



## Empowering employees in sustainability

**Host:** Hanish Patel, User Friendly host and Digital Transformation leader, Deloitte Consulting LLP

**Guests:** Julie Moorad, Global Impact and Sustainability Manager at Salesforce, and Charles Orgbon III, Advisory Sustainability Consultant at Deloitte

**Hanish Patel:**

April 22 marks the 51st anniversary of Earth Day, an event which helped to jumpstart the modern environmental movement. That's why in celebration of Earth Month, I'm excited to bring you a discussion on sustainability and what businesses can do to support sustainability initiatives, as well as empower employees to become agents of change. By engaging and educating employees on climate change impacts, organizations have the power to enable

people to make positive climate choices for themselves at home, at work, and within society.

Joining me today to discuss how organizations can empower employees in corporate sustainability are Julie Moorad, global impact and sustainability manager at Salesforce, and Charles Orgbon III, advisory sustainability consultant at Deloitte. Julie, Charles, welcome to the show.

**Charles Orgbon III:**

It's a pleasure to be with you.

**Julie Moorad:**

Thank you.

**Hanish Patel:**

Great. Let's do this. Let's kick off things by giving our listeners an overview of the current state of sustainability in corporations and their key objectives. Over to you.

**Julie Moorad:**

Awesome. I'm happy to start. At Salesforce, we really believe that business is the greatest platform for change, and that's been part of the company's DNA from the get-go. It's really about serving a broad set of stakeholders—our employees, customers, partners, the communities in which we live and work, as well as the environment.

Our environmental program really focuses on the global journey to net zero emissions. It's about mobilizing the global effort to see an additional trillion trees on earth and protecting and revitalizing our oceans. But all that to say, Salesforce is really focused on creating a low carbon future.

We've set a vast array of sustainability targets, including setting an approved 1.5 degree science-based emissions reduction target, delivering a carbon neutral cloud for all of our customers, and helping our customers meet their own sustainability targets and commitments through products like Sustainability Cloud.

We have a 100% renewable energy target. We're committed to advocating for clear and consistent science-based climate policies that facilitate a just and equitable transition to a 1.5 degree future. We've actually just added climate as an official part of our company public policy platform. But then I think at the crux of all of that, our employees are so critical to this journey. We've got 60,000-plus employees at this point.

Whether it's them having a conversation with their customers about sustainability, integrating sustainability into their day job, or participating in our employee resource group dedicated to sustainability called Earth Force, they are just as critical to our program as all of those commitments I've just mentioned.

**Hanish Patel:**

Wow, that's impressive. That really is. Charles, perspective on Deloitte?

**Charles Orgbon III:**

So we have a four-prong approach to our climate change strategy, which we're calling World Climate. Those four pillars are net zero by 2030, operate green, engage ecosystems, and empower individuals. When we think about

net zero by 2030, we're talking about our commitment to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 for our own operations, which is ahead of the 2050 time frame set by the Paris Agreement. So, we're going to do that by reducing business travel, and sourcing 100% renewable energy for our buildings, and converting 100% of our fleet to hybrid and electric vehicles by fiscal year 2030. We also want to operate green, which means aligning our climate policies, practices, and actions across our organization and designating a senior leader to be responsible for climate in each geography, prioritizing discussion of climate change on executive agendas, and embedding climate smart considerations into decisions on office operations, real estate, and investments.

And when we talk about engaging ecosystems, we're talking about who's at the table when we're doing all of this. We have to collaborate with our clients, our alliance partners, our NGOs, industry groups, and suppliers. A lot of discussion for today's podcast, the empowering individuals piece, is we want to engage and educate our employees on climate change impacts and decisions about what they consume, use, and buy. And we will enable our people to make positive climate choices at home and at work. And we really want to amplify these through their personal networks too.

**Hanish Patel:**

That's brilliant. Thank you, Charles. Just listening to the both of you there and although I would say slightly different names and badges to what you're put in at Salesforce and what we're put in at Deloitte, there seems to be a fair bit of similarities in terms of what both of you mentioned, right? And again, that may be more in tune also with the fact of how you guys met with that common purpose around it. But what I'd like to do with that in mind, and really kind of dig into an area that both of you talked about, which is people and specifically, how can organizations really empower their employees to become those agents of change as I mentioned earlier.

**Charles Orgbon III:**

Well, really I see employees as an untapped reservoir for influencing change within companies. We think about

external forces, for example, consumers wanting to demand companies be more responsible to people and the planet. But I think we often forget about the people that have the closest relationships to the decision makers. The employees within the companies themselves.

And so more companies are actually allowing employees to create their own workstreams and follow their passion projects. And many employees are creating those so-called green teams. And this shouldn't be too surprising because even at Deloitte, we conducted a global survey that found that 78% of employees are very concerned about climate change.

So, for example, employees either have asked for permission or simply volunteered anyways to lead campaigns that are changing purchasing behavior of their business unit so that services and products are sourced with a special emphasis on sustainably sourced, locally owned, and minority owned, phasing out plastic straws from corporate cafeterias, divesting 401(k) and pension plans from extractive economies, and encouraging meetings to be beefless, vegetarian, or vegan because of the impacts animal agriculture has on environmental quality. And also launching wellbeing and sustainability campaigns that encourage biking to work for example.

**Julie Moorad:**

Yeah, I think all of those are great points and, Charles, you said employees are an untapped resource and I think they bring so much energy and vastly different perspectives to the conversations that we're having at companies.

And I think that there's the shifting expectation of employees about what does it mean for them to find purpose at work. And I think that there's plenty of studies out there that millennials want to work for companies that share their values, and that climate is one of the top issues that people are really thinking about and confronted with. And so I think that there's this expectation that employers will create an environment that employees can engage in and go a little bit deeper in.

At Salesforce we have 12 formal equality groups, which are all about creating community for underrepresented groups and allies, as well as professional development, mentoring opportunities,



and just being able to create an impact at the company, and Earth Force is our employee resource group dedicated to just that. Really bringing environmental responsibility to life. And it's spread throughout the company in 40 different offices. We've got leaders from around the world, and I think it's such an important function of the company to provide not only that outlet to employees, but also just this ability to think beyond the green team, right?

You can participate in those formal green team channels, but also how can you take sustainability into your day job so that, Hanish, to your earlier question, employees can become change agents, and we all have a role to play, whether it's at our homes, with our voting, with our purchasing power, and what you work on on a day-to-day basis, whether you're in sales, marketing, what have you, each of us has a different angle with which we can approach the climate crisis.

**Hanish Patel:**

So let me ask you, off the backdrop that you just laid forward there, Julia and Charles, let's home in specifically on TMT organizations. What can they do to really engage their employees in the sustainability efforts? And in particular, I also want to get a perspective from the both of you that for any of our listeners out there where they may not already have an initiative in place by their company, what steps can they take to be more involved?

**Julie Moorad:**

It's a great question. I think an easy step that everyone can take, if this is not something that their companies are already doing, is asking questions. Ask questions of your leadership, ask questions about the strategy. That is exactly how Salesforce's sustainability program was formed many years ago, was an employee raised her hand at an all hands meeting and asked about the strategy, and it was a gap. And so the company created a program. And I think without that, we're seeing so much grassroots employee activism. And I think that the questions are really important to hold companies accountable.

**Hanish Patel:**

Absolutely. Charles, thoughts?

**Charles Orgbon III:**

As it relates to what employees can do, I think it's important to find a senior leadership ally. Someone that you can work with to remove those roadblocks and identify firm funding sources and help make appropriate connections as you navigate maybe the creation of a new idea or solution. And then also building a community of like-minded professionals. In San Francisco we used an initial survey that worked well because it was sent to everyone in the office and got lots of responses and really helped us build our community of people that would help lead some of these new initiatives.

**Julie Moorad:**

I think that having an exec sponsor is so critical. I think it's both bottom up and top down that you need to have that enthusiasm. That's how things get done. So completely agree with you there, Charles.

And Hanish, to your original question around specifically employees in TMT, at Salesforce we actually developed a product as a result of one of our employee's engagement in sustainability. A woman named Sue on our sustainability team was tasked with improving our carbon footprinting process and to leverage the Salesforce technology to improve that process. And what happened is she did it and she did it so successfully, it turned our reporting process from six months down into six weeks just by leveraging the technology that we had at our fingertips. And now that's become a product that our customers can use as well. And I think that just shows you, each employee is going to have something different at their disposal to use these solutions and these tools more effectively. It's just a matter of kind of channeling your thinking to make that change.

**Hanish Patel:**

I absolutely love that, Julie, the fact that you're using your own tools, I'll call it tool kits overall, to actually do something that moves the needle forward on sustainability is phenomenal. And I think should be a real eye opener for any organization in that TMT space that hasn't done much in this space but can be doing more is brilliant.

I want, to that point, maybe pivot a

little and let's just talk about right now, what we're all facing. And again, it's well documented what the impact of the pandemic has had on the environment when everyone was in lockdown. But from an employer and employee perspective, it certainly led to alternative working arrangements such as remote working and virtual environments. And when I think about that remoteness, and we have that in mind, how can companies and employees really stay engaged and active in sustainability efforts to the same degree when we're all in different locations?

**Charles Orgbon III:**

Certainly has made accessibility of how we get information and how do we even participate in programs, for example, easier. So, we're able to get a broader reach. So the green team network across Deloitte, which is encompassing over 30 markets actually, we've kind of become one. When we're able to host events and share information that can then be available to anyone regardless of geography, which I think has really fueled the energy we're seeing internally around pushing Deloitte to even be more aggressive with its sustainability initiatives.

And another thing that I wanted to touch on is, COVID-19 is certainly a devastating health threat, but its ripple effect has also upended food security and economic stability and governance and more, and these are the same components of society that climate change is affecting, just on a much slower scale. And perhaps the most important lesson is that societies around the world must learn during our peregrination towards the solution is to value science and the warnings of scientists about terrible, but yet plausible scenarios.

**Julie Moorad:**

Absolutely. And climate change is a threat multiplier. All of those existing injustices and inequalities are only going to be made worse by the climate crisis. And I think COVID has really made that incredibly evident. But I think on the flip side, it's also opened people's consciousness to see how all of these topics are so interconnected and by addressing climate change in a thoughtful manner, by really having justice at the core of how you're addressing climate,

you can end up solving some of these other issues that we're seeing in front of us every single day in the news, which is incredibly important.

And to Charles's earlier point around having the green team come together as one, I think we're seeing the same thing as at Salesforce. And it's not just Earth Force, it's all of our quality groups coming together to support one another far more than I think was possible when we were in the offices, quite frankly. Or at least it's provided a new opportunity. And I think we will see it continue into the future of these groups collaborating with one another to highlight the intersection of all of these issues, whether that's a multigenerational panel, elevating women that are leading the climate movement, highlighting the interconnectedness of climate injustice and racism.

There are so many overlaps that I think have become a lot more prevalent for folks, which I think in the long run, I'm glad it's happened. And I think it's so important because without bringing together all of these different players and talking about all of these interconnected issues, we can't really begin to solve them.

**Hanish Patel:**

So, let's dig in then. You talked about the intersectionality of work groups and the various work groups. Do you believe this remoteness that we're all in right now has actually accelerated that? And then to your point, and I think you touched upon it there that it needs to continue when we all get back into the office, so to speak.

**Charles Orgbon III:**

Yeah, just to clarify, I don't think that the pandemic accelerated intersectionality. Intersectionality was always there. I do think that the pandemic highlighted and forced us to acknowledge that the intersectionality was there.

**Julie Moorad:**

Absolutely.

**Charles Orgbon III:**

COVID-19 showed us that not all communities are affected equally, right. That women are disproportionately represented in the careers hardest hit by COVID-19. And that families experienced higher food insecurity rates than single individuals, and lack of

access to healthcare in black and brown communities led to increase death rates in those communities from the virus. So I think facing those realities, which have always been true, has been harder to ignore during COVID-19.

**Hanish Patel:**

So more of a magnification and an acceleration then would it be?

**Charles Orgbon III:**

Certainly.

**Julie Moorad:**

Yep. Spotlight.

**Hanish Patel:**

Got it. Fair enough. Just in what you guys were talking about, obviously you brought climate change to the fore in a number of your responses there, and obviously there's lot of immediate concern around just climate change and rightly so, but I want to wrap with a bit more of a focus on the future if I may. And looking ahead, what excites you the most about the future of sustainability? One, from a corporate level, and two, as an individual.

**Charles Orgbon III:**

From a corporate level, I think we're seeing, this is just not an issue we can afford to ignore anymore, right? That climate change in our future is some calculus of adaptation, mitigation, and human suffering. It depends on our actions today that will impact the value of those three variables. And so climate change is going to affect business. And I think we're seeing such an uptick in excitement about addressing climate change issues from a business perspective. So I'm super optimistic there.

I'm also really optimistic because I mentor and support a lot of young climate activists, actually. And I think today's generation of young people are quite energetic to solve these issues. And I think we should all seek out youth-led environmental organizations and support them, mentor them, fund them.

In Deloitte's millennial, gen Z survey, climate change was a critical issue for our generation both before and during the COVID-19 crisis. But what's important to know is that the 2020 millennial survey showed greater optimism about the environment, actually. Half

of respondents in the first survey said that they believe it's too late to repair the damage caused by climate change. Yet in our follow-up survey, this figure drops, suggesting that the pandemic's environmental impact, such as reduced economic activity, has lowered energy use and therefore pollution, has given hope that still time to take action and protect the planet.

**Julie Moorad:**

Spot on. I mean, I think it's so critical that we're elevating the youth voice, but also some of the voices that we haven't heard in the climate movement before. There are so many really incredible people that are working on addressing climate change. And there are so many really incredible solutions that we already have at our fingertips. And I think what I'm really hopeful and excited about is this opportunity to collaborate in a way that we haven't focused on as much before. I think that that's what I like about being a sustainability professional quite frankly, is it's not about competition between each of these companies, right? We're all

trying to solve the same challenge. And so there's so much that we can open source to one another and share and discuss as we're creating the solutions and addressing the challenges that all corporates are facing.

So that really gives me hope from a corporate level. And I think personally, just seeing, as we discussed earlier, COVID really highlighted the importance of community. And I think that community is going to be so central to solving the climate crisis and really fostering that sense of community, addressing climate at a community level as well, bringing together all voices and all different perspectives and no longer working in these silos. I think that that's really exciting and I think there's so much that we have to be hopeful for. And at the end of the day, we have to do it. This is the decade of action. This is when it matters. If we miss this moment, we're screwed. So we got to do the work.

**Charles Orgon III:**

I love that, Julie, the decade of action.

**Julie Moorad:**

We've got our work cut out for us.

**Hanish Patel:**

First and foremost, Julie, Charles, thank you for a really important and engaging conversation today. It was just wonderful to hear your perspectives on what your companies are doing on sustainability and the passion clearly came through. I mean, certainly some of the key points I took away that is so important that sustainability is just a part of a company's DNA as you highlighted.

And whether you're going for a low carbon future or ultimately net zero, setting up Earth Force and green teams and the importance of that. But I just want to wrap with just the statement you said there, Julie, it's the decade of action. And I can't close with a better statement than that. So, I just want to say, thank you, Julie, thank you, Charles. It was a real pleasure to have you on the podcast and until next time, happy listening.

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