

What Do Business Leaders And Mobility Professionals Have In Common?

The 2017 Santa Fe Global Mobility Survey conclusively shows that despite barriers to globalisation and the changing geopolitical context, global mobility continues to be recognised by businesses as a vital factor in an organisation's growth and success.

Against this background, the survey also highlights that while significant challenges remain for global mobility teams, there are some encouraging signs of a more strategic, business-focussed approach of improved ability to measure return on investment and the greater use of technology.

Business leaders, HR and Global Mobility professionals alike, recognise that investing in an internationally mobile workforce is critical to an organisation's development.

The Impact Of Geopolitics On Mobility

The world appears to be shifting towards more insular, nationalistic agendas, and certainly a more dangerous environment through unconventional terrorism, cyber-attacks, and social media - reported as being manipulated to influence economic and political perspectives.

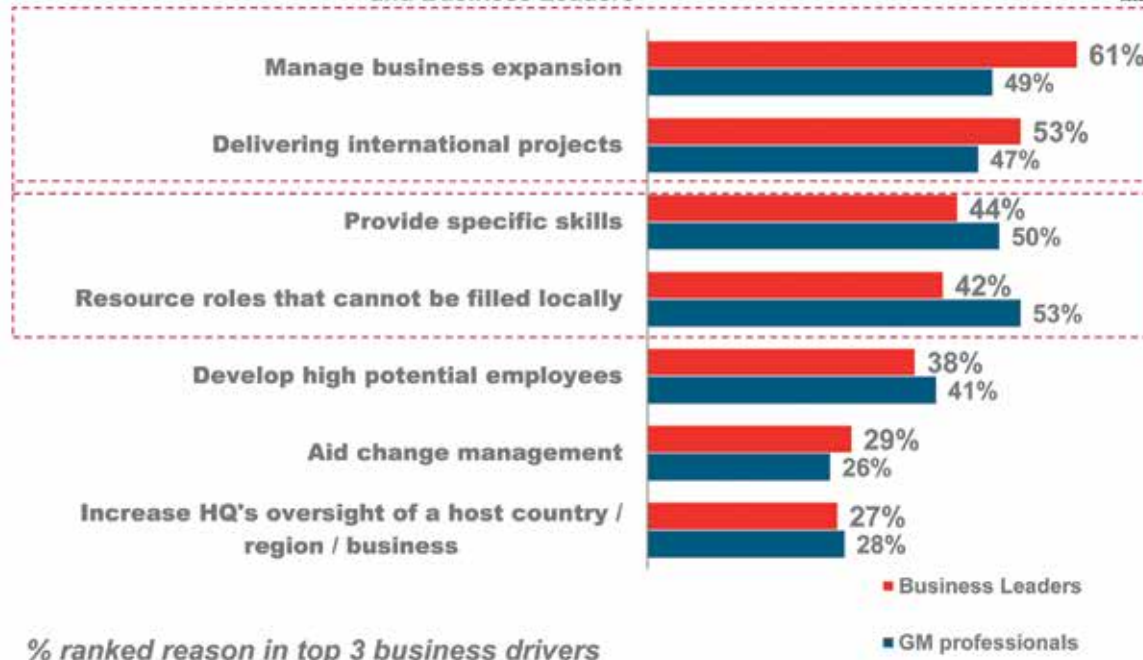
There is still much debate on the impact of the historic European Brexit situation that is currently unfolding, with the potential prospect of closed borders from an employment perspective and reduced access to the free market. Also, the US President's proposal to build border walls with their neighbouring country and publicised 'America First' policies.

Demonstrating The Strategic Value Of Global Mobility

Interestingly, following on from last year's survey, the latest findings continue to reflect the comparison between business leaders and global mobility professionals' views on business driver priorities. One important difference is that business leaders appear more focused on commercial drivers – business expansion, and delivering international projects, whereas it seems that global mobility professionals place greater emphasis on providing specific skills and resourcing roles that remain unfilled locally. Despite the rhetoric, the reality is that global mobility teams will combine corporate expansion with people development initiatives.

KEY BUSINESS DRIVERS FOR MOBILITY

Key business drivers for international assignments amongst GM professionals and Business Leaders

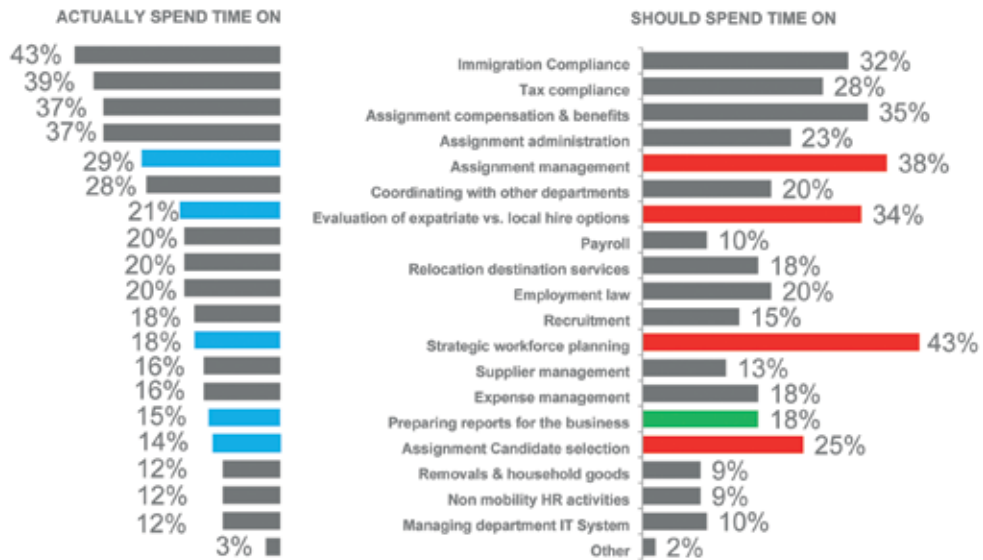


Key Takeaway: Global Mobility Professionals focusing more on skills and resourcing than wider business goals for international assignments.

GLOBAL MOBILITY RECOGNISE THE NEED TO FOCUS ON STRATEGIC ACTIVITIES



Where do Global Mobility teams spend their time and where should they be spending their time?

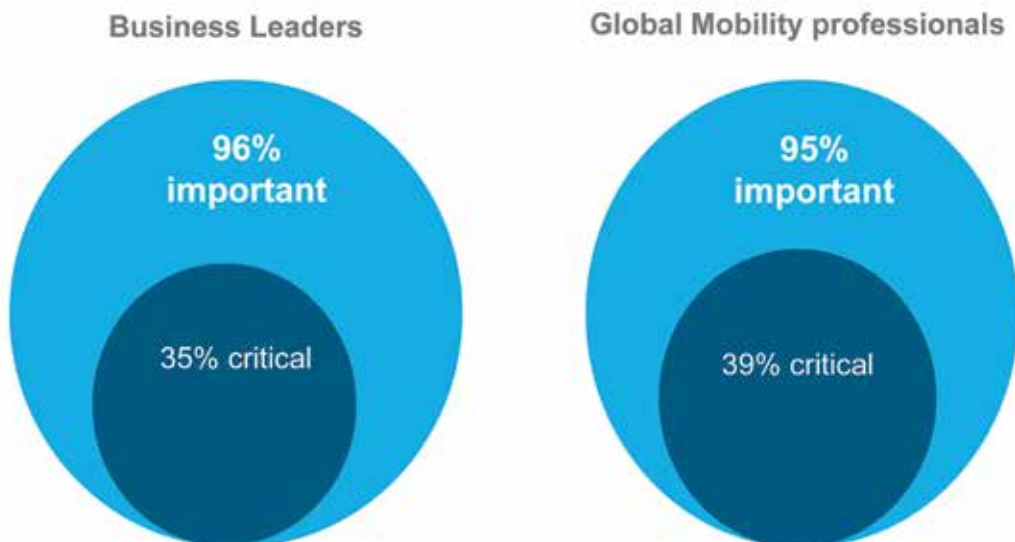


Key Takeaway: Global Mobility wants to spend more time on strategic workforce planning.

IMPORTANCE TO ACHIEVING STRATEGIC GOALS



How important are an internationally mobile workforce able to meet strategic objectives?



Key Takeaway: strong growth expected in international assignments, particularly for short-term assignments.

Enabling A Strategic Role Requires A Commitment To Transformation

The question is, how can a professional's transition to completing more long-term strategic planning while ensuring mobility case management continues smoothly, compliantly and in a risk-managed way? The answer depends on a number of factors including an organisation's position on the Global Mobility function, combined with its leadership's perception on the role.

Those in the global mobility industry understand that the role is a complex mix of international HR, compliance, compensation, supply-chain management and customer service. This is not always fully recognised. Particularly by those who may only see the operational aspects of global mobility. The survey highlights that global mobility professionals' ability to change the perception and contribute to the strategic planning process may be impaired by resource constraints - instead focusing on mostly operational work.

Furthermore, organisation structure can impinge on global mobility's ability to be included in strategic activities – whether it's through reporting lines and structure in centres of excellence or shared services, or business partner models.

This surely represents a call to action for global mobility teams, to better promote their successes and communicate the value of their contribution, to provide meaningful data analysis, and secure an invitation for inclusion in strategic planning and evaluation of the return on investment from internationally mobile employee deployment.

Nevertheless, some global organisations have structured their HR and Global Mobility functions to work collaboratively to focus on strategic advisory and manpower planning activities, and are reaping the benefits of including global mobility advisors earlier in business planning, manpower planning and candidate selection. To achieve this they have undertaken strategic investment decisions on whether to increase internal headcount, invest in global mobility specific software, or look for a suitable partner who has the right resources, geographic footprint and technology to take care of the operational aspects of managing an internationally mobile employee workforce.

All of the above have commercial, technological and people implications. Each should be rigorous to withstand objective assessment, and support both the organisation's short-term (tactical) and long-term goals. Deciding on what activities are key depends on the organisation's expectations of the Global Mobility function.

Global Mobility Is Here To Stay

HR and global mobility teams appear to be pro-actively developing broader policy types

than only traditional long-term and short-term assignments. This is reflected in the survey finding's forecast growth of policy types over the next 12 months. A more sophisticated approach to the alignment of policies with business and talent drivers is certainly an area in which global mobility teams are visibly creating value. There is an additional opportunity to potentially create overall cost savings for an organisation by moving away from traditional 'rich' assignments, towards more local to local plus conditions.

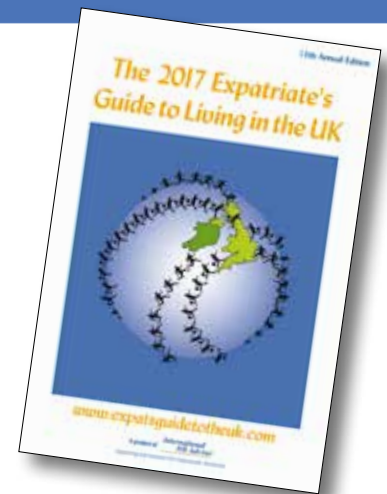
It's worth noting that while the traditional long-term assignment was slowly declining, evidence from the survey's findings suggest that as organisations expand their footprint, they know that a balanced talent portfolio is needed to achieve multiple business and people objectives. Long-term assignments would grow at a double-digit pace, quite a change compared to previous years.

However, the enormous expansion in short-term assignments and international business travellers are two examples that highlight serious decisions need to be made over longer-term investments in technology, organisation structures and partnering decisions. Especially as organisations move into new locations and wrestle with the dynamics of the geopolitical positioning of governments in this volatile and uncertain world.



With almost 1,000 HR and global mobility or business leaders that took part across 56 countries, it's one of the world's leading global mobility surveys. The total number of international assignees and business travellers being managed by global mobility teams who responded to the survey are estimated to be in excess of 500,000. The survey was conducted by an independent research organisation on behalf of Santa Fe Relocation Services. To request a complimentary full copy of the 2017 Santa Fe Global Mobility Survey report; Embedding Business Strategy in Global Mobility, please visit: www.santaferelo.com/globalmobilitysurvey

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