

# A|M|S

Talent is our world

## Talent Lifecycle Listening

Part 1

You can't  
improve what  
you can't measure.





Companies are facing issues not recently seen in the talent marketplace. Today's talent leaders will fail to adapt if they don't have an effective method to understand the ever-changing profile of the needs and drivers of the talent they seek. But most current evaluation tools miss the mark by not enabling the measurement of the holistic talent lifecycle.

Companies are operating in a candidate-driven environment. Employment levels are at a record high, there is a shortage of skills, an ever-increasing demand for higher salaries and large pools of talent are leaving the workforce. To attract and retain talent in this environment, organizations must design candidate and employee experiences that keep pace with the needs and desires of the talent they seek. But very few have an effective method to measure the motivations of talent nor the engagement of stakeholders who influence the talent processes.

This has resulted in a lack of visibility into organizational performance during the critical moments that matter throughout the lifecycle of talent, from candidate to applicant to new hire to employee. Opportunities are being missed for continuous improvement in systems, process, and role design.

Organizations are plagued with a "you can't improve what you can't measure" problem. It is critical that organizations have a vehicle to collect real-time feedback if they are to beat the talent shortage.

## The missing piece

Robust measurement platforms complete with analytic tools are only recently coming available in the talent technology marketplace. Adoption is still limited as is the ability to point to results and ROI. Legacy data capture tools (think: SurveyMonkey) only enable the ability to secure operational data and, therefore, just tell part of the story. Although this data can be useful, when actioned, its use is limited if companies lack the ability to combine it with relevant demographic data to provide another level of insight.

In the absence of comprehensive data and proper analytical tools, leaders are forced to manage by intuition resulting in the formulation of incomplete stories about what is working and what is not. In turn, variable, and often negative, applicant experiences continue to translate into less-than-desirable hiring outcomes and diminished employment brand perception. All too often, organizations miss opportunities to improve the effectiveness of their hiring process for all stakeholders and its critical components: the people and technologies with which applicants interact and shape their experience. If companies can improve engagement at the hiring stage, they can improve the metrics by which all talent functions are judged.

This all said, it would be short-sighted for leaders to focus on only one segment of the talent lifecycle but that seems to be widespread practice. The time from when a candidate applies for a job to the time an offer of employment is extended appears to be what organizations measure most often as applicant engagement has traditionally grabbed all the headlines. Certainly, this is an important period when elements of the hiring process can be evaluated including the performance of recruiters, applicants' interaction with talent technologies, and offer satisfaction. Even with the collection of these data points, though, the picture is still incomplete as companies often neglect to examine other potential points of failure such as the performance of the hiring manager, the role of the HRBP and the interview team. Most current evaluation tools miss the mark by not enabling the measurement of the holistic talent lifecycle across all stakeholders including experiences prior to application, onboarding, and post hire.



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## Measuring the experience of candidates

One key challenge inherent in legacy survey tools is the inability to measure the experience of candidates and being able to point to useable data about those individuals who have visited company websites and have searched for employment opportunities on career pages but have not yet applied for any job. No contact information has been captured and, therefore, no 'survey' can be sent. The level of satisfaction during the time in which candidates are researching companies and job opportunities is a period where there is a dearth of tangible data. This is an unfortunate scenario given that this is a premier opportunity to capture sentiment on the employment brand, career site content, and ease of navigation, all critical elements of candidate-to-applicant conversion. In today's candidate-driven environment where talent is scarce, it is critical for organizations to secure feedback from this pre-apply talent group.

## Assessing the quality of onboarding

Another miss we can find in many survey tools today is the inability to evaluate the experience of new hires in their period of onboarding. This is a time where new hires are vulnerable to counter offers and organizations may face the perils of falloffs or ghosting. By the onboarding phase of the hiring process, organizations have invested a significant amount of time, money, and resources to find, evaluate, and secure their applicant of choice. Yet, all too often, a poor onboarding experience leads the new hire to question their decision to join the company and not begin work as expected or resign their position shortly after starting. Appropriately preparing the new hire to start will shorten the ramp to productivity and improve tenure and this can only be done with the right set of data. One plausible reason for the lack of evaluation in this phase is the manual nature of issuing surveys with the appropriate timing. During the hiring process, integration of the survey with an applicant tracking system will automatically send sentiment surveys at each milestone of the process. Unfortunately, these integrated triggers are often unavailable in the onboarding phase.

# Taking the pulse of your employees

The final, but arguably most important, essential in talent lifecycle listening is the necessity to capture the ongoing sentiment of an organization's employee population. Yes, employee engagement surveys have been around for years, if not decades, but these are typically issued annually or worse, biannually, and by the time results are tabulated, data has been analyzed, and actions have been taken to address any perceived issues, it is too late to have any significant impact. Issues that affect employees' satisfaction and their decisions to stay or leave any organization need to be addressed in real-time. In the candidate-driven market in which we find ourselves, effective internal mobility is critical and internal mobility cannot be fully effective if talent is leaving the organization. Measuring points such as confidence in leadership, engagement, managerial satisfaction, and rewards-related items and taking quick action to address themes more frequently than annually can stave off costly attrition and heighten mobility.

## How to begin

Global Industry Analyst, Josh Bersin, included feedback vehicles referred to as 'lifecycle employee listening' systems as an "exciting" and "transformational" trend in his recent release, HR (Human Resources) Technology 2023: What's Hot? What's Not? He suggested that the tools required today are "platforms" with robust analytical capabilities, not just "surveys" with results which are downloaded into a spreadsheet and lost on someone's hard drive. If we are to agree with Mr. Bersin and believe that the collection and analysis of this type of data is valuable and can lead to actionable events, how does a company begin? They begin by:

- Making the decision to prioritize listening.
- Crafting a strategy that will measure output.
- Creating the space for the internal teams to address feedback.
- Managing the change journey.

There is more to the solution than simply 'plugging in a survey.' There is much preparation required to launch a successful sentiment campaign and return results that enable notable improvements. Important questions must be pondered such as:

- What are we trying to accomplish, and does it align with organizational goals?
- Have we defined our target customer groups?
- What questions should we ask and how many?
- When should we issue the questions and how frequently?
- How do we analyze the data, what actions will we take, and how will we define success?

**Without answers to these questions, organizations are just shooting in the dark.**

*There is more to the solution than simply 'plugging in a survey.'*

## A solution to address the gap

The partnership between AMS and Survale has enabled just this. Survale is the leading technology provider in this space, designed specifically, but not only, to measure the talent acquisition experience for stakeholders within its clients. This platform enables the comprehensive measurement across stakeholder groups required to bring a holistic viewpoint to this discussion, while also pointing to opportunity areas for continuous improvement. This, combined with the Advisory capability at AMS, brings new conversations to the most progressive clients who need to know if the processes they have designed are delivering the experience they intended.

As we look at the investments many of our clients are making to transform talent acquisition, what is missing, is the capability for ongoing measurement focused on satisfaction. This solution addresses this gap and allows clients the comfort that they will be able to use data to alter the intent and outcomes their processes are generating and continuously improving on the experience of their stakeholders.

To find out more about how AMS and Survale can support your talent lifecycle listening please [contact us](#).



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