

Employee Mobility: A Unique Strategic Partner for D&I

The COVID-19 pandemic and recent geopolitical events have intensified focus on diversity and inclusion (D&I) initiatives within organizations. Companies are beginning to identify gaps in their D&I policies and exploring how different internal functions, including employee mobility, can support their initiatives in this important area.

Most organizations are probably more culturally diverse than employees realize. With some changes to their approach, they could boost their overall D&I strategy to incorporate cultural diversity and build the agility, empathy, and global mindset skills needed to reap the benefits of being inclusive. Research has shown that companies with higher percentages of racial and gender diversity have higher sales revenues, more customers, and higher than average market share.

But how do you develop cultural agility within your organization and a global mindset in your people? Organizations with mobility programs have the unique advantage of being able to embed and develop the global mindsets and agility of its people through their programs. Mobility holds a unique position within an organization in that it can act as a resource not only to develop the company's talent pipeline but also to work with D&I to socialize and help embed its D&I philosophy within its people. For example, by adapting programs for diversity needs incorporating inclusive policy provisions and verbiage, introducing flexible program options, and training for differences in D&I expectations in the countries they do business, Mobility can support its company's overall D&I objectives and influence its various stakeholders. The audiences that mobility supports include individuals, the company, and teams receiving relocating individuals, and all are influenced in different ways. Employees that are sent on assignment can experience different cultures while developing essential soft skills including a global mindset and agility. Organizations then gain the benefit of the employee's development. Research has shown that international experience and having a global mindset are critical for meeting business objectives and those who have those skills make more effective global leaders. Lastly, teams receiving mobile employees also benefit as they are having to learn to work across cultures and are exposed to different ways of doing business. This can lead to innovation and overall improved performance, an overall benefit for the company. By creating alignment between D&I and Mobility, organizations can gain a major boost to their wider D&I agendas in making workplaces more diverse with relocated talent and developing the essential inclusive and open mindsets.