

## Diversity and Inclusion in Global Mobility



“Diversity and Inclusion” may be perceived as a mere buzzword in certain business circles, yet it is fundamental to recognizing varying customer needs. It offers companies the chance to re-evaluate outdated policies and guidelines in response to changing demographics. In global mobility, where companies are encountering an increasingly diverse, multi-generational workforce with unique needs, there is an opportunity to transform the services employers currently provide.

### NEW CHALLENGES AND NEEDS OF A MULTIDIMENSIONAL WORKFORCE

Mobility professionals must address new challenges by researching and designing new solutions, which includes providing the necessary tools aimed at adequately preparing and supporting the changing requirements of transferring employees and assignees. Reducing transitional challenges, facilitating productivity, and creating a positive employee experience are the ultimate objectives—such measures can mitigate risk of failed assignments and transfers.

Some new changes are generational in nature, with select situations requiring companies to become more agile in their approach. These include:

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**Single employees going on assignment or being relocated.**

When incorporating inclusion and diversity into new policy language, companies can cover home-finding trips that may include a significant other, friend, parent, or family member.

**Single parents relocating often encounter challenges with childcare.**

Inclusive policies may address these situations and consider options such as relocating a relative to provide childcare.

**Parents who have children with special needs.**

Parents may require additional support to locate the appropriate educational institutions with necessary programs for their children.

**Aging parents that may need assistance or require the support of the transferring employee in some way.**

Much has been said about the “sandwich generation” relocating over the past few years: a generation of people, typically in their thirties or forties, responsible both for bringing up their own children and for the care of their aging parents. Mobility companies must look at ways to support them.

**Gender balance in mobility populations.**

Key to achieving a diverse and inclusive mobility program is to promote gender balance within the talent/candidate pool and support the differentiation in the assignment/transfer population.

**Global perceptions and regulations regarding the LGBTQ+ lifestyle differ.**

It is important to understand the difficulties employees may face in different locations. Having support programs in place for situations in countries where LGBTQ+ individuals could face challenges is an important part of fostering a diverse and inclusive workplace.

Companies may consider updating policies to build greater flexibility within the proven practices we are accustomed to today. They need to enlist the support of talent management teams, HR business partners, and senior management to identify how to seal these gaps in current programs. Everyone in the organization needs to be on the same team, working together, going forward.



## DRIVERS TO SATISFY THE CHANGING NEEDS OF THE GLOBAL MOBILITY WORKFORCE

Traditional models may not be adequate for implementing change or addressing special requirements. After identifying these issues, companies must recognize and support their employees from a legal, professional, cultural, and social perspective.

Policies should be easy to comprehend with the objective of being inclusive in nature. The framework must be fluid and adaptable to various situations while avoiding an inconsistent, ad-hoc approach to policy or managing by exception.

Human Resources in the host or destination location should also be engaged in policy development decisions. They know the cultural landscape differences of their specific locales and can support the organization's objectives with the new workforce dynamic.

## POLICIES AND PRACTICES TO SATISFY NON-TRADITIONAL MOBILE EMPLOYEES: THE CORE-FLEX APPROACH

The core-flex approach identifies a set of pre-defined benefits critical to ensure the success of a relocation provided to all employees. Supplementary (aka, "flex") benefits can then be chosen by the business, the employee, or a combination of both.

The core-flex approach allows for package differentiation by levels and family size, and assists with adapting to local situations and cultural differences at the destination locale. These tailored benefits should be specific in nature, with an eye toward reducing overall costs and exception processing.

Companies can benefit from assistance in designing and implementing the core-flex approach into their current program. The initial step is to clearly define the company's objective and establish the proper framework of the core and the flex benefits to be added. Once completed, other support can be offered. This includes:

- Review your existing policies and assess your program as it aligns to industry best practices
- Provide recommendations on a policy approach that is competitive in the marketplace and provides a tool for attracting and retaining talent
- Provide recommendations on program design
- Collaborate with your company to determine what program structure best suits your company

As with any new program, there may be disadvantages to the core-flex approach. Selecting benefits with a business-choice approach may focus more on cost over quality, and therefore can damage the employee experience by not meeting specific needs. A core-flex approach may also lead to the perception amongst employees of unequal treatment with differing benefits. This is where it is important to identify if a core-flex solution best fits the company's global mobility goals and culture.

The results of the core-flex approach are mainly positive, allowing employees to be part of the process in selecting benefits that best fit their specific needs. With **employee choice**, the employee is engaged in the process, which enhances their experience. The employee's specific needs are also addressed, supporting unique individual and family situations while minimizing exception requests. With **business choice**, the employer is able to determine the specific needs of the role by location and employee level to attract the right talent and better manage their costs.

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### NEXT STEPS

As we've established, Diversity and Inclusion is more than just a catchphrase; by promoting equality and the value of choice, a wider range of skills and resources become available to enhance professional development. As a mobility professional, steps to practice ongoing Diversity and Inclusion include:

- Implementing Diversity and Inclusion into your values and strategies
- Providing colleagues with guidance, resources, and support
- Securing Diversity and Inclusion at all levels, from employees to senior managers and executives
- Implementing regular analysis of representative workforce data
- Integrating regular Diversity and Inclusion training and initiatives
- Promoting positive action by becoming a Diversity and Inclusion ambassador

The importance of agility within companies to deliver up-to-date policies and procedures cannot be overstressed. Exceed company expectations by identifying challenges and needs and offering the best solution to fit those requirements.

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

#### Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development

<https://www.cipd.co.uk/knowledge/fundamentals/reasons/diversity/management-recommendations>

For more information about how Cartus and our Consulting Solutions team can help create a best-in-class Diversity and Inclusion strategy for your mobility program, contact us at [cartussolutions@cartus.com](mailto:cartussolutions@cartus.com).

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