

# Supporting the Wellbeing of Global Employees

AGM











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## Introduction

Borders no longer act as a barrier to career opportunities, and managing a global workforce is becoming a growing reality for businesses everywhere.

The emergence of virtual communication software, such as <u>Zoom</u> and <u>Teams</u>, makes collaborative working effective from all over the world. In fact, a study from The <u>World</u>. <u>Economic Forum</u> now shows that globally diversified teams are becoming key drivers of tomorrow's working world, and <u>70% of professionals are already working remotely</u> from their company's base at least once a week.

It is, however, vital that global employees feel as looked after as those that work locally. This new era of working presents a new set of managerial challenges, which should be considered before enrolling global recruits. As global mobility experts, we can offer our tips and advice on how to support the wellbeing of your global employees to ensure that your company can reap all of the benefits that come alongside it.

### **Perks and Benefits**

Having an international workforce is beneficial in terms of diversifying your company's culture, experiences and talent. Here are just some of the other perks and benefits that you will gain from hiring, or relocating, on a global scale:

- **New perspectives** Employees sharing the same background may be limited to a certain skillset. Looking beyond your company's birth country will add an element of creativity, alongside professional skills, amongst your workforce.
- **Improved retention** If an employee goes through the international relocation process, a stronger sense of commitment will evolve towards the company. This results in a higher chance of them staying at the company.
- **Knowledge transfer** When hiring or relocating employees to a different country, there will be a knowledge transfer. Unique skillsets and new ideas will be shared around the world and within the company.
- Added value In the modern world, relocation opportunities within a business can be seen as an employee benefit. Offering a quality level of support for relocating employees can be a great promotional feature, and can attract new talent across the globe.





### **Proving Quality Support**

Managing your global employees goes far beyond a linear way of thinking, and should require a quality level of support for each individual that moves internationally. There are several ways to ensure that your business's global workforce is managed effectively:

#### Have an effective global mobility strategy

<u>Global mobility</u> takes time and strategic planning. Ahead of moving your international employees, you will need to consider the various aspects of global mobility, such as visa requirements and work

flows, to ensure that the move is seamless for each individual. At <u>Gerson Relocation</u>, we provide our clients with bespoke Global Mobility Programmes, to support your requirements for relocation implementation. Then we manage everything, adapting and refining as your needs and your business change. Using a specialist company to manage your global moves will ensure an accessible and responsive service is available for both you and your employees.

#### Being proactive and flexible

You must be being both proactive and flexible in your approach to <u>global mobility</u>. It is important that your current working practices can be adjusted according to the new locations and cultures of your global employees.

#### Visit your global employees

If you want to take your well-being support to the next level, it would be great practice to travel to international offices and engage with your global employees on a first-hand basis. Immersing yourself in your employees' new environments will help you gain a deeper level of understanding about their new location, and will also allow you to offer the needed well-being support in person.



### Managing Mental Health on a Global Scale

The stigma of mental health in the workplace remains an uncomfortable reality, and access to the right support, at the right time, can prove a challenge, especially for those working overseas.

Many employees may fear opening up at work about their mental health and may worry that discrimination will follow an open discussion about it, and this reality maybe even more difficult to face when working in an international role.

When placing employees in global positions, team members may experience poor mental health due to a range of factors:

- Cultural shock
- Isolation
- Language barriers
- Missing family members or friends from home countries

There are wide variations in attitudes towards mental health across the globe, with some countries excluding certain levels of care or treatment. There are, however, ways as an employer that you can assist your global employees to ensure that they have the correct mental health support, should they require it, to help improve the wellbeing culture at your company.



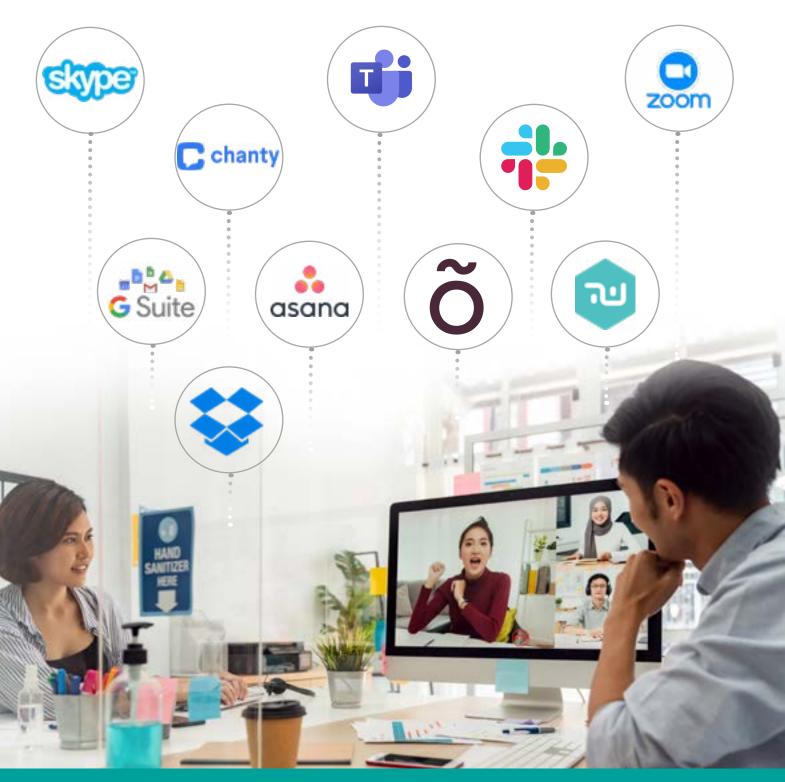
**Communicate** - The first rule to supporting the mental health of your global employees is to ensure that there is a strong culture of connection, between them, you as an employer, and fellow employees. This is particularly relevant for global employees, given culture and language barriers which can be isolating. As an employer, it is important to practice open and honest communication and to provide the necessary tools and software for them to do so. This could include investing in an internal social portal or creating open conversations on <u>Teams</u> or <u>Slack</u>.

**Train** - More and more businesses across the globe are creating a <u>mental first aid policy</u>, or training team members to become mental first aiders. Being trained in mental first aid will enable you to respond to employees with a deeper level of compassion and understanding.

Acknowledge - Cultural diversity can be overwhelming and can be confusing for global employees. If relocating employees on a global scale, it is important to acknowledge the challenges that they may face and to support them. Help your employees understand the new cultures, languages and people they may engage with in their new country, and prepare by offering coaching sessions ahead of time. you would do in your normal life every single day?

### **Global Communication That Feels Personal**

Distance can make the heart grow fonder, but can also make communication harder. The key to ensuring quality support for your global employees is in communication, which is where digital comes into play. With a strategic approach to global employee communication, you can ensure that your team members feel included in discussions and collaborative working opportunities. But what's the best way to offer this communication? Here are some of the best tools on the market to help your company be more communicative and collaborative, wherever they are.



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## **Health & Wellbeing Programmes**

Any business is only as good as its people, which is why it is vital to look after the health and wellbeing of your team, wherever they are located in the world. There are many benefits to looking after the wellbeing of your team, including:

- Increased productivity
- Better employee relations
- Strong company reputation
- Improved staff retention

When offering your team a health and wellbeing program, it is important to define your exact goals and the components you will need to put in place to achieve them. But what sort of employee wellbeing program is best for your organisation?



Here are just some examples of successful health and wellbeing programmes from leading international companies.



**Google** - Google has specialist schemes designed to improve employee wellbeing, with a strong focus on ensuring a quality work-life balance. Schemes include allowing employees to spend more time with family, through generous parental leave policies and retirement saving schemes. International offices have canteens that serve well-balanced meals, as well as bright open working spaces. Office fitness is also promoted with gym facilities.



**Nike** - As a global leading sports brand, Nike has some exemplary employee health and wellbeing plans on offer. In the sportswear industry, the focus on physical fitness is prominent, with their campus housing yoga studios, gyms, basketball and tennis courts, and much more.



**Netflix** - The workplace culture at Netflix is important, but more so is promoting work-life balance. As such, Netflix has been running with an unlimited annual leave policy, allowing employees across the globe to take as much time off as needed. The flexible working options on offer make the company a great promoter of a sustainable work-life balance.

As experts in Global Mobility, Gerson Relocation can help you move and manage your international employees, as well as offering guidance on supporting your employees' wellbeing throughout the process. Get in touch with our team today.

**Contact us**