Cartus and Realogy leaders share how their company has reimagined—and will continue to reimagine—their strategies for leading in a virtual environment, creating workspace agility, and leaning into the vulnerability required to help people and companies succeed in today’s “new normal.”

There has been a lot of (digital) ink spilled in recent months on the topic of Reimagining Work, and for good reason. With companies forced to upend their entire workforce—literally overnight, in many cases—to prioritize worker health and safety, “imagination” often took a backseat to quick, decisive action. But six months into the world’s largest Work from Home experiment, most companies are finally stepping back to assess what’s working, what isn’t, and how we can truly reimagine the future of work from first principles.

As the President and CEO of a global relocation company, I have felt this need keenly, which is why I am grateful to have three powerful co-captains on Cartus’ journey to Reimagine Work, including:

- **Sunita Holzer** – EVP & CHRO, Realogy (Cartus’ parent company—NYSE: RLGY)
- **Josefina Martinez-Amador** – SVP, HR, Cartus
- **Karen Wilks** – VP, Global Talent Mobility, Cartus

Together, we are exploring a broad range of strategies to ensure that Cartus remains at the forefront of leadership and innovation in this brave new business world, while allowing us to think more broadly about how diverse global talent can work cohesively as productive and engaged teams.
People, Process, Technology … and Place?

Cartus VP of Global Talent Mobility and leader of our “Reimagine Work” initiative, Karen Wilks, notes that most people are familiar with the framework of “People, Process, and Technology” when it comes to making organizational changes. However, we must now wrestle with a fourth variable: Place. Yesterday, a formal office was the de facto environment for all business activity. Tomorrow, we need to ensure that our globally distributed workforce is set up to be successful no matter where they are.

This is true for front-line teams—those who directly serve our clients and their relocating employees—as well as team leaders who have to act as principals, cheerleaders, and guidance counselors when communicating with employees about the changes occurring at both the company and individual level. “We need to provide our people leaders with the technical tools and emotional skills they need to lead effectively,” Karen explains.

This is why Cartus’ “Reimagine Work” plan began with a comprehensive “Stop–Start–Continue” analysis to determine what worked and what didn’t during the initial transition to remote working.

People Leaders: Then and Now

Cartus SVP of Human Resources, Josefina Martinez-Amador, agrees that there is a bright line between how companies used to operate, and how they’ll operate going forward. She is so passionate about workforce modernization, she wrote her doctoral thesis on it (pandemic not included). Her research points to three key factors:

1. Talent (individual employee + job design + location)
2. Technology (hardware, software, automation, digitization)
3. Culture (people management, executive leadership, HR policies)

Properly executed, the result should be a high-performing, productive, and engaged workforce—one whose productivity could increase 10-15%, because working from home reduces wasted time in the form of commuting, transitions, and distractions while simultaneously increasing job satisfaction, according to preliminary Cartus data.
Despite her optimism about the future of work, Josefina is quick to note that there are key questions leaders need to address before taking action, including:

- How are our methods of managing people going to have to change for us to be able to strategically realize the value of having people working from home?
- What is the impact on our performance management system? Is what we have today the tool we need for the future?
- Are our incentive plans aligned to this new way of working?
- Is our leadership team prepared to empower their teams and adopt a more agile approach to management?

**In the New Normal, EQ > IQ**

From her perspective as Realogy EVP and CHRO, as well as her access to resources and benchmark data from external leading-edge research institutions, Sunita Holzer is equally adamant that companies can’t lose sight of their employees’ mental health while redesigning their job roles, work processes, and technology packages to maximize virtual productivity.

“You can’t get your team to produce if they don’t feel connected. The number one reason any employee continues to work for a company is the people they work with. The number two reason is the person they work for.” In a virtual environment, leaders must be much more intentional about maintaining the “human aspect” of work. Without the casual relationship-building that occurs during regular small encounters in the office, leadership is now an active choice. And yes, that includes the much-parodied Virtual Happy Hour.
“As a people manager today, you need to spend 70-90% of your time managing and leading. We have to be available to our teams so they can get the information they need to do their jobs. We need to help team members make decisions and focus on high-priority actions to increase productivity. People can get lost very easily in this world.”

To this end, Realogy and Cartus are excited to roll out a new training program for all people managers, teaching them how to lead in a virtual environment—not just logistically, but emotionally, too.

Destination: Reimagination

“Reimagine Work” may sound like a focus-grouped concept, but Imagination is the secret sauce that will enable organizations to emerge from this crisis prepared to succeed in the world that IS, not the world that WAS.

There is no perfect replacement for personal interactions, but we have to think very carefully about why, when, and how we get together. What is the greater purpose? And when we’re not together, how do we maintain that all-important human connection?

We are energized to think through how our newfound geographic flexibility and time-zone focus will broaden our diversity.

We may not have all the answers, but we’re not afraid to ask the questions. Together, we will rise to the occasion.

For more information: Visit www.cartus.com