

Part I. Assignment

Assignment description:

You are a member of the top management team at a company with headquarters in country X. Your company has been expanding its operations to country Y and you are playing an important role in this international expansion. In this project, you need to analyze the relevant characteristics of country Y and to explain the reasons for expanding operations to country Y. You also need to evaluate the company's choice of locating certain value chain activities in country Y, to evaluate whether the chosen entry mode is optimal for starting operations in Y, and to describe various challenges / opportunities associated with expanding your company's operations to country Y.

Your group can select any company that has operations outside of its home country as long as the following requirements are satisfied:

1. The company should not be fictional.
2. Companies from the cases included in the Course Program (Netflix, Walmart, etc.) should not be selected for the group projects.
3. The company's operations in a host country should not be limited just to the sales support – its subsidiary in country Y should engage in some other value chain activities besides marketing and sales (e.g., input procurement, product development, product manufacturing, or providing customer services).
4. The international expansion of your company's operations to country Y should have started within the last three years (from 2022 onwards).

Questions / topics to be addressed in a group project

Stage 1:

1. What are the main cultural differences between your home country (country X in the text of the task) and the host country (i.e. the country you are going to, country Y in the text of the task)? What are the main impacts of these differences on your strategy in the host country? Use one of the frameworks discussed in class to compare cultures.
2. Explain how other characteristics of your home country X and host country Y (beyond culture) could influence your company's decision to expand operations to country Y.
3. What are the strategic objectives for your company's expansion to country Y? Use material discussed in class to evaluate whether this expansion is likely to add value for your company.
4. Describe the activities / operations that your company performs in country Y. Evaluate the company's choice to perform such activities in country Y, while other value chain activities are performed in your home country X or elsewhere.

Stage 2:

1. Present the advantages and disadvantages of alternative entry modes that potentially could be used by your company. In your opinion, has the company selected the optimal entry mode? Please explain why.
2. What are the challenges that the company managers supervising operations in country Y are likely to face when leading multicultural teams, motivating employees, recruiting the right skills, etc. What can be done to address these leadership and HRM challenges?
3. Identify how the expansion of operations to country Y is affecting various stakeholders of your company. How should your company address the stakeholders' concerns triggered by this international expansion?

Part II. Process guidelines

The group project is conducted in groups of 6 students and includes the following steps:

- Group formation (by Feb 13th)
- Project proposal delivery via Moodle (by Feb 20th)
- Project Application presentation (during one of the theoretical classes, to be assigned for each group)
- Mid-term presentation (April 3rd or 4th)
- Final report delivery via Moodle (by May 16th)

Group formation:

Students should form a group to work on the group project through the Moodle page of the course. The recommended number of participants in each group is 6 (TA may adjust the group size depending on the enrollment). Due to the international nature of the course, each group should have students from at least two countries. The groups should be formed by Feb 13th. If you have questions, please email your TA - Alexandra Nunes (alexandra.nunes@novasbe.pt) or Hannah Ribeiro (hannah.ribeiro@novasbe.pt).

Project proposal:

The project proposal is one-page document that contains information about your project: selected company, company's description, host country where this company has expanded its operations, why this company was chosen and a list of group members. You should upload the project proposal to the folder on the Moodle page of the course by February 20th. If two groups within the same section have chosen the same company, the project will be allocated on the "first come, first served" basis and you will be informed by your TA. You can start working on the project after your TA approves the project proposal.

Project Application presentation:

Each group will make a Project Application (PA) presentation during one of the theoretical sessions. Your PA presentation should take 10 min. The presenting group will need to send an email with PowerPoint slides to Prof. Ilya (ilya.okhmatovskiy@novasbe.pt) the night before the PA presentation. This presentation should connect your group project with a topic being

discussed during a theoretical session when your group is scheduled to present. Topics discussed during theoretical sessions are sufficiently general to be applicable for all companies expanding their operations abroad. The schedule of PA presentations will be determined after all groups are created. See the “PA Presentation Guidelines” for further details.

Mid-term presentation:

You will present Stage 1 of your group project in a practical class in the middle of this semester (April 3rd or 4th). Your group should upload their PowerPoint slides on Moodle the night before the midterm presentation by 23:59 (11:59 pm). Your presentation should last no more than 10 minutes.

Final report:

The final report must be delivered at the end of this semester (May 16th) via Moodle (a folder will be created for you to upload the file). The final report should cover both Stage 1 and Stage 2. The questions highlight the issues you should address, but the goal is to provide a coherent report about challenges and opportunities associated with the expansion of your company’s operations to a foreign country. Hence, this report should not be in a Q&A format. The report should be max. 8 pages (excluding a cover page, an executive summary, a list of referenced information sources, and an appendix with figures and tables) in font Times New Roman 11 or 12, with 1.5 line spacing, all margins should be 2.5 cm. If you fail to comply with these formatting requirements, 2 points will be deducted from your project report grade.