

# **Good News and Bad News about Developing Global Executives**

**Morgan W. McCall, Jr.  
University of Southern California**

***“Enhancing Leadership Effectiveness Within Organizations:  
Strategies for Growing High-Potential Talent”***

***The 30th International Congress on Assessment Center Methods***

***October 17, 2002***

---

MORGAN W. McCALL, JR.  
GEORGE P. HOLLENBECK

---

THE LESSONS OF INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE  
**DEVELOPING**  
GLOBAL EXECUTIVES



HARVARD BUSINESS SCHOOL PRESS

# A Profile

Father:	Swiss
Mother:	Russian
Born/Raised:	Beirut
Educated:	Switzerland
Degree:	Physics
Languages:	Arabic, French, English, Swiss German, German, Russian
Assignments:	Indonesia (3 years), Philippines (3 yrs), Japan (2 yrs) Hong Kong (5 yrs)
Age:	44

Father:	Indonesian
Mother:	Chinese
Born/Raised:	Indonesia
Educated:	Australia
Degree:	Chemical Engineering
Languages:	English, Mandarin, Fukienese, Bahasa Malay
Assignments:	Australia (13 yrs) Taiwan (2 yrs) Shanghai (3 yrs), Taiwan (5 yrs), Hong Kong (current)
Current Job:	Gen. Mgr JV China/US
Age:	44

# **The Good News--**

*We Don't Need to Reinvent the Wheel*

- The Process of Development is Similar
- Developmental Experiences are Similar
- The “Lessons Learned” are Similar
- Derailment Dynamics are Similar

# KEY EVENTS IN THE LIVES OF INTERNATIONAL EXECUTIVES

## *Foundation Assignments*

- Early Work Experiences
- First Managerial Responsibility

## *Major Line Assignments*

- **Business Turnaround**
- Business Start-Up
- Building or Evolving a Business
- Joint Ventures, Alliances, Mergers, or Acquisitions

## *Shorter-Term Experiences*

- **Special Projects, Consulting Roles, Staff Advisory Jobs**
- Stint at Headquarters

## *Shorter-Term Experiences (cont.)*

- Negotiations
- **Developmental and Educational Experiences**
- **Significant Other People**

## *Perspective-Changing Experiences*

- Crises
- Career Shift
- Large Changes in Scope or Scale
- **Culture Shock.**
- Confrontations with Reality
- Mistakes and Errors in Judgment
- Family and Personal Challenges

# The Lessons

- Lessons of Culture
- Business Lessons
- Lessons of Leading and Managing
- Dealing with Problem Relationships
- The Personal Qualities of Leaders
- Lessons of Self and Careers

# ARE GLOBAL DERAILMENTS DIFFERENT FROM DOMESTIC?

**In Many Ways, NO...**

**Dynamics are basically the same**

- **Early strengths become weaknesses**
- **Long standing flaws matter in a new situation**
- **Arrogance raises its hoary head**
- **People run into bad luck**

# **The Bad News--** *The Differences are Important*

- There is Not One Kind of Global Executive
- Experiences Change When Embedded in Another Culture
- There are Unique Experiences and Lessons in International Development
- International Jobs have High Derailment Potential

## *Home Country National*

A Swede working for a Swedish Company in Sweden

## *Traditional Expatriate*

A Swede working for a Swedish Company in China

## *Local National*

A Chinese working for a Swedish Company in China

## *Third Country National*

A Brazilian working for a Swedish Company in China

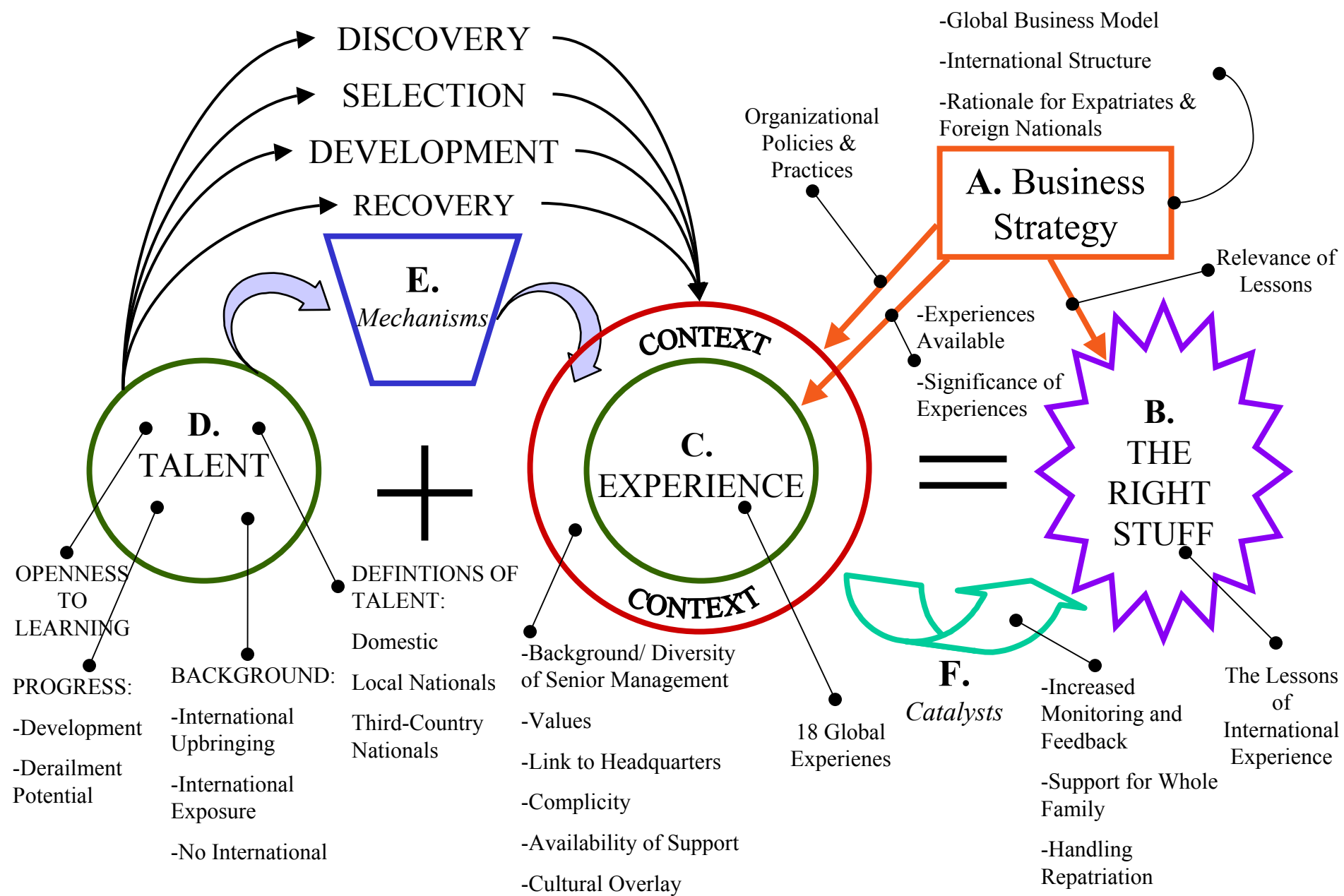
# **Worse News--**

*Harder to Do; Costs More;  
Results Less Certain*

- There is No Substitute for Going There
- The Person X Culture X Experience Interaction is Devilish
- People Who Derail Are More Talented to Begin With and Are More Likely to Derail for the Wrong Reasons

- Global Companies Develop Global Executives
- The Business Strategy is Key
- You Have to Know **Why** You Do What You Do
- You Have to Pay Attention
- It Takes More Effort
- It is Individual

**There is No Magic**



## A GENERAL MODEL FOR DEVELOPING GLOBAL EXECUTIVES