Expatriation Selection, Training and Gender Differences
Case Studies of Four Swedish Banks

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This thesis is written during the autumn 2004, and it is a result of ten weeks hard work. These ten weeks have been a great experience, where we have increased our knowledge within the area of expatriation and how Swedish banks select and train their expatriates. Further, we have gained deeper understanding about the gender issues that occurs within this topic. Writing this thesis has enriched us with valuable experience in how to co-operate and to make use of each other’s knowledge, and also how to stay positive when the progress of our work seemed stagnant.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to gain a deeper understanding of how Swedish banks manage their International Human Resource Management (IHRM). The thesis deals with how Swedish banks in general, from a corporate perspective, select and train their expatriates. Further, the thesis brings up the issue of gender differences within the area of selection and training of expatriates. The study has a qualitative approach, and was conducted with mainly a descriptive purpose. The research strategy chosen was four case studies. The data was gathered through three personal interviews and one telephone interview, with the person responsible for expatriate selection and training at the IHR department at each head-office. The results of this thesis show that Swedish banks find it hard to generalize specific selection criteria in order to identify appropriate expatriates. Further, the banks primarily select their expatriates through interviews where an open/formal system is used together with background and biographical data. Moreover, Swedish banks use only a limited range of cross cultural training (CCT), the method that is most common among the Swedish banks is to send their expatriates on field trips, before departure in order for the expatriate to get a pre view of the host country. Further, Swedish banks are striving towards a gender-equality policy and there is no hesitation to send female expatriates within the Swedish banking industry. However, women seem to be less willing to undertake international assignments, which can be an explanation to why the majority of the expatriates in the Swedish banking industry are men.
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1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter a background to the subject of this thesis will be presented. Further, a problem discussion within the area of research will be provided. Then the purpose and research questions will be stated. Finally, the demarcations of this study will be presented followed by an outline of the study.

1.1 Background

During the last decades business has evolved tremendously, from competing domestically companies have now embraced globally integrated strategies, and are established worldwide which includes competition on a global basis (Adler, 1994). The term global competition encompasses so much more than just exporting domestic products abroad (ibid). However, interacting in a globalised environment is not an easy task for companies due to the tough atmosphere and increased competition. To be able to succeed in these increasingly competitive global markets it is of great importance for companies to have qualified global managers, who have competencies that differentiate the company’s strategic choices. (Harvey and Novicevic, 2001) In other words human assets are becoming a source of vital competitive advantage for multinational companies (MNCs) (Myloni, Harzing & Mirza, 2004).

1.1.1 International Human Resource Management

Within companies the human resource management (HRM) incorporates all aspects of employee administration, such as recruiting and selecting employees (Francesco & Gold, 1998). HRM is considered to be the most valuable and also most significant asset that a company possesses, and upon which a company’s profitability depends (Batra, 1996). Furthermore, Batra (1996) argues that the purpose of HRM is to improve the quality of decision-making by external users, such as the investors who benefit from gaining information from the HRM, about whether the number of employees have increased or decreased during a period of time.

International human resource management (IHRM) involves the same functions as HRM, although IHRM is applied through an international perspective (Francesco & Gold, 1998). According to Dowling and Shuler (1990), the main factors that differentiate international HRM from domestic HRM is the complexities of running business in foreign countries and employing different national categories of workers. Underestimating the importance of selecting qualified managers for foreign assignments might lead to severe damage for the company, such as economic losses, business failures and loss of important knowledge, if the expatriate decides to terminate the operation (Deresky, 2000).

Dowling, Welch and Schuler (1999), have defined IHRM as the interplay among three dimensions, namely human resource functions, countries of operation, and types of employees. The various policies and practices of IHRM are vital since they can act as instruments for coordination and control of international operations (Myloni et al., 2004). According to Deresky (2000) IHRM is a crucial part of implementing a global strategy. Since finding candidates that are right for the increasingly number of overseas assignments is in the power of the IHRM, the international human resource (IHR) managers are often seen as the key determinant for success or failure in an international business environment (Morgan, 1986 as referred by Dowling & Shuler, 1990).
1.1.2 Expatriates

Today many larger organizations view experience in international management as a prerequisite for reaching upper ranks within senior management (Harris & Brewster, 1999). According to Hodgetts and Luthans (2003) every year MNCs select thousands of people for management positions, in international assignments. These international aspirants are labelled as potential expatriates and they are sent out around the world, both on short- and long-term assignments, as corporate missionaries in order to offer managerial and/or technical expertise (Schneider & Tung, 2001). Expatriates can be defined as employees within a company who undertake international assignments, and that are of the same nationality as where the MNC is headquartered. (Hodgetts & Luthans, 2003) Due to the increased globalisation, companies are in need of global leaders that can contribute to the companies’ survival in today’s competitive environment. Hence, expatriates are highly important for MNCs, and therefore, managing expatriates is a major part of IHRM. (Tung, 2004) Further, since expatriates work in a foreign country, which includes that they most likely will face situations that are totally different from what they are used to in their home country, companies most commonly take greater responsibility of their expatriates than of their domestic employees (Francesco & Gold, 1998).

According to Hodgetts and Luthans (2003) most MNCs utilize expatriates for key managerial positions in the host country, while people from the host country are often employed for lower and middle management positions. Until recent years MNCs have frequently sent males for assignments abroad, however, female expatriates have been quite unusual and there are several reasons behind this. Though, lately companies have realised that females in fact are willing and even eager to accept overseas assignments since they see it as a possible chance for a future career. (Tung, 2004) This means that in recent years the number of female expatriates has increased (Hodgetts & Luthans, 2003), still there are a dominant number of male expatriates within MNCs (Tung, 2004).

To send expatriates on overseas assignments includes more than just sending them to a new job in a foreign country (Cullen, 2004). Expatriation can be perceived as a process/cycle including eight stages which are home country assignment, recruitment, selection, training/orientation, global Assignment, debriefing, re-entry, and return. When sending expatriates on assignments all these phases will be more or less thoroughly worked through.(ibid) According to Stanek (2000) the stages before departure are crucial for the outcome of an expatriate assignment and leave no room for mistakes. The pre-departure phase deals with two vital practices of IHRM, namely effective selection and adequate preparation of expatriates. (Ashamalla, 1998)

1.1.3 Recruitment, selection and training of expatriates

The process through which a company hires their new employees is called recruitment and selection (Francesco and Gold, 1998). Recruitment can be defined as “searching for and obtaining potential job candidates in sufficient numbers and quality so that the company can select the most appropriate people to fill its job needs” (Dowling & Shuler, 1990, p. 47). Selection involves the process of gathering information for the purpose of evaluating and deciding who is best suited for particular assignments. The recruitment/selection process is of great importance, and it is often highly complex. (ibid)

It is not only the selection of managers that needs thorough consideration in order to send qualified managers abroad. Training of the expatriate is also vital in order to prevent failure
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and economic losses. (Harzing & Ruysseveldt, 1995) Francesco and Gold (1995) stress the expatriates are more effective when they receive some kind of training from their companies. Furthermore, the most important aspect of expatriate training is considered to be cross-cultural training (CCT), which prepares the expatriate to live and work in the host country. CCT does not only focus on training the expatriate for the specific job task he/she has been assigned, but also on how it will be to live in and how to adjust to the new culture. This training is considered to be of great importance since living in a new environment is much more challenging than dealing with a new job. (ibid)

1.2 Problem discussion

Due to the fast acceleration of business globalisation, a great number of organisations have increased their ability to identify and develop a sufficient number of qualified expatriate managers (Webb & Wright, 1996). Hodgetts and Luthans (2003) argue that usually it is quite difficult for companies to make an effective selection decision for an overseas assignment. When it comes to international operations it is vital that companies have the right people in the right place at the right time, in order to reach success (Deresky, 2000). However, this seems to be a rather complex task considering the fact that research shows that almost 20 to 40 per cent of expatriate managers end their foreign assignments early. These incomplete assignments can be a result of poor performance or incapability for the expatriate to adjust to the local environment, and for companies this is considered a huge failure. (Darby, 1995) According to Deresky (2000) approximately 50 per cent of the expatriates who remain abroad and complete their assignments are inefficient. Considering the enormous resources that are invested in expatriates, companies cannot afford expatriate failures. It is not only the direct cost that will be very expensive for the company, failed expatriate assignment might also lead to damaged relations with the customers and the host-country government. (ibid) Moreover, the company’s reputation might get damaged, resulting in a loss of market share and poor reception for future assignments (Hodgetts & Luthans, 2003). This is something that companies to any price wish to avoid, however, these failures are often the consequence of companies’ lack of knowledge when selecting and training expatriates (Deresky, 2000).

1.2.1 Selection of expatriates

The choice of relocating managers from one country to another has shown to be the most effective means to transfer critical capabilities. Managers that have lived and worked in a foreign country will contribute to a pool of global knowledge and can thereby, upon the return, be seen as a valuable resource for the organisation. (Paik, Segaud & Malinowski, 2002) According to Deresky (2000) it is vital that companies select the “right” expatriate for the international posts. For companies the initial phase of setting up criteria for global selection is to consider which overall staffing approach or approaches would most likely support the company’s strategy (ibid). Further, Deresky (2000) states that companies need to consider other important factors, such as host-country regulations, stage of internationalisation, and how to find a person who is both suitable and available for the position. The selection criteria, most commonly used by companies, are based on the same success factors as in the domestic setting, though, additional criteria that are related to specific circumstances of each international position must be considered. (ibid) Expatriates are required to possess additional and different skills than the domestic employees. It is of great importance that the selected candidate is equipped with knowledge of the company’s corporate culture/philosophy and home country business practices as well as an understanding of the host country customs and practices. Expatriates will be confronted with adjustment
problems to different extents, both at work and in their social life, since working abroad involves different political, cultural and economic conditions. (Yavas & Bodur, 1999)

1.2.2 Selection criteria for expatriates

When it comes to selecting expatriates, there are no specific criteria that can be used as an overall selection criteria strategy (Jordan & Cartwright, 1998). It is almost impossible to generalize exact selection criteria for all international assignments since different circumstances require different ways of reaction, as well as different environments need different skills in order to reach success. Additionally different business situations will affect the required skills when selecting expatriates. (ibid)

When MNCs select their expatriates their decisions are mainly based on international selection conditions, which are influenced by the MNC’s own experiences and cultural factors (Hodgetts & Luthans, 2003). The selection process is primarily based on three issues namely; the firm’s management philosophy, the type of market it is in, and the type of need that exist overseas (Oddou, 1991). Although, given the international selection criteria for an expatriate position, the final choice of an appropriate candidate is ultimately up to each and every MNC. However, not every corporation has a pool of applicants available for overseas operations, and will thereby have to rely on basic personal characteristics when selecting someone who is willing to do the job. (Selmer, 2001) Moreover, the firm’s management philosophy will affect the selection procedure depending on their perception of what an overseas assignment entails. Inaccuracy might occur when firms still view overseas assignments as luxury post and/or rewards for previous work within the corporation (Stanek, 2000).

A mistake often made by the IHR managers is that they usually select potential expatriates simply on the basis of their domestic track record and technical expertise, even though expatriates should have additional skills that are related to the specific international position. Frequently the additional factors, that in many cases have proved to be essential in order for expatriates to be successful, are overlooked. (Deresky, 2000) The need to determine if an intended expatriate has the required cross-cultural awareness and interpersonal skills for the position is too often neglected. Another important factor that also might be ignored when selecting expatriates is the candidates’ personal and family situation and whether everyone within his/her family is likely to adapt to the local culture. (ibid) Companies have to take into consideration whether the selected expatriate and his/her spouse are likely to adjust to their new life in the host-country (Yavas & Bodur, 1999). Moreover, IHR managers also have to keep in mind that there are different situations to which the expatriate must adjust, namely adjustment to work, adjustment to interacting with host country nationals, and adjustment to the general environment (Suutari and Burch, 2001). IHR managers who are aware of this are more likely to choose the most suitable person with a higher chance of adjustment on overseas assignments. Further, this knowledge might assist IHR managers to take necessary actions to facilitate expatriates’ adjustment to different aspects of their new environment such as the work environment, everyday living, and social life. (Yavas & Bodur, 1999)

Despite all the difficulties just mentioned, some overseas skills have been stated, developed and validated in various countries in order to help the companies to select the most appropriate expatriates. (Fish & Jack, 1994) However, it is not only a matter of sending a person that seems to have the right qualifications, companies must also take into consideration whether the expatriate should undergo any form of training for the international assignment (ibid).
1.2.3 Training expatriates

Too often the cost of business failure is not weighed against the expense of pre-departure training of international managers (Stanek, 2000), and considering the huge number of expatriate managers who end their assignments early one can wonder why companies do not focus more on preparing their expatriates before departure (Darby, 1995). According to Deresky (2000) it is understandable that preparation and training for interactions cross-cultural is vital. However, research clearly shows that business expatriates are regularly assigned to all parts of the world without any kind of or with just a brief cross-cultural training (Selmer, 2001). Expatriates and their families will probably face cross-cultural adjustment problems as well as practical differences in everyday living when they arrive to the host-country, and if they are not well prepared for this it might sometimes be the pure reason for failure (ibid). In the process of training the expatriate who experiences serious doubts and reservation regarding many or all aspects of the international assignment has the opportunity to resign before departure rather than realizing their mistake while overseas (Wright & Geroy, 1996). The pre-departure phase of the expatriate process includes the vital practice of training, which gives the employee the opportunity to alter behaviour and attitudes in a way that increases the probability of accomplishing the assignment. Pre-departure training will assist the expatriate with knowledge, skills and approaches necessary to cope with, for example, culture shocks. (Myloni et al, 2004)

Even if pre-departure training is the most discussed type of training in literature, there are other forms of training that are significantly more effective if carried out after departure (Selmer, 2001). According to Suutari and Burch (2001) the home company should provide support and training to the expatriate after he/she has arrived at the assignment. This form of training is called on-site training. However, on-site training is commonly forgotten or not prioritized by MNCs. (ibid) Webb and Wright (1996) underline the importance of support from supervisors in the home country. Support from a supervisor in the home office can, according to Webb and Wright (1996), play an important role in increasing the success rate of their expatriates.

1.2.4 Gender differences

In the past it has not been common for companies to send female expatriates. However, along with the increased globalisation, the number of females sent on international assignments has increased (Fischlmayr, 2002). Despite the fact that female expatriates nowadays are more common, they are still a minority among expatriates (Taylor, Napier & Mayrhofer, 2002). This could be explained by the fact that until recent years companies have in the first place only sent male expatriates to foreign assignments, and this is a pattern that still is visible, and difficult to change, within companies (Fischlmayr, 2002). Furthermore, there are several other possible explanations for the under-representation of females in international business. Linehan and Walsh (1999) argue that the high number of males in upper management positions can contribute to the dominance of male expatriates. According to Harris (1995) many IHR managers tend to select expatriates that are very similar to them-selves, this in order to ensure trustworthiness and predictability. Many MNCs lessen their chances of selecting the best candidate for an overseas assignment by unnecessarily excluding women from their pool of applicants (Mead, 1994).

Linehan and Walsh, (1999) also claim that some companies seem to deal with a double standard for marital status. Caligiuri and Cascio (1998) highlight another concern regarding
female expatriates, and that is that MNC’s might hesitate to send females to countries where women are not accepted in business settings. When operating in a foreign country MNCs have the intention to succeed, and in order to do so they might be forced to adjust to the social mores of that specific country, since it might help to achieve competitive advantage. Due to this, companies fear that business will suffer if they send females to countries where few, if any, females occupy senior management positions. (ibid)

Given the scarcity of female expatriate managers in the past, firms have questioned whether women can function successfully in international assignments or not (Adler, 1994). However, according to Tayler et al. (1998) evidence shows that women can and do succeed when working in a foreign country, even if the host country has an unwelcoming environment towards women. Moreover, research indicate that there are no differences regarding the rate of success in international assignments between males and females, women are frequently quite as successful in expatriate assignments as men (Caliguri & Tung, 1999, Tayler & Napier, 1996, as referred by Guthrie et al., 2003). Still MNCs hesitate to select women for international positions. Although, MNCs should not neglect women as potential expatriates because if they do, they will lose valuable competencies. (Caligiuri & Cascio, 1998) When selecting expatriates companies should rather try to distinguish the competencies needed for the international position, instead of making decisions based on traditional criteria and/or the gender of the applicant (Mead, 1994).

With these facts in mind, it can be said that CCT and preparation should be viewed upon as a matter of course. The selection and training process of expatriates is of high importance, and in fact, it could be the difference between success and failure for companies in a globalise environment.

Considering the discussion above, we find it interesting and worthy of further research to examine how MNCs select and train their expatriates and how MNCs view female expatriates.

One of the service industries most internationalised and where IHRM plays an important role is in the banking sector. The internationalization of banks has expanded since the 1960s at a rapid pace, and banks from all over the world have established themselves abroad since then. (Lindström, 2003) The difficulties with understanding a foreign culture often leads to insecurity, which as a result makes it harder to operate on a new market. Therefore qualified employees within the banks are of great importance. (Marquardt, 1994)

Due to the fact that limited research has been conducted on IHRM in Swedish banks we shall focus this study specifically on this topic.

From the problem discussion above, we can derive the purpose of our study.

1.3 Purpose

The purpose of this thesis is to gain a better understanding of how Swedish banks manage their IHRM.

Having stated earlier that expatriation involves a full cycle with a number of stages, and the fact that the stages early in the expatriation cycle play a crucial role, we limit ourselves only to Selection and Training. Further, considering that most failures depend on companies’
neglection to emphasize selection and training, we find it interesting to investigate these two aspects. Thus, we do not treat the questions of foreign assignment and repatriation.

In other words, to satisfy the stated purpose, the following research questions are addressed:

**RQ1:** How can the selection of managers for international assignments by Swedish banks be described?

**RQ2:** How can the training for international assignments offered to managers selected by Swedish banks be described?

**RQ3:** How can the issue of gender in connection with selection and training of managers for international assignments by Swedish banks be described?

### 1.4 Demarcations

The question of IHRM in general and those of selection and training in specific could be studied both from the corporate as well as the expatriates’ perspective. Our study shall limit itself to the corporate perspective. Further, regarding the term Training, it is a broad term that includes several different areas, however, in this study the term Training is limited to cross-cultural training only.

### 1.5 Outline of the study

This thesis consists of seven chapters. *Chapter one* started out with a background to the subject of the thesis, and then continued with a problem discussion that ended up with the purpose of the study. Three research questions were outlined in order to help the researchers fulfill the purpose. *Chapter two* will provide the reader with an overview of previous studies relevant to the purpose of the thesis. Further, the reviewed literature is narrowed down to a conceptual framework in *chapter three*. *Chapter four* will describe how the research was conducted, and which methodological choices that were made. Then, the empirical data that was collected is presented in *chapter five*. The collected data is compared with the concepts outlined in the conceptual framework by making an analysis in *chapter six*. Finally, *chapter seven* consists of the findings and conclusions, as well as some implications, which we have been able to derive from our research.
2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, theories that are relevant to our research questions, defined in chapter one, will be presented. To start out with, information regarding MNCs selection process of expatriates will be described. Further, previous theories regarding cross-cultural training will be provided. Finally, previous studies on the topic of gender differences within the selection and training of expatriates will be presented. Regarding to the topic of gender differences the term female will be used as well when better suited.

This thesis is a study of how the Swedish banking industry manages their IHRM. However, no earlier research within this area has been made, hence, the literature chapter will contain theories on the subject in general, and not specifically IHRM within the Swedish banking industry.

2.1 Selection

In this section, theories connected to research question number one will be presented. Thereby, literature concerning the criteria that are used when selecting expatriates will be reviewed. Firstly, some information of selection strategies will be presented. Further, different criteria used by MNC’s when selecting their expatriates will be described as well as how the criteria might differ depending on the type of the overseas assignment.

2.1.1 Selection strategies

Selecting someone for an overseas assignment undeniably requires something additional than the usual stringent criteria for outstanding performance in a domestic scenario, and is often a difficult task for the IHR manager (Jordan & Cartwright, 1998).

According to Jordan & Cartwright (1998) it is surprising how many stated qualifications, competencies, and personality characteristics that are required in order to reach success overseas. Heller (1980, as referred by Jordan & Cartwright, 1998) claims that in order to be a successful expatriate one should have:

“A flexible personality, with broad intellectual horizons, attitudinal values of cultural empathy, general friendliness, patience and prudence, impeccable educational or professional (or technical) credentials- all topped off with immaculate health, creative resourcefulness, and respect for peers. If the family is equally well endowed, all the better.”

Companies must be aware that when selecting candidates to serve strategic functions during foreign assignments, these functions are accomplished in a unique cross-cultural context. Thus, specific factors should be taken into consideration when selecting successful international managers. (Black, Gregersen, Mendenhall & Stroh, 1999) Fish and Jack (1994) argue that business do not fail, only people do, and if that is true then selecting the most appropriate candidate for an international assignment will be determinant for success abroad. Considering the fact that expatriates failure can be extremely costly for business ventures, the importance of selecting the right candidate increases. In addition, research shows that the very expensive cost of failure on overseas assignments can return to hurt the parent company, the foreign operation, the expatriate, and the person who selected the failed expatriate (Black et al., 1999).
Much has been written about the skills, abilities and competencies essential for a manager in order to perform effectively. However, little has been achieved in terms of identifying the right person with the right competencies. This can be explained by the simple reason that it is almost impossible to generalize selection criteria in order to conduct a specific selection strategy. Different circumstances require different ways of reaction, as well as different environments require different skills, and this has to be considered when choosing expatriates. Also different business situations will affect the selection of expatriates since different skills will be required depending on the job situation. (Fish & Jack, 1994) Moreover, diverse cultures emphasise different elements in the selection process depending on if the criteria are of an achievement or ascriptive character. Achievement-oriented cultures value knowledge, skills and talents, and ascriptive cultures consider age, gender and family background as important. (Francesco & Gold, 1998)

2.1.2 Technical skills

In the past, the primary criterion when selecting expatriates was focused on the candidate’s technical and functional expertise (Harvey & Novicevic, 2001). However, research has shown that people with the best technical skills are not necessarily those with the best cross-cultural adjustment skills. In fact, expatriate failure, which involves poor performance or premature return, generally occurs as the result of inefficient cross-cultural adjustment by expatriates and their families, rather than as an outcome of inadequate technical and professional skills. (Black et al., 1999) Further, Black et al. (1999) argue that the successful completion of a foreign assignment is closely linked to the expatriate’s and the spouse’s ability to adjust cross-cultural. Nevertheless, companies still focus much on technical, job-related skills when selecting candidates for foreign assignments, however, not to the same extent as earlier. Nowadays companies are moving more and more away from technical expertise as the most important criterion when choosing their expatriates. (ibid)

2.1.3 Personal characteristics

According to Harvey and Novicevic (2001) attempts of identifying an appropriate model for selecting expatriate managers is focused on identifying personal characteristics of candidates that could help to improve the chances of expatriate managers’ success during their assignments. More and more companies are according to Black et al. (1999) trying to recognize various factors that might be crucial for expatriate success, and with time, various selection models have started to focus more on personal characteristics of the potential expatriates (Harvey & Novicevic, 2001). Although, Harvey and Novicevic (2001) claim that it should not be overlooked that the variety of models used when selecting expatriate managers differ depending on the nationality of the corporation, its core concepts and culture, and the job tasks. Consequently, it is difficult to generalize a documented set of selection criteria that can be used by all companies in order to select suitable candidates for international assignments (ibid). It can be said that the selection of expatriate managers is seldom a “systemic well-articulated and documented process” (Harvey & Novicevic, 2001, p.71).

The “Big Five” Personality Characteristics

Having systematic means to predict who is likely to succeed in an expatriate assignment is critical for MNC’s (Caligiuri, 2000). Personality characteristics predispose humans to behave in certain ways, given particular situations, to accomplish certain goals, and so forth (Costa & McCrae, 1992 as referred by Caligiuri, 2000). According to Daft (2002) personality is the set of unseen characteristics and process that underlie a relatively stable pattern of behavior in
response to ideas, objects, or people in the environment. Most commonly personality is thought of as different traits. Although investigators have examined thousands of traits over the years, their findings have been distilled into five dimensions that describe personality that might help predict whether individuals will succeed on their expatriate assignments. (ibid) These five dimensions have been labeled the “Big Five” personality characteristics and Daft (2002) explains them as follows:

1. **Extroversion:** This refers to whether individuals have the ability to successfully assert themselves and gain acceptance in the social environment through social relationships. People that are extrovert are often outgoing, talkative, and comfortable meeting and talking to new people.

2. **Agreeableness:** A person who is highly agreeable can be identified as a team player who is able to get along with others by being good-natured, forgiving, co-operative, compassionate, understanding, and trusting.

3. **Conscientiousness:** The concept of conscientiousness refers to the degree to which a person is responsible, dependable, persistent, achievement-oriented, trusted, and supportive of increased organizational performance.

4. **Emotional stability:** A person’s level of emotional stability refers to the degree to which he/she is well adjusted, calm, secure, and has the ability to adapt and deal with stress in professional and personal spheres of one's life.

5. **Openness or intellect:** This is the degree to which a person has a broad range of interests and is imaginative, creative, willing to consider new ideas, and has an ability to effectively complete functional assignment.

According to Daft (2002) the extension of the “Big Five” personality characteristics as predictors of expatriate success can be theoretically justified through evolutionary personality psychology. A person who is agreeable, extroverted, emotionally stable, conscientious, and open may have the ability to for example form important work relationships, get promoted, and attain a higher status. Considering these facts the Big Five might be important to consider when selecting expatriates. (ibid)

Harvey and Novicevic (2001) also argue that there is a selection of important features that has to be taken into consideration when selecting manager for an assignment. There are various dimensions of individual, organizational, environmental and systemic issues that might have influence on an expatriate’s success or failure. The individual dimension involves the Big Five personality characteristics and supports Daft’s (2002) theory that the “Big Five” personality characteristics should be considered when selecting suitable expatriates. These characteristics seem to have a predictive power relative to the success of expatriates. The likelihood of success depends on the individual conditions such as technical competence, cultural adaptability, previous cultural adjustments and extensive foreign travel. Family issues, the unwillingness to be relocated, dual career issues on the other hand, can cause failure, the commitment to the assignment and a lack of language skills. (Harvey & Novicevic, 2001)
2.1.4 Qualities sought in expatriates

McDonald (1993, as referred by Ashamalla, 1998) is also of the opinion that when selecting expatriates it is important to look for more than technical competences. The expatriates should believe in the company and its organisational culture, and he/she should also have a desire to move the company forwards and represent the company in a good way. Further, possessing global awareness is also a skill that IHR managers should consider when recruiting expatriates. (ibid) Ashamalla (1998) brings up five qualities that are sought within expatriates, namely:

1. **Cultural empathy:** When selecting managers for international assignments one of the most important factors to consider is the candidate’s ability to appreciate and respect believes, values, behaviours and business practices of peoples from other cultures (Ashamalla, 1998).

2. **Awareness of environmental constraints:** Expatriates are often faced with environmental forces that differ extremely to the ones in his/her home country, therefore it is vital that expatriates are able to identify those differences in order to effectively make decisions (Ashamalla, 1998).

3. **Interpersonal skills:** In order to be a successful expatriate one should have an understanding of differences in value orientation within different cultures, such as power distance. Interpersonal skills also involve effective verbal and non-verbal communication. Since most strategic functions of overseas assignment require individuals to communicate effectively in foreign countries, the ability to communicate is vital to expatriates’ success. Further, the ability to use referent power in managing in a foreign market, and the capability to build trust, are interpersonal skills that are important for expatriate managers to possess (Ashamalla, 1998).

4. **Managerial and decision making abilities:** Holding managerial and decision-making abilities is particularly important when the expatriate managers are working isolated or under physical distance from the decision-making centre in the home office. Further, these competencies are also necessary when expatriates have full autonomy in their foreign location. These skills include direct knowledge of the work-task and a grasp of the specific problems to be solved. (Ashamalla, 1998)

5. **Other crucial qualities:** A number of other crucial qualities are required in order for expatriates to do well abroad. Good language skills, flexibility regarding work and the willingness to try new things, adaptability to the new culture and social life, stability in order to handle new stressful situations that often comes together with new experiences, entrepreneurship and self-motivation are skills that are needed. Further, tolerance for ambiguity and the sensitivity to how different factors around the world can affect the company is important factors to consider. (Ashamalla, 1998).

Black et al. (1999) also stress the importance of searching for more than technical expertise when selecting expatriates. Black et al. (1999) have stated ten factors, relevant to success overseas, which should be considered when selecting expatriates. The theory supports the one by Ashamalla (1998) to a great extent, however, Black et al.’s. (1999) theory is more extensive. The authors have chosen to focus on factors that are related to strategic functions or
the successful completion of an assignment: strategic factors, professional skills, conflict resolution skills, leadership skills, communication skill, social skills, ethnocentricity, flexibility, stability, and gender-related factors. (ibid)

Some of Black et al’s. (1999) stated factors are equivalent to some of Ashamalla’s (1998) defined factors concerning success of expatriates, and therefore they will not be described below they will only be referred to Ashamalla’s (1998) theory. First the professional skills stated by Black et al. (1999) can be compared to the managerial and decision-making skills suggested by Ashamalla (1998). Further, the leadership skills, which involve building relationships with subordinates, and the communication skills, which include effective verbal and nonverbal communication, stated by Black et al. (1999) are comparable to Ahamalla’s (1998) interpersonal skills. Finally, Black et al’s. (1999) flexibility and stability factors can be referred to the other crucial qualities stated by Ashamalla (1998) where flexibility and stability are included. Besides from these factors that are discussed both by Ashamalla (1999) and Black et al (1999), the latter authors have five additional factors that are considered when selecting expatriates, and these will be briefly presented below.

Strategic factors: It is of great importance to assess the critical strategic functions of the international assignment when selecting appropriate expatriates. In order to be accomplished successfully, each and every of these functions necessitate several types of skills, experiences, and contacts. For example, if the strategic purposes of an assignment are to improve the control function between headquarters and the subsidiary and to increase the coordination function between subsidiaries, then the expatriate should have broad experience within the firm, including a wide array of contacts throughout the firm. (Black et al. 1999)

Conflict resolution skills: The way in which individuals approach conflict resolution can significantly affect the success of an assignment, both in domestic as well as international managerial positions. The matter of how expatriates resolve conflicts can have a great impact on their effectiveness. (Black et al. 1999)

Social skills: Expatriates social orientation, or interest in developing relationships, might facilitate to adjust to the new culture. Possessing these skills can help the expatriate to build significant social relationships with host-nationals, who can provide critical work- and non-work-related information and feedback on how the manager is doing. (Black et al. 1999)

Ethnocentricity: Frequently people misunderstand and criticize the behaviour of others when crossing cultural boundaries. Often these misunderstandings can be explained by the fact that people use their own rules and believe that their own way to do things (communicating, negotiating, working etc.) is the only “right” way, which is called ethnocentricity. Expatriates who are less ethnocentric are more likely to succeed since they will try to see things from the host-country’s perspective and not only believe that their own way of doing things is the right way. (Black et al. 1999)

Gender-related factors: U.S firms pay significant attention to whether the candidate is a man or a woman. Research has found that females comprise only a small portion of expatriates, and the respondents reported that, on average, approximately 10 per cent of their total expatriate population is female. The reason behind the gender-based selection criterion is twofold: foreigners are biased against female managers and dual-career couples face insurmountable challenges. (Black et al. 1999)
2.1.5 Selection procedures

It is not only the selection criteria that are significant in order to select the most appropriate candidate for an overseas assignment, but also the selection procedures (Hodgetts and Luthans, 2003). When selecting candidates for an international assignment there is a limited range of selection tools, which IHR managers can utilize to receive relevant and important information about the candidates (Black et al., 1999). Black et al., (1999) and Hodgetts and Luthans (2003) define a number of different tools that are used when selecting expatriates; biographical data, standardized tests, work samples and interviews. These are some of the most effective tools when trying to find the most appropriate candidate for an overseas assignment (ibid).

**Biographical data and background data** include information about the candidate’s background such as personal and work histories. In an assignment where professional/technical skills are needed the IHR manager can, by reviewing the candidate’s history, find out whether he/she possesses these skills. (Black et al., 1999)

**Standardized tests** can be both reliable and valid methods of screening candidates for international assignments. This involves that the candidate makes a test to see whether he/she is appropriate for the assignment. For example, engineers are often required to take standardized tests for certification in different states or countries throughout their careers. Mostly these tests are very reliable and valid source of an engineer’s knowledge base. (Black et al., 1999) According to Hodgetts and Luthans (2003), testing is a method that is especially popular when selecting domestic managers. However, regarding the testing of international managers many companies have realized that these tests have little value.

**Work samples** are used as a selection tool in order to find out whether the candidate is able to do the tasks within the overseas assignment. This can be done by taking a “slice” of the prospective job and places the candidate in the work situation and then observe how the candidate handles the situation. (Black et al., 1999)

**Interviews** are one of the most common selection tools used among companies and many organisations use interviews as a screening method. Further, it is agreed upon that the best method of selection is extensive interviews of expatriates and their spouses. (Hodgetts and Luthans, 2003). Black et al. (1999) on the other hand, are of the opinion that interviews are lacking in reliability, and that it is not a highly valid method for effectively selecting the right candidate for the assignment. Hodgetts and Luthans (2003) also state that nowadays it is common that companies employ both expatriates and locals to conduct the interview. The expatriate’s function during the interview is to make sure that attention is focused on the central selection criteria, and to observe whether the candidate has the ability, skill, and training that is required to do the job or not. The local interviewer is there to provide insights about the candidate’s response and behaviour in concern to local culture and customs. Hopefully these two interviewers together are able to find the most appropriate candidate for the assignment. (ibid)

**International manager-selection systems**
Harris (2001) and Harris and Brewster (1999) identify four possible variations of international manager-selection systems; closed, open, formal and informal. Within an open system, anyone with the skills, qualifications, and experiences appropriate to a particular post has a chance to apply for it. Later the candidates are interviewed and the final decision regarding
whom being selected is made by a consensus among the selectors. Closed systems on the other hand, might result in only one person involved in the selection process. This since the selectors at the corporate headquarter makes the choice or nomination of adequate candidates. When the line-manager and the personnel at the head-office have agreed to accept the prospective, the candidate is informed. The interview in this process will rather involve negotiations about terms and conditions for the assignment. (Harris, 2001; Harris & Brewster, 1999) The remaining two variables of the selection process are related to the existence of formal and informal systems that operates at an organizational level. The creators of this typology have conducted a matrix from which four distinct categories of selection processes can be arrived. (Harris, 2001; Harris & Brewster, 1999)

Closed/informal system: since candidates are totally unaware that a selection process is going on, the process lack in both open debate about criteria, and in accountability. This in addition to the lack of influence of formal systems makes the, individual preferences selectors, able to determine which candidate that is acceptable. Moreover, the individual preferences of selectors often are incoherent of identifying and assessing the effective international manager’s characteristics. (Harris, 2001; Harris & Brewster, 1999)

Open/informal system: even though vacancies are advertised and available for all, the final selection-decision is a consensus by relevant managers on the basis of personal recommendations, and reputation. Furthermore, the interview comes after the selection decision. Thereby the tendency will increase for managers to select clones of existing managers. It is argued that this type of selection system may lead to decreasing in consistency as well as incoherent thinking regarding the key characteristics of a manager instead of the formal criteria. (Harris, 2001; Harris & Brewster, 1999)

Closed/formal system, within this system the key elements are the influence of networking and reputation. Selectors appraise candidates against formalized criteria and thereafter discuss the candidates’ match with them. Although, since it is up to the selectors to determine the field of applicants, there is a risk to neglect appropriate candidates. This together with the fact that there is a lack in personal contact in this system may allow consideration of individual preferences in the nominating process. (Harris, 2001; Harris & Brewster, 1999)

Open/formal system, also within this system, candidates are appraised by selectors against formal criteria, and the best suited person is determined through continual comparison of their own assessments against the assessment of other selectors. However, in this system individual preferences are limited and a question of assumption is ensured, which will result in more consistent evaluations and greater clarity in thinking. Moreover, it is likely with a close match between individual selector’s perception of the ideal jobholder, and with formal selection criteria. (Harris, 2001; Harris & Brewster, 1999)

2.2 Training

In this section, theories relevant for research question two will be presented. Theories regarding training of expatriates will be provided, both training before departure as well as on-site training. Further, the importance of training expatriates, how MNCs design their training programs, and what methods they use for training will be covered.
2.2.1 Cross Culture Training

Francesco and Gold (1997) state that CCT is the most vital aspect of expatriate training since it prepares them to live and work abroad in a different culture, which is much more challenging than dealing with a new job in particular. However, even though so much literature stresses the importance of CCT, research clearly shows that business expatriates are regularly assigned to all parts of the world without any CCT at all, due to various reasons (Selmer, 2001). For example, many top managers consider it as unnecessary and ineffective with training (Harrison, 1994).

According to Harrison (1994) there are multiple advantages with CCT that has been identified by research. Among others, there are evidence that CCT has a strong impact on cross-cultural skills development, cross-cultural adjustability, and cross-cultural job performance. CCT improves the expatriates’ job-performance and eases the adjustment and transition of the expatriate and his/her family. In addition, CCT will be profitable in the long run since it limits the number of ineffective expatriates and premature returns. As time proceeds more and more companies are recognising the advantages with CCT and are starting to include it in the preparation of expatriates. (ibid)

The literature on CCT does not provide a framework for developing a comprehensive CCT program (Deresky, 2000). Moreover, according to Harrison (1994), the main concerns of CCT may differ according to the strategic approach of the organisation to worldwide operations. Harrison (1994) claims that most of the companies providing CCT, generally offers programs that are not comprehensive in nature. In other words, they concentrate on a few parts of CCT-program that they consider most vital for the expatriate adjustment and success (ibid).

2.2.2 Duration of cross-cultural training

Black et al. (1999) and Deresky’s (2000), underline the relation between the degree of training rigor and the degree of the trainee’s participant involvement.

An important factor in cross-cultural training is the rigor of the training program. In other words, how much effort and mental involvement the trainer has to put into the training process in order to teach the trainee the required concept. The key of design of compelling cross-cultural training is its degree of rigor. Activities such as watching movies, reading books, listening to lectures and area briefings are considered as low-rigor training, when activities that requires the trainee to learn passively as well as practising what they have been thought is regarded as more rigorous training. Role modelling, video taped sessions are examples of more rigours training. Further, high rigorous training includes the trainee’s level of involvement and use of assessment centres, interactive language training, and sophisticated cross-cultural simulations. (Black et al. 1999)

Furthermore, the length of time of a training program affects the level of rigor. A short and less intensive program is of fewer rigors, compared to a more intensive training program that is holding over a longer period of time. Black et al. (1999) states that high rigorous training methods are the most effective ones, since people tends to remember better from being exposed to activities such as simulations in comparison to the knowledge achieved from lectures.
Harrison (1994) claims that the intensity and time frame for CCT depends on the expatriates’ knowledge of and experience with the specific culture to which they are assigned, as well as the degree of how it differs from their home culture. Commonly CCT appears as a one-shot session just before departure, with very short duration. (Harrison, 1994) According to Selmer (2001) CCT in the past was most commonly provided about one month before departure. However, CCT will be most effective if it is provided in a phase when the expatriate is eager to learn. People that live in a homogenous country and has little experience of travelling are less motivated to learn than people with a lot of travelling in their past. Therefore the formers probably may not profit from pre departure training. This suggests that in addition the timing of CCT is also connected to characteristics and needs of employees. (ibid) The time organisations devote for CCT for their expatriates vary from 3 month up to a year (Harrison, 1994). Selmer (2001) claims that the duration of CCT programs are in general too short to achieve any fundamental and permanent changes in cultural norms. However, according to Harrison (1994) there are suggestions that companies should have CCT programs of 40-50 hours long, and each session should be individual and last at least two hours. (Harrison, 1994) Although, according to Kitsue (1992, as referred by Harrison, 1994) even five- to ten days CCT-programs has proven to be effective.

2.2.3 Design of cross-cultural training

**Inductive/Deductive**

Harrison (1994) claims that both general cultural orientation and specific cultural development should be included in the structure of CCT. Further, the same author discuss two basic ways of how CCT can be designed, namely; an *inductive process* going from the specific to the general and a *deductive process* going the other way around, from the general to the specific. The author proposes a structure that provides an inductive and deductive approach that consists of two basic stages: *general orientation* and *specific development*. The former stage includes two different phases: 1) self-assessment of factors that may influence ones receptiveness to and propensity for effective cross-cultural assignments, and 2) cultural awareness of the general dimensions on which most cultures differ and the potential impact of these differences for expatriates. The aim of its design was to prepare the expatriates for international encounters in general in a better way, and to focus on the expatriate’s attention. (Harrison 1994)

The second stage, specific development is designed to develop the ability of employees to interact effectively within the specific culture to which they are being assigned. This stage involves two different phases: 1) knowledge acquisition of the language and customs within the host country, and 2) skills training, in the application of appropriate behaviours in the specific culture. Furthermore, each of these phases consists of three major steps. (Harrison 1994)
General Orientation

- Self Assessment
- Cultural Awareness

Specific Development

- Knowledge acquisition of host country language and customs
- Skills training

Figure 2.1: Inductive/deductive process
Source: Author’s construction

General orientation

Self-assessment
The initial step within self-assessment is dealing with change, and it should provide trainees with relevant information about the purpose, value, and benefits of their new assignments. Furthermore, it should also provide information on the training they will receive, listening to their reactions and concerns, and responding to their individual needs. The objective of this step is to enhance the motivation and readiness of the expatriate regarding cultural change.

Managing Stress is the second step and it involves offering individual strategies to expatriates and their families for managing stress successfully, and it has become recognized as a critical area of concern by organisations. The key to effective management of stress is to prevent it from being too much or to reduce it to an appropriate level. Discussing the nature of emotional and stress reactions, rehearsing coping skills, and testing these skills under actual stressful conditions. The last step is identifying attributes, which discusses the fact that every person has its own personal attributes that are unique. These attributes determines the way we interpret different things, for example expatriates will perceive, react to and interpret work situations in different ways, and therefore they affect every aspect of a manager’s work. (Harrison, 1994)

Cultural awareness
The first step within cultural awareness is called general dimensions, and involves recognising and accepting differences in other cultures. To develop this appreciation, dimensions on which cultures may differ should be included in CCT. National Values, which is the second step within cultural awareness, has the purpose to assist expatriate managers in recognizing particular national values. For example people in the U.S and people in Japan have a total different view of being in time for a meeting, power distance, and how to communicate in the workplace. Further, workplace incident, which is the third step, involves assisting managers in their adjustment to the workplace. One method to use this step is to use cultural assimilators. (Harrison, 1994)
Specific development

Knowledge acquisition
The initial step under the specific orientation stage is called *area studies* and involves environmental briefings and orientation programs about the specific host-country culture. It can take the form of readings, group discussions, lectures, films, audiotapes and videotapes. It is of great importance for the expatriate manager to provide expatriates with information and knowledge about the history, geography, climate, demographics, economy, political system and industrialization of the host country. Secondly, *language studies*, involves providing language training. The aim in this step is to enable the family to communicate with host nationals upon arrival in the host country. The final step within knowledge acquisition is *host attitudes* and its function is to increase managers’ awareness of host attitudes in the host culture they are being assigned to. (Harrison, 1994)

Skills training
The initial step towards effective skills training, called *case studies*, involves introducing expatriates and their families to cross cultural problem situations that are representative of interactions they might experience in the host culture. These case studies may take the character of being written, videotaped or dramatized for group analysis and learning. The aim is to help the individuals discover what cultural values or behaviours are impacting the interaction in the case, what caused the problem, and what could have been done to avoid the situation. *Area simulation* is the second step of skills training and attempts to create a situation in the training environment that is similar to the real life experience in the host culture. There is an assumption that underlies this step, that individuals will be better able to adjust to the host culture if they have experienced a situation that is as similar as possible to situations in the host country. Finally, the last step is called *behaviour modelling* and focuses on teaching managers specific behaviours that are useful in the workplace. Behaviours like, what is the best way to resolve conflicts? How are decisions made? What motivational techniques are effective? What about evaluations, rewards and communication, how are they handled? The purpose is to provide managers with an opportunity to engage in specific work behaviours, review them critically and abstract some useful insight from the analysis, and ultimately apply the results in the prospective cross cultural work situation. (Harrison, 1994)

2.2.4 Cross-cultural training methods
Harzing and Van Ruysseveldt (1995) present a few strategies and methods for cross-cultural training, many of them correlate to other theories by Harrison (1994), Francesco and Gold (1998), and Tung (1998, as referred by Deresky) presented in this section. The authors stress the diffuse distinction between CCT-methods, within the literature, and therefore Harzing and Van Ruysseveldt present seven instructional strategies that can be used to achieve CCT training goals. One or a few specific methods belong to each and every one of these instructional strategies (see table 2.1 below). All of these specific methods are especially suitable for the training of international staff.
Table 2.1 Overview of the available training options for cross-cultural training

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional strategies</th>
<th>Specific methods</th>
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<tr>
<td>Simulations</td>
<td>Role playing</td>
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<td>Case studies</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Instructional games</td>
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<td>Programmed instructions</td>
<td>Cultural assimilator</td>
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<td>Expositive instructions</td>
<td>Lectures (area briefings)</td>
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<td>Tutorials</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Reading assignments</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Audio/visual presentations</td>
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<td>Sensitivity training</td>
<td>T-groups</td>
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<td>Behaviour modification methods</td>
<td>Drill-and-practice</td>
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<td>Modelling</td>
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<td>Field experiences</td>
<td>Field trips</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Assignments to micro-cultures</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Meetings with experienced international staff</td>
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<tr>
<td>On-the-job training</td>
<td>Coaching</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Job rotation</td>
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</table>

Source: Adapted from Harzing and Van Ruysseveldt (1995, p. 214)

Regarding simulations, *role-playing* offers the applicant to actually act out a situation that might occur during their time abroad. *Case studies* involve a real-life situation, either in business or personal life that illustrates possible aspects of life and work in the host culture. However, *instructional games* involve competition factors and a facilitated real-life situation is represented. These games focus both on the development of basic business skills and interpersonal and communication skills. (Harzing & Van Ruysseveldt, 1995)

Furthermore, *cultural assimilators* involve a written set of circumstances where an expatriate trainee is forced to take a stand in a situation. The trainee will thereafter receive feedback on the appropriateness of the chosen behaviour. An additional method presented is *lectures*, which refers to an oral one-way transmission of information, such as history, geography, economy, politics, and other general information about the host country and region. *Tutorials* on the other hand, involves that both the teacher and the learner actively participate in the process. *Reading assignments* are reading materials suggested to the learner for self-tuition. *Audio/visual presentations* are used when oral presentations and reading materials are insufficient. (Harzing & Van Ruysseveldt, 1995)

*T-groups* have the purpose of loosen up the habitual roles of the participants in order for them to adapt to the new situation by developing new roles. *Drill and practice* is a method with frequent transmission of practice and feedback, to prevent undesired behaviour to get established. Drill and practice is very common when it comes to language training. *Modelling* involves learning by observing models that are performing desired behaviours. The aim is to make the learners behave as the models. (Harzing and Van Ruysseveldt, 1995)

*Field trips* is a visit in the host country and within assignments to micro-culture, expatriates are placed in a situation where they are forced to interact with people from a specific culture. By arranging *meetings with experienced international staff*, the expatriate will get the opportunity to exchange much valuable information and experience from these people. (Van Harzing & Van Ruysseveldt, 1995)
Within coaching, the expatriate is provided with feedback regarding his or her performance, the aim is to improve. Further, in order to allow the expatriate to enjoy a specific role in the organisational structure, the employees get the opportunity to move around between different positions within the organisation, which is called job rotation. (Harzing & Van Ruysseveldt)

Francesco and Gold (1994) present six different methods that can be used by MNCs for their CCT. Five of them, namely; case studies, role-plays, cultural assimilators, field experience and area briefings are supporting the previous presented theory by Harzing and Van Ruysseveldt (1995). However, Francesco and Gold (1994) further mentions cultural briefings, that involves informing the expatriate about the major aspects of the host country culture, including customs, traditions and every day behaviours.

Tung (1998, as referred by Deresky, 2000) also supports the previous presented theory by Harzing and Van Ruysseveldt (1995). He claims that various training techniques can be used by expatriates in order to facilitate the adjustment process on their over seas assignments. These techniques are categorised into five levels; area studies, cultural assimilators, sensitivity training, field experience, and language training. Language training is the only technique that does not support Harzing and Van Ruysseveldt’s (1995) theory.

### 2.2.5 On-site training

Although there are several ways to prepare expatriates for their overseas assignments, companies should not forget that it is also important to provide support and training after the expatriate has arrived to the host-country. However, on-site training/support is commonly neglected by many MNC’s. (Suutari & Burch, 2001) Webb and Wright (1996) underline the importance of support from supervisors in the home country. Often, expatriates lose contact with their home office, and as a result they feel that they are no longer included in business communications. The on-site support could include regular contact to with the expatriate just to exchange important information or arranging home-visits periodically for the expatriate so that he/she can keep up with the corporate thought and direction. By doing that the expatriates will feel that they are still a part of the company back home and that might lead to an improved work performance. Further, the same authors claim that support from a supervisor in the home office can play an important role in increasing the success rate of their expatriates. (ibid)

**Coverage of on-site training**

Suutari and Burch (2001) point at the importance of on-site training and support provided by the host country, in order to make expatriates feel comfortable in the new environment. The on-site training and support should cover areas such as acquainting the expatriate with the area, housing arrangements, banking and other local facilities, school and day-care arrangements, health care and work arrangements in dual career situations. Support offered by the host country is a way to smooth the progress of adjusting to the new culture, not only for the expatriate but also for his/her family, and it might be a determinant factor for success or failure of the overseas assignment. (ibid)

According to Selmer (2001), some training might even be more effective if carried out after arrival in the host country, and moreover this training does not necessarily have to take place just after arrival. Sometimes it is most effective with providing training three to six months after arrival when the expatriate has started to cope with culture shock. Such training should preferably focus on structures and relationships in the host culture, mentality, values, social
structure and living patterns. A training program after arrival can take place in the host country, home country or even in a third country, furthermore, it does not have to take more time than a pre-departure training program. Rather, what is important is that the expatriate receives sufficient information in order to start appreciating his/her living situation in the host country. (Selmer, 2001)

Moreover, companies should consider training program as an investment rather than an expense, since savings on training programs often results in inadequate and inappropriate training (Black et al. 1999).

2.3 Gender issues related to selection and training of expatriates

In this section previous studies related to the issues connected to gender differences when selecting expatriates is presented. Literature concerning the low ratio of women among expatriates and the barriers that women might face when trying to move into senior management will be reviewed. Further, theories related to differences between genders concerning the training required for international assignments will be provided.

2.3.1 Few women in international assignments

Males and females may differ along personality dimensions in the general population, therefore, IHR managers have to consider the fact that there might be gender-based personality differences within the general managerial ranks (Guthrie, Ash & Stevens, 2003). Due to this, the criteria that are used in order to choose the appropriate expatriate might differ depending on whether the potential candidate is a man or a woman (Stone, 1991).

The characteristics and competencies required from managers for international assignments have attracted quite a lot of attention. These characteristics are in general non-gender specific, however, in reality women have often been excluded from appointments and/or promotions to such leadership positions. The reason behind this is that women appear to lack one of the critical competencies identified for such key roles, namely possessing a global mindset. Even though the number of women in advanced education, and managerial and professional ranks has increased during the past two decades, women are still under-represented at the top levels of management and in expatriate assignments. (Tung, 2004) In a recent study conducted by the Employee Relocation Council (162 member organizations responding) the research findings revealed that only a small portion of employees in international assignments are women. Among the organizations that participated, on average, only about 10 per cent of their total expatriate population is female. (Black et al., 1999)

2.3.2 Barriers to women moving into international senior management

In the past decades more and more women have entered the workforce, however, their failure to reach the highest management positions is puzzling. This phenomenon can be referred to as the “glass ceiling” which can be explained as is an invisible and impenetrable barrier that hinders upward career movement. Women and minorities experience the “glass ceiling” in their attempts to move upwards in the managerial ranks that traditionally have been held by the dominant work group, most commonly white males. (Harzing & Van Ruysseveldt, 1995) A number of barriers, which women might face when trying to undertake international assignments, will be presented below.
Companies’ hesitations to female expatriates

One reason behind the low number of female expatriates can be explained by companies’ hesitation to send females on international assignments. According to Adler (1994a, as referred by Stroh, Varma & Valy-Durbin, 2000) companies tend to hold some common beliefs, which can explain their hesitation to select females for their international assignments. The reason behind the hesitation included beliefs such as:

- Women are not interested in being international managers.
- Companies do not send women abroad.
- There are prejudices in the host country that women are ineffective.

Adler (1994a) claims that among women that were sent on international assignments several reported that they had faced some type of resistance from the company before they were being sent. Further, a small number of the expatriates said that they had experienced a grave resistance from their companies to send any female managers abroad and that they were only offered the position after all male candidates had turned it down (ibid).

Regarding the companies’ worries, that foreigners’ prejudice against women would lead to female expatriates experiencing a series of difficulties caused by their gender, Adler (1994a) found that only 20 per cent of the female expatriates found it primarily negative to be a woman in a foreign country. In contrast, most of the women found many advantages by being a woman, such as a high visibility and a curiosity about them that made foreign clients remember them after the first meeting. Additionally, a majority of the female expatriate managers also mentioned that they benefited from a positive “halo effect”. The “halo effect” is a perception held by the foreign businesspersons who expect that the female expatriate is extremely capable and talented since she has been able to overcome the gender barriers in the selection process. (ibid)

Stone (1991) argues that in reality women do not want to be international managers, however, it still exists doubt about it, since many respondents was uncertain about this particular common belief.

Further, regarding companies reluctance in sending women, Asian and expatriate managers favored men rather than women for their international assignments, and this indicates that women still have some barriers to overcome. Finally, when it comes to host country’s prejudices, findings show that it depends on the international position. Asians could not see women in top management positions, although, they definitely appreciated them in specialist positions. Australian managers, on the other hand, were positive to women in both specialist and top management positions. Expatriate managers had quite equal opinions about this. (Stone, 1991)

The conclusions of the study by Stone (1991) are that companies are reluctant to send women even though women are interested in an international career, this since prejudice against female expatriates still appears. It is important for companies to understand and respect host culture attitudes towards women (ibid).

Perceptions and stereotyping

Research by Linehan (2000) found that companies might be willing to promote women through their domestic managerial hierarchy. However, few women are actually given the opportunity to expand their career through access to international careers. Often stereotypical assumptions are made by home-country senior management about women as managers and
about their availability, suitability and preferences for international assignments (Mandelker, 1994 as referred by Linehan & Scullion, 2001). In other words, home-country senior managers tend to be prejudiced against women and hold beliefs that women do not have all the required skills needed for international assignments (ibid). Further, some companies view marriage from two different perspectives; marriage can decrease a woman’s chance to be selected when applying for international positions since she might neglect her career at the expense of her family. Married men on the other hand is seen as an asset for the company since he has a stable network at home which allows him to give his undivided attention to his work. (Vinniecombe & Sturges, 1995 as referred by Linehan & Scullion, 2001)

According to Dallalfar and Movahedi (1996, as referred by Linehan and Scullion, 2001), home-country senior managers quite often make assumptions about the requirements of international managers, and the skills needed for managing such a position. Mainly, assumptions and perceptions by home-country managers are reinforced by the long-established profile of the typical male international manager. The typical male international managers is “approximately 31 years old when he first goes abroad, is married with a trailing spouse who is mobile and committed, spends at least three years on each foreign assignment and has three such assignments in his career” (Linehan and Scullion, 2001, p. 319). These perceptions of the typical manager often put women in a relatively inferior position in the corporate structure (ibid). Furthermore, previous research by Chusmir and Frontczak, (1999, as referred by Linehan & Walsh, 1999) put forward that women’s chances to be selected for an international assignment might be limited by the fact that men hold most upper level management positions. In other words, they do the most hiring, including recruiting individuals for international assignments. Some men may not be willing or feel comfortable with offering such important positions to female subordinates (ibid).

Reasons for selecting men over women

Vance and Paik (2001) also suggest that a reason behind the fact that more men than women are provided with the opportunity to go on international assignments can be explained by the unfavorable perceptions, that home-country management tend to hold regarding female candidate success potential. Further, the high number of male expatriates compared to females has been related to business necessity companies want to promote and optimize the viability of business abroad and to any price avoid expatriate failure. The most common reasons referred to why men usually are selected over women for international assignments are; 1) the presence of heavy cultural restrictions on the role of women in business in the international setting, 2) the predominance of males in international business interactions, 3) greater qualifications of males for international assignments, and 4) the relative inability of females to adapt to the challenging requirements of foreign assignments, and especially the greater vulnerability of females to the male dominated and aggressive nature of the foreign business environment. (ibid)

However, in contrast to the common, although unfounded perceptions about female expatriates research, conducted on western women in expatriate assignments located in several different countries, found that women very often have great success in performing their international assignments (Adler, 1994; Harris, 1995; Stone, 1991; Jelinek & Adler, 1988 as referred by Vance & Paik, 2001)
2.3.4 Cross-cultural training of female expatriates

Linehan and Scullion (2001), underline the fact that recent studies show a lack of pre-departure training for female expatriate managers. Pre-departure training generally supports the position that the expatriate will be exposed to in the host country and the training is related to the cross-culture adjustment of both men and women. However, when it comes to the pre-departure CCT for female expatriates it is important to adapt it to a woman’s repertoire of behavioural responses. This could involve training of the norms, tradition and values of women in the host country, which can ease the adoption of the new culture as well as facilitate potential problem solving. (Caligiuri & Cascio, 1998)

Further MNCs should offer female expatriates developmental experiences in the same extent as they are offered to men. Additionally, female expatriates should be offered the chance to role-play or to simulate, for instance through interactive videos. This in order to make the female expatriate familiar with the variety of difficult situations that may occur in the host country. It is important that the potential female expatriate is prepared for the “after-hours” socialising, peer pressure for sexual favours, and also, single females should be offered strategies for coping with the loneliness that often occur during an overseas assignment. In order to handle stressful situations and to reduce the anxiety that may be a fact when being a newcomer in a position in a host country, the female expatriate should be exposed to realistic job previews. Those realistic job previews give the expatriates the possibility to form a realistic impression of their future post. (Caligiuri & Cascio, 1998)

Due to the above ideas Caligiury and Cascio’s (1998) stated an organisational strategy that stress the importance of MNC’s to train their expatriate women on the norms, values and traditions about women that belongs to the host country nationals. Such training programs should enable them on deriving solutions for the probable challenging situations they may face as females (ibid).

2.3.5 On-site support and mentoring

On-site support and mentoring that is offered by the MNCs may enhance the success of female expatriates. In fact, the use of mentors has been found to improve the likelihood for success for women in managerial positions on overseas assignments. Thus, mentorship may be considered as important for men, however, it is even more important for women since the barriers for female success within an organisation might be greater than for male expatriates. Unfortunately, the access to mentors within many MNCs is incredibly limited. Therefore, MNCs should consider the fact of supporting female expatriates on their overseas assignments. (Caligiury and Cascio, 1998) Due to this fact, the authors suggest that MNCs should provide each female expatriate with an in-country support network or mentor.
3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

In this chapter the conceptualisation of the research questions based on the literature review will be discussed. This conceptualisation will work as a frame of reference for the empirical research. Further, an emerged frame of reference will also be presented.

Miles and Huberman (1994) state, “a conceptual framework explains, either graphically or in a narrative form, the main things to be studied”. In this conceptual framework the topics and issues to be studied has been lifted out and presented. The emerged frame of references has further been graphically shown to illustrate how the research questions are connected to one another.

3.1 Research question 1 - Selection criteria for expatriates

Selecting someone for an international assignment certainly requires something additional than the usual stringent criteria for outstanding performance in a domestic scenario. Although, selecting the “right” candidate is a difficult task for the IHR manager. (Jordan & Cartwright, 1998) However, selecting the “wrong” candidate can result in expatriate failure, which linked to very expensive costs for the company (Black et al. 1999; Fish & Jack, 1994). In order to collect data on the first research question, the following variables will be studied:

**Selection strategy**

Fish and Jack (1994) as well as Francesco and Gold (1998) claim that it is almost impossible to generalize selection criteria in order to conduct a specific selection strategy.

**Technical skills/personal characteristics**

According to Harvey and Novicevic (2001) and Black et al. (1999) companies are trying to recognize various factors that might be crucial for expatriate success, and with time, different selection models have started to focus more on personal characteristics rather than technical and functional expertise of the potential expatriate.

**The “Big Five” personality characteristics**

Further, Daft (2002) and Harvey and Novicevic (2001) underline the importance of considering the “Big Five” personality characteristics when selecting expatriates, in order to reach success.

- Extroversion
- Agreeableness
- Conscientiousness
- Emotional stability
- Openness and intellect

**Qualities sought for in expatriates**

Ashamalla (1998) is of the opinion that when selecting expatriates it is important to look for more than technical competences, the author brings up five qualities that are sought after within expatriates:

- Cultural emphasis
- Awareness of environmental constraints
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

- Interpersonal skills
- Managerial and decision-making abilities
- Other crucial qualities

Black et al. (1999) do also support these characteristics. However, in this research we will use the five-step-theory stated by Ashamalla (1998) since his theory emphasize the cultural aspects more explicitly than Black et al. (1999), which we find more relevant for this study.

Selection procedures
Black et al. (1999) as well as Hodgett and Luthans (2003) are of the opinion that the selection procedures are also significant in order to select the most appropriate candidate. There is a limited range of selection tools, which IHR managers can utilize to receive relevant and important information about the candidate. Black et al. (1999) along with Hodgett and Luthans (2003) define a number of different tools that are used when selecting expatriates:

- Biographical and background data
- Standardised tests
- Work samples
- Interviews

International manager – selection system
Harris (2001) and Harris and Brewster (1999) present a typology that identifies four possible variations of international manger-selection systems; closed, open, formal and informal. In a closed/informal scenario the individual preferences of a selector will be accepted to determine whom they see as a suitable candidate. Further, in an open/informal system the employees are aware of the vacancies and are welcome to apply. However, the decision of who is the best suited is based on personal recommendation and reputation, and although persons may be put forward for an interview the decision of selection is already taken before the interview takes place. In a closed/formal system the selectors select appropriate candidates against formal criteria and discuss whether the candidates’ match with these criteria. Finally, in an open/formal system the candidates are chosen after formal criteria. The best-suited candidates are determined through continual comparison of their own values against the other selectors values. (Harris, 2001; Harris & Brewster, 1999)

3.2 Research question 2 - Training of expatriates

Selmer (2001) stresses the importance of having managers with a cross-cultural competence. Further, Grahn and Swenson (2000) claim that in order to increase the rate of success of organisations’ and employees’, training of expatriates is crucial. In order to collect data on the second research question, the following variables will be studied:

Duration of CCT
According to Harrison (1994) the time organizations devote for CCT for their expatriates vary from three month up to a year. However, the same author claims that there are suggestions for companies to have CCT programs of 40-50 hours long, and each session should be individual and last at least two hours.
Design of CCT
Harrison (1994) suggests that there are two different ways of how CCT can be designed, namely an inductive process going from the specific to the general or a deductive process going from the general to the specific.

CCT methods used
Harzing and Van Ruysseveldt (1995) present an overview of the available training options for CCT. There are seven different strategies in which various methods are defined. We have found these strategies and methods most appropriate to investigate since it is one of the most extended theories. Further, this theory is supported both by Francesco and Gold (1998) and Tung (1998, as referred by Deresky 2000). The theory by Harzing and Van Ruysseveldt (1995) is presented below.

Table 2.1 Overview of the available training options for cross-cultural training

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional strategies</th>
<th>Specific methods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Simulations</td>
<td>Role playing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Case studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Instructional games</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programmed instructions</td>
<td>Cultural assimilator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expositive instructions</td>
<td>Lectures (area briefings)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tutorials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading assignments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Audio/visual presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensitivity training</td>
<td>T-groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behaviour modification methods</td>
<td>Drill-and-practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Modelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field experiences</td>
<td>Field trips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assignments to micro-cultures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meetings with experienced international staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-the-job training</td>
<td>Coaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Job rotation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from Harzing and Van Ruysseveldt (1995, p. 214)

On-site training
- Support from a supervisor in the home office can play an important role in increasing the success rate of their expatriate (Webb & Wright, 1996).

Coverage of on-site training
- Suutari and Burch (2001) claim that on-site training should cover the following areas:
  - Acquainting the expatriate with the area
  - Housing arrangement
  - Banking and other local facilities
  - School and day-care arrangements
  - Health-care
  - Work arrangements in dual career situations

CCT – profitable or not
- CCT is profitable in the long run since it will limit the number of ineffective expatriates and premature returns (Harrison, 1994).
3.3 Research question 3 – Gender differences

The characteristics and competences required by managers for international assignments have attracted a lot of attention. In general these characteristics are non-gender specific, however, in reality women have often been excluded from international assignments. (Tung, 2004) Furthermore, Linehan and Scullion (2001) argue that female expatriate managers suffer from poor pre-departure training. In order to collect data on the third research question, the following variables will be studied:

Few women in international assignments
According to Tung (2004) women are still underestimated at the top management levels and in overseas assignments, although women in advanced education, managerial and professional ranks have increased during the last decades.

Barriers to women moving into international senior management

- **Companies’ hesitation to female expatriates**
  According to Adler (1994, as referred by Stroh et al. 2000), companies tend to hold some common beliefs, which can explain their hesitation to select females for their international assignments. The reason behind the hesitation includes beliefs such as:
  - Women are not interested in being international managers
  - Companies do not send women abroad
  - There are prejudices in the host country that women are ineffective

- **Stereotyping**
  - Often stereotypical assumptions are made by home country senior management about women as managers, and about their availability, suitability and preferences for international assignments (Mandelker, 1994 as referred by Linehan & Scullion, 2001).
  - Vinniecombe and Sturges (1995 as referred by Linehan and Scullion 2001) state that companies view marriage from two different perspectives. For women, marriage might lessen the chance of being selected for an international assignment since she may neglect her career on her family’s expense. Married men on the other hand is viewed upon as an asset for the company due to his stable network at home which allows him to focus on his career. (ibid)

- **Men’s tendency to choose other men**
  Research conducted by Chusmir and Frontczak (1999, as referred by Linehan and Walsh 1999) reveals that women’s chances to be selected for international assignments might be limited by the fact that men hold most upper level management positions. This means that they do the most hiring, including recruiting individuals for international assignments, and some men may not feel comfortable with offering such important positions for female expatriates (ibid).

- **Reasons for selecting men over women**
  According to Vance and Paik (2001) the following reasons for companies selecting men over women, for expatriate assignments are:
  - The predominance of males in international business interaction
- Men have greater qualifications for international assignments

*Female pre-departure training*
Caligiury and Cascio (1999) claim the importance of adapting the CCT to a woman’s repertoire of behavior responses.

*On-site Support and Mentoring*
According to Caligiury and Cascio (1998) all female expatriates should be provided with an in-country support network or a mentor since the barriers for female success within an organization may be greater than for male expatriates

3.4 Emerged frame of references
Considering Miles and Huberman’s (1994) suggestion that a conceptual framework is best done graphically, we have chosen to narrow down our conceptual framework and illustrate it in a graphical frame of reference, as shown in figure 3.1 below.

![Figure 3.1: Frame of Reference](source: Authors’ own construction)
4. METHODOLOGY

This chapter will present the methodology of this study and how we went about collecting data in order to answer our research questions, thus fulfilling the purpose of our thesis. First the purpose of the research will be stated, further the research approach and research strategy will be presented. Thereafter, a description on how the data collection was carried out and how the sampling was conducted is provided. Finally, the choice of general analytical strategy will be explained and the quality standards of the research will be established.

4.1 Purpose of the research

According to Eriksson and Widersheim-Paul (2001) to state the purpose of the study means to inform the reader of what is desired to be achieved, and how the result of it can be used. Further the authors claim that the way of carrying out research can be grouped in three ways: exploratory, descriptive and explanatory, which will be described below.

Exploratory studies are, according to Saunders et al (2000), valuable when the aim is to seek new insights, ask questions and when researchers want to re-assess phenomena. In other words, as Reynolds (1971) expressed it, exploratory research should give the researchers a better understanding of the research area. Further, exploratory studies most often start with a wide research area, in order to progressively become narrower as the research evolves (Saunders et al. 2000).

Many investigations have the purpose to describe various phenomenon's, such as condition, events and course of actions. Description of a study often involves identifying, document and mapping out. All descriptions have a starting point, the researchers choose perspectives, aspects, interpretation and observation etc. Every single description needs a purpose in order to make sense. When one wants to explain, understand, predict and decide, a good description is truly needed. (Eriksson & Widersheim-Paul, 2001)

According to Saunders et al. (2000), explanatory studies are studies with the emphasis to study a situation or a problem in order to explain the cause and effect relationship between given variables. Well-defined research problems and hypotheses need to bee stated in order to accomplish that (Eriksson & Widersheim-Paul, 2001). Explanatory research is mainly utilized within areas where extensive research has already been done (Wallén, 1996).

Our research involves elements from both, it is primarily descriptive due to the fact that our research questions reflect a need to describe the nature of a specific problem area, and that we will both document and identify the findings during our research. In addition, it is exploratory since there are very few researches done within this subject earlier and therefore our purpose is to gain an understanding of our research area, expatriation- selection, training and gender differences. Further, towards the end of our thesis, we will through our conclusions start to explain the phenomena which we have explored and described, thereby our thesis can to a minor extent be described as explanatory.

4.2 Research approach

Based on the research type of data, studies can be divided into quantitative and qualitative research (Lundahl & Skärvad, 1992). Qualitative and quantitative researches are frequently
used in order to explain the approach from which direction researchers conduct their studies (Denscombe, 2000). These terms will in the following section be motivated and described.

Qualitative research is mostly used when a researcher wants to transform what has been observed, reported or registered into written words and not numbers. A qualitative research has a tendency to rely on detailed and thorough descriptions of people or events. These types of studies are often associated with small-scale studies and due to its penetrating nature it is considered to be an excellent tool to handle complex situations. (Denscombe, 2000)

Quantitative research is helpful when the researcher wants to bring forth numeric data, and transform what has been observed, reported, or registered into quantifiable units. Quantitative research is often large-scale studies, since larger data collections contribute with more trustworthy results. The opportunity to generalise the results increases the more units that are involved. (Denscombe, 2000)

The aim of this study is to gain a better understanding of the selection and training of expatriates within the Swedish banking industry. Therefore we have decided to use a qualitative approach in this study. By using a small-scale study we could investigate certain variables in depth and thus, gain a better understanding of our research area. Due to the fact that we are investigating the four biggest banks within Sweden we will to some extent be able to make generalisations from this study.

4.3 Research strategy

When selecting the right research strategy the decision is based on three distinct conditions. These include the type of research question asked, the investigators degree of involvement over the actual behavioural events, and the level of focus on contemporary as opposed to historical events. These tree condition are presented in table 4.1 where it shows how each is related to the five major research strategies; experiments, surveys, archival analyses, histories, and case studies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>For of research question</th>
<th>Requires control over behavioral events</th>
<th>Focuses on contemporary events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experiment</td>
<td>How, why</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>Who, what, where, how many, how much</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archival analysis</td>
<td>Who, what, where, how many, how much</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES/NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>How, why</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Study</td>
<td>How, why</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Yin, 2003, p. 5

Case studies focus on one or a small number of research units. The in-depth analysis of an individual unit increases the chances for a researcher to gain valuable and unique insights that would not have been revealed in a shallower yet broader investigation (Denscombe, 2000). We have chosen to do a case study since our study deals with contemporary events, and we do not need to have control over behavioural events. Further, our research is of a qualitative character, and our research questions are formulated as how and why questions.
In addition, we have decided to use a multiple case study since we wish to compare well-formulated theories to empirical data. This goes in line with Yin’s (2003) recommendation of using multiple case studies. According to Yin (2003) the evidence of multiple cases is often more convincing, and the overall study is therefore considered more robust. According to Eisenhardt (1989) four to ten cases usually works well. Fewer than four cases make it difficult to generate theory with much complexity, and will therefore be unconvincing. However, more than ten cases are difficult to handle, due to the complexity and high volume of data. Therefore, in order to achieve a sufficient basis for analysis, and with the intention to make some generalisations we have chosen to conduct four case studies within the four major banks in Sweden.

4.4 Data collection method

According to Eriksson and Wiederheim-Paul (2001), there are two different categories for data collection, namely; primary and secondary. Primary data are data collected for the first time by the researchers and secondary data are data already collected by previous researchers (ibid).

According to Denscombe (1998) case studies encourage the use of multiple sources of data, which support the validation of data by means of triangulation. According to Yin (2003) the six most important and most commonly used data collection methods for case studies are; documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observations, participant-observations and physical artefacts. Further, the author claims that even though the different sources of evidence has its own advantages and disadvantages, they are very complementary and none of them have a complete advantage over the others (ibid.).

In order to collect data for our case studies we have chosen to use interviews and documentation. We have chosen to use interviews as our primary data collection method due to its strengths to focus directly on the topic of the case study. According to Yin (2003) case study interviews can take the form of being open-ended, focused, or structured. In a focused interview, the respondent is interviewed for a very short period of time, and follows a specific sets of questions derived from the case study protocol. (ibid.) We decided to conduct a focused interview since we had a certain set of questions that needed to be answered in order for us to obtain relevant data to our research questions. Furthermore, we wanted to keep the interview open ended to some extent, in order to preserve the flexibility of the interview as well as the opportunity of probing. An open-ended interview is suitable when the interviewer asks about facts as well as about opinions (Yin, 2003).

Focus interviews and open-ended interviews can in general be conducted by telephone or in person. Telephone interviews are less time consuming and less costly, which may be preferable when contacting a distance respondents. (Lundahl & Skärvad, 1992). However, personal interviews can generally be longer than telephone interviews and include questions that are more complex. The personal contact during a face-to-face interview makes it possible to get a better feed back from the respondent. (ibid) Therefore we decided to conduct face-to-face interviews. We went to Stockholm to conduct three of our four interviews. The fourth interview was conducted by telephone since the respondent was away on a business trip in South America at the time of our visit in Stockholm. Due to our limited time and financial resources we could not stay in Stockholm until the respondent returned. All interviews are conducted in Swedish. The interview guide is presented in Appendix I.
In order to collect secondary data about our chosen companies, we visited their websites. On their websites we could find documentation in the form of general company information.

4.5 Sample selection

Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2000) suggest that there are two ways to select a sample: probability sampling and non-probability sampling. Probability sampling is a process whereby units are selected randomly, and all units have the same chance of being selected. Non-probability sampling is done without chance selection procedures. We have chosen a non-probability sampling method that basically allows a researcher to select cases that seems to be best suited to answer the research questions, this method is by Lewis and Thornhill (2000) referred to as purposive sampling. By doing this we decided to focus our interviews on the four greatest banks in Sweden, since they all have operations abroad and therefore were most likely to be experienced in expatriate management. In order to find the most appropriate respondents we contacted the human resource departments within all four banks, namely; Handelsbanken, Nordea, Skandinaviska Enskilda Banken (SEB), and Swedbank, and made inquiries to them of whom would be the most appropriate to talk to.

The primary selection-criterion was for the prospective company to be experienced with expatriate management. Moreover, the criterion for the respondents to be considered suitable was that the person should be involved in the selection and recruitment of expatriates.

The reason why we decided to focus on the banking industry was to enable us to generalize. We were of the opinion that choosing four multinational companies from the same industry would provide our research with more trustworthy findings and conclusions.

4.6 Data analysis

Data analysis contains of examining, categorizing, tabulating, testing or otherwise recombining both quantitative and qualitative evidence to address the initial propositions of a study (Yin, 2003). Further, Yin (2003) claims that every case study should strive to have a general analytic strategy and that the strategy should help the researcher to choose between various techniques and also to conclude the analysis in a successful way. There are three general analytical strategies: relying on theoretical propositions, setting up a framework based on rival explanations, and developing a case description (ibid.). Relying on theoretical propositions means that the researcher collects data with research questions and previous studies as a basis. The second strategy tries to define and test rival explanations. Rival explanations can be described as other possible influences that may distort the results of the research. The third strategy, developing a case description, means that the researcher presents the data in a descriptive way, however, this is considered as less favorable and should only be used when there is little or no access to previous research (Yin, 2003).

Further, Miles and Huberman (1994) present pattern coding as a way to present data. For a qualitative analyst, pattern coding is important since it reduces large amounts of data into a smaller number of analytic units. This facilitates for the researcher since they can stay more focused and helps the researcher to elaborate a cognitive map in order to understand local incidents and interactions (ibid).
Further, Yin (2003) argues that the ideal strategy when analyzing the material is to follow the theoretical propositions, which led to the actual case study. We reduced data by selecting and simplifying the data relevant for the research questions. The case analysis was conducted in a way in which we compared existing theory, according to our conceptualisation, to our empirical findings. Miles and Huberman (1994) suggest matrices in order to facilitate and visualize the analysis, which we also used in the cross-case analysis. The cross-case analysis was conducted in order to facilitate the comparison between the banks. Thereafter, we summarised key findings in regards to our research questions. Finally, conclusions of the research were drawn.

4.7 Validity and reliability

The term validity comprises to which extent research data, and the methods used in order to receive data, are regarded as precise, valid, and correct (Denscombe, 1998). The meaning of the term validity depends on whether the term validity is referred to the research data or to the research methods. Regarding the data, validity involves whether it reflects the truth, reality and covers the conclusive questions, and when it comes to the methods, validity rather focuses on the question: are we measuring the terms appropriate indicators and are the results achieved precise. (ibid)

In order to establish the quality of the research Yin (2003) discusses four different tests that are used in all social science methods. These methods are summarized in table 4.2 below, which describes the test, recommend the tactics for increasing validity of a case study and reveals in what phase in a case study the tactic should be used.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tests</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Case study tactic</th>
<th>Phase in research</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Construct validity</td>
<td>Establishing correct operational measures for the concepts being studied</td>
<td>• Use multiple sources of evidence</td>
<td>Data collection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Establish chain of evidence</td>
<td>Data collection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Have key informants review draft case study report</td>
<td>Composition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal validity</td>
<td>Establishing a casual relationship, whereby certain conditions are shown to lead to other conditions, as distinguished from spurious relationships</td>
<td>• Do pattern-matching</td>
<td>Data analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Do explanation building</td>
<td>Data analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Address rival explanations</td>
<td>Data analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Use logic models</td>
<td>Data analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External validity</td>
<td>Establishing the domain to which study’s findings can be generalized</td>
<td>• Use theory in single case studies</td>
<td>Research design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Use replication logic in multiple-case studies</td>
<td>Research design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliability</td>
<td>Demonstrating that the operations of a study, such as the data collection procedures, can be repeated, with the same results.</td>
<td>• Use case study protocols</td>
<td>Data collection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Develop case study database</td>
<td>Data collection</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from Yin (2003, p. 33)

With the intention to increase the construct validity of our research, we have used multiple sources of evidence during our data collection, namely; documentation and interviews. Before conducting our focused interviews we had our supervisor to read through our interview guide to make sure that the questions were clear, understandable, and relevant to our study. The interview guide was sent to our respondents in advance, in order for them to read through and
prepare for the interview. In addition, we recorded and took notes during the interviews in order to miss out as little of the important information as possible, which also contributed to enhanced construct validity. Further, we are aware of the possible distortions that might have been caused by conducting the interview in Swedish and then translated its discussion into English. However, we believe that conducting the interviews in Swedish would be the best way to make our Swedish respondents feel comfortable, and therefore the most effective way of conducting a successful interview. Although, we decided not to translate all of the terms into Swedish due to the fact that they might be misinterpreted, therefore, we believed that it would be best to keep some terms and instead explain these terms to the respondents. Moreover, we are aware of the fact that the gender of our respondents may have affected the results regarding the gender issues that have been covered within this thesis. Further, considering the fact that our fourth interview was conducted by telephone we are aware that this might have decreased the validity.

When it comes to internal validity we used pattern matching during our analysis, which according to Yin (2003) involves the comparison of empirically based pattern with the pattern predicted in already existing theories within our conceptual framework. External validity does, according to Yin (2003), test whether one can generalise the findings of a study or not, in other words, if our findings is applicable to the Swedish bank industry. Due to the fact that we have focused on the four major banks within the Swedish banking industry we believe that our findings to some extent can be generalised.

Reliability is according to Yin (2003) a test with the objective to be sure that the same findings and conclusions made by one investigator should arrive from another investigator that followed the same procedures and conducted the same case study all over again. In order to increase the reliability, we created our interview guide trying to avoid leading and subjective questions. Further, we have kept the notes and the tapes from our interviews in order to develop a case-study database. There is a risk that personal biases might have been present in the interview to some extent, therefore the results could be questioned due to the influence from the respondent as well as our own attitudes and values.
5. DATA COLLECTION

In this chapter the collected empirical data will be presented in the form of four case studies. The data for these cases were collected through three personal interviews and one telephone interview. First we will present the empirical data gathered in Case 1. Case studies consist of the company’s background, followed by data regarding expatriates: selection, training, and gender differences. Thereafter, data from Case 2, 3, and 4 will be presented in the same manner.

5.1 Case study one: Handelsbanken

5.1.1 Company background

There are about 9500 people working within the bank, and of these about 2000 work outside of Sweden. Today there are about 90 expatriates on missions, and of these about 85 per cent are Swedish. Handelsbanken has two categories of expatriates, firstly, the regular expatriates, that go to Germany, France, Singapore, China or Hong Kong together with the family on specific conditions. These specific conditions involve all the costs should be covered by Handelsbanken, however, not much more than that. Secondly, Handelsbanken has the Nordic concept that is used when sending people abroad within the Nordic countries. This concept means that people are sent out on expatriate conditions, however, since there are so many conventions when it comes to the social insurances, the financial support is more limited.

Handelsbanken operates in 18 different countries, namely Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland, France, China, Netherlands, Poland, Luxembourg, Russia, Switzerland, U.S, Taiwan, Great Britain (financial centre), Austria, Singapore, Spain and Germany.

Most commonly the expatriates within Handelsbanken are some kind of specialists. When sending someone out it is important that the specific person can contribute to something unique in the host country, something nobody else is able to do. Another reason for sending people out from the home country, is that Handelsbanken is an organisation of a very decentralised nature, therefore it is very important for the expatriates to have the right competences, in order to be able to make the right decisions. Therefore, people that are sent abroad to a relatively new environment often have a very broad and deep competence. It is very important that the person have worked within the bank for a few years before going. Moreover, Handelsbanken stresses the importance of the corporate culture that people work within the bank and learn to know it, before they are sent out. The philosophy of the bank is for the employee to start working at the bank after graduating from school, and then stays at the bank the rest of the life.

Further, they mostly send people on a two plus one-year contract, it gives both the expatriate and the company the opportunity to terminate the contract after two years. Most often the person stays for three years, however it is not unusual that they extend the contract to four or five years. Although, if the expatriate still wants to stay after five years, he/she will be employed on local conditions, without all the benefits they have as expatriates, otherwise they have to go back home.

We interviewed respondent Björn Johansson, working at Handelsbanken. Mr Johansson works with benefits compensations international, which is broader than working with conditions and sending people out on missions. Mr Johansson started to work with the
administrative issue of what policy to use when sending people for abroad assignments. He deals with issues such as what categories of expatriates the bank should have, on what conditions they will be sent, what philosophy that are used, and how to handle all the practical things such as insurance’s, pensions, and the move to the host country.

5.1.2 Selection

Handelsbanken does not have a specific selection strategy, it believe that it is hard to generalize selection criteria since it rather depends on the environment in the host country. The most important thing when selecting expatriates, is that the person are performing good results when he/she is abroad. A person, who performs well in the home office, is often a good candidate. However, Handelsbanken claims that the professional and technical parts are more important, together with being faithful to the bank, than the awareness of the environment and the personal skills.

People who are going abroad are often persons with a strong personality and character, such as openness and great intellect. They have a desire and a strong motivation in succeeding in doing their job out there. There is no doubt that extroversion is a very important character for an expatriate. Regarding awareness, Handelsbanken believes that people in general knows very little about the country they are going to, on the other hand they are very interested in understanding what will face them when entering the new country. It is different to work in a foreign country with a diverse environment than the expatriate is used to. For example, the jargon is very different in Sweden and Denmark, it is much tougher in Denmark. Further, Handelsbanken values conscientiousness, emotional stability and the expatriates ability to function with other people from different cultures.

Handelsbanken believes that cultural emphasis is something very important to consider. Awareness of environmental constraints is viewed as essential, however, not as vital as cultural emphasis. Further, interpersonal skills are also valued as important by Handelsbanken, since it believes in the importance of the social part of a business, in order to understand how people works.

Furthermore, Handelsbanken claims that managerial and decision-making abilities are very vital, especially when it comes to manager-positions, a vacillating manager that have problems in getting things done, will not be successful. When it comes to other crucial qualities, for example; language skills, Handelsbanken do emphasize it when considered necessary.

Handelsbanken select the expatriates by interviewing them, however tests are occasionally used as a complement for the interview. Handelsbanken considers tests as a very unsafe strategy, since it sometimes can provide very believable results but sometimes they do not work very well at all. Further, tests are very demanding and time-consuming. The person using tests needs to be very experienced in order to manage it successfully. Handelsbanken prefer multiple interviews, which they later attune in order to find the appropriate persons. The bank stress the openness in the selection process, although, they claim that in some situations a person considered suitable for a position may be encouraged to apply for the post, however it is impossible to be employed if the post is not applied for.

Regarding the selection of the expatriates, Handelsbanken has an agreement with the union, that all expatriate positions shall be announced, except a few higher positions closest to the
manager of the group. The process is highly open, a person has to apply for a post in order to get it. However, in some cases, a suitable candidate may be encouraged to apply for the job by the selectors.

Further, Handelsbanken adds that people that already have been on a foreign assignment often seem to be interested to do it again in a later part of their life. This is seen as an asset for that person since they know how the environment works, and even if they go to a different country than their last time, they can easier manage the practical details, they do not need as much support and help.

5.1.3 Training

Handelsbanken provides its expatriates with a very limited pre-departure training. The announcement of an international position is done from three, up to six month before expected departure. The Bank expects all the interviews to be done at least three month in advance. The bank does not have any specific duration of the expatriate training, it depends on the work-task as well as the country.

Even though Handelsbanken has a limited pre-departure training, it does provide some training in the form of field trips, tutorials, and to a limited extent language training is provided as well. The training they provide is obligatory. Handelsbanken has about 90 expatriates where about 70 are Swedish, which the bank consider as a fairly low number in order to conduct specific cross culture-training programmes. The fact that the expatriates are sent to various countries with different cultures also impedes the ability to adopt the training to every specific case.

Handelsbanken use specific strategies and methods to a very limited extent when training their expatriates. Instead, Handelsbanken relies on the fact that the expatriates will learn the cultural differences as well as differences in doing business through their colleagues in the host country. The bank calls this “learning by doing”. Further, the expatriates tend to spend a lot of time together, both at work as well as on their spare time, which helps to facilitate their adaptation phase. In that way, the expatriates learn through each other how the system works within the new country.

Moreover, Handelsbanken allows its selected expatriates to visit the host country and its office for a pre-view, most often the spouse is invited to join. This gives them the opportunity to meet the host country manager, visit the work place and get a taste of the new culture and environment.

Handelsbanken does not provide the expatriate with any kind of organised meetings where the expatriate can meet with experienced international staff. Instead they advice him/her to get in contact with old expatriates who have returned after a completed overseas assignment, and through them gain some useful information.

Additionally, Handelsbanken has a person who is responsible for the different overseas areas. This person informs the expatriates about important factors that the expatriate should think of when going abroad such as; living conditions, tax system, insurance, and pension insurance. This information is afterwards collected in a file that later is of great use for the expatriate during his/her time abroad. This is something Handelsbanken though, considers as a form of training.
Language courses are not very common, however, it can be offered in special situations where good language skills are needed. These language courses are first and foremost offered to the expatriate himself/herself but could in special occasions also be offered to the spouses. Handelsbanken mostly have their activities in English speaking countries, but also in Germany where the need for knowing German is vital. However, due to the fact that Swedes generally have very good language skills and since the people who apply for the overseas assignments most often know very good English, the need for language training decreases.

Handelsbanken believes in the importance of a supervisor for their expatriates. When the expatriates are abroad they always have some kind of supervisor, even though they do not have a formalized mentor-system in Handelsbanken. The expatriates have a person it can talk to about all the practical questions, and when it comes to the professional part, the expatriate is the specialist in the area, and therefore should have all the answers themselves. The supervisor is normally the HR manager in the host company. In the cases when the expatriates ask for a specific person in order to have him/her as a mentor, Handelsbanken most often make sure to arrange that. Further, Handelsbanken prefers to have a male mentor to men and female mentors to women, since that seems to be the most effective solution.

Handelsbanken claims that the contact between the expatriate and the office in the home country during the assignment has been less successful, therefore the bank has started a new system that they call "a three-part discussion". The "three-part discussion" involves a discussion between a person from the home country department, the expatriate, and the personnel manager in the host country. The first discussions take place in the pre-departure phase where circumstances of the assignment are discussed. Further, these discussions will be held once a year during the expatriate’s time abroad. The HR department in the home country takes the initiative to call for a new three-part discussion, which is organized and documented. Handelsbanken consider the discussion held related the return home as the most important, since the key issue then is what position the expatriate will hold after returned back home. Usually the repatriation phase works out very well, however, a few of the returnees may feel uncomfortable when they get back to the home country again. Some of them might feel that their time abroad was not that much worth, since their position back home might be on a lower level than the position that they held in the host country. However, soon they most likely will start climbing the corporate ladder again. However, most of the returned expatriates feel that it has been a great experience for him/her and the whole family.

Handelsbanken view housing arrangement, school arrangement as well as insurance as the three most important factors when sending expatriates on overseas assignments, therefore Handelsbanken helps its expatriates with arrangements within these areas. Most often, the host company cover the housing expenses. However, the housing expenses back home are not paid by the home company and therefore the company always advises their expatriate to rent it out during their time abroad.

Moreover, all expatriates have a health care insurance through the company, which covers most of the health care expenses. Furthermore, Handelsbanken helps the expatriate and his/her family with school arrangement for their children. As an example, for the expatriates who are placed in London, education in the Swedish school is offered, but if the expatriates prefer another and more expensive school for their children, then they will have to pay for the additional cost themselves. Considering day-care for children the systems abroad do not work in the same way as the system in Sweden. However, since most of the spouses who come
along on the overseas assignment most often have difficulties with getting a job in the host country, which in turns leads them to stay home in order to take care of their children during the family’s time abroad. However, in those cases where the spouses managed to get a job and therefore also need day-care for their children the company does not compensate for that expense since Handelsbanken does not consider day-care as an obligatory expense.

Handelsbanken does offer the spouses simplified pension insurance since they most often do not work and thereby do not earn any money during their time abroad. The amount of money that Handelsbanken compensate the spouses with is a pension premium with an approximately value of two basic amount. Handelsbanken’s involvement considering work arrangement for spouses is very limited and fairly rare, although there are cases when Handelsbanken have managed to find a job to the spouse as well. Work arrangements for spouses are less complicated if the spouse happens to work within the bank.

Dual careers are something that Handelsbanken started to notice in the end of the seventies. Occasionally dual-career is the reason why people decline their chance for overseas assignment. This may be due to the fact that the husband/wife does not want to jeopardise his/her own career. The issue with dual-career couples started in the end of the seventies, however, it is too expensive to compensate the spouse too, and therefore this problem still exists.

Even though Handelsbanken consider issues relating to dual careers as important, they cannot afford to spend more money on factors related to work arrangement or other kinds of compensations for spouses. In situations when Handelsbanken does not manage to send a suitable expert they have to come up with solutions such as educate someone in the host country, however, that type of solution is time consuming.

Handelsbanken finds it hard to say whether cross-culture training will increase the success of the overseas assignments or not, however they admit that there is a chance that CCT in the long run would increase the results.

5.1.4 Gender differences

Of the expatriates on mission today, two thirds are men and one third are women, Handelsbanken believes that this is due to the old structure, women are probably less willing or less interested in becoming managers abroad. More than 50 per cent of the employees at the bank are women, however, most often those who are sent on the expatriate assignments are those at higher positions, and the majority of the managers are men. However, Handelsbanken claims that it does not consider the host countries before sending women, if there are any prejudices against women or if women are not accepted at higher positions in the host country. The bank does not think that such a problem occurs in the international environment in which they operate. The bank believes that the competence and the cultural questions are the most vital. Neither does it believes that senior managers in the home country hold stereotypical assumptions about women’s suitability and preferences for international assignments as well as their suitability.

When it comes to the different views of a marriage between men and women, Handelsbanken admits that it might be easier to be a male expatriate than a female, however, the bank was not able to answer the question if it takes this into consideration when selecting expatriates, Handelsbanken rather believes that it is up to each individual person to decide. When the bank
find the most appropriate candidate, the candidate has to take a decision whether he/she wants to go or not.

Further, Handelsbanken cannot reject the fact that male managers select other males instead of females on the overseas assignments. Since the great majority of the selectors are men, it may result in the high amount of male expatriates selected.

Handelsbanken does not believe that the predominance of males in international business is a reason for companies to select men over women. Neither does the bank think that men’s qualifications for international assignments are superior to females. Moreover, Handelsbanken does not provide any special training for their female expatriates. All its expatriates receive the same package of training. Handelsbanken does offer its expatriates with an in-country supervisor, however, the bank does not provide its female expatriates with any extra support in the host country due to barriers to females in some cultures. Handelsbanken claims that the reason for this is that the countries it does operate in do not hold such barriers against female expatriates.

5.2 Case study two: Skandinaviska Enskilda Banken (SEB)

5.2.1 Company background

We interviewed respondent Catharina Axling at SEB who has worked within the bank for 18 years. Her present position is “Head of International Assignments and Compensation and Benefit within merchant banking”.

SEB has and offices in 12-15 countries and around 18,000 employees. The bank has Swedish employees in almost every country SEB is operating in. In addition the bank has Swedish people as local employees in foreign countries. The positions that the expatriates within SEB are possessing are most commonly chief positions or specialist positions within a specific product. SEB is very huge within merchant banking, which is the main part of their business, and the persons working there are often specialists. SEB sends many expatriates within the trading business and they are not necessarily chiefs. Around 110-120 expatriates are currently on assignments on contracts normally two plus one years long. If they want to stay in the host country office longer than five years, they need to be employed on local basis.

5.2.2 Selection

SEB does not have a documented strategy for selecting their expatriates. Often the way of selecting expatriates depends on within which department the expatriate will work. For example, if there is a vacancy within the office business then it is required that the expatriate holds good knowledge within the business. Moreover, if SEB is searching for an expatriate for an assignment in Germany, then good language knowledge is often a required skill since many Germans are lacking knowledge in the English language. The method of selecting expatriates differs depending on what positions and within what area he/she will work. It is difficult to have a documented strategy since SEB has expatriates within several different areas. However, one thing that calls for all expatriates is that they must have a strong personality. It is crucial that the expatriate is energetic, able to handle changes and has a driving force to learn, this since it is huge changeover to move to a foreign country.
When selecting expatriates personal characteristics are a vital part, however, technical competencies are the major qualifications looked for, and if the expatriate is sent for a chief position then he/she should be a key person within SEB. For an international chief position SEB uses a Top Management Review (TMR), which means that it evaluates all of its chiefs in a systematic approach and tries to find the most appropriate person for that specific assignment. The bank searches for persons that play highly important roles within SEB, persons that have potential and that can develop them further. However, it also takes into consideration whether an international assignment is in phase with the candidates personal development plan, whether that person is able to work in a foreign country and who’s career, as well as SEB, would benefit from this assignment.

The “Big Five” personality characteristics are becoming important within SEB when selecting expatriates for overseas assignments. The grade of emotional stability is a very important characteristic that expatriates, as well as their spouses, need to have since they will face several of difficult situations in the foreign country. To be emotional stable might facilitate for the expatriate and his/her spouse to handle these situations. The bank does not have the opportunity to help all expatriates with all the problems they might face, therefore the expatriate is forced to take a lot of responsibility on his/her own. Further SEB stress the importance for an expatriate to be able to easily work with other people, even though they are from a different country. Moreover, it is vital that the chosen person for an international assignment is outgoing, agreeable, conscious, and open with a sharp intellect. Having these characteristics will smoothen the progress of changing to a completely new work environment as well as a new social environment. In other words, even though technical competencies are the most vital characteristics looked at when selecting expatriates, The “Big Five” personality characteristics are becoming more and more important.

Moreover, the bank finds cultural emphasis and awareness of environmental constraints to be important for the expatriate since these skills also will help the expatriate to adjust more easily to the new environment, and the new job situation. Interpersonal skills and managerial and decision-making abilities are also taken into consideration when SEB selects its expatriates. Candidates that lack these skills will probably experience a more difficult adjustment process, and it might be hard for the expatriate to cooperate with the host country nationals.

When it comes to the method used when selecting expatriates, the applications are followed by interviews where SEB tries to discern the most suitable person. SEB wants to find the most appropriate person for an international assignment, and it does not matter whether that person has worked for several years or just a few years within the bank. An advantage is if the selected person has knowledge about the banks culture. Further, tests and work samples are seldom used within SEB when choosing expatriates.

Regarding the process when selecting expatriates this varies within the different departments at SEB. Some departments (managers) often pinpoint its expatriates within the bank. It is often a closed process where SEB identifies the most appropriate person within the bank, and these persons are usually key persons within SEB. Other departments (private banking) announce their vacancies among all employees at SEB, which means that it is open for all employees to apply for that post. However, most commonly SEB’s expatriates are chosen by the bank without any announcement of the vacancy, this since when sending expatriates SEB search for a specific person with the special qualities needed in order to manage the assignment.
5.2.3 Training

SEB offers cross-culture training to its expatriates. However, the training is not offered to all the expatriates, those who will have their assignments in countries that are very similar to Sweden, such as; Norway, Finland or Denmark, do not go through any cross-cultural training.

The length of the pre-departure training depends to some extent on the country to which the expatriate is sent. The training is most commonly provided a couple of weeks before departure and the training programs are often tailor-made for the expatriate and most commonly it continues for two days. There is one division that brings up the social part in the new country, and in this element the family is included, further there is the other part that deals with the pure business area where the expatriates family does not participate. In the latter part the training is carried out in groups, where all the expatriates who are going to a specific country are gathered in order to discuss different scenarios and find a network.

For those who are provided with training, it is carried out by an external company, which SEB hires for this purpose. Although, SEB mainly focus on training that is host country specific rather than general for international assignments as a whole. SEB also offers language training to its chosen candidates, though, this training is most commonly carried out when the expatriates has arrived to the host country. It is good if the expatriate has at least language knowledge within the area he/she works, for example a manager should at least be able to communicate things related to his work. The cross culture training is also offered to the expatriate’s family, including older children.

SEB has a selection of strategies and methods that are used when training its expatriates. The training often consists of dialogues and lectures where persons that have experience from both the home- and the host country hold these lectures. For example, if there are expatriates who are going to Germany, then the lecturer usually is from Germany, however, he/she has spent a lot of time in Sweden. This is necessary since then he/she can point out the differences between the two countries and prepare the expatriates on scenarios that might occur in their new country. SEB also use cases in their training, in which the expatriates are put in a specific problem situation that they have to work out a good solution for.

Furthermore, SEB helps its expatriates by giving them tax advices and other important information regarding the bureaucracy issues that occur when going on international assignments. The expatriates are provided with a folder containing various information about things the expatriates should think about when arriving to the host country. The folder also include information about what needs to be done before departure, regarding matters such as taxes and what forms that need to be signed.

In addition, the bank offers field trips or as they call them, “look and see trips”, to the expatriates as a type of training. By visiting the country the expatriate is provided with an opportunity to see if he/she feels comfortable in the new environment, if he/she is able to work together with other expatriates in that country, and what the living situation looks like. Further, SEB puts effort in trying to locate other expatriates in that country that are similar to the new expatriate. As an example, if the expatriate has a wife and two young children then the bank tries to contact similar expatriates that already are in the host country, so that the new expatriate and his family has someone to contact when they have questions about various things. The bank does also recommend the expatriate to get in contact with other expatriates
that have been in the host country, but now are back in the home country, however, SEB does not arrange any meetings with former and future expatriates, this is up to each individual.

When the expatriate has arrived to the host country SEB contact the expatriate every sixth month in order to follow his/her work in the other country. The bank finds it important too keep this contact with the expatriates since eventually these expatriates are coming back to the home country and hopefully the bank will be enriched with new competences and knowledge from that expatriate. Further, the bank helps the expatriates to finance the school fees for the expatriate’s children, the company most often also help to arrange banking issues, health-care, and the living situation for the expatriate and his/her family through relocation agents. Regarding the house/apartment in the home country it recommend the expatriate to rent it out during their assignment, SEB does not pay for the house/apartment while the expatriate is gone. When it comes to the spouses it does not help to find a job for the expatriate’s spouse.

Regarding whether CCT is profitable in the long run, SEB agrees. The bank believes that cross culture training is of great importance since it facilitates the whole adjustment process for the expatriates both when it comes to work and social life.

5.2.4 Gender differences

Even though women apply for international assignments within SEB and the bank does send women on international assignments, the main part of the expatriates are men. The respondent at SEB cannot explain why there are fewer women than men, however, SEB sends most expatriates within the trading business, and men dominate that business. SEB does not consider the gender when selecting their expatriates, it choose the person most qualified for the job no matter the gender. Since SEB does not operate in any country with significant prejudices against women’s effectiveness, they do not consider it as a reason why mostly men are sent on international assignments. However, there might be a possibility that there is a stereotypic assumption that women are not willing or qualified enough to go on international assignments, and therefore women are not considered when searching for expatriates. Furthermore, the major part of the applicants within the bank is males.

Regarding marriage, SEB does not look differently on married men and married women when selecting its expatriates. SEB focuses on finding the most appropriate person for the job and whether it is a married/single man or married/single woman does not matter. The family situation is up to the expatriates to handle, they have to work out something on their own to make sure that their stay abroad will work out well.

Furthermore, SEB does not believe that men are more qualified for international assignments per se, rather that they hold most upper positions, which can contribute to that women are not selected for international assignments. The bank believes that men might prefer to send someone that they can compare themselves to, someone they know would be able to do a good job. Moreover, SEB claims that it does not select men over women for international assignments due to the fact that males are predominant in international business.

When it comes to the pre-departure training there are no differences between men and women, the training is the same, however, the training is adjusted to the different countries and then the women are taught how to behave in a specific country.
SEB tries to locate a person that can work as a mentor in the host country, and for a female expatriate it tries to find a woman in a similar situation that can support the expatriate. The same for men, SEB helps to find a person similar to the expatriate that will work as a mentor/contact person in the host-country. In other words, there are no differences between men and women and the layout of mentorship when being on international assignments.

5.3 Case study three: Nordea

5.3.1 Background data

At Nordea we interviewed respondent Marianne Lien who currently works with a program named “Expatriate Adviser and Human Resource Services Nordic”, which exist in the four Nordic countries.

Nordea, with about 1224 bank offices and 11 million customers, is established in around 15 countries beyond the Nordic countries. However, the biggest exchange of employees is within Scandinavia. Nordea has always been active abroad, although the amount of activities is somewhat relying on the state of the market. The merges with Finland, Denmark and Norway also increased the activities abroad since Nordea now is a part of all of the already established activities. Currently Nordea has 100 expatriates of which 15 are from Sweden. The small amount of Swedish expatriates can be explained in the high cost of sending Swedish people. The other countries in Scandinavia have better deals concerning pension insurances as well as social insurances regarding their expatriates, which reduces the costs.

In the past the expatriates most often had managerial position, however, today the expatriates can hold all different types of positions. Although, the pure international establishments still has expatriates in its managers’ positions, still Poland and the Baltic countries have managers that are of the host country nation. This due to the fact that it is helpful to have a manager that is versed in the country and thereby knows the system, rules, and regulation within that country. The overseas assignments lasts from six months up to five years, commonly the expatriates sign contracts of two plus one year, however, after five years the expatriate has to work on local conditions. Moreover, short-term assignments are also offered, which means that the expatriate still pays taxes, as well as get their salary paid in Sweden.

5.3.2 Selection

Nordea does not have a specific strategy when selecting its expatriates. This can be explained to the fact that Nordea has different business areas, and each area has its own way of selecting their expatriates. However, Nordea has as a policy, which says that one should be flexible. Corporate Institution Banking (CIB), for example, selects people within their own unit, although some positions where special qualifications are needed may be announced. In some occasions there is a special program when selecting the expatriates. These programmes are used when the company has a position for the expatriate after a completed assignment abroad. Otherwise the post is announced internally.

Nordea consider qualified professional skills as important as the expatriate’s openness for new experiences, their interest in, or behaviour directed towards others and their culture as well as his/her low grade of anxiety. Therefore, Nordea consider the importance of technical and personal skills as equal. The applicant’s experiences within the area are also a decisive factor in the selection of expatriates. Nordea does not use any kind of profiles in its selection.
This is due to the fact that the selectors most often know the applicants and therefore also know what kind of qualities he/she holds. Characteristics such as extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and openness and intellect are considered when selecting expatriates, however, often the selectors already knows whether the candidates possess these skills or not. According to Nordea these qualifications are important since most of the expatriates will be working towards customers.

In view of cultural emphasis and the awareness of environmental constraints, Nordea believes that all applicants that are interested in overseas assignment automatically are aware of the cultural differences that come along with foreign assignment since they often have experiences from being abroad. Since the applicant, through business, most often already has a relation with the country/company that he/she is going to means that he/she is to a certain extent familiar with the culture, and its system before departure. Further, Nordea is of the opinion that people who are interested in foreign assignments most commonly possess good interpersonal skills.

Managerial and decision-making abilities are considered as important when Nordea selects its expatriates. Moreover, Nordea stress the fact that the expatriate have to be result oriented, business oriented, customer oriented, high degree of involvement/commitment, as well as an ability to easy create new relationships with other people.

Nordea does not use standardised test or work samples when selecting expatriates. Instead, the method used when selecting expatriates are interviews and background data of the expatriate, since it believes those methods to be the most effective.

The international post can either be announced internal, which means that all employees within the company can apply, or a candidate can be chosen simply on a selector's individual preferences regarding who is the most suitable candidate for the assignment.

5.3.3 Training

Nordea provides its expatriates with a very limited pre-departure training. Regarding the amount of time spent on on-site training activities, Nordea does not have a specific time frame. Nordea has extremely limited use of strategies and methods for its pre-departure training. The training provided last less than three month, and the bank does not consider it necessary to extend its training since the banks overseas assignments so far, have been completed successfully. Field trips are always offered since the bank believes that it is important that the expatriate gets a pre view of the host country in order to decide if they like it or not. A second visit is also offered with the purpose to arrange the living situation for the expatriate. Moreover, the bank emphasizes training specific for the host country rather than training for expatriates in general.

Nordea does not arrange meetings with former expatriates. Even though on-site training may be offered, mentors are not provided to the expatriates. However, the expatriate can “use” their manager in the host country as a mentor when needed. The expatriate can also contact and get support from the human resource department within their home country. Concerning Nordea’s contact with its expatriate during their time abroad mostly depends on the expatriate himself/herself. The contact with the expatriate is more intensive when problems occur, so in other words, if the assignment proceeds without problems, the contact between the home company and the expatriate is less frequently.
The on-site training within Nordea is offered to the expatriates by host country. For instance, the host country offers language training for the expatriates’ if needed, also language training for the family may in some occasions be possible, although it is a question of negotiation. The host company also supports the expatriates regarding housing arrangement and local facilities. Further, the bank helps the expatriates with school arrangement and health care. Whether the host company stands for the housing costs or not depends on the situation. If the bank has its owns property, free living may be an option, also the tax situation plays a decisive roll. In addition, the expatriate may be offered some support regarding his/her accommodation in the home country. However, this support is only for a short period of time during the transitional phase, then the expatriate is recommended to let their house/apartment out for hire. Concerning school fees for the expatriates’ children, and whether this should be paid by Nordea, is negotiable. However, in the cases where the company compensates for the school fees, the host unit is the one who stands for these expenses. Further, spouses are not offered any kind of help to find a suitable job in the host country, if they would be interested in working.

Due to the fact that Nordea does not emphasis pre-departure training, it cannot really comment if the overseas assignment would have been more effective if training would have been offered. Anyway, this is a topic that has been discussed several times within the company since pre-departure training may reduce the number of not completed assignments. However, the uncompleted missions are often a result of the expatriate’s family’s problem of adjusting to the new culture. Nordea considers the fact that adjustment problems could be avoided if pre-departure training was an option. Further, spouses’ ability to adapt and enjoy the new culture would be easier if pre-departure training was provided.

5.3.4 Gender differences

The majority of Nordea’s expatriates are men, only a small number are females. Nordea explains this by the fact that there are more men that applies for the overseas assignments. Nordea believes that this could be a result of females lack in interest for these assignments. Another reason could be the fact that men tend to have a better confidence than women, for instance, if the foreign assignment requires five qualities, men tend to believe that they will be able to manage the job even though they might not fulfil all of the criteria. In contrast to this women have a tendency to not apply for vacancies where they do not considered themselves qualified enough, they often feel that they need to possess all of the required criteria.

Since Nordea does not send expatriates to male dominated cultures with strong prejudices against women they do not consider stereotyping as a problem when sending females abroad.

Nordea does not view marriage from different perspectives depending on the gender of the candidates when they select their expatriates. Nordea does to some extent agree to the fact that female expatriates have the traditional role as women to live up to, and thereby they cannot fully concentrate on their job-tasks. However, this is nothing Nordea takes into consideration in their selection process of expatriates.

Further, it might be possible that if the selector is a man he automatically select a man for the position since he cannot imagine a woman managing such a position. Also, men may consider it easier to speak to and support other males rather than females.
Moreover, Nordea does not view the predominance of males in international business as a reason to not select women for international assignments. In fact, the low number of female applicants for the abroad assignment may be explained by the fact that women might chose to stay home with their families instead of accepting an overseas assignment. Additionally, Nordea does not support the fact that men would have greater qualifications than women.

Nordea does not make a difference between males and females when selecting its expatriates, the most qualified person, no matter the gender, fill the post. Therefore, Nordea sees no reason to adapt the assignments, the support, or the on-site training to suit females. One the whole Nordea strives to have gender equality within the bank.

5.4 Case study four: Swedbank

5.4.1 Company Background

At Swedbank we interviewed Magnus Francke, whose position is a senior advice president, and is responsible for the abroad unit and for emerging markets.

Swedbank was founded in 1997, by the merger of Föreningsbanken and Sparbanken Sverige. Within Swedbank there are a very limited number of expatriates, and today around ten persons are out on international assignments.

Swedbank has offices in five countries besides from Sweden, and these countries are Luxemburg, Norway, England, USA and China. Swedbank most commonly employs local labour for their offices, and therefore the low number of expatriates can be explained. The reason why Swedbank prefers to employ locals to the subsidiaries is because of the high costs that are related to expatriates, local labour is much cheaper to employ. Swedbank does not find it necessary to put a lot of effort in sending expatriates as their workforce, usually the local workforce in the host-country perform as good as expatriates, however, to a lower wage. Further, due to the expensive costs of sending expatriates, Swedbank only sends expatriates for positions within customer responsibilities.

Most commonly the expatriates sign contracts for two plus one year, however, they may lengthen their contracts up to five years. If they wish to stay longer than five years they will have to become local employees and work on local conditions.

5.4.2 Selection

Swedbank does not have a documented selection strategy when selecting its expatriates. When trying to identify suitable expatriates Swedbank searches for a combination of technical expertise and personal characteristics. Swedbank believes that it is difficult to state some general selection criteria since the skills required depends on the position the expatriate will have. One thing that Swedbank puts effort in is to really look up whether the chosen expatriate truly wants to go and how his/her family situation looks like, this is as important as technical and personal characteristics. Swedbank also meet the expatriate’s spouse for an interview in order to see how he/she feels about the whole situation. It is highly important that he/she agrees to, and feels comfortable with going abroad. If the spouse is uncertain, or feels that he/she does not want to go then it will be difficult for the expatriate to go through with the foreign assignment.
Since Swedbank’s expatriates are responsible for the company’s customer it is of great importance that they are outgoing and open. However, most of the employees at Swedbank work toward customers in the home country, which means that they are very open and can handle new people and relations in a good way. Thereby, when selecting expatriates Swedbank takes it for granted that the candidates are outgoing, open, and can handle customer relationships. Further, the expatriates’ emotional stability is also of importance in order to perform well abroad.

Regarding cultural emphasis Swedbank believes that it is difficult to predict whether a person holds this kind of knowledge, it will show during the time on the international assignment. Awareness of environmental constraints is something that Swedbank does not take into consideration when selecting their expatriates.

Interpersonal skills are of importance, however, Swedbank believes that the most of the employees within the company hold these skills, and therefore, it is nothing that the bank emphasise when selecting their expatriates.

The ability to lead and make decisions is nothing that Swedbank finds very important. Swedbank has a decision order that is applied in the lending of money, therefore all the decisions are made collectively, and thus the expatriate is not allowed to make any decisions on their own. However, the expatriate must have the ability to make decisions in questions regarding what customers to process and put effort in.

All international assignments are announced within the company and everyone can apply for the post. The banks policy is that all vacancies shall be announced, therefore, it does not happen that people are pinpointed for international assignments. When Swedbank select its expatriates it is done solely through interviews, no tests or work samples are required, although, some consideration is taken to the applicant’s background data.

5.4.3 Training

Swedbank does only provide a very limited CCT to their expatriates. Further, it does not devote any specific time for training of expatriates. The training the bank does provide lasts only for a short period and it only involves field trips. Moreover, the bank has no specific design of the training, however, it is focused specifically on the host country rather than training for international assignments in general.

Regarding strategies and methods that can be used when training expatriates, Swedbank does offer the expatriates to go on a look and see visit to the host country in order for them to feel whether they might like the new environment or not. On the look and see visits the expatriates can also start looking for an appropriate accommodation. However, this is the only method that Swedbank utilizes in order to make the expatriates familiar with the new environment.

Swedbank does to some extent offer some sort of onsite training/support, and it covers different areas that are of importance in order for the expatriate to feel comfortable in the new country. For example, when it comes to housing in the host country, Swedbank, to a certain extent, helps paying for the new accommodation. The expatriate is given a higher salary when he/she is going on an international assignment and that salary should cover the new apartment/house to a certain degree. Then it is up to the expatriate how he/she prefers to live, whether he/she will spend more or less money on an apartment/house than is included in the
salary. Further, the expatriate is offered help from Swedbank to find an appropriate accommodation in the host country.

Moreover, tax advice is given to the expatriates when he/she has arrived to the new country. Furthermore, language training is nothing that Swedbank offers, since when it select its expatriates, good knowledge in English it is required.

Regarding school and day-care, Swedbank does help the expatriates to arrange this, however, Mr. Francke, who is currently the one that sends out expatriates has never sent someone that has got a family. According to Swedbank sending expatriates with families is way too expensive. Health-care is also included in the things that Swedbank helps its expatriates with. Further, Swedbank does not provide any support for the attendant spouse concerning the matter of finding a job in the new country. It requires resources that Swedbank finds too expensive.

When the expatriates are away on their assignments, their chief at Swedbank has regular contact with them in order to discuss business, however, not to discuss personal problems. Swedbank does not arrange any meetings with former expatriates, it is up to the expatriate him-/herself to get in contact with earlier expatriates.

Swedbank does not believe that training of expatriates will limit the number of ineffective expatriates. Swedbank does not find it necessary to offer training to its expatriates, and none of its expatriates have so far ended their assignment earlier, in most cases Swedbank has extended the expatriates’ contracts.

5.4.4 Gender differences

Swedbank sends women on overseas assignments, however, during the years the major part of Swedbank’s expatriates has been men. At Swedbank the gender equality is very high and it is viewed upon as an important issue, thereby the lower number of female expatriates is not for the reason that the bank does not want to send females.

The dominance of male expatriates within Swedbank can to some extent be explained by the fact that most of the applicants are males, which the bank believes might be due to the poor interest for international assignments among women.

Swedbank does not consider prejudices against women in the host country, when selecting their expatriates. The bank rather believes that it is up to each and every individual to decide whether they want to go or not. Further, equality between the genders is emphasized by Swedbank, which contributes to the non-existence of stereotyping within the bank.

Further, Swedbank does not take into consideration to which country they are sending females and whether it is appropriate to have female expatriates within that specific country considering prejudices that might exist in the host country against women. Swedbank looks through the applicants and chooses the candidate they find most appropriate depending on the conditions for the assignment. For example, if a female applicant has six children then she is not a potential candidate. However, a male applicant with children is not a potential candidate either. Moreover, Swedbank does not see marriage from two different perspectives, nor does the bank consider a married man as an asset and a married woman as someone who will
perform worse. When selecting expatriates it is not a question of whether the expatriate should be a man or a woman, the bank is simply trying to find the most suitable person.

Swedbank does not believe that there is a greater chance that more men are selected for international assignments due to the fact that men often are in the higher positions where recruiting expatriates is one of the tasks. Swedbank has as mentioned a very even distribution of men and women in their business. Moreover, Swedbank applies a quota system in several of its divisions, however, there might still be a predominance of men within the banks international business interactions. Conversely, Swedbank does not believe that men are more qualified than women, in fact the predominance of men is rather a result of men’s greater interest in overseas assignments.

Swedbank does not make a difference between males and females regarding the support and training that is offered to the expatriate, and as mentioned earlier the distribution between males and females is very even. Further, Swedbank does not differentiate men and women regarding the on-site support/mentoring. The bank does not view the selection process of its expatriates as a gender issue, the bank chooses the candidate most suitable for the position.
6. ANALYSIS

In this chapter the empirical data outlined in chapter five will be compared to the conceptual framework that was developed in chapter three. We will start by reducing the data with the help of a within-case analysis, where each case will be compared with previous studies. Thereafter the data will be displayed through a cross case analysis where the four cases are compared to each other. The analysis of data will finally lead to that conclusions will be drawn, which will be outlined in chapter seven.

6.1 Within-Case analysis

In this section the empirical data collected will be analyzed against the concepts outlined in Chapter three. This will be done, as described above.

6.1.1 Within-Case analysis - Handelsbanken

Selection

Selection strategy: Handelsbanken does not have a specific strategy when selecting its expatriates. The bank are of the opinion that it is hard to generalise selection criteria, the selection criteria that is most appropriate depends on the environment in the host country. This goes in line with the theory by Fish and Jack (1994) and Francesco and Gold (1998), who claim that it is almost impossible to generalise selection criteria in order to conduct a specific selection strategy.

Technical skills/personal characteristics: According to Handelsbanken the technical and professional skills together with being faithful to the bank are more important than the personal skills, and the awareness of the environment in the host country. This contradicts the theory that suggests that different selection models have started to focus more on personal characteristics rather than technical and functional expertise of the potential expatriate (Harvey & Novicevic, 2001; Black et al., 1999).

The “Big Five” personality characteristics: Handelsbanken claims that the people the bank sends abroad are often characterized by a strong personality, such as openness and a great intellect. Further, the bank is of the opinion that it is of great importance that its expatriates have a desire and a strong motivation to perform well professionally. Extroversion is another character it values high among the expatriates it send out. Moreover, Handelsbanken believes that people in general are very uninformed about their host country, however, people seem to be very interested in understanding what will face them when entering a new country. Consciousness, emotional stability and the expatriate’s ability to function with people from different cultures are also factors the bank considers important among their expatriates. This goes in line with Daft’s (2002) and Harvey and Novicevic’s (2001) theories which underline the importance of considering the “Big Five” personality characteristics when selecting expatriates, in order to reach success, namely extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and openness and intellect.

Qualities sought for in expatriates: Handelsbanken states that in addition to the technical competences there are a few other qualities that are required by expatriates. The bank stresses the importance of the candidate’s enthusiasm for the work, candidates that perform better than average at home, are most often the best ones. Cultural emphasis is also a skill the bank
considers very important for the expatriate to hold. Awareness of environmental constraints is not considered as important as cultural emphasis but it is still an important characteristic. Interpersonal skills are something Handelsbanken value high, since it believe that the social part of a business activity is important, in order to understand how people work. Furthermore, Handelsbanken believes that it is essential with managerial and decision-making abilities, especially when it comes to manager-positions, a vacillating manager that have problems in getting things done, will not succeed. Handelsbanken also emphasizes language training when necessary. In other words, all these characteristics are considered more or less important by Handelsbanken, and these data supports the theory by Ashamalla (1998) regarding the five qualities that are sought after in expatriates, where he mentions cultural emphasis, awareness of environmental constraints, interpersonal skills, managerial decision-making abilities, and other crucial qualities. These qualities are also to some extent supported by Black et al. (1999).

**Selection procedures:** According to Handelsbanken the procedure used in order to select the most appropriate candidate is interviews. Even though the bank has test tools it is very moderate with using it. The reason for the moderate use of tests is that the person carrying out the test needs to be very experienced in doing tests, in order to receive relevant and important information. Moreover, Handelsbanken considers tests as highly unpredictable, since they sometimes may be very successful, however, other times they are very unsuccessful. It is up to the selector to decide whether tests should be used as complement for interviews or not. Further, earlier merits and experience are always considered when selecting expatriates in Handelsbanken. Therefore Handelsbanken correlates with Black et al. (1999) and Hodgett and Luthans (2003) stated theory that mentions interviews and standardised test as useful tools when selecting expatriates. In addition, Handelsbanken uses biographical and background data, which Black et al. (1999) also bring up as a helpful instrument. Further, Black et al. (1999) mention work samples as an appropriate tool in the selection process, however, this is nothing that Handelsbanken practices.

**International manager - selection system:** The selection procedure in Handelsbanken is highly open and formal in nature. All positions for international assignments are announced internally, in order for anyone within the company to apply for the post. In some occasions a person might be encouraged to apply for a certain international position if someone in the company considers him/her to be suitable for that position. In these cases the selection procedure can be considered as informal, however, if the person does not apply he/she is unable to get the job. Only in very special occasions regarding position very close to the manager of the group, they use a closed system and pick a person without announcement. Therefore, Handelsbanken’s selection procedure mainly goes in line with Harris (2001) as well as Harris and Brewster’s (1999) stated theory of open/formal selection procedures, the best-suited candidate is chosen with formal criteria. To a very finite part the bank uses the open/informal selection procedure and the closed/informal procedure, also mentioned by Harris (2001) and Harris and Brewster (1999). Moreover, the same authors suggest a fourth alternative for the selection system, namely the closed/formal selection procedure, however this is nothing that Handelsbanken utilizes.

**Training**

**Duration of CCT:** Since Handelsbanken does not offer much pre-departure training except from field trips and un-formalized information from the home country department, most of the training starts when they arrive to the host country. However, after the announcement of
the position that normally occurs three to six month before departure, the planning and training begins. Handelsbanken prefers that all the interviews should be done at least three month in advance. The bank has no specific duration of their training programs, it takes place from the end of the interviews, until they consider them sufficiently trained. The practical information is provided in Sweden before departure, the language training may start at home, if it is considered as necessary. When a suitable candidate is selected, and has agreed to the circumstances, the candidate and his/her spouse are offered a field trip, in order to get a preview of the host country. This irregular duration of Handelsbanken’s training programs contradicts the theory by Harrison (1994) who claims that the time organizations devote for CCT of their expatriate vary from three month up to a year. However, the same author claims that there are suggestions for companies to have CCT programs that are 40-50 hours long, and each session should be individual and last at least two hours.

Design of CCT: Due to the kind of training that Handelsbanken provide its expatriates with, field trips and un-formalized information from the home country department, the bank seems to focus on training specific for the host country rather than training for international assignments in general. Thereby the bank supports the inductive alternative of Harrison’s (1994) suggested CCT designs that involves two different ways of how CCT can be designed, namely an inductive process going from the specific to the general or a deductive process going from the general to the specific.

CCT methods: Most commonly Handelsbanken does not provide their expatriates with any kind of pre-departure training. The bank believes that since expatriates are sent to various countries with different cultures, it lessens the chances of a general specific training strategy or method for their expatriates. However, Handelsbanken claims that the information the expatriate receives, in form of personal conversations where the information is gathered in a file and provided to the expatriate, might be considered as a form of pre-departure training. Likewise, the field trips that the expatriate is offered in order to get a preview of the host country office, culture and living conditions are also viewed as a form of pre-departure training. These two different methods go in line with the tutorials and the field trips that Harzing and Van Ruysseveeldt (1995), which further is supported by Francesco and Gold (1998) and Tung (1998, as referred by Deresky 2000), suggest as two of many available training-methods of CCT. However, when it comes to on-site training, Handelsbanken relies on “learning by doing” which involves that the expatriates will learn about both cultural differences and the differences in doing business in the host country through their colleagues.

On-site training: The expatriates within Handelsbanken always have some kind of support from a supervisor during their time abroad. Although, no formalized mentor-system exists, they believe it is important to provide their expatriates with some kind of supervisor in order to reach success. This goes in line with theory that suggests that support from a supervisor in the home office can play an important role in increasing the success rate of their expatriate (Webb & Wright, 1996).

Coverage of on-site training: Handelsbanken considers housing arrangements, school arrangements and insurances as the three most important factors of on-site training when sending expatriates on over-seas assignments. Thereby, these vital parts are the elements it contribute to when its expatriates are abroad. Housing is paid for in the host country, but the bank do not provide any compensation for their housing at home. School fees are paid for, however, day-care fees for children younger than school age, are not paid by the company. Normally, the expatriate has a covering health insurance through the company, which covers
most of the health care expenses. When it comes to work arrangements in dual career situations, the bank cannot provide any help due to the expensive costs of it, even though they consider it as important. Compared to the theory by Suutari and Burch (2001), of what onsite training should cover, namely acquainting the expatriate with the area, housing arrangement, banking and other local facilities, school and day-care arrangements, health-care, and work arrangements in dual career situations, it only corresponds to a part of it, mostly due to economical reasons.

**CCT – profitable or not:** Handelsbanken agrees to a certain extent to Harrison’s (1994) statement that CCT is profitable in the long run since it will limit the number of ineffective expatriates and premature returns. However, the bank believes that this depends on the company, and it does not seem to be necessary for Handelsbanken, since it has had successful expatriate missions for several years without much CCT.

### Gender differences

**Few women in international assignments:** Handelsbanken claims that of all the expatriates in Handelsbanken that currently are on missions only one third are women, and it is hard to explain why. This supports Tung (2004) who claims that women still are underestimated at top management levels in assignments overseas.

**Companies’ hesitation to female expatriates:** Handelsbanken believes that the reason why less women are sent out on expatriate assignments than men, is due to the old structure that women are less represented in higher positions. In general it is the people in higher positions that are sent on expatriate assignments. Moreover, an explanation could be that women might be less willing in working abroad. However, Handelsbanken does send women abroad, it does not value males over females, the bank rather value competence. Furthermore, the bank does not consider prejudices in the host country against women’s ineffectiveness when selecting the most appropriate candidate for an assignment. This data correlates to one of the three beliefs that Adler (1994, as referred by Stroh et al., 2000) presents, as factors that can explain a company’s hesitation to select women as expatriates namely women are not interested in being international managers.

**Stereotyping:** Handelsbanken does not consider prejudices in the host country against women’s ineffectiveness when selecting the most appropriate candidate for an assignment. Thereby the bank contradicts to the theory by Mandelker, (1994, as referred by Linehan & Scullion, 2001) which proposes that often stereotypical assumptions are made by home country senior management about women as managers, and about their availability, suitability and preferences for international assignments.

Furthermore, Handelsbanken believes that it might be easier for male expatriate than for females in an international environment. Further, the bank believes that Vinniecombe and Sturges (1995, as referred by Linehan & Scullion, 2001) might have a point regarding the different views companies have regarding marriage. Vinniecombe and Sturges (1995, as referred by Linehan & Scullion, 2001) state that for women marriage might lessen the chance of being selected for an international assignment since she may neglect her career on her family’s expense. On the other hand, married men is viewed upon as an asset for the company due to their stable network at home which allows them to focus on their career. However, Handelsbanken could not assure that this is something the bank takes into consideration when selecting expatriates.
Men’s tendency to choose other men: Handelsbanken cannot reject the fact that male managers select other men over women for overseas assignments. The bank believes that since the majority of the selectors are men, it might contribute to the high amount of male expatriates. This supports the findings from the research by Chusmir and Frontczak’s (1999, as referred by Linehan & Walsh, 1999) that women’s chances to be selected for international assignments might be limited by the fact that men hold most upper level management positions.

Reasons for selecting men over women: Handelsbanken believes that the fact that more men than women are selected for international assignments has nothing to do with the predominance of males in international business. Neither do the bank believe that men have greater qualifications than women. This contradicts to Vance and Paik’s (2001) theory, which argues that the reason for why companies select men over women is that men have greater qualifications for international assignments, and that men predominate in international business.

Female pre-departure training: Handelsbanken does not adapt its training to female expatriates. All expatriates receive the same training no matter gender. However, if needed, female expatriates can receive extra support from their manager in the host country. This lack of tailor-made training for female expatriates disagree with the theory by Caligiury and Cascio (1999) who stress the importance of adapting the CCT to a woman’s repertoire of behavior responses.

On-site Support and Mentoring: Handelsbanken is of the opinion that women should be provided with extra support in the host country if there seem to be a need for it. The bank does provide the expatriate with an in country supervisor, however, Handelsbanken does not offer a specific supervisor for women. Thereby Handelsbanken does not correspond to Caligiury and Cascio’s (1998) theory which suggests that all female expatriates should be provided with an in-country support network or a mentor, since the barriers for female success within an organization may be greater than for male expatriates.

6.1.2 Within-Case analysis - SEB

Selection

Selection strategy: SEB does not have a documented strategy for selecting their expatriates. The bank believes that the choice of strategy rather depends on what positions and within what area the expatriate will work. This goes in line with the theory that suggests that it is almost impossible to generalize selection criteria in order to conduct a specific selection strategy (Fish & Jack, 1994, Francesco & Gold, 1998).

Technical skills/personal characteristics: SEB values personal characteristics very high when it comes to the selection of expatriates, however, the technical skills are considered as the most vital part in this process. Though, they believe that the “Big Five” personality characteristics are becoming more important. This goes in line with Harvey and Novicevic’s (2001) and Black et al’s. (1999) suggestion that with time, different selection models have started to focus more on personal characteristics rather than technical and functional expertise of the potential expatriate.
The “Big Five” personality characteristics: The “Big Five” personality characteristics become more important to consider when it comes to the selection of expatriates within SEB. Emotional stability is vital for both the expatriate and his/her spouse, due to the multiple different situations they probably will face in the foreign country. Moreover, it is important for the expatriate to be able to easily work with other people, even though they are from a different country. Conscientiousness, extroversion, and openness and intellect are other factors SEB considers as important for expatriates to possess. These characteristics will smooth the progress of changing to a completely new work environment as well as a new social environment. This goes in line with the “Big Five” personality characteristic-theory stated by Daft (2002) which is supported by Harvey and Novicevic (2001) of what characteristics to consider in order to be successful when selecting expatriates. The characteristics they mention are extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability and openness and intellect. Further, SEB value responsibility high since SEB has limited resources to help expatriates with their problems, and people that are responsible often manage well abroad.

Qualities sought for in expatriates: According to SEB it is of great importance for the expatriate to have a strong personality. Moreover, due to the changeover with moving to a new country, the expatriate needs to be energetic, able to handle changes, and has a driving force to learn. SEB finds that cultural emphasis, awareness of environmental constraints, interpersonal skills, and managerial and decision-making abilities will help the expatriate adjust more easily to the new environment and the new job situation. Therefore, SEB considers these skills as highly important when selecting their expatriates. This supports the qualities that are brought up by Ashamalla (1998), and to some extent also mentioned by Black et al. (1999) as other qualities that are important to look at when selecting expatriates, besides from technical competences.

Selection procedure: SEB uses interviews in order to find the most suitable person for the position. Tests and work samples are seldom used in the company, however, due to the fact that SEB is looking for that little extra among its candidates, and often chooses the expatriates without announcement, biographical and background data are often considered when selecting the candidate. Thereby, the selection tools that SEB uses goes in line, to a certain extent, with the tools Black et al. (1999) and Hodgett and Luthans (2003) present, since they mention interview as an appropriate selection tool. Moreover, Black et al. (1999) suggest biographical and background data, work samples and standardised tests as appropriate instruments. Further, Hodgett and Luthans (2003) suggest standardised tests as a possible selection procedure.

International manager - selection system: The selection of expatriates within SEB varies depending on the different departments within the bank. Some departments that search for managers use a closed and informal system, and pinpoint the person they find most appropriate within the bank. Other departments announce their vacancies among all employees, and anyone in the bank can apply. This is a more open system with a formal character. However, most commonly the closed and informal system is used at SEB, since they often search for a specific person who has the particular qualities needed in order to manage the assignment. Thereby SEB’s selection system mainly goes in line with Harris (2001) and Harris and Brewster’s (1999) stated theory of a closed/informal selection procedure, where the individual preferences of a selector will be accepted to determine whom they see as a suitable candidate. However, to some extent they also use the open/formal
system where the best-suited candidates are determined through continual comparison of their own values against the other selectors’ values.

Training

*Duration of CCT:* SEB claims that the length of the pre-departure training depends to some extent on the country to which the expatriate is sent. The training programs are often tailor-made for each expatriate and most commonly continue for two days. This goes in some extent in line with theory, which suggests that the time organizations devote for CCT to their expatriate vary from three month up to a year. However, there are suggestions for companies to have CCT programs of 40-50 hours long, and each session should be individual and last at least two hours. (Harrison, 1994)

*Design of CCT:* SEB focuses on training specific for the host country rather than training for international assignments in general, thereby the bank supports the inductive alternative of Harrison’s (1994) suggested CCT designs. Harrison (1994) suggests that there are two different ways of how CCT can be designed, namely an inductive process going from the specific to the general, or a deductive process going from the general to the specific.

*CCT methods:* The CCT within SEB often consists of dialogues and lectures held by persons with experiences from both the home- and host country. Furthermore, SEB might use cases, which involves problem-solving situations, and in addition the bank provides the expatriates with tax advises and other bureaucracy information that is necessary. The expatriates are also provided with a folder with information relevant for the arrival and before departure. Moreover, SEB offers field trips, and recommend its expatriates to get in contact to former expatriates, although this is no formal process. In other words, SEB uses lectures, cases, tutorials and field trips, which are all methods within Harzing and Van Ruysseveldt’s (1995), Francesco and Gold (1998) and Tung (1998, as referred by Deresky, 2000) suggested methods for CCT.

*On-site training:* Regarding mentorship, SEB tries to locate a person similar to the expatriate, which can work as a mentor in the host country. SEB believes that a mentor may raise the expatriates’ rate of success. This goes in line with the theory by Webb and Wright (1996) which states that support from a supervisor in the home office can play an important role in increasing the success rate of their expatriate (Webb & Wright, 1996).

*Coverage of on-site training:* SEB helps with financing the school arrangement for the expatriate’s children in the host country. Further, the bank helps to arrange the expatriate’s living situation in the host country. The bank also help with banking and health-care arrangements. However, SEB does not contribute with any compensation for the house or apartment in the home country during the assignment. Neither does the bank help the expatriate’s spouse to find a job in the host country. This partly supports what Suutari and Burch (2001) states in their theory of what on-site training should cover, namely acquainting the expatriate with the area, housing arrangement, banking and other local facilities, school and day-care arrangements, and health-care and work arrangements in dual career situations.

*CCT – profitable or not:* SEB believes that CCT is of great importance since it facilitates the whole adjustment process for the expatriate both when it comes to work and social life. Thereby the bank agrees with the theory statement “CCT is profitable in the long run since it will limit the number of ineffective expatriates and premature returns” (Harrison, 1994).
Gender differences

Few women in international assignments: SEB have both male and female expatriates on international assignments, however, the main part of the expatriates are men. This goes in line with theory since Tung (2004) claims that it still is a minority of women on overseas assignments.

Companies’ hesitation to female expatriates: The reason why the majority of SEB’s expatriates are males is hard to define, however, the bank believes that a possible reason is that most expatriates are sent out within the trading business, a business that is dominated by men. However, there are women applying for international assignments and SEB does send women. Since SEB has no expatriate positions in countries where exceptional prejudices about women exist, this is nothing the bank considers when sending people on assignments. SEB focuses on competence when selecting expatriates, no matter the gender. This actually contradicts Adler’s (1994, as referred by Stroh et al., 2000) theory that companies tend to hold three common beliefs, which can explain their hesitation to select females for their international assignments, namely women are not interested in being international managers, companies do not send women abroad and there are prejudices in the host country that women are ineffective.

Stereotyping: SEB is of the opinion that there might be a possibility that there exist stereotypical assumptions that women do not have all the required skills and are unwilling to go on international assignments, and therefore, women are not even considered when the company tries to identify potential expatriates. This goes in line with the theory by Mandelker (1994, as referred by Linehan & Scullion, 2001) that stereotypical assumptions often are made by home country senior management about women as managers, and about their availability, suitability and preferences for international assignments.

SEB does not view marriage differently for men and women when selecting their expatriates, they emphasize competence and gender does not matter. The bank believes that the family situation is something each expatriate needs to work out him or herself. This contradicts to the theory by Vinniecombe and Sturges (1995, as referred by Linehan & Scullion, 2001) that companies view marriage from two different perspectives.

Men’s tendency to choose other men: SEB believes that there might be a chance that women are not selected for international assignments due to the fact that men hold most upper positions. Further, according to SEB it might be possible that men prefer to send someone similar to them, someone they know would be able to perform well. This supports the research findings by Chusmir and Frontczak (1999, as referred by Linehan & Walsh, 1999) that women’s chances to be selected for international assignments might be limited by the fact that men hold most upper level management positions.

Reasons for selecting men over women: SEB claims that men are not selected over women due to the reason that males dominate in the international business. Neither does SEB believe that men have greater qualifications for international assignments than women. This contradicts the theory by Vance and Paik (2001) that claims that the reasons why companies select men over women for expatriate assignments are the predominance of males in international business interaction, and that men have greater qualifications for international assignments.
Female pre-departure training: SEB does not adapt their CCT for women when training its expatriates. The bank rather adapt the training to a specific country, and if there are specific circumstances or important things for women to be aware of in that specific country they will be informed about it. This contradicts the theory of Caligiury and Cascio (1999) that stress the importance of adapting the CCT to a woman’s repertoire of behavioral responses.

On-site Support and Mentoring: When it comes to mentorship for expatriates in the host country, SEB tries to provide its female expatriates with female mentors in a similar situation as the expatriate that can support her. However, men are also provided with mentors, male mentors that are in a situation similar to them, and therefore there is no specific treatment of female expatriates when it comes to mentoring, and this has nothing to do with barriers for female success. Therefore this contradicts the theory that claims that all female expatriates should be provided with an in-country support network or a mentor since the barriers for female success within an organization may be greater than for male expatriates. (Caligiury & Cascio, 1998)

6.1.3 Within-Case analysis - Nordea

Selection

Selection strategy: Nordea is active in different business areas, which complicates the use of a specific strategy when selecting their expatriates. Different business areas require different skills in order to succeed. Therefore, each area within Nordea takes care of its own selection, founded on its own specific needs and qualifications. This goes in line with Fish and Jack’s (1994) and Francesco and Gold (1998) stated theory that claims that it is almost impossible to generalise selection criteria with the purpose to conduct a specific strategy when selecting expatriates.

Technical skills/personal characteristics: Technical skills as well as personal characteristics are of equal importance for Nordea when selecting its expatriates. Nordea considers the expatriates’ professional qualifications as important as their personal skills, such as their openness for new experiences, their interest in others and their cultures as well as their ability to handle stress. According to Harvey and Novicevic (2001) and Black et al. (1999) companies nowadays are focusing more and more on personal characteristics rather than technical competences and thereby Nordea to some extent goes in line with this theory.

The “Big Five” personality characteristics: Due to the fact that the expatriates within Nordea will be working with customers, the expatriates’ personality characteristics are of great importance. Most often, the selector knows the candidate and therefore also knows that he/she holds the personality characteristics needed. Nordea considers characteristics such as extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and openness and intellect as important when going on an overseas assignment. These characteristics are also viewed in Daft’s (2002) and Harvey and Novicevic’s (2001) theories, which argue that the “Big Five” personality characteristics which include extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, openness, and intellect, are highly important in order to do well abroad.

Qualities sought for in expatriates: Nordea believes that the candidates who are willing to accept overseas assignments most often have experience from being abroad, and therefore they automatically are aware of the cultural differences that come along with a cross-culture
assignment. Moreover, since most of the expatriates have had some kind of business relationship with the host company before the overseas assignments, contributes with the fact that the expatriate already is familiar with the host country’s culture, rules and regulations. Therefore, Nordea takes factors such as cultural emphasis and awareness of environmental constraints for granted. Further, Nordea believes that the expatriate has developed strong interpersonal skills through their previous business experiences with the host company. Nordea also stresses the importance of the expatriate’s managerial and decision-making abilities. Nordea agrees with the theory by Ashamalla (1998) which claims that cultural empathy, awareness of environmental constraints, interpersonal skills and managerial and decision making abilities are vital qualities sought after, when choosing appropriate candidates for overseas assignments. Black et al. (1999) also mention these qualities as important. Additionally, Nordea adds to theory that qualities such as result oriented, business oriented, customer oriented, high degree of involvement/commitment, as well as easy to create new relations is vital when Nordea selecting their expatriates.

**Selection procedure:** Nordea uses interviews and biographical and background data when selecting its expatriates. This goes in line with the theory by Hodgett and Luthans (2003), which suggests interviews to be the most common method when selecting expatriates. Further, Nordea also supports Black et al’s (1999) theory, which suggests biographical and background data as useful tools when selection expatriates. Further, Hodgett and Luthans (2003) and Black et al. (1999) mention standardised tests as a selection method. Additionally Black et al. (1999) bring up work sample as useful instruments in the selection process.

**International manager - selection system:** Nordea announces all international posts internally, which allows all employees within the company to apply. However, in some occasions the selectors themselves choose the candidate who they find to be best suited for the assignment. This goes in line with Harris (2001) and Harris and Brewster (1999) stated theory regarding open/formal selection procedures, which means that the best suited candidate is chosen after formal criteria. Further, Nordea utilize the closed/informal selection procedure also mentioned by Harris (2001) and Harris and Brewster (1999) where the selector choose who they see as an appropriate candidate within the company. Theory does also mention closed/formal selection, and open/informal. However, Nordea does not use these methods.

**Training**

**Duration of CCT:** Nordea does not dedicate any specific time for training of its expatriates. Since the expatriates seem to complete their overseas assignments without any difficulties, Nordea sees no reason to extend its CCT. In contradiction Harrison (1994) claims that the time organizations devote for CCT to its expatriates vary from three month up to a year. However, there are suggestions for companies to have CCT programs of 40-50 hours, where each session should be individual and last at least two hours.

**Design of CCT:** Nordea focuses on training specific for the host country rather than training for international assignments in general, thereby they support the inductive alternative of Harrison’s (1994) suggested CCT designs. Harrison (1994) suggests that there are two different ways of how CCT can be designed, namely an inductive process going from the specific to the general or a deductive process going from the general to the specific.

**CCT method:** In fact Nordea’s pre-departure training is very limited, which contribute to the limitation of strategies and methods used. However, Nordea does to some extent provide its
expatriates with field experience. The expatriates are recommended to go on field trips to the
host country in order to see if they like it or not, also a second visit is offered with the purpose
to arrange the expatriate’s accommodation. The limited CCT can be explained due to the fact
that Nordea does not find it necessary since the expatriates seems to do fine on their own.
Moreover, CCT is incredibly expensive, and therefore a more extended CCT contributes to a
great expense for the bank. Nordea’s use of field trips goes in line with Harzing and Van
Ruyssseveldt’s (1995) earlier stated theory, which is supported by Francesco and Gold (1998)
and Tung (1998, as referred by Deresky, 2000) that include field trips as a suitable method for
the training of international staff. However, Harzing and Van Ruyssseveldt (1995) theory is
more extended, although, the other strategies and methods are not utilized by Nordea.

On-site training: Nordea does not provide their expatriates with specific support or
mentorship programs. Instead the expatriate is recommended to make use of their manager in
the host country as a mentor when necessary. In addition, the expatriate can contact the
human recourse manager in their home country when support is needed. Due to the fact that
Nordea does not emphasize support or mentorship to their expatriates the company
contradicts to Webb and Wright’s (1996) earlier stated theory, which underlines the
importance of support from a supervisor in the home country. According to Webb and Wright
(1996) on-site support is vital in order to succeed overseas. The same authors continue by
saying that poor support from the home country may contribute to the fact that the expatriate
no longer feels that he/she is a part of the company.

Coverage of on-site training: Nordea offer pre-visits to their expatriates in order to
acquainting them with the area. Further, the host company offers the on-site training. The host
company supports the expatriates with housing arrangement as well as with various local
facilities. The host company does also support school arrangement and health care. However,
the company does not arrange jobs to spouses. This goes to some extent in line with Suutari
and Burch’s (1995) stated theory that claims that onsite training should include acquainting
the expatriate to the new area, housing arrangement, banking and other local facilities, school
and day-care arrangements, health-care, and work arrangements in dual career situations.

CCT – profitable or not: Due to the fact that Nordea’s expatriates seems to do fine even
though the CCT is very limited contributes to the fact that Nordea does not agree with
Harrison’s (1994) earlier stated theory that claims that CCT is profitable in the long run since
it will eliminate ineffective expatriates.

Gender Differences

Few women in international assignments: In Nordea the majority of the expatriates are men
and just a few are women. This is supported by Tung (2004) who claims that women are in
minority among employees on overseas assignments.

Companies’ hesitation to female expatriation: Nordea explains the low number of female
expatriates by the fact that more males than females apply for the international assignments,
which could be a result of females’ lack of interest. This goes in line with Adler’s (1994)
stated theory that claims that the reasons behind the low number of expatriates may have its
explanation in that women are not interested in being abroad. Further, Nordea does not
support Adler’s (1994) suggestion that companies do not send women on international
assignments, or that there are prejudices in the host country that women are ineffective.
Stereotyping: Nordea does not consider stereotyping from the home country management about women’s lack of suitability of being managers, as a reason for the low number of female that are selected for overseas assignments. This does not agree with theory, which claims that stereotypical assumptions often are made by home country senior management about women as managers, and about their availability, suitability and preferences for international assignments (Mandelker’s, 1994 as referred by Linehan & Scullian, 2001).

Nordea does not view marriage from different perspectives depending on the gender of the expatriate. The bank agrees to some extent to the fact that female expatriates have the traditional role as a woman to live up to, and thereby they may not be able to fully concentrate on their job-tasks. However, this is nothing Nordea takes into consideration when selecting their expatriates. This contradicts the theory by Vinniecombe and Sturges (1995, as referred by Linehan and Scullion, 2001), which claims that companies view marriage from two different perspectives.

Men’s tendency to choose other men: Since most of the selectors are men, Nordea considers it possible that men choose other men for the international assignment since they consider them as better suited for the task. A further reason may be that men feel more comfortable to speak, and support other men rather than females. This is in accordance with Chusmir and Frontczak’s (1999, as referred by Linehan & Walsh, 1999) theory, that states that women’s chance to be selected for assignments abroad may be limited due to the fact that most upper level managers positions are held by men.

Reasons for selecting men over women: Nordea does not consider the predominance of males in international business when selecting their expatriates. The bank believes that most often it is the woman’s own decision that contributes to the low number of female expatriates, since women may choose their family instead of an overseas assignment. In contrary, Vance and Paik’s (2001) stated theory claims that the predominance of males in international business interaction may be a reason for the low amount of female expatriates, another reason may be that men have greater qualifications for international assignments.

Female pre-departure training: In Nordea the most qualified applicant fills the post, no matter of the gender. Therefore Nordea sees no reason for adapting their CCT in order to suit women. This does not agree with Caligury and Cascio’s (1999) theory, which underlines the importance of adapting the CCT to women.

On-site Support and Mentoring: Nordea does not consider their support or mentorship to be of more importance for women than for men. However, this is not inline with earlier stated theory that suggests that all female expatriates should be provided with in–country support or a mentor since they consider it more important than for men. (Caligiury and Casio, 1998)

6.1.4 Within-Case analysis - Swedbank

Selection

Selection strategy: Swedbank does not have a documented selection strategy that the bank follows when selecting their expatriates. This due to the fact that different positions needs different kind of criteria and therefore Swedbank consider it as almost impossible to have a specific strategy for all position. This goes in line with Fish and Jack’s (1994) and Francesco
and Gold’s (1998) stated theory that claims that it is almost impossible to generalize selection criterion with the purpose to conduct a specific selection strategy.

**Technical skills/personal characteristics:** Swedbank is of the opinion that when selecting expatriates they search for a person who has a combination of technical expertise and personal characteristics. Since Swedbank only sends expatriates for assignments as responsible for customers it is a matter of course that the expatriate holds personal characteristics such as extroversion and openness. Yet the technical skills should not be forgotten. According to theory by Harvey and Novicevic (2001) and Black et al. (1999), which claims that companies nowadays focus more on personal characteristics than technical and functional expertise, since personal characteristics might be crucial for expatriate success. Swedbank’s perception on what is looked upon when selecting expatriates is comparable with the theory to a certain extent, however, within Swedbank it is important that the expatriate has a combination of both technical skills and personal characteristics.

**The “Big Five” personality characteristics:** Since Swedbank’s expatriates are responsible for the bank’s customers, the company emphasis the importance of the expatriate’s personal characteristics. He/she should be outgoing and open, and able to easily handle customer relationships. Moreover the expatriate’s emotionally stability is also vital when Swedbank selects its expatriates. Daft’s (2002) and Harvey and Novicevic’s (2001) theories, which highlight the importance of considering the “Big Five” personality characteristics when selecting their expatriates are to some extent supported by Swedbank.

**Qualities sought for in expatriates:** Swedbank believes that it is important to hold interpersonal skills and managerial decision-making abilities. However, it is not used as a predictor for expatriate success when selecting expatriates, since the bank take these qualities for granted among their expatriates. When it comes to cultural emphasis, Swedbank states that it is difficult to say whether the expatriate’s knowledge is good, this is something that will turn out first when the expatriate has arrived to the host country. Thus, this factor is nothing that Swedbank take into consideration when selecting their expatriates. Neither does Swedbank consider awareness of environmental constraints, when selecting expatriates. Due to the fact that they are not using these qualities for predicting expatriate success, this contradicts the theory by Ashamalla (1998) that claims that these qualities is important to look for, when selecting expatriates.

**Selection procedures:** In order to find the most appropriate candidate the applications are followed by interviews, no tests are carried out, however, the selectors do also take the applicants background data into consideration when selecting a suitable candidate for the international post. The use of interviews as a selection tool can be compared to Black et al’s (1999) and Hodgett and Luthans (2003) theory that claims that interviews are the most common method. Further Black et al’s (1999) mention biographical data as a suitable tool, which also is used by Swedbank. Additional tools that are brought up in theory is standardised test and work samples (Black et al’s 1999). Hodgett and Luthans (2003) also bring up standardised tests as a useful instrument in the selection process.

**International manager - selection system:** Further, the recruitment of personnel for international assignments is an open process within Swedbank where the available positions are announced within the company and all employees have the possibility to apply. Having an open selection system is a policy within Swedbank and by that, designating candidates through personal perceptions and recommendations does not take place. This way to select
expatriates agrees with one of Harris (2001) and Harris and Brewster’s (1999) four stated international manager-selection systems namely open/formal, which means that the best suited candidate is chosen after formal criteria. Harris (2001) and Harris and Brewster’s (1999) further mention closed/formal selection, open/informal, and close/informal. However, Swedbank does not use these methods.

Training

Duration of CCT: The training that Swedbank provides the expatriates with is very limited. The training lasts only for a short period of time, less than three months, which contradicts the theory by Harrison (1994) that the time organizations devote for CCT for its expatriates vary from three months up to a year. However, the same author claims that there are suggestions for companies to have CCT programs of 40-50 hours, and each session should be individual and last at least two hours.

Design of CCT: The limited training that Swedbank provides is more focused specifically on the host country rather than training for international assignments in general, thereby the bank supports the inductive alternative of Harrison’s (1994) suggested CCT designs. Harrison (1994) suggests that there are two different ways of how CCT can be designed, namely an inductive process going from the specific to the general or a deductive process going from the general to the specific.

CCT methods: Due to the fact that Swedbank provides its expatriates with a very limited amount of CCT contributes to the company’s limited use of specific strategies or methods when training their expatriates. Swedbank provides its expatriates with pre-visits solely. This goes to some extent in line with Harzing and Van Ruysseveldt’s (1995) theory which is supported by Francesco and Gold (1997), Tung (1998, as referred by Deresky, 2000) who mention that field experience which is a strategy that covers methods like field trips, assignment to micro cultures, and meeting with experienced international staff is an available training option. However, theory has a more extended CCT that includes seven strategies in which a number of different methods can be defined (Harzing and Van Ruysseveld, 1995, Francesco and Gold (1997), Tung (1998, as referred by Deresky, 2000).

On-site training: During the international assignment the expatriates have regular contact with their home office. Most commonly the expatriate talks to someone at the home office every week, however, this contact is mainly business discussion and not a mentorship that works as support for the expatriate if he/she is facing difficulties that is not related to work. Theory by Webb and Wright (1996) states that support from a supervisor in the home office can play an important role in increasing the success rate of their expatriate. Swedbank’s way of mentorship does not agree with theory since the theory suggests that mentorship can be of importance for increasing the expatriate’s rate of success.

Coverage of on-site training: Comparing Swedbank’s onsite training/support to the theory about what onsite training/support should cover, it correlates to some of the parts in the theory by Suutari and Burch (2001). Swedbank does provide support when it comes to housing arrangements, banking and other local facilities, school and day-care arrangements, and health care, which are areas that according to Suutari and Burch (2001) should be covered. Further, Suutari and Burch (2001) state that factors like acquainting the expatriate with the area and work arrangement in dual career situations also should be included in on-site training. The
motive why those parts not are included in Swedbank’s on-site training is mainly because of the high costs.

**CCT – profitable or not:** Swedbank does not find it necessary to offer training to its expatriates since none of the banks expatriates have ended their assignment earlier. Therefore, from Swedbank’s view, training is not necessary in order to have successful expatriates. This contradicts to Harrison’s (1994) theory, which states that CCT is profitable in the long run since it, will limit the number of ineffective expatriates and premature returns.

**Gender differences**

**Few women in international assignments:** Swedbank has very few expatriates, however, the bank sends females on international assignments even though the majority over the years has been males. Swedbank believes that the higher number of male applicants can explain this, to some extent. Thereby Swedbank agrees with theory since Tung (2004) states that women still are underestimated in international assignments.

**Companies’ hesitation to female expatriates:** At Swedbank gender equality is of great importance and the gender equality is very high. Thus, within Swedbank the lower number of female expatriates cannot be explained by the company’s hesitation to send women, maybe women just are not as eager as men to go on international assignments. Further, Swedbank does not consider prejudices of how the host countries perceive women when selecting the expatriates and whether it is appropriate to send a woman to a specific country. When selecting its expatriates Swedbank tries to find the most appropriate candidate depending on the conditions for the assignment, no difference is made between males and females. This data correlates to one of the three beliefs Adler (1994, as referred by Stroh et al., 2000) presents, as what can explain a company’s hesitation to select women as expatriates, namely; women are not interested in being international managers, companies do not send women, or there are prejudices in the host country that women are ineffective.

**Stereotyping:** Swedbank claims that stereotyping against women does not exist within the company since Swedbank emphasis equality between the genders. This contradicts to theory by Mandelker (1994, as referred by Linehan and Scullion, 2001) that states that stereotyping assumptions often are made by the home country senior management about women as managers. Moreover, Swedbank prefer its expatriates to be unmarried, therefore the bank does not view marriage from different perspectives. This in contrast to Vinniecombe and Surges (1995, as referred by Linehan and Scullion 2001) who states that companies often view marriage from two different perspectives, which appear to be an advantage for men, and less advantageous for women.

**Men’s tendency to choose other men:** Swedbank does not agree with the fact that males choose other males over women only because men often hold upper level management positions. Within Swedbank the distribution between men and women is very even and in several of the bank’s different divisions quota systems are used when employing personnel. This does not apply to the findings by Chusmir and Frontczak’s (1999, as referred by Linehan & Walsh, 1999) research, that women’s chances to be selected for international assignments might be limited by the fact that men hold most upper level management positions.

**Reasons for selecting men over women:** The predominance of men within the overseas assignment is nothing Swedbank takes into consideration when selecting their expatriates.
Further, men’s greater interest, instead of their better qualification is most probable the reason for the majority of men internationally. In contrast Vance and Paik (2001) states that the predominance of males in international business interactions as well as the fact that men have greater qualifications for international assignments are reasons why men are selected over women.

**Female pre-departure training:** Special training programs for female expatriates are not considered as an issue for the company, due to the fact that they treat everyone the same, men as women. Theory states differently since Caligiury and Cascio (1998) claim the importance of adapting the CCT to women.

**On-site Support and Mentoring:** Swedbank does not make a difference between males and females regarding the support that is offered to the expatriates and as mentioned earlier, the distribution between males and females is very even and the bank does not, when selecting its expatriates, view it as a gender issue. This is not in line with the theory stated by Caligiury and Cascio (1998) who claim that mentorship is more crucial for female expatriates than for men, since women might face greater barriers within an organisation than men do.

### 6.2 Cross-Case analysis

In this section, data obtained from the four interviews in the four cases will be displayed through a cross-case analysis where the respondents’ perspectives are compared to each other. This is first done graphically by putting together all concepts and data in a table, and then narrative where the information in the table is analyzed in text. The first cross-case analysis is conducted concerning concepts regarding the first research question about the corporate selection procedures of expatriates. The second analysis concerns the second research question that deals with training of expatriates while the third analysis concerns the third research question regarding the corporate perspective on expatriates and gender differences.

#### 6.2.1 Selection criteria for expatriates

The respondents’ answers are in the table compressed to “yes” or “no”, of the tested concept/variable. However, in some occasions, yes or no are not sufficient since they only agree or disagree to a certain extent, then we use the term “to some extent”.


Table 6.1: Cross-Case Analysis of Selection of Expatriates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Selection of Expatriates</th>
<th>Concepts</th>
<th>Handelsbanken</th>
<th>SEB</th>
<th>Nordea</th>
<th>Swedbank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Specific selection strategy</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Main focus when selecting expatriates:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Technical skills</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Personal characteristics</td>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The “Big Five” personality characteristics: important when selecting expatriates?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Qualities for predicting success</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Cultural emphasis</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Awareness of environmental constraints</td>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Interpersonal skills</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Managerial &amp; decision making abilities</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Other crucial qualities</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Selection procedures</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Biographical data &amp; and background data</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Standardised tests</td>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Work samples</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Interviews</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. International manager - selection system</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open/formal</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open/informal</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closed/formal</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closed/informal</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Selection strategy: Handelsbanken, SEB, Nordea and Swedbank all supported the theory that companies do consider it as almost impossible to generalise selection criteria in order to conduct a specific selection strategy, due to the fact that different circumstances require different ways of reaction, as well as different environments need different skills in order to
reach success. They all agreed that different international assignments require different selection criteria, which makes it almost impossible to conduct a specific selection strategy.

**Technical skills/personal characteristics:** The concept concerning the fact that different selection models has over time started to focus more on personal characteristics rather than on technical and functional expertise of the potential candidate. This is not fully supported by the banks. Handelsbanken does consider technical skills together with being faithful to the bank to be more important than the applicants personal characteristics, although Handelsbanken believes that personal characteristics such as extroversion is of great importance when working overseas. SEB does also consider technical skills as being most vital when selecting expatriates, however, the bank agrees with the fact that personal skills are becoming more and more important. Nordea and Swedbank consider personal skills and technical skills of equal importance when selecting expatriates.

**The “Big Five” personality characteristics:** The “Big Five” personality characteristics and their importance for expatriate success is supported by all the banks. Handelsbanken, SEB, Nordea, and Swedbank consider extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and openness or intellect as vital in when selecting expatriates. Nordea and Swedbank consider the “Big Five” personality characteristics important due to the fact that their expatriates will be working with customers and therefore need to fulfil those characteristics. SEB is of the opinion that these characteristics will facilitate the expatriate’s adaptation phase in the host country.

**Qualities sought for in expatriates:** The concept, which states that cultural emphasis, awareness of environmental constraints, interpersonal skills, managerial and decision-making abilities, and other crucial qualities are important qualities look for in expatriates in order to reach success, is supported by all the banks except from Swedbank. Handelsbanken considers these characteristics as essential, and underlines the importance of interpersonal skills since it is of great use, due to the fact that the social part of a business activity is highly important. SEB is of the opinion that it will help the expatriate to adapt more easily to the new situation. Although, Nordea and Swedbank consider those characteristics as vital, the banks more or less take these qualities for granted and should be held by the applicants who applies for the post since most of them already have been working with companies across boarders. Swedbank takes interpersonal skills as well as managerial and decision-making abilities for granted and therefore it is nothing that they consider when selecting their expatriates. However, Swedbank believes that the ability to make decisions is important to a certain extent. Additionally, Nordea adds that qualities such as result oriented, business oriented, customer oriented, high degree of involvement/commitment, as well as easy to create new relations is vital when Nordea selecting their expatriates.

**Selection procedures:** Concerning the four selection procedures used in order to select the most appropriate candidate Handelsbanken, SEB, Nordea, and Swedbank all support interviews as well as biographical and background data since they find those methods as the most effective. Moreover, Handelsbanken mentioned that in some occasion standardised tests might be used, although it is extremely rare.

**International manager-selection system:** Regarding the fact that there is a use of both closed and open selection procedures in an organisation when selecting expatriates as well as an informal and formal way, all of the companies supported the open/formal way. Most of them in combination with others but one company solely used the open/formal way.
6.2.2 Training of expatriates

The respondents’ answers are outlined in table 6.2 below. The respondents’ answers are in the table compressed to “yes” or “no”, of the tested concept/variable. However, in some occasions, “agree” and “disagree” are more sufficient answers. Moreover, sometimes we use the term “very limited”, when “yes” or “no” are not suitable.

Table 6.2: Cross-Case Analysis of Training of Expatriates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training of Expatriates</th>
<th>Concepts</th>
<th>Handelsbanken</th>
<th>SEB</th>
<th>Nordea</th>
<th>Swedbank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Use of cross culture training</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Very limited</td>
<td>Very limited</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Specific duration of CCT</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Design for CCT</td>
<td>- Inductive</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. CCT methods</td>
<td>Role playing</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Case studies</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Instructional games</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cultural assimilator</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lectures</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tutorials</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Readings assignments</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Audio/visual presentation</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T-groups</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Drill-and-practice</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Modelling</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Field trips</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assignment to micro cultures</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting with experienced international staff</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coaching</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Job rotation</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Is on-site training provided</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Very limited</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. On-site training:</td>
<td>Supervisor support in the home country can increase success</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7. Coverage of on-site training</th>
<th>Acquainting the expatriate with the area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing arrangement</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Banking and other local facilities</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School/day-care arrangements</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
<td>Yes/Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health-care</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work arrangements in dual career situations</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Insurances</td>
<td>Insurances and taxes</td>
<td>Various local facilities</td>
<td>Taxes and bureaucratic matters</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CCT- profitable?</th>
<th>Partly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Duration of CCT:** None of the responding banks show any support for the suggested concept of CCT duration for 40-50 hours. The banks do not have any specific time devoted for CCT, except from SEB that normally devote two days for CCT, however, SEB claims that the quantity of time devoted, rather depends on the host country, and that CCT programs often are tailor-made for each expatriate. Swedbank and Handelsbanken agree that the duration of the training depends on the individual, and varies from one expatriate to another.

**Design of CCT:** All of the respondent banks use some kind of CCT, however, since all of them have a quite limited training program, they all focus on host country specific training rather than training for international assignments in general.

**CCT methods used:** All the four banks seem to have a very limited range of CCT provided to their expatriates. The only method that is used by all the banks is field trips. Further, Handelsbanken and SEB both use some kind of tutorials while the other two banks do not. SEB is the only bank among the respondents that uses case studies and lectures. Role-plays, instructional games, cultural assimilators, reading assignments, audio/visual presentations, T-groups, Drill-and-practice, modeling, assignments to microcultures, meeting with experienced international staff, coaching, and job rotation, are other methods suggested in theory, however, these are neglected by all the responding banks. However, language training is a
method that many of the banks provide if necessary, and therefore is something they add to theory.

On-site training: Expatriates at all the responding banks are offered on-site training, however, in Nordea, the on-site training is provided by the host-company. Regarding support from a supervisor in the home office Handelsbanken and SEB agree with the concept that this support is very important in order to increase the success rate of their expatriates. However, Swedbank disagree, since the only contact their expatriates have with the home office is business related, and they have to deal with all the non-work-related problems by themselves. Nordea also disagree to the concept since the bank does not provide their expatriates with a mentor in the home country, however, Nordea recommends the expatriates to contact the human resource manager in the host country when support is needed.

Coverage of on-site training: Regarding the areas that on-site training should cover, all of the respondents provide support for housing arrangements in the host-country, however, no one of them compensate for the living in the home country during their time abroad. Moreover, all companies also help with school arrangements for expatriate children in the host country. Swedbank is the only bank among the respondents that does provide support for day-care arrangements, however, due to economical reasons the bank does seldom send an expatriate with a family on an international assignment. Due to the fact that all the respondents are in the banking-industry they all more or less provide support for banking facilities to the expatriates. Health-care support is also something all of the banks provide, however, none of them help with work arrangements in dual career situations or with acquainting the expatriate with the area. Moreover, Handelsbanken does provide support with insurances and Swedbank with taxes and bureaucratic matters.

CCT – profitable or not: Both Nordea and Swedbank disagree with the statement that CCT is profitable in the long run, since it will limit the number of ineffective expatriates and premature returns. Both of the banks have never used much CCT, however, their international assignments have been successful. Handelsbanken also agrees to a certain extent, to the reason that they seem to do fine without CCT. SEB on the other hand highly agrees to the statement, due to the fact that the bank is of the opinion that CCT facilitates the whole adjustment process for the expatriate, both when it comes to work and social life.

6.2.3 Gender differences

The respondents’ answers are outlined in table 6.3 below. Regarding the first concept it was impossible to compress the answers to “Agree” and “Disagree”, therefore we used “Yes” or “No” instead.

Table 6.3: Cross-Case Analysis of Gender Differences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender Differences</th>
<th>Handelsbanken</th>
<th>SEB</th>
<th>Nordea</th>
<th>Swedbank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Few women in international assignments</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Companies hesitation to female</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Few women in international assignments: All responding banks have a majority of male expatriates, and support the concept that female expatriates are in minority. However, Handelsbanken is the only bank that can present an accurate number that shows that within Handelsbanken only one third of the people on international assignments today are females.

Companies’ hesitation to female expatriates: All the banks except from SEB agree to the statement that women are not interested in being international managers, with the simple explanation that women do not seem as eager as men to go on international assignments. SEB, on the other hand, claims that the bank sends many women, and thereby women are interested in these kinds of assignments. Moreover, all of the banks send female expatriates and thereby they do not agree to the statement that companies do not send women on foreign assignments. Since none of the banks operate in cultures with prominent prejudices against women’s effectiveness they are not forced to consider whether it is appropriate to send women to such countries or not.

Stereotyping: The concept that stereotypical assumptions often are made by home country senior management about women as managers, and about their availability, suitability, and preferences for international assignments and that this might explain low number of women in.
international assignments, is rejected by all banks except from SEB. SEB agrees to this concept and believes that this might be possible.

Further, SEB and Swedbank do not agree to the concept that companies view marriage from different perspectives depending on the gender of the expatriate. The concept involves that a married woman may neglect her career on her family’s expense, while a married man are rather viewed upon as an asset for the company since he has a stable network at home that allows him to focus on his career. SEB claims that family matters are something expatriates have to work out themselves, however, Handelsbanken and Nordea only agree to a certain extent. They believe that it is true that a women has a traditional role to live up to, which hinders her to fully concentrate on her job-task, however, they do not consider it when selecting their expatriates.

**Men’s tendency to choose other men:** All respondents except from Swedbank agree to the concept that women’s chances to be selected for international assignments might be limited by the fact that men hold most upper level management positions. However, Swedbank disagrees since the bank claims that the distribution between men and women within the bank is very even, in several of the divisions in the bank quota-systems are used when employing personnel.

**Reasons for selecting men over women:** None of the respondents believe that the predominance of males in international business interaction is a reason for men being selected over women for expatriate assignments. Neither do any of them agree to the fact that men have greater qualifications for international assignments than women.

**Female pre-departure training:** All companies disagree to the concept that it is important to adapt CCT to a women’s repertoire of behavior responses. All of them stressed that they treat everyone the same way no matter the gender. Further, SEB claimed that they rather adapt their CCT to a specific country than to the individual. Although, Handelsbanken can if needed make sure that their female expatriates can receive extra support from their manager in the host country.

**On-site support and mentoring:** Regarding the concept that all female expatriates should be provided with an in-country support network or a mentor, due to the fact that the barriers for female success within an organization may be greater than for male expatriates, all of the responding banks except from Handelsbanken disagree.
7. FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

In this final chapter of the thesis the research questions that were stated in the first chapter will be answered and we will draw conclusions from the analysis. The aim with this chapter is to answer our three research questions and thereby we have fulfilled our purpose of our study. All findings that are relevant to our purpose, research questions, and demarcations will be presented here, even if they do not match the already existing theories. Then the conclusions will be drawn based on the theory and analyzed data. Finally, implications for practitioners, for theory and for future research will be presented. It must be noted that the conclusions are derived from this study’s limited sample of companies within the Swedish banking industry. However, since this study is made on the four biggest banks within Sweden, we believe that the findings and conclusions are generalisable.

7.1 Research Question 1: How can the criteria used for selection of managers for international assignments by Swedish banks be described?

Among the four studied banks none of them have a specific selection strategy when choosing the expatriates. All of the banks are of the opinion that it seems hard to generalize specific selection criteria in order to select the most appropriate expatriate, it rather depends on the international assignment and what the position requires. Moreover, two of the banks believe that the selection criteria will vary depending on the host country’s culture and environment.

Regarding technical skills versus personal characteristics and what the banks find most crucial for expatriate success varies among the respondents in this study. Two of the banks find technical skills as the most important factor to consider when selecting their expatriates, while the other two banks are of the opinion that technical skills and personal characteristics are of equal importance. However, all of the banks seem to agree that in order for the expatriate to reach success, he/she needs to possess a combination of technical competence and personal characteristics.

All the respondents believe that the “Big Five” personality characteristics, which includes extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and openness or intellect, is important for an expatriate to be successful. The importance of these personality characteristics are valued differently among the four banks, what one bank considers as vital might be considered as less important by another bank. Although, none of the banks believe that any of the personality characteristics within this model are insignificant.

Considering the qualities for predicting success all banks except from one emphasize the importance of four of the five stated qualities namely cultural emphasis, awareness of environmental constraints, interpersonal skills, and managerial and decision making abilities. The three banks consider these qualities more or less important as predictors for expatriate success. The fourth bank that does not consider these qualities when selecting their expatriates, argues that they are convinced that all of their employees possess theses qualities. Regarding cultural emphasis and awareness of environmental constraints the fourth bank believes that it is difficult to predict whether the candidates hold theses skills, it will appear during the assignment.

Concerning the four selection procedures all of the four banks use biographical data and background data as well as interviews as selection tools when selecting their expatriates.
None of the banks use work samples when choosing their expatriates, and only one bank uses standardized tests, although, very infrequently.

When announcing the position for international assignments, all the respondents have an open/formal selection system, where three of them use it as their main selection system. In addition, three of the banks also have a closed/informal selection system, although, only one bank use it as the main selection system. Only one bank has an open/informal system, however, it is of a very limited use. None of the banks have a closed/formal selection system.

With the basis on the analysis and our findings, we have arrived at the following specific conclusions regarding research question one:

- Within the Swedish banking industry it is hard to generalize specific selection criteria in order to select the most appropriate expatriate, it rather depends on the international assignment and what the position requires.
- The expatriates within the Swedish banking industry should possess both technical and personal skills. However, technical skills are still valued higher, although, there is only a marginal difference.
- The “Big Five” personality characteristics are of importance when selecting expatriates in order for expatriate success.
- When selecting expatriates within the Swedish banking industry it is important to look for more than technical competencies. Qualities such as cultural emphasis, awareness of environmental constraints, interpersonal skills, and managerial and decision making abilities are important in order to predict expatriate success.
- Within the Swedish banking industry the selection procedures consist of background and biographical data and interviews.
- The major international manager-selection system within the Swedish banking industry is the open/formal selection system. However, a closed/informal selection system is also used.

7.2 Research question 2: How can the training offered to managers selected by Swedish banks be described?

Regarding the duration of CCT none of the banks have a specific time devoted for training of their expatriates, however, one bank normally dedicates two days for CCT of their expatriates. Three of the respondents argue that the duration of CCT depends on the individual and therefore it is often tailor-made for each expatriate.

The design of CCT among the respondents, even though the CCT is quite limited, is more focused on host country specific training than on training for international assignments in general. This approach is of inductive character.

There is a wide range of CCT methods that can be used in order to train expatriates, however, the use of these methods is very limited among our responding banks. Field trips are the only CCT method that is used among all the four banks. Further, two of the banks use tutorials in order to prepare their expatriates for the international assignment. In addition, lectures and case studies are used within one of the banks.

Regarding the on-site support from a supervisor in the home country, two of the responding banks are of the opinion that it is important in order to increase the success rate of their
expatriates. The other two banks do not agree and believe that support from a supervisor in the home country is necessary for expatriates to reach success abroad.

When it comes to the coverage of on-site training/support all of the four responding banks help the expatriates with housing arrangement in the host country. Further, all of the four banks provide the expatriate and his/her family help/support with banking facilities, school arrangements, and health-care. However, none of the banks put emphasis in giving the expatriates a chance to acquaint themselves with the new area, and neither does any of the banks offer support for work arrangement in dual career situations. Moreover, all of the banks provide their expatriates with some additional support such as insurances, tax advice, and other bureaucratic matters.

Two banks agree that CCT is profitable in the long run since it will facilitate the adjustment process for the expatriates both when it comes to work and social life. The other two banks disagree with this statement since the have never used a high grade of CCT and still have had successful expatriates.

With the basis on the analysis and our findings, we have arrived at the following specific conclusions regarding research question two:

- Within the Swedish banking industry there is no specific time devoted for CCT of expatriates. The time for CCT offered by the banks depends on the individual.
- The design of CCT is more of an inductive character among Swedish banks.
- The most common method used by Swedish banks for training their expatriates is field trips. In addition, tutorials are also used as a method of training expatriates.
- Within the Swedish banking industry the importance of on-site training/support seem to of different significance.
- On-site training/support for expatriates is used within the Swedish banking industry. Housing arrangement, school care, banking facilities, and health care support are provided to expatriates within the Swedish banking industry.
- The Swedish banking industry has different opinions whether CCT is profitable in the long run, or not.

7.3 Research question 3: How can the issue of gender in connection with selection and training of managers for international assignments by Swedish banks be described?

Among the studied banks all of them send women on international assignments, and all of the banks currently have female expatriates on international assignments. However, the majority of the expatriates within all the four banks are males.

Moreover, none of the banks were hesitant to send female expatriates, however, three out of the four banks believed that the low number of female expatriates could be explained by the fact that women are not as willing as men to undertake international assignments. Further, since all of the banks send females on international assignments none of them agreed to the statement that companies do not send abroad. Neither do any of the banks believe that women are not sent on international assignments due to prejudices against women that might exist in the host country that they are ineffective.
Among the four responding banks three of them did not believe that stereotypical assumptions are commonly made by home country senior management about women as managers, and about their availability, suitability, and preferences for international assignments. Regarding the dual view on marriage depending whether the candidate were a man or a woman, two of the respondents explicit disagreed to this and believed that companies do not see different on marriage, as long as the candidate holds the skills that are required for the assignment. However, the two other banks were of the opinion that companies might view marriage from different perspectives depending on whether the candidate is a man or a woman. Women have a traditional role to live up to, which might hinder her to fully concentrate on her work.

All of the respondents except from one believed that there is a tendency for men to choose other men for international assignments, and that this could arise from the fact that men hold most upper level management positions.

Regarding the reasons for men selecting other women, none of the responding banks believed that this could have an explanation in the fact that within international business the majority of the expatriates are males. Neither did any of the respondents agree that men are chosen over males since they have grater qualifications for international assignments than women.

Among all of the responding banks none of them found it important to adapt the CCT to women, they make no difference whether the expatriate is a man or women, they are treated the same way.

In view of on-site support and mentoring for women, since they might face greater barriers in the host country than men, all of the respondents were of the opinion that it is nothing that is necessary to provide.

With the basis on the analysis and our findings, we have arrived at the following specific conclusions regarding research question three:

- There is no hesitation to send female expatriates within the banking industry.
- Within the Swedish banking industry there are gender differences regarding the willingness to undertake international assignments, it seems like women are not as willing as men to apply for foreign posts.
- Within the Swedish bank industry male managers’ unconscious tendency to choose males over females for expatriate assignments might create a barrier to the participation of women in international management.
- Males are not chosen over females due to the fact that they are the majority in international.
- Males are not thought to have greater qualities for international assignment than women among the Swedish banks.
- Within the Swedish banking industry it is not important to adjust the CCT to women.
- On-site support and mentoring for women is nothing that is provided within the Swedish banking industry.

7.4 Implications for practitioners

The implications for practitioners can be viewed as a recommendation for companies, as represented by Human Resource Management and Senior management. The empirical data,
analysis and conclusions that earlier was conducted in this study will be the base for the following implications.

Firstly, we feel it necessary to highlight the matter of why it is so important for Swedish banks to select the right person for international assignments, and also why training for these assignments should be offered. As mentioned in chapter one, business has during the last decade grown tremendously, from competing domestically companies now are forced to compete on a global basis. Qualified managers with competences that differentiate the company’s strategic choices are of great importance in order to succeed internationally. Therefore, the human resource management have to put more emphasis in finding the right person, as well as prepare them well in order to be successful internationally. Further, Swedish banks should make use of their total work pool when selecting their expatriates. In order to select the right expatriates for the assignment, an open and formal system is appropriate since it gives all the employees the same opportunity to apply for the assignment, men as well as women. However, a closed and informal selection system can be suitable when the selectors know the ideal candidate for the position, and thereby there is no need to post the vacancy. Further, in order to select the best-qualified candidate, no matter the gender, companies have to consider the fact of men’s tendency to choose other men. However, this is difficult to counteract since it is not a conscious process. An increased number of females in manager positions domestically, who are involved in the selection of expatriates, could be a solution.

Even though technical skills are of importance when selecting expatriates, Swedish banks should not forget the importance of the applicant’s personal skills. In order to succeed abroad the expatriate should have a desire to move the company forwards. In order to function well in a new environment it is also of great help that the expatriate has strong awareness about different cultures, and thereby is aware about different believes, values, and different ways of doing business.

With the purpose to be as effective as possible Swedish banks should to a greater extent provide their expatriates with training, before departure as well as on site. Good knowledge about the new environment and its rule and regulations is of good use in order to facilitate the adaptation phase. Swedish banks should compare the value of training to the cost of it, and thereby realize that the result of training in some cases may exceed the actual expense. Further, Swedish banks should consider providing the expatriates support from a supervisor or mentor in the home country, since that might make the expatriates’ feel like they still are a part of the company. Support may as well play an important role in order to reach success overseas. The training may in some cases also be adapted to gender, since assignments in some specific cultures might need different preparations depending on if the expatriate is a man or a woman.

Dual Career is also an issue for companies to take into consideration in order to send the most suitable and qualified person. However, this may be a matter that has to be solved primary within the family but should anyway be thought of by the company.

### 7.5 Implications for theory

Our purpose in this study was to gain a better understanding of how Swedish banks manage their IHRM. In order to achieve this purpose we have answered our research questions and by doing that we have also made contribution to an amount of previous studies regarding our
topic. Primarily we have been using concepts from these studies and tested them in Swedish conditions. In addition, we believe that our research can serve as a foundation for constructing theories regarding Swedish banks, and that it can be used as basis for further research. Moreover, in our conclusions we have started to explain certain aspects of which many deserve further research considerations, which is what we will propose in the following section.

7.6 Implications for future research

During our research, we have uncovered areas that were not within the scope of the study. Since we find many of them to be interesting propositions for other researchers, we include them as implications for further research.

- When it comes to female expatriation, it would be interesting to do research in the area of the female expatriates’ situation, from their point of view.
- Barriers and perceptions against females in the international business environment would be an interesting research topic.
- Since we only covered the differences between men and women very briefly in this study, this would be an interesting topic to do more research in.
- In this study we focused only on the Swedish banking industry, therefore it would be interesting to do a similar research within another industry, such as the technical industry or in other service related industries.
- A suggestion that might be suitable for researchers interested in expatriation is to look at how companies manage their on-site training of expatriates, and how important it is for increasing the success rate.
- Another topic that needs further research is the issue of repatriation, how the companies manage the return of their expatriates.
- The impact of mentoring deserves further research. Two of the banks in our study believed that it was important with a supervisor in the home country, while the other two did not. Therefore we suggest that the impact of mentors for expatriate assignments could be studied.
- The expatriate personal characteristics desired by companies deserve further research. All the respondent banks supported the “Big Five” characteristic model. We suggest that a comparison of what personal characteristics different industries require of their expatriates could be studied.
8. References


Linehan, M. (2000). *Senior female international managers: Why so few?*. Ashgate publishing Ltd, Chippenham, Wiltshire


**Interviews**

Johansson, Björn, Handelsbanken (2004-11-23)

Axling, Catharina, Skandinaviska Enskilda Banken (2004-11-23)

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**Company Web Sites**


Interview Guide

General Information – Companies

- Name
- Company
- Respondent’s position
- Years in the company
- Number of countries the company operates in
- Number of years the company has been active abroad

Background information about the expatriates within the company

1. To what locations is the company sending their expatriates?
2. What positions are the expatriates holding?
3. How many expatriates are currently on overseas assignments?

Selection of expatriates

4. Does the company have a specific strategy when selecting expatriates?
5. What is the main focus when selecting expatriates?
   - Technical skills
   - Personal characteristics
6. How important are the “Big Five” personality characteristics when selecting expatriates?
   - Extroversion
   - Agreeableness
   - Conscientiousness
   - Emotional stability
   - Openness or intellect
7. What is the company’s opinion regarding the following qualities?
   - Cultural emphasis
   - Awareness of environmental constraints
   - Interpersonal skills
   - Managerial and decision-making abilities
   - Other crucial qualities
   Are they considered important when selecting expatriates? Why/why not?
8. What kind of method is used when selecting expatriates, and why?
   - Biographical and background data
   - Standardised tests
9. Are you using any specific manager-selection system when selecting expatriates; open / closed / formal / informal?

Training of expatriates

10. Does the company offer any kind of Cross Culture Training (CCT) to their expatriates?

11. How much time does the company devote for the training of expatriates?
   - When does the training start?
   - How long does it proceed?

12. Does the company have a specific design for their CCT?
   - Inductive
   - Deductive

13. What strategies and methods are used when training expatriates?

   • **Simulations**
     - Role playing
     - Case studies
     - Instructional games

   • **Programmed instructions**
     - Cultural assimilator

   • **Expositive instructions**
     - Lectures
     - Tutorials
     - Readings assignments
     - Audio/visual presentation

   • **Sensitivity training**
     - T-groups

   • **Behaviour modification methods**
     - Drill-and-practice
     - Modelling

   • **Field experiences**
     - Field trips
     - Assignment to micro cultures
     - Meeting with experienced international staff
• **On-the-job training**
  - Coaching
  - Job rotation

14. Does the company offer any kind of on-site training/support?

- If yes, how important is on-site training consider for expatriate success?

15. If on-site training/support is provided, what areas does it cover?

- Acquainting the expatriate with the area
- Housing arrangement
- Banking and other local facilities
- School and day-care arrangements
- Health-care
- Work arrangements in dual career situations
- Other

16. What is the company’s opinion/experience regarding the following statement?

“CCT is profitable in the long run since it will limit the number of ineffective expatriates and premature returns”

**Gender differences**

17. Does the company send any female expatriates on international assignments? If yes, how many per cent of the expatriates are females?

18. What is the company’s opinion/experience regarding the following issues?

- Women are not interested in being international managers
- Companies do not send women abroad
- There are prejudices in the host country that women are ineffective
- Often stereotypical assumptions are made by home country senior management about women as managers, and about their availability, suitability and preferences for international assignments.
- Companies view marriage from two different perspectives. For women, marriage might lessen the chance of being selected for an international assignment since she may neglect her career on her family’s expense. Married men on the other hand is viewed upon as an asset for the company due to his stable network at home which allows him to focus on his career.
- Men’s (unconscious) tendency to choose other men that are very similar to themselves for important management positions.
- The predominance of males in international business interaction is one reason why companies select men over women for expatriate assignments.
- Men have greater qualifications for international assignments is one reason why companies select men over women for expatriate assignments.

19. Does the company consider any adjustment to the CCT of women?

20. Does the company provide female expatriates with any in-country support and/or mentoring?

- Why/Why not?

21. Any additional comments?
Intervjuguide

Allmän information om företaget

- Namn
- Företag
- Respondentens position
- Antal år i företaget
- Antal länder där företaget har kontor
- Hur många år företaget varit aktiva utomlands

Bakgrunds information om expatriater inom företaget

1. Till vilka platser skickar företaget sina expatriater?
2. Vilka positioner har de utlandsanställda på företaget?
3. Hur många expatriater är för tillfället på utlands uppdrag?

Valet av expatriater

4. Har banken någon specifik strategi när ni väljer era expatriater?
5. Vad fokuserar ni på när ni väljer ut era expatriater?
   - Teknisk kompetens
   - Personliga egenskaper
6. Hur viktig är de ”Big Five” personlighets egenskaper när ni väljer ut era expatriater?
   - Hur utåtriktad man är
   - Medgörlighet
   - Pålitlig och ambitiös
   - Känslomässig stabilitet
   - Öppenhet eller intellekt
7. Vad är företagets åsikt angående följande kvaliteter vid val av expatriater?
   - Kulturell betoning
   - Medvetenhet om miljö restriktioner
   - Hur man är som person/”interpersonal skills”
   - Förmåga att leda och att ta beslut
   - Andra avgörande kvaliteter

Anser ni att dessa kvaliteter viktiga när man väljer ut sina expatriater? Varför/varför inte?

8. Vilken metod används när ni väljer ut era expatriater, och varför?
   - Biografisk och bakgrunds data
   - Standardiserade tester
9. Använder ni er av något speciellt urvals-system, när ni väljer ut era expatriater; öppet / stängt / formellt / informellt?

**Träning av expatriater**

10. Erbjuder företaget någon form av ”Cross Culture Training” (CCT) för sina expatriater?

11. Hur mycket tid lägger företaget ner för träning av expatriates?
   - När börjar träningen?
   - Hur lång tid pågår den?

12. Har företaget någon specifik design för deras CCT?
   - Induktiv
   - Deduktiv

13. Vilka strategier och metoder använder ni vid träningen av era expatriater?

   - **Simuleringar**
     - Roll spel
     - Fall studie
     - ”Instructional games” (Expatriaten sätts i en förenklad verklighets-situation som fokuserar på att utveckla både bas-kunskaper inom affärsverlden och kommunikations-kunskaper)

   - **Programmerade instruktioner**
     - ”Cultural assimilator” (Skrivna omständigheter, där en expatriat tvingas ta ställning i en situation, och förses sedan med feedback om lämpligheten av sitt ställningstagande)

   - ”Expositive instructions”
     - Föreläsningar
     -Handledare
     - Läs övningar
     - Audio/visuella presentationer

   - **Sensitivitets träning**
     - ”T-groups” (Man försöker att vänja av expatriater med invänjda roller, så att de ska anpassa sig lättare till den nya situationen genom att utveckla nya roller).

   - **”Behaviour modification methods”**
     - “Drill-and-practice” (Frekvent överföring av övning och feedback för att undvika invänjning av oönskade beteenden).
     - “Modeling” (Expatriater lär sig genom att iaktta modeller som utför önskade beteenden).
APPENDIX 2

- På-plats upplevelser
  - Studie-resa
  - Assignment to micro cultures (*expatriaten blir satt i en situation där han/hon tvingas att interagera med människor från en specifik kultur*)
  - Möte med erfaren internationell personal

14. Erbjuder företaget någon form av träning/support på plats i utlandet?
   - Om ja, hur viktigt anser företaget att träning på plats är för att expatriater ska lyckas med sina uppdrag?

15. Om träning på plats förekommer, vilka områden täcker dessa?
   - Låta expatriaten bli bekant med området
   - Arrangement av boende
   - Banker och andra lokala hjälpmedel
   - Arrangement av skola/dagis platser
   - Hälsovård
   - Arrangement av jobb för medföljande make/maka där båda har en karriär
   - Övrigt

16. Vad är företagets åsikt/erfarenhet vad det gäller följande påstående?
   "CCT är lönsamt på lång sikt eftersom det leder till ett begränsat antal ineffektiva expatriater såväl som förtidigt avbrutna uppdrag”.

Skillnader mellan könen

17. Skickar företaget ut några kvinnliga expatriater på utlanduppdrag? Om ja, hur många procent är då kvinnor?

18. Vad är företagets åsikt/erfarenhet gällande följande påståenden?
   - Kvinnor är inte intresserade av chef positioner
   - Företag skickar inte kvinnor på utlands uppdrag
   - Fördomar i värdlandet som säger att kvinnor är ineffektiv
   - Stereotypiska antaganden om kvinnor som chefer och om deras tillgänglighet, lämplighet samt deras preferenser för internationella uppdrag är ofta gjorda av äldre chefer i hemlandet.
   - Företag ser äktenskap från två olika synvinklar. För kvinnor kan ett äktenskap minska chansen att bli vald för ett internationellt uppdrag eftersom det finns risk att kvinnor försummar sin karriär på grund av sin familj. Gifta män däremot ses som en tillgång för företaget på grund av sin stabila nätverk hemma, vilket gör att han fullt kan fokusera på sin egen karriär.
   - Mäns omedvetna tendens att välja andra män som är väldigt lika som dem själva för viktiga utlands uppdrag.
- Dominansen av män i internationella interaktioner är en orsak till att företag väljer män före kvinnor som expatriater.
- Män har bättre kvalifikationer för uppdrag utomlands är en orsak till att företag väljer män före kvinnor som expatriater.

19. Tänker företaget på att anpassa sin CCT för kvinnor?

20. Erbjuder företaget sina kvinnliga expatriater med någon form av support och/eller mentorskap under deras tid utomlands?

- Varför/varför inte

21. Något att tillägga?