

Family Relocation Training

ARUP

Background

Communicaid has worked with Arup since 2001 helping to prepare employees relocating overseas to locations as diverse as Singapore and Japan.

In July 2005, the training department approached Communicaid regarding cross-cultural awareness training for an employee who was imminently relocating to Tokyo with his wife and two young sons. He had already made several business trips to Japan but his family had never lived outside the UK before and as a result were quite anxious about the move.

Training Objectives

The core aims of the programme were:

- To raise the employee's awareness of cultural and work style differences affecting his new role in Tokyo
- To provide the family with practical information and strategies in preparation for their relocation
- To build the family's confidence and enthusiasm in relocating to Japan to allow the employee to focus on his professional environment rather than personal worries
- To allow all family members to raise any specific queries and to address any individual concerns they may have

Challenges

Key challenges were seen as:

- Designing a series of flexible training sessions that would meet the needs of all family members
- Delivering a family session that was both lively and interactive for the children but also interesting and valuable for the adults
- Providing the right balance of cross-cultural input with practical facts and information regarding the target destination
- Finding the best combination of trainers to build rapport with all members of the family

Training Approach

Both the Arup employee and his partner completed detailed pre-training questionnaires outlining their own background and requirements for the training. As a result, three separate three hour sessions were planned for the family:

- 'Working in Japan' for the employee
- 'Spouse Training and Support' for his partner
- 'Family Training' for the employee, his wife and two sons



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Proposed Solutions

- The 'Working in Japan' session focused on the key concepts of Japanese business and the impact of working in this environment. It particularly looked at the cultural issues in business situations such as relationship building, communication styles and how to manage meetings and negotiations.
- The 'Spouse Training and Support' session gave practical advice to the partner advising the best possible situations for the family before and after the move. It offered key methods of adjustment and guidance to enable the wife and children to cope in Japan.
- The final 'Family Training' session was built on the previous spouse training. It was a very practical programme using a variety of interactive activities and visual aids, allowing the children in particular to discover the positives of living in Japan. Key areas covered included sports and leisure activities, tasting Japanese food and drink and Japanese etiquette based on mini role plays.

Results

As a result of the training, the family felt full of confidence and excitement regarding their move to Japan. The Arup employee had a much greater understanding of the potential challenges facing him in the workplace and a greater awareness of strategies he could implement in order to work more effectively in Japan. Knowing his family were well-prepared meant he would be able to focus on his professional transition rather than worries concerning his wife and sons.

Contact Details

For more information about how Communicaid can assist you and your organisation, please contact our Business Development Team:

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Client Feedback

"I thoroughly enjoyed it all, especially hearing first hand about what it is like to be in Japan from my trainer who has actually been in my situation. She has given me much more confidence to do it myself. We were lucky to have Communicaid's expertise."

Christine Olsen
Partner of Roger Olsen, Arup

