

Newcomers should have a welcome committee



It's not high taxes or bad weather that puts most foreigners off staying in Denmark; according to statistics, 80 percent of long-term visitors leave because of loneliness

June Persson, founder and owner of Relocation Scandinavia, is in no doubt as to what Danish companies need to do in order to retain new employees they've coaxed from overseas: welcome them into their community.

In 2006, June returned home to Denmark after seven years in the United States, where she had relocated with her husband, an employee in a large biotech firm. Her time in the US taught her many new things, but one experience proved to be a key factor as she started up Relocation Scandinavia the year following her return - the welcome that her family was given by her husband's firm.

"Danish businesses really could learn a lot from

American companies in that regard," says June Persson. "They appreciate the importance of making employees feel at home."

Relocation Scandinavia helps people get settled into the country in the same way other relocation companies do, finding them housing, CPR-numbers and other essentials. But they also offer one other particularly special service – and that is finding them good friends.

When Relocation Scandinavia is approached by a company to help relocate workers from their home country to Denmark, it isn't just the arriving worker and his or her family that are in focus. Danish employees are also involved in a process that aims at helping new workers, and their families, become a part of the Danish community as quickly and successfully as possible.

"We aim to find you a good new Danish friend in the company," June explains. "And if you are a

family, we'll find you a family."

June goes so far as to suggest companies create a database matching available workers with arriving employees to make this service as efficient as possible. And it's successful – rather than isolation, families can enjoy an instant family network that can last for years.

"If mum's not happy, nobody's happy," June reminds us. She also points out how vital it is for newcomers to break out of the expat bubble.

"Expat communities are great, but they don't help integrate foreigners into the Danish community," she says. "Being part of a community and being invited your colleagues' kids' birthday parties and other social gatherings... It's such an important part of life here."

June sums it up: "Integrating newcomers is crucial for companies if they want to hold onto their new workers."

More information about Relocation Scandinavia can be found at the company's website: www.relocationscandinavia.com