



2023 People Perspective on Relocation



Contents

Executive Summary	3
Survey Highlights	4
Thriving Again in the New Location	5
Making New Friends & Avoiding Loneliness	6
Moving with Children	8
Addressing Professional Needs	8
Non-Working Partners Need Resources, Too	10
Moving Domestically & Internationally	10
Embracing the Benefits of Moving	11
Importance of Being Proactive	13
Design Corporate Relocation Policies to Help Talent ReThrive	14
Survey Participants	15
About IMPACT Group	16

Executive Summary

"Most Stressful Thing I've Ever Done!"

Moving is often cited as the third most stressful life event, following behind divorce and the death of a spouse or child. But many people, who haven't had the misfortune of experiencing the top two events, will tell you, "moving is the most stressful thing I have ever done."

The logistical stress of moving your prize possessions and all the numerous, time-sensitive tasks that go along with that — plus the emotional toll of managing ambiguity and change — can bring up a perfect storm of challenges. This is true even if the move is by choice and for exciting reasons like starting a new job or getting a promotion.

IMPACT Group's third edition of the **People Perspective on Relocation** survey focuses on people's personal experiences during their recent corporate-sponsored moves. We analyze the unique challenges employees face when moving to a new state, country, or across the world. And we shine a light on the amazing benefits that come with relocating for career advancement.

Unless otherwise noted, this data comes from this study, and verbatim quotes are included sporadically as well. Additional insights are drawn from IMPACT Group's 35 years of experience supporting hundreds of thousands of individuals and families during the relocation process.

IMPACT Group founded the relocation spousal coaching industry to make transitions more productive for both employees and corporations and less stressful for the family. We are passionate about empowering people to find and grow great careers—propelling them to thrive at home and the office.

Employers take on the cost and responsibility of moving talent for a variety of critical business reasons. You may be filling a much-needed talent gap or leveraging some of your best and brightest people to expand into a new market. Or perhaps you are moving star talent to propagate your organization's winning ways and culture to a newly acquired business.

No matter what the reason, it's imperative that the move is successful — from everyone's point of view. That's why I invite you to dig deep into these findings so you can minimize risk and maximize the many, many benefits of talent mobility.

Best,

Lauren Herring

LAUREN HERRING
CEO, IMPACT GROUP



Key Survey Highlights

56%

of respondents experienced emotional or personal challenges that lasted three months or longer following the move

70%

would have benefited from additional assistance to help settle in & feel at home again

41%

were uncomfortable or very uncomfortable sharing personal challenges related to the move with their manager/HR

20%

experienced emotional challenges during or after the move that had a significant or very significant effect on their ability to focus on their new role

4x

Employees & families were 4x more likely to consider their relocation a success if family support services were utilized

Thriving Again in the New Location

There is comfort in routines, and it takes time to create new routines following a move. Whether it's the time it takes to get the new house set up, trial and error before you find your favorite pizza joint, or the challenges in finding new friends, recreating a life takes energy and patience.

“After moving, it hit me how much I'd established a life in the previous location and how hard it was to start over.”

Determining where to live and finding resources in the new location, such as places of worship, sports, schools, hobbies, and doctors, were the top two concerns people expressed prior to the move.

Managing the details of the actual move while also working towards building a new life can be overwhelming. Seventy percent (70%) of survey respondents expressed that they would have benefited from additional assistance to help settle in and feel at home again.

70%
of respondents would have benefited from additional assistance to help settle in and feel at home again

Top 5 Concerns Before the Move



Where to Live



Finding Resources



Helping Family Adjust



Spouse/Partner Career



Making New Friends

It's "stressful to manage many different things during a short period of time." For some, it's difficult at the time, but then there is a sense of accomplishment following the rush of activity. For others, the strain can continue to take a toll. In fact, 56% of survey respondents experienced emotional or personal challenges that lasted three months or longer following the move.

[\(View more stats in this infographic.\)](#)

56%

of respondents experienced emotional or personal challenges that lasted three months or longer following the move

"The move was stressful. My company provided relocation support, but I still had to actively manage the process while also focusing on a new job."



Making New Friends & Avoiding Loneliness

U.S. Surgeon General, Vivek Murthy, considers loneliness to be at epidemic levels globally, which has led to significant health concerns. He also states that, "at work, loneliness reduces task performance, limits creativity, and impairs other aspects of executive function such as reasoning and decision making."

Our survey found that making new friends was a top concern for people before they moved, and **feelings of loneliness doubled following the move.** "The hardest part was, and still is, making friends," says one survey participant. Another shared, "I have never had trouble making new friends before, but this time it has been different. It has been very lonely."

The realities of loneliness can be especially troubling for singles.

Single transferees may be easy to move, yet are especially susceptible to loneliness. In our study, 67% of people who relocated solo reported feelings of loneliness as high or medium after the move. Single employees represent many walks of life. Some are young, some are older, some are divorced, and some move with children.

A single person in a new city can find it just as difficult (if not more than those moving with family) to integrate into their new community. Addressing the wellbeing of your single employees helps them acclimate both personally and professionally so they can concentrate on their new role.

Humans are wired for connection, both in our personal and professional lives. A Gallup study found that **when 60% of employees in a company had a work best friend, safety incidents decreased by 36%, profits increased by 12%**, and customer engagement increased by 7%. Implementing mentor programs or social groups is a smart move to help your newly relocated employees adjust faster.

Don't assume everything is fine if mobile employees never mention their struggle with loneliness. Forty-one percent (41%) of respondents shared they are uncomfortable or very uncomfortable opening up about personal challenges with their manager or HR.

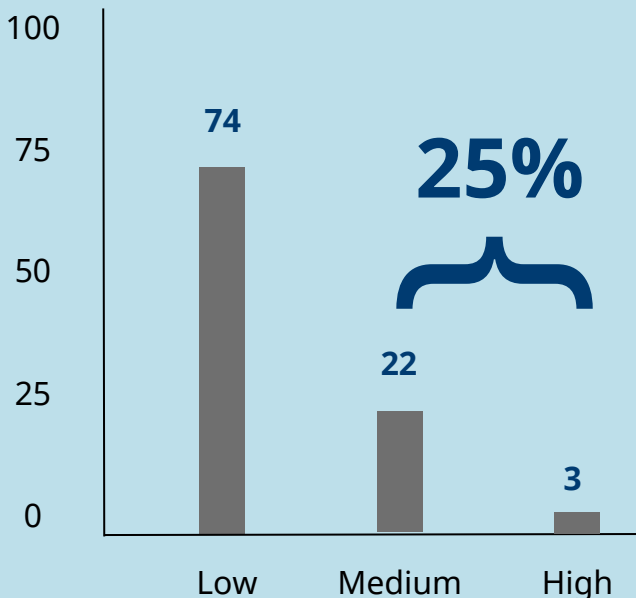
41%

were uncomfortable or very uncomfortable sharing personal challenges related to the move with their manager/HR

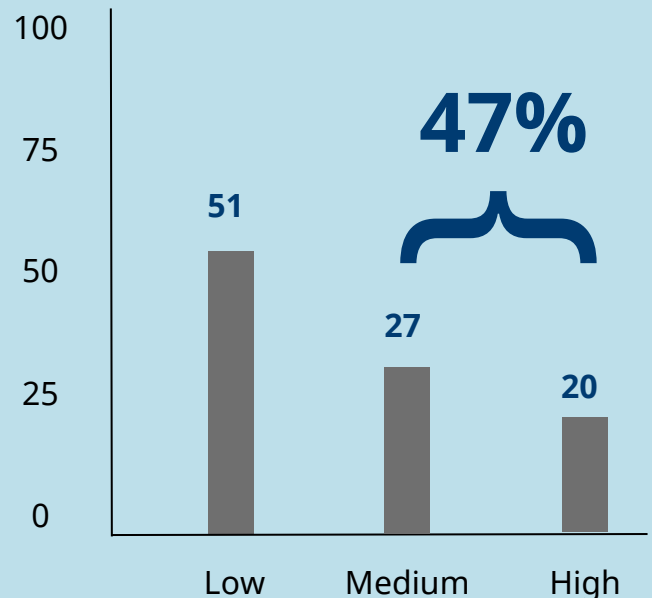
Feelings of Loneliness

25% of respondents ranked their feelings of loneliness as high or medium before the move. After the move, 47% ranked it high or medium.

Before the Move



After the move



Moving with Children

As you would expect, moving with children is a top challenge for families. Parents are ever mindful of their duty to nurture their children's development. A move — and all the changes that affect children — puts more pressure on parents to protect their offspring's fragile emotions while helping them navigate new situations to feel happy and safe.

And let's not forget the parents are also juggling their own emotional needs as well as hundreds of other logistical details at the same time. This includes finding new schools and doctors, getting vaccination records, registering for new piano lessons, and the list goes on...

Moving with just infants and toddlers can be downright isolating. That's because parents

49%

of respondents moved
with children.

might not be able to “plug in” to the readily available social network usually available to parents of school-aged children. Parents of toddlers aren't the only ones troubled, though. As several survey respondents shared, “it was really hard to move pregnant,” and, “I missed my adult children dreadfully.” We are reminded that moving at any stage of parenting can have its own set of difficulties.

Addressing Professional Needs

Another top concern for dual-career families is the spouse/partner career. **Spouse's work life consistently ranks as the #2 or #3 reason for relocation failure and a top reason for relocation refusal in other industry surveys.** Ninety-one percent (91%) of our survey respondents relocated with a spouse/partner — so this concern is vital to address.

Your employee's partner, who is often responsible for managing many details of the move, is carrying a very heavy load when it includes searching for a job in the new location.

The weight of the responsibility is often felt by employees as well. As one transferee states, if her “kids and husband feel well, then it is easier to adjust emotionally as well and perform at work.” Of course, the inverse of this is also true.

And at the end of the day, a successful move means that your employee is performing in their role. Since moving often is a result of a new role, there are many professional changes they may be adjusting to in addition to the new environment in their new location. The stress of these things may not be easily perceived.

“The moving and adjusting process compounded the stress of learning the new job responsibilities.”

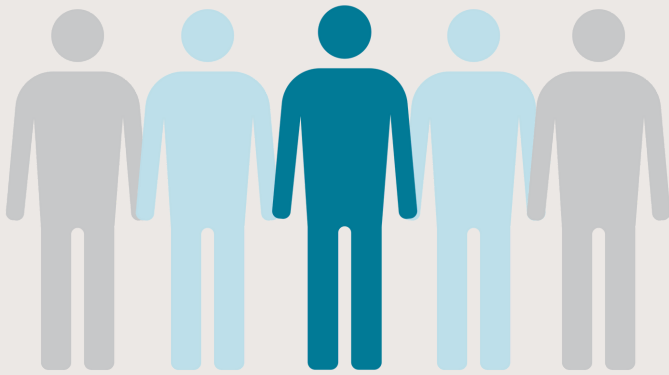
As it relates to productivity in the new role, our survey uncovered that 20% of those who experienced emotional challenges indicated that this had a significant or very significant effect on their ability to focus on their role.

Talent leaders get it. In our latest corporate relocation study, nearly **80% of mobility leaders and CHROs said relocation failure can be correlated with emotional wellbeing**. Stats like this are a key reason why organizations are prioritizing wellbeing during relocations more than ever.

Providing resources that specifically address these issues ensures employees thrive again in their new role and location, and as a result, so does the organization.

Emotional Challenges & Their Effect on Work

20% of those who experienced emotional challenges during or after the move indicated that this had a significant or very significant effect on their ability to focus on their role. 41% reported a slight effect on their work.



3 out of 5 People

said the emotional challenges of moving affected their ability to focus on work. One out of five said the effect was significant or very significant.



Non-Working Partners Need Resources, Too

Very often partners' needs are summed up as "job-search related," but that isn't always true. Some enjoy a fulfilling role and packed schedule in their community. They may want help navigating the local community of philanthropic organizations and social groups. To "rethrive" in the new location, they might want help finding a seat on a volunteer board or sharing their talents in other ways.

Spouses of expats are particularly at risk. While some have no interest in paid employment, others are unable to obtain work visas. But the need to reconstruct a happy, fulfilling life remains the same.

While the employee goes to work every day, and the kids go to school, many spouses have a more difficult time figuring out how to make the most of this experience.

One of our survey respondents captures it all:

"I wasn't sure I was going to adjust to living in another country, so far away from all my family, friends, and everything I knew. Also, I was scared of not finding my own way here and that my life would be completely dependent on my partner (emotionally, financially, and even in terms of activities). I was scared my life would become derivative of my partner's."

Moving Domestically & Internationally

Some people under-estimate the challenges of moving domestically. However, our survey reveals that any move that requires establishing a new household is dramatic. Such a move still involves considerable effort to re-establish routines, relationships, and a new normal.

"There was a lot of anxiety moving halfway across the country where we had no friends and no family."

International moves put the whole transition process on steroids. The wellbeing of expats is at greater risk due to the extent of the change.

Derek Goldberg, Aetna's Managing Director for Southeast Asia & Hong Kong, states,

"There are many challenges that expats face which can result in debilitating mental health issues if ignored. Often, they have to adjust quickly to new and very different cultures, languages, and work responsibilities — all without the usual social support networks."

Repatriation creates its own set of challenges.

"Repatriation after being away for 11 years brought a level of anxiety," shares one respondent. "Everyone has moved on. We have a depth of unique experiences, which are difficult to share."

Embracing the Benefits of Relocation

For all the difficulties we've just discussed, moves offer amazing benefits for the employee and family. These benefits can far outweigh the drawbacks. Your employees will likely benefit from:

- 1. Increased job opportunities:** By relocating to a new area, your employees may gain access to a wider range of possible roles within your organization. Spouses and partners may also be afforded more opportunities as well.
- 2. Higher pay:** Some regions may offer higher salaries or cost of living adjustments that can increase earning potential. Additionally, relocating to a region with a lower cost of living can help stretch paychecks farther.
- 3. Professional growth:** Relocating can give employees the chance to work with new colleagues and clients, learn new skills, and take on new challenges. This can help them develop professionally and expand their skillset.
- 4. Personal growth:** Relocating to a new place can expose individuals to new cultures, lifestyles, and experiences, which broaden perspectives.
- 5. Networking opportunities:** Relocating provides opportunities to connect with new people in the industry, which can lead to valuable professional and personal connections and opportunities.
- 6. Enhanced quality of life:** Depending on the reason for the relocation, employees may find that the new location offers a better quality of life. This can include factors like better weather, access to outdoor activities, and a more vibrant social scene.
- 7. Better education:** Some cities and communities may offer better educational opportunities for children as well as the adults in the household.



The benefits of a move often position someone to thrive. And when employees are thriving in their life, they are more likely to succeed at work as well.

Likewise, families have lots to gain from taking on a relocation. One respondent shared, “The move was personally a great choice and has since improved my life and emotional state.”

“I was nervous at first about moving to a new state, but it ended up being the best move for me and my family.”

Family benefits can include:

- 1. Experiencing new things:** Lives are enriched from experiencing new things and exploring new cultures.
- 2. Starting fresh:** Positive growth can come from building a new life. It provides a clean slate to start fresh and re-evaluate the family’s priorities.
- 3. Building new habits:** Like we stated before, routines are comfortable. Because of this, they can be hard to change. Relocating is a good time to break bad habits and positively disrupt negative patterns.
- 4. Meeting new friends:** Friends enrich our lives in so many ways. Children and adults alike benefit from being able to experience more people and diversity when they relocate.
- 5. Discovering a new you:** Challenging times can bring about a lot of self-reflection. Many use the beginning stages of building a new life to ensure the new life aligns with their goals and true self.
- 6. Improving resilience:** When we navigate changes, we build resilience and become stronger people. It teaches us how to stay anchored when we’re going through seasons of upheaval.



“It was very terrifying to move with a family. I worried about making the right decision. My family loves it here and we made it our home.”

Importance of Being Proactive

Moving creates endings and new beginnings. With every ending, there may be a sense of loss, which means that there is potential for grieving: relationships, a sense of place, what could have been, a certain confidence that simply comes from knowing where things are. These are normal outcomes to relocation; however, how deep and how long will the grief or difficult emotions persist?

For some, moving “was a great experience and one that brought normal emotions.” For others, they may end up saying they fell “into a depression after moving.” And you might not know which of your employees is which. Forty-one percent (41%) of our survey respondents shared that they would be uncomfortable or very uncomfortable sharing personal challenges relating to the move with their manager or HR.

41%

were uncomfortable or very uncomfortable asking for additional assistance for personal or emotional move-related challenges

Similarly, 41% said they would be uncomfortable asking for additional assistance for personal or emotional challenges related to the move. Providing proactive support to the whole family to assist with a positive transition is a small investment in the wellbeing of your employees and families and the success of their new professional assignment.



4x

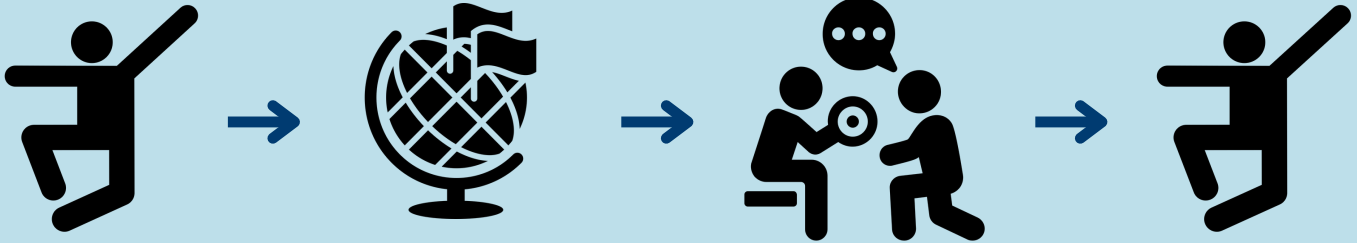
Employees & families were 4x more likely to consider their relocation a success if family support services were utilized

Thriving

Moving

Coaching

ReThriving



How to Design Corporate Relocation Policies to Help Talent ReThrive

What must an employee relocation package include to make the biggest impact to your business? IMPACT Group’s services can increase acceptance rates and get employees settled into their new homes and jobs faster.

In addition to the traditional “spouse assistance” job search offering for accompanying spouses and partners, **Relo ReThrive™ Integration Coaching** provides human-centered, emotional support for employees and their household — something that can often be missing from a relocation. Relocation coaching and a personalized action plan addresses all the needs that are necessary for everyone to thrive again in the new location.

Like we stated above, 41% of employees are not comfortable discussing their personal challenges with their manager or HR. Providing outside, unbiased support from a coach plays a key role in resolving stressors.

Nearly 80% of mobility leaders and CHROs say relocation failure can be correlated with emotional wellbeing, as revealed in our latest survey of corporations. This study also revealed that 49% of organizations are investing more in wellbeing during relocations. **(Get our latest corporate relocation study here.)**

By providing a dedicated relocation coach and tailored location integration services, your employees will feel valued and ready to take on new challenges.



About the Survey Participants

IMPACT Group surveyed 101 individuals between September and November 2022. Survey respondents accepted a corporate-paid relocation and moved domestically in the US or globally across the world.



91 Moved with a Spouse



49 Moved with Children

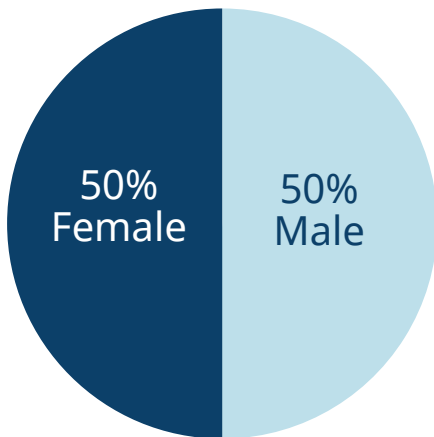


9 Moved Solo

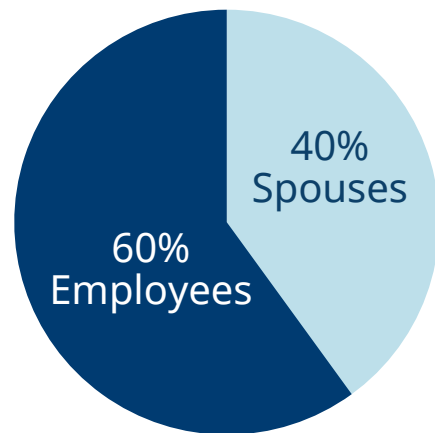


2 Moved with Parents

*FEMALE
VS MALE*



*EMPLOYEE
VS SPOUSE*



98%

Consider their relocation a success



About IMPACT Group

With a global team of coaches, IMPACT Group helps minimize the risk of relocation.

At IMPACT Group, we know that forward-thinking organizations move talent purposefully and strategically. Moves aren't just about filling positions; some moves help propagate corporate culture, grow diversity, open new markets, and lead change. These moves—while strategically important—require considerable time and investment.

For the HR and business leaders responsible for hiring and relocating talent, the stakes are high. How do you show ROI? What happens when the relocated employee fails the assignment...or quits?

Founded in 1988, we've invested 35 years honing our expertise. We've learned how to make corporate relocations easier—and successful—from the point of view of the employer, the employees, their families, and other accompanying talent. Our global team of transition coaches walks alongside your talent, coaching them through change and moving careers forward every step of the way.

IMPACT Group's Relo ReThrive™ program provides coaching—not just to help alleviate the stress of the move, but to ensure the employee and those who move with them are thriving in the new job and in the new city. This coaching program is tailored to the individual needs of your mobile talent and their loved ones. Learn more here:

<https://impactgrouphr.com/business/services/employee-relocation/>.

IMPACT Group partners with a vast network of global relocation management companies (RMCs) to provide spouse/partner job search assistance, family integration assistance, cross-cultural training, and repatriation support. Contact your RMC to discuss the strategic advantages of adding these services to your relocation policies.

Don't partner with an RMC? IMPACT Group works directly with corporations to support relocations across the globe. Contact us now to discuss the business benefits of supporting all aspects of employee relocation.

+1.314.453.9002 | info@impactgrouphr.com | impactgrouphr.com

