

What is a Global Manager?

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To compete around the world, a company needs three strategic capabilities: global-scale efficiency, local responsiveness, and the ability to leverage learning worldwide. No single "global" manager can build these capabilities. Rather, groups of specialized managers must integrate assets, resources, and people in diverse operating units.

Bartlett and Ghoshal identify three types of global managers. They also illustrate the responsibilities each position involves through a close look at the careers of successful executives.

The first type is the global business or product-division manager who must build worldwide efficiency and competitiveness. These managers recognize cross-border opportunities and risks as well as link activities and capabilities around the world.

The second is the country manager who is responsible for understanding and interpreting local markets, building local resources and capabilities, and contributing inputs to the development of global strategy.

Finally, there are worldwide functional specialists. To transfer expertise from one unit to another and leverage learning, these managers must scan the company for good ideas and best practices, transfer them across units, and champion innovations with worldwide applications.