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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

> "An effective orientation program is designed as a system or process by which a new employee gradually learns about the job, the culture of the organization, rules, procedures and so forth. It also enhances the employment relationship and provides the foundation for worker motivation, commitment, and productivity." (Kaul, 1989)

An organization that hires internationally or relocates employees internationally can do much to facilitate success. Many orientation programs are designed inadequately as a one-time information session where the new recruit learns about the benefits, fills out tax-forms, and then reads the policy and procedure manuals.

An overseas assignment imposes additional financial, social, and personal investment on the part of the new expatriate. According to Ron Zemke (1989) who studied the growing body of research on orienting and socializing new employees, poor or no orientation can reduce new employee's effectiveness, which contributes to dissatisfaction and termination of employment.

> "Estimates of the number of international assignments ending in failure range from 25 to 50 percent. Moreover, estimates of failed assignments do not include instances in which the assignment was completed, but at a minimally accepted level of performance. It has been estimated that an additional 30 to 50

> percent of American expatriates stay in their international assignments, but are regarded as either marginally effective or ineffective by their organization. According to evidence accumulated over the past twenty years, roughly only one in three managers sent overseas gets the job done the way headquarters wanted it done. And, despite all the talk about globalization, there is no indication that the situation is greatly improving." (Bird & Dunbar, 1991)

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The major purpose of this study was to evaluate the pre-arrival orientation programs currently in place for new expatriate employees at The Higher Colleges of Technology, located in The United Arab Emirates. The secondary purpose of this study was to collect and compile pre-arrival orientation information from the same, to be used in orientation of future expatriate employees.

Major questions to be answered:

1. How well prepared are the new expatriates based on the pre-arrival materials they had received or researched on their own.
2. What information do the current employees feel would have been helpful for them to know before leaving home.

LIMITATIONS

The population used in the study was limited to the approximately 200 expatriates working in the Higher Colleges of Technology which is located in the United Arab Emirates.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

The internationalization of business over the past decade has increased the amount of professionals taking jobs overseas in countries that may be quite different from their own.

> "For many managers, their first expatriate assignment represents a major departure from anything they have previously experienced. They are confronted with a challenging new assignment, frequently in a strange and unfamiliar country. Beyond the job itself, there is the challenge of moving themselves and their families to a foreign land, establishing a new home, and settling into a new lifestyle, one quite different from which they left." (Bird & Dunbar, 1991)

The Higher Colleges of Technology in United Arab Emirates hire several expatriates from all parts of the world every year. The author is a new expatriate, concerned about being adequately prepared for such an assignment.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

The following are definitions from the Dictionary of Education (1959).

Culture: the behaviors and beliefs characteristic of particular social, ethnic, or age group. The sum total of ways of living built by a group of human beings and transmitted from one generation to another.

Orientation: an introduction, as to guide one in adjusting to new surroundings, employment, activity.

Employee: a person working for another person or business firm for pay.

Assignment: a position of responsibility, post of duty, or the like, to which one is appointed.

Acculturation: the process of adopting the cultural traits or social patterns of another group.

Neophyte: a beginner or novice (new employee).

Expatriate: to withdraw (oneself) from residence in one's native country.

Repatriate: to return to one's own country.

Middle East: the area from Libya East to Afghanistan, usually including Egypt, Sudan, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Turkey, Iraq, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and other countries of the Arabian Peninsula.

United Arab Emirate: an independent federation in Eastern Arabia, formed in 1971, now comprising seven emirates on the Southern coast (formerly, Pirate Coast or Trucial Coast) of the Persian Gulf, formerly under British protection: Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Umm al-Qaiwain, Ras al-Khaimah (joined 1972), and Fujairah.

Overseas: Over, across, or beyond the sea; abroad. Pertaining to countries, associations, activities, etc., beyond the sea. Countries or territories across the sea or ocean.

Cross-Cultural: combining, pertaining to, or contrasting two or more cultures or cultural groups.

ORGANIZATION OF STUDY

Chapter I -- Introduction which includes the problem statement, major questions to be answered, limitations, need for the study, and definition of terms.

Chapter II -- Review of Literature includes guidelines for developing effective orientation models and numerous examples of successful orientation programs done at several multinational organizations. Benefits of an effective orientation program are presented. This is followed by expatriate issues which include: overseas assignment; selection process; pre-arrival orientation models; acculturation process; cross-cultural issues; elements of success; costs associated with an overseas assignment; and rate, cost and causes of failure.

Chapter III --- Summary pertaining to the procedures used in study which include sources of data, construction of the instrument, administration of the instrument, and description of how the analysis of the data gathered will be presented.

Chapter IV --- Presentation which includes the analysis and interpretation of data received from expatriates currently working at Higher College of Technology, United Arab Emirates.

Chapter V --- Summary, conclusions, implications, and recommendations as a result of the study are presented.

Chapter II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The review of literature include books, journals, and periodicals available at Roland R. Renne Library at Montana State University, and the researcher's private professional library.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter addresses issues related to orientation in general with emphasis on pre-arrival expatriate orientation explored by other researchers and authors. It begins with a list of orientation themes followed by the successful orientation models at Texas Instruments Inc., Corning Glass Works, Disney, and Apple Training Support. This is followed by the benefits of an effective orientation program. Expatriate issues, which include selection guidelines, pre-arrival orientation models, the acculturation process, cross-cultural issues, costs associated with an overseas assignment, elements that contribute to success, and the rate, cost, and causes of failure are discussed.

SUCCESSFUL ORIENTATION MODELS

> "The difference between a domestic and an overseas assignment is more a matter of degree than substance - both share elements of newness and uncertainty, both contain elements of surprise and discomfort. This is not to suggest that differences between domestic and overseas assignments are small. Moving from New York to Riyadh, Saudi Arabia is likely to require a far greater adjustment than one from New York to Chicago." (Bird & Dunbar, 1991).

Several large organizations have developed excellent orientation programs after doing extensive research. Effective orientation minimizes high turnover of staff, low productivity, and the costs associated with hiring and bringing the new employees up to speed.

The orientation efforts of Disney, Texas Instruments, Apple Training Support, and Corning Glass are exemplary. "What makes these programs so effective while so many others remain tedious exercises in paper shuffling and benefits briefings?" asks Ron Zemke (1989). He claims to have found six common themes.

1. Significant and measurable goals are set for the orientation program.
2. Orientation is a joint responsibility of training staff and line supervisors.
3. Anxiety reduction (dealing with new-employee jitters) is carefully orchestrated.
4. Make sure employee expectations and the actual responsibilities of the new job are the same.
5. There has to be senior management commitment and participation in the orientation process.
6. Have real work ready for the new employee.

TEXAS INSTRUMENTS

One of the earliest formal studies of an orientation program was conducted by the corporate training group at Texas Instruments Inc. The program which began in the mid - 1970s was given a two year controlled trial.

> "According to Ralph T. Dosher Jr., recently retired manager of T.I. corporate education, the orientation was one of the most extensively studied training programs T.I. ever conducted.
>
> During the experimental period, new employees were assigned randomly to one of two training groups: either the traditional briefing or an experimental employee "socialization" program. The two-hour traditional program covered working hours, pay periods, parking, insurance and so forth. The socialization program ran seven hours and covered such subjects as career management, the importance of politics, picking the right boss and the importance of being in the right place at the right time. At the end of two years, researchers compared learning rates (time required to master the new job), units produced per hour, absenteeism and tardiness for employees in both groups. Employees who had been through the highly focused socialization program proved to be significantly superior on all measures to those who went through the traditional orientation. The most dramatic finding was the impact on turnover among newly hired professionals - engineers, computer specialists and the like. According to Dosher, turnover among those who had gone through the socialization program was 40 percent lower than for employees who had been through the short traditional program." (Zemke, 1989)

CORNING GLASS WORKS

Corning Glass Works received the coveted Yoder Heneman Personnel Creativity Award from the American Society for Personnel Administrators (A.S.P.A.), for its orientation system. Many organizations are using Corning Glass Works orientation program as a model. It is based on self-learning and even though much of the learning takes place in the first six months, the complete process takes 15 - 18 months according to Pamela A. Kaul (1989).

In 1980, Donald W. Hopkins, training director for Corning Glass Works launched a research and development campaign to design an orientation program to resolve the high turnover among the company's professional employees. Approximately 250 engineers, technicians, opticians, designers etc. were hired each year at a cost of $30,000 to $40,000 per head to bring them on board and up to speed (Ron Zemke, 1989). The program was implemented in 1981 and the " 'class of 1981' alone resulted in a saving of more than $460,000 in recruiting and training" says Joseph F. McKenna (1989).

> "Corning's case developers were shooting for four goals: a 17 percent decrease in three-year turnover: a 17 percent reduction in the time needed to master a new job: creation of a uniform understanding of corporate culture, values and goals:and development of a positive attitude toward the company and community among new hires. Corning's researchers and human resource people were stunned to find that by 1983, the end of the second year of testing, turnover among members of the experimental group - those who went through the new orientation process - was already 69 percent lower than turnover among those who had not experienced the process." (Zemke, 1989)

DISNEY

Disney's "In Search of Excellence: The Film" is undoubtedly the most visible new-employer orientation program, both at Disneyland in Anaheim, California and Walt Disney World in Orlando, Florida.

Disney orientation is actually a process and it begins in the selection interview where the prospective employees are given a more realistic view of working at one of the world famous theme parks. It is not all glamour; it is also hard work.

All new employees begin with a two-day orientation seminar called Traditions at Disney University. This provides the new recruits with a firm understanding of corporate traditions and values including Disney lore, language and culture. It also provides generic skills essential to job performance - primarily basic information giving and customer relations.

> "At the Future World unit of Epcot Center, for example, trainers and lead employees conduct a five-day orientation and training program for newcomers. This program deals with everything from the philosophy and purpose of Epcot and Future World to job skills, dress and guest courtesy". (Zemke, 1989)

The Traditions Seminar is carefully orchestrated in a comfortable, specially designed training room. Instructors set the tone for the way new employees will treat guests.

APPLE COMPUTERS

"Orientation does not have to bury new employees in administrivia-not if its delivered on computer" says Brechlin and Rossett (1991). A computer based program developed for new employees of Apple Training Support (A.T.S.), a division of Apple Computer Inc. in Cupertino, California is delivered via HyperCard, an Apple Software Product.

> "The A.T.S. orientation relies on technology, graphics, interactivity, learner control, anecdotes, opinions and digitized images to be interesting to new employees.....A successful orientation depends on establishing a system to ensure adequate resources, planning, communication, development, testing, revision, update and maintenance. No manager should do it alone." (Brechlin & Rossett, 1991)

BENEFITS OF AN EFFECTIVE ORIENTATION PROGRAM

An effective orientation program has several advantages. According to Pamela A. Kaul (1989), orientation can:

- reduce start-up costs because it enables a new employee to reach the normal production level sooner
- reduce turnover
- save time in the long run
- minimize disciplinary actions
- lead to higher morale
- result in easier recruiting
- provide a greater understanding and appreciation of organization objectives.

EXPATRIATE ISSUES

OVERSEAS ASSIGNMENT

An overseas job assignment involves many risks - adjusting to new people, climate, culture, work methods, and even possible disappointment and failure that a new job can present. Relocated employees usually feel isolated because they are cut off from family, friends, and their former network of information resources.

> "First-time expatriate assignees are often ill-prepared for the range of activities they are required to engage in and, though they may possess the requisite skills, may not be sufficiently prepared to apply what they know. The uncertainty of doing business in a new culture clouds the determination of what task-related skills are required to get the job done." (Bird & Dunbar 1991)

SELECTION

According to Lanier (1979), wise selection of personnel can make a difference between success and failure regardless of the technical skills.

> "Those choosing personnel for overseas must select people who will quickly get a feel for many such elements of daily life. No matter what their technical skills, people should not be chosen for key management or joint-venture positions who cannot adapt readily to differences, who "blow up" if frustrated, who are thrown into a tizzy if the people they work with keep avoiding confrontation. One can teach skills or get a technician; one cannot teach empathy or sensitivity." (Lanier, 1979)

PRE-ARRIVAL ORIENTATION MODELS

Rosalie L. Tung (1982) in her research presented six major categories of expatriate training. These principles should be added to the previous orientation guidelines.

1. Environmental briefings:
   Information about the geography, climate, housing, schools.

2. Cultural Assimilation:
   Brief episodes describing intercultural encounters.

3. Cultural Orientation:
   Information about the cultural institutions, value systems of host country.

4. Language Training.

5. Sensitivity Training:
   Develop attitudinal flexibility.

6. Field Experience:
   A trip to the assigned country if at all possible.

Pre-arrival training in preparation for an overseas assignment, according to Alison R. Lanier (1979), is a 7 step plan.

1. Pre-visit (if time and funds permit):

   Experienced firms often send couples on such visits before the contract is signed. The couple should not be given the red-carpet "gloss job" treatment, but allowed to meet and talk to expatriates already there, to see a range of housing, schools, markets, clubs, etc. - and even the traffic jams. They should have a realistic base on which to build. In relation to the cost of the total transfer, money spent on an initial trip is not great but the value is.

2. Language:

Even 20 to 30 hours of instruction prior to departure is enough to make a tremendous difference. According to Lanier (1979), roughly 7% of Americans who do not started learning a language before arrival, work at it after. Where as 87% of Americans that started a language study (even 30 hours total) go on and attain a working knowledge. Reason: a very basic vocabulary gets them over the first hurdle of "I'll never be able to learn this."

3. Intensive Area Study:

This should include in considerable depth; attitudes, heritage, religious beliefs, priorities, sensitivities, political picture, the state of the economy, relationship with the current national prides etc.. "only with such knowledge can one begin to feel how people are likely to think, act or react; to understand conversations; to avoid being an ignoramus on arrival".

4. Country-Specific Handbook:

Each expatriate should take along a working book of company facts - tax plans, travel allowances, medical plans, etc. This book should also include country data: the way the law works if one has an accident, finding and handling household help, social customs, how well the telephone system works, etc.

5. In-House Counselling

Every expatriate needs real and detailed facts about the firms mechanics: good counselling on tax and legal matters, compensation, R&R, and the move itself. Repatriation should also be discussed.

6. Meeting Returnees:

Out-going families should spend time, if possible, with families who have returned from the same location. This should ideally take place mid-way through the preparation to allow accumulation of at least some understanding of the socio-economical base of the new country.

7. On Arrival

Well planned help for the first two weeks can make a notable difference in getting families off to a good start, thereby reducing the threat of burn-out.

> "What people need is immediate help in quickly establishing a new support system to replace the one they left behind: friends, laundry, shopping circuit - a daily pattern of activities.....Until the family feels settled and established, the employee will rarely have his or her mind fully on the job."

ACCULTURATION PROCESS

According to J. Stewart Black (1987) adjustment to the new culture takes place in four phases commonly referred to as the Stages of Acculturation.

1. In the first few weeks, fascination with the new and different aspects of the new culture and country are experienced. The person has not had enough time to discover that his past habits and behaviors are inappropriate in the new culture. This is because there is a complete lack of negative feedback.

2. Frustration and hostility towards the host country and its people follows. The person discovers his past behaviors are not acceptable but has not learned to substitute it. Then, culture shock occurs. The person has received extensive negative feedback and still does not know what to do about his behavior.

3. The person acquires some language skills and can move around on his/her own and has also learned some appropriate behaviors.

4. The person's adjustment is generally complete. He/she can perform necessary behaviors to function effectively without anxiety.

According to Bird and Dunbar (1991), much of the spousal and family adjustment is unanticipated. Each family experiences different levels of consciousness as they move into the international assignment. The whole process is broken down into three stages.

Stage 1: Most of the manager's thoughts are centered on whether or not to accept an international posting. Is this a good career move? What will be the effects of a foreign living experience on my family?

Stage 2: Focus shifts to one of transitional logistics: Mortgage payments, movers, children's education, doctors, dentists, etc.. This relates directly to the family's well-being and security.

Stage 3: Shortly after arrival in the host country, they come into full contact with the new culture. The expatriates experience the cycle of readjustment known as "culture shock." The cycle begins with an underlying expectations that the people in the new culture will really be like them, despite knowledge to the contrary. Initially, culturally different behavior is novel and over time, perceptions of novelty wane. Cultural differences becomes thorns in everyday life and get in the way of doing things like the family used to.

For the expatriate managers, work and contact with headquarters buffers the effects of cultural differences. For the spouse and children, there are fewer buffers.

Once novelty wears off, expatriates react to the new culture with fear and anger and, at some point, the expatriates withdraw from the new culture. They return home or hide out in the local "American club". They stop socializing with both the expatriates and the host-country acquaintances.

As expatriates repeatedly experience this cycle, culturally appropriate expectations about the behavior of others and themselves are developed. Only families that negotiated successfully through the cycle of readjustment can get the job done there.

Savich and Rogers (1988), present a model for personnel management called T.I.D.E. (Techniques for International Development of Expatriates). This model claims that an expatriate goes through eight stages.

1. Functional Stage

   In this stage the manager's technical and managerial skills are developed over an extended period long before departure.

2. Cultural Training Stage

   The manager learns about the new culture and prepares for the difficulties he may face while abroad. Three areas of training are: employee development, family development, and community relations development.

3. Resistance

   The next three stages together indicate how well a manager has absorbed a foreign culture's political, economic, military, and social systems (PEMS).
   Political: This determines how free the nations business people are to conduct business with Americans.
   Economic: This affects the attitude towards foreign investment.
   Military: This determines the country's view toward Americans.
   Social: This determines the cultural differences. The manager should know about the country's history, religion, language and customs. The more an overseas manager learn learns about these aspects of the foreign country before arriving, the more likely he is to succeed in his assignment.

4. Conflict

A manager who does not have a good understanding of PEMS systems, faces significant obstacles which results in conflict between his previously learned values and the new values of his host-country's culture.

5. Resolution

This is finally achieved when the manager achieves a balance between his own values, attitudes, and beliefs and those of the foreign culture.

6. Increased Efficiency

The manager combines his knowledge of his area of specialty with his knowledge of the host country to become a more effective manager.

7. Readjustment

This occurs when the manager returns home and has to readjust to the culture he once knew well.

8. Global Recognition

As time passes and the manager settles into a familiar routine, some of the minor events and frustrations of his overseas experience are forgotten.

The manager has gone through personal changes and the exposure to a new culture has created a new tolerance and acceptance of different ways of life. This experience produces a feeling of pride in having been accepted (and successful) in new surroundings.

CROSS-CULTURAL ISSUES

Alison R. Lanier (1979) states that "many corporations ask themselves 'Is cultural difference just fancy fill? Does it matter in dollar-and-cents terms? In any other terms?'"

> "How important is it for people to adapt to different standards, different priorities, different attitudes, different methods? Many say that we are all alike under the skin. Is that a myth or a reality? In either case, to what extent can an outsider call the tune, whether or not that outsider owns 51% of the shares? And to what extent is he or she the one who must adapt?" (Lanier, 1979)

All cultures have activities that bring happiness and pleasure. Successful expatriates usually find parallel substitutes. They may have a slightly different value system but each culture thrives on it.

> "Virtually all cultures value the general categories of art, sports, cuisine, music, dance, architecture, history, the family, and so on. However, all cultures' manifestations of those activities are not the same - the American expatriate may value baseball, steak and potatoes, and jazz; the new culture he/she is assigned to may value soccer, traditional folk music or raw fish." (Mendenhall & Oddou, 1985)

Cross-cultural training must be an essential part of the orientation for expatriate postings. Many a contract has been lost because of cultural ignorance. Cross-cultural sensitivity can be defined most simply as 'an accurate perception of others'.

Some countries/cultures may be harder to adjust to than others. Mendenhall and Oddou (1985) refer to this as "culturally-tough" and suggest that:

> "the personnel staff should take into account the "toughness" of the culture of the country to which the future expatriate will be assigned. Data gathered on the host country's political, legal, socioeconomic, business, and cultural system should be compared to those systems as they exist currently in the United States." (Mendenhall & Oddou, 1985)

ELEMENTS OF SUCCESS

Expatriates are more inclined to succeed when the following elements are present:

- "....expatriate's confidence and willingness to use the host culture's language has a greater influence on successful adjustment than did actual level of fluency in the foreign language." (Mendenhall & Oddou, 1985)

- "The ability to understand why foreigners behave the way they do is important in adjusting to an unfamiliar cultural environment" (Mendenhall & Oddou, 1985)

- "Well-adjusted expatriates were nonjudgemental and nonevaluative when interpreting the behavior of host-nationals" (Mendenhall & Oddou, 1985)

COSTS OF AN OVERSEAS ASSIGNMENT

Alison R. Lanier (1979) multiplies domestic base salary by 2.5 to 3 times to calculate what it takes to put an employee overseas.

> "A $25,000-a-year person then becomes $75,000 person if all goes well. However, if this person has to be returned prematurely because he or she (or his or her family) "couldn't make it" costs soar - estimated in the area of $80,000 for a family's premature return and replacement." (Lanier, 1979)

RATE, COST, AND CAUSES OF FAILURE

According to Mendenhall and Oddou (1985) premature return rate (failure rate) fluctuates between 25 percent and 40 percent. The average loss per failure ranges from $55,000 and $85,000 to the parent company. J. Stewart Blach (1987) estimates cost of failure to range from $50,000 to $150,000. Bird and Dunbar (1991), estimate the cost of individual failure to be in the range of $40,00 to $250,000.

"Burnouts" are expatriates that do not return home but perform at substandard level. The costs associated with burnouts is unknown and assumed to be very high. Some "invisible" costs are loss of self-esteem, self-confidence, and loss of prestige among one's peers. Intangible costs to the organization are the loss of goodwill and the irretrievable loss of business to the firm.

Rosalie L. Tung (1982) surveyed the reasons for expatriate's failure to function effectively. She lists reasons in descending order of importance.

1. The inability of the expatriate's spouse to adjust to the new cultural environment.
2. The expatriate's ability to adjust to the new cultural environment.
3. Other family related problems
4. Expatriate's personality or emotional maturity
5. Expatriate's ability to cope with larger responsibilities
6. Expatriates lack of technical competence
7. Lack of motivation to work overseas.

SUMMARY

This chapter has addressed orientation in terms of:

- Successful Orientation Models
  - Texas Instrument Inc.
  - Corning Glass Ware
  - Disney
  - Apple Training Support
- Benefits of an Effective Orientation Program
- Expatriate Issues
  - Overseas Assignment
  - Selection Process
  - Pre-arrival Orientation Models
  - Acculturation Process
  - Cross-culture Issues
  - Elements of Success
  - Costs of Overseas Assignment
  - Rate, Cost, and Cause of Failure

The importance of orientation, especially pre-arrival orientation is best exemplified by Ron Zemke in his article "Employee Orientation: a process, not a program" which states:

> "Creating a first class program and process is a job worth doing and doing well. But that last part - doing well - requires time, money, patience, some creativity, and an understanding of what has worked well for others. The old saying "Well begun is half done", applies here. When it comes to getting new employees off on the right foot and in sync with your organization's goals, values and expectations, **well begun may be a lot more than half done."**

Chapter III

RESEARCH PROCEDURES

PROCEDURES

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the pre-arrival orientation programs currently in place for new expatriate employees at The Higher Colleges of Technology (HCT) located in The United Arab Emirates (UAE) and to compile orientation information gathered from current employees of the same to be used for future expatriate orientation.

This chapter outlines the procedures followed to obtain the needed data from expatriates currently employed at HCT, in UAE.

1. Sources of Data
2. Construction of the Data Instrument
3. Administration of the Survey Instrument
4. Data Analysis Methods

SOURCES OF DATA

The first set of data for this study were obtained by a questionnaire (Appendix C) sent to all expatriates currently working for The Higher Colleges of Technology located in United Arab Emirates, and the second set of data were collected by interviewing some of these expatriates.

The idea for the study began in May 1991, when the researcher received an orientation information package from Higher Colleges of Technology (HCT), in United Arab Emirates (UAE). Formal study began in July, 1991 by reviewing related information through searches on Infotrack and Eric databases at the Roland R. Renne Library, Montana State University at Bozeman, Montana. For the duration of the study, the researcher continued reviewing current journals and other sources of information.

CONSTRUCTION OF THE SURVEY INSTRUMENT

After a review of the literature, which identified elements considered important to the study, two instruments were constructed. Drafts of the questionnaire and the interview instrument were reviewed by the Business Education Research Class at Montana State University for suggestions in wording, additions and deletions. Final drafts of the instruments and cover letters were presented to Dr. Norman Millikin, the researcher's advisor, for approval. Upon approval, the instruments were distributed to expatriates at HCT, in UAE for the study.

The second instrument, although not part of problem solving, was constructed to gather data on pre-arrival orientation information from current expatriate employees at HCT, in UAE. A compilation of the findings can be found in Appendix A.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE SURVEY

Early December, 1992, the researcher did a pilot study using a sample of 7 expatriates. Minor changes to the instrument were made. To obtain permission to administer this instrument, the researcher presented the same to Norm Grey, Director, Dubai Men's College, who also suggested a few minor changes. The instrument was then presented to Edward Kolber, Director, Central Services, Abu Dhabi, who had the option to recommend changes or add additional questions. Mr. Kobler suggested that the researcher get permission from Dr. Steven Nicholson, Vice Chancellor of the Colleges. The researcher met Dr. Nicholson in March, 1992 to discuss the content and security of the findings. The instrument and the study was approved and Dr. Nicholson attached a memo requesting the expatriate employees participate in the survey. The researcher agreed to withhold specifics of the finding pending approval from his Research Advisor.

Total number of expatriates working for The Higher Colleges of Technology is approximately 200 employees. A sample size of 118 (picked randomly) with a response rate of 55.9 percent (66 respondents) generated a cross-section that was representative of the population. A two week deadline was set and since there was an adequate response, there was no need for a follow up letter.

The second instrument was completed by the researcher in face-to-face interviews with twenty (20) expatriate employees. Since this part of the research was not meant to be problem solving, only expatriates who were willing to share the information were selected.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Data obtained from the first survey instrument was entered into a dBaseIV database. The researcher was able to score and analyze the data by creating conditional queries and using dBaseIV facilities -- QBE (Query By Example) and SQL (Structured Query Language).

The researcher used WordPerfect 5.1 and the graphs were created in DrawPerfect and imported into the WordPerfect.

From the study and analysis of the findings presented in chapter 4, conclusions were drawn regarding the orientation of expatriates in HCT, in UAE. These conclusions are presented in chapter 5 along with recommendations, and their implications.

A compilation of the orientation information gathered from face-to-face interviews with expatriates (the second survey instrument), is presented in Appendix A.

Chapter IV

FINDINGS

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides the tabulation and analysis of data obtained from the survey of supervisors, faculty, and staff working for the Higher Colleges of Technology in the United Arab Emirates.

A questionnaire packet containing the following was distributed: a cover letter from Dr. Steve Nicholson, Vice Chancellor; a second cover letter requesting the questionnaires be returned to the Director's Executive Assistant at each of the six college campuses.

There were a total of 118 questionnaires sent and 85 were returned for a 72% return. Nineteen (19) of the 85 returned were disqualified because they were hired locally without any orientation, giving 66 or a total return of 55.9 percent.

The following tables present the data concerning the demographics of the people that responded. It can be concluded from these tables that the majority of the respondents were married men between the ages of 31 and 50.

Demographics of Respondents

Table 1a
Age and sex distribution

Age	Female	Percent	Male	Percent
21 - 30	3	4.5%	1	1.5%
31 - 40	12	18.2%	16	24.2%
41 - 50	5	7.5%	18	27.3%
> 50	1	1.5%	10	15.2%
Total:	21	31.7%	45	68.3%

Table 1b
Marital status and children (female)

Female	Count	Children In the UAE
Married with spouse in the UAE	11	16.7%
no children	2	0
1 child	2	2
2 children	4	4
3 or more children	3	2
Married with spouse not in the UAE	3	4.5%
no children	0	0
1 child	1	0
2 children	2	0
3 or more children	0	0
Single	7	10.7%

Table 1c
Marital status and children (male)

Male	Count	Children In the UAE
Married with spouse in the UAE	36	54.5%
no children	5	0
1 child	2	2
2 children	13	10
3 or more children	16	10
Married with spouse not in the UAE	2	3.0%
no children	0	0
1 child	1	0
2 children	1	0
3 or more children	0	0
Single	7	10.7%

The majority of the respondents are male, married with two or more children and their spouses are with them. Among the single respondents, there were just as many single males as there were females but, there were more single females in proportion to the total females than there were single males in proportion to the total male respondents.

Table 2
Employment position

Position	Number	Percent
Directors	2	3.0%
Supervisors	16	24.2%
Faculty	42	63.6%
Staff	6	9.2%

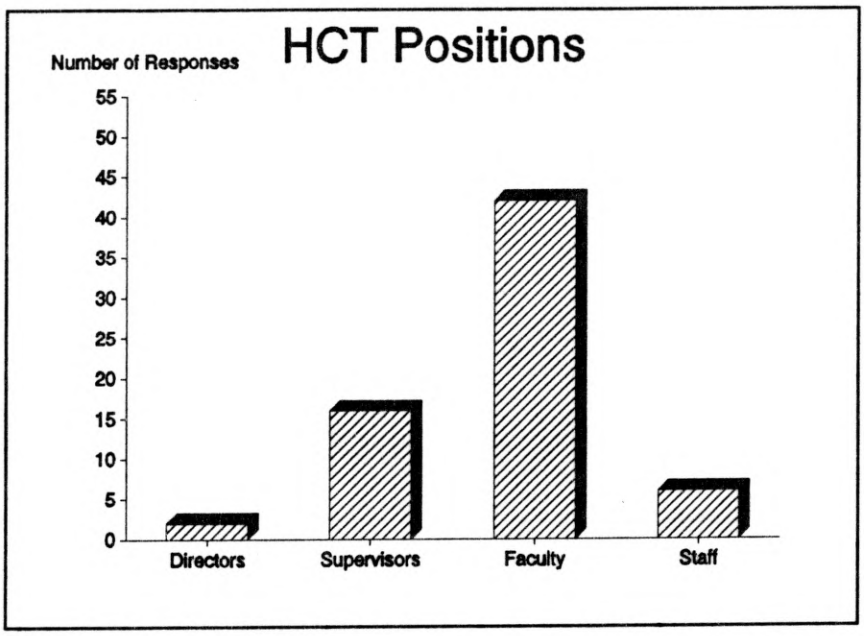


Figure 1.

Although the majority of the respondents were faculty members, it should be noted that just over 25% of the respondents were from administration.

Over 75% of the administration (directors and supervisors) were hired in Canada - 14 out of the 18 respondents.

Table 3
Country of hire

Hire Country	Number	Percent
Bahrain	10	15.2%
Canada	28	42.4%
Sudan	2	3.0%
Egypt	1	1.5%
Algeria	1	1.5%
Ireland	1	1.5%
Jordan	1	1.5%
Kuwait	3	4.5%
Oman	2	3.0%
Iran	1	1.5%
Saudi Arabia	5	7.6%
United States	5	7.6%
Syria	1	1.5%
No response	5	7.6%

Initially (four years ago), most expatriates were hired from Canada and the Higher Colleges of Technology were set up on a Canadian College system. A year later, there was a large recruit from Bahrain and India. More recently, the HCT is hiring from around the globe including New Zealand, Philippines and the United States of America.

Table 4
Nationalities

Country of Residence	Number	Percent
Gulf Countries Community	9	13.6%
Europeans	12	18.2%
North Americans	36	54.5%
Asians	8	12.1%
Other	1	1.5%

The majority of respondents were North American at 54.5%.

Table 5
Length of residency in the UAE

Years in the UAE	Number	Percent
Less than 1 year	15	22.7%
1 - 2 years	25	37.9%
2 or more years	26	39.4%

Staffing Higher Colleges of Technology is stabilizing as is the curriculum and student intake/exit.

Table 6
Developing/under developed world experience

Developing/Under Developed Country	Number	Percent
No Experience	21	31.8%
Experienced (see report below for details)	44	66.7%
No response	1	1.5%

Two-thirds (66.7%) of the respondents had experience working in either the developing or the under developed world. There were 31.8% of expatriates that had no previous experiences as expatriates which would imply that this kind of experience was desirable and not a mandatory criterion for employment at HCT.

A compilation of work experience in the developing or under-developed countries of all the respondents follows:

Tanzania - 4 years, Swaziland - 2 years, Papua New Guinea - 3 years.

Saudi Arabia - 7 years.

Jordan - 6 years.

Chile - 3.5 years, Saudi Arabia - 4 years.

Singapore - 2 years.

Kuwait - 5 years.

East and Central Africa, PNG - 8 years.

Sudan - 2 years, Ethiopia - 4 years, Saudi Arabia - 3 years.

Malaysia - 3 years.

Pakistan - 2.5 years.

Kuwait - 2 years.

Africa and Asia (S.E) - 5 years in total.

Saudi Arabia - 5 years.

Sudan for 11 years

Yemen Arab Republic - 8 months

Saudi Arabia - 10 years

Algeria for 1 year, Kuwait for 1 year, Seychelles for 2 years, Malaysia for 2.5 years.

Dominican Republic, Turkey, Laos, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Yemen - 15 years.

Kuwait - 2 years.

Iran, Kuwait, Qatar - 8 years

Oman - 3 years

Kuwait - 14 years

India, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain - total of 13 years.

Bahrain - 15 years.

My own country, Syria - 11 years.

U.A.E. - 2 years. I have lived here before.

China - 1 year, Saudi Arabia - 7 years, Spain - 1 year.

Bahrain - 10 years.

Saudi Arabia - 2 years.

Nigeria - 2 years.

Kuwait - 4 years.

Iran - 19 years.

Sudan - 18 years

Canada - remote - 10 years

Saudi Arabia, Kuwait - 8 years

Yemen 12.5 years, China - 1 year, Poland - 8 weeks

China - 6 months

India - 15 years.

Egypt, Burkino Fasso, Uganda. 8 years.

Uganda - 5 years.

Tunisia, Libya - 6 years

North Africa - 18 months, K.S.A - 8 years

Saudi Arabia - 3 years, Costa Rica - 6 years.

Uganda - 1 year, Tanzania - 4 years, U.A.E - 12 years.

The following tables represent the findings of questions that were directly related to the pre-arrival orientation packages.

Table 7
Read all the information supplied by the orientation committee

Read all information supplied to me.	Number	Percent
Strongly Agree	27	40.9%
Agree	23	34.8%
Disagree	4	6.1%
Strongly Disagree	0	0.0%
Not Applicable	10	15.2%
No response	2	3.0%

Table 8
Did extensive research on their own

Did extensive research on their own	Number	Percent
Strongly Agree	18	27.3%
Agree	34	51.6%
Disagree	8	12.1%
Strongly Disagree	3	4.5%
Not Applicable	3	4.5%

It would appear from the above two tables that most of the respondents read all of the pre-arrival materials that were sent to them. They also did extensive research on their own to learn about life in the United Arab Emirates.

Table 9
Bring appropriate clothing to the UAE

Clothing - based on information supplied	Number	Percent
Strongly Agree	15	22.7%
Agree	32	48.5%
Disagree	5	7.6%
Strongly Disagree	3	4.5%
Not Applicable	11	16.7%

Most respondents were able to bring appropriate clothing to the UAE based on information that was provided in the pre-arrival orientation package.

Table 10
UAE was more westernized than expected

Expected Westernized	Number	Percent
Strongly Agree	19	28.8%
Agree	27	40.9%
Disagree	11	16.7%
Strongly Disagree	3	4.5%
Not Applicable	6	9.1%

Some of the literature sent in the pre-arrival orientation packages contained information on how Westernized the UAE appeared to be. Most respondents thought that UAE was more westernized than they expected based on the literature they received.

Table 11
Materials received depicted an accurate representation of the status of women in this community

Accurate Status of Women	Number	Percent
Strongly Agree	4	6.1%
Agree	23	34.8%
Disagree	13	19.7%
Strongly Disagree	4	6.1%
Not Applicable	21	31.8%
No response	1	1.5%

Although 40.9% thought the information on the status of women in this community was accurate, 25.8% thought it to be inaccurate. More importantly, 33.3% of respondents opted not to answer this question. The researcher feels that this is because many expatriates did not receive any information on this subject or that they respect the culture and judging this culture by norms of other cultures would be unfair.

Table 12
After accepting the position, might not get visa to the UAE

Afraid Wouldn't Get Visa	Number	Percent
Strongly Agree	3	4.5%
Agree	6	9.1%
Disagree	23	34.9%
Strongly Disagree	22	33.3%
Not Applicable	11	16.7%
No response	1	1.5%

Most respondents felt comfortable that they would receive appropriate visas to work for HCT after they had resigned from their respective jobs.

Table 13
Well informed about my travel plans

Travel Arrangements	Number	Percent
Strongly Agree	17	25.7%
Agree	25	37.5%
Disagree	9	13.6%
Strongly Disagree	9	13.6%
Not Applicable	6	9.1%

Generally, the majority of new employees, were well informed of their travel arrangements.

Table 14
Hotel accommodations upon arrival were excellent

Hotel Accommodations	Number	Percent
Strongly Agree	30	45.5%
Agree	29	44.0%
Disagree	2	3.0%
Strongly Disagree	3	4.5%
Not Applicable	2	3.0%

There is no question that Higher Colleges of Technology provide excellent hotel accommodations for the first 6 days in the UAE while they shop for furnishings, licenses, utilities, etc..

Table 15
Employment contract easy to understand

Employment Contract Easy to Understand	Number	Percent
Strongly Agree	9	13.6%
Agree	37	56.1%
Disagree	15	22.7%
Strongly Disagree	4	6.1%
Not Applicable	0	0.0%
No response	1	1.5%

Although the majority (69.7%) agree that the contract is easy to understand, many comments about the fact that the contract was not binding on the part of Higher Colleges of Technology were volunteered.

Table 16
Studied MEED Guide extensively before arrival to the UAE

Studied MEED Guide Before Arrival	Number	Percent
Strongly Agree	14	21.2%
Agree	13	19.7%
Disagree	9	13.6%
Strongly Disagree	6	9.1%
Not Applicable	24	36.4%

MEED Guide is a book that was supplied to new recruits. It would appear that a whole segment of new employees did not receive this book. Those that received it studied it extensively before arriving in the UAE.

Table 17
Studied MEED Guide extensively after arriving in the UAE

Studied MEED Guide After Arrival	Number	Percent
Strongly Agree	2	3.0%
Agree	32	48.5%
Disagree	15	22.7%
Strongly Disagree	5	7.6%
Not Applicable	12	18.2%

Some respondents must have received or purchased this book post arrival because over 50% read this book while in the UAE.

Table 18
Would like repatriation orientation

Would Like Repatriation Orientation	Number	Percent
Strongly Agree	14	21.2%
Agree	22	33.3%
Disagree	19	28.8%
Strongly Disagree	7	10.6%
Not Applicable	3	4.5%
No response	1	1.5%

The majority of respondents (54.5%) felt they needed some repatriation orientation.

Table 19
The Medical facilities are better than expected

Medical Facilities are better than expected	Number	Percent
Strongly Agree	4	6.1%
Agree	22	33.3%
Disagree	25	37.9%
Strongly Disagree	8	12.1%
Not Applicable	7	10.6%

The medical facilities can range from excellent to very poor. Cities like Al Ain have very poor medical facilities and Dubai and Abu Dhabi have excellent facilities.

Table 20
Difficulty in finding out the required inoculations to travel to the UAE

Inoculations	Number	Percent
Strongly Agree	4	6.1%
Agree	10	15.2%
Disagree	30	45.4%
Strongly Disagree	11	16.7%
Not Applicable	9	13.6%
No response	2	3.0%

21.3% found information on inoculation/vaccinations requirements for the UAE scarce.

Table 21
Sponsorship of dependents

Sponsorship of Dependents	Number	Percent
Strongly Agree	19	28.8%
Agree	27	40.9%
Disagree	5	7.6%
Strongly Disagree	2	3.0%
Not Applicable	12	18.2%
No response	1	1.5%

Anyone coming to the UAE has to have a visa (except British citizens). HCT will provide the residency visa to the new employee, but cannot do the same for his/her family. The employee in turn has to sponsor the family as his/her dependents and is therefore responsible for their well being. The majority of respondents found the information they received to be clear and precise.

Table 22
Official documents required in the UAE

Official Documents	Number	Percent
Strongly Agree	13	19.7%
Agree	20	30.3%
Disagree	13	19.7%
Strongly Disagree	2	3.0%
Not Applicable	17	25.8%
No response	1	1.5%

In the UAE, original or photocopied documents such as marriage certificate, birth certificate, passport, etc., are required at many local businesses (banks, liquor stores, ...) and government offices. Although 50.0% of the respondents received enough information on the kind of documents required in the UAE, and 22.7% disagreed.

Table 23
Resignation policies are clearly stated

Resignation Policies clearly stated	Number	Percent
Strongly Agree	4	6.1%
Agree	22	33.4%
Disagree	20	30.3%
Strongly Disagree	6	9.1%
Not Applicable	4	6.1%

Exactly half the respondents think that the contract is clear and understandable and the other half disagreed.

Table 24
Information on furnishings of the new home in the UAE

Furnishing Information	Number	Percent
Strongly Agree	3	4.5%
Agree	19	28.8%
Disagree	25	37.9%
Strongly Disagree	7	10.6%
Not Applicable	12	18.2%

HCT provides a fixed amount of money for furnishing the new home. Although 33.3% of the respondents found the information adequate, 48.5% of the respondents thought that there was not enough information on furnishing the new home in the pre-arrival orientation package.

Table 25
Did extensive research about the tax laws of home country

Home Country Tax Laws	Number	Percent
Strongly Agree	13	19.7%
Agree	19	28.8%
Disagree	22	33.3%
Strongly Disagree	1	1.5%
Not Applicable	11	16.7%

The majority of the respondents did extensive research on the tax laws of their homeland.

Table 26
Education standard of HCT student as expected

Education Standard of HCT Students as Expected	Number	Percent
Strongly Agree	5	7.6%
Agree	35	53.0%
Disagree	15	22.7%
Strongly Disagree	8	12.1%
Not Applicable	3	4.5%

60.6% of respondents found the education standard of students at HCT met with their expectations and 34.8% found it otherwise.

Table 27
Information about education for children

Education of Children Information	Number	Percent
Strongly Agree	2	3.0%
Agree	13	19.7%
Disagree	11	16.7%
Strongly Disagree	7	10.6%
Not Applicable	32	48.5%
No response	1	1.5%

Although 22.7% of respondents thought there was enough information on education of their children, 27.3% found the information inadequate.

Table 28
Would like the college calendar

Would Like the College Calendar	Number	Percent
Strongly Agree	22	33.3%
Agree	33	50.0%
Disagree	0	0.0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0.0%
Not Applicable	11	16.7%

A unanimous response. Everybody agreed that the college calendar should have been included with the orientation package.

Table 29
Professional development information

Professional Development Information	Number	Percent
Strongly Agree	1	1.5%
Agree	7	10.6%
Disagree	24	36.4%
Strongly Disagree	18	27.3%
Not Applicable	16	24.2%

An overwhelming majority (63.7) of respondents thought that there was not enough information on professional development included in the orientation package.

Table 30
Like to know the courses to be taught

Courses to be Taught	Number	Percent
Strongly Agree	23	34.9
Agree	21	31.8
Disagree	9	13.6
Strongly Disagree	0	0.0
Not Applicable	12	18.2
No response	1	1.5

Most respondents would have liked to know the courses they would be teaching.

Table 31
Accuracy of the orientation material

Orientation Material Accurate	Number	Percent
Strongly Agree	3	4.5
Agree	31	47.0
Disagree	15	22.8
Strongly Disagree	2	3.0
Not Applicable	14	21.2
No response	1	1.5

Although 51.5% of respondents thought the information they received in the pre-arrival orientation package was accurate, there was 25.8% that think otherwise.

Table 32
Orientation committee did a good job

Orientation Committee did a Good Job	Number	Percent
Strongly Agree	14	21.2%
Agree	26	39.4%
Disagree	9	13.6%
Strongly Disagree	5	7.6%
Not Applicable	11	16.7%
No response	1	1.5%

Did the orientation committee do a good job? The majority, (60.6%) of respondents thought they did and 21.2% thought they did not.

Table 33
Overall rating of the pre-arrival orientation package

Rating	Number	Percent
Excellent	5	7.6%
Good	18	27.3%
Acceptable	20	30.3%
Poor	10	15.2%
Unacceptable	6	9.1%
No responses	7	10.6%

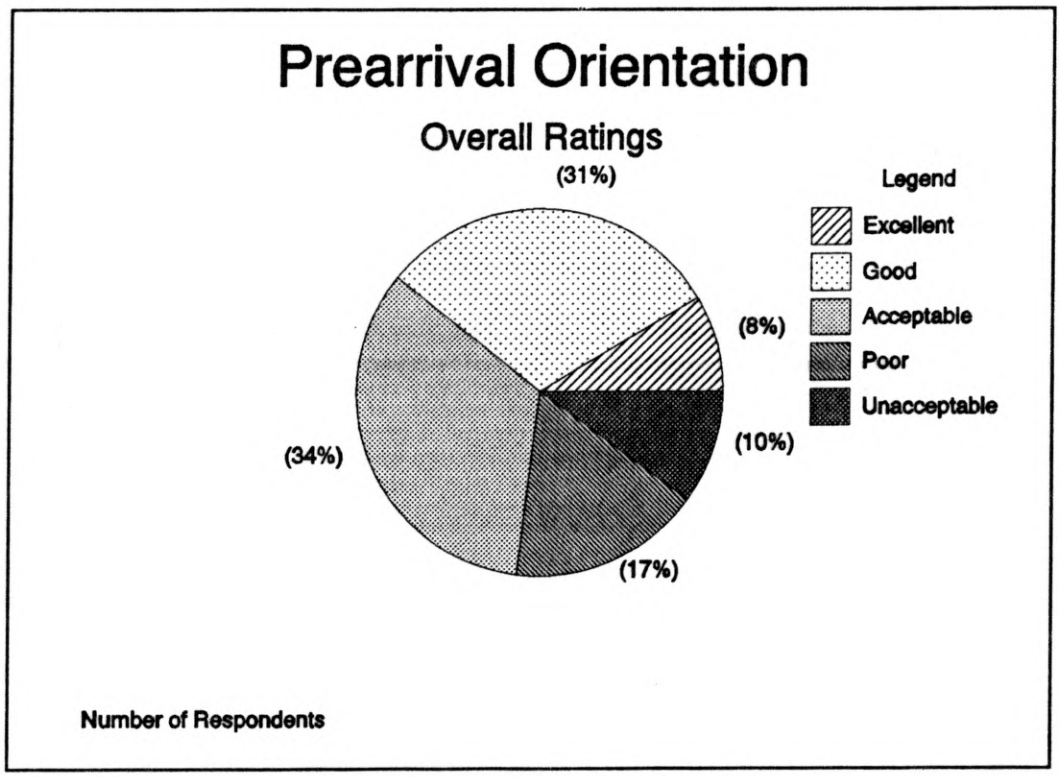


Figure 2.

The above table and chart clearly show that although the majority of the respondents rated the pre-arrival orientation as acceptable or better, there was still 24.3% of the respondents that were unhappy.

Table 34
Knowing what you know now, would you have taken this job?

Take Job	Number	Percent
Yes	45	68.2%
No	8	12.1%
Unsure	10	15.2%
No response	3	4.5%

The majority (68.2%) of respondents like their jobs and would have taken the job, knowing what they know now about the job, the culture, the students, etc.. Also, 27.3% of respondents would have either not taken the job or were not sure if they would have, if they knew what they know now (hind-sight).

Table 35
Would you recommend this job to a friend?

Recommend	Number	Percent
Yes	37	56.1%
No	12	18.2%
Unsure	14	21.2%
No response	3	4.5%

Although 56.1% of respondents had no hesitation in recommending their jobs to a friend, 39.4% of respondents would either not recommend a job with HCT or were not sure that they would.

Table 36
Have you made any cultural mistakes?

Cultural Mistakes		Number	Percent	
Yes	Lack of information	11	16.7	
	Not a lack of information	4	6.1	
	Unsure	4	6.1	28.9%
No cultural mistakes		37		56.0%
Unsure of mistakes		8		12.1%
No responses		2		3.0%

The majority (56.0%) of respondents were sure that they had not made any cultural mistakes. The researcher did not give adequate opportunity for the respondents (28.9%) that had made cultural mistakes to comment on the subject. Therefore, analysis on the type of cultural mistakes can not be made.

The following is a summary of the comments made by the respondents:

The pre-arrival orientation package should be more organized and more formalized.

It was very well-done and one could adapt easily to the new environment. Maybe, Dubai city and its cosmopolitan life style is also responsible for enabling us to feel at home here.

Many did not receive any pre-arrival orientation materials before arriving in the UAE.

Many had worked in the Middle East before and therefore found the pre-arrival orientation package of little use.

MEED guide was not given out prior to 1990.

It would be more efficient to have a generalized compilation of information on all of the U.A.E. first with subsections which pertain to each of the three college/city locations and the peculiarities of each location -- assuming that this information is in text format.

The pre-arrival orientation is evolving and distinct for each college. Last year, it was better than the year before which was better than the year before that which ....

It is frustrating not to be well informed about the culture and the country, so it is an excellent idea to give prospective employees as much objective information as possible. Al Ain is particularly conservative, so newcomers need to be made aware of this as soon as possible.

If I had known that the contract was not binding on the part of HCT, I would not have accepted the position.

In the interview they promised us education allowance for our children and when we arrived, they denied that !!!!

A short course in basic everyday Arabic on arrival would have been useful.

The employee should be informed in advance about the visa problems, with a clear cut advice on "when to resign". It is likely that an employee might resign from his job, only to realize later that his visa request had been rejected.

This questionnaire, like the orientation programs, lend to concentrate on westerners, forgetting about mid-eastern ones, sub-continental, etc....

There was no orientation to our apartment - how the stove, hot water switches, washing machine, etc. worked. This information would be extremely valuable to any new staff or faculty, however it is of no use to anyone if it is not given out or received. I would like to obtain this information even now that we have been here for 7 months.

The teacher should be informed beforehand of the courses he/she is likely to handle. If it is possible, he should then at least be provided with a copy of the program matrix (e.g. Banking, Office Automation, etc.) so he could identify areas/subjects where he could be most affective and about which he might have some useful instructional materials (which he could bring over).

For women, it would have been nice to know that our benefits were going to be stripped away. I am single, so no worries, but I would sure NEVER get married here!! No housing, tickets, school fees. It gives a bad impression. It's like saying we don't value married women as INDEPENDENT human beings, yet this is what we're trying to teach our students !! Go figure.

Much more info about courses to be taught, calendar, resources available and materials needed should have been given before coming her. It could have saved a great deal of time and energy.

It would have been more useful to have a presentation with video/slides.

Cultural awareness orientation, especially "in the classroom," is totally ignored now, but was well covered in 1988 orientation.

Chapter V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSIONS

The pre-arrival orientation process at the Higher Colleges of Technology has evolved from nothing to an acceptable level in just four years. Every year the administration has increased its orientation budget to reflect the corresponding staffing demands.

Individuals expatriating to the UAE, tend to warm up to the culture very quickly. The people are friendly and very accommodating, partly because eighty percent of the population are expatriates with the majority of the coming from India and Pakistan followed closely by expatriates from other Middle Eastern countries. There are also a lot of Filipinos working mostly in the service industries. The British have been here for a long time and are generally employed in administration.

It would appear that although most respondents were very positive about the pre-arrival orientation they received, there is however, a fairly large minority that were not happy.

The majority of the pre-arrival orientation is conducted by the individual campuses or as is the case in Dubai, jointly by the Men's and the Women's College faculty and staff. An orientation committee collects and mails the information about the culture, the city, etc., to the incumbent. Central Services sends information about housing, tickets, furnishings, etc., along with the contract usually via a courier service.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The pre-arrival orientation could be done in three phases, the interview phase, the offer phase, and the acceptance phase.

The Interview Phase. The prospective employee should be given enough time to view a short video (maximum one hour) while waiting for the interview. The video should contain footage of the college life, student interviews and a little bit about life in the Emirates.

The Offer Phase. Along with the offer of employment, the would-be employee should receive details of the contract, housing information, furnishing information, college calendar, etc.. It would also be helpful if names and addresses of one or two ex-employees that live in the same area could be supplied. The repatriates would be volunteers who have had a positive experience with HCT and the Gulf and are willing to spend time to answer questions, offer advice and council the new recruit.

The Acceptance Phase. This should take place when the prospective employee accepts the job and really needs to get ready, physically and mentally. One or two employees that are working in the same department should be assigned to help settle the new expatriate (a buddy system). There are also several HCT employees returning to their own country and usually have a lot of household items for sale. If it can be organized, photographs along with photocopies of bill of sales could be mailed to the new employee. Buying a used car in the same manner would eliminate the tremendous amount of stress that is generated in the first couple of weeks.

Recommendations to specific problem areas highlighted by the respondents are as follows:

Recommendation 1.

Many respondents (69.7%) thought that the UAE was more western than they had expected (based on the pre-arrival orientation).

Include more information on the western lifestyle available here.

Recommendation 2.

Many respondents (28.8%) found the employment contract was not easy to understand. More importantly, there were a number of comments on the binding value of the contract.

The information on the pre-arrival orientation package about the contract states that this contract is binding on both parties and gives guidelines on how to nullify or terminate the contract. Having spent some time at HCT, one learns through the grapevine of contracts terminated abruptly for rather dubious reasons. However, the pre-arrival orientation package can really do nothing about this. Central Services could help by elaborating on some of these conditions that have lead to dismissal of staff.

Recommendation 3.

Half (50.0%) of respondents found the contract was not very easy to read.

Central Services with help from HCT lawyers, could help rewrite the contract so that it is easier to understand.

Recommendation 4.

Over half (54.5%) of respondents stated that they would like some Repatriation Orientation.

Research shows that one must deal with culture shock when expatriating to another country and the same is also true when returning to the motherland. HCT could have a one day seminar for its employees that are leaving. Currently, Central Services explains all the policies and procedures that must be followed to terminate the contract to each individual that is leaving. This should be incorporated in the repatriation seminar.

Recommendation 5.

Some (21.3%) respondents found information on inoculations in their homeland to be scarce.

Pre-arrival orientation package could include inoculation information for the major countries from which they recruit. A special section on requirements for countries like Malaysia, Seychelles, Oman, etc., which are easily accessible from the UAE, should also be included.

Recommendation 6.

Almost half of the respondents (48.5%) found the information on purchasing of furnishings to be inadequate.

Every expatriate is given an allowance to buy furnishings. A price list from two or three stores for Western style furnishings could be included in the package. Prices for electronic equipment like the microwave, coffee machines, blenders, etc. do not vary very much. Again a price list from one or two stores would really help.

Recommendation 7.

The majority of respondents with children found information on education for their children not sufficiently covered in the package.

A list of some of the schools that other employees are using should be compiled and distributed. A contact person at each of the three cities who has a thorough knowledge of what is available could be selected to help.

Recommendation 8.

All (88.3%) respondents (the rest replied as Not Applicable) would have liked a college calendar.

A college calendar does not exist. The curriculum is still evolving and therefore there is nothing formal and/or binding that can be published or circulated. A matrix of courses being taught in a specific career program is available and should be included in the pre-arrival orientation package.

Recommendation 9.

The majority (63.7%) of respondents found little or no Professional Development information in the package.

A list of in-house courses and seminars that will be available or a list of last year's PD activities (there have been many) should be included in the pre-arrival orientation package.

Recommendation 10.

There were some respondents (25.8%) that thought that the pre-arrival orientation package did not convey an accurate representation of life at HCT and the Emirates.

To rectify this, two surveys would need to be conducted. A survey of the new expatriates two or three weeks after arrival would identify some of the suspect areas, and a survey two or three weeks after classes start for the rest of the information. The results of these surveys should be incorporated into the package for subsequent orientations.

The research showed that there were many positive aspects of the pre-arrival orientation package. As this package is evolving, there should be a committee that looks after all the information that is distributed to prospective or new employees. Every year this committee should investigate and update this information. HCT is not expecting a large influx of new employees anymore, since the staffing has stabilized. However, easing expatriation of new employees is still an important service that must not be ignored. One bad apple can spoil the whole bunch.

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APPENDIX A

FACE-TO-FACE INTERVIEW SUMMARY

While not a part of problem solving, the researcher interviewed and compiled data on information pertaining to pre-arrival orientation. The following is a summary of quotes and paraphrases gathered from these face-to-face interviews with expatriates:

1. HOUSING:

HCT has a commitment to provide adequate UNFURNISHED housing which literally means: no carpets, drapes, fridge, stove, washing machine, etc. The definition of "adequate" housing is the prerogative of HCT. Generally most people are happy with housing. The College provides housing which depends on your job position and family structure. Single, married, and married with one child get a two bedroom unit. Married with more than one child get a villa (house) or a 3 bedroom apartment. After the first year, optional housing is available. However, if there are any units empty, this option does not exist. HCT staff will do their best to provide the best possible housing within budget and regulations.

"Housing in Dubai is generally regarded as being of better quality, having more facilities than other cities in the Emirates.
The quality of housing varies from site to site. State what your needs are to Central Services i.e. recreation facilities, proximity to college, size of apartment etc."

"It is 'adequate', but not what we had first been led to expect, i.e. 'luxury villa on the beach' type of image. We have more spacious and costlier housing in Canada, but one must recognize that we are somewhat 'spoiled'. However, HCT should consider villas as an option for Dubai staff, more so than they currently do."

"There isn't really a choice, but it isn't a dump. After one year, you have a slightly better chance to find something you like, but it could cost you a little extra. Fairly suitable and most are happy with what they get."

"The college will provide housing for employees at a technician or faculty level. Men and women are treated equally. Housing is generally of a high standard."

"Locations in respect to the campus and pictures of the units should be a part of the package."

"Some of the information that would be very helpful are: distance of possible housing from college; knowing which apartments come with fridges, stoves, washers and carpeting; closeness to mosques - for 'call to prayers'; central or unit air conditioning; height of the building and the number of units in the building."

"Housing provided by the college is very comfortable. Arrangements had to be made for speedy carpeting and curtain installation. This can be a problem especially if you have small children."

2. VISA

"Any person who has had a passport with a stamp showing that they have entered the Occupied Palestinian Territories (widely known as Israel) will be denied entry to the UAE."

"Obtaining a resident visa is easy and the paperwork is done by the college personnel."

"Appropriate documents should be supplied (if not a copy of the visa) to show airline officials legitimacy of sponsorship before boarding the plane to Dubai."

"The information we received adequately described the condition prevailing. I don't know anything about minor dependent."

"This is arranged by the college - certain documentation is needed -i.e. copy of passport, personal details."

"Taken care of by college."

"Overly bureaucratic process, handled by HCT as smoothly as is possible - not much that HCT can change. HCT could be more flexible in handling and/or helping with non-routine matters. i.e. females sponsoring others."

"I would have liked assurance of my visa prior to boarding plane to Dubai."

"Everything is arranged by the college. Great."

3. CLOTHING

All the men of the Arabian peninsula - except Omanis and Yemenis - wear the gleaming white, ankle length shirt (dishdasha), the white or sometimes red checkered headcloth (gutra) and the twisted, black coil (agal), holding the gutra in place; only rarely will a national appear in Western dress within the Emirates.

Under the head-dress is a skull cap called a taquia in the UAE. Men of standing (Shouyoukh - plural of Sheikh) and wealthy merchants wear a flowing cloak (abba or bisht) edged with gold braid. The sight of an Emirate ruler and his retinue floating down the steps of the majlis in their black or faun colored abbas leaves an indelible impression of the Arab world on those who experience it.

UAE women are equally particular about their dress. Underneath they wear trousers (sirwal) often embroidered at the ankles, and, like jodhpurs, baggy to the knee and tight between the knee and feet. Over the sirwal is worn the kandura, a voluminous dress with an opening at the side of the neck frequently decorated in gold or silver. On top of the kandura is draped the thaub, a rectangular piece of cloth with holes for the arms and head. The Emirate women is covered from head to foot in the abaya, shaili, or abba, an enormous black cloth worn over the thaub. UAE women often wear a canvas mask called a burqua - usually black and shiny - which covers eyebrows, nose and mouth. All hair must be covered - hair in Islam is considered private.

Cotton is by far the best material because it absorbs half its weight of water and is, therefore, of great value when one is perspiring. If one's clothes do not absorb perspiration, one's skin remains bathed in moisture and develops a condition known as 'prickly heat'. Loose-fitting clothes allow a layer of air between the clothing and the skin which assists the evaporation process.

Professional and business men are expected to wear trousers with a short or long-sleeved shirt, depending on the season, and a tie. Suits or jackets are worn for work in the business community; lightweight suits and occasionally a dinner jacket may be required for social occasions. Ties are rarely worn in the summer months except during working hours.

Women are usually clothed in cotton dresses, tops, slacks and skirts. Leather shoes or sandals are more comfortable than those made from synthetic materials which typically do not breathe. A light jacket or blazer for a business meeting or evening reception is advisable, particularly in view of the cooler air-conditioned surroundings in offices, hotels and commercial buildings.

There is an unwritten dress code in the UAE for both men and women and care should be taken not to give offence by wearing clothing which may be revealing. Men should always wear a shirt or top in public and a tie when attending an important meeting or social function.

At the pool or on the beaches, trunks, swimsuit, shorts and bikinis are both acceptable and appropriate.

"The clothing should be modest for women in particular. Dress pants, dress shirts and a neck tie is worn by male employees at HCT. Female employees dress modestly and business like. Light jackets commonly worn in the 'winter' months."

"Bring as much as possible from home - winter and summer. Western-style clothes are limited especially for women; children clothes are plentiful; men's clothing is plentiful. If you have teenage daughters definitely stock up before leaving home. Bare arms and low necklines are not appreciated nor are shorts that are quite short."

"Bring light clothing, no heavy jackets, maybe a few light sweaters."

"Need more formal/party clothes than I expected. You do need some warm clothes for the winter. i.e. sweaters, jackets, long pants. More freedom in dress - shorts OK, but I think that this is sometimes abused and pushed to the limits."

"Cheap and plentiful - bring minimum, buy here. Shopping centers such as Hong Kong and Bangkok are only a plane ride away. Good tailors."

"Modesty prevails. Dubai is less extreme than other Middle Eastern countries. Women have to have the skirt to the knee, men should wear trousers and not shorts. Reasonable professional standard of dress."

"Bring one or two sweaters and one piece of rain gear, if light. For women light weight, below knee skirts and jackets (especially for air-conditioned buildings)"

"It should be emphasized that cool clothing is important to have on arrival here as temperatures are in the 40's in early August with very high humidity. Even in the "winter" months it's still quite warm."

"Depending upon the time of year, clothing should be generally lightweight, easily cleanable and practical. During the winter months, warmer garments are frequently required."

4. DUBAI "APPEARS WESTERNIZED"

Many women wear a veil in the street, beneath the mask-like burqa which covers the face. Islamic penalties for crime, long-waived in practice, are being resurrected, partly as a symbol of the increasing influence of Islam and partly in reaction to increasing crime imported with the huge influx of cosmopolitan workers.

"As a woman, and because I work for Dubai Men's College, I always dress modestly in public. Also be cautious because women are not regularly seen alone at night. Be careful about taking taxis alone."

"Can live a very westernized life style but, you are missing the flavor of the multi-cultural environment."

"Also Eastern. Very modern place (more so than expected). Western food and groceries are easily accessible. More British 'westernized' than North American. Need to adjust to British terms, customs, clubs, etc., even more than Arab or Indian."

"Prayers are five times a day. Everything shuts down on Friday. 'Weekend' is Thursday and Friday, not Saturday and Sunday. Don't live near a mosque because of the frequent prayer-calls over loud-speakers."

"Dubai is much more westernized than we had expected. A few chain restaurants, e.g. Kentucky Fried Chicken, Pizza Hut, etc. Very good roads (apart from roundabouts and U-turns, that require getting used to) - it's taking your life in your hands using either of these. Yet, you don't see a lot of accidents."

"Never forget that this is a traditional society. Respect and extreme sensitivity is required. Considering everything, nationals behave very well towards expatriates (Western)."

"Most shopping centers have the latest 'Paris' fashions, Italian leather goods and 'western' accessories (especially for ladies). You don't see too many Arab fashion magazines - most magazines cater to the expatriate with quite daring fashions for ladies. Most people however, wear modest clothing due to the Islamic environment."

"Censorship of books, magazines is sometimes done using a black marker to block out the offensive parts - be it exposure of skin, news, etc."

5. STATUS OF WOMEN

"What a single woman can expect socially - the ramifications, if any of dating Arab men. In the Men's College or even dealing with traditional men - don't shake hands first, never touch students and be very cautious with the very religious ones."

"Arab women seem to be controlled by men. Western women in a position of authority have reasonable respect."

"If you dress properly - no problems. Dress inappropriately and you may get hassled by the nationals and you are offensive to the culture. The hassles are relatively minor."

"In a state of transition. More influence than you first expect. Different standards for western women as compared to Muslim or Eastern women. Biggest difference is in the social life rather than at work. One is able to do most things and it is relatively safe. There are separate line up for males and females for almost everything."

"Pretty much the same as in Canada. Women can work, drive and shop alone without any problems."

"Women are generally treated with respect, however sexual discrimination is accepted and institutionalized over here; i.e. different rules, pay scales, etc."

"Actually, women are given priority over men lined up on queues (even though they are in separate queues), waiting for taxis, or behind a service desk etc. Women also have separate areas where there are only women in attendance, e.g. government facilities. Even "Women Only" shopping centers, e.g. Al Manal Center."

6. TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

"Travel Agents here will not suggest alternative routes or schedules - you have to initiate it."

"Check to see if you have a long wait in Europe (or elsewhere) and ask to change ticket. HCT will usually oblige."

"Prices are cheap and UAE is close to both Europe and the Far East. Faculty get 56 calendar days vacation plus statutory holidays and a return ticket home for each family member. One can also use cash in lieu of the ticket to travel elsewhere instead of returning home."

"No problems, usually well taken care of."

"Travel arrangements are excellent and easy."

"Make good use of the extra baggage allowance and bring all that you think you might be able to use here including shower curtains, bed spreads, bed sheets, towels, cutlery, warm clothes, ghetto blasters, sporting goods, etc.."

7. FURNISHINGS

HCT is responsible for unfurnished housing. Furnishing allowance for a faculty member is Canadian $10,000.

Buy the bare necessities immediately (bed, table, linens, cookware, etc.) - then shop around for the best deals. Shopping here for almost anything means that you have to go to the appropriate souk. Souks are markets areas that specialize in a particular commodity eg. ready made garments, vegetables/fruits, auto accessories, antiques, carpets, etc.. The best way to do this is to look at what is available in the first shop, compare prices to the next shop you visit. Now that you know what is available in the marketplace; buy from the third shop. Prices do not really vary in commodities like electronics, hardware, linens, etc. although you have to barter for a better price. Do not feel bad to bargain and then walk out it is quite acceptable.

"College pays. But some is expected back if four years of contract is not fulfilled."

"Dhs. 30,000 (Canadian $10,000) to spend as you like (Faculty). Narrow range of western style furniture. Gaudy stuff is plentiful."

"Expect to spend some of your own money in order to live comfortably, but it's worth it."

"Furnishings are expensive. Dhs. 30,000 does not buy you much, especially for a family."

"The allowance helps a lot but most certainly will not provide all necessities at near cost."

"Trust the College representatives. They took me around to the cheap and acceptable places. I would add however, that they should emphasize the Sharjah market as well. Also buy only the essentials first, then shop around and learn more about the market(s) to buy the rest. In addition, consider how long you are planning to stay and what items you may wish to take home."

"Very expensive. Half the allowance is spent on basic necessities such as fridge, washing machine, beds, carpeting and curtains."

9. INOCULATIONS

If you plan on travelling to places close by, such as Thailand, Malaysia, Africa, pre-plan what you would like to see and get the appropriate vaccinations - if you don't go - Mafi Mushkilla (No Problem)!

"Leave up to individuals, as there are many discrepancies from country to country; suggest certain inoculations if planning to travel to surrounding areas."

"Very clean city. I personally had nothing, but doctor will advise."

"None required. Very safe here."

"None necessary, but you will want to get the recommended ones for travelling outside of the UAE. All are readily available here."

"I still know nothing about inoculation requirements. Are they necessary."

"Coming from Canada, nothing special was required."

"I would like to let them know what is recommended for inoculations for adults and children, but I don't know myself."

"Complete details of what is legally required and what one should consider as an option. (I am not a doctor, so this should be left to specialists)."

"Once you have obtained a health card, all inquiries regarding inoculations are given at the local clinic. T.B. injection is given here, which is not given any more to children overseas. Also Hep. B injections are stressed overseas, but not encouraged here."

9. MEDICAL FACILITIES

"Expensive if an expatriate doctor. Generally, unreliable and not well informed of latest medical developments."

"Stay healthy. Hospitals are well equipped but staffing leaves a lot to be desired."

"British clinics, etc. available, efficient and sufficient. From those of us used to a free health care system - EXPENSIVE!!"

"Some western style medical practices but for an illness of a more serious nature, one might question the quality."

"Not too bad - not quite up to the standards we are used to in Canada."

"Are very good at low cost."

"The insurance booklet which we got a few months after our arrival should be provided. Also recommended specialists/GP's with addresses located on a map."

"Good/bad - it depends on the mood of the staff on duty. Generally facilities are of a very high standard with access to the latest medical equipment."

10. EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN

Less visible but more important has been the expenditure on developing the country's most vital resource - it's people. Today, all nationals are entitled to free medical care, all children go to school and some 8,000 young people are university students, most of them at the UAE's own university in Al Ain. Then we have The Higher Colleges of Technology!

"Have heard standards are in line with UK or higher."

"Limited choice, but some are very good. Must register early. For English speaking, primary emphasis on the British system. Prepare children for wearing uniforms and being bussed to school. Expect to pay extra (more than what HCT provides) for transportation, uniforms, maybe even some tuition."

"Depending on the age of your children and the type of education you are looking for, there are limited choices. If you want to keep your children in the North American system, J.A.S. goes from K - Gr. 10 (Gr. 11 & 12 will be starting in September 92/93). Dubai College is in the British system and there are various elementary schools (mostly British). In general there is a fairly high standard of education.

"It is expensive and of good quality but entrance is not assured."

"Very expensive with very long waiting lists. For Kindergarten, fees are in excess of CAN $2,500 (which should be furnished by the college)."

11. SPONSORSHIP OF DEPENDENTS

"Easy for men - not so easy for women."

"Generally O.K. but problems if you are single, female, lowly paid or non-Western. Problems to sponsor non-family members, single adults, or older male children."

"This is usually achieved within one month of the person sponsoring starting employment."

"Is very easy."

"For my wife, I had no problems. No experience with others."

12. LEGAL DOCUMENTS

"There are procedures to follow to get a liquor license, and driving license. HCT Support Staff will assist with all this and are very knowledgeable about the ever changing requirements of official documents. Also, make sure your passport doesn't expire in the near future. Nearest Canadian Consulate is in Kuwait and the approximate total cost of getting a new passport is CAN $500."

"Memorize your passport number. Lots of passport size photographs."

"Bring the originals, not copies. The more seals, the better they are accepted for marriage, divorce, degrees, professional qualifications, etc."

"Will need to bring at least 20 pictures of yourself to distribute for Driver's license and other documents."

"Many photocopies of passport (you can copy here), plus "hundreds" of passport-size photographs are needed when applying for Driver's license, bank accounts, etc."

"Do not send them to Central Services because they may lose them."

"Lots of photographs. Bring extra documents required to renew your passport, if it expires before the term ends."

13. TAX LAWS OF HOME COUNTRY

"Colleges can't research everyone's tax laws. They may be held liable if they are not up-to-date. Should recommend that individuals find out before leaving their country."

"Canada - sell everything - cut off as many ties as possible. Declare yourself a non-resident for income tax purposes."

"I am a non-resident and therefore not taxed."

"In U.S.A. you are exempt up to $70,000 as resident of a foreign country."

"Try to find out as much as you can before leaving. This can be difficult. The government doesn't like to let you know all the loopholes."

"There are none here, but may need to qualify to not pay taxes in the U.S.A. Resident Visa Test and 330 day Residence Test evaluate eligibility to tax exemptions."

"They mention this in the package I got. But they should emphasize it. Perhaps some "typical" examples should be given (U.S., Canada, U.K., Australia and New Zealand)."

"Canadians - spend $100 or $200 and go to a tax consultant specializing in employment abroad. They know what is allowed and what is not. This relieves you of much anxiety whether or not you have done all the right things in order to obtain tax-free status."

"For middle-income families overseas tax is taken at 33% - 45% of gross wage, whereas over here, its a tax-free country which is a big incentive to come and work here."

14. EDUCATIONAL STANDARD OF STUDENTS

"The HCT aims for a high educational standard. The quality of the students is high, however the motivation of the average student is low. Basically, your work is cut out to motivate them into learning. You also have to give out handouts that summarizes every topic. Most students will not read the text book. The longer the student has been at HCT the better the study habits, problem solving skills, English language, etc.. HCT has been quite successful in achieving this."

"There is a lack of motivation and generally the education process until reaching the college. Their level of English is very low or non-existent"

"Not very good at High School Level. Seems to be good at HCT."

"Lower because of language barrier and study habits."

"Higher in some areas; i.e. bright, want to achieve, motivated, polite. Problems with previous methods of learning (by rout), English skills, they have to learn study habits."

"For the most part, quite low. Students have limited abilities in speaking and reading in English. Study habits need much improvement."

"Very low with disappointing retention levels."

15. COLLEGE CALENDAR

A college calendar does not exist. However, it is possible to get a matrix of subjects, for a particular area of interest, if you can get a hold of the right person.

"It would be nice to receive something with the list and description of courses taught, even if it was for the previous year."

"Two semesters - September to January, January to June."

"Just the college timings - there is a subject matrix. It is a long year from mid-August to end of June."

"Two semesters, September through December, February through May."

"Not enough holidays."

"If ever the HCT curriculum stabilizes, one can expect a published calendar not too distant in the future."

16. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

There is a PD Committee. There are many workshops held in-house which are usually excellent. The Instructional Skills Workshop (ISW) is offered and recommended to all faculty members regardless of experience. If you are not familiar with Competency Based Education (CBE), there is a lot to learn. HCT also offer Conversational Arabic classes.

"Many in-house training courses."

"Non-existent (almost). Some started during 90/91, but it was cut this year. Given a low priority in the HCT system this year. Should be raised in priority."

"That the ISW provides some excellent tools for those new to the teaching profession."

17. WORKLOAD

No different than a Canadian technical colleges in terms of teaching hours. A little more frustrating the first semester for a newcomer; partly because the system is so different and partly because the new instructor wants to do well everything must be perfect, etc.. By the time you hit the second semester, the workload seems to be okay.

"A lot."

"Teaching workload is okay. Extra curriculum time extensive."

"Full, steady, some busy work. Overall, reasonable."

"The workload seems heavy for first time teachers who have come from industry, however 18 - 20 hours in class teaching per week is a good workload."

"The workload is too much. Students have very little retention so half the class period is allotted to revision of the previous class. In effect, the course can't be covered within the semester, which puts tremendous pressures on the teacher."

"Need extra time to make summarized handouts for every single topic you cover. Students generally can't or don't like to read texts. Usually, these texts are chosen for them by whoever wrote the curriculum and perhaps too ambitious for the level of student. But, this is being looked at and curriculum is being revised and appropriate texts being chosen. "

18. RELIGION

"Don't discuss it. Mainly Muslim. Intolerant of conflicting views. Dubai does have churches for other religions."

"Prayer calls are loud. May be hard to get used to - especially at 4:00 a.m. if volume is turned up on the PA system."

"Other than Judaism, most religions (western) could be practiced here."

"Muslim country. However, religious services in other denominations are available."

"There are various denominations with churches in Dubai and there is freedom of all religions (well, almost all)."

"Islam is dominant. Christianity is tolerated and allowed among the expatriate population."

"No problem. Complete freedom. Respect for others as you would expect in any civilized country."

"The religion here is Islam, but all other religions are freely practiced without any discrimination. In fact, all other religions even those of polytheists are well tolerated. Islam is a way of life as well as a religion. It touches everything they do in their day-to-day life. This includes their life-style, manners, dress, food, relationships, attitude, cleanliness, music, etc."

19. WEATHER

The climate of the UAE is hot and humid in the summer (June to September) and warm and pleasant in the winter months (October to May). The climate varies between the inland and coastal regions. In the summertime, temperatures can reach 49 degrees C with humidity in excess of 90%. In winter, mid-day temperatures range from 20 to 35 degrees C with evenings comfortably cool. Rainfall is sparse and in most regions more prevalent in winter. Rain rarely exceeds five inches a year, with mountain areas experiencing more precipitation.

The most persistent wind is the "shamal" which reaches gale force in the winter; it is frequently laden with dust and sand and can reduce the temperature in summer. A cooling northwesterly wind prevails between May and October, while coastal areas sometimes have thick early morning fog during the winter months.

It is very important that one keep cool, especially during the Gulf summers. The body's natural response to the heat is to perspire more freely. Acclimatization generally takes two weeks for people who are generally fit and of average weight.

In any 24 hour period, one should drink one pint of fluid for every 10 degrees F. Therefore at 80 degrees F, eight pints of fluid between 8:00 a.m. one morning and 8:00 a.m. the next day is highly recommended. Urine should remain nearly colorless - once it becomes definitively yellow, it is concentrating and one is beginning to dehydrate.

When it rains here it pours. There is so little rain that the city has decided that it is not cost effective for them to build a drainage system. The streets get flooded which causes an above average number of road accidents. In the mountains where it rains more often, you get flash floods. If you happen to be wadi-bashing (travelling in dried up river beds in a 4 X 4 vehicle) and if you happen get caught in one of these flash floods, head for higher grounds then the only way out is to be rescued by helicopters. You can be sure of extensive water damage to your vehicle. In the mountains, you can also find pockets of crystal clear water that have been carved into the rock. These are excellent locations for picnics and swimming. The water could be as deep as 10 feet and sometimes quite cold.

"Hot - April through October (high 30's to low 40's). Not so hot - September through March (low 20's)."

"Great - hot but humid."

"You do adjust to the heat. During much of the year - outdoors is great. Better than I expected."

"Winter - approximately January - March is usually a low 8 - 10 degrees C to a high of 18 - 19 degrees C with a few days of rain. Summer - hot!! Temperatures up to 45 degrees C and very humid (July - September). The rest of the year its perfect. There are occasional sandstorms (not too pleasant)."

"Warm and warmer. Hot and hotter."

"Hot and humid! Be prepared to stay in an air-conditioned environment from May through September (for the better part of this period you will be on vacation)."

20. SOCIAL/RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Living in Dubai is like living year round at a holiday resort. Most of the year the climate is very pleasant and all outdoor activities can be enjoyed. Almost every sport under the sun is available. These range from deep-sea fishing to ice-skating, golfing on the Middle East's only grass course to dune driving in the desert. The Emirates Golf course is ranked among the world's best and is one of the latest additions to the European PGA circuit.

The waters off Dubai are considered one of the world's best areas for scuba diving, for both novices and experts. With minimal tidal flow, the Gulf is safe for beginners, and weather is seldom a negative factor. The seas are calm, visibility is good and life underwater is of a richness to rival the best-known dive centers in the world. The UAE's east coast, an hour and one-half drive from Dubai, offers divers some of the most spectacular reefs in the world.

A popular pastime with residents is wadi-bashing. Wadis are the dry beds of streams that flow after winter rains from the Hajar mountains that comprise Dubai's backbone onto the desert. For the adventurous an hour of rough driving will be rewarded with scenes of great and unexpected beauty: rock pools, some with water year-round, carved in strange shapes by the rushing seasonal torrents; greenery clinging to a precarious existence; tiny cultivated plots and stone houses, evidence of man's tenacity.

"Listings of clubs and hotels that have fitness centers attached to them is available. HCT employees even get discounts at most clubs."

"Lots and lots if you want."

"Emphasis on sports. Too many. If anything, the expatriate lifestyle is very superficial - parties, balls, fancy dinners, plays, etc. Not as many 'low key' inexpensive events. Not a lot for children. Really miss going out to the movies."

"Abundance of activities - especially water sports. Various associations hold many events during the year - dances, darts, snooker, tennis, squash, basketball."

"Almost everything is available for a price. Parks for families are excellent."

"If you join an association or religious group of your interest, then activities are arranged throughout the year."

"Reading material (novels, magazines) very expensive although available."

"Cassettes (any kind of music) very cheap - not originals, edited locally. CD's quite expensive but readily available."

21. CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

Upon arrival, HCT provide orientation sessions to help you adapt and understand the culture here. Dubai is by far the best place to be in the Middle East and very easy to adapt to.

"Language barrier."

"You get used to it. Most adapt easily."

"Remember that there is a cultural difference between North Americans and British. Dubai is more British than American. It is also very difficult to socialize/know local people (don't socialize the same way we do; i.e. sexes segregated) and locals are greatly outnumbered."

"So many nationalities live in Dubai quite peacefully and everyone tries various foods, go to different cultural events, etc."

"In the major cities of Dubai and Abu Dhabi, it is possible to live in whatever culture you prefer and remain completely isolated from other cultures if so desired -- but why?"

"Reading of the Meed Guide is essential."

22. SHOPPING

This can be done in the souks (basically a collection of shops selling the same kind of products, e.g. gold souk, material souk, etc.). Many modern shopping centers are opening around Dubai, unfortunately they do tend to be a little on the expensive side. The hours of shopping vary - most of the souks open from 8:00 a.m., closing at 1:00 p.m. and opening again around 4:00 p.m. until 9:30 or 10:00 p.m. The shopping centers open 9:30 a.m or 10:00 a.m. through to 1:30 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. through 9:30 p.m. A lot of the supermarkets open at 8:00 a.m. and stay open all day. There are a few supermarkets that are open 24 hours a day.

Can purchase almost everything available in the West, however the prices may vary a lot and finding some items can be tricky.

Dubai has the reputation as the "Hong Kong" of the Middle East. As an open port with low import duties, Dubai's retail prices are reasonable and the variety of products available matches that of any other major international city. Top brand name products are cheaper in Dubai than their country of origin due to the duty-free element. Couture clothes from Paris or Milan, hi-tech from Japan, or a piece of silver Bedu jewelry - all are available at the right price.

Souks have been called "the heart of the real Arabia" and Dubai has plenty. The traditional ones include the dusty alleyways of the spice souk, the modern building housed fish and vegetable souks, the gold souk where narrow streets are lined with shop windows glinting with bracelets, necklaces and earrings in 21 carat for Arabs, 22 carat for Asians and 18 carat for westerners.

Attractive modern shopping malls are conveniently located throughout the city. These house a wide range of supermarkets, shops, boutiques, restaurants and fast food outlets.

Last, but not least, is the Sharjah Souk, a mere 20 minutes from Dubai, where almost everything is available with some of the best buys being persian carpets and antiques.

Dubai Duty Free has won eight international awards, including four Frontier Marketing Awards and two each from Business Traveller and Middle East Economic Digest. Dubai Duty Free is generally recognized among travellers as offering an unbeatable range of duty-free bargains.

"Excellent, almost everything available."

"Just great - Fantastic."

"Generally great. Choice - very inexpensive or very expensive and not much in between. Food - expensive (especially packaged Western food)."

23. CONTRACT

"The contract although in black and white and signed by both parties is dynamic. It is subject to change. In effect, the contract is really not a contract but a guideline to a contract. This is because we are not in the same legal system as back home."

"Two years. Renewable if both parties want to."

"Not worth the paper it is printed on (can be easily changed). Security is non-existent. If they want you out - you are history."

"No remedy for contract breaches by HCT. The interpretation of the terms change during the course of the contract. The administration of the contract is much stingier than one would expect the intention of the contract is. The decisions of the federal auditors supersede contract terms."

"The college contract seems to be susceptible to change with little recourse; i.e. Excursion fare vs Economy fare."

24. LIFE INSURANCE

"Driving is dangerous. Insurance recommended."

"Haven't worried about it, or checked into it. It is available. We retained policies in Canada."

"I don't know."

"Auto insurance is mandatory and expensive. If you have a 5 year accident free record, get a letter from your insurance company to get as much as 25 percent discount. Most auto insurance companies will also have an option on accidental life insurance."

25. ACCULTURATION PROCESS

Life is very intense in the Gulf. The highs are really high, the lows are very low. People become very close, very fast (support group) and it can be painful if they eventually move away - difficult to establish a new group. Dubai is a place where you can feel at home and make it your home - easy and fun to settle in. Difficult to leave it - people tend to stay on longer than they initially plan.

"There are no counsellors to talk to privately when one is homesick or has problems adjusting. You must seek private consultations that is expensive and not covered by the optional medical insurance plan at HCT."

"Easy."

"Read any information you can find on culture shock - be aware of its existence."

"It is not difficult if you have some sensitivity and people skills."

THINGS I LIKE:

- The students are the nicest group of people I've ever had the pleasure of dealing with.
- It is a multicultural environment and one can get by with English.
- Beaches are beautiful and not crowded.
- Souks are amazing - different one for different products.
- Food - cheap if you are willing to compromise on brand names. Local brands are just as good as any in North America.
- Fruits and vegetables - fresh and plentiful - if you shop at the vegetable/fruit market, items are half the price of the supermarkets.
- Sea Gullies - a lobster type shellfish - readily available in December and January and relatively cheap compared to shellfish back home and tastes excellent.
- Eating out - has tremendous variety. Local Middle Eastern restaurants are very reasonable. Shuwarma, (similar to Greek Gyros or European Donair) is a grilled chicken or mutton pita bread sandwich and can be found all over Dubai (considered fast food).
- The local Indian restaurants are extremely cheap. Not a nice ambience, so "take out" is the way to go.
- Buy a 4 x 4 if you are even slightly outdoorsy.
- Clubs/Fitness - take your pick - from darts to sailing, to tennis, to golf.
- Dancing/Pubbing.
- Major sporting events - desert rallies, camel and horse races, boat races, tennis tournaments. Concerts - Paul Young, Osibisa, Kaoma, Banana Rama.
- There is a local bus service, but expatriates do not generally use this service. Taxis are everywhere - fairly cheap - barter on price before entering.

- The Government of Dubai shows extreme tolerance of the western expatriate. The Police are the finest and very helpful and courteous. The medical facilities in Dubai are much nicer than anywhere else in the Emirates.

- It is always nice to get excellent service. Here, if you shop at the same outlet, you will always get better service.

- Labor is cheap. You can get a maid or servant for house work on a part-time bases, full-time, or even live-in at a very reasonable rate.

- Vitamin "W" or Wasta! It is who you know. You can accomplish anything you want if you know the right people.

THINGS I DON'T LIKE:

- 4 x 4's trucks driving on the beaches.

- Driving etiquette - but you get used to it and have a much better attitude toward someone cutting in front of you or turning without signalling.

- No address system. Locate by landmarks which is impossible at first.

- Financing - If I could have arranged financing for my car in Canada, it would have been a lot cheaper. Here, interest is calculated on the total principal amount over the entire duration - effectively paying a much higher rate of interest than quoted.

- Long line-ups. Things move slowly. It is best to be the first one there when they open. Women, especially pregnant ones, have automatic "Wasta" and are always served first.

- Intercept Driven Society: "The squeaky wheel gets the oil". Five customers could be serviced at the same time. e.g. When we were opening bank accounts (10 of us), the manager had us sitting in his office and he answered phone calls, services other employees, and even made outgoing calls. That's normal -don't get flustered.

THINGS I WOULD HAVE DONE DIFFERENTLY:

- Brought more things from home - things I gave away because I wanted to travel light (tennis rackets, new balls, portable gas BBQ, set of knives, clothes, shoes, ties, belts, towels, etc. MAKE GOOD USE OF YOUR BAGGAGE ALLOWANCE.

- Bring very few, if any, textbooks - there are lots here.

APPENDIX B - COVER LETTERS

Higher Colleges of Technology — Central Services

M e m o r a n d u m

To	:	HCT Staff
From	:	R.Stephen Nicholson Acting Vice Chancellor
Date	:	29th February 1992.
Subject	:	Request for Assistance

Nash Teja is working on a post graduate study project which will also provide some useful information for the Higher Colleges Orientation project. His letter well outlines the scope and usefulness of the project.

Please take a few moments to execute this survey and return it to him.

Thank you for your cooperation

United Arab Emirates
HIGHER COLLEGES OF TECHNOLOGY
Dubai Men's College

الامـارات العـربيـة المتحـدة
كليـات التقنيـة العليـا
كليـة دبـي للطـلاب

Director/Heads/Supervisor/Faculty
Dubai Men's College
Dubai, UAE

March 10, 1992

Dear Expatriate,

As we all know, the HCT faculty is extensively multi-national. As an expatriate, the pre-arrival information you received and your perceptions of the culture were all that you had upon arrival in the UAE. Each of us went through the acculturation process in our own special way.

I am a graduate student at Montana State University, presently completing research on my professional project. The focus of my research is Pre-arrival Orientation and I would like your assistance in obtaining the information I need.

It would be greatly appreciated if you could take ten minutes of your time to complete the enclosed questionnaire. Please return the questionnaire by April 1, 1992 in my mailbox or my desk. If you have any questions or concerns please contact me at 04-690029 ext 221.

Your answers will be kept confidential. The questionnaire is approved by Central Services with the condition that the summary findings are made available for future use.

Thank you for your assistance with this project. Your time and effort are greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Nash Teja.
Faculty - Dubai Men's College

ص.ب ١٥٨٢٥ دبي - الإمارات العربية المتحدة - هاتف ٦٩٠٠٢٩ - فاكس ٦٩١٣٦٩

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كليـة دبـي للطـلاب

Director/Heads/Supervisor/Faculty
Dubai Women's College
Dubai, UAE

March 10, 1992

Dear Expatriate,

As we all know, the HCT faculty is extensively multi-national. As an expatriate, the pre-arrival information you received and your perceptions of the culture were all that you had upon arrival in the UAE. Each of us went through the acculturation process in our own special way.

I am a graduate student at Montana State University, presently completing research on my professional project. The focus of my research is Pre-arrival Orientation and I would like your assistance in obtaining the information I need.

It would be greatly appreciated if you could take ten minutes of your time to complete the enclosed questionnaire. Please return the questionnaire to ***Jabeen Yusufali by April 1, 1992.*** *If you have any questions or concerns please contact me at 04-690029 ext 221.*

Your answers will be kept confidential. The questionnaire is approved by Central Services with the condition that the summary findings are made available for future use.

Thank you for your assistance with this project. Your time and effort are greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Nash Teja.
Faculty - Dubai Men's College

ص.ب ١٥٨٢٥ دبي - الإمارات العربية المتحدة - هاتف ٦٩٠٠٢٩ - فاكس ٦٩١٣٦٩

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كلية دبي للطلاب

Director/Heads/Supervisor/Faculty
Al Ain Women's College
Al Ain, UAE

March 10, 1992

Dear Expatriate,

As we all know, the HCT faculty is extensively multi-national. As an expatriate, the pre-arrival information you received and your perceptions of the culture were all that you had upon arrival in the UAE. Each of us went through the acculturation process in our own special way.

I am a graduate student at Montana State University, presently completing research on my professional project. The focus of my research is Pre-arrival Orientation and I would like your assistance in obtaining the information I need.

It would be greatly appreciated if you could take ten minutes of your time to complete the enclosed questionnaire. Please return the questionnaire to Madeline Jabs by April 1, 1992. If you have any questions or concerns please contact me at 04-690029 ext 221.

Your answers will be kept confidential. The questionnaire is approved by Central Services with the condition that the summary findings are made available for future use.

Thank you for your assistance with this project. Your time and effort are greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Nash Teja.
Faculty - Dubai Men's College

ص ب ١٥٨٢٥ دبي - الإمارات العربية المتحدة - هاتف ٦٩٠٠٢٩ - فاكس ٦٩١٣٦٩
P.O. Box 15825 Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Telephone 690029. Facsimile 691369

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Director/Heads/Supervisor/Faculty
Al Ain Men's College
Al Ain, UAE

March 10, 1992

Dear Expatriate,

As we all know, the HCT faculty is extensively multi-national. As an expatriate, the pre-arrival information you received and your perceptions of the culture were all that you had upon arrival in the UAE. Each of us went through the acculturation process in our own special way.

I am a graduate student at Montana State University, presently completing research on my professional project. The focus of my research is Pre-arrival Orientation and I would like your assistance in obtaining the information I need.

*It would be greatly appreciated if you could take ten minutes of your time to complete the enclosed questionnaire. Please return the questionnaire to **Aline Doghramadjian by April 1, 1992**. If you have any questions or concerns please contact me at 04-690029 ext 221.*

Your answers will be kept confidential. The questionnaire is approved by Central Services with the condition that the summary findings are made available for future use.

Thank you for your assistance with this project. Your time and effort are greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Nash Teja.
Faculty - Dubai Men's College

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كلية دبي للطلاب

Director/Heads/Supervisor/Faculty
Abu Dhabi Men's College
Abu Dhabi, UAE

March 10, 1992

Dear Expatriate,

As we all know, the HCT faculty is extensively multi-national. As an expatriate, the pre-arrival information you received and your perceptions of the culture were all that you had upon arrival in the UAE. Each of us went through the acculturation process in our own special way.

I am a graduate student at Montana State University, presently completing research on my professional project. The focus of my research is Pre-arrival Orientation and I would like your assistance in obtaining the information I need.

It would be greatly appreciated if you could take ten minutes of your time to complete the enclosed questionnaire. Please return the questionnaire to Pam Bottomeley by April 1, 1992. If you have any questions or concerns please contact me at 04-690029 ext 221.

Your answers will be kept confidential. The questionnaire is approved by Central Services with the condition that the summary findings are made available for future use.

Thank you for your assistance with this project. Your time and effort are greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Nash Teja.
Faculty - Dubai Men's College

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كلية دبي للطلاب

Director/Heads/Supervisor/Faculty
Abu Dhabi Women's College
Abu Dhabi, UAE

March 10, 1992

Dear Expatriate,

As we all know, the HCT faculty is extensively multi-national. As an expatriate, the pre-arrival information you received and your perceptions of the culture were all that you had upon arrival in the UAE. Each of us went through the acculturation process in our own special way.

I am a graduate student at Montana State University, presently completing research on my professional project. The focus of my research is Pre-arrival Orientation and I would like your assistance in obtaining the information I need.

It would be greatly appreciated if you could take ten minutes of your time to complete the enclosed questionnaire. Please return the questionnaire to Susan Hill by April 1, 1992. If you have any questions or concerns please contact me at 04-690029 ext 221.

Your answers will be kept confidential. The questionnaire is approved by Central Services with the condition that the summary findings are made available for future use.

Thank you for your assistance with this project. Your time and effort are greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Nash Teja.
Faculty - Dubai Men's College

ص.ب ١٥٨٢٥ دبي - الإمارات العربية المتحدة - هاتف ٦٩٠٠٢٩ - فاكس ٦٩١٣٦٩

APPENDIX C - SURVEY INSTRUMENTS

The major purpose of this instrument is to evaluate the current pre-arrival orientation package at The Higher Colleges of Technology (HCT), located in The United Arab Emirates (UAE).

QUESTIONNAIRE

message.....

Please check ( ) the appropriate response

1. Age
   - ____ 21 - 30
   - ____ 31 - 40
   - ____ 41 - 50
   - ____ greater than 50

2. Sex
   - ____ Male
   - ____ Female

3. Marital Status
   - ____ married - is your spouse here? ___ Yes ___ No
   - ____ single
   - ____ other - head of household? ___ Yes ___ No

4. How many children do you have?
   - ____ 1 child
   - ____ 2 children
   - ____ 3 or more

   are all children in UAE? ___ Yes ___ No

5. Position at HCT
   - ____ supervisor
   - ____ faculty/librarian
   - ____ staff
   - ____ other specify:_____

6. In what country were you hired?
   - ____ Canada
   - ____ USA
   - ____ Britain
   - ____ other specify:_____

7. Nationality
   - ____ Arabic
   - ____ European
   - ____ North American
   - ____ Asiatic
   - ____ other specify:_____

8. How long you have been in UAE?
   ____ less than 1 year
   ____ 1 - 2 year
   ____ 3 or more years

9. Have you ever worked in a developing or underdeveloped country? ____ Yes _____ No
   If yes, where? _____
   if so, for how long? _____

Please circle the appropriate response.

SA	- Stongly Agree	**D**	- Disagree
A	- Agree	**SD**	- Strongly Disagree
		NA	- Not Applicable

10. I read all the information supplied to me by the orientation committee ..... SA A D SD NA

11. I did extensive research on my own to learn about UAE ..... SA A D SD NA

12. I was able to bring appropriate clothing to UAE based on information provided in the orientation package ..... SA A D SD NA

13. Upon arrival, I found that UAE was a lot more westernized than I had expected ..... SA A D SD NA

14. The orientation material I received prior to arriving in UAE was generally an accurate representation of the status of women in this community ..... SA A D SD NA

15. After accepting the position, I was afraid that I would not get an entry visa to UAE ..... SA A D SD NA

16. I was well informed about my travel arrangements ..... SA A D SD NA

17. Upon arrival, my hotel accommodations were excellent ..... SA A D SD NA

18. The orientation committee did a good job ..... SA A D SD NA

19. The employment contract is easy to understand ..... SA A D SD NA

20. I studied the MEED Guide extensively before arriving in UAE ..... SA A D SD NA

21. I used the MEED Guide extensively after arriving in UAE ..... SA A D SD NA

22. I would like repatriation orientation before returning home ..... SA A D SD NA

23. The medical facilities are better than I expected ..... SA A D SD NA

24. I had difficulty in finding out the required inoculations to travel to UAE ..... SA A D SD NA

25. The orientation package should have more information regarding sponsorship of dependents ..... SA A D SD NA

26. Official documents (birth certificates, marriage license, etc.) required were clearly stated in the orientation package ..... SA A D SD NA

27 Resignation policies are clearly stated in the contract/orientation package ..... SA A D SD NA

28. The orientation package had enough information about furnishing my new home ..... SA A D SD NA

29. I did extensive research about the tax laws of my home country before leaving for UAE ..... SA A D SD NA

30. The educational standard of my students is approximately what I expected it would be ..... SA A D SD NA

31. The orientation package gave me information about education for my children ..... SA A D SD NA

32. I would have liked a copy of the college calendar along with my orientation package ..... SA A D SD NA

33. I received enough information about professional development in the orientation package ..... SA A D SD NA

34. I would have liked to know the courses I would be teaching before arriving in UAE ..... SA A D SD NA

35. The orientation I received prior to arriving in UAE was generally an accurate representation of this community ..... SA A D SD NA

Please check ( ) the appropriate response.

How would you rate the pre-arrival orientation process overall
___excellent ____good ____acceptable ____poor ____unacceptable

Knowing what you know now, would you have taken this job?
_____ yes _____ no _____ unsure

Would you recommend this job to a good friend?
_____ yes _____ no _____ unsure

Have you made culture related mistakes?
_____ yes _____ no _____ unsure

If Yes was it because of lack of information?
_____ yes _____ no

Would you like to make some comments about the pre-arrival orientation?

Thank you for your participation.

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The major purpose of this instrument is to compile pre-arrival orientation information into a package to be used by future expatriate employees at The Higher Colleges of Technology, located in The United Arab Emirates.

FACE-TO-FACE INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

Q A new expatriate employee would like some information about life in The Emirates. Knowing what you know now, what information would you share on the following subjects:

1. ***HOUSING***

2. ***VISA***

3. ***CLOTHING***

4. ***"APPEARS WESTERNIZED"***

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5. *STATUS OF WOMEN*

6. *TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS*

7. *FURNISHINGS*

8. *INOCULATIONS*

9. *MEDICAL FACILITIES*

10. *EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN*

11. *SPONSORSHIP OF DEPENDENTS*

12. *LEGAL DOCUMENTS*

13. *TAX LAWS OF HOME COUNTRY*

14. *EDUCATIONAL STANDARD OF STUDENTS*

15. *COLLEGE CALENDAR*

16. *PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT*

17. *WORKLOAD*

18. *RELIGION*

19. *WEATHER*

20. *SOCIAL/RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES*

21. *CULTURAL DIFFERENCES*

22. *SHOPPING*

23. *CONTRACT*

24. *LIFE INSURANCE*

25. *ACCULTURATION PROCESS*