

# **Global Workforce Development through Business Internship Program: Kevin's Company at Kanda University of International Studies**

Kevin Knight

## **Abstract**

Students need to acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes associated with global competency that will enable them to compete in the global workforce upon graduation. In the literature, there are various interpretations of global competency, but study abroad is often recommended as a way of acquiring global competency. This study investigates the effectiveness of a domestic business internship program in Japan, Kevin's Company at the Kanda University of International Studies (KUIS), in preparing students to succeed as members of the global workforce. The results of a questionnaire completed by students who had participated in Kevin's Company indicated that the students had been able to increase their global competency through the program.

## **Introduction and background**

Globalization is changing the work environment that our students will enter upon graduation, as Tillman (2005: 4-5) describes below.

Globalization is the most powerful economic factor influencing the job market in all regions of the world... We are not only talking about large businesses or multinational corporations being impacted by what's been referred to as the 'new economy' and a changing global and political landscape. Students leaving colleges and universities with either AA, BA, MA, MS, MBA, or doctoral degrees all face a job market — whether in the nonprofit, public, or private sectors — that is decidedly different than a generation ago.

Given the rapid onset of globalization, the advancement of technology, and the necessity of a competent workforce for the well-being of a nation, the following two questions are relevant:

- (1) What do students need in order to become successful members of the global workforce upon graduation?
- (2) How should students be prepared?

In the literature, these two questions have been answered in various ways, but the answers usually refer to the “knowledge, attitudes and skills” that are associated with global competency. (Shams & George 2006 citing Green & Olson 2005)

In 1991 in the U.S. Department of Labor, the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) produced a report entitled *What Work Requires of Schools: A SCANS Report for America 2000* that identified the *fundamental skills* and *workplace competencies* needed by students to succeed in the “world of work” and the “high performance work place.”

The *fundamental skills* were divided into basic skills, thinking skills, and

personal qualities. Among these fundamental skills were reading, writing, mathematics, creative thinking, decision making, responsibility, and self-esteem. (See Table 1.)

The *workplace competencies* were listed under the headings of resources, interpersonal, information, systems, and technology. Among these workplace competencies were the management of time and money, team participation and leadership, the use of computers, the monitoring and correcting of performance, and the selection and application of technology. (See Table 1.)

**Table 1. SCANS Skills and Competencies (SCANS 2000: xviii, xx, 12, 16)**

**Fundamental Skills:**

1. Basic Skills: Reading, writing, arithmetic/mathematics, listening, speaking
2. Thinking Skills: Creative thinking, decision making, problem solving, seeing things in the mind's eye, knowing how to learn, reasoning
3. Personal Qualities: Responsibility, self-esteem, sociability, self-management, integrity/honesty

**Workplace Competencies:**

1. Resources: Time, money, material and facilities, human resources
2. Interpersonal: Participates as member of a team, teaches others new skills, serves clients/customers, exercises leadership, negotiates, works with diversity
3. Information: Acquires and evaluates information, organizes and maintains information, interprets and communicates information, uses computers to process information
4. Systems: Understands systems, monitors and corrects performance, improves or designs systems
5. Technology: Selects technology, applies technology to task, maintains and troubleshoots equipment

In the field of *international education*, experts in the area of “global competency” offer various interpretations of the term. The three interpretations in Table 2 do not emphasize the specific “workplace competencies” of the SCANS report but instead refer to the importance of a student’s (1) knowledge of global issues, (2) ability to learn and to make interconnections, and (3) knowledge of foreign languages and cultures.

**Table 2. Perspectives of Global Competency (Willard: 1)**

<p>“A global-ready graduate [is] a person with a grasp of global systems, global issues, the dynamics of how things are interrelated and interconnected in the world, and how society can best address global issues.’ - Ron Moffatt, Director of the San Diego State University International Student Center</p> <p>‘The skills to listen, observe and evaluate, analyze, interpret, and relate.’ - Darla K. Deardorff, Director of Duke University’s International Education Administrators Association</p> <p>‘The ability to be fluent in at least one other language, such as Spanish or Mandarin; fluency with e-commerce and the Internet; a well-versed knowledge of geography; and, maybe most important, some knowledge of the political and cultural history of one or two countries or regions outside of Western Europe.’ - Carol Conway, Director of the Southern Global Strategies Council”</p>
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In research conducted to identify the competencies and skills that employers desire, Reilly found that 28 survey items were “very important” for a *recent graduate* to know or be able to do in order to “secure an entry-level, professional employment position in an international setting.” (Reilly 2004) (See Table 3.) These items reflect the “fundamental skills” in the SCANS report

and Deardorff's comments regarding global competency. (See Table 2.)

**Table 3. Items Identified as "Very Important" for a Recent Graduate  
(Reilly 2004: 112-124)**

- Demonstrate the qualities of tolerance, sensitivity to others, and tact
- Recognize and respect individual and cultural differences
- Demonstrate appropriate international etiquette in situations with business colleagues and clients such as greeting, introducing, thanking, taking leave, negotiating, and confirming contracts, socializing, paying and receiving compliments, and gift giving
- Behave in a manner that demonstrates knowledge of and respect for other countries
- Adapt use of English to the formality of the situation and the fluency of the business partner in international business and social settings
- Demonstrate ability to manage one's own stress levels
- Demonstrate self-awareness
- Demonstrate ability to motivate oneself
- Demonstrate ability to handle problems
- Demonstrate dependability
- Demonstrate ability to be flexible and adaptable
- Demonstrate commitment to quality work
- Demonstrate ability to self-evaluate personal strengths and weaknesses (awareness of personal skills and abilities)
- Demonstrate amenability toward training
- Practice good listening skills (learn to speak less, listen more)
- Demonstrate knowledge of Standard English: correct grammar, organization, writing strategy, sentence structure, and punctuation required for writing or editing reports
- Demonstrate ability to express ideas orally with consideration for audiences that understand English language in varying degrees
- Demonstrate ability to communicate effectively with others in writing as indicated by the needs of the audience (writing)
- Demonstrate ability to communicate effectively with others in writing as indicated by the needs of the audience (writing)
- Demonstrate ability to listen to what other people are saying and ask questions as appropriate (active listening)

- Understand the necessity of tailoring messages to reflect cultural context and difference
- Demonstrate ability to listen to others and ask clarifying questions as appropriate
- Demonstrate knowledge of how to find information and identify essential information (information gathering)
- Demonstrate ability to problem-solve issues related to one's professional competence in different cultural contexts
- Demonstrate ability to understand how the organization works
- Demonstrate ability for team-building
- Demonstrate an understanding of the organization's international strategic vision (clearly defined, understood, communicated, and accepted throughout the organization)
- Demonstrate an understanding of the international context and cultural norms of potential members, customers, partners, and other stakeholders

It should be recognized, however, that *global companies* do have workforce needs unique to their industries and organizations. The Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of United Parcel Service (UPS), Michael Eskew, for example, in a speech entitled *Education in an Age of Globalization* presented to the States Institute on International Education stated that his company was looking for future employees who were able to meet the need created by an increase in world trade; specifically, employees who were “trade literate,” “sensitive to foreign cultures,” “conversant in different languages,” “technology savvy,” “capable of managing complexity,” and “ethical,” although Eskew added that people with the aforementioned skills would be leading most American companies. (Eskew 2005: 12)

Considering the career growth of graduates over time, *business leadership* development is another area in which specific global competencies have been

identified, and it is recommended in the literature that the global leadership potential of employees be assessed to determine future global business leaders. (Thorn 2002)

Executives believe that developing leaders is the most important human resource goal for achieving global success. The competencies and qualities that are cited as important include honesty, integrity, teamwork, communication, and risk-taking. These qualities are also highlighted in Dr. Rosen's (Rosen, 1999) global leadership research based on interviews of business leaders from 30 different countries to identify the universal competencies and practices of global leaders.

Finally, in the interconnected *world of the future* described by Friedman in the best selling book, *The World is Flat*, middle class jobs will be filled by people with the skills to collaborate, synthesize, explain, leverage technology, adapt, solve environmental problems, personalize, and localize. (Friedman 2006)

**Table 4: Jobs and Skills in the Future Interconnected World (Source: Friedman 2006)**

- “Collaborators and Orchestrators”: Collaborating and orchestrating in and between global companies with diverse populations
- “Synthesizers”: Combining unrelated things in unique, unforeseen ways
- “Explainers”: Explaining complicated things simply
- “Leveragers”: Leveraging technology to empower others
- “Adapters”: Continually adapting, learning, and growing
- “Green People”: Solving environmental problems
- “Personalizers”: Adding a personal/human touch to a job
- “Localizers”: Customizing global capabilities for local needs

### Acquiring Skills and Competencies

Taking into consideration all of the aforementioned skills and competencies that are valued now and are likely to be valued in the future, what is the best way to prepare students for the global workforce?

The SCANS report stated that based on an examination of “the findings of cognitive science, the most effective way of teaching skills is ‘in context,’” and recommended that the following three principles underlie programs involving such contextual learning. (SCANS 2000: 19)

- Students do not need to learn basic skills before they learn problem-solving skills. The two go together. They are not sequential but mutually enforcing.
- Learning should be reoriented from mere mastery of information toward encouraging students to recognize and solve problems; and
- Real know-how foundation and competencies cannot be taught in isolation; students need practice in the application of these skills.

The SCANS report also listed five proficiency levels that could be used to indicate how prepared someone was for the workforce: (1) “preparatory,” (2) “work-ready,” (3) “intermediate,” (4) “advanced,” and (5) “specialist.” (SCANS 2000: xx, 25)

Additionally, the SCANS report described the “schools of tomorrow” as having the following characteristics. (SCANS 2000: 22)



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Strategy: (1) Focus on development of thinking skills and (2) Assessment integral to teaching

Learning Environment: (1) Students construct knowledge for themselves, (2) Cooperative learning solving, and (3) Skills learned in the context of real problems

Management: Learner-centered, teacher directed

Outcome: All students learn to think

In the field of *international education*, study abroad programs stand out as a highly recommended option for developing a student's global competency. In regard to overcoming one potential weakness of a study abroad program, Shams and George argue that international service learning is "a viable tool to educate students towards global competency....Framing the study abroad experience within a service-learning context can provide the sometimes meaningful relationships to the community" that may be missing in a study abroad program where students remain together in an isolated group. (Shams & George 2006)

In the development of *business leaders*, overseas experiences are also considered important. The suggestions for training leaders below by Thorn provide insight into the types of experiences that educators might create to develop the global workforce competencies of their students. (Thorn 2002)

Based on recommendations from the interviews with current global leaders, in addition to ongoing management development and training, programs targeted for the development of leaders need to include the following:

- Assignments with responsibility and authority;
- Assignments and travel to different countries;
- Broad leadership education and training outside the organization's (e.g., other disciplines, other sectors);
- Rotational assignments to other organizations;
- Sabbaticals for continuous learning and perspective;
- Opportunities to work with and “shadow leaders”; and
- Assignments to action learning/risk-taking teams.

In summary, the literature indicates the following two points: (1) the importance of the knowledge, skills, and attitudes associated with global competency for members of the global workforce and (2) the value of overseas experiences in the development of global workforce competency.

### Kevin's Company

Recognizing that the needs of a student for language training and professional experience are not always met through the traditional internship programs in Japan where a student-intern's responsibility and exposure to the English language may be limited or nonexistent, Kevin's Company was created.

Kevin's Company is the name of a business internship program offered through the Career Education Center of the Kanda University of International Studies (KUIS) in Chiba, Japan to second and third year undergraduate KUIS students of Japanese nationality. The school-year long program is an elective, and students receive academic credit for participation.

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In the internship program, the participants simulate working in a consulting company entitled *Kevin's Company*. Each participant is assigned to a consulting team. Classroom sessions are conducted as company meetings. The instructor is a native English speaker, acts as president of the company, teaches marketing management to the participants, and directly supervises the consulting teams. All meetings are conducted in English.

Each team is assigned to create a marketing plan for British Hills (BH). BH is a reproduction of a British village from the Victorian era and located on top of a hill in a forested area of Fukushima prefecture in Japan. BH is affiliated with KUIS and serves as a residential language-learning facility for students of all ages throughout Japan and for company and government employees. BH simultaneously functions as a resort for guests interested in British culture. BH hires native English speakers from primarily the former British Commonwealth of Nations to work as instructors and staff. BH also hires as employees Japanese with advanced English speaking ability.

The internship program is divided into three stages. During the first stage, the teams construct the first draft of a marketing plan and prepare to conduct research onsite at BH. They learn how to analyze a company (SWOT analysis), conduct marketing research (observation, interview, and questionnaire), and create a marketing plan, based on designs suggested in MBA-level materials in English (e.g., Kotler 2006, Burns 2006).

During this first stage, the teams have a limited amount of information about British Hills. The emphasis during this stage is on the ability of the

applicants to work and to learn in teams and to apply the concepts that they are learning to their team's marketing plan.

During the second stage of the internship program, the applicants acquire real world feedback on their plan from professionals at British Hills. During this stage, the participants stay at BH for six days during the summer break of KUIS. During their stay at BH, they engage in three types of activities: (1) meetings with the management and staff of each BH department, (2) marketing research, and (3) work in the different departments at BH. Through these activities, they are provided with opportunities to interview English-speaking employees of BH, learn about the work of each department in the organization, and experience doing several of the jobs themselves. The teams are also asked to improve their marketing plans based on the information they acquire at BH.

During this second stage, the teams often realize that their marketing plans are insufficient in one or more ways. It is at this point that team members have to overcome their "failure," revise their plan based on the feedback they have acquired, and achieve success. This is the type of setback experience that the participants in Kevin's Company must be able to overcome to be successful as members of the global workforce.

During the third stage of the internship program, the teams are asked to conduct marketing research that targets the students of KUIS and the Kanda Institute of Foreign Languages (KIFL), which is a two-year vocational institution affiliated with KUIS. Thereafter, the teams analyze the data they

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have obtained and finalize their marketing plans. Additionally, the teams prepare a PowerPoint presentation and receive training in presentation delivery. The audience of the teams' final presentation may consist of BH and university administrators, the participants' professors, members of the business community, and the participants' peers.

This third stage is intended to simulate the type of experience that the participants might have in persuading others in the workplace (i.e., a boss, colleagues, or the members of a board of directors) to support their proposals.

Each participant is assessed on his or her team's performance, individual performance, and peer evaluation.

## **Objective**

As Kevin's Company is a domestic business internship program in Japan, the study was designed to provide an indication of whether this type of domestic program is effective in preparing participants to compete in the global workforce upon graduation, given the recognized value of overseas experiences in the development of global competency.

## **Participants**

This study was conducted with the participants in the first year of Kevin's Company (i.e., April 2006 to January 2007). Six undergraduate students at

KUIS enrolled in the business internship program. Five of the students (three females and two males) were undergraduate students in their third year of study, and one of the students (female) was in her second year of study.

The six participants were divided into two classes held at different times, due to their class schedules. One class consisted of two third-year females and one third-year male (3F, 3F, 3M), and another class consisted of one third-year male, one third-year female, and one second-year female (3M, 3F, 2F).

Prior to entering the business internship program:

- All of the third-year students had held one or more part-time jobs.
- All of the participants had traveled to one or more foreign countries.
- All of the participants had studied English in several of their other classes at KUIS.

Kevin's Company is now in its second year and has 31 participants (a significant increase over the previous year), but as only one semester had passed at the time of this publication, these participants had not completed their marketing research nor given their final presentations, so they were not included in this study.

## **Methods**

At the end of the internship program, five of the six students were asked to complete a questionnaire in class. One of the students (female in her third year of study) was absent from class at the time the questionnaire was

administered.

The questionnaire first asked a participant to identify what he or she had experienced in the business internship program and then to list in order of importance the five most valuable parts of the program for a participant.

Many of the 43 items in this questionnaire were simplified versions of the items in the aforementioned survey by Reilly. (Reilly 2004: 112-124) In the questionnaire for Kevin's Company, the items that the participants were asked if they had experienced were as follows:

1. Leadership
2. Teamwork
3. Flexible attitude
4. Patience with others
5. Acting outside of your comfort zone
6. Analyzing issues from many different perspectives
7. Increase in confidence to work in foreign countries
8. Greater willingness to take risks
9. Belief that you can affect change
10. Greater respect for the differences that exist around the world
11. Greater respect for the views of others
12. Openness to new experiences
13. Nonjudgmental reaction to cultural differences
14. Greater awareness of your own culture
15. Greater awareness of another culture(s)
16. Greater appreciation of teamwork
17. Greater awareness of the relationship between different organizations
18. Knowledge of the basic parts of a marketing plan

19. Greater understanding of the different parts of a business
20. Greater understanding of how outside factors affect a business
21. Greater awareness of personal skills and abilities
22. Adapt the way you use English to match the formality of a situation
23. Improve your proficiency in English
24. Effectively manage your own stress
25. Motivate yourself
26. Handle problems under challenging situations
27. Act dependably
28. Commit to quality work
29. Manage multiple priorities (Multitask)
30. Prepare yourself psychologically for an unexpected situation
31. Become receptive to learning
32. Practice good listening skills
33. Use standard English (good grammar, etc.)
34. Try to express your ideas in spoken English in a way that the listener could understand
35. Communicate effectively in writing
36. Ask questions as appropriate
37. Understand the need to tailor messages to reflect cultural context difference
38. Ask clarifying questions as appropriate
39. Gather information effectively
40. Solve different kinds of problems effectively
41. Contribute to team building
42. Understand the vision/purpose of the team
43. Understand the vision/purpose of non-team members



## Results

The results of the questionnaire have been divided into the following two sections:

- (1) The 43 items experienced by participants, and
- (2) The five most valuable parts of the business internship program.

### 43 Items Experienced by Participants

The breakdown of the *total number of items* experienced by each of the participants is as follows.

3<sup>rd</sup> year female: 39 items (91%)

3<sup>rd</sup> year female: 22 items (51%)

2<sup>nd</sup> year female: 22 items (51%)

3<sup>rd</sup> year male: 24 items (56%)

3<sup>rd</sup> year male: 37 items (86%)

*All five of the participants* indicated that they had experienced the following seven items.

2. Teamwork
3. Flexible attitude
5. Acting outside of your comfort zone
6. Analyzing issues from many different perspectives
32. Practice good listening skills
42. Contribute to team building
43. Understand the vision/purpose of the team

*Four out of five of the participants* indicated that they had experienced the following 13 items in addition to the seven items that all of the participants had experienced (for a total of 20 items).

4. Patience with others
9. Belief that you can affect change
11. Greater respect for the views of others
12. Openness to new experiences
16. Greater appreciation of teamwork
18. Knowledge of the basic parts of a marketing plan
20. Greater understanding of how outside factors affect a business
21. Greater awareness of personal skills and abilities
24. Effectively manage your own stress
25. Handle problems under challenging situations
26. Act dependably
34. Try to express your ideas in spoken English in a way that the listener could understand
39. Gather information effectively

*All of the female participants* indicated that they had experienced the following six items in addition to the seven items that all of the participants had experienced (for a total of 13 items).

12. Openness to new experiences
16. Greater appreciation of teamwork
24. Effectively manage your own stress
27. Act dependably
34. Try to express your ideas in spoken English in a way that the listener could understand
39. Gather information effectively

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*All of the male participants* indicated that they had experienced the following 12 items in addition to the seven items that all of the participants had experienced (for a total of 19 items).

4. Patience with others
7. Increase in confidence to work in foreign countries
8. Greater willingness to take risks
9. Belief that you can affect change
11. Greater respect for the views of others
17. Greater awareness of the relationship between different organizations
18. Knowledge of the basic parts of a marketing plan
20. Greater understanding of how outside factors affect a business
21. Greater awareness of personal skills and abilities
26. Handle problems under challenging situations
31. Become receptive to learning
40. Solve different kinds of problems effectively

There were two items that were experienced by only *one participant*. All of the other items were experienced by two or more of the participants.

14. Greater awareness of your own culture (third year male student)
23. Improve your proficiency in English (second year female student)

**Table 3. Items Experienced by Participants**

Item		3F	3F	2F	3M	3M
1	Leadership	<input type="radio"/>			<input type="radio"/>	
2	Teamwork	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3	Flexible attitude	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4	Patience with others	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5	Acting outside of your comfort zone	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6	Analyzing issues from many different perspectives	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7	Increase in confidence to work in foreign countries	<input type="radio"/>			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8	Greater willingness to take risks			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9	Belief that you can affect change	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10	Greater respect for the differences that exist around the world	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>			<input type="radio"/>
11	Greater respect for the views of others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12	Openness to new experiences	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>
13	Nonjudgmental reaction to cultural differences		<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14	Greater awareness of your own culture				<input type="radio"/>	
15	Greater awareness of another culture(s)	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>
16	Greater appreciation of teamwork	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>
17	Greater awareness of the relationship between different organizations	<input type="radio"/>			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
18	Knowledge of the basic parts of a marketing plan	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
19	Greater understanding of the different parts of a business	<input type="radio"/>				<input type="radio"/>
20	Greater understanding of how outside factors affect a business	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
21	Greater awareness of personal skills and abilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
22	Adapt the way you use English to match the formality of a situation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>			<input type="radio"/>
23	Improve your proficiency in English			<input type="radio"/>		
24	Effectively manage your own stress	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>
25	Motivate yourself	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
26	Handle problems under challenging situations	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
27	Act dependably	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>
28	Commit to quality work	<input type="radio"/>				<input type="radio"/>

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29	Manage multiple priorities (Multitask)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
30	Prepare yourself psychologically for an unexpected situation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
31	Become receptive to learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
32	Practice good listening skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
33	Use standard English (good grammar, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
34	Try to express your ideas in spoken English in way listener understands	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
35	Communicate effectively in writing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
36	Ask questions as appropriate	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
37	Understand the need to tailor messages to reflect cultural context difference	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
38	Ask clarifying questions as appropriate	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
39	Gather information effectively	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
40	Solve different kinds of problems effectively	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
41	Contribute to team building	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
42	Understand the vision/purpose of the team	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
43	Understand the vision/purpose of non-team members	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Total</b>		<b>39</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Percentage of all items (Rounded up)</b>		<b>91</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>86</b>
<b>3F</b>	3rd year female undergraduate student at KUIS					
<b>2F</b>	2nd year female undergraduate student at KUIS					
<b>3M</b>	3rd year male undergraduate student at KUIS					

### Five Most Valuable Parts of the Business Internship Program

In regard to the five most valuable parts of the business internship program that participants were asked to rank in order of importance, “teamwork”-related items were ranked number one by four of the five participants. One participant ranked “leadership” number one and a “teamwork”-related item number three.

Among the 25 responses from the five participants, in total, there were:

- 6 responses regarding teams
- 4 responses regarding marketing
- 4 responses regarding business/analysis of business issues
- 4 responses regarding language skills
- 3 responses regarding acting outside of one's comfort zone/handling problems
- 1 response regarding leadership
- 1 response regarding motivation/presentation
- 1 response regarding patience with others
- 1 response regarding enjoying BH stay with other participants

**Table 4. Ranking of 5 Most Valuable Parts of the Business Internship Program**

<p><b>3F: 3rd year female undergraduate student at KUIS</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Teamwork, strong friendship</li><li>2) To handle problems in many situations</li><li>3) To know marketing which I hadn't known at all</li><li>4) To have motivation to succeed in a presentation</li><li>5) To analyze issues in B.H. and build strategies for them</li></ol>
<p><b>3F: 3rd year female undergraduate student at KUIS</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Teamwork</li><li>2) Understand the vision/purpose of the team</li><li>3) Knowledge of the basic parts of a marketing plan</li><li>4) Analyzing issues from many different perspectives</li><li>5) Acting outside of my comfort zone</li></ol>
<p><b>2F: 2nd year female undergraduate student at KUIS</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Teamwork</li><li>2) Acting outside of my comfort zone</li></ol>

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<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>3) Improving my proficiency in English</li><li>4) Practicing good listening skills</li><li>5) Trying to express my ideas in spoken English in a way that the listener could understand</li></ol>
<p><b>3M: 3rd year male undergraduate student at KUIS</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Leadership</li><li>2) Patience with others</li><li>3) Contributing to team building</li><li>4) Knowledge of the basic parts of a marketing plan</li><li>5) Practicing good listening skills</li></ol>
<p><b>3M: 3rd year male undergraduate student at KUIS</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Acquired skill to cooperate with team members</li><li>2) Became insightful in analyzing any aspect of the business</li><li>3) Learned what actual business is like</li><li>4) Acquired a knowledge of marketing</li><li>5) Enjoyed my stay with the other participants at B.H.</li></ol>

## Discussion

Kevin's Company was originally designed to give participants the experiences listed below, and the responses to the questionnaire indicated that one or more of the participants had experienced one or more of these six items.

- Understanding and analysis of an actual business
- Teamwork and leadership opportunities
- Business English proficiency
- Understanding of and ability to create a marketing plan
- Presentation and persuasion skills
- The experience of successfully overcoming a challenge

In regard to business English proficiency, however, only one participant (second-year female student) indicated that she had experienced improvement in her English proficiency. Although the participants were not asked to elaborate on this point, I assume the reasons to be as follows. First, the other four students had studied longer and had greater proficiency in the English language. Second, although the classroom sessions were conducted in English and the participants were learning from business materials intended for use by native level speakers, the participants were permitted to use Japanese when they met as a team so that the more knowledgeable members of the team could explain the business concepts to those teammates who needed assistance. In other words, *learn the business concepts in any way you can* was given priority over *learn the business concepts through English only*. Third, at BH, the participants were given presentations by the heads of the different departments. However, these professionals were primarily Japanese, so in most cases, the participants were given the option and chose to hear the presentations in the Japanese language. Finally, when the participants gave their final presentations to the staff at BH about what they had learned during their stay at BH, they were given the option of speaking in Japanese or speaking in English. In other words, the participants were not required to use English to the *greatest extent possible*.

In regard to global workforce development, the responses to the questionnaire indicated that the participants had indeed experienced a large percentage of the items listed on the questionnaire. Specifically, all of the participants claimed to have experienced more than 50% of the items, and one participant claimed to have experienced more than 90% of the items. This



would seem to be a favorable indication that a domestic internship program similar to Kevin's Company can provide participants with global workforce skills and competencies to a certain extent. However, three points should be noted: (1) the number of the participants was few, so the questionnaire results are not necessarily indicative of a large population, (2) the participants were not required to indicate the strength of their experiences, and (3) the participants' perceptions of their experiences might not necessarily have been accurate.

## **Conclusion and Recommendations**

The objective of the study was to indicate whether a domestic business internship program such as Kevin's Company has the potential to increase the global competency of the participants, given the recognized importance of overseas experiences in this area. The responses to the questionnaire indicated that Kevin's Company enabled participants to acquire certain knowledge, skills, and attitudes associated with global competency that would help them to become successful members of the global workforce.

On the other hand, the responses to the questionnaire also indicated that Kevin's Company could be improved by creating environments that do the following: (1) require the participants to use English more often and (2) develop in participants those questionnaire items that not many of the participants had indicated experiencing.

Finally, it may be difficult for a domestic program in a country where English is not the native language to replicate the results of international

service-learning programs that connect the participants to English-speaking communities. In the case of Kevin's Company, however, enabling the participants to interact with English-speaking groups on domestic service-learning projects in Japan seems to be a promising approach to global workforce development in the future.

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