



GOODBYE-HELLO

Tips About Relocation

At work, you're asked to relocate and you're excited about the promotion and change. However, you hate to leave the comfortable life that you're now living. Knowing what to expect may make the transition easier.

Relocation Stress

Whether you're a seasoned transferee or this is your first time, the process of relocating is stressful. In the past, if you turned down a transfer, you risked coming to a dead end in your company. Today, companies usually offer you a choice, but making that choice can be difficult.

The biggest problem is usually family separation. You may have to leave your parents and siblings behind. This is hard enough, but it can be even more difficult if you're married and if you have children. Often your spouse will have to give up a good job and he or she may not be able to find acceptable work after the move.

Children also make the situation complex. If they want to finish out a school year, are part of team sports or are involved in other school activities, leaving may be difficult for them. The result is that the family may stay behind for a while and you may end up shuttling back and forth. This is expensive, as is maintaining two residences. Also, your spouse is left behind as a "single parent," selling the house, quitting a job and preparing for the move. Your spouse may be in greater stress than you are.

Stress also comes from the many questions for which you have to find answers. Questions about where to live, the quality of the schools, neighborhood safety, the cost of living or where the kids will finish school, all take a toll on you.

Solutions

Stabilize your circumstances as soon as you can. Deal with a real estate company that has a relocation expert or that's willing to match you with a field person with a background similar to yours. Ask if the field person is trained in relocations and is able to give you support in settling into the community. Your company may also have a staff member willing to help make you feel at home.

Look for things in the new community that you enjoyed in your old one. If you're active in a house of worship, look for a similar denomination to attend. If you're a golfer, check out the courses and see if you can meet new people there. Education classes, sports activities and a wide variety of other interests may link you with this new community. Joining Newcomers or calling the Welcome Wagon helps. New neighbors can also recommend shopping areas and health care options.

Relocation experts say that even though most families try to avoid moving until after the last month of school, it may not always be best to wait. By moving earlier, the kids can find friends and connect up with summer activities. Keep in mind that if you move in months that are excessively hot or cold, you may find that people tend to stay indoors and are less accessible. You may have to seek friends boldly for your kids by ringing the doorbell of a neighbor with toys in the yard. Some of the best friendships have been made this way.

Remember, you have the stress of a new job, a new home and a new life. Take care of yourself and try and keep your life as simple as possible. Be aware of the stress your family is also going through.

Who Can Help

Use relocation experts and people from your company who are willing to help you. If you find that all of these changes are more than you can handle, talk to a counselor who can help you sort it all out. You and your family are getting a chance to build a new life and you want to be able to enjoy it to the fullest.