

The Global Mobility Wellbeing Checklist

9 psychological risk points that quietly derail international assignments — and what to put in place for each.

Logistics get solved. The human months after landing rarely do. A single failed or curtailed assignment can cost **\$250K–\$1M** — and the psychological reality usually lands in **months 3–9**, long after the boxes are unpacked. Partner and family adjustment is the leading predictor of whether an assignment succeeds. Use this to check the human side before it becomes a crisis.

PRE-DEPARTURE & FIRST 90 DAYS

01 The partner has no role or identity anchor in the new location.

Put in place — Before departure, map the accompanying partner's own goals — work, study, community — and name one concrete anchor for month one, not just the employee's role.

02 Expectations are set by the relocation brochure, not the reality of months 3–9.

Put in place — Brief the family honestly on the adjustment curve: the hardest stretch usually comes after the excitement fades, and that dip is normal — not a sign of failure.

03 Everyone owns the logistics; no one owns the human side.

Put in place — Assign a named point of contact for wellbeing, separate from the logistics lead, that the whole family knows how to reach.

MONTHS 3–9 — THE DIP

04 The arrival high fades and no one checks in — on paper it looks fine.

Put in place — Put structured check-ins on the calendar at ~90 days and ~6 months. Proactive and scheduled, not ‘reach out if you need anything.’

05 The accompanying partner’s loneliness and lost professional identity go unspoken.

Put in place — Offer the partner their own support track — and permission to use it: connection, purpose, and a route back to work or study.

06 School and family transition stress feeds back into the employee’s performance.

Put in place — Ask about the family, not just the employee. A struggling child or partner is one of the strongest predictors of an early return.

07 The employee normalizes the struggle and never raises it.

Put in place — Normalize help-seeking in writing before it’s needed — make clear that adjustment support is expected and used, not a sign the assignment is failing.

SUSTAINING THE ASSIGNMENT

08 No structured reflection point — problems only surface at the exit interview, too late.

Put in place — Build one lightweight reflection point into the assignment cycle so issues surface while there’s still time to act.

09 Repatriation isn’t planned for from the start.

Put in place — Name the return path early. Re-entry is often harder than the move out; planning it from day one protects both the person and the investment.

Want the system behind this checklist?

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