

reimagining employee retention

group moves in the era of employee experience

Group moves are not like an individual employee relocation. They are significant events that require a unique approach whereas an individual move, often aligns with broader company goals or personal growth opportunities. Group moves are driven by major corporate decisions that often stem from acquisition, a change in company footprint, or a reduction in workforce.

The reasons behind such moves are diverse and can include factors such as:

- Moving a facility to a lower-cost location
- Taking advantage of state/government tax credits being offered where labor is plentiful
- Moving to a market that will attract diverse talent aligned with companies' diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) goals
- Integrating talent due to a merger or acquisition
- Competitively positioning a head office or plant
- Relocating to a location already saturated with the talent and skillset required for a company's specific industry

Challenges to overcome. As a result of economic impacts and the need to increase cost effectiveness, a significant number of organizations are now facing one or more of these factors, in addition to navigating a highly competitive workforce landscape across several industries.

When faced with the prospect of a group move, employees and their families are often at a crossroads: should they stay the course with their current position in a new locale, or seek out fresh opportunities nearby? The decision can be daunting, given the upheaval of an unexpected relocation.

Companies, on the other hand, are keenly aware of the steep costs associated with recruiting, hiring, and training new talent. Hence, they strive to keep their valued team members on board, even if it means moving them to a new location. The challenge lies in crafting compelling strategies that inspire these essential employees to embark on the journey with their organization. Today, it's all about finding intuitive and customizable solutions to foster loyalty and retain top-notch talent.



group moves should be approached differently from an individual employee relocation

discretion and proper planning are paramount to success

Companies must retain key talent to achieve optimal success—both in terms of their overall business strategies and specific group move objectives. In our experience, when employees begin to sense a pending disruption to their jobs and their lives, rumors begin to circulate, productivity is lost, and companies risk the sudden departure of essential talent.

In general, organizations will assess their talent pre-announcement and identify individuals who are deemed critical to the success of the transition. With the advent of remote work and its popularity, organizations need to take a more thoughtful, measured approach when evaluating their workforce by considering those critical on-site employees versus others who can continue by working remotely.

Therefore, once the announcement is communicated, HR leaders and businesses must be prepared to have individual conversations with their employees and be able to exhibit the forethought that went into the move decision by recognizing the changing needs of the employee population.

Include the relo team early in the process! When it comes to the sensitive and confidential nature of planning a group move, it's no wonder relocation managers are often left in the dark. The big decisions are still being hashed out at the highest levels. That is why you will usually find corporate leadership bringing in "site-selection professionals" to crunch the numbers on potential new locations and snag the best tax breaks and incentives.

We recommend also looping in relocation experts early in the game. These pros know all the ins and outs of managing a smooth group move and can steer you clear of any pitfalls. Just remember: due to the sensitive nature of these moves, make sure every outside expert signs a rock-solid non-disclosure agreement.

Goals and objectives must be clearly understood by all stakeholders to properly construct a program plan:

- Clearly stating the rationale for the move
- Considering the corporate culture and how will it inform employees' attitudes
- Determining the projected "go live" date in the new location
- Identifying who and how many employees will be impacted
- Consider the company's goals for attrition and retention post-move

With this data in hand, the group move expert will formulate a project plan, beginning with a go live/destination start date and working backwards, filling in each key milestone in the timeline.



35+

in the last five years,
cartus consulting solutions
provided customized
support for more than
35 group moves

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timing and communication impact success factors

A formal communication strategy is paramount to the success of the group move. It begins with the format and delivery method and is followed by key messages the company must relay to gain:

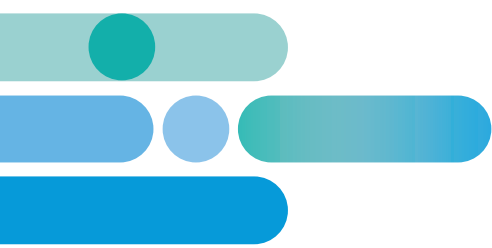
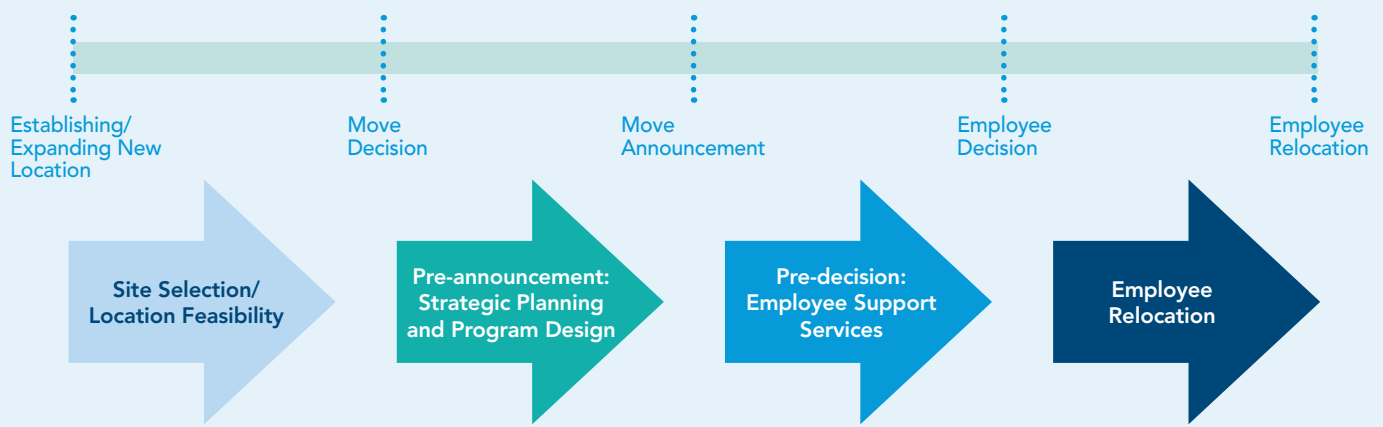
- Understanding
- Acceptance
- Participation from its employees

In addition to the move announcement, the company should map out the sequence of events, provide an outlet for Q&A, and be prepared to begin activities immediately.

This communication format and the activities to follow will provide employees and families with a framework and a comfort level that the company is putting its employees first.

In partnership with its group move relocation partner, the company will provide employees with a clear, concise, and ongoing communication roadmap, which will commence with the move announcement and may continue for up to six months following the final move. This approach can lessen anxiety, increase trust in the organization, and help to maintain an acceptable level of productivity during the entire group move. It can also decrease—perhaps even eliminate—the loss of critical employees.

group move consulting: strategic planning for success



customized employee support: key to a successful transition

Studies reveal that it is often more cost-effective to keep and move key talent rather than go through the lengthy process of recruiting, hiring, and training new employees in a new location. While the average cost to replace an employee is estimated at just \$4,700, in reality, many companies find themselves spending three to four times an individual's salary when factoring in all other related expenses (e.g., recruitment and training costs, significant impact on productivity during the transition period). (Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), April 2022)

Therefore, once you have identified key employees who will be impacted, it is crucial to dive into their current situations to understand what specific benefits and assistance they require to make the move smooth and welcoming. By doing so, you ensure that valuable talent feels supported and motivated to embrace the relocation.

Unlike an individual relocation, in a group move, the company must proactively learn about the personal lives of employees and their families so that they can offer the appropriate support to help them overcome roadblocks to moving. These may include families:


- Living in one location all of their lives
- Providing care to an elderly relative
- In a single parent household
- With a spouse/partner that need new employment
- With children who need to move schools/have special educational needs

Destination Preparation

Before employee's jump online aimlessly researching, it is important for companies to drive the messaging around the new location to ensure their employees are well-informed with accurate, high-quality intelligence. Cartus has developed and implemented a number of communication solutions that can be tailored to the unique needs of each company and its employee population—e.g., pre-move surveys, policy and new location workshops, destination fairs, virtual resource websites, cultural support, personalized area orientations and more.

Relocation Program Strategy

While flexibility has been at the forefront of conversations for years, more companies are doing away with traditional policies and adopting a more flexible approach across their entire mobile population. A core/flex approach is one example whereby companies can offer a set of core benefits accompanied by flexible options, so each employee can choose benefits that are specific to their own unique family needs. This has been proven to go a long way toward employee satisfaction and retention. This approach helps each employee feel that their organization is truly interested in their personal needs and successful transition to a new location. [Find out more.](#)



intuitive and customizable tactics are needed to retain optimal talent

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getting started: designing a winning group move

One powerful way to offer support and knowledge is by leveraging technology through the development of custom tools, which help both employees and their families understand what it is like to live and work at the destination location. A web-based virtual resource center typically includes topics such as housing, education, school information, a commute map, details about the new work site, office, amenities, plus company-sponsored Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) or events and various checklists to help prepare for the move.

In addition, in today's virtual world, preparing employees with virtual consultations, home purchase tours, and/or closings will remove some of the concerns they may have.

A full spectrum of innovative group move programs that are offered both in-person and through virtual group webinars may include:

- ✓ Program and policy group workshops
- ✓ Area familiarization tours
- ✓ Spouse/partner career assistance
- ✓ Children's educational assistance
- ✓ Destination housing & mortgage programs
- ✓ Cultural coaching, workshops
- ✓ Language coaching, training
- ✓ Outplacement support for impacted employees

Please contact Cartus Consulting Solutions at
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for customized recommendations specific to your company's needs.