

Human Resources

QUALIFIED HUMAN RESOURCES

People and knowledge: these are the key drivers of the IT-BPO segment in Brazil. The great scale and the quality of labor currently available in the country, as well as the ability to prepare an increasing number of professionals to meet the market demands in an effective manner, set Brazil apart.

In step with its economic growth, Brazil has invested over the last two decades in the universalization of its education. Amongst 7 to 14 year-olds, 97.6% - around 27 million young people - are in school, attending nine years of primary education. Post-secondary school's duration is four to six years, with 9.4 million students. Professional education, including technical schools (4 years), short-term technical courses, and professional training courses, take in 6 million people.

According to the last Post-Secondary Education Census, in 2008 over 5.8 million people entered post-secondary education, in 2,252 institutions.

The challenge of meeting the labor needs of the IT-BPO market, which has been growing at an annual average rate of 6.5% over the last four years, is shared by public and private institutions throughout the country. A Ministry of Education survey carried out in 2007 revealed that there are 1,714 courses, from technical to university courses, directly linked to information technology in Brazil. Over 240,000 people are estimated to be currently being prepared to enter the market. This estimate includes courses in mathematics, physics and some engineering areas, as it is not uncommon in Brazil for professionals from those courses to get into the IT-BPO area.

There is an ongoing plan to double the current number of vacancies offered by the federal technical and technological area to 500,000 places by 2010. A qualification in information technology will be a priority in this initiative.

QUALIFICATION IN ENGLISH IS ALSO A PRIORITY

Foreign language skills must also be included in the qualification of IT-BPO professionals,

especially when the focus is on the external market.

In Brazil, English is a mandatory language course on the school curricula in primary, secondary, and post-secondary schools. Many students also attend supplementary courses in English as a second language (ESL), which are widely available throughout the country. Out of the largest developing economies, Brazil has the second-highest number of English speakers (10.2 million), behind only India.

Spanish and French are also widely taught in Brazil, especially in private, independent courses. The immigrant community also provides professionals fluent in Italian, German, Japanese and Arabic, amongst other languages.

The development of language skills is a priority as Brazil moves forward with its internationalization process. To this end, Brasscom has been working hard in close partnership with the government and private businesses to implement programs over the short, medium, and long term.

BRAZILIAN WORKERS ARE RECOGNIZED FOR THEIR COMMITMENT AND FLEXIBILITY

According to IDC, Brazil has one of the largest communities of COBOL and Java programmers in the world. It also certifies a large number of professionals every year in Unix, Linux, Natural, .Net, C++, as well as other programming languages.

Based on interviews with executives in the sector, IDC has concluded that Brazilian workers are recognized for the quality of their work and their commitment. They are considered to be flexible, not afraid to face challenges, and they are also not afraid to draw attention to problems that arise in projects. This can be explained by their curiosity and more holistic view of the process. They are also considered innovative and creative.

Turnover in teams in Brazil is around 4% on average, and is even lower in global projects. For the clients, especially offshore outsourced services, this has a significant impact on productivity, quality, training and transition costs and, consequently, on the total cost of the project. Stable teams maintain their knowledge of the business processes and systems, which is usually transferred in the initial phases of the project.