



Payroll leadership: from invisible to influential

Ziena Jalil



Why this moment matters

- Payroll = trust, risk mitigation, financial governance
- Too often seen as a cost, not a capability
- Time to shift that narrative

What is leadership?



The leadership you already deliver

Navigate
complexity

Uphold
compliance

Build employee
trust

Crisis-proof the
business

A modern conference room with a large white table and black chairs. Sunlight streams through vertical blinds, creating strong shadows on the dark wood floor. The room is empty, with a few papers and a small object on the table.

Why leadership is your leverage

- Get a seat at the decision-making table
- Influence system selection, risk strategy, policy development

From outsider
to leader



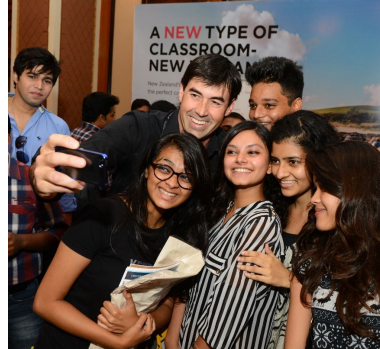
Asia Singapore

According to recent data from the Singapore Economic Development Corporation, Singapore is the most competitive country in the world for business and Asia the most important region in the world for investment. This is a testament to the success of the Singaporean government in creating a business-friendly environment. The success of the Singaporean government in creating a business-friendly environment is a testament to the success of the Singaporean government in creating a business-friendly environment.

...specifically we have established a new E2E collaboration that will help us to better understand the needs of our students and to provide them with the best possible learning experience. We also have some other initiatives that we are working on, such as the Singaporean government's initiative to provide a more inclusive and equitable education for all students.

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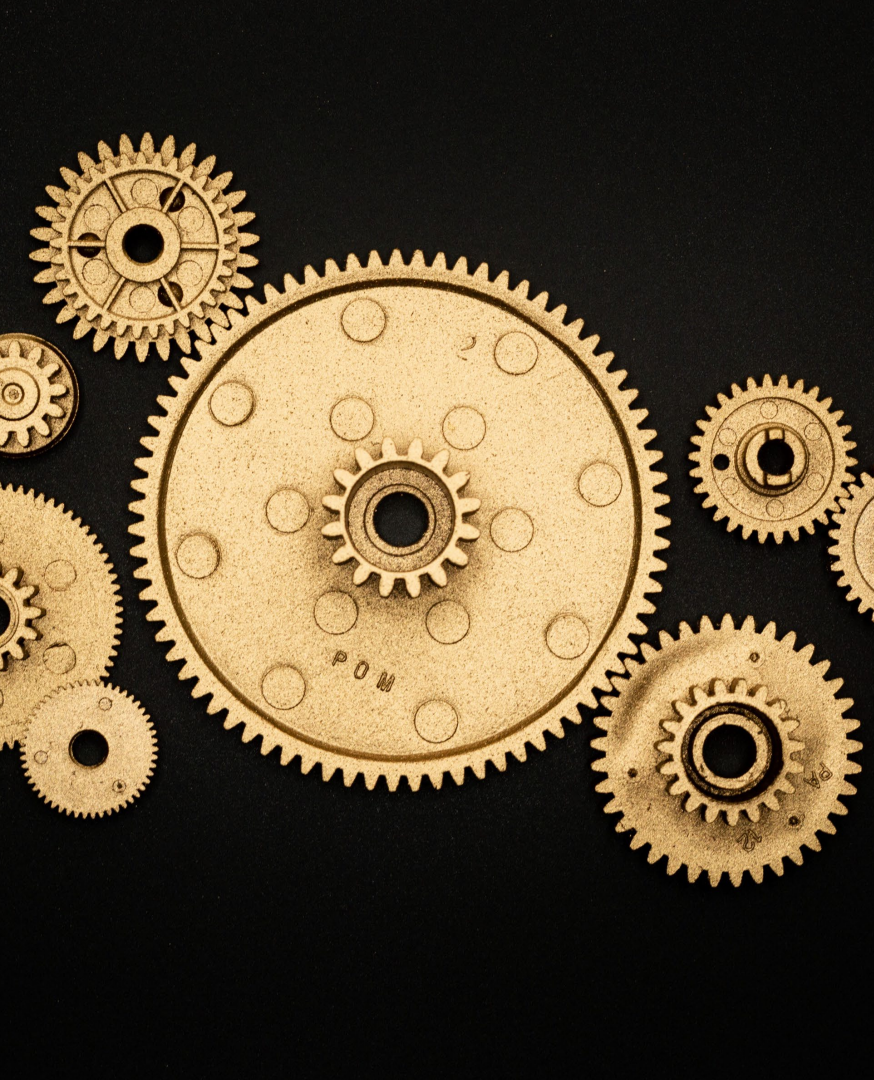
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Ziena Jalil is responsible for developing New Zealand's trade image in North Asia. Global communications is about listening and learning, she tells Craig Hoy



LEADERSHIP



The 5 shifts of payroll leadership

1. Executor → Influencer
2. Reactive → Strategic
3. Invisible → Essential
4. Administrator → Connector
5. Technician → People Leader

Payroll leadership in action: Novopay



2,400 NZ schools

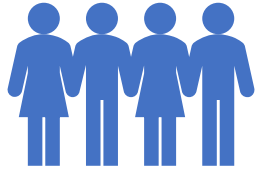


Under/overpayment
issues

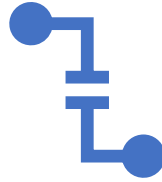


\$45+ million in
remediation costs

Payroll leadership in action: Phoenix



290,000 Federal
employees



Compliance chaos:
under/overpayments

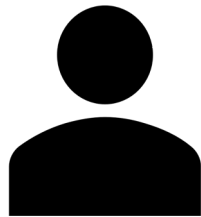


More than C\$5b to fix

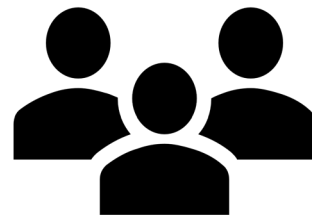
Payroll leadership in action: People 2.0



Operating in 140+
countries



Storytelling to raise
profile



Earned influence with
global ELT



Flexibility \neq invisibility

Payroll is a profession — not a stepping stone

Know yourself –
what's your why



Become an inclusive leader



- Know your colleagues
- Call out unfair practices
- Be a sponsor
- Review your systems
- Challenge biases



Curiosity is a
leadership skill

Complex
problems
require a
collaborative
response

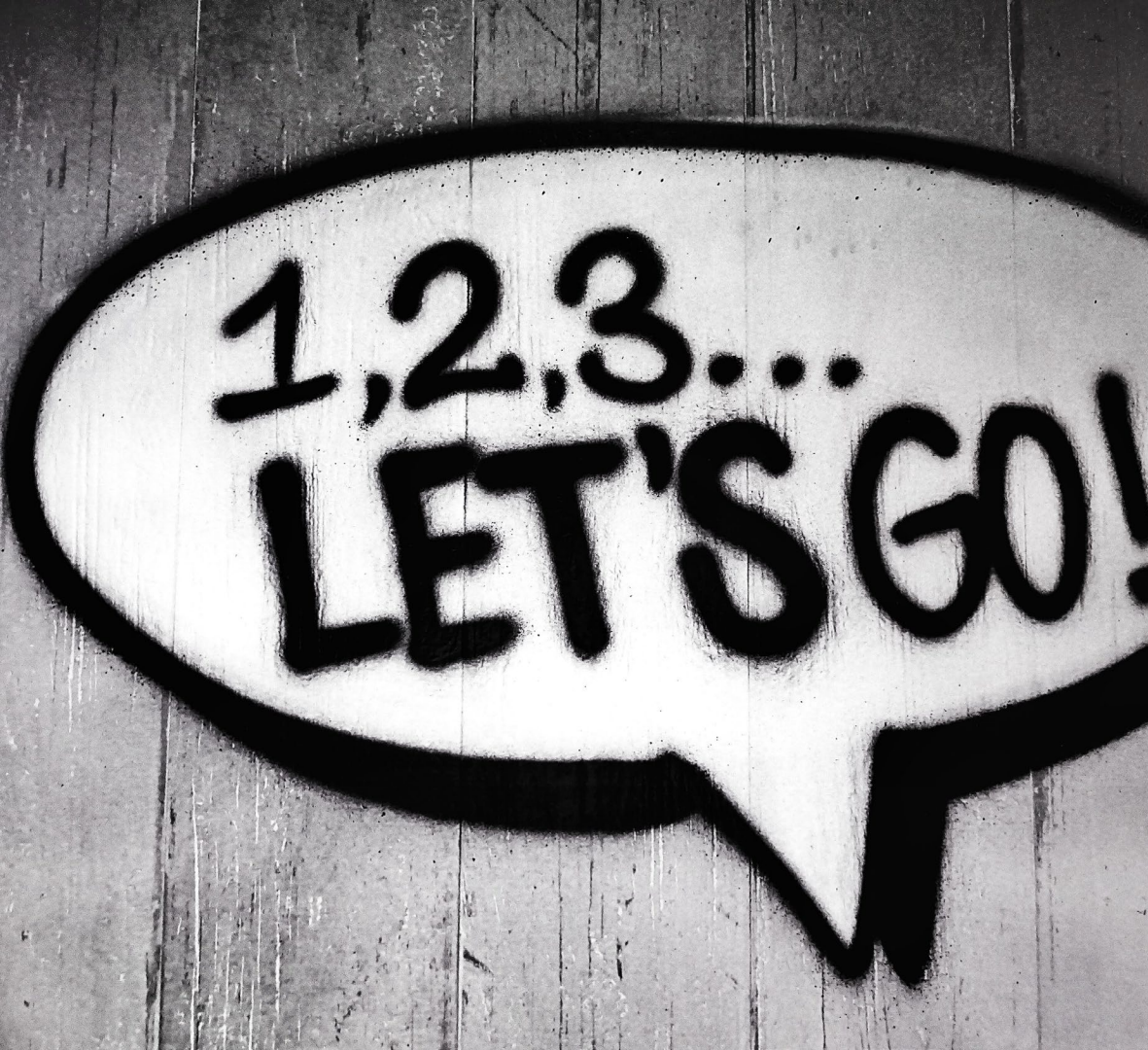





Choose progress
over
perfectionism



SELF
CARE
ISN'T
SELFISH



- Tell one story
- Learn one thing
- Back one person

The image is a collage of outdoor garden scenes. In the background, there are tables and chairs set up for an outdoor dining area, with warm string lights hanging above. In the foreground, there are several vertical black metal posts with decorative, carved patterns. The ground is wet and reflective, suggesting it has recently rained. There are various plants and flowers in pots and planters throughout the scene.

**Will you bring your
own chair?**