U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

Non-Precedent Decision of the Administrative Appeals Office

In Re: 39567890

Date: OCT. 21, 2025

Appeal of Service Center Operations (SCOPS) Decision

Form I-129, Petition for a Nonimmigrant Worker (L-1B Specialized Knowledge Worker)

The Petitioner is an architecture firm that seeks to employ the Beneficiary temporarily in the position of "Executive Project & Administrative Coordinator" under the L-1B nonimmigrant classification for intracompany transferees. See Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act) section 101(a)(15)(L), 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(15)(L).

Service Center Operations (SCOPS) denied the petition, concluding that the record did not establish that the Beneficiary possesses specialized knowledge and was employed abroad and would be employed in the United States in a specialized knowledge capacity. The matter is now before us on appeal pursuant to 8 C.F.R. § 103.3.

The Petitioner bears the burden of proof to demonstrate eligibility by a preponderance of the evidence. *Matter of Chawathe*, 25 I&N Dec. 369, 375-76 (AAO 2010). We review the questions in this matter de novo. *Matter of Christo's, Inc.*, 26 I&N Dec. 537, 537 n.2 (AAO 2015). Upon de novo review, we will dismiss the appeal.

I. LAW

To establish eligibility for the L-1B nonimmigrant visa classification, the beneficiary must seek to enter the United States temporarily to continue rendering his or her services to the same employer or a subsidiary or affiliate thereof in a specialized knowledge capacity. Section 101(a)(15)(L) of the Act. The petitioner must also establish that the beneficiary's prior education, training, and employment qualify him or her to perform the intended services in the United States. 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(l)(3).

II. SPECIALIZED KNOWLEDGE

The primary issue in this matter is whether the Petitioner established that the Beneficiary possesses specialized knowledge and whether she has been employed abroad and will be employed in the United States, in a specialized knowledge capacity.[1]

[1] The Petitioner does not claim that the Beneficiary was employed abroad in an executive or managerial capacity.

As a threshold issue, we must determine whether the Petitioner established that the Beneficiary possesses specialized knowledge. If the evidence is insufficient to establish that he possesses specialized knowledge, then we cannot conclude that the Beneficiary's past and intended future employment involve specialized knowledge.

A beneficiary is deemed to have specialized knowledge if they have: (1) a "special" knowledge of the petitioning organization's product and its application in international markets; or (2) an "advanced" level of knowledge of the processes and procedures of the petitioning organization. Section 214(c)(2)(B) of the Act; 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(l)(1)(ii)(D). A petitioner may establish eligibility by submitting evidence that the beneficiary and the proffered position satisfy either prong of the statutory definition.

As both "special" and "advanced" are relative terms, determining whether a given beneficiary's knowledge is "special" or "advanced" inherently requires a comparison of the beneficiary's knowledge against that of others. With respect to either special or advanced knowledge, the petitioner ordinarily must demonstrate that the beneficiary's knowledge is not commonly held throughout the particular industry and cannot be easily imparted from one person to another. The ultimate question is whether the petitioner has met its burden of demonstrating by a preponderance of the evidence that the beneficiary's knowledge or expertise is special or advanced, and that the beneficiary's position requires such knowledge.

Special knowledge concerns knowledge of the petitioning organization's products or services and their application in international markets. To establish that a beneficiary has special knowledge, the petitioner may meet its burden through evidence that the beneficiary has knowledge that is distinct or uncommon in comparison to the knowledge of other similarly employed workers in the particular industry.

Because "advanced knowledge" concerns knowledge of an organization's processes and procedures, the petitioning entity may meet its burden through evidence that the beneficiary has knowledge of or an expertise in the organization's processes and procedures that is greatly developed or further along in progress, complexity, and understanding in comparison to other workers in the employer's operations. Such advanced knowledge must be supported by evidence setting that knowledge apart from the elementary or basic knowledge possessed by others.

Once a petitioner articulates the nature of the claimed specialized knowledge, it is the weight and type of evidence which establishes whether the beneficiary actually possesses specialized knowledge. We cannot make a factual determination regarding a given beneficiary's specialized knowledge if the petitioner does not, at a minimum, articulate with specificity the nature of its products and services or processes and procedures, the nature of the specific industry or field involved, and the nature of the beneficiary's knowledge. The petitioner should also describe how such knowledge is typically gained within the organization and explain how and when the individual beneficiary gained such knowledge.

In a supporting statement, the Petitioner discussed the range of services provided by its architectural firm, stating that its employees must have "a solid understanding" of these services as well as "knowledge of our internal processes and procedures." The Petitioner, however, did not elaborate on those processes and procedures or state precisely what they entailed. The Petitioner also highlighted

the importance of having a "knowledge of our specific architectural business and design services," noting that such knowledge is uncommon and "can only be gained from on-the-job experience working with" the Petitioner's CEO and its clients and vendors. However, the Petitioner did not explain what is special about its services or distinguish its services from those of other architectural firms, thereby making it unclear as to why specialized knowledge is required to assume the Beneficiary's coordinator role.

The Petitioner further elaborated on the requirements of the Beneficiary's position, stating that in addition to "intimate knowledge" of the firm's services the position requires an individual with "experience interacting with clients and vendors, effective time management, and working under pressure," as well as strong verbal and written communication skills, organization skills, proficiency in various office software, and "knowledge of current technology." The Petitioner described the Beneficiary's position as that of a "go-between" who coordinates interactions between the company's CEO and its teams, clients, contractors, and vendors, and manages the office of the CEO, represents the CEO and the company "when interacting with clients, contractors, and vendors," ensures that the CEO is updated on all client projects, and offers "insights that help [the CEO] make well-informed company and project-related decisions."

While the listed job requirements indicate that the Beneficiary will have a significant role in assisting the CEO and the parties involved in the firm's architectural projects, it is unclear how these requirements are distinct from those of coordinators at other architectural firms; nor does the record show that the skillset required of the Beneficiary's position is common only to an individual possessing specialized knowledge of their employer's services or their processes and procedures.

The Petitioner also stated that the Beneficiary's "more than three years of on-the-job training and experience in [her] role" enabled her to acquire "the requisite knowledge" of the company's services, clients, contractor's and vendor, while also highlighting her "unique background of both business and creative design" which stemmed from her former ownership of a clothing business. However, the Petitioner has not established that the Beneficiary's "unique background" from her prior work experience is related to a specialized knowledge of its firm's services or its processes and procedures. Nor has the Petitioner outlined the steps taken by the Beneficiary to obtain the knowledge that is claimed to be specialized.

In a request for evidence (RFE), SCOPS asked the Petitioner to identify the Beneficiary's knowledge as special, thus involving knowledge of the organization's products or services and their application in international markets, or as advanced, thus involving knowledge of the organization's processes and procedures. The Petitioner was also asked to establish how the Beneficiary's knowledge is special or advanced, state the minimum time required to obtain the knowledge through training and/or work experience, and to compare the Beneficiary's qualifications and training with that of others in the organization and in the industry.

In response, the Petitioner reiterates the professional requirements of the Beneficiary's role, once again listing the Beneficiary's positive attributes and explaining why she is an ideal candidate for the proposed position. The Petitioner also stated that the Beneficiary has "in-depth knowledge" of the organization's services, which include "Master-Planning & Pre-Planning," "Design Assistance," "Construction Administrative," and "Site-Selection & Evaluation" services. However, the Petitioner

did not elaborate on these services or explain why specialized knowledge is required to execute the Beneficiary's role as a "go-between" among the parties who carry out and purchase these services. Likewise, the Petitioner made broad references but did not further elaborate on its organization's "techniques, management, and other business interests." As such, it is unclear why working as a "go-between" within the context of these techniques, management, and business interests would require specialized knowledge.

And although the Petitioner claimed that it could take up to 24 months of "on-the-job training with [the company's CEO] and other management" before an individual has the "in-depth knowledge" of the firm's architectural services, clients, and techniques, it did not outline a timeline of the information conveyed during this period. Nor did the Petitioner establish that gaining a "detailed knowledge" of the CEO's "standard for client projects" and his "preferences" for office management and communicating with architectural teams, clients, and vendors is equivalent to acquiring special knowledge of the organization's services or an advanced knowledge of its processes and procedures.

The Petitioner also referred to the Beneficiary's "unique background in design and business" but it did not explain how such knowledge translates to specialized knowledge *of the petitioning organization's* services or its products and processes. And despite referring to the Beneficiary's "in-depth knowledge of our services from trainings," the Petitioner did not provide evidence that any formal training took place. The Petitioner must support its assertions with relevant, probative, and credible evidence. *See Matter of Chawathe*, 25 I&N Dec. 369, 376 (AAO 2010).

In addition, the Petitioner provided evidence of marketing materials that the Beneficiary designed on behalf of the company as well as social media and budgets she created for the business she owned prior to assuming a role with the petitioning organization. However, the Petitioner did not establish a nexus between these submissions and the claim that the Beneficiary acquired specialized knowledge of the petitioning organization's services or its processes and procedures.

On appeal,[2] the Petitioner argues that SCOPS' decision was inconsistent with precedent case law and "ignored information provided." However, the Petitioner does not specify which information SCOPS is claimed to have ignored or explain how the decision is inconsistent with precedent decisions.

The Petitioner also asserts that the Beneficiary is the only employee within the organization who has the knowledge and skills to carry out her assigned duties. However, to establish that the Beneficiary possesses specialized knowledge, the Petitioner must demonstrate that the Beneficiary's knowledge is special with respect to the organization's services or advanced with respect to the organization's processes and procedures. *See* 2 USCIS Policy Manual, L.4(B)(1). As discussed earlier, the Petitioner has not adequately discussed or even identified its firm's processes and procedures, nor has it identified distinguishing characteristics in its firm's services to support the claim that specialized knowledge is required to carry out the Beneficiary's role as an intermediary among parties who work with and use those services. The Petitioner also has not outlined its firm's process for acquiring specialized knowledge of its services or its processes and procedures.

[2] The Petitioner marked box 1.b on the appeal form, indicating the intent to submit an appeal brief or additional evidence within 30 days of filing the appeal. The record, however, does not contain a brief or supplemental evidence. As such, this decision will be based on our review of the record as presently constituted.

III. CONCLUSION

Given the evidentiary deficiencies discussed above, the record does not establish that the Beneficiary attained specialized knowledge of the petitioning organization's products or services or its processes and procedures. Therefore, the Petitioner has not established that the Beneficiary possesses specialized knowledge or that she was employed abroad and would be employed in the United States in a specialized knowledge capacity.

ORDER: The appeal is dismissed.

NOTICE: This constitutes the final decision in this matter. The filing of a motion will not postpone the effect of the decision. 8 C.F.R. § 103.5(a)(1)(iv). Aliens who are not lawfully present, or who are otherwise inadmissible or deportable, may be subject to the commencement of removal proceedings under section 240 of the Act through the issuance of a Form I-862, Notice to Appear. Those proceedings may result in their removal from the United States and possible ineligibility for future visas or other immigration benefits.