

AGILE ANALYTICS IMPROVE TALENT PLACEMENT

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In both the EU and Canadian markets, a unified, talent-placement strategy focused on getting the right talent to the right place at the right time is creating advantages for organizations. The secret weapon: back-end-analytics systems that contextualize talent acquisition, performance, and development.

Something is Missing

One of the most pressing challenges facing recruiters, managers, staffers, and HR is that top talent (as defined by the organization) is not meeting expectations using the current set of solutions offered by most companies. For many organizations, talent acquisition is an acute focus; it is what management refers to as, “getting the right talent to the right place at the right time.” When managers look at their goals, however, they often find they transcend the scope of hiring. Their goals go beyond the focus to bring in top talent to restructuring how to profile employee performance, to emphasizing the promotion of internal talent, to determining when to hire outside the organization. While senior leadership focus is to acquire top talent to fill skills gaps, middle management is forced to combine performance metrics and talent acquisition to work in tandem to alleviate the organization’s talent placement struggles. Combining these areas does not work so well, however, when management is unable to get senior leadership to consider the organization’s long-term need for top talent and its placement.

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Table 1: Top Pressures with the Talent Ecosystem

	EU	Canada
Lack of honesty in performance reviews	55%	49%
Lack of data visibility	37%	36%
Lack of dataset integrations	36%	27%
Inability to determine skills gaps	34%	24%

Source: Aberdeen, January 2019, n = 160
 Aberdeen, January 2019, n = 77

Table 1 shows the top talent-related pressures facing organizations. The complaint at the top of the list is that stakeholders find there to be a lack of honesty in performance reviews, making it more challenging to determine whether someone is a good internal candidate or if they have the right skillset

and characteristics for a specific job. Sometimes, a candidate can have the ideal values for the company but lack the qualities needed for a particular role. When internal performance metrics are dated, subjective, or both, hiring teams lack a strong understanding of how a candidate would fit into the environment or whether they would be a match with a particular team's culture. Performance data defines the company's internal culture while contributing insight as to whether an employee is working to management's expectations. If those in charge of hiring and promotions lack a solid understanding of this backed by robust performance data, they cannot make objective, data-driven decisions about whether a candidate is a good match for the work environment and role.

The second and third major challenges hiring professionals face are a lack of visibility into data and a lack of dataset integrations. The typical organization currently builds its talent ecosystem organically, as the company scales in size. However, by the time firms reach mid-size (1,000-5,000 employees), organizations are, on average, using as many as five, best-of-breed solutions to collect data independently, usually with little to no interoperability between them. (On the higher end of this range, some organizations use as many as 30 such solutions). Something else to consider from Table 1: While it may appear to be low, when delineated by industry and sector, the percentage of Canadian firms impacted by these pressures increases to 36%.

The final top pressure listed in Table 1 is an inability to determine skills gaps, which leads to ill-defined job descriptions, and, in turn, uncertainty regarding the talent, skills, and traits that the organization needs to acquire.

In the EU and Canada, educational systems lag behind other sectors in terms of specialization, as cost and spending structures in the private sector change work requirements and methods. For education, viable talent pools are shrinking, even as efforts to promote labor mobility gains momentum across larger regions. For the EU, talent pools for specialized talent dwindle as employee training lags; additionally, a [wider range of talent acquisition options increases competition. More agile US firms competing for the same talent increases the problem for many Canadian firms, as well.](#) If hiring teams are unable to define the expertise they needed rapidly, the organization will lag behind the competition when it comes time to acquire the necessary skills — and the talent who possess them.

The second problem is that disparate, incomplete datasets require HR and hiring teams to act as data analysts, which is a role far outside their job descriptions. Fifty-five percent of EU firms and 66% of Canadian firms find that their labor management and hiring teams spend at least half their time manually managing data — when making decisions around hiring and

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promotion — in an effort to gain insight. As competition for top talent heats up, organizations cannot spare the time it takes to calculate these results. When it comes to hiring / promoting talent, manual data analysis forces HR professionals to choose between full-context, data-backed conclusions, and making time-effective decisions.

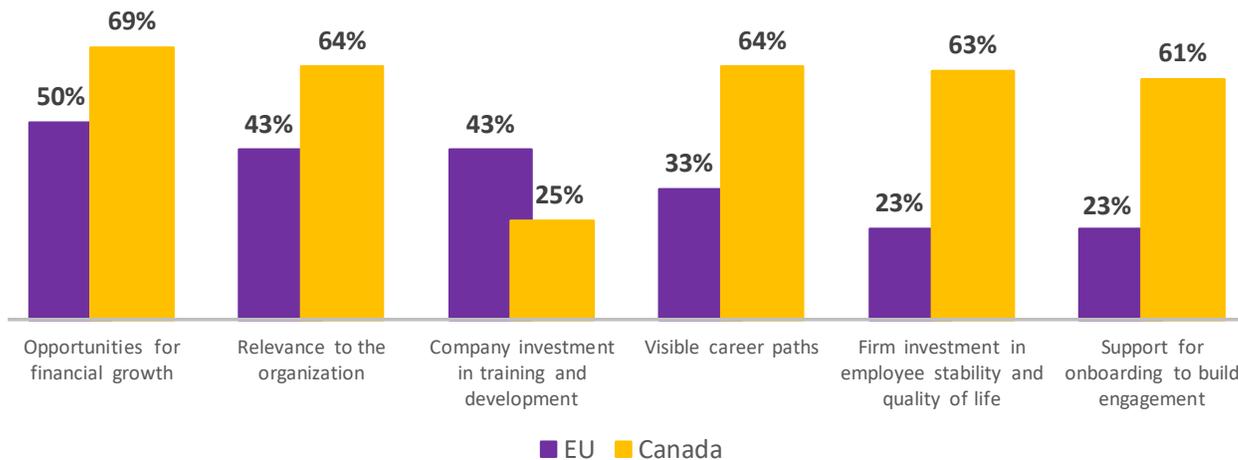
The Big Fix

When organizations employ talent placement technology, the primary goal is to improve accuracy and efficiency when transferring contextual information. In talent placement, these components mark the difference between having first-choice, top talent or lagging behind more agile competitors.

In a recent survey, Aberdeen looked at why EU and Canadian employees join and stay with organizations (Figure 1). Unsurprisingly, the reasons are not very different across geographies or industries. Employees want to join an organization with a mission that they can embrace; they value a clearly defined, visible career path. Most employees also wish to work for a company that invests in personalized training and development.

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Figure 1: Reasons Why Employees Join and Stay with the Organization



Source: Aberdeen, January 2019, n = 160
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Across the board, employees look for growth, organizational buy-in, and an employer committed to their personal development. An Aberdeen analysis of U.S. firms reveals similar results, which means these conditions are endemic within western office culture but not reflected in the way senior management hires for short-term needs. How can hiring teams build a solution that meets long-term needs while assuaging upper management’s shortsightedness?

The answer is agile analytics.

Top performing companies are unifying their talent acquisition and talent-management-solution ecosystems into a single solution backed by agile analytics. Aberdeen's research found that Best-in-Class companies are 67% more likely than All Others (30% vs. 18%) to align employee interests, candidate goals, and management goals analytically. The Best-in-Class are also 43% more likely than All Others (43% vs. 32%) to integrate performance data with the learning ecosystem and talent acquisition tools to develop career path descriptions, ideal candidate profiles, and an understanding of how to train incoming and internal talent to create optimal employees.

Within the ecosystem itself, Best-in-Class companies are connecting talent profiles to construct a more detailed image of what defines top talent. As these organizations build their talent brands, management teams are learning what sets the company's corporate culture as it relates to different job requirements. While forging these links, managers rely on technological ecosystems that return accurate, real-time insights backed by effective data compliance measures.

By the Numbers

Best-in-Class companies in the EU are refocusing talent placement efforts, linking solutions together through agile analytics while maintaining data compliance between all of the ecosystem's components. In Canada, the Best-in-Class are also using agile analytics, but with a stronger focus on building engagement throughout the talent lifecycle. While these two markets produce different motivators for talent placement solutions, firms in both regions are banking on agile analytics to resolve data-based problems.

Agile analytics deliver strong results. In the EU, Best-in-Class firms are 24% more likely than All Others (84% vs. 68%) to find that they are better equipped to compete for top talent. In Canada, 68% of firms improved their competitive position using agile analytics. Back in the EU, Best-in-Class companies are 81% more capable of filling hiring needs than All Others (65% vs. 36%). In Canada, the Best-in-Class are 52% more likely than All Others (50% vs. 33%) to be meet hiring objectives more effectively.

When firms can achieve hiring goals more rapidly and more effectively, they can reduce talent management and onboarding costs by retaining top performers and attracting career-oriented hires. As noted earlier, when there are divisions between talent placement solution, acquisition, and management, organizations overlook internal top talent who could potentially fill emerging skills gaps. Ignoring them forces top talent to leave the firm to gain promotion. In the EU and Canada, Best-in-Class companies are combining these solution spaces to shut the revolving doors for top talent.

Best-in-Class companies are 67% more likely than All Others to analytically align employee interests, candidate goals, and management goals inside their organization.

After building a functional transition from talent acquisition to talent management, the next step that the Best-in-Class take is to unite datasets from these solution spaces with an agile analytics platform. Each solution space provides the other with the context to define top talent, which, in turn, provides managers and hiring stakeholders with the necessary insights to account for skill needs, goal management, and the corporate culture.

Unifying both talent acquisition and talent management into one entity – talent placement – is not specific to geography or industry. Data unification builds long-term success while helping HR and hiring teams appease senior management’s short-term goals. HR, hiring teams, and division managers are torn between a need to provide employees with stronger resources, such as investment in their personal development, and calls from senior management to reduce labor costs. But cost reduction is dependent on reducing employee churn, and employee development is dependent on facilitating a strong resource management strategy. Both of these vital elements are achieved more effectively when agile analytics link the learning and development, talent acquisition, and performance management systems.

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