WHAT IS TALENT ADVISORY?

Talent Advisory is an evolution of recruitment from providing candidates to providing knowledge services that enhance how an organisation gets work done.

These services demonstrate the best way to complete the required work to meet the organisation's goals and provide insight into sourcing the most effective solutions.

A Talent Advisor understands the skills required by the business to be successful now and in the future and uses a multi-channel approach of:

- Internal mobility – building and developing internal capability,
- External recruitment – buying, reviewing talent demand and supply, and advising on optimal tactics,
- Borrowing or loaning talent (contingent workforce) – looking at what skills can be hired on a short-term basis to supplement and train the existing workforce, and
- Bot – what position can be automated and how will the nature of the role be changed with automation?

This moves the traditional recruitment role from transactional and tactical to strategic business partners, adding additional incremental value to the business. Talent Advisors use data, market intelligence, and expertise to influence stakeholders to gain "optimal talent outcomes".

Talent Advisory moves beyond receiving instructions to think about the most effective approach (Build, Buy, Borrow and Bot). It provides advice on how and where to source requisition based on market data and analytics to make optimal talent decisions. It thinks proactively about the future skills and

capabilities required to future-proof the business.

Talent Advisory includes a mindset shift from reactive to proactive, spending more time in the pre-engagement phase to understanding the talent market space internally and externally to create a blended view and, most importantly, being able to articulate this to hiring managers and other stakeholders.

Talent Advisors look for new channels and options to build talent communities. These may include education from high school up, internal talent through skills identification, external communities and groups, minority groups to upskill, partnering with other companies to share people and develop skills, traditional recruitment channels, contractors, freelancers, and automation.

"Solutions can be sourced across: Build (internal Mobility), Buy (External Recruitment), Borrow (Gain access to skills on a short-term basis) and Bot (automate parts of the job)."

RECRUITER

Key outcomes:
- Fill position as quickly as possible.
- Meet brief as closely as possible.
- Repeatable quality outcomes.
- Identify and engage customers in a way that protects the brand.

Focus:
Current position needs, reactive, typically 90% on the external market.

SOURCER

Key outcomes:
- Identify and screen potential candidates.
- Meet the hiring brief as closely as possible.
- Identify new channels to approach candidates.

Focus:
The current position's reactive needs are typically 90% on the external market.

Differences between Recruiters, Sourcers and Talent Advisors

TALENT ADVISOR

Key outcomes:
- Partner with the business using talent intelligence* to:
  - Provide advice on demand & supply external skills.
  - Understand internal skills
- Assist the business make optimal talent decisions (buy, build borrow & bot).
- Identify and engage customers in a way that protects the brand.

Focus:
Future & current skills, proactive & typically 50% on external market & 50% on internal.

INTERNAL FACTORS

Retention
Internal mobility
Engagement
Development
Workforce planning

EXTERNAL FACTORS

Talent shortage
Technology
Market competition
Shorter tenure
Development opportunities
Automation

* Talent intelligence is the insight from internal and external data sources analysis to achieve a competitive advantage.

A recruiter is responsible for the end-to-end recruitment process. They find, screen, and hire candidates for open positions within an organisation. This typically includes posting job listings, searching for and reaching out to potential candidates, conducting interviews, and working with hiring managers to make final decisions.

A Sourcer, on the other hand, focuses specifically on finding and identifying potential candidates for open positions. This can include using various sourcing tools and techniques, such as Boolean search strings, social media, and employee referrals, to locate and reach out to potential candidates. Sourcers often work closely with recruiters to provide them with a pool of pre-screened and qualified candidates for open positions.

Talent Advisors help organisations identify, attract, and retain top talent. They provide guidance and support in workforce planning, talent acquisition, employee development, and retention. Their remit may include the following:

- Assessing the current and future talent needs of an organisation
- Developing and implementing strategies to attract and retain top talent
- Identifying and leveraging external and internal sources of talent
- Working with hiring managers to define and fill open positions
- Guiding employee development, engagement, and retention
- Partnering with other HR and business leaders to align talent initiatives with overall business objectives.

	Recruiter	Sourcer	Talent Advisor	HR Business Partner
Workforce planning			X	X
Internal growth			X	X
Skills analysis			X	X
Role requirements	X		X	
Job brief	X	X	X	
Channel identification	X	X	X	
Job posting	X			
Applicant review	X			
Passive candidate identification		X		
Outreach	X	X		
Interviews	X			
Offer	X			X
Declination	X			
Process analysis			X	X
Reporting	X	X	X	X
Market intelligence	X		X	
Skills library			X	X
Automation opportunity identification			X	
Contract opportunity identification			X	
Outsource opportunity identification			X	
Branding	X	X	X	X

Table 1.

What do Talent Advisors do?

Talent Advisory involves utilising the available data to find optimal talent for critical skills and roles. Talent Advisors ask themselves questions such as:

- Do we have someone internally with the foundational skills we could develop?
- What combination of skills do we have internally?
- Who has the talent if we don't?
- What skills might we need in the future?
- How does our value proposition compare to our competitors for this skill?
- What skills do we need right here, right now?
- What developmental paths can we create to ensure our employees can continue to meet the future demands?

To be successful, Talent Advisory persuades hiring managers to think more broadly and be more accepting of information. This may be quite a significant change to the existing function of the recruitment team. Using data, a Talent Advisor may ask the hiring manager:

- What type of person do you need for this job after looking at the people available externally and internally?
- If we can provide the career trajectory for this position, would you consider a slightly different skill set?
- Can you provide me with the best person to do this position, and I will use this as a base to find similar people? If the people we find require a different value proposition, would you consider changing it?

> "Talent Advisors understand the skills and capabilities needed to achieve business outcomes in one business or across several companies."

Technology is critical to understanding internal and external skills. A talent advisor must be adept at extracting insight from talent data streams provided by the technology stack and translating this back into the business. In doing so, they provide a level of futureproofing for the business. It requires a close relationship with the customer, keeping them at the heart of all their considerations and adapting to the company's changing needs as it grows (or shrinks). Talent Advisors need to be well-versed in the architecture of the job family. They advise maintaining a strategic lens without being caught in the transactional nature of current recruiters.

Critical tasks a Talent Advisor does are as follows:

- Provide advice to the business on external market demand and supply of skills/talent related to their business and roles.
- Analyse and provide guidance on the organisation's value proposition in the external market. For example, where do the job families/position fit in comparison to other organisations' value propositions (weak, neutral, or strong and why)?
- Understand the existing internal talent capabilities relating to current and potential business needs. This includes all capabilities, both known and assumed.
- Provide advice to the business to assist with optimal talent decisions based on buy, build, borrow, or bot. Buy being external recruitment, make internal recruitment with development, borrow meaning to gain capabilities for a short period and bot sense to automate the work.

- Contribute to developing a cohesive organisational workforce plan
- Undertake ongoing recruitment to fill open positions
- Understand and report on the cost of alternative recruitment approaches, including internal and external sources; this includes the cost of not filling the position or filling the work with a different role.
- Develop market maps for crucial talent segments and create pools of talent/networks to fill critical positions where internal talent is unavailable.
- Develop reports to support budgeting on development, branding, remuneration, and value proposition.

Talent advisors may also be responsible for developing internal branding to encourage and inspire existing employees to apply for roles. As an organisation matures and develops internal skills databases this element will become more important to ensure that existing employees are willing to move into new roles and develop their skillsets.

As with all areas of recruitment, Talent Advisors must be acutely aware of the impact of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DE&I) on the organisation to ensure that they are attracting, retaining, and developing people from the broadest talent pool possible. Talent Advisors should be champions of diversity and the benefits within the organisation given their influence and impact on workforce planning and makeup. At a minimum, Talent Advisors should be able to demonstrate that their actions will:

- Promote inclusivity
- Reduce bias in hiring and development
- Increase the potential for innovation
- Meet local legal requirements.
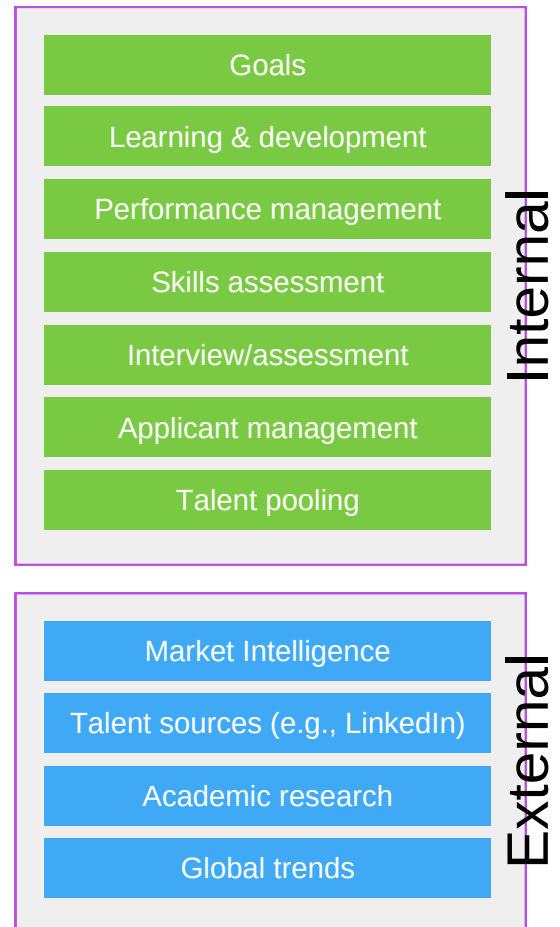
Example technology stack of data sources

Internal

- Goals
- Learning & development
- Performance management
- Skills assessment
- Interview/assessment
- Applicant management
- Talent pooling

External

- Market Intelligence
- Talent sources (e.g., LinkedIn)
- Academic research
- Global trends

Diagram 1.