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To Retain Talent the Field Engineering Companies Must Think of Housing

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1.0 Introduction

The field engineering industry faces challenges in retaining its skilled workforce, including:

- Work-life balance: Remote locations, extended absences from family and friends, and physically demanding work can make it difficult for employees to balance their work and personal lives.
- Diversity and inclusion: Women may feel side lined, particularly in technical and operational roles. The industry may also have insufficient levels of diversity and inclusion overall.
- Health and safety: Health and safety risks and propaganda can make it difficult to attract new talent.
- Housing and society: Not having to have a good social life is also one reason why the field engineering companies are failing to attract and retain talent.
- Modern condominiums have a number of distinct facilities. Please see Figure.1 for more details. You may look for more information[2].



Photo courtesy: Open source Internet



Figure 1. Condominiums for gated living (both the images are downloaded from the online sources)

One of the greatest disenchantments of the field engineers employed in the mining of minerals and oil and gas sectors as well for power industries is lack of proper housing. Considering that the field engineering would also need talent people having exposure in software, network and automation, the companies must realise that they are in fierce competition from their urban rivals in terms of poaching of talent. Retaining talent in the mines, rigs and power plants, etc. has been a nightmare for the HR people for a long time.

2.0 Condominium Style Living

A condominium (also known as a "condo") is a big property complex designed for various apartments, each of which is assigned to an individual. A non-commercial right in certain "community property" owned by the condominium management is frequently included in the

company ownership. Condominium administration is often comprised of a board of allotters' that oversee the complex's day-to-day operations, such as maintenance, repair, painting and garbage removal. A condo is an apartment complex that is built to provide convenient, affordable housing for the expanding Mines' community. The complex houses both single and married employees, along with families. There are one, two, and three-bedroom single individuals, and one and two-bedroom units for families[2].

2.1 The Facilities Often Include

Kitchens are equipped with a full-size refrigerator, dishwasher, and an oven and range

One, Two, and Three-Bedroom Units for Undergraduate Students and Graduate Students

One or Two-Bedroom Units for Family Housing

Community Center 2 – Laundry facilities located here for students in the 1900s. Residents have the ability to reserve Community Center 2 for programs, events, and gatherings.

Wired and wireless internet access

Parking Permit

Community Programs and Events

Recreational areas and green space

Maintenance

Transportation: periodic city shuttles

Utilities: Everything is included (energy & gas)

Air Conditioning in all or some units

Trash and recycling receptacles

Safe walking distance to campus

2.2 Rent and Non-Rent Services

Mine/plant pays for water, sewer, public area lighting, trash removal, and parking and wired or wireless connection to the main network. Upon move-in, the employee will contact the facility manager to transfer utilities into his/her name(s) in consultation with the utility provider for both gas and electric. A parking pass may be required to park at condominium. Units include a stove, dishwasher and refrigerator. One must bring any additional appliances one may require. The general layout of a condominium looks like as in Figure 2.



Figure 2. Layout of a condominium.
Photo courtesy: Open source Internet

3.0 What the big daddies of mining industry are doing?

RioTinto

Fifteen iron ore mines, four port terminals, and more than 1,700 kilometres of railway in Western Australia's Pilbara region are owned and managed by RioTinto. Iron ore operations are concentrated in the Pilbara region, Western Australia. From these operations they produce a premium product suite, including our flagship Pilbara Blend, which are used by customers as a key ingredient in the production of steel. Its integrated network of mines, rail, ports and related infrastructure form a seamless supply chain, managed remotely from our purpose built Operations Centre 1,500 kilometres away in Perth

At the Pilbara, the house the employees are living in is managed on behalf of Rio Tinto by Sodexo, an international facilities and services Management Company. A Sodexo representative is available to assist the employees with any tenancy related queries that one may have. Sodexo is the service provider and property manager for the company housing portfolio and is responsible for other town-based assets such as the fly-in, fly-out (FIFO) accommodation and facilities in the Pilbara. **Tenants should liaise with Sodexo for all day to day tenancy related matters such as property inspections, maintenance requests, lease management, bond disposal processes and removal/ relocation services. Internal employee processes such as rent deductions via payroll is managed by Rio Tinto.** Sodexo offers the "Portal" website that enables tenants to access a range of information and additional user-pay services such as cleaning, gardening and minor home improvements.

3.1 For an Employee Moving to Pilbara

Whilst relocating to a new community can provide great opportunities and experiences, it can be stressful - even if some have moved, or worked/not worked in the mining industry previously. It can take time to adjust, particularly if some have left close family and friends behind to make the move. RioTinto offers useful resources to help make one's move less stressful and help to become part of the new community. It says "**The best way to weave some more way into the fabric of a little place is to become involved, and all of a sudden, some become part of a wider community**". Rio Tinto assists in[2]:

1. Supporting mental health and wellbeing after moving somewhere new,
2. Providing a range of parenting and family support services.
3. Emergency help lines: urgent concerns for the safety or wellbeing of an employee who is at work and cannot be reached.
4. Updates from site relating to emergencies such as cyclone or fire. Simply follow the automated prompts and one of our representatives will assist by passing on the details to a site representative who will call back as a priority. They recommend one provides the name of the team/business unit as well as leader's name and contact number with the partner/family, in case of emergencies.
5. Even pets can have trouble settling into a new environment.
6. To Keep in touch with friends and family one has moved away from. Catching up with old friends on social media or communicating via Skype/FaceTime for mental health and a sense of wellbeing.
7. To help get involved in the new community .Go along to social events (even if some don't feel like it) – this is an important way for the family to make connections
   • Contact some local shire or council or visit their website (see information in 'some local town' section of this folder).
8. Employee Assistance Programme (EAP): A free, confidential counselling service for Rio Tinto employees and immediate family, provided by an independent organisation staffed by experienced psychologists.
9. 24 Hour Alcohol and Drug Support for anyone concerned about their own or another person's alcohol or drug use.

4.0 References

1. https://www.google.com/url?sa=i&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.realvantage.co%2Finsights%2Fwhat-is-a-condominium-condo%2F&psig=AOvVaw2nK9XgiK24mrUdBcbt0d5Q&ust=1719161944982000&source=images&cd=vfe&opi=89978449&ved=0CBEQjRxqFwoTCIi81rbX74YDFQAAAAAdAAAAABAJ
2. Tenant welcome pack, Rio Tinto, print.
3. Mines Park, Colorado School of Mines, print.