear during the international assignment. Typically, different working habits in the host country are things that may disconcert the assignee. This includes time and decision-making process, hierarchy, gender and age playing role in a business, taking a risk etc. (MacLachlan, 2010).

3.6.1 Hofstede' culture dimensions

International human resource management is not a new field, but thank to increasing globalisation and Internet innovation, its popularity increased a lot. One of the well-known pioneers focusing on cultural differences is Geert Hofstede. He created "Dimensions of National Culture". The theory explains how, based on the dimension, people act and behave differently in different cultures and also how the values are influenced by the culture (Hofstede, 2001). The main dimensions are:

a) power distance
b) uncertain avoidance
c) individualism
d) masculinity
e) long-term orientation
f) indulgence

The following lines will belong to the explanation of Hofstede's cultural dimensions because it is necessary for understanding the next chapters. The following sub-chapter shows the cultural dimensions applied to the real life. In other word there will be a comparison of cultural dimension between Czech Republic and China.

Power distance is explained as "the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organisations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally (Geert-hofstede.com, 2016). People in countries with high power distance score accept how the power is distributed (Philippines). On the other hand, cultures with low power distance score do not agree and do not accept the way, how the power is distributed and these countries tent to be more democratic (USA, UK, Sweden). People in these societies believe that all are equal.

Dimension that explains until what extent people feel endangered by uncertain behaviour is call **uncertainty avoidance** (UA). Countries with high UA score feel threatened by uncertain behaviour thus they apply laws and codes to preclude the uncertainty (France, Czech Republic). Oppositely, countries with low score are more flexible and open to try something new, something innovative (UK).

If societies tend to be **individualistic**, it means that they do not great groups and take care only about themselves and very close family (USA). People do not take care about other people in a group and bond among group member is very fragile. In comparison with China or Japan that are very collectivist countries, they care about all member of the group that includes wider circle than just a family. These societies are loyal to the group for the rest of the life.

People living in societies that are characterised as a greatly results oriented, very competitive usually have a high score of **masculinity** dimension (USA, Japan, China). Oppositely lower score means that the core values in society are a taking care about other and quality of life (Sweden).

Long-term orientation (LTO) explains how the society is fixed to the past. Low score countries have strong bones with the history and traditions and are very distrustful to changes and to everything what is new (Poland). Oppositely, high score represent pragmatic countries that focuses on what is happening right now and have an ability to adapt to changing environment fast (Czech Republic).

People in societies with high **Indulgence** score are very relaxed people who can enjoy their lives and do not control their expressions that much. These people put a great emphasis on leisure time and meeting people (Venezuela). Low score in this dimensions means that people do not really like indulgence or that they feel that by enjoying a moment they are do something wrong. People in these societies also tend to be more sarcastic, pessimistic and cynic (Czech Republic).

3.6.2   Cultural comparison between Czech Republic and China

The graph below was constructed based on Hofstede' cultural dimensions. It shows the comparison between Czech Republic and China among all cultural dimensions. This comparison is included in the thesis for better understand of Hofstede's dimensions in practise. Score of the dimensions will be explained and applied to the working practice. Czech Republic was chosen because student of Czech university writes this thesis. As a country for comparison was selected China because it is country that was voted as a top challenging country for expatriates for several years. In other word, it is a country in which

the expatriation failure rate is highest and where are expatriates struggling most often (Brookfield GRS, 2016).

The following figure 4 represents comparison of national cultural dimensions between Czech Republic and China.

Czech Republic*
in comparison with China*
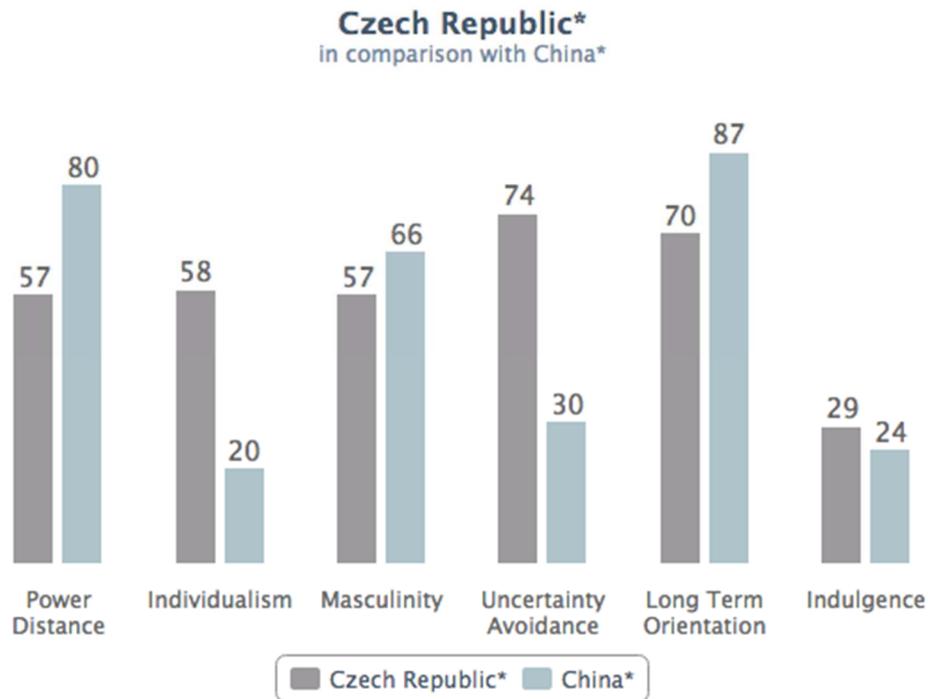
Figure 4, comparison of national cultural dimensions between Czech Republic and China, Geert-hofstede.com, 2016

Results of the comparison are compared, explained and discussed in the following table.

Dimension	Comparison
Power distance	As we can see from the graph, both countries tent to accept how the power is distributed and expect that some inequalities can arise. This is not surprising finding for a China, a country where is dictatorship regime applied, but one would expect that societies in the CR would score much lower because it is a democratic

	country. Maybe that past regime in the CR has left a deeper footage than people think.
Individualism	The second biggest difference between these two countries. Chinese people stick together and take care about group member much for the whole life. While in Czech Republic, people take care more about individualities, they put their own interest first instead of group interest.
Masculinity	In this dimension, countries are very similar. Both are driven by competition and are results oriented, therefore people can work very hard and put the work first.
Uncertain Avoidance	A huge difference between China and Czech Republic can be observed in this dimension. Czechs are very sceptical and feel threatened of uncertain behaviour and do not want to put themselves in unknown situations. These societies usually have some plan B or strategic future plan for a business. On the other hand, results says that China is pretty much open and welcome new things. In business, these societies focus do not focus on far future, therefore they do not have detailed strategic plans for their businesses.
Long-term orientation	Both countries are long term oriented therefore tent to be more pragmatic. They do not spend much time by focusing on past. Appling this to the business reality, both are flexible and can adjust to changing situations in order to achieve better results. Therefore in changing global situations we can expect that these societies will enjoy first mover advantage by e.g. exploring new markets opportunities.
Indulgence	China and Czech republic rank very low in this dimension. People do not rank leisure time very high or they may feel that by enjoying a free time they are doing something wrong. People in both countries are more pessimistic. Author of the thesis explain these results by a political situation in countries. China is under the control and pressure from the country leadership. Czech

	Republic is democratic country but still, the long dark history of socialism will not disappear during one generation.

Table 1, cultural comparison between Czech Republic and China, authors compilation from Geert-hofstede.com

Hofstede's Dimensions are well known and respected findings, but sometimes it is criticised for several reasons. One of the critical point is that Hofstede's cultural dimensions count with a country as a one homogenous and compact unit. In many cases, one country is inhabited by several ethnics groups that may have a completely different opinions and behaviour. Dimensions also face criticism about national borders. It is highlighted that culture does not knows the exact borders. Therefore culture of one nation extends to and influences another nation. The last and maybe the most important point of criticism is the time factor. It is stressed that Hofstede conducted his study between 1967 and 1973, later in 2001 extended his study by adding few more countries (Mindtools.com, 2015). But since then the world has change dramatically. Therefore it is questionable whether it is valid to use Hofstede's results today (Jones, 2007, p. 5).

Despite the criticism, Hofstede's cultural dimensions are crucial projects among researches in intercultural studies. As table above shows, there exist many differences between these two countries. Therefore learning about host-country culture is key step for expatriates. Without a proper knowledge about customs, traditions, authorities and people's behaviour, expats will not adjust to local culture easily and it may take a long time. Struggling with culture differences may cause expatriation failure and thus generate unexpected costs.

3.7 Cross-cultural training

In order to avoid expatriation failure, company can provide cross culture training to its expatriates. **Cross-cultural training** is an educational training that helps to gain abilities, awareness, skills and knowledge that is necessary for a smooth process of adjusting to the new culture. It educates the assignee how to interact in diversity environment and how to behave properly and correctly when in contact with local people of host country (Briscoe, 1995; Brewster, Sparrow and Vernon, 2007; Shen and Lang, 2009; Harrison, 2010; Romero, 2002).

Lectured content can differ, but cross-cultural training usually covers topics such as language, cultural awareness, country specific information, geography, customs and traditions, advices based on everyday basis (housing, shopping, schools), cultural assimilation, flexibility, and local business norms, etiquette and protocol (Abdullah and Jin, 2015; Romero, 2002). Cross-cultural training can have many forms. The information about host country can be delivered in form of lecture, information sheet or another printed materials. From practice is known that forms of training that encourage assignee to speak or act, are more valuable. Therefore cross-cultural training is delivered in form of brainstorming, workshops, and language training or even in the form of theatre. With more practical approach, expat can learn and understand the issue more than just from a piece of paper. In case that company has more expatriates, it is useful when one experienced expat is having a conversation with not experienced expat. Experienced one can provide very practical information and advices that cannot be known from any literature. Some companies offer a country visit to assignee. Assignee has a time to explore and apply learned knowledge in the practice before the real assignment starts. Whether the company chooses this form of training or that, it should never be only one form of the training. The more forms and types of training assignee takes, the higher chance is that he/she understand the cross cultural issues and he/she is aware of cultural differences between home and host country (Brewster, Mendenhall and Oddou, 1986; Sparrow and Vernon, 2007; Shen and Lang, 2009; Harrison, 2010; Romero, 2002).

Another important factor that company has to take in consideration is a time when the training is delivered to the assignee. From the research that focused on Australian expatriates is known that leaving training on the last week before departure is not very lucky solution.

Company from the research let its assignees to organize the training and assignees were supposed to fit the training to their schedules when they had time. The result was that assignees somehow forget about the training (because they did not scheduled the training) and because of no fixed date for the training, they prioritized other things before training. In the week before departure, assignees undertook the training, but it was very frustrating for them because they have many questions about host country (China) but no time for clarification (Shen and Lang, 2009, pp. 380-382). Companies can learn from mistakes done by other people and take a lesson that the training for expatriation should be scheduled in advance to avoid mistakes that can be done in rush and stress because of lack of time. Cross-cultural training is a foundation stone for successful expatriation. It has positive impact on assignee's skills and job performance while it decreases possibility of expatriation failure. Companies should pay attention and invest money into the training if they want to secure a smooth expatriation without complications (Abdullah and Jin, 2015; Shen and Lang, 2009; Romero, 2002).

3.7.1 Usage of cross-cultural training and its cost

It has been proved that by providing cross-cultural training to assignees, company is increasing a chance for successful expatriation (Abdullah and Jin, 2015; Shen and Lang, 2009; Romero, 2002). From this point of view, the question remains why there are not more companies providing a cross-cultural training to their expatriates. From the literature is known that companies are not paying sufficient attention to providing cross-cultural training (Tung, 1982; Briscoe, 1995; Brewster, Sparrow and Vernon, 2007; Shen and Lang, 2009; Harrison, 2010). Tung did a research and found out that providing cross-cultural training depends on the place where the company is from. For example, only 32% of researched US companies provided a cross-cultural training to their assignees, while 69% of European companies offered this kind of trainings to their assignees (Tung, 1982, p.66). Another authors wrote that 40% of MNE did not offer any kind of training to their assignees (McFarlin and Sweeney, 2011). The most recent research discovered that 38% of international companies are providing some kind of intercultural preparation for their employees (Brookfieldgrs.com, 2015, p. 80).

33

In the literature, there is no research asking companies about not providing training to heir assignees. In the research done by Shen and Lang (2009), one company representative mentioned that they were not providing language training because they believe that short training is not effective and therefore does not worth the money (Shen and Lang, 2009, p. 380). On the other hand, from the literature is known that the little training is better than no training (Gupta et.al., 2012; Okpara and Kabongo, 2011). Moreover, 87% of assignees agreed that cross-cultural training has a great or good value for assignment success while none of the respondents did no says the training had no or poor value for them (Brookfieldgrs.com, 2015, p. 83).

Cross-cultural training should always be customized. It should be designed for an assignee and focused on a certain host country. Only few companies are providing the training by themselves, in many cases training is outsources. Nowadays, there are many companies delivering cross-cultural training. The price differs and it depends on the length of the training, the country where the assignee is going and the number of participants. The price range of the training is between $500 and $2000 dollars per day (454 EUR and 1816 EUR), which is approximately between 12,300 CZK and 49,000 CZK (Expatriate and Cross-Cultural Coaching, 2016). If one compares investment cost of training and cost of expatriation failure that is counted up to $1 million per expatriates (Shannonhouse, 1996), it is obvious that cross-culture training worth investing the money.

3.8 Pre-departure training and post-departure training

Cross-cultural training can be divided into two types form a time point of view. There exists **pre-departure training** that assignee undertake before departure to the host country and **post-departure training** that is conducted after arrival to the host country. Pre-departure training got a great attention and was highly evaluated mainly in older literature. In a recent literature, it can be found that post-departure training is assessed as a more valuable. Advantage of post-departure training is that after the arrival to the host country, expatriate can fully realize and understand learnt knowledge and more importantly apply it in to the practice (Harrison and Michailova, 2012, p. 638). Other researches showed that pre-departure training was out-dated. Respondents complained about the length of the pre-departure training that was according to them too short. British respondents highlighted the fact that pre-departure preparation for assignment in Asian countries should last longer because the culture was so distant. But they realized then after the arrival to the host country.

3.8.1   Pre-departure training

Pre-departure training can be delivered in the form of lectures, workshops, language training, cultural briefings etc. To cover all part of new working life of expat in host country, pre-departure trainings should include cross-cultural training, preliminary visit, language training and day-to-day support from the company.

Cross-cultural training was explained in the details above. Generally speaking it is an educative process that teaches assignee about cultural differences, it awakes cultural awareness and it is designed to reduce anxiety of ambiguous behaviour and situations (Briscoe, 1995; Brewster, Sparrow and Vernon, 2007; Shen and Lang, 2009; Harrison, 2010).

Preliminary visits serves as a first-hand experience with the host country and evaluation of local business environment (Brewster, Sparrow and Vernon, 2007; Harrison, 2010).

Language training is an essential factor. Today, English language is perceived as a language number one. In majority of non-English speaking countries, people are learning English in order to communicate with other business clients. More complicated is situation when English native speaker is assigned to non-English speaking country e.g. Czech Republic.

Despite that many Czech speak English, in everyday situations it may be frustrating for expat because not signs are in English, but just in Czech language. Therefore shopping in supermarket, public transportation or even some restaurants that are not inside city centre of Prague still might not be able to provide English menus that might be frustrating for assignee. Therefore language training is needed in this case too, so assignee can gain at least very basic knowledge of the language (Brewster, Sparrow and Vernon, 2007; Shen and Lang, 2009).

Last, but definitely not least is day-to day support from the company. Companies tent to assist to assignee before departure to host country but they should be in a contact with assignee also during and after the assignment. Company should assists to assignee and to make sure that he/she understands his/her goals and objectives clearly and that assignee is not struggling with any problem (Briscoe, 1995; Brewster, Sparrow and Vernon, 2007; Shen and Lang, 2009; Harrison, 2010).

3.8.2 Post-departure training

Post-departure training is usually more practical and can include demonstration in different situations in practice. It seeks to reduce culture shock and help assignee with cultural difficulties to adjust. A person providing post-departure training in the place of assignment, should be able to help to assignee with every-day situations like shopping, schools for children, opening bank account, public transportation, tax system etc. (Brewster, Sparrow and Vernon, 2007; Shen and Lang, 2009).

Pre-departure training is a great tool for getting prime knowledge about the country, but it is more than good to continue with the training also after the arrival to the host country. Research that focused on female expatriates working in Middle East revealed that most women appreciate post-departure training more than pre-departure training (Harrison and Michailova, 2012, pp. 13-15). Respondents stated that training after arrival was extremely useful because they could learn and practice at the same time. Before the departure, there were situations when women were not sure what is their trainer talking about, but when they arrived they realized (Harrison and Michailova, 2012, p. 14). Culture in Middle East is very distant from European culture therefore training after arrival is a crucial for smooth expatriation. One respondent even said that no training could prepare one for this complete

different "world". This respondent highlighted the fact that in Dubai lives people from many different nationalities, not just Emiratis. And every nationality brings its own beliefs and customs, therefore training that was focused only on Emiratis is just not enough (Harrison and Michailova, 2012, p. 14). This finding is in correlation with criticism of Hofstede's culture dimensions, when it is highlighted that dimensions counts with a country as a one complex unit. But in real world, in one country can be observed many nationalities that might significantly differ (Jones, 2007, p. 5).

3.8.3   Usage and applicability of cross-cultural training

The important and usefulness of the cross-cultural training was explained and agreed in many researches (Briscoe, 1995; Brewster, Sparrow and Vernon, 2007; Shen and Lang, 2009; Harrison, 2010). In the recent research from 2015 it has been proven that cross-cultural training lowers the expatriation failure (Kasar et al., 2015, pp. 7-8). In this particular research was revealed that 28% of assignees did not undertake any kind of training. From those who received some kind of training, 36% undertook post-departure training, 20% undertook pre-departure training and only 14% undertook both, pre and post-departure training (Kasar et al., 2015, p. 7). It is known from literature that best option of training is combination of pre and post-departure training (Harrison and Michailova, 2012, p. 14) but according to mentioned research it does not seem that companies are aware of this fact. Moreover, it was revealed that from those expatriates who received cross-cultural training, almost 96% completed their assignment. From those expatriates who did not undertake any cross-cultural training, 77% completed the assignment (Kasar et al., 2015, p. 8). Therefore we can see that by providing cross-cultural training, companies are increasing chances of successful expatriation.

Respondents from the research also admitted, that adjusting to local culture for much easier for those (93%), who had undertook both kind of trainings, pre-departure and post-departure. For these expatriates was also much easier to communicate and personal staff in the host country company. The last interesting result was found out about happiness and attitude of expatriates. Those who received some kind of training, almost 74% responded that they would be willing to accept another international assignment. On the other hand, from those

who did received any kind of cross-cultural training, only 22% would consider accepting another international assignment (Kasar et al., 2015, p. 8).

From the results is clear, that providing cross-cultural training is a crucial for successful expatriation and it is relevant topic that worth the attention. Moreover, by providing both types of training from the time perspective (pre and post-departure training), company is increasing probability that its assignee will be successful and also willing to accept another international assignment in the future.

Despite the fact that it is known that combination of pre-departure and post-departure training is very useful for the successful expatriation, literature does not specify what kind of training brings biggest benefit to expatriates. For this reason, the author of the thesis decided to focus on finding the most valuable training for expatriates in the empirical part.

4. Empirical Part

Qualitative research

Based on the nature of research questions, author of the thesis decided to conduct qualitative research. Qualitative research helps to better understand examined issues, in this case expatriation and cross-cultural training. Usually, only small number of participants is joining the qualitative research. In comparison with quantitative research, were can be hundreds or thousands of participants and results can be generalized to the whole population. Results of qualitative research cannot be generalized to the whole population but on the other hand it results in understanding the issue and human behaviour of studied sample (Hendl, 2005; Saunders and Lewis, 2002; Keegan, 2009).

Sample resources

Author of the thesis is member of InterNation community. This community puts together expatriates and people working outside of the country of their origin. This community has now more than 2 millions of people all around the world. InterNations has communities in 390 cities in 155 countries. InterNation has its own website that serve as a social network. It is a social network for expatriates. On the website, expatriates can find information about living and working environment it the particular city. Expatriates creates groups based on the interest (Prague Legal Support Group, Prague Bowling Group) and also organize events (Let's Discuss your Work Permit and Employment Issues, Prague Film & Theater Networking Night). Therefore the community offers support from business and leisure point of view.

All respondents participating in the research were somehow connected to InterNations. Four respondents were contacted by the author and asked if they are willing to join the research. From those four people, author got a contact to another three who were interested in the research.

All participants were assigned expatriates, therefore they were offered by their company to work abroad and they accepted the offer. After the consideration, e-mail interview was

chosen as a best possible technique for data collection. Not all of expatriates where willing to participate in the research because of lack of the time. Therefore e-mail interview was selected because expatriates could manage the time to answer questions whenever they want. Beside advantage that every respondent can manage its time to answer questions, e-mail interview has some disadvantages. It is a written form of interview; therefore researcher is unable to read from body language of the respondent. All gestures, voice tone, mimics are not included in the written text. On the other hand, e-mail interview gives to respondent time to think about the answers. Some people also tend to say something what the society wants to hear or because they are shy of the researcher. In case of e-mail interview, they could express their feeling without concerns how the other person would react. Moreover, e-mail interview is already in written form; therefore there is no need for transcription (Meho, 2006).

Data collection

Author of the thesis did a pilot research twice. Pilot researches are done so the researcher is sure that all questions are understandable and clear. Pilot research was conducted with people who were not participating in the research but they were all expatriates. After first run of pilot, there were some misunderstandings, therefore these questions were removed or rewritten. After second round of pilot, all questions were clear.

E-mail interview was conducted as a standardized interview. At the beginning, there are some identification questions (age, sex, country of origin, host country of expatriation, job industry, achieved education and etc.). Then followed by questions about expatriations experience, cross-cultural training, pre and post-departure training and evaluation of different types of cross-cultural training. All questions were written in the same order. Advantage of structured interview is that it is easier to compare answers from all respondents. Moreover, influence of the researcher is lower therefore research is more objective. Due to the fact that empirical part of this thesis is based on qualitative research, in the interview appear open-ended questions that encourage respondent to express his/her feelings, concerns and ideas (*What do you think about, How would you described....).* This

type of questions allows getting a picture of expatriation issues and understanding them better.

Research ethics

Every research where human beings are taking apart can raise some concerns about privacy and misuse of personal data. Aim of research ethics is to secure confidentiality and anonymity of research participants. The core of research ethics is to protect its participants. All participants must be fully aware that they are part of the research (Walton, 2015).

To secure research ethics in this thesis, author decided that every participant in this research must read Participant Information Sheet (see in Appendix). In Participant Information Sheet can be found information about this research, about anonymity and voluntary participation. This sheet serves to provide certainty to participants that their personal data (such as names, name of the company they work in, e-mail addresses) will never be published or that their answers will not be connected to their names. In order to secure anonymity, empirical findings of every participant will be hidden behind abbreviation such as Respondent 1 (R1, R2, R3 etc). Therefore names or e-mail addresses will not be used.

By answering to e-mail interview, participant agrees that he/she read Participant Information Sheet and that understands that participation in the research is voluntary and he/she can withdraw from the research any time.

4.1 Empirical findings

This chapter introduces empirical findings from the research. Empirical findings provide author's compilation of respondents' answers to the e-mail interview. Specific findings are always presented about one respondent. Totally, seven respondents participated in the research. Because author cannot publish name of respondents, abbreviation will be used (Respondent 1, Respondent 2,…Respondent 7 that corresponds to….R1, R2….R7). Similarities among respondents' answers and correspondence with the literature are discussed in the Results and Recommendation chapter.

First, it is necessary to introduce participant of the research. The table shows the age range, sex, nationality, highest achieved education, industry in which expat is working and job position. All respondents are currently working as expatriates in the Czech Republic.

The first chart shows the gender of respondents who participated in the research. Five out of total seven respondents were men and two were women. Therefore women represent about 28% of all respondents.
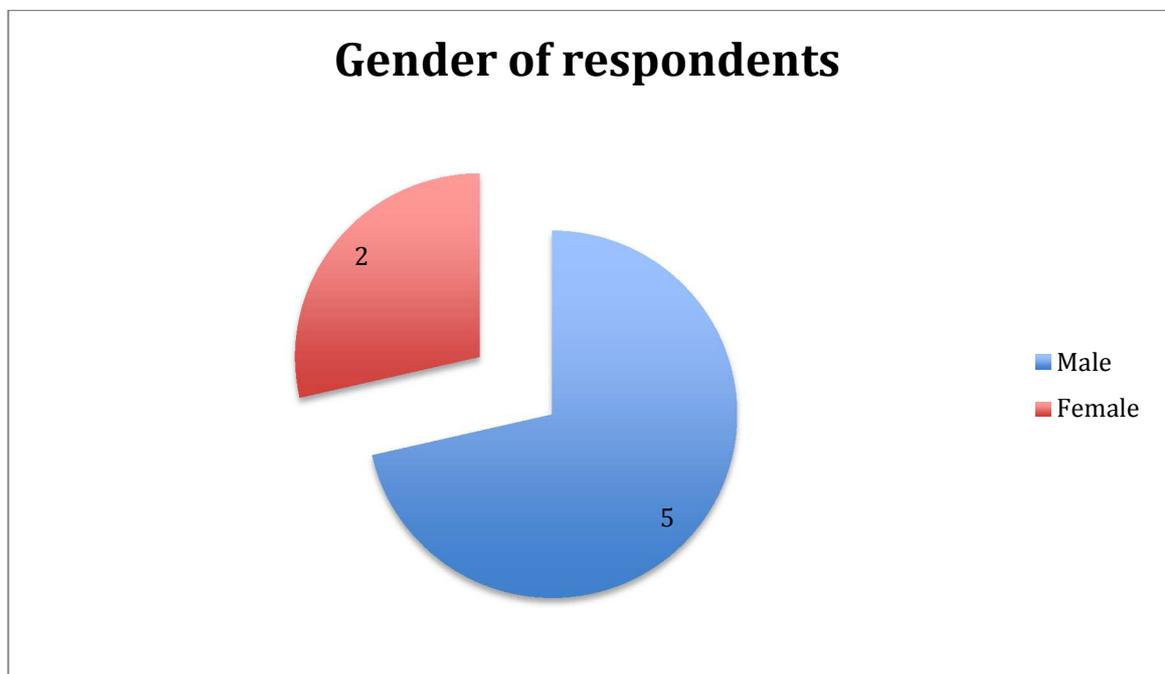
Figure 5, gender of respondents, author's own processing

The following chart shows education achieved by participants of the project. All of them are very educated, with master degree from universities. Some of them also achieved diploma from MBA. The chart specifies what type of degree respondents received.

It is obvious that participant of the research are technically focused because all of respondents except one have university degree with focus on engineering or IT.

Education of respondents
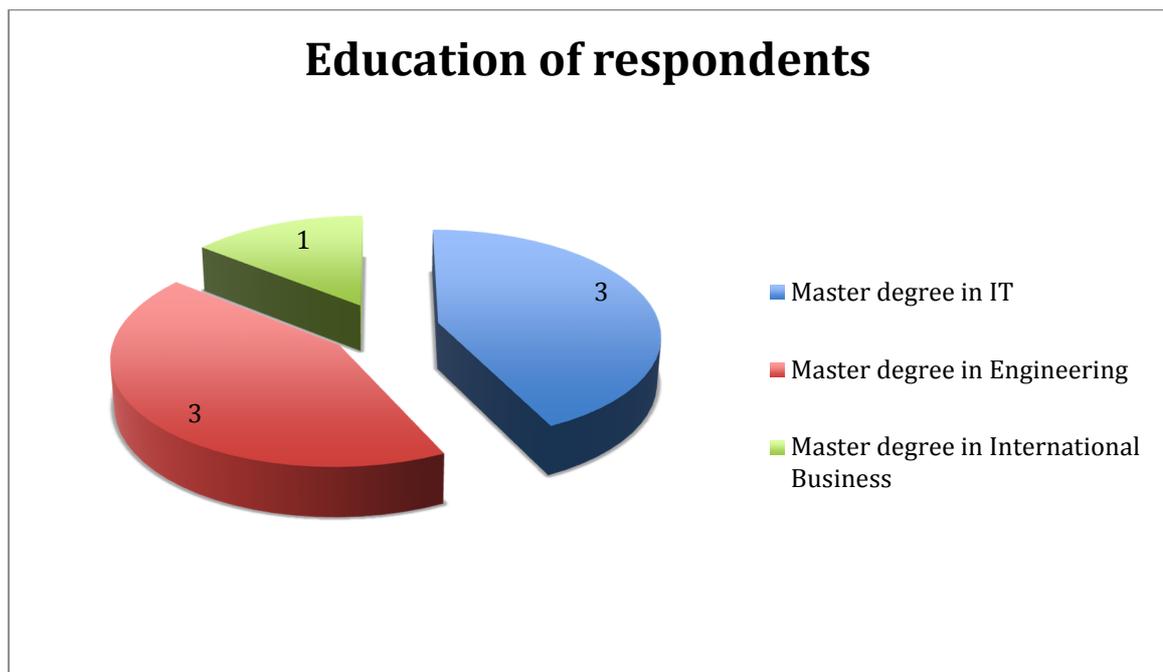
Figure 6, Education of respondents, author's own processing

Concerning age of the respondents, six out of seven respondents were in age range 35-44 years old. One respondent was in age range 25-34 years old.

Two women who participated in the research were both awarded by master degree specialized in IT and both are currently working in IT industry.

Nationality of respondents is very diverse. In the research appeared six different nationalities (Bulgarian, Columbian, Venezuelan, Polish, Hungarian and Swedish).

The following table introduces respondent is a detail. Some factors (gender, age, education) have already been mentioned but author enclose this table for closer and better image of respondent sample.

Respondent	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7
Sex	Female	Male	Male	Male	Female	Male	Male
Age range	25-34	35-44	35-44	35-44	35-44	35-44	35-44
Nationality	Bulgarian	Columbian	Polish	Hungarian	Venezuelan	Swedish	Swedish
Education	MBA, Master degree in IT	MBA, Master degree in IT	Master degree in International Business	Master degree in Engineering	Master degree in IT	MBA, Master degree in Engineering	Master degree in Engineering
Industry	IT	IT	Food and Beverage	Security and Telecommunication	IT	Security and IT	Security and Aircraft Engineering
Job position	Project Manager	Project Manager	Sales Director for Eastern Europe	Product and Sales Manager	Sales Manager for Eastern Europe	Sales and Marketing Manager	Product Manager

Table 2, Participants introduction, author's own processing

At a closer look, it can be seen that all of participant are pretty much similar to each other. They were all awarded by university degree in similar field, they are working in IT, security

or telecommunication industry at job positions connected to sales, marketing and products. There is one exception and it is Respondent 3 who was awarded by MA degree and is working in completely different industry (Food and Beverages). Despite that fact he is working on similar positions as others.

The following part will summarize answers of research respondents. Verbatim responses from e-mail interviews can be found in appendices.

4.2 Respondent 1

Respondent 1 (R1) is a female in age range between 25-34 years old. She is Bulgarian and studied at university. She is rewarded by master degree in IT and also achieved MBA (The Master of Business Administration). She was working in Bulgaria in IT industry and was assigned to work in the Czech Republic (Prague) as a project manager.

This is her first experience as an expatriate and the length of the international assignment is planned for two years. She decided to accept the offer because she perceives expatriation as a chance for career development and for gaining new experience. R1 also appreciates the attractiveness of the Czech Republic. After considering factors such as family issues and relationship issues arising from moving abroad, Respondent 1 decided to accept the offer for international assignment. The time spent with deciding whether to accept the offer or not last for 3-4 weeks.

Respondent 1 described that she experienced some difficulties at the beginning of her international assignment in the Czech Republic. She stated she is happy right now because she was able to make new friends from the inside and outside of the work. She feels that Bulgarian and Czech culture and customs are a little bit similar so it helps her with adjusting to the Czech culture. She finds knowledge of Czech language as an important factor because not all signs are written in English language.

Respondent 1 explained that she does not struggle to communicate with local people. She said she has several local friends from the work. She also attends some events organized by embassy where it was easy to find new international friends. She believes that being a friend of local people is very helpful because sometimes only they know places that they can recommend to her or they can help her with everyday life issues. R1 explained that she was

very happy to have many international friends (also due to the fact that she is a member of InterNations) but now she prefers to socialize with local people.

Concerning ability to adjust to Czech culture, R1 believes that she adjusted very well to Czech culture, because her culture is quite similar. R1 was very surprised that Czech people are so friendly but never understood Czech sense for humour, especially the black humour. Respondent 1 was experiencing the hardest time at the beginning of the international assignment when everything was new for her and when she did not know anyone. What helped her most and what made her expatriation easier was just the fact that she was able to make new friends and meet new people who always help her. She also highlighted the self-confidence. When she knew she did a pretty good job at work, she started to believe in herself and was confident. Again she stressed importance of contact with local people and the knowledge of the host country.

Unfortunately, no cross-cultural training was provided to Respondent 1 therefore she could not comment on this topic. Nevertheless, she did some self-study and she was looking for some basic information about the country. The main source of information was Internet. She also read some books before arrival but she read them again after she arrived to the host country. Until after arrival to the Czech Republic she was able to understand things written in the books or was able to visit places mentioned in the book. R1 stated that she would really appreciate if the company would provide her some type of cross-cultural training.

Expatriation failure is a phenomenon that she never experienced before because this is her first international assignment. A family or spouse in Prague does not accompany her. She realizes that having a family, spouse and kids can be for some people a reason why to refuse offer for expatriation. Arranging schools for kids and moving out from their home is probably much complicated for the whole family, than just for one assigned person. She reported that she thinks that the reason why so many expatriations fail is just family issues. If some member of the family is not happy in the host country it can negatively influence expatriate. Another reason according to her is inability to adjust to local culture. Especially when home and host culture is very different, it might cause expatriation failure. Last reason for expatriation failure she believes in is expatriate who is not satisfied at work.

At the end, Respondent 1 stressed that company should clarify her competences and responsibility in order to achieve smoother and not complicated expatriation. She also stated that she would be really happy if the company would provide to her some type of cross-

cultural training or some dinner with her colleagues could be arranged to meet for a first time. She indicated language training, cultural briefings and meetings with local people among three most useful tools for expatriation success.

4.3 Respondent 2

Respondent 2 is a Columbian male in age range between 35-44 years old. He is awarded by master degree in IT as well as MBA. R2 is working in IT industry on the position of project manager. R2 is assigned expatriate with previous experience of international assignment. Respondent was working in London for 3 years as an acquisition manager. Respondent 2 is now assigned from Columbia to work in Prague, Czech Republic for another three years.

When company announced opening position for expatriation to the Czech Republic, Respondent 2 was thinking about this job position for about 2 weeks. He discussed it with his wife. Expatriation in the Czech Republic means to Respondent 2 great opportunity to develop his career, gaining experience in completely different business environment and meeting new people from inside and outside of the work.

Respondent 2 is now completely satisfied with his job. He highlighted the fact of having clear objectives and goal that he and his team are aiming to. He learnt that Czech people tend to keep distance before they meet person closely, but once they get know each other, they are open and honest. Respondent stressed the differences between Czech and Columbian culture. Columbians are more passionate and enthusiastic. R2 believes that Czech people can express the same enthusiasms as Columbians only when they are in pub and talking about politics that he really enjoys. Concerning culture differences, R2 highlighted some differences between Columbians and Czech people. Czech people do not enjoy life and do not express their feelings that much as Columbians. R2 said that Czech people should also be more self-confidence because they can work hard and they deserve to be more confident. Concerning adjusting to the Czech culture, R2 feels confident. He stressed the fact that Czech Republic and especially Prague is full of open-minded people who can speak English and who has no problem with foreigners. Sometimes, language barrier is a problem. It happens usually when he is outside the Prague in some restaurant in a small cottage where menus are not provided in English language. In order to avoid such a problem, he learnt word "Svíčková" that work perfectly almost everywhere. Respondent's recommendation for

smoother expatriation is that people working in municipalities and post offices should be able to speak in English language. Sometimes it is very frustrating or the Respondent 2, but he and the other person have always figure the problem out.

Respondent 2 is very outgoing person. Besides that he is using several social networks such as Facebook, LinkedIn, he also attends events organized by expatriate community InterNations in order to meet new people. He likes that he can meet interesting people form business or meet people who might be his customer or competitor.

Concerning cross-cultural training, company provided cultural lectures, preliminary visit and book to Respondent 2. All training was done before the international assignment started therefore all was pre-departure training. R2 was also looking for information on his own on the Internet before and after arrival to the Czech Republic. As an advantage of pre-departure training was the fact that having knowledge about Prague and the Czech Republic before the international assignment started, was good. More important for him, was preliminary visit that gave him the real idea about the country. He appreciated that he was able to meet his new colleagues and have a dinner with them before the assignment started. Respondent 2 is educating himself by reading books and articles about doing business in the Czech Republic. He highlighted the fact that cross-cultural training was relevant and very useful and without training he would probably did not adjust to culture so easily. Training provided by the company was obligatory and lasted for 3 days. Three-day training covers topics such as geography, culture, customs, people behaviour, law and religion. Respondent 2 joined two weeks of preliminary visit in the Czech Republic. R2 believes that culture knowledge of the country where person works is very important and he would highly recommended cross-cultural training to everyone.

Respondent's wife and two children in Prague accompany this expatriate. Training and preliminary visit were provided to him and his wife only. He believes that all of them adjusted to the Czech culture well. Kids are joining football club in Prague and seem happy. He is little bit concern about his wife. She is taking care of kids and stays at home all the time what makes her sad and sometimes feels lonely. He thinks that if she would be able to make some friends and go out for a dinner or drink as she did back in Columbia, she would be happier.

Concerning expatriation failure, R2 recorded that he never experienced expatriation failure. He believes that having a support from family and from the company is a critical for

successful expatriation. Another important factor for expatriates that helps to avoid expatriation failure is having new friends in the host country. Respondent 2 mentioned family support as a factor for successful expatriation because he believes that family issues and problems among family members are reasons for expatriation failure. When some of the family member is not happy, it influences mood of expatriate that might cause bad job performance and might cause expatriation failure.

In conclusion, Respondent 2 believes that cross-cultural training is very important for expatriation failure. According to his opinion, family issues are main cause for expatriation failure and the easiest way to avoid expatriation failure is that all family members undergo cross-cultural training. This training should include cultural briefings, preliminary visit and meeting with local people.

4.4 Respondent 3

Respondent 3 is a Polish male in an age range between 35-44 years old. He has master degree in International Business. R3 is working in Food and Beverages industry. He is assigned by the company in Poland to work as an expatriate in the Czech Republic on position of Sales Director for Eastern Europe. The contract for expatriation is signed for two years. Respondent 3 has no previous experience with international assignments. After considering family issues and career development, after three weeks R3 decided to accept the offer for international assignment. Driving factors for accepting the offer were gaining new experience, moving on in career development, getting new contacts and connections and obtaining better salary.

R3 is now in a half of his planned two-year expatriation and feels much better than at the beginning. He stated how experienced hard time at the beginning of the expatriation. He specified his concerns by thinking whether he made the right decision when he accepted the offer for expatriation. Moreover, he did not received great support from the company so he had to arrange his living in Prague on his own. This time was very frustrating for him. Now, he is happy he stayed in the Czech Republic. He socializes with local people mainly. R3 said that culture and customs of his home country and the Czech Republic are very similar; therefore he did not have any issues with culture adjustment.

Concerning cross-cultural training, Respondent 3 did not undergo any type of training. On the other hand, he was educated himself by his own. He was searching for some basic information on the Internet and as he said, he knew what to expect because he visited Czech Republic several times as a tourist. He believes that if two countries are very similar (Poland and Czech Republic) no extra training is needed.

This is a first expatriation of Respondent 3 so he did not experienced expatriation failure before but he expressed his opinion why he believes that expatriation fails. He suggested that family issues and argue inside the family can greatly contribute to fail of expatriation. As factors that can help to avoid expatriation failure, R3 sees providing support from the company and from the family. He suggested that company should arrange necessary things such as housing and car rent to expatriate so he/she does not have to deal with these issues after arrival to the host country.

According to Respondent's opinion, the three most useful cross-cultural training to avoid expatriation failure are language training, meetings with other expatriates and meetings with local people.

4.5 Respondent 4

Respondent 4 is in age range between 35-44 years old Hungarian man. He is awarded by master degree in Engineering and works in Security and Telecommunication industry. He is assigned from Hungary to work as an expatriate person in the Czech Republic on position of Product and Sales Manager. He is assigned for international assignment that is planned for one year. This is the first expatriation experience of the Respondent 4.

This respondent sees the expatriation as a great opportunity to gain some experience in his career development. He considered job position and the attractiveness of host country, after one week he decided to accept the offer of international assignment.

Respondent 4 noted that because his home country and Czech Republic have similar cultures it is advantage for him because he adjusts to culture easily. He did not experienced any hard time or troubles from cultural adjustment point of view. He is using some social networks and attends several events where he can meet new people from business. He feels that having friends around make his expatriation much easier.

Company provided some training to Respondent 4. This training covered topics such as information about history, geography, and law and business environment in the Czech Republic. Company also did meetings focused on the future job position in the host country. All training was provided before departure. R4 appreciated this training and according to him it was very useful to have complex information about the host country. He also studied on his own via Internet. The most useful information obtained during the training was lectures about Czech law and business environment. The training provided by the company lasted only half day and the length of the training was thing that Respondent 4 was complaining about. He would appreciate training that lasts longer. Training was obligatory but did not explain any cultural aspects. R4 said he would appreciate some cultural briefings but there was not time for this type of training. Respondent finished part about training by saying that some kind of training is necessary, mainly in cases when home and host country are very different from cultural point of view.

This is the first experience with international assignment for Respondent 4 so he couldn't experience expatriation failure before. On the other hand, he answered that his colleague failed in expatriation in Slovakia. R4 believes that when competences and decision process are clear, no expatriation failure can occur. When asked about reasons for expatriation failure, he suggested family issues and issues connected with partner/spouse are main reasons for expatriation failure. He thinks that some people refuse expatriation because when accompanied by family and kids, expatriation is much complicated. The more people involved in expatriation, the more problem may arise.

In order to secure conditions for easier expatriation, R4 suggested company should provide clear decision-making process, specified responsibilities and competences. Company should also provide best possible conditions for everyday issues (housing, car rent, schools for kids) that should be secured by the company so expatriate does not have to spent his/her time with arranging all this necessary things. Respondent 4 summarized that most used type of cross-cultural training is language training, cultural briefings and meetings with local people.

4.6 Respondent 5

Respondent 5 is a female in age range between 35-44 years old and is the only third-country national. She is Venezuelan, was assigned by the company from the UK to work as an

expatriates in Prague, Czech Republic. Now, she is working in IT industry as a Sales Manager for Eastern Europe. R4 have previous experience with international assignments. She was forking for two years in Bratislava, Slovakia. The current expatriation is contracted for 3 years. When the offer for expatriation to the Czech Republic was announced, she was thinking about it for 2 weeks. She considered new experienced and career development that she might gain in the host country. Moreover, the offer for international assignment was actually promotion so it was the opportunity to move on in her career development.

Based on previous experience in business and cultural environment in Slovakia, R5 believes that she is adjusting to Czech culture very well, because Slovak and Czech culture, customs are almost the same. Socializing with local people is very easy for her also because she is member of Prague Business Club where she meets people from business and finds also some real friends. She did not experienced any hard time during her expatriation in the Czech Republic. She feels satisfied when she has a good hinterland, friends and family support and mainly company support.

Concerning cross-cultural training, Respondent 5 undertook the pre-departure training. This training was organized in a form of cultural lectures, lectures focused on business and law in the Czech Republic. Some books were also provided to her. R5 believes that cultural training is very important because culture of the country tells a lot about the people. All training provided by the company was relevant and actual. She regrets that company did not arranged any language training that she finds useful too. She is not undergoing any training in these days but she is thinking about some Czech language training for foreigners. The training arranged by the company lasted for two days and was obligatory. Respondent 5 thinks that cross-cultural training helped her with cultural adjustment in the Czech Republic nevertheless she would appreciate some more explanation about Czech political system and already mentioned language training. Overall, she believes that cross-cultural training is necessary in majority cases of expatriation.

This respondent has never experienced expatriation failure. She expressed her belief that reasons why some people refuse international assignments and reasons for expatriation are the same therefore family issues and issues with local staff in host country. In order to make expatriation easier, R5 suggests company and family support. Respondent 5 believes that cross-cultural training is necessary and the most useful types of cross-cultural training are

cultural briefings, meetings with other expatriates and meetings with local people. She also highlighted importance of language training.

4.7 Respondent 6

Respondent 6 is male of age between 35-44 years old with Swedish nationality. He is awarded by master degree from Engineering and also obtained degree from MBA. He is assigned expatriate by the company in Sweden that operates in Security and IT industry. Expatriate is working as a Sales and Marketing Manager in the Czech Republic.

This respondent has a previous experience in international assignments. He was working at lower positions in Poland and Romania. Current expatriation contract is signed for two years with the possibility to extend the contract for another two years if needed.

Respondent decided to join selection procedure after he considered what a great opportunity would be to work as an expatriate in the Czech Republic. He stressed the chance for career development. He specified that this position was highly demanded, lucrative and there were many applicants applying for this position. Once he was announced he won selection process he agreed to sign the contract immediately. He does not regret his choice, oppositely he really enjoys working and living in Prague. He sees Czech people very open-minded and friendly. He attends events organized by Swedish embassy where he meets lot of interesting people from inside and outside the business. He feels that he adjusted very well to Czech culture; he is not experienced any hard time or struggles connected to culture. He expressed how positively surprised he was after arrival to Prague. He appreciates how Czech Republic changed since 1989. Be highlighted that infrastructure and services are working on very high level just like in Sweden. He likes the fact that Czech people can work very hard if try are correctly motivated. He is impressed by the level of education and knowledge that Czech people have. On the other hand, he was complaining about high level of bureaucracy, clientelism and corruption. He noted that doing business in the Czech Republic is almost impossible without the right connections.

Company provided very broad range of cross-cultural training to this expatriate. He received training sessions that were focused on culture and customs, law, business environment, they he watched some video examples from real life, books and brochures were provided to him, but most importantly preliminary visit was arranged. All types of training were pre-departure

training. He stated that training was obligatory and very helpful for cultural adjustment. Preliminary visit was chosen as the best training from all that he undertook. He also explained the process of expatriation preparation within the company. His preparation took for about half a year. During this period, he visited country three times and met his new colleagues, people from embassy and some business partners. One month before departure, he received 2 days training about culture, customs and law. He stated that the training was necessary to understand people's mentality, but a critical point was actual contact with them. Wife and child in Prague accompany Respondent 6. The training was provided also to his wife, except the business training. No training was provided to his child. Respondent appreciate that company arranged everything (housing, car rent, health service, kindergarten and later school). He believes that all of them adjusted well to new country. His kid is attending international school and joins ice hockey club in Prague. Wife is taking care of the child and looking for a job.

This respondent di not experienced expatriation failure. He believes that people refuse international assignment because of lack of confidence or for family issues. A family issue is also the reason why he thinks so many assignments fail. In order to make his expatriation easier he suggests that all companies should provide the best possible conditions and support to their expatriates. Another important factor for easier expatriation is family support and no argues. Respondent 6 chosen preliminary visit, cultural briefings and meeting with other expatriates as three most useful tools for cross-cultural training.

4.8 Respondent 7

Respondent 7 is Swedish man in age range between 35-44 years old. He is awarded by master degree in Engineering. He was assigned by the company in Sweden to work as expatriate in the Czech Republic on Product Manager position. He already has experiences with international assignment from Hungary where he was working for two years. His current contract in Czech Republic is signed for three years.

He decided to accept the offer for expatriation because of career development. He was thinking about the offer for about a week. He applied for this position because of the attractiveness of the country. He does not regret being expatriate in Prague at all, oppositely he sees huge potential in the Czech Republic and finds Prague as a very good place for life.

He feels that he adjusted very well to Czech culture. Connections, international and local friends helped him to adjust to culture. He is attending many exhibitions, banquets and organized event very often so he does not struggle with communication. He was very surprised how developed country Czech Republic is. He appreciates high level of services that are comparable with the Swedish ones. He does not like the corruption that is spread in the Czech Republic. He also stressed that without connections to "right" people, doing transparent business in the Czech Republic is very hard. Friends, pro-activity, self-confidence, friends among local people are factors that makes his expatriation easier.

Complex training was provided to this respondent. It included cultural lectures, leaflets and preliminary visit. He explained that the company has a team in Sweden that focuses primarily on expatriates and that this team is organizing everything what he needs for smoother expatriation. From his point of view, preliminary visit was the most useful tool from cross-cultural training that was provided. All training provided was actual and relevant. All was pre-departure training. Moreover, every month he receives an update with actual information about changes that happened in the country. He has also contact on Swedish embassy (business advisor/attaché) that provides him information about current contracts and business activities in the Czech Republic. He stressed that the training and provided information are very important and that without it, it would be extremely hard to adjust and work properly. He specified his relocation to the Czech Republic was organized for 5 months. He visited Czech Republic twice during that time period. Cultural lectures were held one month before departure and lasted for two days.

Wife is accompanying this respondent in Prague. Company provided her the same training as to expatriate, except meetings that were business related. Unfortunately, until now, she was not able to find a job.

Concerning expatriation failure, Respondent 7 has no experience with this negative phenomenon. He expressed his opinion that the main reasons for expatriation failure are family issues and problems at work. He also believes that the reason why someone refuses expatriation is caused by family concerns because family is not willing to move to host country. In order to avoid expatriation failure, company should secure conditions for smooth expatriation (arrange housing, car, health insurance etc.). Afterwards, Respondent 7 chose cultural briefings, preliminary visit and meetings with other expatriates as the most useful tools for cross-cultural training.

5. Results and Discussion

This chapter summarizes the results from empirical findings. Respondent's answers are compared among themselves so some similarities and differences can be explained. There is also discussion about whether results of this research correspond with the literature and whether the results differ or are the same.

5.1 Factors making expatriation easier

The following table represents respondents answers to questions about factors that they believe would help them to make their expatriation easier in order to avoid expatriation failure.

Respondent	Factors making expatriation easier in order to avoid expatriation failure
Respondent 1	Provide some training for expatriates, organize some events (dinner) for expatriate and new colleagues in host country, clarify responsibilities and competences
Respondent 2	Company and family support, cross-cultural training
Respondent 3	Motivation from company, company support (secure housing, car, insurance), family support
Respondent 4	Cross-cultural training, clear job description and competences, clear decision-making process, company support (secure housing, car rent, schools)
Respondent 5	Company and family support, language training
Respondent 6	Company support (proper training for expatriation) and family support
Respondent 7	Company support (secure housing, car, health insurance, schools), provide cross-cultural training and preliminary visit

Table 3, Factors making expatriation easier in order to avoid expatriation failure, author's own processing

The most frequent factors for easier expatriation provided by respondents of the research are company and family support. Both groups of respondents (those who received some type of cross-cultural training and those who did not) agreed that company support is critical for easier expatriation that might lead to avoiding expatriation failure. In this response are hidden two types of company supports – securing and arranging everyday life necessities such as housing, car rent, schools for kids, health insurance etc. and providing some type of cross-cultural training.

According the literature, the most frequent reason for expatriation failure is inability of expatriates or spouses to adjust to local culture (Brisoce, 1995; Brewster, Sparrow and Vernon, 2007, Dowling and Welch, 2004, Harrison and Michailova, 2012). Therefore responses from respondents that providing cross-cultural training would contribute to avoiding expatriation failure are relevant and corresponds with the literature. The other part of company support that was mentioned by the research respondents is securing and arranging housing, car rent, schools for kids and health insurance. It is quite understandable because when expatriate moves to completely new country and has to deal with new working environment, it is very challenging. It is even challenging if he/she should secure and arrange his/her new "life" in the country on his/her own. If company provides and arranges these things for expatriate, he/she does not have to spend time and energy with securing mentioned services and can only focus on his/her job. It has been mentioned in literature that companies usually covers all costs connected with expatriation such as housing, car rent (Andresen et al., 2012, p. 932) but the literature does not mention who is dealing with these arrangements and who spend time with it. It is clear from the research, that it is not a rule that company provides this type of service. Costs of expatriation might be covered, but expat has to communicate, arrange and spend his/her own time with it, while company "just" send its money to the account. This topic does not receive enough attention in the literature. As results of the research showed, it is very important for expatriates so it is a recommendation for companies to pay more attention and spend time with arranging these services to their expatriates.

The second frequent response of respondents to factors that make expatriation easier in order to avoid expatriation failure was family support. The importance of spouses and kids and

their influence on the mood and job performance of expatriate has been highlighted in the literature (Brisoce, 1995; Brewster, Sparrow and Vernon, 2007, Dowling and Welch, 2004, Harrison and Michailova, 2012). Expatriate needs to feel family support in order to fully concentrate on the task given by the company. From this reason, it is also important to provide cross-cultural training to spouses and people who accompanied the expatriate to the host country. Without training they may easily struggle with local culture that can cause some issues and argues inside the family. From the responses provided by respondents is clear that family support is an important factor for expatriates that makes expatriation easier and contributes to avoiding expatriation failure.

Based on explanation and discussion above, first research question can be answered.

RQ 1: *What makes expatriation easier in order to avoid or decrease possibility of expatriation failure?*

Based on the research of this thesis, company support and family support are two main factors that make expatriation easier and contribute to avoiding expatriation failure.

As a company comport is meant mainly providing some type of cross-cultural training and arranging housing, car rent, health insurance, schools and other things necessary for everyday life of expatriates.

The second response, family support, cannot be secured by the company, but the company can influence the family happiness by providing cross-cultural training to all members who are accompanying expatriate in host country. By providing cross-cultural training, accompaniment will be prepared for culture of host country and will not struggle to adjust. It is an important, because expatriation failure is mainly caused by inability of expatriates or family member who are not able to adjust to local culture. Struggling accompaniment with culture can cause family issues and argues that greatly influence expatriate mood and job performance.

5.2 Factors helping to adjust to culture

The following table show factors that help expatriates with adjusting to local culture.

Respondent	Factors helping to adjust to culture
Respondent 1	Being a friend of local people, going out to organized events and meeting new people, acknowledge of place where you work and live
Respondent 2	Cross-culture training, support provided by the company, having friend among local people
Respondent 3	Friends among local people
Respondent 4	Having friends around
Respondent 5	Having a good hinterland and friends among local people
Respondent 6	International friends, local friends, cross-cultural training
Respondent 7	Having friends in host country, being active and confident, learn about place you live and work, make friends among local people

Table 4, factors helping to adjust to culture, author's own processing

The most frequent response chosen as the factor that helps to adjust expatriates to local culture is friendship with local people. All respondents mentioned in their responses that adjusting to local culture was much easier when they had friends among local people. Respondent 6 stated that local friends served as a city guide in the host country.
Importance of being in contact with local people is mentioned in literature (Peltokorpi and Froese, 2009; Kim and Froese, 2012). It stressed that when expat is in contact or even better has friends among local people, his/her understanding and knowledge of culture is deeper. In consequence, by staying in touch with local people expatriates adjusts faster and easier to the culture of host country.

The findings of this research confirm knowledge gained from literature review that contact with local people greatly contributes to easier adjusting to culture. Therefore the finding corresponds with the literature. Author highlights the fact that this finding is supported by responses from all respondent therefore the importance of friendships with local people

worth the attention and might serve as recommendation for companies to organize some events or meetings where expatriates and local people can meet and exchange their business experiences.

Based on the results and discussion above, the second research question can be answered.

RQ 2: *What are factors that help expatriates to adjust to host country culture?*

The main factors that help expatriates to adjust to culture of host country are friendships with international people and mainly with local people. Once expatriate is in contact with local people they can understand the local culture better and deeper and therefore adjusting to culture is easier and faster.

5.3 Evaluation of type of cross-cultural training

The following table shows different types of cross-cultural training and votes that training received from specific respondents. This table was constructed based on the last question in e-mail interview when respondent were supposed to choose three types of cross-cultural training that they believe is the most useful type of cross-cultural training for expatriation. In case, that no training was provided, respondent were asked to choose three types of cross-cultural training that he/she believes would be the best type of cross-cultural training for expatriation.

Type of training	Votes	Respondent number
Language training	3	R1, R3, R4
Cultural briefings	6	R1, R2, R4, R5, R6, R7
Preliminary visit	3	R2, R6, R7
Videos		
Books		
Simulation of situations		
Post-arrival meetings with other expatriates	3	R3, R5, R6
Post-arrival meetings with local people	6	R1, R2, R3, R4, R5, R7

Table 5, cross-cultural training evaluation, author's own processing

As can be seen in the table, there are two types of cross-cultural training that received the highest number of votes from respondents. These are Cultural briefings and Meetings with local people. Both types of training received 6 votes from 7 respondents.

As known from literature review, cultural briefings usually cover topics such as cultural awareness, cultural differences, customs, religion, holidays but also brief introduction to history, geography and law (Briscoe, 1995; Brewster, Sparrow and Vernon, 2007; Shen and Lang, 2009; Harrison, 2010). The same or similar topics were covered in cultural briefings of research respondents training. This result also corresponds with finding of previous researches that cultural awareness and culture knowledge of host country is a crucial for

expatriates (Brewster, Sparrow and Vernon, 2007; Harrison, 2010). Respondents – expatriates expressed the same feeling, namely that training focused on cultural differences and cultural awareness is perceived by them as the most important and useful type of cross-cultural training.

Type of training that obtained the same amount of votes (6) as Culture briefings are Post-arrival meetings with local people. By meetings with local people is meant any kind of meeting or encounter between expatriate and citizen/s of the host country. It has been mentioned in literature that coping with culture of host country and adjusting is much easier for expatriates, when they are in contact with local people (Peltokorpi and Froese, 2009, p. 1106). Results of the research done by the author of this thesis correspond with the literature. This type of training is done after arrival to host country for practical reason. After arrival, expatriate is facing his/her working and everyday life challenges in real situations in host country. It would be non-sense to provide such meetings before departure because expatriate would not be able to try them and experience them immediately. Meetings with local people do not necessarily have to be organized by the company but expatriates themselves might initiate them. Local people can greatly contribute to easier cultural adjustment by providing practical help and tips for everyday life of expatriate.

Surprisingly, these types of meetings do not receive appropriate attention in academic texts. From this research is obvious that socializing and meeting local people of host country contributes to successful expatriation as well as makes cultural adjustment easier. One would think that if this type of socializing were so useful for expatriates, it would receive greater attention in academic text and books. Author believes that this part of the research may serve as an idea and recommendation on what future researches should focus.

Based on the results above, the third research question can be answered:

RQ 3: *What specific type of cross-cultural training is evaluated as the most useful for expatriates?*

According to this research, as the most useful type of cross-cultural training for expatriates are Cultural briefings and Post-arrival meetings with local people.

Language training, preliminary visit and post-arrival meetings with other expatriates received the same amount of votes (3) from respondents.

Despite the fact that language training was noted as an essential for expatriation (Brewster, Sparrow and Vernon, 2007; Shen and Lang, 2009), author believes that language training did not received more votes in the research because all respondent were assigned by international companies where language number one is English. Because usage of English language is spread all around the world, people rely on the knowledge of English and do not tend to learn language that is used only in one country.

Preliminary visit is mentioned in the literature (Brewster, Sparrow and Vernon, 2007; Harrison, 2010) as a training that serves as a first-hand experience with the host country. Respondents (R2, R6, R7) who visited host country before the original assignment stated, highlighted its importance very strongly. The rest of respondents who did not visited host country before assignment did not vote for preliminary visit as the most useful tool for expatriation. There might be discussion about the situation that if those respondents would experience preliminary visit, their attitude and evaluation of types of cross-cultural training might change. Changes toward types of cross-cultural training before and after arrival to host country can be next suggestion for the future research.

The rest of types of cross-cultural training (videos, books and simulation of situations an expatriate can get into) did not receive any vote so it will not be discussed.

5.4 Validity and Reliability of the research

Validity of the research means that the research really studies and measures what was intended to study and measure (psucd8, 2011). Therefore valid research is research that gives answers to its research questions. Qualitative research does not guarantee validity, but with usage of qualitative research, researcher can achieve higher validity than with quantitative research. It is caused by techniques of the research because with quantitative research, respondent is usually limited by given answers from which he/she chooses or there is scale from that respondent chooses specific number. But it does not really explain respondent's choice or studied issues. On the other hand, quantitative research is usually less time demanding and data processing is fast due to different software usage.

This research focused on understanding issues and concerns of cross-cultural training therefore decision for qualitative research was clear choice. This research provided answers to its research questions therefore it can be stated that this research is valid.

Reliability means that if someone other researcher conducts the same research under the same conditions, he/she should find out the same results. Reliable research is research whose findings are repeatable (Keegan, 2009).

Because of the nature of qualitative research, reliability of this research is very low. It is due to the fact that participant of the research changes and environment is changing too, therefore chance to create completely the same conditions to repeat the study is very low, almost impossible. It is not only case of this particular research but it is case of qualitative research in general.

6. Conclusion and Recommendation

This thesis aimed on introduction, explanation and critical analysis of issues connected with the field of expatriation with the stress on training of expatriates and the negative phenomenon known as an expatriation failure. Gained knowledge from literature review that focused on topics such as reasons for expatriation, expatriation failure, culture awareness and cross-cultural training served as a background for empirical part. Gained knowledge was introduced in the practices and afterwards it was applied, discussed and compared with the results that this research revealed. The own research focused on finding what makes expatriation easier in order to avoid expatriation failure, what helps to expatriates to adjust to culture of host country and on finding the most useful type of cross-culture training for expatriation. Findings of the research were used to answer these questions.

The research detected some interesting facts concerning the field of expatriation. The research revealed that company support and family support are two factors that make expatriation of assignees easier. Company support conceals of two important things by which company can help expatriate to avoid expatriation failure. The first one is providing some type of cross-cultural training to expatriates and the second one is securing and arranging best possible conditions for every-day life (arranging and dealing with housing, car rent, health insurance, school for kids). Respondents stated that if the company provide these types of supports, it makes their expatriation easier and greatly contributes to avoiding expatriation failure. These findings confirm knowledge gained from literature review about cross-cultural training. It is believed and now was confirm with this research that cross-cultural training greatly helps to avoid expatriation failure.

The second factor that contributes to avoiding expatriation failure is family support. Research uncovered that family welfare help expatriates to avoid expatriation failure. When expatriate is contented at home, he/she is not exposed to the stress so change that the international assignment fails is much lower. This finding corresponds with the literature that states that the most frequent reason for expatriation failures are family issues that are connected with inability to adjust to local culture. From the research results is obvious that family and contentment of family members matters to expatriates and that expatriates realize

that by having both company and family support their chances that their expatriation assignment will be successful are higher.

The research also focused on cultural side of expatriation and the results indicates that the factors that help to expatriates to adjust to culture of host country are friendships with international expatriates and more importantly friendship with local people of host country. Respondents highlighted that having friends among local people help them to adjust easier and faster. By friendship with local people, expatriates can gain deeper knowledge of the host country and its culture, customs and rules. They can understand and realize differences between cultures faster and easier that help them to avoid unpleasant situation. By being in a contact with local people that gain host culture knowledge that helps them to adjust to local culture faster and easier. This finding correspond with literature that highlight the fact that by staying in touch with local people is great assistance to expatriate in his/her process of adjusting to local culture.

The last result uncovered by the research is connected to cross-cultural training. It was find out that the most useful type of cross-cultural training are Cultural Briefings and Post-arrival Meetings with Local People. These types of training received the same amount of votes from respondents in the evaluation of cross-cultural training type.

By meetings is meant any meeting or encounter where expatriate and a citizen of the host country meet and talk. This finding is in connection with the previous finding that friendship with local people helps expatriates to adjust to local culture easier. These two outcomes greatly stress the important role of the contact with local people in expatriation. It seems that by the contact with local people and by socializing with them, expatriations can highly increase chance that their expatriation will be successful.

Cultural Briefings are believed to have same importance as Post-arrival Meetings with Local People. Cultural Briefings include information about culture, customs, history, religion and some basic information about law. With cultural knowledge that Cultural Briefings provides, expatriate is featured with the knowledge he/she needs to know for smooth process of international assignment from cultural point of view. This result supports the literature that cultural knowledge is a crucial for successful expatriation.

This thesis and its results serve as a guide that recommends several changes in in company's attitude toward expatriation. Based on the results of the research that revealed that providing some type of cross-cultural training and by arranging necessaries connected with everyday life (housing, car rent, schools for kids, health insurance) are two factors that helps expatriation easier, company can secure this services and contributes to successful expatriation. Company should not only cover the costs connected with expatriation, it should also arrange, sort and deal with arranging theses services in order to make expatriation easier. It may look that company can do anything about family support but author recommends to company to provide cross-culture training also to family members or partners who are accompanying expatriate to host country. From literature is known that family issues connected to inability to adjust to local culture is the main reason why expatriation fails. In order to avoid these issues, company provides cross-cultural training to accompaniment. With the proper cross-cultural training, the ability to adjust to local culture rises and chances to failure decreases.

In order to help expatriates adjust to culture, based on the results, company should provide cross-cultural training as well as organize some events and meetings where expatriates meets with local people. It is recommended to provide both pre-departure and post-departure training. The training should be broad and should include different form of training. It is highly recommended to provide cultural briefings and preliminary visits before the original task starts. After arrival to the country, expatriates can greatly benefit from meetings with local people.

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8. Appendices
8.1 Appendix 1: Participant Information Sheet
Participant Information Sheet

Thank you very much for considering being a part of the research. I am a final year student of the Czech University of Life Sciences in Prauge and I study Economics and Management. In my dissertation "A critical analysis and exploration into what type of cross-cultural training is the most useful tool for avoiding expatriation failure" I would like to find out what is the most useful tool of cross-cultural training for expatriates.

Criteria for a research

You must be a woman aged over 18 years old, working abroad as an expatriate or with the experience of being expatriate.

Data collection

Participants will receive e-mail with several close and open-ended questions concerning expatriation, training for expatriation, expatriation failure and evaluation of different types of cross-cultural training.

Anonymity and voluntary participation

Participation in a research is voluntary and participants can withdraw from the research at any time. Participants have the right to pull out of the question/interview at any time. Identification information such as your personal name, e-mail addresses, and names of the company will NOT be used in publications and will NOT be shared. I would like you to make sure that the research serves for academic purpose only and the results of the research will never harm you as a person. No identification questions as names or company names will not be asked in the interview. If you agree to take a part in a research, please answer to e-mail interview questions and sent them to the researcher. If you have more questions, feel free to contact me.

Researcher contact details:
Miluše Masařová
miluse.masarova@sezna.cz

8.2 Appendix 2: Questions for e-mail interview

Identification questions
1) What is your age?
19-24
25-34
35-44
45-54
55-64
65-74 years old
75 years and older

2) What is your gender?

3) What is your nationality?

4) What is your highest achieved education?

5) From which country you have been assigned to expatriation?

6) Where do you work as an expatriate?

7) In what industry do you work?

8) What is your job position?

Questions regarding your expatriation
9) Are you self-initiative or assigned expatriate?

10) Is this your firs international assignment?

11) Do you have any previous experience with international assignments? If yes, please write how long your expatriation was and where it took a place.

12) What is a length of your current/last expatriation?

13) Why did you decide to accept the offer of international assignment?

14) What factors did you take into consideration when deciding whether to accept the offer or not?

15) How long did it take you to decide whether accept the offer or not?

16) How would you evaluate your current expatriation? Can you describe your feelings and concerns, pros and cons that you are experiencing in host country?

17) How do you find new friends in a host country? Do you struggle to communicate with local people?

18) How do you perceive your ability to adjust to local culture and ability to adjust to local business culture?

19) What surprised you most in host country? When do you experience the hardest time?

20) What helps you to feel better, to be happy in new host country?

Questions regarding cross-culture training

21) Did your company provide you any cross-cultural training (pre-liminary visit, lectures, brainstorming, books, videos etc.) Please write which ones.

If not, please write if you have prepared yourself to expatriation and how? When did you prepared (before or after arrival)? What was more useful? Would you appreciate if your company would provide some cross-cultural training?

22) When some training provided, was it before or after your arrival to the host country?

23) Can you describe pros and cons of training that was provided to you before and after the arrival?

23) When you look back, was training useful? Did it give you better idea what to expect in the country?

24) Which of the trainings you undertook was the most useful?

25) Are you undergoing some training in these days? Which one?

26) Was the training you undertook relevant? Does it correspond with the real situations in the country?

27) Do you think that cross-cultural training helped you to adjust to local culture? Do you think it would be more complicated without training?

28) Was training voluntary or obligatory? If voluntary, did you go to all of the training? If not, why?

29) How long last the trainings?

30) What type of training would you appreciate to last longer?

31) How would you evaluate cross-cultural training in general? Do you think it is necessary, is it helpful?

Questions regarding accompaniment

32) Are you accompanied by family/spouse/kids in host country?

33) Did the company provide the cross-cultural training to them?

34) What is the biggest challenge or concerns for them in the host country?

35) What do you think would make their stay in host country easier?

Questions regarding expatriation failure and expatriation experience (expatriation failure = early return home, not finished assignment)

36) Have your ever-experienced expatriation failure? If yes, what was the cause of the failure?

37) What do you think would help to avoid the failure?

38) Why do you think that some people decide to refuse the offer of expatriations? Can you write some pros and cons form your experience?

39) What do you think are reasons that expatriation fails so many times?

40) Generally speaking about expatriation, what should company do to make your expatriation easier and smoother?

Cross-cultural training evaluation

Please choose three types of training those that you believe that are the most useful types of cross-cultural training for expatriation. In case company did not provide any training, choose three types of cross-cultural training that you believe are the most useful type of cross-cultural training for expatriation.

- Language training
- Cultural briefings
- Pre-liminary visit
- Videos
- Books about host country culture
- Simulations of situation into which expatriate can get
- Post-arrival meetings with other expatriates
- Post-arrival meetings with local people
- Suggest your idea

8.3 Appendix 3: Answers to e-mail interviews

Respondent 1
Questions for e-mail interview

Identification questions
1) What is your age?
19-24
25-34
35-44
45-54
55-64
65-74 years old
75 years and older

2) What is your gender?
Female

3) What is your nationality?
Bulgarian

4) What is your highest achieved education?
Master degree in IT, MBA

5) From which country you have been assigned to expatriation?
Bulgaria

6) Where do you work as an expatriate?
Czech Republic, Prague

7) In what industry do you work?
IT

8) What is your job position?
Project manager

Questions regarding your expatriation
9) Are you self-initiative or assigned expatriate?
Assigned expatriate

10) Is this your first international assignment?
Yes

11) Do you have any previous experience with international assignments? If yes, please write how long your expatriation was and where it took a place.
No

12) What is a length of your current/last expatriation?
It is planned for 2 years

13) Why did you decide to accept the offer of international assignment?
Career development, new experience, and attractiveness of the country
14) What factors did you take into consideration when deciding whether to accept the offer or not?
Family issues, relationship. Career development.

15) How long did it take you to decide whether accept the offer or not?
3-4 weeks

16) How would you evaluate your current expatriation? Can you describe your feelings and concerns, pros and cons that you are experiencing in host country?
I am quite happy. I had some difficulties at the beginning but since I have some new friends from and outside the work it is much easier. Culture and language of my country and the Czech republic is little bit similar so it is easier for me to learn Czech. Language knowledge is very helpful mainly because not everything is written in English language.

17) How do you find new friends in a host country? Do you struggle to communicate with local people? Do you use any website/social network for expatriates?
Some people from my work are my friends now. I am attending several events on embassy where I have some friends. At the beginning it was easier to make friends among international staff but now I have some Czech friends too. It is very helpful because they know their country/city very well so they recommend me places where to go, help me with some everyday life issues. I am member of InterNations and I attend their events regularly. Not so often right now because I already have enough friends and people to meet but from the beginning it was very good tool how to get access to events and meet new international people. Now, I prefer to go out with local people.

18) How do you perceive your ability to adjust to local culture and ability to adjust to local business culture?
I think Bulgarian and Czech cultures are similar therefore there are not such a big differences. I think I adjusted very well.

19) What surprised you most in host country? When do you experience the hardest time?
Local people were always friendly to me. The hardest time was from the beginning when I did not know anybody and everything was new. I remember that Czech sense for humour was for me quite shocking, especially black humour.

20) What helps you to feel better, to be happy in new host country?
To go out to some organized events and meet new people. Being friend of local people is very helpful. If I am satisfied with my job performance, I am confident and it makes me feel that I am on right place. And knowledge of place where you live and work is crucial but it takes time.

Questions regarding cross-culture training

21) Did your company provide you any cross-cultural training (pre-liminary visit, lectures, brainstorming, books, videos etc.) Please write which ones.

If not, please write if you have prepared yourself to expatriation and how? When did you prepared (before or after arrival)? What was more useful? Would you appreciate if your company would provide some cross-cultural training?
No training was provided. I was looking for some basic information about the country on the Internet. I read some books before arrival but I read them again when I was in Prague because I was able to go to places mentioned in the book. I would be happy if my company give me some cross-cultural training but as I said, culture and customs in Bulgaria and Czech rep. are pretty similar to me.

22) When some training provided, was it before or after your arrival to the host country?

23) Can you describe pros and cons of training that was provided to you before and after the arrival?

23) When you look back, was training useful? Did it give you better idea what to expect in the country?

24) Which of the trainings you undertook was the most useful?

25) Are you undergoing some training in these days? Which one?

26) Was the training you undertook relevant? Does it correspond with the real situations in the country?

27) Do you think that cross-cultural training helped you to adjust to local culture? Do you think it would be more complicated without training?

28) Was training voluntary or obligatory? If voluntary, did you go to all of the training? If not, why?

29) How long last the trainings?

30) What type of training would you appreciate to last longer?

31) How would you evaluate cross-cultural training in general? Do you think it is necessary, is it helpful?

Questions regarding accompaniment
32) Are you accompanied by family/spouse/kids in host country?
no
33) Did the company provide the cross-cultural training to them?

34) What is the biggest challenge or concerns for them in the host country?

35) What do you think would make their stay in host country easier?

Questions regarding expatriation failure and expatriation experience (expatriation failure = early return home, not finished assignment)

36) Have your ever-experienced expatriation failure? If yes, what was the cause of the failure?
This is my first expatriation so no

37) What do you think would help to avoid the failure?

38) Why do you think that some people decide to refuse the offer of expatriations? Can you write some pros and cons form your experience?
Some people already have families, kids etc. therefore it is much complicated for them to pack and just leave to completely different country. They have to find new schools for kids, spouse has to find new job etc.

39) What do you think are reasons that expatriation fails so many times?
Because family, partners or kids are not happy in the new country. When the countries are too different it might be hard for them to adjust. Expat is not satisfied at job.

40) Generally speaking about expatriation, what should company do to make your expatriation easier and smoother?
Provide some training. Organize some dinner after arrival to meet new colleagues before I started work. Sometimes my competences and responsibility are not clear.

Cross-cultural training evaluation
Please choose three types of training those that you believe that are the most useful types of

cross-cultural training for expatriation. In case company did not provide any training, choose

three types of cross-cultural training that you believe are the most useful type of cross-

cultural training for expatriation.

- *Language training*
- *Cultural briefings*
- Pre-liminary visit
- Videos
- Books about host country culture
- Simulations of situation into which expatriate can get
- Post-arrival meetings with other expatriates
- *Post-arrival meetings with local people*
- Suggest your idea: *I would say that meeting new people both international and local is very helpful. I would advice to make friends among local people.*

Respondent 2
Questions for e-mail interview

Identification questions
1) What is your age?
19-24
25-34
35-44
45-54
55-64
65-74 years old
75 years and older

2) What is your gender?
Male

3) What is your nationality?
Columbian

4) What is your highest achieved education?
Master degree in IT and MBA

5) From which country you have been assigned to expatriation?
Columbia

6) Where do you work as an expatriate?
Czech Republic, Prague

7) In what industry do you work?
IT

8) What is your job position?
Project manager

Questions regarding your expatriation
9) Are you self-initiative or assigned expatriate?
Assigned expatriate

10) Is this your first international assignment?
No, second one.

11) Do you have any previous experience with international assignments? If yes, please write how long your expatriation was and where it took a place.
I was working in London for 3 years as a acquisition manager.

12) What is a length of your current/last expatriation?
It is three-year international assignment.

13) Why did you decide to accept the offer of international assignment?

It was highly demanded position and I was chosen as a best candidate so I was very pleased to accept the offer.

14) What factors did you take into consideration when deciding whether to accept the offer or not?

I was thinking about what it brings to me and advantages outweigh. I find working in Europe, in Prague as a great opportunity to develop my career, gain some experience in completely different business environment, and meet interesting people inside and outside the work. I took into the consideration the distance between my home country and Czech Republic but because family is in Prague with me, I decided to move on.

15) How long did it take you to decide whether accept the offer or not?

When company announced that there will be selection process on the position for expatriates, I was thinking about it about 2 weeks with my wife.

16) How would you evaluate your current expatriation? Can you describe your feelings and concerns, pros and cons that you are experiencing in host country?

I am completely satisfied with the job here. I have clear objectives and goal and I have great team at work. I learnt that Czech people keep distance from the beginning but when they know you, they are quite open. And they have great sense for humour. When I am with my colleagues in the pub, they can be so enthusiastic and passionate just like Columbians. I like Czechs discussion about politics and government, which is really funny.

17) How do you find new friends in a host country? Do you struggle to communicate with local people? Do you use any website/social network for expatriates?

Czech people are very friendly. Some of them tend to underestimate themselves. Sometimes I think they are not so confident as they should be.

I do not struggle to communicate with Czechs at all. I like that they are honest. I am not using any extra social network, I only use those that everyone knows (facebook, linkedin). I like to go to events organized by InterNations to meet new people. I think it is a good idea of organizing such events. You can meet very important people whose can help you with your business or who might be your customer, competitor…

18) How do you perceive your ability to adjust to local culture and ability to adjust to local business culture?

My home country is way too different. People do not hesitate to share and express emotions. Here, people do not express their current feelings that much. I miss that emotionality and enthusiasm but I can live without it. I think I adjusted very well. I know that Prague is not so cosmopolitan city like a London where I have been working before, but Czech Republic and especially Prague citizens are very open, most of them speak English and other languages and do not have problem to with foreigners. What I love about Czech Republic is food. I can get enough of Svickova.

19) What surprised you most in host country? When do you experience the hardest time?
If you get out of Prague to some trip and there you go to the cottage for a lunch, sometimes is difficult to order a meal because a menu is not in English everywhere. So I learnt word "Svickova" and it works almost everywhere.

20) What helps you to feel better, to be happy in new host country?
People working in post offices and municipalities should be able to speak in English. This is sometimes frustrating but me and the other person have always figure it out.

Questions regarding cross-culture training

21) Did your company provide you any cross-cultural training (preliminary visit, lectures, brainstorming, books, videos etc.) Please write which ones.
Yes. Cultural lectures, books, preliminary visit.

If not, please write if you have prepared yourself to expatriation and how? When did you prepared (before or after arrival)? What was more useful? Would you appreciate if your company would provide some cross-cultural training?

22) When some training provided, was it before or after your arrival to the host country?
Everything was before departure. Of course I also searched on the Internet on my own before and after arrival to the Czech rep.

23) Can you describe pros and cons of training that was provided to you before and after the arrival?
It was good to know little bit about Prague and Czech before the assignment started but I find pre-liminary visit as the most important thing. I was able to meet my new colleagues before so we went to dinner had a talk…It was very helpful.

23) When you look back, was training useful? Did it give you better idea what to expect in the country?
Definitely it was useful. As I wrote above, it was much better than no training.

24) Which of the trainings you undertook was the most useful?
Preliminary visit

25) Are you undergoing some training in these days? Which one?
I am educating my self by reading books and articles about doing business in the Czech Republic.

26) Was the training you undertook relevant? Does it correspond with the real situations in the country?
Yes, pretty much.

27) Do you think that cross-cultural training helped you to adjust to local culture? Do you think it would be more complicated without training?
I think I would be able to adjust to culture without training but I highly appreciate the training that was provided. Before training I did not know much about Czech Republic besides that you have a good beer.

28) Was training voluntary or obligatory? If voluntary, did you go to all of the training? If not, why?
It was obligatory.

29) How long last the trainings?
3 days of lectures focused on geography, culture, customs, people behaviour, law, religion. Than 2 weeks of preliminary visit.

30) What type of training would you appreciate to last longer?
It was arranged pretty well.

31) How would you evaluate cross-cultural training in general? Do you think it is necessary, is it helpful?
I think culture knowledge is very important so I would highly recommend to everyone to join some cross-cultural training.

Questions regarding accompaniment
32) Are you accompanied by family/spouse/kids in host country?
Yes. My wife and two children are in Prague with me.

33) Did the company provide the cross-cultural training to them?
Training and preliminary visit were provided only to me and to my wife.

34) What is the biggest challenge or concerns for them in the host country?
My wife is taking care of our boys so sometimes she feels alone because she is only at home and does not have many friends. My boys are great. They have many friends at school, they joined football club in Prague and they seem happy to me.

35) What do you think would make their stay in host country easier?
More local friends who would take her out to dinner or drink just like she did it back in Colombia or London.

Questions regarding expatriation failure and expatriation experience (expatriation failure = early return home, not finished assignment)

36) Have your ever-experienced expatriation failure? If yes, what was the cause of the failure?
No.

37) What do you think would help to you/other people avoid the failure?
To have support from your family, from your company and to have friends in new country. Provide some type of cross-cultural training.

38) Why do you think that some people decide to refuse the offer of expatriations? Can you write some pros and cons form your experience?
Well, I believe it is a family concern. Sometimes spouses are not willing to move, it is hard for kids in new schools. When your family members are not happy it influences your mood and job performance so it might cause failure.

39) What do you think are reasons that expatriation fails so many times?
See above (family concerns).

40) Generally speaking about expatriation, what should company do to make your expatriation easier and smoother?
I think my company did good and prepared me for assignment well. Maybe training and preliminary visit to all member of my family would be nice.

Cross-cultural training evaluation
Please choose three types of training those that you believe that are the most useful types of cross-cultural training for expatriation. In case company did not provide any training, choose three types of cross-cultural training that you believe are the most useful type of cross-cultural training for expatriation.

- Language training
- *Cultural briefings*
- *Preliminary visit*
- Videos
- Books about host country culture
- Simulations of situation into which expatriate can get
- Post-arrival meetings with other expatriates
- *Post-arrival meetings with local people*
- Suggest your idea:

Respondent 3
Questions for e-mail interview

Identification questions
1) What is your age?
19-24
25-34
35-44
45-54
55-64
65-74 years old
75 years and older

2) What is your gender?
Male.

3) What is your nationality?
Polish

4) What is your highest achieved education?
Master degree in International Business, MA

5) From which country you have been assigned to expatriation?
Poland

6) Where do you work as an expatriate?
Czech Republic, Prague

7) In what industry do you work?
Food and beverage industry

8) What is your job position?
Sales director for Eastern Europe

Questions regarding your expatriation
9) Are you self-initiative or assigned expatriate?
Assigned

10) Is this your firs international assignment?
Yes

11) Do you have any previous experience with international assignments? If yes, please write how long your expatriation was and where it took a place.
No

12) What is a length of your current/last expatriation?
2 years

13) Why did you decide to accept the offer of international assignment?
It is great experience, career development, new contacts, and better salary.

14) What factors did you take into consideration when deciding whether to accept the offer or not?
Career development, family issues.

15) How long did it take you to decide whether accept the offer or not?
3 weeks

16) How would you evaluate your current expatriation? Can you describe your feelings and concerns, pros and cons that you are experiencing in host country?
I am happy where am I right know. I am in Prague for more than one year and I feel it is much better than at the beginning.

17) How do you find new friends in a host country? Do you struggle to communicate with local people?
It was hard from the beginning when I doubt whether I made right decision but now it is fine. I also had to arrange my housing and insurance and everything and it was little bit frustrating. Some company support would be nice. I tend to go out mainly with local people.

18) How do you perceive your ability to adjust to local culture and ability to adjust to local business culture?
Poland and Czech Republic are very similar therefore I think there are no adjustment difficulties.

19) What surprised you most in host country? When do you experience the hardest time?
From the beginning it was difficult, but when you know one Czech guy he will introduce you other and other…it is like snowball effect.

20) What helps you to feel better, to be happy in new host country?
Local friends.

Questions regarding cross-culture training

21) Did your company provide you any cross-cultural training (pre-liminary visit, lectures, brainstorming, books, videos etc.) Please write which ones.
No training provided.

If not, please write if you have prepared yourself to expatriation and how? When did you prepared (before or after arrival)? What was more useful? Would you appreciate if your company would provide some cross-cultural training?
I search through Internet but I visited Czech Republic before as a tourist so I knew what to expect. And cultures and customs are very similar.

22) When some training provided, was it before or after your arrival to the host country?

23) Can you describe pros and cons of training that was provided to you before and after the arrival?

23) When you look back, was training useful? Did it give you better idea what to expect in the country?

24) Which of the trainings you undertook was the most useful?

25) Are you undergoing some training in these days? Which one?

26) Was the training you undertook relevant? Does it correspond with the real situations in the country?

27) Do you think that cross-cultural training helped you to adjust to local culture? Do you think it would be more complicated without training?

28) Was training voluntary or obligatory? If voluntary, did you go to all of the training? If not, why?

29) How long last the trainings?

30) What type of training would you appreciate to last longer?

31) How would you evaluate cross-cultural training in general? Do you think it is necessary, is it helpful?
I think if you come from very similar countries, no extra training is needed.

Questions regarding accompaniment
32) Are you accompanied by family/spouse/kids in host country?
No
33) Did the company provide the cross-cultural training to them?

34) What is the biggest challenge or concerns for them in the host country?

35) What do you think would make their stay in host country easier?

Questions regarding expatriation failure and expatriation experience (expatriation failure = early return home, not finished assignment)

36) Have your ever-experienced expatriation failure? If yes, what was the cause of the failure?
No
37) What do you think would help to avoid the failure?
Support from the family and the company.

38) Why do you think that some people decide to refuse the offer of expatriations? Can you write some pros and cons form your experience?

They don't want to leave their families or partners.

39) What do you think are reasons that expatriation fails so many times?
Argues inside the family, relationship about expatriation.

40) Generally speaking about expatriation, what should company do to make your expatriation easier and smoother?
Motivate employee, support them by providing house and car and all necessary things that expat has to deal after arrival.

Cross-cultural training evaluation
Please choose three types of training those that you believe that are the most useful types of cross-cultural training for expatriation. In case company did not provide any training, choose three types of cross-cultural training that you believe are the most useful type of cross-cultural training for expatriation.

- ***Language training***
- Cultural briefings
- Pre-liminary visit
- Videos
- Books about host country culture
- Simulations of situation into which expatriate can get
- ***Post-arrival meetings with other expatriates***
- ***Post-arrival meetings with local people***
- Suggest your idea: ***company should provide best possible conditions (housing, health insurance, car..)***

Respondent 4
Questions for e-mail interview

Identification questions
1) What is your age?
19-24
25-34
35-44
45-54
55-64
65-74 years old
75 years and older

2) What is your gender?
Male

3) What is your nationality?
Hungarian

4) What is your highest achieved education?
Master degree in Engineering

5) From which country you have been assigned to expatriation?
Hungary

6) Where do you work as an expatriate?
Czech republic

7) In what industry do you work?
Security and telecommunication

8) What is your job position?
Product and sales manager

Questions regarding your expatriation
9) Are you self-initiative or assigned expatriate?
Assigned

10) Is this your firs international assignment?
Yes

11) Do you have any previous experience with international assignments? If yes, please write how long your expatriation was and where it took a place.
No

12) What is a length of your current/last expatriation?
One year

13) Why did you decide to accept the offer of international assignment?
It is great opportunity to gain some experience in my career.
14) What factors did you take into consideration when deciding whether to accept the offer or not?
Job position, country of expatriation

15) How long did it take you to decide whether accept the offer or not?
1 week

16) How would you evaluate your current expatriation? Can you describe your feelings and concerns, pros and cons that you are experiencing in host country?
Both countries are very similar so I find similarity as advantage. People are friendly.

17) How do you find new friends in a host country? Do you struggle to communicate with local people?
Usually via social networks and organized events by some organizations.

18) How do you perceive your ability to adjust to local culture and ability to adjust to local business culture?
I adjusted to Czech easily, no troubles.

19) What surprised you most in host country? When do you experience the hardest time?
How similar it is to my home country. No hard time.

20) What helps you to feel better, to be happy in new host country?
When I have friends around me everything is easier. And when I know I did good at job.

Questions regarding cross-culture training

21) Did your company provide you any cross-cultural training (pre-liminary visit, lectures, brainstorming, books, videos etc.) Please write which ones.
Yes, some training for job position and some basic information about Czech law, business environment and very brief introduction to Czech geography, history and current situation.

If not, please write if you have prepared yourself to expatriation and how? When did you prepared (before or after arrival)? What was more useful? Would you appreciate if your company would provide some cross-cultural training?

22) When some training provided, was it before or after your arrival to the host country?
Yes, before departure.

23) Can you describe pros and cons of training that was provided to you before and after the arrival?
It was good that I had some basic knowledge about Czech republic. I was also looking for some information by my self, mainly via Internet.

23) When you look back, was training useful? Did it give you better idea what to expect in the country?
Training was fine but too short. But it was probably because countries are very similar.

24) Which of the trainings you undertook was the most useful?
Czech law and business environment

25) Are you undergoing some training in these days? Which one?
No. If I need something I find it via Internet.

26) Was the training you undertook relevant? Does it correspond with the real situations in the country?
Yes definitely.

27) Do you think that cross-cultural training helped you to adjust to local culture? Do you think it would be more complicated without training?
It was not cross-cultural training but I would appreciate this type of training.

28) Was training voluntary or obligatory? If voluntary, did you go to all of the training? If not, why?
Obligatory

29) How long last the trainings?
Half day

30) What type of training would you appreciate to last longer?
Yes definitely

31) How would you evaluate cross-cultural training in general? Do you think it is necessary, is it helpful?
I think that in case those countries are very different like Hungary and China, then training is necessary. Generally I believe that some kind of training is necessary.

Questions regarding accompaniment
32) Are you accompanied by family/spouse/kids in host country?
no
33) Did the company provide the cross-cultural training to them?

34) What is the biggest challenge or concerns for them in the host country?

35) What do you think would make their stay in host country easier?

Questions regarding expatriation failure and expatriation experience (expatriation failure = early return home, not finished assignment)

36) Have your ever-experienced expatriation failure? If yes, what was the cause of the failure?
My colleague returned earlier from Slovakia. But no failure connected to my person.

37) What do you think would help to avoid the failure?
To set clear job description and competences and do not change them during the time. Sometimes I do not know if I can decide on my own (at work) or if I have to ask for permission.

38) Why do you think that some people decide to refuse the offer of expatriations? Can you write some pros and cons form your experience?
Maybe they do not want to put their relationship into the risk. Or if they have family it is very demanding for expat and spouse and kids.

39) What do you think are reasons that expatriation fails so many times?
Family issues, partner issues?

40) Generally speaking about expatriation, what should company do to make your expatriation easier and smoother?
It should give me a chance to decide on my own and clarify responsibilities and competences. Secure best conditions for living (housing, rent, schools for kids..).

Cross-cultural training evaluation
Please choose three types of training those that you believe that are the most useful types of cross-cultural training for expatriation. In case company did not provide any training, choose three types of cross-cultural training that you believe are the most useful type of cross-cultural training for expatriation.

- *Language training*
- *Cultural briefings*
- Pre-liminary visit
- Videos
- Books about host country culture
- Simulations of situation into which expatriate can get
- Post-arrival meetings with other expatriates
- *Post-arrival meetings with local people*
- Suggest your idea: *I would appreciate if company would provide some cross-cultural briefings*

Respondent 5
Questions for e-mail interview

Identification questions
1) What is your age?
19-24
25-34
35-44
45-54
55-64
65-74 years old
75 years and older

2) What is your gender?
Female

3) What is your nationality?
Venezuelan

4) What is your highest achieved education?
Master degree in IT

5) From which country you have been assigned to expatriation?
UK

6) Where do you work as an expatriate?
Czech Republic

7) In what industry do you work?
IT

8) What is your job position?
Sales Manager for Eastern Europe

Questions regarding your expatriation
9) Are you self-initiative or assigned expatriate?
Assigned

10) Is this your firs international assignment?
No

11) Do you have any previous experience with international assignments? If yes, please write how long your expatriation was and where it took a place.
I was working in Bratislava for 2 years.

12) What is a length of your current/last expatriation?
3 years

13) Why did you decide to accept the offer of international assignment?
It was a promotion and I find moving to Czech republic as a potential to growth, meet new people and to get experience in different business environment.

14) What factors did you take into consideration when deciding whether to accept the offer or not?
New experience, career development.

15) How long did it take you to decide whether accept the offer or not?
2 weeks

16) How would you evaluate your current expatriation? Can you describe your feelings and concerns, pros and cons that you are experiencing in host country?
I am satisfied. It is very similar to what I know from Slovakia so it was easier for me.

17) How do you find new friends in a host country? Do you struggle to communicate with local people?
I have some Slovak friends here who introduced me to their Czech friends. I am member of Prague business club where I can meet people from business.

18) How do you perceive your ability to adjust to local culture and ability to adjust to local business culture?
It is easy for me.

19) What surprised you most in host country? When do you experience the hardest time?
No hard time experienced. People are happy and always friendly and when you motivate them correctly they are able to work very hard.

20) What helps you to feel better, to be happy in new host country?
To have a good hinterland, friends among local people, support from company and from the family.

Questions regarding cross-culture training

21) Did your company provide you any cross-cultural training (pre-liminary visit, lectures, brainstorming, books, videos etc.) Please write which ones.
Cultural lectures, business and law lectures, books.

If not, please write if you have prepared yourself to expatriation and how? When did you prepared (before or after arrival)? What was more useful? Would you appreciate if your company would provide some cross-cultural training?

22) When some training provided, was it before or after your arrival to the host country?
Before arrival.

23) Can you describe pros and cons of training that was provided to you before and after the arrival?
I would appreciate some language training provided by the company. It was good to know what to expect.

23) When you look back, was training useful? Did it give you better idea what to expect in the country?
Very useful.

24) Which of the trainings you undertook was the most useful?
Cultural lectures. Culture of country tells you a lot about its people. But I was missing language training.

25) Are you undergoing some training in these days? Which one?
No, but I will probably find some Czech language course.

26) Was the training you undertook relevant? Does it correspond with the real situations in the country?
Yes, it was relevant and the training prepared me to the real situations.

27) Do you think that cross-cultural training helped you to adjust to local culture? Do you think it would be more complicated without training?
Yes but I think that based on my experience from Slovakia I would be able to do it without training. But training was helpful.

28) Was training voluntary or obligatory? If voluntary, did you go to all of the training? If not, why?
obligatory

29) How long last the trainings?
2 days

30) What type of training would you appreciate to last longer?
Some explanation of Czech political system, and I would appreciate some language training.

31) How would you evaluate cross-cultural training in general? Do you think it is necessary, is it helpful?
It is good, in majority cases necessary.

Questions regarding accompaniment
32) Are you accompanied by family/spouse/kids in host country?
no
33) Did the company provide the cross-cultural training to them?

34) What is the biggest challenge or concerns for them in the host country?

35) What do you think would make their stay in host country easier?

Questions regarding expatriation failure and expatriation experience (expatriation failure = early return home, not finished assignment)

36) Have your ever-experienced expatriation failure? If yes, what was the cause of the failure?
No

37) What do you think would help to avoid the failure?
Expat has to ask company to provided best possible conditions for expatriation. Family or partner support is also necessary.

38) Why do you think that some people decide to refuse the offer of expatriations? Can you write some pros and cons form your experience?
Family issues, issues within local people in the company

39) What do you think are reasons that expatriation fails so many times?
Family issues, issues within local people in the company

40) Generally speaking about expatriation, what should company do to make your expatriation easier and smoother?
Family and company support

Cross-cultural training evaluation
Please choose three types of training those that you believe that are the most useful types of cross-cultural training for expatriation. In case company did not provide any training, choose three types of cross-cultural training that you believe are the most useful type of cross-cultural training for expatriation.

- Language training
- *Cultural briefings*
- Pre-liminary visit
- Videos
- Books about host country culture
- Simulations of situation into which expatriate can get
- *Post-arrival meetings with other expatriates*
- *Post-arrival meetings with local people*
- Suggest your idea: *I wish I have some language training*

Respondent 6
Questions for e-mail interview

Identification questions
1) What is your age?
19-24
25-34
35-44
45-54
55-64
65-74 years old
75 years and older

2) What is your gender?
Male

3) What is your nationality?
Swedish

4) What is your highest achieved education?
MBA, Master degree in Engineering

5) From which country you have been assigned to expatriation?
Sweden

6) Where do you work as an expatriate?
Czech Republic

7) In what industry do you work?
Security and IT

8) What is your job position?
Sales and Marketing Manager

Questions regarding your expatriation
9) Are you self-initiative or assigned expatriate?
Assigned expat

10) Is this your firs international assignment?
No

11) Do you have any previous experience with international assignments? If yes, please write how long your expatriation was and where it took a place.
I *was working in Poland and Romania at lower positions.*

12) What is a length of your current/last expatriation?
It is contracted for 2 years with the possibility of extension to another two years.

13) Why did you decide to accept the offer of international assignment?

It is challenging but the position is very lucrative and there were many applicants for this position. I was honoured to accept the offer.

14) What factors did you take into consideration when deciding whether to accept the offer or not?

Great opportunity for career development,

15) How long did it take you to decide whether accept the offer or not?

I knew I want to apply to this position so when I found out I won the selection process I decided immediately to accept the offer.

16) How would you evaluate your current expatriation? Can you describe your feelings and concerns, pros and cons that you are experiencing in host country?

It is a great opportunity for me, it is challenging and I enjoy being in Prague and being a member of Market Unit for Eastern Europe.

17) How do you find new friends in a host country? Do you struggle to communicate with local people?

I do not struggle to communicate at all. People are open-minded and friendly. I know lot of people from Swedish embassy who introduced me to their Czech friends. I attend many banquets every week where I meet new people. No struggle at all.

18) How do you perceive your ability to adjust to local culture and ability to adjust to local business culture?

I adjusted very well. Do not have any issues with Czech culture. I was given training about business environment in the Czech Republic so I knew what to expect.

19) What surprised you most in host country? When do you experience the hardest time?

I am positively surprised how Czech republic changed since 1989. Technological development and improvement in infrastructure and services is striking. Everything is working just like in any other Western country; some things are working better than in Sweden. Czech people are very educated and can work very hard. What I do not like about Czech Republic is a huge level of bureaucracy, clientelism and related corruption. Without connections and contacts you basically cannot do any business.

20) What helps you to feel better, to be happy in new host country?

Business environment should improve – decrease bureaucracy and eliminate corruption so doing business in the Czech Republic would not be so hard.

Questions regarding cross-culture training

21) Did your company provide you any cross-cultural training (pre-liminary visit, lectures, brainstorming, books, videos etc.) Please write which ones.

Training sessions, books, brochures, preliminary visit, videos, examples from real life

If not, please write if you have prepared yourself to expatriation and how? When did you prepared (before or after arrival)? What was more useful? Would you appreciate if your company would provide some cross-cultural training?

22) When some training provided, was it before or after your arrival to the host country?
All training provided was done before the expatriation started.

23) Can you describe pros and cons of training that was provided to you before and after the arrival?
Training covered broad spectrum of examples from real life in the Czech Republic, culture, customs, business environment, law etc. It was very well organized and helpful-

23) When you look back, was training useful? Did it give you better idea what to expect in the country?
It was very helpful and helped me to prepare myself to the task.

24) Which of the trainings you undertook was the most useful?
I would say that combination of all of them, but preliminary visit was probably the most useful technique.

25) Are you undergoing some training in these days? Which one?
Every month I receive updates about politics, political parties and government, information about special events etc.

26) Was the training you undertook relevant? Does it correspond with the real situations in the country?
Yes, it was relevant and I received only actual information.

27) Do you think that cross-cultural training helped you to adjust to local culture? Do you think it would be more complicated without training?
Yes it definitely helped me to prepare for the task. I really appreciate information about business environment and political parties and its members. My friends and local friend helped me a lot during the first stage of my expatriation. They were like my guides in new city.

28) Was training voluntary or obligatory? If voluntary, did you go to all of the training? If not, why?
Obligatory

29) How long last the trainings?
Preparation for expatriation was organizing for half a year. During that time period I visited Czech Republic three times and met my new colleagues, people from embassy and some business partners. One month before departure I undertook 2 days training about culture and customs etc.

30) What type of training would you appreciate to last longer?
It was perfect.

31) How would you evaluate cross-cultural training in general? Do you think it is necessary, is it helpful?

I think it is necessary to understand mentality of people, but crucial was contact with them. Therefore I believe that prelimary visit is the most important part in preparation for expatriation.

Questions regarding accompaniment

32) Are you accompanied by family/spouse/kids in host country?
Yes, my wife and child are here in Prague with me.

33) Did the company provide the cross-cultural training to them?
My wife undertook 2 days cultural training and visited Czech Republic twice with me. No training for our child (he is 7 years old). But company arranged everything what you could imagine (kindergarten, courses, housing, car, health service…)

34) What is the biggest challenge or concerns for them in the host country?
I think they are fine. Our kid is attending international school in Prague and ice hockey courses with other kids so I believe he adjusted well. My wife is taking care of the child and looking for a job.

35) What do you think would make their stay in host country easier?
I think they are happy. Maybe if I could spend lees time at work.

Questions regarding expatriation failure and expatriation experience (expatriation failure = early return home, not finished assignment)
36) Have your ever-experienced expatriation failure? If yes, what was the cause of the failure?
No

37) What do you think would help to avoid the failure?
Corporate support and support from the family members. If company provides proper training (just like company I work in) maybe failure rate would be lower.

38) Why do you think that some people decide to refuse the offer of expatriations? Can you write some pros and cons form your experience?
They have a lack of confidence, family issues.

39) What do you think are reasons that expatriation fails so many times?
Family issues

40) Generally speaking about expatriation, what should company do to make your expatriation easier and smoother?
I am happy how it is now.

Cross-cultural training evaluation
Please choose three types of training those that you believe that are the most useful types of cross-cultural training for expatriation. In case company did not provide any training, choose three types of cross-cultural training that you believe are the most useful type of cross-cultural training for expatriation.

- Language training
- *Cultural briefings*
- *Pre-liminary visit*
- Videos
- Books about host country culture
- Simulations of situation into which expatriate can get
- *Post-arrival meetings with other expatriates*
- Post-arrival meetings with local people
- Suggest your idea

Respondent 7
Questions for e-mail interview

Identification questions
1) What is your age?
19-24
25-34
35-44
45-54
55-64
65-74 years old
75 years and older

2) What is your gender?
Male

3) What is your nationality?
Swedish

4) What is your highest achieved education?
Master degree in Engineering

5) From which country you have been assigned to expatriation?
Sweden

6) Where do you work as an expatriate?
Czech Republic

7) In what industry do you work?
Security and Aircraft Engineering

8) What is your job position?
Product Manager

Questions regarding your expatriation
9) Are you self-initiative or assigned expatriate?
Assigned

10) Is this your firs international assignment?
No

11) Do you have any previous experience with international assignments? If yes, please write how long your expatriation was and where it took a place.
I was working in Hungary for 2 years.

12) What is a length of your current/last expatriation?
Contract is signed for 3 years.

13) Why did you decide to accept the offer of international assignment?

I wanted this position because of career development.

14) What factors did you take into consideration when deciding whether to accept the offer or not?
Career development and attractiveness of the country.

15) How long did it take you to decide whether accept the offer or not?
I knew I would like to apply for selection process within the company, I was thinking about that position for about a week.

16) How would you evaluate your current expatriation? Can you describe your feelings and concerns, pros and cons that you are experiencing in host country?
I do not regret at all. I think Czech republic has a great potential for growth and it is very good place to live.

17) How do you find new friends in a host country? Do you struggle to communicate with local people?
I know lot of people from embassy and some business partners are my friends too. I attend several exhibitions and events quite often so I do not struggle to make friends.

18) How do you perceive your ability to adjust to local culture and ability to adjust to local business culture?
I think I adjusted very well.

19) What surprised you most in host country? When do you experience the hardest time?
Czech Republic is very advance country. Services are on very high level and are comparable to the Swedish ones. What I do not like is high level of corruption and the fact that without knowing "the right" person you basically cannot do transparent business.

20) What helps you to feel better, to be happy in new host country?
Make friends, be active, be confident, learn about place where you live, make friends among local people.

Questions regarding cross-culture training

21) Did your company provide you any cross-cultural training (pre-liminary visit, lectures, brainstorming, books, videos etc.) Please write which ones.
Yes, company provided complex training that included preliminary visit, leaflets and some cultural lectures.

If not, please write if you have prepared yourself to expatriation and how? When did you prepared (before or after arrival)? What was more useful? Would you appreciate if your company would provide some cross-cultural training?

22) When some training provided, was it before or after your arrival to the host country?
Before arrival to the host country.

23) Can you describe pros and cons of training that was provided to you before and after the arrival?
Everything was perfectly organized. Our company has own team in Sweden that prepares every single expat to his/her new location. We have really great corporate support.

23) When you look back, was training useful? Did it give you better idea what to expect in the country?
It was very useful. It gave me idea what I should expect.

24) Which of the trainings you undertook was the most useful?
Preliminary visit.

25) Are you undergoing some training in these days? Which one?
Regular updates from the team from Sweden. I also visit business advisor/attache in Swedish embassy who gives us information about current contracts and business activities in Prague/CZ.

26) Was the training you undertook relevant? Does it correspond with the real situations in the country?
It was ok.

27) Do you think that cross-cultural training helped you to adjust to local culture? Do you think it would be more complicated without training?
Without training and corporate support it would be extremely hard and adjustment would take longer.

28) Was training voluntary or obligatory? If voluntary, did you go to all of the training? If not, why?
Obligatory.

29) How long last the trainings?
Our team in Sweden was working on my relocation for 5 months. I visited CZ 2 times before relocation. Cultural lectures were held for 2 days, one month before departure.

30) What type of training would you appreciate to last longer?
It was just right.

31) How would you evaluate cross-cultural training in general? Do you think it is necessary, is it helpful?
Very helpful. Without training everything would be more complicated and took more time.

Questions regarding accompaniment
32) Are you accompanied by family/spouse/kids in host country?
Yes, with my wife.

33) Did the company provide the cross-cultural training to them?
She undertook the same training as me except meetings that were business related.

34) What is the biggest challenge or concerns for them in the host country?
She is still looking for a job.

35) What do you think would make their stay in host country easier?
To find a job so she would not be at home alone.

Questions regarding expatriation failure and expatriation experience (expatriation failure = early return home, not finished assignment)

36) Have your ever-experienced expatriation failure? If yes, what was the cause of the failure?
no
37) What do you think would help to avoid the failure?
Company should secure conditions for smooth expatriation and arranged all necessities (housing, car, health insurance..) and secure cross-cultural training and preliminary visit.

38) Why do you think that some people decide to refuse the offer of expatriations? Can you write some pros and cons form your experience?
Maybe because they do not want to move out for family reasons.

39) What do you think are reasons that expatriation fails so many times?
Family issues, problems at work.

40) Generally speaking about expatriation, what should company do to make your expatriation easier and smoother?
Company should secure conditions for smooth expatriation and arranged all necessities (housing, car, health insurance). Provide preliminary visit.

Cross-cultural training evaluation
Please choose three types of training those that you believe that are the most useful types of

cross-cultural training for expatriation. In case company did not provide any training, choose

three types of cross-cultural training that you believe are the most useful type of cross-

cultural training for expatriation.

- Language training
- *Cultural briefings*
- *Pre-liminary visit*
- Videos
- Books about host country culture
- Simulations of situation into which expatriate can get
- Post-arrival meetings with other expatriates
- *Post-arrival meetings with local people*
- Suggest your idea