

“Build A Bridge And Get Over It...”

We are extremely privileged to hear the challenges faced by hundreds of multi-national organisations every year but we can safely confirm that the one recurrent challenge we hear is how GM managers are stretched and have very little time to network and build robust relationships with their peers and external service providers.

There are many ways the Global Mobility manager can start to build their network. The most significant way is to form solid working relationships with internal stakeholders and colleagues including HRBPs, Talent, Reward, Finance, Travel, Recruitment and Line Managers, but for many they are missing a trick. Peers managing Global Mobility programmes in other organisations face similar challenges and are usually more than willing to share their knowledge and experiences collaboratively. Service providers too are investing in expert Global Mobility training with us so they can empathise and help create effective solutions.

So the next time the phone rings consider that the person on the other end of the line may have some valuable insights which could help you. We are positively extolling the virtues of knowledge sharing and encouraging everyone to look at ways to share know-how and expertise. Of course they may possibly need your help this time but there is no doubt that your generosity will be reciprocated in the future.

In the spirit of building bridges and sharing knowledge amongst the Global Mobility industry we publish a quarterly wrap up of the hot topics discussed at our events called out “Nutshells” (available online on the Expat Academy Dashboard).

Highlights from our latest Nutshell are shared below:

Changing patterns of international assignments are leading to increased complexity. Global Mobility professionals must balance caring for and supporting assignees and their families with the increased challenges of:

- Increased compliance
- New policies
- New locations
- Pressure to reduce costs.

Low Cost, High Value

Whilst many companies are reducing the overall cost of an assignment (by reducing assignee numbers or reducing some of the

core components of the traditional long-term policy such as settling in allowances), some are actually increasing the level of intercultural and language training on the basis that these components are as a percentage, low of the overall cost, but are seen as high value to the assignee and business.

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Low Cost Duty of Care Options

- Mandatory pre-assignment medicals for assignees (and families) or at least a requirement to complete a pre-assignment medical questionnaire
- The provision of an expatriate EAP (employee assistance programme) throughout the length of the assignment which can cost from just £9 for a family for a year.

Local Plus/Permanent Transfers

The shift to more local plus and permanent transfers and the risks associated with these populations e.g. underpayment to social schemes and problems with pension transferability, threaten to leave many international workers in more complicated and vulnerable situations. This is an area of risk for many organisations.

Regular communication

The importance of regular communication with the assignee population. Having some knowledge about the assignee’s personal situation will ensure that appropriate support and assistance can be given at the time of the move and during the assignment.

There is no doubt that giving assignees that extra level of care will result in them having a more positive experience and settling in more quickly.

South Africa

- The ICT process for this location now requires employees to have a skills transfer plan showing how they will transfer skills to a South African national
- The long-term multiple entry visa will ease business travel to South Africa
- Travelling with children can still be a challenge:
 - Visa Exempt nationals – just need a letter and passports
 - From China you need all documents including birth certificates
 - There is still a problem if you have a spouse on a tourist visa travelling with children.

China

All companies are required to de-register work permits even if the employee has been terminated or the work permit has expired. If you do not retain paper copies of paperwork, HR are required to go in person to de-register individuals. There is no fee to de-register individuals but there may be a penalty if you don’t and it might affect future applications.

Argentina

Non married partners are now recognised as dependents, including same sex couples.

EU

The Shengen database is now being used actively to track where people are. Any step into a Shengen state counts as a full day there. Finland and Norway in particular are looking at this closely.

Security

Many countries are taking longer than normal to process arrivals through security. Advise your assignees to be patient and expect long queues in Germany, Sweden, Italy and Spain (particularly Barcelona).

STBVs

Don’t forget the weekends! Top tip to ask your STBVs “Do you need to spend any more time in the UK aside from the days you will be working?” All the days in the UK count in your reporting.

Exceptions

If you are being pressurised to make exceptions to your Global Mobility policies

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for “special people”, ask the following question to your business “What’s stopping you using reward strategy to incentivise this person?”

Conclusion

The highlights shared above are merely a flavour of what we discussed in the first quarter of 2016. The area of Global Mobility is so complicated now it is virtually impossible to stay abreast of all new developments. Investing time in your peer network and technical experts is by far the best way to effectively keep up to date with the latest hot topics. Trusted colleagues from inside and outside your organisation may well have the answer to your question or be able to point you in the right direction. What’s more it is enjoyable meeting new people, masterminding new creative solutions and showcasing your own knowledge too. Reading summaries of events you have missed is useful but really cannot ever replace the rapport you build face to face. Even more so for the young professionals joining our industry who have grown up on text and e-mail communication. Chatting with professionals of all ages and contributing to group problem solving boosts confidence and provides a safe environment to build communication skills.

Time spent with others is not a waste, it is an investment. Build your bridges far and wide.



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New Website To Support Expatriate’s Moving To, Or Living In The UK

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This brand new website, where you can also view *The 2016 Expatriate’s Guide to Living in the UK* online, supports expatriates who have moved to the UK from anywhere in the world, by providing key information about living in the UK.

Living and working in the UK can provide a fantastic opportunity to any individual expatriate and their family. The UK offers a diverse range of cultures and if you have relocated for business, family or lifestyle reasons, this website will prove to be an invaluable resource.

The site currently contains over ten Useful Advice pages covering:

- Banking & Wealth • Expatriate Clubs • Embassies & High Commissions
- Driving & Transport • Education - Schools & Universities
- Healthcare & Hospitals • Immigration & Residency • Legal Issues
- Moving & Relocation • Residential Lettings
- Serviced Apartments • Taxation

These pages contain detailed information on these subjects, with valuable advice, information and links to our partners.

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