

Speaker 1:

Welcome to PayTalk, the podcast for payroll professionals, with your host, Nina Talley. In the podcast, we explore the human side of payroll by speaking with global industry leaders who provide their unique insights to help listeners better understand the issues important to them and their careers.

Nina Talley:

Welcome to PayTalk, the podcast that brings you payroll's human side. I'm your host, Nina Talley, and today we're tackling a critical challenge facing mid-market companies, managing global payroll compliance with limited resources but enterprise level complexity. And we're joined today by Graham Wiley, the Chief Marketing Officer at activpayroll, who brings a unique perspective from his extensive experience and background in ed tech, ad tech, and HR tech. Graham has identified patterns and solutions that are specific for mid-market payroll teams facing global compliance challenges, and I'm so excited for him to share those insights with you all. But before we begin, Graham, can you share a bit about your background and maybe a little bit about what drew you to the payroll industry?

Graham Wiley:

Hi, Nina. Yeah, I'd love to. Delighted to be here. I'm based in the UK and have listened to the PayTalk podcast probably for a good four or five years. I think you've been running now for five years, is it?

Nina Talley:

Yes, we just celebrated our five-year anniversary last month.

Graham Wiley:

So you've been integral to my education into the world of payroll.

Nina Talley:

Oh, that's amazing to hear. Thank you so much.

Graham Wiley:

Obviously, I've been paid for more than 30 years, but we'll try and keep that one a little on the quiet side. And then I traveled through a number of different industries from chemicals through car parking, through manufacturing, and then found myself working, as you said, in educational technology and then advertising technology. And like most payroll professionals, fell into the world of payroll about eight years ago. And what really struck me is just how meaningful the payroll profession is.

When I worked in education technology, I had kids of a primary school age, so kind of 5, 6, 7, and I was working on primary school classroom technology. And it was a really meaningful job because you could see the impact the technology was having on people. And when I started in payroll, I actually felt very similar, that here is this profession that people think is about numbers and mathematics and is actually about humans and their emotions and lots of complexity and lots of challenge to overcome.

So I've really loved my time in the payroll profession and industry and I've had a really unique opportunity to mix with some, what I would describe as kind of cutting edge or lateral thinkers in and around the space. So for nearly eight years, I led international marketing for ADP and I ran ADP ReThink, which is a big industry event, bringing in speakers from all around different segments, different parts of industry, so hearing some great customer testimonials of how businesses were transforming their global payroll.

But then also talking to the likes of Dan Pink, the author, about how different problems can be viewed through different lenses and how upstream thinking in particular has an impact on the payroll profession. We all know that payroll, biggest challenge is often the data that it's receiving from other parts of the business.

So yeah, just going through that process of looking at different categories, different sectors, and then matching those experiences to payroll. And then last year, coming to activpayroll to lead marketing globally.

Nina Talley:

I love that background so much because it really touches on the sort of through line that we're constantly discussing here at PayTalk, which is that payroll is really about humans. It is about the humans and meeting the humans where they are. And just as you need to understand the tiny humans to figure out how to properly get them the education that works with their skill set and works with their lives, it's a really beautiful comparison of just meeting the people where they're at and serving them solutions that fits the problems that they have.

Graham Wiley:

And it's just recognizing that whilst payroll is a process, it sits at the heart of that relationship between the employee and the employer, and recognizing that there is always going to be an emotion when opening a paycheck. And that might be excitement and anticipation because now you can afford the vacation you've been planning or you can do the next thing. It might be fear and angst that maybe a debt is due and you don't have quite as much money as you were expecting to have. It can be a frustration with the employer because there is a problem with the pay. Or it can be an ambivalence because a lot of people aren't even checking their payslips and they're missing an opportunity to iterate and show the value to their employees. So it is always an emotional experience, even if that emotion on behalf of the employee is perhaps a little empty, that is an opportunity for businesses to do something different.

Nina Talley:

And I think that leads right into what I wanted to discuss with you, which is, so with our mid-market payroll teams, I know that they're being pushed more and more into the global space because we all are. That is the nature of running payroll in 2025 is oftentimes, you are having to look at new processes in order to help your expanding global and distributed team. So what are some of the actual strategies that you've seen actually applied that are helping these sort of companies overcome the issue of limited resourcing in this sort of globally complicated world?

Graham Wiley:

Yeah, and I think mid-market, it's a really interesting space to try and describe because it's sometimes easier to describe by what it's not than what it is. So if we think about what it's not, it's not a very young company with a large amount of venture capital investment that has no legacy at all and it's trying to build something completely from scratch and is scaling rapidly across multiple countries. It's probably been around for a period of time, it's probably got a significant population in the US and expanding into different geographies, maybe grew through acquisition, maybe grew through change. But it's not yet at enterprise scale and it doesn't have enterprise resources to work with. It can't afford significant, hundreds of thousands if not millions of dollars for a global deployment of a full HRIS and a fully integrated global payroll to run alongside it. There's a price exclusion around that.

So what you have is this legacy of multiple different ways of managing payroll in all these different countries with no real level of expertise in any one place, but just enough resources that somebody can come to your desk as the payroll leader in head office and say, "We kind of want you to look after global

payroll." And that means in some companies that's five countries and maybe they're all European countries, maybe they're all pretty good at speaking English. But we grew up in oil and gas as activpayroll. And then you're talking about some pretty interesting frontier locations across Asia Pacific, across Africa, across Latin America.

And that is a super tough challenge for a payroll leader who's really good at domestic, doesn't have a ton of international exposure or doesn't have a ton of international resource. How do you solve for that challenge? And that's really where we began. And it's oftentimes still where a customer will come and talk to us and they will say it's very much like we were built for the problem that they're trying to solve. So I think you touched on what we've seen and what we've seen that works. I think the first thing that works is being honest about the complexity.

Nina Talley:

Ooh. I love that. That is always one of the first places we have to start. And we had an episode a few months ago that was about the complexities of global payroll and that simple global pay is a myth that we tell ourselves to help us sleep at night.

Graham Wiley:

Yeah. I think it was the bright shining light for the first 10 years of the global payroll industry, right? Here was this thing that was overly fragmented, overly complex. How hard can it be to bring some simplification to that, right? 80% roughly of a payroll process could be standardized, 20% is going to be local. If you understand what those local variabilities are, you can manage for them and you can edit for them in the way that you produce software and technology and services.

But I think what has happened, certainly in the last five years, is far from getting simpler, the actual setup and industry and context has become way more complex. And I think the mantra of simplification, I am removing the word simplification or simplify from all of the activpayroll communications because actually, if we try to pretend it can be done at the press of a button, then we are misleading our stakeholders and misleading their stakeholders about what it really takes to succeed. And that means leaning into the complexity, it means embracing it, it means understanding it, and it means applying your expertise and insight and capability to solve those problems, not to pretend they don't exist.

And I think the far end, if you're an SME, there is still a degree of simplification for a small business that can happen. But I think in that mid-market space, it's being honest about the fact that regulation is just increasing in complexity, whether that's the PIPL privacy laws in China, whether it's the next iteration of eSocial in Brazil, whether it's how Spain is thinking about time management or how the UK is thinking about minimum wage and the national insurance rises that we had here in the last few weeks.

And regulators learned through COVID that they didn't need to do a 12-month industry consultation period. They learned that they could actually do things on the fly, and in some countries do things on the fly and then retroactively apply them. So the whole industry has to move in a much more agile fashion than it ever had to before.

And that goes back to the problem of the mid-market global payroll leader. How do you keep up with those changes? How do you stay one step ahead of those changes? And how do you bring all the stakeholders on the journey?

Nina Talley:

I think that something we can all relate to is being given or taking on a new challenge at work and not finding necessarily the financial support that is needed to complete the task as we would like. Do you have any type of advice or strategies for payroll professionals who are trying to get that buy-in from their CFO and just haven't found the way to get that response yet?

Graham Wiley:

Yeah, I think that the payroll for many years suffered from the if it ain't broke, don't fix it, and that high risk perception that goes with transforming a payroll operation just because of the mission criticality of payroll. And what companies have learned and seen with some other IT-based transformations or HR transformations where things are sometimes more difficult than they first appear. But actually, the business case for a global payroll transformation is incredibly strong.

So what we find is when you start a conversation around the exploration of what does my business case look like for this? There are ways to surface up what the costs already are. What are the costs in terms of internal manpower, chasing down resources? What are the costs in terms of compliance penalties? And oftentimes, that has to be a really specific discovery process because it's just part of business as usual in the way that those countries operate their payroll today.

So yeah, we always have problems with the upstream data coming in from HR. So we always file two days late, so there's always a penalty associated with that particular issue. And that doesn't normally get surfaced up until either there's a payroll review or in many instances where people are moving to real-time filing and then those compliance penalties get quite substantial if you can't adapt to the real-time nature of the way governments and regulators want you to run payroll in those countries. So there are a series of hidden costs that you go through a discovery process.

And then it's about actually thinking through what is the likely pace of transformation? What is going to be the cost of transformation? And how do I build that overall business case? And there are some good resources out there around building that global payroll transformation, but I think there's nothing better than actually early engagement with specialists in the market before you get to the structured RFP. I think most organizations these days in a procurement of any scale would use a structured RFP, but that really limits the opportunity for innovation and experimentation because you're issuing a request for a proposal against a specification so that you can compare vendors like for like.

There is a critical step before that about preparing for the RFP and actually sizing the opportunity that I think organizations miss at their peril. So going through that step and talking to a couple of vendors early in the process, maybe you're in a position where you have a specialized consultant that you can work with that can help in that process. But really, actually talking to the people who are doing the payroll in those countries, who understand the challenges is really valuable early on. That lets you then build and refine what your business case is likely to look like and then to build your RFP to deliver that business case.

And then you go into a formal structured cadence of request for proposal and competitive tendering and the procurement cycle. And that openness to different ways of working, different ways of driving efficiency, different ways of integrating with the HR technology, do you go for the sophisticated real-time API type integration or actually, given the nature of your operation in that country, do you not perhaps need to spend quite so much on a real-time information flow? You can stick with a batch-based file upload process. It might be different in different geographies. Each of those allows you to size your investment, reduce the cost of the setup, and then think about the return that it delivers to the business.

And then I guess later in the process is looking at how do you consolidate separate services into one framework? So again, thinking about if you've got a lot of global mobility and global movement, if you're managing multiple payment suppliers through that process, being able to structure an RFP that gives you the leanest operation with the maximum impact is incredibly valuable for a business going through that transformation process.

And then obviously you've got to stand up and communicate that to your stakeholder group. And working with partners and teams that are actually going to help you build that business case, help you stress test it and articulate it, are going to champion it for you and provide you with the information you need in a timely fashion. There is nothing worse than going through an RFP, finding that you're missing a critical part of the information at the point where you need to present internally to the CFO, and not being able to get hold of the vendors to provide that information and give you an update. So that culture fit through the

experimentation discovery process, through the RFP process really maximizes your opportunity to present a compelling business case to the CFO in a compelling way.

And in a way that's mindful of the competing investments because we're in a world where there is a limited finite amount of resource that every CFO has available to them. And how do you make the business case? It doesn't just have to pay for itself and wash its face, it has to be a better investment for the CFO [inaudible 00:24:59] investment. And with the amount of money that companies are sinking into AI, that bar is rising all the time.

But actually looking at how you would adopt some of those technologies, how you would integrate, that can also help speed your business case. Payroll and the way you think about payroll management, you can be at the forefront of some of those technology innovations and discussions even in the way you run your own function, just using standard off-the-shelf tools. That's a way to kind of maybe take money that's being ring-fenced for new technology investments and new areas and say, "Hey, bring it payroll. We'll do some of that experimentation."

Nina Talley:

When they ask, what is your favorite day of the year, what do you tell them? Easter, your birthday, an anniversary perhaps? Moveable feasts one and all. There is, however, one guaranteed day every month when, with the right planning, the stars align to create a truly beguiling day, a day of joy, a day of renewal, a day of pay. Payday, whether fate, kismet, or the product of accurate, compliant, and on-time payroll, payday matters to us all. That's why activpayroll is releasing a limited edition fragrance called Love Pay Day to celebrate, a scent as complex and alluring as the challenge of global payroll and as calming and confidence inspiring as the answers offered by activpayroll. Unconventional, certainly. Intriguing, undeniably. So come with us and be captivated by the allure of global payroll. Love your people, Love Pay Day from activpayroll. Find out more at www.activpayroll.com/love. Again, that's W-W-W dot A-C-T-I-V-P-A-Y-R-O-L-L dot com slash love.

It touches on something that I did want to cover with you, which is the existence of AI solutions in the global payroll space. And I know I'm a little tired of talking about AI. I don't know if you're a little tired-

Graham Wiley:

[inaudible 00:27:34].

Nina Talley:

... talking about AI at this point, but just a little. But I do think that there is often a misconception about AI, and I know I'm finding it across industries. But the idea is that AI will just automate it and make it simple and easier. And I want to ask you a little bit about what those misconceptions are, where AI's place is in this sphere and how our payroll professionals can look to those tools to actually assist them.

Graham Wiley:

So I think you're right, there's a lot been said about AI, so let's see, Nina, if we can say something that hasn't been said before in a different way.

So I think one of the first things to bear in mind, and one of the things that resonated for me as someone who, over the last few years, has been trying to figure some of this stuff out as well in my own role, is the kind of things we think computers would be good at. AI in the form of generative AI is actually pretty bad in terms of maths and calculations.

Nina Talley:

Yes.

Graham Wiley:

And some of the things we-

Nina Talley:

It can't count.

Graham Wiley:

Yeah. Some of the things we think it wouldn't be good at, it's actually pretty darn good at. Being a good thought partner, bouncing ideas around, helping you refine that proposal to the CFO. What does the business case need to look like? What other factors is that individual likely to be thinking? How could I structure the argument to be more persuasive to them? That kind of thought partnering is amazingly powerful with the technology and doesn't require you to be uploading any of your own proprietary data into technologies that you're not sure who will own them next week or whether they'll still be around next week.

So I think for me, it's not so much about what the technology vendors are doing and what's the latest whiz-bang technology. It's how do I, as an individual, understand the potential for this technology? And how do I, as an individual, start to use it? And when you start looking at it through that lens, it becomes less about what's ChatGPT able to do or Microsoft Copilot or Perplexity or DeepSeek, and it's more about what is the problem I'm trying to solve and what could point me in that direction? So the majority of IT, finance, and payroll departments, and HR, still use a significant amount of Excel for some of their work, right?

Nina Talley:

Yes.

Graham Wiley:

We don't talk about it. It's not glamorous, it doesn't fit in a product roadmap. But in a team, in a function, not so much on the vendor operations side where things are automated and they sit on a platform, but when you ask a payroll team to do an analysis or when they're thinking about a new way of looking at the data, Excel's going to be the tool that often comes up. I'm sure there are teams out there that are getting data fed to them in some form of Excel from their HR function. It's well known that 80 to 90% of Excel spreadsheets contain some sort of an error. Copilot's getting really good as a way of testing and checking formulae in Excel. That doesn't cost you anything if your organization already has Copilot. It sits squarely in an area that you're already using and responsible for, and it's something you can control and think through. How am I going to develop a formulae or think about doing an analysis in a different way?

So yeah, I think it starts by starting small and thinking about where can I use case this in my own operations today with the tools that are available inside my organization? Then with the knowledge that builds, how do I ask smarter questions of the vendors? And then realistically, what is the feature functionality that I really need to pay in my tool set?

So from our perspective, we're looking at things like the use of AI to do data validation. We all know there are upstream challenges coming in from the HR function and other places where data comes from, especially across a complex geographic portfolio of countries. So that seems like a really good place to put AI capabilities.

Some people are super excited about AI agents, but when you see the demos and you see the technology and you see what it is doing, see the latest demonstration of an AI agent trying to book travel demonstrations from ChatGPT example, the technology is still some way away. So you're talking about the immediate return, if you're talking about rolling out across five or six countries in a rollout program of

less than a year, agentic AI really isn't an issue for this year. So I think it's just deciding which bits you are going to focus on, which bits are going to be most useful to you, and which bits do you actually believe will add value. And then building that in, hence the kind of discovery, the dialogue, the exploration before you get to the structured RFP.

Nina Talley:

That's an excellent point. And I do know that AI is not going anywhere. We all at this point, I believe, are aware that it is here for a bit. And it's just a matter of acknowledging the weaknesses of the tool and adapting the strengths into your processes while understanding and knowing that I personally believe AI will never replace the human element of things. There is something special about humans that allows us to create new ideas out of nothing. And that sort of refreshed eyeball look at things is always, always one of the most important factors of solving payroll problems. Because when you get bogged down in the strategy of it, of just trying to optimize, optimize, optimize, you can lose a little bit of the humanity and you can lose sight of the people who are working payroll and you can lose sight of the people getting paid.

Graham Wiley:

Which comes back to it being a messy people-based experience. People are messy and they will have odd questions. And yes, 20% of their questions might be, I forgot my password. And that's great to automate that and put that through. But when somebody is trying to understand, I relocated to this country, my tax code has changed, I've just found out that I'm having a baby, what are my situations? The language models can do a good job of some of that today. And I think we should always be a little careful of never because the exponential technology curve, it's going to take us to unexpected places. But yeah, I think the day that artificial intelligence is running payroll, it will probably be running most things. So it will be paying artificial intelligence engines to do artificial intelligence work because this is a super complex area to get right.

The notion of expertise, Malcolm Gladwell's idea around 10,000 hours, that you can look at something and know that it's wrong but not know why you know it's wrong. That I think, that intuition, that humanness, that has a role certainly for anyone starting a career now in payroll. And I think we all have work to do to encourage more people to start a career in payroll. But that shortage of talent, that shortage of experience, we can supplement teams with AI, we can increase the impact they have on their business. The tool is going to be useful, but only if you as an individual understand how and why.

Nina Talley:

Yes.

Graham Wiley:

And unfortunately, I can offer a warning from the world of marketing. About 10, 15 years ago, a couple of companies that you might've heard of, one called Facebook, one called Google, started doing a lot of work around advertising and helping businesses do their advertising. And do you know what? 10, 15 years on, most marketers receive their training in advertising from Facebook and Google. And when you allow a vendor to train you on what is happening in the space, [inaudible 00:36:08] training the next generation of talent to be more dependent on that vendor's tools. So again, sometimes when you see stuff happen in different sectors, advertising technology exploded 15 years ago, transformed the way that digital advertising was run, but it had some real impacts on the way the profession operates and where they go to for their professional skills and development.

Nina Talley:

I would completely agree with that. That's a really wonderful point and it does then influence the entire market. This is the way to get trained, then those are the tools that you use inherently.

Graham Wiley:

Yeah. And then everybody's on the same tools doing the same things in the same way.

Nina Talley:

There's no need for the tool to improve for the user. The tool is just improving for its own end game.

Graham Wiley:

Yes. Yeah. Which is often making the vendor more money, by the way, but we'll gloss over that. So I think that people should be excited about what this technology can do, but they should also be measured in their thought process about where am I going to apply it? How does it apply to me? And of all the things I have in front of me, how do I ensure I'm future ready on this one? But how do I ensure that we don't drop the ball this week, this month, this quarter? And actually, where is the biggest productivity improvement? And maybe the biggest productivity improvement is going from paper checks to direct deposit.

Nina Talley:

Yes.

Graham Wiley:

Something that in a lot of countries has happened already and is just business as usual that still, I know in the US there's still a significant amount of paper checks in that payroll process. Maybe it is in thinking through actually, if we've got a globally mobile population, let's think about how we de-risk the compliance issues on that population through expert advice and guidance rather than through subscribing to an ongoing information service. We do a one-time hit to make sure everybody's set up correctly rather than spend that money on a piece of technology that we'll need to reference, but we'll need to reference when there's a problem. Maybe we should be thinking about getting ahead of the problem and doing diagnostic work first. And that's still a human thing.

Nina Talley:

And talking about that human side of things and making the human side of things a little bit more of a strategic tool, how and what do you think that payroll professionals who are looking to climb the corporate ladder and are maybe looking to become that strategic leader and get a place on the boardroom, in the boardroom, a seat at the table, how do our mid-market payroll professionals become, say, a chief people officer?

Graham Wiley:

Yeah, I absolutely love this one because if you're in a mid-sized organization, the idea of a chief payroll officer, as has been talked about in some circles, I think is just there's not enough mental bandwidth inside most executive suites for it to become that specialized in the conversation.

But I think that every chief people officer coming through in the next few years needs a really good understanding of what's happening in payroll. The compliance risks are so significant, the impact on people is so significant, the amount of money that it affects for the employing organization, the risks that AI poses in terms of fraud and misdirection and challenges to the business on the, we talk about the positives, but we don't often talk about the challenges of deep fakes and some of the other challenges that

payrollers will need to deal with. A deep understanding of that is a huge step forward for an individual that knows that business in depth.

So you start to open up new career pathways, right? If you do a global payroll transformation, we've now been doing global payroll probably 20 odd years globally in terms of different enabling technologies in ways. It's a really substantial career path now that if you take on global, you can do a transformation in your organization, you can then move to the next organization and do a transformation. I've had the pleasure of talking to people who've done 3, 4, 5 large-scale global transformations over the last 20 years, but started their life in single country payroll in a mid-size organization.

Or you can take the view that actually payroll is the pulse of the organization. And if you really transform and build a competent global payroll structure inside the company you're in today and you have strategic impact on the business, you can then start to layer in new skills and you can move up inside that organization. I don't think payroll is capped in the way that it perhaps is perceived to have been in the past because the change in the last five years, the strategic significance is there.

Nina Talley:

I love that. Do you have any thoughts or questions about global payroll? We want to hear from you. Join the conversation and send an email to podcasts@payroll.org or leave us a message on PayrollOrg's Facebook page.

So now is the time in our podcast for something that we like to call payroll nightmares. And all of our listeners know that this is just my favorite part and it's because I think it is the great equalizer. It shows that everyone can have a bad day that they think they'll never recover from and they will recover from it. So Graham, I know that you have a few payroll nightmares for us, and I just wanted to see if you would mind sharing them on a public stage.

Graham Wiley:

Yeah, absolutely. So as I said, I've been paid for 30 years and I've had one payroll nightmare in that time. So I was working for an American company operating in the UK, so it was a multi-country payroll, and there was a mistake made in the way in which expenses were handled. And the expenses were bundled in with the salary, and so the income was overstated. And then the tax man took a very large chunk of, well, it felt like a very large chunk of income at that particular point in time across a whole swathe of the UK employee base.

It took so long to unravel. The company had to provide specialist advice to each affected employee. It took 12 months to work through with HMRC and then get to the tax returns. It wasn't until you'd done the subsequent tax return that you could actually work out [inaudible 00:44:16] months later that everything was squared away and that it'd all been done, all because of an administrative misunderstanding that whilst the expenses were being run through payroll, they shouldn't have been treated the same as pay. And that little issue created so many different challenges and lost hours of work, as I tried to work out what was my financial loss and how were we going to make sure that I was right with the organization and magnify that across not a huge population, but a significantly growing population in that business. So that was one side of it.

And then similarly, I was having a conversation with an activpayroll customer who was talking to me about their global transformation and what they found in their German operation. They actually found that under the existing payroll setup, they had not been paying the appropriate level of taxes for their employees. And the only way to actually rectify that and avoid a significant compliance penalty was to substantially reduce the take-home pay for those employees in the early part of the transition in order to make sure that the appropriate amount of taxation was clawed back.

So yeah, definitely scope for several payroll nightmares. But I do have to say, this industry is phenomenal. The scope for those payroll nightmares are so significant, and yet we see so few of them and

we hear about them so rarely because payroll professionals will go that extra mile in order to make sure that the problem is unwound. And listening to people on this podcast who've explained what they've been doing and how they've solved those problems is both inspiring and enlightening.

Nina Talley:

I completely agree. And on our most recent episode, our guest shared the insight that when you ask employees why do they work and maybe we make sure it's not their boss who's asking, generally the honest answer that you'll get is to get paid. I work so that I can get my paycheck and go home. But then why do payroll professionals work? And it's so that everyone else can get paid. And they are almost always willing to take that burden on because they know so intimately the impact that it's having on employees when there is something wrong.

Graham Wiley:

Yeah, I really see that in our people. I see that in our customers. I see that in the industry overall. And it's just how people have to plan their vacation and their holiday around running paydays.

Nina Talley:

Yes. Yes.

So before we lose you, Graham, I have one last question for you, and that is, what is the best piece of professional advice you have ever been given? Or what is the piece of advice that you wish you had been given?

Graham Wiley:

I love this question. I've been so privileged to work with some very smart people across different industries who always challenge and push me. But the one I'm going to choose, which I think is most applicable to the conversation we've been having and the world of global payroll, was actually shared with me by someone in the global payroll world who said the phrase, stress is a privilege. And it took me a moment, after I laughed at that and I thought, "Yeah, it doesn't feel like it." It took me a moment to reflect on what that individual was saying to me. And they were saying, "We believe that you are the solution to the problem, and therefore, we are putting that problem on your shoulders to resolve. And yes, that is stressful, and yes, that is difficult, but it is a privilege that you have earned by your past performance and your impact on the business and the way that you approach the problem."

And I just see that with mid-market global payroll teams, if you're an individual in a US head office who's just been asked with a senior colleague to address global payroll, that is stressful. But that stress is a privilege because your peers, your business is saying to you, "We think you're the right person to help us understand this, to help us uncover the value that's hidden, to unlock the potential in our global payroll. And we trust you to solve the problem in the best way that you know how." And that, I think it resonated for me then. And it's something that my teams and I really look to deliver for our customers, because if stress is a privilege, then our goal is to help you manage that stress and achieve that level of calm confidence.

Nina Talley:

What a beautiful piece of advice and a really wonderful sort of lens refresh on how to look at the stress that comes with payroll. Because it is true, it sits heavily on payrollers' shoulders that it's done correctly and it's done right, but that stress that's coming to you is because so many people trust you and trust your skillset. Thank you for sharing that insight. I had never really thought of it like that.

Graham Wiley:

Well, thank you. And I think the individual, if they listen to this, they will know who they were, and I appreciate that advice almost every day.

Nina Talley:

Well, Graham, thank you so much for joining us today. This conversation was incredibly refreshing, and I know that you've given our listeners a lot of practical wisdom that is just going to help mid-market payroll teams everywhere, and I know that they will appreciate it.

Graham Wiley:

Yeah, I think our goal is pragmatic advice and guidance and making sure that people have the information and resources that they need to take action. The worst thing in a rapidly changing global world is to not be in a position to take action to drive the transformation that you need to drive.

So I've really enjoyed the conversation, Nina. It's so fun getting a chance to meet someone virtually, but virtually in person, who you've had the opportunity to listen to whilst driving to and from work, whilst noodling through a problem and walking in the countryside, even whilst doing the ironing. So thank you very much, it's been a genuine privilege.

Nina Talley:

Oh, well, thank you so much for that. And definitely, I am always happy to join you for your ironing.

And as always, I want to thank our listeners for tuning in to PayTalk. Your support makes this podcast possible, and we are committed to bringing you the human stories and practical insights that make payroll so much more than just numbers on a payslip. If you found value in today's conversation, please share it with a colleague or rate, review, and subscribe on your preferred podcast streaming service. That is the best way to make sure that we can keep bringing you the human side of payroll. Until next time, this has been your host, Nina Talley, with PayTalk.

Speaker 1:

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