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White Paper International Mobility Consultancy

Your organization has people working abroad, so-called expatriates, or you have expatriates working at your location, and now you need to find a way to work efficiently and effectively with these expatriates. How do you keep an expatriate engaged in your organization? How can mutual understanding continue to exist? If the expatriate comes back to the mother organization, how do you reintegrate a returning expatriate in the organization? In essence, how do you get the maximum out of expatriation for you organization? In this paper we will consider two types of expatriates, those that you send abroad to work at another location and foreign employees working at your organization.

Common issues in International Mobility Consultancy

Many companies send expatriates abroad and work with them without having a clear policy in this area; some organizations have no policy at all. Many problems may then occur. The next situations regarding expatriates are often found within organizations, and not only within small and middle-sized organizations, but also at the larger ones:

- Often the lack of policy costs money, since this lack of policy decreases expatriates' productivity and is more risky. There are higher costs involved due to expatriation failing and having to replace these expatriates and having to rebuild everything.
- Too many ad hoc decisions are taken when there is no clear policy for mobility management. These decisions can then be very expensive.
- If an organization has a policy set for international mobility management these are either too rigid rules or there is a lack of clear rules.
- Another common issue is that companies want to solve too much with money and too little with practical solutions.
- It can be very difficult for the mother organization to keep a good relationship with the expatriate.
- On many occasions the organization focuses on the short term, actually getting the expatriate there, but the long term is sometimes overlooked.
- When an expatriate is sent abroad it is usually overlooked that the expatriate will likely return at some point in time and repatriation and reintegration is usually not considered.

Until now there is very little coherent policy in the field of mobility management and there are few companies active in this field. Courses that are given are usually very one-sided and focus on culture and conflict, with which they focus mostly on the external environment and not on the internal environment, and/or they focus on the communication with the local employees, not on the relation between the expatriate and the mother organization and usually the communication between the two is mainly focused on the business relationship.

How can these problems be avoided?

In international mobility management there should be a focus on the entire process, the short-term and the long-term as well as reintegration. The short term includes more practical issues, for example the secondary terms of relocation, such as airplane tickets, temporary accommodation when visiting the home country, etc. When considering the long-term, one can think of matters as returning expatriates, at this point it is important to harvest the investment and spread the knowledge the expatriate has gained throughout the organization, since expatriates are an investment in the organization and organizational knowledge.

It can be difficult for an organization to have a focus on the entire process that is involved in international mobility management; hence it can be useful to have a company do this for you. This is where we come into play: Solidbasics International. We are a company that can help you with this process, help you keep track of your expatriates and make sure the process is a smooth one.

Who are we?

The content of our International Mobility Consultancy Program

When you have expatriates working abroad at another location of your organization the contact you have with these expatriates is mostly business-like, very little attention is given to less-formal communication that you would have otherwise if the expatriate was working at the home location. You would then have a talk with someone at the water-cooler or at lunch, which enhances the non-working relationship. This means that communication with expatriates can be difficult and expatriates can feel misunderstood and not appreciated. The communication that is not work-related can be important for the overall communication and strengthens



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the relationship with your employees. Despite the fact that this does not directly contribute to the organization, it does strengthen the organization.

Also expatriates that come from another location working at your organization can have problems adjusting to your organization. This person has connections with the home country. A way to help this person feel more comfortable is for example to give that person regular opportunities to fly home (if needed also with the family). There has to be understanding within the organization for a different way of thinking to get the maximum out of expatriates and this is where we are able to help you.

Our program has, in essence, two parts:

1. We give the organization instruments to guide the expatriate.
2. We help with relationship management to improve the relationship between expatriates, and management and colleagues. These expatriates can be expatriates working at your location or expatriates from your organization working at a different location.

The service we deliver is consultancy based with the required courses where we focus on both the short and the long term. We deliver a service in expatriate relocation so we have experience and knowledge in this field of expatriates and therefore recognize the possible problems that can arise in this process. Furthermore, we will look with you at how mobility management in your organization is given shape and how we can help you improve it. We can, with our consultancy and instruments, give your organization a structure in which you can improve your expatriate policy, giving you the capability of finding a new balance in the relationship.

The process of our International Mobility Consultancy Program

These are the steps that we will take when we look at your organization's policies towards expatriates and the international mobility within your organization:

- 1) Current situation
- 2) Review of the past of the organization
- 3) Proposals for implementation of changes
- 4) Implementation of changes
- 5) Evaluation of changes

In essence we look at your present situation, keeping in mind the past of the organization and help you make the required changes to get the maximum out of expatriation by giving advice on issues that need to change and give required courses and workshops for employees.

Furthermore we provide a software solution that helps you keep track of expatriates working abroad. It helps you keep track of the process and costs related to expatriates and mobility. This software solution will help you supervise and guide the relocation. Furthermore it will give you a platform to communicate, regardless of the time-zone, so you can lay down any problems that might exist and have contact with your consultant. Our system is not supposed to replace personal contact, which is key for relocation, but it gives a place of contact, and operates as a back-up system.

Benefits for you

When our program is in place and your organization has made the necessary changes you will have an improved way of communicating with your expatriates both abroad and those who came from abroad to work at your organization. Expatriates are relatively expensive employees, and you want to have them working as effectively as possible. When then necessary changes have been made within your organization, these expatriates will feel more comfortable and better understood leading them to be more productive and their expatriation is more likely to succeed. Through our program you will be able to get the maximum out of your expatriates. Moreover we try to help you save 20 to 30 percent of your operational costs on expatriates. Furthermore, our program will help your organization to better manage and understand the growing influence of internationalization.

International Mobility Management can be that easy!

With our mobility management the management of your international mobile and receding (permanently and short term) labour force can be easily improved. Our experience and knowledge will help you better understand the management of the international component of your organization. Helping you reap the benefits by giving you a well managed flexible structure and through reduction of costs, time and risk.