

THE IMPORTANCE OF MENTORING IN GLOBAL MOBILITY

In a recent survey from BGRS, the third most challenging factor for the Globally Mobility industry in managing assignments, after compliance and cost containment, was “Assignee and Family Adjustment”. I can understand why! For employees travelling to new locations, there are often steep learning curves and vast adjustments, the impact on the family can play a big part in this too.

In fact, in the same BGRS survey, twenty seven percent of those asked said there were increasing numbers of married and partnered employees choosing “single-status” for long term assignments. Perhaps this is because they know how tricky it can be to uproot a family. So, what exactly can be done to help improve employee adjustment? Well, I believe that mentoring has a considerable role to play in improving employee and family experiences to break down the challenges.

Mentoring has been proven, time and time again, to offer a vast range of benefits for individuals and organisations alike which can include employee retention, engagement and knowledge sharing. So, simply put, we know that mentoring works. There are a huge number of ways in which mentoring schemes and programs can be implemented but they are all too often neglected. Why, because traditionally mentoring programs require a lot of resources to make them work, matching mentors and mentees, keeping track of mentoring relationships, helping employees to make the most of their mentoring and much more too. Furthermore, when we think of mentoring and try to imagine implementing it into a worldwide agile and mobile workforce, there are undoubtedly additional challenges. However, thanks to the advent of the internet and mentoring platforms, this no longer needs to be the case.

HAVING A MENTOR?

Having a mentor who has been through similar challenges and experiences can be a huge support and breathe of fresh air for employees at any stage in their career. When you then look at the additional challenges often faced by employees in adjusting to new locations, it makes sense that mentoring plays an

important role in aiding individuals. By offering employees a mentor, you give them an additional channel of support where alternatives simply fall by the wayside. In providing mentoring networks within Global Mobility it means that organisations can offer a real, impactful and knowledgeable support network to combat the otherwise potentially tricky situations. Mentoring can often be more than knowledge sharing and support though, but it can play a big part in helping to avoid repeat mistakes and failings.

Let us take another area in which mentoring is popular, entrepreneurship. Why, because entrepreneurs have steep learning curves, risk a lot of pitfalls and often fail. Mentoring helps entrepreneurs to learn from others' mistakes, avoid failing where others have and ultimately helps the business growth. The same could be said of Global Mobility which has steep learning curves and requires a lot of adjustment.

MENTORING FOR THE FAMILY

Creating a network of mentors and mentees within your organisation does not need to stop at employees who undertake an assignment or permanent transfer. In fact, the recent BGRS Global Mobility survey highlighted sixty eight percent of assignees were married or partnered. Such partners can often benefit from additional support to help avoid becoming the “invisible” or trailing spouse or partner. Being matched with a mentor who has had similar experiences when accompanying a spouse or partner could be a valuable resource that may prevent the failure of an assignment. This all sounds good and well, but how can an organisation setup an effective mentoring scheme, using technology, to support the mentoring agenda for employees going on assignment?

SETTING UP A MENTORING SCHEME

Mentoring schemes can now be setup quickly and easily, alongside inviting an employee and their spouse or partner to join them too. Platforms can match prospective mentors and mentees, without a HR Manager or Global Mobility Professional needing to go through this process manually. The technology takes care of exploring locations of mentors and mentees matching by experience level, industries and much more too. Better still, the platform then helps both mentors and mentees to manage their mentoring relationship while giving the scheme managers full visibility of everyone in their network. It really can be that easy and make so much difference to an employee and their family.

So, if you are looking at reducing the challenges around managing employee and family adjustment, it is worth considering setting up a mentoring scheme given just how beneficial it could be.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ed Johnson is a technology entrepreneur based in London. As CEO and Co-Founder of mentoring platform [Pushfar](#), Ed realised there was an issue with mentoring when he struggled to find an effective way to find a mentor himself. Twelve months later, [Pushfar](#) launched, both to help individuals and organisations with mentoring schemes and programs.

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