



Unemployment still key issue for South America



A COMMITMENT to combating unemployment, by a combination of maintaining jobs and creating new ones, must be a very high priority for HR professionals in Latin

America, FIDAP President Ruben Casavalle (above) told *WorldLink* on the eve of his Federation's congress in Montevideo, Uruguay, at the end of September. Employment issues would be dominating both this conference and future events in the region, he said, as they were becoming more and more problematic.

According to a new ILO report* on Latin American/Caribbean labour markets, unemployment in the region is rising fast and expected to affect as many as 9.5 per cent of the regular workforce this year, surpassing the peak jobless rates during the external debt crisis of the 1980s, despite a decade of economic reform and modernisation.

"Economic growth and price stability have not produced a significant improvement of the employment situation or of wages," states the report, which forecasts a negative growth rate in the region of around -0.4 per cent this year.

And this would be compounded, said Casavalle, by the less dynamic world economy, together with

the Brazilian economic crisis (see *WorldLink*, April 1999) and the recession in Chile.

The ILO report also comments that over 85 per cent of all new jobs created in '90s were in the informal sector, involving micro-enterprises, farming and small-scale services where wages, productivity and levels of social protection are generally much lower than in the formal sector. Women and younger workers have been especially hard hit, it points out.

ILO goals for Latin America currently include new training systems to improve productivity and competitiveness and labour legislation reforms and harmonisation between countries.

Meanwhile other topics on the agenda for what was the 16th Interamerican Congress of Personnel Administration included competences, modernising labour relations and the future role of HR.

Representatives of all FIDAP's 12 national personnel associations were expected to attend.

After the congress, Alfredo Diez-Conseco, President of the Asociacion de Relaciones Industriales of Peru, will succeed Ruben Casavalle as FIDAP President, and Peru will host the next FIDAP conference in 2001.

* *Decent work and protection for all: priority of the Americas*. ILO, Geneva, 1999

Singapore invited back into APFHRM

AS THIS issue of *WorldLink* went to press, the Singapore Human Resources Institute (SHRI) looked likely to accept an invitation to rejoin the Asia Pacific Federation of Human Resource Management, which would bring the total number of countries in membership of the World Federation to 52.

The invitation went to SHRI President Mrs Lim-Ho Geok Choo and Executive Director David Ang Chee Chim following a recent visit to Singapore by WFPMA President Mike Losey and APFHRM President Eddie Ng.

The Institute's decision was expected at the late September/early October meeting of the APFHRM Delegate Assembly and Council, which they were invited to attend as observers.

Also invited to attend were representatives from China and Korea.

● *Losey/Ng visit – page 7*

Federation's new website



THE WORLD Federation now has its own new website. As well as background on the WFPMA and its activities, the site includes a full list of members with details of individual country members' officers, addresses and events.

In addition, the latest issues of *WorldLink* can be downloaded, and an index makes it quick and easy to access articles on countries and topics that have been covered since October 1998.

The new website address is: <http://www.wfpma.com>

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Next issue

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BOLIVIA Our apologies for the accidental omission of Bolivia from the list of WFPMA member countries which has appeared on the back page of previous issues of *WorldLink* and in the WFPMA information leaflet. SOBADRHU (the Sociedad Boliviana de Administracion y Desarrollo de Recursos Humanos) became affiliated to FIDAP, the Interamerican Federation of Personnel Administration, in April '98.

Education or training – which is more important?

BY JOHN STEVENS

Director of IFTDO's Global Taskforce and Development and Public Policy Director for the IPD

While it is certainly true that less well developed countries tend to have lower levels of educational attainment, above a certain level of general education it is difficult to relate economic performance to educational qualification. Other factors can be equally important – from the availability of natural resources to national culture.

But learning is important and there is much comparative statistical and descriptive information available on the educational systems of countries in different parts of the world. In Europe, at least, there is also a wealth of information on national vocational training systems. However at the heart of the picture there is a 'black hole' where there should be a description of work-based training.

This might not seem too important, but there is mounting research evidence that people management and development is the most important differentiating factor in organisational performance and at the heart of this lies the acquisition, extension and use of skills. Organisational strategy, technology and innovation are second order factors.

All this suggests that more attention should be paid to international comparisons of people management and development practice.

It was in this context that the International Federation of Training and Development Organisations commented on the International Labour Organisation's last World Employment Report and concluded that this otherwise excellent report concentrated on public education systems and gave relatively little attention to developments in professional practice. Following subsequent discussions with the ILO, the IFTDO, with the help of the UK's Institute of Personnel and Development, sought to start to fill the gap with a review of the international research on workplace learning, culture and performance.

The report of the research has now been published. It looks at the drivers for change and the various phases of structural development as enterprises respond to external factors:

1. Skill strategies driven by product or service cycles, with training related to new process developments and specific skills;
2. Shorter life cycles and more flexibility based on competences and multiskilling; and ultimately
3. Integrated learning and working, focusing on entrepreneurial, communication and problem-solving skills.

Most organisations are moving from the first to the second stage, with relatively few having reached the third. Yet market pressures do not

always result in positive behaviour. Although almost all organisations seek to minimise costs, some make the transition to more modern forms of work and seek to facilitate learning at work.

Interestingly, an IPD survey, which a number of IFTDO members have committed to replicating in their own countries, has shown that only 1 per cent of organisations are developing a comprehensive approach to skill development, focusing equally on all four key skill areas: individual, broadening, quality and group-based. Most organisations concentrated on the 'bundle' of skills associated with individual performance – those most closely associated with achieving high performance through work intensification, 'harder rather than smarter'.

The IFTDO report is particularly helpful in looking at the development of workplace learning methodologies. Examples include – from Germany – the use of learning 'islands', as part of production processes, and the Leittext method of near-the-job training (subsequently taken up in the Netherlands), and the form of coaching and 'learning embedded in the production process' as practised in Italy.

National commitment

Another theme emphasised in the report is the importance of a supportive climate for workplace learning. In particular, the report identifies the advantages enjoyed by Japan and Germany where national learning cultures support a widespread commitment to learning at work.

So, maybe the answer to the question, 'which is more important, education or training?', is 'neither is more important'. Education lays the cultural and behavioural basis for later learning. However, in public debate and policy there is undoubtedly a disproportionate focus on the contribution of education as opposed to workplace learning to economic development.

Incidentally, the IFTDO and ILO work on this subject has not finished. A series of case studies on the contribution of training and development to high performance working are planned to be launched next Spring. ○

The World Employment Report 1998-9; price SF45 from ILO Publications, ILO, CH-1211, Geneva 22, Switzerland. IFTDO/IPD report: 'Workplace learning, culture and performance'; price £11.95 from Plymbridge Distributors, Estover, Plymouth PL6 7PZ, UK.

Rewarding the global cadre

Very few of today's leading transnational businesses are trying to control their global operations from a single head office; rather they tend to devolve along either regional or 'business stream' lines.

Regionalising generally means dividing the world into Asian, European and American zones, and having a substantial presence there. Antipodean, African and Middle-Eastern territories tend to be grouped with one or other of those zones, depending on company history.

The alternative is to structure operations and governance along market lines. Chairman of Burmah Castrol, Jonathan Fry, argues that "the classic geographic model... is old hat and the concept of the 'business stream' structure on a global basis is much more in the ascendancy". The idea is to segment the business to concentrate on a particular marketplace.

Notwithstanding structure, however, a pattern is clearly emerging whereby corporations are developing a top level management cadre or 'executive' across world-wide operations. Such groups may number between about 50 and 300, depending on the overall scale of the business, and each member tends to sit above, say, the average branch manager in Kuala Lumpur or the district manager in Venezuela.

To cement a sense of alignment between corporate and executive interests, irrespective of physical location, a common reward and recognition philosophy is being adopted. This does not imply that everyone is receiving the same level of salary, but global corporations are ensuring such individuals participate on common terms in their corporate 'wealth accumulation' programmes.

This apparent centralisation of terms and conditions does not necessarily involve formal employment contracts between the individual and the corporate legal entity. But in terms of some framework of commonality of treatment for reward and recognition purposes, the cadre constituents tend to be afforded the benefits of participation in corporate share option schemes, restricted share programmes or long term incentive plans. Their annual bonus will contain some element of group results or, if it is a regional company, some element of regional results.

This trend mirrors one that was observable in the early 1980s when conglomerates attempted to create some cohesion across their disparate

BY STEPHEN PERKINS AND CHRIS HENDRY

organisations, and some sort of managerial pool. Transposed on a global scale, the model has one major difference, namely that it is less constrained than its predecessor was by structure.

There appears to be a feeling among business leaders that the global cadre is what they mean when they talk of 'corporate talent'.

Increasingly, these talented people, whose career development will tend to be the direct responsibility of the head office personnel director, are able to move between the various parts of the organisation much more easily than before.

Reflecting the migration from an emphasis on manufacturing to marketing, the conclusion seems to be that an executive with excellent marketing competencies can market anything, irrespective of business sector. In an era dominated by manufacturing, more functionally-specific skills, as an engineer or general business administrator, say, may have inhibited mobility.

Corporations like Coca Cola, which are constitutionally a series of firms, all quoted independently on stock exchanges around the world, have enormous problems in mobilising people, in that they have to terminate an individual's employment in one organisation and start it again in another. Moving from Coca Cola 'B' to Coca Cola 'E', for example, is a 'company move'. Nevertheless, the group holds to the global cadre concept, despite the requirement for complicated executive share schemes and pension plan arrangements.

Bonuses and stock options

Some businesses operating widely across the world are taking the view that restricting global alignment of corporate incentives to top management in regionally or market segment-devolved strategic business units misses an opportunity. Doug Reid, Vice President, Global Compensation at Nortel in Canada, argues that any firm that manufactures and markets its products and services on a reasonably uniform basis throughout the world should reflect this organisational character in its reward arrangements. "One of the many advantages of a global firm is that management can tap the experience and creativity of people in all the countries in which it operates." In many cases, Reid adds, "such employees' ideas will have

global application and thereby contribute to the firm's global success."

Nortel currently offers annual bonuses and stock options to its global management employees. "In addition," says Doug Reid "we plan to offer all employees who participate in our investment and savings plan a match in the form of company stock, depending on the employee's level of personal savings." Nortel intended to have such programmes operational in approximately 30 countries this year. ○

Stephen Perkins is Director of the Strategic Remuneration Research Centre and Chris Hendry is Centenary Professor of Organisational Behaviour at the UK's City University Business School. They are co-authors of a forthcoming guide to international reward and recognition to be published by the Institute of Personnel and Development and of a chapter on international compensation in a new IPD book 'The global HR manager: creating the seamless organisation'.

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The key preconditions for home-based work

A new study reveals that significant national differences in the uptake of both home-based and mobile teleworking cannot be explained simply in terms of the availability of relevant technology

Estimates of the extent of teleworking vary enormously, depending on definition and the method of data collection and measurement. Even allowing for such differences, however, a new survey from the Institute of Employment Studies concludes that home-based teleworking is most prevalent in the Anglo-Saxon and Nordic countries, and in Singapore; and relatively low in Japan and the rest of Europe.

Clearly, a prerequisite for teleworking is a telecommunications network capable of supporting voice and data transmission. The report includes recent statistics to show teledensity (number of phone lines per 1,000 of the population), and also takes account of costs both of lines and calls.

Not surprisingly it finds that the USA, Canada and Sweden, with teledensities of over 60 per cent, have a high proportion of their populations working from home; Japan, Italy and Spain, with teledensities of under 50 per cent, have relatively low incidences of home-based teleworking.

The report reveals a similar picture for mobile teleworking, where up to three-quarters of working time is spent away from base, much of it on the move. The researchers suggest considerable correlation with the number of mobile phone users.

Top of the list with over 280 mobile phones per 1000 inhabitants are Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden and Australia. Next come Hong Kong, Japan, Israel and Iceland with teledensities between 180 and 220. Then come the US, Singapore and New Zealand; and then the UK and Canada.

Countries with low mobile teledensities and lowest likelihood of mobile teleworking include several from eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, as well as a number of countries in the Caribbean, the Pacific, Latin America and Africa.

Welfare and regulations

While no two countries are identical and the number of variables makes any comparison fraught with difficulties, the researchers conclude that it is possible to associate types of welfare system with different models of labour market regulation and industrial relations regimes – at least for Europe – and that these, in turn, strongly influence the patterns of flexible working, including teleworking.

Thus 'liberal' regimes are associated with a laissez-faire attitude to labour markets, with weak regulation, informal agreements and low levels of collective negotiation which, when it does take place, is more likely to be at a local than a national level. In such countries the most common forms of flexible working involve the use of temporary or casual working or loosely-regulated part-time working. The commitment of workers and employers to each other can therefore be said to be relatively weak, with the average worker spending a comparatively short time in any given employment. Because employees are relatively poorly protected, the penalties for leaving permanent full-time work for self-employment or part-time or temporary working are also low, making it relatively easy to experiment with new forms of working, such as teleworking.

'Corporatist' regimes are very different. Here, labour contracts are tightly regulated, with controls on conditions of employment and social protection. Typically these countries have a strong social dialogue, with near-universal collective bargaining. Hiring and firing are embarked on reluctantly, resulting in longer-term mutual commitment by workers and employers.

Flexibility of employment, therefore, is more likely to take 'internal' forms, such as multi-skilling, multi-tasking and the introduction of flexible hours, including devices like annual hours contracts to redistribute work to match demand.

In such societies, because so many benefits hinge on the social insurance contributions of the main breadwinner, the cost of leaving secure, full-time work is high. Any new form of working, such as teleworking, therefore, is likely to be

regarded with suspicion by the workforce; it is also more difficult to introduce in an informal and ad hoc manner. For it to be introduced in accordance with existing regulations, it is necessary for special contracts to be negotiated, a process which can be slow and cumbersome.

This combination of factors, states the report, has undoubtedly contributed to the lower levels of home-based teleworking to be found in Germany, France and Italy than in North America, Australia or the UK.

The social democratic model, found in various forms in Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland, has some features in common with the corporatist model. There is a strong social dialogue, with trade unions playing an important role in the codetermination of wages and conditions, creating a regulated labour market with strong protection for those in employment. In contrast with the corporatist model, however, the system is egalitarian, with many benefits available universally, regardless of occupation.

In this context, 'flexible working' is more likely, as in the corporatist model, to involve internal rather than external forms. However, the nature of the benefit system makes it easier for workers to move from occupation to occupation, or from full-time to part-time work, without the loss of pension entitlement or other forms of social protection. The egalitarian and meritocratic nature of the culture, with a strong focus on improving the quality of working life, has also, the researchers speculate, made it easier to develop relationships of trust between workers and employers, which may provide a partial explanation for the high prevalence of teleworking in Sweden.

The 'Mediterranean' model is found in the EU in Spain, Portugal and Greece, but, states the report, may well share some characteristics with other more recently developed countries in other continents. Typically, these countries have a relatively high proportion of the population still in agriculture or other forms of self-employment, a large informal sector and a comparatively undeveloped welfare system.

In the formal sector, where collective bargaining is relatively strong, the

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development of teleworking is likely to be constrained by some of the same factors as under corporatist regimes: a resistance to abandoning the relative security of full-time, permanent jobs in the sectors where occupation-specific social protection has been negotiated. In the informal sector, teleworking may well exist, but is unlikely to be documented or insured.

The report only deals with regimes which have been comparatively well-studied in relation to flexible working. Eastern Europe, Japan and the newly-developed countries of South East Asia, say the researchers, present sharp contrasts in many of their characteristics both to each other and to those summarised here.

Organisation structure and culture

Another key factor is the nature of the organisation. The research suggests that teleworking works best where hierarchies are flat, bureaucratic rules minimised, job descriptions flexible and workers are encouraged to work to targets which they have negotiated with their managers or team-mates. Because management by results is a crucial component of effective telework management, it is also most likely to be adopted within cultures which are open and meritocratic.

Work cultures in which advancement depends on 'informal networking' or developing a strong personal relationship with the boss are likely to be those where teleworking is contra-indicated.

At least where more senior, knowledge-intensive jobs are concerned, teleworking tends to flourish best with a managerial style which is nurturing and enabling, rather than autocratic or dictatorial.

These factors, say the researchers, may provide a partial explanation for the prevalence of home-based teleworking in the 'liberal' regulatory environments of the Anglo-Saxon countries. The comparatively loose bonds between worker and manager have led to a high degree of self-management.

For rather different reasons (notably an egalitarian and meritocratic work culture, stress on teamworking and a general public culture of trust and honesty) the Nordic countries appear also to have generated a type of democratic work culture and horizontal pattern of intercommunication in which teleworking can thrive.

By contrast, states the report, the corporatist model appears to be more closely associated with hierarchical structures and formal, rule-driven work procedures which act as barriers to successful teleworking.

There is also evidence that teleworking is easier to introduce into organisations which already have a well-developed electronic communications culture, in which staff are used to using voice-mail, e-mail and other forms of communication which make location irrelevant.

Housing

Another variable which the researchers claim plays a part is housing and household structure; clearly, homeworking is likely to be difficult in a house shared by a large number of other occupants. Thus, the US, Canada, Australia, Sweden and the UK all have relatively high proportions of their inhabitants living alone or in small nuclear-family-type households, combined with relatively generous allocations of space per person, whereas the inhabitants of Japan, Spain and Italy are likely to live

in more crowded conditions, with a larger average household size. This may offer part of the explanation for the relatively high incidence of mobile in preference to home-based teleworking in Japan.

It goes without saying that the home in question should have an uninterrupted supply of electricity.

Skills

A final teleworking prerequisite relates to skills. At the most basic level, of course, literacy is necessary. There is also a need for ICT-specific skills, which may include keyboard skills, knowledge of the relevant software and competence in linking the computer to the means of telecommunications used for delivery of the work.

In addition, a range of tacit skills is usually necessary to function effectively from a distance. These include time-management, the ability to be self-motivated and sufficient diagnostic ability to work out who to contact or what procedure to adopt if problems are encountered. In the case of more highly-skilled teleworking there is also, of course, a need for occupation-specific skills and qualifications, such as programming, accountancy or editing skills.

Moreover, language fluency is necessary for many kinds of work and, where telephone contact with clients is involved, there may be a more specific requirement for an accent which is acceptable or comprehensible to certain national or regional customer groups.

The report concludes that home-based teleworking is likely to be found on a significant scale only when a number of preconditions are met. These include broad access to affordable telecommunications, relatively deregulated labour markets or collective agreements supportive of this form of working, households which allow for private working, and the existence of appropriate skills. These preconditions are at present most commonly found in the Anglo Saxon and Nordic countries, and in highly developed urban centres, such as Singapore. They also exist, to a lesser extent, along with other forms of individualised teleworking such as mobile working, in other developed countries.

Most developing countries, however, currently have a concentration of the factors likely to constrain the growth of home-based or mobile teleworking. ○

Teleworking and Globalisation by Ursula Huws, Nick Jagger and Siobhan O'Regan. IES Report 358, July 1999. Price £30 from Grantham Book Services, Isaac Newton Way, Alma Park Industrial Estate, Grantham NG31 95D, UK. Tel: (+44) 01476 541080; fax (+44) 01476 541 061.



PHOTO: Tony Stone

Developing managers the challenge for western



The 12 graduating members of Alston's 'China nursery' with the President and France's Ecole Centrale de Lyon

Global organisations' career management strategies are under severe pressure in the emerging markets of Russia, Eastern Europe and not least in China where developing local managers may be less expensive than relying on expatriates but is by no means a soft option. Jane Sturges went to China recently as part of her research into the challenges facing western companies now operating there

The very high costs and difficulties associated with expatriation, coupled with increasing recognition of the impact of cultural differences on an expatriate's ability to perform effectively, have pushed many companies with significant international operations down the road of developing local managers in the countries in which they operate.

The enormous scale and potential of China as an emergency market, its rapid economic liberalisation and the consequent growing number of joint ventures between Chinese and western businesses make this country eminently suitable for a study of the challenges facing western organisations wanting to develop managers in the East.

British academic Jane Sturges who has been researching this subject highlights a key irony: many Chinese managers are very keen to work for western organisations, but they are keen because they see them as a way out of China en route to an international career,

Formerly a Research Fellow with the Department of Organizational Psychology at Birkbeck College, London, Jane Sturges is now a lecturer at the Open University.

whereas western employees hire them because they want them there – in China.

English was not studied in China during the Cultural Revolution, so those who speak the language are in short supply and tend to be relatively young; not surprisingly they are in high demand, making poaching common and retention a nightmare.

Cannon fodder

First, says Sturges, it is important for HR professionals and management developers to be sufficiently au fait with Chinese culture and the education system if their programmes are to be acceptable and effective.

Secondly, it makes sense to take on board Chinese managers' personal and career development desires rather than treating them as cannon fodder.

In terms of training and development, for instance, she points out that, while the Chinese place great value on education, their approach to learning is more about memorising facts than dialogue, critical thinking and analysis.

Also the strong role of hierarchy, respect for age and deference to seniors means, for example, one company could not gain acceptance for a high-flyers programme until it had selected some older people to be on it. Certainly the Chinese are not comfortable with the practice of identifying young high potential managers.

Other significant factors, which make it totally inappropriate to attempt to apply western-style HR policies and practices, include the strong orientation to work in groups rather than individually and the consequent reluctance to lead a group; and the overwhelming importance of 'face', which both compounds the reluctance to make solo decisions, for fear of losing face if the decision is wrong, and makes appraisal virtually impossible as negative feedback will be seen as loss of face.

It is also important to be aware of the 'guanxi' phenomenon, people's very strong networks of relationships, which underlies much Chinese activity because of the emphasis on, for instance, repaying favours.

ers in China: multinationals

Management in China, says Sturges, tends to be regarded as a statistical, operational science, and 'softer' areas such as organisational behaviour and even marketing are given short shrift.

Chinese managers prefer personal contact rather than formal meetings, they manage through personal relationships and are reluctant to delegate.

Two companies which have made serious attempts to work with the differences and tackle such challenges are GEC Alstom (formerly Anglo-French, now French) and General Electric (USA). GEC Alstom has focused on graduates and GE has a particularly interesting programme for middle managers.

The advantage of the graduate approach, says Sturges, is that it offers the chance to 'mould' young managers from an early age and is, apparently, the easiest way to recruit Chinese managers. On the other hand, there is fierce competition for suitable recruits; fostering commitment is problematic – relationships need to be forged with universities over a period of years, she says; and turnover rates are extremely high, with very few graduate recruits staying beyond three years.

Whose needs come first?

One of companies' key faults, however, is putting their own business needs before the development needs of the graduates, by including very little training on most firms' graduate recruitment schemes.

GEC Alstom – now called Alstom since last year's public flotation – designed a graduate development programme that seems to take account of the needs and deficiencies Sturges has pointed out. Called the 'China nursery', the scheme's key criteria for selection are an ability to speak English and 'open-mindedness'. Plus a couple of older, more senior managers also participate in the scheme as part of the company's efforts to overcome potential resistance.

The one-year programme was designed by France's Ecole Centrale de Lyon working closely with Alstom's transmission and distribution sector, and began in August 1997 with 10 new graduates from two Chinese engineering universities plus two existing Alstom employees.

The course covered a month of basic French, and about four months of intercultural training plus the basics of European market economy and technology – at the college; then three months of production and manufacturing at Alstom, a month at the Ecole Supérieure de Commerce de Lyon on finance and management skills and finally three months on a project in one or other of the Alstom sites in France.

Feedback revealed that this last part of the programme was the most popular and students asked if it could be extended in future, with the academic content either slightly reduced or more future job-related.

In order to minimise dissatisfaction on the part of colleagues back in China, the company has been careful not to show favouritism to the returning students, and to promote on merit rather than education. In addition, greater exposure to European and American management is being provided for existing employees, more on-the-job training in overseas units and opportunities to accompany Chinese customers on visits to technical sites.

Beijing-based HR director Joanne Liu told *WorldLink* that the company has since also run a couple of programmes for existing managers, consisting of five weeks in Europe attending both classroom sessions and Alstom manufacturing sites.

Meanwhile, a year after returning, the 12 original 'Nursery' students are all working well in different Alstom offices in China and Liu hopes they will stay on for the foreseeable future.

General Electric has been in China for about 20 years. Recently, concerned to find more Chinese to take up leadership positions locally as GE (China) expands, the company launched a new two-year 'Asian leadership development programme' for potential high-flyers. What is particularly unusual, though, is that participants were recruited externally by executive search consultants, a rare phenomenon in China. An extensive raft of tests and assessment centres resulted in the ultimate selection of five managers from a hand-picked pool of 600, plus one existing GE employee, to take part in the new programme.

Part of the programme consists of an overseas assignment, thus addressing the

Chinese aspirations, and this is run in rotation with a home country assignment and an audit assignment.

There is also some financial management training, which is highly valued by the engineering-biased programme participants, and 'Six Sigma' quality management training.

Mentors

Mentoring and coaching additionally increase the chances of successful integration of cultures, and indeed GE runs a programme to train its own mentors, albeit not just for the Asian programme. Rong Liu, HR Director, GE in Beijing, says each participating business provides a mentor for the Asian leadership development programme participants, "and I am sure we will continue providing mentors for them after they finish."

Jane Sturges concludes that, if organisations wish to succeed in emerging markets, they cannot ignore the issue of developing local managers; but they do need to integrate the local managers into international career paths and, in China in particular, to tailor programmes to suit local managers' needs and aspirations. Above all, she says, "it is not sensible or even possible to apply HR policies and developmental programmes wholesale across the world." ○

Japan welcomes WFPMA



WFPMA President Mike Losey (left) and APFHRM President Eddie Ng (right) combined a visit to the Board of the Singapore HR Institute (see story, page 1) with their attendance at the Tokyo launch of the new Japan Society for HRM (see *Worldlink*, July 1999). Accepting the WFPMA-sponsored plaque are (l-r) JSHRM Chairman Tsutae Hyodo and Ario Orita, President of the Japan Productivity Centre.

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Theme: 'Symphony HR: people, business, success'

Tel: +416-923 2324

Fax: +416-923 7264

E-mail: info@hrpao.org

March 15-16, 2000

Monterrey, Mexico

AMERI Congress and Exposition

Tel: +52-5 140 2220

Fax: +52-5 140 2229

E-mail: cparedes@ameri.com.mx

April 2-4, 2000

San Diego, California, USA

SHRM International Conference and Exposition

Contact: Brian Glade, SHRM

Tel: +1-703-535 6033

Fax: +1-703-535 6497

E-mail: intldiv@shrm.org

April 3-6, 2000

London, England

IFTDO World Human Resource Development Conference and Exhibition

Theme: 'The HRD challenge: facing a certain future'

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E-mail: conf@ipd.co.uk

May 28-31, 2000

Sydney, Australia

Australian Human Resources Institute National Convention

Tel: +612-9953 2900

Fax: +612-9953 3012

E-mail: ahrinat@ahri.com.au

May 29-31, 2000

Paris, France

WFPMA 8th World Congress on Human Resource Management

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Conference hotline: 33 1 55 07 26 54
Website: www.hr2000.org

Registration and hotel accommodation:

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Exhibition: Christophe Leparc

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