

# Training policy

Global mobility policies should address all aspects of the expatriation cycle from pre-departure, the assignment itself, and repatriation. Training can provide crucial support to assist with the successful achievement of assignment objectives.

Training policy addresses a wide range of skills areas. Training can be given prior to departure and/or on assignment. Training interventions may apply to accompanying family members. Training should be available to non-mobile assignees carrying out virtual assignments.

## LANGUAGE

Language is an artefact of culture. To operate successfully both in the workplace and socially, it is important for assignees to be able to speak the local language. Language capability aids settling-in and functioning effectively in the community. It is important to offer language training to accompanying family members.

## CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING

Every country has a unique culture which governs what is acceptable and how members of that society should behave. Cultural misunderstandings can cause offense and seriously affect working relationships between assignees and locals.

Cross-cultural training can assist employees to understand the unique nature of their host location's ways of working. It is important to remember that some host countries have multi-cultural populations. Training that provides a broader understanding of cultural differences can be useful in such societies.

Cultural training should enable participants to engage with locals in their host society. Immersion style exercises are more helpful in changing behaviours than cultural briefing sessions alone.

Family members benefit hugely from undertaking cultural training as this helps them to settle in more effectively.

## MANAGEMENT

Each culture has a different management style. In some, a more participative or democratic style works more effectively than a top-down, authoritative, approach. To develop the best working relationships with staff, assignees must adapt their management style to fit the host culture in which they are working.

## NEGOTIATION SKILLS

Some cultures rely more heavily on building relationships to facilitate negotiations; others rely more on contracts. In some, time must be spent to build rapport and trust before a deal can be struck; in others a shorter time-frame is expected with less reliance on relationship building. Assignees must adapt their negotiation style to fit the host culture where they are doing business.

## SAFETY & SECURITY

Assignees' safety and security are paramount. While employers can put security measure in place, this will be less effective if assignees and their families do not understand or engage in safe practices aligned with their local environment. Preparatory training that addresses potential threats and how to mitigate these is vital. Organisations might also offer defensive driving training as appropriate.

## STRESS MANAGEMENT

Living and working abroad can prove stressful. Training that explains what stress is and how it can be successfully managed through appropriate coping mechanisms is important to assignees' and their families' wellbeing.

## ON-THE-JOB SKILLS

Ensuring that assignees maintain their professional skills should be embraced within training policy. It is important that they are kept up-to-date with company developments.

## REPATRIATION

Repatriation is often a stressful and disappointing experience. It involves fitting back into the home country's cultural norms and embracing change. Training can address societal, cultural and personal changes, aiding employee and family reintegration.

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