

## How to source and manage payroll providers for globally distributed teams

with Denis Barnard, Director at HRmeansbusiness, Author, HRIS & payroll expert

**Maddie Duke** 00:01

You're listening to *The State Of Work*, the podcast by Lano. *The State Of Work* is about finding your place in the changing world of work as an individual or an organization. In each episode, we dive into some of the benefits and limitations that we face when it comes to remote and flexible work. We discuss how we work, how we hire and manage people and how we live in this increasingly global workplace. I'm your host, Maddie Duke. And today's episode is all about navigating payroll for global businesses. My guest is HR and payroll consultant, Denis Barnard. Denis has been involved in a variety of projects across the HR and payroll space for over 30 years and has spent a great deal of that time working remotely. He's the director of Green River Technology and HR Means Business and partner at All Remotely. Denis took some time out of his busy schedule to answer some questions about how to find and manage payroll providers for globally distributed teams.

Welcome, Denis, and thanks for joining me on *The State of Work* today.

**Denis Barnard** 01:12

Thank you very much, Maddie. Great to be here.

**Maddie Duke** 01:16

Awesome. It's great to have you. Where are you joining us from today?

**Denis Barnard** 01:20

Today I'm speaking from Bogota in Colombia, where it's kind of chilly 14 degrees. And it's... well, early in the morning.

**Maddie Duke** 01:33

You were telling me earlier off-air that you are growing mangoes and bananas?

**Denis Barnard** 01:39

Yep, yeah, I've got a house about 30/40 miles south of the capital. There I grew bananas and coffee and mangoes, whatever you want. Any of those tropical fruits, great fun.

**Maddie Duke** 01:53

I certainly miss fresh, flavorful mangoes since I moved to Berlin. We're really pleased to have you on the podcast today as someone with over 30 years of experience in HR and payroll software. Before we get into some of my questions I wanted to ask, could you tell me a bit about your background in general?

**Denis Barnard** 02:16

I'm actually a refugee from accounting. And 100 years ago, I decided to switch to tech and go for a new line as it were in HR. A few years after that somebody asked me to computerize the payroll, which I did. And ever since then people are saying, you know, that stuff? Could you do this for us? I mean, that really says where it is. It's after leaving corporate life and then striking out with a business partner, I specialize more and more in the tech side. And with a whole range of active projects, you know, mainly in selection implementation, for a whole range of sectors. In 2009, I founded HR Comparison (which is now GPA comparison), which was really a comparison website for HR payroll and other software associated with the HR space that transitioned into management with the Global Payroll Association. And in the meantime, I wrote up a book, which I think everybody is rushing to buy in the airport called "*Selecting and Implementing HR and Payroll Software*". But it was great fun to write, so much fun, I'm writing a follow up.

**Maddie Duke** 03:30

Awesome.

**Denis Barnard** 03:31

And now, although I'm still doing a lot of consulting more and more, my time is taken up with educational materials, like videos and webinars, goodness knows what else. So it's all fun.

**Maddie Duke** 03:43

Brilliant. Well, I mean, the title of your book is very relevant to what I want to talk to you about today.

**Denis Barnard** 03:52

Great, thank goodness for that.

**Maddie Duke** 03:55

Exactly. Yeah, we do want to kind of talk about the decision making processes for choosing new payroll systems, and particularly in the context of companies that are expanding globally or working with remote or distributed teams. And so perhaps we could really just start there like, what does an ideal.... I guess, what does an ideal global payroll setup look like? If you are a company that's looking globally.

**Denis Barnard 04:22**

Yeah, I think I should say straight up, there is no one piece of software that does all the world's payroll. So you by necessity, have to have payroll providers or payroll information coming from the various places as you're operating in. I don't see there's any ideal setup. I think it very much depends on the culture and distribution of the company. Most companies start off by, you know, in their home territory, then they expand into one or two countries, they find local providers and everything fine, and then boom, they take off, they need more and more places. And so they've got to go hunting for providers. And that's not always easy. You know that to judge, you know how good these people are going to be. I mean, the essence of any payroll is really about timeliness, accuracy, speed, and compliance. And to find somebody in some, what one would consider as a far off land, who's going to do all that for you is not so easy. And you have timezone differences as well. So working across that, you know, many people have actually decided here, they'll try and put their eggs into different basket, which is where I guess we'll probably be talking about.

**Maddie Duke 05:51**

Yeah, I mean, well, you've perhaps already answered my next question, which was, basically, what are the biggest factors when you're comparing different providers? And you mentioned timeliness, accuracy, speed and compliance? Would that be your answer there as well?

**Denis Barnard 06:06**

Those are the main factors, but you've got to look at other things. Some countries, legislation is more tricky than others, some have more difficult payrolls to handle than others, I think for anybody looking for on a global scale, consistency of information are right across the board, you actually want the information in a way that you are going to assimilate into your center in a given format. And, you know, getting people to comply with that on time at a long distance isn't always easy. And, you know, there are problems, some territories that the people operating in don't have a wonderful infrastructure. So if you're moving heavy files of payroll information, it could be the local bandwidth causes you some problems, you have to maybe vary the times of day. You know, I know for a start, you know, I'm not going to say anything, I have a Zoom meeting on Saturday night, when the whole of Latin America is jabbering with their friends and family. The bandwidth just collapses. So you would you know, those are sort of local problems, you're going to find it's not easy, I have to say.

**Maddie Duke 07:28**

I mean, that leads me to ask, what are some of the biggest problems and complaints that people run into when sourcing payroll providers and like locally and countries that are foreign to them?

**Denis Barnard 07:40**

Yeah, I think, you know, there's sometimes a lack of understanding between the client and the local agent, sometimes the local agent may have problems in trying to get the information into the format that the client wants. But it all means you know, you've got to go and find them, and if you're operating in 74 territories, you know, you've got a fair bit of legwork to do. And, of course,

it would be great fun to travel around the world, finding payroll suppliers, but by the time you get to number 44, you're probably quite fed up with it. So the problems yes can be, there could be, I think, the two sides for understand what they're doing, you know, the client also has to understand something about the legislation and compliance required in the country. Otherwise, you know, if the local person tried to explain the problem to the person sitting in the center, there could be a kind of disconnect there and they don't quite get what the heck is going on. I think in certain surveys that I've seen, you know, there is this lack of experience, or comprehension, generally on the part of the local end agent, they've been very comfortably working with local clients who understand the conditions, you've got a big multinational arrive on your doorstep with certain demands of format, and time and reporting standards and the rest of it. And you know, it could be a big disconnect there.

**Maddie Duke** 09:21

Yeah. So what are some of the solutions then?

**Denis Barnard** 09:24

Well, most people are favoring going for payroll aggregators, who actually collect the information for you from the various parts of the world. I think you have to be very careful in what you negotiate for with your payroll aggregator. You want the information in a certain format, they've got to be clear that that's what it's got to be on a certain timeline and so on. And on top of that, you know, there are the costs implications, because you know, it's not cheap to do. I think it's the ideal solution for people who don't want to have to invest too much time and effort in this. But you have to be very, very clear from the outset about what the standards are going to be. You know, for instance, one key point is you've got to be sure whether or not the person who is the people who are dealing with this for you are going to keep you updated on legislative changes and things like that, I think you need to look at the negotiation part, very closely to make sure you get what you actually want. The downside of this, I would say, is that you have earlier cutoff points. So if you were running the payroll for August, it could be your provider, in order to give themselves plenty of time, are actually going to say, well, you'll have to close the August payroll on the 16th of August. Which means - it doesn't mean much in terms of regular salary payments. But what it does mean is if there's any overtime, extra payments to be made to the second half of the month, they're not going to appear, when they don't appear, you get a whole raft of queries coming in from the staff saying, hey, my overtime and so you know, that is one danger that one has to watch out for when you hand off their operation to a third party.

**Maddie Duke** 11:36

Do you think that there's a certain time or business model where it makes sense to hand this over to, like a third party to organize for you? Or whether, you know, at what point do you do that?

**Denis Barnard** 11:54

I think it depends on the resources that you've got, nobody likes deploying too many resources. As a standard sort of medium sized company, I would say, if you start operating in more than five, or eight territories, I think you got to do it. You know, you've got a relationship to maintain. If

you - if you're maintaining a relationship with even more than five, it becomes an issue. It's time consuming, but it's very necessary. You can't just let them switch off the radio and let them work in silence out there, you've got to be managing that relationship. So very much depending on your resources, I would say if you've got more than five, you've got to start looking at as a sole vendor, or couple of vendors. Yeah, otherwise, you know, you're going to be in a morass of relationship management.

**Maddie Duke** 12:49

And using a vendor, just to kind of clarify using a vendor that works with multiple providers is sort of also what you were referring to before when you mentioned an aggregator, is that right?

**Denis Barnard** 13:03

Yes, it's a different format. It's done in different ways. Some will gather the information for you, and presented to others will show the information on a dashboard - they have different sort of modus operandi. But that's let's say, that's what we would say they are, I will call them a vendor in this case.

**Maddie Duke** 13:25

Yeah. I wanted to ask if, like, particularly as someone with, you know, a couple of decades of experience in this world...

**Denis Barnard** 13:34

Haha sounds terrible, yeah, go on.

**Maddie Duke** 13:38

...but what some of the biggest changes you've seen, I mean, not just not just over that time, but also, I'd like to hear about the last couple of years, what sort of things you've seen change in the way that people compare different providers or some of the trends or the role of automation?

**Denis Barnard** 13:58

Yeah, I think one of the things, the biggest change, I suppose we've seen over the last five to 10 years is the movement towards cloud. And I think in this...if you're thinking of operating in more than one territory, then cloud's gotta be there. Not only does it is it, well, he just has so many advantages. You don't need stuff sitting on your own servers and so on. I just think it's so much easier. And I think that's been a big change. There's still a long way to go, you'd be quite surprised. I wouldn't be surprised if there were more than still 20 or 30% of people still not on the cloud. And some of that is due to concerns about security, which I think if the Bank of England can use stuff in the cloud, then I think, no, certainly you and I can do that. Other facets are.... Well, we're standing on the dawn - we should already I've been across the threshold - but we standing on the door at the dawn of more automation. And again, you know, there's still a lot of work to be done in this arena. Automation will take a lot of the drudgery out of the routine machinations of payroll, and also be less prone to making errors. Also, I mean, automation actually helps you, if you've got to move stuff between systems. If you've got a legacy system, it's really horrible. But nobody's got the will to change it, automation will actually pull information

out of that legacy system and present it to another one. So you can actually get a bit more life span out of their old application, even though it's horrible to use. So we've got automation, and that I think we'll see over the course of the 2020s, will start to slice away at routine payroll and HR operations as well. Then we have Artificial Intelligence coming in. And I think, I'm not sure that the world of HR and payroll is really sure about what it can do. But I think it's going to come, I will, if you like, let's just try and put a context to it: AI, I believe will be like a regulator in the system. If you've got AI set up, right, it will tell you, if somebody is taking too much holiday, it will tell you, if you're not paying minimum wage to this particular band of workers, it will also tell you, once it's set up, and I've spent a lot of time working with some colleagues in the industry, it will also tell you if you've got a bias a gender pay gap, or a other pay gap - it could be ethnicity, it could be age, or whatever it will detect and tell you about bias. So AI, you could almost liken to not quite a policeman, but it's an alert system, it will look at what's going on and tell you what, what, what that trend could be. So I think again, you know, we're going to see that it could be you set flags in the system to say, hang on a minute, this person's done 84 hours of overtime this month, I mean, that that's gotta be wrong. Not wrong. They've done it. But I think from a health and safety point of view, and so you know, those things, I think, you know, the cloud, AI and RPA automation are the three big factors looming. And of course, we are now global, most of us. So the big move now is to operate globally. And, you know, in spite of what's happening to Brexit, and the rest of it, the UK will still have to trade with the rest of the world. And the tendency is to move out globally, we can now more easily sell our products abroad. So that's probably the backdrop to all these innovations.

**Maddie Duke** 18:14

Simplify your global payroll with Lano. Use Lano's payroll partners or bring your own for consolidated end to end payroll. You can automate payments to employees and contractors with Lano wallet and manage payroll for the whole global team in one dashboard. Find out more at [lano.io](http://lano.io).

What do you think that, you know, maybe coming back to this a couple of things. First of all, the fear of the cloud, like what do you think it's going to take for that, you know, maybe it's 20% or 30% of organizations that are still kind of working with legacy software, and maybe fearful of security breaches or security issues, basically, in that digital transformation. What do you think it will take for them to embrace that given that were really approaching.. this being, well, it's already kind of could be seen as the norm.

**Denis Barnard** 19:11

Yes, it is. I mean cloud is... I can tell you over the last 16 years, every HR software that I put on my list and I have a 100% record that everything on my shortlist has always been selected. Nobody has ever opted for anything other than the cloud. So it shows you I think that last 20 30% I think it's just gonna be realization on the path of people above, they'll find it cheaper, easier to operate. A whole generation of IT people who since the first day I ever got involved in HR software have been hysterical about security and what have you and so on. You know, we're past that now.

**Maddie Duke 20:02**

Yeah.

**Denis Barnard 20:03**

So it's almost like time, rather than like it caught up with the dinosaurs is going to catch up with the non cloud people. Of course, I could be proved totally wrong. Tomorrow, somebody will come up and say, my god, the cloud has leaked all their details. But right now, I, you know, I think it's just a question of time.

**Maddie Duke 20:21**

Yeah.

**Denis Barnard 20:22**

And not only that, it will be question of support. You know, one by one, you'll lose, the people will lose the capability of running stuff on servers, you know, people say why we got servers sitting in the basement?

**Maddie Duke 20:36**

Yeah, yeah, absolutely. And what about those companies that have been dealing with work from home as a result of the pandemic, who are now saying, okay, we're gonna let our staff work from "anywhere" I use quotation marks there, because in theory, we know work from anywhere, it's not strictly possible, but working in various iterations of actual remote work. So may be that in different states or different cities or countries. So companies that have been centralized and have gone to the work from home option, and now might be dealing with staff relocating or yeah, shifting places, like, who had a payroll system established? What sorts of issues are they running into now having to move shift their model to kind of follow employee demand, like, you know, that's what candidates and employees are expecting now from workplaces?

**Denis Barnard 21:37**

Yeah, it's a broad question. I and colleagues have been looking into this quite extensively, since Day 1 - I mean, I've been working remotely for nearly 20 years. So quite an old hand at this. I think what we find is, let's look at the trend. I think the trend right now is towards what they call hybrid. And that trend is about sitting at home for three or four days or a few days or whatever, and the rest of time to the office. I don't see that as a long term solution. The hybrid model is actually more expensive for an organization for a number of reasons. What I believe also, is that we won't work from anywhere, I think there's one of my colleagues or is completely debunked the myth.

**Maddie Duke 22:30**

Exactly. Shout out to Bhagyashree.

**Denis Barnard 22:33**

Yeah, Bhagyashee. I mean, these pictures of guys lolling around on the beach, with laptops, you know, which is the last thing I do probably in places where I live because they just come and lift

things off you but never mind. It, you know, depends on the signal. You know, even the UK and sub parts of the UK, I can't get a signal good enough to handle the bandwidth of files. So yeah, that work from anywhere myth is really only applicable to a number of places in the world? I think the real tendency is going to be, yes, you're working in the same country. But you don't have to come to the office all the time, you know, it's a thing to be negotiated out. So in order to do that, we've all got to be hooked into the cloud, or in yeah, into the internet. And to do that we need that infrastructure. I don't think it's a question of software so much now as I think it's a question of management. The software works. I mean, some people during this pandemic, who hadn't invested in good software got caught out big time. They didn't have a good operating self-service operating in their systems and so on. So the means of moving stuff around the system. You know, things like timesheets and sick forms, and all that other paraphernalia associated with running staff, that just fell down. So there was, you know, there's a big head of steam building up now for people to get better software. But I think, you know, the software is out there to manage all this tendency. I don't think that we'll see individual - I don't think you'll see some individuals in a department working hybrid, and others working in the office. I think there'll be activities that are identified as more suited to working from home or remote call it what would will and and that will be on block. So we'll say just for argument's sake, don't quote me: the payroll department works better from home so why not give them the opportunity to work from home. And there are pitfalls. Not everybody can work well remotely. Some people need a lot more support than others. And one thing that seems to be overlooked in the whole argument of this of working from home is what happens if the employee is on the wrong end of an abusive relationship domestically. And that's another issue. So it's not so easy. But it's going to come. And I think you're able to settle down right now people are taking the middle option. People are saying, Tell me, you know, the enlightened ones, the dinosaurs, were saying, you've got to come to the office, and we'll cut your pay.

**Maddie Duke** 25:37

Yes.

**Denis Barnard** 22:33

..although we'll stay off the Google... the Google story. You know, it's just for a company that's been shouting from the houses about what a wonderful employee it is. I think the thing that really got up everybody's noses is the fact that one Google executive said he was taking off to New Zealand or something to work, while all the rest had to live within some whatever. But anyway, that's another story. It's an isolated incident, I think the move to work away from the office will be in places where it is a pain to commute. And I think what we'll see over a little more time, is that the work will move towards residential areas. So instead of having to fight your way into two hours on a train, or a bus or whatever, there will be sort of digital honeycomb or co-working spaces springing up in what were previously dedicated industrial development zones in and around town. So people have a pleasant 15 minute drive to get to their little co-working space, I think that's what will happen. But the software is in place, everything's in place to do it. I think it's the way it's used. I mean, when the pandemic kicked off, some people in areas that don't protect their employees had to have the videos switched on all the time. Other people got subjected to a barrage of phone calls, Zoom calls, emails, and the rest of it. This is not software,

this is poor management. And I do believe that's a big, big skill. Somebody on LinkedIn, put a thing about where should we be going to the world of the future, more tech? And I said, No, not more tech. I think we need better managers. You know, I mean, I'll give you a case. There are a number of outfits during the pandemic have been thinking the best way from staff morale, is to get them all together on a Friday afternoon, have a drink. Well, you know, I believe the term I should be using and that is culturally insensitive. I can think of at least two religions where that doesn't work for nevermind anybody who is a recovering alcoholic. So that's just really poor management. And that's where I think our next thrust should be in this arena. I think the software is there. The infrastructure is there as well.

**Maddie Duke 28:13**

Yeah, and for sure, I think there is definitely a trend of like, as you, as you mentioned, bringing Friday night drinks in and thinking, yeah, that's gonna engage everyone. But it just doesn't - whether you're remote or not like, yeah, that's never a fix all for everyone, or pizza, or whatever it might be.

**Denis Barnard 28:35**

No, no, you're right. Even in the office. I mean, a bunch of people who go out drinking from the department on the Friday, naturally excludes other people. You know, to whom that not applicable. So yes, it's a management question, definitely.

**Maddie Duke 28:54**

I'm coming back to I know, right at the start, I asked like, what, what an ideal payroll setup would be for a global team or an a team that's expanding, I guess, I'd really like to hear your opinion on when a business is at that point where they are hiring overseas or hiring in different cities or whatever it might be. What factors they should consider when they're thinking about which type of model they goes go with. So when we're looking at that I'm talking about whether we go with an AR option, hiring people in a different country via an employer of record, whether we go with a single HQ and multiple entities, so establishing actual entities in different countries. You know, there's a couple of different ways or maybe even just working with contractors internationally, what factors should they consider? And I guess particularly when it comes to what they need to know about the pay payroll and HR side of that kind of multi office setup. This is another broad question for you here. But I guess, the known and unknown factors to really consider when you're choosing that model?

**Denis Barnard 30:15**

Yeah, I think in order to employ people as opposed to, well, we'll deal with contractors right now. Because I mean, my prediction, again, I'm full of these things for the future is, I know the the Americans, particularly they are obsessed with the fact that, hey, if you're not going to follow Google's rules, all that will happen is that Google will employ will outsource your whole department to somewhere else. And that's not as easy as it sounds, I believe the trend will be to contract people from outside of your tax regime, if you like, for special projects. And indeed, that's what I do. If I want a video series made, I go to one of those places out there in the cloud and say, Hey, I need some videos made. So once I have hired somebody from Romania, once

I've hired somebody from Argentina is a one off contract. And I don't need any specific thing in place, when I'm talking about employing people on a permanent basis, the whole rule changes. To do that in some places, you actually have to establish an identity as an entity in that country, then we start getting into problems. Yeah, that is very ponderous indeed. So if you are going to employ people in other countries, it makes sense. For convenience, you know, it's not the cheapest option, I'm sure. But in the long run, it possibly could be, because it should be foolproof to go through an EOR (employer of record), or some such structure that will actually manage it for you, you've only got one to one relationship to manage as well. So I think it takes a lot of thought, and I think it very much depends on where you're trying to operate as well. Every country has its idiosyncrasies which aren't always apparent from the surface as well. So, you know, I, being sort of lazy by tendency, would definitely go down the route. But that may not be for everybody. But certainly the thing to bear in mind is in many, many tax regimes, if you want to directly employ somebody, you've got to have a local entity, they're paying them and managing them. And to do that, in some countries, you have to have a local partner, you have to, you know, whole thing gets really complicated to the EOR companies do make life a lot easier. And of course, that comes at a cost, but balancing it up cost versus risk, you know, it starts to make a lot of sense.

**Maddie Duke** 33:13

Yeah, absolutely. And what about when you're, for example, actually, let's maybe look at the United States as an example of finding payroll providers in a country where payment regulations can differ from state to state. So it's not just a federal system that you're looking at, but like, localized? Does that mean finding a payroll provider in each state that you're hiring someone in or other ones that cover the whole region?

**Denis Barnard** 33:43

Yeah, yeah, there are some, there are obviously payroll providers that cover the whole of the US. And that would make sense to tap into that if you're actually dealing with more than one state. If you're just dealing with one state. If all of your business is done in Rhode Island. It makes sense just to find somebody in Rhode Island. But if you're dealing, if you're dealing with different states, it's better to go for one of the established names who are dealing with them, you know, of course, I won't mention any names here. But they're there. You just find them and you say, look, I'm setting up an operation in Arkansas, or Rhode Island and Florida. And I need to pay people there. And I just hook into that system.

**Maddie Duke** 34:29

Yeah. Cool. I'd love to ask about the book that you're working on.

**Denis Barnard** 34:40

Yeah, I mean, it's just something that floated up from my mind and be one of the biggest pieces of work that companies and organizations have to do when they are considering sourcing a new HR payroll system, is they need to look at all the processes, because until they examine the processes They can't go to a vendor and say this, you know, unless they've got it, they can't go and say this is how our sickness absence process works, or this is how overtime processes. So

it's actually a book about HR processes, which I think will have a dual purpose, I hope nobody listening is going to copy the idea, but nevermind it doesn't matter. So it will have two purposes: if you're a startup, and you need to get a blueprint for how your staff management should work. This would provide it and on the other hand, is if you're an outfit looking for HR software, this will give you a checklist of the things that you need to be looking for in your next payroll or HR software. So it's really there. It's a guide. I'm having a lot of fun with it, because it's not just the blueprint, it is me commenting on it. And I'll give you an example. In there, I've got a process that shows how people book holidays. Now in my book and I mean book with a small B. I hate that, you know, having a fill out a bit of form of paper and saying to your manager can please can I have holiday on these dates? I'd rather technology deal with that. If there are people you are going to not supposed to clash with on holidays, you key that into the system? So where are your people wants to book holidays between the 13th and 27th of June? It will either say yes, great ching, and the little notifications your manager or bang, no, sorry, it clashes with that other person you must never be away with at the same time. Please try again. So it's that I'm giving notes on these sorts of things, saying, you know, you can do this, but I wouldn't recommend it. Here's a better way of doing it. So it's not just a book of sort of process maps is there's a lot of my rather cutting commentaries as well.

**Maddie Duke** 37:10

It's a critique! Um, yeah, I mean, that's no, no, that just makes me think that. Yeah, it's it's so true that the way that a lot of these softwares that we use, in actually all facets of business, could maybe particularly in HR.

**Denis Barnard** 37:25

Yeah, because there's a lot of stuff we don't, there's a lot of stuff that we have in HR systems we don't use. And that's a shame. Yeah, and this is one of those things that could be done.

**Maddie Duke** 37:37

Yeah. And I think what it sort of makes me think about his company's culture and values and the way they want to treat their employees versus the software that the employees have to use. So it could be, for example, a big clash that a company thinks, yes, we do want you to have freedom to choose when you go on leave. But unfortunately, the system we use has, you know, this and this many steps of approval. So from that experience of the employee, it might still feel really rigid, and it doesn't match the what they've been told about the company's values, if that makes sense.

**Denis Barnard** 38:17

Absolutely, I think we now are approaching quite an interesting crossroads that our friend, the pandemic is thrown off is the issue of trust. I think that I think we're now having to display greater levels of trust with people. And I think that's a good thing. I think that you know, that that trust could be validated by what our what our systems tell us is actually happening. And I obviously it is a rearguard action by people who want to have all those people sitting in the office where they can see them, because if, you know, I can't remember who was the guy of JP Morgan or Goldman Sachs said that people who working from home are not motivated or

something terrible like that. I mean, you know, 20 years of me lying around at home, I guess. I think that era is closing. Yes, I think whether we like it or whether they like it or not, I've always believed in trusting... These managers, these directors got to get their heads around the fact we are in a different era and trust is all important. And we will have machinery systems that tell us that people are doing well or not doing well. We will see their performance in real time. AI will help us find out if they're really engaged in what they're doing, and we can do something about it. It's about trust and supporting her trust is a new era and a very exciting one.

**Maddie Duke** 39:54

And I think if you've got a manager or company leader who doesn't trust you're probably not very motivated, it sort of goes in a cycle.

**Denis Barnard** 40:04

And you're in the wrong job. You know, over my career, I've heard a number of things. And people say, Well, you know, I can't really trust them to do this. So we'll get rid of them and get people you can trust. But the point is, they will never do it.

**Maddie Duke** 40:19

It's like, yeah, and it goes hand in hand. If you feel that from above that you're not trusted to do something, then you're not really feeling empowered to do it.

**Denis Barnard** 40:28

I absolutely agree. If you tell people you don't trust them, they'll verify your opinion.

**Maddie Duke** 40:36

Give you hand someone some trust, yeah, they've got a responsibility, and they're probably more likely to feel motivated to fulfill it.

**Denis Barnard** 40:44

I think if you had that trust, you've got to explain what it is you're trying to do. Well, that I think, you know, what, what is it? What is the problem we're trying to solve? What is your opinion and how can we solve a problem? That's your opinion, great. I mean, that revolves around things like job descriptions, I know this a slight sidetrack. But many job descriptions are about six pages long. They tell you everything that has to be done and the way it has to be done. I don't believe in that, because where is individualism? Where is the new inspiration coming from? If you stay with the same blueprint forever, in the same way, nothing ever changes. So if I, let's say, I was hiring a payroll manager, I will say here is the job description. I want you and your department to pay everybody on time, within budget, and compliantly. And how you do it is up to you. Now, how much easier life is, isn't it? That companies as organisms don't trust people, they say you have to do this, you have to do that in a certain way on green paper. I mean, yeah, it's just it's ridiculous, isn't it?

**Maddie Duke** 41:59

Yeah. I'd love to see if we come back to that example of payroll manager has been told, you know, this is our goal. We want to pay everyone on time and compliantly yeah, where should they start?

**Denis Barnard** 42:12

They'll know what to do if you've hired the right person.

**Maddie Duke** 42:18

Yes, okay. Maybe I should rephrase the question: what, like maybe if someone's been tasked with this, and it's new, it's, you know, they've done it before, but maybe not on a level of such a global scale for them.

**Denis Barnard** 42:35

If you've never done it before. And you're suddenly handed a global payroll situation, I would suggest one of two things. One is to join an association or institute that actually has experience in this. And the second is to actually talk to people who are organizations that are actually doing it and say, Look, you know, this is what I've got over 15 countries here, I got 400 employees scattered around, they need to do this and this and this. And you know, what sort of price can we do it and you look at a few of these, get a handle on it? Yeah, the contract with one of them for a couple of years. So you're comfortable with the territory. But talk to also talk to peers who are doing it in some of these associations. So that's the only way you're going to find out is actually to get somebody else to do a lot of it for you in the first place. You know, it's something you wouldn't be hired to do that. You wouldn't move from one, you know, from a UK payroll for 100 people to a global payroll, or 10,000 people, you probably wouldn't get hired. But if your company acquired an outfit that had this set up, then yes, you've got to get the experience. And the only way to do that is to talk to people who are doing it.

**Maddie Duke** 44:01

Awesome. And maybe they could reach out to you.

**Denis Barnard** 44:06

Well, I was gonna say that, but I hate publicizing my services.

**Maddie Duke** 44:10

Yes. Well, for anyone that does want to get in touch. We'll make sure that your details are on our landing page.

**Denis Barnard** 44:17

Very good. Thank you very much.

**Maddie Duke** 44:19

All right. All right. Well, I think that's pretty much where we're definitely over time. So basically, all we've got time for but thanks so much for joining me today, Denis and sharing all your insights and knowledge.

**Denis Barnard** 44:32

Thank you. It's been fun here. And if I see you though, is that that kind of topic you could talk on and on for but great fun,

**Maddie Duke** 44:41

...especially when you're such an expert, with so much experience. So yeah, thank you very much.

**Denis Barnard** 44:49

Thank you.

**Maddie Duke** 44:53

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