

Improving Talent Acquisition and Management Practices

Major Organizations Detail Their Efforts and Lessons Learned



If someone can do the job, they should be eligible for the job.

That’s the philosophy behind a skills-based approach to sourcing and hiring talent, which honors an individual’s professional abilities instead of their completion of a bachelor’s degree. Yet, many businesses still screen out skilled talent through unnecessary degree requirements, even though hiring new talent is one of the most pressing challenges business leaders face, [according to Forbes](#).

Workplace leaders who use skills-based talent practices broaden and diversify their talent pool, promote employee retention, and make their businesses stronger.

Fully implementing this approach is essential to remaining competitive, but it isn’t easy. If you’re wondering where to start, or have started but face challenges in your company, you aren’t alone.

Senior leaders in 11 major corporations shared their efforts, now compiled as a resource with tactical starting points and inspiration for designing or enhancing skills-based talent programs. The collection, [Innovative Skills-Based Talent Practices](#), covers 24 examples already underway at the following organizations:

BRT participants



Each entry was co-authored by vice presidents and C-suite human resources leaders with experience at companies of all sizes.

Opportunity@Work facilitated learning among the [Business Roundtable’s Innovation Working Group](#), and helped uncover practices that could be adopted or adapted by others. We brought a special focus on STARs, workers [Skilled Through Alternative Routes](#), who have gained experience and expertise from community college, apprenticeships, work experience, trade schools, military service, or other alternative pathways.

Through participation in the working group peer-to-peer learning experience, champions of talent-based initiatives had candid conversations and shared concrete models. The working group successfully highlighted best practices and got support from other group members in adapting them.

“As companies have opened new skills-based pathways to employment and advancement, not only is the talent pool larger but, importantly, more diverse. As a result, companies are playing a vital role in broadening economic opportunity and upward mobility for all Americans.”

Mary Barra

Chair and CEO of General Motors and
Business Roundtable Chair

Findings

Companies seeking to adopt skills-based talent practices need to align across this full talent continuum. If they don't, they risk undermining success. Consider this: it won't matter if you have a robust pipeline of STARS and candidates of color if your application review, interview, and selection processes aren't inclusive. And if you do get those candidates through the front door but fail to provide professional development and internal mobility support to get them past the entryway, you're missing out on the full potential of your current workforce.

“Skills-based hiring, upskilling, and reskilling are a common priority to all of us...[This was a] huge opportunity to learn from each other.”

Sébastien Pottier

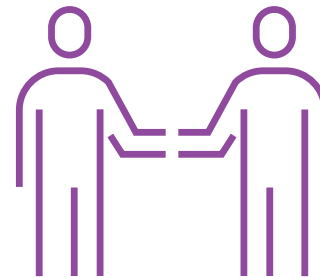
Divisional Vice President or Global Talent Acquisition at Abbott and working group co-chair

For skills-based initiatives to succeed, leaders need to pay attention to these interdependent stages of the talent lifecycle:



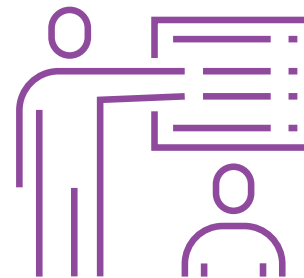
Sourcing Prospective Candidates

(e.g., recruitment, outreach, and expanding the talent pipeline)



Selecting New Hires

(e.g., ensuring equitable hiring practices)

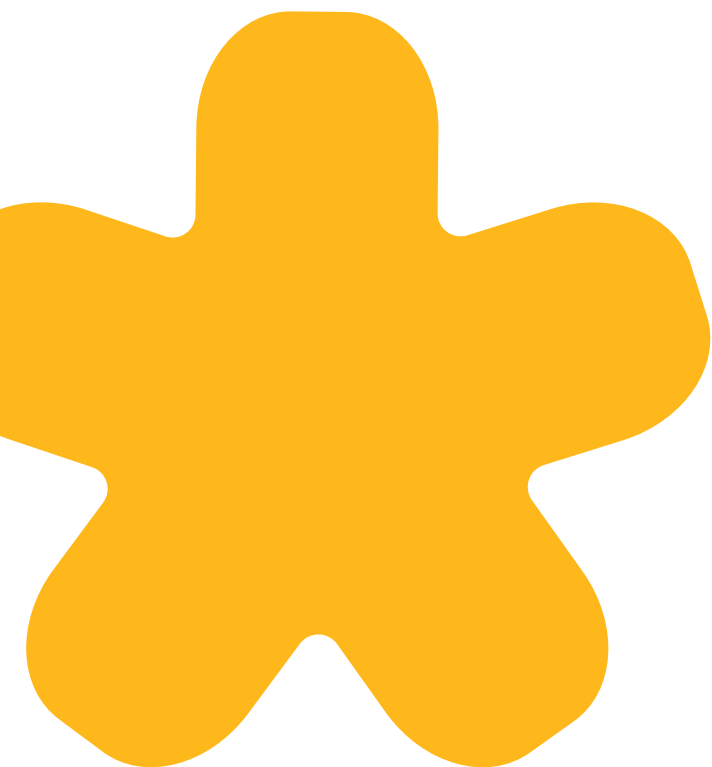


Re-skilling or Upskilling Existing Employees

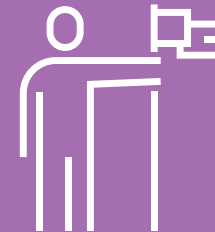
(e.g., investing in professional development and internal mobility)

Case in point: **accenture**

Accenture's apprenticeship program, detailed in the collection, brings talented individuals on board who would otherwise not be considered or who are underrepresented in technology industries. Accenture's ultimate goal is for 20 percent of entry-level hires to be apprentices.



More than 1,200 apprentices have participated in the program across more than 35 cities in the United States and Canada



The overwhelming majority of apprentices stay with the company after completing the program. Since the program started in 2016, they have hired more than 2,000 apprentices



Accenture is actively developing a Network Apprenticeship model, inspiring and providing support to other companies, including working group peer Abbott, as they develop their own apprenticeship programs.

Take Action

If you're looking for action-oriented steps on how to elevate diverse communities in your workplace, download [Innovative Skills-Based Talent Practices: A Collection of Fresh Ideas, New Practices and Lessons Learned.](#)

We'd love to hear your progress and questions as you pilot these solutions. If you're not sure how to get started, reach out to us for our expert-level support of these programs. Or, if you're interested in trying a collaborative design sprint to address your unique challenges, let us know at innovation:

innovation@opportunityatwork.org

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