

Mobile workforce strategy

When looking into your organization's mobile workforce strategy, it's important to analyze how business and employee needs change. How will your mobile population be affected as you consider remote work as a component of your workforce strategy beyond COVID-19 recovery? How can your global mobility team be a significant contributor or lead this strategic initiative?

In creating an agile recovery plan, your organization can transform its mobile workforce strategy.

Step 1: Define immediate workforce strategy

Start by looking at your active population. What actions need to be taken for these stranded or remote working employees? What are your mission-critical roles, and which employees need to be repatriated? Once that's determined, mobility is in exceptional position to partner with HR leaders to take a deep look at your pipeline before the pandemic and determine which moves on the pipeline should resume immediately, which need to be put on hold, and which might be canceled. To help make these decisions, it's important to bring data about things like which countries are safe to travel to, which are still under travel restrictions, and possible workarounds.



Step 2: Evaluate alternative ways to fill talent needs

For those moves that are still not feasible to resume but are critical for the business, you can also address the problem by finding alternative solutions to fill talent needs. Maybe it's about working with talent acquisition to find local talent to fill such roles in interim. Maybe it's about changing the types of moves, such as using more frequent business travels to replace longer-term assignments. Maybe it's about having the right technology to keep up with the changing ways we work and enable global assignments to start remotely. Maybe it's about having the right technology to keep up with the changing ways we work and enable mobile assignments to start remotely.



Step 3: Think about long-term mobile workforce strategy

It's important to understand your company's long-term workforce strategy and assess impact on mobile workforce. If you can anticipate future changes, you can work with the business to address those changes and meet those needs in an agile way. If remote work is a key component of the future workforce strategy, mobility can leverage its expertise and cross-functional network to help the organization operationalize remote strategy and navigate compliance.



Spanning the spectrum

Mild disruption

There is heightened demand for your organization to provide alternative work arrangements, such as remote work, and increased employee well-being and flexibility expectations. Actions to take include:

- Developing remote work policy, process, and governance structure
- Advising HR and business leaders on operational and compliance considerations
- Developing employee communications and change management plan

Severe disruption

Your organization will continue to need global talent in key locations for continuity, but traditional packages may no longer be fit for purpose or supported by the balance sheet. Actions to take include:

- Understanding trends in global talent needs and the types of roles enabled through global talent deployment
- Forecasting global mobility pipelines in the short and long term
- Developing flexible but cost-effective guidelines to support the deployment of mission-critical roles

Strategic spending

COVID-19 has put a spotlight on cost. Organizations need to both make sure the funds they spend are spent strategically and continually find ways to limit or cut costs to support recovery. No matter the impact these needs have, organizations will begin to reevaluate spending at different levels and on different programs. You might want to consider what constitutes a strategic dollar spent and how mobility can play into that goal with the tools at your disposal.

Doing so will help determine if your organization's mobility spend is aligned to its changing priorities.

Step 1: Understand its financial impact and position

When the C-suite is demanding that costs be reduced, they may first look to mobility, as in many cases the perception is that these programs are expensive and may be a quick path toward significant savings. Before you analyze the potential savings that mobility can deliver, you should understand the total costs at hand and what's driving them. Is cash flow a priority? How do you communicate the ROI of your program? Has its value significantly changed? How are you using technology to enable visibility into cost? How do you create baseline costing data?



Step 2: Determine future cost strategy

Once you understand the overall financial impact, you're able to model out the various cost-cutting scenarios that accommodate the ever-changing business landscape. You can determine how your future mobility budget may be affected and governed going forward and identify what costs will be prioritized and what needs to be reduced or cut completely. The road to recovery will have a cost that must be tracked and made transparent to stakeholders.



Step 3: Identify the most strategic use of funds

What costs are most strategic for mobility and the business? Identify areas where potential cost increases are warranted, analyze active mobile population to identify opportunities to save, and respond to government stimulus programs like US International Revenue Code Section 139, and other alternative vehicles like equity compensation restructuring. Enhance rewards programs to better align with current cost containment structure, and rethink compensation.



Spanning the spectrum

Mild disruption

Your organization increased revenue in some areas, while others experienced a loss. Cost-saving measures are anticipated to reach all levels of the company in the short term. Actions to take include:

- Reviewing current-state process to identify potential opportunities to streamline operations and increase efficiency
- Looking for repetitive, rule-based workflow that can be easily automated
- Identifying potential opportunities to outsource certain components of work

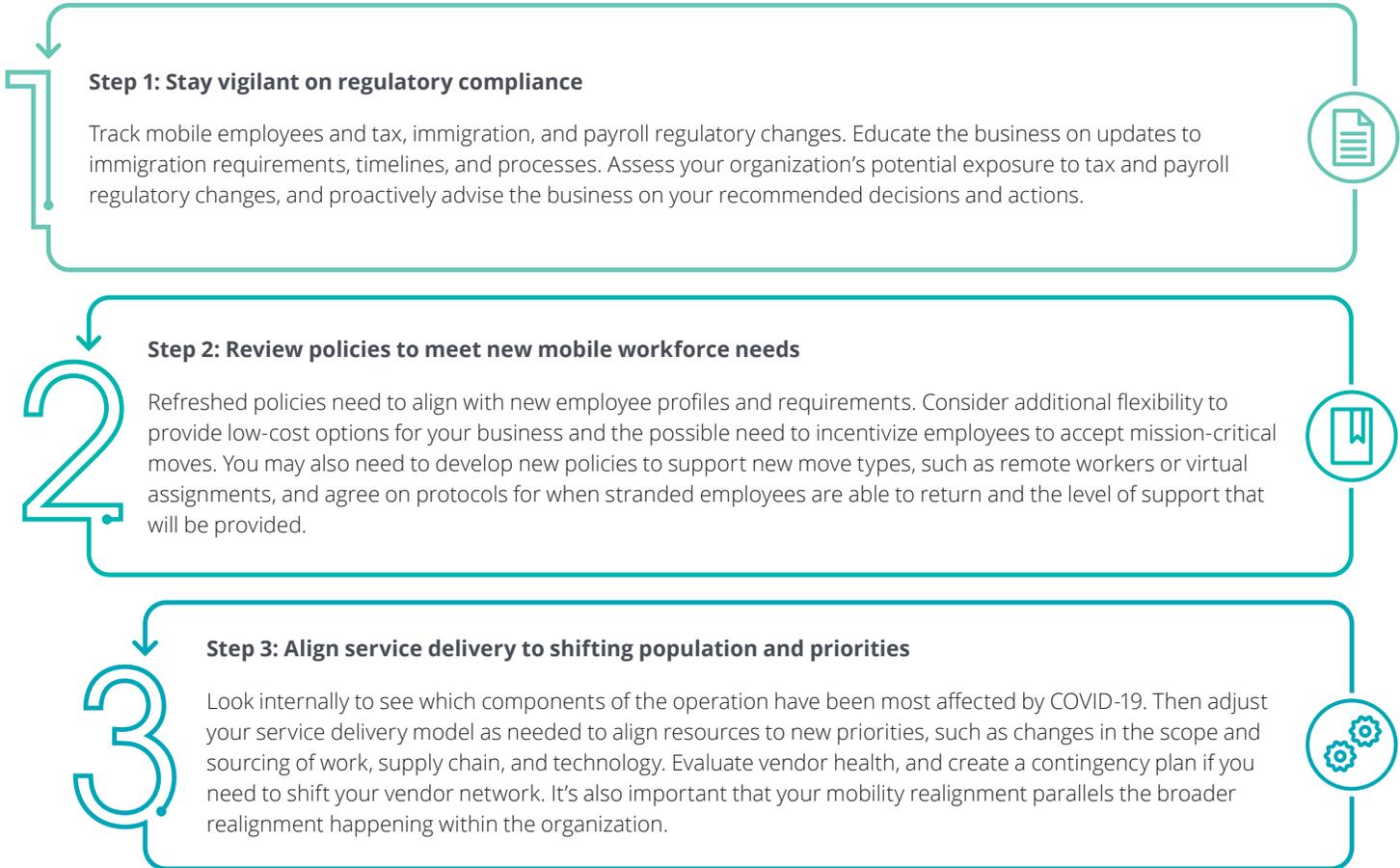
Severe disruption

Your organization faces significant cost-cutting measures. Whether directly related to COVID-19, commodity pricing, or overall market downturn, it needs cash and needs it now. Actions to take include:

- Illuminating total program cost and driving factors
- Highlighting high-cost outliers and low-cost anomalies
- Modeling various cost-cutting scenarios with data and technology
- Aligning cost-cutting plans with broader talent-driven goals
- Putting in place an actionable plan with obtainable goals and benchmarking

Operations realignment

As your organization gets acclimated to modified work models and business demands, how can leaders rethink their global mobility operations so that new expectations are met? Mobility programs may face new challenges and disruptions, which could require critical analysis and action. Organizations need to reevaluate their program and operations to see how they can align to the go-forward business and workforce strategy. Do you need to have a different geographical focus? Will you be supporting different employee profiles? Will the global mobility activity decrease significantly or be replaced by remote workers? It's important to think through those lenses and adapt your functional team and operations to the future landscape.



Spanning the spectrum

Mild disruption

Your organization is prioritizing mission-critical moves while closely evaluating other moves through a lens of business criticality and cost. Actions to take include:

- Review and adjust current-state process to ensure speedy delivery of services for mission-critical moves
- Help business understand different mobility packages and cost implications
- Develop more cost-effective mobility packages, if needed
- Advise on alternative mobility solutions to meet talent needs

Severe disruption

Your organization needs an overhaul to deliver on evolving demands. In-house mobility teams are costly and difficult to scale up and down with volatile global deployment. Actions to take include:

- Partner with staffing and development to forecast ongoing and future mobility needs and anticipated fluctuation
- Survey stakeholders to determine future support needs
- Rightsize mobility organization to support SME and business facing roles
- Outsource remaining administration and execution roles

Rethinking your COVID-19 recovery

The most impactful recoveries may not just successfully return organizations to business as usual. They may push the envelope and be innovative in areas like policy, funding, or technology that, before COVID-19, would have been off the table.

As they navigate the challenges of mobile workforce strategy, strategic spending, and operations realignment, resilient leaders should create an agile, iterative, and innovative framework for action that strikes the right balance between business and people needs:

Focus on short-term sprints instead of long-term changes

Be an adviser and plan your mobility recovery strategy around wider business needs

Innovate, challenge the status quo, and push the boundaries on traditional way of doing things

It's time to shift your mindset and embrace the role of strategic business partner. Are you ready to start your recovery?

Get started

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