MASTER'S THESIS

L

The Repatriation Program as a Process
Case Studies of Ericsson and Nokia

Anna Frändberg
Carolina Kjellman

Acknowledgement

We would like to thank our supervisor, Manucher Farhang for his help during the process of writing this thesis. Mr. Farhang has supported us with his professional view on our work to increase the quality and enhance our understanding of our topic of MNC's repatriation programme. We would also like to thank Ericsson and Nokia for providing us with valuable insights concerning their repatriation programmes.

Luleå, January 2005

Anna Frändberg   Carolina Kjellman

Abstract

The rapid development of the technology, the liberalization of international trade and the intense international competition has resulted in an increased globalization. It has therefore become more important for multinational corporations (MNCs) to internationalize its business. In the long run this implies that MNCs need to be able to offer its employees the possibility to during a limited period work in subsidiaries abroad called expatriation. The advantages with expatriation are numerous, even though the investment of sending employees on international assignments can be considered high. For employees, the possibility of working abroad is often viewed as a mean of career progression. However, studies have shown that the situation at the expatriate's return to the home organization, called repatriation is related to many problems, and that these problems not always are taken seriously. The repatriate can, for instance, be offered the same position in the home office as the person held before the international assignment. The fact that the repatriate not is able to use his or her international skills and competences might result in that he or she becomes unsatisfied and even leaves the firm. This results in that MNCs looses valuable personnel and the investment of sending employees on foreign assignments. To conquer these problems MNCs need to develop a strategy concerning the firm's repatriation.

The aim with this thesis is therefore to study the actions that MNCs can do before, during and after the assignment in order to achieve successful repatriation. The study is based on a specific theory that treats these three stages. To achieve this objective we have conducted two case studies with the Swedish Ericsson and the Norwegian Nokia. The result of this thesis is that the actions that MNCs conduct during these three stages vary. However, it should be mentioned that the different actions are more related to the work in the foreign location than to the possibility to achieve successful repatriation.

Sammanfattning

Den snabba utvecklingen av teknologin, liberalisering av internationell handel samt den intensiva internationella konkurrensen har lett till en ökad globalisering. Det börjar därför bli mer och mer viktigt för multinationella företag att internationalisera sin verksamhet. I det långa loppet innebär detta att multinationella företag kommer att behöva erbjuda sin personal möjligheten att arbeta utomlands inom ramen för en tidsbestämd period s.k. expatriation. Fördelarna av expatriation för multinationella företag är flertaliga även om investeringarna för expatriation kan anses vara höga. Möjligheten att arbeta utomlands ses ofta som en chans till karriärutveckling för personalen. Studier har dock visat att situationen som uppstår vid personalens hemkomst till företaget, d.v.s. repatriation är ofta problematisk samtidigt som problemen inte alltid bearbetas och/eller tas på allvar. Personalen kan t.ex. bli tvungna att återgå till samma position och/eller inte ges möjligheten att använda sina nya kunskaper vid hemkomsten vilket kan skapa missnöje hos den hemkomna personalen. Studier har vidare visat att personalen ofta kort efter hemkomsten lämnar företaget. Detta leder i sin tur till att företagen går miste om värdefull personal och de investeringar som företaget lagt ut under personalens vistelse utomlands. På grund av detta måste företagen utveckla en strategi för hur deras expatriation cykel ska gå till samt hur företagen ska gå tillväga med den situationen som uppstår vid personalens hemkomst.

Målet med denna uppsats är att studera de åtgärder som multinationella företag kan göra före, under, och efter en expatriates arbetsvistelse utomlands för att skapa lyckad repatriation. Studien är baserad på en specific teori som behandlar dessa tre steg. För att nå detta syfte har vi genomfört två fallstudier genom intervjuer med svenska Ericsson och norska Nokia. Resultatet av detta arbete är att de åtgärder som de multinationella företagen i vår studie gör före, under och efter deras expatriates arbetsvistelse utomlands varierar. Det bör dock poängteras att dessa åtgärder ofta är mer kopplade till arbetsuppgiften än att i slutändan nå lyckad repatriation.

Table of Content

Appendix A: English Interview Guide
Appendix B: Swedish Interview Guide

List of Figures

List of Tables

1 Introduction

In this chapter an introduction of the thesis and the chosen topic is provided. The chapter begins with a background concerning the research area, followed by a problem discussion, which intends to guide the reader to the research purpose and the research questions. Finally, demarcations and the structure of the thesis are presented.

1.1 Background

While international trade is not a new phenomenon, the level of international business has increased significantly during recent decades**.** Today, a growing number of companies are actors in the global marketplace. Reasons for the expansion in international business can be explained by a rapid increase in technology, liberalization of government policies, development of institutions facilitating international trade and increased global competition. (Daniels and Radebaugh, 2001) For survival and to stay competitive organizations have to search for opportunities outside their national boarders. Therefore, major multinational corporations (MNCs)[1] have holdings throughout the world. Some of these holdings are a result of direct investments while others are partnership arrangements with local firms. (Hodgetts and Luthans, 2001) The need for a global view concerning strategic perspectives increases as firms internationalize. To be successfully developed, international business systems require international human resource strategies and globally competent people. In other words, the need for companies to consider their human resources on an international level may become crucial for success. Therefore, one of the greatest challenges facing multinational corporations today is how to manage human resources (HR) on a global scale. (Selmer, 1995) Issues that need to be considered in an international human resource management perspective include, for instance, deciding how to staff foreign subsidiaries, finding candidates for international assignments, managers' adjustment to working in different cultures and decentralized human resource programs (Sanyal, 2001).

Due to the increase in foreign direct investments through for instance, the establishments of subsidiaries abroad it has become more common for parent country nationals, also called expatriates to take on assignments in subsidiaries abroad. (Fors and Lindmark, 1999) However, the first question an organization should ask before recruiting an expatriate for a subsidiary located abroad is; What are the advantages of selecting a parent country national (PCN) over a host country national (HCN) or a third country national (TCN)?[2]. HCNs have, for instance, much knowledge about the local culture and social systems. Third-country nationals are usually highly skilled and have often considerable experience from foreign assignment. (Hutchings, 2002) However, PCNs are, for instance, familiar with the corporate culture and might be better able to train local employees about corporate systems and new technology. For these reasons many organizations choose to send PCNs to work in subsidiaries abroad instead of educating local staff or third country nationals. (Hodgetts and Luthans, 2003)

---

[1] An MNC is a firm that has operations in more than one country, has international sales, and a nationality mix of managers and owners (Hodgetts and Luthans, 2003).

[2] A person that neither comes from the home country nor the parent country (Hodgetts and Luthans, 2003)

Expatriates might be used not only to direct and transfer technology to the subsidiary, but also to provide international career development for selected employees. The development of, for instance, the European Union has resulted in that there is a general belief that gaining international experience will be crucial for the development of effective international managers. For firms to develop culturally successful business strategies international experience among managers are important. Managers who have worked abroad have acquired cultural sensitivity and knowledge that they can bring to the decision making process. Managers with international experience are more likely to make strategic decisions that reflect valuable knowledge concerning foreign customers and the social, political, legal and economic systems of the firm's markets. (Selmer, 1995) A continued use of expatriate managers might therefore be one step in trying to secure future shares in the international market (Daniels and Radebaugh, 2001).

When selecting an individual for an expatriate position it is generally a management position that is considered, and the demands on expatriate managers are usually high. Expatriate managers in foreign subsidiaries often need to perform top-level management duties. This means that the expatriate may be responsible for a number of different functions in the subsidiary and to create valuable relationships with external stakeholders such as the community and the government. (Daniels and Radebaugh, 2001) A subsidiary manager usually also needs the ability to work more independently because the subsidiary lacks many staff functions. Moreover, since the headquarter usually is the center for technical expertise it is likely that the expatriate have less people to ask for guidance and support, hence the expatriate might have to rely more heavily on his or her personal expertise and judgment. Apart from management positions other jobs expatriates might have includes, for instance, functional heads, troubleshooters and operatives. (Hodgetts and Luthans, 2001)

The expatriation process consist of four stages; selection, training, the foreign country assignment and repatriation. Selection is the process of gathering information to evaluate who is the most suitable for a particular job. Training is the stage where the firm prepares the individual for the foreign assignment with the purpose to describe the foreign culture and the project. This step is followed by the foreign country assignment, which is related to working, living and adjusting to the foreign environment. The last step repatriation involves the process of returning to the home country. (Dowling, Schuler and Welsch, 1994)

Repatriation is often overlooked instead of seen as the final link in the expatriation process (Salomon, 1995). While many firms have acknowledged the problem of expatriate selection, preparation and placement, companies seldom see the difficulties related to repatriation. However, poor repatriation policies might be a large barrier to firm's successful globalization and might therefore represent a serious international human resource management problem. (Allen and Alvarez, 1998)

1.2 Problem discussion

While MNCs generally have recognized the critical role that international experience play in global competitiveness and organizational learning, evidence shows that MNCs often fail in capitalizing on these human investments (Lazarova and Caligiuri, 2001). Expatriates usually return to the home country with a wealth of experiences. However,

poor repatriation policies can be blamed for not utilizing this knowledge and talent and therefore loosing human capital and discouraging others from taking on foreign assignments. (Jassawalla, Connolly and Slojkowski, 2004) Many expatriates report that their new job at the home office is related to less status and autonomy, that the job is non-challenging and that they do not get the opportunity to put their foreign knowledge into practice. Many repatriates therefore believe that the permanent position they received upon return was a demotion. Moreover, many repatriates find it difficult to adjust to the new job and the "new" culture in the home country. (Hodgetts and Luthans, 2002) While abroad the expatriate might adopt local cultural norms that probably do not match the home country culture. The home corporate culture itself might also have changed while the expatriate has been abroad. (Paik, Segaud and Malinowski, 2002)

While HR staff generally recognizes the need for pre-departure training preparing the expatriate for the culture in the foreign location, few have recognized the importance of briefing the repatriate about the home country culture and the changes that has been made at the home office (Hurn, 1999). Considering those issues and the unrealistic expectations the expatriate might have of coming back and the enormous family upheaval of taking on a foreign assignment it is not surprising that studies have shown that poor repatriation policies lead to that up to 25 % of the repatriates leave the firm within two years of returning. This is a significantly higher percentage than among employees with comparable positions that have not been working as expatriates. (Strob, Gregersen and Black, 1998) When poor repatriation policies do not lead to that the repatriate leave the firm it is likely to result in less motivated employees, which probably will reduce their productivity (Harvey, 1989).

Considering the large investment to develop, maintain and transfer expatriates, loosing an expatriate with valuable foreign experience is costly and might affect the MNCs bottom line. The use of expatriates can be seen as a way for companies to support their international expansion as they create a pool of global knowledge to be capitalized upon. (Paik, et al, 2002) Poor repatriation therefore results in a loss of the global knowledge that the firm wanted to gain by sending an expatriate to the foreign subsidiary. Furthermore, when firms are loosing an expatriate it often indirectly results in providing advantages to competitors, as unsatisfied repatriates are likely to seek employments with other firms in the industry. (Lazarova and Caligiuri, 2001)

Considering the above issues ways to enhance repatriate retention is an important challenge facing MNCs today (Lazarova and Caligiuri, 2001). A successful repatriation outcome can be described as one in which the repatriate upon return gains a suitable job. This means one that recognizes the newly acquired international expertise and enables the repatriate to sustain a career path that at least is comparable to if the expatriate had not accepted an assignment abroad. Furthermore, for the repatriation to be viewed as successful the expatriate should experience minimal cross-cultural adjustment problems, and report low turnover intentions. (O'sullivan, 2002)

As previously mentioned, many researchers have during the past decades focused on how organizations can prepare their expatriate managers for foreign assignments. The last step in the expatriation cycle, repatriation of corporate executives has not received as much attention. While there have been attempts to define relevant issues related to repatriation, little empirical studies have been conducted to support these issues.

Moreover, repatriation has commonly been looked at as a single event that begins at the time of the expatriate's return. Firms therefore generally start to plan for the expatriate's homecoming close to the date when the expatriate is returning to the home country. (Salomon, 1995) More recent studies suggest that this approach represents poor repatriation that is likely to result in unsatisfied and unmotivated employees (Jassawalla, Connoly and Slojkowski, 2004).

One recent study made by Jassawalla, et al (2004) suggest a new way of looking at repatriation. Instead of looking at repatriation as a single event the authors suggest a more holistic view of repatriation. The author's offer a more comprehensive solution to the problems associated with repatriation. The authors have interviewed former expatriates, mainly from the U.S. Some of them had multiple experiences with working with foreign assignments. The respondents were asked to explain the formal repatriation process they experienced, if any, their thoughts about the process, the stress they experienced upon return and the possible causes, and their recommendations for improved repatriation. From this research the authors stated that to accomplish successful repatriation it has to be looked upon as a process with the aim to create an environment appreciative of global experience. (Ibid)

Jassawalla, et al (2004) further state that as with the expatriation process, repatriation can be viewed as a cycle that needs to be considered before, during and upon return. According to the respondents in the study a full-circle repatriation program should include issues such as career counseling and task clarity prior to departure, sufficient support and frequent communication while abroad, and, for instance, receiving recognition for the foreign assignment and obtaining a job that is a career progression upon return. By taking actions in all three stages the organization can improve the outcomes of repatriation. The outcomes for firms following this approach are likely to be more effective utilization of skills gained overseas, improved return on investment in skills and talents, and higher retention and loyalty. This approach to repatriation therefore suggests a way for organizations to reduce many of the problems related to repatriation. However, to ensure that these issues are considered MNCs need to establish a formal program for repatriation. (Ibid) Since this is a new way of looking at repatriation we want to compare MNCs repatriation policies with this approach to repatriation. The main issue is whether MNCs plan for their expatriates' return before, during and after their stay.

1.3 Purpose and research questions

Our purpose with this study is to gain a deeper understanding of MNCs' repatriation programs.

To fulfill our purpose the following research questions shall be addressed:

Research question 1   How can the repatriation measures adopted by MNCs prior to expatriates' departure for foreign assignments be described?

Research question 2   How can the repatriation measures adopted by MNCs during expatriates' assignments be described?

| Research question 3 | How can the repatriation measures adopted by MNCs after the expatriates' return be described? |

1.4 Demarcations

The expatriation process consists of four stages; selection, training, the foreign country assignments and repatriation. This study will only focus on repatriation. The other stages will therefore only be discussed in relation to this stage. Moreover, only MNCs will be studied. Our study is based on the research made by Jassawalla et al, (2004). However, we will only look at what actions MNCs conduct before, during and after the expatriate's return. Issues related to the outcomes of using this approach to repatriation will not be discussed. Furthermore, we will only look at repatriation from MNCs point of view. Issues that might effect successful repatriation that are related to the individual such as personality traits will not be looked at.

1.5 Structure of the thesis

Chapter two contains relevant literature and theory concerning the area of research. A conceptual framework, which will serve as a basis for data collection and analysis for this thesis is also presented.

Chapter three includes the methodology used for obtaining the data needed. The chapter begins with the purpose of the research followed by research approach, research strategy, data collection method, sample selection, analysis of data and quality standards.

Chapter four consists of the empirical data and is collected in the form of multiple case studies.

Chapter five includes two within case analysis and one cross-case analysis of the collected data.

Chapter six consists of findings and conclusions of this study. Furthermore, implications for managers, theory, future research and implications for the model within the area are presented.

2 Literature Review

This chapter is based on the previous introduction and the problem area presented in chapter one. It will provide the reader with a literature review concerning the research area. The chapter begins with an introduction to repatriation and related problems. Thereafter, the different stages of the repatriation program will be discussed. The chapter will end with a conceptual framework related to this study.

2.1 Repatriation

Hurn (1999) states that repatriation, or re-entry, is the transition from a foreign country back to one's own after working overseas for a significant period of time. According to Black, Gregersen, and Mendenhall (1999) this last stage of the expatriation process has been neglected to some extent since the process of relocation to the home country and home organization has been assumed to be a simple matter for expatriates. However, repatriation problems are complex both for the company and the expatriate because they involve the challenges of personal re-entry and professional re-entry at the same time (Linehan and Scullion, 2002). Hodgetts and Luthans (2001), claim that for most expatriates, the return to the home country occurs within five years after leaving the home country. Furthermore, Dowling, et al. (1994) suggests that the repatriation process consists of different phases in which the expatriate and the company face different roles. The authors describe the repatriation process in four related phases. These are a) preparation, b) physical relocation, c) transition, and d) readjustment. The first stage, preparation, involves the development of plans for the future both for the company and the expatriate. In this stage the expatriate can gather information about the new position that will be offered in the home organization. Preparation is followed by physical relocation of the expatriate. This stage refers to removing personal effects; breaking ties with colleagues, and traveling to the country where the home organization is located. In this stage the company can offer comprehensive and personalized relocation assistance to reduce the amount of anxiety the repatriate may feel. Transition, the third step in the repatriation process, is the settling into temporary accommodations as well as making arrangements for administrative tasks. This makes the process of re-entry to the home organization smoother. Readjustment, the last step, involves coping with reverse culture shock and career demands that are followed by the re-entry. (Ibid)

According to Paik, et al. (2002), the process of an expatriate's re-entry to the home organization is a complex interaction of several job-related factors, socio- cultural factors and family factors. The job-related factors primarily address the relationship between the expatriate and the home office and issues related to the repatriate's career progression after returning to the home country. Many repatriates return to an organization that does not know what they have accomplished overseas and how to use the repatriate's experience appropriately. The socio-cultural factors are related to the repatriate's ability to adjust and reintegrate into the home country culture. Sufficient cross-cultural preparation is needed to prepare the expatriate for working in another culture as well as for preparing the expatriate for working in the home organization upon return. Finally, the family factors address the impact of reintegration on the spouse and children. The cultural shock that the family may experience can affect the repatriate's ability to resume their responsibilities at the home office. One of the key

transitional activities is to involve targeted communication concerning the expectation of the home office towards the return of the repatriate and his or her family. (Ibid)

Suutari and Brewster, (2003) claim that for the employee, career progression is often the reason to accept an assignment abroad. As a consequence the re-entry position is frequently linked with whether the new position matches the repatriate's career expectations. Although international assignments are seen as a key tool for developing international managers the positive connection between an expatriation assignment and career development has been questioned. The authors' further state that there is a gloomy picture with organizations losing a lot of talented and experienced international staff at or shortly after repatriation. The fall-out rate is often a result of dissatisfaction among repatriates whose careers are blighted by their negative experience and who have to rebuild their careers elsewhere. (Ibid) However, according to Linehan and Scullion (2002) the costs of losing repatriates are significant because they are valuable and expensive human resources who are capable of understanding the workings of both corporate headquarters and overseas operations; in addition they are responsible for critical co-ordination and control functions.

2.1.1 The Repatriation program

Black, et al, (1999) stress the importance of having a well-defined repatriation program in order to accomplish successful repatriation and to conquer the problems companies and employees face. However, Dowling, et al (1999) present a study by Harvey that state that only 31 percent of U.S companies have a program for repatriation. The three most frequent mentioned reasons for not having a program was a lack of knowledge about how to develop a program, the costs of training repatriates, and no perceived need by top management of having a program. (Ibid)

Yongsun (2002), claims that in order for organizations to fully exploit the knowledge and skills of returning expatriates it is critical for the company to manage the repatriation process. Different theories and approaches of how a repatriation program can be developed exist in the literature. (Ibid) According to Jassawalla, et al (2004), a retrofit program at the end of the expatriates' assignment makes poor repatriation. Vermond (2001) suggests that the repatriation process should start as early as possible in an expatriate's assignment, and should be continued after the expatriate's return to the home country.

The repatriation program as an ongoing process
Jassawalla, et al (2004), have developed a theoretical model of how an effective repatriation program can look like. In this model the authors have divided the repatriation process in three stages as shown in table 2.1. This model identifies the key action steps taken prior to departure, during the assignment, and after the repatriate's return that appear to determine the organizational and individual outcomes. (ibid) However, the outcomes of these actions will not be discussed as mentioned in the delimitations in chapter one. As previously mentioned, companies and expatriates face different problems in the repatriation process. These problems affect the stages in the repatriation program developed by Jassawalla et al, (2004) differently. Therefore some problems are mentioned in several stages in order to justify different actions that can be

taken in order to conquer the problems that either the company or the expatriate/repatriate face.

Table 2.1 A model of Effective Repatriation

Prior to departure	During their stay	After they return	→ Outcomes
Task clarity	Perception of support while on assignment	Quality of interaction with sponsors	→ *For the firms:* Improved retention, return on investment in human capital
Career counseling	Nature and frequency of communication	Perceptions of support upon return	→ *For the employee:* Lower uncertainty and anxiety, greater satisfaction, greater feeling of belonging
Formal policies for repatriation			

Source: Jassawalla et al, (2004)

2.2 Prior to the expatriate's departure for a foreign assignment

Jassawalla, et al, (2004), state that the key issues with the expatriation and repatriation process relate to how the company is working with the uncertainty that the expatriate experience prior to departure to the assignment abroad. Suutari and Brewster (2003) therefore state that prior to departure, the main task for the company is to help the expatriate to develop realistic expectations about the assignment abroad and the re-entry. Moreover, Dowling, Schuler and Welsch (1999) claim that normally, after the assignment the company brings the expatriate back home, although it should be mentioned that an expatriate could be re-assigned to another post abroad. According to Salomon (1995), it is important to communicate realistic expectations about the re-entry to the employee at the time the position abroad is offered. This section of the literature review will discuss which actions Jassawalla, et al, (2004) recommend companies to conduct prior to an expatriate's departure abroad. These actions are task clarity, career counseling, and formal policies for repatriation.

2.2.1 Task clarity

According to Dowling, et al (1999) hiring and placing people in positions where they can perform effectively is a goal for most organizations. Effective expatriation requires a repertoire of individual competencies together with a suitable assignment (Ibid). Salomon (1995) suggests that the primary issues in an effective repatriation process are to outline the need for the international assignment together with a clear job description for the expatriate's task abroad. A successful definition of the post abroad should be outlined with input from both the home and the host location. (Ibid)

Tasks that expatriates can be given when working on an assignment abroad can be categorized into three types according to Harvey, Milorad, and Noviecevic (2001). These are a) coordinative tasks, b) computational tasks, and c) creative tasks. *Coordinative tasks* are tasks as: developing a marketing plan, initiating organizational change in a foreign subsidiary, or selecting foreign suppliers. Coordinative tasks require well-outlined communication between the domestic organization and the subsidiary where the expatriate is located. (Ibid) *Computational tasks* are according to

Hambrick, Davison Snell and Snow (1998) more structured tasks that require utilization of an established type of knowledge and techniques for successful accomplishment. There is a known beginning and ending point in the set of activities comprising a computational task. While most computational tasks are fairly practical, and may require a great deal of effort on the part of the expatriate manager, their demand on expatriates for coordination with others is lessened. *Creative tasks* are tasks that do not have proven answers or processes to find their solution and are dependent on the creative insights of the expatriate to find acceptable solutions. These tasks can be approached and/or framed in a number of different ways because a wide variety of information sources are to be scanned for creative task accomplishment. (Ibid)

Lobel (1990) state that an organization that is seeking to create an expatriate assignment must be careful to define the different aspects of the assignment. The assignment should not only include the technical aspects of the task as described above. (Ibid) Beyond the assignment the expatriate receives, Jassawalla, et al, (2004) recommends a clear task definition to include *performance expectations, deadlines* and *how the performance will be evaluated*. A clear task definition appears essential in order to increase expatriates' focus on the task and to lessen their anxiety while overseas and upon their return, which in turn is a step towards achieving successful repatriation. (Ibid)

Riusala and Suutari, (2000) suggest that if firms want to attract high potential employees to international assignments they also have to make sure that a successfully completed assignment is properly awarded. According to Salomon (1995) companies should therefore develop a program that recognizes and rewards returning employees. Information about the reward system should be outlined prior to an expatriate's departure, as this is likely to increase the expatriate's performance and motivation during the assignment. (Ibid)

2.2.2 Career counseling

Black, et al. (1999) claim that international transfers are the most powerful strategy for developing global leaders. However, the relationship between foreign assignments and career progressions has been stated to be unclear (Riusala and Suutari, 2000). According to Black, Gregersen, and Mendenhall, (1992) existing research indicates that the position an expatriate return to in the domestic organization may often be vaguely defined and the new position may include less authority compared with the position held during the foreign assignment. Moreover, Suutari and Brewster (2003) stress that expatriates may feel disenchantment when they return to the home organizations and see how other executives, who have not been working on foreign assignments have progressed in their careers.

Mendenhall, Dunbar, and Oddou (1987), claim that overseas assignments are haphazard and ill planned affairs. Unclear performance expectations coupled with the anxiety associated with a lack of clarity about an expatriate's future within the company lead to poor performance abroad and poor repatriation at the return to the home office. Career counseling should therefore be a part of the expatriation program prior to an expatriate's departure to conquer these problems and since it leads to benefits both for the company and the expatriate when it comes to repatriation. (Ibid). According to Jassawalla, et al (2004) the aim of the career counseling is to give the

expatriate a holistic view of why he or she is sent abroad and to define the benefits for both the expatriate and for the firm. Effective repatriation requires the company to offer the expatriate career counseling to clarify a) *the reasons for sending the manager overseas*, b) *the benefits of the overseas assignment to the firm and the manager*, and c) *the manager's career options upon return*. Black, et al. (1992) suggest that the reasons for a company to send an expatriate abroad can be to achieve corporate objectives, for instance, to open a new market, to transfer skills and/or to build international management experiences. Logically, the benefits of an expatriate's assignment to the firm can therefore be to achieve such corporate objectives. As mentioned before, for the expatriate, the benefits of the assignment can be to increase the possibility for career progression and/or to gain new experiences. The third step for the company in the expatriate's career counseling is to before the departure clarify the expatriate's career options upon return. In this step, it is critical for the company to help the expatriate to develop realistic expectations concerning the different kind of positions that the expatriate can be offered upon return depending on their performance abroad. (Ibid) Furthermore, according to Jassawalla, et al (2004) companies can also see the career counseling as a way to communicate the values and overall strategy of the firm, for instance, how an expatriate's assignment abroad fit the goals of the firm and how an expatriate's contribution to the foreign assignment make a difference for the firm.

According to Allen and Alvarez (1998) some firms offer job guarantees, but with varying degrees of specificity. Some firms ensure that the employees will receive a job that at least is comparable to the one held before the foreign assignment. Other companies are more specific in their guarantees. Having specific guarantees enhances the chance that employees are willing to accept foreign assignments, is likely to reduce the expatriate's stress upon return, and increases the chance that firms will plan ahead and take the necessary action to provide an appropriate reentry for the expatriate. However, the authors further claim that most organizations do not have a guarantee at all. Instead, the problem associated with what kind of position the repatriate will receive in the home country is left until the repatriate's return. (Ibid)

2.2.3 Formal policies for repatriation

Salomon (1995) emphasizes the importance of involving international human resource management at corporate strategic levels when planning for international activities. The main concern of expatriates leaving for foreign assignments relate to the uncertainty that shape their perceptions, both those formed when they are abroad, and those that emerge from retrospective evaluations. Most foreign assignments seem quickly designed, signaling the weakly planned character of international assignments. Moreover, a lack of human resource planning seems to leave expatriates unclear about the details of their assignment. (Ibid) According to Riusula and Suutari (2000) companies are anxious to retain valued employees and therefore human resource departments need to establish a credible policy concerning repatriation in order to coupe with the problems emerged from poorly planned foreign assignments.

According to Jassawalla, et al (2004), the presence of policy guidelines increase the expatriate's effectiveness as it through written guidelines clarifies the repatriation process. Formal policies do not only reduce the anxiety expatriates may feel, it also states the firm's objectives and how to manage returning expatriates. This seems to enhance the confidence expatriates feel when leaving for a foreign assignment as well

as when they return to the home country. Therefore the authors claim that effective repatriation requires firms to develop formal policies that govern the pre-visit, visit, and post-visit expectations of expatriates. (Ibid)

Salomon (1995) state that different practices and or measures can be included in a formal policy of repatriation depending on factors such as the company and the industry. Riusala and Suutari (2000) have, for instance, developed an approach of seven different practices that should be included in a formal policy for repatriation. These practices are described below.

- o According to the authors the expatriation should start with career development debriefings prior to the expatriate's departure. Here it is critical for the company and the expatriate to discuss and analyze the impact of the expatriate's assignment and future-working career. By discussing the expatriate's long-term career development the anxiety of the future career can be decreased at the same time as realistic expectations about the assignment can be developed. (Ibid)

- o The second practice is to emphasize succession planning. This means that the company should outline a policy that requires the expatriate to complete the assignment abroad in order to proceed to a high-level position in the home organization at the re-entry. (Ibid)

- o The company should offer the expatriate and his or her family counseling at the re-entry in order to give advice and support that will help them deal with possible challenges upon return. (Ibid)

- o The company should also develop a policy for reward systems that links the expatriate's performance of the assignment closely to rewards such as career advancement. (Ibid)

- o The expatriate should be able to present new skills gained during the assignment and give general feedback to the home organization upon return. (Ibid)

- o The company should also offer career-planning support before the re-entry. The organization can help repatriates to search for positions in which they can benefit from the skills gained when working abroad. (Ibid)

- o There is also a need for family repatriation programs to help the expatriate and the family to deal with adjustment problems that they might face in the repatriation process. (Ibid)

2.3 During the expatriate's stay in the foreign location

According to Jassawalla, et al (2004) the problems that arise during the assignment are often related to a lack of support, a loss of connection with the home office, and a feeling of isolation. Inadequate support while on the assignment not only increases the expatriate's anxiety, it also construes a clear signal of how the repatriation is going to be. Managers will return dissatisfied, which might function as a self-fulfilling prophecy. What seems to make a difference are the expatriate's perception of support

and the nature and frequency of communication between the expatriate and the home office during the assignment. (Ibid)

2.3.1 Perception of support while on the assignment

Jassawalla et al (2004) claim that repatriates that are satisfied with the repatriation program report that they and their families have been supported while they have been on the foreign assignment. If the organization supports the expatriate while he or she is abroad it shows that the firm is concerned with the expatriate's transition and adjustment to the foreign environment. Moreover, managers' report heightened feelings of loyalty and a greater interest in trying to fit in upon return if they receive clear evidence of support during their stay. Support from the organization is related to the relocation package, which can include issues like financial compensation and support to the spouse and children to help them adjust to the foreign location. (Ibid)

The relocation package
Fransesco and Gold, (1998) claim that expatriates usually receive extra compensation for the inconvenience of living abroad. Firms also often pay additional benefits with the aim to motivate the expatriate. Many large MNCs have an established policy regarding expatriate compensation. In other organizations the benefits received varies from case to case. (Ibid)

According to Fransesco & Gold (1998) typical expatriate benefits include;

- *Overseas premium*: An additional percentage of the base salary to compensate for the inconvenience of living abroad
- *Housing allowance*: Provision for housing for free or at a rate similar to what the expatriate is used to from the home country
- *Cost of living allowance*: Extra payment to cover additional costs to allow the expatriate to live in a similar way as at home
- *Moving expenses*: Transportation of the expatriate and the family to the foreign location and the shipment of goods to and from the country of the assignment
- *Tuition for dependent education*: Payment for an education for the expatriate's children that are similar to the schooling in the home country, for instance, offering a private school in the foreign location
- *Home leave*: Transportation for the expatriate and his or her family and time off for traveling to the home country
- *Tax reimbursement payments*: Reimbursement for any extra taxes that might result from living abroad (Ibid)

Dowling, (1999) states that many companies also offer financial assistance or protection in connection with the sale or leasing of the expatriate's former residence in the home country. Furthermore, Hodgetts and Luthans (2001) suggest that as the number of dual career couples rises it has become more and more important for organizations to take this issue into consideration. Usually the spouse has to give up his or her job to accompany the expatriate to the foreign location. Therefore, organizations need to support the spouse by offering job assistance in the foreign location and by compensating the spouse for lost wages. Many firms also provide support for the expatriate's family by establishing social networks such as different clubs. These associations can help families to settle down and enjoy the experience of living abroad.

This might help to ease the isolation the spouse may feel when moving to a country where he or she does not have a social network. (Ibid)

2.3.2 Nature and frequency of communication

Jassawalla, et al (2004) state that for the repatriation to be successful it is important that the expatriate have frequent communication with the home office while being overseas as loss of visibility is one of the most common fears mentioned by expatriates. Frequent communication does not only reduce the level of isolation, it also signals the importance of the overseas assignment for the organization, which considerably can enhance the expatriate's motivation. It indicates that the expatriate still is a part of the organization and participating in its activities. Furthermore, it shows that the firm wants the expatriate to know about any changes taking place in the organization that they need to know to be able to adjust upon return, which creates trust. Managers who do not have frequent communication with the home office feel isolated and have a perception of being out of touch. This is likely to raise the expatriate's anxiety of returning to a home office where changes might have been taking place. It also forces expatriates to rely on rumors, which will affect their expectations and realities about their awaiting return. Therefore the authors suggest that firms should provide opportunities for frequent communication in ways that make the expatriate feel sufficiently connected to the home operation. (Ibid)

Communication methods
According to Allen and Alvarez (1998) the aim is to communicate regularly for the purpose of informing the expatriates about what happens in the home office and about developments in the home country as well as to be able to inform home country employees about the expatriate's accomplishments. To maintain visibility several steps can be taken in order to keep the contact between the home office and the expatriate. With technologies such as fax, phone, e-mail and voice mail it is much easer to keep in touch with home office staff than it was in the past. (Ibid) Moreover, Klaff (2002) states that employers also can stay in contact with expatriates by giving them access to the intranet and the firm's newsletters. However, Jassawalla, et al (2004) emphasize that the most effective visibility and communication method is personal visits to the home office since it makes face-to-face contacts possible. It is therefore, according to Allen and Alvarez (1998) important that organizations offer home leave packages that allow the expatriate to visit the home country. Sponsors, HR managers, and the supervisors of positions in the home country that the expatriate is interested in as well as friends and colleagues can be visited during these trips. This helps the expatriate to avoid the out of sight, out of mind situation that otherwise might be common. Similarly, maintenance of social networks in the home office may be crucial for the expatriate's happiness upon return. Face to face contacts will not only ease repatriation, it will also enhance the expatriate's ability to serve as an effective link between headquarters and the subsidiary. (Ibid)

Responsibility for the communication
According to Jassawalla, et al (2004) the communication is not related to regular contacts with any special person in the firm, but rather with the organization as a whole. In a study made by Paik, et al (2002) the researchers investigated what person in organizations that was responsible for the contact with the expatriate while he or she was overseas. The study revealed that the functional department, home office or the

mentor was responsible for communicating with the expatriate. Moreover, the expatriates in the study expressed that they did not necessarily have time to pursue the communication themselves as they felt it would be an extra burden to their already challenging jobs abroad. Therefore, the expatriates believed that someone in the home office should make the effort to reach them. (Ibid)

Mentors
Dowling, et al (1999), states that some companies assign the expatriate a mentor. The reason for having a mentor is to reduce the out of sight and out of mind situation mentioned earlier. Generally, the mentor is in a more senior position in the organization than the expatriate. He or she is usually working in the sending office, and knows the expatriate personally. The duties of a mentor include;

- Maintaining contact with the expatriate during the assignments
- Ensuring that expatriates are kept up to date with what is happening in the home country
- Ensuring that the expatriate is kept in existing management developing programs
- Assisting repatriates upon return to the home country, including trying to find a suitable position in the home office (Ibid)

According to Harvey, Buckley, Noviecevic and Wiese (1999), a mentor has three roles, namely, a professional, a relational and a personal role. The professional role is related to the relationship between the manger and the subordinates. The relational role is the relationship between a manager and others in the organization that is not directly under the manager's chain of command, but could benefit from the manager's knowledge and experience. The personal role is a bond that goes beyond the formal commitment in the organization and is therefore amplified by an informal dimension. However, the role of the mentor is also dependent on the mentor's expertise and the individual needs of the expatriate. (Ibid)

Table 2.2: The mentor's different roles

The mentor's different tasks

The mentor's different roles	A.Cognitive/Informational	B. Networks/Contacts	C. Social/Emotional/ Political Guidance
Professional	Specialized training beyond standard positional functional information	Assistance with internal contacts and relationships with key managers at all levels in the organization	Support during difficult professional experiences
Relational	Insights into the informal organization and the political dimensions in the organization	Assistance with developing external and internal networks	Preparing the expatriate for potential actual conflict in the professional arena
Personal	Sharing of "restricted" information/data that could be beneficial to the expatriate	Assistance with social/professional introductions into organizations with potentially influential contacts	Enduring friendship and emotional support during both professional and personal difficulties

Source: Adopted from Harvey, et al, (1999)

Harvey, et al (1999) further claim that if a mentor successfully can perform these roles it is likely to result in positive outcomes for the expatriate such as a reduction in job related stress and reduced work alienation and turnover intentions. Furthermore, repatriates that have had a mentor report higher career satisfaction and are receiving more promotions. Moreover, it is essential for organizational learning that the expatriate's experiences are integrated into the MNCs global organizational learning processes. A mentor can help to develop a process of expatriational learning that can be used by future expatriates. (Ibid)

According to Dowling, et al (1999) the provision of a mentor can be related to a number of organizational factors such as the size of the expatriate workforce, the work unit responsible for the expatriate and the nationality of the organization. Larger firms are generally more likely to assign their expatriates a mentor. Mentors are more common in organizations where the corporate HR department formulates the expatriate policy and in cases where the expatriate is managed under a special international assignment unit. Furthermore, European firms are more likely to use mentors compared to US firms. (Ibid)

The HR function dealing with expatriates
Allen and Alvarez (1998) suggest that due to the separation in many MNCs between home country and foreign operations, an official handoff approach often occurs in the home office as the expatriate leaves for a foreign assignment and moves to the international side of the operation. This usually results in both an administrative and a physical distance from the home office. Administratively, the HR function related to the expatriate is often removed from the home country to an international HR division. All HR support received by the expatriate is therefore offered by the international HR group as long as the expatriate is on the foreign assignment. A lack of communication between HR staff in the home country and the expatriate might result in that when jobs become open, expatriates are probably not considered as candidates and are unlikely to

know about those positions as long as they are abroad. This hampers the expatriate's chance of having an appropriate job in the home country upon return. (Ibid)

2.4 After the expatriate's return to the home country

Klaff (2002) stresses that to ease the transition to the home country it is beneficial if a discussion about returning home begins six to eight months before the expatriate leaves the country of the assignment. Jassawalla, et al (2004) state that during the time the expatriate has been away the home office might have undergone significant changes in structure, information systems and formal and informal processes. Familiar faces and informal processes might have given way to new employees, new rules and power structures. Social issues might be a source of anxiety, but it generally pales in comparison to the anxiety related to not receiving credit for the foreign assignment and not having a choice of a job that requires their newly acquired skills. Two main issues seem to make a difference, namely, the quality of interaction with sponsors and perception of support upon return. (Ibid)

2.4.1 Quality of interaction with sponsors

Jassawalla, et al (2004), state that repatriates that are satisfied with their repatriation often identify a sponsor as a contributing factor to their positive experience. According to the authors a sponsor is a person that has more authority in the organization than the expatriate, who has a personal stake in the success of the foreign assignment and who is responsible for the expatriate's career progression. This definition differs somewhat from what the literature commonly call a mentor. As mentioned earlier, a mentor is a person who is, for instance, responsible for providing information. However, this person might not necessarily have a personal interest in the success of the returning expatriate and may not be accountable to superiors for the success or failure of the expatriate. Moreover, the sponsor's job includes searching for opportunities within the firm that are likely to suit the expatriate and invest their time and energy to ensure that the expatriate's skills will be used by the firm upon return. (Ibid)

Allen and Alvarez (1998) claim that sponsors should be assigned before the expatriate leaves the home country in order to allow them sufficient time to establish a relationship. Furthermore, in order to ensure consistency, a screening and training program for sponsors should be carried out. There are a number of characteristics that a successful sponsor are likely to have. Such traits include personal international experience, sufficient influence to act as an advocate for the expatriate and energy and dedication to stay in contact with the expatriate during the whole time the expatriate is abroad and after his or her return. These issues will affect how effective the sponsor program is going to be. (Ibid)

A manager in the study made by Jassawalla, et al (2004) that was satisfied with his repatriation explained his sponsor's role as follows:

"My company's repatriation policy was such that there was a lot of flexibility built into it. You were assigned someone who was on the receiving end back in the United States – kind of your dedicated HR person who did everything from soup to nuts for you. When you found out you were coming back from the United States he did everything

16

from finding movers, to setting up appointments for you with your new boss, your new peers, arranging social events for you in the new areas you were working in back in the States." (Ibid)

At the other extreme, in a study made by Allen and Alvarez (1998) one expatriate reported that while on the foreign assignment, he received a call from his sponsor about once a year asking if he was coming back soon. When the expatriate answered that he would not return any time soon, the sponsor said "I guess I don't have to go back to work yet" and did not contact the expatriate for another year. (Ibid)

2.4.2 Perception of support upon return

According to Jassawalla, et al (2004) expatriates often feel highly valued during foreign assignments. Expatriates generally have greater autonomy, more responsibility and are the focus of attention. Upon return many expatriates miss the lifestyle, the autonomy and the monetary benefits, and have therefore problems with adjusting to the work environment in the home country. Expatriates' perceptions of the support upon return are a rather complex issue that involves a number of different dimensions. The five main issues that seem to have an impact on the perceived level of support are mentioned below.

- Choosing new assignments in the home office
- Utilizing their new perspectives in their new job
- Receiving recognition for the foreign assignment
- Adjusting to the positive or negative differences in job related factors of their new job compared to the foreign assignment
- Using the resources, if any, allocated for training and other procedures designed to reorient the expatriate to the home office. (Ibid)

The transition to the home country
According to Jassawalla, et al (2004) firms should help the expatriate with *finding an assignment in the home office*. It is important that companies provide support to repatriates in terms of offering a position in the home country that indicates that the company values them as much as they were valued overseas and in which the repatriates get the *opportunity to use his or her new perspectives and expertise*. (Ibid) Feldman (1999) states that for a repatriate transition to be considered effective, the employee needs to get the opportunity to use his or her newly acquired skills. The lack of opportunity to use the knowledge and skills gained overseas is likely to result in feelings of frustration and resentment. If those feelings not lead to repatriate turnover it is likely to result in reduced productivity. Furthermore, if the expatriate not gets the chance to use his or her international experience, the organization has not benefited from the foreign assignment and their investment. Many repatriates do not get the chance, for instance, to manage a diverse workforce or working on problems involving both the firm's domestic and international operations. (Ibid) However, according to Klaff (2002) Deloitte & Touche can serve as a good example of a firm that takes care of the repatriate's foreign experience. The firm tries to place their repatriates in positions that allow them to conduct business with customers in the country where they lived. In other cases the repatriates are placed in larger cities that are more involved in international activities to enable the repatriate to use his or her international expertise and to associate with other people who have foreign experiences. (Ibid)

As mentioned earlier, Dowling, et al (1999) claims that the limited research on repatriation indicates that the major reason why employees accept a foreign assignment is its perceived value in terms of career progression. The job received upon return is therefore judged by whether it matches the repatriate's job expectations or not. (Ibid) According to Jassawalla, et al (2004) one of the main reasons why repatriates leave the firm after returning from a foreign assignment is because of that the positive expectations related to their career path was not met. Instead, the repatriate received a position in the home country that was more of a downgrading than a career progression. (Ibid) Allen and Alvarez (1998) states that one problem is that even if the organization values the repatriates and would like to place them in a better job, no such jobs are available at the time of the repatriate's return. Therefore, according to Dowling, et al (1999) repatriates often only receive a temporary position such as in a project team upon return. In these situations, repatriates become an underutilized resource as their experience gained overseas not is exploited. If organizations do not guarantee appropriate re-entry positions, it is likely to have a negative impact on the number of employees who are willing to take on foreign assignments. The lack of suitable positions signals to the employees that international assignments might be negative for their careers and therefore risky, which serves as a deterrent for potential expatriates. (Ibid)

Allen and Alvarez (1998) suggest that one reason for the lack of job opportunities for repatriates is because that they when abroad are out of sight and out of mind, planning for their return therefore only begins very close to the time when the expatriate is going home. The choice of positions is therefore very limited, which often result in that the repatriate is placed in a "holding" position or in a position that are negative for the expatriate's career. Another reason is that in many organizations, the employee is expected to start to work in the same division as they worked in before they left. Job opportunities are therefore restricted to the few vacant positions in that division rather than more suitable jobs that might be available in other parts of the firm. (Ibid)

Feldman (1999) emphasizes that to facilitate the re-entry process organizations should upon return have definite job assignments for the repatriates. To the extent that the date of return to the home country can be known, specific jobs can be waiting repatriates. (Ibid) However, Allen and Alvarez (1998), proposes another view regarding this issue. The authors' claim that most international assignments come with a fixed end-date, the downside with this is that a fixed return date tends to limit job opportunities since only those available at this specific time can be considered. A more flexible time frame of three months to a year for an expatriate's return will enhance the chance of that a suitable position will be available upon return. Furthermore, it will help if the repatriate is kept in the home country's HR system. Otherwise, the repatriate is entirely excluded from domestic job screens and will therefore miss out on job opportunities that might have been suitable. (Ibid)

Jassawalla, et al (2004) claims it is essential that the company gives the repatriate *recognition for the foreign assignment*. By offering the repatriate a position in the home country that is a career progression and in which the person will find their foreign expertise useful is one way. (Ibid) Furthermore, Allen and Alvarez (1998) state that preparation and training of new expatriates is an important function that the repatriate can assist in. Repatriates can offer first hand experience and advice to potential

expatriates as well as for newly returned repatriates. Moreover, a repatriate directory can be established in order to facilitate organizational learning, to maintain contact with former expatriates and to follow up on the repatriation process. A database can also be used to track other important information on international assignments such as the percentage of completed assignments, reasons for early terminations and career movements of repatriates. By using repatriates for activities in which their international experience and expertise are utilized, the firm signals to the repatriates that their experience is valued and appreciated. (Ibid)

According to Selmer (1995) one might assume that an employee with previous experience in the parent company would not suffer from transition problems in that their expectations concerning the organization not would be accurate. This cannot be taken for granted. (Ibid) Feldman, (1999) states that many repatriates experience high levels of stress due to work place changes upon return. The repatriate is likely to receive a new position in the home country that is related to less discretion and responsibility. Jassawalla, et al (2004), therefore state that it is essential that companies help the repatriate to adjust *to the differences in job related factors of their new job in the home country compared to the foreign assignment.* Apart from a new job other workplace changes might affect readjustment. Often there have, for instance, been changes in the formal and informal information channels in the home organization, especially if there has been widespread restructuring in the firm. (Ibid) Strob, et al (1998) suggest that unless there has been sufficient contact between the home office and the repatriate he or she will be unprepared for these changes. Many repatriates therefore report feelings of disorientation. Moreover, Dowling et al (1999) states that technological advances in the MNC might render the repatriate's functional skills and might result in that the repatriate's knowledge is outdated.

Strob, et al (1998), suggest that expatriates also might face readjustment problems related to non-work areas such as housing and economy at home and relationships with friends. During the time the repatriate has been away the neighborhood might have changed and friends might have moved away. This might result in unanticipated surprises for the repatriate. (Ibid) Dowling, et al (1999) stress that compounding these problems is the loss of benefits and pay. Payments are usually lower and the compensation benefits from abroad are removed. Repatriates therefore return to the home country to resume life on a scale that often is less comfortable compared to what they have become used to abroad. The factors discussed may combined result in that the repatriate might view the life at home as dull and unexciting. The repatriate may therefore start to glamorize the life he or she left behind in the assignment country. (Ibid) However, according to Strob, et al (1998) it should also be mentioned that being abroad for a couple of years are likely to alter a person. The position abroad is, for instance, commonly more demanding. Learning how to cope with the new challenges may give the person more confidence, along with a broader perspective. (Ibid)

Strob, et al (1998) claims that since readjustment problems are linked with the repatriate's expectations of coming home, managing expectations is an important aspect of repatriation. Expatriates develop both work-related and non work-related expectations before and during the assignment. It might be expectations, for instance, concerning their career progression, relationships with friends in the home country and expectations concerning support for the family upon return. A number of people, including supervisors, co-workers, HR staff and former expatriates, with whom the

expatriate communicates before going abroad, contribute to the development of these expectations. If those expectations are not met the repatriate will be unsatisfied, which will affect the repatriate's commitment to the firm. Organizations therefore need to devote more attention to helping expatriates to develop realistic expectations before they are coming home. By doing this, firms can avoid subjecting repatriates to surprises and differences between the repatriate's anticipations and subsequent experiences in the home country; hence the turnover rate is likely to decrease. (Ibid)

According to Dowling, et al (1999) the changes that have occurred in the home country might lead to reverse culture shock[3]. Feldman (1999) suggests that due to readjustment problems, the rate of the repatriate's job success is generally lower than in domestic job transitions. Jassawalla, et al (2004) therefore states that firms should devote resources for *training and other procedures to reorient the expatriate to the home office*. Hurn (1999) also states that to help the repatriate to adjust to the home office and the home country and to reduce the problems associated with reverse culture shock companies should offer repatriation courses. The content is usually decided in consultation with the HR department, the repatriate and his or her family and the provider. According to the author a re-entry course can cover the following aspects:

- *Reverse culture shock*: developing coping strategies, dealing with change and readjustment to the home country
- *An update of the home country*: political, social and economic changes, cost of living, personal security, law and order etc.
- *Business environment*: changes in legislation and company policy, trends and developments
- *Review of financial planning*: taxation, investments, pensions, national insurance
- *Schoolchildren's education*: national curriculum, examinations, standards, school admissions, procedures, university entrance
- *Spouse issues*: job search, CVs, professional updating (Ibid)

Hurn, (1999) further claims that the issues listed above should depend on the individual needs of the repatriate. Courses should therefore be tailor-made. (Ibid)

---

[3] A disorientation experienced by a returning expatriate (Fransesco and Gold, 1998)

2.5 Conceptual framework

The theories in the literature review should, according to Miles and Huberman (1994), be conceptualized into the main dimensions, factors and variables of the research questions that will be studied. The authors further claim that the development of a conceptual framework is facilitated if a number of research questions already have been stated. (Ibid) The research questions in this study are stated in chapter one. Furthermore, the conceptual framework serves as a base for the interview guide, which will be used for data collection. The interview guide includes the same issues and follows the same order as the conceptual framework.

Our purpose with this study is to gain a deeper understanding of MNCs' repatriation program. In order to reach this purpose we have chosen to focus our study on the theory of Jassawalla, et al (2004). We will therefore base our conceptual framework on the repatriation program developed by these researchers. We have chosen to use this framework since it provides a new approach concerning how to conduct a repatriation program. Moreover, we have also chosen this study since it seems like it reduces many of the problems related to repatriation such as high employee turnover rates. It might therefore be interesting to investigate if firms follow this approach to repatriation. The repatriation program of Jassawalla, et al (2004) is divided in three different stages, which are prior to the expatriate's departure, during the expatriate's stay, and upon the expatriate's return. Since we want to investigate if firms follow the particular repatriation program developed by these authors the conceptual framework of this study is based on this theory, as described in figure 2.2 below. However, in order to give more strength to the study other authors' contributions about the issues that Jassawalla, et al (2004) recommend will also be included.

Figure 2.2: Conceptual Framework

Repatriation Program	

Prior to the expatriate's departure

- *Task clarity*
Expectations on the expatriate

The deadlines of the task

How the performance will be evaluated

- *Career counselling*
The reasons for sending the manager overseas

The benefits of the overseas assignment for the firm and the manager

The manager's career options upon return

- *Formal policies for repatriation*
Repatriation policies should include actions to be taken during the pre-visit, visit and post visit.

During the expatriate's stay

- *Perception of support while on assignment*
Related to issues included in the relocation package such as financial compensation, support to the spouse and children to aid in their adjustment to the foreign environment.

- *Nature and frequency of communication*
This factor is related to the frequency of communication between the home office and the expatriate while he or she is abroad. Who is responsible for the contact and how the contact is maintained are considered.

After the expatriate's return

- *Quality of interaction with sponsors*
The sponsor has a stake in the repatriate's personal long-term career. The duties of a sponsor include searching for positions that may suit the repatriate and try to ensure that the repatriate's skills will be used upon return.

- *Perceptions of support upon return*
Receiving credit and recognition for the foreign assignment

Choosing new assignments in the home office

Utilizing their new perspectives in their new job

Adjusting to the differences in job related factors of their new job compared to the foreign assignment

Using the procedures designed to reorient the repatriate to the home office

Source: Author's construction based on Jassawalla et al (2004)

The following authors will also be referred to in respective stage:

Prior to the expatriate's departure
Task clarity: Salomon (1995), Lobel (1999)
Career counseling: Black, et al (1999), Riusala & Suutari (2000), Allen & Alvarez (1998)
Formal policies for repatriation: Mendenhall, Dunbar & Oddou (1987) Salomon (1995)

During the expatriate's stay
Perception of support while on the assignment: Fransesco & Gold (1998), Hodgetts & Luthans (2001)

Nature and frequency of communication: Allen & Alvarez (1998), Paik, et al (2002), Dowling, et al (1999)

After the expatriate's return
Quality and interaction with sponsors: Hurn (1999)
Perception of support upon return: Allen & Alvarez (1998), Hurn (1999) Feldman (1991)

3 Methodology

The previous chapters have presented an introduction and an overview of theories related to our field of research. In this chapter we will describe the methodological approaches used in order to reach our purpose and to answer our research questions. The authors are focusing on describing each choice of methodological approach that has been made. These choices are shortly justified with a brief theoretical description.

3.1 Purpose of Research

According to Yin (1994), the purpose of research can be to explore, describe and/ or to explain. These types are shortly described below:

- *Exploratory research* can be described as finding out what is happening to seek new insights, to ask questions and to assess phenomena in a new light (Saunders and Lewis, 2000). The purpose is therefore to collect as much information about a specific topic as possible. Exploratory research is mainly used when the problem studied is difficult to limit, when the perception of which method or model to use is diffuse and it is unclear what characteristics and relations are important (Eriksson and Wiedersheim-Paul, 1997). This type of research is therefore a particularly useful approach when the researcher wishes to clarify the understanding of a problem (Saunders and Lewis, 2000).

- *Descriptive research* can be described as to portray an accurate profile of situations and is therefore an extension of a piece of exploratory research (Saunders and Lewis, 2000). According to Eriksson and Wiedersheim-Paul (1997) the descriptive research is used when the problem of the research is clearer. This type of research aims to develop generalizations and to explain these (Ibid).

- *Explanatory research* can be defined as a research that establishes causal relationships between variables (Saunders and Lewis, 2000). Explanatory research aims to fit the parts of the research together and explain their relationships to each other in a developed theory (Yin, 1994).

The purpose with this thesis is to gain a deeper understanding of MNCs' repatriation program. The aim with this thesis is threefold. The first objective is to *explore* if MNC's apply a repatriation program similar to the repatriation program developed by Jassawalla, et al (2004). The second aim is to *describe* a repatriation program in the three different stages; prior to an expatriate's departure, during the stay and upon return. Moreover, this study is partly *explanatory* as the third aim is to start to explain the relationship between the actions the MNC's are taking in the different stages of the expatriation cycle. The three types of research will therefore be used in this thesis in order to be able to answer the research questions.

3.2 Research approach

There are two different research approaches, quantitative and qualitative that decide how the selected data is analyzed and treated (Patel and Davidson, 1994). The most appropriate approach depends on the research questions and the purpose of the study (Yin, 1994). When considering which approach to chose the following statements can be used:

- o The *quantitative* research approach can be described as to gather information through questionnaires, to generalize the collected information and present it in tables and diagrams (Saunders and Lewis, 2000).

- o A *qualitative* research approach aims to gain a better understanding of data, which is not quantifiable. Qualitative data is based on meanings expressed through words and analyzed through the use of conceptualization (Yin, 1994).

We have chosen a qualitative approach since the aim with the research questions and purpose is to gain a deeper understanding of the repatriation program that MNCs use. The aim with this thesis is not to make generalizations. A deep understanding of the research area also requires data expressed in attitudes and perceptions and such data cannot be analyzed with a quantitative approach.

3.3 Research strategy

Different research strategies can be used to be able to answer the research questions and reach the purpose. The most suitable research strategy is dependent on the research questions, the extent the researcher has control over behavioral events, and to what degree the focus is on contemporary events, as shown in the table 3.2. (Yin, 1994)

Table 3.1 Relevant Situations for Different Research Strategies

Research Strategy	Form of research question	Requires control over behavioral events	Focuses on contemporary events
Experiment	How, why	YES	YES
Survey	Who, what, where, how many, how much	NO	YES
Archival analysis	Who, what, where, how many, how much	NO	YES/NO
History	How, why	NO	NO
Case Study	How, why	NO	YES

Source: Yin, 1994, p. 6

We have chosen to conduct a case study since our research questions are formulated as how questions. Furthermore, a case study is conducted in research that aims to gain a rich understanding of the context of the research and about the process that is being enacted. (Saunders and Lewis, 2000) This is also in line with our purpose since it is to gain a better understanding of our research area.

According to Yin (1994), there are two types of case studies, single and multiple case studies. A single case study is when one entity is investigated. A multiple case study includes investigating and comparing two or more entities. Due to the recommendations related to this thesis we chose to conduct a multiple case study,

which allows us to make a comparison between different cases and the opportunity to discover similarities and differences.

We do not consider to make a survey or an archival analysis since our research questions are not formed to answer who, what, where, how many or how much. Furthermore, we have not chosen to do an experiment since it does require control over behavioral events. Since, we are interested in investigating the situation of our research area today, we are not using a historical research strategy.

3.4 Data collection method

After deciding which research strategy to use, data to the case study can be collected through documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observations, participant observations, and physical artifacts (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Table 3.2 is presented in order to justify the choice of method to collect the data in this thesis.

Table 3.2: Six sources of Evidence: Strengths and weaknesses

Source of Evidence	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
Documentation	Stable: can be reviewed repeatedly Unobtrusive: not created as a result of the case Exact: contains exact names, references, and details of an event Broad coverage: long span of time, many events, and many settings	Retrievability: can be low Biased selectivity: if collections are incomplete Reporting bias: reflects (unknown) bias of author Access: may be deliberately blocked
Archival Records	(Same as above for documentation) Precise and quantitative	(Same as above for documentation) Accessibility due to privacy reasons
Interviews	Targeted: focuses directly on case study topic Insightful: provides perceived causal inferences	Bias due to poorly constructed questionnaires Response bias Inaccuracies due to poor recall Reflexivity: interviewee gives what interviewer wants to hear
Direct Observations	Reality: covers event in real time Contextual: covers context of event	Time Consuming Selectivity: unless broad coverage Reflexivity: event may proceed differently because it is being observed Cost: hours needed by human observers
Participant Observation	(Same as for direct observations) Insightful into inter-personal behavior and motives	(Same as for direct observations) Bias due to investigator's manipulation of events
Physical Artifacts	Insightful into cultural features Insightful into technical operations	Selectivity Availability

Source: Yin, 1994, p. 80

Yin (1994) describes the strength of different sources of evidence in a case study as triangulation. We have chosen to collect data through a) documentation, and b) interviews. In order to gain a deep understanding of MNCs' repatriation program we have searched for documentation such as written reports and the companies' websites.

The second method we used to collect the data for this thesis is through focused interviews. The interviews were conducted by phone due to the geographical distance. Moreover the interviews were done with a certain set of questions where we have focused on the topics that are important for our research questions and purpose. The interview is based on the interview guide that is enclosed to this thesis. Furthermore, the questions are based on the conceptual framework from chapter two. Since we wanted the interview to be flexible it is also, to a degree open- ended which allows the respondent to answer the questions in his/her own words.

Archival records is a type of data collection method that is precise and quantitative (Yin, 1994). Since the aim with the data collection is to have a qualitative mode of research this method has been excluded. Moreover, since both direct and participant observations are a method that is recommended for research aiming at collecting data by studying the participants these techniques have also been eliminated (Saunders and Lewis, 2000). These types of data collection are also time-consuming. We have also excluded physical artifacts due to the fact that our aim not is to get insight into cultural or technical operations.

3.5 Sample selection

The choice of sampling technique is dependent on the feasibility and sensibility of the collected data to answer the research questions and to address the objectives from the entire population (Saunders and Lewis, 2000). Moreover, the sample selection is important for analysis of the data since it places limits on the conclusions that will be drawn. (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

There are two different techniques of sample selection. These are non-probability sampling and probability sampling as defined below.

- o Research questions and objectives that do not require generalizations can make use of a *non-probability sampling* technique. Non-probability sampling provide the researcher the opportunity to select the sample purposively. (Saunders and Lewis, 2000) Non-probability sampling is when the chance of each case being selected from the population is known (Yin 1994).

- o Another form of technique is *probability sampling*. This type is most commonly associated with survey-based research, where the researcher needs to make inferences from the sample about a population to answer the research questions and to meet the objectives. (Saunders and Lewis, 2000)

We have chosen non-probability sampling, as earlier mentioned, since our purpose is to gain a better understanding of a specific research area instead of making a survey-based research and/or to draw general conclusions. Another main reason why we have chosen to use a non-probability sampling technique is since this method allows us to choose our case study companies. To reach our purpose we have chosen to investigate two

different MNCs, namely Ericsson and Nokia. These companies have been selected based on the following criteria a) are MNCs, b) have a significant expatriation organization, c) are operating in the same industry and d) are working with repatriation. Moreover, we chose to interview one of the persons in each company that is responsible for repatriation in respective MNC. We contacted respective company and asked to talk with personnel who are working with expatriation and repatriation issues. From the beginning we wanted to interview Swedish Ericsson and Finnish Nokia but as Finnish Nokia did not want to take part in our study we contacted Norwegian Nokia who was positive and agreed on participating in the study.

3.6 Data analysis

Data analysis can be based on two different strategies a) relying on theoretical propositions and b) developing a case description. The first strategy can be used when the results from previous studies concerning the research questions are compared to the researcher's findings from the case study. The second strategy is used when there is little previous research about the subject. (Yin, 1994) We have chosen to rely on theoretical propositions for several reasons. Firstly, repatriation is not a new area in the field of research, which means that previous studies have been conducted. Secondly, the structure of our study is derived from a new theory regarding repatriation.

The way in which the data will be analyzed is very important for any research study (Yin, 1994). Research data analysis can be done through two different techniques. These are a) within-case analysis, which can be described as to compare the data collected against the theory used and b) cross-case analysis that can be described as to compare data in one case to data in another case. Due to the recommendations for this thesis we have made a multiple-case study. A natural choice for us was therefore to conduct a cross-case analysis to reduce the data. The collected data from our case studies are first compared with the conceptual framework in the literature chapter and then the case studies are compared with each other. Based on the findings in the cross case-analysis we will draw the conclusions.

3.7 Quality standards

Saunders and Lewis (2000) claim that quality standards highlight the reduction of the possibility of getting the wrong answer. According to Eriksson and Wiedersheim-Paul (1997) the transfer of theoretical ideas into empirical observations is difficult. There are two important aspects in this process. These are validity and reliability (ibid). *Validity* is related to whether the findings are really about what they appear to be about (Yin, 1994).

We have conducted the following steps to increase validity in our research:

To increase validity *before data collection* we have developed the interview guide on the basis of existing theories and with help from our supervisor. Our supervisor has also helped us with the theoretical aspects in the interview guide. The interview guide was also sent to the respondents before the date of the interview to allow them to prepare themselves.

To increase the validity *during data collection* the whole interview was taped. It gave us the possibility to go back to a specific part in the interview and to support the notes that were taken during the interview. Furthermore, we were precise to ask for definitions of words to clarify the answers. However, due to the fact that the interviews were conducted in Swedish and then translated into English might have resulted in translation errors. Another issue that can have affected the collected data is that the expatriation policy of Nokia is confidential.

Reliability means that if a researcher later follows the same method and investigates the same research area in the same case study firm, he or she should get the same results and conclusions as the researcher got in the first research (Yin, 1994). To reach reliability in the research it is important that the information give trustworthy and stable results (Eriksson and Wiedersheim-Paul, 1997).

We have conducted the following steps to increase reliability in our research:

To increase reliability *before data collection* we have chosen to interview the person having the most knowledge about the company's expatriation program. Moreover, we have tried to formulate the questions in the interview guide as clear as possible to avoid any misunderstandings. We have based our literature review on stable sources as books and scientific articles. The approach we chose is based on a specific article and supported by other theories related to our field of research to make it possible to use our research approach in another study.

To increase reliability *during data collection* we taped the whole interview and we tried not to pose any leading questions that would affect the answers given by the respondents. The timeframe available for the interview was suited to the questions we had prepared. We also asked the respondents if we could contact him/her again to get the opportunity to ask for more information if needed.

In order to increase *reliability of the research* the objective during the entire process has been to explain each step considered and taken. The way the data has been selected, collected, and treated in this thesis follows the recommendations from our supervisor. Moreover, all the references used are mentioned in the reference list and can easily be found by other researchers. As earlier mentioned, the model of Jassawalla, et al (2004) is open to the researchers' own perceptions, which can affect the reliability of our research.

4 Empirical data

This chapter gives a presentation of the collected data. The data has been gathered from interviews and documentation from our two case study companies, Ericsson and Nokia. The data collected from each case will be presented in a separate section. Each case will begin with an introduction of the company, which will be followed by the data related to our three research questions.

We have interviewed two companies, Ericsson and Nokia, which are both operating in the mobile telecommunication industry. The data in this chapter is collected from Ericsson located in Sweden and Nokia located in Norway. We have interviewed a human resource manager at respective company who has provided us with the information regarding the firm's repatriation program. It is significant to point out that the companies represent the whole company, but the data about the companies' repatriation program is in the first place valid for the Swedish Ericsson and the Norwegian Nokia. The information about the repatriation should therefore not directly be connected to the companies' other organizations' expatriation/repatriation processes located in other countries.

4.1 Case Study One: Repatriation at Ericsson

Company background
It was in Stockholm in 1876 that Lars Magnus Ericsson and Carl Johan Andersson laid the foundation for Ericsson. In the beginning the company was repairing foreign-made telephones, but it soon started to make and sell its own handsets. A few years later the company formed an agreement to supply telephones to Sweden's first telecom company, Stockholms Allmänna Telefonaktiebolag. Today, Ericsson is one of the world's largest telecommunication companies. The firm is active in more than 140 countries located in all parts of the world, and around 40% of all mobile calls are made through the company's systems. The number of employees was in 2003, 51 583 worldwide, 24 408 of those were working in Sweden. The same year the net sales amounted to 117 738 million Swedish crowns.

Ericsson's *business offering* is to supply operators and service providers with end-to-end solutions, for all existing systems, in mobile phones and broadband Internet. The offering includes network infrastructure, access equipment and terminals, application enables and global services. Ericsson's main *business objective* is to be the first choice supplier of the most demanding front-line customers and to gain a sustainable and competitive operating profit. To achieve its objective Ericsson has to be the leader in market developments and innovations, develop its customer relationships, and expand the business with an increased focus on value-added services. The firm's *strategy* is to be a market, technology and operational leader. This allows the company to profit from economies of scale that can be used to provide superior products and services. Moreover, the *core values* in Ericsson are professionalism, respect and perseverance. These values are the foundation of the Ericsson culture and therefore they guide the firm's daily work, for instance, how the company relate to people and how it conducts business.

The firm's *customers* are almost all major network operators globally. However, most of the revenue is derived from business from large, multi-year network build-out

agreements with a limited number of important customers. Of a total customer base of 425 network operators, the ten largest customers account for almost 50% of net sales. The *competition* varies dependent on the product. The main competitors in wireless communication include, Motorola, Alcatel, Nokia and Siemens. In the area of wire line communication, the competition is less concentrated and includes, for instance, Siemens, Cisco and Alcatel.

The company is divided into three business segments, namely, systems, phones and other operations. Systems specialize on end-to-end solutions and large customized projects to both fixed and mobile operations. For reporting purposes this unit is divided into three segments, Mobile Networks, Fixed Networks and Professional Services. The second business segment, phones is a joint venture with Sony. This partnership allows Ericsson to leverage its knowledge in mobile technologies with Sony's expertise in consumer electronic devises. This permits Sony Ericsson to provide a wide range of mobile phones. It also helps the organization to monitor the requirements in the consumer market for mobile phones. Moreover, Ericsson views the joint venture as an important drive for its mobile systems unit as it enhances the unit's ability to offer end-to-end systems to customers. The last business segment, other operations, consists of a number of small operations like Defense Systems (Microwave Systems), Network Technologies, Enterprise Systems, Mobile Platforms and Technology Licensing. Several of these small units are in the investment phase with an aim of future growth and contribution to the organization's profits. A more detailed model of the organizational structure is presented in figure 4.1 below.
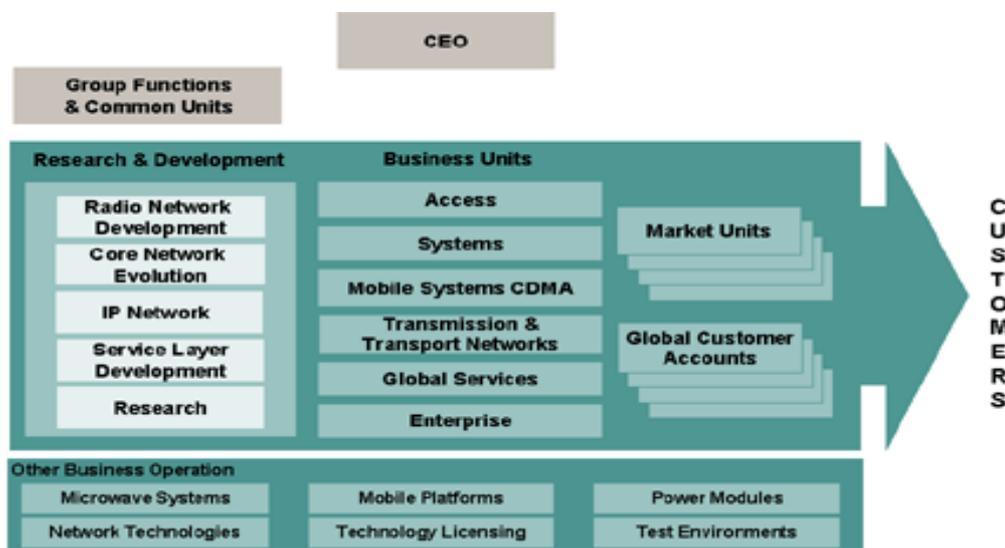
Figure 4.1: Ericsson's organizational structure
Source: www.ericsson.se, 2004-11-25

Expatriation at Ericsson
The respondent, Göran Henriksson, is an HR manager who is working in Sweden in the business segment called Systems. From this department 100 people are currently working on international assignments. The respondent has been working on international contracts in Japan and in the Middle East.

Today, around 1000 people in the whole organization worldwide are working as expatriates. However, a few years ago the number was 4000 people. The reason for the

reduction in the number of expatriates is not because the firm does not view international experience as important anymore, or that the interest among employees regarding international assignments has been reduced. It is, instead mainly due to downsizing. In order to stay competitive the firm has been forced to dismiss a large number of employees, which also has affected the number of international assignments available.

The most common reason why the organization uses expatriates is to gain international expertise. The expatriate will acquire knowledge, for instance, about local customers that he or she can bring back to headquarters. For international assignments, the organization recruits globally within the firm by using the web. In other words, the positions offered abroad are open for everyone within the Ericsson concern to apply for. Furthermore, it is the local subsidiary that offers the international assignment that puts the advertisement on the web. The positions offered for international assignments in Ericsson are not only management positions as the jobs available are dependent on the organization's needs at the time.

The international assignments are either viewed as long term, lasting for at least twelve months or short term, lasting for less than twelve months. The firm has had people who have been working on assignments in the same location for seven to eight years. This is today viewed as something negative rather than positive. Ericsson has therefore developed a policy that an expatriate should not be abroad for more than three years at a time. The reason for this is that after three years the firm believes that the person needs to come home in order not to get too detached from the home office. Furthermore, when a person has been abroad for a significant period of time he or she needs to update his or her competences as it might have become outdated. After a period of time in the home country the person can go abroad again to the same location or to another country.

4.1.1 Prior to the expatriate's departure

Task clarity
The advertisements about the international assignments include a description of the assignment, the tasks to be performed and the professional and personal competences needed for the assignment. It is the local subsidiary that has put the advertisement on the web that informs the expatriate about job related expectations and about how the job will be evaluated. If it is not the home office that has done this it is not responsible for informing about these issues. Moreover, the international assignment usually comes with a fixed end date and if there are other deadlines of importance it is also the local subsidiary's responsibility to inform about this. It is customary for the expatriate to visit the subsidiary abroad before he or she starts to work. The subsidiary then informs the expatriate about the expectations it has on him or her and about how the job will be evaluated. The expatriate therefore knows about these issues before he or she starts to work on the foreign assignment. Moreover, the expatriate has to sign a code of conduct and business ethics and a contract in the home office prior to departure. The code of conduct specifies moral standards and ethics that the expatriate needs to follow abroad. Implicitly this contract says something about the expectations the firm has on the expatriate as it defines what behavior the firm believes is suitable. The contract covers issues like the length of stay, payments and benefits.

Career counseling
Generally, Ericsson does not inform the expatriate about the benefits of the assignment for the person or to the firm. Neither does the company inform the expatriate about possible positions in the home office upon return. Since the position the repatriate will receive after returning to the home country is dependent on what vacancies there are at the time, the firm cannot ensure a certain position prior to departure. However, Ericsson has a stated policy regarding management planning. In this policy it is declared that the company should develop its managers through international assignments. Sometimes the company decides what managers that are suitable to be sent abroad, these managers are often young. Furthermore, for some senior positions it is required that the person has been working on at least one assignment abroad to be considered for the job. If the repatriate has the other qualities needed for the job these positions become open for him or her to apply for.

Formal policies for repatriation
Ericsson has a written policy regarding the whole international assignment, or the whole expatriation cycle including repatriation. The firm does not have a certain policy that only governs repatriation. The organization has special departments, called market units that have the utmost responsibility for the policy and that it is followed. Moreover, apart from the issues in the policy the market units are responsible for the contract, performance management and competence development. These units have, together with the manager in the expatriate's home office the main responsibility for the expatriate while he or she is abroad. However, the market units are not responsible for finding a position for the expatriate when he or she returns to Sweden. This is the HR department in Sweden, the expatriate's manager in the home office and the expatriate's responsibility. At the moment there are 64 market units around the world that are responsible for a certain region or country.

Since the respondent did not have much knowledge about what the expatriation policy actually covers, we contacted the manager for the market unit in Stockholm, Cecilia Calais in order to gain more information. She sent us the company's policy regarding long-term assignments abroad. The policy came into effect the first of April, 2004. In the following part, information stated in the policy is provided.

Ericsson needs expatriates that temporarily serve in a foreign location in order to develop the firm's business around the world. The main reasons for sending employees on foreign assignments are to develop international managers, to transfer specific Ericsson knowledge, to transfer and instill Ericsson's culture and values and to develop local staff. Furthermore, it is important that the expatriate is recognized as valuable for the firm. Employees that accept a foreign assignment understand that this is positive for his or her career in Ericsson. The home and host office as well as the assignee has together the responsibility to plan for, and monitor the assignee's future development in the firm.

The policy consists of 16 different parts, which are summarized below.

- **General provisions and definitions**
  An individual agreement has to be signed between the company and the expatriate for each long-term assignment. In the contract are, for instance, salary, incentives, pensions, and the initial period of the assignment stated. The

initial period of the assignment usually is 12, 18 or 24 months. Furthermore, there are certain conditions that apply for all assignees in each country of service. These are stated in the country policy for that country and are attached to the agreement.

- **General rules of conduct**
  The expatriate and accompanying family has to adhere to the regulations in the host country. Moreover, the assignee undertakes to promote the interests of the company in every way and to comply with the rules governing service within the company.

- **Working hours, vacation and time off**
  Working hours are dependent on the country of service and are in accordance with the laws and customs in that country. Furthermore, the management grants vacation after considering the assignee's wishes and work situation. Basic yearly vacation for a five days workweek is 25 working days.

- **Remuneration**
  The base salary is influenced by competence, experience and the performance of the assignee. The salary is adjusted dependent on the cost of living and living conditions in the host country. Moreover, the company pays income tax, pensions and social insurances imposed in the country of service. The company also pays incentives, vacation pay and sick pay.

- **Pension and other insurances**
  The host organization undertakes to maintain a pension arrangement, preferably in the home country. Moreover, the insurances the company offers are, group life insurances, travel insurances, liability insurances, removal insurances, storage insurances and voluntary group life/accident insurances.

- **Accommodation**
  In the country policy it is stated if it is the company or the expatriate that pays for the accommodation in the country of service. Accommodation in the home country is the assignee's responsibility. The company will pay for temporary accommodation in the host country during a reasonably initial period, while arranging permanent accommodation. The company will also under a limited number of days pay for temporary accommodation in the home country prior to and after the international assignment if the assignee and accompanying family members cannot stay in their own accommodation.

- **Removal and storage of personal belongings**
  When the assignee moves to the country of service, the company will pay custom duties and shipping costs for normal household goods within a certain volume limit. At the time of repatriation the company will pay for the same shipment limit as at the commencement of service in the foreign location.

- **Reimbursement for relocation expenses**
  Ericsson will pay a net allowance reimbursement for extra costs in connection with the start of the assignment. When the expatriate is to provide furniture for the accommodation in the foreign location, reimbursement for additional costs

might be granted. When the assignee returns to the home country the company will pay a net allowance reimbursement for extra costs in connection with repatriation.

- **Preparatory training**
  The assignee and accompanying family are to participate in a briefing program for working and living abroad. The host organization is responsible for providing an introduction program for the expatriate and family upon arrival and for offering essential information about working and living conditions in the country of the international assignment. Furthermore, the assignee is entitled to sufficient language training to be able to adapt to the conditions in the country of service and to be able to carry out his or her work successfully. Accompanying family members are also entitled to language training required to adapt to the foreign environment.

- **Travel regulations**
  On the commencement and upon termination the company pays for travel costs for the assignee and accompanying family. After every twelve months period the expatriate and family are entitled to a trip to the home country.

- **Medical provisions**
  During the time abroad the expatriate and family is offered free medical care, unless otherwise is stated in the country policy. If a national health insurance program exists in the host country the company recommends the assignee and family to use this insurance.

- **Education**
  Accompanying children are to attend a public school if the school is deemed to be appropriate. If not, the company will pay for private schooling. If extra language training is needed for the child to be able to follow the school program, the company will pay for such training.

- **Termination of assignment**
  Normally, the agreement cannot be terminated earlier than the completion of the initial period. Moreover, the expatriate has to give a written notice 6 months prior to the expatriation of this period for the assignment to be terminated. However, if production, organizational or other business conditions in the host country so require or the expatriate is unable, for instance, due to prolonged illness to fulfill his or her obligations the assignment can be terminated.

- **Termination of employment**
  If the company believes that a particular incident justifies for the dismissal of the assignee, the agreement will be cancelled and the assignee will be called back home.

- **Repatriation**
  Upon completion of the international assignment, the assignee is to return to the home organization. The home country and the expatriate are to reach an agreement well in advance of the expatriate's return about duties and conditions of employment valid upon return.

- **Disputes**

    If an agreement related to issues in the policy cannot be reached between the company and the assignee, resource will be devoted for arbitration in Sweden. Moreover, the division for international assignments at Ericsson will represent the organization in the expatriate's country of service in the event of a dispute between the expatriate and the host organization.

4.1.2 During the expatriate's assignment

Perception of support while on the assignment

What the relocation package includes is, to some extent, dependent on which country the expatriate is going to. The certain conditions that apply for each country are stated in the policy for that country. Nevertheless, regardless of country the company always provides some benefits and these are stated in the expatriation policy. It is common that the expatriate receives additional financial compensation for working abroad. Moreover, Ericsson, for instance, pays for the shipping of the expatriate and family's belongings and the assignee and family receive financial support for travel to the home country. Ericsson also supports the expatriate and family by finding accommodation and schools for the children and by offering insurances. The benefits that the expatriate is entitled to are stated in the contract.

The issue of dual career couples is seen as a smaller problem as both often view their career as important. Usually the spouse has to give up his or her job to accompany the partner abroad. The firm has in some occasions helped the spouse in finding a job in the foreign location. However, this is not common practice. The chance that the firm will assist the spouse is larger if he or she also works within the Ericsson concern. Otherwise, the firm believes that it is difficult to assist in this matter. Therefore this issue is not included in the relocation package. The problems related to dual career couples has resulted in that more employees are going on shorter assignments, which to a larger extent, allows the spouse to remain in the home country while the partner is working abroad.

Nature and frequency of communication

For the expatriate not to get too isolated from the home office Ericsson communicates frequently with the expatriate while he or she is abroad. In the expatriate's home country it is mainly the manager in the expatriate's home office who is in contact with the expatriate. This person can be called a mentor, but this is not a term or title that the company uses. The manager in the home office does, to some extent, inform the expatriate about changes that has taken place in the home office. However, the responsibility for the expatriate to stay in touch with the home office and to gain information is not only the home office's task. The firm believes that the expatriate has an equally large responsibility to keep up to date with what is happening in the home office, by, for instance, contacting the home division and by searching for information on the Internet. Furthermore, the main methods of communication are phone and e-mail. It is also customary that the expatriate during the time abroad will visit the home office during holidays and business trips to Sweden.

4.1.3 After the expatriate's return

Quality and interaction with sponsors
The reason why the manager in the expatriate's home office has the most contact with the expatriate is to sustain or create a more long-term relationship. A long-term relationship between the employee and the manager in the home office is important for employee development and to ensure that the person has sufficient knowledge, especially in new product areas. The relationship is created or sustained by frequent communication between the two parts. Moreover, apart from frequently communicating with the expatriate and to provide some information about changes in the home office, the manager in the expatriate's home office is together with the HR department and the expatriate responsible for finding an appropriate position for the expatriate upon return. Furthermore, since international assignments are a positive factor when it comes to an employee's career development the manager in the home office is responsible for that this is taken into consideration when the expatriate returns home. However, the manager in the home office cannot guarantee that the position the repatriate can be offered is a career progression since it is dependent on the vacancies at the time.

Perception of support upon return
The preparation for the expatriate's return starts three to six months before the expatriate's homecoming. At this time the manager in the home office and the HR department together with the expatriate start to look for suitable positions in the home country. The firm searches for opportunities within the whole organization and not only within the division the expatriate worked in before leaving for the foreign assignment. Ericsson values the expertise and skills the repatriate gains overseas. It is viewed as something positive and the firm tries to find a position where the repatriate gets the opportunity to utilize these skills. However, as mentioned earlier this is not a guarantee.

Ericsson helps the repatriate to reorient to the home organization. When the expatriate returns home Ericsson informs the person about, for instance, changes in work conditions. However, the expatriate also has his or her own responsibility to find out about any changes that has taken place while he or she has been abroad. What, and if training is provided depends on the individual. What needs the individual might have is, for example, dependent on where the person has been located. Ericsson, for instance, offers the repatriate assistance with how to handle culture shock if needed and if the expatriate has been in a country with conflicts or that has suffered from a natural catastrophe the firm is offering counseling. Moreover, if the repatriate has been overseas for a significant period of time the person might need to update his or her knowledge and competence to be able to conduct the new job in the home country successfully. In those instances the firm helps the repatriate to update his or her knowledge. Furthermore, the company can also provide temporarily accommodation in the home country.

The respondent, Göran Henriksson is pleased with his own repatriation. During his time abroad he was active and gained information about vacant positions in Sweden. He also had a frequent dialogue with the home office and job related networks. He therefore had a job in Sweden four months before he returned home. He believed that he got the support he needed and did not miss anything. However, he thinks that his strong engagement and that he himself was so active helped.

4.2 Case Study two: Repatriation at Nokia

Company background

Nokia has from the 19th century origins in the paper industry. The decision to concentrate on mobile telecommunications was made in the early 1990s. This change gave the company the opportunity and challenge to operate in a new and growing industry. Today the firm is a world leader in the industry of mobile communications. The company is dedicated to enhancing people's lives and productivity by providing easy-to-use and secure products like mobile phones and solutions for imaging, games, media, mobile network operators and businesses. The company's aim is to help people get connected and increase the level of enjoyment and productivity. Nokia has developed a known brand and product based on advanced technology, and an international corporate culture.

In 2003 the company's net sale was 6939 million EUR. The company's largest markets were USA, UK, Germany, China, UAE, India, Italy, France, Brazil, and Spain. The ten largest markets in 2003 represent 61% of Nokia's total sales. The shares of Nokia Corporation are listed on the Helsinki, Stockholm, Frankfurt, Paris, and New York stock exchanges.

Nokia consists of four business groups: Mobile Phones, Multimedia, Networks and Enterprise Solutions as shown in the figure 4.2 below.
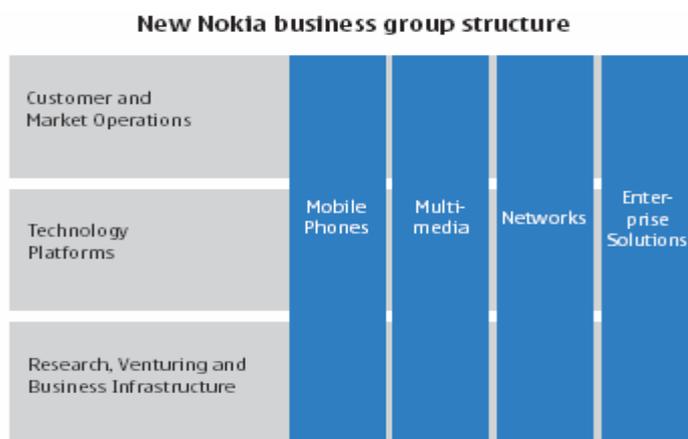
Figure 4.2: Nokia Business Group Structure
Source: www.nokia.com, 2004-12-07

The business group, Mobile Phones, develops mobile phones for all customer segments in over 130 countries. It is responsible for Nokia's current core mobile phones business based on, for an example, GSM technology. The second business group is called Multimedia, which brings mobile multimedia to consumers in the form of advanced mobile devices and applications. This business group's products have features and functionality such as imaging, games, music, media and a range of other attractive contents. Networks is the business group of Nokia, which provides network infrastructure, service delivery platforms, broadband access, and related services to mobile operators and service providers. Nokia's networks have been installed in all major global markets. Through the Enterprise Solutions business group, Nokia seeks to leverage its knowledge of the two crucial elements in mobilizing enterprises which are

a) high levels of security and reliability, and b) the ability to produce state-of-the-art, pocketable, powerful and user-friendly devices.

The three horizontal groups of Nokia are: Customer and Market Operations, Technology Platforms, and Research, Venturing and Business Infrastructure. Customer and Market Operations include Nokia's sales and marketing organization as well as manufacturing, logistics and sourcing. The second horizontal group, Technology Platforms, delivers technologies and platforms to Nokia's business groups and external customers. The third horizontal group of Nokia is; Research, Venturing and Business Infrastructure, which combines the forces of several important organizations. Beyond current product development, the Nokia Research Center develops disruptive technologies and creates competencies in technology areas vital to the company's future success. The ongoing renewal of the company is also furthered by the Nokia Ventures Organization, which identifies new business opportunities and nurtures them through to profitable commercialization. To enable the overall efficient operation of the company, Business Infrastructure manages the company's business processes, and IT platforms.

Nokia employs over 50 000 people from more than 120 countries, which creates an international organization. The work environment of the company is influenced by the chance to lead or participate in projects that have a global impact, changing the lives of millions of people and reaching the mission of the company: connecting people. Through the company's values, customer satisfaction, achievement, respect and renewal, Nokia aim to create an atmosphere, where people can be themselves and excel at what they do. The company applies recognition of achievement through a mix of individual, team and company wide incentives. The ten major personnel countries in 2003 were Finland, USA, China, Germany, Hungary, UK, Brazil, Mexico, Denmark, and South Korea.

Expatriation at Nokia
As mentioned above, Nokia's organization is highly international since the company is operating in many countries and is employing personnel from many different countries. Expatriation is a way for Nokia to develop and maintain the international corporate culture of the company, to offer its personnel new work possibilities and work challenges abroad and to develop their skills. As well as in the whole organization, and in the company's expatriation and repatriation, Nokia aims at giving its personnel support to create opportunities for personal and professional growth. It is therefore important for the company to ensure that the employees can feel comfortable, valued and motivated to succeed.

The website of the open positions in the home organization as well as of the expatriation positions is also a way for Nokia to communicate the ways of how the company works, its values, and which personnel and professional skills the firm is seeking for specific assignments abroad. The company is, for instance, communicating different current program at the website. At the moment Nokia seeks to develop its operations throughout the Middle East and Africa since the company is committed to significantly strengthening its presence in these high-growth regions. At the website information about the Middle East and Africa can be found as the company tries to communicate this strategy and find talented people who understand the environment.

The respondent Anne-Lene Bratli is an HR manager working in Norway. The organization in Norway is quite small compared to rest of Nokia's organizations. At the moment the annual turnover of expatriates in the Norwegian Nokia count to a handful expatriates. This is a smaller amount than before. In the expatriation process the subsidiary in Norway follows the company's overall strategy for expatriation. The normal length of an assignment is normally 2 years, but there are also expatriate assignments, which last only for one year. The expatriates that are on an assignment abroad at the moment will return to the home organization in 2005.

4.2.1 Prior to the expatriate's departure

Task clarity
The company's advertisements of the available expatriate positions include a description of the position and the personal requirements needed. Information about the business group in which the position is offered, the location of the position and the primary function of the task are also included in the advertisements. However, the amount and depth of the information in the different advertisements can vary as the department who is searching for a person for the position outlines the advertisements. Due to the extent of information in the job description the expatriate can gain a good understanding of the task from the start. It is normally the employee that applies for a position, which might result in an expatriate assignment. However, recruitment managers at Nokia might also contact specific employees and ask them to apply, but this is voluntary. When the expatriate for a specific assignment has been chosen the host organization aims at giving an overall view of the position as well as detailed information of the task. Several issues as the overall aim of the task abroad and the environment in which the expatriate will be working are described. The assignments abroad are not only management positions and can include multiple tasks within the position.

Prior to departure the expatriate signs a work contract. The contract includes all the things that are connected to the expatriation as the assignment, organization, line manager, compensation, benefits, assignment duties, family status, social security, pensions, insurances, taxes, working hours and leaves, termination conditions, and repatriation. The contract and the included issues are based upon the company's expatriation policy. Nokia believes that it is important to outline a contract in order to ensure a common procedure for all expatriates and repatriates in all the countries in which the company operates. The HR department, the home and the host organization and the expatriate have different roles in the expatriation process. These different parts decide different issues in the contract. This means that issues in the contract that are related to the work assignment in the host organization are outlined by the host organization. At the same time the international HR department outlines issues concerning the expatriation overall. Such issues are pensions, insurances, and taxes.

The assignment abroad, the expectations on the expatriate and issues of how the work will be evaluated are decided and discussed with the business group in which the position is offered, not with the home organization. The company believes that it is important to discuss the expectations and how the work will be evaluated in order to give the expatriate a good understanding of the assignment. The assignment's end-date is decided prior to departure by the host organization. As mentioned, the length of an assignment is normally 2 years, but can also be only 1 year. The length is normally

dependent upon the position to be fulfilled. As mentioned, the expatriate is aware of the length of the assignment, as it is a part of the work contract.

Career counseling

Formal career counseling, as a way to achieve successful repatriation, is not a taken step prior to the expatriate's departure in the company's expatriation, but the company informs the expatriate of certain issues prior to departure. The benefits of the assignment to the firm and to the expatriate as well as the reason for sending the expatriate abroad are usually a part of the initial discussion between the expatriate and the host organization. First of all, Nokia believes that expatriation is a necessary way to maintain the international corporate culture and to develop managerial skills as already mentioned. This reason is also a part of the firm's overall value. Secondly, the international assignments are offered since the host organization has a need of personnel for this task. These two reasons for expatriation can therefore be described as the benefits of the assignment to the firm. The expatriates are aware of these benefits of the assignment for the firm prior to the departure, as it is a part of the company's value. The company believes that the benefits for the expatriate, beyond to fulfill the assignment abroad, is to develop his or her managerial skills and to be able to understand the international corporate culture of the firm. Nokia aims at choosing a person who has the requested competencies for a specific expatriate assignment. This can also be described as the reason for sending an expatriate abroad.

The position that the expatriate can receive at the return is not decided prior to the departure, but the expatriate is informed about the company's repatriation guarantee. This means that at the expatriate's return a current position might not be available but the home organization will do what it can to help the expatriate to find a suitable position. There is a chance that the expatriate must return to the same or similar position he or she had prior to the assignment. However, due to the company's repatriation guarantee the repatriates will not be given a position with less authority than the position he or she had prior to departure. Expatriation is seen as a valuable investment for the company. The company aims at keeping the expatriates and developing the expatriates' skills both during the assignment and upon the return. However, the company cannot, prior to departure offer a position that the expatriate can receive upon return. The position the expatriate can be offered upon return is dependent on the performance during the assignment, the new acquired skills and experience gained during the assignment.

Formal policies for repatriation

Nokia has not developed a formal policy for repatriation, but the company has a written policy that covers issues connected to expatriation and repatriation. This policy has been developed to ensure a common procedure for the company's expatriation process. The policy is confidential as it covers all the things connected to expatriation. At the moment Nokia does not perceive problem in its current expatriation process and/or the result of the repatriation.

4.2.2 During the expatriate's assignment

Perception of support while on the assignment

Nokia offers support both to its expatriates and the regular personnel who are working at the home organization. The aim of these programs and guidelines is to help maintain

a balanced working life according to each person's needs. During the assignment the expatriate follows host country guidelines regarding the support and benefits. The support that the expatriate receives is also dependent on the position. This means that the support the expatriates receive is different from country to country and from position to position. The support that the company offers the expatriate is outlined in the work contract. Types of support that Nokia offers all expatriates are financial compensation, the travels to and from the country in which the position is offered, advice regarding taxes and social security and insurances.

The company can also help the expatriate and his/her family to find accommodation in the host country. The company cannot guarantee the expatriate's spouse work in the location the expatriate position is offered. If the expatriate's spouse is already working in Nokia it is more likely for the company to be able to offer the spouse a position at the same location as the expatriate. The support and help the expatriates receive is also dependent upon the specific needs of the expatriate. If the expatriate, for instance, has children the host organization can, for example, give recommendations for specific schools.

Beyond this compensation the expatriate is also during the assignment abroad offered other support which also regular personnel in the company are offered. Such support is flexible working hours, sabbaticals, study leaves, health care services, and recreational activities. The expatriates are also a part of a corporate bonus program, stock program and retirement saving programs.

Nature and frequency of communication
Nokia believes that contact is important in order for the expatriate to stay updated regarding changes in the home organization. The company thinks it is essential for the expatriate to be aware of whom he or she can contact regarding certain issues. During the assignment abroad the expatriate mainly has contact with the home line manager and home HR department. However, the expatriate can also stay in contact with the international HR department regarding issues that, for instance, are connected to the work contract. This communication is done by phone and e-mail. Both the expatriate and the home organization have the responsibility to maintain the contact. The expatriate also has a contact person in the home organization. However, the company has not specified how the contact person is chosen and/or the tasks of the contact person. The help that the expatriate receives from the contact person is instead highly influenced by the expatriate's needs and the situation. During the assignment the international and the local HR department has different roles. The international HR department handles tasks that are connected to the work contract and any changes in the contracts. The local HR department takes care of practical issues. It is also the local HR department that handles the contact with the expatriate.

4.2.3 After the expatriate's return

Quality and interaction with sponsors
As previously mentioned, expatriates at Nokia have a contact person, but it is not specified in the company's expatriation policy how this person is chosen. Neither has Nokia developed a guideline of which tasks the expatriate's contact person has. Therefore how the expatriate's contact person is chosen varies from case to case and the tasks that the expatriate's contact person has differ depending on the situation. As

earlier mentioned the expatriate can also be in contact with the home line manger, the international and the local HR department, but neither of their roles is directly connected to the position that the expatriate will receive upon the return. Instead the international HR department is responsible for tasks that are connected to the work contract whereas the local HR department takes care of practical issues. It is also the local HR department together with the home line manager who mainly stays in contact with the expatriate. Expatriates at Nokia do not have a sponsor who has more authority than the expatriate. Neither do the expatriates have a person who has a personal stake in the success of the foreign assignments and who is responsible for the expatriate's career progression. Instead the position that the expatriates receive at the return is more dependent upon other factors that are not related to a specific person's responsibility. The position that the expatriate receives upon return is dependent on factors such as the open positions at that specific moment. As mentioned it is also possible that the expatriate must return to the same or a similar position he/she had prior to the departure upon the return.

Perception of support upon return
Nokia starts to plan for the expatriate's return approximately 3 months in advance of the assignment's end date. The international HR department, the local HR department, the home line manager as well as the expatriate are all a part in this process. At the return the support the expatriate receives is again dependent upon the overall values of the firm, the support policy of the home organization as well as the specific situation related to the expatriate and the new position. In the same way as the task and the job environment are described to the expatriate prior to departure, the same way the task and the job environment are described at the return. The depth of the information of the position that the expatriate receives upon the return can vary, as it is possible that expatriate return to the same position to which the expatriate is already familiar. The homes organization also provides the expatriate with general updates regarding changes that have been made. However it is also the responsibility of the expatriate to keep himself/herself updated about the home organization both during the stay abroad and upon the return. As during the stay, the company offers at the return, regular support such as flexible working hours, sabbaticals, study leaves, health care services, and recreational activities. Moreover, the corporate bonus program, stock program and retirement saving programs are offered upon return. These are offered in order to enable the expatriate to feel valuable at the return. The company does not have experience with reverse culture shock but such training can be offered if needed.

5. Data Analysis

In this chapter we will, firstly conduct a within case study for respective case company to analyze and compare the collected data with our conceptual framework developed in chapter two. This is made in order to discover similarities and differences compared to theory. Secondly, we will conduct a cross case analysis with the collected data from chapter four in order to discover similarities and differences between the two cases. The aim is to gain a better understanding of MNC's repatriation program.

Since the aim with this thesis is to find out if firms follow the repatriation program developed by Jassawalla, et al (2004), the analysis is based in these authors' model. However, the analysis will be strengthened by other researchers' contributions within the area, as it will make the analysis more comprehensive. Furthermore, depending on the information in both case studies we have chosen to bring up specific contributions of other authors to highlight different issues in the within case analysis. However, the information in the tables is only pointing out the measures recommended by Jassawalla et al (2004). Each case will separately be presented according to the three research questions developed in chapter one.

It should be mentioned that Jassawalla, et al (2004) not always are clear about what each action in each step in the repatriation program should include. The authors, for instance, state that firms should through the relocation package support the expatriate while he or she is abroad. However, the authors do not say what the relocation package should include to be effective. This leads to that the analysis regarding the program developed by these authors is open for researchers' own perceptions and judgments.

5.1. Within case analysis one – Ericsson

5.1.1 Prior to the expatriate's departure

Task clarity
The advertisement about the international assignment includes a description of the assignment, the task to be performed and the professional and personal competences needed for the task. This complies with the theory of Salomon (1995) since the author states that for successful repatriation companies have to outline the need for the international assignment and develop a job description of the task to be performed abroad. In Ericsson, it is the subsidiary that has put the advertisement about the international assignment on the web that informs the expatriate about its expectations on the expatriate, deadlines and about how the expatriate will be evaluated. Since the expatriate visits the subsidiary before the assignment he or she has information about these issues prior to departure. This is in accordance with theory as Jassawalla, et al (2004), state that those issues should be discussed prior to departure in order to reduce the expatriate's anxiety during and after the assignment. However, the authors do not mention who should have the responsibility to inform the expatriate about these topics. The authors only claim that it should be discussed prior to departure as it is in Ericsson.

Career counseling
One of the main reasons why Ericsson has expatriates is to develop international managers. This complies with theory as Black; et al (1999) suggests that international assignments are the most powerful strategy for developing global leaders. Furthermore, other main reasons why Ericsson offers foreign assignments are to transfer specific Ericsson knowledge and competences, to gain international expertise, to transfer and instill Ericsson's culture and knowledge and to develop local staff. This also fits theory as Black, et al (1992) states that the benefit of an assignment for the firm can be to achieve objectives such as to transfer skills and to build international management expertise. The authors further state that the benefits for the expatriate can be to increase the chance of career progression and to gain new experiences. However, Ericsson does not inform the expatriate about the benefits and reasons of the foreign assignment for the firm or for the expatriate. This is not in accordance with theory as Jassawalla, et al (2004) claim that firms should discuss these issues with the expatriate prior to departure since it contributes to the expatriate's focus and motivation.

Neither does Ericsson prior to departure discuss possible positions in the home country upon return. This is not done since the position the repatriate will receive in the home organization is dependent on the vacancies at the moment and this cannot be known until rather close to the expatriate's homecoming. This fits the theory of Allen and Alvarez (1998) who states that most companies do not have a job guarantee. However, this does not comply with the theory of Jassawalla, et al (2004) as the authors claim that companies should discuss with the expatriate prior to departure possible positions upon return, as it will help the expatriate to develop realistic expectation about their career opportunities. This is supported by Riusala and Suutari (2000) that state that career counseling should be offered prior to departure as it decreases the anxiety of the expatriate concerning his or her future career.

However, in Ericsson's expatriation policy it is mentioned that the home organization and the expatriate are to discuss well in advance of the re-entry conditions and duties of employment valid after returning to the home organization. If the policy is followed the repatriate should know what to expect before returning to the home country. This is in accordance with theory as Riusala and Suutari (2000) state that career planning also should be offered before the re-entry. According to the authors the home organization should before the expatriate's repatriation help the expatriate to find a position in the home country in which he or she can benefit from the foreign assignment. Furthermore, Ericsson has a stated policy regarding management planning that states that the organization should develop its managers through international assignments. Moreover, for some senior positions it is required that the person has been working on at least one international assignment. By working abroad the repatriate can apply for these positions. This also complies with the theory of Riusala and Suutari (2000) as the authors claim that firms should outline a policy that requires employees to complete an assignment abroad in order to gain a high level position in the home organization.

Formal policies for repatriation
Ericsson has a written policy that governs the whole expatriation cycle including repatriation. The company does not have a policy that only governs repatriation. The expatriation policy includes, for instance, remuneration, accommodation, training prior to departure, insurances, and education for the children. However, even though the policy covers issues that should be conducted before, during and after the assignment,

the policy is not a policy for repatriation. This does not comply with theory since Jassawalla, et al (2004) claims that firms should have formal and written policies for repatriation that governs the pre visit, visit and post visit as it contributes to the confidence expatriates feel when leaving and returning for a foreign assignment. However, the authors do not mention what these guidelines should include. In table 5.1 below it is stated whether the actions conducted by Ericsson prior to the expatriate's departure complies with the theory of Jassawalla, et al (2004) or not.

Table 5.1 Ericsson: Prior to the expatriate's departure

Prior to the Departure	Fits with theory
Task clarity	
Expectations on the expatriate	Yes
The deadlines of the task	Yes
How the performance will be evaluated	Yes
Career counseling	
The reasons for sending the expatriate overseas	No
The benefits of the overseas assignment for the firm and the expatriate	No
The expatriate's career options upon return	No
Formal policies for repatriation	
A repatriation program should include actions to be taken during the pre-visit, visit and post visit.	No

Source: Authors

5.1.2 During the expatriate's assignment

Perception of support while on the assignment
The benefits that the expatriate receives are, to some extent dependent on the country of service. The benefits that are dependent on the country of the assignment are stated in a separate policy regarding that country. However, there are also benefits that all expatriates are entitled to and these are mentioned in the expatriation policy. It is in the policy stated that all expatriates, for instance, receives additional financial compensation for working abroad, financial support for the expatriate and family to travel to the host and home country, the shipping of the expatriate and family's belongings, assistance with finding accommodation and suitable schools for the children, and payments of taxes imposed in the country of service. This complies with theory since Fransesco and Gold (1998) state that the relocation package should include those issues. Furthermore, it is stated in Ericsson's expatriation policy that apart form finding suitable schools for the children Ericsson also offers the family preparatory training and language training before leaving the home country. Moreover, if the children need additional language training to be able to follow the education abroad this

is also offered. The support Ericsson offers is in accordance with the theory developed by Jassawalla, et al (2004), since the authors state that support from the organization is related to factors included in the relocation package, such as financial compensation and support to the spouse and children to ease their adjustment to the foreign location. The authors claim that expatriates that receive sufficient support for themselves and their families while on the assignment are more satisfied with their repatriation. However, the authors only give a few examples of what a relocation package should include and do therefore not say exactly how a relocation package should look like to be effective. However, since Ericsson's expatriation policy covers the issues that Fransesco and Gold (1998) mention, and takes the expatriate's family into consideration this factor complies with theory.

However, Ericsson has only in a few occasions helped the spouse with finding a job. If the partner is not working within the Ericsson concern the company believes that it is difficult to assist the spouse in finding employment, hence this is not something that is included in the relocation package. The firm believes that the issue of dual career couples is a smaller problem as both often view their career as important. This has resulted in that more employees are going on shorter assignments as it allows for the spouse to remain in the home country. This is not in accordance with theory as Hodgetts and Luthans (2001) claim that since the number of dual career couples rises it has become more important for firms to help the spouse with finding a job in the country of the assignment.

Nature and frequency of communication
In order for the expatriate not to get too detached from the home office Ericsson believes that it is important to have frequent contact with the expatriate while he or she is abroad. This is only partly in line with the theory of Allen and Alvarez (1998) as the authors state that the aim is to communicate regularly not only for the purpose of informing the expatriate about what happens in the home office but also to be able to inform home country employees about the expatriate's accomplishments. Moreover, in Ericsson it is mainly the manager in the expatriate's home office that is in touch with the expatriate and this person can be called a mentor. This complies with the research conducted by Paik, et al (2002) since the authors' study revealed that firms believe that the home office or the mentor should be responsible for the communication. The manager in the expatriate's home office at Ericsson is apart from staying in contact with the expatriate also, to some extent, informing the expatriate about changes in the home office, and tries to find a suitable position in the home organization. This is in accordance with theory since Dowling, et al (1999) state that a mentor should have these duties. Moreover, the manager in the expatriate's home office is in a more senior position than the expatriate and works in the sending office. Furthermore, Ericsson has mentors and is a large European firm that has a special department responsible for the expatriation policy and the expatriate. This also complies with the theory of Dowling, et al (1999) as the authors claim that a mentor should have these characteristics and that firms that have this character are more likely to use mentors. However, Ericsson believes that it is not only the home office that is responsible for staying in contact with the expatriate. It is also the expatriate's responsibility to contact the home office and to find out about any changes that might have taken place at home. This differs somewhat from the study made by Paik, et al (2002) as the researchers claim that expatriates might see it as an extra burden to their already challenging job abroad and might therefore not have the time to initiate such communication. The expatriates in the study

therefore believed that someone from the home organization should make the effort to initiate the contact.

The most common methods of communication in Ericsson are phone and e-mail. This is in accordance with theory as Allen and Alvarez (1998) state that this is common means of communication. Furthermore, when the expatriate is in Sweden during holidays and business trips it is customary for him or her to visit the home office. It is stated in Ericsson's policy that at after every twelve-month period the firm will pay for a trip to the home country. This also complies with the theory of Allen and Alvarez (1998) since the authors state that visits to the home office is important since it helps to reduce the chance of an out of sight and out of mind situation that might be experienced by the expatriate. It is therefore important that firms offer home leave packages that allow the expatriate to visit the home office. (Ibid) Jassawalla, et al (2004) emphasizes the importance of frequent communication between the home office and the expatriate as it contributes to the feeling of connectedness. The communication is not related to any special person but with the organization as a whole. The authors especially highlight the importance of frequent visits to the home office. However, it should be mentioned that it is difficult to know how much communication the authors view as frequent as it is a matter of perception. Nevertheless, Ericsson believes that it communicates with the expatriates regularly and as much that is necessary for the expatriate not to get detached from the home office. This factor can therefore be said to be in accordance with theory. In table 5.2 below it is stated whether the actions conducted by Ericsson during the expatriate's stay complies with the theory of Jassawalla, et al (2004) or not.

Table 5.2 Ericsson: During the expatriate's assignment

During the expatriate's stay	Fits with theory
Perception of support *while on assignment* Related to issues included in the relocation package such as financial compensation and support to the family	Yes
Nature and frequency *of communication* Communication and responsibility to maintain the contact between the home office and the expatriate while he or she is abroad	Yes

Source: Authors

5.1.3 After the expatriate's return

Quality and interaction with sponsors
The reason why the manager in the expatriate's home office is the person that has the most contact with the expatriate is to create or sustain a long-term relationship with the expatriate. According to Ericsson a long-term relationship is important as it contributes to employee development and that the manager can ensure that the employee has sufficient knowledge and competences, especially in new product areas. However, this person can probably not be called a sponsor as Jassawalla, et al (2004) claim that a

sponsor should be personally vested and have a personal stake in the success or failure of the expatriate. The manager in the expatriate's home office at Ericsson does probably not have a strong personal interest in the success of the expatriate.

However, the manager in the expatriate's home office is frequently communicating with the expatriate as well as, to some extent providing information. Apart from this, the manager in the home office is together with the HR department and the expatriate responsible for finding a suitable position for the expatriate in the home organization and as international assignments are viewed as something positive the expatriate's manager in the home office is also responsible for trying to ensure that the skills gained overseas are taken into consideration. This complies with what Jassawalla, et al (2004) mention as a sponsor's duties as the authors state that a mentor should be responsible for finding a suitable position for the repatriate in the home organization and to ensure that the expatriate's skills and competences gained overseas are used. However, the expatriate's manager in the home office in Ericsson also has other duties like frequently communicating with the expatriate and to provide information that Jassawalla, et al (2004) believe are more related to a mentor's duties. Moreover, one issue that not is totally in line with the theory of Jassawalla, et al (2004) is that the authors claim that the sponsor should ensure that the repatriate's skills are utilized. However, the manager in the expatriate's home office cannot ensure this, as the position received is dependent on the vacant positions at the time. Nevertheless, overall the manager in the home office has the duties of a sponsor.

Perception of support upon return
Ericsson starts to plan for the expatriate's homecoming three to six months before the expatriate returns to the home country. At this time the company begins to search for a position for the expatriate in the home organization. This differs somewhat from the theory developed by Klaff (2002) since the author states that in order to ease the transition it is beneficial if a discussion about returning home begins six to eight months before the expatriate's return to the hone country. In Ericsson it is not only the expatriate's own responsibility to search for a suitable position in the home organization. As previously mentioned, it is also the manager in the expatriate's home office and the HR department responsibility that together with the expatriate try to find an appropriate position for the expatriate. This is in accordance with the theory of Jassawalla, et al (2004) since the authors' claim that the company should *help the expatriate with finding an assignment in the home organization*. Even though the firm values the skills the repatriate has gained overseas and therefore tries to find a position in which the repatriate *receives recognition for the foreign assignment and can utilize his or her new perspective and skills* this cannot be ensured since the position received is dependent on the vacant positions at the time. This partly fits the theory of Jassawalla, et al (2004). The authors stress the importance of receiving credit and recognition for the foreign assignment, which can be done by offering a position that is a career progression. Moreover, for successful repatriation it is important that the repatriate is able to utilize the new perspectives in the new job. Considering this our case study of Ericsson complies with theory in those instances where the repatriate receives a job in which the newly acquired skills can be utilized. However, it is reasonable to assume that since the job received upon return is dependent on the available positions at the moment the repatriate can just as well be offered a job in which he or she not receives recognition for the foreign assignment and in which the repatriate not can use his or her international competence. The situation at Ericsson fits

the theory of Allen and Alvarez (1998) who claims that even if companies' values the expertise that the expatriate has gained overseas such jobs might not be available at the time of the expatriate's homecoming.

Ericsson not only searches for a position in the division in the home country in where the expatriate worked before leaving for the foreign assignment. The firm looks for a suitable position within the whole organization in the home country. This is not in accordance with theory as Allen and Alvarez (1998) suggest that many firm only searches for a job for the repatriate in the same division as the employee worked in before the foreign assignment. The authors' further states that this limits the job opportunities to only the vacant positions in that division, which makes it more difficult to find an appropriate position. Moreover, the international assignments at Ericsson have fixed end dates, which also is in accordance with Allen and Alvarez (1998). However, these authors claim that the downside with this is that it limits job opportunities to only those positions that are vacant at that certain moment. Feldman, (1991) also states that foreign assignments usually comes with fixed end dates, but these authors view it as something positive as it facilitates the possibility for firms to have definite job assignments for the expatriate upon return.

It is stated in Ericsson's expatriation policy that the firm should upon return offer temporary accommodation in the home country if needed and that the company will pay a net allowance reimbursement for extra relocation expenses. Furthermore, Ericsson *offers training and other procedures to reorient the repatriate to the home office*. When the expatriate returns to the home country Ericsson informs the person about changes, for instance, in work conditions. This is in accordance with theory as Hurn (1999) states that the repatriate should be informed about these issues. Nevertheless, as previously mentioned the repatriate also has his or her own responsibility to find out about changes in the home organization. If training is provided and needed is, at Ericsson dependent on the repatriate's individual needs and where he or she has been located. This also complies with theory of Hurn (1999) as the author claim that training should be based on the individual needs of the repatriate. Ericsson offers training about how to handle culture shock if needed. Moreover, sometimes the person has been working in a country with conflicts or in a country that has suffered from a natural catastrophe. In those instances Ericsson offers counseling. Furthermore, if the repatriate has been away for a significant period of time an update of his or her knowledge and competence might be necessary. In those occasions Ericsson helps the repatriate to renew his or her skills. The support Ericsson offers the repatriate complies with theory since Jassawalla, et al (2004) state that it is important that organizations offer procedures designed to reorient the repatriate to the home office. Moreover, the support mentioned above is also likely to help the repatriate to *adjust to the differences in work related factors between the foreign assignment and the new job in the home office*. This is also in accordance with the theory developed by Jassawalla, et al (2004) since these authors state that the firm should help the repatriate to adjust to differences in job related factor between the foreign assignment and the new job in the home office. In table 5.3 below it is stated whether the actions conducted by Ericsson after the expatriate's return complies with the theory of Jassawalla, et al (2004) or not.

Table 5.3 Ericsson: After the expatriate's return

After the expatriate's return	Fits with theory
Quality of interaction with sponsors	
A personal stake in the repatriate's long-term career	No
Searching for positions that may suit the repatriate	Yes
Try to ensure that the repatriate's skills will be used upon return.	Yes
Perceptions of support upon return	
Receiving credit and recognition for the foreign assignment	Partly
Choosing new assignments in the home office	Yes
Utilizing their new perspectives in their new job	Partly
Adjusting to the differences in job related factors of their new job compared to the foreign assignment	Yes
Using the procedures designed to reorient the repatriate to the home office	Yes

Source: Authors

5.2. Within-case analysis two: Nokia

5.2.1 Prior to the expatriate's departure

Task clarity
The expatriate signs a work contract prior to his or her departure, which includes all the things that are connected to the expatriation. At Nokia the HR department, the home and the host organization and the expatriate have different roles in the expatriation process. These different parts have influence on different issues in the work contract. This seems to be in accordance with theory as Salomon (1995) suggests that the assignment abroad should be outlined with input from both the home and the host location. Moreover, Nokia is careful to point out not only information regarding the assignment, but also all the issues that are related to the expatriation in the contract. Prior to the departure Nokia also aims at giving an overall view of the position as well as detailed information of the task. Several issues as the overall aim of the task abroad and the environment, in which the expatriate will be working, are described. This factor seems to be in accordance with theory since Lobel (1990) claims that an organization that seeks to create an expatriate assignment must be careful to define the different aspects of the assignment. According to the author the assignment should not only include the technical aspects of the task.

The expatriates at Nokia are prior to departure provided information by the host organization about the assignment abroad, the expectations on the expatriate, deadlines, and issues of how the work will be evaluated. The company believes that it is important to discuss the expectations and how the work will be evaluated as it helps the expatriate to gain a good understanding of the assignment prior to departure. This complies with the theory of Jassawalla, et al (2004), since the authors claim that it is essential to discuss the performance expectations, deadlines and how the performance will be evaluated prior to departure. The authors recommend companies to conduct these actions in order to increase expatriates' focus on the task and to lessen their anxiety while overseas and upon their return, which in turn is a step towards achieving successful repatriation. Moreover, as earlier mentioned in this chapter Jassawalla, et al (2004) do not mention whether it is the host or home organization's responsibility to inform the expatriate about the expectations, deadlines and the evaluation. In the case of Nokia it is the responsibility of the host organization to inform the expatriate about these issues prior to the departure.

Career counseling
At Nokia expatriation is seen as a way to maintain the international corporate culture and to develop managerial skills. This factor fits with the theory of Black, et al, (1999) who claim that international transfers are the most powerful strategy for developing global leaders.

Formal career counseling, as a way to achieve successful repatriation, is not a taken step prior to the expatriate's departure in Nokia's expatriation process. However, at the same time the company informs the expatriate about certain issues prior to the departure. Both the benefits of the assignment to the firm and to the expatriate and the reason to send the expatriate abroad are usually a part of the initial discussion between the expatriate and the host organization. Moreover, the expatriates are also aware of the benefits of the assignment both for the firm and themselves prior to the departure,

as they are a part of the company's overall value. According to Jassawalla, et al (2004) effective repatriation requires the company to offer the expatriate career counseling to clarify the reasons for sending the manager overseas, the benefits of the overseas assignment to the firm and the manager, and the manager's career options upon return. The authors believe that career counseling is important in order to give the expatriate a holistic view about why he or she is sent abroad. As mentioned, Nokia does not conduct formal career counseling as a step in order to achieve successful repatriation, but the company does inform the expatriate about the issues the authors mention. Therefore it can be claimed that this step fits with theory even though these actions cannot be described as formal career counseling. Moreover, Jassawalla et al (2004) believe that these issues should be discussed in order to give the expatriate a holistic view. As mentioned, the reason for sending the expatriate abroad and the benefits of the assignment both to the firm and the expatriate is a part of Nokia's overall value.

At Nokia the position that the expatriate can receive at the return is not decided prior to departure, but the expatriate is informed about the company's repatriation guarantee, which means that at the expatriate's return he/she will not receive a position, which has lower authority than the position held in the home country before the foreign assignment. There is a chance that the expatriate must return to the same and/or similar position he/she had prior to the assignment. This factor seems to be in accordance with theory as Jassawalla, et al (2004) claim that firms should, prior to departure inform the expatriate about the position they might receive upon return, as it will help the expatriate to develop realistic expectation about their career opportunities. Suutari and Brewster, (2003) also claim that it is important to help the expatriate to develop realistic expectations about the assignment before the re-entry. In this case the findings about Nokia seem to fit theory since the position at the return is discussed prior to the expatriate's homecoming as a way to give the expatriate information about the position upon the return

Another angle of Nokia's repatriation guarantee can be presented from the result in the study of Allen and Alvarez (1998). The authors mention that the job guarantee can be offered with varying degrees of specificity. In the case of Nokia the findings seems to comply with the cases in which the companies in the study did not exactly specify the job at the return. In the theory of the authors some of the firms ensured that the employees would receive a job that at least were comparable to the one held before the foreign assignment. This seems to comply with the case of Nokia as the expatriates might return to the same and/or similar position upon the return. This result also strengthens the theory of Riusala and Suutari, (2000) who claim that the relationship between foreign assignments and career developments has been stated to be unclear.

Formal policies for repatriation
Nokia has developed a policy, which according to the company includes all the issues that are related to the expatriation. Therefore this factor does not seem to comply with the theory of Mendenhall, Dunbar, and Oddou (1987) who claim that overseas assignments usually are haphazard and ill planned affairs. Furthermore, Nokia has involved the international and local human resource management in the development of the work contract, which bases on the policy. This can be said to fit the theory of Salomon (1995). The author emphasizes the importance of involving international HR management at corporate strategic levels when planning for international activities. Nokia's expatriation policy has been developed to ensure a common procedure for the

company's expatriation process. Jassawalla, et al (2004) claims that firms should have a formal policy for repatriation that governs the pre visit, visit and post visit. The authors believe that a formal policy increases the expatriate's confidence prior, during the assignment as well as upon the return. Nokia's formal policy is confidential, but it includes the things that are related to the expatriation. Jassawalla et al (2004) do not state what the formal policy should include. However, this factor does not fit with theory as the policy of Nokia is described as a policy for expatriation, not as a policy for repatriation. In table 5.4 below it is stated whether the actions conducted by Nokia prior to the expatriate's departure complies with the theory of Jassawalla, et al (2004) or not.

Table 5.4 Nokia: Prior to the expatriate's departure

Prior to the Departure	Fits with theory
Task clarity	
Expectations on the expatriate	Yes
The deadlines of the task	Yes
How the performance will be evaluated	Yes
Career counseling	
The reasons for sending the expatriate overseas	Yes
The benefits of the overseas assignment for the firm and the expatriate	Yes
The expatriate's career options upon return	Yes
Formal policies for repatriation	
A repatriation program should include actions to be taken during the pre-visit, visit and post visit.	No

Source: Authors

5.2.2 During the expatriate's assignment

Perception of support while on the assignment
Nokia offers support both to its expatriates and the regular personnel who are working at their home organization. The aim of these programs and guidelines is to help maintain a balanced working life according to each person's needs. During the assignment the expatriate follows host country guidelines regarding the support and benefits. The support that the expatriate receives is also dependent on the position. This means that the support the expatriates receive is different from country to country and from position to position. Moreover, the benefits received are dependent on the specific needs of the expatriate. Types of support that Nokia offers all expatriates are financial compensation, the travels to and from the country in which the position is offered, insurances, and advice regarding taxes and social security. Further help that can be offered to the expatriate and his/her family is assistance with finding accommodation in the host country and recommendations for schools for the children. Beyond this support

the company also offers the expatriate regular support that also other personnel is offered. Jassawalla, et al (2004), emphasize that firms should support the expatriate during the assignment in order to achieve successful repatriation at the return. The authors believe that by providing sufficient support during the assignment the company can help the expatriate to feel satisfied both during the stay and upon the return. According to the authors the company can provide support such as financial compensation and assistance for the family to facilitate their adjustment to the foreign environment. However, the authors are not exact with what the relocation package should include. According to Fransesco & Gold (1998) typical expatriate benefits are overseas premium, housing allowance, host of living allowance, moving expenses, tuition for dependent education and home leave as well as tax reimbursement payments. Since the examples of support that Nokia offers its expatriates are related to issues that both Jassawalla et al (2004) and Fransesco & Gold (1998) recommend this factor complies with theory. However, the company does not assist the expatriate's spouse in finding employment in the location the expatriate position is offered. This is not in accordance with theory since Hodgetts and Luthans (2001) claim that as the number of dual career couples raises companies should help the spouse with finding a job.

The support Nokia offers can be divided into four groups; support that is offered specific expatriates depending on the position, benefits that is dependent on the host organization's policy, help that all expatriates receive, and support that all the regular personnel in the home country receive. However, neither of the authors mention if the support the expatriate receives should be dependent upon, for instance, the host organization's support program and/or the position that the expatriate has.

Nature and frequency of communication
Nokia believes that contact is important in order for the expatriate to stay updated regarding changes in the home organization. This both comply and not comply with the theory of Allen and Alvarez (1998) as the authors claim that the aim of the communication is to inform the expatriate about what happens in the home office as well as to inform home country employees about the expatriate's accomplishments. It fits theory since the reason why Nokia communicates with the expatriate is to provide information about changes in the home organization. However, at Nokia the aim of the communication with the expatriate is not to be able to inform home country employees about the expatriate's accomplishments.

During the assignment abroad the expatriate has regular contact with the home line manager and the home HR department. The fact that the expatriates at Nokia frequently is communicating with the home HR department is not totally in line with the theory of Allen and Alvarez (1998) since the authors suggest that when the expatriate leaves for a foreign assignment the HR function related to the expatriate is removed to an international HR division. All HR support is therefore according to the authors offered by the international HR group. A lack of communication between the home HR division and the expatriate is likely to result in that when jobs become open the expatriate is not considered as a candidate and this is likely to hamper the chance that the expatriate will have a suitable job upon return. However, the expatriates at Nokia can also contact the international HR department regarding questions that are related to them. Moreover, the expatriates at Nokia are aware of who he or she can contact regarding certain issues. The expatriates at Nokia also have a contact person in the

home organization. However, Nokia has not developed a guideline of which tasks the contact person should have. The help the expatriates can receive from the contact person is therefore to a high extent influenced by the needs of the expatriate and the situation. Jassawalla, et al (2004), believe that it is important to have frequent communication between the home office and the expatriate during the assignment as frequent contact contributes to the expatriate's feeling of connectedness. The authors further believe that the communication not is related to any special person, but with the organization as a whole. As the expatriates at Nokia can stay in contact both with the international and local HR department as well as the home line manager and the contact person this factor seems to comply with the theory.

The communication in Nokia is conducted by phone and e-mail. These methods of communication are in accordance with the theory of Allen and Alvarez, (1998) as the authors recommend technologies such as phone and e-mail to be used. However, the authors also mentioned other methods of communication such as fax that not is used by Nokia. At Nokia both the expatriate and the home organization have the responsibility to maintain the contact. This differs somewhat from the study made by Paik, et al (2002) as the study revealed that the expatriates in the study expressed that they did not necessarily have time to peruse the communication themselves. The expatriate's therefore believed that someone in the home organization should make the effort to outreach them. In table 5.5 below it is stated whether the actions conducted by Nokia during the expatriate's stay complies with the theory of Jassawalla, et al (2004) or not.

Table 5.5 Nokia: During the expatriate's assignment

During the expatriate's stay	Fits with theory
Perception of support *while on assignment* Related to issues included in the relocation package such as financial compensation and support to the family	Yes
Nature and frequency *of communication* Communication and responsibility to maintain the contact between the home office and the expatriate while he or she is abroad	Yes

Source: Authors

5.3.3 After the expatriate's return

Quality and interaction with sponsors
As previously mentioned, expatriates at Nokia has a contact person, but it is not specified how this person is chosen. Neither has Nokia specified which tasks the expatriate's contact person has. The expatriate can also be in contact with the home line manager and the international and local HR department, but neither the roles of these departments are directly connected to the position that the expatriate will receive upon the return. Expatriates at Nokia do not have a sponsor who has more authority than the expatriate. Neither do the expatriates at Nokia have a person who has a personal stake

in the success of the foreign assignments and who is responsible for the expatriate's career progression. Instead the position that the expatriate receives at the return is more dependent upon other factors that are not related to a specific person's responsibility. The position that the expatriate receives after returning to the home country is dependent on, for instance, the open positions at that specific moment. As mentioned, it is also possible that the expatriate must return to the same and/or similar position as he or she had prior to departure. According to Jassawalla, et al (2004) a sponsor's main duties are to be involved in the repatriate's long-term career, to help the expatriate to find a suitable position in the home country upon his/her return as well as to make sure that the firm will use the repatriate's skills and expertise. Since Nokia does not have a person who is personally vested in the success of the expatriate and do not have a person who has the duties of a sponsor this factor does not comply with theory.

Perception of support upon return
Nokia tries to *help the expatriate to find a suitable position upon the return* even though this might lead to that the expatriate must return to the same position as he/she had before the international assignment. This factor therefore seems to fit with theory as Jassawalla et al (2004) claim that the company should assist in choosing a new assignment in the home office. Furthermore, even though the company aims at developing and utilizing the repatriates skills the firm cannot guarantee that the expatriate will *receive recognition for the foreign assignment* or will obtain a job in which the *repatriate's skills and new perspectives can be utilized* since, as previously mentioned the repatriate might receive the same job as before he or she left the home country. However, Jassawalla, et al (2004) stress the importance of receiving credit and recognition for the foreign assignment which can be done by offering a position that is a career progression. The authors also claim that it is important to be able to utilize the new perspectives in the new job. It is difficult to determine these factors. In one sense these factors seem to fit with theory since the company aims at developing the expatriate's new acquired skills upon the return as well as give credit and recognition for the foreign assignment. However, at the same time the expatriate might be offered the same position upon the return, which cannot directly be described as to utilize the new perspectives or to give credit and recognition for the foreign assignment. In this sense these factors only partly comply with theory since the company might offer the expatriate the same position as the person had prior to the departure. Nevertheless, the facts that the repatriates might receive the same job as he or she had before leaving for the foreign assignment fits with the theory of Allen and Alvarez (1998) as the authors' state that one problem with repatriation is that even if the organization values the repatriates and would like to place them in a better job, no such jobs are available at the time of the repatriates' return. In these situations, repatriates become an underutilized resource, as their experience gained overseas not is exploited.

At the return the support the expatriates at Nokia receive is dependent upon the overall values of the firm, the support policy of the home organization as well as the specific situation related to the expatriate and the new position. In the same way as the task and the job environment are described to the expatriate prior to the departure, the same way the task and the job environment are described at the return. The depth of the information of the position that the expatriate receives upon the return can vary, as it is possible that the expatriate return to the same position to which the expatriate is already familiar. At the return the company also offers general update of the changes that have occurred during the expatriate's assignment abroad. However, it is also the

responsibility of the expatriate to keep himself/herself updated about the home organization both during the stay abroad and upon the return. As during the stay, the company also offers at the return, regular support as, for instance, flexible working hours. Nokia does not have experience with reverse culture shock but specific training related to culture shock can be offered if needed. This is in accordance with theory as Hurn (1999) states that training for reverse culture shock should be offered if needed. Furthermore, Jassawalla et al (2004) believe that it is important for the company to help the expatriate to *adjust to the differences in job related factors of their new job* compared to the foreign assignment. Hurn, (1999) also claims that the training should be dependent on the individual needs of the repatriate and the training offered should therefore be tailor-made. Therefore this factor seems to comply with theory as Nokia offers the expatriate information about the new position upon the return and specific training if needed. Moreover, this also seems to fit the theory of Jassawalla et al (2004) who state that it is important that organizations *offer procedures designed to reorient the repatriate to the home office,* as Nokia offers information about the changes that have taken place during the expatriates stay abroad.

The expatriate assignments at Nokia do normally have a fixed end-date. Allen and Alvarez (1998), claim that most international assignments come with a fixed end-date, which might limit job opportunities upon the return since only those positions available at this specific time can be considered for the expatriate. The authors claim that a more flexible time frame of three months to a year for an expatriate's return will enhance the chance of that a suitable position will be available upon return. However, Nokia starts to plan for the return normally three months in advance. Furthermore, the home organization helps the expatriate to find a suitable position in the home organization. This is therefore not totally in line with the suggestions of Allen and Alvarez (1998) as the company plans for the expatriate's return in advance. Moreover, that Nokia starts to plan for the expatriate's return three months in advance is not in accordance with the theory of Klaff (2002) as the author claims that in order to ease the transition it is beneficial if a discussion about returning home begins six to eight months before the expatriate's homecoming. In table 5.6 below it is stated whether the actions conducted by Nokia after the expatriate's return complies with the theory of Jassawalla, et al (2004) or not.

Table 5.6 Nokia: After the expatriate's return

After the expatriate's return	Fits with theory
Quality of interaction with sponsors	
A personal stake in the repatriate's long-term career	No
Searching for positions that may suit the repatriate	No
Try to ensure that the repatriate's skills will be used upon return.	No
Perceptions of support upon return	
Receiving credit and recognition for the foreign assignment	Partly
Choosing new assignments in the home office	Yes
Utilizing their new perspectives in their new job	Partly
Adjusting to the differences in job related factors of their new job compared to the foreign assignment	Yes
Using the procedures designed to reorient the repatriate to the home office	Yes

Source: Authors

5.2. Cross-case analysis of Ericsson and Nokia

In the previous section a within case analysis was conducted. In that part each of the case studies was compared to our frame of reference. The following part consists of a cross case analysis where the two cases is compared to each other. The cross case analysis is presented according to the three research questions. To make the analysis clearer, the data related to each research question will be presented in a table.

The starting point of Ericsson's and Nokia's expatriation and repatriation is somewhat different. The findings from our case study Ericsson show that there are at the moment 100 people from the department systems who currently are working on international assignments abroad. At Nokia in Norway there are currently only a handful expatriates working on an assignment abroad.

The international assignments in both companies come with a fixed end date. In Ericsson the international assignment usually lasts for 12, 18 or 24 months whereas in Nokia the most common lengths of an assignment is 24 months, but some assignments only lasts for 12 months. Moreover, Ericsson has developed a policy that an expatriate should not be abroad for more than three years at a time. The reason for this is that after three years the firm believes that the person needs to come home in order not to get too detached from the home office.

The main reasons for expatriation at Ericsson are to gain international expertise, to develop international managers, to transfer specific Ericsson knowledge, to transfer and instill Ericsson's culture and values, and to develop local staff. For Nokia expatriation is a way to develop and maintain the international corporate culture of the company and to offer the personnel new work possibilities, work challenges abroad as well as to develop their skills. The two companies therefore seem to have rather similar reasons for sending the employees abroad. Moreover, both Ericsson and Nokia recruit globally within the firm by using the web for all the international assignments. Furthermore, the positions offered for international assignments in the two companies are not only management positions.

5.3.1 Prior to the expatriate's departure

In table 5.7 below it is stated whether the actions conducted by Ericsson and Nokia prior to the expatriate's departure complies with the theory of Jassawalla, et al (2004) or not.

Table 5.7 Prior to the expatriate's departure

Prior to the Departure	Ericsson	Nokia
Task clarity		
Expectations on the expatriate	Yes	Yes
The deadlines of the task	Yes	Yes
How the performance will be evaluated	Yes	Yes
Career counseling		
The reasons for sending the expatriate overseas	No	Yes
The benefits of the overseas assignment for the firm and the expatriate	No	Yes
The expatriate's career options upon return	No	Yes
Formal policies for repatriation		
A repatriation program should include actions to be taken during the pre-visit, visit and post visit	No	No

Source: Authors

Task clarity
In both Ericsson and Nokia the advertisements about the international assignments include a description of the assignment, the task to be performed and the personal competences needed for the job. Moreover, both Ericsson and Nokia inform the expatriates prior to departure about the expectations on the expatriate, the deadlines, and how the expatriate's performance will be evaluated. In both companies it is the host organization that informs the expatriate about these issues. Nokia emphasizes that when the expatriate has been chosen the host organization aims at giving an overall view of the assignment and detailed information about the task. Issues like the environment in which the expatriate will be working and the aim of the task is therefore described.

In both companies the expatriates sign a work contract prior to departure. According to Nokia the firm's contract covers all the issues that are related to the expatriation from the start to the beginning. Nokia believes that it is important to have a contract, which includes all the issues related to the expatriation in order to ensure a common procedure for the expatriation process. In Ericsson the contract includes, for instance, the length of the assignment, payments and benefits. Furthermore, the expatriates at Ericsson also sign a code of conduct and business ethics in the home office that implicitly says something about the ethical and moral behavior that the firm is expecting from the expatriate.

Career counseling
This is a factor where the findings in our case studies differ from each other. Ericsson does not offer any career counseling while Nokia does. Ericsson does not inform the expatriates about the benefits of the foreign assignment for the firm or to the expatriate. At Nokia formal career counseling is not a taken step prior to the expatriate's departure as a way to achieve successful repatriation. However, Nokia does inform the expatriates of the reasons and the benefits for the firm and the expatriate. The benefits of the assignment to the firm and to the expatriate are usually a part of the initial discussion between the expatriate and the host organization. These issues are also a part of Nokia's overall value.

Ericsson does not prior to departure discuss possible positions in the home country upon the expatriate's return. This is not done since the position the repatriate will receive in the home country is dependent on the vacancies at the time, which cannot be known until rather close to the expatriate's homecoming. Neither is the position that the expatriate can receive at the return decided prior to the departure at Nokia. However, the expatriate is informed about the company's repatriation guarantee, which means that at the expatriate's return a specific position might not be available, but the home organization in the home country will do what it can to find a suitable position. Moreover, due to the guarantee the repatriate will not receive a position with less authority than the one held before the assignment. It should be mentioned that there is a chance that the expatriate must return to the same and/or similar position as he or she had prior to the assignment. Based on this discussion it can be stated that neither Ericsson nor Nokia conduct formal career counseling as a step in order to achieve successful repatriation. However, Nokia does inform it expatriates about the issues that we have studied that should be included in career counseling.

Formal policies for repatriation
Both Ericsson and Nokia have a written policy that governs the whole expatriation cycle including repatriation instead of having a formal policy only for repatriation. In Ericsson's policy issues like the contract, payments, the relocation package, and counseling and training upon return are included. According to Nokia the firm's written policy covers all the issues connected to the company's expatriation. Both companies' policies seem therefore to be broad and include several aspects related to the companies' expatriation. However, Nokia does not mention what the policy include as it is confidential.

5.3.2 During the expatriate's assignment

In table 5.5 below it is stated whether the actions conducted by Ericsson and Nokia during the expatriate's stay complies with the theory of Jassawalla, et al (2004) or not.

Table 5.8 During the expatriate's assignment

During the stay	Ericsson	Nokia
Perception of support while on the assignment Related to issues included in the relocation package such as financial compensation and support to the family	Yes	Yes
Nature and frequency of communication Communication and responsibility to maintain the contact between the home office and the expatriate while he or she is abroad	Yes	Yes

Source: Authors

Perception of support while on the assignment
Both Ericsson and Nokia offer their expatriates support and benefits during the foreign assignment. Nokia stresses that this is done in order to help expatriates to maintain a balanced working life according to each expatriate's needs. In both companies the support the expatriate will receive is, to some extent dependent on the country of service. In Ericsson the certain aspects that are dependent on the country are stated in the specific policy for that country and Nokia has specific host country guidelines. Furthermore, both companies have benefits that all employees are entitled to regardless of country and these benefits are stated in the contract that the expatriate signs before leaving the home organization. In Ericsson the benefits that all expatriates receive are mentioned in the policy regarding long-term assignments. Since the expatriation policy in Nokia is confidential it is not possible to say if the company's relocation package is as comprehensive and covers the same issues as in Ericsson. However, many of the benefits that Nokia mentioned are the same as Ericsson offers. The relocation package at the two companies both includes, for instance, extra financial compensation for working abroad, insurances, travels to the home country and accommodation. Nokia also declared that the firm offers expatriates support that also regular personnel working in the home country receives like recreational activities, flexible working hours, sabbaticals, study leaves that neither the respondent at Ericsson did mention nor is included in the policy regarding international assignments. Moreover, Nokia claimed that the benefits the firm offers expatriates during their time abroad also are dependent on the position.

In Nokia, the support the expatriate receives is dependent on the specific needs of the expatriate; for instance, if the expatriate has children the firm assists in finding suitable

schools. This can also be said to be the case in Ericsson as the company, for instance, also assists the expatriate in finding appropriate schools and offer additional language training for the children if needed. However, neither Ericsson nor Nokia commonly assist the spouse in finding a job in the country of the assignment. The main reason why Ericsson does not help the spouse is that it is viewed as something difficult to assist with if the spouse not is working in the organization. The firm has in a few occasions helps the spouse in finding employment if the spouse has been working within the Ericsson concern. Nokia also stated that if the spouse works within the organization it is more likely that the company helps the spouse with this issue. This is therefore not included in the relocation package in neither of the companies. However, overall, both firms support the expatriate and family by providing benefits during the stay in the foreign location.

Nature and frequency of communication
Since both companies believe it is important with frequent contact between the home office and the expatriate the two firms are frequently communicating with the expatriate. Nokia emphasizes that this is important in order for the expatriate to stay updated regarding changes in the home organization whereas Ericsson stresses that frequent contact is essential in order for the expatriate not to get too detached from the home office. In Ericsson, the person in the home organization that has the most contact with the expatriate is the manager in the expatriate's home office and this person can be called a mentor. In Nokia it is both the manager in the home office and the home HR department that mainly is communicating with the expatriate. However, the expatriate can also contact the international HR division for issues related to them. Nokia also has a contact person for the expatriate. However, it is not specified how this person is chosen or the tasks this person have. The duties of this person are instead dependent on the expatriate's needs and the situation. In Ericsson the HR department usually gets involved towards the end of the international assignment, usually three to six months before the expatriate's homecoming. At this time the HR department together with the manager in the expatriate's home office and the expatriate starts to look for a position for the expatriate in the home country. The home HR department at Ericsson is therefore not frequently communicating with the expatriate during the whole assignment.

The most frequently used methods of communication are in both Ericsson and Nokia phone and e-mail. However, Ericsson also emphasized visits to the home office as an important communication tool. When the expatriate is in Sweden during business trips or holidays it is common that he or she visits the home office. Furthermore, both Ericsson and Nokia emphasizes that it is not only the home office that has the responsibility to stay in contact with the expatriate. The expatriate also has a responsibility to maintain the contact.

5.3.3 After the expatriate's return

In table 5.6 below it is stated whether the actions conducted by Ericsson and Nokia after the expatriate's return complies with the theory of Jassawalla, et al (2004) or not.

Table 5.9 After the expatriate's return

After the expatriate's return	Ericsson	Nokia
Quality of interaction with sponsors		
A personal stake in the expatriate's long-term career	No	No
Searching for positions that may suit the repatriate	Yes	No
Try to ensure that the repatriate's skills will be used upon return	Yes	No
Perceptions of support upon return		
Receiving credit and recognition for the foreign assignment	Partly	Partly
Choosing new assignments in the home office	Yes	Yes
Utilizing their new perspectives in their new job	Partly	Partly
Adjusting to the differences in job related factors of their new job compared to the foreign assignment	Yes	Yes
Using the procedures designed to reorient the repatriate to the home	Yes	Yes

Source: Authors

Quality and interaction with sponsors
As previously mentioned, the expatriate's manager in the home office at Ericsson is frequently communicating with the expatriate and is, to some extent providing information. Furthermore, the manager in the home office is together with the HR department and the expatriate responsible for finding a suitable position for the

expatriate. Moreover, since the skills and competencies the expatriate gains during the foreign assignment is viewed as something positive, it is also the manger in the home office's responsibility to try to ensure that this is taken into consideration. However, Nokia does not have a person that has these duties. In Nokia the expatriate is mainly in contact with the manager in the home office and the local HR department during his or her time abroad, but their roles are not directly connected to the position the expatriate will receive upon return. The position that the repatriate receives is more dependent on the vacant positions at the time.

Moreover, Nokia does not have a person that has a personal stake in the success of the expatriate and does therefore not have a person who has a sponsor's duties or a person that, considering the definition can be called a sponsor. However, neither does Ericsson use the title sponsor regarding the manager in the home office nor is it likely that this person really can be called a sponsor since this person should be personally vested in the success or failure of the expatriate. The manager in the expatriate's home office at Ericsson does probably not have a strong personal interest in the success of the expatriate. However, the manger in the home office at Ericsson has the duties of a sponsor and is together with the HR department and the expatriate responsible for the expatriate's career development. However, the manager in the home office also has other responsibilities that are more related to a mentor's duties. Furthermore, even if the manager in the home organization at Ericsson has a responsibility to try to find a suitable position in the home country, he or she cannot guarantee that such a position can be offered to the repatriate since the position in Ericsson, just as well as in Nokia, is dependent on the vacant positions at the time. Nevertheless, one difference between the two companies is that the manager in the home organization is much more involved in the expatriate in Ericsson than in Nokia.

Perception of support upon return
In Nokia the preparation of the expatriate's homecoming usually starts three months before the expatriate's homecoming and at Ericsson the preparation starts three to six months prior to the expatriate's return to the home country. In neither of the companies the expatriate is solely responsible for finding a position in the home organization upon return as both Ericsson and Nokia help the expatriate with *finding a job in the home country*. However, even though both companies' values the expertise the expatriate has gained overseas and tries to find a suitable position, neither of the firms can ensure that the expatriate will *receive recognition for the foreign assignment* and that the expatriate can *use his or her international expertise and perspective* in the position received upon return. This cannot be guaranteed since the position gained upon return in both companies is dependent on the vacant positions at the time of the expatriate's homecoming. Therefore, it might be assumed that in both companies the repatriate might receive a position in which their international skills can be utilized just as well as he or she might be offered a position in which the international competences not can be used. In Nokia the position that the repatriate will receive in the home organization is also dependent on the repatriate's performance during the assignment, the new acquired skills and the experience gained during the assignment. One issue that separates Ericsson and Nokia is that Nokia guarantees that if the repatriate not can receive a position in which the international skills can be utilized the repatriate can return to the position held before the foreign assignment.

Both Nokia and Ericsson offer the repatriate *training and other processes to reorient the repatriate to the home organization*. However, what training and reorientation the companies offer varies somewhat. In both Ericsson and Nokia the support the expatriate receives is dependent on the specific situation related to the expatriate. However, in Nokia the training offered is also dependent on the overall values of the firm, the support policy of the firm, and the new position. The job environment is only, to some extent, discussed with the repatriate in Nokia and in Ericsson as the two companies believe that the expatriate also has his or her own responsibility to find out about any changes that have taken place in the home organization. Both companies can offer training about how to handle reverse culture shock if needed. If this is needed in Ericsson is, for instance, dependent on the country of service. If an expatriate at Ericsson has been in a country with conflicts, the firm offers counseling. Moreover, if an expatriate has been overseas for a significant period of time he or she might need to update his or her competences. In those instances Ericsson offers training to help the repatriate to renew his or her skills. Furthermore, Nokia highlights that in the same way as the task is described prior to departure; the task received upon return is described. However, the depths of the information varies dependent on the position the repatriate gains, for instance, sometimes the repatriate returns to the same position held before the foreign assignment. All these issues are likely to *help the repatriate to adjust to work related differences between the job in the foreign location and the new job in the home country.*

As well as during the assignment the repatriate is offered benefits in both the companies upon return. However, what issues the two companies have brought up as included in the support varies. In Ericsson's expatriation policy it is stated that the company offers temporarily accommodation upon repatriation if the expatriate and family not can stay in their own accommodation and it is further declared that the firm will pay a net allowance reimbursement for extra relocation expenses. The benefits that Nokia emphasizes are, for instance, flexible working hours, sabbaticals, study leaves, health care services and retirement programs. These issues are not mentioned in Ericsson's policy regarding expatriation.

6. Findings and Conclusions

In this final chapter we will present our findings. Based on our conducted research we will answer our research questions. We will also give some general conclusions before presenting our implications for management, theory, future research, and for the model developed by Jassawalla, et al (2004).

It is significant to point out that our findings only are based on two case studies, namely Ericsson and Nokia. Our findings therefore do not provide sufficient grounds for any kind of generalization. Nevertheless, both Ericsson and Nokia are well known MNCs and their repatriation programs might be indicative for many other MNCs' practices. Moreover, any diversion and/or similarity from the model presented by Jassawalla et al, (2004) and our case studies could be of significance per MNCs' repatriation program.

We believe that it is important to point out that the reasons to conduct the different actions taken prior, during and upon the expatriates' return that Jassawalla, et al (2004) recommend are two folded. Firstly, the authors believe that by conducting the different measures MNCs can, for instance, lessen the expatriate's anxiety and increase the expatriate's focus on the task. Secondly, in the end the authors believe that by making these measures MNCs can achieve successful repatriation. We believe that in those cases where our case study company/companies make the measures recommended by Jassawalla et al (2004), even though the aim of the MNCs are not to achieve either of the two folded reasons of the authors, the companies get closer to achieve successful repatriation.

The program developed by Jassawalla, et al (2004) says something about which steps an organization should take before, during and after an international assignment in order to create successful repatriation. However, as long as those steps are included it seems like firms can develop a program that suits the situation it is facing. In other words, firms can, for instance, decide what training and relocation package to include in the repatriation program in order to satisfy the company's special needs. However, it is important that the program and the actions that should be taken in each step is formalized, as it will reduce the repatriate's anxiety and increases the chance that the program will be followed.

While our case study companies conduct many of the actions that Jassawalla, et al (2004) recommend in order to achieve successful repatriation, it does not seem like the aim for the companies with the actions made, especially before and during the assignment is to achieve successful repatriation, which might indicate that the organizations not view repatriation as a process that needs to be considered during the whole assignment. Furthermore, the taken actions in the expatriation cycle must not necessarily be seen as a part of a process as pre-visit, visit, and post-visit of expatriates. Instead the taken actions that are conducted in companies' expatriation processes can be more task related. MNCs can therefore conduct different activities in the different stages of the expatriation process even though these actions are not seen as a part of an expatriation cycle/program.

6.1 Research question 1: How can the repatriation measures adopted by MNCs prior to expatriates' departure for foreign assignments be described?

Task clarity

Our study revealed that the definition of the task is a measurement taken by the MNCs Ericsson and Nokia prior to the expatriate's departure. Critical parts as what the expectations are of the expatriate during the assignment abroad, the deadlines and how the expatriate's performance will be evaluated are outlined and discussed in both case study firms prior to the expatriates' departure beyond the discussion of the main task. In both firms it is the host organization that informs the expatriate about these issues. Moreover, expatriates sign a contract, which include different issues related to the expatriation in the home office prior to departure.

Career counseling

Our study indicates that formal career counseling not necessarily is seen as one of the main tasks for the MNC's Ericsson and Nokia prior to an expatriate's departure. One of our case study firms discusses issues that should be included in the career counseling such as the reasons for sending the manager overseas and the benefits of the overseas assignment to the firm and the expatriate. However, the second case study company did not discuss these issues. Moreover, neither of the firms decides prior to departure what position the expatriate will receive upon return. One of the companies claimed that this was not done since the position received upon return was dependent on the vacancies at that moment. However, one of the firms in the study informs the expatriate about the company's repatriation guarantee, which means that the expatriate will not receive a position in the home organization with less authority than the position held before the assignment and if no other positions are available the repatriate will obtain the same position as before he or she went on the foreign assignment.

Formal policies for repatriation

The MNC's Ericsson and Nokia have outlined a formal policy for expatriation, which includes issues regarding repatriation. However, a formal policy for repatriation is not developed in our case study companies.

To briefly summarize the measures adopted by the MNCs Ericsson and Nokia prior to the expatriates' assignments abroad the following can be concluded:

- The MNC's Ericsson and Nokia inform expatriates about the expectations on the expatriate, how the performance will be evaluated and about relevant deadline prior to departure.
- One of the MNC in the study informs the expatriate about the reasons for sending the expatriate overseas.
- One of the MNC in the study informs the expatriate about the benefits of the overseas assignment to the firm and the manager.
- One of the MNC in the study discusses the expatriates' career options upon return.
- The MNCs Ericsson and Nokia have not outlined a formal policy for repatriation. Instead the two MNCs in the study have developed a formal policy for expatriation.

6.2 Research question 2: How can the repatriation measures adopted by MNCs during expatriates' assignments be described?

Perception of support while on the assignment
Our study revealed that the support and benefits the MNCs Ericsson and Nokia offer the expatriates during the foreign assignment is, to some extent, dependent on the country of service. The benefits that are dependent on country are either stated in a policy for that specific country or in host country guidelines. However, there are benefits that all expatriates are entitled to regardless of country. These benefits are, for instance, extra financial compensation for working abroad, insurances, and the travels to and from the country of service. Furthermore, the benefits included in the relocation package are included in the contract that the employee signs before leaving the home organization.

Our study indicates that the MNCs Ericsson and Nokia, to a certain degree include the family in the relocation package. If the expatriate's family accompanies the expatriate to the foreign location firms, for instance, assist in finding suitable schools for the children. Moreover, one of the companies also stated that it offers the children additional language training if needed for the child to be able to follow the education abroad. However, our study revealed that the MNCs Ericsson and Nokia do not assist the spouse with finding a job in the country of the assignment. Our study indicated that the chance is larger that the two firms will support the spouse in this matter if he or she also is working in the organization.

Nature and frequency of communication
Our study shows that the MNCs Ericsson and Nokia believe that it is important with frequent contact between the expatriate and the home organization and therefore are communicating with the expatriate regularly. However, the reasons for doing so differ between the two companies. One of the firms in the study thought that frequent communication was essential because it helps the expatriate not to get too detached from the home office while the other company thought that it was important in order for the expatriate to stay updated about changes that have taken place in the home office. Moreover, the most common methods of communication in the two MNCs are phone and e-mail. Visits to the home office during the expatriate's time abroad also functions as a communication method in one of the firms.

The person or persons who are mainly communicating with the expatriate differs somewhat between the two case study firms. In one of the companies in the study it was only the manager in the expatriate's home office who mainly was responsible for staying in contact with the expatriate and this person can be called a mentor. In the other firm it was both the manager in the home office and the home HR department who had the main responsibility. Furthermore, the study revealed that the MNCs Ericsson and Nokia do not believe that it is only the home organizations responsibility to stay in touch with the expatriate. The expatriate also has a responsibility to contact the home office.

To briefly summarize the measures adopted by the MNCs Ericsson and Nokia during the managers' assignments abroad the following can be concluded

- The MNCs Ericsson and Nokia support the expatriate during the foreign assignment by offering a relocation package.
- The MNCs Ericsson and Nokia are, to some extent supporting the family during the foreign assignment.
- The MNCs Ericsson and Nokia are frequently communicating with the expatriate while he or she is abroad.
- In the MNCs Ericsson and Nokia it is mainly the manager in the home office that is responsible for communicating with the expatriate. However, in one of the firms the home HR department also had the main responsibility for staying in touch with the expatriate.
- In the MNCs Ericsson and Nokia the contact is mainly maintained through phone and e-mail. However, visits to the home office also serve as a mean for communication in one of the companies.

6.3 Research question 3: How can the repatriation measures adopted by MNCs after the expatriates' return be described?

Quality and interaction with sponsors
The MNCs Ericsson and Nokia do not seem to have a person in the company who actually can be called a sponsor since this person should be personally vested in the success or failure of the expatriate. However, in one of the companies in the study the manager in the expatriate's home office had, among other tasks the duties of a sponsor as this person is together with the HR department and the expatriate is responsible for finding a position in the home country and to try to ensure that the international skills the expatriate have gained overseas are taken into consideration. However, the other company in the study does not have a person who has these tasks since the position received is not related to any person's specific responsibility.

Perception of support upon return
Our study revealed that the preparation for the expatriate's return in the MNCs Ericsson and Nokia starts three to six months before the expatriate's homecoming. Furthermore, in the two case study companies, the expatriate is not solely responsible for finding a position in the home organizations as the firms help the expatriate with this matter. However, even though the MNCs Ericsson and Nokia are aware of the significance of being abroad and values the expertise the expatriate have gained overseas and tries to find a suitable position, the firms cannot guarantee that the expatriate will receive recognition for the foreign assignment or will be able to utilize the international skills in the position received. This is, for instance, because the job obtained is dependent on the vacancies at the time of the expatriate's return. However, one firm guaranteed that if no other positions can be offered the repatriate can get the position held before the assignment.

Our study shows that the MNCs Ericsson and Nokia, offer training to reorient the repatriate and to help the repatriate to adjust to the differences in job related factors between the job in the foreign location and the job in the home office. However, what the training and reorientation includes differs somewhat between the two companies. The work environment is only to a certain degree discussed in the MNCs Ericsson and Nokia, as the firms believe that it also is the expatriate's responsibility to find out about any changes that might have taken place in the home organization. Furthermore, the

training offered is dependent on the specific situation of the expatriate. If needed, the two companies, for instance, can offer training about how to handle culture shock. Moreover, counseling if the expatriate has been working in a country with conflicts or natural catastrophes and help to update the competencies was offered in one company.

The MNCs Ericsson and Nokia also offer repatriate support and benefits when the repatriate returns to the home country. However, what benefits companies offer varies. While one firm offers temporarily accommodation and a net allowance reimbursement for extra relocation expenses the other firm stated that it offered flexible working hours, sabbaticals, study leaves and health care services.

To briefly summarize the measures adopted by the MNC's Ericsson and Nokia after the managers' return the following can be concluded

- The MNCs Ericsson and Nokia do not seem to have a person who fits the definition of a sponsor. However, one of the firms has a person that has a sponsor's duties.
- In the MNCs Ericsson and Nokia repatriates cannot be ensured that they will receive a position in which they get credit and recognition for the foreign assignment and in which their new skills and perspectives can be utilized.
- The MNCs Ericsson and Nokia help the expatriate with finding a suitable assignment in the home country.
- In the MNCs Ericsson and Nokia repatriates are offered training and other procedures to reorient the person to the home organization and to be able to adjust to the work related differences in the home organization compared to the assignment.

6.4 Implications

In this final part we will present the implications our study could have for management, theory, and future research in this field of study.

6.4.1 Implications for management

The repatriation program in our case study companies has already been developed. However, we think that the findings in this thesis can give rise to implications to the firms as new measures in repatriation have been discussed. Our study also gives rise to an issue worth considering for the companies as it provides an approach of repatriation as a process. Since our case study companies' conduct their repatriation differently we would like to give each of the companies' specific guidelines for how to improve their repatriation.

Implications for management at Ericsson

- Ericsson conducts many of the actions that Jassawalla, et al (2004) recommend firms to do in order to achieve successful repatriation along with other actions in connection with repatriation. However, most of these issues are not included in the written expatriation policy. Ericsson could therefore consider including these topics in the policy as it might make the expatriate more clear about what to

expect and since it is likely to reduce the anxiety that the expatriate might experience.

— Ericsson does not offer any kind of career counseling. This might lead to that the expatriate develops unrealistic job expectations about the position he or she should receive upon return. When those expectations are not met it might lead to that the repatriate leaves the firm. Therefore, Ericsson might benefit from paying more attention to help the expatriate to develop realistic career expectations.

— It is stated in the firm's expatriation policy that an employee that accepts a foreign assignment knows that this is positive for his or her career in Ericsson. However, Ericsson does not have any kind of job guarantee for the repatriate. Repatriates might become unsatisfied if they do not receive a job that is a career progression or that does not allow the person to use the international expertise gained overseas which might lead to expatriate turnover. One of Ericsson's main aims with sending employees on foreign assignments is to gain international expertise. By not ensuring that these skills will be used the firm does not benefit from the assignment. Ericsson could therefore consider, to a larger extent to try to ensure that the repatriate can be offered a position upon return that allows the person to use his or her international skills and competences.

— Ericsson does not inform the expatriate about the benefits of the assignment for the firm or to the expatriate. Discussing those issues is likely to enhance the expatriate's understanding of what is expected from him or her and increase the focus on the foreign assignment.

Implications for management at Nokia

Our second case study company, Nokia, also conducts many of the actions that Jassawalla, et al (2004) recommend firms to do in order to achieve successful repatriation. However it should be mentioned that the company's expatriation policy is confidential and gives us therefore a gap of the steps taken by the company. Due to the confidential policy we might give the company implications that are already considered.

— At Nokia the expatriate might return to the original position upon the return even though the company believes that it is important to develop and maintain the personnel's skills. We believe that it is not the best solution to offer the repatriate the same position at the return. Previous studies have shown that expatriation is often seen as a way to progress in the career. In this case the expatriates might get unsatisfied and leave the company if their career expectations are not met.

— Nokia has not specified how the contact person is selected and which tasks the contact person has. We believe that it could be important for Nokia and for its expatriate to decide how the contact person should be selected and which duties the contact person should have. By doing this expatriates could get a person who has more responsibility of the expatriates' long-term career both during the assignment and upon the return.

Implications for management in both Nokia and Ericsson

—   Neither Ericsson nor Nokia assist the spouse in finding a job in the foreign location. However, the firms could benefit from supporting the spouse by offering job assistance and by compensating for lost wages. This might not only result in that more employees are willing to accept an international assignment but also that expatriates on foreign assignments will feel more supported and be more satisfied.

—   Ericsson and Nokia place a rather large responsibility on the expatriate for staying in touch with the home office and to find out about any changes that might have taken place in the home division. However, studies have shown that expatriates not necessarily have the time to peruse such communication as they feel it would be an extra burden to their already demanding job abroad. Considering this the firms might benefit from letting the home office take on more responsibility for communicating with the expatriate and, to a larger extent, debrief the repatriate upon return about changes that have taken place in the home office while the person has been abroad instead of assuming that the repatriate has looked those things up him or herself.

Implications for overall management

–   New results from research in this field of study are continuously discussed in literature. We think that such research can provide valuable information for the personnel responsible for successful repatriation. More knowledge about repatriation is likely to positively enhance a firm's repatriation. As a result, the firm might be better able to make the right decision related to its repatriation.

—   Repatriation cannot be studied in isolation. Organizations need to have a holistic view when examining the result of its repatriation program. Firms need to be aware of that failure in the success of a company's repatriation can also be affected by issues that are out of control of the company as, for instance, private and/or family issues.

–   In order to achieve successful repatriation managers need to view repatriation as a process. To view repatriation as only the last step in the expatriation cycle represents poor repatriation. Instead, actions need to be taken before, during and after the assignment.

—   Since it is a large investment to send an employee on a foreign assignment firms should try to ensure that they benefit from it. Companies should therefore try to make sure that the repatriate can use his or her new skills in the job received in the home country. Moreover, if firms do not offer a suitable position the repatriate might leave the firm, which leads to, that the company not gains from its investment.

6.3.2 Implications for theory

—   In this thesis we have *explored* if MNC's apply a repatriation program similar to the repatriation program developed by Jassawalla et al (2004). Moreover, we have *described* a repatriation program in the three different stages; prior to an expatriate's departure, during their stay, and upon their return. We have also *explained* the relationships between the actions taken by MNC's in the different stages of the repatriation program. In this thesis the model developed by Jassawalla et al, (2004) has been compared with the actions taken in two MNC's. We believe that further theory is needed in order to develop this approach. With more theory the model developed by Jassawalla et al (2004) can serve as a base for MNC's when developing their repatriation program divided in the three stages recommended by the authors.

—   In some cases the findings in this thesis strengthens the theory. There are also cases when the findings do not comply with the model of Jassawalla et al, (2004). In both situations we believe that further theory is needed in order to develop a common ground for which actions that can be taken in MNC's repatriation as well as the reason to why these actions are taken.

—   Hopefully, our study might add to theory and enhance the understanding of the measures taken by MNC's in the process of repatriation. Furthermore, this study is based on empirical data from two case studies and might therefore serve as a base for future research.

6.4.3 Implications for future research

—   We have found cases in the existing theory where different authors emphasize different measure and/or practices that can be conducted in a company's repatriation program. In these cases we think there is a need for more research in order to gain more theory of which are the most important actions in order to receive successful repatriation.

—   Furthermore, many studies in the area are related to large organizations. Small and large organizations might have different opinions of measures that should be taken in order to achieve successful repatriation. For instance, large firms might have more resources compared to small companies. More research concerning small firms and repatriation programs is therefore needed.

—   It is possible that different industries generally are favoring a certain set of measures in their repatriation. Therefore we think it could be necessary for further research related to the type of industry and repatriation measures since this could add important information to existing theory.

—   In this study we have focused on the repatriation measures our case study companies offer their repatriates. It could be interesting to study how the repatriates in our case study companies' perceive the repatriation programs, as this would enhance further understanding of the repatriation programs offered by our case study companies.

— Successful repatriation aims at capturing the experience and knowledge of the repatriates. Another important area to study is if a successful repatriation program generally leads to this possibility for the company.

— It would also be interesting to investigate the relationship between measures adopted and the retention of repatriates.

6.4.4 Implications for the model

In this final part of the study we would briefly like to discuss and give implications for the model developed by Jassawalla et al (2004). In some cases implications for the model go hand in hand with our implications for theory and/or future research.

— The model is open for firms' own perceptions about what should be included in the different actions to create effective repatriation. More research could therefore be done in order to develop a more comprehensive model that also includes, for instance, what the relocation package should include to be effective.

— The model is a new approach, which describe repatriation in three different stages. As this is a new way of looking at repatriation more research concerning the different measures that can be taken in each stage of the repatriation is needed.

— Jassawalla et al, (2004) describe repatriation as a process starting prior to an expatriate's departure abroad. We believe that further research is needed in order to support this model as other authors not always describe repatriation as a process and as we found a number of divergences between our collected data and the model.

— In order to check the validity of the model we believe that it could be interesting to keep the aim to investigate a repatriation program in the three different stages, but when doing so, exclude the theory of Jassawalla et al (2004). By focusing on describing the measures recommended by other authors in the three specific stages the validity of the measures in the model of Jassawalla et al (2004) could be proofed further.

— Jassawalla et al (2004) have in their model described specific outcomes, as mentioned in our literature review. In this thesis we have focused only on describing the measures in the different stages, which are recommended by the authors. However we believe that it could be interesting to broaden the aim of the research and also investigate the outcomes of the measurements in order to check both the validity of the measurements and the model.

— Further research in the area of measures in the repatriation should be conducted. In this study we have chosen to describe repatriation in the three different stages. Future research can also be done in a specific stage of the repatriation instead of describing all three parts. By describing one stage more in depth further similarities and differences can be found.

Reference List

Allen, D. & Alvarez, S. (1998). Empowering Expatriates and Organizations to Improve Repatriation Effectiveness. *Human Resource Planning.* 21 (4) p. 29-40.

Black, S.J., Gregersen, H.B., & Mendenhall, M. (1992). Toward a Theoretical Framework of Repatriation Adjustment, *Journal of International Business Studies.* 23(4) p. 737-760

Black, S.J., Gregersen, H.B., & Mendenhall, M. (1999). The Right Way to Manage Expats, *Harvard Business Review.* 77 (2) p. 52-59

Daniels, J.D & Radebaugh, L.H. (2001). *International Business: Environments and Operations.* New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Dowling, P.J, Schuler, R.S. & Welsch, D.E. (1994). *International Dimensions of Human Resource Management.* California: Wadsworth Inc.

Dowling, P.J, Welsch, D.E & Schuler, R.S. (1999). *International Human Resource Management: Managing People in a Multinational Context.* Cincinnati: South-Western College Publishing.

Eriksson L.T. & Wiedersheim-Paul F. (1997). *Att utreda, forska och rapportera,* Malmö: Liber Ekonomi.

Feldman, D.C. (1999). Repatriate Moves as Career Transitions. *Human Resource Management Review.* 1 (3) p. 163-178.

Fors, A., & Lindmark, J. (1999), *The Role of the Spouse in International Transfers of Expatriates,* Luleå: Luleå University of Technology (1999:024)

Francesco, A. M. & Gold, B.A. (1998). *International Organizational Behaviour.* New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Hambrick, D.C., Davison, S.C., Snell, S.A., Snow, C.C., (1998). When Groups Consist of Multiple Nationalities: Towards an Understanding of the Implications, *Organization Studies.* 5 (3) p. 205-216

Harvey, M.G. (1989). Repatriation of Corporate Executives: An Empirical Study. *Journal of International Business Studies.* 20 (1). p. 131-145.

Harvey, M, Buckley, R, Milorad, M & Wiese, D. (1999). Mentoring Dual-Career Expatriates: a Sense-Making and Sense-Giving Social Support Process. *International Journal of Human Resource Management.* 10 (5) p. 808-828.

Harvey, M., Milorad, M & Noviecevic, N. (2001). Selecting Expatriates Increasingly for Complex Global Assignments, *Career Development International.* .6 (2) p. 69-87

Hodgetts, R. M & Luthans, F. (2003). *International Management: Culture, Strategy and Behaviour.* 5th edition, New York.: McGraw-Hill Higher Education.

Holme, I.M. & Solvang, B. K. (1997). *Forskningsmetodik: Om kvalitativa och kvantitativa metoder,* Lund: Studentlitteratur

Hurn, B.J. (1999). Repatriation- The Toughest Assignment of All. *Industrial and Commercial Training.* 31 (6). p. 224-228.

Hutchings, K., (2002), Improving Selection Processes but Providing Marginal Support: A Review of Cross- Cultural Difficulties for Expatriates in Australian Organizations in China. *Cross-Cultural Management.* 9 (3) p. 32-57

Jassawalla, A, Connoly, T & Sljkowski, L. (2004). Issues of Effective Repatriation: A Model and Managerial Implications. *Advanced Management Journal.* 69 (2) p. 38-47.

Klaff, L. G. (2002). The Right Way to Bring Expats Home. *Workforce.* 81 (7) p. 40-45.

Lazarova, M. & Caligiuri, P. (2001) Retaining Repatriates: The Role of Organizational Support Practicies. *Journal of World Business.* 36 (3) p. 389-412

Linehan, M. & Scullion, H. (2001). Repatriation of Female Executives: Empirical Evidence from Europe. *Woman in Management Review.* 17 (2) p. 80-88

Lobel, S. (1990) Global Leadership Competencies: Managing to a Different Drumbeat. *Human Resource Management.* 29 (1) p. 39-47

Mendenhall, M.E., Dunbar, E, Oddoud, G. (1987). Expatriate Selection, Training and Career Pathing: a Review and Critique. *Human Resource Management.* 26 (3) p. 331-345

Miles, M.B. & Huberman, M.A. (1994). *Qualitative Data Analysis.* 2nd Edition. London: Sage publications.

O'Sullivan, S.L. (2002). The Protean Approach to Managing Repatriation Transitions. *International Journal of Manpower.* 23 (7) p. 597-616.

O'Sullivan, S.L., Appelbaum, S.H. & Abikhzer, C. (2002). Expatriate Management "Best Practices" in Canadian MNC's: a Multiple Case Study. *Career Development International.* 7 (2) p. 79-95

Paik, Y, Segaud, B. & Malinowski, C. (2002). How to Improve Repatriation Management. *International Journal of Manpower.* 23 (7) p. 635-648.

Patel, R. & Davidson. B. (1994) *Forskningsmetodikens grunder: att planrea, genomföra och rapportera en undersökning,* Lund: Studentlitteratur.

Riusala, K., & Suutari, V., (2000). Expatriation and careers: perspectives of Expatriates and Spouses. *Career Development International.* 5 (2) p. 81-90

Sanyal, N.R, (2001) International Management: A Strategic Perspective. New Jersey: Prentice Hall

Saunders, M., Lewis, P., & Thornhill, A., (2000). *Research Methods for Business Students*, 2nd Edition, Harlow: Pearson Education Ltd.

Selmer, J. (1995). *Expatriate Management: New Ideas for International Business.* Westport: Greenwood Publishing Group.

Salomon, C.M. (1995). Repatriation: Up, Down or Out? *Personnel Journal.* 74 (1) p. 28-35.

Strob, L.K, Gregersen, G.B & Black, S.J. (1998) Closing the Gap: Expectations Versus Reality Among Repatriates. *Journal of World Business.* 33 (2) p. 111-125.

Suutari, V. & Brewster, C. (2003). Repatriation: Empirical Evidence from a Longitudinal Study of Careers and Expectations among Finnish Expatriates, *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*.14 (7) p. 1132-1151

Vermond, K. (2001). Expatriates Come Home. *CMA Management*. 75 (7) p. 30-34

Yin, R.K (1994). *Case study research: design and methods,* 2nd Edition, Sage Publications, Inc, USA

Yongsun, P., Segaud, B., Malinowski, C. (2002). How to improve repatriation management: Are motivations and expectations congruent between the company and expatriates? *International Journal of Manpower,* 23 (7)

Ericsson (2004) *General Conditions for Long-Term Assignments Abroad*

www.ericsson.com, 2004-11-25
www.nokia.com, 2004-12-07

Interviews
MR. Göran Henriksson, Ericsson 2004-11- 24
Ms. Anne-Lene Bratli, Nokia 2004-12-07

Appendix A: English Interview Guide

Part A –   Company Data and Introduction of the Company's Repatriation

1. The respondent's name and position in the company?
2. When was the company founded?
3. Annual turnover of the company?
4. What does the company organization look like?
5. What is the number of people working in the company?
6. In how many countries does the company operate?
7. Why does the company use expatriates?
8. In what situations and for what positions are expatriates used?
9. How many people does the company send from home organization to work in foreign subsidiaries per year?

Part B –   Research Questions

How can the repatriation program used by MNCs prior to departure be described?

Task clarity

1. What issues does the company include in the explanation of the assignment?
    For instance:
    ─ The company's expectations on the expatriate?
    ─ The time period and deadlines for the assignment abroad?
    ─ How the work is evaluated?
    ─ Other issues?

Career counseling

1. Does the company inform the expatriate about the reasons why he or she is sent abroad for the assignment?

2. Does the company inform the expatriate about the importance of the assignment for the company?

3. Does the company inform the expatriate about the importance of the assignment for the expatriate?

4. Does the company inform the expatriate about possible positions in the home country upon return?

Formal policies for repatriation

1. Does the company have a formal policy for the repatriation process? If yes, how does it look like and why? If no, why has the company chosen not to have a formal policy?

How can the repatriation program used by MNCs during the assignment be described?

Perception of support while on the assignment

1. How does the company support the expatriate while he or she is on the assignment? For instance:
    − Compensation
    − Help with accommodation
    − Help with schooling for the children
    − Work assistance for the spouse

Nature and frequency of communication

1. Does the company communicate regularly with the expatriate while he or she is on the assignment? If yes,
    − Who takes care of the contact?
    − In what way and how does the company communicate with the expatriate?
    − How often?

How can the repatriation program used by MNCs upon return be described?

Quality of interaction with sponsors

1. Does the company assign the expatriate a sponsor? If yes,
    − How is the sponsor chosen?
    − What tasks does the sponsor have?

Perception of support upon return

1. What position is the expatriate assigned in the home country?
    − When does the company start to search for a position for the expatriate in the home country?

2. What kind of support does the repatriate receive after the return to the home country?   For instance:
    − Information about changes that has taken place in the home office
    − Training to reorient the repatriate to the home office
    − Help with dealing with reverse culture shock

Appendix B: Svensk Intervjuguide

Del A - Företagsinformation och Historia Kring Företagets Repatriation

1. Den svarande personens namn och ställning i företaget?
2. När grundades företaget?
3. Företagets årliga omsättning?
4. Hur ser företagsorganisationen ut?
5. Hur många personer arbetar i företaget?
6. I hur många länder verkar företaget?
7. Varför använder sig företaget av expatriater?
8. I vilka situationer och för vilka positioner använder sig företaget av expatriater?
9. Hur många personer skickar företaget för att arbeta från hem organisationen till dotterbolag i utlandet varje år?

Del B – Forsknings Frågor

Hur kan repatriations programmet som MNC:s använder före avförd beskrivas?

Tydlighet av uppdraget

1. Vad inkluderar företaget i beskrivningen av arbetsuppgiften? T.ex.:
   ─ Företagets förväntningar på personen i fråga?
   ─ Tidsram och deadlines för arbetsuppgiften utomlands?
   ─ Hur arbetsresultatet värderas?
   ─ Övrigt?

Karriär konsultation

1. Informerar företaget personen i fråga om orsakerna till varför han/hon skickas utomlands för detta uppdrag/arbete?

2. Informerar företaget personen i fråga nyttan av personens utlandsvistelse och arbetsinsats för företaget?

3. Informerar företaget personen i fråga om nyttan av utlandsvistelsen för denna person?

4. Informerar företaget personen i fråga om möjliga arbetsalternativ för honom/henne vid hemkomst?

Formell policy för repatriationen

1. Har företaget en skriven policy för repatriations processen? Om ja, hur ser den ut och varför? Om nej, varför har företaget valt att inte ha en formell policy?

Hur kan repatriations programmet som MNC:s använder under utlandsvistelsen beskrivas?

Perception av stöd under utlandsvistelsen

1. Hur stöder/hjälper ni personen när han/hon befinner sig utomlands? T.ex.
   — Kompensation
   — Hjälp med boende
   — Hjälp med skola åt barnen
   — Jobb åt partnern

Kommunikation mellan hemmaenheten och personen som befinner sig utomlands

1. Har ni kontinuerlig kontakt med personen medan han/hon befinner sig utomlands? Om ja,
   — Vem sköter kontakten?
   — På vilket sätt sköts kontakten?
   — Hur ofta?

Hur kan repatriations programmet som MNC:s använder efter hemkomst beskrivas?

Kvaliteten på interaktionen med sponsorn

1. Använder ni er av en sponsor? Om ja,
   — Hur tillsätts denna person?
   — Vilka uppgifter har denna person?

Perception av stöd vid hemkomst

1. Vad får personen för jobb efter hemkomsten till Sverige?
   — När börjar ni planera för ett jobb åt personen?

2. Vad får personen för stöd när han/hon kommer tillbaka till Sverige? T.ex.
   — Uppdatering av förändringar i organisationen
   — Träning för att hjälpa personen att anpassa sig till hemma organsationen
   — Hjälp med att hantera "reverse culture shock"