

# Dealing with Relocation Blues: Taking a Balanced Decision

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**Abstract.** With globalization, many executives in India now have opportunities to relocate to foreign countries. While such moves offer significant career opportunities, they also introduce unique personal and familial challenges. This case study throws light upon the personal and professional conflicts faced by Sunil Joshi, an executive with TechSolve Inc., and explores the implications on expatriate family life. While Sunil tackles a demanding job with frequent travel, his wife Sukanya grapples with isolation and depression. Their son Anand, meanwhile, has trouble in his new US school. The case study delves into the cultural and emotional hurdles of the expatriate family life, exploring its impact on internal family dynamics and individual psychological well-being. Sunil is torn between personal aspirations and family responsibilities. His dilemma is whether to prioritize his family's happiness by returning to India or remain in the US. This case study highlights relocation management, and the delicate balance between career aspirations and familial obligations. It also emphasizes the critical role of the "trailing spouse", in the family's adjustment process.

**Keywords:** cultural differences, work-life balance, dilemma, expatriate support.

## 1. Introduction

Born and raised in Bengaluru, India, Sunil Joshi's passion for technology and business was evident from a young age. At IIT Bombay, he excelled in computer science, and followed up his engineering degree with an MBA from IIM Ahmedabad, where he honed his strategic thinking, leadership skills and business acumen, earning recognition as a "whiz kid" among his peers and faculty members.

As a professional, he gained extensive experience in the technology and business sectors. Though quiet and slightly introverted, his insights and analytical mind made him an asset to any team or organization. He constantly sought new opportunities for personal and professional growth. Sunil held leadership positions in prominent technology firms, where he demonstrated a knack for innovation, strategic planning, and driving organizational growth. His ability to bridge the gap between technical complexities and business objectives earned him respect and admiration within the industry.

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He was approached by TechSolve, a prominent Indian IT Services company, which had become a great organization under its founders' steady and ethical leadership, emphasizing quality and integrity. The company was expanding rapidly both in Europe and the US. Sunil took up the role of heading the American subsidiary of TechSolve Inc., on January 12<sup>th</sup> 2023.

Relocating from Bengaluru, India, to San Francisco, USA, with his wife Sukanya and son Anand initially seemed like an exciting adventure, but as time passed, the transition took a troubling turn. The job came with significant expectations from the company's leadership. Sunil's role was pivotal not just for the subsidiary's success but also for TechSolve's global strategy. Sharing a good rapport with the founders, Sunil was given to understand that in due course, depending on his handling of the current role in the US subsidiary, he could even end up heading the entire US setup.

For the present, he was tasked with ambitious revenue targets, acquiring new clients, and building a strong brand presence in North America. Achieving these within tight timelines brought considerable pressure to bear on Sunil. Additionally, he was responsible for everything from setting up the office infrastructure to hiring local talent and ensuring compliance with American laws and regulations. These tasks were daunting and demanded a steep learning curve. Building trust with US clients required not just technical expertise but also cultural fluency and a deep understanding of their business needs. Sunil was expected to adapt quickly to US business norms, such as direct communication, emphasis on ROI, and transparent reporting.

His position and responsibilities brought him under constant scrutiny from TechSolve's Board and leadership. Regular reporting requirements on key performance indicators (KPIs) and financial results added to his stress. Sunil was conscious that he was not just running the subsidiary, he was laying the groundwork for TechSolve's future in the US. He was always mindful of the fact that his decisions would have long-term consequences for the company.

## **2. The Joshi Family**

On another front, significant cultural adjustments needed to be made by the Joshi family. Differences in communication styles, work ethics, and societal norms posed challenges in integrating into US life for Sunil, his wife Sukanya, and their son Anand. By November, Sunil was only too aware of how different San Francisco was from Bengaluru.

Sunil's role as the head of TechSolve's American subsidiary placed him at the intersection of personal ambition, organizational expectations, and family obligations. Sukanya, who had given up a career of her own to relocate with her husband and son, found it even harder than Sunil to cope, away from her family and friends.