



ClearCo

BUYER'S GUIDE

Employees Thrive With a Tailored Talent Management System

More Than a Job: Design an Employee Experience With a Complete Talent Management System

The new world of work is here to stay.

Employees today want more than just a job. They're looking for human-centric leadership and employers who value their contributions and invest in their success. They're prioritizing growth opportunities, company culture, and work-life balance over flashy perks. They want to feel like they belong and are an integral part of what makes your company great.

They want a top-notch employee experience — and they're willing to quit to find it. **93% of employees** say they're looking or plan to look for a new job this year.

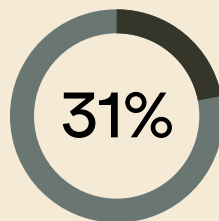
Your company's success is deeply connected to your ability to recruit, nurture, and keep top talent. More than ever, leadership is relying on human resources to create an employee experience that does just that.



Although HR strategy may be getting more attention from executives, that doesn't always translate to more resources. A comprehensive employee experience isn't easy to execute when your team is at its limit just trying to keep up with hiring demand and stay on top of administrative HR tasks.

If this is a familiar situation, you're in need of a unified talent platform. Unlike most siloed HR technology solutions, talent management software unites the entire employee lifecycle, from application to offboarding, and gives your team unprecedented workforce insight in the process. Not to mention, consolidating your software also means consolidating costs.

But how do you narrow down your options in a market that's full of talent management technology and tools? We know just how hard it can be to weigh your options, so we've created this complete Talent Management System Buyer's Guide to help you organize your team's decision-making process.



Only **31% of employees** are engaged at work, according to Gallup research.

Why You Need a Talent Management System

Maximizing Employee Potential and Growth

Before we dive into choosing technology, it's important to understand just how crucial a talent management system is to managing your people and processes effectively.

Talent management accounts for every part of the employee experience, which is shaped by every interaction a person has with your organization. It starts with the first touchpoint as a job seeker or recruited candidate. It's followed by the onboarding experience, which is the foundation of the rest of the employee experience.

Then, employee journeys are characterized by their relationships with managers and colleagues, performance evaluations, growth or role progression, engagement levels, sense of belonging and purpose, and more.

To manage this holistic experience seamlessly, you need a comprehensive talent management system with must-have employee experience tools to support your strategies and talent analytics to see their impact.

The right talent management system will carry talent from applicant to productive and engaged employee seamlessly. It enables you to design an employee experience that helps them thrive and your business succeed. An effective talent management solution takes the critical but time-consuming tasks of people management off your team's plate.

A talent management platform enables your team to leverage automation and artificial intelligence (AI), taking over repetitive administrative work so you can focus on critical people management strategies. The software links all of your people management processes together and provides analytics and reporting tools that give you access to data-informed insights about your employees that simply aren't accessible otherwise.

Insights from your talent management system help your team develop more effective HR strategies tailored to your unique workforce and, ultimately, drive business success.



Solve Common HR Problems With a Talent Management System

Unite People and Processes for Efficiency and Insight

Regardless of the state of your HR strategy, you have regular tasks that can't be ignored. You can't just stop interviewing candidates, running background checks, gathering documentation, managing benefits, handling promotions and terminations, assigning equipment, answering policy questions, or any of the other countless tasks that come across your desk.

But that doesn't leave much time for designing your employee experience, let alone collecting and evaluating data so you can improve it.

A talent management system can solve tons of common problems your team faces:

- ✓ Inefficient recruitment and hiring processes, including candidate screening and interview scheduling
- ✓ Lack of communication with candidates during hiring and onboarding
- ✓ Lack of structure or standardization across HR processes
- ✓ Lack of transparency around people management processes and policies
- ✓ Inconsistent processes and policies
- ✓ Miscommunication and information siloes
- ✓ Lack of understanding of employee engagement and performance
- ✓ Inconsistent or inefficient learning and development (L&D) programs
- ✓ Lack of insight leading to ineffective strategies
- ✓ Inability to plan or anticipate workforce needs



Talent management software also has an impact on problems employees often face, including:

- ✓ Disorganized and drawn-out candidate experience
- ✓ Unpredictable communication from recruiters and hiring managers
- ✓ Lack of preparation and support during onboarding
- ✓ Confusion around responsibilities and expectations
- ✓ Lack of transparency around work performance
- ✓ Few opportunities to give or receive feedback
- ✓ Few chances to learn new skills or grow in their roles
- ✓ Feeling unappreciated and unmotivated
- ✓ Lack of insight into business goals and how their work fits into the big picture



BUYER TIP

Do any of your HR processes feel particularly disconnected or disjointed?

Ask software vendors how their talent management system can streamline clunky workflows.

The Case for Comprehensive Talent Management Software

Recruit, Recognize, Develop, and Retain Top Talent

An engaging, connected employee experience is no longer optional. If you want in-demand top talent to even consider working at your company, let alone stick around to become high-performing employees, it's a necessity. Research shows that a positive employee experience makes your people **87% more likely to stay and 70% more likely to recommend** your organization to others.

You need a connected HR tech ecosystem to support your employee experience strategy. Unfortunately, HR teams are using a hodgepodge of **21 different systems** or modules, on average, to complete their work. Just 42% have an HR systems strategy that's regularly updated, which means many organizations are piling systems on top of systems without planning for the future.

There's no question that you need to support your people with streamlined technology that can adapt as your company grows. Equip your team with a powerful talent management software solution that unites your people and processes for the best possible employee experience.

Here are just a few convincing reasons why your HR team needs talent management software:

- ✓ Respond to the competitive talent market
- ✓ Demand for top-notch candidate and employee experiences
- ✓ Increase efficiency and save valuable hours for HR with automation and AI
- ✓ Eliminate mistakes due to human error
- ✓ Execute a comprehensive employee lifecycle management strategy
- ✓ Attract and retain a diverse workforce
- ✓ Support employee career development and internal mobility
- ✓ Recognize and celebrate accomplishments and milestones
- ✓ Foster engagement at every stage of the employee lifecycle
- ✓ Increase transparency and collaboration among HR and employees
- ✓ Access in-depth insights from talent management processes
- ✓ Continued competition for top talent and increased technology adoption anticipated by HR experts



The Need for Comprehensive Talent Management

86%

86% of employees would leave their jobs or one with more learning opportunities.

24%

Only 24% of HR departments are getting maximum value from the technology they use.

46%

Only 46% of employees say they know what's expected of them at work.

Take these steps to get buy-in from leaders and stakeholders:

1. List each stakeholder's name, title, department, role in the decision-making process, and specific employee lifecycle challenges.
2. Identify the issues each stakeholder needs the new system to solve.
3. Determine need-to-have vs. nice-to-have talent management features and ensure everyone agrees to make the final decision easier.
4. Outline the business case for a full-platform talent management system. You'll need to clearly show the problems affecting your people management strategy currently and how a talent management system would help solve them. Include metrics to illustrate your points.

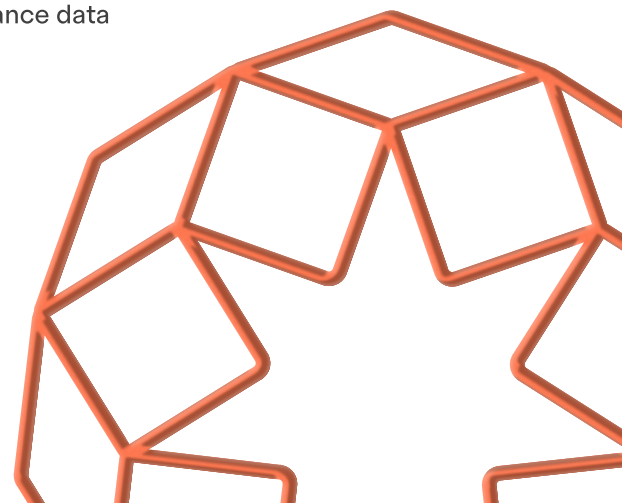
You can use HR metrics like these — or lack thereof — to support your case:

- ✓ HR hours spent on manual employee tasks
- ✓ Number of disconnected software systems in use by HR
- ✓ Retention rates for new hires and employees overall
- ✓ Engagement rates or lack of engagement data
- ✓ Performance review scores, goal completion rates, or lack of performance data
- ✓ Learning and training data or lack of L&D data
- ✓ Rate of internal promotions



15%

Positive employee experiences can lead to a **15% increase in profitability.**



Talent Management System Features You Can't Live Without

Maximize Employee Talent for Success at Every Stage

Today, employees are looking for a company that wants them to succeed, listens to their needs, and empowers them to perform at their best. They want an employee experience where expectations are clear, recognition is given freely, and growth is supported. Your HR team needs tools that take manual tasks off their hands, allowing them to focus on helping your people reach their full potential.

Talent management systems are packed with features, but just because they're available doesn't mean you need all of them.

The talent management system you choose should ease workloads, connect all the moving parts of managing your people, and distill complex employee data into easy-to-understand reports.

Understand talent management tools so you can choose the right provider for your business needs and avoid wasting time looking at software that won't work.

Must-Haves for Years of Usability

Before we tackle top talent management system tools, it's important to consider whether the software is user-friendly. If you choose a talent management system that's chock-full of features but is difficult for your team to use or lacks proper support from the vendor, you'll likely struggle to get the most out of those features.

Ask about these characteristics first to be sure your team can get tons of value from the software for years to come.

1. User-Friendly Interface

Learning a new system at work is never a simple task, and sometimes, it's so daunting it can cause productivity issues. An intuitive interface is key for faster adoption of the new technology — and to keep employees from feeling overwhelmed or burnt out as they navigate the learning curve.

2. Scalable With Business Growth

Consider your company's short- and long-term growth plans. Choose a talent management system equipped to handle both an increased number of HR users and a larger headcount.



3. Single-Platform Login

How many HR systems does your team log into each day? Ensure the talent management system requires only one login username and password to simplify HR workflows. Better yet? A talent management system with single sign-on (SSO) which enables users to log into any SSO-enabled app using the same credentials in just one click.

4. Cloud-Based

The biggest benefit of a talent management system is arguably the aggregation of typically far-flung people data. With a cloud-based software solution, every user can access the most accurate and up-to-date information when they log in.

This way, there's no confusion about where the information came from and less miscommunication overall.

5. Centralized User Dashboard

Talent management systems are designed to handle an enormous amount of employee data and HR processes. Look for a system that enables your HR users to create their own centralized dashboard where they can see what's most relevant to their roles as soon as they log in.

6. Seamless Software Integration

An excellent talent management solution consolidates employee data from different HR systems into a single source. Look for a platform that easily integrates with other HR software you'll be using, like payroll, benefits administration, learning management, and employee assessment solutions.

7. Smooth Implementation

You're surely no stranger to waiting months to begin implementing new software, a process that can take just as long to complete. Be sure to choose a vendor that can meet your implementation deadline, and ask what a typical implementation process looks like for companies similar to yours.

8. Regular New Feature and Product Update Releases

Software is updated for many reasons: a bug fix, feature functionality increases, security improvements, or the release of brand-new tools, to name a few. You don't want to start using software that is rarely improved or enhanced. Not only will you miss out on exciting new technology developments, but you could face additional challenges that come with using buggy software, like the loss of valuable time spent troubleshooting. Look for a talent management system that consistently releases new features and updates its tools.

9. Collaborative Client-Vendor Relationship

Many of the best talent management systems foster collaborative relationships with their top clients to aid in better product development. Look for a vendor that asks for your feedback and gets clients involved in product testing so they can build the best possible talent management system.

10. AI-Powered People Analytics

Top talent management systems offer AI-powered analytics and reporting capabilities to take advantage of their vast repositories of people data. Look for a system that can give you insight into every part of the employee lifecycle, enriched by AI.

Learn from your people analytics, and you can:

- ✓ Strengthen employer branding and reach more candidates.
- ✓ Contact, interview, and hire candidates faster.
- ✓ Implement onboarding programs that start new hires off strong.
- ✓ Understand what makes a high-performing, loyal employee at your company.
- ✓ Learn what drives employee engagement most among your workforce.
- ✓ Spot patterns in employee performance so you can address issues or emulate successful strategies.
- ✓ Plan for the future of your company by hiring the right people at the right time and consistently reskilling and upskilling your employees.
- ✓ Easily share insights via compelling data visualizations and reports.

Talent Acquisition Tools

Talent acquisition is the process of recruiting, hiring, and ramping — or onboarding — new hires. Look for a talent management system that supports these with an applicant tracking system (ATS) and onboarding features.

Applicant tracking systems support the employer brand, manage internal hiring team and candidate communications, organize information, and enable better collaboration on recruiting teams. Employee onboarding solutions can help keep organizations compliant, ease new hires into their role, lower time to productivity, and decrease turnover.

These are a few of the most useful talent acquisition tools to look for:

11. Career Site Chatbot Assistant

A career site chatbot is your 24/7 virtual recruiting assistant. As job seekers browse open roles, the chatbot can suggest other roles they might be interested in. It can help them complete their applications and answer simple FAQs. You can even have it act as a recruiter for certain roles, asking candidates a few knockout questions and prompting them to schedule an interview if they pass.



12. AI-Assisted Content and Outreach

Artificial intelligence has huge time-saving potential for HR teams. Look for a talent management system with AI enhancements that help recruiters write job descriptions and compose emails and text messages to candidates in a fraction of the time. Then, automate outreach with strategic drip campaigns, keeping in touch with talent pools without increasing recruiters' manual workload.

13. AI-Powered Candidate Sourcing and Talent Matching

Using AI to find candidates and then prioritize your outreach helps you find the best possible fit for every role. AI-enhanced sourcing tools are able to tap into vast global talent pools to source both active and passive prospects. Then, talent matching ranks candidates based on how closely they match your specified criteria, including skills, experience, and location. With fair, unbiased evaluations and the ability to prioritize top talent, these tools bring consistency, efficiency, and expertise to modern hiring strategies.

14. Easy Interview Scheduling

Scheduling candidate screenings and interviews can take days of back-and-forth via email — but not with the right talent management system. With automatic interview links and multi-interviewer scheduling, recruiters can include a calendar link in their first contact email showing only available times that work for everyone, and candidates can get their screening scheduled right away.

15. Interview Guides and Scorecards

Give standardized interviews and make it easier to score candidates fairly with guides and scorecards. Interview guides ensure hiring teams ask candidates the same questions, and scorecards enable quick comparisons and faster feedback from hiring teams.

16. Candidate Texting

There's no better way to reach most people than by text, and the same goes for candidates. Help recruiters stay in touch and get answers faster while adding a personal touch to the hiring process with candidate texting and text messaging templates.

17. Self-Service Employee Portal

Empower new hires to start their onboarding journey independently and take some of the burden off of HR with an employee self-service portal. Give new hires the reins in their onboarding experience, putting relevant onboarding information at their fingertips for a more engaging process.

18. Built-In Hiring Compliance Features

Hiring new employees requires employment verification, background checks, and other compliance tasks. Automatically sign and submit digital paperwork and complete background checks without re-entering candidate information. Be confident you're bringing qualified employees on board and eliminate a common manual data entry task for HR.

19. Onboarding Checklists With Centralized Progress Tracker

Build a complete new hire onboarding checklist to ensure your newest employees and your internal team complete every step in the process. Checklists and task trackers enable HR to keep track of each new hire's progress and ensure your company consistently provides the best possible onboarding experience.

At The PCA Group, an HR team of three uses ClearCo to efficiently manage the entire employee lifecycle for over 1,000 employees.

[Read the Case Study](#)

Effortless Employee Engagement, Performance, and Goals

Your performance management strategy helps employees feel more connected to their jobs and goals, increases transparency and collaboration, boosts the frequency and effectiveness of feedback, and helps drive succession planning. It's also a key part of keeping employees engaged. Set clear expectations, help employees understand how they're doing, and foster their professional development with these features.

20. Goal Planning and Tracking

Define and track employee goals with goal planning and tracking. Enable employees to see how their work impacts business goals and keep everyone informed of their progress with regular updates.

21. Performance Review Templates and Guides

Kick-off performance review season quickly with the help of review templates and best practice guides. Give reviews that are useful for your employees and standardize performance data so your team can better analyze performance.

22. Employee Engagement Survey

Understand employee sentiment and get their valuable feedback with employee engagement surveys. Look for a talent management system that offers a variety of survey templates as well as customizable surveys to help you dig deeper and get employees' opinions on everything from diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) to working from home.

23. Manager-Employee 1:1s

Manager-employee 1:1 tools facilitate increased collaboration, feedback, and trust between managers and their direct reports. 1:1 tools help you establish these valuable meetings on a regular basis and provide both private and shared workspaces for managers and employees to create agendas, take notes, and define action items.

24. Employee Social Recognition and Automated Celebrations

Employee recognition is a key driver of engagement and inclusive workplace culture. Social recognition tools enable employees to show appreciation for their colleagues publicly. Automated celebrations ensure that big days — whether it's a birthday or work anniversary — don't slip by unnoticed. Both tools help foster an environment where employees feel valued and appreciated.

Key Considerations Before You Buy

55 Questions To Help You Find the Best Talent Platform

There are lots of factors to consider before investing in a new talent management system. Ask the right questions so you can focus on what's important and find the best full platform software for your organization.

We've compiled a list of 55 questions to ask throughout the process to help you choose the right solution.



Recruitment and Applicant Tracking

1. Does your talent management system offer AI-powered candidate sourcing and matching?
2. Can it integrate with job boards and social media for job posting?
3. Does the system support branded career sites (for multiple brands, if applicable)?
4. What features support candidate screening and interviews?
5. Does the system include an applicant tracking system (ATS)?
6. How does it manage and organize applicant data?
7. What tools are available for candidate communication and engagement, e.g., AI content generation and texting?
8. Can the system help with diversity and inclusion in recruitment?
9. Does the system offer built-in background checks?



Onboarding

10. How does the system facilitate the onboarding process for new hires?
11. Does it offer automated onboarding workflows?
12. Can it handle e-signatures and document management for onboarding paperwork?
13. What measures are in place to ensure a smooth transition for new employees?
14. Can onboarding processes be customized to our organization's needs?





Performance and Engagement

15. How does the system support performance evaluations and feedback?
16. Can it handle 360-degree feedback evaluations?
17. Does it provide tools for setting goals and KPI tracking?
18. Is there support for continuous performance feedback, including manager check-ins?
19. How does it handle performance appraisal scheduling?
20. What features are available for employee engagement and satisfaction surveys?
21. How does the system measure and improve employee engagement?
22. Can it collect real-time employee feedback and sentiment analysis?
23. Is there support for recognition programs?
24. Does it facilitate team collaboration and communication?
25. How does it track turnover rates and identify retention risks?
26. Can it provide insights into employee turnover reasons?



Learning & Development

27. Does the system include a Learning Management System (LMS) to support employee training and development?
28. Does the LMS include a content library and options for custom course creation?
29. Can employees create their own learning paths to support individual career goals?
30. How can HR and L&D teams monitor course completion and knowledge retention?
31. Does the system encourage engagement through gamification, customization, or other features?
32. How does the talent management system assist in identifying high-potential employees?
33. Can it help create succession plans and talent pipelines?
34. How does the system facilitate knowledge transfer and retention?



Analytics & Reporting

35. Does the system offer AI-enhanced reporting and analytics capabilities?
36. Can it provide workforce insights and predictive analytics?
37. Is there support for custom reporting and dashboard creation?
38. Can the system produce shareable data visualizations and reports?
39. How does it handle data security and compliance in analytics?
40. What are some use cases for various reporting tools?





Integrations and Customization

- 41. Can the platform integrate with payroll and benefits administration systems?
- 42. What other integrations are available with other HR and business systems?
- 43. Can the system be customized to meet our specific needs?
- 44. How do you ensure data consistency across integrated systems?
- 45. Can you provide examples of successful customizations and integrations you've done for similar clients in our industry?



Implementation and Customer Support

- 46. What is the typical timeline for implementing your talent management system?
- 47. What type of user support or training is available for our HR team and employees?
- 48. Do you offer ongoing training and support after implementation?
- 49. How do you handle data migration from our existing HR systems to your platform?
- 50. Can you share examples of successful implementations with other organizations in our industry?
- 51. How does it handle data security and compliance in analytics?
- 52. What are some use cases for various reporting tools?



Data Security and Compliance

- 53. How does the system handle data security and compliance, including GDPR and other regulations?
- 54. Can it manage data access and permissions effectively?
- 55. How does the system handle data privacy and protection?



Tips for Productive Talent Management System Demos

With your lists of must-have and nice-to-have features and questions for vendors, you're ready to determine which software solutions your team will explore. Prepare for talent management system demos beforehand so you're not swayed by a charismatic salesperson or fun feature.

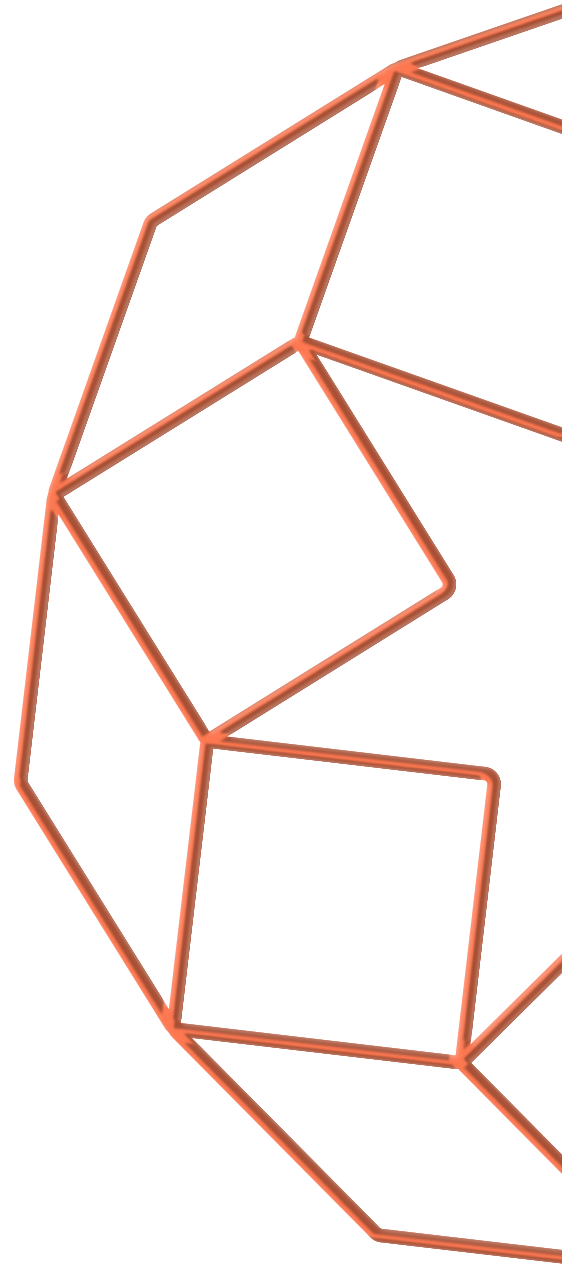
In addition to online research, ask your extended network for recommendations and allow your human resources team to assess any relationships with current technologies and offer their thoughts. Be sure to read reviews of talent management systems or visit review sites like G2, Capterra, and SoftwareAdvice.

Gather a list of potential solutions and match your list of needs to their feature list or pricing page. Schedule demos to see the tool in action. A live, personalized demo (vs. a video recording) will always give you a better idea of whether the software suits your team. Before taking your demo, create a checklist from the list of desired features and functionalities so you can keep track of the software's pros and cons and save time.

11 Rules for a Successful Talent Management System Demo

1. Invite the final decision maker and at least one potential user to attend.
2. Have your list of feature expectations handy.
3. Take notes (preferably alongside your must-have list).
4. Give a clear idea of your company's needs for a relevant, personalized demo.
5. Be honest about the concerns you have with the tool.
6. Ask questions or repeat a step if you missed it.
7. Verify integrations with your other business-critical systems.
8. Ask detailed questions about support options and implementation.
9. Understand if there are any implementation fees.
10. If you don't hear a necessary feature mentioned, ask about it.
11. Get concrete costs and pricing information.

Remember that software demos are yours to lead. The vendor knows their product, but you are the expert on your company's needs and expectations for a full-platform talent management solution.



Kick Off Your Search for the Right Talent Management System

Simplify talent management with a solution that enhances employee journeys, unlocks AI and analytics insights, and slashes tech costs — all in one system.

Start your search now — sign up for a demo of ClearCo's unified talent platform and find out if our award-winning platform fits your needs.

“We’re doing things we never could have done before — because we have ClearCo.”

Nicole McBride

Talent Manager
Kinetic Construction

Get Your Personalized Demo



ClearCo