

Is It All About Compliance?

Should Global Mobility Professionals Be More Business Minded?

Within Global Mobility we are keen to highlight to stakeholders and senior leadership the need for compliance when an employee travels internationally. However, whilst compliance will always be of fundamental importance, does our need to refer to it devalue both Global Mobility's role and opportunity to become a strategic partner?

Stakeholders and the senior leadership of a company respond to business language, decisions advantageous to the company's strategy and benefits to the bottom line. Many do not understand the intricate details that Global Mobility professionals face daily nor do they have the time to understand complex immigration and tax legislation. For Global Mobility the need to maintain compliance is fundamental and drives the decisions that the Global Mobility Team make on a daily basis. However, decisions led by the company are not based on compliance but the desire to drive the company's success in current and new markets. When Global Mobility highlights compliance concerns versus solutions, it can mean concerns are no longer listened to and are instead seen as blockers versus a strategic partner who helps to achieve company strategy.

Understand The Company

Every company is different and the requirements of a Global Mobility Team will vary based on the company's industry and strategy. The Global Mobility Team needs to engage stakeholders regularly to understand this and start to determine solutions to support the company, including how to mitigate compliance in new or legislative heavy markets. Understanding the company and adapting to align to the wider company strategy will highlight the team as a partner to achieve success, but also ensure compliance, through working together to mitigate it. Stakeholders will be more inclined to partner with a Global Mobility Team if they understand them and the company, versus a Global Mobility Team whose only concern is compliance and does not offer pragmatic solutions.

Highlight The Global Mobility Team

The Global Mobility Team, in my experience, are not good at highlighting their strengths and successes in line with company strategy.

Often the Global Mobility Team are there after other Human Resource functions have left for the day and go the extra mile to enhance the employee experience, but it is very rare that this is highlighted to management or senior leadership. The Global Mobility Team can listen to stakeholders and align to company strategy, but it is essential that team achievements are discussed with senior leadership, in particular cost savings that are achieved through stakeholder partnership and aligning to company strategy.

The Global Mobility Team can become a strategic partner who proactively partners with stakeholders to achieve success and help the company achieve its strategy. However, if this is not openly publicised and promoted then the Global Mobility Team will never be seen as more than a team focused on compliance.

Take The Opportunity

The average Global Mobility Team is often under resourced and underfunded, with no time to partner with stakeholders or ability to align to the company strategy. I myself have often felt the idea to become a strategic partner was out of reach, due to a heavy workload, but through promotion it can be achieved. With success stories and cost savings helping to raise the Global Mobility Team profile to senior leadership, business cases can begin to be built. The business case should not focus on compliance, but how to benefit the company long-term.

Business cases should look to present case studies, projections on cost savings and how the investment into the Global Mobility Team will help the company. A business case should never focus on compliance, something a Global Mobility Team should automatically achieve, but how the team will be transformed through this investment.

To truly enable the Global Mobility Team to be seen as a strategic partner versus blocker, who enables company success and growth, an adjustment to how Global Mobility is perceived needs to occur. This will not happen through adhering to compliance legislation and regulation only, but through Global Mobility taking the initiative to help drive success and company strategy. Compliance should always be adhered to, but Global Mobility Teams need to start to be at the forefront of a company strategy and developing innovative solutions to help achieve this. Global Mobility Teams need to engage in regular discussions about strategy, align their policies to promote company

growth and continuously look for innovations to improve capabilities.

The Global Mobility Team should never be afraid to promote their successes or ask for additional budget to improve their capabilities. The ability to build a business case to support looking at the long-term benefits to the company, through proving worth as a team that is aligned to company strategy, can help make the Global Mobility Team be seen as a true partner.



HOLLY MARIA CREED

Holly graduated with a BA (Hons) in History and upon graduation undertook a graduate scheme in US and UK expatriation tax before moving to EY to specialise in global mobility. Over the next 18 months Holly ran a FTSE 100 client account and undertook her first Assignment to India. Upon Holly's return from India, she moved into Global Mobility consulting before undertaking the role of project manager to help the Head of Global Mobility establish a new operating model for an international energy company. This role saw Holly and her colleagues receive considerable industry recognition and named as runner ups within the EMEA region for team of the year. Holly currently works as a Global Mobility Manager responsible for Europe within a large technology firm. Along with her worldwide colleagues she is currently working towards the harmonisation and re-design of the Global Mobility Function following a merger. Holly's role as part of the harmonisation project is to lead the Vendor, Business Visitor Compliance and Tracker Programme, a role she has been relishing for the last seven months. Holly is fast gathering a positive reputation within the industry and in 2016 was nominated and shortlisted for Global Mobility Rising Star within the EMEA region and in 2018 co-founded and launched the Next Gen GM.