

Information from Cartus on Relocation and International Assignment Trends and Practices.

## Putting Talent Management into Practice with New Mobility Approaches



Today talent management is much less hierarchical. It is not just about supporting high profile and senior employees, but rather creating a community of talent that will become tomorrow's leaders. To win the global talent war, organizations must adopt a holistic approach that delivers this narrative and one that incorporates mobility.

The correlation between talent management and mobility has long been acknowledged as a key business priority. Organizations need to ensure that mobility programs support the development, motivation, and retention of talent while also ensuring a clear return on investment. According to Cartus' 2018 Biggest Challenges survey, the top three ways in which organizations are achieving the greatest value from international assignments are:

- Looking at succession planning and repatriation earlier in the assignment process (46%)
- Implementing a formal leadership approval process prior to initiating a global assignment (42%)
- Reviewing assignment objectives at the beginning of the assignment (40%)

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Adopting effective mobility approaches like these, which directly link to talent management, will ensure international assignments truly contribute to overall long-term business strategies.

There are a number of challenges that organizations must first overcome when trying to integrate talent management and mobility. Often international assignments need to support more immediate, short-term business priorities, which can disrupt the focus on key talent. In other instances, limited recognition, career progression or in some cases no progressive role offered to returning employees can lead to demotivation, disengagement and attrition. To meet such challenges some organizations are creating a **new dedicated talent development track** that resides within the global relocation framework and supports 'talent track employees'.

We are starting to see organizations adopt this new approach, by following a number of best practices to redefine the **relocation intent, organizational structure, assignment support and return on investment**, moving away from a primarily business-led program to one led by Talent Development and HR teams.



Objectives should clearly outline business deliverables as well as the assignee's personal development goals.

### RELOCATION INTENT

In our Biggest Challenges survey, 75% of mobility managers indicated that international assignments are positive for leadership and career development, but what measures can be taken to ensure this translates into meaningful results, both for the employee and business?

#### Achieving Synergy: Short-term Business Priorities and Long-term Talent Objectives

The need for international assignments to support short-term business priorities can sometimes disrupt an organization's focus on key talent. Setting objectives and milestones may help to achieve a successful assignment and one that delivers a return on investment.

Two-fifths (40%) of mobility managers said that ensuring assignment objectives are incorporated into the employee's performance review was one of the strategies that they use to link global mobility and talent management. Objectives should clearly outline business deliverables as well as the assignee's personal development goals.

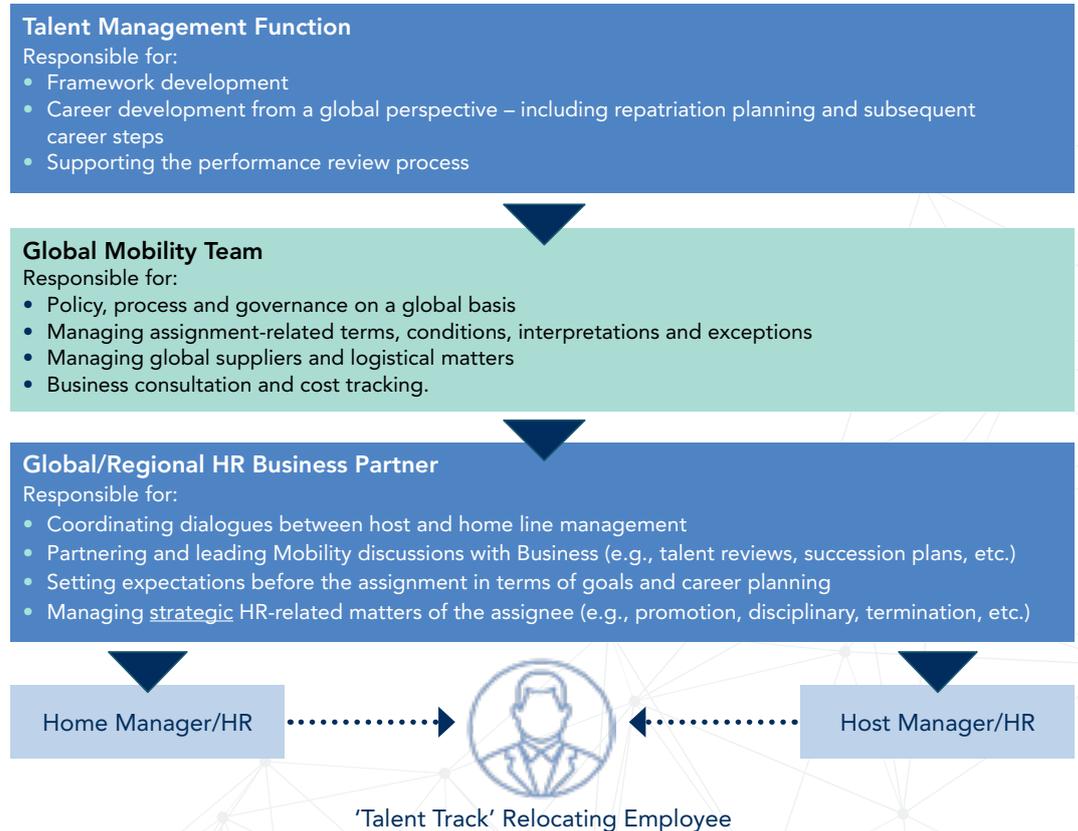
### ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

#### Talent Council or Global Mobility Center of Excellence

Some organizations are creating a long-term strategy for talent track employees that incorporates global succession planning for future leadership positions. Planning should be tailored to the assignee profile, so a career track set up for an experienced expatriate may not be the same strategy adopted for a graduate millennial.

Consider setting up a 'talent council' or 'global mobility center of excellence'. Represented by different areas of the business, its function will be to implement this long-term strategy, focusing on talent track employees.

Sample structure:



Only 37% of mobility managers indicated that when linking mobility and talent management, their organization collaborates with HR to ensure employee performance ratings are considered.

## ASSIGNMENT SUPPORT AND CAREER TRACKING

Effective talent management through mobility is not only about demonstrating support at the start of a relocation, but rather ensuring that there is constant and regular support in place throughout the move, which includes career tracking.

### Designated Career Sponsorship

Organizations may have well-intentioned approaches to talent management, but these will not yield optimal results if they are siloed and fail to make the necessary connections between HR teams and the rest of the business. Communication across business functions appears to be a common challenge. Only 37% of mobility managers indicated that, when linking mobility and talent management, their organization collaborates with HR to ensure employee performance ratings are considered.

To meet this challenge consider creating a mentor role; the aim of which is to help bridge discussions between home and host HR teams, as well as the assignee's manager. The mentor will coordinate performance management throughout the assignment and will enable discussions on repatriation or next assignment plans in advance.

Annual reviews or 'audits' of talent track employees should also be conducted between HR and the rest of the business. Reviews should confirm where assignees are, how long they have been there and what the plan is once the assignment ends. Succession planning should also be conducted to establish what talent is required in what locations, to meet the needs of current and future business goals. Such advanced planning helps to avoid gaps in talent.

### Policy Support

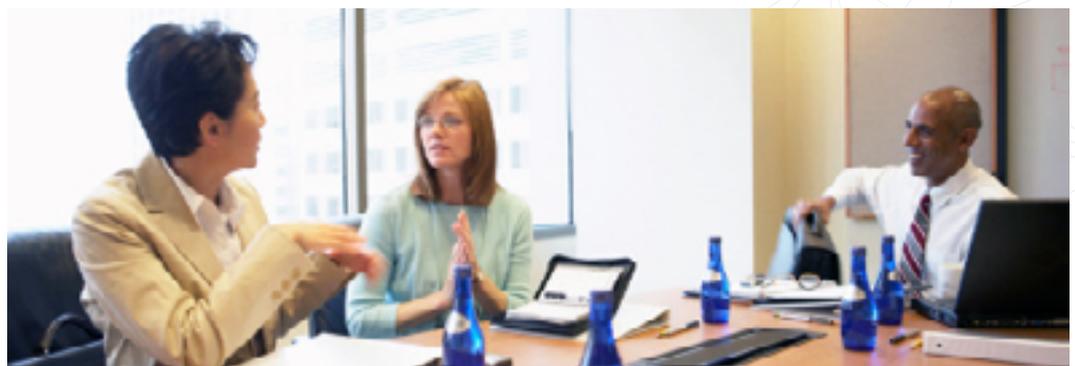
Relocation policy support is also key to mobility successfully contributing to effective talent management. Specific guidelines should be drawn to decipher which relocation policies are common requirements for each assignee profile. For the career expatriate with a family, enhanced split family support may be required. Whereas for millennial assignees, a generation who are used to speedy responses and instant communication, a fast track exception process may be needed to ensure they feel fully supported.

## RETURN ON INVESTMENT

To achieve the greatest value from international assignments, 46% of respondents to Cartus' Biggest Challenges survey stated that their organizations were looking at succession planning and repatriation earlier in the assignment process. Repatriation is often where an organization is most vulnerable to employee attrition. We recommend that organizations have a formal repatriation policy in place and begin repatriation discussions as early as possible.

### Maximize the Repatriated Employee's Experience

Retention of repatriated talent track employees can be attributed to their ability to identify, articulate, and apply the new skills they have learned to their role within the business. Consider providing opportunities like setting up a career forum for the repatriated employee to share their experiences, skills and growth with junior mentees and to broader populations of the business.



### Redefine ROI for Talent Track Employees

Attrition rates can often be high amongst repatriated employees, especially during the first year of returning. This means that organizations can quickly lose the investment they have made in their talent track employee to bring valuable experience and international skills to the business. Frequently, those employees go on to take such skills and values to the competition.

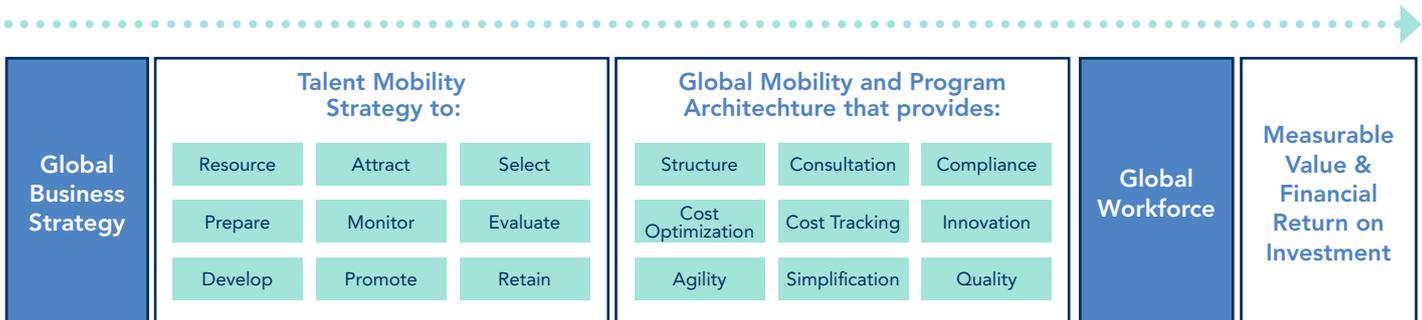
For organizations to realize ROI from global assignments (in terms of talent management objectives), they must redefine what it means for talent track employees. They should take additional steps to expand the employee’s responsibilities as well as develop, reward, and promote their talent. Adopting a formal leadership process may ensure the employee remains engaged with the business.

### Summary

Clearly defined strategies linking talent management and mobility are finally gaining momentum and we will be closely observing progress and sharing results.

The increased focus amongst organizations to link global mobility with talent management suggests that many are now understanding the importance of how international assignments can support not only employee retention and development, but long-term business growth.

### Program Design Best Practices



- Strong alignment between Talent Management and Mobility
- Clear objectives and milestones for the assignments
- Mentor relationships—home and host
- Performance management throughout the assignment
- Repatriation discussions

- A global framework with appropriate regional nuances
- Consultative guidance and support for the business
- Holistic ownership of the policy design and execution
- Frequent review of framework, cost, utilization and user feedback
- Anticipation and mitigation of risk

- Capitalize on assignee experience on return
- Determine who “owns” the repatriation
- Tracking expat turnover within two years of repatriation to the home country

If you would like more information on how to develop your global mobility program, please contact your Cartus representative, or email us at [cartussolutions@cartus.com](mailto:cartussolutions@cartus.com).