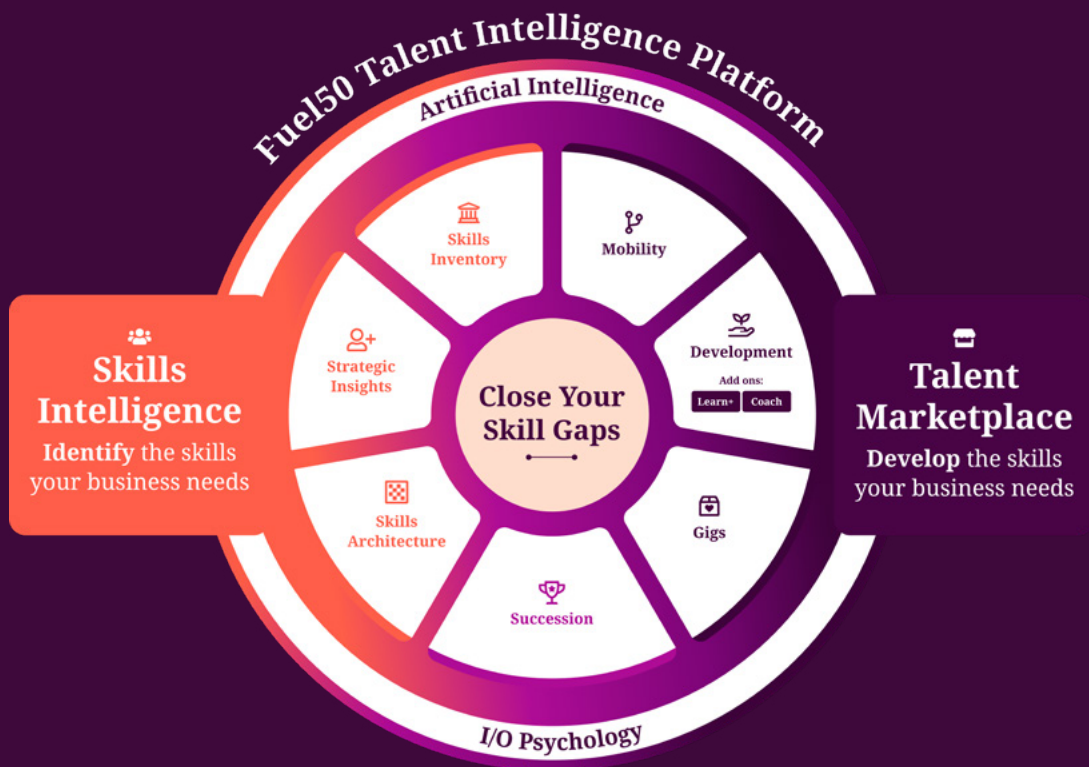




Skills Intelligence Platform Evaluation Kit

How to select a future-ready skills intelligence solution



Join the people-first skills revolution



At Fuel50, we speak with hundreds of HR leaders every year about their workforce data foundations and skills strategies. Their questions often range from **how to harmonize skills data across systems** and **build a trusted ontology** to **how AI classifies, infers,**

and updates skills over time.

Below is a comprehensive checklist to help you evaluate potential skills intelligence platforms and ensure your investment supports a scalable, ethical, and high-impact talent ecosystem.

1. Data foundations and ontology design

Determine how the platform structures, classifies, and evolves your organizational skills data.

Questions to ask:

- How is your skills ontology built and maintained? Is it proprietary, licensed, or open source?
- Can it merge and reconcile multiple taxonomies like HRIS, LXP, LMS, or external benchmarks?
- How often is the ontology updated to reflect emerging roles and technologies such as AI or data science?
- Can we adapt the taxonomy to our internal naming conventions and job architecture?
- How do you manage duplication, synonyms, and outdated skills?

What a good candidate looks like:

- ✓ Proprietary, research-backed ontology with transparent version control.
- ✓ Dynamic updates based on global market trends.
- ✓ Configurable mapping tools to align with internal frameworks.
- ✓ Human-AI collaboration in taxonomy evolution.



2. Skills data integration and interoperability

Pinpoint how the system connects to your existing data sources and harmonizes skills signals.

Questions to ask:

- What integrations are supported out of the box (Workday, SAP, Degreed, LinkedIn Learning, SmartRecruiters, etc.)?
- How does the platform pull and normalize skills data from multiple systems?
- Can we feed inferred skills or proficiency data back into our HRIS?
- How often do data syncs occur, and how are discrepancies flagged or resolved?
- Can it operate as a neutral data layer across multiple HR technologies?

What a good candidate looks like:

- ✓ Bidirectional integrations with key HR systems
- ✓ Automated reconciliation of overlapping or conflicting skill signals
- ✓ Flexible APIs for analytics and visualization
- ✓ Strong data governance documentation

3. AI capabilities and explainability

Review the quality, transparency, and adaptability of the platform's AI.

Questions to ask:

- How are skills inferred from unstructured data (resumes, learning, projects, etc.)?
- Can we trace how the system made a recommendation or skill inference?
- What bias mitigation frameworks do you use?
- How does your AI adapt to regional or industry context?
- Can administrators configure or override AI-driven outputs?

What a good candidate looks like:

- ✓ Explainable AI with auditable reasoning for inferences
- ✓ Transparent model cards and bias testing reports
- ✓ Ability to tune or limit AI inference according to approved data sources
- ✓ AI aligned with organizational governance standards



4. Skills assessment and validation

Look into how the platform verifies and measures skill proficiency.

Questions to ask:

- What mechanisms validate self-reported skills?
- Can skills be verified through behavioral data, peer endorsements, or performance outcomes?
- How are proficiency levels determined and maintained?
- Can we define our own grading framework (e.g., Basic, Advanced, Expert)?

What a good candidate looks like:

- ✓ Evidence-based skill validation (such as learning completions or performance signals)
- ✓ Configurable proficiency scales
- ✓ Skill verification that integrates seamlessly into talent reviews and career conversations

5. Analytics, insights, and forecasting

Assess the platform's ability to convert skills data into workforce intelligence.

Questions to ask:

- What analytics are available—current-state skills visibility, gaps, and emerging trends?
- Can the platform identify future skill adjacencies or reskilling pathways?
- How does it benchmark our organization's skill profile against external market data?
- Can we model scenarios like, "What if we automate X% of this function?" or "Build a new capability area"?

What a good candidate looks like:

- ✓ Predictive and prescriptive analytics dashboards
- ✓ Role- or business unit-level reporting
- ✓ Integration with BI tools for advanced analytics
- ✓ External market and competitor benchmarking



6. Governance and data stewardship

Hone in on who owns, updates, and maintains the integrity of your skills framework.

Questions to ask:

- What governance model supports taxonomy maintenance?
- How can we monitor changes, additions, or deprecations in the skills library?
- What access controls are available for different stakeholders (HR, COE, managers, etc.)?
- How do you ensure consistency across global regions or business units?

What a good candidate looks like:

- ✓ Clear governance playbook for skills stewardship
- ✓ Role-based editing rights and change tracking
- ✓ Audit logs for every update
- ✓ Support for decentralized, yet standardized maintenance

7. Experience and usability

Uncover how intuitive the platform is for HR, employees, and leaders.

Questions to ask:

- How do employees view, edit, or validate their skills profiles?
- Can managers easily explore team skills and gaps?
- Does the UI support multilingual experiences and accessibility standards?
- How is the skills layer visualized—taxonomy maps, dashboards, or search-based exploration?

What a good candidate looks like:

- ✓ Intuitive visualizations (skill graphs, heatmaps)
- ✓ Configurable UX for different audiences
- ✓ Localization and accessibility compliance



8. Implementation and scalability

Gauge readiness, rollout support, and long-term scalability.

Questions to ask:

- What is a typical implementation timeline for organizations of our size?
- How much data preparation or cleansing is required up front?
- What resources are needed from our side during setup?
- How does the platform scale across global operations and future use cases?

What a good candidate looks like:

- ✓ Phased rollout with rapid initial time-to-value
- ✓ Dedicated data support team
- ✓ Proven scalability across enterprise-level datasets

9. Security, compliance, and ethics

Survey the vendor's approach to protecting sensitive workforce data.

Questions to ask:

- What compliance frameworks and certifications do you meet (SOC 2, ISO 27001, GDPR)?
- How is employee consent handled for data usage?
- How do you manage regional data residency?
- What's your process for anonymizing or deleting data upon request?

What a good candidate looks like:

- ✓ Robust data encryption and secure access protocols
- ✓ Clear consent and data retention policies
- ✓ Full audit trails and compliance documentation



10. Vendor partnership and roadmap

Evaluate alignment with your long-term data and skills strategy.

Questions to ask:

- How do you incorporate client feedback into your roadmap?
- What's your vision for the future of skills intelligence and AI integration?
- What percentage of your roadmap focuses on predictive analytics and interoperability?
- Can you demonstrate long-term client success and retention?

What a good candidate looks like:

- ✓ Transparent roadmap aligned with enterprise AI trends
- ✓ Evidence of co-development with global clients
- ✓ Focus on interoperability with future systems and marketplaces

11. Total cost and value realization

Estimate the true investment and return over time.

Questions to ask:

- How is pricing structured —per user, per skill, per module?
- Are updates and ontology refreshes included in the subscription?
- What's the typical time to value (TTV) post-implementation?
- What adoption or usage metrics indicate success?

What a good candidate looks like:

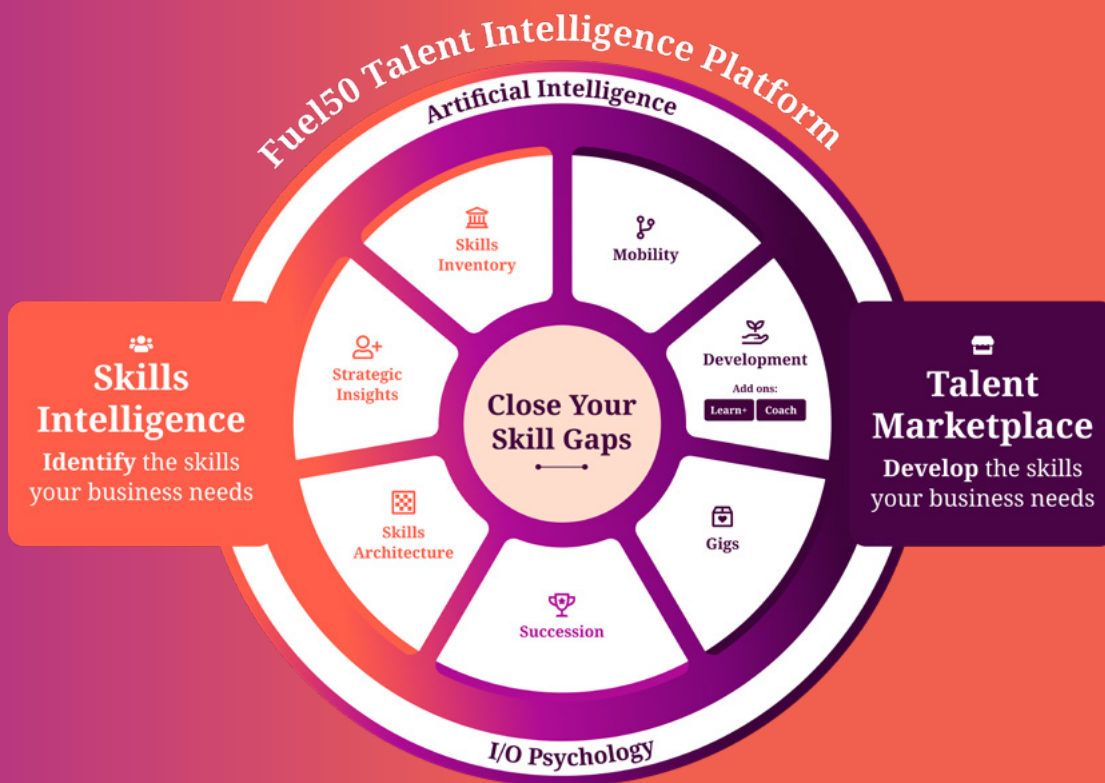
- ✓ Transparent pricing with no hidden data fees
- ✓ ROI tracked through adoption and data utilization metrics
- ✓ Demonstrated reduction in skills gaps or duplication

the next decade.

*deploying and valuing workers,
and managing careers.*

You Can't Close Skills Gaps If You Can't See Them

Learn more about how Fuel50 can solve your skills gaps.



Join the **people-first** skills revolution