**Thinking Geographically**

**Case Study – A Call Centre in India**





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| **The call centre technician: David Somma 34, London, UK**  | **The call centre technician: Ankur Chadha, 34, New Delhi** |

**HSBC, Europe's biggest bank**, has reported pre-tax profits of $19bn (£11.8bn) for 2010, more than double the $7.1bn figure for 2009. It is looking to increase profit margins in what is a difficult economic climate by cutting down on staff costs. Part of this will be to close some local HSBC branches and promoting the use of ‘Online Banking’. They will also be relocating three of their UK based call centre’s to New Delhi to cut down on associated costs.

**David Somma, 34**, has been working for the HSBC credit card call centre in London, UK for the last four years. He has worked his way from a team member to team leader and is paid $22,500 per year for his work. David has a partner who is pregnant and a three year old son as well as a mortgage on their two bedroom apartment in London. David has recently been given three months’ notice that his job will end in December and his job will be transferred to New Dehli, India. With the current global recession, David is worried about finding a new job.

**Ankur Chadha, 34** is a graduate student from the University of Delhi in electronic engineering and system design. He is currently working in a call centre in New Delhi for Amazon.com helping with website enquiries and has done for the last five years. He is married to Jer and has two children or 3 and 5 years old. Ankur earns $2,100 a year with Amazon but with his experience will earn $2,500 with HSBC. Ankur is looking forward to the new challenge of helping UK based customers with their credit card enquiries.

What are the pros and cons in this situation as seen by the various participants?

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|  | HSBC | David Somma | Ankur Chadha |
| Pros |  |  |  |
| Cons |  |  |  |

Do you think that the resolution of the issue is fair? (e.g. the call centre goes to New Delhi in India, resulting in the loss of 1000 jobs in London)

Who in the situation do you sympathise with? Is it possible to empathise equally with all participants? (e.g. it may be easier to empathise with and feel sympathy for those who have lost their jobs, but does this mean that the New Delhi decision was wrong?)

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| http://t0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcQr__Vyyprbr5ckXE5i7c7VunQ2y5mdynsDU_2V08NZqoHnHhMMBYECf3A0 | ankur chadha | http://www.globalsurance.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2010/05/HSBC-Logo.jpg |
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What might be the consequences of the decision for individuals or the group? (e.g. in London (where there have been job losses) and in New Delhi (where there have been job gains)

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| London  | New Delhi  |
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Who should be consulted in a decision such as this? Individuals? Representative groups? (e.g. trade unions)

How far should people be treated as equal or different and on what grounds? (e.g. does one workforce have greater rights than another? Think about wages and rights.) To help you, you might want to watch from 16 mins 50 secs on the YouTube documentary on geographypods.com or [click here](http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=1okXqlBaL7I).



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| Similarities between workers | Differences between workers |
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Idea from GA – Global Dimensions.