

Aligning Mobility And Talent: Using Data Analytics To Unlock The Potential

There has been a growing trend in recent years for businesses to align their talent and mobility functions more closely. It has become obvious that real synergies existing between the two could unlock significant value to the business. Identifying the business decisions you need your data to support is a sensible place to start this journey.

Organisations are in the initial stages of realising this value – they have identified that senior leadership talent is developed through international experience and accept that talent is critical to the success of any business. However, it is likely that the various stakeholders are still looking for answers to questions such as:

- **Mobility:** How can I connect the international mobility programme better to business and talent strategies?
- **Talent:** How can I get visibility of high-potential resources globally?
- **Business:** How can I ensure I have the resources available to meet the future business needs and growth objectives?

In this article, we explore how mobility and talent teams can enable the business to make better, more informed decisions around global talent deployment through the use of advanced data analytics.

It All Starts With Accurate Data Gathering

The demand for data-driven insight from senior decision-makers continues to gain momentum with the increase of online interactive reporting technology. This is creating a new demand for internal data consumption, and is placing greater pressure on mobility and talent functions to measure and demonstrate the effectiveness of people strategies from both a cost and value perspective. This begins with compiling relevant, accurate and interconnected data sets. Once a robust initial dataset has been established, it is significantly easier to layer additional data and gain deeper, more meaningful insights into the programme.

There are numerous HR management systems now available to help businesses track, capture and store vast quantities of global workforce data. However, there are still challenges with compiling accurate data that can provide mobility

Example Data Sources Required To Perform Meaningful Analytics

Data source	Where is it stored?	What is it used for?
Demographic data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HR or mobility management systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visualisation of assignee locations and availability of resource • Assignee profiling metrics
Compensation (cost) data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobility management, payroll or HR systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ROI (Return on Investment) metrics • Scenario cost modeling • Assignee selection criteria
Performance data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance management system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ROI metrics • Alignment with performance talent and mobility strategy • Correlating performance ratings against assignment demographics and compensation
Role definition and requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HR systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matching employees to most appropriate roles • Creating transparent career path options post-repatriation
Employee skills, qualifications and experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talent systems • Cloud platforms such as LinkedIn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matching employees to most appropriate roles • Creating transparent career path options post-repatriation
Business plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance • ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) planning system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning role requirements based on current and future growth expectations

with a source of reliable outputs. The data required to perform meaningful analytics is unlikely to be integrated in a way that enables talent and mobility to be clearly linked. The table provides an indicator of the types of data sources we would expect to be analysed. These sources may be housed within HR data systems or within documents held by your immediate team and related functions. The data may also be held by your vendor network.

Connecting International Mobility To Talent And Business Strategies

Historically, mobility and talent functions have remained distinctly separate, as have their employee and assignee data stores. However, it is becoming clear that the mobility function can assist talent management in addressing global workforce challenges.

Mobility professionals typically have

greater visibility of global talent pools through existing assignment data and through their internal networks. Their experience can inform the assignee assessment and selection process to ensure the right individuals, with the right skills, are identified as potential international assignees.

If an assignment has taken place, repatriation strategies are often inconsistent, although this should be addressed as a priority. EY's Global Mobility Effectiveness Survey, published in 2013, states that up to 24% of repatriates leave their company within one year of returning from assignment, and 41% simply return to their previous position. This doesn't feel like the right level of ROI, considering the typical assignment cost is three times that of the domestic salary. However, used efficiently, assignments can provide an essential medium through which to develop top talent and to build the future leadership pipeline and bench strength.

Gaining Visibility Over Global Talent Pools

Within global organisations, talent management is often fragmented and lacks transparency across borders and departments. This means talent decisions are not based on the strategic business needs of a rapidly growing global business, but on local requirements or recommendations.

Limited visibility over global talent pools and skill sets can result in the highest-performing employees being overlooked for progression. This can increase the risk of attrition, but can also create challenges with mapping existing to future talent needs in order to implement an effective workforce and succession planning strategy.

Despite the growing expectation that future leaders should have taken at least one international assignment, global processes to identify and engage key talent about their mobility aspirations are unlikely to be established.

Meeting Future Business Needs

In an increasingly competitive global market for skills, it is more important than ever that companies understand where key talent resides. This is especially critical where multinationals are using existing resources to expand into new territories, particularly across dispersed, diverse locations such as the African continent.

The consequences of poor talent planning can be detrimental to the programme's success. Organisations may discover too late that they simply do not have the talent required to implement new strategies successfully. At best, they will then need to inject excessive funding, buying talent on the open market and trying to play catch-up. At worst, they will simply miss critical opportunities by becoming less relevant in their respective industries.

How Can Data Analytics Help Address These Challenges?

By more closely aligning the talent and mobility functions, their respective data sets can be combined to deliver valuable insights. These insights will enable senior stakeholders to make short- and long-term strategic business decisions with greater confidence than ever before.

MOBILITY

Using data analytics to:

- Inform assignee assessment and selection criteria
- Harness skills gained on assignment to benefit the business
- Improve repatriation processes to retain critical skills
- Demonstrate return on investment.

Mobility has access to retrospective assignment data such as demographic and compensation information. This enables them to build up a picture of the past, and to provide a framework for future assignment selection decisions, predicting best-suited candidates. Mobility can also use assignee performance data to monitor performance at each stage of the assignee life cycle – pre-, during and post-assignment. Capturing new and evolving skills over the course of the assignment allows the identification of suitable alternative career path options post-repatriation.

Using historic assignee data, mobility analytics can define what makes a successful repatriation. This process can then be replicated and implemented on a global scale to ensure smooth entry back into the business. Metrics can assist in determining those more likely to leave the organisation, providing an early warning system for the business to help retain top talent and intervene if required.

Mobility analytics can also provide guidance around which assignee is likely to provide the best return on investment for the business, by measuring against a balanced scorecard of ROI metrics. These metrics typically include speed to land, expected costs, attrition risk and performance ratings, to generate a score of success. The results deliver educated insights on the likely impact of programme investment, by allowing upfront validation of the potential success rating of an assignment.

Figure 1: Individual role mappings can identify potential roles in home and host locations as succession opportunities.

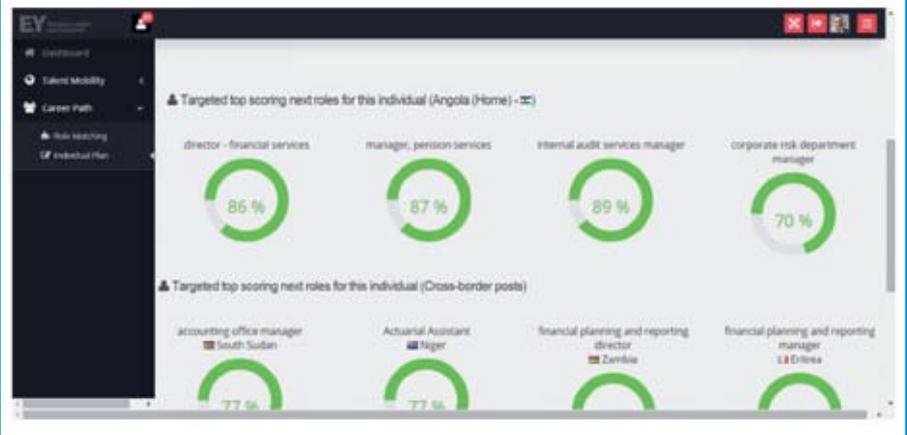
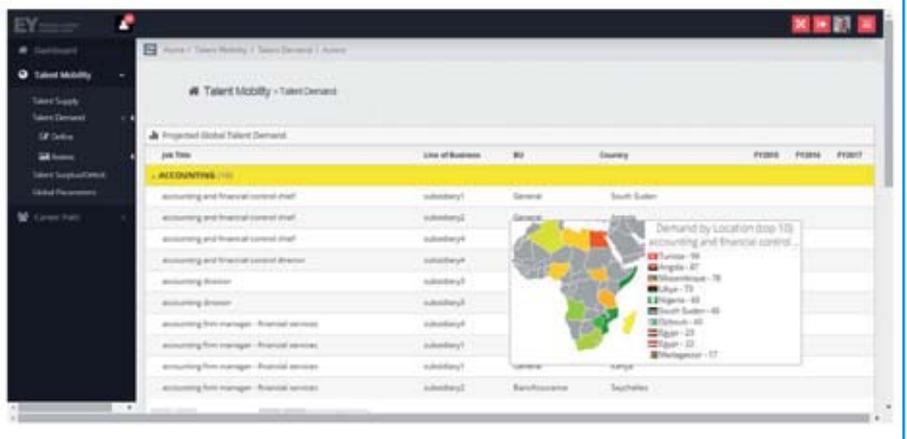


Figure 2: Summary views of talent demand, both visual (heat map-based) and list-based, allow for rapid assessment of global talent requirements.



Improving Return On Investment And Assignment Success

EY's Mobility Analytics Team recently undertook a study for a global consulting organisation to:

- Align its mobility data with key performance metrics set by its talent strategy
- Select those best suited for assignments
- Help realise cost savings through more successful assignment outcomes.

As a result, assignments provided a better return on investment through efficient resource selection, while matching assignees to the right roles, improving assignee satisfaction and overall success.

TALENT

Using data analytics to:

- Identify the highest performers and ensure they are offered assignments
- Improve succession planning
- Reduce attrition rates.

A consolidated data set of employee, role requirement and assignment data can provide a single, comprehensive view and understanding of the organisation's skills' demand and supply. This enables informed planning of the movement of talent across the organisation, between business units, lines and geographies. This immediately creates a much deeper pool of potential candidates for assignment roles, where talent decisions are often based more on informal networks than strategic business needs. Recently, we have found this approach to be particularly effective for a client where the legacy approach of sending high-profile individuals to establish new country operations created a major thinning of talent in the home country, which had effectively become a net talent exporter.

Visualisation tools can also map individual employee demographic, performance and compensation data against broader business growth requirements on a global scale. This helps talent teams to determine who is available, which roles they would be most suitable for, and in which locations. Individual career aspirations, specific talent demands and succession planning insights are all incorporated into the analysis, allowing companies to match mobility aspirations of key talent with demand opportunities that need to be filled.

Performance and behavioral metrics, such as performance ratings, employee

experience ratings and time in role, can be used to provide early warning indicators of attrition. Proactive interventions, by communicating with the assignee or amending policy or assignment setup, are recommended in order to protect the investment made in the assignee and retain critical skills, experience and knowledge.

Reducing Attrition Rates And Creating Assignee Career Paths

EY's Mobility Analytics Team has recently been helping a client to align their talent and mobility data, with the explicit intent of creating clear and transparent future career paths for assignees and, as a result, create more engaged employees on assignment, and lower attrition rates post-repatriation.

The Global Talent Forum has used the outputs of this process to assess how the experience and skills gained on assignment open up additional career opportunities, either in the home country or abroad.

BUSINESS

Using data analytics to:

- Increase speed to deployment, particularly to diverse locations
- Identify skills gaps and address in a timely way.

With historic data, such as relocation and immigration application process timing (based on types of assignments and employees), businesses are much better positioned to assess the viability and timing implications of moving candidates from one country to another. Feasibility metrics can also be incorporated, providing guidance around lead times and potential

risks of moving professionals from one location to another. This type of analysis can be performed by aggregating data from thousands of mobility assignments across multiple clients. Often, this type of assessment is best facilitated with an organisation that has access to large amounts of experience data.

In order for the business to achieve its long-term growth objectives, there are some key decisions that need to be made now. By effectively using the various data sources discussed, talent and mobility can provide valuable insights to the business on the skills and experience required to implement effective workforce planning strategies and accelerate growth.

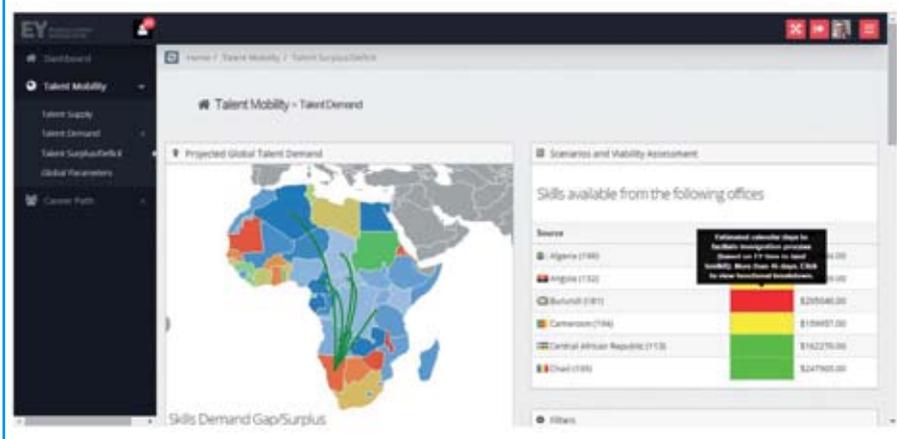
Implementing Workforce Planning Strategies In Line With Business Needs

A large automotive organisation recently used mobility and talent data to align its policy of future women leaders in the business. After an initial review, they discovered that the number of women on assignment, which was a future leader's criterion, was significantly less than needed. The use of data highlighted this, and helped to create future assignment selection criteria better aligned with the strategic needs of the business to meet this objective.

So, What's The Future Of Data Analytics In Aligning Mobility And Talent?

Infusing analytics into fact-based decision-making, letting the data do all the hard work, is the key to aligning mobility and talent successfully.

Figure 3: In addition to providing a view of projected surplus and deficits of skills, leveraging data can provide high-level indications of feasibility of candidate deployment between locations and the benchmarked costs of each candidate.



We believe that the use and benefit of data analytics is only just beginning to be realised, but over the next 10 years it will become central to every major business. The most successful organisations will use detailed data and benchmarks to not only gain insight into mobility and talent but in a way that drives competitive advantage in a fast-paced market. Organisations can navigate the future and make better decisions across a range of challenges, including talent, with greater foresight than ever before. In doing this, mobility and talent professionals can become strategic partners of the business.

The data sources required to perform this level of analytics already exist within organisations and are relatively easy to access. Most businesses simply need support in organising and aggregating the data in a way that allows these valuable insights to be obtained.

The views reflected in this article are the views of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the global EY organisation or its member firms.



Gareth Paine is a director leading EY's Human Capital EMEA Global Mobility Analytics business in London. He has over 12 years of consulting experience in the mobility, reward and HR technology workspace, with a particular focus on helping clients realize the value from data housed within their global mobility and broader HR business.

For further information please contact: +44 2079516943 or email GPaine@uk.ey.com



Nathan Sasto is an executive director in EY's Human Capital EMEA Global Mobility Analytics business in Johannesburg. He has over 11 years of consulting experience, with a particular focus on advanced analytics and modeling in the human capital space. Nathan works with organisations to build consistent, empirically backed people strategies and the technical infrastructure to support and deliver them.

For further information please contact: +27 11 772 4021 or email Nathan.Sasto@za.ey.com

INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE PROGRAMMES AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE COURSES FOR 3-18 YEAR OLDS

ICS International
Community School
icschool.co.uk

Inspiring Success

ICS is the international day school located in the very centre of London. We offer the International Baccalaureate Programmes (Primary and Middle Years Programme and Diploma) to children aged 3-18yrs. ICS has a diverse community with 45 different nationalities, and boasts a strong tradition of working with students in a highly personalised tuition framework in a rigorous but supportive environment. For students needing English language support we offer our customised preparation programme. We also welcome and provide outstanding support to children with special educational needs (SEN). All our students benefit from a wide ranging sports & activity programme. This year ICS is proud to be celebrating 35 years of offering international education.



+44 (0) 20 7935 1206 | ADMISSIONS@ICSCHOOL.CO.UK | WWW.ICSSCHOOL.CO.UK



REALISE YOUR POTENTIAL