

RELOCATION TODAY

Monthly International Relocation Newsletter

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News for Today, Tomorrow and the Future

Global Selection Technology—It's Not a One-Time Test—It's a System!

by Barry Kozloff, President—SRI Selection Research International, Inc.

Selection is still the key activity for an organization's return on investment. As Mike Haak, VP, Engineering at Solar Turbines-Caterpillar, stated: "We have to select hard to manage easy. Whether it is an expatriate, a local national, or a new hire—selection is the way to find, keep and grow them..." Whether an assignment is for three years or six months, ensuring top performance and the well being of the employee and his/her family requires selecting the right person for the job and the readiness of the family members for the particular assignment.

Job suitability factors, as well as personal and familial conditions, are the elements making up the *success / failure equation*. If the assignment ends prematurely, or the employee is not the right fit for the job, there are measurable losses including: the aggregate out-of-pocket loss to the company of bringing the person back, trying to find a place for the employee in an organization which was not ready for his/her return, and possible loss of an individual who may otherwise be a talented employee. Then there are the costs associated with backfilling the position (finding, replacing, and orienting the replacement employee and family). In addition, there are organizational losses: project momentum, client contacts, workforce morale, disruption to staff and organizational systems.

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International Relocation and School Considerations for Children With Special Needs

by Elizabeth Perelstein, President—School Choice International

Moving with children is always difficult. This is particularly true in today's child-centered world, where parents strive for perfection. Whether a child is of nursery school age or a teenager, parents are overwhelmed by guilt when contemplating the sacrifices required by relocating their children. They know what they have at home. They have researched, planned, arranged and moved mountains so that all of the pieces could be in place to give their offspring every advantage.

Moving with children who have special needs is an even a greater challenge, especially since more of these children are now being diagnosed. Whether there are greater numbers of children who are born with or who develop special needs, or whether diagnostic tools have improved, is a matter of active debate.

How to Approach a Move With a Special Needs Child

To families who have children with minor or major special needs, deciding whether or not to move is a decision of greater magnitude than it is for other families. Since the additional stress that a family faces is so significant, it is wise to keep other aspects of the move as simple as possible. Education should be the first priority.

The family may want to work with an educational advisor or someone qualified to spearhead the effort, pulling together help that may be available from disparate

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Selection and Assessment

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A complex constellation of factors and conditions affect international assignments. These include professional abilities and skills, personality traits, familial conditions, motivation, ethics, interests and values, cognitive reasoning and problem solving, emotional resources, maturity and judgment, social intelligence and interpersonal skills. Because every employee and spouse brings this constellation of factors to the job and the relocation, they must be assessed for their transferability to a different global context.


Organizations Look at Too Few Job Criteria

Executives are principally trained to look at job-relevant criteria and, as a rule, are not effective evaluating employee developmental weakness and personality gaps. Consider, for example, a married General Manager with chronic kidney disease and two children in college who believes that managing 300 Chinese in Shanghai will be easier than 4,000 employees in Oklahoma City. What if this manager was the only candidate willing to go, or had the blessing of a senior manager? If a formal assessment does not flag such potential problems prior to the assignment, then management will probably have to do a lot of damage control.

The key to effective assignment and performance management is *selection technology* which is governed by Federal and American Psychological Association standards. It is neither for making “Go/No Go” decisions, nor looking for an employee’s cultural predisposition. A professional assessment must provide critical job-relevant data along with information about familial conditions. Assessment data is best used to generate a conceptual map to manage the many assignment elements; e.g., job and development, family acculturation, and career planning (repatriation is part of the latter).

Selection technology is a comprehensive diagnostic method. It is imperative organizations have the data about the assignee’s job-related strengths and developmental weaknesses to set expectations and provide resources to help them succeed. To say, “we don’t have the money to conduct an assessment,” or “we have only one candidate,” misses the point. The conceptual or planning map generated by a formal assessment defines needs and resources establishing measurable behavioral targets for traditional and non-traditional performance indicators.

Whether an organization is a multi-billion dollar global corporation with thousands of employees worldwide and hundreds of expatriates, or a small company with two sales managers overseas – selection technology is the most cost effective and best method to insure the investment represented assignees. The trend towards short-term assignments does not diminish the fact that a person is responsible for the success of the job. Whether an employee will be on assignment three months or three years, *the same familial conditions, employee strengths, and developmental gaps will be there to affect the family’s acculturation and the employee’s job performance.*

About the Author: President of Selection Research International, Inc. (SRI) since 1978, Barry Kozloff co-founded SRI with Edmund Gaydos, Ph.D. Kozloff began his career in the early '70s as the Executive Director of a family-counseling agency in St. Louis. He has a Master's degree focused on Care and Counseling, BA Anthropology, (abd) Ph.D. Anthropology. Contact: kozloff@sri-2000.com or tel: 314-567-6900. 

[When] accepting a job abroad, learn as much as possible about the company's relocation package. Services to be provided? Will a relocation services firm be used? Relocation services companies take care of the research and planning that goes into moving, this frees you up to concentrate on the effect the move will have on your career and family. Source: *What to Expect in a Relocation Package*

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Children with Special Needs

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sources. With one point person, sources of useful information can be integrated and evaluated before being presented to the parents. Some educational advisors are international, having offices in the country of origin as well as the country of destination, whereas others need to be found in the country of destination.

Diagnosis Amidst a Move

Another complex issue frequently occurs when searching for schooling during an international relocation. Some students experience difficulty in school, but obtain passing grades. The source of the problem may not be identified or brought to the surface at home. Some children are promoted from one year to the next with mild concern on the part of teachers and parents, but no one ever investigates the possibility of a learning disability/significant problem. If the same child applied to school now, rather than having done so at the entry level, many would be denied places at the schools where they now are students. When moving, they are forced to apply for admission in a weaker position than the one in which they entered the educational system years earlier.

Early Versus Late Detection

A recent article in *NY Magazine* (April 19, 2004) highlights the pros and cons of early diagnosis. On the one hand, early diagnosis can lead to helpful early intervention. In these instances, children have benefited from lives free of disabilities that otherwise may have been obstacles. On the other hand, many children have received therapy and parents have worried unnecessarily about perceived disorders that they may have outgrown without treatment.

Conclusion

After all information is gathered, parents should make every effort to be realistic about their child. Parents need to be open-minded. If a child currently goes to school in the independent sector, but the new country does a better job with children of similar profiles in the state system, it would be wise to explore both alternatives rather than focusing on a single possibility.

Moving to another country may allow a family a new perspective. And even though replicating the services from home may not be possible, available resources in the new location may shed light on a treatment, therapy or approach that could be the most valuable aspect of a family's overseas move.

About the Author: Elizabeth was an assistant principal; university administrator and school board trustee. She founded School Choice International and holds Masters' degrees in Educational Administration and Public Policy from the University of Chicago. See her website at: www.SchoolChoiceIntl.com

Books in Print

Young Children \$7.95

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Let's Make A Move!

Adults \$14.95

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NEXT MONTH'S HIGHLIGHTS

Feature Article

Family Holiday Traditions and Living Abroad

Betsy Burlinghame, President –
ExpatExchange.com

Guest Article

Turning the Downs of Moving into Ups

Arlene Alpert, MS, LMHC –
Private Practice

Interested in writing for *Relocation Today* or would like to suggest an article topic, contact Amy Roman at:

aroman@branchor.com

See our Editorial Calendar at:
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“That’s My Favorite Book”

BR Anchor Publishing Staff’s favorite relocation book...

“Let’s Move Overseas, a spinoff of Let’s Make A Move! is my favorite because young children have so much difficulty moving abroad”.

— Beverly D. Roman, Publisher

“Let’s Make A Move! [I believe] has made the greatest impact on children”.

— Amy L. Roman, Executive Director

“The League of Super Movers...the unique storyline educates and encourages preteen children throughout the relocation process”.

— Dalene Bickel, Senior Editor
et’s Make A Move!

— Michael Cadieux, Art Director

Contact Amy Roman, Executive Director at: aroman@branchor.com. *We would like to hear from you!*

FIGT Update



FAMILIES IN GLOBAL TRANSITION, INC. (FIGT)

With Families in Global Transition's record-setting conference (attendance and sponsorship) now a memory, it's time to look to the future. During 2006, FIGT will host information events in the Houston to build on the momentum developed there this fall. We'll be seeking additional sponsors and even wider community involvement during the next conference tentatively scheduled there for spring of 2007.

Please visit FIGT's web site: www.figt.org to join our Associates program and to learn more about future Houston-area events. ☎

Words to Live By

Travel: the word travel has a common origin with the word travail. Once upon a time, travel was exceedingly uncomfortable and often dangerous. Indeed, the ultimate source of the word 'travel' is a medieval instrument of torture - the trepalium - a contraption would pierce its victim with three sharp stakes (tres 'three' and palus 'stake').

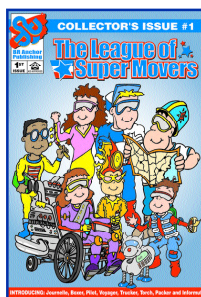
The League of Super Movers-School Study

In May 2005, BR Anchor Publishing conducted a school study using *The League of Super Movers*. The purpose of the study was to learn if *The League of Super Movers* met BR Anchor Publishing's goal: to help children ages 9-12 overcome the challenges of a move and settle into a new community using a fun and interesting story line and activities specifically for this age group. Based on the responses of both the educators and the students, our goal was realized.

Participants were third, fourth and fifth grade students and teachers at Meadowlark Elementary School in Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

The study was coordinated by Suzanne Sarfert, 3rd grade teacher who said: "Key ingredients to having a smooth transition when relocating are becoming familiar with the new location and making new friends. *The League of Super Movers* gives advice in both of these areas and helps to simplify the moving process."

BR Anchor Publishing has conducted studies with all of its books for children. To download a complete study, go to www.branchor.com and click on your book of choice. ☎



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Features of Interest

News to Note...

Does your company assist an employee's spouse or partner in finding employment in the new location? 41% of companies answered "yes".

Source: The 38th Annual Corporate Relocation Survey, Atlas World Groups, Inc.

Were these "emerging leaders" honing their skills back home, they likely would be granted an executive coach, who would help them map out a game plan for reaching their personal and professional goals [abroad].

Source: *A Case for Expat Coaching* by Julie Cook Ramirez - Relocation Columnist

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relocation colleague