

Designing Ideal Mobility Programs in China

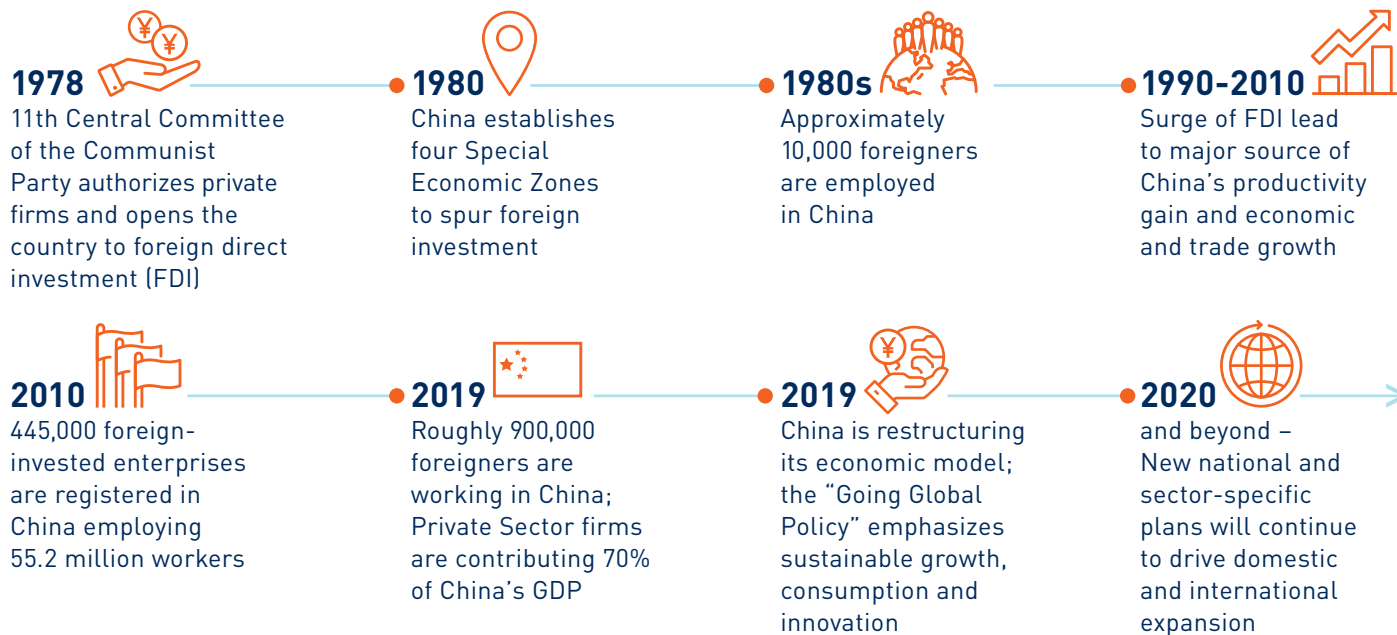
New Opportunities Based on Years of Experience



Mobility programs are a relatively new corporate function in China. As a result, Mobility teams at Chinese companies have a tremendous opportunity to design state-of-the-art programs that aren't tied down by outdated relocation practices or internal biases about Mobility's "place" in an organization.



Historical Perspective



42%

of Chinese companies increased global Mobility activity in 2017-2018*

The Recent Evolution of China's Economy

Until recently, "Talent Mobility" in China usually referred to the inbound assignment of managers and executives from Western companies (primarily European and North American) overseeing and supporting their local or regional entities. Following the opening of its economy in 1978, China embraced an aggressive, "grow at any cost" approach. Western companies seized the opportunity to tap into the country's substantial economic and trade growth.

China is undergoing a major economic restructuring because its former model is widely viewed as unsustainable, with industrial pollution and overcapacity in certain industries. New economic plans such as the "Going Global Policy," "Made in China 2025," the "Belt-Road-Initiative" and related sector-specific initiatives are in place to support industries in high-tech, innovation, services and consumption. These models are creating new overseas business opportunities and markets for Chinese firms.



The Rise of Mobility

Talent relocation has been managed ad hoc by business units for many companies in China, but others are discovering that a well-designed, strategic Mobility function can provide significant efficiencies and support successful international expansion while ensuring regulatory compliance.



Chinese enterprises are rapidly expanding into new markets and some have already emerged as major international competitors. Many more Chinese companies are making initial forays to new locations domestically and internationally.



A Clean Slate for Chinese Mobility Programs

The late adoption of corporate Mobility programs will prove to be an advantage to Chinese companies. Mobility programs in the West have matured and evolved over the past three decades. Chinese Mobility program leaders can avoid this learning curve and look at best practices to streamline their processes.

For example, only recently, Mobility offices in the West have emerged from the shadows of Human Resource/ Talent shared service departments to provide corporate strategic value. Chinese Mobility programs can incorporate these strategic elements into their programs right from the start.



Based on a 2019 insideMOBILITY survey, Core-flex and International Relocations were identified as two of the top Policy focuses over the next two years in APAC.



Mobility programs have slowly moved away from one-size-fits-all relocation benefit packages. They now have flexible systems that account for employee preferences. Chinese companies can bypass this reform stage and design modern relocation policies with the personal options and flexibility employees have come to expect.

42%

of Mobility departments do not have a defined mission statement.*



Mobility's Strategic Role

Mobility, far from being simply an administrative function, can support company initiatives related to growth and profitability by aligning the Mobility strategy with business and talent strategies.



Talent acquisition

Millennials are mobile. Many want to relocate for a job and expect they'll eventually have to relocate to advance their careers. Organizations compete for these workers, and companies that create exceptional Mobility programs will have an edge.



Talent retention

Working abroad is challenging. Mobility programs ease that burden to ensure employee experiences are positive. Additionally, Mobility highlights the pathways to advancement for top employees to keep them engaged.



Company branding

International companies are very visible. A Mobility program extends the company's brand in a way that draws top talent to drive growth.



Compliance

The world is locally complex. It's all too easy for international companies to run afoul of immigration, tax, privacy and other requirements unless Mobility experts coordinate these matters.



Productivity

Working overseas can be distracting. A strong Mobility program will manage the details behind the scenes so employees placed in other countries are productive from the start in their new responsibilities.



The Ideal Mobility Program Design

How can Mobility program leaders in China take advantage of their opportunity to design an ideal program right from the start?



Start with a Strategy

Mobility's day-to-day function is to manage a relocation program that provides exceptional employee experiences. Mobility also has a strategic function of providing value to key internal stakeholders. Craft a strategic mission statement based on these fundamental questions:

- > How can Mobility help others in the organization achieve their goals?
- > How can Mobility measure its own success with each of these stakeholders?



Connect Internally

Cultivate relationships with key stakeholders identified above. Solicit their feedback regarding Mobility's program and mission. Provide them program and progress updates. Look for opportunities to create mutual goals, win-win situations and communication processes.

Entering a New World of Mobility

This is an exciting time for Chinese companies as more and more firms expand internationally. However, just like their Western counterparts, Chinese Mobility teams will need to balance business objectives, assignee expectations and market opportunities. Their Mobility policies will have to be scalable to accommodate a growing company and nimble to respond to changes in international markets. Their policies should embrace best practices while staying true to their culture.



Build Ideal Metrics

Measuring cost and volume data is essential for a Mobility program – don't stop there. Create systems that capture performance, retention and engagement measures for assigned employees. Get in the habit of analyzing the program's effectiveness based on these metrics.



Develop a Technology Plan

Implement technology systems that offer reliable, user-friendly experiences for employees and stakeholders. Make sure the systems can support the metrics requirements identified.



Build your Brand

Project Mobility's strategic brand in all internal interactions. Educate colleagues when they choose to define Mobility solely in terms of its transactional functions.



Graebel's Mobility Strategy experts review, design and update Mobility programs for global companies. [Contact us](#) to discuss a Mobility design that will be ideal for your organization.