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:

Hey, everyone, thanks for joining us for PayTalk, the podcast that brings you payrolls human side. I'm your host, Nina Talley. And today we're joined by Ian Sparrow, the Vice President for ADP global payroll in their Employer Services International Division. Ian is just about one of the most experienced payroll professionals that I have ever met. And I'm so excited for him to share his thoughts and his knowledge on the evolution of technology in payroll. Ian why don't you give our listeners a little bit of your background?

Ian Sparrow:

Well, thanks, Tina, for such a grand introduction. So I'm not sure I really deserve all of that. Yes, I've been in payroll a long time. So my role today is to ensure that we provide the delivery structure and the operating processes for more than 140 countries. So that includes service code compliance, platform integration, so working with both ADP, the local affiliate companies, but also with a network of external partners. So I guess, overall, I'd say, I'm not a payroll expert, but perhaps I am a expert in payroll. And along my way, I've worked through all the layers of payroll, HR finance, and to really in the end, have a deep understanding of the underlying sort of payroll principles, and all related to inputs, outputs, basically how it works, pre and post payroll activities and the sort of attributes of a payroll platform.

Ian Sparrow:

I've been working for ADP for 30 plus years a little bit, actually, my background about payroll, I think it's important, I'd like to say to the group that I am a payroll, I actually started when I was 14 in my holidays, to get a bit of pocket money. So I worked for a local company and ended up in the payroll department. So I have a lot of experience in this domain. Very pleased to be here and be invited to a talk. Thanks, Tina.

Nina Talley:

Yeah, we love having you here. And honestly, I have found that, regardless of what the industry is, the true experts sort of shun the idea of being an expert, because they're constantly learning. And you've been in payroll, since you were 14. And have been working with ADP for 30 years. And yet, you say, I am not a payroll expert, I am simply an expert on payroll. And I love that. I'm very excited to dig into that expertise, even if you don't necessarily want to wear it. So I've noticed that two topics that at PayTalk we keep orbiting, is payroll strategy and payroll technologies, and how those two things come together.

Nina Talley:

And that's a really good reason, especially over the last year, it is sort of the bread and butter of staying afloat and not getting overwhelmed. So Ian I would love to get your thoughts on how payroll strategy and technology marry together. And I guess let's just get started with how have you seen it evolve over the last year or two years?

Ian Sparrow:

Good questions, I think there are two things. There's the strategic importance of payroll itself, and also the change in the recognition of payroll leaders. So I think as payroll leaders, we all recognize that at some moment, we are invisible until a problem and then bathed in a spotlight and often in the wrong type of spotlight. But let's come back to the leader kind of payroll leaders, strategic importance of partners, I think, in a modern organization, it's still true that payroll in many senses is the source of truth, and still continues to be extremely important, in the employee experience. But if we take pay data as the source of truth in many aspects, in terms of the records kind of forecasts, it's always up to date, it's always reliable.

Ian Sparrow:

Getting access to this data hasn't always been easy, or easy to use. And increasingly, and it isn't just in the last couple of years, companies for some time have wanted to harness all the accurate data we have in payroll, and really through sort of tight and time integration and of course with other systems as finance and you have workforce management time. But what's more relevant today I think is the increasing utilization of large global systems of record HR system, global HR system, systems of records SOR, as are often referred to. Therefore, the integration of HR type data, employee data to and from payroll, it's very important to be able to have these accurate business reporting and use that for a wide range to help companies make informed decisions about their employees about their costs, about their locations.

Ian Sparrow:

And integration is also bringing significant efficiencies by having single point of entry. So removing the kind of duplication and loss of the payroll data entry that used to occur. So that's not, I'd say, something of recent past, it's been happening over a longer time. But I think the drive and the significance of is happening and I think post COVID maybe we'll come on to COVID I don't know, it's kind of a topical area will drive further changes. So, on that I still think some traditional things are important.

Ian Sparrow:

So I think the payslip is still a key and process. So in the past where an employee got their payslip was very important, because it showed the way the company was organized. So an accurate payslip meant a good company, an inaccurate payslip probably meant a badly organized company for the employee. So I think, even though technology is changing the way that we can deliver employees, payslips has changed, the experience themselves is still extremely important.

Nina Talley:

I completely agree with that. I just want to circle back to what you said about payroll being a source of truth for a company and I've never heard it so plainly put. And I love it. And that it's also you're completely right, that is essentially the sniff test of a company. If your pay stub is accurate, it passes the sniff test. If it's not, it's out. Thank you so much for bringing that up. And the data has been historically hard to access. But as we're putting more and more work into it, you can unlock that sort of sense of truth. And you're absolutely right. This has been building for years.

Nina Talley:

I do think that possibly the Covid 19 pandemic was the pushing point for many smaller companies that had been dancing around how to harness payroll data. But you're definitely right, we are standing on the shoulders of giants who've been putting in work for years to make this evolution happen. And I just

wanted to see if you had any insights on exactly how technology can help a payroll professional achieve recognition. We've talked a bit about how payroll is sort of in the shadows until there is a spotlight and then it's not necessarily the most positive spotlight. How can a payroll professional harness technology to bring a positive spotlight into their life?

Ian Sparrow:

Yeah, I think using technology to leverage some of those challenges we just mentioned, about harnessing data, harmonizing streamlining processes, consistent processes, things for the employee, thinking right through end to end for the company for the employee experience. I think there are good options these days, leveraging technology to improve those and bring efficiencies as we mentioned before. I think for the payroll professional themselves, I think there is a kind of change coming. I think there is an increasing complication in relation to compliance and privacy legislation on top of payroll, and this kind of drive to more flexible working and payments that's there.

Ian Sparrow:

I think there's a shortfall in skilled payroll professionals able to manage the environment and some of the strategic changes that are happening. And more recently, if we think about the COVID period, we see that payroll is seen as an essential business recognized by governments. And it's never been more highlighted the importance of that. So I think there is technology around to drive change through the payroll organization. And in the wider scheme of saying, it's a process as a part of other employee related and business processes.

Ian Sparrow:

But I think when you think about payroll professionals to gain recognition, I think it's really about driving improvement through the organization, turning data into information, help decision making, streamline processes and consistency, as I mentioned before, make payroll a knowledge center, improve employee access and experience and I think probably as basically as staying up to date is a good start keeping payroll up to date, making it modern, make the experience modern, and accessible.

Nina Talley:

I love that and it ties into our last episode as well with Aggy Swoboda at Cliff, she talked about data and visual storytelling and taking data and turning it into information that is easily consumable and modern. It is such a tool that is at this point beginning to get utilized a bit more but has been historically underutilized. And I love hearing from both you and her that it's blossoming and that we're going to really get to see it change and affect the industry at a pretty high level. And a part of having more eyes on your work in general and achieving recognition means that there's more eyes on your work. That can be a little intimidating. So do you have any tips or ideas on how to use data or technology to maybe shield yourself or common pitfalls that maybe payroll professionals aren't looking out for when they are beginning to engage with technology?

Ian Sparrow:

That's a really good question. But maybe I'll tangent a little bit in the answer. Think about it this way. I think the payroll shouldn't be a silent community, it's time to shine in the light. So if you think about, as I mentioned before, often, payroll in the past has only got recognition when there's a problem. And then you're not spotlighted for the right reason. So I think payroll is key, we work hard, there's a lot to it, it

doesn't happen automatically though, we have systems to help us. So I think having your contribution or your hard work, and dedication visible just cannot be a bad thing.

Ian Sparrow:

Unless you like the situation where of course, no one knows what you do cares what you do, or where you're sitting. So I think as a payroll, you make an important contribution to the welfare of the business, and its employees.

Ian Sparrow:

So obviously, you need to plan well, research, gain knowledge, see what's happening in the industry, and become a little bit of a payroll SME, if you like. But payroll is key, payroll is changing. And I think not just in payroll, but really, in many ways, there's nowhere to hide, the change is happening. And it's kind of happening now. So you don't really need to search for it too far, because in some ways it's looking for you. So I think we owe it to ourselves as pay rollers to get a little bit more in the spotlight and not to be worried about making ourselves visible, our contribution should be counted, equitably with other parts of business leadership.

Nina Talley:

And you so right, the change is happening, you cannot hide, the ball is rolling, and you will get swept up on it. So it's whether you want to surf and ride the wave or go under the water a little bit.

Ian Sparrow:

Yeah, I think Nina, there are two payroll types of people. There are other people that traditionally in all respect to those, I'm not making a judgment on either description I have here but they probably work in a steady environment, they just like their job, they come in do that and they get everybody paid. And that's exactly what they should be doing. But I think in modern companies, things are changing. And the change isn't driven necessarily just from the inside, it's also driven from the outside. There are many impacts, coming to payroll, which drive change. And so as we just described, it's coming, you've got to face it and looking for you. So it's true, so many things.

Nina Talley:

I completely agree. And on that note, I think that it's a little bit of a hot buzzword, and everybody likes talking about how machine learning is going to integrate into their career. But I think that you probably have one of the best outlooks for the future in how machine learning and artificial intelligence and robotics will integrate currently, as well as in the future.

Ian Sparrow:

Yeah. First of all, I want to claim that I am not a technology specialist. So anybody who's listening to this, there are many, many people that know much more than me. But in ADP, we do use robots with RPA. So robotic process automation. So the principle of this is basically, it's a machine, a robot, able to repeat a series of activities, they are programmed to do in an extremely efficient and fast manner. So it can bring a lot in terms of accuracy in value, where we have repeatable activities that are not easily elsewhere in other ways to automate. One of the things in one country using a lot for is for accessing government websites to make all the declarations that need to be done.

Ian Sparrow:

So basically, log on parser returns to all the things that need to be done, the interactions are very quickly. That's a good idea. But I think that's probably more in a kind of engineering environment, we have large scale volumes, etc. And probably for smaller companies, it's harder to leverage that technology today, although the costs are kind of falling. It's mainly we use it today for kind of large scale things. But you mentioned machine learning and artificial intelligence. And it's not here today, but it's certainly coming. What machine learning, artificial intelligence from a layman's kind of perspective is about taking user behavior, and data to help make recommendations or enhance the system's behavior without the need of kind of further programming. So you don't have to program kind of core changes to the systems in something that sits alongside that.

Ian Sparrow:

So if we think about the payroll professional today, we hold a lot of experience and knowledge in our heads. Aside of all the rules and regulations, payroll is complicated, because it's related to people and people have inconsistent behaviors. Matching payroll is about reconciling the plan, and the actual. So knowing how to make the right adjustments, etc is part of the payroll professionals kind of secret sauce, if you like. So, I think what mill machine learning will do will start to be able to learn from these characteristics and follow up the payroll actions taken, and therefore reviewed data points, and will help when there is a decision to be made or a recommendation.

Ian Sparrow:

I mean, some practical examples already in place is what we can see in our workforce management tools that we have. So for example, time off approvals, managers can get recommendations whether to approve or reject vacation requests based on what other team members are scheduled to do, or help with decisions to switch shifts based on the employee's preferences. So they could be making recommendations around who swaps with whom, and when. So that's a practical example that's happening today. So machine learning can greatly help you check in and control payroll. So helping the checking of input, output, accuracy of payslips results, therefore, not just finding errors, but also finding the data points to understand differences are correct, and making appropriate accurate changes or recommendations.

Ian Sparrow:

They'll be able to check over multiple periods and highlight where there are inadequate system rules, for example. So PayI will help, artificial intelligence will help the system to learn different decisions scenarios, easing the effort on payroll teams. So one example is I remember a long time ago before I joined ADP, and one of my jobs was to go to the Chief Accountant with the payroll control book. So essentially, that's a period to period reconciliation with all of the variances. So with things like machine learning or artificial intelligence, I really believe that this type of technology would greatly enhance the payroll team's ability to approve or not such decisions because they can look at great detail over historic periods, to work out what these variances are, and whether there's a recommendation to approve.

Ian Sparrow:

So I think overall, it will greatly help the accuracy and timeliness and payroll and take a huge burden off the payroll teams, and particularly probably in some industry types. We have a lot of variability, like retail, some manufacturing, hospitality, things like that something can make a big difference. So

generally, it's not here today, I'd say ADP are working on that get some other technology companies would be probably thinking that way as well.

Nina Talley:

And what you said is so true is that humans are incredibly inconsistent creatures. So even as artificial intelligence begins to take some of the burden off of payroll professionals, there will still always be that professional oversight. Unfortunately, the machines cannot have the empathy that you and I as human beings can. Anytime we talk about artificial intelligence, I like to tie it up with a little bow that it's not coming for your job, it's coming to make your job easier.

Ian Sparrow:

Definitely Nina, it's not there to replace people. It is there to support us and make the decision process easier, that's for sure. And of course, it will take some of the burden of the work away. So it's good for the company because probably makes it more efficient or timely. But in the end, the value of a good payroll leader doesn't diminish with that it's enhanced.

Nina Talley:

You won't want to miss the two Congress extreme bonus events happening on March 10 and April 7, put on by the American Payroll Association and the Global Payroll Management Institute. The two live webinars, which will not be available on demand will give a boost to your virtual leadership confidence and allow you to hear the latest updates directly from the IRS commissioner. The first bonus event on March 10 is with Peggy a motivational speaker who will show you how to be a leader in a virtual world in a confident effective and supportive way. The second bonus event on April 7 features IRS commissioner Charles Chuck Rettig, who will cover the compliance issues that are important to the payroll community and the tax challenges ahead.

Nina Talley:

Register today for Congress Extreme to receive access to both events. Register by April 2 for access to the April 7 IRS commissioner bonus event. Congress Extreme is the biggest and the best virtual event in payroll. Unlike no other virtual events you've attended. Attend may 18 through the 21st to receive educational insights from payroll industry experts worldwide. On top of that, it's the IRS key opportunity to come together to expand your professional networking by catching up with old friends and meeting new ones. Plus New this year is a video chat feature to take your networking to a more personal level. Bolster your career with educational insights from these two industry experts by registering today at www.congressextreme.com.

Nina Talley:

I think that, as we've already touched on a few times, payroll operations are drastically different now than they were in February of 2020. And working in global payroll in particular, there's obviously a lot of balls that are in the air that need to be sanitized before they are then juggled. And I just wanted to get some of your thoughts on how things have changed, particularly at ADP. And I heard a rumor that between March and July of 2020, ADP issued nearly 1000 payroll legislation bulletins, across 140 different countries. How do you keep track of all of that different legislation being released from so many different sources?

Ian Sparrow:

I don't know where you heard that from but it is true. Yeah, that's for international business. So the CSL, the selecto streamline business that I work for. And actually, it doesn't count the local notification. So those 1000, I think, was actually 983 bulletins that we published, are actually going to the headquarters. So on top of that, there is also a local context. So we're sending to the headquarters, a summary for the countries that are impacted. So just as an interesting, probably a fact is that for our employer's services, international business, that's the ADP business outside of North America. This year, we just passed the equivalent of 100 years of programming related to legislation system changes.

Ian Sparrow:

So in a single year, we've had to invest 100 years worth of development face, just on legislation changes. So that's a lot. And that's just for the ADP platforms not necessary for other platforms that we using. So yeah, it's a lot. But I guess, Nina, to your question, how do we do that? Well, of course, the first thing is we have a professional organization that's organized globally to watch what we call legal watch. So is studying what's happening, all the changes coming from the government, etc, and sometimes from the employment bodies as well, so have this legal watch. And so basically, they're reviewed in detail. Actually, we do get multiple sources. So from some countries, we have multiple sources of information, we compare those, we go backwards and forwards to make sure we're clear.

Ian Sparrow:

And then of course, they go to our technical teams, to make the technical assessment of what's required. But we also look at the operational impact as well, to make sure that from some of the compliance things are not just about programmatic things. They're about process things as well. So it's interesting, because we think about it from COVID. But it's not just from COVID. And COVID, was a special event. But over the last years, many years, actually, I'd say, five to eight years, we're seeing increasingly legal changes from governments, and we expect that those changes to continue. So it's increasing the employer burden. And generally, it's also driving a little bit more technology to deliver that, as governments become more organized as well. So, yeah, it's a lot of work. It's something we're very conscious of all recognition to the people that do this. It's been a very difficult year.

Nina Talley:

And I think that that blends in nicely with my next question, which is, what were some other surprise hurdles that you had to navigate through as ADP transitioned its payroll department into a work from home model? And how did you overcome that?

Ian Sparrow:

Yeah, I think we really to work COVID, there is something I'd like to say to your listeners is that in some ways, and maybe I'll go talk more about global payroll, and local payroll, but depending on where you are in the world, we should all remember that though we're not doctors and nurses, and great respect to them. We do bring an essential service to our employers, the employees and the community, as well. So sometimes it's very important to remember that in some countries in the world, payroll is more hand to mouth, it's a hand to mouth service, if you like. And there is a statistic in the ADP research institute that stated that 26% of all employees would not notice if they were paid wrongly.

Ian Sparrow:

And for me, that's a first world problem. So in many parts of the world, or ADP is paying employees, every penny is counted and needed. So we should remember that payroll is key to family and

community and not being paid correctly is incredibly stressful worrying for the individuals. If we come back to COVID. All I wanted to say by that first statement is that just because most of us probably have salary and be paid regularly, we might not always check is not the same everywhere. So it's a very important service that we offer. I mean, across the 140 countries that we're supporting, ADP is paying about 13 million people. So this is not North America, this is everything outside North America, it's a lot of countries. And it's a lot of people. And that's through the international business and our domestic businesses.

Ian Sparrow:

And we managed to make that transition without any major disruption. That's an amazing achievement all the people involved. But really, it happened, because we planned for it. We've been planning for it. We didn't know about this event. But there is a rigorous program that we have in place that ADP is completely diligent about each year and assessment on our business continuity, disaster recovery, and our business resilience program. So in a way we got through this, because we were prepared. We didn't know about the event. But I think going back to your original question, we invest a lot of time in the readiness. So inside of doing payroll, we're trying to make sure we're prepared for any event to the worst case scenario happen. But when it came to the actual move itself, I think what we really found the difficulties come about more around security of data, and the working environment because people working from home, etc.

Ian Sparrow:

No local infrastructure brings its own challenges. So local internet and those types of things. But I think the main impact we found on a more regular basis were the specific processes which can't be managed from home and require a third party. So these are things really about with reportorial government bodies, like starters, leavers, contract changes, authorizations. And what we found was often they were more closed and less accessible than general business. And so they were really not organized for the working from home structure. And that's where we found most of the problems, I think,

Nina Talley:

That is sadly predictable. I'm glad that ADP had the disaster preparedness and disaster readiness in place, so that you could just roll with it. And I do think that that is something that many small businesses often overlook, and think that it's not really an issue that they need to keep on the horizon. But I do think the pandemic told us one thing, is you can make a plan and life is going to laugh at it. So at least have a disaster readiness plan for when it laughs at you. I think that I would just like to ask you a bit about how the role of a traditional payroll manager has changed, it's never going back. And what do you think a modern take on a global payroll manager looks like?

Ian Sparrow:

I think, for many sort of growing modern businesses, and their changing approach to work, working hours, payments and benefits, payroll still key in any organization. Of course, HR played their role too. And with new generation tools and more sophisticated and intelligent payroll solutions, we remove administration, but not completely solve the need for payroll professionals. I think what we are increasingly seeing is the development of global payroll. And there's a new world for the payroll professional and leader. So I think in the future, it will be less about knowing all the rules and the attributes of payroll, it's about being a leader of change in an organization to be able to, let's say, leverage common practice and drive efficiency to support your organization to operate in a global

environment, or maybe a multi location environment where payroll can be more centralized across multiple countries, jurisdictions, very importantly, bring this consistent employee experience, employees demand more from their employers in the way that they can interact with their life events online and in real time, remote mobility as well.

Ian Sparrow:

So I think, in some ways, the past traditional payroll role for managers is over, if you like, they will need to be more strategic, they will need to be advocates of change lead to change within the organization. And I think payroll team members will need to up skill. So if we look ahead, probably payroll specialists may become more integration specialists with all the systems in play and further integration coming. Internal payroll skillset, maybe more focused on projects and continuous improvement and process standardization rather than just, all the different calculations. So to prove, as we mentioned before, to provide more expertise and insight, more analytical, more perspectives more proactive and visible in their value to the business and less focused on the administration, I think from modern payroll team they should act as change agents, integration, process analysts, understanding, fully the principles probably of compliance and statutory requirements. But not necessarily knowing all of the specifics.

Ian Sparrow:

I mean, these can be leveraged in specialist roles. And probably there'll be more intelligence within the platform's themselves. So maybe some people can see or can't see that the changes there. And for many organizations, what you just described is what they're doing today. And what they're looking for today is not something of tomorrow. It's already here, okay.

Nina Talley:

I love that take. And it really is about becoming that leader of change. And for our pay rollers listening, if you don't see that space, in your business, where there is a pay roller who is leading a technological shift or change, make the space yourself. You can just begin acquiring these skills and utilizing these tools, and you'll create your own spotlight. And you'll begin becoming the change agent in your business. It is that, I don't want to say that simple, but it is up to you to be the change you want to see in your business and to make your job easier for yourself. And so, now is the time in our podcast for something we like to call, payroll nightmares. We ask our listeners to send us their payroll nightmares to podcast at AmericanPayroll.org. Or leave us a comment on the APA's Facebook page.

Nina Talley:

For this month's nightmare, we have a story from an anonymous listener about walking into the payroll department mid hack. One day, a payroll professional was driving to work on a Monday morning, when they got a text from their IT department saying that when they got into the office, to not sign into their computer, and that they would explain when they got here. So when that payroll person got into the office, they were told that the parent company in Saudi Arabia had been hit with a virus. And that is where all of the servers were located. The payroll person asked why they didn't have backup for a situation like this, and was told that they had a backup server, but it was on the same network. So much for a disaster recovery plan.

Nina Talley:

The payroll team used SAP and an in house system, so there was no access to run payroll, they had weekly, bi weekly and semi monthly payrolls. So until there was access to the system, another way was

needed to be figured out to pay everyone. Other companies in the same situation had just taken their previous ACH files, modified the date and reset it. But they could not get to them. That payroll person's new manager had wanted to do away with paper reports. But luckily, they hadn't been phased out yet. So direct deposit report was run with the employees routing number and account and what was paid. Their treasury manager contacted their bank, and they had a tool that would allow them to go in and manually key the info in so that people could get paid.

Nina Talley:

Three people did all the keying by using the amounts that had been paid the last pay period when the system was up. And it was about three weeks before access was gained back into their payroll system. The payroll professional then ran payroll with the hourly employees and either paid them the difference, or if they were overpaid, those amounts had to be tracked. So could be taken back over the next couple of pay periods. It is amazing how resourceful you can become in situations like this. And that is a very intense story. Ian, can you tell us a little bit about how you would have handled this?

Ian Sparrow:

Well, Nina, I'm not sure given the circumstance. So I could have done anything differently to your correspondent there. Because in some ways, perhaps the point of no return had already been passed, launching multiple payments, all these things about remembering not only to fix immediate problems, it's also as importantly to check it doesn't reoccur. These are all lessons learned whatever pressures, I think what's important is you must systematically control the correction process, as making the situation worse is very easily. We've all potentially been there or actually been there. But I think the way I would answer this question is I think the person did well on the ground in a very difficult situation. But as I mentioned before, I can't tell you how important the DRP and the BCP business resilience programs are to have in place.

Ian Sparrow:

So as I said, we made it through COVID because we were prepared. So we have this very strong program that we adhere to make this possible. You mentioned For smaller companies don't think it's happening. So with our partners globally, we actually have some resistance from partners saying, "I don't want to make those investments because I don't think those situations will happen to us." I can honestly tell you absolutely hand on heart, that every one of those non believers, not just through COVID, but for other situations, has come back to us and said, "Thank you ADB, for insisting that we made these changes to make sure that we've prepared." Those events are coming from all sorts of basic failures, they're coming from unrest.

Ian Sparrow:

So there's a whole range of things that can affect you that you can't be expecting for natural things, rain, flooding, all of those things. So my way of taking this would say, payroll is learn from this story. Now, these things happening much more frequently than you think, structural failures, conflicts, all of these things. And simple systems can easily break down the very critical times. So please look at the way you're organized in a breakdown. I think one of the things highlighted in the story is great to have backup. But if backup is on the same system, that's not going to help you very much. So make sure you have alternative solutions. It's all about planning in advance.

Nina Talley:

I hear that the best offense is a good defense. That's just the rumor on the street. Well, thank you so much for that insight. And to our listeners, don't forget, if you would like to be included in our payroll nightmares, make sure to send an email to podcasts@AmericanPayroll.org. Or leave us a comment on the APA's Facebook page. And we don't really like to leave things on a negative note here at PayTalk. So I have one final question for you Ian. What is the best piece of payroll advice you have ever been given? Or what is the piece of advice that you wish somebody had given to you?

Ian Sparrow:

I sort of have to think about that for a moment. I guess one thing is kind of sticks out to me, but it's nothing to do with payroll is as a child as to cross the road, I was taught to look right, look left, look right, again, as part of a systematic programming of us as children. But it teaches you to take basic precautions. It's very simple. And the controls are needed. It's a simple procedure to keep things simple. And I think all of us need to learn that even in the payroll world, we need to take basic precautions, do things simply and in a structured way, and we can cross the other side of the road.

Ian Sparrow:

Of course, I've spent the latter part of my life living in France and Spain. So actually, I don't look right, look left, look right, I actually look left look right, look left. You have to adapt and adjust based on needs as well. So it's not like one rule is for life. I think that is something to think about. I was trying to think of your answer. But I come back to my first job. And I remember paying people then we had to fill the wage packets, and we had to walk around the head office floor and distribute those payslips. And I remember paying people later than the hour that they were meant to be peppered. I remember handing the wrong payslip to the wrong person. So I'm telling you some terrible stories from payroll. So I think what I learned, and I'd say to all pay rollers, in the end, is pay people accurately on time, every time. And if we live with that principle, I think you can't go too far wrong in payroll.

Nina Talley:

I love it. And I want to thank you again for circling back earlier and reminding all of our listeners that many of us are on salaries, and we are essential employees. And we can take payroll a little bit for granted. But there are many places that it's hand to mouth, and it is absolutely needed to keep the world going. So thank you so much for that insight. And Ian, it has been an absolute pleasure speaking with you today. And thank you so much for joining us to share your time and your knowledge. I know you gave our listeners some serious food for thoughts. And keep in mind everyone payroll isn't going to stop changing, and neither should you. Get on the evolution train now.

Nina Talley:

And with that in mind, I want to make sure to also say thank you to our listeners. Without you PayTalk would not be possible. Make sure you like and subscribe or leave a rating and review us on your preferred podcast streaming service. That is the best way to support this podcast and ensure that we can continue to bring you the human stories that make payroll so personal. Until next time folks, this has been your host Nina Talley with PayTalk.

Speaker 1:

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