

# Developing Employees for International Success



## Background

Ashurst LLP is an elite law firm with 200 + partners in 15 countries. Each year, Ashurst recruits 55 graduates for training contracts, and many, as part of their two year traineeship, will undertake a six month seat in an overseas office. Since 2007, Communicaid has been providing intensive language training for assignees going to Paris, Frankfurt, Madrid and Milan. Assignees for Dubai, Singapore and Tokyo receive culture awareness training prior to their departure.

## Training Objectives

- To raise employees' existing high level language skills to an operational level and adapt their style and register to working in a legal environment
- To provide employees with a more in-depth understanding of the target culture and working styles
- To prepare employees for the practicalities of living overseas and alleviate any concerns they may have about their new environment

## Challenges

The main challenges were seen as:

- Designing a consistent training approach with content and materials tailored to the employees' existing skills and experience
- Finding an appropriate balance between language and cultural awareness for employees going to non-European offices
- Delivering a succinct yet high impact training programme to accommodate the employees' busy schedules prior to their assignment

## Training Approach

Working closely with Ashurst's Graduate Recruitment & Development Team, we agreed on two separate solutions, depending on the destination of the employee.

Most assignees relocating to Paris, Frankfurt, Madrid and Milan already had a good foundation in the local language and needed to boost their business and specialist legal language. They often had experience living in-country during university and so their challenges were mostly linguistic rather than cultural.

Assignees relocating to Tokyo, Dubai, and Singapore were most often complete beginners in the language and had little experience of the target country. Rather than trying to master Japanese or Arabic from scratch, Communicaid recommended that these employees would benefit from a cultural awareness training session encompassing the basic greetings and phrases to aid relationship building.



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## Proposed Solutions

- Three day intensive language skills training for the Paris, Frankfurt, Madrid and Milan assignees
- Half day cultural awareness training including basic language skills for Dubai, Singapore and Tokyo assignees
- Flexible language training available on the ground in the target city if they were unable to complete their three days' training prior to their departure

## Results

Feedback on all programmes is consistently positive with up to 16 delegates trained annually. Due to the intensive preparation prior to their assignment, employees have been able to hit the ground running on arrival. Several employees have found their assignment so positive that they have extended their stay.

## Contact Details

For more information about how Communicaid can assist you and your organisation, please contact our Business Development Team:

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## Client Feedback

"The cultural awareness and language training offered by Communicaid has given our trainees going on international secondment the key knowledge and skills that make their settling into a new country that little bit less daunting! All courses have always followed careful discussion with each individual about their level of language ability / experience of a country and are perfectly tailored to ensure each trainee really does get the most from the training offered."

Katherine Elam

Graduate Recruitment and  
Development Officer, Ashurst

