

TALENT ADVISORY: A NEW HORIZON IN RECRUITMENT CAREERS



FOREWORD

As workplace dynamics evolve, the strategies for talent management must also advance. Talent Advisors are at the forefront of this evolution, providing a holistic strategy that impacts individual careers and organisational achievements. Their multifaceted role is explored in this paper, highlighting their influence on overall business prosperity.

Talent Advisory transcends conventional recruitment; it's about constructing a framework for organisational advancement and nurturing employee potential. Talent Advisory provides a model that combines internal mobility with external recruitment, talent sharing, and innovative automation, aiming to meet immediate business needs and foresee and shape the future.

Talent Advisory is redefining career paths, particularly for professionals in Internal or RPO roles, unlocking opportunities within People & Culture and adjacent fields such as HR Business Partnership, Customer Experience, and Innovation Management. This paper offers practical insights and a roadmap for those aspiring to excel in Talent Advisory.

Welcome to the cutting edge of recruitment careers.

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INTRODUCTION

Talent Advisory marks a significant advancement in career progression for recruiters, particularly those in Internal or RPO positions.

While traditional recruitment predominantly focuses on external hiring, Talent Advisory adopts a comprehensive, multi-channel approach. This method integrates internal mobility, external recruitment, talent sharing, and automation to devise optimum strategies to “get work done” and help drive business success.

Mastery of these approaches can help to pave the way for career advancement opportunities to roles within People & Culture (P&C) like HR Business Partner, Talent Management Specialist, Learning and Development Consultant, and Organisational Development Consultant, or outside P&C with roles such as Customer Experience Design, Innovation Management, or Entrepreneurship. A list of possible opportunities and the required attributes developed as a Talent Advisor is included at the end of this paper.

Talent Advisors collaborate closely with businesses to understand the precise outcomes needed by hiring managers. This partnership departs from standard recruitment briefs, demanding a more nuanced understanding. A specialised Talent Advisory position brief, tailored to this multi-channel approach, is available for download from [TCS Insights](#).

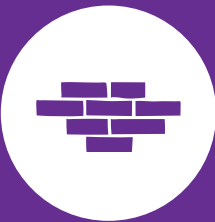
Before action, Talent Advisors conduct thorough research to assess skill demand and supply, evaluate value proposition alignment, and identify internal skill transference opportunities. This data-driven approach enables them to recommend the most effective channel or combination thereof, aligning closely with the Hiring Manager's vision.

TALENT ADVISORY DOMAINS

Talent Advisory transcends traditional instruction-following, actively considering the most effective talent channels. It entails forward-thinking about future skill requirements and organisational readiness.

This moves recruitment from a transactional process to the role of a strategic business partnership, adding incremental value through informed talent outcomes

This approach demands a proactive mindset, dedicating significant time to understanding the internal and external talent landscape. Articulating a blended view of this landscape to hiring managers and stakeholders is critical for future career development.



BUILD

Internal Mobility, fostering internal talent growth and development.



BUY

External Recruitment, analysing talent market dynamics and advising on recruitment strategies.



BORROW

Borrowing or loaning talent – utilising contingent workforce for short-term skill supplementation and training.



BOT

Automation – assessing the potential for automation and how it reshapes role requirements.

CULTIVATING TALENT COMMUNITIES

These may include identifying internal talent, engaging with external communities, focusing on upskilling minority groups, collaborating with other organisations for skill development, and educational institutions (high school through to universities and colleges). Talent advisors leverage traditional recruitment methods alongside contractors, freelancers, and automation technologies to find the right approach at the right time and price point and in the right way to accomplish the work.

Below are some critical distinctions between Recruitment and Sourcing compared to Talent Advisory. Also included are some actions to try as a step towards Talent Advisory; you do not need to be formally appointed to the position of Talent Advisory to experiment with some basic activities.

| CURRENT ROLES | WHAT CAN YOU DO | NEW ROLE |
|--|--|---|
| <p>RECRUITER Key outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fill position with suitable candidates fast. • Meet KPIs and report typically in arrears. • Provide a recruitment service to Hiring Managers that is valued. <p>Focus: Open positions, reactive and tactical, typically 90% on external candidates.</p> <p>SOURCER Key outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and screen candidates who meet hiring brief. • Identify optimum sourcing channels. • Report on sourcing effectiveness. <p>Focus: Open positions, reactive and tactical, typically 90% on external candidates.</p> | <p>STEPS TO TALENT ADVISORY</p> <p>For key positions, you need to understand:</p> <div> <div>Career paths to and from positions.</div> <div>External demand and supply and value proposition.</div> <div>Internal positions that have complementary skills.</div> <div>Implications and brief the business and agree next steps.</div> <div>Skills required to complete the work effectively.</div> </div> | <p>TALENT ADVISOR Key outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist the business make optimal talent decisions based on buy, build, borrow and bot and reduce reliance on external recruitment. • Analyse and compare value proposition to the market and competitors. • Partner with the business using talent intelligence to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Provide advice on demand and supply external skills. • Position the business to gain a competitive advantage. • Assist the business to retain required talent. • Identify and engage customers in a way that enhances the brand. <p>Focus: Future and current skills, proactive and strategic, typically 50% on external market and 50% on internal.</p> |

WHAT DO TALENT ADVISORS DO?

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 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.

Talent Advisors leverage data to identify optimal talent for critical skills and roles. They encourage hiring managers to adopt a broader perspective and be receptive to new information. This shift transforms recruitment functions into strategic, data-informed decision-making roles.

WHAT TALENT ADVISORS DO

DAILY TASKS

- Provide advice to the business to gain optimal talent decisions.
- Undertake a multi-channel approach to gaining or developing talent to meet business needs (build, buy, borrow or bot).
- Undertake recruitment of open positions.
- Provide advice and consultation on external market demand and supply.
- Partner with the business to understand current and future needs.
- Provide talent/career advice to external candidates and staff.

WEEKLY TASKS

- Review and analyse key skill talent data and understanding the external demand and supply of skills.
- Gather data on the value proposition, match for key positions/skills.
- Understand existing internal talent capabilities and skills in relation to potential skill needs.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of each talent supply channel by key skill type.
- Participate in diversity, equity and inclusion (DE&I) activities to attract and retain a broad pool of skills.

MONTHLY TASKS

- Develop market maps for key skill types.
- Create pools of talent networks to fill critical positions.
- Report on talent advisory metrics and their impact to key stakeholders.
- Develop reports to support business budgeting, remuneration value proposition, and demand and supply of key skills.
- Report on comparison of value position match to key competitors.
- Develop and present talent forecasts and outlooks.
- Support internal branding to engage staff to apply for positions/projects.
- Develop internal skill databases.
- Contribute to talent policies and procedures.
- Network with industry peers.

QUESTIONS TALENT ADVISORS ASK

As a Talent Advisor focusing on the "build, buy, borrow, and bot" framework, your questions should aim to uncover the hiring manager's current and future talent needs, and how they align with the company's strategy. Outlined below are some questions that can guide your discussion and that you can consider including in your position brief:

Build (developing internal Talent):

- What skills do we currently have internally that we can develop further for this role?
- How could we structure a development plan for internal candidates to prepare them for this position?
- Which employees show potential and could be groomed for this role through training or stretch assignments?

Buy (external recruitment):

- What specific skills or experiences are we lacking internally that we need to look for externally?
- How critical is it to bring in someone from outside to bring fresh perspectives or skills we cannot develop in-house in the required time frame?
- What is the budget for recruiting externally, and does it align with the market rate for the skills we are seeking?

Borrow (contracting or temporary solutions):

- Are there aspects of this role that could be filled through temporary or contract positions?
- Could consultants or freelancers be a solution for meeting short-term objectives or for expertise not available in-house?
- How might we integrate borrowed talent with our current team dynamics and culture?

Bot (leveraging technology and automation):

- Are there tasks within this role that could be automated or supported by technology to increase efficiency?
- What technology or digital tools do we currently have that could supplement or replace parts of this role?
- Is there an opportunity to invest in new technologies like AI or RPA to fulfill some of the job responsibilities?

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QUESTIONS TALENT ADVISORS ASK (CONTINUE...)

Strategy alignment:

- Considering our strategic objectives, which blend of build, buy, borrow, or bot would best align with our long-term goals?
- How do you envision this role evolving with advancements in technology and changes in our industry?
- How can we balance the need for immediate talent against the benefits of developing skills internally over time?

Assessing Current Capabilities and Needs:

- What skills and capabilities do we have now, and what do we expect to need in the next 1-3 years?
- How does this role contribute to our competitive advantage, and how can we ensure it continues to do so?

By asking these targeted questions, you can guide the hiring manager to think strategically about their talent acquisition and development in the context of the company's current capabilities and future direction. Importantly these questions will assist you to gain a deeper understanding of the business's talent needs and help you to a valued business partner.

WHAT TECHNOLOGIES DO TALENT ADVISORS USE?

Talent Advisors use a range of smart tech tools to understand the wealth of information from different sources, both inside and outside the company. These tools can be used alone, or in conjunction with data analytics platforms to spot trends and patterns in how people use language, thanks to machine learning – a type of artificial intelligence that improves as it goes.

Talent Advisors can use these tech-driven insights to help businesses make intelligent choices about hiring and managing their teams. With the right mix of human know-how and innovative technology, companies can stay ahead in finding and keeping the right talent.

Talent Advisors need to be well-versed in the architecture of the job family and can use a range of technologies to support the "build, buy, borrow, bot" strategies and provide market intelligence, including:

- **Talent Management Systems** – HRIS Platforms such as Success Factors, Workday Human Capital, and Cornerstone On Demand support the "build" aspect by facilitating the development of existing employees through training and development programs, career planning, and performance management.
- **Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) and Recruitment Marketing Platforms** help to explore and track the "buy" strategy, which involves acquiring new talent. Talent Advisors use ATSes and recruitment marketing platforms to streamline the hiring process, from posting job openings to managing candidate pipelines. Examples of these platforms include Smart Recruiters, Page Up, Avature, Beamery and Job Adder. The data collected may need to be explored in a separate system to generate the biggest benefits.
- **Freelancer Management Systems (FMS) and External Talent Marketplaces** enable Talent Advisors to "borrow" talent. Talent Advisors leverage FMS and platforms like Upwork or Freelancer to access and manage contract workers or freelancers for short-term needs or specific projects. Data within these is almost always held by the developer rather than in-house. As a result, you may need additional licenses or third-party tools to access insights (that may be more generic).

- **Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Automation Tools** – the "bot" component involves using AI, machine learning, and robotic process automation to automate repetitive tasks, enhance decision-making with predictive analytics, and improve the efficiency of talent processes. Technology like Chat GPT4 and Bard can be readily used to support market Intelligence. This area is growing and changing incredibly fast and aggregators like [“There's an AI for that”](#) might be a good way to help stay on top of the options.
- **Focused Talent Intelligence Platforms** that aggregate data from multiple sources can be used to gain real-time insights into talent supply and demand, competitor benchmarking, skills analysis, and workforce planning to inform strategic decisions. Potential examples include, hireEZ, SeekOut and Eightfold.ai.
- **Internal Mobility Platforms** like GoFgr, rejig, Gloat and Fuel50 support internal talent mobility by matching employees' skills and career aspirations with internal opportunities, facilitating the "build" and "borrow" strategies.
- **Learning Management Systems (LMS) and Online Learning Platforms** tap into the “Build” element and can be used to demonstrate proof of skills. Data from continuous learning and skill development platforms like LinkedIn Learning, Coursera, and Udemy can be used to identify people with the right skills or to develop skills in those who may require upskilling.
- **Collaboration and Communication tools** such as Slack, Microsoft Teams, and Zoom are essential for maintaining connectivity and collaboration. The data from within them can also be used to identify your best collaborators or the experts that people turn to when they have a problem. Including this in your dataset can greatly assist when looking to identify the right people internally.
- **HR Analytics and Workforce Planning tools** analyse data on workforce trends, talent gaps, and future needs, supporting strategic planning across all "build, buy, borrow, bot" strategies.
- To ensure a diverse and inclusive workforce, Talent Advisors use **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion DEI technologies** that help reduce bias in hiring processes and support the "buy" strategy by attracting a broad spectrum of candidates.

Of course, these technologies will vary based on an organisation's needs. Integrating platforms into a cohesive tech stack will be a leading measure of success for organisations looking to improve their talent function. Please note this is far from an exhaustive list; many technologies overlap in functionality and could be included under different headings.

Importantly, the talent technology stack allows Talent Advisors to collaborate, effectively manage and develop talent, make informed hiring decisions, leverage external talent when necessary, and automate processes to improve efficiency and productivity. Each stack component should contribute to a comprehensive approach to talent management, supporting the organisation's ability to adapt to changing market conditions and talent needs.

ORGANISATIONAL BUSINESS DRIVERS

Your organisational strategic business drivers will directly impact key activities a Talent Advisor will perform. If your business drivers are about rapid expansion versus cost out, these require different skills. Aligning your team to business goals and drivers is a crucial element for the success of talent advisory.

As an example, let's look at four different business goals and their impacts:

- **Rapid growth** may require Talent Advisors who can scale recruitment efforts quickly, attract talent with high-growth potential, and build a culture that supports rapid change and adaptation.
 - **Cost reduction** may require Talent Advisors who can utilise cost-effective recruitment strategies, identify and develop internal talent pipelines, and optimise talent costs without compromising quality.
 - **Improve Operational Efficiency** – Talent Advisors can provide strategic recruitment and internal mobility by identifying current workforce capability gaps and identify people who bridge that gap. They can also support succession planning with effective talent pooling.
 - **Digital Transformation** – A Talent Advisor needs to understand the talent implications and source people with the right skills which may be contractors to work alongside of the existing workforce to help them reskill. The Talent Advisor could also build relationships with technical educational institutions to source emerging talent.
 - **Improve Regularity Compliance** – A Talent Advisor needs to understand any additional skills or competencies are required to meet the new compliance needs.
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TALENT ADVISOR PERSONA

Organisations prioritising specific values like diversity, inclusion, or sustainability require Talent Advisors to possess strong skills in sourcing and attracting diverse candidates, promoting inclusive hiring practices.

If an organisation values innovation, this might require Talent Advisors with skills in sourcing and attracting creative thinkers, assessing entrepreneurial potential, and designing talent programs that foster a culture of innovation.

TCS Insights' experience with various Talent Acquisition Functions in the US and Australia highlights the diverse skill sets needed for successful Talent Advisors. These skills vary based on organisational business drivers, values, and strategic objectives. With the help of Dr Simon Moss, TCS Insights has developed a persona survey to tailor Talent Advisor personas to specific organisational needs. To explore the preferred persona of your team, [visit: Link](#).

Typical skills for Talent Advisors include creativity, collaboration, curiosity, insightfulness, analytical thinking, customer orientation, leadership & mentoring, strategic thinking, market intelligence, and sourcing. Understanding where your team stands concerning these skills is crucial for effective talent advisory.

I am Angela

I am a Recruitment Advisor and have been in the industry for about 8 years. I love working with data to develop stories, and I use these to explain who our next hire should be, and where we'll find them.



The Traits, Competencies, and Skills that combine to make me effective in my role are:

| TRAITS | COMPETENCIES | SKILLS |
|--|--|----------|
| Creativity Collaboration Curiosity Insightfulness | Analytics Customer Orientation Leadership & Mentoring Market Intelligence Strategic Thinking | Sourcing |

My responsibilities include:

- Assisting the business make optimal talent decisions based on buy, build borrow & bot and reducing reliance on external recruitment
- Analysing and comparing value propositions to the market and competitors
- Partnering with the business using talent intelligence to:
 - provide advice on demand & supply external skills
 - Understand internal skills
 - Position the business to gain a competitive advantage.
 - Assist the business to retain required talent
 - Identify and engage customers in a way that enhances the brand

My biggest challenges include:

- Being able to gather and analyze the data I need
- Balancing strategy and delivery
- Influencing the business to try new approaches
- Persuading hiring managers to consider candidates who are "outside the box".



THE 5-STEP APPROACH

TCS Insights has formulated a 5-step approach to cultivate Talent Advisor skills.

1

Uncover your team's Talent Advisor persona.

2

Utilise the Situational Judgement Test to create your benchmark.

3

Analyse team and individual reports for strengths and areas of improvement.

4

Conduct workshops to discuss findings and development activities.

5

Implement and reassess development activities to gauge improvements.

WHERE TO NEXT?

Whether you want to deepen your expertise in People and culture or explore new opportunities, the Talent Advisory skillset provides enormous opportunities. Some of the potential career paths available include:

| Pathway | Description |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Organisational development | Designing and implementing programs that increase organisational effectiveness. |
| Management consulting | Advising organisations on improving performance by analysing existing problems and developing improvement plans. |
| Business strategy | Roles in strategic planning and business model innovation. |
| Change management | Leading transitions in organisational structure, culture, and processes. |
| HR leadership | Overseeing talent management, employee relations, and leadership development. |
| Learning & development | Creating and managing training and professional development programs. |
| Product management | Using market intelligence to guide product development, launch, and growth. |
| Project management | Leading complex projects focusing on collaboration and strategic implementation. |
| Entrepreneurship | Starting or leading a business where a combination of creativity, strategic thinking, and leadership is critical. |
| Marketing intelligence | Analysing market data to inform marketing strategies and business decisions. |
| Customer experience design | Developing strategies to enhance customer satisfaction and engagement. |
| Data science & analytics | Applying analytical thinking to extract insights from data to inform business strategy. |
| Talent acquisition strategy | Designing and implementing innovative recruitment strategies at a strategic level. |
| Innovation management | Managing and driving innovation within an organisation or industry. |
| Corporate training & coaching | Providing mentorship and development programs to enhance employee skills and leadership. |

Developed by Trevor Vas, Simon Townsend, and Dr Simon Moss, TCS Insights provides individual and team assessments across talent acquisition.

Based on real world situations, the assessments explore the Traits, Competencies, and Skills that lead to business success and drive value beyond recruitment.

If you are interested in assessing your team's readiness for Talent Advisory, or another area of talent acquisition, do reach out to us – we'd love to hear from you.

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