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Addressing cultural issues in the new world of work

We tend to underestimate the impact of cultural issues and misunderstandings on the performance of international assignees and their integration in their countries of destination. Read Mercer's article on this [here](#).

Navigating the global talent shortage

The European Commission is seeking to make the EU as a whole more attractive for high-, medium- and low-skilled talent to mobilise within and to the region. Read Vialto's article [here](#).

Intro

It's the big **5-0!** Oh my, haven't we grown?! You know, the traditional gift for a 50th anniversary is gold, a useful hedge against inflation and currency devaluation in these troublesome times! Give me any word and I'll eventually find a way to link it to global mobility! :D See our benchmarking section for a timely question on this.

While our rivers may be running dry and hosepipe bans have been enforced, our work has not dried up! So let us spray you with content ;)

A Shift in Relocation Types?

As mentioned, we are busier than ever here at Expat Academy. Part of the reason for that is how many conversations we are still having with our network to understand your challenges and your program developments. One common theme we are hearing (or EAR-ing! ;) is how **costs are being scrutinised** more than ever before and that for many, this has resulted in a shift away from the traditional long-term assignments towards **more one-way transfers** (permanent transfers, whatever you want to call them). There are of course exceptions, depending on current growth, speed of that current growth, type of industry, company culture, etc. But there is definitely a general trend.

Check out this [AIRINC vlog](#) (I don't know if they call it a vlog but I do!) for a great visual explanation of why this may be happening in simple cost terms. Does it have to be this way though? Should we assume one-way transfers are always going to be cheaper? We would argue—as always—that it depends. Yes it most likely will usually be true, but this is where policy flexibility, aka **core/flex** comes in; it's why, as much as it's a hateful buzzphrase, it doesn't go away as a policy strategy. Picking a leaner assignment package may still be more expensive, but perhaps not as expensive as imagined. Furthermore, it may be the difference between the candidate accepting the relocation and not accepting the relocation; the promise of a return role, home country pensions, security clearances, etc., there are many reasons.

On the topic of one-way or permanent transfers, we do have a member who has perhaps been ahead of the curve on that trend for a couple of years already. And given that we are a community, that member has offered to connect with others just following that path now so that learnings can be shared. Please let your account manager know if you are interested, and if there are a lot of you, we'll perhaps use an upcoming event rather than make the poor member have 213 calls (that's how many companies are now members ;))!





EAR for Yourself

Come and boost your technical knowledge through one of [our events](#):

26 September 2022 – [Expat Academy 2022 Annual Conference: Get on Board](#) - London

29 September 2022 – [Global Mobility Policies Training Course](#) - Virtual

3 October 2022 – [European Super Huddle](#) - Amsterdam

13 October 2022 – [APAC Super Huddle](#) - Singapore

2 November 2022 – [US Huddle](#) - New York

8 November 2022– [Symposium Network Huddle](#) - London

10 November 2022– [Club 100 Network Huddle](#) - London

Second Opinion - Assignment Technology

Here we have a new section of potentially controversial but mainly thought-provoking statements and stories to get your brain juices flowing!

From those member chats that we've been having (and will continue to have), we have seen a clear difference between our Club 100 members and Symposium members when it comes to the use of technology. Now, we knew that already to a large extent because we have two networks for a reason: they have different size GM programs and different challenges associated with that. However, what has been sparked as a thought recently is the question of 'what does it mean to embrace technology?'. Do GM teams truly evaluate their end-to-end processes with enough scrutiny in order to determine their needs for technology (including that which is already available to them, such as a HR Information System e.g., Workday, Oracle, or even Excel)? Or are too many simply looking at their assignment numbers and not generating the business case they should when considering new technology? If new technology is still not an option, it's not an all or nothing part of the job. We would argue that even Excel and its many tools and formulas can be incredibly powerful to be used within a GM process.

The point here is that to simply resign yourself to having to work so manually, e.g., having to write your assignment letters manually, is not appreciating how much more efficient even the simplest of tools at our disposal can be. We'd also argue looking at your GM process and current technology capabilities may also make your processes more robust and compliant as opposed to manually creating and/or maintaining assignment records.

An example to illustrate this is from one company we know who had an assignment letter drawn up manually. Unfortunately, the individual drawing up the letter missed the inclusion of the home country in a section designed to ensure any legal dispute whilst on assignment would be governed by employment law in the Home Country. This led to the company having to pay a six-figure settlement to the employee at the end of their assignment.

Whilst many would argue that additional manual checks would correct this issue, it then simply drives in greater inefficiency in GM programs when simpler but more robust digital solutions may be available right under your noses. Just a thought!



Quote of the week...

When a clown moves into a palace, he doesn't become the king. The palace becomes a circus.

Turkish Proverb



Author



No, not Brad Pitt. Greg Smith, Head of Client Services – Symposium Network. Seems to spend most of his time either in Spain or at Paultons Park...



Benchmarking

We have had a busy time on the benchmarking service recently! It's great to see so much engagement and community spirit to help each other. We have had:

[Home leave flights / allowances](#), [Childcare costs in the host country](#), [Netherlands - Measures to navigate BSN delays](#), [New York City - Reimbursement of third-party guarantor costs](#), [Saudi Arabia - End of service award for expats](#), [UK - London Housing Allowance](#), and [UK Right to Work checks for British/Irish nationals!](#)

Members need your help

[Here](#) is the page to visit to see what else is live right now. Remember, communities work best when everyone participates and the more answers we get, the better the benchmark result will be; not only for the person asking but for anyone interested!

We currently have '[Remote Working Extension](#)', '[Should assignees be eligible for sabbatical leave?](#)', and '[Inflation & Fluctuating Foreign Exchange \(FX\) Rates](#)'.