

The Transformation Of HR And Global Mobility Roles

There is no doubt that Global Mobility for many organisations has either undergone or about to go through a period of transformation. Redesigning the expected contribution from mobility is no easy task. The digital journey is a fundamental part of the debate and being digital of course, is more than simply buying or accessing mobility specific software. The consequence of re-calibrating business models is the requirement to innovate and review the organisation's capability to remain structured but agile. There will be pressure to undertake change for a variety of reasons; corporate cost optimisation initiatives, HR restructuring, changes in business and talent requirements and importantly a need to demonstrate more value using predictive business analytics. Whatever change is implemented requires a holistic view of how the value-chain of purpose, strategy, talent, culture, process and technology is tailored to your journey over the next decade and more urgently, what should global mobility prioritise over the next 24 months.

Every industry will have differentiated approaches to their assignment types, their employee value proposition and the way that mobility teams enable programme delivery. However, there remains a common theme—remaining relevant, being included at the earliest possible stages of planning and being valued for advisory support that enables organisation capability and competitiveness.

Global Mobility: Evolutionary Journeys

The challenge for organisations is to really understand their desired outcomes as part of the transformation process. Whilst there may well be clarity at Executive Board level, the potential for diluting the vision increases as the mandate for change is cascaded through the organisation.

Santa Fe Relocation's recently published Global Mobility Survey 2019 highlights that business leaders most certainly expect their mobility teams involved in critical work areas: workforce planning, advisory services and a broader risk assessment (not only compliance for the organisation but also duty of care for all international work arrangements).

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Balancing Transformation Ownership: HR Or Procurement?

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Here are some recommendations for achieving your desired outcomes.

Global Mobility Professionals

- Global Mobility and human resources

teams should invest time in understanding their future role expectation - being strategic and tactical at the same time is unlikely to be a workable solution and importantly what contribution does the business expect from Global Mobility, post transformation?

Will this require investment in acquiring new skills and competencies - for example in strategic and talent advisory consultancy?

- Establish clarity on how Global Mobility fits into the broader transformed organisation - has this been communicated and agreed with internal key stakeholders in the business? Post transformation, the business needs to be clear how and why the focus of the existing internal Global Mobility role has changed
- Taking time to seek the views of both suppliers, the business/line management and other industry peers before embarking on a formalised tender process, will assist in debunking 'myths, rumours and preconceived views' and provide a strong platform for asking the right questions and assessing the right combination of culture, people, process and technology that will build, from day one, the foundations of a successful transformation
- Scope - operational consistency offered by a supplier may also mean inflexibility and charging for every extra request. Ideally the new partnership will have sufficient trust and governance for a mature approach from both parties to agree when additional fees for new services or project fall outside of the contract
- Transformation or implementation? As we have explored, clarity and honesty by all parties on the realistic outcomes and over what timescales
- Success for everyone - entering a new partner relationship(s) will involve some level of bedding in the processes, workflows and preferred operational approach - this is a long-term investment not a short-term gain, although an effective transformation should yield dividends at an early stage
- Communicating value to the business from the transformation ensures momentum behind the change process - whether it is improved reporting, enhanced satisfaction from relocating employees or releasing time for Global Mobility teams to focus on their new organisational roles.

Business Leaders' view of where Global Mobility spend most time and should spend most time

	Actually spend time on		Should spend time on
Strategic workforce planning		40%	46%
Employee candidate suitability screening		32%	21%
Employment law		30%	17%
Supplier management compensation services immigration, tax services, expense management		30%	19%
Payroll co-ordination and queries		26%	8%
Recruitment of candidates		26%	12%
Employee candidate selection		26%	27%
Coordinating with other departments		25%	21%
Advisory services to executive management		23%	27%
Advisory services to employees, HR business peers and line management		23%	38%
Risk assessment (profiling and locations)		21%	33%
Internal immigration compliance		19%	13%
Internal tax compliance		19%	15%
Compensation calculations e.g. total cost estimates, balance sheets		19%	19%
Personal delivery of internal relocation destination Services (not using external supplier)		19%	21%
Supplier management: relocation, destination services, HHG		17%	10%
Non-mobility HR activities		17%	13%
Internal expense management		17%	27%
Managing departmental IT system(s)		15%	12%
Preparing management reports		15%	15%
Other		0%	0%

Sourcing/Procurement

- Taking time to fully understand the current and future state of Global Mobility contribution is key to supporting the selection of sustainable Global Mobility suppliers. If Global Mobility/professional services are exceptional projects for the procurement function, seeking to negotiate predominantly on price and volumes, misses the opportunity to understand the complexity of services, regional variations, available technology and competitive advantages of Global Mobility programmes

- Pricing - be aware of the relativities of the services being procured within the total programme costs. Selecting the right partner who is sustainable must be the priority and while pricing will be market competitive, why would any organisation expect their suppliers to operate on unsustainable margins? If this is the case, how will quality of service be delivered? The Global Mobility industry has gone through waves of maturity and with technology and the availability of suppliers across the continuum, the days

of opportunistic pricing in some areas of Global Mobility have not completely disappeared, however they are now the exception to the norm. Therefore, any tendering process needs full planning and education for all parties.

Conclusion

Organisations are evolving and so too are business expectations of their professionals. Increasingly, organisations will shift from functions to roles and whilst the rate of change will be differential,

the end game is that robotisation and expectations of value creators rather than facilitators will be the mission and purpose of those employed inside the organisation. Therefore, the evolution of assessing the right cultural and technical supply-chain fit is critical. The views and models we have referenced affirm the direction of travel for professionals – and this equally applies to others in finance, procurement, marketing and so forth. The digitalised world requires one to re-learn how to thrive and grow in this fourth industrial age.

A large-scale tendering process can take a year to achieve the final decision, another six months undergoing transitional activities and if, after 'go live' the operational model, service capabilities, pricing or some other significant dimension fail, will there be an audit trail as to why this occurred? If the transformation is desired over the long-term, is there a pitfall in expecting instant gratification and overlook that a partnership is evolutionary?

References:

This article is based on, and uses extracts from Santa Fe Relocation's report 'Effective transformation in Global Mobility A board game or a puzzle?' Read and download the

full report here: www.santaferelo.com/en/mobility-insights/white-papers/effective-transformation-in-global-mobility/

'Global Mobility Survey 2019 'REVISION: Mobility through the looking glass' Download: www.santaferelo.com/en/mobility-insights/global-mobility-survey/

Visit www.santaferelo.com for more information.



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