

# #relocant

A Lively Conversation with Steven M. John, SCRP, SGMS-T, President and CEO

## Smooth Relocations: Focus on the Family

Relocation is a complex process that impacts not just the employee, but also their family, including spouses, children, and dependent seniors. Nurturing the well-being of these family members during a corporate relocation is critical to ensure engaged employees and a successful, long-term transition to a new city. Too many relocations fail as a result of family pressures.

### Relocation impacts on family

**Career Transitions:** Spouses often face the daunting task of transitioning their own careers. It's vital for HR managers to consider their job prospects in the new location and offer resources for job searches, networking, and professional development.

**Emotional Support:** The emotional toll of leaving behind friends, family, and familiar surroundings can be significant. Spouses or significant others may feel an extra burden of managing finer details of a move. Children may experience anxiety, sadness, or confusion during a family relocation. And isolation and loneliness can affect seniors' mental health when relocating.

It is important to encourage transferring employees to talk openly with family members about the move and provide access to counseling services that can help ease the stress of the move. Children's support groups, senior community centers, social groups, and volunteer opportunities are good resources to help loved ones stay engaged.

**Community Integration:** Assisting family members in becoming part of the new community can greatly impact their well-being. Offering information about local clubs, associations, and social events can help them establish connections and form lasting bonds with their new community.

**Educational and Recreational:** Moving can be especially challenging for children, as they must adapt to new schools, teachers, and classmates. Transferring families need information about local schools, extracurricular activities, and educational support services.

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Finding ways for children to engage with their new environment is crucial. Information detailing local parks, playgrounds, and child-friendly activities will help parents keep their children active and happy.

**Health and Accessibility Considerations:** Relocation means transitioning to new healthcare providers. Families need guidance on finding suitable doctors, specialists, and healthcare facilities in the new area. Families with dependent seniors will also be concerned that the new living environment is accessible and safe for seniors with mobility issues. They may benefit from consulting on home modifications or assistive devices if necessary.

### **Family Support Strategies**

**Tailored Resources:** Recognize that the needs of each family member may differ. Consider providing benefits, resources and assistance based on the specific challenges faced by spouses, children, and dependent seniors. Family support counseling programs can be obtained for a comparatively small additional cost, \$500 - \$1,500. These programs will assist with:

- Career counseling and job search
- Children's education options
- School reports/rankings
- Civic and charitable organizations
- Special interest or hobby groups
- Healthcare providers and specialists
- Senior facilities and in-home care
- Adult and youth sports
- Childcare providers and nanny services
- Housekeeping services
- Area attractions and cultural resources
- Vets and pet boarding/grooming services

**Pre-Relocation Assistance:** Supporting families starts well in advance of the move. Connect employees and family members from the very beginning, including on a pre-decision basis. Many candidates turn down offers requiring relocation because there are family uncertainties that could be resolved with the right information and counseling. For group moves, offer pre-move workshops, webinars, or informational sessions that cover various aspects of the relocation process and benefits and information about the destination. Organize orientation tours for families, showcasing the new community, schools, healthcare facilities, and recreational opportunities. Familiarity with the surroundings can ease the transition.

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**Support Groups:** Establish peer support groups or networks where spouses, parents, and seniors can connect with others going through similar experiences. These groups provide a valuable platform for sharing advice and building friendships. Utilize all resources available, from family counseling programs to relocation consultant, real estate agent, loan officer, etc.

Prioritizing the well-being of the family during corporate relocations is not just a matter of employee support; it's a strategic move to ensure a smooth transition and retain valuable talent. By offering tailored resources, emotional support, and community integration opportunities, HR managers can help families adapt, thrive, and contribute to the success of the relocation process. Ultimately, a well-supported family means a more successful and satisfied relocated employee, benefiting both the individual and the organization.

Thanks for listening!

