

Printed from

THE ECONOMIC TIMES**Learn Strategies:**

- » Designed to protect your stock portfolio.
- » Aimed at generating additional income.
- » Created to speculate on market direction.

FREE
Online Webinar
LEARN MORE >

optionsXpress®
Online Options, Stock &
Futures Brokers
optionsXpress, Inc.

Foreign stint should be right for family too

11 Dec, 2007, 0038 hrs IST, Malini Goyal, TNN

**C Perry Yeatman**

*International postings are rising as talent mobility in the global job market surge. The breed of expatriate executives, mostly a male bastion, has begun to see many more women. A recently published book — *Get Ahead By Going Abroad* — written by C Perry Yeatman and Stacie Nevadomski Berdan, is a woman's guide to fast track career success. Both women executives come with strong credentials; they have had long and successful international stints.*

Perry Yeatman, who is senior vice president and among the top 50 executives at Kraft Foods, gives some insights from the book and share some tips for women aspiring for international assignments:

Has anything changed in the corporate world making things easier for women on international assignments?

Absolutely. Business has changed from command and control to much more matrix-driven and themed organisation. Building relationships and some of the softer issues are very important in leaders today, things in which women can succeed much better. What they need to do is raise their hands and express themselves.

How did things improve for you with overseas assignments?

Personally, I grew up with a pretty narrow view of the world. My perspective of the world was pretty much what was happening in America. And I thought what's true for the US is true for the world. When I landed in Asia it was a slap on my face. I was so naïve. It made me wake up and realise that there are different ways of doing things and there are no best answers. That opened my eyes to other possibilities.

Why do you think international assignments are growing in importance? How has it helped you?

It helps you keep an open mind and look at issues differently. It's like becoming a global citizen and learning to appreciate great aspects of different cultures. The only way companies are going to succeed today is by understanding these differences well. Professionally, international stints have expanded my capabilities. Today, I handle almost 100 countries worldwide for Kraft Foods. I would have never been able to do this if I was sitting in Chicago all through. I wouldn't have been able to help my colleagues as I couldn't have understood where they are coming from. It has also helped me try new things.

Some of the big challenges that women face in international assignments?

The challenges significantly vary based on the particular woman and her job and family situation. However, across all markets and all types of assignments, the greatest challenge is usually for a woman to land an overseas position in the first place. Once she's got the job, more often than not — and even more often than a man according to recent research — a woman will succeed in working overseas. So, my advice is, to be sure that your boss and your human resources manager know that you want to work overseas. And, keep reminding them — time and again if need be — so they know you are serious and committed.

Your tips for surviving and flourishing in international assignments

There are many things you can do to help ensure you have the best experience possible in an overseas assignment. But if I had to boil it down to just three things, I'd pick the following tips:

- Do all you can to be sure it's the right opportunity for you and for your family before you even accept the job.
- Get mentally prepared to listen and learn a lot while simultaneously not forgetting that you know a lot

already and can add value even while you are learning.

- Throw yourself into your new role as soon as you land, but don't forget to look after yourself and your family too as the number one reason people return early from expatriate assignments is an unhappy spouse or child.

Any advice for women aspiring for international stints.

More than 200 women we researched for the book prove that women can successfully work overseas at any stage in their lives — single or married, with children or without. However, women do need to be aware that the choices they might make regarding the type of role or market may need to vary based on their life stage and marital status. For example, a single woman or a married woman without kids might want to choose a regional job with lots of travel. Or, she might be excited by a job in a fast growing, but perhaps volatile market. Whereas a woman with small children might want find a job with limited travel in an economically stable, clean, safe environment to be a better option.

[About Us](#) | [Advertise with Us](#) | [Careers @ TIL](#) | [Terms of Use](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Feedback](#) | [Sitemap](#)

Copyright © 2007 Times Internet Limited. All rights reserved. For reprint rights: [Times Syndication Service](#)

This site is best viewed with Internet Explorer 6.0 or higher; Firefox 2.0 or higher at a minimum screen resolution of 1024x768