

# Accessing Global Talent - Embracing The New Era

Much is currently being written by journalists, business leaders, academics, and management consultants on the increasingly complex and diverse world of talent. We are being warned of the ‘Great Resignation’, that the “global jobs market recovery has ‘gone into reverse’”<sup>(1)</sup>, and are being asked “are employers heading for a talent shortage perfect storm?”<sup>(2)</sup>. But what are the causes of these issues and how can organisations respond to the changing face of talent management?

In a recent 2022 CEO Deloitte survey, chief executives reported optimism about growth amidst uncertainty marked by talent supply chain disruptions and the continuing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Talent remains a top concern for CEOs, with 71% of CEOs citing global labour/skills shortage as their top external challenge to their business strategy<sup>(3)</sup>. From a global talent perspective, there are generally five key forces creating a perfect storm for change and the race for talent:

- 1. Changes in the workforce:** there are now four generations in the workforce, each with their own dreams, expectations, and worries about the future. Understanding these groups is key to attraction and retention strategies.
- 2. The Digital Age:** technology is allowing us to do things we never thought possible before at exponential speed. Increasing numbers of operational tasks are being automated, with organisations becoming more focused on digital. However, there is simply not enough core technology and digital skills related talent to keep up with demand. At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the World Economic Forum estimated that 50% of the existing workforce will need to reskill by 2025.<sup>(4)</sup>
- 3. The shifting geopolitical climate:** the trade and immigration landscapes are becoming increasingly complex, and that complexity has been increased by measures taken in response to COVID-19 and political conflicts.
- 4. The rise of (domestic and international) remote work and increasingly dispersed talent:** the technology required to work

remotely for large numbers of office-based employees has been possible for many years, but only through the COVID-19 pandemic did it become a cultural possibility, and some would argue a health/wellness necessity. Many employees are finding they can live in locations without a physical proximity to traditional places of work and employers are finding new talent outside of their historical ‘catchment’ areas/countries.

- 5. Evolving employee expectations:** increasingly employees expect empathy, inclusivity, equity, and a ‘consumer-grade experience’<sup>(5)</sup> in the workplace. Career trajectories are shifting from a traditional linear approach to more agile curated portfolios of roles and experiences. CEOs are becoming increasingly aware of this and a recent survey reported the top three areas they feel that their organisations lack stakeholder trust on as: (1) Diversity, equity and inclusion (41%), (2) employee experience (30%), and (3) innovation and technology.<sup>(6)</sup>

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## The Challenge And The Opportunity

To counteract these forces, many organisations are now taking a more global view of talent and, as a result, are unearthing many potential opportunities for both their business and their employees. Some of these opportunities include:

- Increasing the talent pool available to an organisation.
- Enabling the career aspirations of existing employees through a greater number of opportunities.
- Increasing an organisation’s ability to deploy key skills to where they are needed most within the organisation.

However, realising these opportunities is not without its challenges which typically fall into one or more of the following:

- Finding a way to overcome a lack of infrastructure to analyse and evaluate the skills available within and outside of the organisation on a global basis, often leading to siloed domestic recruitment strategies.
- Working with existing HR functions/capabilities that tend to be both domestically focused and/or structured around technical disciplines (e.g., talent acquisition, learning and development, workforce management etc.) and may not be able to solve talent supply chain problems on a global or cross-border basis.
- Overhauling existing processes that involve Global Mobility, the function which ordinarily supports the temporary or permanent cross-border movement of employees and external hires, who are often involved late in the selection process and treated as a separate function to wider HR/Talent.

To overcome these challenges, a new global talent approach is needed. One which has a border-free mindset and utilises cross-functional or multi-disciplinary teams to set talent programmes directly in response to business imperatives and help deliver the key skills required by the organisation to where it is needed most. Imagine an approach where talent acquisition professionals work as one global team, alongside global mobility, tax and legal professionals, and business leaders to review business requirements, determine talent needs, identify pools of talent (internal and external), and deliver a strategic programme to acquire and internationally deploy talent when and where it is needed, efficiently and compliantly.

From being reactive, with possible disconnects due to functional silos, organisations would be able to shift to a more proactive approach, better able to plan, and adopt practical capabilities to utilise global talent, once identified. This does, of course, require robust HR operations, but can better realise the benefits of proactive workforce planning, and support improvement in employee experience.

At the core of this concept is the need for organisations to have a clear understanding of the wide range of talent onboarding and deployment approaches. As well as domestic hiring, organisations can explore alternative means of talent deployment such as international assignments, local-to-local employee transfers, permanent remote working, virtual assignments, business travel, global employment organisations, global employment companies, and more. This exploration does not necessarily mean that every organisation will utilise all options at their disposal, but they will have a clear rationale for which approaches will work for them, together with the potential value proposition, e.g., use of virtual assignments will not only allow an organisation to deploy skills quickly, but also offer a global experience to employees who may have previously been unable to physically relocate. This should also not be a one-time exercise; strategies should be frequently revisited to ensure the approach taken remains fit for purpose.

**A Future-Proofed Model**

The business imperative of the race for talent, the enhanced ability of technology

ecosystems, and a global mindset culture forms the foundations to allow a new approach to be embedded. The 'new Global Workforce model' (Figure 1) seeks to take advantage of all these aspects, responding to the changing forces in the world of talent. With the overarching business strategy at the centre, a new internal cross-functional/disciplinary group known as 'Global Workforce Advisory' can work with the business to identify and source key skills that may be required. Solutions and/or programmes can then be created that allow for the self-service management of talent by individual business leaders (e.g., requests for project management or data expertise) which are constantly reviewed and iterated through the use of analytics and a continuing focus on return on investment.

We envisage such solutions and/or programmes to focus on resolving issues with one or more of the four key elements of the talent lifecycle (BUY - acquisition of new talent; BUILD - generating the skills and capabilities required; BORROW - deployment of talent; PLAN - succession and career planning) and to consider them from an international perspective.

Example solutions could include hiring of talent on a permanent remote basis in a talent hotspot; virtual assignments to provide global opportunities, and learning experiences for individuals who are unable to physically relocate cross-border; use of global employment companies to quickly deploy high demand skills to where it is needed most.

Moving to a new talent approach and model requires deliberate thought and effort to ensure the change is embedded successfully and the gains sought are realised. As well as developing this new model through our work with clients, we have been able to develop a new set of building blocks (Figure 2, see next page) to support organisations with this journey.

**Phase 1: WHY -**

Seeks to understand what the business imperatives are and strategic goals as an organisation.

**Phase 2: WHO -**

Seeks to understand what skills are needed to allow the organisation to deliver its strategic objectives. Includes a clear assessment of the international talent requirements.

**Phase 3: HOW AND WHERE -**

Looks at how to meet international talent requirements through a mixture of buy, build, and/or borrow of talent. Fulfilment of needs is on a borderless basis through both virtual and onsite roles, and permanent and temporary arrangements.

**Phase 4: WHAT -**

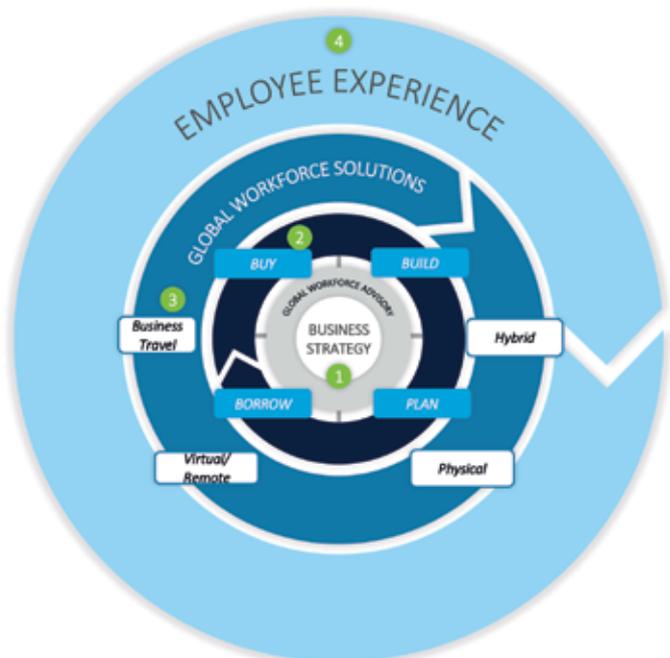
By having clarity on the purpose of talent, what skills are needed, and how it will be deployed, organisations will then be able to think about the requirements for a 'Global Workforce' function which will manage both long-term attraction methods and support individual requests, delivering operational support.

**Figure 1 - The New Global Workforce Model**

Through a proactive consideration of the broader business strategy, the Global Workforce Model cuts across traditional functional silos to minimise handoffs and offer clear mobility types available on a self-service basis. ROI is transparent and constant iteration ensures repeated value is delivered to the wider organisation.

**Core Elements of the Global Workforce Service Delivery Model**

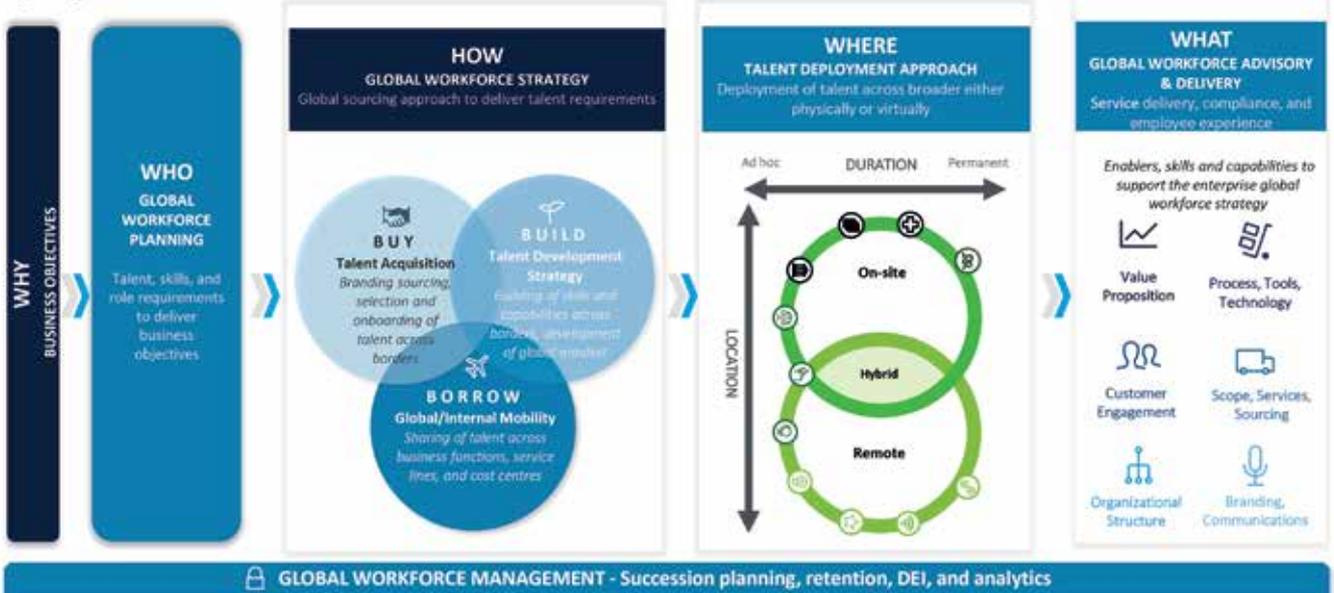
- 1 Model centers around true business partnering, with Business Strategy at its core.
- 2 Global Workforce Advisory exists to fulfil business priorities by attracting, developing, retaining and deploying a connected, agile and dynamic global workforce.
- 3 Deployment methods include business travel, virtual/remote, physical, or hybrid arrangements. These options are known as differing Global Workforce Solutions and are enabled by skills, delivery model, process, technology, analytics, and vendors
- 4 Employee Experience digitally connects the Global Workforce Solutions to the wider organisation, allowing for service initiation and targeted consultancy



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## Figure 2 - Setting A New Global Workforce Approach

The future global workforce programme provides holistic advisory and delivery which supports the entire HR lifecycle. This approach supports all cross-border talent planning, acquisition, development and deployment (internal & global mobility). It addresses the future of how we work in a hybrid world and optimises the employee and digital experience.



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All phases are underpinned by analytics and longer-term workforce planning, driving retention efforts and ensuring return on talent investment.

### The Implementation - Turning Strategy Into Reality

Moving to a new model may not always be simple, but it is critical for organisations to consider how best to adapt to a global talent approach, particularly given the Future of Work is 'here and now'. The first steps on this journey could include, but will not be limited to:

**Having a change-mindset:** one of the most critical aspects of a successful implementation will be understanding and managing the change. The approach may require a differentiated mindset and culture - moving from domestic, potentially siloed functions to a multi-disciplinary global talent model.

**Engaging with your stakeholders:** the implementation will require early buy-in from the top as well as collaboration across business functions. Educate yourself and your stakeholders on the need for change, and the benefits that can be reaped by taking this leap of faith as early as possible.

**Understanding the talent supply chain challenges:** it is essential to understand your organisation's problem statement- both in terms of size and scale. Knowing this will allow you to articulate the opportunities available and why a global talent approach may better enable wider business objectives.

**Considering the technology solutions available:** a fundamental aspect will include having a supporting infrastructure to allow business leaders to access and understand the global skills and talent available. There are many talent marketplace and global workforce management technology solutions available, and conducting a market scan of these early in your change journey is imperative.

### Time For Action

Having to respond to the increasingly complex world of talent is not a question of 'if' but 'when'. Organisations must put in place a proactive strategy, approach, and model to respond and overcome the challenges faced. The time is now.

If any of the topics and issues discussed here resonate, please do get in touch - we would be delighted to have a formal or informal conversation.

#### Reference:

- (1) 'Global jobs market recovery 'has gone into reverse', warns UN labour agency', UN News – May 2022
- (2) 'Are employers heading for a talent shortage perfect storm?', Forbes – May 2022
- (3) 2022 Fortune/Deloitte CEO Survey (175 leading CEOs within 15 industries) – Winter 2022
- (4) Future of Jobs Report 2020, World Economic Forum – Oct 2020
- (5) 'Creating a consumer-grade experience for employees with digital HR', Deloitte - 2017
- (6) 2022 Fortune/Deloitte CEO Survey (175 leading CEOs within 15 industries) – Winter 2022

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**DELOITTE GLOBAL WORKFORCE CONSULTING**

In today's increasingly competitive world, businesses are having to find new ways to attract, acquire, develop, retain, and deploy key talent and skills. While traditional hiring practices and global mobility assignments are still in place new methodologies are emerging, and HR, Reward, and Global Mobility functions are at an inflection point where they need to consider how to respond to these exciting changes brought by the Future of Work. Deloitte's Global Workforce Consulting practice partners with organisations to help optimise and transform the operational, strategic, and digital aspects of Global Workforce Management and pride ourselves on being able to tailor our support to client specific requirements. Find out more here [www.deloitte.co.uk/globalworkforce](http://www.deloitte.co.uk/globalworkforce)

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