

Strategic Moves Conference - Move It Up A Gear

Deloitte's 6th Strategic Moves Conference took place on 14th November in Deloitte's offices in London and brought together more than 100 Global Mobility and Talent Professionals from over 60 international organisations. The keynote speaker, Peter Cheese (Chief Executive, CIPD) opened the Conference by providing some thought provoking insights in Global Megatrends impacting the HR function and the role of mobility.

Peter outlined the current volatile and unpredictable global economy, the focus on intangible values and flexible work patterns and the diverse and demanding workforce as the main factors that change the mobility landscape in the 21st century. Peter discussed how recent changes in demographics are having a significant impact on the way organisations perceive mobility today, suggesting that "It's not the strongest or the most intelligent that survive ... it's the most adaptable".

With the unemployment rates increasing in developed markets (18% across Europe, particularly mothers, older and youth workers) and death rates in Europe growing, with 17 countries in Europe having recorded more deaths than births, including Germany, Italy, Russia and Sweden, the employment market is more complex than ever.

Peter went on to discuss how the nature of talent within organisations is changing. "Talent" will not always equal "employee" and "work" will not always equate to location. Businesses are increasingly looking to rightsource, seeking to identify what their specific talent needs are, the need for flexibility and what are the best ways to source those needs. Peter explained how organisations are making imaginative use of crowd sourcing so that non employees can increasingly form an important part of the talent supply chain.

The overall focus of the Conference was to help global multinationals navigate their way through the ever changing business environment, including a thought provoking session on the alignment of mobility and talent as HR

disciplines. Professor Hae-Jung Hong Ph.D., from the NEOMA Business School, explained how empirical evidence had demonstrated that multi-cultural talent has a positive impact on business results. "Multi-culturals" (a term used to describe individuals who have been extensively exposed to culturally diverse environments) are more effective at adapting to the demands of an increasingly global market place.

Professor Hong used case studies to show how multi-culturals have more cultural awareness and curiosity to other cultures, are more sensitive to understanding alien concepts and an ability to switch easier among cultural references and different communication styles. Their skills span the more effective identification of product opportunities to building stronger bonds with colleagues in different offices, suggesting global organisations are increasingly seeking to leverage multi-culturals as a competitive advantage.

Other sessions included speakers from a number of household names, including AstraZeneca, Novartis, Rio Tinto, Roche, Thomson Reuters, UniCredit and, Unilever. The topics ranged from regional mobility trends (APAC, Africa, Europe and LATAM), data analytics and its importance in managing mobility trends, open talent economy, mobility offshoring and the effective use of HR shared service centres on global mobility.

The Conference closed with Axel Olesen a futurist from NextNordic painting a picture of mobility in the future. Findings from NextNordic's "DephicCrowd" survey suggest that the future of mobility will be very different from today. Growth will be particularly apparent in Asia and Africa where GDP is expected to increase exponentially compared to Europe or the Americas. Axel suggested that the welfare systems in Europe will phase out, and the West will experience the elimination of moderate skillsets and a shift of focus on technology and IT. Findings also suggested that there will be an increase in "recycling" (often replacement) of top executives, middle managers will experience more pressure to meet their

objectives and achieve the anticipated results, whereas 70% of the survey respondents foresee the traditional banks to experience serious competition from new sources.

On social media its importance is expected to decrease as approximately 75% of respondents expect companies to focus more on the development of their core business. Axel also presented detailed demographics on the expected rates of the aging population from 2015 – 2025, pointing out that the percentage of population between 95-99 years old is expected to be higher in Europe compared to the rest of the world. Most European countries like Italy, Spain and Germany are also expected to have more over 85 years old compared to the USA or the UK. As a result middle aged and older people in the West will be the main core of the working population and focus on talent at younger age groups will become a priority.

What was clear from the conference, and as Peter Cheese suggested, in the rapidly changing world of Global Mobility, it is not the strongest or the most intelligent that survive, but the most adaptable.

The next Strategic Moves Conference will take place on Thursday 13th November, 2014 in London.

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