International Knowledge, Skills, Abilities and Qualifications (KSAQ):

A Discovery of Global Business Competency

by

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Dissertation Approval

As members of the dissertation committee for Amy S. Coon and on behalf of the Doctoral Program at Cardinal Stritch University, we affirm that this report meets the expectations and academic requirements for the Ph.D. degree in Leadership for the Advancement of Learning and Service.

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As the Dean of the College of Education and Leadership, and on behalf of the Doctoral Program at Cardinal Stritch University, I affirm that this report meets the expectations and academic requirements for the Ph.D. degree in Leadership for the Advancement of Learning and Service.

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Freda Russell, Ph.D.   Approval Date

Dedication and Acknowledgements

I dedicate this project to my family. Without all of the love and support that you have provided me throughout this process, this project would not have been possible. I would like to acknowledge my cohort friends, instructors, and mentors, for all of their encouragement and for challenging me to perform at the highest level.

Abstract

The purpose of this research was to determine the international specific knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications (KSAQ) that international businesses require when hiring employees. Business leaders (participants) from companies conducting international business in a Midwest state from both small/medium companies (less than 500 employees) and large companies (500+ employees) were included in this study in order to determine the required international knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications (KSAQ). In addition, specific challenges which businesses encountered due to their employees lack of international knowledge, skills, abilities or qualifications were discovered. Methods for resolving business challenges due to the lack of international business knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications of their employees were also addressed.

A mixed-method research approach was utilized by the researcher that employed both survey and key informant interviews. This combination of quantitative and qualitative methodology compared the knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications required by companies with known methods in order to determine a specific international KSAQ skill set.

The findings of the research included a global business competency skill set for international business professionals based off of the requirements and challenges as determined by both small/medium and large sized companies. Findings of the study indicate the need for global business professional competence in the areas of cultural competence and leadership, personal effectiveness, business knowledge and business expertise. This study also indicated that there was no significant difference in the skill

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requirements between small/medium and large companies. As a result, the international business competence skill set could be used for any sized organization. Acquiring or enhancing this desired international business skill set may be obtained by way of professional development and entrepreneurial learning by way of mentoring, networking, experiential learning, formal training programs, seminars and academic programs.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Statement of the Problem

As the business environment becomes inevitably more global, so must our work force. In order to keep a competitive edge in this global economy, as managers, it only makes sense that we look to hire employees that possess the knowledge, skills, abilities (KSA) and qualifications (Q) deemed desirable in the global market. As academics, we must continually validate the KSAQ required by global businesses compared to what services (relating to international business curriculums and training) we are providing to their future employees.   The ultimate goal of both business and academic professionals should be to provide the KSAQ desired by global businesses.

Businesses must be prepared to compete on a global scale. "In the current era of globalization, many governments, along with individual companies and industrial organizations have recognized the critical need for development of an internationally competitive workforce" (Prestwich & Ho-Kim, 2009, p. 150). Knowledgeable, skilled and competent employees with the abilities to work in a global business environment are key factors to staying competitive on this global platform. "Firms create competitive advantage by perceiving or discovering new and better ways to compete in an industry and bringing them to market" (Porter, 1990, p. 45). As stated in *Culture, Leadership, and Organizations* (2004), a Rapid development of regional and global economic integration of nations through entities such as the North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) have created a need for culturally knowledgeable managers able to work in multicultural environments (p. 709).

The United States government also supports competitive economic growth in global markets and exporting by United States. companies. As a result of this support, the government launched the National Export Initiative (NEI) in order to strengthen America's economy, support additional jobs here at home, and ensure long-term, sustainable growth (U.S. Department of Commerce, 2013). "The Obama administration has made it a top priority to improve the conditions that directly affect the private sector's ability to export" (U.S. Department of Commerce, 2013). On a national scale, a record of more than 302,000 companies in the United States exported goods in 2011, nearly 98 percent of which (295,594) in 2011 were small or medium-sized companies (SMEs) with fewer than 500 employees" (U.S. Department of Commerce, 2013). In 2012, United States exports hit an all-time record of $2.2 trillion (U.S. Department of Commerce, 2013). This export growth was a result of America's free trade agreement (FTA) partners, record exports for the motor vehicle industry and for agricultural products, and a robust travel and tourism sector (U.S. Department of Commerce, 2013).

In order to prepare our business leaders and our businesses for international success, we must first confirm the required knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications required (KSAQ) by businesses competing in the global marketplace. KSA, known as knowledge, skills and abilities, is a commonly used acronym by human resource professionals and academics alike when determining hiring criteria for specific job responsibilities. It also serves as a benchmark used by the American Council on Education (Prestwich & Ho-Kim, 2007). Specific KSA can be used as a benchmark for the criteria when hiring for specific jobs such as hiring international business leaders. In order to construct a platform of the knowledge, skills and abilities required of a global

leader, Brake developed the Global Leadership Triad in 1997. The Triad (Figure 2) consists of three sets of competencies: business acumen, relationship management and personal effectiveness with the core competency being the transformational self (Brake, 1997, p. 44). Although the need for knowledgeable, skilled, able and qualified (KSAQ) employees occurs on both a national and international level, this particular study will focus primarily on the national level focusing on the particular state of Wisconsin. On an operational level, an ideal international business professional will in posses specific international knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications that enable them to perform competently in this uniquely complex global environment as determined by this study.

Bringing the specific population of the study into focus, in 2011 Wisconsin had a total of 8,605 companies exporting from the state. Of these exporting companies 7,550 (or 87.7%) were classified as small and medium-sized business, meaning that they report fewer than 500 employees (U.S. Department of Commerce, 2013). This represents a majority of in terms of company sizes within the state. In addition to this fact, Wisconsin's 2012 merchandise exports accounted for $23.1 billion dollars (U.S. Department of Commerce, 2013). The state's top five export destinations in 2012 included: Canada ($7.6 billion or 33%); Mexico ($2.2 billion or 9.4%); China ($1.5 billion or 6.7%); Australia ($865 million or 3.8%) and Japan ($864 million or 3.7%) (U.S. Department of Commerce, 2013). Although Wisconsin is considered to be land-locked, meaning that we do not have direct access to an ocean port, international business is still an economic factor for the state. Employing knowledgeable, skilled, able and qualified employees is a key factor for business success for not only the state, but also required to compete at a global level.

The trade statistics discussed prior support that there is a need for a skilled workforce in the state. International business programs are commonplace. State Universities and Private Colleges are recognizing the need for providing the academic preparedness for students to be able to work in the international market. After all, with the advent of social media and electronic communications, from call centers, to suppliers and distributors for example, it can be argued that all business transactions could actually already be global. International majors, minors, certificates, certifications and so forth are continually being developed and implemented in academic curriculums of higher education institutions around the globe. There is a need for international preparedness (U.S. Department of Education, 2012).

As a result of researching the aforementioned problem, the following question presented itself: What are the required international knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications required by companies competing in our present day global economy? This study seeks to answer this question. The subjects of this particular study included 38 international business professionals working for companies based in the state of Wisconsin.

History of the Problem

In *The World is Flat*, Friedman (2007) developed the theory that modern technologic advances provided tools necessary for people to communicate globally in timely, efficient, and cost saving ways. Consequently, the playing field has flattened, making economic success accessible to a rapidly increasing portion of the world's population. This theory has changed how business is conducted on a global basis. As the world become even more flat (Friedman, 2007), we will need to keep evolving in terms

of our decision-making based on the new dilemmas that we will face. We cannot predict the leadership decisions of the future, however we can provide leaders with the skill sets needed to make these global business decisions.

Research in this area is necessary to ensure that we are offering the best international business learning opportunities for both employees and students. These opportunities include avenues for growth and development of knowledge, skills, and abilities related to international business functions resulting in qualifications for business professionals. Prestwich and Ho-Kim (2009) found that "when it comes to specific international KSA, even specialist international business (IB) degree programs do not necessarily provide graduates with a tool kit of practical skills appropriate to the needs of companies doing business overseas" (p. 151). The purpose of this study was to determine the international-specific knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications (KSAQ) that businesses require when hiring employees for international positions. The related questions include: What specific knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications do companies competing in our global economy require?; What challenges do businesses encounter due to their employees lack of international knowledge, skills, abilities or qualifications?; How have businesses leaders overcome business challenges due to the lack of international business knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications of their employees?

In order to prepare our business leaders for international success, we must determine and or verify the required knowledge, skills, abilities and qualification required by businesses in our present day global economy. Then we may use these findings on either a business or academic platform in order to enhance the learning of our employees

or students. Providing further support for this research study, Prestwich and Ho-Kim proposed the following: "given that many jobs are highly specialized and require jobholders to have specific KSA to be competent, it is unrealistic to assume that the formal education system can satisfy all such needs" (2009). Providing further support to this point, Everett (Jaschik, 2013) in an interview with http://www.insidehighered.com states "as complexity increases, intense teamwork, sophisticated information gathering and interpretation, performing across barriers, communication, an understanding of culture and a heightened awareness of the 'ecosystem' in which the organization operates are all vital" (para. 3). Research in this area will provide continued support to the topic and enhance the KSA of international business professionals. It is apparent that both management practice and management education must be assessed to ensure that needs are met on both sides. In order to provide future leaders with the knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications needed for international business success we need to determine this particular KSAQ platform for success.

Nevertheless, those requirements by international businesses must be driving force for development of international curriculum and professional training. In support of meeting the needs of international businesses, in 1991 the higher education accrediting body, the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), determined three components of the International Business curriculum would include: (1) ethical and global issues, (2) the influence of political, social, legal and regulatory environmental and technical issues, and (3) the impact of demographic diversity on organizations (AACSB, 2012).

What is perhaps more important is that the globalization of

business has led to substantial derived demand for global

management education. Indicators of globalization in business are

likely to underestimate the corresponding needs for knowledge,

skills and attitudes that align with current and future needs of the

business profession. (AACSB, 2011, p. 12)

Technological innovations, privatization, liberalization of trade, changes in government

policies, advances in communication, and other trends have all contributed to a

globalized world (AACSB, 2011, p.14). These changes will directly affect the KSAQ

required in business in order for them to compete on a global scale. Thus, it is imperative

that we keep keen eye on this important "bridge" between business and academics/higher

education.

One of the recommendations for additional research as a result of the AACSB

(2011) study was to determine "what global skills and competencies should educators

aim to build" (p. 232) such that "an enhanced understanding of particular challenges

posted by assessment of 'global' competencies and capabilities is increasingly important"

(p. 232). This mixed method survey aims to provide business managers and academics

the required competencies in knowledge (K), skills (S), abilities (A) and qualifications

(Q) required by the companies conducting international businesses.

From a business perspective, NASBITE International (National Association of

Small Business International Trade Educators) was formed in response to a strong

movement that began to place international trade education in more prominent position

with-in colleges, universities, and various public service institutions in the 1980s

(NASBITE International, 2013). In 2000, NASBITE embarked on a new mission to develop a credential that would raise the level of practice in the field, provide professional development goals, and showcase competency, thus creating the CGBP (Certified Global Business Professional) certification (NASBITE International, 2013). "The NASBITE CGBP confirms knowledge in international trade and assures that employees are able to practice global business at the professional level required in today's competitive environment" (NASBITE International, 2013, para. 1). The CGBP supports the need for specific international knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications in employees working in international companies.

Current Status of the Problem

As the business environment becomes global, so must our expectations for globally competent (KSAQ) employees and thus a global KSAQ.   In order to keep a competitive edge in an international environment, it only makes sense that businesses look to acquire the best workforce, meaning that they acquire international professionals that have the knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications (KSAQ) to do the job at hand. We must determine what businesses are requiring when hiring their most valuable asset. Higher education programs are now requiring international experiences, language skills and international curriculums, certificates, undergraduate majors, minors and emphasis programs in order to meet the needs of AACSB accreditation requirements. After all, managers able to lead in a global context are a critical resource for innovation and economic development (AACSB, 2011, p. 5).

This mixed method study will focus on the global KSAQ required in the business environment, particularly in the state of Wisconsin, located in the United States of

America. A platform based on global knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications is a desirable outcome of this study to be used today and in the future in order to stay competitive in global business. "The course of globalization will continue as long as people are driven to look across borders for resources, ideas, efficiencies, and services" (AACSB, 2011, p. 4). In order to stay competitive, schools must meet the needs of companies in order to provide viable candidates for the global workforce. Businesses will then hire these employees that meet their specific expectations in terms of their own global KSAQ. "In the current era of globalization, many governments, along with individual companies and industrial organizations have recognized the critical need for development of an internationally competitive workforce" (Prestwich & Ho-Kim, 2009, p. 150).

Educators need to prepare students to fill this gap in order to provide businesses with competent employees. In support of this point, Secretary Arne Duncan stated, "To be on track for college and careers, students need the 21st century skills that are so vital to success in a global economy" (Personal communication, March 14, 2012, p. 1). As businesses, we require competent employees. In terms of competitive advantage, "It always involves investment in developing skills and knowledge" (Porter, 1990, p. 45). From either perspective, the training/education/experience should not be overlooked; rather business should keep their key asset (employees) globally prepared. It is important to keep in mind that initial internationalization of curricula in business schools occurred as a response to the needs and expectations of the corporate sector in the early 1980s.

As a direct result, the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB International) instituted accreditation outcomes focusing on the inclusion of

international content in the curriculum in order to facilitate this desired change (Crittenden & Wilson, 2005, p. 81). Specifically, AACSB required that a common body of knowledge, which included an international perspective, be a part of the business school curriculum (Kaynak, Yucelt, & Barker, 1990). AACSB International currently retains 1,350+ members from over 83 countries around the globe (AACSB International, 2013). Only 681 of these memberships (from roughly 50 countries) have obtained AACSB Accreditation (AACSB International, 2013).

By 1991, AACSB had determined more specific requirements regarding the internationalization of curriculum on both an undergraduate and graduate level. AACSB specifically stated that the curriculum should cover: (1) ethical and global issues, (2) the influence of political, social, legal and regulatory, environmental, and technological issues, and (3) the impact of demographic diversity on organizations (AACSB, 2012). By 2003, the AACSB changed its name to AACSB International in order to represent its "worldwide stature" (AACSB, 2012) and further refined its standards emphasizing the importance to include stating that "every graduate should be prepared to pursue a business or management career in global context" (AACSB, 2012).

The AACSB Globalization of Management Report (2011) states that "what is perhaps more important is that the globalization of business has led to substantial derived demand for global management education" (p. 12). "The relationship between the business profession and the business academy is largely symbolic: they support each other in various ways that advance the welfare of society" (AACSB, 2011, p. 9). However, mixed results have been reported "with respect to the extent to which schools of business have globalized their curricula" (Crittenden & Wilson, 2005, p. 84). Thus,

"indicators of globalization in business are likely to underestimate the corresponding needs for knowledge, skills, and attitudes that align with current and future needs of the business profession" (AACSB, 2011, p. 12). In relation to these findings, this particular study will focus on the global KSAQ required by companies conducting international business.

Theory and Action Related to the Problem

In relation to the competitive need to employ skilled international business professionals, the theory of *competitive advantage* is a good fit and the most recognized. Porter (1990) stated, "competitive advantage grows out of the way firms organize and perform discrete activities" (p. 40). He noted that in order "to gain competitive advantage over its rivals, a firm must either provide comparable buyer value but perform activities more efficiently than its competitors (lower cost), or perform activities in a unique way that creates greater buyer value and commands a premium price (differentiation)" (Porter, 1990, p. 40). The activities performed when competing can be grouped into categories. Rather, these activities performed in Porter's (1990) view of a competitive industry, are considered "The Value Chain" (pp. 40-41). The value chain consists of both support activities (infrastructure, human resources, technology, procurement) and primary activities (logistics, manufacturing, marketing/sales, service) (Porter, 1990, p. 41) visible in Figure 1.

Figure 1: *Porter's Value Chain*
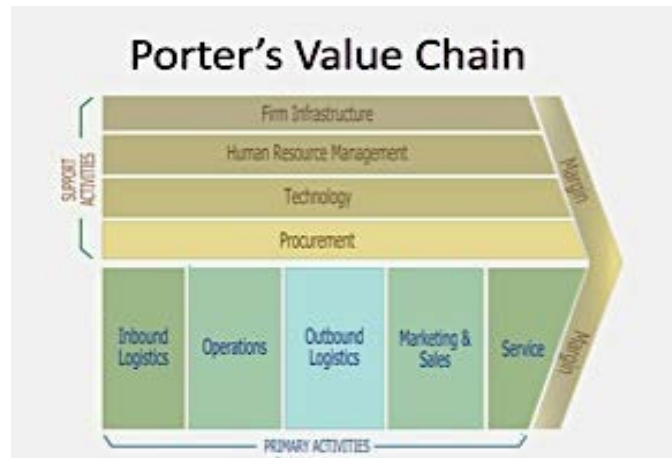
Source: Competitive Advantage: Creating and Sustaining Performance by Michael E. Porter (1990)

According to Porter (1990) firms gain competitive advantage by developing new and innovative ways in which firms "conduct activities, employing new procedures, new technologies, or different inputs" (pp. 40-41). Porter states that "much innovation, in practice, is rather mundane and incremental rather than radical" and often involves small insights and advances, ideas that have not been vigorously pursued" (Porter, 1990, p. 45). It is important to keep in mind that a firm's national environment may influence the likelihood of this behavior (Porter, 1990, p. 52). However, the basic principles of competitive strategy apply to both domestic and international competition (Porter, 1990, p. 53). More important in terms of this study, competitive advantage requires an "investment in developing skills and knowledge" (Porter, 1990, p. 45).

The application of the principles of *The Competitive Advantage of Nations* has breadth across nations and is widely accepted (Porter, 1990, p. 163). Porter's value chain "provides a systematic framework for thinking about areas where cooperation among neighbors can enhance the productivity of the national business environment" (Porter, 1990, p. 72). It is a "mutually reinforcing system" whereas "the effect of one determinant

is contingent on the state of others" (Porter, 1990, p. 72). Firms of all industries have adapted this framework to build or enhance competitive advantage. Human resource management is the main focus of the value chain in relation to this study. This consists of "activities involved in the recruiting, hiring training, development, and compensation of all types of personnel. It affects competitive advantage in any firm due to the fact that this role determines the skills and motivations of employees, plus the cost of hiring and training" (Porter, 1990, p. 43). A good example of this comes from the former world leader in accounting, Arthur Anderson, whom had purchased a former college campus in the Chicago area and invested heavily in training the firm in firm wide methodology on a global scale (Porter, 1990).

If a nation is to achieve international success in a particular industry, Porter's (1990) "diamond theory" is a model to follow. This theory, which refers to determinants as a system (Porter, 1990, p. 72), contains four determinants consisting of the: firm strategy, structure and rivalry; demand conditions; related and supporting industries; and factor conditions (Porter, 1990, p. 72). The diamond allows for the spread of information through the diamond and affects the directions of technological developments (Porter, 1990, p. 79). "Firms gain competitive advantage where their home base allows and supports the most rapid accumulation of specialized assets and skills, sometimes due solely to greater commitment" (Porter, 1990, p. 71). The theory of competitive advantage supports the study due to the specific focus on global business related KSAQ.

Adam Smith, author of *Wealth of Nations* (1977*)*, also discussed competitive advantage. Specifically relating to the problem, Smith stated that "the most dissimilar geniuses are to use to one another" (Smith, 1977, p. 7), thus, "difference is useful"

(Smith, 1977, p. 6). This refers to the differentiation of skills and how this differentiation of skills (for example international KSAQ) relates to the success of business on an international scale, which is the businesses competitive advantage. Smith also states that difference is useful. In this study this would specifically relate to the differentiation between global and domestic knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications, noting that there is a difference between the two. Smith proposes an action plan for competitive advantage (Smith, 1977, p. 13) that includes: (1) global awareness, (2) global understanding, and (3) global competence (Smith, 1977, p. 98).

The AACSB's (2011) review of international business research "uncovered several meaningful themes that compliment the four broad trends" that characterize the globalization of business in recent years: (1) deepening of integration; (2) fusion of markets; (3) shift to networked organizations: and (4) migration to cyberspace (p. 13). Specifically relating to this study, the theme of "competition, cooperation and competition" (AACSB, 2011, p. 13) ties into the theory of competitive advantage as "a growing number of schools have approached globalization by seeking to distinguish themselves in local and global environments" (AACSB, 2011, p. 18). Furthermore, "due in part to globalization, the relationships between organizations have become increasingly complex, and characterizing relationships as either competitive or cooperative has become more difficult" (AACSB, 2011, pp. 16-17), thus the importance of this study.

Need for Further Study of the Problem

This problem requires further study due to the single state focus of the data collection. The international KSAQ platform to be developed as a result of this study

will require further study on a multiple state, country and global level findings to verify the validity of a generalizable finding. Once a platform of global knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications (KSAQ) is developed via this study, a method of assessment may then be determined on a multi-level platform.   In addition, the findings of this study may contribute to the limited research base (Prestwich & Ho-Kim, 2007) in this particular area of study. Furthermore, this study aims to provide academics and leadership with specific "global skills and competencies" such that "an enhanced understanding of particular challenges posted by assessment of 'global' competencies and capabilities" as recommended by AACSB (p. 232).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the international specific knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications (KSAQ) that businesses require when hiring employees for international positions. The related questions that will guide this study include:

1. What specific international business knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications do companies competing in a global economy require?

2. What challenges do businesses encounter due to their employees lack of international knowledge, skills, abilities or qualifications?

3. How have businesses leaders overcome business challenges due to the lack of international business knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications of their employees?

Approach of the Study

Given the research purpose of determining the international knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications (KSAQ) required by international businesses when hiring

employees, the research approach was that of a mixed method employing the methods of survey and key informant interviews. This combination of quantitative and qualitative methodology will compare the knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications required by companies with known methods in order to determine if there is an international-specific KSAQ skill set.

Phase one, titled: *Phase I: Administration of the Survey Instrument,* utilized survey methodology and collected quantitative data on the knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications (KSAQ) required by business leaders from companies conducting international business in a Midwest state. The goal of the survey was to determine the rankings of the knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications (KSAQ) required for international positions at these companies. This phase included a descriptive survey instrument that was utilized to gather information from 38 international business professionals whom had attended an international trade event in the state of Wisconsin in 2013. The goal of the survey data collection was to learn the required KSAQ of employees at international companies in Wisconsin. The researcher developed a survey tool based of the research of AACSB (2012); Bolt (1996); Brake (1997); Cant (2004); Cohen (2007); Goldsmith, Greenberg, Robertson, and Hu-Chan (2003); Hofstede (2001); House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, and Gupta (2004); Marquardt and Berger (2000); McCall and Hollenbeck (2002); NASBITE International (2012); Prestwich and Ho-Kim (2007); Smith, Smith, and Bush (2002); Vibhakar & Smith (2004); and Yu, Guan, Yang, and Chiao (2005). A pilot test was administered in order to validate the survey content, clarify question wording and survey structure. Once the survey instrument was determined to be valid, it was then administered in person.

Phase two titled: *Phase II – Key informant interviews,* was the qualitative phase of the study that explored international business leaders experiences and challenges related to specific knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications (KSAQ) required of international business professionals. This phase was administered concurrently with Phase I. Key informant interviews were conducted. Candidates specifically addressed the specific knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications required of global business professionals at their respective companies. In addition, they discussed challenges that their businesses had encountered due to an employee's lack of specific international knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications (KSAQ) on the job and the solutions they implemented in order to overcome these specific business challenges.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant due to the fact that it focuses on gathering the requirements of international business professionals, thus enabling a skill set, or platform, to be developed for the profession, specifically within the state of Wisconsin. There seems to be limited literature related to the needs of companies doing business internationally that also identifies job-specific knowledge, skills and abilities (KSA) (Prestwich & Ho-Kim, 2007). In addition to this fact, a study of this sort has not yet been completed with this particular target audience, as the Prestwich and Ho-Kim (2007) study focused only on Minnesota based companies. There is also limited research regarding "needs assessments of businesses specifying the IB (International Business) related KSA they look for when hiring someone into an international position" (Prestwich & Ho-Kim, 2007, p. 31). In response to this lack of research, this particular study will focus on determining the specific international knowledge, skills, attributes and qualifications

(KSAQ) that business leaders require when hiring employees for international positions within their respective company.

AACSB touched on the importance of the need for this type of study as addressed in the following quotation, "The course of globalization will continue as long as people are driven to look across borders for resources, ideas, efficiencies and services. Business schools that fail to adapt to that reality do so at their own peril" (AACSB, 2011, p. 4). This message implies that in order to stay competitive, business schools must meet the needs of their customers in order to provide viable candidates for the global workforce. The can be said for the business community as well, as "In the current era of globalization, many governments, along with individual companies and industrial organizations have recognized the critical need for development of an internationally competitive workforce" (Prestwich & Ho-Kim, 2009, p. 150). In summary, there is a significant need for this particular type of study stemming from both a business and academic need for information.

Contribution to Knowledge, Theory and Practice

The Prestwich and Ho-Kim study (2007) looked at the knowledge, skills and abilities (KSA) required by small/medium businesses in the state of Minnesota. A similar study has not been conducted in this particular state. This study will look at the specific needs of the state of Wisconsin in terms of the hiring requirements of businesses with international focus. In addition to these requirements, the study will also research additional global qualifications that have been noted as important components of the global skill set by both academia (AACSB) and business (NASBITE). As a result of this

study, we look to find the international KSAQ required by businesses when hiring for global positions within Wisconsin.

This study will contribute further to the research completed by: AACSB (2012); Bolt (1996); Brake (1997); Cant (2004); Cohen (2007); Goldsmith et al. (2003); Hofstede (2001); House et al. (2004); Marquardt and Berger (2000); McCall and Hollenbeck (2002); NASBITE International (2012); Prestwich & Ho-Kim (2007, 2009); Smith et al. (2002); Vibhakar and Smith (2004); and Yu et al. (2005) in regards to knowledge of the international-specific KSAQ required by businesses in the state. The study will also provide a benchmark for higher education in order to develop and maintain successful, relevant, international programming. The goal of this mixed method study is to provide a global KSAQ platform that may be used to provide hiring criteria required of businesses for international business roles in order to assist in the hiring of knowledgeable, skilled, able and qualified employees. This information may prove to be helpful data for academic use in the creation of curricular development and professional training for employees in this field.

The United States Department of Education's international strategy was designed to achieve the two overarching goals of improving education and advancing our nation's international priorities. More specifically, though, it was developed to ensure the competitiveness of our nation and our workforce; to educate our own increasingly diverse United States. society; promote national security and diplomacy; and strengthen our ability to address global challenges (U.S. Department of Education, 2012). The data gathered in this study aims to supports these goals, such that "our hyper connected world also requires the ability to think critically and creatively to solve complex problems, the

skills and disposition to engage globally, well-honed communication skills, and advanced mathematics, science and technical skills" (U.S. Department of Education, 2012, p. 2). The Department of Education also states that "Such competencies will prepare our students, our nation, for a world in which the following are the reality: economic competitiveness and jobs; global challenges; national security and diplomacy; and a diverse U.S. society" (pp. 2-3). In summary, the results of this study will add depth to the 21st century skills (Figure 3).

Limitations of the Study

Limitations of this study include the sample size, as the surveys were distributed to international business professionals that attended a specific global trade event in 2013 in a Midwest state. However, this study may exclude: qualified businesses with-in the state that either chose not to attend this particular event; those who where unaware of the event, employees whom lacked financial support in order to attend/register the event; and so on. In addition, this study only included international business and did not include non-business professionals attending the event.

This study is one specific situation reflecting the state of Wisconsin and cannot be generalized for other states, nor for the entire country (United States of America) nor other countries of the globe. The limited scope of this particular study focuses only on businesses with international focus with-in one state. There was a possibility that there may be additional KSAQ required by businesses that may not be brought to the surface through the use of only a survey research methodology and may warrant further qualitative research formats. This is why the study consisted of a mixed method approach including a descriptive survey and key informant interviews.

Assumptions

The sample chosen for this study included businesses in Wisconsin that conduct international business consisting "of transactions that are devised and carried out across national borders to satisfy the objectives of individuals, companies, and organizations" (Czinkota, Ronkainen, & Moffett, 2010, p. 5). It is assumed that each survey respondent was aware of the knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications necessary for success in the role of an international business professional within the state. It was also an assumption of this study that the respondents may work in various roles within a business and may not necessarily serve in a role of a human resource professional nor have direct hiring influence on this type of position.

Parameters

This mixed method study includes the findings of one specific situation and therefore cannot be generalized. The limited scope of this particular study includes businesses within a Midwest state that conduct international business. The survey respondents were international business professionals were willing participants in the survey whom had attended an international trade event that occurred in this particular state in the year 2013 and/or had participated in the key informant interview phase of this particular study.

Timeframe

This research study took place over a three-month period in fall of 2013. The hard survey was distributed over a five-week period in the fall of 2013. Data was assessed and analyzed over a 12-week period based off the prior survey completion

period. Conclusions and theories were developed over an eight-week period with completion occurring in April of 2014.

Vocabulary of the Study

For consistency of interpretation, the following terms are defined:

AACSB: Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business.

CGBP: Certified Global Business Professional (NASBITE, 2012).

Global Leaders: individuals who effect significant positive change in organizations by building communities through the development of trust and the arrangement of organizational structures and processes in a contact involving multiple cross-boundary stakeholders, multiple sources of external cross-boundary authority, and multiple cultures under conditions of temporal, geographical and cultural complexity (Mendenhall, 2008, p. 17).

Global Business: refer to International Business definition.

International Business: transactions that are devised and carried out across national borders to satisfy the objectives of individuals, companies, and organizations" (Czinkota, Ronkainen, & Moffett, 2010).

Knowledge/Skills/Abilities (KSA): benchmark of American Council on Education (Prestwich & Ho-Kim, 2007).

KSAQ: Knowledge, Skills, Abilities and Qualifications required by international business professionals (Coon, 2014).

Large Business: businesses that they report greater than 500 employees (U.S. Department of Commerce, 2013).

NASBITE International: National Association of Small Business International Trade Educators.

Small/Medium Business: businesses that they report fewer than 500 employees (U.S. Department of Commerce, 2013).

Summary and Forecast

This introductory chapter presented an overview of this mixed method study through description of the background, purpose, approach, significance, delimitations and limitations, and vocabulary of the research. Chapter Two will construct the theoretical framework of the study through a review of literature related to the research questions. Chapter Three describes the mixed method research design employed to conduct the study, with particular attention to survey and interview methodology and techniques applied to data collection and analysis. Chapter Four will present the study results in the form of data generated and analyzed through application of the mixed method research design. Chapter Five presents a discussion of study findings and conclusions related to the research questions and reviewed literature. The concluding chapter also addresses the implications of the findings for practice and research, as well as leadership, learning, and service.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviews literature addressing research and theory related to the study of global leadership and the knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications required of aspiring global business leaders in the United States. The specific leadership requirements (knowledge, skills, abilities, qualifications) are explored regarding the practice of global business leadership in this study. Definitions have been gathered in order to develop a platform for discovery from which to base the research on.

It is important to note that International business careers are often preempted by formal degrees granted from higher education institutions that are governed by standards set by accreditation, such as AACSB (academic) or NASBITE (businesses trade association). However, the requirements of global business professionals must be gathered and assessed in order to determine the specific knowledge, skills set, and competencies required of an employee in this field. The purpose of this study is to determine the specific international business knowledge, skills and competencies that Wisconsin businesses require when hiring employees for international positions.

Organization of Review

The purpose of this study was to determine the international specific knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications (KSAQ) that businesses require when hiring employees for international positions. The related questions that will guide this study include:

1. What specific international business knowledge, skills and abilities and qualifications required by companies competing in a global economy?

2. What challenges do businesses encounter due to their employees lack of international knowledge, skills, abilities or qualifications?

3. How have businesses leaders overcome business challenges due to the lack of international business knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications of their employees?

This chapter reviews literature that addresses research and theory related to the study in the areas of global business leadership, international business specific knowledge, skills, abilities (KSA) and qualifications required by international companies when hiring for the roles of global business professionals. This area is summarized from an academic, professional and government perspectives are presented at the end of the chapter.

Theoretical Framework

Review of Research and Theory about Global Leadership and Cultural Competence

Leadership is the foundation for good management practice. Leaders set the stage for company success and company demise. However, it is even more important on a global level that leaders have the knowledge, skills and abilities to perform in this environment. Global leaders have to "deal with more and different competitors, customers, governments, stakeholders, and NGOs (non-governmental Organizations), in addition to multiplicity on all aspects along the value chain" (Mendenhall, 2008, p. 15). Knowledge, skills and abilities of global leaders form the foundation for the ideal global business leader. "A key leadership attribute of twenty-first century leaders will be the ability to see the world and the workplace with a global mindset" (Marquardt & Berger, 2000, p. 18).

The complexity of global leadership can also be described as "an emerging field that seeks to understand and explain the impact of globalization process on leadership"

(Mendenhall, 2008, forward). Mendenhall (2008) discusses the multidisciplinary roots of global leadership, which includes the concept of intercultural competence. Intercultural communication competence reinforces the importance of learning in respect to both the expectations and communication practices of other cultures, adapting a sense of mindfulness, empathy and perspective regarding global mindset. This would also include "building relationships, handling stress, and switching communication styles when appropriate and acknowledgment of different skills and competencies in relation to different situations and contexts" (Mendenhall, 2008, p. 20). This helps to build a platform for discovery regarding global leadership in this particular research study.

In order to construct a platform of the knowledge, skills and abilities required of a global leader, Brake developed the Global Leadership Triad in 1997. The Triad (Figure 2) consists of three sets of competencies: business acumen, relationship management and personal effectiveness with the core competency being the transformational self (Brake, 1997). These three competencies are part of the "transformational self, a philosophy and personal engagement with the world" which resides in the center of the model (Brake, 1997, p. 44). The transformational self is "a philosophy of possibility and personal engagement with the world," rather, "a drive toward meaning and purpose through activity strengthened by reflection, personal mind management, and openness to change" (Brake, 1997, p. 44).

Figure 2: *Brake's Global Leadership Triad*

RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT
- Change Agentry
- Community Building
- Conflict Management and Negotiation
- Cross-Cultural Communication
- Influencing

TRANSFORMATIONAL
SELF

BUSINESS ACUMEN
- Depth of Field
- Entrepreneurial Spirit
- Professional Expertise
- Stakeholder Orientation
- Total Organization Astuteness

PERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS
- Accountability
- Curiosity and Learning
- Improvisation
- Maturity
- Thinking agility

Source: *The Global Leader: Management Insights from Around the World* (Brake, 1997)

The first competency in the Global Leadership Triad is called "business acumen". This competency includes "the ability to pursue and apply appropriate professional knowledge and skills to achieve optimal results of the company's global shareholders" (Brake, 1997, p. 45). The skills subset in the business acumen competency cluster includes depth of field, entrepreneurial spirit, professional expertise, stakeholder orientation and total organization astuteness. Depth of field "demonstrates a willingness and ability to switch perspectives between local and global/functional and cross-functional needs and opportunities" (Brake, 1997, p. 45). Entrepreneurial spirit "demonstrates the initiative and courage to take calculated risks based on the identification and analysis of high-potential local and global business opportunities"

(Brake, 1997, p. 46). Professional expertise "demonstrates an ongoing development of his or her business knowledge and skills to world-class levels" (Brake, 1997, p. 46). Stakeholder orientation "demonstrates a willingness and an ability to balance the sometimes conflicting needs of stakeholders to achieve optimal results for the organization" (Brake, 1997, p. 47). Lastly, total organization astuteness "demonstrates insight into 'how business works' about and beyond his or her immediate area and seeks to use this knowledge to get things done within and among organizational units" (Brake, 1997, p. 47).

According to Brake (1997), the second competency in the triad is called relationship management. This includes "the ability to build and influence collaborative relationships in a complex and diverse global network to direct energy toward achievement of business strategies" (Brake, 1997, p. 48). Additional skills deemed important in relationship management include the importance of community building, the skill of "change agentry", conflict management and negotiation, cross-cultural communication, and influencing (Brake, 1997, pp. 48-52).

The third set of competencies is personal effectiveness. It is defined as "the ability to attain increasing levels of maturity to perform at peak levels under the strenuous conditions of working in the global enterprise" (Brake, 1997, p. 52). Personal effectiveness includes the skill subsets of accountability, curiosity and learning, improvisation, maturity and thinking agility (Brake, 1997, pp. 52-54). Together, the three components of the global leadership triad form the "transformational self". Brake's (1997) model indirectly serves both the global leader and the global business leader and has been referenced as one of the platforms for determining the knowledge, skills and

competencies needed in the role of global business leaders (Jokinen, 2004; Lokkesmoe 2009).

Also using a three dimensional framework, Bolt (1996), author of chapter 17 in *The Leader of the Future*, proposes a framework that requires the development of three skill sets (or dimensions) of business, leadership and personal effectiveness. Bolt described the framework as being "a three-dimensional leadership development framework, a comprehensive process that recognizes that executives need mind-sets, knowledge, and skills that are vastly different from those of the past" (Bolt, 1996, p. 167).

The business dimension includes "mind-sets and capabilities needed to identify and address global business challenges" (Bolt, 1996, p. 167). This was the typical focal point for most executive development models; however, in this particular model it is enhanced. By adding a focus on the leadership and personal dimensions, in addition to business, in order to balance and integrate all three areas (Bolt, 1996, p. 168).

The leadership dimension has "traditionally been neglected in executive education because many people assume that it can't be taught" (Bolt, 1996, p. 168). The particular leadership dimension involves "fully developed leadership capacity needed to lead the organization confidently into the future" (Bolt, 1996, p. 167). Global leadership is a necessary component in the skill set of an international business professional.

Third, is the personal frame dimension that includes "personal effectiveness skills needed to achieve excellence, balance and ongoing renewal" (Bolt, 1996, p. 167). The personal dimension "concentrates on helping to clarify and develop the individual's purpose, vision, values and talents and to integrate work goals and priorities into his or

her personal life" and includes skills such as self-empowerment, personal responsibility, an appreciation of nature, science, the arts, the humanities; emotional and physical well-being; and the development of a continuous-learning-mindset (Bolt, 1996, p. 169). It is important to keep in mind that each of three frameworks have an equal value and Bolt states that "true leaders must develop all facets of their potential in order to lead, not just the narrow few needed to manage" (Bolt, 1996, p. 168).

Goldsmith, Greenberg, Robertson and Hu-Chan (2003), in the *Next Generation of Global Leadership,* predict five dimensions of leadership of importance for the future. The authors' state, "many qualities of effective leadership –characteristics such as communicating a shared vision, demonstrating integrity, focusing on results and ensuring customer satisfaction- will never change" (Goldsmith et al., 2003, pp. 1-2). After conducting interviews "with more 200 high-potential leaders from 120 companies and organizations around the world" (Goldsmith et al., 2003, p. xxxiii), the authors conclude that there are "five emerging characteristics of global leaders" that have emerged as being important for the future leader (Goldsmith et al., 2003, p. 2).

These five dimensions include: thinking globally; appreciating cultural diversity; developing technological savvy; building partnerships and alliances; and sharing leadership (Goldsmith et al., 2003, pp. 1-2). Thinking globally for the future, was determined to include: (1) consistently treating people with respect; (2) understanding the impact of globalization on her or his business; and (3) creating and communicating a clear vision for her or his organization (Goldsmith et al., 2003, p. 15). Being able to appreciate cultural diversity means "companies must foster an open culture built on personal relationships, small group loyalty, strong mentoring, and diverse leadership

teams" (Goldsmith et al., 2003, p. 39). By developing technological savvy, future leaders will technologically capable in their skill sets at both an individual and organization level, and be able to "successfully integrate" technological knowledge "into the core of the business in order to help the organization achieve a competitive advantage" (Goldsmith et al., 2003, p. 59). Future "global leaders must be able to build partnerships and form alliances and create networks" both inside and outside of the organization "to accomplish organization goals" (Goldsmith et al., 2003, p. 79). "Because all 15 dimensions of a global leader of the future are unlikely to reside in one super leader, competencies will have to be pooled among a leadership team, thereby creating a the need for a new competence- sharing leadership" (Goldsmith et al., 2003, p. 101). Therefore, global leaders must work together to share competencies by building partnerships and alliances.

Although the previous five dimensions have been found to be the five most emerging characteristics of global leaders, "research findings show that the 15 dimensions of leadership will be key for the effective global leader of the future" (Goldsmith et al., 2003, p. xxxiv).

The 15 key leadership dimensions are listed below by level of importance:

1. Thinking globally
2. Appreciating cultural diversity
3. Developing technological savvy
4. Building partnerships and alliances
5. Sharing leadership
6. Creating shared vision
7. Developing people
8. Empowering people
9. Achieving personal mastery
10. Encouraging constructive dialogue
11. Demonstrating integrity
12. Leading change
13. Anticipating opportunities
14. Ensuring customer satisfaction
15. Maintaining a competitive advantage (Goldsmith et al., 2003, pp. 329-334).

Goldsmith et al. (2003) state "no one leader can be expected to excel in every dimension. This leads us to the conclusion that shared leadership across a team of leaders may be the standard mode of operation in which excellent global companies do business in the future" (Goldsmith et al., 2003, p. xxxiv).   Further more, "in a complex global business environment, no specific, single model will fit the broad range of situations that leaders will encounter" (Goldsmith et al., 2003, p. 1). This statement adds credibility to both the complexity of global leadership and the need for the clarification and validation needed by businesses in order to be successful in our competitive global market.

In *Leadership without Boarders*, Cohen (2007) discussed global leadership competencies as well. He classified these competencies to include the following items with respective percentages of importance: (1) Global Business Acumen 29.5%; (2) Leadership characteristics 16.6%; (3) World view 12.5%; (4) People Leadership 27.2%; and (5) Business Leadership 14.2% (Cohen, 2007, pp. 14-15). Cohen also noted that the key core values of global leaders include: conviction, diversity, entrepreneurship,

excellence, fairness, humility, integrity, passion, perseverance, positive attitude, respect, service oriented, teamwork and work-life balance (Cohen, 2007, p. 34).

Cohen (2007) also discussed key traits essential for world-class success in his book. These key traits included: being open to new experiences, being curious about the world, being enthusiastic and energetic and willing to listen and learn (Cohen, 2007, p. 19). In addition, he also found that being able to adapt readily to change, being willing to ask the right questions were also important traits (Cohen, 2007, p. 19). Lastly, the leader must be innovative and creative, self-assured and results orientated (Cohen, 2007, p. 19) in order to be well equipped for world-class success. However, it is important to point out that Cohen found that "all leaders demonstrate certain leadership characteristics; what sets global leaders apart is that they exhibit a broader spectrum of these traits" (Cohen, 2007, p. 19).

Another important competency discussed in *Leadership without Boarders* is that of a global mindset. "People and organizations must rethink their strategy and parochial mindset" (Cohen, 2007, p. 77). Forming a global mindset includes the questions: (1) Who are your clients; (2) Who are your competitors; (3) Where are the next big opportunities; and (4) What are the next big threats? (Cohen, 2007, p. 77). Cohen then discussed the six keys for creating a global mindset. These include: (1) embrace diversity; (2) hire foreign talent if necessary; (3) expose team to global experiences; (4) use the world as your idea factory; (5) seek alliances and organize to be global; and (6) think global from day one (or today) (Cohen, 2007, p. 185).

In *Global leaders for the 21ˢᵗ Century,* eight significant forces were determined to have transformed the world of work as we concluded the twentieth century. These eight

forces include: (1) globalization; (2) technology; (3) radical restructuring and reengineering of the world of work; (4) increased customer power and demands; (5) the emergence of knowledge and learning as the organizations most valuable assets; (6) changing roles and expectations; (7) biotechnology; and (8) ever more rapid change and chaos. "Leaders must now operate in a dramatically transformed world with new kinds of workers and customers, within global marketplaces and highly technologized environments" (Marquardt & Berger, 2000, p. 17). Thus, the need for specific global leadership competencies were developed, rather necessitated, by these workplace transformations (Marquardt & Berger, 2000, p. 17).

The "new global leadership attributes" were identified as a result of this process, respectively. These six attributes include: (1) global mindset; (2) teacher, coach, mentor, and model learner; (3) servant and stewardship; (4) systems thinking and polychromic coordination; (5) spirituality and concern for ethics; (6) technologist; (7) innovator and risk-taker; and (8) visionary and vision-builder (Marquardt & Berger, 2000, pp. 17-18). The authors determined that "a key leadership attribute of twenty-first century leaders will be the ability to see the world and the workplace with a global mindset" (Marquardt & Berger, 2000, p. 18). Global mindset is simply a "filter though which we look at the world" and are inclusive in nature. People with a global mindset "seek to continually expand their knowledge, have a highly developed capacity to conceptualize the complexity of organizations, are extremely flexible, strive to be sensitive to cultural diversity, are able to intuit decisions with inadequate information, and have a strong capacity for reflection" (Marquardt & Berger, 2000, p. 19). This mindset allows for one to think and see the world globally (vs. domestically), an ability to dissect one's

"provincial ways of thinking" and "able to operate cross-functionally, cross-divisionally, and cross-culturally around the world" (Marquardt & Berger, 2000, p. 19). These are all important components in the tool kit of an international business professional, so it is easy to see why a global mindset has such value.

In addition to the importance of having a global mindset, *Global leaders for the 21ˢᵗ Century* also determined that key global competencies for twenty-first leaders should include the following abilities to describe clearly the forces behind the globalization of business:

- To recognize and connect global market trends, technological innovation, and business strategy.
- To outline issues essential to effective strategic alliance.
- To frame day-to-day management issues, problems, and goals in a global context.
- To think and plan beyond historical, cultural, and political boundaries, structures, systems and processes.
- To create and effectively lead worldwide business teams.
- To help the company adopt a functional global organizational structure. (Marquardt & Berger, 2000, p. 19)

The knowledge, skills and abilities (KSA) necessary for global leaders are vast. However, it can be inferred from the following text that it is important for leaders to have a firm leadership and personal foundation, in addition to business leadership expertise. This global leadership foundation includes different dimensions and competencies ranging from a global mindset, relationship building/management, people skills and moral/ethical integrity and cultural competence.

Culture is a pertinent, yet broad skill set required of global leaders at any level of an organization of any capacity. This can be best stated by the following quotation:

Given the increasing globalization of industrial organizations and

the growing interdependencies and the growing interdependencies

among nations, the need for better understanding of cultural

influences on leadership and organizational practices has never

been greater. (House et al, 2004, p. 10).

Thus, this topic will be explored in depth in the heading of *Cultural Competence.*

Cultural Competence

As the cultures of the world are becoming increasingly more interconnected the

business world is becoming more global (House et al., 2004, p. 4). "It is obvious that

globalization is the name of the game in business, and no large firms can afford to ignore

their overseas markets" (Chhokar et al., 2007, p. xiii). "Leaders confront situations that

are highly complex, constantly evolving, and difficult to interpret. Managers of global

firms are facing unprecedented fierce and rapidly changing competition" (House et al.,

2004, p. 10). "At the present time there is a greater need for effective International and

cross-cultural communication, collaboration, and cooperation, not only for the effective

practice of management but also for the betterment of the human condition" (House et al.,

2004, p. 4). Working with other cultures is valuable trait that sets business professionals

ahead.

Hofstede (2001) defines culture as being "the collective programming of the mind

distinguishing the members of one group or category of people from another" (p. 9). The

category in the definition of culture refers to the "nations, regions within or across

nations, ethnicities, religions, occupations, organizations, or the genders" (Hofstede,

2013, para. 1). "Culture determines the uniqueness of a human group in the same way

personality determines the uniqueness of an individual" (Hofstede, 2001, p. 10).
Hofstede thus far has researched the dimensions of both national and organizational
cultures.

Hofstede's (2001) cultural research began with a large research project
researching national cultural differences among matched samples of businesses
employees across 50+ countries, called "the IBM study" (Hofstede, 2001, p. 29). Based
off the research findings of this study, "as well as a series of follow-up studies on other
samples" (Hofstede, 2001, p. 29), Hofstede identified five dimensions of national culture
differences. These dimensions were empirically verified and statistically independent
and occurred in all possible combinations. As a result, his model has become a widely
used benchmark for cultural research (Hofstede, 2013, paragraph 13).

The five dimensions of national culture differences include: (1) power distance;
(2) uncertainty avoidance; (3) individualism versus collectivism; (4) masculinity versus
femininity; (5) and long-term versus short-term orientation (Hofstede, 2001). Power
distance looks at human inequality, which "can occur in areas such as prestige, wealth,
and power" as "different societies put different weights on status consistency among
these areas" (Hofstede, 2001, p. 79). It can also be viewed as "the extent to which the
less powerful members of organizations and institutions (like the family) accept and
expect the power is distributed unequally" (Hofstede, 2013, paragraph 3). Power
distance addresses to what degree human inequality underlies the function of the society
in question (Hofstede, 2001). Dimension 2, uncertainty avoidance, addresses the degree
to which the society in question attempts to "control the uncontrollable" (Hofstede, 2013,
paragraph 4) and "is related to the level of stress in a society in the face of an unknown

future" (Hofstede, 2001, p. 29). Uncertainty avoidance indicates "the extent to which a culture programs its members to feel either uncomfortable or comfortable in unstructured situations" (Hofstede, 2013, paragraph 4) where unstructured refers to situations are "unknown, novel, different or surprising when compared to usual situations" (Hofstede, 2013, paragraph 4). Individualism versus collectivism is the third dimension. It "describes the relationship between the individual and the collectivity that prevails in a given society" (Hofstede, 2001, p. 209) and is typically "reflected in the way people live together" (Hofstede, 2001, p. 209). This dimension determines "the degree to which individuals are supposed to look after themselves or remain integrated into groups" (Hofstede, 2013, paragraph 3). Dimension 4, masculinity versus femininity of a culture, reveals the "emotional roles between genders" and classifies a society based on the opposition of "tough" masculine compared to "tender" feminine tendencies (Hofstede, 2013, paragraph 5). "The duality of the sexes is a fundamental fact with which different societies cope in different ways" (Hofstede, 2001, p. 279). This dimensions looks at the implications of the biological differences between the sexes for emotional and social gender roles (Hofstede, 2001, p. 279).

Hofstede included a fifth dimension called long-term versus short-term orientation, which was not included in the original IBM study and is independent from the previous four dimensions (Hofstede, 2001, p. 351). Long-versus short-term orientation measures "the extent to which a culture programs its members to accept delayed gratification of their material, social, and emotional needs" (Hofstede, 2013, para. 6). This dimension "appears to be based on items reminiscent of the teachings of Confucius, on both of its poles" (Hofstede, 2001, p. 351). Specifically, this dimension

"opposes long-term to short-term aspects of Confucian thinking: persistence and thrift to personal stability and respect for tradition" (Hofstede, 2001, p. 351).

In summary, it is important to note that the study was validated and determined that each of the five dimensions "were empirically found and validated, and each country could be positioned on the scale represented by each dimension" (Hofstede, 2001, p. 29). Lastly, the five dimensions were found to be "statistically distinct and occurred in all possible combinations, although some combinations were found more frequent than others" (Hofstede, 2001, p. 29). Hofstede's work in the realm of organizational culture notes that "managing international business means handling both national and organization culture differences at the same time" (Hofstede, 2013, para. 3). Organizational cultures are "somewhat manageable while national cultures are given facts for management; common organization cultures across borders are what holds multinationals together (Hofstede, 2013, para. 3). Hofstede states that "ideas about leadership reflect the dominant culture of a country" (Hofstede, 2001, p. 388) and "asking people to describe the qualities of a good leader is in fact another way of asking them to describe their culture" (Hofstede, 2001, p. 388). It is important to keep in mind, however, that "the Hofstede dimensions of national cultures are not relevant for comparing organizations within the same country" (Hofstede, 2013, para. 1).

However, Hofstede's (1980) original work has been criticized on a few levels. Criticism includes that this work has reduced culture to an "overly simplistic four or five dimension conceptualization" and that results of his work were based off of a limited sample size due to single Multinational Corporation (Sivakumar & Nakata, 2001). In addition, the work "failed "to capture the malleability of culture over time" and "ignoring

within-country cultural heterogeneity" (Sivakumar & Nakata, 2001). Despite the aforementioned criticisms, "researchers have favored this five-dimension framework because of its clarity, parsimony, and resonance with managers" (Kirkman, Lowe, & Gibson, 2006, p. 286). In addition, as of the 2006 study by Kirkman et al., over 180 studies have been published using Hofstede's (2001) cultural values framework. Cultural values were found to be associated with change management; decision-making; human resource management (HRM); leadership; organizational citizenship behavior (OCB); work-related attitudes; negotiation behavior; reward allocation; and individual behaviors relating to personality and group processes (Kirkman et al., 2006).

The GLOBE studies: The Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness (GLOBE) studies (House et al., 2004) began as an international study of leadership and have grown in popularity as a potential alternative to Hofstede's (2001) metrics for cultural distance (House et al., 2004). The project was accomplished using a mixed method study with participation from approximately 17,300 middle managers from 950 organizations in 62 countries identified 21 globally desirable leadership attributes. Leadership attributes were measured through a questionnaire containing 112 leadership items in the study to come up with 21 leadership attributes (House et al., 2004). This study also reported the empirical findings concerning the rankings of the 62 societies (Appendix A) (with at least three societies from each major geographic region of the world) with respect to nine attributes of their cultures (House et al., 2004, p. 3). It also reports "the effects of these attributes on what is expected of leaders, and the effects of these attributes on what is expected of leaders, and the effects of these attributes on organizational practices in each of the societies studied" (House et al., 2004, p. 3).

Culture was conceptualized to include nine cultural attributes in the GLOBE study. The nine attributes in the study include: Future Orientation, Gender Egalitarianism, Assertiveness, Humane Orientation, In-Group Collectivism, Institutional Collectivism, Performance Orientation, Power Concentration versus Decentralization (or Power Distance) and Uncertainty Avoidance (House et al., 2004, p. 3). Out of the nine attributes, "the first six cultural dimensions have their origins in the dimensions of culture identified by Hofstede (1980)" (House et al., 2004, p. 13). The scales for the first three dimensions were designed to mirror the same constructs as Hofstede's (2001) dimensions of Individualism, Uncertainty Avoidance and Power Distance (House et al., 2004, p. 13). In the GLOBE study, the definition of culture was determined by House & Javidan (2004) to be "shared motives, values, beliefs, identities, and interpretations or meanings of significant events that result from common experiences of members of collectives and are transmitted across age generations" (House et al., 2004, p. 15).

These attributes are referred to as cultural dimensions when quantified (House et al., 2004, p. 3) and also have implications for leadership" (p. 7). "The mean values for the nine cultural values scores range from 2.75 (power distance) to 5.94 (performance orientation). The study found that most Globe societies prefer lower levels of power differentiation and higher levels of performance orientation" (House et al., 2004, p. 15).

The GLOBE study was "able to empirically establish that there are culturally based shared conceptions of leadership, referred to as *culturally endorsed implicit theories of leadership (CLT)"* (House et al., 2004, p. 41). This means that members of cultures share common observations and values concerning what constitutes effective and ineffective leadership. Leadership attributes were then "statistically grouped into 21

'first-order' primary factors…that were then consolidated into six "second-order" global leadership dimensions. Combined, they represent the culturally endorsed leadership theory dimensions" (CLT's) (House et al., 2004, p. 41).

Six global leadership dimensions were determined in this study in order to answer the question "extent to which specific leader characteristics and actions are universally endorsed as contributing to the effective leadership" (House et al., 2004, p. 14). These six dimensions include charismatic/value-based leadership, team-orientated leadership, participative leadership, humane-orientated leadership, autonomous leadership and self-protective leadership. Each dimension includes some type of subset scale. Each of the dimensions and its respective subset scale are described in the following text.

Charismatic/value-based leadership is a broadly defined dimension that "reflects the ability to inspire, to motivate, and to expect high performance outcomes from others based on firmly held core values" (House et al., 2004, p. 14). This leadership is "generally reported to contribute to outstanding leadership" (House et al., 2004, p. 41). It includes "six leadership subscales labeled (a) visionary, (b) inspirational, (c) self-sacrifice, (d) integrity, (e) decisive and (f) performance orientated" (House et al., 2004, p. 14). "The range of mean societal scores among GLOBE countries is 4.5 to 6.5 on a 7-point scale" (House et al., 2004, p. 41).

The team-oriented leadership typically "emphasizes effective team building and implementation of a common purpose or goal among team members" (House et al., 2004, p. 14) and "is generally reported to contribute to outstanding leadership" (House et al., 2004, p. 41). The five subscales in this dimension include: (a) collaborative team orientation, (b) team integrator, (c) diplomatic, (d) malevolent (reverse scored) and (e)

administratively competent. "The range of mean societal scores among GLOBE countries is 4.7 to 6.2 on a 7-point scale" (House et al., 2004, p. 41).

Participative leadership "reflects the degree to which managers involve other in making and implementing decisions" (House et al., 2004, p. 14). It has been "reported to contribute to outstanding leadership, although there are meaningful differences among countries and clusters" (House et al., 2004, p. 41). This dimension includes two reversed scored subscales including (a) non-participative and (b) autocratic. "The range of mean societal scores among GLOBE countries is 4.5 to 6.1 on a 7-point scale" (House et al., 2004, p. 41).

Human-orientated leadership "reflects supportive and considerate leadership but also includes compassion and generosity" (House et al., 2004, p. 14). This type of leadership "is reported to be neutral in some countries and moderately contribute to outstanding leadership in others" (House et al., 2004, p. 41). The two subscales are (a) modesty and (2) humane orientation. "The range of mean societal scores among GLOBE countries is 3.8 to 5.6 on a 7-point scale" (House et al., 2004, p. 41).

Autonomous leadership "is a newly defined leadership dimension that refers to independent and individualistic leadership attributes. It is measured by a single subscale labeled autonomous leadership and consists of individualistic, independence, autonomous and unique attributes" (House et al., 2004, p. 14). "Autonomous leadership is reported to range from impeding outstanding leadership to slightly facilitating outstanding leadership. The range of mean societal scores among GLOBE countries is 2.3 to 4.7 on a 7-point scale" (House et al., 2004, p. 42).

Self-protective leadership is the sixth dimension, or the sixth global leadership behavior identified in the GLOBE study. "From a Western perspective, this is a newly defined leadership behavior" that focuses on "ensuring the safety and security of the individual and group through status enhancement and face saving" (House et al., 2004, p. 14). The five subscales for this leadership dimension include (a) self-centered, (b) status conscious, (c) conflict inducer, (d) face saver, and (e) procedural (House et al., 2004, p. 14). It has been "generally reported to impede outstanding leadership" with a "range of mean societal scores among GLOBE countries is 2.5 to 4.7 on a 7-point scale" (House et al., 2004, p. 42).

A major finding of the GLOBE study is that "there are indeed universal attributes of leadership" (House et al., 2004, p. 728). GLOBE empirically verified that there is a significant relationship between culture and leadership. "The way societies allocate their resources has to take into consideration the cultural issues and their implications" (House et al., 2004, p. 726). Given the increasing globalization of industrial organizations and the growing interdependencies among nations, the need for a better understanding of cultural influences on leadership and organizational practices has never been greater. It is apparent that "managers of global firms are facing unprecedented fierce and rapidly changing competition" (House et al., 2004, p. 10). Thus, the authors state, "effective organizational leadership is critical to the success of international operations" (House et al., 2004, p. 4).

GLOBE studies have been commonly used by scholars in order to discover a diverse range of business occurrences ranging from research such as the *Consequences of cultural practices for entrepreneurial behaviors* (Autio, Pathak, & Wennberg, 2013),

Does national cultural effect willingness to justify ethically suspect behaviors?
(Parboteeah, Bronson, & Cullen, 2005) and over 17,000 more references listed in Google Scholar (August 5, 2013 at 4:25 p.m.). However, scholars find shortcomings to the GLOBE measures as well (Brewer & Venaik, 2011; Autio, Pathak & Wennberg, 2013).

A specific look at the cultural competence of managers was the focus of the article "Internationalizing the Business Curriculum: Developing Intercultural Competence" (Cant, 2004, pp. 177-182). Cant (2004) discussed that numerous authors have described the key competencies required of a successful global manager, however, he noted that "much of this literature has in essence described the general competencies of managers and leaders; flexibility, resourcefulness, ability to articulate a vision for the organization, ability to cope with contradictions and ambiguity" (Cant, 2004, p. 177).

Cant (2004) noted that "while these general competencies are important, there are unique competencies required to succeed as a global manager" (p. 177). He then discussed how the five competences fit into five categories: (1) cultural self-awareness; (2) cultural competence; (3) leading multicultural teams; (4) negotiating across cultures; and (5) global mindset (Cant, 2004, p.177). Cant (2004) discussed that a goal of academic international business programs should be to develop theses five cultural competencies, as these are essential to successful global managers.

In summary, based off of these findings, a global leadership foundation includes different dimensions and competencies ranging from a global mindset (Cant, 2004; Cohen, 2007; Goldsmith et al., 2003; Marquardt & Berger, 2000), relationship building and management and business acumen (Brake, 1997; Cohen, 2007), people skills (Cohen, 2007) and moral/ethical integrity and cultural competence (Mendenhall, 2008; Hofstede,

2001;). Culturally competent leaders are a necessity for all fields in our global society. "Leaders must now operate in a dramatically transformed world with new kinds of workers and customers, within global marketplaces and highly technologized environments" (Marquardt & Berger, 2000, p. 17). Hofstede (2001) and GLOBE studies (House et al., 2007) have become synonymous with cultural competencies.

Review of Research and Theory about International Knowledge, Skills, Abilities (KSA)

In 2007, Prestwich and Ho-Kim determined skills needed for Minnesota businesses when hiring international business professionals. "The implications for colleges and universities developing international business curricula that aim to provide the academic or professional breadth and depth of education/training necessary for a firm's global success are considerable" (Prestwich & Ho-Kim, 2007, p. 30). The question their study seeks to answer was "Are the education and training provided by colleges and universities in such textbook-based IB courses really meeting business needs?" (Prestwich & Ho-Kim, 2007, p. 30). The authors researched the knowledge, skills and abilities needed for recent graduates (i.e. international majors) in 2007.

Prestwich and Ho-Kim (2007) determined that most international business academic material focuses on world of business in transnational/multinational (TNC/MNC) corporations, not small business. The authors state, "Responses to the survey instrument can be viewed as fairly representative of American small and mid-sized companies in general, with relatively little boarder-state bias" (Prestwich & Ho-Kim, 2007, p. 39). Prestwich and Ho-Kim (2007) noted the following IB-Related KSA essential for hire in the field of international business (listed in no particular order):

direct sales: importing and sourcing or purchasing strategies; global sales contracts and contract negotiation; global transportation logistics; strategic planning; global production; export control laws/regulatory compliance/licensing/inspections; business ethics; bi-lateral/multilateral trade agreements; and global advertising/marketing (Prestwich & Ho-Kim, 2007, p. 40).

This international KSA skill set was determined to be necessary in addition to the following "general business KSA essential for hire" which included: writing skills (47%), teamwork (44%), computer software skills (43%), presentation skills (38%) and project leadership (35)% to be that top five KSAs (Prestwich & Ho-Kim, 2007, p. 39). Survey results of this study suggest, "there is a significant gap between the content delivered by most curricula and the KSA requirements of companies doing work internationally (Prestwich & Ho-Kim, 2007, p. 44)." Further supporting the need for research relating to the actual knowledge, skills and competencies required by international businesses.

Prestwich and Ho-Kim revisited their 2007 study with a new twist in 2009 with a focus on how IB professionals obtain or enhance the needed KSA found in their 2007 research. The following quote summarizes this focus: "Companies doing business internationally face the competitive challenges of a constantly changing operational environment." They found that "employees need to update their international knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSA) frequently by attending training programs" (Prestwich & Ho-Kim, 2007, p. 149).

In the 2009 study, Prestwich and Ho-Kim add practical reality to the knowledge and skill areas with the addition of international business work and consulting experience as important pieces of the puzzle. They discuss bringing in practitioners as guest

speakers lecturers as a way for academic programs to enhance the KSA of students in their international programs. In addition to this enhancement, they noted that encouraging students to join local professional organizations and to attend conferences and training programs would be another way for students/employees to gain this type of experience. The study can be best summarized as follows, "When it comes to specific international business (IB) degree programs do not necessarily provide graduates with a toolkit of practical skills appropriate to the needs of companies doing business overseas" (Prestwich & Ho-Kim, 2007, p. 151). However, we must also keep in mind that, "new learning would still be needed as IB processes vary by company, and the international environment in which a firm operates is subject to constant change" (Prestwich & Ho-Kim, 2007, p. 151).

In the article "Developing the Appropriate Employee Skill Set and Degree for Small International Business," Vibhakar and Smith (2004) discussed the importance of five international business skills and background competencies found to have been important among key personnel in small international businesses. These include: (1) international work experience, (2) personal networks and relationships abroad, (3) marketing expertise, (4) international business education, and (5) expertise in technology and communication (Vibhakar & Smith, 2004, p. 55). These skill sets were determined as a result of their research study, discussed in the article, regarding sixteen skills that were rated by 108 companies classified as being a small business, as determined by the Small Business Administration's (SBA) definition (Small Business Administration, 2013).

International businesses, specifically small international businesses, can be defined as "formidable economic force in the U.S., representing the majority of firms, employing more than half the work force, creating two-thirds of new jobs, and accounting for just over half of the private sector output" (Vibhakar & Smith, 2004, p. 51). Today as "over the past two decades, openings have accounted for 40 percent of the 'new' jobs and expansions have accounted for the remaining 60 percent" (U.S. Small Business Administration, 2013). It seems imperative that small businesses with international focus must develop the appropriate employee skill set for their employees. One should also keep in mind that "the importance of some skills increase as the business becomes more involved in international commerce or grows larger" (Vibhakar & Smith, 2004, p. 51).

The most important general skills for all companies as noted in the survey results in order of mean value included: (1) ability to solve problems quickly; (2) recognizing cultural barriers; (3) identification of overseas business opportunities; and (4) the ability to develop an international business plan. The study also determined that there are three important specific skills needed for international companies required in new employees (Vibhakar & Smith, 2004, p. 60). The first important skill includes understanding and performing global telecommunications. Second, it was important to be fluent in a foreign language. The third specific skill found in the study was understanding and implementing shipping. In terms of competencies, the authors found that "International business practioner's look for new employees who: (1) have knowledge of international business; (2) know something about exporting and importing; (3) have good cross-

cultural communication skills; and are (4) able to adapt quickly to day-to-day operations of an international firm" (Vibhakar & Smith, 2004, p. 56).

The Vibhakar and Smith study also discussed the actual experiences (or competencies in this study) that were required by small businesses when hiring a new employee. However, the authors stated that these skills "were not as important relative to other skills tested in this research" (Vibhakar & Smith, 2004, p. 60). The less important skills included having a master's degree (mean = 3.5), interning in a foreign country (mean = 3.1) or being from a foreign country (mean 3.1) (Vibhakar & Smith, 2004, p. 60). Additional knowledge and skills required of small business professional, based off the study included experiential learning, critical thinking, goal orientated work, recognition of cultural barriers and problem solving skills (Vibhakar & Smith, 2004, p. 63). "As firms get more involved in global trade, a more specialized degree is increasingly preferred. Among these small businesses a graduate degree specializing in international business becomes more important" (Vibhakar & Smith, 2004, p. 62).

Additional skills needed for international business professionals include international marketing, knowledge of international trade and exporting, and cross-cultural communication skills (Bush & Bush, 1998; Lundstrom, White, & Schuster, 1996; Prestwich & Ho-Kim, 2007; Reynolds & Rice, 1988; Smith, Bush, & Bush, 2002).

Smith et al. (2002) researched business executives in order to find the international business skills that firms were looking for in recent college graduates. The study found that despite the fact that international business people felt that recent graduates "had a fairly good understanding of the 'big picture' of global business", these same people found that the graduates also "had little understanding of the day-to-day

operations of a global business" (Smith et al., 2002, p. 86). They conclude that recent graduates should possess knowledge of international business, be fluent in import and export practices, excel in cross-cultural communication and must be able to quickly adapt on a daily basis regarding operations of an international firm (Smith et al., 2002, p. 86). Implications of this study found the following four skills to be of the greatest importance. First in the importance ranking is problem solving skills, such as being able to "recognize, take responsibility for and solve problems" (Smith et al., 2002, p. 94). Second, it is important the international marketing practioner's are able to recognize cultural barriers (Smith et al., 2002, p. 94). The final two skill sets include global telecommunications and computer literacy (Smith et al., 2002, p. 95) summarizing that being computer competent and fluent with the latest technology is key.

Global competencies required of successful global managers also include general business competencies such as " flexibility, resourcefulness, ability to articulate a vision for the organization, ability to cope with contradictions and ambiguity, etc." (Cant, 2004, p. 178). "While these general competencies are important, there are unique competencies required to succeed as a global manager" (Cant, 2004, p. 178). These global competencies fit into five categories: (1) cultural self-awareness; (2) cultural consciousness; (3) leading multicultural teams; (4) negotiating across cultures; and (5) global mindset (Cant, 2004, p. 178). Three different approaches have been identified in the internationalization of business curriculums including an international business degree or major, specialized internationalized business courses and the infusion of international material into traditional courses (Cant, 2004, p. 180).

In order to gain a broad perspective on what is required of a successful global executive, or an international business manager, multiple sources must be researched, compared and analyzed. Research on the topic compared the lessons of global executives with those learned by domestic executives was researched by McCall and Hollenbeck, and is referenced in *The Lessons of International Experience Developing Global Executives* (2002). A summary of these findings noted that "Those results combined with our study of what global executives seek when choosing international managers and executives, help identify which lessons form the foundation of international careers" (McCall & Hollenbeck, 2002, p. 93).

Research in the field of global management has determined that there are six career relevant findings have been determined for global executives (McCall & Hollenbeck, 2002, pp. 200-201). The first finding includes discusses that "there is no one global executive career" rather, there are simply many paths to a global career. This is relevant to this particular research in that this study focuses on the position of an international business employee in a broad sense. The importance of this topic is best stated in the following quotation, "Already in a world of complexity, global business will be even more complex as the number of players, suppliers, and entrants into the global economy increases" (McCall & Hollenbeck, 2002, p. 200).

Second, "the critical lessons of global leadership are learned in global work" and "the combination of business and culture is essential" (McCall & Hollenbeck, 2002, p. 200). In other words, personal hands-on experience in the international environment is relevant to the success of a global executive.

Third, "global careers require experience outside one's own country…prepare for it" and the finding states that "culture shock is the unique cultural experience" (McCall & Hollenbeck, 2002, p. 200). This finding supports that fact that cross-cultural experiences provide an opportunity for international business professionals to develop new perspectives, new attitudes, and skills.

The fourth finding is that of "lessons in culture are the unique global lessons" as many of the other skills of a successful executive appear to be similar whether domestic or international in nature. Culture is what "truly differentiates that global context for global executives" (McCall & Hollenbeck, 2002, p. 201).

Fifth in the list of career relevant findings states, "Line experiences are the crucibles of development, but other experiences assume more importance in global careers than they do in domestic" (McCall & Hollenbeck, 2002, p. 201). Short-term and long-term experiences in an international setting both provide crucial global lessons. (McCall & Hollenbeck, 2002, p. 201).

The sixth relevant finding includes that "there are more hazards and traps in a global career than in a domestic one" (McCall & Hollenbeck, 2002, p. 201). "Expecting a different world is a significant part of the battle in overcoming obstacles. Knowing what to expect is the key to success" (McCall & Hollenbeck, 2002, p. 201).

The Lesson of International Experience Developing Global Executives also discusses the personal attitudes and skills needed in international business survival included a "broad range of broad range of personal attitudes and skills" (McCall & Hollenbeck, 2002, p. 91). These relevant findings (or skill sets) were summarized to fit into the following broad categories (McCall & Hollenbeck, 2002):

- Learning to listen carefully, to ask questions, and to see the world through other people's eyes.

- Learning to be open, genuine, honest, and fair; to treat other people with respect; and to trust others.

- Learning to be flexible, to adapt to changing situations, to take changing circumstances into account, to manage multiple priorities and complex relationships, and to think on your feet.

- Learning to assess risks and to take them, and to act in the face of uncertainty.

- Learning to persevere, to act with discipline, and to stay calm under tough circumstances.

- Learning to be optimistic, to believe in oneself, to trust one's instincts, to take a stand for what one believes is right, and to accept responsibility for the consequences of one's actions. (McCall & Hollenbeck, 2002, p. 91)

In summary, on the accumulation of both success and failures in international work, the authors found that self-confidence and humility make "it possible to cope with the uncertainty and take risks, both of which are prerequisites of learning" (McCall & Hollenbeck, 2002, p. 92). As an additional point on this study, further research point out that the process must start early for everyone in the organization, not just the executive level of leadership (Tubbs & Schulz, 2006). Project Ulysses also cites this study in the integrated service-learning program (Pless, Maak, & Stahl, 2001).

Developing the Skills for International Business Management-The implications of the Management Education Opportunity Grid (Yu, Guan, Yang, & Chiao, 2005),

addressed the selection of employees for positions in international management and the evaluation of what the important skills for international management professionals and how well university graduates are equipped (Yu et al., 2005). The primary purpose of the study was to "understand the expectations and suggestions of executives regarding international business management and international business education programs" (Yu et al., 2005, p. 11). This result was partially based on the statement that "No relevant discussions are found on how effective relevant educational programs have been in satisfying the needs of employers in the workplace" (Yu et al., 2005, p. 7).

The conclusions drawn from the study include the following recruiting criteria for positions with international responsibility:

- Managers should have expertise in IB.

- Managers should have foreign language ability.

- Professional knowledge in IB and business experience are preferred.

- Managers should have formal business education.

- Managers should have an international vision.

- We prefer applicants with MBA degrees.

- We increasingly hire generalists for new recruits.

- The value of IB education is not easy to determine among new graduates.

- We prefer foreign MBAs to Taiwanese MBAs (Yu et al., 2005).

The results of the study found that seven skills required by international business management included communication skills, initiative, business ethics, foreign language ability, leaning capability and self-control (Yu et al., 2005). Executives preferred skills

for general management seem to be prerequisites to the need for international business management (Yu et al., 2005).

Conclusions of the study state that "the knowledge of international business management play a very important roles for large firms in developed countries and, likewise, for small and medium-sized firms in newly industrialized countries like Taiwan" (Yu et al., 2005, pp. 22-23). Results indicated that in the recruiting process, the importance of employees possessing international business management knowledge ranks only next to the importance of possessing practical experience (Yu et al., 2005, p. 22). Concluding that "students are the outputs of educational programs, whether they possess the capabilities demanded by the business community ought to be a major concern for educators" (Yu et al., 2005, p. 22).

Review of Research and Theory about Training

Human resource management consist of recruiting, training, development, hiring and compensation related activities of employees (Porter, 1985, p. 42). The action of training employees, an activity of the human resource function, is considered a value activity according to Porters value chain (1985). Porter discussed that "value is the amount buyers are willing to pay for what a firm provides them" and "value, instead of cost, must be used in analyzing competitive position" (Porter, 1985, p. 38). Thus, the competitive advantage of a firm is directly affected by human resource management through its role in "determining the skills and motivation of employees" (Porter, 1985, p. 43).

Training is a form of differentiation and it can be a way that firms provide a unique offering which could be the customer service, customer training or even the

superior training of personnel in a company (Porter, 1985). Firms may use training to supplement their existing staff or use certain skills and training criteria as a way to hire qualified employees.

Training & Academia: The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) International

Competencies deemed important for international business professionals have been determined from different perspectives. From an academic perspective, the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business International (AACSB) focuses on the goal of advancing "quality management education worldwide through accreditation, thought leadership, and value-added services" (AACSB International, 2010). AACSB "is a global, nonprofit membership organization of educational institutions, businesses, and other entities devoted to the advancement of management education" (AACSB International, 2010, para. 1). Established in 1916, AACSB provides its members with "a variety of products and services to assist them with the continuous improvement of their business programs and schools" (AACSB International). One of these services includes an "internationally recognized accreditation for undergraduate, masters, and doctoral programs in business and accounting" (AACSB International, 2010, para. 2). The specific accreditation requirements as determined by the AACSB are highlighted below.

As previously discussed in Chapter One, we must keep in mind that initial internationalization of curricula in business schools occurred as a response to the needs and expectations of the corporate sector in the early 1980s. As a direct result, the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB International) instituted

accreditation outcomes focusing on the inclusion of international content in the curriculum in order to facilitate this desired change (Crittenden & Wilson, 2005, p. 81). Specifically, AACSB required that a common body of knowledge, which included an international perspective, be a part of the business school curriculum.

By 1991, the AACSB had determined more specific requirements regarding curriculum internationalization on both an undergraduate and graduate level. AACSB specifically stated that the curriculum should cover: (1) ethical and global issues; (2) the influence of political, social, legal and regulatory, environmental, and technological issues; (3) and the impact of demographic diversity on organizations (AACSB International, 2010). By 2003, the AACSB changed its name to AACSB International in order to represent its worldwide stature and further refined it's standards to include stating that "every graduate should be prepared to pursue a business or management career in global context" (AACSB International, 2010, para. 3).

In 2011, AACSB International released the statement, "Managers who can lead in a global context are a critical resource for innovation and economic development" (AACSB, 2011, p. 18). Followed by stating, "Yet comparatively little is known about the globalization of management education" (AACSB, 2011, p. 14). The AACSB defines a global school of management as one that: (1) prepares students to perform competently and confidently in a world of global business competition and inherently global issues; (2) generates research insights about trends and best practices in global management; and (3) leverages diverse cultures and practices" (AACSB, 2011, p. 7).

The importance of this topic is summed up in the following quotation from AACSB, "the course of globalization will continue as long as people are driven to look

across borders for resources, ideas, efficiencies and services. Business schools that fail to adapt to that reality do so at their own peril" (AACSB, 2011, p. 4). In order to stay competitive, schools must meet the needs of their customers in order to provide viable candidates for the global workforce.

Training & Professional: National Association of Small Business and International Trade Educators (NASBITE International)

In addition to the accreditation standards in higher education business colleges, the international business trade community has also created an accreditation standard for international business professionals. The opportunity for international business professionals is prevalent, as supported by the following quote from the National Association of Small Business and International Trade Educators (NASBITE International):

> The increasing globalization of business is exciting and filled with opportunity. With decreasing trade barriers, and increasing productivity and technology, there are international opportunities previously only limited to only the largest and most experienced organizations. But these opportunities are also challenging. Individual working in the profession of global business must be knowledgeable in a wide range of competencies…Organizations rely on the expertise of individuals handling their international activities and are seeking proof of competency. (NASBITE International, 2012, p. 2).

The National Association of Small Business and International Trade Educators (NASBITE) is an association of both business and academic professionals, created a credential (trade skills, tasks and knowledge) required of international business

professionals. This credential is called the Certified Global Business Professional (CGBP) and it provides a benchmark for competency in global commerce. This designation "demonstrates an individual's ability to conduct global business, including global business management, global marketing, supply chain management, and trade finance" (NASBITE International, 2012, p. 4).

The CGBP is comprised of four top-level domains, and five threads (topics across all four domains). The four domains consist of Global Business Management, Global Marketing, Supply Chain Management and Trade Finance. Across each of these domains the following topics are discussed: documentation, intercultural awareness, resources in support of global trade, legal and regulatory compliance and technology (NASBITE International, 2012). A brief discussion of each of these domains follows.

The first domain, global business management, involves development "and/or assistance with the strategic and operational planning, development, implementation, and assessment of the international aspects of the business" (NASBITE International, 2012, p. 4). The development of global vision, recognizing ethical and cultural issues, strategic global business planning, research, legal compliance, budget creation, relationship management and communication/technology know-how are all core competencies in this domain.

Global marketing (domain 2) involves be able to "manage, implement, coordinate and/or assist with marketing, including planning, sales, research and support functions to assess customer needs; evaluate opportunities and threats on a global scale; and meet corporate needs within environmental constraints and corporate goals" (NASBITE International, 2012, p. 5). This domain includes the core competencies of market

assessment, development of a global marketing plan, and coordination of the companies marketing mix (products, pricing, promotion, distribution, sales) in order to implement the global marketing plan.

Supply chain management is the third domain of the CBGP credential. This domain focuses on the evaluation of all supply chain options that result in the best overall solutions to support the international business plan while complying with all rules, regulations and security issues from sourcing to final distribution (NASBITE International, 2012, p. 6). Supply chain management focuses on the core competencies that include the optimization of supply chain solutions, evaluation of trade intermediaries, international document completion, coordination of departments, risk management and facilitation of offshore procurement process.

The forth domain is that of trade finance. Trade finance includes the ability to "evaluate financial risks and methods, selection and implantation of most favorable methods of payment to support global activities, and ensure that all related costs are included at the time of quotation" and the ability to "evaluate quantity and source of finance necessary to implement global activities" (NASBITE International, 2012, p. 7). Core competencies that reside in this domain include the ability to assess political and economic risks and cultural issues in order to establish financial costs and viability, risk mitigation, commercial risk evaluation and establishing appropriate payment terms and methods. In addition, this domain also includes selecting appropriate methods, terms of conditions of purchase or sale, development of a financial plan and knowledge of forms of all terms of financing.

In summary, the four domains of international business include global business management, global marketing, supply chain management and trade finance. Each of these domains is made up of numerous core competency components requiring specific knowledge in all aspects of international business as discussed in detail in the NASBITE International practice delineation (NASBITE International, 2012, pp. 4-7).

Training & United States Department of Education & Global Competencies

The third perspective includes that of the United States Government, which also relates to the overall international needs criteria of both academic and business in relation to the international based knowledge, skills, abilities and competencies needed for our workforce. The United States Department of Education's International Strategy for 2012-16 released a report titled "Succeeding Globally Through International Education and Engagement" in November of 2012. This particular report outlined the "first-ever, fully articulated international strategy" (U.S. Department of Education, 2012, p. 1) for the United States Department of Education. The strategy was "designed to simultaneously advance two strategic goals: strengthening U.S. Education and advancing our nation's international priorities" (U.S. Department of Education, 2012, p. 1). "The strategy reflects the value and necessity of: a world class education for all students; global competencies for all students; international benchmarking and applying lessons learned form other countries; and education diplomacy and engagement with other countries" (U.S. Department of Education, 2012, p. 1). These global competencies relating to the 21st century skills have been applied to the world, visible in Figure 3.

Figure 3: *Global Competencies: 21st Century Skills Applied to the World*
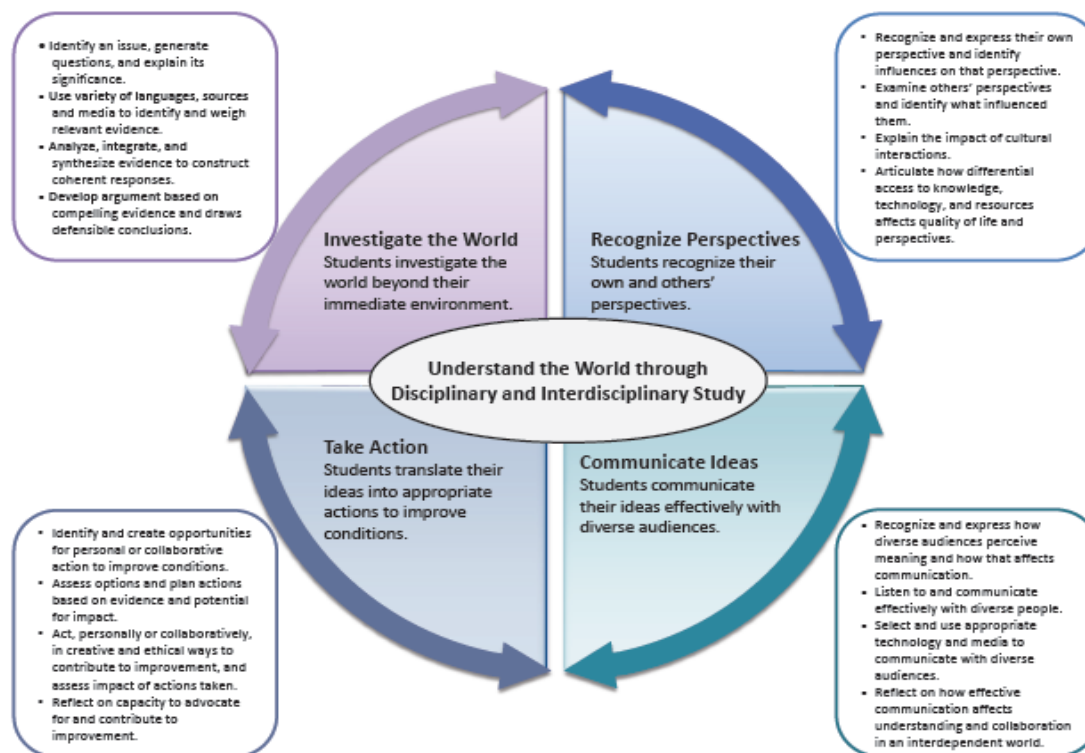
Source: (U.S. Department of Education, 2012, p. 6)

This international strategy proposed by The Global Competence Task Force "reflects a deliberate shift to a systematic and integrated approach to international engagement based on the goals and objectives of the strategy" (U.S. Department of Education, 2012, p. 1). The global competencies, the 21st century skills applied to the world, has an ultimate goal of understanding the world through disciplinary and interdisciplinary studies that include the following four components: investigating the world; recognizing perspectives; taking action; and communicating ideas (U.S. Department of Education, 2012, p. 6).

According to the U.S. Department of Education, "in today's globalized world, an effective domestic education agenda must address global needs and trends and aim to

develop a globally competent citizenry" (U.S. Department of Education, 2012, p. 8). This agenda also holds true for businesses with international presence. "Our hyper connected world also requires the ability to think critically and creatively to solve complex problems, the skills and disposition to engage globally, well-honed communication skills, and advanced mathematics, science and technical skills" (U.S. Department of Education, 2012, p. 2). Therefore, "such competencies will prepare our students, our nation, for a world in which the following are the reality: economic competitiveness and jobs; global challenges; national security and diplomacy; and a diverse U.S. society" (U.S. Department of Education, 2012, pp. 2-3).

This integrated (domestic/international) strategy was designed to "simultaneously attain two strategic goals" and as a result of implementation, the "Department of Education will focus on building awareness of the importance of a world-class education for all, international collaboration, and cross-cultural exchange" (U.S. Department of Education, 2012, p. 5). The Department of Education Secretary addressed "these issues in speeches at such organizations as the CFR, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Bank" (U.S. Department of Education, 2012, p. 5). Moreover, the international strategy was "developed to ensure that the competiveness of our nation and our workforce; educate our own increasingly diverse U.S. society; promote national security and diplomacy; and strengthen our ability to address global challenges" (U.S. Department of Education, 2012, p. 15). This international strategy includes the following objectives: (1) Increase the global competencies of all students in the United States, including those from traditionally disadvantaged groups; (2) Enhance federal, state and local education policy and practice

applying lessons learned from other countries to drive excellence and innovation in the United States and abroad; (3) Advance United States International priorities in strategically important countries through active education diplomacy; (4) Develop, monitor and continuously improve ED's international activities in an integrated and coordinated manner (U.S. Department of Education, 2012, p. 5-15).

Objective one points out that "global competencies comprise the knowledge and skills individuals need to be successful in today's flat, interconnected world" (U.S. Department of Education, 2012, p. 5). As such, "these standards, including knowledge and understanding of other countries, cultures, languages and perspectives, are applicable across the world" (U.S. Department of Education, 2012, p. 5). These skills include "interrelated skills and knowledge that are used together to enable individuals to understand the world and take action" (U.S. Department of Education, 2012, p. 5). These global competencies "are not a luxury for a select few, but rather, are essential skills for all individuals" (U.S. Department of Education, 2012, p. 5). In summary, the Department of Education's international strategy was "developed to ensure the competiveness of our nation and our workforce; educate our own increasingly diverse United States society; promote national security and diplomacy; and strengthen our ability to address global challenges" (U.S. Department of Education, 2012, p. 15). The United States Department of Education Secretary Arne Duncan, best summarized the strategy:

> Education is now the key to eliminating gender inequality, to reducing poverty, to creating a sustainable planet, to preventing needless deaths and illness, and to fostering peace. And in a knowledge economy, education is the new currency by which nations maintain economic competitiveness and

> global prosperity. Education today is inseparable from the development of
>
> human capital. (U.S. Department of Education, 2012, p. 15)

The strategy reflects the importance of "international engagement" and "the importance of a world-class education for all, so that we have a nation, and a world, this is informed, engaged, and prepared to deal effectively with the global challenges that will face us" (U.S. Department of Education, 2012, p. 15). Global competencies are indeed important and must be integrated into learning.

Summary of Findings and Themes within Reviewed Literature

The above review of literature represents the theoretical framework related to the research questions addressed by the study. This final chapter section summarizes prominent themes and findings within the framework. This summarization will serve as a base for comparison of study findings to relevant literature in Chapter Five.

Summary of Findings regarding Global Leadership and Cultural Competence

The knowledge, skills and abilities (KSA) necessary for today's global leaders may be somewhat broad based off the findings discussed in this heading. However, it can be inferred from the preceding discussion that it is important for leaders to have a firm leadership and personal foundation, in addition to business leadership expertise. "Leaders must now operate in a dramatically transformed world with new kinds of workers and customers, within global marketplaces and highly technologized environments" (Marquardt & Berger, 2000, p. 17). This global leadership foundation includes different dimensions and competencies ranging from a global mindset (Cant, 2004; Cohen, 2007; Goldsmith et al., 2003; Marquardt & Berger, 2000), relationship management (Brake, 1997), business acumen (Brake, 1997; Cohen, 2007), people skills

(Cohen, 2007) and moral/ethical integrity and cultural competence (Hofstede, 2001; Mendenhall, 2008).

Culturally competent leaders are a necessity for all fields/professions in our global society. Hofstede (2001) and GLOBE studies (House et al., 2007) have become synonymous with cultural competencies. Hofstede (2001) determined that there are five dimensions of culture. These include power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism versus collectivism, masculinity versus femininity and long-term versus short-term orientation (Hofstede, 2001). Hofstede's findings in the realm of organizational culture find that "managing international business means handling both national and organization culture differences at the same time" (Hofstede, 2013, para. 3).

The Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness (GLOBE) studies (House et al., 2004) began as an international study of leadership and have grown in popularity as a potential alternative to Hofstede's (2001) metrics for cultural distance (House et al., 2004). Six global leadership dimensions were determined in this study in order to answer the question "extent to which specific leader characteristics and actions are universally endorsed as contributing to the effective leadership" (House et al., 2004, p. 14). These six dimensions include charismatic/value-based leadership, team-orientated leadership, participative leadership, humane-orientated leadership, autonomous leadership and self-protective leadership. Each dimension includes some type of subset scale. Each of the dimensions and its respective subset scale are described in the following text. The GLOBE study (House et al., 2004) empirically verified that there is a significant relationship between culture and leadership.

Summary of Themes/Findings regarding international knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications necessary for International Business Professionals

Findings: International Business specific KSA

International Business specific KSA essential for hire in the field of international business include: direct sales, importing and sourcing or purchasing strategies, global sales contracts and contract negotiation, global transportation logistics, strategic planning, global production, export control laws/regulatory compliance/licensing/inspections, business ethics, bi-lateral/multilateral trade agreements and global advertising/marketing (Prestwich & Ho-Kim, 2007, p. 40). Where as general business KSA's were determined to include: writing skills; teamwork; computer software skills, presentation skills and project leadership (Prestwich & Ho-Kim, 2007, p. 39).

Vibhakar and Smith (2004) also determined five international business skills and background competencies found to have been important among key personnel in small international businesses. These include: (1) international work experience, (2) personal networks and relationships abroad, (3) marketing expertise, (4) international business education, and (5) expertise in technology and communication (Vibhakar & Smith, 2004, p. 55).

The Lesson of International Experience Developing Global Executives also discussed the personal attitudes and skills needed in international business survival which covered a "broad range of broad range of personal attitudes and skills" (McCall & Hollenbeck, 2002, p. 91). These attitudes and skills include:

- Learning to listen carefully, to ask questions, and to see the world through other people's eyes.

- Learning to be open, genuine, honest, and fair; to treat other people with respect; and to trust others.

- Learning to be flexible, to adapt to changing situations, to take changing circumstances into account, to manage multiple priorities and complex relationships, and to think on your feet.

- Learning to assess risks and to take them, and to act in the face of uncertainty.

- Learning to persevere, to act with discipline, and to stay calm under tough circumstances.

- Learning to be optimistic, to believe in oneself, to trust one's instincts, to take a stand for what one believes is right, and to accept responsibility for the consequences of one's actions (McCall & Hollenbeck, 2002, p. 91).

Research in the area of international business KSA has drawn attention to a number of additional skills needed for international business professionals which include: international marketing, knowledge of international trade and exporting, and cross-cultural communication skills (Bush & Bush 1998; Lundstrom, White, & Schuster, 1996; Prestwich & Ho-Kim, 2007, 2009; Reynolds & Rice, 1988; Smith, Bush, & Bush, 2002).

Five unique global competency categories of an international business professional include: cultural self-awareness; cultural consciousness; leading multicultural teams; negotiating across cultures; and global mindset" (Cant, 2004, p. 178). Seven skills required by international business management include: communication skills, initiative, business ethics, foreign language ability, leaning capability and self-control (Yu et al., 2005).

Recent graduates should possess knowledge of international business, be fluent in import and export practices, excel in cross-cultural communication and must be able to quickly adapt on a daily basis regarding operations of an international firm (Smith et al., 2002, p. 86). Problem solving, cultural barriers, global telecommunications and computer literacy were found to be the four most important skills (Smith et al., 2002).

Summary of Findings: Training

Three establishments of training were found to be important in the determination of the international business specific KSAQ's related to this study. These three establishments include: AACSB, NASBITE and the United States Department of Education.

The AACSB (2011) defines a global school of management as one that: (1) prepares students to perform competently and confidently in a world of global business competition and inherently global issues; (2) generates research insights about trends and best practices in global management; and (3) leverages diverse cultures and practices" (p. 7). AACSB specifically stated that the curriculum should cover: (1) ethical and global issues; (2) the influence of political, social, legal and regulatory, environmental, and technological issues; (3) and the impact of demographic diversity on organizations (AACSB International).

The National Association of Small Business and International Trade Educators (NASBITE International) developed a certification for global business professionals called the Certified Global Business Professional designation. The CGBP is comprised of four top-level domains, and five threads (topics across all four domains). The four domains consist of Global Business Management, Global Marketing, Supply Chain

Management and Trade Finance. Across each of these domains the following topics are discussed: documentation, intercultural awareness, resources in support of global trade, legal and regulatory compliance and technology (NASBITE International, 2012). In summary, the four domains of international business include global business management, global marketing, supply chain management and trade finance. Each of these domains is made up of numerous core competency components requiring specific knowledge in all aspects of international business as discussed in detail in the NASBITE International practice delineation (NASBITE International, 2012, pp. 4-7).

The third establishment of interest is that of the United States Department of Education. According to the Department of Education, "in today's globalized world, an effective domestic education agenda must address global needs and trends and aim to develop a globally competent citizenry" (U.S. Department of Education, 2012, p. 8). It is best summarized in the following quote: "Our hyper connected world also requires the ability to think critically and creatively to solve complex problems, the skills and disposition to engage globally, well-honed communication skills, and advanced mathematics, science and technical skills" (U.S. Department of Education, 2012, p. 2). The global competencies, or the 21st century skills applied to the world, apply an ultimate goal of understanding the world through disciplinary and interdisciplinary studies that include the following four components: investigating the world; recognizing perspectives; taking action; and communicating ideas (U.S. Department of Education, 2012, p. 6). The vision is that these skills should prepare our nation and our students "for a world in which the following are the reality: economic competitiveness and jobs; global challenges; national security and diplomacy; and a diverse U.S. society" (U.S.

Department of Education, 2012, pp. 2-3). Moreover, the international strategy states that students should be "developed to ensure that the competiveness of our nation and our workforce; educate our own increasingly diverse U.S. society; promote national security and diplomacy; and strengthen our ability to address global challenges" (U.S. Department of Education, 2012, p. 15). Domestic education must address these global needs and trends.

Forecast Chapter Three

This chapter reviewed literature addressing research and theory related to the study in the areas of global business leadership, international business specific knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications (KSAQ) required of international companies when hiring for the roles of global business professionals. The requirements and perspectives of Global leaders, Global business professionals, AACSB International, NASBITE International and the United States government were recorded and analyzed in order to determine a framework for the survey and interview research that will take place in Chapter Three.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN

Research Rationale

Research Purpose

Limited literature related to the needs of companies doing business internationally that also identifies job-specific knowledge, skills and abilities (KSA) (Prestwich & Ho-Kim, 2005) currently exist. In addition, there is also limited research regarding "needs assessments of businesses specifying the IB (International Business) related KSA they look for when hiring someone into an international position" (Prestwich & Ho-Kim, 2005, p. 31). In response to this lack of research, this particular study will focus on determining the specific international-specific knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications (KSAQ) that business leaders require when hiring employees for international positions. This study focused on needs of businesses that are classified to be "international businesses" within the state of Wisconsin and the KSAQ that the global business leaders require of their employees. The related research questions include:

1. What specific international business knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications do companies competing in a global economy require?

2. What challenges do businesses encounter due to their employees lack of international knowledge, skills, abilities or qualifications?

3. How have businesses leaders overcome business challenges due to the lack of international business knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications of their employees?

Research Approach

The research methodology employed to answer the questions addressed by this study included a mixed methods approach. The data was collected through both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods, which included a descriptive survey and structured interviews. A survey of a sample of a population provided "a quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions" (Creswell, 2008, p. 153). In this study, a survey of international business leaders in Wisconsin provided quantitative data in relation to the specific knowledge, skills, abilities and competencies that are desirable in employees. The survey addressed research question one directly. Qualitative in-depth interviews, specifically key informant interviews, provided additional support to the survey questions and by providing opinions and perspective from key business leaders in relation to the challenges and solutions faced by businesses when their employees are not prepared for international business activities.

Nature of the Methodology

In a mixed methods format, this study utilized descriptive survey and interviews as a combination of quantitative and qualitative methodology, to determine the knowledge, skills, attitudes and qualifications required of international business professionals working for international businesses in the state of Wisconsin. This study followed a concurrent design format and was administered in a two-phase approach. The survey and interview data were collected simultaneously. Data analysis initially occurred separately for both the survey and key informant interview findings were analyzed and then merged to determine the overall study results. Analysis of this data consisted of descriptive statistics, reliability and validity testing for the quantitative survey data and

content analysis, theme and pattern coding for the qualitative interview data. The data was then merged to uncover the overall findings of the study.

Quantitative and qualitative data gathering instruments were employed in this study in order to answer the questions addressed in this mixed method study. Quantitative research was appropriate for addressing specific questions with measurable numeric data (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005) relating to the purpose of this study. In this research study the quantitative data was gathered through a descriptive survey. The quantitative data gathered in this study measured the extent to which international-specific knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications were essential to the role of the international business professionals within Wisconsin businesses. Respectively, the qualitative data was gathered through key informant interviews. Qualitative research, such as key informant interviews, can be interpretive and gather information related to the perspectives of participants (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005).

Appropriateness of the Methodology to the Research

Mixed methods was chosen as a methodology for this study for a number reasons. First, mixed methods "focuses on collecting, analyzing, and mixing both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study" (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2010, p. 5). Also, the use of both survey and key informant interview methodology "in combination, provides a better under standing of research problems than either approach alone" (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2010, p. 5). As "individuals tend to solve problems using both numbers and words, combing inductive and deductive thinking" (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2010, p. 13), the choice of a mixed method study was due to its practicality.

The descriptive survey administered in this study provided quantitative research and numbers in relation to the view of international KSAQ that are important to business professionals in relation to the international business environment in the state of Wisconsin in 2013. "Surveys are information-collection methods used to describe, compare, or explain individual and societal knowledge, feelings, values, preferences and behavior" (Fink, 2009, p. 11). This method was chosen as a data collection method based on the high return rate and the ability to reach a large geographic audience (Fink, 2009). The sample audience for the survey instrument consisted of 38 international business professionals.

Qualitative research, such as interview research, specifically that of key informant interviewing, is an appropriate technique for mixed method research, especially when paired with a survey. This technique allowed the researcher to identify potential problems or clarifications needed in the survey tool that might not be apparent in the survey by obtaining supplemental qualitative information from key information sources in international businesses. Key informant interviews assisted in clarification of the quantitative findings in this study and also provided qualitative depth to the survey results. In addition to these factors, key informants made good sample candidates due to the knowledge, resources and experiences that they possess related to the topic of international business leadership. Key informants were chosen for this study based on references from the international trade associations being sampled in the survey, a convenience sampling technique.

Research Plan

Site and Sample

The sample group consisted of 38 international business professionals that either attended the specific international trade association event in the year 2013 or were members of one the state based international trade associations. The researcher by way of in-person contact at a state-based international trade association event contacted the sample group. This convenience sampling technique was chosen as a way to locate participants that met the criteria of the study and prequalify the survey participants in order to obtain an acceptable response rate.

Selection and Description of Site

The state of Wisconsin was chosen as a sample site due to the proximity of the research to multiple international businesses and in part due the wealth of qualified participants that participate in state-based international trade association meetings and events in the state. A descriptive survey was distributed in-person by the researcher at an international trade association event. A specific site was chosen, however it will not be disclosed in order for this researcher to protect the participants of the survey. The population of interest included members of multiple "international trade associations" in the state of Wisconsin. This particular population provided the study with a sample that encompassed the entire state while including both small/medium and large size company participation.

Communication with Site

The researcher gained approval from the international trade association to attend the specific event and distribute the hard copy of the descriptive survey by way of in-

person distribution on the day of the event. The site agreed to announce the survey completion process to the event participants during the event, which allowed for adequate communication with the sample on the day of the data collection.

Selection and Description of Sample

A convenience sample was chosen for this particular research design and therefore this study uses a non-probability sampling technique (Creswell, 2008). A non-probability sampling technique was used in this study due to the fact that the participants were selected because they represent the international business population this study was to sample; they were conveniently located and available to be contacted (Creswell, 2008). "A convenience sample is one that you get because people are willing to complete the survey are also available when you need them" (Fink, 2009, p. 56). The convenience sample for this study consisted of international business professionals that work in the state of Wisconsin that had attended the international trade association event. A trade association is defined as "an association of organizations in the same trade formed to further their collective interests, especially in negotiating with governments, trade unions, etc." (Trade association, 2013).

A sample is a smaller collection of units from a population used to determine truths about the population (Field, 2009, p. 793). It would be unrealistic to collect survey data from all international business professionals in the state of Wisconsin. Bringing the specific population of the study into focus, in 2011 Wisconsin had a total of 8,605 companies exporting from the state (U.S. Department of Commerce, 2013). Thus, a sample size was determined from the population of all qualified event attendees with the goal of obtaining a confidence level of 95% (0.05), an acceptable measure for

quantitative research (Field, 2009). The sample size was determined using the following equation: n=Nz^2pq/(E^2(N-1)+z^2pq) (Fink, 2009). Using this formula, the total qualified event attendees were calculated in order to determine 38 surveys were deemed an acceptable sample size with a goal of being statistically representative of the attendee population with a confidence level of 95% and a confidence interval of 8.0%. The sample for this study included 38 international business professional that attended an international trade event in Wisconsin in 2013.

The sample was assembled by way of in-person interaction at an international trade event that occurred one day in 2013. The sample was contacted on the day of the event by in-person introductions by the researcher as attendees entered the meeting room. Data was gathered by way of in-person survey completion at an international trade association event during the survey collection period. This chosen method of communication ensured that "an acceptable response rate can be reached when the researcher knows the respondents and has made sure that the questions are understandable to them" (Fink, 2009, p. 63). In order to warrant that 50% of the sample actually completed the survey, the study employed an additional strategy in order to provide a gift or cash incentive (Fink, 2009, p. 63). As an incentive for completion of the survey, the event attendees whom agreed to complete and submit the survey instrument during the event were able to enter in the optional drawing for one of three awards, each for of a "one year individual membership" to the international trade association that sponsored the event. The winners were chosen randomly via statistical software, from the pool of complete and valid surveys submitted to the researcher on the day of the

event. These three membership awards were paid for by the researcher out of good will an appreciation for working the trade association.

Additional strategies for improving response rates include being "realistic with the eligibility criteria" (Fink, 2009, p. 63), such as prequalifying those attendees for survey completion by way of in-person distribution; this helped to ensure that the sample contained the correct audience for the study. By knowing that the intended audience for the event met a majority of the survey qualifications for this study, the researcher had the benefits of convenience sample on her side. Respondent were informed of the purpose of the study and how the data will be used prior to completing the survey (Fink, 2009) by way of the researcher when she introduced the survey and by way of an announcement that was made regarding the survey during the event. Providing additional in-person information will also provide a good opportunity for the completion of surveys due to the fact that the researcher also attended and paid registration fees for the event that the sample attended, which may assist in the completion rate. Lastly, privacy and confidentiality were discussed as it relates to the use of the survey data (Fink, 2009). This information was included in the descriptive survey instrument that was distributed to the survey respondents.

Communication with Sample

In-person communication occurred with the sample at one international business trade association event that was approved by the association. After the event data was determined to be an event that would attract a similar audience to those needed for this study and the association board approved the distribution of the surveys to the attendee for the date of that event, sample group for the survey was identified. Participants in

attendance on the day of the international trade event were informed of the survey after registering for the event at the site that day. Communication was initially in-person where the researcher personally invited each attendee to participate in the research study and handed out the survey. This allowed for the surveys to be completed at this specific point in time to ensure that an adequate sample size is obtained. The researcher informed the event attendees personally that the survey data was being collected on that day only and that the survey was part of a doctoral research study. The emcee for the event also made the same announcement numerous times during the daylong event. In addition, the emcee informed the sample that the researcher would award three respondents each a "one-year individual membership" to the trade association for completing the surveys.

At this particular event the researcher provided a short explanation stating the importance of the research by way of an information table and by an announcement that was made at the event the discussed the purpose of the research and the importance of completing the survey. The in-person distribution of surveys occurred in a hard copy format. This allowed for the descriptive survey to be completed at this specific point in time (the international trade event) in order to ensure that an adequate sample size was obtained. Additional in-person communications occurred with a few respondents whom preferred to fill out the online survey because they ran out of time to complete it at the event. The interview candidates who were not in attendance at the daylong event completed the exact same survey online via http:/www.surveymonkey.

Data Collection

Within the research methodology of mixed methods, this study employed the quantitative technique of descriptive survey research and the qualitative technique of key

informant interviews in order to generate data relevant to the research questions. The use of a mixed methods approach allowed for the researcher to gather an explanation to the quantitative results of the survey.

Quantitative: Nature of Descriptive Survey Research

The descriptive survey provided quantitative research and numbers in relation to the international KSAQ that are important to business professionals working in an international business environment in the state of Wisconsin in 2013. "Surveys are information-collection methods used to describe, compare, or explain individual and societal knowledge, feelings, values, preferences and behavior" (Fink, 2009, p. 11). Surveys, such as self-administered, can be filled out by the respondent on their own and then turned in to the researcher. The survey contains questions and responses that aid in the gathering of descriptive data (Fink, 2009). This method was chosen as a data collection method based on the high return rate and the ability to reach a large geographic audience (Fink, 2009). The sample audience for the descriptive survey instrument used in this study consisted of 38 international business professionals.

Appropriateness of the technique

The technique of mixed methods supports research where "one data source may be insufficient, results need to be explained, exploratory findings need to be generalized, a second method is needed to enhance a primary method" (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2010, p. 8). Within a quantitative design, specifically in this particular study, a survey was an appropriate tool for addressing specific questions with measurable numeric data (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). The quantitative design of the survey allowed for inquiry regarding the key informants demographics and their views on international businesses KSAQ.

Qualitative research, such as interviews, can be interpretive and gather information related to the perspectives of participants (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). As a mixed methodology study, it will qualitatively examine the professional knowledge, skills, attitudes and qualifications that key informants from international businesses in Wisconsin viewed to be necessary for success and what is lacking currently in the field. Together the survey and interviews provide more detail and insight into the purpose of this study. Due to these reasons, a mixed method approach is the best match for this particular study.

Development of Reliable/Valid/Trustworthy/Instrument

The researcher developed the descriptive survey instrument used in this study based on the knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications determined during the document review process resulting in the findings of Chapter Two. The main variables chosen as a focus for this research were choses based on prior research by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (2012): Bolt (1996); Brake (1997); Cant (2004); Cohen (2007); Goldsmith et al. (2003); Hofstede (2001); House et al. (2004); Marquardt and Berger (2000); McCall and Hollenbeck (2002); NASBITE International (2012); Prestwich and Ho-Kim (2007, 2009); Smith et al. (2002); Vibhakar and Smith (2004); and Yu et al. (2005). As a result of the literature review regarding the knowledge, skills, abilities, and qualifications necessary for international business professionals, four variables were determined to be relevant to the study. These variables included: Relationship Management, Business Acumen, Personal Effectiveness and Qualifications. These four variables were developed into the descriptive survey content in order to assist the data collection in order to determine the international knowledge,

skills, abilities and qualifications (KSAQ) that companies competing in a global economy require. Variable five was also included in the survey and included the demographic questions. Questions were then developed for each of these variables. The variables and the respective questions included: Relationship Management (6 questions); Business Acumen (22 questions); Personal Effectiveness (8 questions); Personal Qualifications (10 questions) and Demographics (10 questions).

Each of the 47 questions in the survey (excluding the 10 demographic questions) utilized a six-point Likert-type rating scale. A Likert scale is a rating that is a commonly used ordinal scale in which the "respondents are asked to tell how closely they agree or disagree with a statement" (Fink, 2009, p. 25). In this particular study a 6-point scale was used to as a "*forced-choice* method because the middle option of *neither agree nor disagree* or, by convention, *neutral* is not available" (Fink, 2009, p. 26). This particular scale used one number at one end of the scale to represent the least agreement (ex: (1) not needed) and one number at the other end of the scale to represent the most agreement (ex: (6) essential skill) (Fink, 2009, p. 25). The survey used the following six point Likert-type scale response choices and scores: job position does not require this skill (1); rarely needed (2); minimally needed (3); somewhat needed (4); almost always needed (5); and essential (6).

Mean scores and standard deviations were calculated from the survey results for the survey, for each of the 47 skills, and for each of the four variables (Parts I-IV). The mean is a hypothetical estimate of the "typical" score found in the survey results and a simple statistical model of the center of the distribution of the scores (Field, 2009). The standard deviation is the average amount that observations vary from the mean. It is an

estimate of the average spread (or variability) of a set of data that is measured in the same units as the original data (Field, 2009). Small variations in the standard deviation show that the data points are close to the mean, whereas large variations show that data points are distant from the mean (Field, 2009).

In order to determine whether or not the findings from the small/medium company group were different from those of the large company group regarding the international-specific business skills, knowledge, abilities and qualifications (KSAQ) required of international businesses, statistical tests were conducted. The following methods were used to test for differences between the groups include the statistical techniques of the independent t-test and ANOVA (analysis of variance). Statistical tests hypothesize similarity in outcomes across groups (Fink, 2009). The independent *t-test* is used to test for differences and allows for the comparison of the means for two groups in order to determine the probability that any differences found are real and not due to chance (Fink, 2009). ANOVA tests the group means or averages by two or more groups (Fink, 2009).

Demographic data was also collected from the sample. Webster's Dictionary defines demographics is the statistical characteristics of human populations (as age or income) used especially to identify markets. Demographic information was needed from the sample, which assisted the researcher in analyzing the survey results and obtaining specific quantitative data in which to sort and group findings. Demographic questions were included at the conclusion of the survey in order to classify the companies by both size and location and to assist in the determination of an acceptable sample for the study.

In addition, both a name and email address was also requested of those respondents whom chose to be entered in the incentive drawing.

Validity and Reliability of the Survey Instrument

Quantitative validity is reached when the scores received from participants are consistent and stable over time (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2010). These standards are drawn from a source "external to the research and participants" and include evidence of content validity, criterion validity or construct validity (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2010, p. 210). Content validity, or the extent to which an instrument includes a representative sample of the content being measured (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005), was accomplished through the literature review of international business related knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications deemed desirable. Validity will be addressed in this study by way of the literature review on the four variables of international business specific knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications.

It is important to keep in mind that internal validity is of highest concern in experimental studies (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2010, p. 211). Thus, a valid survey tool was developed for this study under the following premises: "Valid survey information comes from reliable and valid survey instruments (measurement validity) and valid survey instruments (design validity)" (Fink, 2009, p. 72). A survey is deemed internally valid "if a study's outcome is due to or caused by the variables that are controlled or manipulated in the study" and determined externally valid if the findings apply to other settings and people (Fink, 2009, p. 72). A pilot test of the instrument aided in the triangulation of the findings.

Threats to the study may occur on both an internal and external validity of the survey instrument. Internal threats may be associated with the selection of participants, history, maturation and attrition. Where as external threats may include interaction effects of selection biases and the experimental treatment, reactive effects of testing, reactive effects of experiments arrangements or Hawthorne effect and multiple program interference (Fink, 2009, pp. 73-74).

In relation to this particular survey instrument, internal validity may include threats associated with the selection of participants, history, maturation and attrition (Fink, 2009, pp. 72-73). Selection of participants may be considered a threat if a bias results from the selection of the group of respondents. This may be diverted if the participants are invited from both small/medium and large companies versus only the selection of one sized group. History is considered a threat that occurs when unanticipated event occur during the survey completion period (Fink, 2009, p. 72). This is an uncontrollable risk, but must be taken in consideration when compiling results. The timeframe for the survey completion will be compared with global news and issues that may have occurred during the completion period and will be noted in the results as such.

Maturation is a process that occurs within participants that inevitably occurs as a function of time (Fink, 2009, p. 72). In this survey, maturation refers to the length of time that a survey participant has been involved in the international business profession, or to the depth of their personal knowledge, skills, abilities, competencies and qualifications required for the field. This can be tracked in the demographic section of the survey by asking a question about the participant's specific length and depth of their involvement in the international trade profession.

Attrition is the forth threat to internal validity of the survey included in this research study. Attrition refers to the "differential loss of respondents from one or more groups on a nonrandom basis" (Fink, 2009, p. 73). It may occur with the loss or addition of membership included in the sample. This is not something that the researcher can control; therefore it will be reported in the outcomes in order to address any shortage of sample size. The sample size for the survey was determined to be 38 surveys.

External Validity

External validity is defined as "the extent to which the investigator can conclude that results apply to a larger population" (Creswell & Plano-Clarke, 2010, p. 211). This is important to this particular study, and specifically relating to the survey, in that correct inferences may only be drawn to past and future situations, other person and settings when the investigator of the study uses a representative sample (Creswell & Plano-Clarke, 2010, p. 211). External validity will be checked in this survey by addressing the following threats. These four specific threats relative to the survey include the interaction effects of selection biases and the experimental treatment, reactive effects of testing, reactive effects of experimental arrangements or Hawthorne effect and multiple program interference (Fink, 2009, pp. 73-74).

The interaction effects of selection biases and the experimental treatment occurs when a program and the participants are unique and my not be found elsewhere (Fink, 2009, p. 73). In this particular sample, the participants are members of a specific international trade group in a specific location in a specific state. This could cause error in external validity if the specific group results are to be applied to a global audience, versus this state specific sample. This will be addressed by sampling all international

trade professionals attending this specific event, not just members of the trade association sponsoring the event. In addition, the particular blend of international trade needs and employee needs the specific state of study could pose a risk to the external validity as well. This is a definite threat to the external validity if this data where to be applied on a multi-state scale. Therefore, this study will specifically focus on the outcomes in one state and stated as such in the findings. This would allow for future statewide studies in which the data could be collected and compared, thus significantly reducing the external validity risk on the survey.

Second, reactive effects of testing may also pose a risk on the external validity of the survey. This threat can be summarized as the "bias that occurs when a survey is given before an intervention or program resulting in an effect that will not generalize" (Fink, 2009, p. 73). Standardizing the survey distribution process can mitigate reactive effects of external validity. For example, the survey were distributed to event attendees prior to the start of the event on the day of the event to potentially avoid any bias obtained from the event content and/or preparation in order to answer the survey questions. The topics of the event may or may not have related directly to/or impact the members' vision of the overall research questions.

Third, the reactive effects of experimental arrangements or Hawthorne effect occurs when "respondents in an experimental situation may answer questions atypically because they know they are in a special experiment" (Fink, 2009, p. 73). This will be addressed in the survey participants were notified when the survey was distributed and at the beginning of the interview that they are in no way (in regards to this research)

considered an expert, special international company, special candidate or have "special expertise" for completion of this survey research or interview.

Finally, the threat of multiple program interference is defined as "a bias that results when respondents are in other complementary activities or programs that interact" (Fink, 2009, p. 74). This may occur if a person whom has an international business degree, certification or special knowledge on the subject completes the survey. For example, the CGBP professional credential provides a benchmark for competency in global commerce. This designation demonstrates an individual's ability to conduct global business, including global business management, global marketing, supply chain management, and trade finance. This depth of international knowledge may provide a level of bias for the study in regards to the fact that these professionals have specific knowledge and interest in the area of international KSAQ.

Content validity

Content validity stipulates that a survey questions accurately represent the characteristics or attitudes that they intended to measure. In addition, content validity is "usually established by referring to theories about personality, emotions, and behavior and by asking experts whether the items are representative samples of the attitudes and traits that you want in the survey" (Fink, 2009, p. 43). Content validity was addressed through the summary of content findings found in Chapter Two of this study. These findings were then determined to fall into four constructs, which is what the survey format was developed from.

Construct Validity

Construct validity assists in the validation of a survey instrument. "Surveys can be validated by demonstrating that they measure a construct such as hostility or satisfaction" (Fink, 2009, p. 43). It can be established experimentally by "trying the survey on people whom the experts say do and do not exhibit the behavior associated with the construct" (Fink, 2009, p. 43). This will be addressed by administering the survey to business professionals involved in the global marketplace, thus focusing on a specific international trade event audience within the state.

Reliability

Reliability in a quantitative study is also important issue in a research study. Adequate reliability is an important characteristic of a valid survey. "In a study researchers need to check for the reliability of scores (through statistical procedures of internal consistency) and any test-retest comparisons while exploring the data" (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2010, p. 211). Thus, a survey is valid if it is an accurate reflection of respondents' knowledge, attitudes, values, and behavior (Fink, 2009, p. 43). "Quantitative reliability is reached when the scores received from participants are consistent and stable over time" (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2010, p. 211). Determining the predictive ability and the concurrent content and construct validity may also assess survey validity (Fink, 2009, p. 43).

Predictive ability will be addressed in this survey by administering the survey to all international business professionals attending the event and then comparing scores between the small/medium and large companies. When comparing the data sets, if the results show a high positive or negative correlation, then the survey has predictive validity (Fink, 2009, p. 43). The survey will prove concurrent validity if it can be

compared it to a known and acceptable known and accepted measure. Specially, this survey has been developed from the successes of valid surveys by Prestwich & Ho-Kim (2007, 2009) and Vibhakar & Smith (2005) and research by Bolt (1996); Brake (1997); Cant (2004); Cohen (2007); Goldsmith et al. (2003); Hofstede (2001); House et al. (2004); Marquardt & Berger (2000); McCall & Hollenbeck (2002); NASBITE International (2012); Prestwich & Ho-Kim (2007); Smith et al. (2002); Vibhakar & Smith (2004); and Yu et al. (2005).

Pilot test of the survey instrument

A pilot test was conducted once the respondents were determined. A pilot test is a test of the survey device with a purpose "to help produce a survey form that is usable and that will provide you with the information you need" (Fink, 2009, p. 6). As a sound research practice, "surveys *must* be pilot tested before being put into practice" (Fink, 2009, p. 7). The pilot participants were contacted and asked to complete the survey using a convenience sampling (Fink, 2009) in order to identify qualified international business professionals that would not be in conflict with the sample used for the main study. Each of the sample respondents was then contacted via email requesting that they complete the survey within a seven-day window of time. The goal of the pilot survey was to contact 16 participants. The qualified pilot participants came from outside of the state of Wisconsin or were not currently in the pool of qualified candidates for the research study. This process allowed the pilot to successfully gather results without compromising the potential audience for the survey. Each participant received an email invitation message that provided an electronic link to the survey tool in addition to the request for participation in the survey. Of the 16 people contacted for the pilot survey, only eight

participants completed (50%) the survey in the given timeframe. Out of the final eight completed surveys, one survey was marked incomplete making only seven surveys valid. The incomplete survey was due to the respondent being distracted at work and only completing the questions for the first variable. Thus, this incomplete survey was invalid and not used in the compilation of results.

Included in the survey data, four respondents provided feedback on the survey questions. The responses included: a) In question 5, you might want to fix to say "ability to share leadership" instead of sharing; b) My role does not include hiring nor am I a manager; c) The survey looks good; d) 200 people in company. These comments brought up a few items that needed clarification in the pilot survey. A few minor corrections were necessary which included rewording the phrase "sharing of leadership" and the addition of demographic data questions to include the specific sizes of companies in order to classify responses coming from small/medium and large companies. Lastly, the following respondent posed question was addressed in the study that item b) (above) addressed: Will the sample audience feel comfortable enough to answer the questions even if they are not the hiring manager? This required a repositioning of the variable write-ups and survey instructions to remind/ensure that the participants to answer the questions based on their perceptions of the profession, not their perceptions of the hiring process at their particular place of employment.

Reliability of Pilot Instrument

A test for reliability occurred on the question data of the pilot test using SPSS. Reliability is "the ability of a measure to produce consistent results when the same entities are measured under different conditions (Field, 2009, pp. 792-793). It refers to

the consistency or stability of the instrument being measured using a Cronbach alpha coefficient. The Cronbach alpha is "a measure of the reliability of a scale" (Field, 2009, p. 784). The pilot study applied a six-point Likert scale rating scale. The rating scale included the following: 1- not needed; 2-rarely needed; 3-minimally needed; 3-minimally needed; 4-somewhat needed; 5- almost always needed; and 6-essential (can not function without). The ability of this survey instrument to measure something accurately with consistency means that it is a reliable instrument.

Specifically relating to the pilot survey, the SPSS reliability results reflected that the survey is reliable. Each scale was run separately to test for reliability. The findings for the six variables of the study, when analyzed in SPSS, included a Cronbach Alpha of an acceptable scale (above .700) for each variable (Field, 2009). The Cronbach Alpha findings for each of the variables are included: Relationship Management .781; Business Acumen subsets of General Business .836, Supply Chain .908 and Trade Finance.905; Personal Effectiveness .955; and Qualifications .871.

The results of factor analysis of the pilot data reflect that the original question groupings for the pilot survey questions statistically correlated into different variable categories from where they had originally been assigned. For example, the first two questions in variable one fell into the fourth component based on the factor analysis. Most questions fell into the grouping of the first component (variable 1 relationship management). The only other grouping that stood out was that all the questions in component 3 (variable 3 business acumen – supply chain management) were all grouped to component 2 (variable 2 business acumen- general business management and marketing). These results suggest that the third component could be removed entirely

and the questions moved to second component. However, taking into consideration that this was a small sample size (pilot sample) this does not mean that this component needs to be removed from the survey. Upon reflection of the literature review and focus group findings, the researcher chose for the component to remain in the survey. This analysis procedure also provided the researcher with a chance to triangulate data (surveys, interviews, content analysis) in order to determine if the groupings were acceptable for further study.

Validity of Pilot Instrument

Quantitative validity is addressed at two levels including the quality of the scores from instruments used and the quality of the conclusions that can be drawn from the results of the analysis (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2012, p. 416). Validity was ensured through the pilot test. Validity is the evidence that a study allows correct inferences about the question it was aimed to answer or that a test measures what it set out to measure conceptually (Field, 2009, p. 795). Respondents were able to provide feedback regarding the tool in the "comments" section at the end of the pilot survey. As a result, the survey tool was adjusted to accommodate for these findings (refer to the details in the pilot study section). In order to check for validity and validate the survey content, question clarity and basic structure of the survey tool. Based on initial feedback from the respondents, wording on one question was changed to provide a clear question. One question was eliminated entirely after noting the similarity in the question wording and responses.

Two demographic data questions were included in the pilot survey. Demographic data is important for classification purposes when grouping data and responses, looking

for trends, themes and even outliers in the data analysis. These questions identified the respondent's specific demographic data relating to the name of the company that the respondent worked for, state, zip code and the company size. Two additional demographic questions were added after completion of the pilot study. One of these questions was added to account for gathering the respondent information of those who were interested in entering a drawing (a completion incentive). The second question was added to specifically address demographic data needed in final survey that will be implemented due to the fact that this data relates specifically to the international trade associations located in Wisconsin (where the primary participants will be drawn from) and personal demographics detail including name, email addresses.

Descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics were calculated on the pilot questions to analyze the mean and determine the standard deviation for each question. This was completed in order to assess the fit of the statistical model of the pilot data (Field, 2009, p. 35). The mean is "a statistical model of the center of the distribution of scores and a hypothetical estimate of the 'typical' score" (Field, 2009, p. 789). The mean is a model created to summarize the research data (Field, 2009). The range of the mean for the 48 pilot questions was 3.85-5.85 on a six-point scale in relation to the rating of the essential KSAQ required by the pilot study respondents. This is the hypothetical view that the most common answers fell with-in the range of three to five, minimally needed to almost always needed respectively, on the six-point scale of the survey. This also reflects that the questions are a good fit for the scale of this study.

The standard deviation is an estimate of the average variability (spread) of a set of data measured in the same units of measurement as the original data. It is the square root of the variance (Field, 2009, p. 794). The standard deviation is calculated in the pilot data because it is used as "a measure of how representative the mean was of the observed data" (Field, 2009, p. 42). A small standard deviation, such as .534, represents that most data points were consistently close to the mean for this particular question (Field, 2009). As a result the mean was an accurate representation of the respondents' ratings for this particular question. A large standard deviation, such as 1.889, represents that most data points for this question were more spread from the mean. This means that some respondent's ratings were low and others were high on the six-point scale for this particular question and the mean for this question may not be an accurate representation of the mean in terms of the responses for this question (Field, 2009). An analysis was run for each of the 48 questions in the pilot survey (Refer to Tables 1-3).

Table 1

Pilot Study Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Community building (develop sense of unity, trust in project teams)	8	4.00	6.00	4.6250	.74402
Ability to build collaborative relationships in global environment	8	5.00	6.00	5.5000	.53452
Partnering skills	8	4.00	6.00	5.0000	.53452
Ability to be flexible & open to new ways of doing things	8	4.00	6.00	5.3750	.74402
Appreciation of cultural diversity (communications, customs)	8	4.00	6.00	5.6250	.74402
Building partnerships & alliances with global partners	8	4.00	6.00	5.3750	.74402
Networking and communication skills (verbally, digitally)	8	4.00	6.00	5.7500	.70711
Business ethics (e.g. corporate responsibility, fair labor practices)	7	5.00	6.00	5.8571	.37796
Country specific knowledge (e.g. how to do business)	7	4.00	6.00	5.2857	.75593
Global sales contracts (e.g. Inco terms), contracts negotiation	7	4.00	6.00	4.5714	.97590
Global advertising and marketing (e.g. trade leads)	7	3.00	6.00	4.8571	1.06904
Global customer services, including after-sales	7	3.00	6.00	4.7143	.95119
Global production (e.g. materials management, ISO certification)	7	1.00	6.00	4.0000	1.82574
Joint ventures, foreign investment, branches	7	2.00	6.00	4.0000	1.29099
Market research methods (e.g. techniques, sources, reports)	7	3.00	6.00	4.5714	.97590
Human resources (e.g. global employees, hiring, visas)	7	3.00	6.00	4.7143	1.11270
Strategic planning (global strategy development/implementation)	7	3.00	6.00	5.1429	1.06904
Export control laws, regulatory compliance, licensing, inspections	7	3.00	6.00	5.4286	1.13389
Global transportation and logistics (e.g. Storage, shipping)	7	4.00	6.00	5.1429	.89974

n = 8; Source: (Coon, 2013)

Table 2

Pilot Study Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Importing and sourcing or purchasing strategies	7	2.00	6.00	4.7143	1.38013
Legal areas (e.g. intellectual property rights, distributor agreements)	7	3.00	6.00	5.0000	1.41421
Other export/import skills (e.g. CE Mark, documents, NAICS/HS)	7	2.00	6.00	5.0000	1.41421
Export financing (e.g. Ex-Im Bank, SBA, letters of credit)	7	3.00	6.00	4.5714	.97590
Exporting, distributorship (direct sales)	7	3.00	6.00	4.5714	1.13389
Foreign exchange (market, exchange rate regimes, risk)	7	3.00	6.00	4.8571	1.06904
Import laws, regulatory compliance, inspections	7	5.00	6.00	5.5714	.53452
International trade theory (trade agreements NAFTA, EU, WTO)	7	3.00	6.00	4.5714	.97590
Letters of credit (add types)	7	3.00	6.00	4.1429	1.21499
Political risk (differences in political economics between countries)	7	3.00	6.00	4.5714	.97590
Global mindset	7	4.00	6.00	5.7143	.75593
Critical thinking & problems solving skills	7	5.00	6.00	5.4286	.53452
Facilitation skills (e.g. change & complex global environment)	7	3.00	6.00	5.0000	1.00000
Recognizing cultural values (e.g. in business, customers, partners)	7	4.00	6.00	5.2857	.75593
Ability to switch communication styles (with foreign partners, employees, customers)	7	4.00	6.00	5.1429	.89974
Ability to sharing leadership (delegation, teamwork, group thinking)	7	3.00	6.00	5.0000	1.15470
Empathy (to situations, other people)	7	3.00	6.00	5.0000	1.00000
Maturity to perform at peak levels under strenuous conditions	7	4.00	6.00	5.2857	.75593
Being Tech savvy (devices, how to, and comfort using technology)	7	3.00	6.00	4.8571	1.06904
International business degree (minor, major, emphasis)	7	2.00	5.00	4.0000	1.15470

n = 8; Source: (Coon, 2013)

Table 3

Pilot Study Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
International business course work in education (e.g. International Marketing, etc.)	7	2.00	5.00	4.0000	1.15470
International business certification (e.g. CGBP certification)	7	2.00	5.00	3.8571	1.21499
Multiple language skills (in addition to English)	7	2.00	6.00	4.2857	1.38013
International travel experience (academic, study abroad)	7	2.00	5.00	4.1429	1.21499
International travel experience (personal or business)	7	3.00	6.00	4.7143	1.25357
Presentations skills (speaking, creating presentations, etc.)	7	4.00	6.00	5.4286	.78680
Project management experience, skill set and/or certification (PMP)	7	3.00	6.00	4.4286	1.13389
Valid Passport prior to hire	7	1.00	6.00	5.2857	1.88982
Writing skills (professional, publications, website communications)	7	3.00	6.00	4.7143	1.11270
Valid N (listwise)	7				

n = 8; Source: (Coon, 2013)

After running a statistical analysis on the 48 questions on a group batch, the researcher found that none of the questions needed to be removed from the survey. This finding was based on the reliability statistics with a Cronbach Alpha of .959 on the 48 questions. Since the result of the reliability test yielded results higher than .8, they should not be removed (Field, 2009). This SPSS test was a quick way to show the researcher if one or more of the questions should be removed from the survey tool.

For each of the six variables of this particular survey, the Cronbach Alpha was at .700 or higher (refer to Table 4). This suggests that all of the survey questions in each of the six sections were acceptable questions; and based on this statistical analysis, they do not need to be removed from the survey. However, the researcher removed one question

from the first variable, due to it being similar to another question in the same variable

question set based on the fact that it produced the same results as the other question in the

pilot test.

Table 4

Cronbach Alpha of Pilot Data

Survey Variables	Cronbach Alpha	Number of items
Personal Effectiveness	0.955	9
Business Acumen- SCM	0.908	5
Business Acumen _TF PM	0.905	7
Qualifications	0.871	10
Business Acumen- GMM	0.836	10
Relationship Management	0.781	7
Pilot survey (all questions)	0.959	48

Source: (Coon, 2013)

Factor analysis was performed on the pilot data using SPSS. Factor analysis is "a

multivariate technique for identifying whether the correlations between a set of observed

variables stem from the relationship to one or mare latent variables in the data, each of

which takes the form of a linear model" (Field, 2009, p. 785). The goal of factor analysis

is to provide the reader of the research with enough information to make an informed

opinion about the data presented in the research (Field, 2009, p. 671). It often measures

things that cannot be directly measured and is considered a technique for identifying

groups or clusters of variables (Field, 2009, p. 628). Factor analysis is a good way to

measure the variables used in the pilot survey and to "(1) understand the structure of a set

of variables; (2) to construct a questionnaire to measure an underlying variable; and (3) to

reduce a data set to a more manageable size while retaining as much original information

as possible" (Field, 2009, p. 628). Factor analysis of the 49 questions resulted in six main

themes, which resulted in the survey categories of: Relationship Management; Management and Marketing; Supply Chain Management; Trade Finance and Payment Methods; Personal Effectiveness; and Qualifications. Each of the 49 questions received a factor analysis score of .5 or higher revealing a strong construct validity rating of the survey instrument.

Principle component analysis is another approach (in addition to factor analysis) used to locate the underlying dimensions of a data set (Field, 2009) and was the chosen analysis method for analyzing the pilot study data. When analyzing the pilot study survey questions as a whole by way of factor analysis, the results showed that the groupings for the pilot survey questions fell into different variable categories from where they had originally been assigned. For example, the first two questions in variable one fell into the fourth component based on the factor analysis. Most questions fell into the grouping of the first component (variable one relationship management). The only other grouping that stood out was that all the questions in component three (variable three business acumen – supply chain management) were all grouped to component two (variable two business acumen- general business management and marketing). The results suggest that the third component could be removed entirely and the questions moved to second component.

This online survey format was used successfully for the pilot study and thus has been chosen as the format for the final survey. Once the survey was ready to pilot, the researcher contacted 16 pilot participants that met the profile of the future respondents. The pilot sample respondents were not qualified to be in the research study due to minor clarifications, such as business location. This confirmed that would be zero chance for

error by using the same people again. As a result of the pilot study, necessary changes were made to the survey in accordance to these findings.

After analysis of pilot study, the following changes were made to the survey tool. In the first section, one of the questions was removed that asked about "partnering skills" as it seemed to be a duplication of another question in the same section. The researcher made some changes to the demographic section for the final version of the survey. The section for comments was removed due to the fact that this section was only needed for the pilot. A section for company demographics was included in order to track the zip codes, company name, company size and current trade association membership as mandatory data needed in the survey. This demographic data will help the researcher to track the respondents and ensure that the required sample size is completed. In order to validate the study in terms of maturation and history of the sample population, a question was added to the survey to gather the length of time that a survey participant has been involved in the international business profession. Lastly, the researcher added the optional demographic questions of name and email address solely for the purpose of entering the drawing that the researcher will sponsor for completing the survey. More information on this procedure will be included in the survey procedure section.

Once the updates were made, the variables and components were aligned to the following research questions for this study as stated below:

1. What specific international business knowledge, skills and abilities and qualifications do businesses seek when hiring employees for international roles? (Refers to components 1, 2, 3, 4; Survey Instrument)

2. What challenges do businesses encounter due to their employees lack of international knowledge, skills, abilities or qualifications? (Refers to all 4 components; Key Informant Interviews)

3. How have businesses leaders overcome business challenges due to the lack of international business knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications of their employees? (Refers to all components; Key Informant Interviews)

Procedure

Permission to collect data and conduct research for this study was approved by the Institutional Review Board at Cardinal Stritch University. With approval from the Board, the study was then conducted in compliance with the principles governing research with human subjects and in accordance with the Ethical Principles of the American Psychological Association.

Phase I – Administration of the Survey Instrument. Phase one of the study began with the collection of quantitative data on the international knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications needed in international business professionals. The goal of this survey was to compare the known knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications as gathered in the literature review of this study to the actual needs of the international business professionals in the state of Wisconsin. This survey was be administered in hard copy format to gather information from 38 international business professionals from companies located in the state of Wisconsin whom had attended an international trade

association event in 2013. The format of the survey, hard copy, allowed for timely completion by the respondents whom attended the event. Survey questions were developed by the researcher based as determined from the findings of: AACSB (2012); Bolt (1996); Brake (1997); Cant (2004); Cohen (2007); Goldsmith, Greenberg, Robertson, and Hu-Chan (2003); Hofstede (2001); House et al. (2004); Marquardt and Berger (2000); McCall and Hollenbeck (2002); NASBITE International (2012); Prestwich and Ho-Kim (2007); Smith et al. (2002); Vibhakar and Smith (2004); and Yu et al. (2005). Questions were validated for clarity of content and survey structure using a pilot test of the survey instrument prior to final use.

The sampling procedure for this survey include a single-stage sampling procedure due to the fact that the researcher has access to sample by direct in-person contact with the sample population (Creswell, 2003, p. 156). The sample group was selected from the attendees of an international trade association event that was held on a specific day at a specific time and location in 2013. This population consisted of 38 international business leaders.

Through the use of Surveymonkey survey software the survey instrument was created. The survey population was then contacted in-person by the researcher whom informed them about the importance of completing the survey and the optional contest entry for completing the survey and returning it by the end of the event. Reminder messages about the survey were announced by the event MC throughout the event in hopes of respondent awareness of the importance to the research regarding completion of the survey.

Phase II – Key informant interviews. At the same time as the survey data collection phase (*Phase I)*, the qualitative phase (*Phase II – Key informant interviews*) occurred that gathered descriptive information regarding key international business professional's experiences and perspectives on the international knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications required in the field of international professionals. Key informant interviewing will be discussed at a greater depth in the following section.

Qualitative Methodology: Nature of Interview Methodology

An interview is most simply defined as "as conversation with a purpose" (Kahn & Cannell, 1957). Interviewing can be an effective way to gather information as part of a formal research process. "We can learn about the work of occupations and how people fashion careers, about cultures and the values they sponsor, and about the challenges people confront as they lead their lives" (Weiss, 1994, p. 1). It is a form of qualitative data collection "that sacrifices uniformity of questioning to achieve fuller development of information" (Rubin, 2005, p. 3). Qualitative interviews provide the researcher a way to understand experiences and reconstruct events that they have not experienced and they allow the researcher to extend an intellectual and emotional reach across age, occupation, class, race, sex and geographical boundaries (Rubin, 2005).

Interview research, as a data collection method, has many advantages. Interviewees can provide historical background or information relevant to the research topic. It can be useful for the researcher to interview when participants cannot be observed directly (such as researching the knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications required of international business professionals). Interviews also provide the interviewer with "control" over the line of questioning (Creswell, 2008). The interviewer can guide

and probe as needed in order to obtain answers and varying levels of depth with each interview candidate, if necessary.

When conducting interviews, it is important to prepare protocols (conversation guides) in order to keep the interview questions flowing and to keep the interviewer on track. Protocol refers to "the form of ceremony or etiquette observed" in interview research method (Blair, 2010, slide 12). When referring to the interview research, an interview protocol refers to the full written version of the main interview questions are determined prior to the interview (Rubin, 2005). This protocol was provided to the interviewee in advance of the actual interview and served as a guide for the interview. The interview protocol was submitted to institutional review boards for approval prior to conducting the interviews. Weiss (1994) discussed the use of an interview guide as an interview protocol of sorts, in that "the guide functions for the interviewer as a prompter might for an actor" (Weiss, 1994, p. 48). He refers to the interview guide is a listing of areas to be covered in the actual interview, which includes a listing of topics or questions that together suggest lines of inquiry for each area (Weiss, 1994). Developing an interview protocol did serve as a guide for the researcher when conducting the key informant interviews for this study.

Protocols were established regarding the researcher's role in the interview process. Establishing an acceptable research role is important for the researcher when conducting interviews. As a researcher "you have to show who you are in ways that the interviewees accept and understand" (Rubin, 2005, p. 84). This role includes presenting yourself in a non-threatening way and still enabling in-depth questioning (Rubin, 2005).

This allowed for a potential connection between the interviewer and the interviewee at the emotional level (emotional intelligence) in some instances.

Key informant interviewing is the mode of interviewing chosen in this research study. "Key informant interviews collect informed opinions, perceptions, and facts from people with special knowledge and expertise about the implementation of the type of program being considered" (Wholey, Hatry, & Newcomer, 2004, p. 72). This type of interview typically takes place by phone, but may take place in face-to-face fashion. An advantage of this particular form of interviewing is that it captures the key informant's expert knowledge in the particular program area that the researcher is evaluating. "Key informant interviews collect informed opinions, perceptions, and facts from people with special knowledge and expertise " (Wholey et al., 2004, p. 72) which support the inclusion of key informant interviewing in this particular method of study.

Despite the advantages of interviewing, disadvantages of using interviews as a data collection method do exist. Disadvantages of this type of interview include the fact that an experienced interviewer is needed to collect question answers effectively within the short period of time during an interview (Yin, 2004). This interviewer must also have people skills and be able to build rapport with the informants in order to facilitate honest answers (Weiss, 1994). However, the sampling process used for this interview process is subject to bias on behalf of the committee and possibly the researcher. The variance in words, coding and theme building may not be a seen as being comparable to quantitative collection methods. Due to the reasons stated, this study included both qualitative and quantitative data collection, which is considered a mixed method study.

Interviewing also includes significant time investment and room for bias. Time and effort is a significant investment associated with using interviewing as the chosen form of data collection due to the preparation for, execution of and analysis methods of the data. Avoiding potential bias in areas of the role of the researcher, such as the way in which questions are asked (intonations, verbal cues, facial expressions, etc.) may be hard for a researcher to accomplish. Transcribing the data takes additional time once the interview has been conducted. Sample bias may also occur due the sample technique. Snowballing, or sampling based on recommendations from other participants, and the use of convenience sampling may also cause a bias (Weiss, 1994).

Lastly, the data gathering tools for key informant interviewing must be used both systematically and properly in order to collect valid evidence from the key informant interviews. Validation of the data and results should occur by following persuasive qualitative data analysis procedures that include using the researcher, participant, and reviewer standards; using validation strategies (member checking, triangulation, disconfirming evidence and external reviewers); checking for accuracy of the account; and employing limited procedures for checking reliability (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, p. 206).

Appropriateness of the Technique

The findings of the quantitative method of survey research were compared with the qualitative method of key informant interviews. Interview participants were provided with opportunity to elaborate on the specific topics of interest related to questions two and three of the study. Additional validity was provided to this study as the key informant interview data was provided in an open-ended context in order to confirm the

outcomes of this study (Albers-Miller, 2000, p. 67). Key informant interviewee candidates consisted of the international business professionals that were employees of Wisconsin based businesses that conduct business on an international platform. The companies varied in size from small/medium (at less than 500 employees) to large (at more than 500 employees). The researcher will be using pre-established interview protocol based on the survey results for each interview and will complete all of the interviews.

Interview research, specifically key informant interviewing, is an appropriate technique for a mixed method research study. This technique allowed the researcher to identify potential KSAQ related business challenges that might not be apparent based solely on the survey results. The key informant interviews provided a way for the researcher to obtain information from key informants from the international business sample that included more depth and detail than obtained by survey respondents alone.

Development of Reliable/Valid/Trustworthy Instrument

In qualitative research, validity holds more focus then reliability when compared to quantitative research. Reliability in qualitative research plays a minor role, when compared to validity and in this case refers primarily to the accuracy of coding. Validity relates to whether or not the researcher's and participants data was recorded accurately, can be trusted and is credible (Creswell, 2012). Validity in this case comes from analysis procedures of the researcher, based on information gleaned while visiting with participants, and from external reviewers. Although establishing validity in qualitative research is important and many approaches are available to use, the main focus is

assessing whether the information obtained through the qualitative data collection is accurate (Creswell, 2012).

As previously discussed in the nature of key informant interviewing, validation of the data and results should occur by following persuasive qualitative data analysis procedures that include: using the researcher, participant, and reviewer standards; using validation strategies (member checking, triangulation, disconfirming evidence and external reviewers); checking for accuracy of the account; and employing limited procedures for checking reliability (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Member checking is an approach that is frequently used in qualitative research. In this approach, the researcher takes summaries of findings, such as major themes, back to key participants involved in the study and asks them is the findings are an accurate reflection of their experiences (Creswell, 2012).

Another common validation approach is that of triangulation of data from several sources (three or more) or data from several individuals (Creswell, 2012, p. 211). Disconfirming evidence is another approach. This is information that "presents a perspective that is contrary to the one indicated by the established evidence" (Creswell, 2012, p. 212). "This approach confirms the accuracy of the data analysis in real life, we expect the evidence for themes tot diverge and include more than just positive information" (Creswell, 2012, p. 212). The final approach to determine validity would be to ask others (peers, external auditors, individuals not affiliated with the project) to exam the data and qualitative results using their own criteria (Creswell, 2007).

Threats to validity are also possible when implementing key informant interviews. "Threats to external validity are most often the consequence of the way in which

respondents are selected and assigned" (Fink, 2009, p. 73). An example of a threat to external validity in an interview would be that of The Hawthorne Effect (Fink, 2009, p. 73).   The Hawthorne effect typically occurs when respondents know that they are participating in an experiment (Fink, 2009, p. 74). The threat to validity occurs when the participants "behave uncharacteristically because they are aware that their circumstances are different" (Fink, 2009, p. 74) or because "they have been 'chosen' for an experiment" (Fink, 2009, p. 74). In order to reduce the threat to external validity in the study, the researcher conducted the following protocol. The key informant interviewee will be informed as part of the protocol that they are part of a sample group of interviewee's chosen for this study. The researcher will also state not imply that the interviewee are in no way (in regards to this research) specifically considered to be an expert, a special interview candidate or that they have been "chosen" for this research.

Procedure

The following procedure took place in order to conduct eight key informant interviews (Wholey et al., 2004) for this study. The interviews were completed with key informants during *Phase II – Key informant interviews* of the study. As this was a concurrent design, both Phase I and II occurred simultaneously. The researcher contacted potential key informant candidates while distributing the survey instrument at an international trade event. This in-person contact with potential key informant participants assisted the researcher in developing an interview list by way both convenience and snowball sampling techniques. Potential key informants candidates were in attendance at this particular international trade association event and it was know to the researcher that

they would meet the qualifications for both the survey and interview study due to their breadth and depth of knowledge in international business professional.

Once the interview list had been created, the researcher contacted the initial group of key informants by email and phone. At the point of contact with the potential candidates, the researcher described the purpose of the interview and then asked these key informants if they were willing to participate in the study. During the initial contact, the researcher requested the candidate suggest an additional informant to add to the interview list, if they had someone in mind. The names of key informants identified in this step were then added to the list. The researcher continued to develop the "snowball" sample until ten key informants were identified for the interview process.

Simultaneously, the researcher obtained institutional review board approval from Cardinal Stritch University. This occurred prior to solicitation of interview candidates and the distribution of questions and/or interview collection. Key question areas that were included in the interview protocol included the all three research questions from this study included questions one, two and three of this study, specifically: (1) What international-specific business knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications do companies competing in a global economy require? (2) What challenges has your business encountered due to an employees lack of international knowledge, skills, abilities or qualifications? (3) How have business leaders overcome challenges due to the lack of international business knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications of their employees?

After IRB approval, the researcher obtained signatures for necessary participation agreement waivers from the key informants prior to the interviews as determined by the

IRB. Once the interview questions are final and approved, the researcher will develop an interview script and use it to guide the interview process. The interview protocol will then be used for all key informant interviews. The interview questions will be sent in advance to the key informants and the researcher will arrange a time and venue for each interview. The interviews were conducted by one of three modes: in person, via phone or electronic means (such as Skype™). The mode will be determined based on the availability of the individual interviewee during the scheduled data collection period for this study.

After each interview had taken place, the interview findings were recorded in a spreadsheet that corresponded with the interview script. Key topics of knowledge, skill, ability and qualifications were be determined that link to the purpose of the study. These topics were correlated directly to the survey collection process that occurred in this research study. Once the interviews have been completed, the qualitative data will be recorded, transcribed, coded, and analyzed using content analysis.

Data Analysis

Data generated by techniques previously described were subsequently interpreted through the analysis techniques/procedures of both quantitative and qualitative methods.

Quantitative Analysis

Data generated by survey research was interpreted through the analysis techniques/procedures of SPSS data analysis. For the quantitative data analysis, each Likert scale responses collected from the survey questions will be coded. There were six Likert scale responses for each question. Thus, the responses were coded by way of the following six Likert-type scale response choices and scores: not needed (1); rarely needed

(2); minimally needed (3); somewhat needed (4); almost always needed (5); and essential (6). Once they were coded, the results were entered into an SPSS data file accordingly with one line assigned to each respondent. Item responses were then grouped according to the four components of the survey and analyzed as a whole for accuracy using SPSS.

Factor analysis was also performed on the pilot data using SPSS. Factor analysis is "a multivariate technique for identifying whether the correlations between a set of observed variables stem from the relationship to one or mare latent variables in the data, each of which takes the form of a linear model" (Field, 2009, p. 785). The goal of factor analysis is to provide the reader of the research with enough information to make an informed opinion about the data presented in the research (Field, 2009, p. 671). It often measures things that cannot be directly measured and is considered a technique for identifying groups or clusters of variables (Field, 2009, p. 628). Factor analysis was a good way to measure the variables used in the pilot survey and to "(1) understand the structure of a set of variables; (2) to construct a questionnaire to measure an underlying variable; and (3) to reduce a data set to a more manageable size while retaining as much original information as possible" (Field, 2009, p. 628).

Statistical analysis was completed in order to analyze the survey data. Once the survey time period has closed, the findings for the five variables of the study will be analyzed in SPSS. Statistical analysis provided a way to compare differences or correlations of groups, typically resulting in inferences that can be made based on the sample and that can be applied to the population (Creswell, 2009). Descriptive statistics provided the researcher with a way to analyze the behavior or characteristics of the respondents in the survey data (Field, 2009). Descriptive statistics in this study included

computation of the mean and the standard deviation, frequencies and range of ratings for each KSAQ (47 questions) in the survey instrument. These descriptive summaries help to create a visual of the collected data. The mean is "a statistical model of the center of the distribution of scores and a hypothetical estimate of the 'typical' score" (Field, 2009, p. 789) and is simply a "model created to summarize our data" (Field, 2009, p. 35). The mean was used to measure the average survey response for each question. The standard deviations were calculated for each group in order to show the relationship that each set of data had to the mean and show the variability in the data. This measure tends to be more accurate than using the mean values alone and it helps detect the distribution of the mean (Field, 2009).

Inferential statistical analysis was performed on the data collected from Parts I-IV of the survey. These analyses included independent *t*-tests, analysis of variance (ANOVA) and Cronbach Alpha. Independent *t*-tests were used to compare the mean scores of two groups on a continuous variable (Field, 2009). In this study the *t*-test compared the groups of small/medium company responses to those of large company responses for each part of the survey (Parts I-IV).

These statistics were also used to calculate the factorial ANOVA's between the two groups of respondents (small/medium companies vs. large companies). An ANOVA is a statistical model used to "analyze situations in which we want to compare more than two conditions" (Field, 2009, p. 348), or an analysis of variance. The results of this test will show whether the relationship between the two groups is either a significant or non-significant in nature (Field, 2009). Specifically this test will show whether the international KSAQ are determined significant to both the small/medium companies and

large companies, one group, or neither group based on the survey data. Using ANOVA will help decrease the chance for error that would be required in conducting multiple *t*-tests in order to compare all combinations of variables that will be acquired in the survey results (Field, 2009).

In addition to conducting an ANOVA test, the Cronbach Alpha findings for each of the four variables (or Part I-IV) of the survey (Relationship Management, Business Acumen, Personal Effectiveness, and Qualifications) were determined and compared to the acceptable scale for each of the groups. The Cronbach Alpha should have an acceptable scale (above .700) for each of the variables and is used as a common measure of scale reliability (Field, 2009).

Using both descriptive and statistical analysis a model for KSAQ in international business professional roles may develop. It is also important to note that the final survey benefited from the factor analysis that was run on pilot survey questions. This analysis was able to show whether or not the groupings for the pilot survey questions were accurate. It also helped clarify where the KSAQ should or should not be placed in the survey noting if they actually fit into the chosen components when comparing the survey to the factor analysis components or if they should be moved into another part of the survey.

Application to the Data

Once the data collection has taken place, data analysis occurred over an eight-week period. The data sets were reviewed and organized in order to determine a logical organizational structure. This will help the researcher to recognize themes or trends in the data, maybe there is also data that was found that was not included or a criterion was

missing that should be included in the study. This information was included in the analysis at this time.

With content analysis, the analysis is accomplished by coding. The data will then be sorted by specific criteria. However, these specific criteria were not determined until this step. The researcher then determined whether or not the data that was gathered, analyzed and interpreted actually solves the research problem. The result of the data analysis either supports the hypothesis or does not (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). Once this step is complete, the researcher assessed the initial problem statement to determine if it is indeed a worthwhile problem. The findings were then disseminated to the audience in a way that makes sense to that particular audience and the sophistication of the audience should be considered in this process (Owen, 2007, p. 71). SPSS software provided a professional, credible and accurate way to collect and analyze the data.

When using content analysis, the researcher tabulated the frequency of each characteristic found in the material being studied (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005, p. 143). This is the next step for SPSS process. This process involved both quantitative as well as qualitative analysis. Statistical analyses are typically performed on the compiled data to determine whether or not significant differences exist relevant to the research question (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005, p. 143). This research method was administered to see what themes emerged from the data. The data was broken down into categories, which were either inclusive or mutually exclusive. All data fit into a category. The researcher then used these tabulations to interpret the data. Examination of the output of the data helped the researcher to learn more about the data. Next the researcher chose to run further analyses, including as crosstabs, *t*-tests, and ANOVA or regression analysis as needed.

As stated earlier, using a software program (SPSS), the researcher was able to complete data analysis quickly with less error.

The researcher determined whether or not the data that was gathered, analyzed and interpreted actually solved the research problem. The result of the data analysis either supports the hypothesis or does not (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). Once this step was completed, the researcher assessed the initial problem statement to determine if it is indeed a worthwhile problem. The findings should be disseminated to the audience in a way that makes sense to that particular audience and the sophistication of the audience should be considered in this process (Owen, 2007, p. 71).

Validity/Trustworthiness/Triangulation

When conducting quantitative research, there is a concern that results of the study are valid at two levels: (a) the quality of the scores from the instruments used and the quality of the conclusions that can be drawn from the results of the quantitative analysis. Quantitative validity means that the scores received from the instrument (survey) are meaningful indicators of the construct being measured. Validity is drawn from a source external to the participants and the researcher by statistical procedures or external experts (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2011).

In this specific study, during content analysis the researcher checked for content validity, criterion-based validity and construct validity. Content validity assesses whether or not the questions are representative of possible items. Construct validity refers to whether or not the results measure what they intend to measure. When conducting research the "researchers need to check for the reliability of scores (through statistical procedures of internal consistency) and any test-retest comparisons while exploring the

data" (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2011, p. 211). Analyzing the SPSS results can check validity in these measures.

Reliability in qualitative research has limited meaning (Creswell, 2011). When coding is part of the validation, and the coding is being compared among coders, there seems to be more popularity with the topic. Inter-coder agreement in qualitative research occurs when several coders individually code data and then compare results. This is a way to determine if the data is indeed reliable.

Triangulation of the data from several sources is also considered another validity approach for qualitative research (Creswell, 2012). Triangulation of the survey data, or the quantitative results, occurred by when reviewing the results of key informant interview findings. The researcher conducted each of the eight interviews and transcribed each of the interview transcripts. These transcripts were analyzed and coded and then compared to the quantitative data. To form triangulation, both data sets were compared to the findings of Chapter Two in order to complete the validation of the study.

Qualitative Analysis

Data generated by interview research methodology will be interpreted through the analysis techniques/procedures of content analysis. Content analysis is a detailed and systematic examination of the contents of a particular body of material for the purpose of identifying patterns, themes, or biases (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005, p. 142). It is also "a method of analyzing qualitative data for the purpose of drawing inferences abo the meaning of recorded information such as open-ended responses and comments made by survey respondents" (Fink, 2008, p. 89). Content analysis is quite objective and systematic and a good fit for this particular study considering the time frame. From the

perspective of the researcher, "it means carefully reading the comments to identify the presence of certain words, concepts, themes, phrases, characters, or sentences in order to quantify them" (Fink, 2008, p. 89).

In this study, the content analysis procedure will be followed as outlined by Leedy and Ormrod (2005). In the first step of this method, the researcher identifies the specific body of material to be studied. The body of material will contain the data collected in the implementation research review step and from the key informant interviews. This will consist of journal articles, books and Internet sources that relate to the topics of: international business education, international business majors, global leadership skills, international business skills, etc. Using this method, the researcher must first determine the amount of material to study. If there is a large amount of material to cover, the research should determine a sample size to research. The sample determined for this particular study consists the membership base of four international trade associations.

Next, the researcher defines the characteristics or qualities to be examined in precise and concrete terms. A specific example of each characteristic will be identified. Based on the complexity or length of the material to be analyzed, the researcher will break down each of the above items into smaller segments. This way each segment can be analyzed separately. A literature review document has been created as a result of the content review process.

Application to the Data

Once the data collection has taken place, data analysis will occur during a four-week period. The data is first reviewed and organized in order to determine a logical organizational structure. This will help the researcher to recognize themes or trends in

the data, maybe there is also data that was found that was not included or a criterion was missing that should be included in the study. This information would be included in the analysis at this time.

With content analysis, the analysis is accomplished by coding. The data will then be sorted by specific criteria. However, the specific criteria will not be determined until this step. The researcher now determines whether or not the data that was gathered, analyzed and interpreted actually solves the research problem. The result of the data analysis either supports the hypothesis or does not (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). Once this step is complete, the researcher can assess the initial problem statement to determine if it is indeed a worthwhile problem. The findings should be disseminated to the audience in a way that makes sense to that particular audience and the sophistication of the audience should be considered in this process (Owen, 2007). SPSS software (when correctly used) will provide a professional, credible and accurate way to collect and analyze the data.

When using content analysis, the researcher tabulates the frequency of each characteristic found in the material being studied (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). This is the next step for SPSS process. It involves both quantitative as well as qualitative analysis. Statistical analyses are typically performed on the compiled data to determine whether or not significant differences exist relevant to the research question (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). This research method is used to see what themes emerge. Data is broken down into categories, which are either inclusive or mutually exclusive, and all data fits some category (Weber, 1990). The researcher then uses these tabulations to interpret the data. Examination of the output of the data helps the researcher to learn more about the data. Next the researcher can continue to run further analyses, such as crosstabs, t-tests, and

ANOVA or regression analysis as needed. As stated earlier, using a software program

(SPSS), the researcher will be able to complete data analysis quickly with less error. The

researcher determines whether or not the data that was gathered, analyzed and interpreted

actually solves the research problem. The result of the data analysis either supports the

hypothesis or does not (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). Once this step is complete, the

researcher can assess the initial problem statement to determine if it is indeed a

worthwhile problem. The findings should be disseminated to the audience in a way that

makes sense to that particular audience and the sophistication of the audience should be

considered in this process (Owen, 2007).

Validity/Trustworthiness/Triangulation

When conducting quantitative research, there is a concern that results of the study

are valid at two levels: the quality of the scores from the instruments used and the quality

of the conclusions that can be drawn from the results of the quantitative analysis.

Quantitative validity means that the scores received from the instrument (survey) are

meaningful indicators of the construct being measured. Validity is drawn from a source

external to the participants and the researcher by statistical procedures or external experts

(Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2011).

In this specific study, during content analysis the researcher will check for either

content validity, criterion-based validity or construct validity. Content validity assesses

whether or not the questions are representative of possible items. Construct validity refers

to whether or not the results measure what they intend to measure. When conducting

research the "researchers need to check for the reliability of scores (through statistical

procedures of internal consistency) and any test-retest comparisons while exploring the

data" (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2011, p. 211). Analyzing the SPSS results can check validity in these measures.

Reliability in qualitative research has limited meaning (Creswell, 2011). When coding is part of the validation, and the coding is being compared among coders, there seems to be more popularity with the topic. Inter-coder agreement in qualitative research occurs when several coders individually code data and then compare results. This is a way to determine if the data is indeed reliable.

Triangulation of the data from several sources is also considered another validity approach for qualitative research (Creswell, 2012). Triangulation of the survey data, or the quantitative results, occurred by when reviewing the results of key informant interview findings. The researcher conducted each of the eight interviews and transcribed each of the interview transcripts. These transcripts were analyzed and coded and then compared to the quantitative data. To form triangulation, both data sets were compared to the findings of Chapter Two in order to complete the validation of the study.

Role of the Researcher

Qualifications

The researcher was an experienced international business professional and market researcher with over 17 years professional experience in international business and over 10 years experience in higher education. In addition, the researcher was a doctoral candidate with prior survey and interview experience.

Biases

Research biases regarding this study include the researcher's view that global leadership training is an essential component in any international business program that is

implemented into higher academic curricula and professional development. Past and present international business activities in the areas of consulting, teaching, program development serve both as an asset and as inspiration for the researcher. However, these experiences have the potential to be a source of research bias if it is not correctly supported by proven research and triangulation of data.

Responsibilities

The researchers responsibilities included conducting pilot surveys and focus groups, developing and implementing a valid survey and valid interview protocol, conducting key informant interviews, transcribing interview data and content analysis of both data sets.

Timeline

Time Span

The time span of this particular mixed method research occurred over an eighteen-week period during the second half of 2013.

Chronology of Events and Procedures

The breakdown of the events regarding this mixed methods research consisted of three components including data collection, data analysis and discussion of the findings. The first component included data collection by survey that occurred over a ten-week period. Next, data analysis occurred over an eight-week period. Finally, the findings and summarization of results will occur over another eight-week period. The total time span for this mixed methods study took approximately 26 weeks.

Summary/Coherency of Design

Validity/Trustworthiness

A mixed methods methodology, specifically that of both survey and key informant interviews, was the chosen methodology for this particular research study. An aggressive timeframe allowed for the researcher to gather a valid sample that was analyzed in the current environment relating to the international business KSAQ needed to work in the professional environment of small and medium business in Wisconsin. Validity was ensured through pilot testing of the survey tool. SPSS analysis was run on the pilot data to ensure the validity of the survey and data gathered.

Triangulation

Triangulation of the research data gathered in this study occurred between the following three data sets: survey data, key informant interview data and document review including member checking, program criteria, etc. Data was triangulated from survey results, document artifacts and interview transcripts to ensure validity and find commonalities or themes within the data.

Limitations

Limitations of this study included that the mixed method study covers one specific situation and cannot be generalized due to the fact that international business surveyed were located within the state of Wisconsin. In addition, the survey respondents were obtained from attendees at a state based international trade association event that occurred in 2013. Therefore only event attendees were asked to participate in the survey, thus excluding international business professionals not in attendance on that specific event. Additional limitations included the fact that respondents invited to complete the

surveys may be new to the international business professional, such that they may not be fully aware of the needed criterion as compared to the depth of knowledge of experienced international business professionals.

Forecast Chapter Four

A mixed-methods approach utilizing the data collection tools of descriptive survey and key informant interviewing, provided a methodology that could effectively provide evaluative data in the area of KSAQ required in the professional field of International Business. With thorough analysis, the results of this data could prove to build the case around the specific KSAQ that international business professional need to be employed by small and medium businesses in the international environment.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH RESULTS

Presentation of Approach

The purpose of this study was to determine the international-specific knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications (KSAQ) that businesses require when hiring employees for international positions. The related questions that guide this study included:

1. What specific international business knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications do companies competing in a global economy require?

2. What challenges do businesses encounter due to their employees lack of international knowledge, skills, abilities or qualifications?

3. How have businesses leaders overcome business challenges due to the lack of international business knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications of their employees?

The design of the study was that of a mixed method study, in a convergent design, that employed the data collection methods of survey and interviewing, as discussed in depth in Chapter Three. Question one (referenced above) was addressed by both the survey and interview questions utilizing both quantitative and qualitative collection instruments. Questions two and three (also above) were addressed solely in the qualitative format by in-depth interviews. Quantitative data collection included a survey instrument that was designed and distributed by the researcher to international business professionals at an International Trade Event that occurred in Wisconsin in 2013. The survey addressed question one of the study and provided quantitative findings. Qualitative data was also collected from the eight in-depth structured interviews that took place during the fall of 2013 in a Midwest state. These key informant interviews

addressed all three questions posed in this study and provided qualitative findings. The qualitative data will be discussed in the section immediately following the quantitative results.

This chapter presents a summary of data generated by the study and has been presented in the following order: site, sample and participant demographics; quantitative survey findings related to each of the four parts of the survey and overall survey findings (for all respondents); survey findings based on small/medium vs. large companies; and qualitative interview findings.

Presentation and Summary of Data

Description of Site and Sample

Descriptive data about site

The study's convenience sample for the survey administered in this study consisted of 38 international business professionals whom attended an international trade event that was held in Wisconsin in 2013. The survey sample included international trade professionals, international trade association members and non-members. The target audience for this international trade event included CEOs, CFOs, VPs, Directors of Operations, Sales and Marketing and Entrepreneurs from international businesses located in the Midwest region of the United States.

The descriptive survey included five components that included: Relationship Management (Part I); Business Acumen (Part II); Personal Effectiveness (Part III); Qualifications (Part IV); and Demographics (Part V). The survey included 47 questions and the respective questions included: relationship management (six questions); business acumen (22 questions); personal effectiveness (eight questions); qualifications (10

questions); and demographics (10 questions). Each of the questions in Part I-IV of the survey had a six-point Likert-type rating scale. The specific response choices and scores included: Job position does not require this skill (1); rarely needed (2); minimally needed (3); somewhat needed (4); almost always needed (5); and essential (6). Part V included demographic data responses and open-ended questions related to either respondent or company specific information.

Descriptive data about sample

Respondent demographics and company information

As previously stated, the survey for this study was administered to international business professionals at a Midwest international trade event in the fall of 2013. Thirty-eight of the submitted surveys were valid upon review of the data. There was a survey response rate of 73.01%. The invalid surveys collected included eight surveys that were not returned to the researcher and six disqualified surveys. The valid total of 38 survey respondents included 34 event attendees plus four surveys from interview candidates.

Demographic and company information was collected from ten questions and included questions 2, 3, and 10 – 17 from the survey. The findings from each of these questions are listed and summarized in the following paragraphs in order to describe the sample for this particular study. In addition to this summary, tables have been included for a visual descriptor of the data when appropriate.

Demographic question number two asked the survey respondents to state whether or not they influence the hiring of international business professionals. The question was: *Do you influence the hiring process or hiring decisions regarding international business professionals at your company?* The answer choices for this question included: Yes, I

currently influence; No, I do not currently influence, however, I have in the past; or No, I have never influenced the hiring process. Out of the total of 38 responses, 27 answered this question with the choice "Yes, I currently influence", which is 71.1% of the sample. 7 respondents answered with the choice "No, I do not currently influence, However, I have in the past", which included 18.4% of the sample. The remaining 4 respondents (10.5%) answered with the choice "No, I have never influenced the hiring process". In summary, 89.5% of the respondents had an influence over hiring international professionals.

Question 3 asked the respondents to classify the level of that particular hiring influence. Respondents were asked: *When you influence the hiring process/decisions regarding international business professionals, at what level is the hiring process?* The answer choices for this question included the specific hiring levels of either a: *local level (ex. office in Thailand), corporate level (ex. office in state); both local and corporate levels; and other.* The most common response to this question was "both local and corporate levels" according to 15 respondents (39.5%). 13 respondents (34.2%) chose their level of influence to be at the "corporate level". Only five respondents (13.2%) chose the "local level" to be the level of this hiring position. Lastly, five respondents (13.2%) choose "other." Respondents included the following responses in the "other" response box: sales and accounting executives, United States, did not hire. Figure 4 depicts the hiring level responses from all survey respondents.

Figure 4. *Level of Hiring Influence*

Level of Hiring Influence
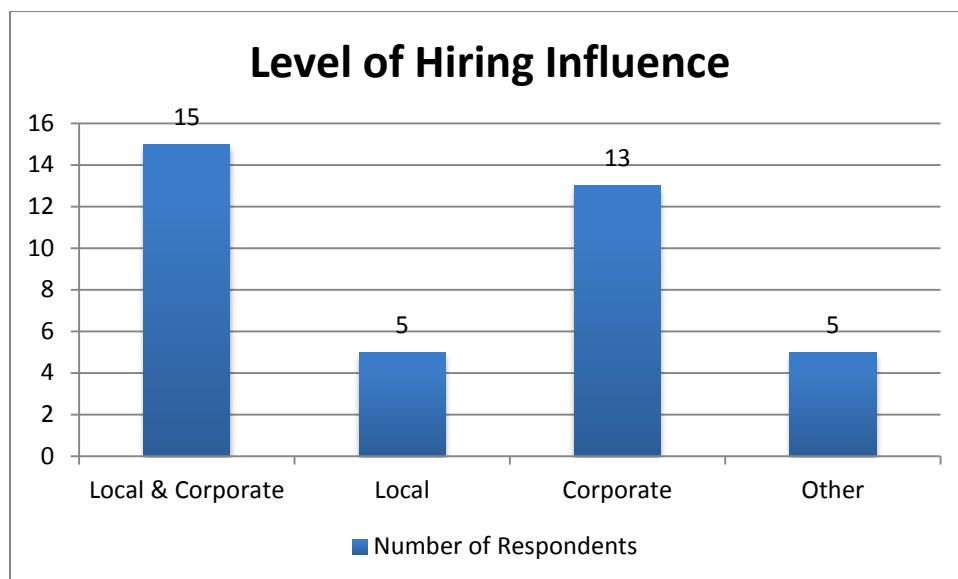
n = 38 respondents

Demographic question 10 asked the respondent to*: Choose the most accurate classification size for your international business at which you work.* The two choices included for this particular question were either *small/medium (500 or less employees)* or *large (more than 500 employees).* A majority of the respondents (26 or 68.4%) were classified as being from small/medium companies, where as large company classification accounted for 12 respondents (31.6 %).

Question 11 of the survey asked respondents: *Of your company's total sales, approximately what percent is international?* This was an open-ended question. A quick analysis of the data broke down the percentages to show that a 14 companies noted that 30% or more international sales. Table 5 depicts the percent of international sales among all respondents.

Table 5

Percentage of Company's International Sales

Percentage of Company's International Sales	Number of Companies	Total Percentage of Sample
15% or less	17	44.7
30% or more	14	36.9
Did not answer	7	18.4
Total	38	100.0

n= 38 respondents

Demographic question 12 asked specifically, *"Over the past 5 years, what is the extent of your company's international sales growth?"* This was an open-ended question that received a variety of answers despite the specific request for a percent answer. The most common response was by percentage of sales growth. However, there were numerous responses to that included dollar amounts ($5 million, $20 million, $30 million) and other comments (50, all, consultancy company, excellent, strong growth), which made the data challenging to represent as percentage based sales growth comparison between respondents. The response frequency based on the findings of company international sales growth percentages is depicted in Table 6.

Table 6

International Sales Growth

Percentage	# Respondents
100 or higher	3
33	1
15	3
10	2
1	1
0 (zero)	3
No answer	15

n= 28 respondents

Question 13 collected data in regards to the number of countries that each business sold to. The purpose of this question was to gather data in regards to the breadth of international sales of the respondents companies. The specific open-ended question included in the survey was*: Please enter the number of countries that your business sells to.* In summary, the most common answers for the respondents were both selling to 1 - 5 countries (10 companies or 26.2%) and selling to 100 or more countries (nine companies or 23.7%). Table 7 depicts the actual breakdown of the country and company numbers.

Table 7

International Sales related to Number of Countries

Number of countries your company sells to	Number of Company's	Percentage of Sample
51 countries or more	15	36.9
50 countries or less	19	49.9
No answer given	5	13.2
Total Responses	**38**	**100.0**

n= 38 respondents

Question 14 addressed the length of time that the respondent has been involved in international business. It asked to *"Please indicate the length of time that you have been involved in the international business profession by choosing one of the answers below:*

more than 20 years; 16-20 years; 11-15 years; 6-10 years; 1-5 years; and less than one

year". A majority of respondents, 17 (44.7%), have been involved in the international

business profession for more than 20 years. Six respondents were included in the 16- 20

years experience category. Four respondents were included in the 11 – 15 years category.

Five respondents have been involved in the profession for 6 – 10 years. Three

respondents have been involved in the profession for 1 – 5 years. Three respondents

were new to the profession with less than one year of experience. Figure 5 displays the

results of the respondent years in the field of international business.

Figure 5. *Respondents Years in the Field of International Business*

n = 38 respondents

Question 15 gathered information from respondents that assessed their foreign

language capacity. Specifically the survey asked respondents: *What languages do you*

speak? The response options for the respondents were: *I only speak English* or *I speak*

the following foreign languages (offering an open-ended response choice). English only

speakers accounted for 52.6% (or 20 respondents) of the sample. The remaining 47.4%

(18 respondents) spoke another language (or multiple languages) in addition to English.

The most common second language was Spanish (10 respondents) and French (8

respondents). Additional languages noted by the respondents included German,

Portuguese, Japanese, Dutch, Russian and Mandarin. Table 8 displays the language and

respondent data for this question.

Table 8

Fluent Languages of Respondents (in addition to English)

Additional Languages	Number Of Respondents
Spanish	10
French	8
German	5
Portuguese	4
Dutch	1
Japanese	1
Mandarin	1
Russian	1

n= 20 out of 38 respondents spoke another language in addition to English

Question 16 assessed whether or not the respondents had worked overseas. The

specific question asked was: *Have you worked overseas?* The response choices for this

question were either Yes or No. The results for this question profile that exactly half (19

or 50%) of the respondents had worked overseas and half (19 or 50%) had not worked

overseas. Thirteen small/medium group respondents (or 50%) and six large group

respondents (or 50%) had worked overseas.

The last question in this section, question 17, related to the respondents company,

and asked the respondent to choose whether or not the international or domestic business

was growing at a faster rate for their company. The question was: *"For your company, which business area is growing at a faster rate?"* For the companies in the survey sample, it appears that 27 respondents (71.1%) feel that business is growing at a faster rate in the international market than the domestic market. Eleven respondents (28.9%) feel that the reverse is true with the domestic market growing faster.

Findings Related to Research Question Questions One, Two and Three

Quantitative Findings related to Research Question One

As previously stated, a total of 38 international business professionals completed the International Business Skills Survey, which addressed question one of this study. Question 1 stated, "What specific international business knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications do companies competing in a global economy require?" The International Business Skills Survey is a researcher-designed survey that was developed and implemented for the purpose of this study. It included 57 questions reflected in the following five sections: Relationship Management (Part I); Business Acumen (Part II); Personal Effectiveness (Part III); Qualifications (Part IV); and Demographics (Part V). As discussed in Chapter Three, each of the sections (except for Part V) used the following six Likert-type scale response choices and scores: not needed (1); rarely needed (2); minimally needed (3); somewhat needed (4); almost always needed (5); and essential (6) for each of the 47 KSAQ that were assessed in the survey. In this particular study a 6-point scale was used to as a "*forced-choice* method because the middle option of *neither agree nor disagree* or, by convention, *neutral* is not available" (Fink, 2009, p. 26). The survey data was analyzed from three perspectives, which included all respondents, small/medium company respondents and large company respondents. Part V included

respondent and company demographic information and included questions with open-ended responses.

Descriptive statistics for All Respondents to International KSAQ Survey

Descriptive statistics were calculated in order to describe and organize the data characteristics of the survey results. Descriptive statistics in this research project included mean scores, standard deviations and frequency distribution, which were collected from Parts I-IV of the survey. The mean was used to measure the average survey response for each question. The mean score represents "a statistical model of the center of the distribution of scores and a hypothetical estimate of a 'typical' score" (Field, 2009, p. 789). The standard deviations were calculated for each group in order to show the relationship that each set of data had to the mean and show the variability in the data. This measure tends to be more accurate than using the mean values alone and it helps detect the distribution of the mean. Frequency distribution notes that frequency with which each value occurs per question (Field, 2009) typically shown by way of a histogram.

A mean response and the standard deviation were calculated for each survey question, for Parts I-IV, and the survey as whole. As stated earlier, a six point Likert-type scale was applied to each question in the survey. The scale included the responses (scale of 1 - 6): Job position does not require this skill (1); rarely needed (2); minimally needed (3); somewhat needed (4); almost always needed (5); and essential (6). The mean is a hypothetical estimate of the "typical" score found in the survey results and a simple statistical model of the center of the distribution of the scores (Field, 2009). The standard deviation is the estimate of the average spread (or variability) of a set of data that is

measured in the same units as the original data (Field, 2009). Small variations in the standard deviation show that the data points are close to the mean, whereas large variations show that data points are distant from the mean (Field, 2009).

Table 9

Descriptive Statistics for All Respondents

All Respondents		
Results	$\bar{x}$	sd
Overall Survey	4.52	0.60
Part I: Relationship Management	5.41	0.41
Part II: Business Acumen	4.11	0.90
Part III: Personal Effectiveness	5.24	0.48
Part IV: Qualifications	4.24	0.70

 n= 38 Respondents
 *$\bar{x}$= Mean; sd= Standard Deviation

The overall mean of the survey was calculated to be 4.52 on a six-point scale. The standard deviation for the survey as a whole was .60. The means for Parts I-IV ranged from 5.41 (Part I: Relationship Management) to 4.11 (Part II: Business Acumen), an entire spread of 1.3. This reflects that survey answers fell a majority of times into either the somewhat needed (4) or almost always needed (5) rating. The standard deviation of Parts I-IV ranged from .41 (Part I: Relationship Management) to .90 (Part II: Business Acumen). The total range of the standard deviation would be a spread of .49 meaning that the average amount that observations vary from the mean is .49, or a slight variation. Table 9 depicts the descriptive data for the mean ($\bar{x}$) and standard deviations (*sd*) previously discussed.

Descriptive Statistics for Part I: Relationship Management

Relationship Management explored the relationship management related skills that the respondents specific business may or may not consider to be important when

hiring for an international position. Each respondent rated six skills that included: community building, ability to build collaborative relationships in global environment, ability to be flexible and open to new ways of doing things, appreciation of cultural diversity, ability to build partnerships and alliances with global partners and networking and communication skills. Each skill set in Part I will be analyzed below by ways of descriptive data. The analysis included the mean, median and mode for each skill set in Part I. The mean scores and standard deviations for Part I of the survey are displayed in Table 10.

Table 10

Descriptive Statistics Comparison of each KSAQ (Part I) for All Respondents

All Respondents	$\bar{x}$*	sd
Part I: Relationship Management		
Appreciations of cultural diversity	5.66	0.58
Ability to build Collaborative relationships	5.58	0.55
Networking and communication	5.53	0.65
Ability to be flexible & open	5.37	0.59
Ability to build partnerships	5.37	0.75
Community Building	4.97	1.00

n= 38 Respondents   **Range 1-6*

The mode, or the most common response of respondents per variable, was determined to be at 6.0 (essential) on a 6-point scale for four out of six variables (ability to build collaborative relationships, appreciation of cultural diversity, ability to build partnerships and networking and communication skills). For each of the remaining two variables (community building, ability to be flexible), a mode of 5.0 (almost always needed) was determined. However, for the community building skill, a mean of 4.97 and a standard deviation of .999 reflect more of a range in the respondents answers for this variable, versus the others in Part 1. It seems that the respondents do not agree on the

rating of the importance of the community building skill set. Support for the uncertainty of this ranking is also apparent in the chart (below) by the spread of answers given, which ranged from 1 to 6 (or the entire Likert scale) for the community building skill. Whereas four of the remaining of the skills had a range of 4 to 6 and one (ability to build partnerships) had a range of 3 to 6.

Community building was the first KSAQ assessed in the survey under Part 1. The most common response for this item was "almost always needed" with a frequency of 19 participants (or 50%) of the sample. The essential rating followed this choice with 11 respondents (or 28.9%). The remaining choices and frequencies included: six chose that community building was somewhat needed (15.8%), one chose minimally needed (2.6%) and one chose that job position does not require the skill (2.6%).

The next skill set was the ability to build collaborative relationships in a global environment. The most frequent choice (60.5%) made by 23 respondents was that this skill was "essential". Followed by "almost always needed" (36.8%) with 14 respondents and "somewhat needed" (2.6%) chosen by one respondent. So, we may infer that the ability to build collaborative relationships in a global environment is indeed an essential skill of relationship management.

The third skill set assessed in the survey was the ability to be flexible & open to new ways of doing things. This skill was found to be "almost always needed" as a skill set and was chosen by 20 respondents (52.6%), 16 respondents (42.1%) felt it was an "essential" skill, while two respondents (5.3%) felt it was only "somewhat needed".

Having an "appreciation of cultural diversity (communications, customs)" was the fourth item in the Relationship Management group. A majority of the respondents, 27 to

be exact (71.1%), agreed that this particular skill set was essential. Followed by nine respondents (23.7%) choosing this skill set to be almost always needed. The least frequency occurred with the choice of somewhat needed, which was chosen by only two respondents (5.3%).

Fifth was the skill set that included the "ability to build partnerships & alliances with global partners". Again, 19 of the respondents (50%) chose this particular skill set to be an essential skill. Followed by the rating of almost always needed by 15 respondents (39.5), somewhat needed by three respondents (7.9%) and minimally needed by one respondent (2.6%).

The final skill set in part one of the survey included "networking and communication skills". The essential rating was chosen with the most frequency with 23 respondents (60.5%). The remainder of the respondent sample chose that this skill set was almost always needed 12 respondents (31.6%), followed by somewhat needed by three respondents (7.9%).

In summary, Part I yielded an essential rating for all skill sets *except for* the skill "being able to be flexible & open to new ways of doing things" which rated as being almost always needed vs. essential by 20 people or 52.6% of the sample.

Descriptive Statistics for Part II: Business Acumen

Business Acumen explored business acumen related skills that the respondents specific business may or may not consider to be important when hiring for an international position. This part was further broken down to the subsets: (1) General Business Management and Marketing; (2) Supply Chain Management; and (3) Trade

Finance and Payment Methods. Each of these subsets included skills sets related to that specific topic. The overall mean and standard deviation scores are displayed in Table 11.

Table 11

Descriptive Statistics for Part II Business Acumen Subsets

All Respondents

	$\bar{x}$	sd
General Business Management and Marketing	4.26	0.8
Trade Finance and Payment Methods	4.01	1.1
Supply Chain Management	3.93	1.39

n = 38 Respondents

Mean and standard deviation scores have further analyzed each of the three sections in Part II. An analysis of each KSAQ surveyed in Business Acumen has been detailed in the text that follows.

Part II: Business Acumen: General Business Management and Marketing

The subset of General Business Management and Marketing included the following skills: business ethics, country specific knowledge, global sales contracts/contracts negotiation, global advertising and marketing, global customer services, global production, joint ventures/foreign investment/branches, market research methods, human resources and strategic planning. Each skill set and the frequency of respondent choices for this section has been outlined below and represented in Table 12.

Table 12

Descriptive Statistics Comparison of each KSAQ for Part II: General Business and Marketing for All Respondents

	$\bar{x}$ *	sd
Business ethics	5.21	0.81
Country specific knowledge	4.95	0.96
Global customer services (pre/post sale)	4.68	1.12
Strategic planning	4.68	0.87
Global sales contracts, contracts negotiation	4.47	1.03
Global advertising and marketing	4.16	1.15
Market research methods	4.11	1.35
Human resources	3.53	1.41
Joint ventures, foreign investment, branches	3.42	1.48
Global production	3.34	1.49

n = 38 Respondents   *Range 1-6*

Business ethics was determined to be an important skill set for this category. It was determined to be an "essential skill" by 16 respondents (39.5%) and "almost always needed" by 15 respondents (42.1%). These two choices accounted for 81.6% of the respondents. Followed by somewhat needed with six respondents (15.8%) and one respondent thought this skill to be minimally needed (2.6%).

Country specific knowledge, or how to do business in a country, was the second skill set in this subset. There was a range of ratings for this skill set from essential to minimally needed. Fourteen, or 36.8% of the respondents, felt this skill set was "essential". Ten respondents (26.3%) felt that this skill was "almost always needed" followed by a higher amount (12 respondents or 31.6%) that felt this skill was only "somewhat needed" or "minimally needed" (two respondents or 5.3%).

Global sales and contracts negation was the third skill set in this subset. Most respondents (16 or 42.1%) felt that this skill was only somewhat needed, as compared to the six respondents (15.8%) that felt it was "essential". Other responses included 12

(31.6%) for almost always needed, three (7.9%) for "minimally needed" and one respondent (2.6%) stated that the "job position does not require this skill".

The next skill examined was that of global advertising and marketing. The mode for this question was "somewhat needed" as it had 39.5% or 15 respondents choose this rating. Eleven (28.9%) respondents felt that this skill was "somewhat needed". Three respondents (7.9%) felt it was minimally needed and five felt it was "rarely needed". Only four respondents (10.5%) felt that global advertising and marketing was an "essential" skill.

Global customer service (pre/post sales) skills were next. The mode for this skill was at "almost always needed" and 17 respondents (44.7%) felt this way, while only eight respondents (21.1%) felt this skill to be "essential". Nine respondents (23.7%) indicated that this particular skill was "somewhat needed", whereas it was only "minimally needed" by two (5.3%) and rarely needed by one (2.6%). One respondent (2.6%) noted that the "job position does not require this skill".

Global production (e.g. materials management, ISO certification) was chosen by 13 respondents (34.2%) to be a "somewhat needed" skill and consequently the mode for this skill. Eight respondents felt this skill set to be more important marking the "essential" (two or 5.3%) and "almost always needed" (six or 15.8%) choices. Ten respondents felt this was either "minimally needed" (six or 15.8%) or "rarely needed" (four or 10.5%). Seven respondents (18.4%) noted the "job position does not require this skill".

The next KSAQ was that of joint ventures, foreign investment and branches (i.e. business formation). The mode for this skill was at "somewhat needed" with 11

respondents or 28.9%. Six respondents (15.8%) rated this skill "almost always needed". Thirteen respondents felt this skill was either "minimally needed" (seven or 18.4%) or "rarely needed" (six or 15.8%). Only three (7.9%) found this skill to be essential. Five respondents (13.2%) noted that the "job position does not require this skill".

Market research methods also had a mode at "somewhat needed" with 34.2% or 13 respondents. Eleven (28.9%) felt it was "almost always needed" and five (13.2%) felt it was an "essential" skill set. Four respondents (10.5%) felt this skill was "rarely needed", while three (7.9%) felt it was "minimally needed". Two respondents (5.3%) noted that the "job position does not require this skill".

Human resources (for example knowing how to work with global employees, visas and hiring) also had a mode of "somewhat needed" with 12 respondents (31.6%). Eight (21.1%) felt this was a "minimally needed" skill. Six (15.8%) felt this human resource knowledge was "almost always needed". Five respondents (13.2%) felt it was "rarely needed" in an international business professional. Whereas three respondents (7.9%) felt it was "essential". Four respondents (10.5%) noted that the "job position does not require this skill".

Strategic planning (global strategy development/implementation) was the next skill in the business acumen subset. The mode for strategic planning was at "almost always needed" with 47.4% or 18 respondents. Ten (26.3%) felt it to be "somewhat needed", while six (15.8%) felt it was "essential" and four (10.5%) felt it was "minimally needed".

Part II: Business Acumen: Supply Chain Management

The second subset of Part II, Supply Chain Management, included the following

KSAQ: export control laws, regulatory compliance, licensing, inspections; global

transportation and logistics; importing and sourcing or purchasing strategies; legal areas;

and other export/import skills. Table 13 depicts the overall mean and standard deviations

for each KSAQ in the Supply Chain Management section.

Table 13

Descriptive Statistics Comparison of each KSAQ for Part II: Supply Chain Management

	$\bar{x}$ *	sd
Global transportation and logistics	4.29	1.59
Export control laws, regulatory compliance, licensing	4.13	1.68
Importing and sourcing or purchasing strategies	3.87	1.58
Other export/import skills	3.74	1.43
Legal areas	3.63	1.42

n = 38 Respondents   **Range 1-6*

The first KSAQ in this subset included "export control laws, regulatory

compliance, licensing, and inspections." The mode was "essential" with 31.6% or 12

respondents marking this choice. It was followed in declining percentages by "minimally

needed" with 21.1% (eight respondents), "somewhat needed" with 18.4% (seven

respondents), "minimally needed" with 13.2% (five respondents), and "rarely needed"

with 5.3% (two respondents). Four respondents (10.5%) noted that the "job position does

not require this skill".

Global transportation and logistics was the next KSAQ evaluated in this subset.

This skill set was determined to be "essential" by 12 of the survey respondents (31.6%).

Ten respondents (26.3%) felt it was "minimally needed". Eight respondents (21.1%) felt

that it was "almost always needed". Four respondents (10.5%) felt global transportation

and logistics skills were "somewhat needed" and one (2.6%) felt it was "rarely needed". Three respondents (7.9%) noted that the "job position does not require this skill".

The KSAQ called "importing and sourcing or purchasing strategies" also had a wide range of all ratings. Eleven (28.9%) respondents felt that the skill was "almost always needed" whereas 10 (26.3%) felt it was "minimally needed." Six (15.8%) found this skill set to be "essential". Four respondents (10.5%) found it to be "somewhat needed". Three (7.9%) respondents found it to be "rarely needed". Four respondents (10.5%) noted that the "job position does not require this skill".

Legal areas such as example knowing intellectual property rights and distributor agreements were also assessed. Responses included the entire range of ratings. Most common, with 12 (31.6%) respondents, was the rating of "somewhat needed". Seven (18.4%) rated it as "minimally needed". Six candidates (15.8%) rated legal areas as "almost always needed" and six (15.8%) as "rarely needed". Four respondents (10.5%) rated it as "essential" KSAQ. Three respondents (7.9%) noted that the "job position does not require this skill".

The last skill in this subset was called other export/import skills (CE Mark, documents, NAICS/HS). Once again, the respondents chose a wide range of ratings. The mode was tied with 10 respondents (26.3%) for both "somewhat needed" and "minimally needed". Eight (21.1%) respondents felt this skill set was "almost always needed". Four respondents (10.5%) felt it was "essential" and two (5.3%) felt it was "rarely needed". Four respondents (10.5%) noted that the "job position does not require this skill".

Part II: Business Acumen: Trade Finance and Payment Methods

The subset of Trade Finance and Payment Methods included the following skills: export financing; exporting, distributorship; foreign exchange; import laws, regulatory compliance, inspections; international trade theory; letters of credit; and political risk. All skills in this subset obtained ratings in all six levels. Table 14 depicts the descriptive statistical comparison for each of the KSAQ in Trade Finance and Payment Methods section.

Table 14

Descriptive Statistics Comparison of each KSAQ for Part II: Trade Finance and Payment Methods

	$\bar{x}$ *	sd
Exporting, distributorship	4.39	1.17
Political risk	4.18	1.18
Import laws, regulatory compliance, inspections	4.05	1.33
Export financing	3.92	1.68
Letters of credit	3.92	1.48
International trade theory	3.87	1.21
Foreign exchange	3.84	1.37
Exporting, distributorship	4.39	1.17

n = 38 Respondents   **Range 1-6*

Export financing (for example knowledge of Ex-Im Bank, SBA, letters of credit) received all ratings. Nine respondents felt that this skill was "somewhat needed." Eight respondents (21.1% each) felt it was both "essential" and "almost always needed". Four respondents (10.5% each) felt it was both "minimally needed" and rarely needed. Five respondents (13.2%) noted that the "job position does not require this skill".

Exporting and distributorship (such as direct sales) was the second skill in this subsection. The mode fell at "almost always needed" with 16 respondents (42.1%) choosing this rating. The next choice was "somewhat needed" with 10 respondents

(26.3%). Five respondents (13.2%) chose an "essential" rating, while 4 (10.5%) chose "minimally needed" and 2 (5.3%) chose "rarely needed." One respondent (2.6%) noted that the "job position does not require this skill".

The skill including knowledge of foreign exchange, including the market, exchange rate regimes and risk was the third skill. The mode fell to the "somewhat needed" rating for this skill with a respondent rate of 15 (39.5%). Seven respondents chose the rating of "almost always needed" and "minimally needed". One respondent (2.6%) felt that this skill was rarely needed. Four respondents (10.5%) noted that the "job position does not require this skill".

Import laws, regulatory compliance, and inspections were the forth skill set in the subset of trade finance and payment methods. The mode for this skill was at the "somewhat needed" rating with 31.6% of respondents (12). Ten respondents (26.3%) chose "almost always needed". Six respondents (15.8%) chose "minimally needed" as their rating for this skill. Five respondents (13.2%) felt that import laws, regulatory compliance and inspections were "essential". Three respondents (7.9%) felt that this skill was "rarely needed." Two respondents (5.3%) noted that the "job position does not require this skill".

Having knowledge of international trade theory (trade agreements such as NAFTA, WTO, EU) was the next skill in this subset. A majority of respondents (16 or 42.1%) felt that this skill was "somewhat needed". Eleven respondents (28.9%) felt this skill was "almost always needed". Five respondents (13.2%) felt it was "minimally needed," while two (5.3%) felt this rarely needed. Only one respondent (2.6%) felt

international trade theory was "essential". Three respondents (7.9%) noted that the "job position does not require this skill".

The next KSAQ in this section was "letters of credit". Eleven respondents (28.9%) felt knowledge of this skill was "somewhat needed" and 10 (26.3.%) felt that it was "almost always needed". Five respondents (13.2%) felt this was an "essential skill", but five (13.2%) also felt this skill was "rarely needed". Four respondents (10.5%) felt it was "minimally needed". Three respondents (7.9%) noted that the "job position does not require this skill".

The KSAQ surveyed in this subset was for "political risk, or the knowledge of the differences in political economics between countries". Fourteen respondents (36.8%) rated the skill to be "somewhat needed". Twelve respondents (31.6%) rated the skill to be "almost always needed." Four respondents (10.5%) rated the skill as both "essential" and "minimally needed." Three (7.9%) rated knowledge of political risk as a rarely needed skill. One respondent (2.6%) noted that the "job position does not require this skill".

Part III: Personal Effectiveness

Personal Effectiveness explored the personal skills that the respondent's business may or may not consider to be important when hiring for an international position within their business. Personal effectiveness covers topics such as global thinking to maturity to perform job duties under strenuous global conditions. The personal skills in this section included: global mindset, critical thinking and problem solving skills, facilitation skills, recognizing cultural values, ability to switch communication styles, ability to sharing leadership, empathy, maturity to perform at peak levels under strenuous conditions and

being tech savvy. Table 15 depicts that mean and standard deviation scores for each of

the KSAQ surveyed in the Personal Effectiveness (Part III) component of the survey.

Each of the personal skills survey results have been analyzed and described in the

following text.

Table 15

Descriptive Statistics Comparison for Part III

	$\bar{x}*$	sd
Global mindset	5.50	0.95
Critical thinking & problems solving	5.50	0.51
Ability to switch communication styles	5.37	1.00
Maturity to perform at peak levels	5.34	0.71
Recognizing cultural values	5.32	0.70
Empathy	5.13	0.62
Facilitation skills	5.08	0.71
Ability to sharing leadership	5.00	0.74
Being Tech savvy	4.92	0.78

n = 38 Respondents　　　　　　　**Range 1-6*

The global mindset was "essential" a 6 rating, meaning that the role of an

international business professional cannot function without this KSAQ, for 25

respondents (65.8% of the sample). Global mindset was noted as "almost always

needed" by 10 respondents (26.3%) of the sample. Two respondents (5.3%) felt that

having a global mindset was "somewhat needed". One respondent (2.6%) marked that

the "job position does not require this skill." The standard deviation for global mindset

was .95, whereas the mean was 5.5.

Critical thinking and problem solving had minimal variance in response as to the

rating for this KSAQ. Overall 100% of the respondents felt that this was either an

"essential" or "almost always needed" item. In fact, 50% chose critical thinking to be

"essential" (19 respondents) and 50% (also 19 respondents) chose it to be "almost always

needed". The mean for critical thinking and problem solving was a 5.5 (same as global mindset). However the standard deviation was much lower at .51.

The next item was classified as "facilitation skills". Specifically, this facilitation in this case referred to that ability to deal with/facilitate change in a complex global environment. There was strong agreement with 25 respondents rating facilitation at "almost always needed" which was 65.8% of the sample. It was rated "essential" by nine respondents (23.7%). Two respondents (5.3%) felt that facilitation was "somewhat needed". Two respondents (5.3%) felt that facilitation was "minimally needed". Facilitation skills had an overall mean of 5.08 with a standard deviation of .71.

Recognizing cultural values was the next skill. A majority of respondents (35 of 38) felt that this skill set was either "almost always needed" (19 respondents or 50%) or "essential" (16 respondents or 42.1%) for international business professionals at their company. Two respondents (5.3%) felt that facilitation was "somewhat needed". One respondent felt that recognizing cultural values was "minimally needed" (2.6%). The overall mean for this skill was 5.32 with a standard deviation of .70.

Ability to switch communication styles with foreign partners, employees or customers was the next rating. The ability to switch communication styles was rated as "essential" by 55.3% or 21 respondents. This rating was followed by "almost always needed" with 14 respondents or 36.8% of the sample. The remaining three respondents (2.6% each) felt that the ability to switch communication styles was either "somewhat needed", "minimally needed" or that the job position did not require this skill". The mean for this item was 5.37 with a standard deviation of .99.

The next skill rated was the ability to share leadership, or sharing leadership through delegation, teamwork or group thinking. 55.3% or 21 respondents felt that the ability to share leadership was "almost always needed". Nine respondents (23.7%) felt that this was an "essential" skill for international business professionals. Seven respondents (18.4%) felt that the ability to share leadership was only "somewhat needed" and one respondent felt this skill was only "minimally needed". Sharing leadership had a cumulative mean of 5.0 with a standard deviation of .74.

The ability to have empathy, specifically empathy to situations or other people in the international business environment was also rated in Personal Effectiveness, Part III. Empathy was rated as follows: "almost always needed" had 23 respondents for 60.5% of the sample, "essential" was chosen by 10 respondents (26.3%), and "somewhat needed" was chosen by five respondents (13.2%). The mean for empathy was at 5.13 with a standard deviation of .62.

Possessing the maturity to perform at peak levels under strenuous conditions was also rated in the personal effectiveness section. The most popular rating for this skill was the "essential" rating with 18 respondents (47.4%) followed in ratings by "almost always needed" with 15 respondents (39.5%). The remaining five respondents (13.2%) felt that this skill was "somewhat needed". The mean for maturity to perform at peak levels under strenuous conditions was 5.34 (a bit higher than the previous 2 skills) with a .71 standard deviation.

The final rating in Part III was that of being tech savvy, meaning that the international business professional should possess the technical knowledge related to technical devices, the how to regarding use of these devises and an overall comfort to the

use of technology. There was more variance in this skill than noted in the previous few. 18 respondents (47.4%) felt that being tech savvy was "almost always needed", while 10 (or 26.3%) felt it was "somewhat needed". However, nine respondents (23.7%) felt it was "essential". One respondent felt it was "minimally needed". The ability to be tech savvy had the lowest mean of Part III, which was recorded at 4.92 with a standard deviation of .78. However, this is still a relatively high mean and a normal distribution of ratings.

Part IV: Qualifications

Qualifications, explored background qualifications (degrees, languages, travel) that the respondents specific business may or may not consider to be important when hiring for an international position. These qualifications included: international business degree, international business course work in education, international business certification, multiple language skills, international travel experience (academic/personal/business), presentation skills, project management experience, valid passport and writing skills. Table 16 depicts the mean and standard deviation scores for each of the KSAQ's surveyed in the Qualifications component of the survey. Each of these items has been individually analyzed and discussed in the text below.

Table 16

Descriptive Statistics Comparison for Part IV

	$\bar{x}$ *	sd
Presentations skills	5.11	0.95
Writing skills	5.08	0.75
Valid Passport prior to hire	4.50	1.52
International travel experience (personal or business)	4.34	1.32
Multiple language skills	4.29	1.18
International travel experience (academic, study abroad)	4.24	1.34
Project management experience or certification	4.24	1.30
International business course work in education	3.82	1.20
International business degree (minor, major, emphasis)	3.66	1.15
International business certification	3.18	1.14

*n= 38 Respondents; *Range 1 - 6*

An international business degree was determined to be only "somewhat needed" by a the most respondents (15 respondents or 39.5%). Nine respondents (23.7%) felt that this skill was "essential". However, the same amount (23.7% or nine respondents) felt that an international business degree was "minimally needed" in the role of an international business professional. Two respondents (5.3%) felt that an international business degree was "rarely needed". Three respondents (7.9%) felt that the "job position does not require this skill". With such a wide range of ratings for this qualification, it is not surprising that the mean reflects this range of ratings with a calculated overall mean of 3.66 and a standard deviation of 1.15.

International business course work in education (International Marketing for example) was the next qualification in this section of the survey. This item had a wide range of ratings. Agreement was found on the rating of "somewhat needed" or a "4" rating on the survey for international course work in education. Eighteen respondents chose this rating or 47.4% of the sample. The remaining respondents rated international course work as follows: seven respondents (18.4%) chose "almost always needed" and

seven respondents (18.4%) chose "minimally needed". Whereas two (5.3%) chose "essential" and two (5.3%) chose "rarely needed". One respondent (2.6%) chose "job position does not require this skill" and one (2.6%) did not answer the question. The mean was 3.82 and standard deviation of 1.20. Again, more of a range in the ratings versus what was calculated for the skills in part III.

Next in the qualification section was the category of international business certification. No respondents rated this skill as "essential". Fourteen respondents (36.8%) rated this skill as "somewhat needed". Thirteen respondents (34.2%) rated qualification as being "minimally needed". Three respondents rated international business certification as both "almost always needed" (7.9%) and "rarely needed" (7.9%). Five respondents (13.2%) chose that the "job position does not require this skill". As in the previous qualifications, there was a wide range of ratings from the respondents, which is apparent in the overall mean at 3.18, and standard deviation of 1.14.

Multiple language skills were the next qualification rated in Part IV. Knowing multiple languages was rated as "somewhat needed" by 15 respondents (39.5%). Eight respondents felt that knowing multiple languages was "almost always needed" and seven felt that it was "essential". Six felt that knowing multiple languages was "minimally needed" in the international business profession. Where as one respondent (2.6%) felt it was rarely needed. One respondent (2.6%) noted that the "job position does not require this skill". The overall mean for multiple languages was at 4.2 and standard deviation of 1.18.

International travel experience was rated on both academic and personal/business basis. Upon comparing the results of the two items, both mean and standard deviation

scores were quite similar. For academic the mean was 4.34/1.34 and personal/business it was 4.34/1.32. However, the frequencies were not so similar. The ratings for international travel experience on an academic basis were: 11 (28.9%) chose "almost always needed"; 10 (26.3%) chose "somewhat needed"; seven (18.4%) chose "essential"; five (13.2%) chose "minimally needed"; four (10.5) chose "rarely needed"; one (2.6%) noted that the "job position does not require this skill". Whereas international travel experience of a personal or business nature rated as follows: 13 (34.2%) chose "somewhat needed"; nine (23.7%) chose "essential"; eight (21.1%) chose "almost always needed"; four (10.5%) chose "minimally needed"; three (7.9%) chose "rarely needed". Again, one respondent (2.6%) noted that the "job position does not require this skill".

Presentation skills, including creating presentations and speaking to groups, was the next item in the qualifications section of the survey. Overall, 20 respondents (52.6%) felt this item was a five rating or "almost always needed". However, 13 respondents (34.2%) felt that this qualification was "essential" for international business professionals. The remaining five respondents chose either "somewhat needed" (three respondents or 7.9%) or "rarely needed" (two respondents or 5.3%). The mean for presentation skills was 5.11 with a standard deviation of .95.

The next qualification that was assessed in the survey was that of project management, which included project management experience, the skill set of project management and certification. The most popular rating response for this qualification was an "almost always needed" rating given by 14 respondents (36.8% of sample). The next most popular rating was "somewhat needed" from 10 respondents (26.3%) followed by "essential" with five respondents (13.2%) and "minimally needed" also with five

respondents (13.2%). Two respondents (5.3%) felt this qualification was "rarely

needed". Two respondents chose the "job position does not require this skill". The mean

for project management was 4.24 with a standard deviation of 1.3.

The survey then addressed was whether it necessary for international business

professionals to have a valid passport prior to hire. The most common rating for this

qualification was "essential" for 13 of the 38 respondents (34.3%). Eleven respondents

(28.9%) felt it was almost always needed. The remaining ratings included: seven

respondents (18.4%) felt it was "minimally needed"; four (10.5%) felt it was "rarely

needed"; two (5.3%) chose "somewhat needed"; and one chose that "job position does

not require this skill". The overall mean for having a valid passport prior to hire was 4.50

with a standard deviation of 1.52. The standard deviation range was quite apparent in the

wide range of ratings given to this qualification.

The last item assessed in the qualification section was for writing skills such as

professional writing, writing for publications and website communications. Thirty-one of

the respondents answered in the top 2 ratings (either a 5 or 6) with a rating of "almost

always needed" (with 20 respondents or 52.6%) or as "essential" (with 11 respondents

28.9%). While six respondents (15.8%) felt that writing skills were "somewhat needed"

and one (2.6%) felt it was "minimally needed". The overall mean for writing skills was

5.08 with a standard deviation of .75.

In summary for Part IV, the qualification for presentation skills scored the highest

mean at 5.10 and a standard deviation of .95. The qualifications including international

business degree, coursework and certification scored significantly lower, each with a

mean falling in the 3's. The remaining qualifications had means in the 4's. Except for

writing skills *(x̄ 5.08/sd .75)*, there were somewhat significant ranges in the *sd* for each

qualification resulting in a wide range of ratings for each of the items. Table 17

compares the mean (*x̄*) and standard deviations (*sd*) across the entire survey (Parts I-IV)

for all respondents and all 47 KSAQ questions.

Table 17

Descriptive Statistics Comparison of each KSAQ (Parts I-IV) for All Respondents

All Respondents	$\bar{x}$ *	sd
Overall Survey Results	4.52	1.10
Part I: Relationship Management		
Appreciations of cultural diversity	5.66	0.58
Ability to build Collaborative relationships	5.58	0.55
Networking and communication	5.53	0.65
Ability to be flexible & open	5.37	0.59
Ability to build partnerships	5.37	0.75
Community Building	4.97	1.00
Part II: Business Acumen		
Business Acumen: General Business Management and Marketing (1)		
Business ethics	5.21	0.81
Country specific knowledge	4.95	0.96
Global customer services (pre/post sale)	4.68	1.12
Strategic planning	4.68	0.87
Global sales contracts (e.g. Inco terms), contracts negotiation	4.47	1.03
Global advertising and marketing	4.16	1.15
Market research methods	4.11	1.35
Human resources	3.53	1.41
Joint ventures, foreign investment, branches	3.42	1.48
Global production	3.34	1.49
Business Acumen: Supply Chain Management (2)		
Global transportation and logistics	4.29	1.59
Export control laws, regulatory compliance, licensing, inspections	4.13	1.68
Importing and sourcing or purchasing strategies	3.87	1.58
Other export/import skills	3.74	1.43
Legal areas	3.63	1.42
Business Acumen: Trade Finance and Payment Methods (3)		
Exporting, distributorship	4.39	1.17
Political risk	4.18	1.18
Import laws, regulatory compliance, inspections	4.05	1.33
Export financing	3.92	1.68
Letters of credit	3.92	1.48
International trade theory	3.87	1.21

Foreign exchange	3.84	1.37
Part III: Personal Effectiveness		
Global mindset	5.50	0.95
Critical thinking & problems solving skills	5.50	0.51
Ability to switch communication styles	5.37	1.00
Maturity to perform at peak levels under strenuous conditions	5.34	0.71
Recognizing cultural values	5.32	0.70
Empathy	5.13	0.62
Facilitation skills	5.08	0.71
Ability to sharing leadership	5.00	0.74
Being Tech savvy	4.92	0.78
Part IV: Qualifications		
Presentations skills	5.11	0.95
Writing skills	5.08	0.75
Valid Passport prior to hire	4.50	1.52
International travel experience (personal or business)	4.34	1.32
Multiple language skills	4.29	1.18
International travel experience (academic, study abroad)	4.24	1.34
Project management experience, skill set and/or certification	4.24	1.30
International business course work in education	3.82	1.20
International business degree (minor, major, emphasis)	3.66	1.15
International business certification	3.18	1.14

Based on 38 Respondents   *Range 1-6

Inferential statistical analysis

Inferential statistical analysis was also performed on the data collected from Parts I-IV of the survey. This analysis provided information regarding differences or correlation between groups, which resulted in inferences that can be made, based on the sample and applied to the population (Creswell, 2009). The following analyses were performed on the data: Cronbach Alpha, factor analysis and independent *t*-tests.

The reliability of the researcher-designed survey was first authenticated through the pilot test. However, it was still necessary to determine the reliability of the research instrument for the actual research population. The Cronbach's alpha score for the pilot test was .959 based on 48 questions. The overall Cronbach's Alpha for the final version of this survey as a whole was calculated to be .941 based on the final 47 questions. This

means that 94.1 % of the variance in the survey would be true score or reliable variance. When analyzing all 47 questions in SPSS, there was a range from .937-.942 for the "Cronbach's Alpha if item deleted" score. Therefore, since the result of the reliability test yielded Cronbach Alpha results higher than .8, there were no specific questions that should have been deleted in order to better the survey, thus they should not be removed (Field, 2009). In summary, the score for this survey was determined to be acceptable, as the overall Cronbach score was .941 or 94.1%.

When the survey was further broken down into the four parts (Parts I-IV) an outlier was uncovered in the alpha scores. Keeping in mind that the Cronbach reliability is a measurement of the internal consistency of an instrument, the analysis of subset scores would not be valid (Pallant, 2007). However, it is worth mentioning that the Cronbach alpha score for Part II was .944, Part III was .808 and Part IV was .785, which are all acceptable measures as previously discussed. However, Part I had a Cronbach Alpha of .599, which is well below the other scores and lower than a .8 threshold of reliability if this section was standalone (Field, 2009). A low score may be attributed to the 1.0 variance in the means between the small and large group responses and will be addressed in the part I descriptive statistics discussion that follows.

Once the Cronbach Alpha score verified the reliability of the survey, the survey was also analyzed to ensure a normal distribution of the scores before further statistical analysis is conducted. Normal distribution is a probability distribution, or curve describing an idealized frequency distribution of a variable, from which a probability can be established of a random variable that is know to have certain properties (Field, 2009). In a normal distribution, there will be a skew of 0 and kurtosis of 0. After running SPSS

frequencies in order to determine the normality of the data, Part I was found to have a skew of all negative numbers, indicating that there was a pile-up to the right of the distribution (Field, 2009). In fact, 46 out of the 47 variables were all skewed to the right, or toward the 5 "almost always needed" or 6 "essential" ratings of the Likert scale. There was only one KSAQ from Part IV, titled "international business course work in education", which received a skew of 0.00. Therefore, the distribution of the sample is not normal, but rather skewed to the right. This may be attributed to the small sample size of the survey ($n = 38$). This skew is apparent in the Histogram of the *z-score* data in table (Appendix B).

      Z-scores were then determined for each the 47 variables in order to determine if there was a normal distribution with the survey results. The *z-score* is "the value of an observation expressed in standard deviation units" thus creating a new mean of zero and a standard deviation of one, in order to compare all (Field, 2009, p. 796). In order to determine 95% probability, these *z-scores* must lie between -1.96 and 1.96 (Field, 2009). Numbers are expected to fall in this range in a normal distribution (Field, 2009). All *z-scores* for the 47 survey questions fell within the acceptable range of -1.96 and 1.96, the actual range of scores was -1.90 to 1.62.

      The histogram of the 47 mean scores (Appendix B) reflects a definite skew and kurtosis. In order to determine the cause of the skew and kurtosis, the skew and kurtosis scores were converted to *z-scores* using the following formulas z skewness= $S - 0/SE$ skewness and z kurtosis=$K- 0/KE$ kurtosis (Field, 2009, p. 139). These *z-scores* can be compared to values that you would expect to get by chance alone. In this case the research again used the acceptable range of -1.96 and 1.96. The z skewness= -.06. This

number fell within the acceptable range and indicates that there was a build-up of high scores in the data set (Field, 2009). The *z* kurtosis score = -1.79, which also fell within the acceptable range. This score indicates that there is a flat light tailed distribution, which is apparent in the histogram (Appendix B).

In summary, the *z-scores* for the 47 survey questions and the *z-scores* for skewness and kurtosis fell within the acceptable range for a normal distribution, -1.96 and 1.96 or 95% showing that the survey data is reliable and indeed a normal distribution.

Statistical Comparison of Small/Medium Company and Large Company Responses

In order to determine whether or not the small/medium group is different from the large group regarding the professional skills, knowledge, abilities and qualifications that are required of international business professionals, statistical tests must be conducted. The following methods were used to test for differences between the groups include the statistical techniques of the independent *t*-test and factor analysis. Statistical tests hypothesize similarity in outcomes across groups (Fink, 2009). The independent sample *t*-test is used to test for differences and allows for the comparison of the means for two groups in order to determine the probability that any differences found are real and not due to chance (Fink, 2009). Factor analysis is "a multivariate technique for identifying whether the correlations between a set of observed variables stem from the relationship to one or mare latent variables in the data, each of which takes the form of a linear model" (Field, 2009, p. 785).

The independent sample *t*-test was performed in order to test for the differences between the two groups of survey respondents from both small/medium and large company's. It was used to test for differences in the mean scores of one or more

variables between these two independent groups. The results must be quite different from the value of the mean of the distribution, meaning that something has only a low probability of occurring by chance without a relationship between the two variables (Field, 2009). For the independent sample *t*-test, the researcher established that the differences between the two groups would not be significant at less than .05 level of significance, or Type I error (Fink, 2009). This meaning that probability that these two groups will differ by chance alone is 5% ($p < .05$) and the probability that one will reject the null hypothesis when it is true (Fink, 2009). An error, such as <.05 Type I would mean that there was chance that a difference in scores could be due to something other than group membership (Field, 2009).

In order to conduct a *t*-test, the researcher had to reflect on the following research hypothesis: The KSAQ requirements for international business professionals at small/medium size companies differ from the requirements of large companies. The null hypothesis reflected: There is no significant difference between small/medium companies and large companies when determining KSAQ requirements for international business professionals. At a .05 level of significance, the *t* value necessary in order to reject the null hypothesis was 1.86 (Field, 2009).

An independent sample *t*-test was administered for the survey as a whole, in four parts (Parts I-IV) and on an individual question basis in order to examine the differences between small/medium and large companies responses. The *t*-test was administered to determine whether or not there was a difference in the independent groups mean scores for one or more of the variables. The *t*-values for calculated for overall results are referenced in Table 18.

Table 18

S*mall/Medium and Large company survey and Independent t-test results*

Company Size	Small/Medium		Large		Independent t-test	
	$\bar{x}$ *	sd	$\bar{x}$ *	sd	t	p
Overall Survey Results	4.470	0.605	4.626	0.614	-0.725	0.830
Part I: Relationship Management	5.385	0.416	5.472	0.722	-0.613	0.980
Part II: Business Acumen	3.990	0.904	4.367	0.885	-1.205	0.933
Part III: Personal Effectiveness	5.251	0.552	5.210	0.270	0.232	0.147
Part IV: Qualifications	4.285	0.698	4.158	0.734	0.510	0.584

n = 26 (small/med);n = 12 (large*)*

The overall *t*-value for the survey was - 0.725. This value is less than 1.86, so the null hypothesis was not rejected and therefore concluding that there is no significant difference between small/medium companies and large companies when determining KSAQ requirements for international business professionals.

The significance test, 2-tailed test, data pointed out that only two out of the 47 KSAQ had significant differences in mean scores between groups. Both KSAQ resulted in *p* values of less than .05, specifically values of .012 and .004, which notes that there was a significant difference between groups for these specific skills. Both KSAQ were categorized under the Business Acumen component (Part II), specifically part of the Trade Finance and Payment Methods section of the survey. This first KSAQ, "Exporting, distributorship (direct sales)," received a *p* value of .012. The second KSAQ, "Foreign exchange (market, exchange rate regimes, risk)," received a *p* value of .004, which points out that there was a *very significant* difference in mean scores between small/medium and large groups.

Running Levene's test for equality of variances on the 47 skills sets in comparison of the small/medium versus the large companies resulted in equal variances being assumed for all skills except for "ability to build collaborative relationships in

global environment" where the significance score was .029 (less than .05) and thus equal variances are not assumed for this skill. Two skills scored just above .05, "maturity to perform at peak levels under strenuous conditions" which scored at .054 and "international business course work in education" which scored at .057. Neither of which would effect that equal variances assumed classification. The remainder of the 44 skills tested did not score below .05 confirming that equal variances were assumed.

The significance values were calculated with a $p = .05$, meaning that any p value greater than .05 would note that a significant difference does not exist between the small/medium and large groups. Based on the findings from the independent t-test, the p value for the survey instrument was .830, which is greater than .05. So, it can be concluded that a significant difference does not exist between international KSAQ required by small/medium and large companies.

However, the researcher also analyzed each of the four parts of the survey in order to further determine if any specific parts of the survey did in fact contain any significant differences. Independent sample t-tests were performed for each of the components of the survey (Parts I-IV) that resulted in all components falling into the acceptable $p >.05$ range. It should be noted that Part I had a p value of .980, Part II had a p value of .933, Part III had a p value of .147, and Part IV had a p value of .584. The effect size was measured for the two groups to see how different they are in comparison to one another. The Pearson correlation coefficient, r, was calculated to determine effect size *(ES)* is $ES =$ (group one mean – group two mean)/standard deviation (Field, 2009). The effect size of the overall survey is $ES = .12$. This reflects a small effect, as it falls in the $r = .10$, or explaining 1% of the total variance (Field. 2009).

Factor analysis was performed prior on the pilot data (discussed in Chapter Three) and on the final descriptive survey data. One outcome of factor analysis is to provide the reader of the research with enough information to make an informed opinion about the data presented in the research (Field, 2009, p. 671). Factor analysis is a more efficient way to analyze the survey as a whole and helps the researcher to see any correlations and patterns between the groups of data. Factor analysis was performed initially on the pilot data, which helped the researcher to develop the survey instrument and was performed again on the final survey as a way to validate the final survey instrument. In addition, performing factor analysis on the final instrument helps to ensure that this was a reliable and valid tool.

In this particular study the variables in the factor analysis included the 47 questions in the survey. The factor analysis revealed that 12 components with eigenvalues exceeded one, which explained 83.24% of the variance. However, after analyzing the scree plot, four components were retained. These four components and respective variance for each included: Business Knowledge (29.02%); Cultural Competence (12.29%); Personal Effectiveness (8.41%); and Business Expertise (6.25%). The first component revealed business acumen related skills such as import/export skills and foreign exchanges laws, legal areas, global transportation, etc. The second component included a mixture of cultural, communication and relationship skills. The third component included personal effectiveness skills. The fourth component included qualification and business experience items including marketing research skills, international coursework (degrees, certificates, certifications), global production and project management experience. These results indicate that there are four desired skill

sets. Upon analysis of all skills results, the loading scores for eight of the skill items fell below the acceptable range of .5 for a valid survey, thus indicating that these items will be removed from the instrument when used in future studies. These skills included: multiple language skills, country specific knowledge, global customer service, business ethics, writing skills, communications, the ability to flexible and open to new ways of doing things, and human resources.

Descriptive Statistics for Parts I-IV: Small/Medium and Large Companies

In addition to the inferential statistical analysis of the small/medium and large company responses, both the small/medium and large company responses each of the skills listed in Part I-IV were analyzed using descriptive statistics. This data was analyzed in order to verify if there were any differences between group responses. The survey asked respondents to classify their company into one of two categories. The company could be a small and medium-sized business meaning that they report fewer than 500 employees or a large company meaning that they report more than 500 employees (U.S. Department of Commerce, 2013). The data analyzed contained survey data from 26 small/medium companies and 12 large companies.

On a six-point scale, the mean for overall survey was 4.47 for small/medium size companies and the mean was 4.63 for large companies. There was a difference between the two groups of only .16. This may seem minute and possibly classified as an insignificant difference, however, differences between both groups may be visible when we break down the survey and compare the two groups in terms of: Part I Relationship Management; Part II Business Acumen; Part III Personal Effectiveness; and Part IV

Qualifications. Table 19 compares each group based on the components (Parts I-IV) and

subsequently each KSAQ evaluated in the survey.

Table 19

Descriptive Statistics Comparison of each KSAQ (Parts I-IV) Small/Medium and Large Group

Group	Small/Medium		Large	
	$\bar{x}$ *	sd	$\bar{x}$ *	sd
Overall Survey Results	4.47	0.61	4.63	0.61
Part I: Relationship Management				
Appreciations of cultural diversity	5.69	0.55	5.58	0.67
Ability to build Collaborative relationships	5.50	0.58	5.75	0.45
Networking and communication	5.50	0.71	5.58	0.51
Ability to build partnerships	5.38	0.64	5.33	0.98
Ability to be flexible & open	5.27	0.53	5.58	0.67
Community Building	4.96	0.99	5.00	1.04
Part II: Business Acumen				
Business Acumen: General Business Management and Marketing				
Business ethics	5.27	0.72	5.08	1.00
Country specific knowledge	4.92	1.02	5.00	0.85
Strategic planning	4.77	0.82	4.50	1.00
Global customer services (pre/post sale)	4.58	1.06	4.92	1.24
Global sales contracts (e.g. Inco terms), contracts negotiation	4.35	1.09	4.75	0.87
Market research methods	4.23	1.39	3.83	1.27
Global advertising and marketing	4.12	1.14	4.25	1.22
Human resources	3.42	1.42	3.75	1.42
Global production	3.27	1.51	3.50	1.51
Joint ventures, foreign investment, branches	3.15	1.49	4.00	1.35
Business Acumen: Supply Chain Management				
Global transportation and logistics	4.27	1.61	4.33	1.61
Export control laws, regulatory compliance, licensing	4.00	1.72	4.42	1.62
Importing and sourcing or purchasing strategies	3.69	1.54	4.25	1.66
Legal areas	3.50	1.48	3.92	1.31
Other export/import skills	3.50	1.39	4.25	1.42
Business Acumen: Trade Finance and Payment Methods				
Exporting, distributorship	4.08	1.20	5.08	0.79
Political risk	3.96	1.11	4.67	1.23
Import laws, regulatory compliance, inspections	3.88	1.34	4.42	1.31
Export financing	3.85	1.69	4.08	1.73
Letters of credit	3.81	1.55	4.17	1.33
International trade theory	3.73	1.28	4.17	1.03
Foreign exchange	3.42	1.27	4.75	1.14
Part III: Personal Effectiveness				
Critical thinking & problems solving skills	5.54	0.51	5.42	0.51
Global mindset	5.46	1.07	5.58	0.67

Ability to switch communication styles	5.35	1.16	5.42	0.51
Recognizing cultural values	5.31	0.74	5.33	0.65
Maturity	5.31	0.79	5.42	0.51
Empathy	5.23	0.65	4.92	0.51
Ability to sharing leadership	5.08	0.80	4.83	0.58
Facilitation skills	5.04	0.72	5.17	0.72
Being Tech savvy	4.96	0.77	4.83	0.83
Part IV: Qualifications				
Presentations skills	5.08	0.84	5.17	1.19
Writing skills	5.04	0.72	5.17	0.83
Valid Passport prior to hire	4.69	1.44	4.08	1.68
International travel experience (personal or business)	4.38	1.30	4.25	1.42
Project management experience, skill set and/or certification	4.38	1.20	3.92	1.51
Multiple language skills	4.23	1.21	4.42	1.16
International travel experience (academic, study abroad)	4.08	1.38	4.58	1.24
International business course work in education	4.00	0.98	3.42	1.56
International business degree (minor, major, emphasis)	3.73	1.00	3.50	1.45
International business certification	3.23	1.14	3.08	1.16

N = 38 Respondents (26 Small/Medium; 12 Large)   *Range 1-6*

The mean comparison for Part I show little variance in measures between groups. The small/medium group had a mean of 5.39, whereas the large group had a mean of 5.47. The standard deviation for Part I was at .42 for small/medium and .39 for the large group (range of .03). Part II, business acumen, showed no significant variance in needs between the groups with small/medium companies was computed to have a mean of 3.99, whereas the large group was at 4.37 (range of .38). The standard deviation for both groups had similar scores falling at .90 (small/medium) and .89 (large) with only a .01 range. Part III seemed to have more similarity between the group means than the prior two parts. The mean scores for this section were at 5.25 for small/medium and 5.21 for large (range of .04). Part III also had a minor variance in the standard deviation than the other parts, measuring at .55 (small/medium) and .27 (large) for a range of .28. Part IV had mean scores for small/medium at 4.29 and large at 4.16. The standard deviations

were both similar with the small/medium at .70 and large group at .73 (range of .03).

Table 20 displays the results of the mean ($\bar{x}$) and standard deviation (*sd*) scores between the small/medium and large company groups.

Table 20

Survey Mean and Standard Deviations

Company Size	Small/Medium		Large	
Results	$\bar{x}$ *	sd	$\bar{x}$ *	sd
Overall Survey Results	4.47	0.61	4.63	0.61
Part I: Relationship Management	5.39	0.42	5.47	0.39
Part II: Business Acumen	3.99	0.90	4.37	0.89
Part III: Personal Effectiveness	5.25	0.55	5.21	0.27
Part IV: Qualifications	4.29	0.70	4.16	0.73

n = 26 Small/Medium; 12 Large $\bar{x}$ = Mean; sd = Standard Deviation

In summary, the small/medium and large company groups had similar mean scores for Parts I-IV of the survey. Part II had the most variance between mean scores of the two groups with a .38 spread. The remaining mean scores were very similar. Overall, the mean scores did not point out any significant differences between groups. Standard deviation scores were also found to be similar between the small/medium and large company groups. Part III had the most variance in standard deviations with only a .28 difference between groups. All parts had very similar standard deviation results noting that there was not any significant difference in the overall answers recorded for each part when comparing the two groups.

Similarity occurs between groups by way of the "essential" rating (6) for the following skills: ability to build collaborative relationships in a global environment; appreciation of cultural diversity; ability to build partnerships & alliances with global partners; and networking and communication skills. Whereas differences in rating occur between the small/medium and large groups for the following skills: community

building, ability to be flexible & open to new ways of doing things. The small/medium group yielded a tie in ratings for the ability to build partnerships & alliances with global partners. For example, the first skill of "community building" yielded and essential rating by five respondents in the large company sample (41.7% of respondents in this category) whereas the small/medium companies rated this skill as almost always needed (16 respondents or 61.5% of this category). This highlights the fact that the small/medium companies view this skill set as being much more important in the role of an international business professionals than do the large companies. There is also a discrepancy between groups in the third skill set "ability to be flexible & open to new ways of doing things". The large companies chose this skill be essential (66.7% or eight respondents) where as a majority of the small/medium companies (65.4% or 17 respondents) chose this skill to be almost always needed, not as an essential skill.

Finally, it is worth noting that for the fourth skill set, "ability to build partnerships, alliances with global partners" received a tied rating from the large companies with a 46.2% rating for both "essential" and "almost always needed". So there is definitely a discrepancy in the exact need for this skill from the view of the large companies in the sample, meaning that it is not clear whether the skill set should be classified as essential or somewhat needed.

Qualitative Findings about Research Question One

Qualitative findings were gathered in a concurrent triangulation method, in order to answer the following research questions:

1. What specific international business knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications do companies competing in a global economy require?

2. What challenges do business encounter due to their employees lack of international knowledge, skills abilities or qualifications?

3. How have businesses leaders overcome business challenges due to the lack of international business knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications by their employees?

Structured interviews provided qualitative data to address each of these questions. The purpose of the structured interview with international business professionals was to assist in clarification of the quantitative findings in this study and will also provide depth to the survey results. In addition to these factors, key informant interviewees make good candidates due to the knowledge, resources and experiences that they possess related to the topic of international business leadership. Key informants were chosen for this study based on references from the international trade associations being sampled in the survey, a convenience sampling technique.

Description of site and sample for interviews

As previously discussed, eight interview candidates were contacted based on the researcher's international business professional network and the international trade association members using a snowball sampling technique. All interview candidates had either past or current hiring authority in regards to international business professional staff. Candidates represented both small/medium and large companies residing in the state of Wisconsin. Candidates were required to classify their company as either a *small/medium company (500 or less employees)* or as a *large company (more than 500 employees)*. The interviews followed a structured interview approach. Three interviews

were conducted in-person and five interviews were conducted by telephone during the data collection period. Seven of the eight interviews completed the survey instrument.

Process for Interviews and Coding

Qualitative data analysis of the structured interviews was accomplished through the following procedure that included data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing and verification (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Structured interviews were conducted with eight international business professionals. Once the interviews were completed, the recorded interviews were transcribed and then reviewed a minimum of three times to ensure accuracy of the transcription. The technique of data reduction, "the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the data" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p.10), was then applied to the transcribed text. This process does not conclude until the final report has been completed (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Initially the documents were coded by themes in order to create a code list.

The code list was developed from the conceptual framework, including both survey and interview questions and the content of the study. "Codes are tags or labels for assigning units of meaning of the descriptive or inferential information compiled during a study" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 56). Next all eight interviews were coded using this code list. After the first pass of the eight interview transcripts, the code list was updated to reflect any emerging themes not included in the initial list. These codes assisted the researcher in identifying patterns in the interview response data in relation to the quantitative survey findings. Pattern coding was specific coding chosen for this study due to the fact that it is more inferential and explanatory commonly used descriptive and interpretive coding (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The three important functions of pattern

coding for this research are: (1) reduces large amounts of data into a smaller number of analytic units; (2) analysis occurs during data collection so field work is more focused; and (3) it helps the researcher build cognitive maps and schema (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 69).

Data display was the next activity in qualitative analysis. Data display is an organized, condensed gathering of information that warrants conclusion drawing and action (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Displays help the researcher see the themes and have a way to further analyze or react to the findings or the researchers understanding of the data. Simply put, the display is designed to "assemble organized information into an immediately accessible, compact form" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 11). The data display for this particular study included both conceptually ordered display and thematic conceptual matrix (Miles & Huberman, 1994, pp. 127 & 131). Due to the focus of the qualitative part of the study being on the required knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications (KSAQ) the conceptual ordered display worked well for this data analysis. Where as the focus on interviewees on the challenges of international businesses face due to the lack of KSAQ on the job, the thematic conceptual matrix was a good fit for this data analysis. These data displays allowed the researcher to draw conclusions from the findings.

The interview data have been summarized by interview questions and will be presented in the following order:

1. Demographics of interview candidates.

2. Influence on hiring process or decisions.

3. Specific KSAQ of a successful IB professional (conceptual ordered display).

4. A recent/past challenge company encountered due to lack of desired KSAQ on the job (thematic conceptual matrix).

5. Classification of the challenge from question 4 (thematic conceptual matrix).

6. Actions taken to overcome challenges from question 4 (thematic conceptual matrix).

Interview question three corresponds with research question one of the research study. Both interview question's four and five correlate to research question two of this study. Interview question six correlates to research question three of this study.

To ensure validity of the data collected through the structured interview process, two strategies were used. Data triangulation was used to assess validity. Data triangulation is the process of confirming evidence of a particular theme from several sources (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). This was accomplished by the researchers comparison of participant responses on the survey and the structured interviews regarding the desired international knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications on the job. The comparison between the survey responses and the interview themes ensured the validity of the data. Reliability in the structured interviews was reported by careful documentation of the interview procedures so that an auditor would be able to repeat the process and conclude the same results (Yin, 2004).

Demographics of the Interview Sample

The interview sample included eight international business professionals from a Midwest state. There were five males (62.5%) and three females (37.5%) interviewed. A majority of interview candidates (six or 75%) currently work for small/medium companies, while two candidates work for large companies. Three of candidates had

worked overseas, while five had not worked overseas. Seven out of eight candidates spoke only English, while one candidate was also fluent in Japanese.

The number of years of experience in the international business profession varied from six to over 20. Half of the interview candidates (four or 50%) had more that 20 years of experience. Two candidates (25%) had between 11-15 years experience. Two candidates (25%) had six to 10 years experience in the international business profession. The combined years of international business experience alone for the interview group was 136 years. Figure 6 depicts the results for each interviewee in relation to years of international business experience.

Figure 6: *Total Years of Business Experience per Candidate*
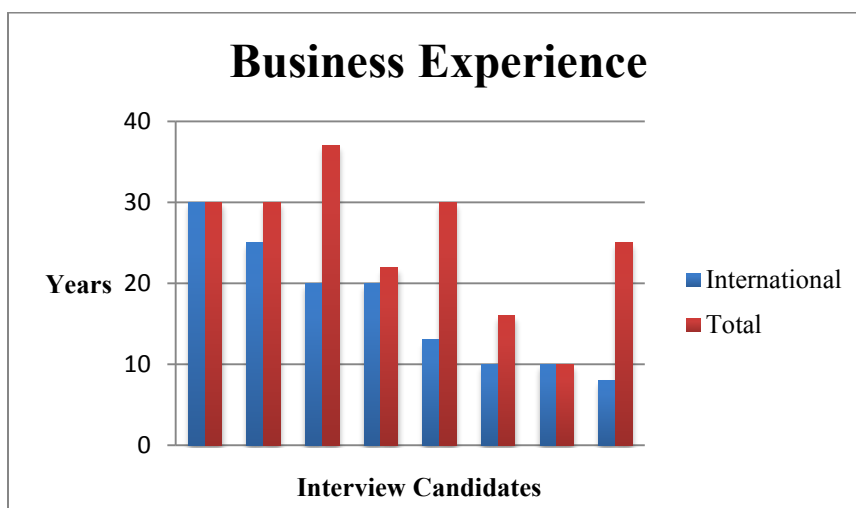
n = 8 Interview Candidates

The areas of international expertise for the interviewees included international business development, technology and global business specific areas (logistics, sourcing, materials, compliance). Six of the respondents classified themselves to be business development professionals (four out of the six specified "international business development"). One respondent classified his/her area to be technology. One respondent

classified his/her area to include global logistics, global sourcing, global materials and global compliance.

Hiring influence was analyzed and according to the survey data. Seven of the interview candidates (or 87.5%) currently influence either the hiring process or hiring decisions at their respective companies, while one candidate has influenced hiring in the past. Six of the candidates influence both local and corporate level hiring or hiring decisions, whereas one person only hires on a corporate level and one only at the local country level.

For their respective companies, six or 75% of the candidates rated international business as growing at a faster rate than domestic growth. One candidate rated domestic business was growing faster. One candidate did not complete the survey question.

Answers to the following open-ended questions in the survey (questions 11-13 respectively) for the interview candidates follow. *Question 11: Of your company's total sales, approximately what percent is international?* One candidate noted that 80% of their company's sales were international. One noted 35%, one noted 20%, two noted 15% and one at 10%. Two candidates did not answer the question. *Question 12: over the past five years, what is the extent of your company's international sales growth?* Sales growth over the past five years for the companies of the interviewees was not clear. One of the eight candidates stated that their company had a $30 million dollar growth in five years. One candidate vaguely stated that there was strong growth in both China and Europe. One candidate stated a 25% growth. One candidate stated zero growth. Three candidates did not answer the question. *Question 13: Please enter the number of countries that your business sells to.* Since this was an open-ended question, the answers

varied. Two interviewee candidates noted that their company sold to 100 countries, 2 sold to five countries, one sold to six countries and one to 70 countries. One candidate's answer was not entered in numbers and one candidate did not answer this question.

Influence on Hiring Process

In order to classify the interview candidates in a hiring category, similar to what was administered in the survey, each candidate was asked how they were involved in the hiring process at their respective companies. Candidates were asked to respond to the following open-ended question: "How do you or how have you influenced the hiring process or hiring decisions at your company?" The interview transcripts were reviewed in order to gather individual experiences and personal examples of their involvement in the hiring process at their company. The interview data provided a deeper level of probing into the specific hiring influence of the candidates than the survey data could provide.

Interview results brought out the fact that one candidate had an upper level of influence on hiring process but did not actually interview employees. Another candidate noted that he/she only was only involved in the hiring of indirect employees. One candidate marked his/her hiring influence as being on the corporate level, whereas his/her interview responses allude to both local and corporate level hiring influence. When combining the interview and survey data, seven of the eight interview candidates (or 87.5%) currently influence either the hiring process or hiring decisions at their respective companies and one candidate influenced hiring in the past. Six of the candidates influence both local and corporate level hiring or hiring decisions. The remaining two candidates either hired on a corporate level (state level) or on the local country level.

Qualitative Findings Related to Research Question One:

What specific international business knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications do companies competing in a global economy require?

Interviewees were asked the following question: "From your business perspective, what specific international knowledge, skills, abilities or qualifications make an international business professional successful on the job?" This question was asked in order to provide specific answers from each of the candidates about what KSAQ they equate with international business success. This question also reflects question one of this research project, which was subsequently a summary of the quantitative data collected by the survey instrument. The results of reviewing the transcripts for experiences, stories and examples helped to validate the findings of the survey data.

Table 21 represents a summary of statements from the candidates' discussions regarding their opinions regarding the successful KSAQ of international business professionals. One candidate described the KSAQ in a way that "you have to be somewhat of a road warrior in order to be able to be any good at this" which implied that constant travel and appreciation of being on the road in order to build relationships, communicate and appreciate other cultures when doing international business. Having an open mind on numerous levels was also a common theme among candidate responses.

Table 21

Quotations from Interview Respondents for Question One

Quotations
"You have to live it, to have a global mindset"
"A person has to have the global mindset"
"You have to be somewhat of a road warrior in order to be able to be any good at this"
"I think you need to have a love of people"
"The number one thing that they have to have is an open mind to other ways of doing business and operations, so there is no cookie cutter"
"Make sure the individuals don't have an ethnocentric attitude"
"How they can interact with different people of different cultures and languages across the whole continuum of activities"
"The understanding of different cultures and be able to work within different cultures"
"The number one thing is the ability to communicate"

n = 8 candidates

The candidates discussed many related concepts in relation to the their responses in regards to what specific international knowledge, skills, abilities or qualifications make an international business professional successful on the job. These comments addressed areas all areas of the KSAQ, including relationship management, business acumen, personal effectiveness and qualifications. One respondent stated that "you need to have a love of people" and be "a relationship builder". Being successful in international business could be based on "how they can interact with different people of different cultures and languages across the whole continuum of activities" according to one respondent. A summary of candidate responses related this question, Question One of this study are presented in Table 22.

Table 22

Candidate Key KSAQ Requirements Question One: Interview Respondents

Candidate	KSAQ
A	Market development, international experience & expertise, sales/marketing knowledge, cultural awareness/appreciation, cross cultural communication, mentoring, love travel
B	Global mindset, cultural knowledge, multiple languages, regional expertise, hard skills, communication skills, industry expertise, market knowledge
C	Love travel, road warrior, culturally aware, building relationships, confidence, knowledgeable, international expertise
D	Open minded, culturally awareness/appreciation, global mindset, international expertise, knowledgeable, love travel
E	Multiple languages, communication skills, cultural awareness, international expertise, global logistics, marketing, finance, management, cross cultural communications
F	People skills, psychology, knowledge, relationship building, cultural awareness
G	International knowledge & skills, market knowledge, export process, marketing/selling, cultural awareness, relationship management, multiple languages
H	Communication skills, multiple languages, mentoring, cultural awareness, cross cultural communications, expertise, qualifications, travel, work visa

Based on the interview transcripts for this question, the findings can be summarized into

eight themes as shown in Table 23.

Table 23

Summary of themes from KSAQ requirements

Interview Question	Theme	Candidates *n* = 8
#3 What specific international knowledge, skills, abilities (KSA) or qualifications make an international business professional successful on the job?	Culture	8
	Knowledge/ Expertise	8
	Communication	5
	Language	5
	Relationships	4
	Marketing	4
	Travel	3

The themes prevalent in this data related to culture, expertise/knowledge,

communication, language, relationships, and marketing were noted in interviewees'

descriptions of specific international knowledge, skills, abilities or qualifications needed

for on the job success in international business. The two most prevalent themes that emerged from these responses included culture and international business knowledge/expertise. Overall, all eight candidates noted that both culture and expertise/knowledge related themes were necessary for on the job success. Five candidates discussed the themes related to communication and language ability as being important. Four candidates referenced the importance of building relationships and marketing skills in the success of international business professionals. Three candidates discussed the ability and willingness to travel as being necessary components in the success criteria of international business professionals.

Qualitative findings about Question Two.

What challenges do business encounter due to their employees lack of international knowledge, skills abilities or qualifications?

Key informant interview question 4 directly relates to question two of the study, which asks the interview candidate to: "Describe a recent or past challenge that your business has encountered due to an employee or group of employees lack of desired international knowledge, skills, abilities or qualifications on the job?" This question was asked of the interviewees in order to offer a different perspective to what KSAQ were deemed important for each candidate. It allowed for an accumulation of candidate responses that included stories, experiences and examples. A summary of quotations related to the lack of KSAQ challenge described by the candidates is displayed in Table 24.

Table 24

Key Quotations – Research Question Two

Quotations
"The real challenge is the developing markets"
"A lot of times they (upper management) just don't understand the importance"
"This is not a focus so we aren't going to put any money into this area"
"When a Western approach fails"
"You really need to take the effort to be succinct in your explanation so that both sides can understand"
"Can spell international, but not necessarily do it"
"Always had people keep up their skill level by going to training"
Being required to "keep it in the US"
"They have been there (to a country) once or twice and they think they are an expert"
"This question is hard for me because I hire these people"

n = 8 candidates

In response to this question, one participant stated that in his/her business "the real challenge is the developing markets…" Another participant described the perspective of upper management in regards to international business activities as "a lot of times they just don't understand the importance". One participant discussed a lack of upper management support relating to international business and that a common response at the company was "this is not a focus so we aren't going to put any money into this area." Another candidate discussed the challenge and frustration involved when working with people who "can spell international, but not necessarily do it". It was also discussed how challenging it is to work with upper level management that have been to a country "once or twice and they think that they are an expert" when in fact they are not.

The quotations were only a portion of the data collected. The candidates described from their own personal perspective, a wide range of challenges that they had faced in business that related to an employee or group of employees lack of international KSAQ on the job. Key concepts, or KSAQ, that were described by the interview candidates

challenges in regards to being lacking in international business, and thus a challenge, are

visible in Table 25.

Table 25

Themes of Business Challenges

Themes	KSAQ related business challenges	Candidates *n* = 8
Knowledge/expertise	Credit and collections	7
	Lack of contract knowledge	
	Lack of intl. business knowledge (2)	
	Lack of KSAQ to actually DO intl. business	
	Lack of market knowledge	
	New to international business	
	Lower level lack of intl. knowledge (2)	
	Lack of upper level interest/buy in	
	Upper level lack of intl. knowledge (2)	
	Upper management lack of experience Upper level willingness but lack of knowledge/skills (2)	
Personal Effectiveness	Lack of maturity	7
	Lack of trust	
	Lack of vision	
	Risk averse (2)	
	Fear of going global (2)	
	No control	
	Loss of credibility	
	Uncomfortable making decisions (2)	
	Giving improper council/advice (2)	
Cultural	Language issues (2)	5
	Cultural issues (5)	
	Lack of cultural awareness/competence (4)	
	Lack of cultural business etiquette (2)	
Negotiation	Negotiation failures	3
	Poor negotiations	
	Failed negotiations	
Communication	Communication challenges	3
	Lack of communication	
	Poor communications	
	Communication issues	

(#): Notes more than one response

Common themes for KSAQ items that related to the challenges discussed by respondents

include knowledge/skill, personal effectiveness, cultural, negotiation and communication.

The summary of themes with candidate responses references for question four is included

in Table 26.

Table 26

Summary of themes- Research Question Two

Interview Question	Theme	Candidates *n* = 8
#4 Describe a recent or past challenge that your business has encountered due to an employee or group of employees lack of desired international knowledge, skills, abilities (KSA) or qualifications on the job?	Knowledge/expertise	7
	Personal Effectiveness	7
	Cultural	5
	Negotiation	3
	Communication	3

Seven candidates described both components of knowledge/skill and those of personal

effectiveness as being common themes in their challenge examples. Culture was a theme

as apparent in the comments for five of the candidates and could be implied in the

remainder of the two respondents comments. Both negotiation and communication were

common themes in three of the candidates' responses.

      KSAQ Classification of Challenges Interview candidates were asked, "If you were

to classify that challenge that you just discussed in one of the following categories, which

would it fall into: Knowledge, Skill, Ability or Qualifications?" Summaries of the

classifications are reflected in Table 27.

Table 27

Business Challenge KSAQ Classification

Interview Question	Theme	Candidates n = 8
#: If you were to classify the challenge that you just discussed in one of the following categories, which would it fall in?	Knowledge	5
	All KSAQ	2
	Skills	1

Five candidates felt that their respective business challenge fell into the knowledge category. This was mainly attributed to lack of upper level management's international knowledge, which led to lack of interest (i.e. funding, goals, interest) in the international project at hand. One candidate felt that the business challenge was solely linked to "skills". Two candidates expressed that their business challenge should be classified as all KSAQ's, which was not an answer choice. They both felt as though they could not pick one category and that their challenge spread across all categories and not specifically tied to one specific category.

Qualitative findings about Question Three.

How have businesses leaders overcome business challenges due to the lack of international business knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications of their employees?

How challenges related to lack of international KSAQ were addressed in question six of the interview protocol. The interview candidates were asked, "How did your company act in order to overcome the aforementioned business challenge?" One candidate stated, "I don't think that there is one factor that says this person is going to be more successful that another" rather, "you have to be more of a generalist than anything." Another responded pointed out that "all of these questions revert back to top down", and "all of these things boil down to hiring, training, developing". In regards to upper management lack of knowledge, one respondent noted that "they don't understand how to" actually do international business and "they think it is a lot easier" than it is. Candidate responses to this question were sorted based on how their company acted to mitigate the challenges discussed in question four. Table 28 presents prevalent themes and related candidate responses found from the candidates responses to this question.

Table 28

Responses of from Question Three: How to overcome Business Challenges

Themes	KSAQ related business responses	Candidates *n* = 8
International Knowledge/expertise	International business knowledge and expertise, business knowledge, cultural knowledge	6
Hard Skills	Negotiation, research goal setting, measurement, accountability & hard skills	5
Training	Training, mentoring, professional development	5
Upper Level Leadership	Support, IB knowledge, training	5
Cultural	Cross-cultural communications, language capacity, cultural awareness, training	4
Entrepreneurial	Being entrepreneurial, having entrepreneurial spirit	4
Networking	People skills, finding clients, finding experts	4
Communication	Cross-cultural & business communication	3
Tech Savvy	Technology as a solution, way of doing business	3

These findings provided key information as to the way in which the interview respondents responded to international business challenges due to lack of desired KSAQ. The themes included the KSAQ areas of personal effectiveness, business acumen, relationship management, qualifications and other external areas including training and upper level leadership.

International knowledge and expertise encompasses all of the KSAQ and was found to be a theme among six of the candidates. Hard skills in the area of business acumen was a common theme among candidates, specifically in the areas of negotiation, goal setting, being accountable. It seems that companies tended to lean towards training, mentoring and professional development as a response their business challenges. Having upper level leadership, specifically relating to management support, knowledge of and training in international business seemed apparent to success in many of these international businesses. Entrepreneurial skills involving an open mind and learning on the job were discussed. Relationship management was noted in relation to the skills

needed for effective communication and networking with other international business professionals in order to solve challenges. Being a tech savvy professional was also key in this type of situation.

Table 29

Themes of how to overcome Business Challenges

Interview Question	Themes	Candidates $n = 8$
#6 How did your company (or other businesses leaders in your company) act in order to overcome the aforementioned business challenges?	International Knowledge/expertise	6
	Hard Skills	5
	Training	5
	Upper Level Leadership	5
	Cultural	4
	Entrepreneurial	4
	Networking	4
	Communication	3
	Tech Savvy	3

A summary of the specific themes and candidate frequency for the findings of question six are reflected in Table 29.

Summary of Themes The eight interview candidates provided a rich discussion around the desired international KSAQ for professionals in their companies, together with challenges that they face in their professional due to a lack of these KSAQ and how they solve these challenges. A summary of themes from each of the questions asked of the eight interview candidates and common themes extracted from the analysis have been replicated in Table 30.

Table 30

Summary of Themes: All Interview Questions

Interview Question	Theme	Candidates *n* = 8
3. What specific international knowledge, skills, abilities (KSA) or qualifications make an international business professional successful on the job? (Research Question One)	Culture	8
	Expertise/Knowledge	8
	Communication	5
	Language	5
	Relationships	4
	Marketing	4
	Travel	3
4. Describe a recent or past challenge that your business has encountered due to an employee or group of employees lack of desired international knowledge, skills, abilities (KSA) or qualifications on the job? (Research Question Two)	Knowledge/skill	7
	Personal Effectiveness	7
	Cultural	5
	Negotiation	3
	Communication	3
5. If you were to classify the challenge that you just discussed in one of the following categories, which would it fall in? (Research Question Two)	Knowledge	5
	All KSAQ	2
	Skills	1
6. How did your company (or other businesses leaders in your company) act in order to overcome the aforementioned business challenges? (Research Question Three)	International Knowledge/expertise	6
	Hard Skills	5
	Training	5
	Upper Level Leadership	5
	Entrepreneurial	4
	Networking	4
	Communication	3
	Tech Savvy	3

In conclusion, this study exposed the preferred KSAQ of international business professionals and that each candidate had a unique perspective on the international KSAQ needed to be successful in international business. Each of the eight candidates touched on many of the KSAQ described in the survey instrument. Interview question three revealed the specific KSAQ of an international business professional. Cultural awareness/knowledge/acceptance and having international business expertise were common themes among all responses as specific skills needed. While interview question

four revealed a mix of interesting international KSAQ related business challenges based the respondents' stories. Key themes regarding these challenges ranged from cultural situations, to poor communications and a lack of international expertise. Interview question five resulted in a distinct classification by the respondent for the challenge that they revealed in response to question four. It was apparent that knowledge, rather a *lack of knowledge*, was the most common classification for business challenges encountered by international professionals. Question six revealed the specific KSAQ required in order to solve the previously mentioned international business challenges. It was discovered that there was a mixed batch of responses. However, six respondents all noted that having international business expertise, knowing hard skills and training were solutions to resolving these challenges.

Upon review of the themes prevalent in research question questions one, two and three it was apparent that all KSAQ components were included. Each of the questions resulted in themes relating to the components of relationship management, business acumen and personal effectiveness and qualifications. The qualifications category was addressed more so on an individual skill level relating to multiple language skills and travel experience, but it was not common when comparing respondent's comments. Stand-alone themes include training and leadership, which were brought out as themes by interview question six. Descriptive results were presented that correlated to the research questions, which resulted in the themes previously discussed. Additional discussion and comparison of the interview themes and survey results will occur place in Chapter Five.

Summary of Results

The purpose of this study was to determine the desirable international knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications (KSAQ) that businesses require when hiring for international positions. By learning about the international business challenges that international business professionals faced in their companies due to a lack of these international KSAQ, the researcher was also able confirm the desirable KSAQ and categorize the challenges. Using the sample data, the researcher was also able to determine whether or not the desirable international KSAQ differed between small/medium and large businesses. The study was conducted in a mixed method convergent design, which engaged the data collection methods of survey and interviewing. Thirty-eight international business professionals completed the survey. Eight international business professionals participated in the qualitative portion of this study, which allowed for in-depth structured interview data collection. This chapter summarized the quantitative survey results and the qualitative interview results that related to the purpose of this study. Additional discussion and comparison of the interview themes and survey results will occur place in Chapter Five.

Summary of Quantitative Results: In summary, the survey data was able to provide validity to the survey and inform the researcher of the respondent's requirements for the international knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications for international business professionals. The results of the descriptive survey were also analyzed in order to determine if any significant difference exists between the small/medium and large company responses. Inferential statistical analyses were performed on the survey as a whole, which included Cronbach, factor analysis, *z-scores* and Pearson correlation.

Inferential statistical analyses were conducted on the survey data as a whole in order to determine the overall Cronbach score of .941 or 94.1% and thus determined to be reliable. The *z scores* for the 47 survey questions and the *z*-sores for skewness and kurtosis fell within the acceptable range for a normal distribution, -1.96 and 1.96 or 95% showing that the survey data is reliable and indeed a normal distribution with actual scores ranging from -1.90 to 1.62. The *z* skewness was determined to be at -.06, an acceptable range indicating a build-up of high scores in the data set. The *z* kurtosis score was determined to be -1.79, which also fell within the acceptable range.

Factor analysis was performed on the 47 survey questions. The factor analysis results revealed that 12 components with eigenvalues exceeded one, which explained 83.24% of the variance. However after analyzing the scree plot four components were retained. The first component accounted for 29.02% of the variance. Followed by 12.29%, 8.41% and 6.25%, respectively, totaling 56.83% of the total variance. The first component revealed business acumen related skills such as import/export skills and foreign exchanges laws, legal areas, global transportation, etc. The second component included a mixture of cultural, communication and relationship skills. The third component included personal effectiveness skills and the fourth included qualification related items.

The Pearson correlation coefficient, r, was calculated to determine effect size *(ES)* is *ES* = (group one mean – group two mean)/standard deviation (Field, 2009). The effect size of the overall survey is *ES* = .12. This reflects a small effect, as it falls in the r = .10 range, explaining 1% of the total variance (Field. 2009). The significance test, 2-tailed test, data pointed out that only two out of the forty-seven KSAQ had significant

differences in mean scores between groups. Based on the findings from the independent t-test, the *p* value for the survey instrument was .83, which is greater than .05. So, it can be concluded that a significant difference does not exist between international KSAQ required by small/medium and large companies.

The survey data documented only a minute spread in the standard deviation among all survey respondents, small/medium and large company groups (*sd* = .60, .61, .61 respectively). Mean scores were also comparable between all survey respondents, small/medium and large company groups ($\bar{x}$ = 4.52, 4.47, 4.63 respectively) noting similarity in KSAQ requirements. The four parts of the survey also reflected only a slight variance in descriptive results. In conclusion, the quantitative results of the descriptive survey in this study revealed that the specific international business knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications that companies competing in a global economy require are similar among small/medium and large companies.

Summary of Qualitative Results: In conclusion, this study exposed the preferred KSAQ of international business professionals and that each candidate had a unique perspective on the international KSAQ needed to be successful in international business. Each of the eight candidates touched on many of the KSAQ described in the survey instrument. Interview question three revealed the specific KSAQ of an international business professional. Cultural awareness/knowledge/acceptance and having international business expertise were common themes among all responses as specific skills needed. While interview question four revealed a mix of interesting international KSAQ related business challenges based the respondents' stories. Key themes regarding these challenges ranged from cultural situations, to poor

communications and a lack of international expertise. Interview question five resulted in a distinct classification by the respondent for the challenge that they revealed in response to question four. It was apparent that knowledge, rather a *lack of knowledge*, was the most common classification for business challenges encountered by international professionals. Question six revealed the specific KSAQ required in order to solve the previously mentioned international business challenges. It was discovered that there was a mixed batch of responses. However, six respondents all noted that having international business expertise, knowing hard skills and training were solutions to resolving these challenges.

Upon review of the themes prevalent in research question questions one, two and three it was apparent that all KSAQ components were included. Each of the questions resulted in themes relating to the components of relationship management, business acumen and personal effectiveness and qualifications. The qualifications category was addressed more so on an individual skill level relating to multiple language skills and travel experience, but it was not common when comparing respondent's comments. Stand-alone themes include training and leadership, which were brought out as themes by interview question six. Descriptive results were presented that correlated to the research questions, which resulted in the themes previously discussed. Additional discussion and comparison of the interview themes and survey results will occur place in Chapter Five.

Forecast Chapter Five

Chapter Five presents the results of the interpreted data from the data collection process that occurred based on Chapter four data. This discussion includes an analysis of the desired international KSAQ as determined by both quantitative and qualitative

methods. In addition, analysis regarding business challenges relating to lack of these desired international KSAQ and how these businesses overcame the challenge was interpreted by qualitative methods. The study's limitations and implications for practice; leadership, learning and service; and further research will also be examined.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

Overview

This concluding chapter of the study reviewed the content of the prior four chapters and discussed the findings, conclusions and implications of the study. Particular attention was made to how the study findings related to the research question.

Review of Study

This study investigated the international specific knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications (KSAQ) international businesses require when hiring employees.

Chapter One introduced the research through description of the background, purpose, approach, significance, delimitations and limitations, and vocabulary of the study. This study specifically examined the following questions:

Chapter Two reviewed literature about theory and research related to the study in the areas of global business leadership, international business specific knowledge, skills, abilities (KSA) and qualifications required by international companies when hiring for the roles of global business professionals.

Chapter Three detailed the design of the study through description of this particular mixed method study, which was executed in a convergent design and employed the data collection methods of survey and interviewing. Quantitative data collection included a survey instrument that was designed and distributed by the researcher to 38 international business professionals at an International Trade Event that occurred in a Midwest state in 2013. Qualitative data was collected by way of in-depth structured interviews that took place with the eight candidates during the same timeframe as the survey collection.

Chapter Four presented and summarized data generated by the study design in alignment to the study research questions.

This final chapter will discuss a summary of the findings related to the research purpose and reviewed literature in the areas of requirements of international knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications of international business professionals, global leadership and cultural competence. Chapter Five will also discuss conclusions and implications of the study for practice, leadership for the advancement of learning and service, and research.

Discussion of Conclusions

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the international specific knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications (KSAQ) required of businesses when hiring employees for international positions. The related questions that guide this study include:

1. What specific international business knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications do companies competing in a global economy require?

2. What challenges do businesses encounter due to their employees lack of international knowledge, skills, abilities or qualifications?

3. How have businesses leaders overcome business challenges due to the lack of international business knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications of their employees?

Discussion of Conclusions

Conclusions Related to Research Purpose

Study Findings and Conclusions related to Research Question One

What specific international business knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications do companies competing in a global economy require?

Companies competing in a global economy require that their employees possess certain business knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications. By way of mixed method data collection methods, the researcher was able to analyze the findings of this question in order to build a list of requirements. By way of survey collection, the researcher was able to analyze the survey results and the individual skills that were classified to each part in order to determine the most important requirements of international business professionals. By way of qualitative interviews the researcher was able to determine the specific business knowledge, skills, abilities and qualification requirements for a small sample of companies, in order to further support the quantitative data (i.e. survey findings).

The survey was developed from prior research on international business and leadership skills, educational degree requirements, government expectations and cultural competency findings. The 47 international knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications (KSAQ) survey questions were determined from the findings of: AACSB (2012); Bolt (1996); Brake (1997); Cant (2004); Cohen (2007); Goldsmith, Greenberg, Robertson and Hu-Chan (2003); Hofstede (2001); House et al. (2004); Marquardt and Berger (2000); McCall and Hollenbeck (2002); NASBITE International (2012); Prestwich and Ho-Kim

(2007); Smith et al. (2002); Vibhakar and Smith (2004); and Yu, Guan, Yang, and Chiao (2005).

The descriptive survey included five components that included: Relationship Management (Part I); Business Acumen (Part II); Personal Effectiveness (Part III); Qualifications (Part IV); and Demographics (Part V). The survey included 47 questions overall with the respective questions from: relationship management (six questions); business acumen (22 questions); personal effectiveness (eight questions); qualifications (10 questions); and demographics (10 questions). Each of the questions in Part I-IV of the survey had a six-point Likert-type rating scale. The specific response choices and scores for the rating included: Job position does not require this skill (1); rarely needed (2); minimally needed (3); somewhat needed (4); almost always needed (5); and essential (6). Part V included demographic data responses and open-ended questions related to either respondent or company specific information.

Descriptive statistics revealed mean scores ($\overline{x}$) for the survey as a whole and for each of the 47 individual survey items for the 38 survey respondents. Mean scores were also determined for both the Small/Medium and Large company respondent groups. Overall, the mean and standard deviation scores of the overall survey results were comparable amongst the groups and reflected responses close to the mean.

An independent sample *t*-test was used in order to determine if there was a significant difference in the mean scores between the Small/Medium and Large company respondent groups. There were no significant differences between the average mean scores for the small/medium respondents when compared to the large respondent group, which did not support the hypothesis. Thus the null hypothesis was not rejected and

therefore concluding that there is no significant difference between small/medium companies and large companies when determining KSAQ requirements for international business professionals.

Based on the individual item analysis of all 47 items from all respondents of the survey, top survey skills were determined by a mean score of above $\bar{x}$ = 5.5 on a 6-point Likert scale. The highest scoring skills for all respondents included the appreciation of cultural diversity, ability to build collaborative relationships, networking and communication, critical thinking and problem solving skills and global mindset. The first three items were all from the Relationship Management section (Part I) of the survey. These items related to culture and communication, which were also two common themes as determined by the qualitative interview data. The fourth and fifth items were both skills from the Personal Effectiveness section (Part III) of the survey: critical thinking and problem solving skills and global mindset. A question relating to critical thinking and problem solving skills was not specifically addressed in the interview questions; however, critical thinking skills are a part of international business and are an effective skill for business communications, contract negotiations, solving challenges and so forth. It is not hard to see why this skill was ranking highly amongst all survey respondents ($\bar{x}$ = 5.5). On the contrary, an additional question was asked of interviewees in order to build more depth around the item of global mindset. Also with a mean score of $\bar{x}$ = 5.5, "global mindset" was ranked as a top skill. This will be addressed in more detail later in this chapter. These specific skills and the corresponding survey category are displayed in Table 31.

Table 31

Descriptive Statistics of top KSAQ for All

All Respondents	$\overline{x}$*	sd	Survey Category
Appreciation of cultural diversity	5.66	0.58	Part I: Relationship Management
Ability to build collaborative relationships	5.58	0.55	Part I: Relationship Management
Networking and communication	5.53	0.65	Part I: Relationship Management
Critical thinking & problem solving skills	5.50	0.51	Part III: Personal Effectiveness
Global mindset	5.50	0.95	Part III: Personal Effectiveness

*n = 38 Respondents; * Range 1 – 6*

In a similar fashion to all respondent findings, mean scores determined the top

skill sets for both Small/Medium Company and Large company respondents. Similar to

the findings of all respondents, this group also rated appreciation of cultural diversity to

be the top skill. The four remaining top skills were also the same items as found in the

all-respondent sample included: critical thinking and problem solving skills; ability to

build collaborative relationships; networking and communication skills and global

mindset. For the Small/Medium companies, the top items and corresponding survey

categories are displayed in Table 32.

Table 32

Descriptive Statistics of top KSAQ for Small/Medium Company Group

Small/Medium Respondents Only	$\overline{x}$*	sd	Survey Category
Appreciation of cultural diversity	5.69	0.55	Part I: Relationship Management
Critical thinking & problem solving skills	5.54	0.51	Part III: Personal Effectiveness
Ability to build collaborative relationships	5.50	0.58	Part I: Relationship Management
Networking and communication	5.50	0.71	Part I: Relationship Management
Global mindset	5.46	1.07	Part III: Personal Effectiveness

*n = 28 Respondents; * Range 1 – 6*

The Large company respondent findings also rated these same five items as being

the top five skills. Again, the rating order slightly differs from that of both the all-

respondent group and the Small/Medium group. This group rated the ability to build

collaborative relationships higher than the all respondent and Small/Medium groups.

Global mindset rated higher for this group than the others. The results for the large group

are displayed in Table 33.

Table 33

Descriptive Statistics of top KSAQ for Large Company Group

Large Company Respondents Only	x̄*	*sd*	*Survey Category*
Ability to build collaborative relationships	5.75	0.45	Part I: Relationship Management
Networking and communication	5.58	0.51	Part I: Relationship Management
Appreciation of cultural diversity	5.58	0.67	Part I: Relationship Management
Global mindset	5.58	0.67	Part III: Personal Effectiveness
Critical thinking & problem solving skills	5.42	0.51	Part III: Personal Effectiveness

*n = 12 Respondents; * Range 1 – 6*

As a final comparison of the top skills as determined by the survey data, the

survey results of the interview candidates were ranked and sorted. The list of top skills as

a result of the interview candidate survey data contains eight items compared to the five

items determined in the previous groups. This was determined from the exact mean score

rating for five items. The top item was global mindset. These top eight descriptive

findings based on the interview candidate survey data are displayed in Table 34.

Table 34

Descriptive Statistics of top KSAQ: Interview Candidates Only

Interview Candidates Only	x̄*	*sd*	*Survey Category*
Global mindset	6.00	0.00	Part III: Personal Effectiveness
Ability to build collaborative relationships	5.71	0.49	Part I: Relationship Management
Appreciation of cultural diversity	5.71	0.76	Part I: Relationship Management
Ability to be flexible & open to new ways of doing	5.57	0.53	Part I: Relationship Management
Critical thinking & problem solving skills	5.57	0.53	Part III: Personal Effectiveness
Ability to switch communication styles	5.57	0.53	Part III: Personal Effectiveness
Maturity to perform at peak levels under strenuous conditions	5.57	0.53	Part III: Personal Effectiveness
Networking and communication skills	5.57	0.79	Part I: Relationship Management

*n = 7 Respondents; * Range 1 – 6*

Each of these skills received a mean score rating above $\bar{x} = 5.5$ on a 6-point scale. As previously discussed, global mindset was a unanimous rating of a 6, followed closely by the ability to build collaborative relationships in a global environment ($\bar{x} = 5.71$) and they appreciations of cultural diversity ($\bar{x} = 5.71$). The next five items all scored at $\bar{x} = 5.57$ and were ranked accordingly by standard deviation scores. There was a four way tie between the ability to be flexible and open to new ways of doing things, critical thinking and problem solving skills, ability to switch communication styles and the maturity to perform at peak levels under strenuous conditions. These items were followed be the need for networking and communication skills.

When comparing the top scoring survey items amongst all respondents, small/medium respondents, large respondents and interview candidates, five common skills emerge. These include the ability to build collaborative relationships and the appreciation of cultural diversity, both items categorized in the Relationship Management skill set (Part I). The next two common skills include critical thinking and problem solving skills and global mindset. Both of these skills are categorized under the Personal Effectiveness skill set (Part III). The final skill was networking and communication, also a Relationship Management skill set (Part I). However, in addition to these four skills, the interview only group included an additional three skills not included in the rankings of the all-respondent group nor the small/medium and large groups. These unique three skill sets included the ability to be flexible and open to new ways of doing things (Relationship Management skill set), the ability to switch communication styles (Personal Effectiveness skill set) and possessing maturity to perform at peak levels under strenuous conditions (Personal Effectiveness skill set).

As noted in Chapter Four, these items were all key pieces of the required KSAQ skill sets for international business professionals. Similarly to the findings of the overall survey mean rankings, these items were all categorized within the two survey sections of Relationship Management and Personal Effectiveness, thus noting a strong desire for these types of skills in the overall make-up for international business professionals. In conclusion, the survey results conclude that the top international business knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications include the ability to build collaborative relationships, appreciation of cultural diversity, critical thinking and problem solving skills, networking and communication skills and global mindset. These themes are displayed in Table 35.

Table 35

Required KSAQ for International Business Professionals

Required Skills Based on Mean Scores
Appreciation of cultural diversity
Ability to build collaborative relationships
Networking and communication
Critical thinking & problem solving skills
Global mindset

Qualitative Finding pertaining to Question One

Qualitative research also addressed question one of the study. An interview protocol was developed by the researcher based on the knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications (KSAQ) required by international business professionals reviewed in the literature. The use of survey and key informant interviews was supported by the fact that together the data "provides a better understanding of research problems than either approach alone" (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007, p. 5). In-depth interviews were conducted with eight international business professionals; seven of the interviewees

completed the researcher designed survey instrument. Key informant interviewees were chosen for this study from references of international trade association members sampled in the survey, a convenience sampling technique. The interview sample included eight international business professionals from a Midwest state. There were five males (62.5% of sample) and three (37.5%) females interviewed. A majority of interview candidates (6 or 75%) worked for small/medium companies, while two candidates worked for large companies.

Interviewees were asked the following question in relation to question one of the study: "From your business perspective, what specific international knowledge, skills, abilities or qualifications make an international business professional successful on the job?" This question was asked in order to provide specific answers from each of the candidates about what KSAQ they equate with international business success. The results of reviewing the transcripts for experiences, stories and examples helped to validate the findings of the survey data. The interview findings for this question exposed the preferred KSAQ of international business professionals and each individual candidate's unique perspective on the international KSAQ required to be successful in international business.

Common themes generated from the results of this interview question were determined based on the analysis of the responses of the eight interview candidates. A theme was considered to be prominent among the qualitative findings if the theme was apparent in 62.5% of the sample, or in five out of the eight interviews. The most common themes in relation to the required KSAQ of international business professionals included: culture; international business knowledge/expertise; and communication. The

themes of culture and knowledge/expertise each scored 100% (all respondents) for required skills needed in the international business profession. Communication was a common theme addressed by 62.5% (5 respondents). These themes encompass Relationship Management (Part I), Business Acumen (Part II), Personal Effectiveness (Part III) and Qualifications (Part IV) of the survey. These themes are displayed in Table 36.

Table 36

Summary of themes: Required KSAQ

Interview Question	Theme
From your business perspective, what specific international knowledge, skills, abilities (KSA) or qualifications make an international business professional successful on the job?	Culture Expertise/Knowledge Communication

In conclusion, question one discussed the specific international knowledge, skills, abilities or qualifications make an international business professional successful on the job. The common themes were determined to be that of culture, international business expertise/knowledge and communication.

Qualitative Finding pertaining to Question Two

What challenges do businesses encounter due to their employees lack of international knowledge, skills, abilities or qualifications?

In further support to the findings previously stated regarding question one of this study, the eight interview candidates were specifically asked to describe a recent or past challenge that their company had encountered due to an employee or group of employees lack of the desired knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications on the job. Prevalent themes were found after coding the data, which are displayed in Table 37. KSAQ skills

were found to be lacking in the areas of: knowledge/expertise; personal effectiveness; and culture. International knowledge/expertise skills were common challenges as discussed by seven (87.5%). Personal Effectiveness skills where addressed by seven candidates (87.5%). Cultural challenges were discussed in detail by five of the candidates (62.5%).

Table 37

Summary of themes KSAQ challenges

Interview Question	Theme
Describe a recent or past challenge that your business has encountered due to an employee or group of employees lack of desired international knowledge, skills, abilities (KSA) or qualifications on the job?	Knowledge/expertise Personal effectiveness Cultural

Key informant interview data revealed the challenges that each of the eight businesses had encountered due to an employee or a group of employees lack of the required knowledge, skills abilities or qualifications. Challenges were grouped into themes in order to determine what the most common causes for challenge were amongst the KSAQ. The following themes were identified from the interview group: lack of knowledge/expertise in the international business area; lack of personal effectiveness traits; cultural issues; poor negotiations and communications. Responses that followed the lack of knowledge/expertise theme included the areas of hard skills (credit, collections and contracts), general lack of international business knowledge and expertise and specific reference to the lack of upper level knowledge/skills, expertise in international business. One candidate responded to this question saying that the real challenge is when upper management "can spell international, but not necessarily do it." Challenges in the category of personal effectiveness included many items from lacking

maturity, trust, global vision and credibility, to being unable to take risks or make decisions, and giving improper council/advice in the international area. Cultural issues, such as a lack of cultural competence, were common amongst five of the eight candidates responses. This theme could be related to one candidate response stating this is "when a Western approach fails". This was attributed to lack of business etiquette and cultural knowledge of a country when performing business functions with another culture, to actual communication breakdowns within companies whom poorly communicate across cultures. Negotiation also fits with culture and communication, which has lead to failures in communications resulting in loss of business, contracts amongst both domestic and international clients/companies.

Challenges also seemed to stem from deficiencies in upper level management in relation to their lack of knowledge or skill related to international business. A few of the candidates praised their upper level management for having a global vision and being supportive of their international activities, however, this was not a common response. More often the response related to a lack of upper level support relating to their international business roles. In some cases, there was support, but there was a lack of vision (global vision) by these upper level staff. They were stated as not being able to understand how businesses outside of the United States or even taking that to the next level by visiting a country one time and then counseling or giving improper international business related advice to others or thinking that they know how to do it, when in fact they have just started to scratch the surface of doing business in a country. Lack of cultural awareness/competence was also an issue for some upper level managers. This could be due to a lack of market knowledge relating to how to perform business in a

country or lack of cultural business etiquette, lack of multiple language abilities or other cultural related faux pas.

When categorizing the challenges that the candidate's company had faced, seven of the respondents noted that it was due to a lack of knowledge (two noted that is was due to a lack of all KSAQ) and one noted it was a lack of skill. This was reflected in the common them of lack of knowledge/skill that was found in seven candidates responses. However, it is also important to keep in mind the following response from an interview candidate in regards to question two was, "this question is hard for me because I hire these people". As with any qualitative research method, it is important to be aware that the interview candidates may embrace some sort of bias (stated or unstated) in regards to how much information they disclose about their own challenges.

In conclusion, question two discussed the challenges that the interview candidates businesses encountered due to an employee's lack of international knowledge, skills, abilities or qualifications. The most common areas that employees were lacking in this particular skill set came from areas of international business knowledge/expertise, personal effectiveness skills and culture. The prevalent theme as determined by the interview data for this question was an international business knowledge/expertise. This research supports that without this particular skill area, international businesses are prone to having challenges due to a lack of these skills. Candidates in relation to employees addressed cultural challenges have a lack of skill in this area. Again, this was a unanimous finding in relation to both the interview findings relating to question one of this study and in relation to the quantitative findings of the survey. The third area of business challenges came from a long list of skills in the Personal Effectiveness section

of the survey, which tie in to the findings from question one of this study. These skills relate to the personal actions and skills that international business people require such as to use critical thinking and problem solving skills in business activities and have a global mindset.

Qualitative Findings pertaining to Question Three

How have businesses leaders overcome business challenges due to the lack of international business knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications of their employees?

The purpose of question two was to determine how business leaders chose to deal with the challenges discussed in question two and to determine in what ways they were able to solve the challenges due to lack of required skill sets. Question Three addressed the ways in which these international companies chose to overcome the lack of KSAQ challenges discussed in question two, which included the areas of international business knowledge/expertise, culture and communication. The responses to this question included seven themes. These themes included solutions in the areas of international knowledge/expertise, hard skills, training, entrepreneurial solutions, communications, technology and upper level leadership. The most common solutions to the challenges included: acquiring international knowledge/expertise (six or 75%); knowing/applying hard skills (five or 62.5%); attending training (five or 62.5%); and upper level leadership development (five or 62.5%). Table 38 represents the themes of the solutions for this question.

Table 38

Summary of Themes for KSAQ Solutions

Interview Question	Themes
How did your company (or other	International Knowledge/expertise

businesses leaders in your company) act in order to overcome the aforementioned business challenges?	Hard Skills Training Upper Level Leadership

   Three of the top solutions (all but training) are prevalent in the original themes of the lack of KSAQ challenges discussed in question two and can be classified into the knowledge/skill and personal effectiveness categories. Training, which included attending training sessions/seminars, professional development and mentoring, was mentioned from five of the candidates as typical way that they were able to resolve the challenges in their companies. It was also addressed in depth by two candidates that the upper level leadership at their company should also receive mentoring, training and development activities such as cultural knowledge for specific markets, in order to provide this level of staff tools to adequately support international business/projects at their companies. Knowing or learning specific hard skills such as how to conduct international business (see business acumen criteria as a reference) were discussed by five of the candidates as ways to overcome challenges. Another theme for overcoming challenge was determined to be rather entrepreneurial in nature. Candidates told stories of how that had to use creative, unique solutions in order to solve problems such as pitching an idea of a new inventory system to upper level management in order to export goods and creative approaches to learning necessary KSA on the job by way of networking and attending international association meetings in lieu of formal costly training. It is interesting to note that although culture was not found to be a prevalent theme in the candidates responses to how they solved challenges, it is quite prevalent in the findings of both question one and question two of this study and warrants further investigation on how it relates to these findings on a deeper level.

In conclusion, question three discussed the solutions that the interview respondents applied in order to overcome the challenges the company faced when employees lacked the required international KSAQ skill set as discussed in question one of this study. The results of interview finding analysis generated seven themes. These themes included solutions in the areas of international knowledge/expertise, hard skills, training, entrepreneurial solutions, communications, technology and upper level leadership. The most common solutions to the challenges included: acquiring international knowledge/expertise; knowing/applying hard skills; attending training; and upper level leadership development.

Discussion: A Global Business KSAQ Competency Model

Global (International) business professionals require a certain global business competency. By way of survey collection, the research was able to analyze the four parts of the surveys and the individual skills that were classified to each part. The survey was developed as a result of prior research on international business skills, global leadership, and educational requirements for international degrees, government education expectations and cultural competency publications. By way of a descriptive survey and key informant interviews, the researcher was able to determine requirement for international business professionals from a sample of companies in the state of Wisconsin, located in the United States of America.

Results of this study defined the global business KSAQ competency model (Coon, 2014), referenced in Figure 7, from the identification of themes relating to cultural competence, personal effectiveness, international business knowledge and international business expertise. A theme was considered to be prominent among the qualitative

findings if the theme was apparent in 62.5% of the interview sample, or in five out of the eight interview candidates. In addition each theme must have scored above a mean of $\bar{x} =$ 5.0 in the overall survey results and appeared in the literature review of this study.

Figure 7. *Global Business Competency Model*
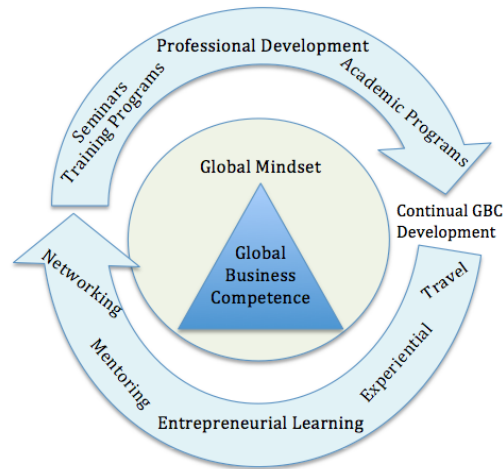
Source: (Coon, 2014)

By way of mixed method data collection methods, the researcher was able to analyze the findings of this question in order to build a list of requirements. By way of survey data collection, the researcher was able to analyze the survey results of 38 respondents in order to determine the most important requirements of international business professionals. By way of eight qualitative interviews the researcher was able to determine the specific business knowledge, skills, abilities and qualification requirements for a small sample of companies, in order to further support the quantitative data (i.e. survey findings).

Results of the data analysis from both data sets concluded that the core themes from this study included cultural competence, personal effectiveness, business knowledge, and business expertise. Based on the survey results, the top five desired

skills of international business professional included: the appreciation of cultural diversity; ability to build collaborative relationships; networking and communication; critical thinking and problem solving skills; and global mindset. Each of these specific skills fit within a global business competence component in the model, represented in Figure 8.

Figure 8. *Global Business KSAQ Competence Components*

Source: (Coon, 2014)

Cultural competence warrants its own section in the Global Business Competency Model. Cultural knowledge, expertise and skills are an all-encompassing piece of the Global Business Competency skill set of successful international business professionals. Cultural competency is the core component of the model as it is an overarching theme that must be addressed by every business professional working a global economy. The themes of culture competence scored 100% for required skills needed in international business as a result of interview coding. Survey results reflect that management attention seems to be focused on the skill building and knowledge component of the international business skill set, however, without the cultural skills business negotiations and cross-

cultural communications often fail and/or appear as company challenges for those employees (as previously stated). The *GLOBE study* (House et al., 2004) stated that "The implications for corporations involved in international trade and cross-boarder mergers and acquisitions is that they are facing increasingly global employees, customers, suppliers, competitors, and creditors" (House et al., 2004, p. 4). Cultural differences are not disappearing; rather it may result in quite the opposite effect. This finding further supports the following statement from the *GLOBE Studies*, "At the present time there is a greater need for effective international and cross-cultural communication, collaboration, and cooperation, not only for the effective practice of management but also for the betterment of the human condition" (House et al., 2004, p. 4). This was apparent in the cultural theme that was prevalent through out this study.

Personal Effectiveness is another component in the Global Business Competence Model. Communication, a personal effectiveness skill, was rated as important themes by 62.5% of the interview sample. The fourth and fifth top international business professional skill items were both from the Personal Effectiveness section (Part III) of the survey. These skills include (1) critical thinking and problem solving skills and (2) global mindset. Although a specific question relating to critical thinking and problem solving skills was not specifically addressed in the interview questions, interview candidates did address problem solving and critical thinking related situations, which were especially apparent in the second and third question answers. Critical thinking and problem solving skills are a part of international business and were discussed in interviews and are an effective skill for business communications, contract negotiations, and solving international related business challenges. It is not hard to see why this skill

was ranking highly amongst all survey respondents ($\bar{x}$ = 5.5 mean). Results of the survey data analysis calculate the overall mean for the survey rated components and Personal Effectiveness to be at $\bar{x}$ = 5.24 on a six-point scale, representing agreement amongst respondents in this part of the survey.

International Business Knowledge was determined to be another component in the Global Business Competence Model. Interview research found employees to be lacking in the areas of international business knowledge/expertise, personal effectiveness and culture. The theme of international business expertise/knowledge scored 100% for required skills needed in international business as a result of interview coding data. International knowledge/expertise skills were also common challenges discussed by seven (87.5%) candidates when discussing company challenges relating to employee lack of international knowledge, skills and abilities (Question Two). Specific business knowledge areas of need included those of hard skills (credit, collections and contracts), general lack of international business knowledge by all levels of employees. The international knowledge/expertise challenge was discussed in Question Three of this study and obtained by gaining international business knowledge, applying hard skills and providing upper level leadership development.

The Business Expertise component in the Global Business Competence Model relates to items found in the Relationship Management (Part I) and Qualifications (Part IV) sections of the descriptive survey tool used in this study. Results of the survey data analysis calculated the overall mean for the survey rated component of Relationship Management at $\bar{x}$ = 5.41, the highest rated component on a six-point scale, which represents the most agreement amongst respondents in this part of the survey. The top

three desired skills of international business professionals included skills from the Relationship Management component: appreciation of cultural diversity; ability to build collaborative relationships; and networking and communication. Factor analysis revealed components from the Qualifications section as being key items to this theme. These items included international business courses, degrees and certifications and having a valid passport.

The Global Business Competence model represents the ideal skill set of international business professional. Ideally, the international professional skill set involves a global mindset. In order to sustain competitive advantage, continual global business competence development must continually occur in the areas of both professional development and entrepreneurial learning. In order to sustain a global business competence, international business professionals must keep up to speed on all components of global business competence. Professional development may occur in training programs, seminars and academic programs such as international business degrees, certificate and certification programs. Entrepreneurial learning is another way that international business professionals update or refine their skills. Experiential learning was to acquire needed cultural skills through overseas travel and cultural related traveling experiences. In the face of challenges due to a lack of global business competence, international business professionals acquire needed skills through networking, mentoring and travel.

Following the Global Business Competency Model as a basis for international business professional development may provide companies, organizations and training professionals a way to ensure that their employees meet the needs of international

businesses and a way to in which they may provide a competitive advantage in a global economy.

Conclusions Compared to Related Literature

Major findings/themes that emerged from the Chapter Two literature review of research and theory related to this study included: Global Leadership and Cultural Competence; International knowledge, skills and abilities of international business professional; and Training.

Comparison of Findings about international knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications of International Business Professions compared to Literature Findings regarding Global Leadership and Cultural Competence

As discussed in Chapter Two, it is important for global leaders to have a firm leadership and personal foundation. Leaders set the stage for company success and company demise. Global leaders have to "deal with more and different competitors, customers, governments, stakeholders, and NGOs (non-governmental Organizations), in addition to multiplicity on all aspects along the value chain" (Mendenhall, 2008, p. 15). Knowledge, skills and abilities of global leaders form the foundation for the ideal global business leader.

Literature findings defined the different dimensions and competencies needed to build a firm global leadership foundation keeping in mind that "leaders must now operate in a dramatically transformed world with new kinds of workers and customers, within global marketplaces and highly technologized environments" (Marquardt & Berger, 2000, p. 17). The foundation included relationship management and business acumen skills (Brake, 1997; Cohen, 2007), global mindset (Cohen, 2007; Goldsmith et al., 2003;

Marquardt & Berger, 2000), intercultural communication (Mendenhall, 2008) and cultural competence (Hofstede, 2001).

This study also found these same dimensions and competencies to be necessary in the foundation of global business leaders. Brake (1997) discussed the importance of having a Relationship Management based competency as a foundation block for global leaders. Relationship management and business acumen were sections in the descriptive survey used in this study. When analyzing the descriptive statistics of this section of the survey for the relationship management section, it resulted in a mean score of $\bar{x}$ 5.41 on 6-point scale, showing a very high correlation, which reflected a strong desire by respondents for this particular skill set.

Brake (1997) and Cohen (2007) both discussed the need for a Business Acumen related competency for global leaders. This was also a section in the descriptive survey used in this study. When analyzing the descriptive statistics for the Business Acumen section, it resulted in a mean of $\bar{x}$ 4.11 on a 6-point scale. This was the lowest scoring section of the survey, which housed many of the hard skills related specifically to international business skills. This research study built upon the initial platform of both the Brake (1997) and Cohen (2007) studies in order to accommodate for the global business leader competencies versus the general global leader discussed in their publications.

Another foundation item deemed important based on the results of this study included the "global mindset" as discussed by (Cant, 2004; Cohen, 2007; Goldsmith et al., 2003; Marquardt & Berger, 2000). Relating this theme to the survey results, "having a global mindset" which was a sub-skill in the Personal Effectiveness section, ranked at

5.5 on the 6-point Likert scale for all survey respondents.   However, it is very important to note that seven out of seven interview candidates whom completed the survey rated this skill set as being a 6.0 on the 6-point Likert scale. This was the only skill out of the 47 skills in the survey that received a 100% unanimous scoring of 6 out of 6-points. According to the interview candidate survey results, having a global mindset was followed by appreciation of cultural diversity (5.71) and the ability to build collaborative relationships in a global environment (5.71).

This item was also supported by the findings of the qualitative data as key informant interview candidates were asked to define a global mindset. Seven out of the eight candidates were asked the following question, "In your own words, define global mindset." The definition is best expressed in the following quote from one of the candidates as being "when your way of thinking considers all of the cultural elements of a project or issue in a global environment".   Each candidate mentioned the importance of cultural awareness and cultural appreciation in their definitions. Two candidates specifically discussed their feeling that having a global mindset was an innate skill and you either had it or you did not. Overall, the candidates' definitions seemed to reflect how they defined success in the international business profession. To these international business professionals, having a global mindset was a key component in terms of business vision, communications, decision making/problem solving and overall business prosperity in a global economy.

Intercultural communication competence reinforces the importance of learning in respect to both the expectations and communication practices of other cultures, adapting a sense of mindfulness, empathy and perspective regarding global mindset. This would

also include "building relationships, handling stress, and switching communication styles when appropriate and acknowledgment of different skills and competencies in relation to different situations and contexts" (Mendenhall, 2008, p. 20). These findings were integrated into Personal Effectiveness section of the descriptive survey instrument for this study and each item received a mean score of $\overline{x}$ = 5.0 or higher on a 6-point scale. Having an ability to build collaborative relationships was determined to be an essential skill of relationship management based on survey results ($\overline{x}$ = 5.58/6).

The last foundation item discussed in the literature review in the global leadership and cultural competence section relates to cultural competence. Culturally competent global business leaders are a necessity for all fields in our global society. Hofstede's findings in the realm of organizational culture claim "managing international business means handling both national and organizational culture at the same time" (2013). This study found that knowledge, expertise and skill in the area of culture were found to be imperative to the success of international business leaders. Cultural competence was determined to be a strong theme apparent in both quantitative and qualitative findings of this United States centric study. Based on study findings, cultural awareness and cultural knowledge encompass the required skill set of an international business leader. The cultural theme prevailing in this study consisted specifically of cultural awareness, cultural acceptance, cultural knowledge, cross-cultural communication, ability to switch communication styles with foreign partners and employees and multiple language capacity.

The importance of a global business leader being able to communicate effectively across cultures with businessmen in other countries is of essence and supports both the

findings of Hofstede (2001) and the Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness (GLOBE) studies (House et al., 2004). It was also deemed important for a global business leader to have an appreciation of cultural diversity and to recognize cultural values in business, customers, partners and others was an overarching theme as determined by all eight of the interview candidate responses. GLOBE findings empirically verified that there was a significant relationship between culture and leadership. The GLOBE study stated that "the implications for corporations involved in international trade and cross-boarder mergers and acquisitions is that they are facing increasingly global employees, customers, suppliers, competitors, and creditors" (House et al., 2004, p. 4). As a result culture differences are not disappearing, rather it may result in quite the opposite effect reflecting the need for cultural competence on many levels. This is apparent in the cultural theme that is prevalent through out this study, which has an impact on relationship management in areas of appreciation of cultural diversity, being able to build collaborative relationships, networking and communication skills and having the ability to be flexible and open to new ways of doing things. It was also apparent in the top skills determined in this study in relation to personal effectiveness in the areas of global mindset, critical thinking and problem solving skills, ability to switch communication styles and having maturity to perform at peak levels under strenuous conditions. Cultural knowledge and the ability to apply this cultural knowledge to all situations (personal and business) are a crucial building block of the international business professional. This can be best summed up in the following quote from the GLOBE study, "Being global is not just about where you do business. It is also about how you do it" (House et al., 2004, p. 5). By possessing cultural competence, an

international business professional can ensure that they have at least one component in place for their own business success.

As previously stated, results of this particular study found that upper level management did not provide adequate international support to lower level employees at these firms due to their lack of knowledge, skill or abilities relating to conducting international business. Rather upper level management created challenges for the lower level employees when conducting international business functions. A recent publication reporting on the research obtained from the aforementioned *Strategic leadership across cultures: The GLOBE Study of CEO Leadership Behavior and Effectiveness in 24 Countries* (2014) addressed strategic leadership effectiveness for executive and top-level management. United States managers' rankings for societal leadership expectations included (p. 358, figure 11.19) the following skills: visionary; inspirational; self-sacrificial; integrity; decisive; and performance orientated. Findings in this research study found that to be true as having a global mindset was ranked as one of the top five skills required of an international business professional based on this United States study.

Strategic Leadership Across Cultures also compared superior and inferior CEO's of international firms the following skills were rated as mission critical (in rank order): visionary, performance orientated, decisive, inspirational, administratively competent, integrity and diplomatic (pg. 359, figure 11.20). Again, this points out the critical component of being a visionary, also apparent in both the United States group and the participants of this study. However, the Globe study found that CEO still need to know what is important on a leadership level in the particular country they are working with.

This knowledge need, cultural leadership knowledge, ties back in the importance of cultural competence as referenced in the findings of this particular research study.

For future studies, this should be looked at from a financial perspective in relation to firm performance in order to determine if these types of supportive CEO possessed a global vision, which resulted in a successful firm. In fact *Strategic Leadership Across Cultures* discussed findings relating to CEO behavior that was "significantly correlated with firm performance" (House et al., 2014, p. 345). This may determine whether this type of CEO (upper level leadership) had an impact on firm performance.

Comparison of Findings regarding international knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications (KSAQ) of International Business Professionals compared to related literature

The literature review found in Chapter Two of this study summarized the key international business skill and background competencies as determined by prior studies from various authors. The review was compiled from a business perspective that included the essential skills required when hiring in international business and desired global executive skills sets. The descriptive survey instrument used in this study assessed the international knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications deemed important to global business leaders (i.e., international business professionals). The interview findings for this question exposed the preferred KSAQ of international business professionals and each individual's unique perspective on the international KSAQ needed to be successful in international business.

Prestwich and Ho-Kim (2007) determined that the skills required for international business new hires to included: direct sales, importing and sourcing or purchasing strategies, global sales contracts and contract negotiation, global transportation logistics,

strategic planning, control laws/regulatory compliance/licensing/inspections, business ethics, bi-lateral/multilateral trade agreements, global production, export and global advertising/marketing. According to the results of this study, the sample required a softer set of skills than the hard skills in the Prestwich and Ho-Kim (2007) findings. There were more personal effectiveness and cultural skills, versus that hard skills addressed in this particular research. This study found that he highest scoring skills for all respondents included the appreciation of cultural diversity, ability to build collaborative relationships, networking and communication, critical thinking and problem solving skills and global mindset.

Research in the area of international business KSA has drawn attention to a number of additional skills needed for international business professionals which included: international marketing, knowledge of international trade and exporting, and cross-cultural communication skills (Bush & Bush, 1998; Lundstrom, White & Schuster, 1996; Prestwich & Ho-Kim, 2007; Reynolds & Rice, 1988; Smith, Bush, & Bush, 2002). Knowledge and expertise in the area of international business and cultural competence were unanimous themes apparent in this research, thus supporting the need for these specific skills.

Background skills relating to international business education was determined to be an important skill for new hires (Smith, Bush, & Bush, 2002; Vibhakar & Smith, 2004) in international business. However, in this particular study this item scored a very low $\bar{x} = 3.66$ on a 6-point scale, when applying descriptive statistics.

Personal Effectiveness was a section of the descriptive survey that included many of the skills sets discussed in the literature (Cant, 2004; Smith, Bush & Bush, 2002).

These items included items such as problem solving, recognizing cultural values, being tech savvy and having a global mindset. Means for these skills score at $\overline{x}$ = 5.50, 5.32, 4.92, and 5.50 respectively, thus supporting the need for these particular skills. It is important to keep in mind that "the combination of business and culture is essential" to the success of global leaders (McCall & Hollenbeck, 2002, p. 200).

Cultural awareness/knowledge/acceptance and having international business expertise were common themes among all responses as specific skills needed. The cultural theme consists of cultural awareness, cultural acceptance, cultural knowledge, cross-cultural communication and language related skills. The importance of one being able to communicate effectively with businessmen in other countries is of essence. Being able to have an appreciation of cultural diversity and to recognize cultural values in business, customers, partners and others was an overarching theme as determined by all eight of the interview candidate responses. International business knowledge/expertise was another theme in all interview discussions further supporting the finding that managers should have expertise in International Business (Yu, Guan, Yang, & Chiao, 2005). It was also the highest ranked mean out of all 47 individual survey items, with a mean score of $\overline{x}$ = 5.66. Communication skills including networking, relationship building, partnerships, cross-cultural communication skills were also popular themes in five of the candidate discussions.

Comparison of Findings regarding international knowledge, skills, abilities and qualification of International Business Professionals compared to Literature Findings on Training

Training is a form of differentiation and it can be a way that firms provide a unique offering which could be the customer service, customer training or even the

superior training of personnel in a company (Porter, 1985). International companies may use training to supplement their existing staff or use certain skills and training criteria as a way to hire qualified employees.

Training may come in an academic format in the form of a degree, certificate, major, minor or individual class sessions administered by public, private or government institutions. Trade associations often provide training programs and seminars in order to fulfill continuing education requirements (CEU). The monitoring of international business related skills training may come from an academic perspective; such as the accreditation standards in higher education business colleges (AACSB) that administers an "internationally recognized accreditation for undergraduate, masters, and doctoral programs in business and accounting" (AACSB International). AACSB specifically stated that the international business curriculum should cover: (1) ethical and global issues; (2) the influence of political, social, legal and regulatory, environmental, and technological issues; and (3) and the impact of demographic diversity of organizations (AACSB International). The three areas stated above provide a wide range of areas to cover. However, as determined by the findings of this study, a clear focus on culture competence and communications should be added to the focus. It is unclear whether or not these skills are included.

Monitoring of international business related skills might also take place in international business trade community. For example, National Association of Small Business and International Trade Educators (NASBITE) created a credential for international business professionals called the Certified Global Business Professional (CGBP). This credential provides a benchmark for competency in global commerce for

global business professionals. This designation "demonstrates an individual's ability to conduct global business, including global business management, global marketing, supply chain management, and trade finance" (NASBITE International, 2012, p. 4). The CGBP criteria aligned with the Business Acumen section of the descriptive survey administered in this study. The overall mean for this section of the survey was $\bar{x} = 4.11$ on a 6-point scale with an *sd* of .90. The skill set proves to be a good fit for international business professionals. However, as determined by findings from this study, the criteria may be lacking in the cultural competence and personal effectiveness areas of measure such as appreciation of cultural diversity, recognizing cultural values, ability to switch communication styles, global mindset and critical thinking and problem solving skill.

From a United States perspective, "In today's globalized world, an effective domestic education agenda must address global needs and trends and aim to develop a globally competent citizenry" (U.S. Department of Education, 2012, p. 8). "Our hyper connected world also requires the ability to think critically and creatively to solve complex problems, the skills and disposition to engage globally, well-honed communication skills, and advanced mathematics, science and technical skills" (U.S. Department of Education, 2012, p. 2). Therefore, "such competencies will prepare our students, our nation, for a world in which the following are the reality: economic competitiveness and jobs; global challenges; national security and diplomacy; and a diverse U.S. society" (U.S. Department of Education, 2012, pp. 2-3). Based on the findings of this study, global business leaders also need to think critically and have problem solving skills, excel in communication skills and cultural competence.

Conclusions

The results of this study helped to create the global business competency model (Coon, 2014) from the identification of themes relating to knowledge/skill, personal effectiveness and cultural competence found in the study. A theme was considered to be prominent among the qualitative findings if the theme was apparent in 62.5% of the sample, or in five out of the eight interviews. The themes of culture and expertise/knowledge both scored 100% for required skills needed in international business. Five respondents rated communication and language as important themes. Similarly, survey data analysis calculated the overall mean for each Part (I-IV) of the survey to be: Relationship Management ($\overline{x} = 5.41$); Personal Effectiveness ($\overline{x} = 5.24$); Qualifications ($\overline{x} = 4.24$); and Business Acumen ($\overline{x} = 4.11$). With Relationship Management and Personal Effectiveness scoring close to 6.0, the maximum mean score possible, these both represent agreement amongst respondents in these two parts of the survey and were used as key building blocks in the model. Where as both Qualifications and Business Acumen scored closer to $\overline{x} = 4.0$, representing that there was less agreement amongst respondents in these areas of the survey.

Cultural knowledge, international business expertise and skills are an all-encompassing piece of the KSAQ skill set of successful international business professional. The cultural component is an overarching theme that must be addressed in order for the business skills to be used effectively in a global economy. Much attention seems to be focused on the skill building and knowledge component, however, without the cultural skills and expertise negotiations and communications often fail (as stated in the interview data). Having cultural expertise warrants its own section of the KSA

models that was not prominently apparent in prior literature discussed in this study. The GLOBE studies touch on how important cultural competence is. This study supports that finding. For students (higher education/K-12) experiences such as study abroad, language emersion and cultural units should be introduced for the purpose of developing global business leaders.

Discussion of Implications

The findings of this study further inform fields of study and behavior associated with the knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications of international business professionals in small, medium and large companies. Study findings have particular implications for leadership, learning and service, as well as research.

Implications for Leadership, Learning, and Service

Implication for Leadership

Upper level leadership, such as CEOs, Presidents and Vice Presidents, are considered to be leaders within a company. As upper level leaders, they are tasked with providing guidance to their employees in order to advance their company in the global marketplace. However, upper level leadership would benefit from an awareness of the international knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications that their employees require in order to compete in a global economy. Leadership must adopt a global vision, acquire global leadership skills and cultural competence in order to better embrace the global economy, communicate and build relationships in order to ensure success. They need to be aware that global ignorance (in regards to the skills needed of international business professionals) will not contribute to success in either the company itself or the employees that work there. Lower level managers, consultants and employees with international

business KSAQ are not reaching their own potential with the lack of vision that exudes from upper level leaders who lack the skills of a global leader. These same people, at the same time, must also act as mentors and teachers and to prepare and develop their upper level management and subordinates in order to be successful in a global economy. True global leaders in upper management roles have a global vision and do not put up roadblocks to impede success.

Those in academic based leadership roles in Higher Education and K12 must also be aware of the strong role that cultural competence plays in student success in a global economy. Cultural competence based skills should be integrated into the academic curriculums and specific course content of all courses. International internship opportunities with global firms should be made available for students of all disciplines in order to prepare future leaders for success in global business. Also from a leadership perspective, assessment of students/professionals global business competence and cultural competence.

Implication for Learning

In a global economy, international businesses are running leaner than ever which has an implication for Professional Learning a formal learning component of the Global Business Competence Model. International business employees may have to know a little bit about everything in order to run a successful business or work effectively in an international company. Formal training exists for many of the global business competency components in many formats, including but not limited to seminars, training programs, online courses, certificate programs and so forth. Some of these training programs are offered at a minimal cost; however, cost is usually a factor in decision

making regarding what training programs are chosen by businesses. Training and professional development plans are not the same as they used to be back in the 1990s. Budgets are tight, resources are tight and professional learning is no exception. Higher education programs offer global business curricula, courses, internships, and executive programs that provide these skills, which would fall into the Professional Development portion of the presented Global Business KSAQ Competency Model.

Entrepreneurial learning can best be defined as learning that international business professionals create and implement for themselves on an informal basis. Thus, these business professionals are creating their own personal mastery, a set of principles and practices that enable a person to learn, create a personal vision with an objective view of the world (Senge, 2006). As the research in this study highlighted, many companies do not provide in-house training in the areas of the Global Business KSAQ Competency model. Rather, these professionals are referred to other organizations and international business professionals for advice, they may network, or they may attend local seminars and international trade meetings in order to continually develop the components of Global Business Competence. Mentoring of international business employees in-house is a common form of training between both groups of small/medium and large companies. House et al. (2014) also referenced that mentoring, executive coaching sessions, multisource feedback, and formal training programs were also ways that companies enhance leadership skills (p. 364). These findings were also found to be true based on the findings of this study. In summary, International business professionals should be entrepreneurial learners in their thinking process when developing and

maintaining their own international business skills in order to continually stay abreast of the global economy, competition and to continue to be successful in their roles.

Implication for Service

Service is the action to which one gives or provides in order to help meet the needs of another person or organization (Coon, 2011). Where as a service vision is the mental picture of activities formed by empathy, compassion and beliefs that provide action to which one gives or provides either a person, organization or community in order to meet the needs of the issue at hand (Coon, 2012). The implications for service for this study include the dissemination of the finding to other international business professionals, training and development professionals and international trade associations. International business professionals may be aware that cultural competence is an integral part of global business competence components required in their professional roles or they may be aware but fail to implement cultural competence into business strategy. Numerous failures of international businesses have "ascribed to a lack of cross-cultural competence" (Johnson, Lenartowicz, & Apud, 2006). These failures could be in part due to "a gap between knowing and doing" (Johnson, Lenartowicz, & Apud, 2006). There seems to be an importance to this research topic and the model presented in this study and an implication for research in this area.

The Global Business KSAQ Competency Model also has implications for service in the areas of measurement and assessment in the component areas in both business and academics. Providing measures and assessment for businesses may provide insight into an organization structure and job requirements that may prove to be beneficial to company performance measures and hiring practices. Providing assessment and

measurement for K12 teachers for acquiring a student's cultural competence may prove to be a beneficial tool for gauging a student's progress or aptitude in that skill competence area. Higher Education may benefit from assessment and competency criteria from which these leaders may adapt courseware or curriculum in order to enhance the student's portfolio, thus enhancing employment opportunities with global firms.

Implications for Research

Implication One- Company Size Classification

In this particular study, the international business professional participants were classified into one of two groups; they could be either a small/medium company (less than 500 employees) or large company (more than 500 employees). In order to provide greater factor analysis of the groups, it may be beneficial to further categorize the large company category to take into account the wide range of company size in this category. For example, a large company may have 500, 5000, or even 50,000 employees and still be categorized as a large company. Likewise, the small and medium companies may need a more detailed breakdown.

Implication for Research Design

Implications for research design would include the use of different design formats. The researcher used a concurrent design format for this study; however, she had initially planned to use a sequential explanatory mixed method research design. This would have allowed for the survey to be conducted and analyzed prior to the qualitative key informant interviews. Due to logistical and time related constraints the researcher chose a concurrent design. The concurrent design did prove to be effective for this study, however, it did not allow for specific follow-up on the open-ended questions in the

survey. By analyzing this quantitative first, this would have allowed for the more detail into some of these open-ended questions.

The mixed method design of this study allowed for both quantitative and qualitative exploration of the knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications required of international business professionals. The study allowed for the analyzing of data from the international business professional group as a whole, from small/medium company perspective and from a large company perspective. However, another qualitative method such as focus groups may been beneficial to learn more about how the KSAQ are determined and to get more specific information from the group relating to the open-ended questions in the survey.

Implications for Survey Design

Relating specifically to the survey, after running SPSS frequencies in order to determine the normality of the data, Part I was found to have a skew of all negative numbers, indicating that there was a pile-up to the right of the distribution (Field, 2009). In fact, 46 out of the 47 variables were all skewed to the right, or toward the 5 "almost always needed" or 6 "essential" ratings. There was only one KSAQ from Part IV titled "international business course work in education", which received a skew of 0.00. Therefore, the distribution of the sample for the survey used in this study was not normal, but rather skewed to the right. This was due to the small sample size of the survey ($n = 38$) and it would be beneficial for other researchers to use a larger sample size in order to remove the skew. Factor analysis was also performed on the final survey data, which lead to the discovery that there were eight questions that scored below a 0.5. Due to the length of the survey being at 47 questions, it may be advantageous to remove these

questions and shorten the survey to 39 questions. It would also be beneficial to reword the open-ended questions to make the closed questions or they should be eliminated from the survey. The use of open-ended questions resulted in respondents answering in anyway they felt appropriate, despite the clear directives given in the question. This resulted in answers that were hard to compare (such as U.S. dollars versus percentage), too vague or not answered at all.

Concluding Remarks or Future Research

International Business Professionals possess certain knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications that set them up for success in a global economy. The person starting at an early age, such as cultural skills, communication skills and global mindset, learns many of the personal effectiveness type skills. However, many of the desired skills deemed a requirement for this profession requires competence in international business knowledge, experience conducting international business, and cultural competence.

As an outcome of this research study, a model was created that reflects the skills deemed desirable for international business professionals in United States based on the desirable traits determined by International business professionals working at global businesses in a Midwest state. Findings of the study indicate the need for global business professional KSAQ competencies (Coon, 2014) in the areas of cultural competence and leadership, business knowledge, business expertise and personal effectiveness. The top five skills required of international business professionals, as determined from the results of quantitative analysis include an appreciation of cultural diversity, ability to build collaborative relationships, networking and communication, critical thinking and problem solving skills and a global mindset. This study also indicated that there was no

significant difference in the skill requirements between small/medium and large companies. As a result, the international business competence skill set could be used for any sized organization and by using this model, it allows the potential for companies to "create competitive advantage by perceiving or discovering new and better ways to compete in an industry and bringing them to market" (Porter, 1990, p. 45). As previously discussed, those employees that have the international-specific knowledge, skill, ability and qualifications are ready to work in a global business environment and thus are key factors to being competitive on this global economic platform.

The findings of this study may be used to further improve international business professional knowledge, skills, abilities and qualification related models, training and hiring practices to make sure there is a focus specifically related to cultural component that is able to touch upon all of the international skill sets items from that perspective. Relationship Management skills should continue to be a focus of international business professional and global leaders. These skills include community building, forming collaborative relationships and partnerships, the ability to be flexible and open to new ideas, appreciative of cultural diversity, networking and communication skills. A focus should be placed on development and maintenance of strong communication skills (both written and verbal) in order to ensure global business success from all levels of the organization. Personal effectiveness skills such as having a global mindset, critical thinking and problem solving skills, cross cultural communication skills, empathy, maturity, being tech savvy and the ability to share leadership make you a more competent global leader. Business acumen, also referred to as knowledge and expertise, related to items such as business ethics, knowledge of country specific information, strategic

planning, global customer service, global sales and marketing are also important requirements of international business professionals based on results of this study.

In summary, businesses require competent employees in order to thrive in our global market economy. For a global company, having a competitive advantage over the competition (Porter, 1990) involves an investment in acquiring qualified international business employees or investing in the development of these specific skills and knowledge desired by international business professionals. From either perspective, the training/education/experience should not be overlooked; rather business should keep their key asset (employees) globally prepared. By way of this research, we have learned more about the specific skills required of international business professionals in the year 2014. Acquiring or enhancing this desired global business competence skill set might be obtained by way of both formal and informal training and required continual development. Formal training or professional development, consists of training and development related venues such as academic programs offered by an academic institution such as a university, consisting of international business degrees, international courses, programs and certificates, seminars, etc. Formal training also includes a wide array of seminars and training programs sponsored by trade associations and private firms in any of the areas previously discussed in the global business competence component. Informal training or entrepreneurial learning, is the other area of training that provides business professionals with the global competence skill development opportunities that are needed on a continual basis as described in the model. Entrepreneurial learning includes mentoring, networking with other business professionals in order to provide the information that business professionals require in order to perform in a global economy

with minimal cost. In addition to these items experiential learning such as international travel and the cultural experiences related to travel (meals, communications, customs) also enhance the learning situations building global business competence. However, there is no single solution to obtaining the skills necessary to be a globally competent business professional.

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Appendix A

*Culture, Leadership and Organizations: The GLOBE Study of 62 Societies.*

62 Societies*:*

1. Japan	32. Albania
2. Kazakhstan	33. Argentina
3. Kuwait	34. Australia
4. Malaysia	35. Austria
5. Mexico	36. Bolivia
6. Morocco	37. Brazil
7. Namibia	38. Canada (English speaking)
8. The Netherlands	39. China
9. New Zealand	40. Colombia
10. Nigeria	41. Costa Rica
11. The Philippines	42. Czech Republic
12. Poland	43. Denmark
13. Portugal	44. Ecuador
14. Qatar	45. Egypt
15. Russia	46. El Salvador
16. Singapore	47. England
17. Slovenia	48. Finland
18. South Africa (Black Sample)	49. France
19. South Africa (White Sample)	50. Georgia
20. South Korea	51. German-East (former GDR)
21. Spain	52. Germany-West (former FRG)
22. Sweden	53. Greece
23. Switzerland	54. Guatemala
24. Switzerland (French-Speaking)	55. Hong Kong
25. Taiwan	56. Hungary
26. Thailand	57. India
27. Turkey	58. Indonesia
28. United states	59. Iran
29. Venezuela	60. Ireland
30. Zambia	61. Israel
31. Zimbabwe	62. Italy

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Appendix B

Histogram of z-score data

Comparison of Small/Medium Company and Large Company Responses

Normal P-P Plot of VAR00001
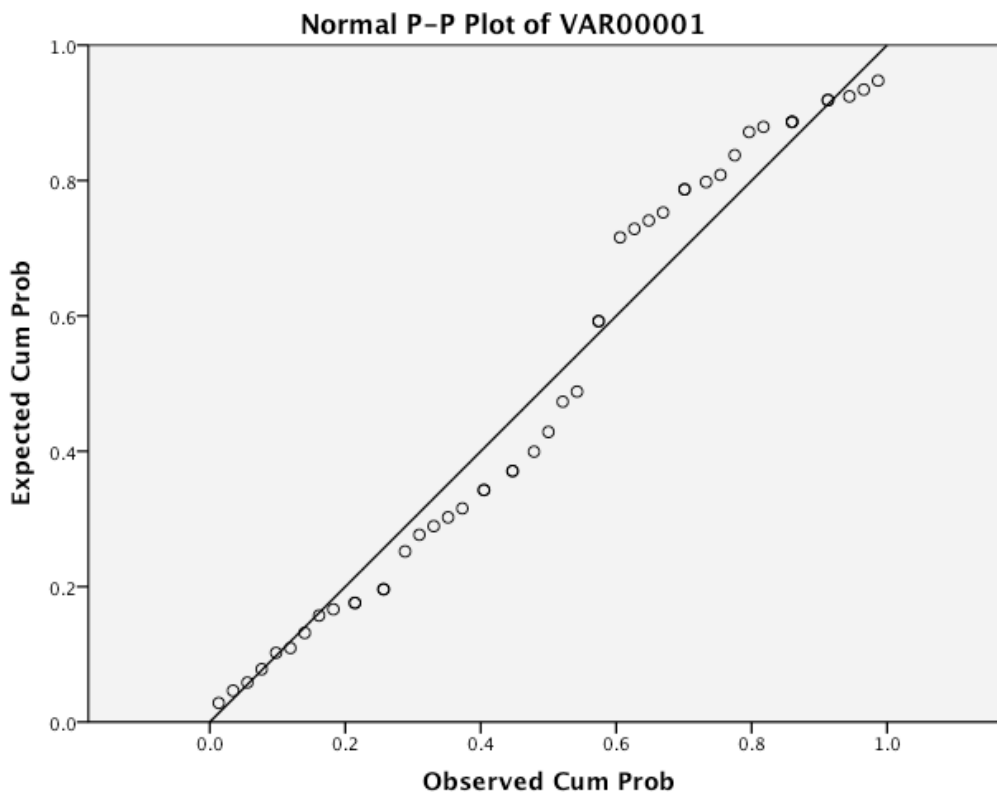
n= 38 respondents

Appendix C

International Business Knowledge, Skills, Abilities and Qualifications: Interview Protocol

Interviewee: International Business Professionals
Interviewer: Amy Coon, Doctoral Candidate at Cardinal Stritch University
Dates: TBD
Time: TBD
Venue: To include either: telephone, Skype™ or in-person

I.   Introduction of interviewer and description/purpose for interview.
 I am currently conducting research on the international knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications desired by international businesses in Wisconsin in order to fulfill my doctorate in leadership at Cardinal Stritch University. As part of my dissertation research, I will be interviewing international business leaders from both small/medium and large companies in Wisconsin who either influence either the hiring process or decisions at your company. You have been referred to me as an individual that would qualify for this interview, this referral was given solely on your qualifications not based of any international business skills expertise that you may or may not have in the specific area of this study. This interview will take approximately 15 - 30 minutes and will be recorded in audio format order for me to transcribe and review the response to the following questions and will serve no other purpose. Do I have your permission to record our conversation? (If the answer is yes, continue with the interview; If the answer is no, interview will end immediately).

II.   Interview Questions
The following questions will be asked of each candidate during the interview process. Each candidate will receive a copy of the questions prior to the interview. The questions will be distributed once the interviewer has confirmed the interview date and time to allow for more accurate and thoughtful answers from each candidate.

1. Please state your name, company title and the number of years of in the field. Please state your specific areas of international expertise.
2. How do you or how have you influenced the hiring process or hiring decisions at your company?
3. From your business perspective, what specific international knowledge, skills, abilities (KSA) or qualifications make an international business professional successful on the job?
4. Describe a recent or past challenge that your business has encountered due to an employee or group of employees lack of desired international knowledge, skills, abilities (KSA) or qualifications on the job?
5. If you were to classify the challenge that you just discussed in one of the following categories, which would it fall into? a. Knowledge, b. Skill, c. Ability, d. Qualifications
6. How did your company (or other businesses leaders in your company) act in order to overcome the aforementioned business challenges?

Appendix D

Participation Information Statement for Interviews
Topic: International knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications of International
Business Professionals

(date), 2013

<u>Procedure</u>: You agree to participate in a 30-35 minute personal interview relating to the topic "international knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications of International business professionals.   This discussion will take no longer than 45 minutes of your time. This session will be audio recorded to ensure that all responses are recorded accurately.

<u>Confidentiality</u>: All responses to the questions will remain confidential (i.e., I will not reveal your responses). To ensure confidentiality, your name will be changed in the research document.

<u>Risks</u>: I do not anticipate this study will cause any type of risk, psychological or otherwise.

<u>Benefits</u>: Although this study probably will not benefit you directly in the short-term, this research will help academics and business professionals better understand the specific knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications required of international business professionals in Wisconsin.

<u>Participation is Voluntary</u>: If you are not comfortable with this study, please feel free to stop at any time. Your answers to the questions will be destroyed upon your request and you will not be penalized in any way.

<u>Use of Your Information</u>: My goal is to include this data in my research study. Only aggregate (combined) data from all participants will be used, and in no case will any names be associated with this study.

<u>Contact Information</u>: If you are interested in the results of this study (which should be completed by October 9, 2014), or if you have any other questions, concerns, or comments on this project, please contact:

If you have any complaints about this study, please contact:

Although your name may be asked, all complaints are kept in confidence.

The Cardinal Stritch University Institutional Review Board has approved this research project for the Protection of Human Research Participants on October 9, 2013, for a period of 12 months.

Thank you for your cooperation. Please include your signature below to note that you have reviewed this form and agree to participate in the interview as stated above.

_____   _____   _____
Name of Interviewee (printed)   Signature of Interviewee   Date (Month/Day/Year)

Appendix E

International Skills Survey