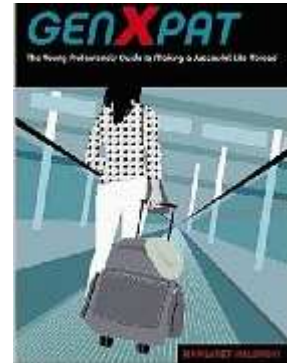


GenXpat – the young professional’s guide to making a successful life abroad

By Margaret Malewski

Intercultural Press, a Nicholas Brealey Publishing Company, 2005

Reviewed by Lena Lauridsen



The title *GenXpat* caught my eye as I did not understand it at first. The title refers to members of a generation born between 1964 and 1981 where many are expatriates and/or are pursuing a career abroad.

I found it interesting as I have been one of those and could relate to her introduction to the book: A generation caught up in fast-paced careers that increasingly involve travel and international relocation. A generation where young people find themselves living and working abroad, often at the cost of meaningful relationships and a sense of connection.

GenXpat promises to take us through subjects as:

- ✓ negotiating an expat contract ,
- ✓ juggle work and relocation logistics,
- ✓ deal with culture shock ,
- ✓ build social networks abroad,
- ✓ enjoy dating across cultures
- ✓ prepare for a smooth re-entry back home.

The book is easy to read. Margaret writes in a non-academic language and the pages fly by as she combines advice with real life stories from many of her genXpat colleagues and this makes the book trustworthy. For all young professionals about to make the move to go abroad this book is of great help and it covers some of the very important areas in one’s future life. Margaret takes us through the journey from the first ideas of going abroad, through the practical details, the experiences we will have abroad and finally the art of coming home. Throughout the book the reader is given loads of practical tips on how to succeed in this lifestyle.

Knowing that a book covering all these topics and taken its size into consideration one must be aware that this is only an appetizer. Still I was a bit disappointed that she tries to cover all topics, but does not go into details. I am now at the other end, having had my experiences and now knowing

where the pitfalls are. Still I would have appreciated if Margaret had dedicated a chapter to the downsides of this lifestyle. True, we do find examples here and there through out the book but – at last in my perspective – it is not structured well enough and does not give a clear picture of the negative elements of a life abroad as a genXpat.

This book is a must read for all young, single professionals who are just starting their international career as “hidden expats”. “Hidden expats” often travel from country to country on local contracts and without the back up from HQ that traditional expats gets. They are more on their own so to say. This book acknowledges this and gives useful information on how to build up a social network and more over: how to maintain focus on this side of life and not only work.

About the author:

Margeret Malewski grew up in Montreal, Canada, speaking English, French and Polish. In 1992 she began a decade of expatriation that led her to work in countries as varied as Poland, Switzerland and Israel. GenXpat combines her personal relocation experience and that of her colleagues with leading research into this modern phenomenon. Since her return to Canada in 2002, Margaret has been focusing on the issues confronting the new generation of young, internationally mobile professionals and she delivers seminars and coaching sessions on expatriate living and international careers as a cross-cultural trainer.