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Successfully Meeting the Three Challenges of all International Assignments

Gary Fontaine

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As you well know, our world is global. To do our business successfully today we must rely not on habits developed at home in the past--however effective there--but on strategies responsive to the global world we face. We must do this whether our business is in commerce, diplomacy, science and technology, education, entertainment, tourism, transportation, religion, communication, or the military. And to do business globally typically requires going there, be it a short-term assignment to negotiate a treaty or a long-term one to manage a subsidiary.
This book provides both practical and conceptual insight into the management of these global assignments. It provides an honest, realistic assessment of the requirements for doing business consistently effectively on them and what personnel and their organization can do to maximize that opportunity. It reviews the commonly described strategies for doing business internationally and their weaknesses. It describes an optimal strategy for doing it and the essential skills associated with this strategy. The book then presents how an organization can best manage programs for screening, self-selection, orientation, training, travel, accommodation, and support to help personnel in using that strategy.
The book is useful as a companion guide for personnel in preparation for and during their international assignments; as a key source for managers, trainers, and human resource specialists responsible for organizational programs to manage these personnel; and as a textbook for students in academic or professional programs in international management, international relations, international studies, intercultural and international communication, or human resource development. It fills a large gap between material currently available focused primarily on comparative management and cross-cultural training ("how other cultures do business") and the full requirements of managing international assignments ("how to do business with those from other cultures"). Issues are presented within an integrated theoretical perspective yet are illustrated at a very practical level. The focus is international--on personnel from any country assigned to any country.

About the Author:
Dr. Gary Fontaine is an Emeritus Professor in the School of Communications at the University of Hawaii. His primary interests center on persons, teams and organizations as they encounter the adjustment, interaction and motivation challenges of "strange lands" -- novel and rapidly changing ecologies characterized by new people, places and technologies. He is particularly interested in the experiences these challenges produce, the strategies developed to deal with them, and the communication and other skills required to implement the strategies effectively. Over the years he has applied this focus in research, teaching and intervention activities to contexts such as international assignments in business and government, our diverse, rapidly changing workplaces and communities at home, geographically dispersed teams, distance learning, knowledge creation and transfer, and coaching teams, managers and leaders to deal with intercultural and international diversity effectively. His most recent work has been on self-organization and swarm intelligence models for developing optimal strategies for global effectiveness.

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