

The 2025 HR Executive's Guide to Purchasing Corporate Moving & Relocation Services



Introduction

Let's be honest: corporate relocation used to be the thing HR handled when someone needed to move for work. Pack up, ship out, hope for the best. But in 2025, that approach isn't cutting it anymore.

Today's relocation decisions ripple through your entire talent strategy. When you're competing for the best candidates, a clunky, stressful moving experience can tank an otherwise perfect hire. On the flip side, a smooth, thoughtful relocation process? That's your secret weapon for attracting top talent and keeping your best people engaged.

The insights and recommendations in this guide aren't based on theory or industry speculation, they come directly from comprehensive research we've conducted with both relocated employees and the executives who manage corporate mobility programs. Our findings draw from multiple proprietary studies, including:

01	2024 Corporate Relocation Study	Surveying decision-makers across industries about their relocation volumes, challenges, and vendor selection criteria
02	Mobility and Mindsets	How Trends & Attitudes Shape Employee Relocation Choices - understanding what relocating employees actually value during their move experience
03	30th Annual Trippel Nationwide Relocating Employee Survey	Tracking satisfaction and service quality across moving providers
04	Strategic Role of Corporate Relocation in Attracting and Retaining Talent	Examining how mobility programs impact recruitment and retention

These studies reflect real experiences from thousands of relocations, giving you evidence-based best practices rather than vendor marketing speak. Whether you're evaluating your first relocation partner or looking to upgrade your current program, this guide will help you ask the right questions, avoid common pitfalls, and build a relocation experience that actually works for your people and your business.

The numbers tell the story: 41.5% of companies expect their relocation volumes to climb. Why? Because talent shortages are real, and sometimes the perfect candidate lives a thousand or more miles away from your office. But choosing the right relocation partner isn't like picking a new office supplier, the stakes are higher, the variables are more complex, and frankly, there's a lot more that can go wrong.



1. The Reality of Corporate Mobility in 2025

Remember when "corporate relocation" meant moving someone to headquarters? Those days are gone. Today's mobility landscape is messier, more complex, and arguably more important than ever.

The pandemic didn't just change where we work, it changed how we think about work. While 68.5% of companies now have more remote workers than before 2020, that hasn't killed relocation. It's just made it more strategic.

Here's what's really happening:

Remote work created new relocation needs, not fewer ones

Your talent is spread across the country, but they still need to move. Maybe it's a hybrid role that requires quarterly travel, or a remote worker who wants to relocate closer to family. The point is, mobility isn't going anywhere, it's just getting more diverse.

Geography became a competitive advantage

Smart companies are expanding their talent pools beyond traditional hubs. That means relocating people to secondary markets, emerging tech cities, and places where your competitors aren't looking. It's a smart play, but it requires a relocation partner who can execute moves anywhere, not just between major metro areas.

Talent mobility drives business growth

One-third of relocations are promotion-driven. Think about that. These aren't just administrative moves. They're strategic investments in your best people. When you nail the relocation experience, you're not just moving someone's furniture. You're investing in their career trajectory and your company's future leadership.

The bar for employee experience keeps rising

Today's employees expect more than a moving truck and a good luck handshake. They want transparency, support, and a process that doesn't derail their life for three months. The companies that deliver on those expectations are the ones that win.

Costs and complexity are increasing

Truck shortages, labor constraints, housing market volatility, the operational challenges are real. But here's the thing: the companies that navigate these challenges well aren't just surviving; they're using superior relocation support as a differentiator.



2. Who's Really Making These Decisions?

If you think relocation decisions happen in a vacuum, think again. Our research shows that successful relocation programs require buy-in from multiple stakeholders, each with their own priorities and concerns.



The key players:

Categories	Percentage
Operations teams	45.7%
HR and Mobility professionals	34.7%
Procurement and Finance	14.0%
Supply Chain and Vendor Management	5.5%

Operations teams make up 45.7% of decision process.

They're focused on execution and logistics. They want to know: Will this vendor deliver on time? Can they handle our volume? What happens when things go wrong?

HR and Mobility professionals make up 34.7% of the decision process.

You're thinking about the employee experience. How will this move affect retention? Will our people feel supported? Does this align with our culture and values?

Procurement and Finance make up 14.0% of the decision process.

They're asking tough questions about cost control, contract terms, and ROI. They want transparency, predictability, and value for money.

Supply Chain and Vendor Management make up 5.5% of the decision process.

They're looking at the bigger picture, how does this partnership fit into our overall vendor strategy? Are we building relationships that will scale our business?

The best relocation decisions happen when all these perspectives are represented and aligned. That's why your RFP process needs to address operational excellence, employee experience, cost management, and strategic partnership potential.

3. What Actually Matters When Choosing a Moving Partner

Forget the marketing fluff. When you're evaluating relocation vendors, focus on the fundamentals that actually impact your employees' experience and your program's success.



The non-negotiables:

Proven service capacity

Can they handle your volume? Do they have coverage where your people actually live and work? This isn't just about having trucks, it's about having the right resources in the right places when you need them.

Service flexibility that matches your workforce

Your C-suite moves aren't the same as your entry-level hires. You need a partner who can deliver white-glove service for your executives and efficient, cost-effective solutions for everyone else.



Real-time visibility and communication

Your employees (and you) shouldn't be left wondering where their stuff is. Look for partners who provide shipment tracking, proactive communication, and centralized access to all move-related information.

Transparent, predictable pricing

Moving costs can spiral quickly if you're not careful. The best partners provide clear pricing scenarios, help you understand cost drivers, and work with you to optimize your budget without compromising service quality.

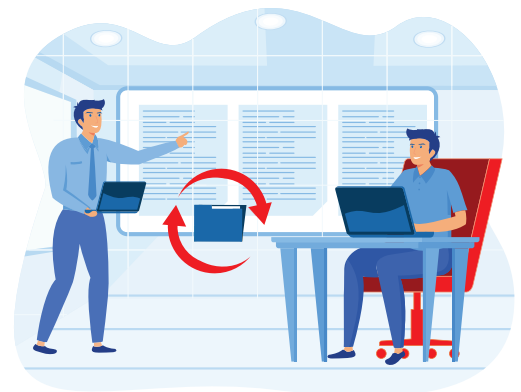
A track record of actual results

Don't just take their word for it. Look for vendors who can demonstrate consistent performance through customer satisfaction scores, industry recognition, and reference customers who look like your organization.

Pro tip: 49.2% of relocating employees rated full-service movers as their preferred option. That tells you something about what your people actually value during a move.

4. How to Run an RFP Process That Actually Works

Most RFP processes are painful for everyone involved. Vendors submit generic proposals, you spend weeks comparing apples to oranges, and somehow you still end up with more questions than answers.



👉 Here's how to do it better!

Before you start

Get your policy house in order

If your relocation policy hasn't been updated in three years, don't start the RFP process yet. Outdated policies lead to misaligned vendor proposals and unrealistic expectations. Take the time to review and update your policy framework first.

Involve the right people from day one

Your RFP team should include representatives from HR, Operations, Procurement, Vendor Management, and Legal. Each brings essential perspectives, and you'll save time by addressing their concerns upfront rather than after you've already invested weeks in the process.



Set realistic timelines

Most RFP processes take 1-6 months. Don't rush it. A thorough evaluation process is an investment that pays dividends for years.

During the process

Request real pricing scenarios

Here's a game-changer: share anonymized historical move data with all vendors. Give them actual origin and destination addresses, services used, and timing. This forces them to provide realistic pricing instead of best-case scenarios.

Focus on capabilities, not just costs

The cheapest option usually isn't the best value. Dig into their service delivery model, technology platform, and support resources. Understanding how they actually execute moves is more important than their quoted hourly rate.

Test their responsiveness

How quickly do they respond to questions? How detailed are their answers? This gives you a preview of what working with them will actually feel like.

RED FLAGS TO WATCH FOR:

- ! Vague answers about capacity or coverage areas
- ! Unwillingness to provide detailed cost breakdowns
- ! References that don't match your company size or industry
- ! Technology platforms that look like they were built in 2010 or earlier



5. The Relocation Benefits That Actually Matter to Your Employees

Here's what most companies get wrong about relocation benefits: they focus on what's easiest to administer instead of what actually reduces stress and drives satisfaction for their people. Our research shows that 69% of employees receive some form of relocation support, but the structure of that support dramatically impacts their experience and your retention rates.



The reality check: Full-service support wins every time

When employees receive comprehensive relocation support — professional packing, coordinated logistics, dedicated move coordinators—satisfaction scores are consistently highest. It's not just about convenience; it's about removing the stress and uncertainty that can derail someone's transition to a new role.

Reimbursement models create hidden costs

Sure, reimbursement feels budget - friendly, but it shifts financial risk and administrative burden to your employees. They're fronting thousands of dollars, dealing with vendor issues, and managing logistics during an already stressful time. The short term savings often aren't worth the long-term impact on employee satisfaction.

Common benefit structures and their impact:

Benefits Structure	% of Companies	Impact
Full Relocation Benefits	45.7%	Highest employee satisfaction and stress reduction
Reimbursement Benefits	30.4%	Flexible but places upfront costs and burden on employees
Fixed Lump Sum Benefits	8.7%	Least supportive; suitable mainly for junior staff
Managed Lump Sum Benefits	8.4%	Less flexibility but some quality assurance

The executive experience matters more than you think

Your senior leaders' relocation experiences ripple through your organization. When executives have smooth, well-supported moves, they become advocates for your program. When they don't, they question whether you're really committed to supporting your people.



The bottom line:

Match your benefit structure to your strategic goals. If you're using relocation to attract top talent, invest in the experience that will actually impress them. If you're supporting internal mobility and development, provide the level of support that shows you're serious about their growth.

6. Choosing the Right Service Model for Your People

Not every relocation needs the same level of support, but every employee deserves a good experience. The trick is matching service levels to needs without creating a system that's too complex to manage.

Your options:

Full-service moving

This is comprehensive support where the moving company handles the logistics: professional packing, transportation, and coordination. It's designed to minimize disruption to your employees' work and personal lives while ensuring their belongings are handled professionally. Full-service options can be scaled from standard professional service to VIP white-glove treatment depending on your policy tiers.

Best for: Any employee where you want to minimize stress and maximize satisfaction from new hires you're trying to impress to busy managers who can't take time off to coordinate a move.

The trade-off: Higher investment per move, but significantly higher satisfaction scores and reduced employee downtime.



Managed lump sum

A hybrid approach where you provide financial support but also coordinate with preferred vendors to ensure quality and consistency.

Best for: Mid-level employees who need support but can handle some coordination themselves.

The trade-off: More complex to administer but can offer a good balance of cost control and employee support.

Self-directed lump sum

You provide a budget; the employee manages the details. This can work, but it requires careful planning and clear communication about expectations.

Best for: Entry-level employees, short-distance moves, or employees who prefer maximum flexibility.

The trade-off: Lower cost and administrative burden for you, but higher stress and potential for problems.

The important caveat:

If you're offering lump sum or reimbursement benefits, make sure your people understand the importance of working with licensed, credentialed moving providers. The moving industry has its share of bad actors, and the last thing you want is an employee dealing with a moving scam on your company's dime.



7. Timing Your Moves for Success

Here's something most companies don't think about until it's too late: when you move people, it matters how you move them. The moving industry has predictable capacity constraints and seasonal patterns. Ignore them at your peril.



The reality of peak season:

Summer presents capacity challenges

From mid-May through August, moving demand peaks across the industry. While moves certainly happen during these months, capacity becomes tighter and advance planning becomes even more critical. Companies with contractual agreements typically have better access to resources during peak periods, while those relying on spot market pricing or employee-directed arrangements may face more significant cost variability.

Winter holidays are also challenging

The period from early December through New Year's is difficult for different reasons. People are distracted, many vendors have limited availability, and it's generally not a great time to relocate someone.

THE SWEET SPOTS:

January through April:

Post-holiday availability is typically strong, and you're ahead of the summer rush

October through early November:

After the summer chaos but before the holiday season

PLANNING TIPS THAT ACTUALLY WORK:

Start planning 3-4 months out

This gives you and your vendors time to coordinate properly, secure capacity, and address any complications before they become crises.

Build flexibility into your process

When possible, give employees a range of potential start dates. This flexibility can save you money and stress while ensuring better service quality.

Use data to plan ahead

Tools like North American's Best Times to Move calendar can help you anticipate capacity constraints and plan accordingly.

8. Supporting Your People Beyond Moving Day

Here's where most companies drop the ball: they think relocation ends when the moving truck drives away. But for your employees, that's often when the real challenges begin.



The hidden stressors:

According to our Mobility and Mindsets research, the most common personal and family concerns following a job-related move include:

Employee Concern	% of Employee	Insights
Disruption of family and friendships	45.9%	Nearly half of relocated employees cite this as their biggest concern. That's not a logistics problem-it's a human problem.
Higher cost of living in new location	31.8%	Cost differences can create unexpected financial stress, especially in expensive markets.
Career concerns for spouses or partners	13.9%	When someone relocates, their spouse or partner often has to navigate a new job market, affecting family dynamics significantly.

What actually helps

Destination services that matter

Help your people get oriented in their new city. This isn't just about finding the nearest grocery store, it's about helping them build a life in their new location.

Flexible timing and expectations

Recognize that settling into a new location takes time. Be flexible with start dates, travel expectations, and performance ramp-up periods.

Ongoing check-ins

Don't just check in during the move. Follow up at 30, 60, and 90 days to see how they're settling in. This shows you care about their success, not just their productivity.

Mental health and counseling resources

Relocation can be emotionally challenging. Providing access to counseling or mental health resources demonstrates that you understand the full scope of what you're asking of your people.

9. Using Relocation as a Strategic Tool

Here's what forward-thinking companies understand: relocation isn't just about filling open positions. It's about building organizational capability, developing talent, and creating competitive advantage.



The strategic opportunities

Succession planning and leadership development

When you relocate high-potential employees, you're not just filling a role, you're building future leaders. These experiences broaden perspectives, develop resilience, and create stronger organizational networks.

Cross-training and knowledge transfer

Strategic relocations can help spread institutional knowledge, break down silos, and create more agile organizations. This is especially valuable in technical roles where expertise is concentrated in specific locations.

Market expansion and local expertise

When you relocate experienced employees to new markets, you're building local capability while maintaining cultural consistency. This is often more effective than hiring locally and hoping they'll adapt to your culture.



The numbers that matter:

Remember that 33.4% of relocations are promotion-driven. That means one-third of your moves are directly tied to career development and internal mobility. These aren't just administrative transactions, they're investments in your talent pipeline.

10. Why North American Van Lines Gets It Right

After 90+ years in the business, we've learned that successful relocations come down to three things: capability, consistency, and care.



What sets us apart

Proven capacity where you need it

We have the resources and network to handle moves anywhere in the country, from major metropolitan areas to small towns. That matters when your talent is spread across diverse markets.

Tailored solutions for every situation

Whether you need white-glove service for executives or efficient, cost-effective solutions for entry-level employees. We have the experience and flexibility to design a program for your specific needs

A track record you can trust

We've been rated #1 in customer satisfaction by relocated employees for six consecutive years. That's not marketing speak—that's proof that we deliver on our promises.

What our clients say:



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Working with North American made our relocation process seamless. Their proactive communication and care for our people set them apart.

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- HR Director, Fortune 500 Tech Firm



Your Next Steps

Building a relocation program that actually works for your people and your business isn't about finding the cheapest vendor or the fanciest technology. It's about creating a system that reduces stress, demonstrates your commitment to your employees, and supports your strategic goals.

What to do now

Review your current approach

Does your relocation policy reflect your current workforce and business needs? When was the last time you updated it? If it's been more than two years, it's probably time for a refresh.



Assess your vendor relationships

Are you getting the service quality and employee satisfaction you need? Are your costs predictable and reasonable? Are your vendors true partners or just service providers?



Plan for the future

What are your talent mobility needs for the next 2-3 years? Are you prepared for growth, geographic expansion, or changes in your workforce strategy?

We're here to help

Review Your Current Relocation Policy

Assess whether it aligns with the needs of your current workforce and strategic goals. Does it provide adequate support by job level and seniority?

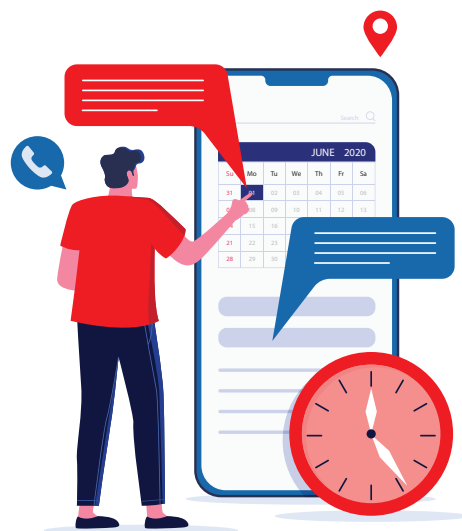


Download Our Vendor Checklist & Interview Guide

Use this companion tool to structure your RFP, evaluate providers, and ensure you're asking the right questions during the selection process.

Schedule a Free Relocation Policy Review

North American Van Lines offers complimentary reviews that benchmark your policy against industry best practices and identify opportunities for improvement.



Ready to get started?

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- ☎ Phone: 800.213.4910
- 🌐 Learn more: www.northAmerican.com/corporate-relocation/services

Because at the end of the day, we're not just moving your people's stuff. We're helping you build a stronger, more connected organization, one successful relocation at a time.

North American. Moving You, Your Company and Your Employees Forward.