

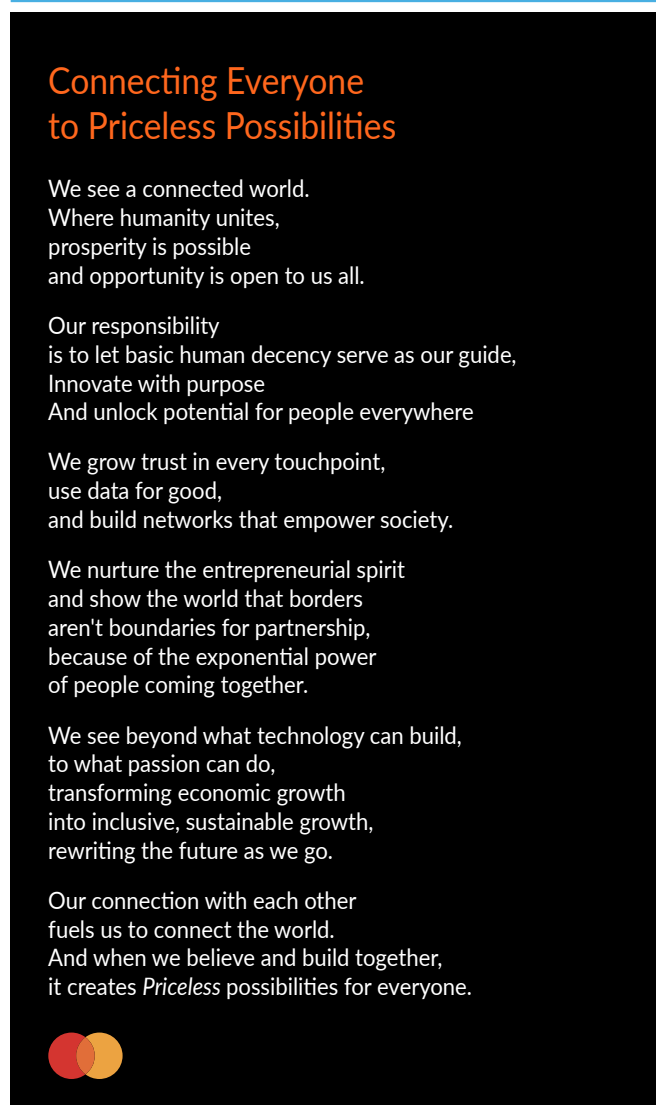
# Mastercard Unlocks the Potential of Its People with an Internal Talent Marketplace



# A Recognizable Name in the Industry

Headquartered in New York state, Mastercard is a global, technology payments company working to create and drive an inclusive, digital economy. By connecting individuals, businesses, and organizations in more than 210 countries and territories, Mastercard aims to build a sustainable world that unlocks "priceless" possibilities (see Figure 1) and benefits everyone, everywhere by making digital transactions safe, simple, smart, and accessible.

Figure 1: Mastercard's Purpose Manifesto



**Connecting Everyone to Priceless Possibilities**

We see a connected world.  
Where humanity unites,  
prosperity is possible  
and opportunity is open to us all.


Our responsibility  
is to let basic human decency serve as our guide,  
Innovate with purpose  
And unlock potential for people everywhere

We grow trust in every touchpoint,  
use data for good,  
and build networks that empower society.

We nurture the entrepreneurial spirit  
and show the world that borders  
aren't boundaries for partnership,  
because of the exponential power  
of people coming together.

We see beyond what technology can build,  
to what passion can do,  
transforming economic growth  
into inclusive, sustainable growth,  
rewriting the future as we go.

Our connection with each other  
fuels us to connect the world.  
And when we believe and build together,  
it creates *Priceless* possibilities for everyone.



Source: KnightAgency.com

Summary
<b>Challenge</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Creating a digital, automated platform that will match people with projects and leaders with talent.</li><li>• Wanting people to connect cross-regionally and cross-functionally via sharing, volunteering, and mentoring.</li><li>• Offering a more holistic way for people to consider long-term career opportunities.</li></ul>
<b>Solution</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mastercard built Unlocked, an internal talent marketplace.</li><li>• Unlocked was utilized to match people with projects, volunteering, and mentoring.</li></ul>
<b>Results</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Within a few months of launch, 62% of employees were registered on Unlocked.</li><li>• Mentoring pairings were around 62% cross-functional and about 52% cross-regional.</li></ul>

## Creating Connections to Meet Customer Needs

During a global meeting in 2020, then Mastercard CEO Ajay Banga shared that customers were looking for partnerships and solutions to help them during the pandemic. "Immediately, there were a hundred people who put up their hands and said, 'I'm here to help,'" said Vice President of Digital Talent Heather Yurko. Soon after the initial call to action for employees to donate their time, skills, and passions to support customers and the company's strategic priorities, several hundred more expressed their enthusiasm.

### An Attempt at a Solution

The talent market initiative, Project Possible, empowered people to become involved in company-wide projects; however, while using Excel spreadsheets to manually connect

people and opportunities, members of HR recognized a problem—because of the time-consuming, hands-on nature of spreadsheet work, roughly only 30% of employees who volunteered were successfully matched.

To operate an internal talent marketplace at scale, it needed a more sophisticated approach, and this meant looking for external solutions. “We realized it was something we couldn’t solve ourselves,” said Chief Talent and Organizational Officer Lucrecia Borgonovo.

Faced with this challenge, Mastercard established specific criteria:

- Unlocking capacity and redeploying talent
- Providing agile upskilling and reskilling to develop a future-fit workforce
- Opening career development opportunities to everyone
- Creating connections across functional and regional teams
- Leveraging a platform that would easily integrate with its current HR technology architecture
- Ability to access data regarding skills and expertise from the platform and join it with other data for broader insights

“We knew that there was a way for us to start thinking about this differently. During a time of uncertainty, at the beginning of the pandemic, we really needed to focus on how we could be more adaptive and more responsive. Thinking about matching the skills of our employees to our customers’ needs became a really critical path for us,” said Yurko.

## Unlocked is the Key

After several evaluations, Mastercard decided on a partnership with the internal talent marketplace company Gloat. Gloat’s platform helped create a holistic approach to meet immediate needs and develop long-term opportunities that would further build connections, drive innovation, and support career development.

Built by employees, for employees, Unlocked was designed to meet customer needs through surfacing skills and expertise across the organization. Automated matching made additional connections across regions and functions possible, giving employees clear opportunities to develop and drive their careers.

*Unlocked, our opportunity network, is our vision of a one-stop shop where employees can unlock their potential by having access to their own priceless possibilities. So, it was important to identify a partner who could allow us to create a seamless experience.*

Lucrecia Borgonovo, Chief Talent and Organizational Officer, Mastercard

## Leveraging Talent by Opportunity Types

Unlocked launched with these initial opportunities:

- Participating
- Volunteering
- Mentoring
- Learning

To build the user experience for these opportunities, questions were centered on policies, processes, and manager/employee involvement. “There were a lot of different conversations at every level,” explained Yurko. “We made a very conscious effort to make the team global.”

From May through December 2021, Mastercard introduced the platform to an initial group of 8,000 early adopters. At the beginning of 2022, it was introduced to all 26,000+ global employees.

“When we were first launching the platform, our running joke was that it would not exist without the platform itself,” said Yurko. “There is no Unlocked without Unlocked.” Mastercard needed to bring people together, and the way to do that was by creating projects and finding people with the skill sets to launch them.

As an example of success regarding making connections across regions and functions, Yurko shared the story of an employee in Nigeria working as a customer service representative. Unlocked gave him the opportunity to become a community manager. “He said, ‘I’ve never worked outside

my region ever before.” During the interview process, he introduced the project owner to his family, taking the laptop around his home and saying: “Here is my mother, and this is my grandmother, and these are my cousins.”

“This project seeker was so excited, he wanted to share it with his entire family,” said Yurko.

## Employees Pursue Their Passions While Making an Impact on Business

To measure the success of Unlocked, Mastercard leveraged various key metrics (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Success Measures for Unlocked



Source: The Josh Bersin Company, 2022

Within two months of the launch, 62% of employees were registered, with about 62% of them cross-functional and 52% cross-regional within the mentoring communities.

Unlocked also helped to expand opportunities in mentoring by facilitating relationships based on skill and not seniority; nine percent of the mentoring relationship matches were between newer employees and those who are more seasoned. “It absolutely is accelerating our ability for people to learn within the organization, and to think of new and different ways to approach our customers,” said Yurko.

## A Win/Win for Employees and Mastercard

Employees report feeling empowered by taking ownership in their career journeys and exploring opportunities for growth and development. All of this engagement makes a positive impact for Mastercard. “What we’ve seen across multiple projects is that our managers or our project owners are giving us feedback that they would not have been able to move forward as quickly with their projects or other work that needed to get done because they never would have found that particular skillset or someone with the workload capacity to deliver. And so being able to get that access quickly—usually within a week of opening a project—has been very positive for our owners and for our participants,” said Yurko.

“*The feedback that we’ve received has been incredible. We heard comments like, ‘I’ve never done anything like this before in my career. This feels like freedom. This feels like an ability for me to take the areas that I’m really interested in and passionate about, to continue to grow and develop my career while still working my day job.’*”

Heather Yurko, Vice President of Digital Talent, Mastercard

## Exploring Career Paths at Scale

Since the launch, the opportunity to explore potential career paths based on current experiences and desired roles or development areas was rolled out. The results were that 51% of employees explored career paths and, of those, 32% were saved as paths with potential.

The internal talent marketplace can help support employees in how they think about growing and developing their careers. “Growth is not about moving up within your particular function or business unit,” said Borgonovo. “We wanted people thinking about careers as jungle gyms.” She meant exploring different opportunities to learn new skills or make new connections, consider your future, and explore what career paths are available.

Borgonovo shared: “People are looking for choice and that’s what our opportunity network does. It allows you to charter your own journey to take ownership of your career.”

## Lessons Learned

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As the team built and deployed Unlocked at rapid speed and great scale, they learned several important lessons for their future and for other HR and talent leaders to share.

- **Speed and agility are important to meet employee and customer needs.** Mastercard learned that a platform must meet the needs and speed at scale that employees and customers require. Through Unlocked, matching opportunities was now automated and directly linked to employees' experiences and desired areas of development.
- **Work can be approached in different ways to meet market demands.** Unlocked created a new way to connect people, skills, and expertise to projects, volunteering, and mentoring.
- **Stay focused on the goal of an internal talent marketplace.** Having a desired outcome is critical, but so is being agile and willing to experiment and learn along the way to ensure customer and employee needs are met.

## Conclusion and Next Steps

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During the initial introduction of its internal talent marketplace, Mastercard wanted to provide employees with opportunities to engage in projects to learn new skills, achieve business outcomes, and make connections across the organization.

As the Unlocked journey evolves, new features and functionality will be introduced to continue supporting career growth and solving business needs. Planned features include enhanced user experience, more in-depth skill understanding, deeper connections to learning and wellness, and career development enhancements connected to internal positions.

## About the Authors



### Josh Bersin

Josh founded Bersin & Associates in 2001 to provide research and advisory services focused on corporate learning. He expanded the company's coverage to encompass HR, talent management, talent acquisition, and leadership and became a recognized expert in the talent market. Josh sold the company to Deloitte in 2012 and was a partner in Bersin by Deloitte up until 2018.

In 2019, Josh founded the Josh Bersin Academy, a professional development academy that has become the “home for HR.” In 2020, he put together a team of analysts and advisors who are now working with him to support and guide HR organizations from around the world under the umbrella of The Josh Bersin Company. He is frequently featured in publications such as *Forbes*, *Harvard Business Review*, *HR Executive*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and *CLO Magazine*. He is a popular blogger and has more than 800,000 followers on LinkedIn.



### Kathi Enderes, PhD

Kathi is the senior vice president of research at The Josh Bersin Company, leading and developing research-based insights for all areas of HR, learning, talent, and HR technology. Kathi has more than 20 years' global experience, from management consulting with IBM, PwC, and EY and as a talent leader at McKesson and Kaiser Permanente. Most recently, Kathi led talent and workforce research at Deloitte. She is a frequent keynote speaker, author, and thought leader.

Originally from Austria, Kathi has worked in Vienna, London, and Spain and now lives in San Francisco. Her passion is to make work better and more meaningful. Kathi holds a doctoral degree in mathematics and a master's degree in mathematics from the University of Vienna.

## The Josh Bersin Company Membership

The Josh Bersin Company provides a wide range of research and advisory services to help HR leaders and professionals tackle the ever-evolving challenges and needs of today's workforce. We cover all topics in HR, talent, and L&D. The Josh Bersin Academy—built on our research and powered by Nomadic Learning—helps HR practitioners grow key foundational skills. Our corporate membership program provides HR teams and senior leaders with the skills, strategies, and insights to build cutting-edge HR and people strategies through a combination of research, assessments, professional development, exclusive events, and community. In 2022, The Josh Bersin Company introduced the Global Workforce Intelligence (GWI) Project to guide market-leading businesses and their leaders through the challenges of industry convergence while remaining future-focused.

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