

# EXPATRIATE HOTEL MANAGERS' PERSPECTIVE ON CROSS-CULTURAL SKILLS

Empirical  
study

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## Keywords

Expat hotel manager,  
Cross-cultural,  
Training

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## Abstract

*The globalization and expansion of multinationals has led to various studies on expatriation management, but literature regarding this issue in the hotel industry is still scarce, especially in Romania. Expatriates are critical to the success of this particular industry, as more and more hotel chains operate beyond their domestic domains and intend to enter inclusively in the Romanian market. The study presented in this article uses a qualitative research method intended to discover the perspective of practitioners on the most important management skills hotel expatriate managers should possess, the most effective cross-cultural training activities provided by parent hotel companies and other challenges faced in international assignments. The data collection method was an in-depth interview with expatriate hotel managers in Bucharest. The study suggests opportunities for international hotel chains to better prepare their expatriates, in order to integrate them more effectively in a new cultural environment.*

## Introduction

The need for well-trained expatriate hotel managers derives from the fact that their negative results have various consequences on multi-national hotel companies: negative influence on global business growth (Caligiuri et al., 1999, cited by Causin and Ayoun, 2011) and on the long-term competitiveness (Kriegel, 2000, cited by Causin and Ayoun, 2011). Weak performances also have financial impact (Magnini, 2009) through their influence on direct costs incurred with the reassignment and remuneration package of the expatriate, as well as with relocation and compensation of expatriates' replacement. Moreover, academics recognize that the expatriate's failure to adapt to the host country conducts to turnover (Powers, 1992; Stone, 1991, cited by Magnini, 2009).

### 1. Expatriate management and cross-cultural training. Conceptual clarifications

In the globalised market, as corporations expand their operations to other countries or even move them completely to countries where they can build a cost advantage, managers are faced with the challenge to move to and work in countries other than their own (Ko and Yang, 2011).

Often, the culture of the host country is significantly different from that of the home country, challenging expatriates to acquire new competencies that would facilitate managers' adaptation to the new environment.

#### 1.1. Expatriate management: enhancing adjustment, reducing failure

Laserre (2007) defines expatriate personnel as people living and working in non-native countries. They generally fall into two main categories: parent-country nationals, native to the country where companies have their headquarters, and third-country nationals. The latter are also known as "international" or "global managers" and their career is made up of

successive appointments in different countries (Laserre, 2007).

In the case of hospitality, the professionalization of the industry, translated into the transfer of skills and knowledge (Adler and Rigg, 2012), technical expertise (Asad Sadi and Henderson, 2005), technology and corporate culture (Lomax, 2011, cited by Ho, 2012) is one of the main motivations for sending domestic personnel to manage operations abroad. Other reasons include a better control of operating units and providing development opportunities for management (Adler and Rigg, 2012).

The capacity of expatriates to adjust to the new culture "can make or break an expatriate assignment" (van den Anker, 2013). Thus, adaptation dictates success, the latter considered to be the level of task completion and the relationships built with local employees, as these elements drive organizations to obtain high levels of performance (Harrison and Shaffer, 2005, cited by Hon and Lu, 2010).

According to Bhaskar-Shrinivas, Schaffer and Luk (2005), cultural adjustment is one of the strongest determinants of expatriates' decision to withdraw from their assignments. However, the failure of an expatriate assignment does not necessarily mean a premature return. Expatriates can remain on the assignment, but can psychologically withdraw, which conducts to considerably losses for their enterprise, as reduction in productivity, market share, competitive position, but also problems in terms of relationships with the staff, customers and suppliers (Shaffer and Harrison, 1998, cited by Vögel and Van Vuuren, 2008).

The failure rate of expatriate managers in accomplishing their assignment presumably ranges between 16 and 40 per cent (Ko and Yang, 2011). This is not surprising however since expatriate managers are generally chosen for the skills they demonstrated in their home country. Moreover, the failure rate appears to increase up to 70 per cent when

expatriates are assigned to still-developing countries (Shay and Tracey, 1997). A survey carried out by Shay and Tracey (1997) shows that the failure rate of expatriate managers in the hospitality industry is similar to that in other sectors.

The failure rate may be caused by the inappropriate and poor preparation of expatriates. According to the second annual Global Expatriate Study (Britt, 2002, cited by Vögel and Van Vuuren, 2008), 40% of the 709 expatriate respondents recognised that they were not prepared properly for an international assignment, while 56% identified poor coordination between the host-country and the parent company's HR departments.

A study conducted by Tung (1997, cited by Laserre, 2007) among US expatriate managers revealed that the main causes of failure were the inability to adapt, family-related problems, manager's personality or emotional immaturity, manager's inability to cope with responsibility, lack of technical competence and lack of motivation. Except problems that are related to family, each of the problems mentioned above can be improved or even solved through appropriate training.

Moreover, these issues also apply to the hotel industry, as the main challenges identified in expatriate hotel management assignments are (Ho, 2012): cultural/religious differences, the language barrier, the bureaucratic system and work-family conflict.

The adaptation process is important as it impacts expatriates' job satisfaction, described as the successful adjustment to overseas job requirements and the development of relationships with the host country's workforce and customers (Black et al., 1991; Herchanova et al., 2003; Shaffer and Harrison, 1998, cited by Froese and Peltokorpi, 2011). Cultural distance (differences between countries, regarding the level of development, education, business and everyday language, cultural values, connections between countries), from the perspective

of the national cultural distance, supervisor's nationality and host-country language proficiency, have been found to have a negative impact on expatriates' job satisfaction (Froese and Peltokorpi, 2011). Furthermore, researchers also highlight the importance of offering support to expatriates' families by the parent company, as a factor with influence on the success of the (proposed) assignment (Forster, 1992; Foster and Johnsen, 1996, cited by Ozdemir and Cizel, 2007). The adaptation process is also influenced by the support the parent company offers in the advantage of the expatriates in terms of the work-family conflict (Harris, 2004; Linehan and Walsh, 2000, cited by Ozdemir and Cizel, 2007) and the career of spouses (Hardill and MacDonald, 1998; Harvey, 1996; Harvey, 1998, cited by Ozdemir and Cizel, 2007).

The literature on expatriation management studies issues on a variety of industries, but with limited focus on the hospitality industry (Causin, Ayoun and Moreo, 2011). This does not mean however that the hospitality industry lacks expatriate management. The global expansion of operations is a strategic decision taken by hotel corporations in order to enter new market segments and take the lead in the market competition (Chen, Wang and Chu, 2010).

## **1.2. Cross-cultural training of expatriates**

Cross-cultural training has been acknowledged as the key stage of the pre-departure preparation of an expatriate (Depshande and Viswesvaran, 1992; Morris and Robie, 2001, cited by Ozdemir and Cizel, 2007). Academics and professionals alike have proposed cultural training as a means to enhance expatriates' effectiveness and facilitate their adaptation to the culture of the host country. Joshua-Goher (2012) defines cross-cultural training as "the educative processes used to improve inter-cultural learning via the development of the cognitive, affective,

and behavioural competencies needed for successful interactions in diverse cultures". Although international companies have already recognized the importance of cultural training for the managers that are to begin an international assignment, the effectiveness of practices of this particular type of training is still under discussion (Selmer, 2000, cited by Magnini, 2009) and can be significantly improved.

Hunter-Schmidt suggests that cross-cultural training (cited by Desphande, 1992) impacts expatriate manager's effectiveness in five main areas: self development, perception, relationship, adjustment, and performance.

Causin, Ayoun and Moreo (2011) identified several types of cross-cultural training, usually brought to discussion in literature: cross-cultural communication, cross-cultural negotiation, business and culture, business etiquette, cross cultural team-building, cultural-diversity training, youth cross-cultural training.

In a research conducted by Causin, Ayoun and Moreo (2011) on 66 expatriates in the hotel industry, cultural training activities that parent company provide were found to be effective for the success of an expatriate assignment. However, cross-cultural training and cultural diversity training were revealed as not effective, in the opinion of the respondents.

Trainings should be cut out and based on the expatriates' cultural background and existing skills. For example, Yu and Huat (1995, cited by Causin, Ayoun and Moreo, 2011) concluded that language barriers and cultural differences are the most important impediments in achieving success in an assignment as expatriate hotel manager in China.

Academics (Avril and Magnini, 2007; Magnini and Honeycutt, 2003; Mendenhall and Stahl, 2000, cited by Magnini, 2009) argue that although cultural trainings performed before the beginning of the international assignment are useful, there should also be provided real-time trainings: different resources for

information and advice, for the new situations that may arise (Mendenhall and Stahl, 2000, cited by Magnini, 2009). A research conducted by Magnini (2009) shows that hotel expatriates usually prefer to ask for cultural advice from local nationals and from other current expatriates.

According to Laserre (2007), the recognition of cross-border assignments and the support given to expatriated by their headquarters or corporate centre are crucial for their success. Academics also recognize the importance of a cultural mentor, who can be a long-term expatriate or a member of foreign culture, who has lived abroad for a long period of time and understands the challenge of mastering another culture or people not totally in step with their own culture. Research shows that expatriates who have been guided by a cultural mentor have performed better in their assignments, by being more fluent in the local language, by better adapting to the conditions of living abroad, understanding the local culture and receiving positive feedback from their superiors (Osland, 1995, cited by Osland and Bird, 2000).

Literature on the cross-cultural training of expatriate management in the hospitality industry is rather scarce and more focused on domestic employees rather than on managers operating abroad.

The growth of international travel led to the need for companies in the tourism and hospitality industry to enhance their workers' intercultural sensitivity. Thus, cross cultural training is currently used not only to prepare managers for assignments abroad, but also to improve the cultural awareness of employees in the home country and enhance their ability to communicate, interact and negotiate with individuals with various cultural backgrounds (Joshua-Gojer, 2012). Academics (Shapero, 2007) consider that cross-cultural training in the hospitality industry should be delivered not only to managing staff, but also to front line

employees, the latter being the ones in direct interaction with customers. Since hotel employees interact with a high number of tourists, it is critical for them to understand the needs of their clients and properly communicate with them (Shapero, 2007). Furthermore, cross-cultural training has also been viewed as a means to increase the performance of low-skilled immigrant workers in the hotel industry (Asad Sadi and Henderson, 2005).

### **1.3. Skills and competencies for a successful adaptation**

According to the Global Relocation Trends Survey Report (2004), the assumption is that expatriate managers' performances in their home countries will be automatically replicated once they move abroad. In this line of reasoning, a common practice is to transfer abroad the managers with the most impressive domestic records (Shay and Tracey, 1997). In spite of their previous performance in their home countries, individuals sent overseas without appropriate training often fail (Li, 1995, cited by Hu, Martin and Yeh, 2002) since success in other countries may require new skills and capabilities, significantly different from the ones expatriates already possess.

Academics have shown interest in researching the skills and competencies needed in expatriate assignments. A study conducted by Stahl (cited by Laserre, 2007) indicated seven skills critical to success in international assignments: tolerance of ambiguity, defined as the ability to perform in a complex and uncertain environment (1), behavioural flexibility (2), goal orientation (3), sociability and interest in other people (4), empathy (5), non-judgementalness (6), and meta-communication skills or the capacity to "guide" intercultural communication (7).

However, information related to this subject in the context of the international hospitality industry is still scarce (Causin and Ayoun, 2011). Causin and Ayoun (2011) have created a model for successful

hospitality expatriate assignment (Table 1), showing that personal and familial relationship expertise are crucial.

Although the initiative of creating a universal set of competencies and skills that can be applied to a majority of expatriate jobs around the world is useful, it has to be accepted that the skills required may vary from one region to another (Causin, Ayoun and Moreo, 2011). Shay and Tracey (1997) even consider that the attributes necessary to achieve success in hospitality – people skills, adaptability, flexibility, and emotional maturity – appear to be particular to the industry (Shay and Tracey, 1997).

In a research conducted on expatriate hotel managers, Ho (2012) concluded that, in her interviewees' opinion, an expat hotel manager should be a leader with skills of being adaptive, culturally sensitive, diplomatic and glocalised - the ability to think globally and act locally during overseas assignments (Wind, 1986, cited by Ho, 2012).

This view is supported by the results of a study conducted by Gannon (2008), who shows that the hospitality industry is characterized by the absence of a rigorous understanding of intercultural awareness and communication in spite of the increasing cultural diversity of hospitality employees and customers. Hence the need for more appropriate training programmes focused on cross-cultural skills and competences.

## **2. Methodology**

The purpose of this study is to reveal and analyse the perspective of practitioners on the most important management skills hotel expatriate managers should possess, the most effective cross-cultural training activities provided by parent hotel companies and other challenges faced in international assignments.

The study focuses on expatriate hotel managers in Bucharest, who are also members of Skål International Romania, an international association of travel and

tourism professional. The contacts of the expatriates were obtained using Skål International Romania database, the authors being members of Young Skål Bucharest.

The study is based on a qualitative method, an interview, intended to highlight the much valuable experience of expat hotel managers from several highly appreciated accommodation units in Bucharest. In order to discover expatriate hotel managers' perspective on cross-cultural skills and the manner in which they succeed in their international assignments, the interview included the following units/questions:

- What personal characteristics do you think that relate with an international career in the hotel industry?
- What motivates you to work overseas?
- How does cultural distance impact your work? How do you perceive the cultural distance in Romania and in which country did you have the most difficult assignment due to cultural distance?
- Managers should be equipped with the necessary skills and competencies needed to adapt to the foreign culture and country before departure for foreign assignment. What is the pre-departure preparation and how do you think it should be improved?
- What cross-cultural training activities that hotel companies provide are the most effective for an expatriate assignment?
- What influences your job satisfaction as an expatriate hotel manager?
- How do you effectively communicate and interact with local people and local employees? How important is to have proficiency in the host country language?
- What are the most important challenges you have faced in a foreign assignment/in Romania?
- Does the parent company offer support for spouses and families? How important is this issue in accepting/succeeding (in) a foreign assignment?
- Has working overseas changed your personal beliefs and values?

- What is the usual duration of an international assignment?

In addition, the interview ended with several demographic questions. The six expat hotel managers in Bucharest, identified in Skål International Romania database, were contacted by e-mail on the 4<sup>th</sup> of March and four of them accepted to take part in the research. The last interview was taken on the 10<sup>th</sup> of March and all the responses were registered in an Excel Worksheet document.

### **3. Results and discussion**

The content analysis revealed three main discussion themes: the profile of expatriate managers, their pre-departure preparation, and the difficulties experienced by expatriates in adjusting to the culture of the host countries. The results of the research indicate the skills that managers consider relevant for enhancing their adaptation and, ultimately, their success and performance. Furthermore, responses also point out to what preparation and training expatriates consider relevant to their adjustment and international assignments.

#### **3.1. The profile of the expatriate hotel manager**

All the four expatriates interviewed manage up-scale hotels in Bucharest, affiliated to an international hotel chain. The medium duration of an international assignment in a specific hotel was mentioned to be between two to four years. The participants at this research are highly educated (they all have an MBA), have different origin countries and work for different international hotel chains. Their full demographic profile is detailed in Table 2.

The interview was structured in order to highlight expatriate hotel managers' perspective on the necessary skills for a successful career in international hotel management. The research indicates that there is a consensus on the fact that an expatriate hotel manager should be an extremely open-minded person, with a

positive attitude and opened to change, socially active and interested in different cultures, outgoing, hard-worker, available on taking risks and creative. Regarding the managerial skills, the interviewees suggested that an expatriate hotel manager should be able to work alone, but, at the same time, should be a very good leader and team player, opened to transfer his knowledge to others, to be inspirational for his team, objective in evaluation, with the ability of establishing clear objectives for his employees.

From the cultural point of view, an expatriate hotel manager should be able to integrate local customs in the international corporate identity, always working with a deep attention to detail in order to obtain the best financial results for his company. In addition, another quality that was stressed out by the interviewees was the empathy towards clients and employees, which enables the possibility of constantly adapting the business and management style.

The hotel managers interviewed accept assignments as expatriates driven by the motivation to significantly develop new products and high quality services in countries were, unlike their home countries, the tourism industry is not very developed. Expatriate hotel managers affirmed that the possibility of transferring their knowledge by training young professional people in working at the highest hospitality standards and improving the local community standards of living are other extremely important factors that positively influence them in accepting an overseas assignment. Furthermore, the permanent desire of knowing new cultures and new ways of doing business is another motivator for working overseas.

Expatriate hotel managers interviewed are satisfied with their job if they successfully integrate in the new social environment and if they manage to get accepted by the hotel's middle management and staff. The personnel's willingness to change was

mentioned as crucial, as it directly influences the expatriate hotel manager's success in implementing a new corporate culture and business strategy. The satisfaction of working as an expatriate hotel manager is derived from the performances realised with the employees in each new assignment. In addition, it was mentioned that the possibility of continuously developing, at both personal and professional level, by establishing new strategies, adapted to new work situations, is crucial in being satisfied with the job as a hotel manager in a foreign country. Furthermore, expatriate hotel managers mentioned that they consider themselves satisfied with their job if they succeed in increasing guest satisfaction levels, in achieving targeted financial results and in establishing a good image for the hotel, in the local hotel market, but also in the international hotel chain they are representing.

### **3.2. Pre-departure preparation of expatriate hotel managers**

The research was also intended to highlight expatriate hotel managers' perspective on the pre-departure preparation needed for achieving a good performance in an overseas assignment. All the managers interviewed affirmed that their companies do not offer a specific preparation program before an assignment in a new country. It is generally considered, from the beginning, that the management structure of the parent company has the ability of delegating the best candidate for the job.

However, the expatriate hotel managers interviewed mentioned that before beginning a new assignment, in a new country, they consider useful a short visit to the country, in order to discuss with the manager in charge (soon to be replaced) and with the hotel's owners. These discussions provide a useful insight on the economic climate of the country, the financial situation of the company, the targets, objectives and budgets needed to be achieved. Expatriate hotel managers

focus mainly on obtaining information needed to build the business strategy for the next company they will lead. Although it was discovered that parent companies do not offer specific formal cross-cultural training activities, the interviewees mentioned that before an international assignment, a hotel manager should obtain information regarding the culture of the country he is about to work in, by focusing on elements regarding negotiation tactics, cultural values, customs, beliefs and local language. This type of information is usually obtained from discussions with expatriate managers that are to be replaced in the assignment, but also with human resources experts. It was identified a general consensus on the idea that there is no need for a formal pre-departure training, as hotel managers are usually highly educated persons, and their previous experience in working in different countries has developed their ability of adapting to new customs and cultural habits and of dealing with different people.

The research also aimed at identifying whether or not parent companies offer support for expatriate hotel managers' families. All the interviewees stressed out that this aspect is crucial in accepting and succeeding in a foreign assignment, as their companies provide housing allowances for their entire family, international schooling for their children, but no career support for their spouses. The need for balance in the personal life was mentioned to have a positive impact on professional results and on the motivation of achieving better results in the company.

Furthermore, expatriate managers also tend to feel that having a well prepared and interested team in the host country relieves expatriates of the cultural distance burden.

### **3.3. Difficulties in adjusting to the new environment**

The literature review points to the fact that perceived cultural distance has a negative impact on job satisfaction (Froese and

Peltokorpi, 2011) and, potentially, on job performance. Thus, the inability to diminish and cope with cultural distance generates difficulties in adjusting to the new environment.

Respondents find cultural distance of great importance in the adaptation process. In fact, one respondent mentioned that cultural distance is „the greatest challenge to handle”.

However, hotel managers also feel that once this challenge is surpassed, cultural distance may translate into diversity of thoughts and ideas and may ultimately bring added value to service provision. Furthermore, results indicate that expatriates experiencing more than one international assignment gradually find cultural distance as less difficult to cope with.

For some managers, the challenge of cultural distance actually motivates them to succeed. Adjusting to a new culture and values is a learning experience that opens new career perspectives to international managers. In fact, one of the interviewed managers characterized his former assignments abroad as “a wonderful platform of international experience, useful in any aspect of assignments”.

In what regards the cultural distance perceived in Romania, respondents feel this is significant and may in fact demotivate expatriate managers in accomplishing their assignments.

Among the most frequently described difficulties generated by cultural distance between managers' home country and Romania can be mentioned the absence of or poor regulation, bureaucracy and lack of predictability.

Other difficulties perceived by expatriate managers in Romania include understanding an industry (the hospitality industry) that is currently developing and that often functions according to regulations very different to those in Western Europe.

Achieving good financial results in spite of the economic climate of the host country is

also perceived by a major difficulty by respondents. Feeling that your efforts are not properly rewarded financially may demotivate expatriate managers and make them resistant to change.

Changing personal beliefs is another challenge posed by international assignments. However, responses show that a successful adaptation depends on managers' openness to adjust and update their system of personal values and beliefs. A first step in this process is understanding that "other people's beliefs are as valuable as yours". The more managers understand cultures different to their own and the tolerant they become the easier it will be for them to move on to other international assignments.

Experiencing new cultures may also lead to the strengthening of existing personal beliefs, as one respondent indicated, and even to enhanced personal development and to professional performance. Learning to embrace the values of other cultures translates into empathy and even to a better understanding of clients and his needs.

The results of the research show that expatriate managers generally feel that their Romanian co-workers possess good communication abilities and a high percentage of Romanians employed in the hospitality industry speak at least a foreign language. These offer expatriates the necessary support to surpass cultural distance barriers and adjust to the Romanian culture.

Furthermore, the interviewed managers consider that Romanians hold great respect for foreign managers, which further motivates expatriates to understand Romanian culture and make efforts to adjust to it. The key, according to one respondent, is to set a personal example and be "impeccable". If such an example is set, Romanian staff will also make efforts to better understand its foreign manager and integrate him or her in the organization.

Regarding the countries managers find most difficult to adapt, Russia was identified, a country respondents characterize as having a very strong and autocratic leadership style, very different from what managers in Western Europe are accustomed to, as well as Japan. This indicates that the greater the perceived cultural distance is, the more difficult it is for expatriate managers to adjust to the new environment.

### **Conclusions**

Although academics highlight the importance of cross-cultural training for expatriate managers, the results of the interviews revealed that in the hospitality industry formal trainings are seldom used. Other instruments seemed to be preferred: visits to the host country before the beginning of the assignments, discussions with the current manager in charge and employees, inquiries in what regards the language, culture and traditions of the country in which the expatriate will perform. In the case in which the expatriate replaces another international manager, respondents recommend meetings and discussions between the two parties; this makes the new environment more predictable for expatriates and helps them set realistic expectations.

Another important result refers to the support offered to expatriates' families. All respondents indicated that if their family is supported by the company through housing allowance and international schooling for children, the adaptation process is perceived as much easier. Being satisfied with the personal life reduces the stress determined by perceived cultural distance, with positive impact on managers' capacity to complete their assignment.

Furthermore, expatriate managers also tend to feel that having a well prepared and interested team in the host country relieves expatriates of the cultural distance burden. The research points out to the fact that communication is perceived by expatriate

managers as the most important skill for successful adaptation. Good communication refers both to the ability to provide instructions to employees in the host country but also to the ability to “listen to people”. The latter will enhance manager's capacity to understand individuals belonging to other cultures and to ensure “a good interpretation” of information.

Expatriate managers also feel that an effective communication is dependent on the ability to learn and use foreign languages such as French and English, while also having a minimum understanding of the host country's language.

Responses also revealed the fact that surpassing cultural distance does not mean changing the culture of the host country, but rather embracing it. Being present in the social life of employees, having a warm relationship with the staff, and understanding and respecting the traditions of the host organization ultimately motivates employees to also make efforts towards accepting their expatriate manager and helping him or her adjust to the new culture.

Having a well prepared and highly educated team also exerts a positive impact on manager's capacity to adapt to the host country. The research does have its limits, translated in a relatively small number of respondents, currently working in Romania. However, it does represent a relevant starting point in further research. The authors intend to extend the research in the future to a higher number of respondents and also complement through a quantitative questionnaire-based research.

Overall, results show that expatriates managers in the hospitality industry do not benefit from formal cross-cultural training, but do resort to other means to enhance their capacity to adapt. Communication is seen as vital to expatriates' success, but the external environment is also important: a well prepared team and support for

expatriates' families are shown to exert a positive impact on managers' capacity to adjust to the new culture and ultimately to achieve professional performance.

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*Appendices*

Table No. 1  
*Competencies needed for a successful hospitality assignment*

<b>Personal competencies</b>
View the organization in a holistic manner
Ability to acknowledge, balance and work with cultural differences
Effectively receive ideas and information from others
Grasp on how all the parts of the organization fit together
Have the mental capacity to understand the overall workings of the organization and its environment
Awareness of own cultural background
Effectively conveys ideas and information to others
Get along with subordinates, peers and those at higher levels of the organization
Open-minded and flexible in thought and tactics
Ability to understand why foreigners behave in the way they do
Able to deal with complexity
Have a technical and managerial expertise
Cultural interest and sensitivity
Demonstrate cultural empathy
Orientation towards time
<b>Global management skills</b>
Understanding international marketing
International negotiation skills
Coordinate the budgeting process between foreign operational headquarters
Understand a variety of foreign business systems
Understanding international finance
Ability to work in international teams
Language skills
<b>Expatriate adjustment</b>
Emotional stability
Stable personal life
Resilient, resourceful, optimistic and energetic
Adaptability to new environment settings
Honesty and integrity

Source: Causin and Ayoun, 2011

Table no. 2  
*The demographic profile of the expat hotel managers interviewed*

<b>Origin country</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>In how many countries have you worked in?</b>	<b>Years worked in the hotel industry</b>	<b>Years worked in overseas assignments</b>	<b>Years worked in Romania</b>
<i>Austria</i>	<i>37</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Netherlands</i>	<i>68</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>Canada</i>	<i>45</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>19</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>France</i>	<i>43</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>2</i>