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**More than the sum of its parts
How to effectively manage group moves**

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Agenda

- The context of group moves
- The psychological mindset of the group move employee
- Group move relocation policies and communication
- Strategic planning and timeline of the relocation process
- How to adapt relocation services to the group move context
- Company testimonial



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Definition – What is a group move

- A group move occurs when several employees are relocated simultaneously to a specific location



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Context of group moves

- Merger/Acquisition
- Special Project
- Relocation/closure of division/department
- Mass recruitment



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Psychological mindset of a group move employee

- Relocation may be imposed
- Employee could be made redundant if move is declined
- Comparing with others
- Peer pressure/group dynamic and influence
- Eagerness for information



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Group move policies

- Standardization is key
- Firm benefits (no individual negotiation)
- Consider different policies adapted to group move
 - Enhanced mobility premium
 - Pre-decision visit
 - Depending on context, repayment agreement could be removed from policy



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Strategic planning and timeline of the relocation process

- Early involvement of strategic players within organization (home and host)
- Identification of key contacts within organization
- Understand clearly the organizational context and objective of the group move
- Perform cost analysis
- Single point of contact within HR team
- Identify spokesperson within group
- Appropriate supplier selection
- Early involvement of all suppliers in process



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Strategic planning and timeline of the relocation process

- Collect information on destination (general country information, housing, schooling, cultural traits)
- Always be one step ahead of employees to prevent negative impacts of the group dynamic
- Active listening and prompt reaction to any ambiguities/dissatisfactions within the group
- If employees return to host country, plan and prepare repatriation process well in advance



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Communication Process

- Early communication is key
 - Policy and process information sessions
 - Share roles and responsibilities with employees
 - Information sessions about host country/Cross cultural training
 - Reference library
 - Active participation of all involved parties (employees and family, HR, operations, management)



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Adapting relocation services to the group move context

- Pre-decision visits
- Orientation sessions in small groups
- Group information session for administrative formalities
- Standardize living standards as much as possible (accommodation etc)
- Team building activity in host location (special projects)



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Testimonial – Context of project

- Newly acquired entity
- No prior relocation experience (no existing relocation policies)
- New HR manager
- Distant and unfamiliar location (Australia)
- No host company
- New client
- Very specialized labour force
- Several groups of 6-month period contracts
- Total of 30 assignees



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Testimonial – Key Success Factors

- Importance of standardization of compensation and relocation benefits (no individual negotiation)
- Importance of standardization of accommodation standards
- Group team building at destination with employees and families
- Involvement of host parties
- Attractive location and similar standard of living
- Importance of supplier partnership
- Key resource person within group at host location



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Testimonial – Lessons Learned

- Clarify roles of employees and expectations of employer for mandate
- Be aware and do not neglect importance of small differences in lifestyle (left-hand driving, language, food, mosquito nets...)
- Importance of early familiarization visit to host location by HR
- Agree to benefit parameters with management prior to communication of policy to employees
- Always maintain equity within the group
- Ensure that employees are good candidates for expatriation and will adapt easily



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Testimonial – Lessons Learned

- Build 'Living and Working' guide specific to host location
- Early preparation and planning is key
- Recognize the importance of knowledgeable and experienced suppliers in the relocation process
- Cost containment should not be primary focus
- Communication process within home entity and for employees on assignment
- Maintain sense of belonging with home entity
- Prepare repatriation process, reintegration and reverse culture shock



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Testimonial – Conclusion

- Group move relocations can be fun
- I lived to tell the tale!