



U.S. Businesses Seek Employees with Global Talent

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- **A survey of more than 2,000 U.S. HR managers shows that U.S. mid- and large-size businesses value language skills and multicultural experience**
- **Seventy per cent of respondents indicate that higher education in the U.S. needs to do more to prepare graduates in terms of language skills and multicultural experience**
- **One in six say that their company has lost business due to a lack of personnel with language skills and multicultural experience**

American businesses seek recruits with *Global Talent* – professionals in all disciplines who have a high level of proficiency in a foreign language and/or significant experience abroad – in order to better manage the increasing diversity of their workforces, and to better manage and market their services and products to multilingual and multicultural audiences in the U.S. and abroad.

U.S. Companies associate a wide range of positive attributes with Global Talent – increased risk-taking and improved risk management; flexibility; adaptability; and a greater ability to work with and manage diverse viewpoints – internally in company operations and externally with clients and customers of all backgrounds and in all locations.

A recent survey of 2,101 Human Resource managers in mid- and large-size U.S. companies¹ by the Joint National Committee for Languages, along with the Globalization and Localization Association and the Collegiate Employment Research Institute of Michigan State University showed that:

- 33% of U.S. mid and large size companies have international operations and/or serve multilingual/multicultural clientele
- 93% of these companies seek “employees who can show they are able to work effectively with customers, clients, and businesses from a range of different countries and cultures.”
- 64% seek employees with multicultural experience
- 49% seek employees with overseas experience
- 69% of respondents believe that higher education must do more to prepare students with Global Talent

¹ In 2008 the US had 90,386 mid-size and 18,469 large businesses, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.



- The top business skills in demand for initial hires with Global Talent: sales, customer service, project management
- The top sectors requiring Global Talent are manufacturing and engineering, professional services, and education

Foreign Language Skills as an Enabler of Global Talent

On the other hand, the data indicate that insufficient attention is paid to language as an enabler of these highly sought qualifications:

- 55% track employee foreign language skills
- 35% give advantage to multilingual candidates
- 21% report difficulty in managing and integrating diverse teams due to a lack of Global Talent
- 11% seek to fill jobs requiring foreign language skills

From JNCL-NCLIS' perspective, foreign language as an enabler of effective multicultural and overseas experience needs to be more strongly reflected in educational policy documents such as the U.S. Department of Education's current strategic plan for International Education. Global Competence is defined there in broader terms, "Global competence is the capacity and disposition to understand and act on issues of global significance," while the data reported here indicate that American businesses identify *Global Talent* with foreign language proficiency and multicultural experience.²

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² Mansilla, V. B. & Jackson, A. (eds.). 2011. *Educating for Global Competence: Preparing our Youth to Engage with the World*. Council of Chief State Schools Officers EdSteps Initiative and Asia Society Partnership for Global Learning. New York: Asia Society. **Cited by:** United States Department of Education. 2012. *Succeeding Globally through International Education and Engagement*. United States Department of Education International Strategy 2012-2016. Washington, DC: United States Department of Education.