



Inclusive Mobility: How Mobilizing a Diverse Workforce Can Drive Business Performance

As the global business and talent landscape undergoes transformation, unleashing human potential in new ways is critical for driving strong business results. How can the alignment of diversity & inclusion (D&I) and global mobility (GM) benefit your organization?

Global changes and challenges require new approaches

Complexity, competition, and change in the global business and talent landscape are creating new challenges for businesses and their leaders. These new challenges, in turn, require new approaches to business and talent (Figure 1).¹

Achieving strong performance in this environment requires unleashing the full potential of people around the world. Now more than ever, organizations need diverse global talent who can flex and move to address these challenges at home and abroad.

We propose that aligning and increasing collaboration between diversity & inclusion (D&I) and global mobility (GM), which are typically separate areas of focus within organizations, offers an opportunity to mobilize diverse talent to help drive individual and organizational performance on a global scale (Figure 2).

We first consider the business case for D&I more broadly and inclusive mobility specifically. We then outline opportunities for organizations to bring D&I and GM together. Finally, we highlight some potential benefits of inclusive mobility and identify steps for getting started.

Figure 1: Global challenges require new approaches to business and talent

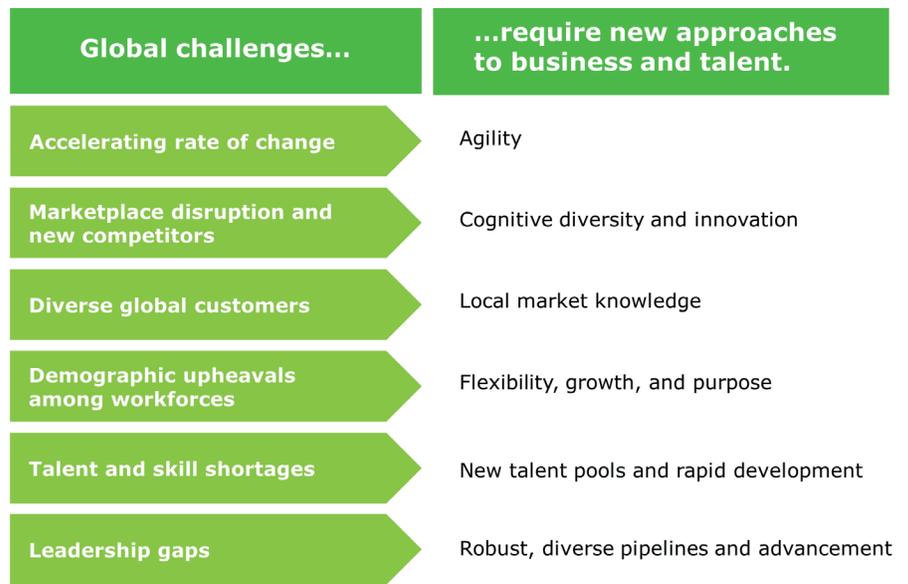


Figure 2: Together, D&I and GM can help drive performance on a global scale



Diverse and inclusive organizations outperform competition

Diversity & inclusion today is no longer about just check-the-box compliance or “doing good.” Mounting evidence confirms that organizations with diverse workforces and inclusive workplaces outperform the competition:

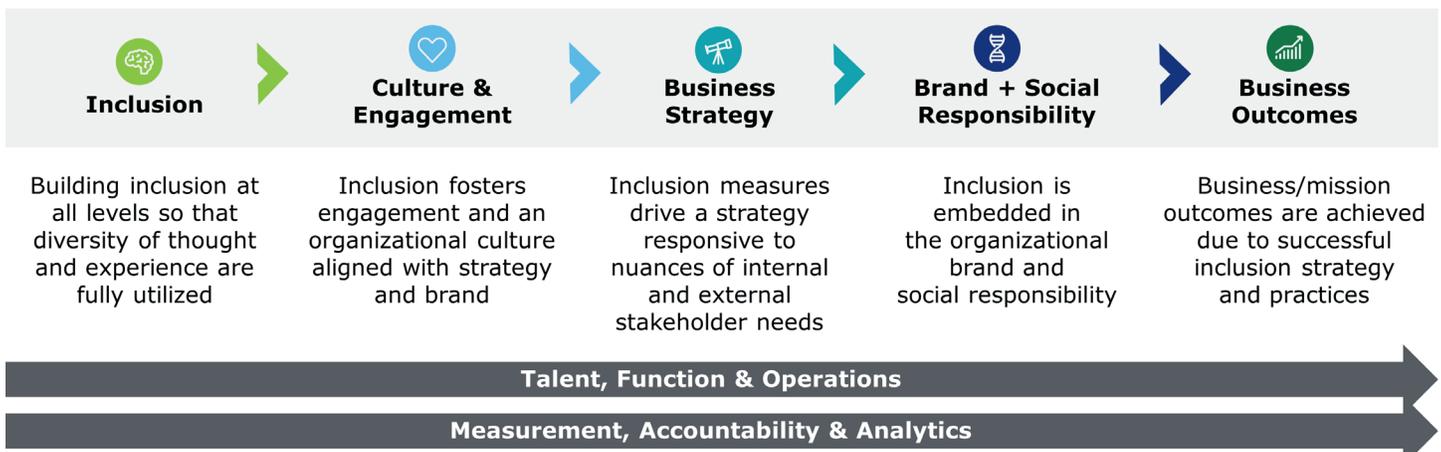
- DiversityInc’s Top 50 stock index outperforms DJIA, Nasdaq, and S&P 500 for one-, three-, and five-year returns.²
- Recruiting, retaining, and advancing diverse top talent is critical to remaining competitive. Companies with inclusive cultures have:³
 - 22 percent lower turnover rates
 - 22 percent greater productivity
 - 27 percent higher profitability
 - 39 percent higher customer satisfaction
- A Deloitte Australia study found that when employees think their organization is committed to and supportive of diversity and they feel included, they are 83 percent more likely to report better business performance in terms of ability to innovate.⁴
- Another study found that Millennials, who are rapidly becoming a majority sector of the workforce, are 83 percent more engaged when working in an inclusive culture.⁵

Deloitte's strategic inclusion value chain brings these findings to life within organizations (Figure 3). In today's talent landscape, inclusive practices drive an engaged, collaborative, and innovative culture, which allows an organization to achieve business outcomes. An inclusive culture also contributes to building the organization's external brand with customers and future employees, therefore driving achievement of the organization's mission and strategic priorities. When employee experience does not align with an organization's stated values, that dissonance can erode the culture, leading to decreased performance.

Diversity & inclusion today is no longer about just “checking the box” or “doing good.” It's about driving strong business performance and results.

Figure 3: Deloitte's Inclusion Value Chain

Inclusion is not a state of being; it is composed of key actions and functions that produce tangible results.



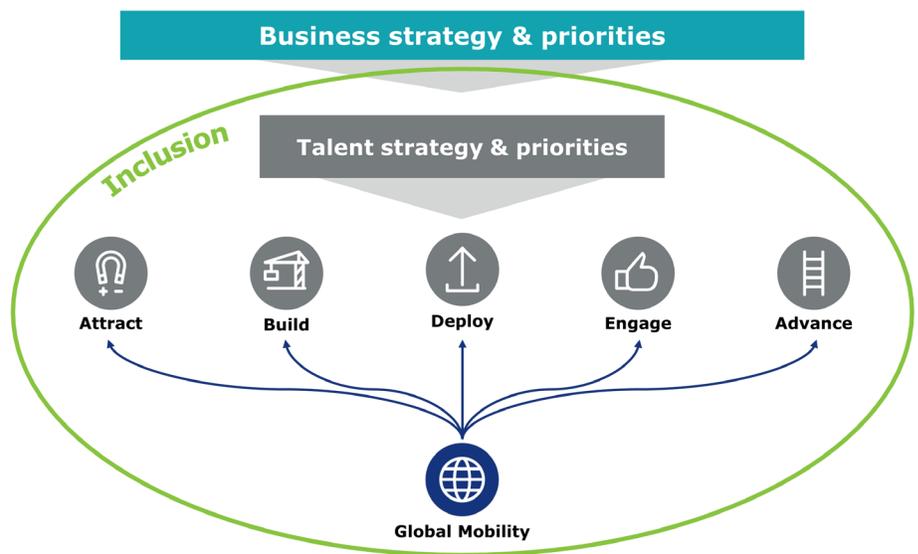
A clear business case for “inclusive mobility”

Global mobility today is evolving from an operational function and transactional “people mover” to a strategic business and talent partner in many organizations.

Leaders increasingly see the role global mobility can play in enabling business imperatives such as new market entry, innovation, access to new customer segments, merger and acquisition activity, and other facets of growth.⁶ Global mobility is also increasingly integrated with talent, serving as a key lever in other imperatives, including the acquisition, development, deployment, retention, and advancement of people.⁷

Given the potential for D&I and GM to support broader strategic priorities and address new challenges of the changing business landscape, these two areas seem like natural partners for unleashing an organization’s people potential globally. Indeed, aligning global mobility with diversity & inclusion can increase the ROI of each and expand the strategic impact of both efforts by bringing an organization’s inclusive culture and talent priorities to life (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Global mobility can help bring an organization’s inclusive culture and talent priorities to life



However, diversity & inclusion and global mobility are generally disconnected within organizations. In a recent Deloitte survey of global mobility leaders and professionals, we found:⁸

- About **one in five** reported having a **strong understanding of and alignment with** their enterprise **D&I strategy and priorities**.
- Only **one in ten** reported **participating in D&I discussions and planning**.
- While many companies track D&I data broadly for the organization, **less than 15 percent** said they **track and report D&I data for global mobility**.

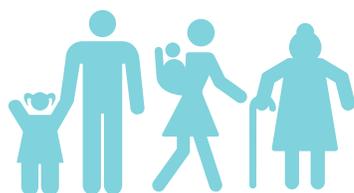
These findings suggest that global mobility practices may be less inclusive than those of the organization as a whole.

Diversity & inclusion and global mobility are natural partners for unleashing people’s potential globally, yet they are often disconnected.

The costs of limited participation in global mobility

While more research is needed on diverse participation in global mobility, the limited data available tell a story of obstacles to participation in international opportunities by employees with “non-traditional” profiles:

- **One in five** international assignees are **women**, with only modest gains over the past decade.⁹
- **Fifty-three percent of LGBT** employees are not out at work, and **23 percent fear they will not be offered opportunities** like global mobility if they do come out.¹⁰
 - Global mobility is the most personally intrusive interaction employees have with their employers, and information needed for processing allowances and visas require employees to come out if they want a spouse or partner to accompany them.
 - Moreover, **61 percent of employers are unaware of LGBT social and legal conditions in countries of operation**, including knowing where someone can be imprisoned or killed for being gay, potentially putting employees and organizations at risk.¹¹
- **“Family”** is the **number one reason** provided by both women and men for **refusing international assignments** and plays a critical role in **assignment success or failure**.¹²
 - The definition of family today is expanding to include not only opposite-sex spouses and dependent children but also same-sex partners and spouses, elderly parents, non-biological children, and other dependents. However, mobility policies often lag in applying changing definitions of family.
- While 88 percent of leaders report being concerned about finding suitable candidates for international assignments, **only 6 percent actively encourage mobility among minorities**.¹³
- **Millennials** will make up 75 percent of the workforce by 2025.¹⁴ A **majority expect international experience** to be part of their careers, and most are willing to work abroad.¹⁵



Statistics tell a story of obstacles to participation in international opportunities by “non-traditional” profiles.

Recognizing the obstacles to participation in international opportunities faced by employees who do not fit “traditional” mobility profiles is important for several reasons:

In many organizations, international experience plays an important role in career advancement and leadership development. Limited participation in global mobility can close the doors to leadership roles within an organization, thus narrowing the diverse leader pipeline so urgently needed in today's challenging global landscape.

Limited access to global mobility can have a negative impact on the talent brand and the ability to attract and retain diverse employees, especially Millennials, who expect international opportunities as part of their careers.

Sending the same profiles of employees on global moves can signal to local offices, customers, and communities that the organization is not fully committed to creating and reflecting the diversity of local markets.

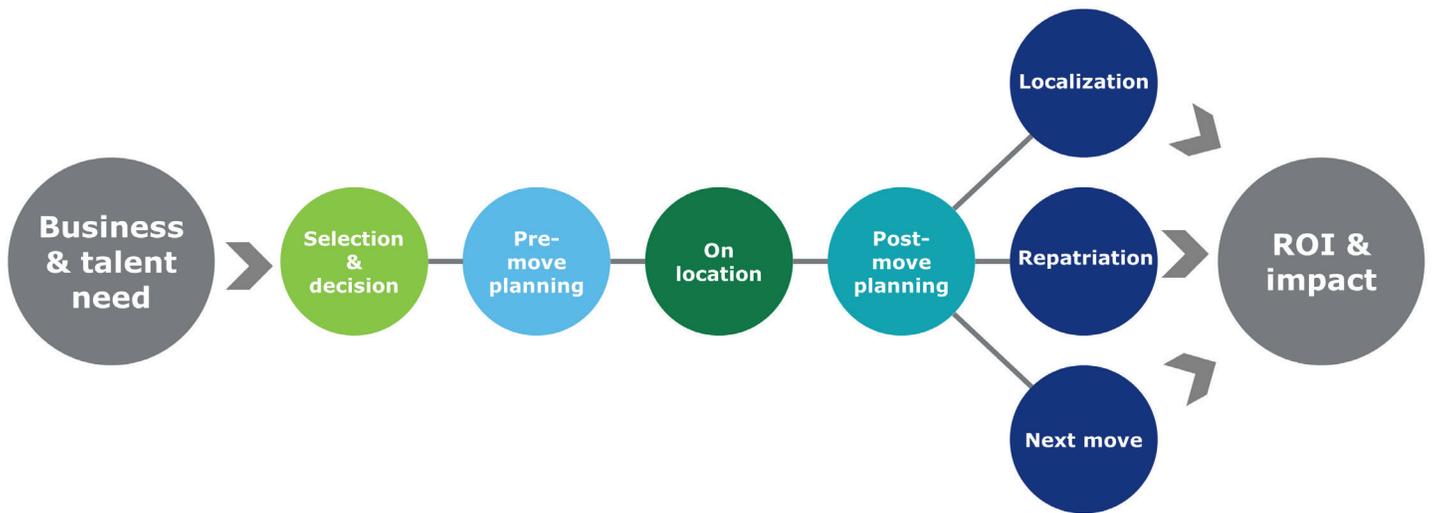
Organizations may not be getting their best and their brightest talent to key markets to address pressing challenges and stimulate innovation, if global mobility is not broadly inclusive of employees with differing backgrounds and perspectives.

Inclusion across the global mobility life cycle

How can organizations make global mobility more inclusive and expand access to international opportunities, thereby increasing the strategic impact of investments? One key area is taking a closer look at obstacles and opportunities across the global mobility life cycle (Figure 5).

Global mobility is the most personally intrusive interaction employees have with their employers.

Figure 5: The global mobility life cycle



Using three mobile employee personas—June, Alex, and Mo—we consider representative individual experiences to understand obstacles and opportunities for inclusive mobility across the life cycle and highlight ways that global mobility can be designed more inclusively.

June



Situation

Profile

- Senior finance manager, aspires to CFO/COO
- 49, Asian-American heterosexual female
- LA-based, single parent of three
- One child has a learning disability and requires specialized tutoring

Opportunity

- Three-year assignment in rapidly expanding office in Russia
- Finance director needed to build culture and capacity

What happens

- Interested, June goes to her division leader
- Learns that colleague is taking assignment
- Division leader surprised to hear of interest due to her family situation
- June is frustrated and disappointed

Solutions

Inclusive leadership & bias mitigation

Inclusive leadership and bias mitigation practices could help reduce bias in the selection process.

Candidate sourcing & selection

Diverse candidate sourcing and selection practices, e.g., the Rooney Rule,¹⁶ can encourage the business to cast its net widely to consider more diverse candidates than typically considered.

Flexible policy provisions

Flexible policy provisions that offer employees menus of options for meeting individual relocation needs can provide single parents or dual-career couples assistance with sourcing and paying for a nanny in the host country.



Alex



Situation

Profile

- Sales manager, covers Latin America
- 28, Caucasian homosexual male
- Houston-based, not widely “out” at work, spouse Jeremy

Opportunity

- Company expanding to Brazil
- Regional sales manager needed indefinitely

What happens

- Approached by a senior leader due to fantastic experience and track record
- Alex is interested, but unsure of LGBT situation in Brazil
- After deliberation, asks HR, but they know little about the LGBT landscape in Brazil
- After doing their own research and talking to people in their network, Alex and Jeremy decide to move to Brazil

Solutions

Inclusive culture & accountability

An **inclusive culture and accountability for D&I** can create a more open environment where employees can bring their authentic selves to work and feel comfortable being out.

A **pre-decision security briefing** can help employees understand the risks and make an informed decision about moving to certain locations.

HR/GM knowledge of local D&I landscape

HR/GM knowledge of the local D&I landscape in countries of operation can help both employers and employees weigh the risks of relocating people to certain parts of the world.

Expecting relocation consultants to be aware and knowledgeable about D&I considerations so they can help employees find appropriate support.

Inclusive mobility processes

Inclusive mobility practices that allow for gathering personal information on an as-needed basis while keeping it broadly confidential can also give employees the power to decide what gets shared and when.

Organizations can connect employees with **global affinity groups**, e.g. LGBT and Allies, or with **local affinity groups** with the help of Destination Service Providers to help ease the transition to a new social and cultural environment by connecting people with shared backgrounds and interests.

Maureen (Mo)



Situation

Profile

- Computer engineer and team leader
- 36, African-American heterosexual female
- Atlanta-based, spouse Keith, one child, elderly parent in retirement home

Opportunity

- Company expanding operations in a tier 2-sized city in India
- Two-year assignment to hire, build, and lead large team

What happens

- Mo takes role, but with concern for ethnicity and mother
- Role is professionally successful, but personally challenging, as she worries about her mother at home and her family feels socially isolated in India
- Returns to the same role, but feels disconnected from her office and desires greater responsibility
- Leaves company for leadership role at competitor

Solutions

Role modeling & flexible programs

Role modeling and mentoring can help address employees' concerns about ethnicity and other considerations when considering moves. Organizations can connect past mobile employees to current ones for support.

Flexible policy provisions and **flexible programs** can accommodate a wide range of considerations. In this case, for example, a broader definition of "dependent" could include bringing Mo's mother on the assignment, or a menu of options could include additional home leaves to meet personal needs.

Talent management planning

Planning for what is next after a global move should go beyond typical relocation considerations to include **talent management planning** in both the host and home country to help organizations and individuals realize the greatest impact from the experience gained, rather than returning individuals to their same pre-assignment roles and responsibilities.

Inclusive leadership & mentoring

Inclusive leadership and accountability plus **post-move mentoring** can help mobile employees re-integrate and put their newly gained experience to work. Non-traditional profiles appear to be particularly at risk for challenges with repatriation and reintegration.

A model for bringing diversity & inclusion and global mobility together

As the personas and scenarios in the previous section illustrate, inclusive design for global mobility can remove barriers and make international opportunities more accessible to diverse individuals. However, broader alignment and increased collaboration between D&I and GM is required to bring inclusive mobility design to life.

Here we present Deloitte's maturity model describing key indicators for D&I and GM alignment (Figure 6). Business, HR, D&I, and GM leaders should consider their current and desired state for each indicator, and then identify and plan for the types of actions that will move them toward their desired state.

Figure 6: Deloitte's maturity model for the alignment of D&I and GM

Indicator	No/Minimal Alignment "Reactionary"	Emerging Alignment "Ad Hoc"	Established Alignment "Intentional"	Strategic Alignment "Transformational"
GM's awareness and understanding of enterprise D&I strategy	Minimal	Some	Strong	Influencing
GM's role in D&I discussions and planning	Not considered	Considered, but not participating	Participating	Partnering
Role of business and HR manager in candidate sourcing and selection	Conscious/unconscious bias excludes many	Conscious/unconscious bias excludes some	Bias mitigation practices, including diverse candidate sourcing	Held accountable for diverse sourcing and inclusive selection of candidates
Diverse participation in mobility opportunities	Low participation, with many self-selecting out	Moderate participation, with some self-selecting out	Diverse participation, with active encouragement	Diverse participation, with active recruitment and mentoring
Overall accommodation of diverse considerations	Minimal ability	Some ability	Greater ability	Broad ability
Flexible and inclusive programs, policies, and processes	Inflexible and meeting few individual needs	Minimally flexible and meeting some individual needs	Somewhat flexible and meeting many individual needs	Fully flexible and meeting most individual needs
Vendor support for diverse global move profiles	None	Requested	Expected	Held accountable
GM's role in acquisition and development of diverse talent globally	No role	Limited role in efforts	Active role in efforts	Partnered with programs for underrepresented groups
HR's knowledge of D&I landscape in countries of operation	Limited	Some	Extended, including access to country-specific information	Deep, including specialized security briefings as needed

Increasing ROI and strategic impact for both D&I and GM



The benefits of “getting it right”

In addition to making international opportunities more accessible to diverse individuals, aligning D&I and GM can help organizations position themselves to realize an array of business and talent benefits, including:

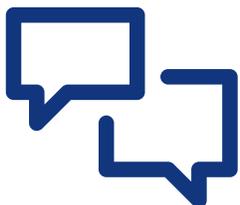
- **Reach new and diverse talent** from different markets through global recruitment efforts
- Deploy capabilities to **address domestic and international priorities faster and better** than before through a broader pool of mobile talent
- **Mirror changing talent and customer demographics** in new markets by sending diverse leaders to set up and expand operations
- **Build a pipeline of diverse, globally minded leaders** by developing diverse talent through mobility experiences
- **Advance D&I strategic impact** through tighter integration with talent and business
- **Increase return on investment in global mobility** and impact of assignments

Steps for getting started

If your organization could benefit from stronger alignment and increased collaboration between D&I and GM, we recommend a few practical steps for getting started:

- 1 A good starting point is meaningful conversation.** Get D&I and GM leaders and teams together and talking to develop a vision and some initial goals. Share your strategies and identify opportunities for teaming.
- 2 Make sure you understand current participation in global mobility within your organization.** Begin with numbers and traditional demographic categories, but do not stop there. Ask leaders, managers, and employees for qualitative feedback.
- 3 Finally, review current global mobility practices for inclusive design,** from leadership accountability through to people, programs, policies, processes, and partners.

Together, these steps can set your organization on the course for inclusive mobility—and for unleashing human potential to drive organizational and individual performance on a global scale.



HR and Tax executives'
perspectives:
Aligning D&I and GM
to drive performance

HR and Tax executives' perspectives

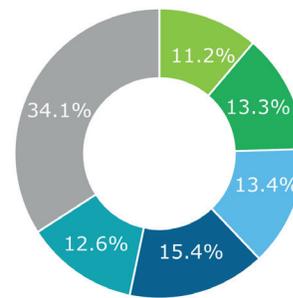
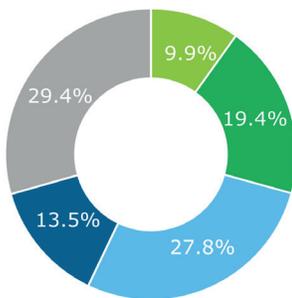


Deloitte Tax hosted a Dbriefs webcast in 2016 to discuss how aligning and integrating diversity & inclusion (D&I) and global mobility (GM) can drive performance in a rapidly changing global marketplace.

Presenters shared ideas for designing inclusive global mobility program, policies, and processes, as well as using global mobility as a strategic lever for diversity & inclusion. More than 1,800 participants from beyond Deloitte offered their own views through polling topics and posed questions to the presenters, as described below. Participants ranged from analyst to executive level and represented all regions of the United States plus nine countries. The fact that roughly one-third of participants answered "don't know/not applicable" to each of the polling questions suggests that alignment and collaboration between D&I and GM is a very new area of consideration for most organizations, as noted by the presenters.

Q1: To what extent are D&I and GM strategies, priorities, and programs aligned and integrated within your organization?

Q2: What is the greatest challenge you see for inclusive mobility within your organization?



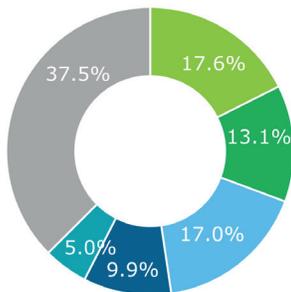
- Not at all
- Minimally
- Partially
- Fully
- Don't know/not applicable

- Limited understanding of business case for inclusive mobility
- Challenging global conditions for diverse employees
- Leader and/or manager bias
- Lack of role models, mentors, and sponsors for employees
- Program or process obstacles to meeting diverse needs
- Don't know/not applicable

Q1: Although the integration and alignment of D&I and GM strategies, policies, and programs offer significant opportunities to unleash global talent potential to address organizations' toughest challenges, most participants said these areas are "partially," "minimally," or "not at all" integrated and aligned within their organizations.

Q2: When asked about the key challenge to inclusive mobility within their organizations, participants were fairly evenly mixed among issues of leadership, global conditions, program or process and obstacles, and unclear business case.

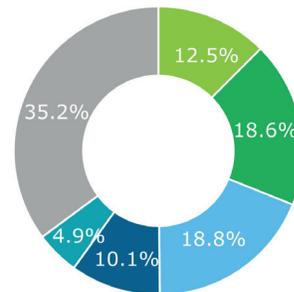
Q3: Of the solutions presented for inclusive mobility, which one has been or could be most successfully implemented within your organization?



- Inclusive leadership, culture, and accountability
- More diverse candidate sourcing
- Inclusive and flexible policy provisions & programs
- Role-modeling and mentoring for diverse mobile employees
- HR/GM knowledge of local D&I landscape
- Don't know/not applicable

Q3: Presenters discussed several possible solutions for fostering inclusive mobility, including inclusive leadership, culture, and accountability; flexible policies and programs; diverse candidate sourcing; role-modeling and mentoring; and HR/GM knowledge of local D&I landscape. Again, webcast participants were mixed in their views of which of those solutions has been or could be most successfully implemented in their organization.

Q4: Where do you think the alignment and integration of D&I and GM could have the greatest impact for your organization?



- Reach and grow new sources of diverse talent
- Build diverse, globally minded leaders
- Deploy the right people with the right skills to the right place to address needs faster and better than before
- Stimulate innovation through cognitive diversity
- Promote customer and employee brand as committed to D&I
- Don't know/not applicable

Q4: Aligning D&I and GM can have a variety of positive impacts. Equal numbers of participants said that the ability to deploy the right people with the right skills to the right place to address needs faster and better than before as well as the ability to build diverse, globally minded leaders would have the greatest impact on their organization. Others said that the greatest impact would be the ability to reach and grow diverse talent, stimulate innovation, and promote a brand that is committed to D&I.

Endnotes

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