

transcript

mobility matters, episode 1: top 10 ways to make your global mobility program more inclusive — part one

WITH KAREN WILKS AND LISA JOHNSON

karen:

Hello, and welcome to the first episode of season two of mobility matters, the official Cartus podcast. I'm your host Karen Wilks, Vice President of Strategic Growth, my pronouns are she/her and I'm so excited to be kicking off this season, by exploring the top 10 ways to make your global mobility program more inclusive. There's so much to unpack here, that we've decided that it really needs two episodes. So in this first half, we'll share five best practices. And later in the season, part two, we'll explore the other five. And there's no one more qualified to take us through this top 10 list than our very own Lisa Johnson, Director, Global DEI solutions at Cartus. Welcome, Lisa.

lisa:

Thank you, Karen. And my pronouns are she and her. And a big thank you to all of our listeners out there, I've been really looking forward to this two-part episode, because it's a chance to share some of my favorite actions when it comes to creating a more inclusive global mobility program. And as you said, Karen, we're doing this in the form of tips. This means that there will be something here for everyone, it is a great two-part episode.

karen:

Exactly, double the fun.

lisa:

Karen, to kick off this discussion, I really want to take a minute to bring in a general sense of where we are seeing companies fall when it comes to making their global mobility programs more inclusive, and better aligned with the DEI priorities in their own organizations. And I really like to start here, because for some of you, listeners, you

are way ahead of most companies. And for some of you, you haven't made any changes in this direction, or just a few. But really, our research and experience shows that for probably half of you listeners out there, you have made some changes already, you're kind of in the middle, and maybe looking for well, what is next. But no matter where you are in the spectrum from just getting started to being innovators and leaders in the inclusive mobility space, there's always room for making more progress. It's not one and done or a checklist. Most companies have goals of progress and DEI, that include dates, when you look at it your DEI website in your own organization, you'll see that there are these goals of you know, "By 2030, we're going to have a certain number of women on our board," or "We're going to have certain number of our population that has had certain kinds of training around unconscious bias or around inclusive behaviors." So companies always set goals and you can do that with your mobility program too.

karen:

Great thank you, Lisa. So as we share these tips for today's episode, the first of two, we're sharing some of our favorite actions and asking you to leave the podcast with at least one action that you can get started on tomorrow. And go ahead and check off those steps we share that you've already done. For anyone who has made progress, enjoy your progress.

lisa:

Exactly. I mean, there's nothing like checking off completed actions on any list to feel fantastic. So Karen, I think I'm just gonna get us started with the first of this episode's five tips.

So tip number one, if your organization has a DEI leader, or a DEI team, or just a champion within talent, or your leadership in your organization, meet with them, introduce yourself, ask them what their priorities are for this year. And tell them that your goal is to better align global mobility with the company's DEI priorities. Connecting with the DEI leaders, if you have them in your organization can be anything from initiating an informational call to introducing yourself and sharing big picture ideas or could come as part of something you're working on really. And I say that because I just met with the Global Mobility team of a large global company. And we're working with them on an initiative to create a one-page description of resources from their global mobility policy and program and combine them with some of the resources in their companies DEI and HR initiatives like employee resource groups, ERGs, things that are available to support underrepresented employees going through a relocation and trying to make those kinds of support more visible.

So in putting this one page resource or tool together for the transferees, the Global Mobility leader in that company had to reach out to the DEI team to share the concept and to get their input. And it was the first time that they had brought them in to talk about making the relocation experience more inclusive. And just that connection has created an opportunity for them to connect, and it is gonna lead to future collaborations and connections. So that's why I wanted to share that it doesn't have to be a formal meeting, or can sometimes just be that you're working on an initiative. And if you share it with the larger group, it creates those connections.

I'm just going to go on to tip two. And tip two is to be able to articulate your business case for developing a more inclusive mobility program. And maybe that's a really good, you know, follow up to the first tip, where you're going to be introducing yourself and talking about these connections, you need to be ready for that, right. So I call it your elevator pitch. And so you don't need to be intimidated by this. Do not spend lots of time on this, but a

couple of sentences, maybe three sentences, I usually say something like: Sentence one, "We know that employees who get international opportunities have more career options than colleagues who don't." Sentence two, "We know that global companies value and some even require senior leaders to have had international experience." Sentence three, "When we increase the diversity of the assignee or mobility population, we're creating a more diverse future leadership pipeline," right, three sentences.

"We know employees who get international opportunities have more career options than colleagues, those colleagues who don't. We know that global companies value and maybe require senior leaders to have had some international experience. And so when we increase the diversity of the assignee or mobility population, we're creating a more diverse future leadership pipeline."

karen:

Great. Thank you, Lisa. And I think for a third tip, a good follow up to the elevator pitch or the business case to consider is, what data do you already have? Because someone may ask how diverse is our current population? And how will we know we've made progress? Right, we get those questions all the time. What demographic data do you already track related to your global mobility assignee or transferee population? From [Cartus' latest research](#), only about 23% of companies track anything. And the most common demographic areas that companies measure in their program are gender, geographic location, and the level of the assignee in the organization. But there are many other categories we can track, right, you can track a family profile, meaning whether they're single or married. The tenure with the company, generational information, nationality and passports, number of previous moves, languages spoken, sexual orientation, disabilities, whether visible or non-visible, dual career relationships, gender identity.

Now, anyone who's tried to measure this knows it isn't easy. Many categories have to be volunteered by the employee. And there are laws in certain countries that prevent you from asking employees about certain aspects of diversity. And there are also some countries where it would be dangerous to disclose sexual orientation. We could do an entire episode on just what to measure and how to

measure diversity and assignee populations. Let's put that on our list for future episodes. But for today's tip list, let me say that [our research](#) shows that the more inclusive a company's culture is, the more comfortable and valued diverse populations are in your company, the more open employees will be with identifying their diversity openly. Until then, you should have the resources that support different kinds of diversity and make those resources visible to your assignee population. Whether it's on your intranet site or in your policies. So, people have access to the resources without them having to disclose anything to their managers or to your team, unless they want to.

lisa:

Karen, this is such a great segue to our next tip. Tip number four, which is establishing your global mobility team as an ally to DEI. What does that mean? How can the team be an ally you may be asking, this is about gaining DEI confidence, having a more global view of DEI and how it varies around the world. And understanding what inclusive mobility could be. An ally is a person or group who provides assistance and support in an ongoing effort, activity or struggle. So, giving support to underrepresented or historically excluded groups makes you an ally. So, one aspect of making your global mobility team an ally is to educate yourself and the team on what allies are on different aspects of diversity.

You also should be aware of the ways that some of your underrepresented employees may not be included in your program or policy today, a global mobility ally is increasingly expanding their knowledge around what support underrepresented employees and assignees may need. You don't have to be an expert at everything DEI. The other is what outward signs do you have that show that your team and your program are allies to diversity? What do you have that's visible in your policy or visible in your team communication in the ERGs you're a part of for example, back when I visited a lot of offices face to face, in my organization, pre pandemic, I used to wear a pride or a DEI themed lanyard at work, and people could include outward signs to show their being allies in their offices. But now, so many of us are virtual as employees. So, I definitely use my pronouns in my signature and as

part of my introduction in meetings, but there are other ways to show that you can be an ally. For me, I write articles that have DEI mobility themes, and a podcast series and an episode like what we're doing today.

I have clients that are adding support for LGBTQ+ employees into their policies, and support for single parents and assignees with disabilities into their benefits. Some of our clients have videos and photos of assignees that show same sex partners or employees with disabilities who share their stories and share their experiences about relocating within their companies. It's always important for people to see themselves represented in your program. Your program becomes an ally to all.

karen:

Lisa, I really do think each of these could be a podcast to discuss on their own and go into more detail, don't you?

lisa:

Absolutely. There's so much to talk about.

karen:

Indeed. Our fifth and final tip for part one of this two-part episode is what I consider low hanging fruit, and a "just getting started" step to making your program more inclusive. And that is to review your policy and communications for inclusive language, pronouns, and terminology. And as we mentioned in the previous step, showing your DEI commitment and alignment through your policy, intranet site and other communications. Here's something interesting for those of you listeners who are rolling your eyes because you did the pronoun and language review a couple years ago, we are seeing an uptick recently from some of you, who are now working with us to update your original policy and program review to make sure that the inclusion in your policy and program communication is staying current. That's because our industry is getting more mature around DEI mobility and concepts continue to evolve and best practices are emerging. Right?

lisa:

That's right. So, you can't assume we've got this, we did that, we're done right. And make sure that ongoing expanding definitions of families get reflected, and the latest in how diverse employees talk about themselves, and new policy benefits that emerge as your supply chain becomes more inclusive, or technology and laws change. Right?

karen:

Absolutely. So Lisa, we're coming to the end of this episode, which leads me to ask what has been your "wow factor", and listeners. By that we mean, what has been the key takeaway from the discussion that will really help you in your day-to-day roles.

lisa:

Okay, so I'm gonna cheat a little bit here, because I know I'm just supposed to share one, but I can't choose. So I'm going to share all five. In this episode, we've covered five tips for moving forward with strengthening DEI mobility strategies, and our focus was on some of the ways you can get started or strengthen the steps you've already taken. We talked about:

1. Connecting with your employees' DEI team leadership or champions within your company.
2. Developing and practicing your elevator pitch. Why does DEI mobility matter?

3. Starting to measure your assignee, populations diversity and creating an environment where people will disclose more about their diversity, because they know that you are an ally.
4. Establishing global mobility as an ally, upskilling you and your team. What makes you an ally to others? How do they know you're an ally? What visible signs does your program policy or team have that show your ally status.
5. Our fifth tip, which is my fifth wow factor, conducting a policy review for inclusive language and pronouns. And if you did it a few years ago, why you need to do it again. This is an evolving area. DEI and inclusive mobility keep on changing and growing and getting better.

karen:

Great round up and seeing that this is our first episode. But you have those five Wow factors for this one. Thank you, Lisa.

So, look out for the second part of this episode in the coming weeks where we cover five more tips around developing and inclusive global mobility program. Listeners, thank you for being here for today's episode, Lisa and I hope you'll come back for part two. If you got something from this one, the next one is going to blow you away. So that's it for today. Be sure to subscribe to Mobility Matters through your favorite podcast streaming platform. And until next time, thank you and take care.

visit cartus.com/podcast for more episodes of mobility matters