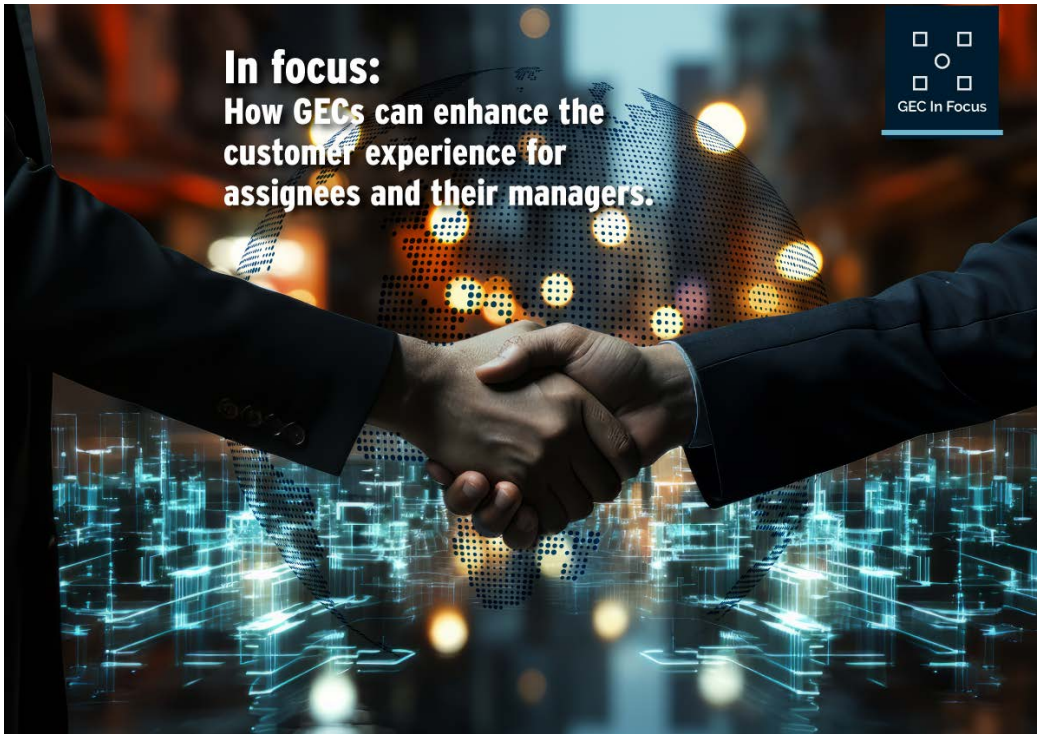
In focus: How GECs can enhance the customer experience for assignees and their managers



The traditional approach to Global Mobility usually includes the involvement of multiple local HR teams managing employees on international assignments, often leading to fragmented processes and varying levels of support. To address these challenges, many organizations are turning to Global Employment Companies (GECs) as a solution. But do GECs truly offer a better service to international assignees and their managers? Let's explore the benefits of GECs and how they can enhance the international assignment experience.

Reducing Fragmentation and Enhancing Clarity

A key advantage of the GEC model is its centralized structure, which significantly reduces the fragmentation of processes that can occur when multiple local entities are involved during the assignment lifecycle. The centralization inherent to GECs not only streamlines operations but also reduces ambiguity regarding roles and responsibilities. With a single point of accountability, international assignees and their managers know exactly who to turn to for support, which typically reduces the timelines and the number of touchpoints required to resolve issues or answer questions.

This streamlined approach is particularly beneficial in managing complex cases where multiple departments or stakeholders are involved. In traditional models, case management can become convoluted, with unclear lines of responsibility and prolonged resolution times. However, with a GEC, there is usually a clearer chain of command and accountability, leading to quicker and more efficient handling of cases. The reduced need for assignees and managers to navigate through various teams and departments also contributes to a smoother and more satisfying experience.

Better Visibility and Proactive Management

Another significant benefit of the GEC model is the enhanced visibility it provides over every aspect of an international assignment. When processes and data are centralized, mobility teams have a holistic view of all ongoing assignments, enabling them to manage these assignments more proactively. This proactive management can take many forms, from anticipating and addressing potential issues before they arise to ensuring compliance with local labor laws and tax regulations in various countries.

Continuous Improvement Through Data Analysis

The centralized nature of the GEC model not only improves operational efficiency and visibility but also facilitates continuous improvement through better data analysis. With all assignment-related data consolidated in one place, organizations can perform comprehensive analyses to identify trends, track key performance indicators, and understand areas needing improvement. For example, by analyzing data on assignment costs, completion rates, and employee satisfaction, companies can identify patterns and areas where the process might be optimized or where additional support might be needed. Such insights are invaluable for refining policies and procedures, ensuring they remain aligned with both business objectives and employee needs.

A holistic view of mobility programs also enables organizations to take a strategic approach to talent management. By understanding which assignments are most successful and which factors contribute to their success, companies can tailor future programs to replicate their internal best practices. Additionally, this data-driven approach allows for more accurate forecasting and budgeting, making the GEC model not only more efficient but also more cost-effective.

Empirical Evidence Supporting the GEC Model

The theoretical benefits of GECs mentioned above are also supported by empirical evidence. A survey conducted by ITX in 2023 found that 89% of organizations using a GEC model reported that it had helped them achieve or partially achieve a better employee experience. This high level of satisfaction indicates that the GEC model is effective in addressing some of the core challenges associated with managing international assignments.

The survey results suggest that organizations using GECs experience fewer administrative challenges and a more streamlined process for both employees and managers. The ability to offer consistent, high-quality support across the world appears to be a key factor in this improved experience. Furthermore, the reduction in bureaucracy, less duplication of efforts, and the streamlined communication channels that GECs provide, contribute significantly to the enhanced satisfaction reported by these organizations.

A word of caution

While the GEC model offers many advantages, it is important to recognize that the quality of service delivered to international assignees and their managers ultimately depends on several factors related to the design, implementation, and operation of the GEC itself. If any of these factors fail, the service delivered by the GEC will almost certainly be impacted.

The design of the GEC must be carefully crafted to align with the needs and expectations of the organization it supports. This includes the development of clear processes, policies, an appropriate operating model, and the right staffing and technology systems. A well-designed GEC is essential for ensuring that the centralized model functions effectively and meets the unique challenges of international mobility.

However, even the best-designed GEC will fail to deliver on its promises without accurate implementation. This means rolling out the GEC model in a way that aligns with its design principles, ensuring that all stakeholders are adequately trained, and that the necessary infrastructure is in place.

Expert execution during the GEC's daily operations is equally crucial. The day-to-day management of international assignments requires skilled personnel who understand the complexities of global mobility and can navigate them effectively. Receiving expert guidance and support can significantly reduce risks associated with international assignments and enhance the overall experience for both assignees and managers.

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In summary, organizations with Global Employment Companies (GECs) are generally able to deliver a better service to their international assignees and managers than those relying on more traditional and decentralized models. The centralization inherent to the GEC model reduces fragmentation and ambiguity, leading to clearer accountability and fewer touchpoints for resolving issues. Moreover, the enhanced visibility and data-driven insights provided by GECs enable more proactive management of assignments and continuous improvement of mobility programs.

The empirical evidence from the ITX survey underscores these advantages, demonstrating a strong correlation between the use of GECs and improved employee experience. However, the effectiveness of a GEC ultimately depends on its design, implementation, and day-to-day operations. By carefully considering these factors and seeking expert guidance, organizations can maximize the benefits of a GEC, ensuring a more efficient, effective, and satisfying experience for both international assignees and their managers.

If you wish to discuss whether a GEC could potentially work in your organization, please feel free to **reach out to an ITX consultant** for a free consultation. You can also take the self-assessment using the QR Code below and receive a customized report in about 60 seconds.