



TALENT ACQUISITION

When it requires an international relocation

"The fact that you're here today, and the fact that my new Employer has retained your firm to look after my family's relocation to Canada, speaks volumes to me about how much they care."

These words were said to me a long time ago, at the beginning of my career in the relocation industry in fact. But I've never forgotten them. Andrew really made me begin to understand just how valuable it can be for an Employer to offer good relocation support as an integral part of the recruitment process.

I was representing a major North American corporation that was headhunting aerospace engineers from top UK companies. The relocation support became crucial to securing the right candidates. My client learned this fact before I did! It was a big eye-opener to me, and it helped shape my career and approach to providing international relocation support as part of the recruitment process. I believe it is more important today (20 years on) than it has ever been!



Getting Andrew on board was immensely important to my client. Andrew wanted the job and he loved the fact that it would involve a new life in Canada for his young family. At the same time I could tell he was a bit scared about what exactly lay ahead. He was giving up a good job with an old established aerospace company in England. He was concerned about convincing his wife to take the risk of emigrating to Canada.

How would it all affect his young children's lives? But as we talked I could see him becoming enormously relieved and re-assured that his family would be comprehensively supported throughout the relocation process – that they were going to be assisted with every aspect of their move across the globe.

I could see his wife was delighted too. At last her husband was being treated well by an employer – the way he deserved to be treated given his extraordinary expertise and dedication. This sort of service was a million miles from the way his current, English employer treated him. It was obvious to me what a big mistake they had made. They had taken him for granted and now they would lose him forever!

As I conducted these initial meetings with the candidates all over the UK I encountered a similar reaction. It was clear to me that my client had taken a wise decision to engage professional relocation support at an early stage, and it hadn't even been my idea!

This experience early on in my relocation career taught me just how important it is for Employers to provide good, caring relocation support as part of the talent acquisition process. And it should kick-in as early as possible in the recruitment process – because it is part and parcel of selling the new position to the candidate.



The candidate not only needs to be excited about the position; the candidate also needs to be excited about (among other things) the new location, living conditions and lifestyle; so does the candidate's family – especially their spouse. The parents will also need to be happy about the schools that are available for their children. This is especially true of an international relocation which always involves substantial lifestyle changes.

The above project involved relocations from the UK to Canada. Relocations into the UK can involve their own special considerations.

Consider, for example, if your company needs to bring in a senior executive from overseas for a position in London. Right now he works for a major corporation in Dallas. His new life in London (should he take the position) will be different, but not as different as for his wife and children. No matter how much *he* wants the new job, he will want his family to be totally happy about the move. He needs to be able to demonstrate that they will be able to secure a lovely home in a good area with good schooling, etc.

On the other hand, if the family is not going to be happy living in the UK, your company needs to know that at the earliest possible stage in the process – so that vast amounts of time and money are not squandered away on a hopeless case.

The costs of a failed recruitment, at this level especially, can be very high. Therefore, in such a case, it is a very wise investment to retain a professional relocation firm to spend some time in London with the family touring neighborhoods, typical homes, schools, etc. as part of an orientation or familiarization program. Not only will you impress the candidate, you will also gain a great deal of useful information. It will help you and the candidate make good decisions going forward.



In consultation with your relocation professionals, you'll be able to tailor a relocation program to cater for the family's precise needs. You'll be able to establish accurate cost estimates.

Most important, if this is the right candidate, you'll demonstrate to them just how highly you and your company value them! This will give you a big edge over other corporations who are also trying to attract this talented individual. I know this because not many employers get this right. They provide too little too late in an effort to skimp and save. It's a false economy because the competitive advantage you can gain is worth its weight in gold!

I would add that such projects are, self-evidently, distinctly different than inter-company relocations. They need a hybrid approach by professionals who are seasoned in providing the special attention that is required. Your regular relocation company may not be the right resource.

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