

SIRVA Story:

Aligning Housing Expectations to Deliver Exceptional Results



When assignees relocate from one country to another, they're often surprised by the differences in available housing, from amenities that may or may not be included to housing types and their associated costs. Often, though, these surprises are just as unexpected when an employee makes a simple move across town. Such was the case when John, a German national who had lived in Shanghai for several years, was required to move to a more central location for his job at a Fortune 500 company's chemistry plant.

John had certain expectations for his new home and hadn't been happy with any of the many properties presented by a SIRVA agent. Leo Shen, SIRVA's Associate Director of Relocation, China, suspected that this might be a case of the employee's expectations being misaligned with the available market. He and his team mounted a concerted effort to understand the root causes of the problem and how to address them.

After investigating, Leo discovered several reasons for the misalignment:

- John had used external agent ads as a benchmark, many of which listed non-existent properties or had been embellished with incorrect information to attract home buyers.
- John seemed unaware of his company's lease policy; the landlords of most of the properties he was interested in didn't accept the terms of that policy.
- John's wife had, until this point, participated in preliminary home searches alone, after which the couple returned to visit properties that had been shortlisted together.

Leo wanted to ensure that John and his wife would find a home they'd be happy to live in, and he knew the first step toward accomplishing this was to establish a sense of trust. He also knew he would need to educate them on the current housing market and availability.

To accomplish all of this, he and his team prepared data that reflected true local pricing and amenities, as well as information that would illustrate the inaccuracy of the online ads that John had seen. Next, they met with John and his wife personally to share this information, to make sure the couple understood employer guidelines and recognized the many desirable properties still available to them, and to clarify a realistic, mutually agreed upon wish list for a new home. Once all parties were on the same page, the team and couple conducted an in-office review of multiple listings. The list was narrowed down and a targeted, on-site house-hunting schedule was arranged. Thanks to personalized and caring attention, John and his wife found a new home that was not only perfect for them, but that also met his employer's lease requirements. The couple was as thrilled with the service they'd received as they were with their new home.

Every relocation is unique so, every day, SIRVA employees around the world go above and beyond to provide innovative, caring, and customized solutions to our clients and their employees. [Visit Sirva.com to read more SIRVA Stories](https://www.sirva.com) or contact us to learn how our global expertise can do the same for you.

The Face Behind the Story:

Leo Shen, Associate Director, Relocation Service, China



As Associate Director, Relocation Service for SIRVA, China, Leo is responsible for the coordination and oversight of Destination Services delivery to clients throughout the country. Together with his team, he ensures the delivery of consistent quality service and that the highest customer satisfaction is achieved.

Leo holds a bachelor's degree in engineering and brings over 13 years of relocation experience and expertise to our organization. Clients and employees alike benefit from his ability to combine strategic problem-solving skills with a strong dedication to the people he serves.

When Leo's not busy at the office, he enjoys swimming, practicing taekwondo, and spending time with his daughter – playing Legos when they're inside or taking in the natural beauty of the many parks, mountains and creeks near Shanghai when they can be outside. He also enjoys travelling with his family. Favorite destinations include Thailand and Australia, and they hope to visit New Zealand in the near future.

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