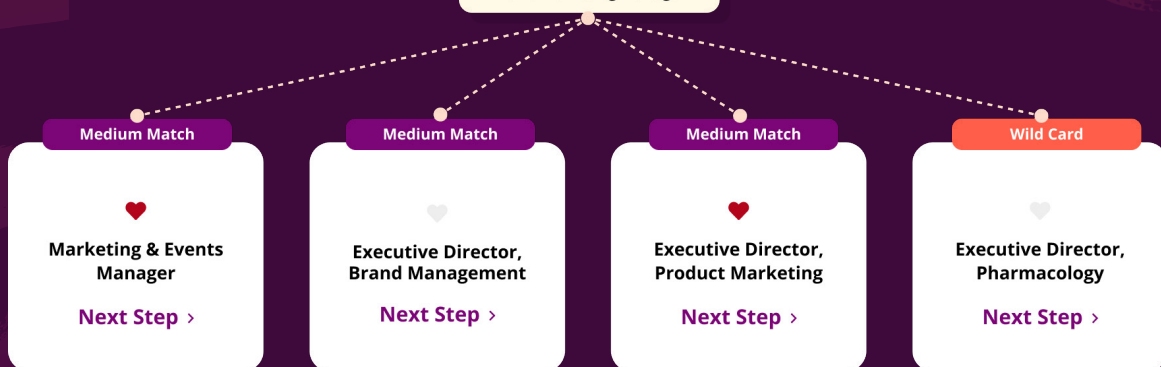




The Complete Guide to Internal Talent Mobility



Brand Marketing Manager



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When a high performer leaves, the impact is immediate and expensive. Deadlines slip. Team morale takes a hit. Budgets get reallocated. The search for a replacement begins—but by the time the new hire arrives, the damage is done. Ramp-up takes months. Institutional knowledge is gone. Productivity lags.

And here's what no one likes to admit: someone inside the business probably could've stepped in. They had the skills, understood the culture but they didn't know the opportunity existed. Or they didn't think it was their place to ask. Or maybe, they didn't think anyone would say yes.

This is where most internal mobility efforts break down—not from a lack of talent, but a lack of structure.

“Mobility fails when it’s reactive.”

Mobility fails when it's reactive. A vacancy opens, and HR scrambles. Managers hoard talent. Employees never know what's next for them. The system never connects the dots in time. And the cycle repeats itself.

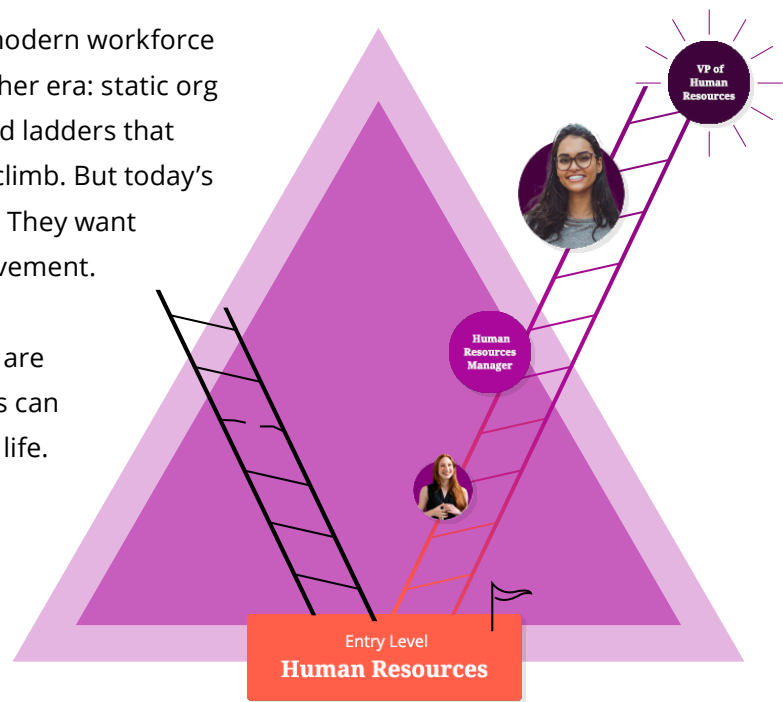
In many organizations, what passes for “mobility” is an outdated job board. Or an annual talent review that doesn't go anywhere. Or a vague notion that people are free to move, but no support to make it happen.

The truth is mobility isn't a perk or a pilot. It's a system. A way of operating that:

- Surfaces skills and potential across the business in real time
- Connects people with roles, gigs, learning, and mentors that match their growth
- Enables managers to lead meaningful career conversations—not just performance check-ins
- Lowers dependency on external hiring by unlocking talent from within
- Aligns internal movement with actual business priorities, not just vacancies

Too many companies are solving modern workforce challenges with tools built for another era: static org charts, templated training, and rigid ladders that define success as a single upward climb. But today's workforce doesn't think in ladders. They want momentum. Stretch. Meaning. Movement.

And the market isn't waiting. Roles are changing faster than org structures can keep up. Skills have a shorter shelf life. Tenure means less than trajectory. If people don't see a path forward internally, they'll create one somewhere else.



Poor mobility doesn't just increase churn. It slows everything down.

It wastes potential. It creates a drag on your business.

This guide covers:

- How to build the structure that enables internal movement to scale
- What systems and practices actually move the needle
- How to clear the cultural blockers that stall talent
- How to turn mobility into your next competitive edge—not just your next HR project

Why most talent mobility strategies fail

Most companies think they have internal mobility figured out because they've launched a job board, rolled out a mentoring program, or mentioned "career growth" at an all-hands. However, these are signals, not systems. They check a box without changing the behavior that matters.

Mobility fails when it's treated as a list of initiatives rather than a living system. When the structures, incentives, and visibility needed to support internal growth aren't wired into how the organization actually works, talent sits still—or worse—walks.

Below are the most common breakdown points that stall internal mobility.

1. Managers hoard talent instead of developing it

In theory, managers are supposed to be career coaches. In practice though, many become career blockers. They know that if a strong performer leaves the team—even for a promotion—it creates a gap they may not have the time, budget, or head count to refill.

So, they hoard.



They withhold stretch assignments “forget” to nominate people for openings, and talk about growth, but only on their terms.

A recent Deloitte analysis found that [46% of managers resist internal mobility](#), often preferring to retain top talent on their own teams—even at the expense of organizational agility—rather than letting them move internally.

Most organizations don’t make it easy for managers to let go. They don’t reward talent development, budget for backfills, or train managers to see mobility as a win.

That’s a structural failure.

2. Employees don’t know what’s possible

Most employees don’t see internal mobility. They assume roles are limited to their function. They wait for someone to tap them while quietly browsing external job boards because the internal path feels foggy at best and blocked at worst.

McKinsey research shows that [41% of employees](#) who left their jobs during the Great Resignation did so because they saw no clear path to advancement.

When employees can’t see where they could go, how to get there, or what skills they need to grow, they don’t stay and ask questions—they leave.

3. There’s no structured career framework

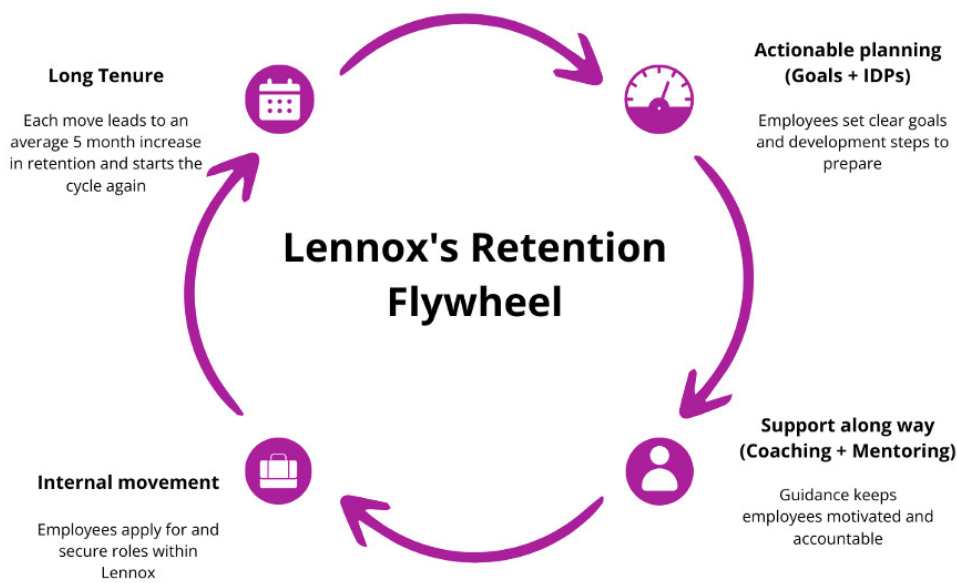
You can’t grow into something that doesn’t exist.

Too many companies operate without a defined, accessible career architecture. There’s no shared language for job levels, no clear competencies tied to roles, and no transparent pathways across business units or functions.

So, even if mobility is encouraged, there’s no scaffolding to support it.

Employees are told to “own their careers,” but with what tools? What map? What guidance?

Fuel50’s internal research has found that organizations with defined [career frameworks](#) (i.e., banding, levels, lateral pathways, success profiles) see significantly higher internal application rates and mobility success, because people can finally see the road ahead. For instance, at Lennox, actionable career goals and mentoring led to improved talent mobility, which led to more employee tenure.



4. Skills are invisible, outdated, or ignored

Your organization likely possesses more potential than you realize. You simply lack visibility into it.

Skills data lives in fragmented systems. It’s self-reported, based on titles, not actual capabilities, doesn’t update in real time, and is rarely tied to learning, projects, or roles in motion.

Without dynamic, [skills-based insights](#), you’re flying blind.

That’s why skills-based organizations are pulling ahead. They use skills intelligence platforms to continuously assess skills, identify gaps, and match people to opportunities based on real capabilities, rather than résumés or referrals.

5. Talent data lives in silos

Learning management system (LMS) data lives on one platform, HRIS data on another. Performance reviews are locked in PDFs, talent reviews buried in shared drives, and there's no central source of truth.

Sounds familiar?

When data is fragmented, your talent strategy becomes reactive. You can't anticipate attrition risk, see who's ready for a new challenge, or align development to real-time business needs.

At Fuel50, we see every day that when companies integrate skills, mobility, performance, and learning data into a unified ecosystem, internal fill rates increase dramatically, as managers and employees finally have the visibility they need to take action.

6. Culture doesn't reward movement

Even with the right tools and data, your internal mobility strategy will stall if the [culture doesn't support it](#).

Employees won't apply for roles if they think their manager will retaliate. Managers won't share talent if they're not recognized for doing so. Leaders won't invest if it's seen as "HR's problem."

This is the silent killer of mobility: the belief that moving is disloyal.

But at leading companies, movement is a signal of strength, not loss. It's how institutional knowledge spreads, high-potential employees stay engaged, and teams grow stronger over time.

The most successful Fuel50 clients invest as much in culture as in technology. They normalize career conversations, spotlight internal moves, and train managers to coach instead of hoarding.

Why you should elevate mobility from a siloed HR initiative to a top-down strategic lever

Most conversations about internal talent mobility start—and stop—with retention. That's part of the value. When people see a path forward inside your business, they're less likely to leave. But reducing attrition is only the beginning.

If you only look at mobility through the lens of HR, you're missing the bigger picture. Internal mobility isn't a perk, program, or check-the-box initiative that sits quietly inside the [HR function](#).

Done right, it's infrastructure.

It's how you control workforce costs without sacrificing innovation, build [succession pipelines](#) in real-time, and stay agile in a volatile market—by redeploying talent at speed and scale instead of defaulting to layoffs and rehires. It's how you keep institutional knowledge moving through your organization instead of watching it walk out the door.

Here are a few reasons you should instill mobility as a strategic lever.

Talent mobility as a cost-control strategy hiding in plain sight

Hiring is expensive. Backfilling a mid-level role can cost [1.5 to 2 times the employee's salary](#), according to Gallup, and that's just the financial cost. It doesn't account for lost productivity, onboarding time, or cultural disruption.

Now, layer on economic volatility, hiring freezes, or budget cuts, and the stakes rise even higher. Suddenly, every hire becomes a gamble.

Mobility flips the equation. Instead of pouring money into external recruitment, you optimize the people you already have. You fill roles with employees who already know the business, reduce ramp time, retain hard-won knowledge, and send a powerful message to your workforce that you grow your own.

Companies that invest in internal mobility consistently see better returns on talent. LinkedIn data revealed that organizations with high internal mobility rates retain employees nearly twice as long. Fuel50 clients like [KeyBank](#) and [UCI](#) have reported major reductions in attrition without increasing comp spend simply by giving personnel access to new opportunities inside the business.

9,858

“Future Ready” skills assessed.

2,774

Upskilling / Reskilling actions set to close skill gaps.

1 in 3

Attended an “Investing in My Development” session.

72%

‘Grow at Key’ User Return Rate.

100%

Increase in “Aspiring Leaders Program” participation.

60%

Increase in training participation and usage.

In a world where every dollar of head count matters, mobility is a smarter way to grow.

Talent mobility as a succession planning lever

Most succession planning is hypothetical. HR and leadership create spreadsheets with a list of high potentials and talk about future readiness.

But when the time comes for a senior leader to exit or a business unit to expand, those plans often fall apart.

Why? Because succession was never operationalized. Talent mobility changes that.

When you have a live view of who's ready for what based on real skills, values, and career aspirations, you make succession actionable. You can proactively match people to stretch roles, run targeted development plans, and create pipelines based on reality, not just reviews.

Fuel50's clients already do this: [At Trane Technologies](#), for example, managers use Fuel50 to guide career conversations, spot future leaders, and help employees grow into broader roles. As a result, the company saw an 11% improvement in managerial effectiveness scores, as well as stronger leadership benches across the business.

Career Framework

Career Streams

Differentiate career types

Bands

Differentiate jobs based on scope, scale, accountability and complexity

Each employee is able to see the Career Streams and Bands for open positions. This enables more efficient movement of talent across functions, businesses and regions.

Success Profiles

Outline the key experiences to be gained in a role, as well as the specific competencies needed for success.

Employees may assess their skill level and see common career moves into and out of different roles to help chart their course. This information allows them to enhance their proficiency in their current role, or prepare them for future roles.

Career Navigator

Employees can gather insights on their career journey, including assessing their talents, mapping development actions, preparing for career conversations and sharing insights with their manager.

- 24/7 access
- Translated into 6 additional languages in June 2017

55%



Internal recruitment rose from 38.7% to 55% since Fuel50 was introduced.

+11%



11% improvement in leader conversation measured in engagement survey for pilot over 5% improvement in rest of business.

+5%



5% improvement in engagement in pilot audience of engineers vs 2% in remainder of business

Talent mobility as a key to business continuity and workforce agility

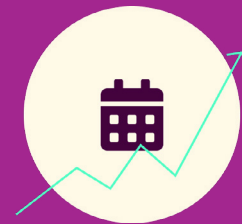
Markets move faster than ever. Roles evolve, skills shift, and priorities change overnight. In this hectic climate, the companies that thrive aren't just those with great hiring pipelines—they're the ones that can redeploy talent internally, at speed, and internal mobility gives you that muscle.

When you understand the skills inside your business and have built the infrastructure for people to move across teams and functions, you can adjust faster. You're able to pivot without scrambling to hire from scratch and experiment without overcommitting head count.

Trane Technologies, a global industrial manufacturer with over 40,000 employees, used Fuel50 to launch a sweeping career initiative called Career Progress, just as the organization was evolving its structure post-acquisition. Rather than resort to layoffs or external hiring, they built a standardized, transparent career framework and rolled out Fuel50's Career Pathing to give employees visibility into roles, skills, and mobility options. Within months, internal recruitment rose from 38.7% to 55%, and leaders were able to move talent laterally across regions and functions, thus preserving institutional knowledge, empowering growth, and ensuring continuity through change. That's the kind of agility a systemic mobility strategy enables.

Within months, internal recruitment rose from:

38.7% – 55%



Without that visibility and infrastructure, your workforce becomes rigid. People are stuck, and leaders can't find the talent they need internally, so they go external.

How to implement mobility as an operating system within the organization

Most companies say they support internal mobility, but few actually enable it, and fewer still treat it as an operating system that powers workforce agility, business continuity, and employee growth in real time. But that's exactly what leading organizations are doing: turning talent mobility from a siloed HR initiative into infrastructure that runs throughout the business.

In this section, we'll walk you through how to introduce internal mobility as a system with five interconnected components. If you want mobility to scale, these are the building blocks.

Step 1: Foster a culture that supports internal movement

Mobility fails in silence when culture quietly punishes those who move.

Before implementing any tools or frameworks, organizations need to dismantle the unspoken norms that discourage internal transitions. This starts by creating a culture where exploring new roles is encouraged. That level of psychological safety must be modeled and reinforced across every level of leadership.

Executives should normalize mobility by speaking openly about internal career growth. Personnel leaders need training and support to facilitate career conversations without fear or defensiveness. Additionally, the organization must signal, clearly and consistently, that movement is growth, not defection.

Mobility also needs to be rewarded. Organizations that successfully scale internal mobility often tie manager KPIs directly to talent development—measuring and rewarding leaders for growing and graduating talent. According to [Peoplebox](#), companies with high internal mobility rates (60%) are those where managers actively support career growth, compared to just 35% in low-mobility organizations.

Step 2: Make skills visible and actionable

Most mobility efforts stall because the organization doesn't know what skills it has—or what it needs.

Skills are often buried in outdated job descriptions, scattered across performance reviews, or stored in static spreadsheets that rarely reflect real-time capability. And without a clear, validated view of employee skills, managers are left guessing who's ready for what, while employees struggle to see where they can grow.

This is where visibility becomes critical.

Making skills visible starts by defining the skills that matter for the business—based on the roles you need today and the ones you'll need tomorrow. Then, it's about capturing employee skills in a structured, dynamic way—not just through self-assessment, but through manager validation and, where possible, actual work experience and project contribution.

This shared visibility creates a common language for mobility. Employees understand where they stand, what's expected in different roles, and how to close their gaps. Managers can have clearer, more productive development conversations. And leaders can match people to opportunities with confidence—based not on gut feel, but real data.

Importantly, visibility is only the first step. To make it actionable, skills data needs to integrate into the flow of work. That means connecting it to learning tools, gig platforms, career paths, and internal job postings—so that every insight leads somewhere.

Whether it's surfacing a learning path, suggesting a stretch assignment, or identifying a role that fits an employee's current strengths, actionable skills data turns mobility into motion. And it removes the guesswork from growth—for everyone.

Step 3: Create career architecture

Before people can move, they need to see where they can go—and what it takes to get there. Most organizations still operate with legacy frameworks: rigid job ladders, one-size-fits-all competency models, and outdated hierarchies that assume careers move up, one function at a time. But today's workforce thinks differently. Growth doesn't just mean promotion—it means progress. Across departments. Into new capabilities. Toward meaningful, skill-aligned work.

That's where [a skills-based architecture](#) comes in.

A modern career architecture starts by mapping the capabilities your business needs—now and in the future—and aligning them to your roles. It connects the dots between the work that matters and the skills required to do it, making clear how employees can stretch, shift, or grow into new opportunities.

Think of it less like a ladder and more like a map. One that shows multiple directions for growth—not just vertical advancement, but lateral and diagonal moves too.

When built well, this architecture acts as the connective tissue between employee aspirations and organizational priorities. It helps people understand:

- Which roles are adjacent to theirs, and what skills overlap
- What it takes to move into a new role, stretch assignment, or function
- How their current capabilities map to business needs

And importantly, it makes those insights visible not just to HR, but to managers and employees directly.

Step 4: Construct a talent marketplace that works

A talent marketplace is the engine of your mobility system, but only if it's designed to serve both employees and the business.

Many internal mobility initiatives fail because they rely on static job boards—tools that surface open roles but lack intelligence, personalization, and integration. Employees browse for a few minutes, find nothing relevant, and disengage. Leaders stop posting opportunities.

Momentum dies.

To avoid this, a functional marketplace needs four things:

- 1. Real-time matching: Talent should be matched to roles, projects, learning, and mentors based on skills, goals, and preferences.**
- 2. User-first design: The experience should be intuitive, transparent, and mobile-friendly.**
- 3. Integrated ecosystem: It should connect seamlessly to HR systems, learning platforms, and business tools.**
- 4. Organizational support: Roles and gigs need to be posted by hiring managers, not buried in processes.**

When done right, a talent marketplace becomes more than a tool. It's how you connect capability to opportunity in real-time and unlock capacity across the organization.

Step 5: Equip managers to accelerate mobility

Managers are the critical link in the mobility chain. Without their support, movement stalls. Yet, many managers are unprepared to have developmental conversations. They're unsure how to coach, fear losing top talent, or lack clarity on what is expected of them.

Organizations must invest in building managers' skills, confidence, and accountability around internal growth. That includes:

- Providing [conversation guides and coaching frameworks](#)
- Offering developmental analytics so managers can track growth
- Aligning performance goals with team member progression
- Recognizing and rewarding managers who support movement

Most importantly, organizations must send a clear message that growing talent is a core leadership responsibility.

How to measure talent mobility ROI

If you're serious about turning internal mobility into a core operating system, sooner or later, you'll need to justify it to the people who own the budgets, namely, your CFO, and CEO.

That entails translating mobility from a well-intentioned personnel initiative into a quantifiable business lever.

The good news is you don't need to reinvent the wheel. You just need to measure what matters.

In this section, you'll learn how to frame your case for talent mobility in terms that resonate with the executive suite. These are the numbers that tell the real story of performance, resilience, and return on investment.

1. Internal hire rate

The most basic (and telling) mobility metric is your internal hire rate, which is the percentage of roles filled by existing employees.

This number matters because it reveals whether your organization walks the walk. If you say you believe in internal growth, but 90% of roles are filled externally, something is wrong. Either your people are unaware of opportunities, or the business doesn't make space for them.

Start by tracking internal hires over time. Slice by department, region, and level. What is working? Where are the bottlenecks? A rising internal hire rate is a sign your system is functioning and that mobility is live.

Bonus: Every internal hire saves significantly on recruiting costs, reduces ramp time, and increases time to productivity. That's the ROI your CFO will understand.

2. Lateral movement

Most companies equate mobility with promotions, but lateral moves are the unsung hero of workforce agility.

When employees move across teams, functions, or regions, they expand their skill sets, build cross-functional context, and fill gaps without the need for external recruitment. This is the talent equivalent of compounding interest.

However, most organizations don't track it. They celebrate upward movement and overlook horizontal growth, which is a missed opportunity.

Monitor how often employees move into new roles at the same level. Look for patterns like: Do certain departments enable more lateral moves? Does lateral movement help you retain high-potential talent? Are you building internal generalists who can flex across business lines? Make lateral mobility a KPI to shift the culture from “promotion or bust” to one that values growth in all directions.

3. Retention by role and level

Not all turnover is bad, but losing high-potential, hard-to-replace talent is a cost most companies can't afford.

To make the case for mobility, measure retention not just broadly, but specifically:

- By tenure (e.g., under 12 months, 1–3 years, 3–5 years)
- By level (e.g., early career, mid-level, leadership)
- By role importance (e.g., revenue-generating, client-facing, technical)

This matters because mobility most often saves you in those exact scenarios: A junior engineer who moves into product management, a mid-level manager who steps laterally into another division, or a high-potential leader who takes on a cross-functional stretch role.

Compare retention between employees who moved internally and those who didn't. The data typically shows that workers who experience mobility stay longer.

4. Skills gaps closed

One of the most tangible ways to measure the ROI of internal mobility is by looking at how well you're closing critical skills gaps—especially in areas tied to business growth or transformation.

Start by identifying the 5 to 10 capabilities that are most essential to your company's strategic objectives. These could be technical skills like AI or data science, operational capabilities like frontline leadership or supply chain expertise, or cross-functional competencies like change management or innovation readiness.

Then take a baseline reading of your internal supply:

- How many employees currently have these skills?
- How many have made measurable progress toward acquiring them (via learning, mentorship, projects, or new roles)?
- How has that supply grown quarter over quarter?

Even if your current skills data isn't perfect, the point is to track directional improvement. Mobility should result in stronger pipelines of internal talent with the capabilities you'd otherwise need to buy externally.

If you can demonstrate that internal movement is actively growing your talent base in the areas that matter most to your business, you're not just filling roles—you're future-proofing the organization.

5. Succession coverage

Executives want to know the answers to questions like: If a critical leader leaves, do we have someone ready to step in? If the business needs to pivot, do we have the bench strength to move quickly? If we need to scale, are we building future leaders now?

Talent mobility makes succession coverage a reality. When you track who's moving into stretch roles, who's gaining cross-functional experience, and who's on a path to leadership, you stop guessing at readiness and start cultivating it.

Measure succession coverage as a percentage of critical roles with at least one internal ready-now or ready-soon candidate. Then, track how mobility investments (e.g., rotational programs, internal gigs, cross-training) increase that coverage over time.

How Fuel50 helps you mobilize your talent

When it comes to talent mobility, strategy is the starting line. The real challenge is building the infrastructure, workflows, and behavioral changes that make internal movement a daily, scalable reality.

Fuel50 makes that shift possible.

Unlike static organizational charts, out-of-date LMS portals, or vague career programs, Fuel50 is built to hardwire mobility into the way your organization operates. From day-to-day workflows to long-range planning, it becomes the system of record action for workforce development.

Let's discuss how Fuel50 translates strategy into execution through five core product pillars—each designed to solve a critical barrier to internal talent movement.


Fuel50's career pathing makes growth tangible and transparent

One of the most common reasons people leave is also one of the easiest to fix: They don't see what's next.

Gigs

Personalized Opportunities

Home
Journeys
Gigs
Coach
Learn+
Vacancies




Product Launch

Sept 1 - Dec 31

Spearhead the launch of the new Fuel360 product across the North American Market. Build a team and strategy.

Learn More

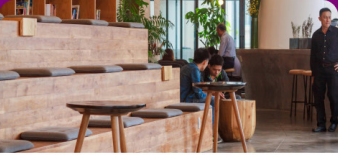


Culture Captain

Jan 1 - Dec 31

Become the new remote culture captain to assist HR in creating fun and exciting events for remote workers.

Learn More



Office ReBrand

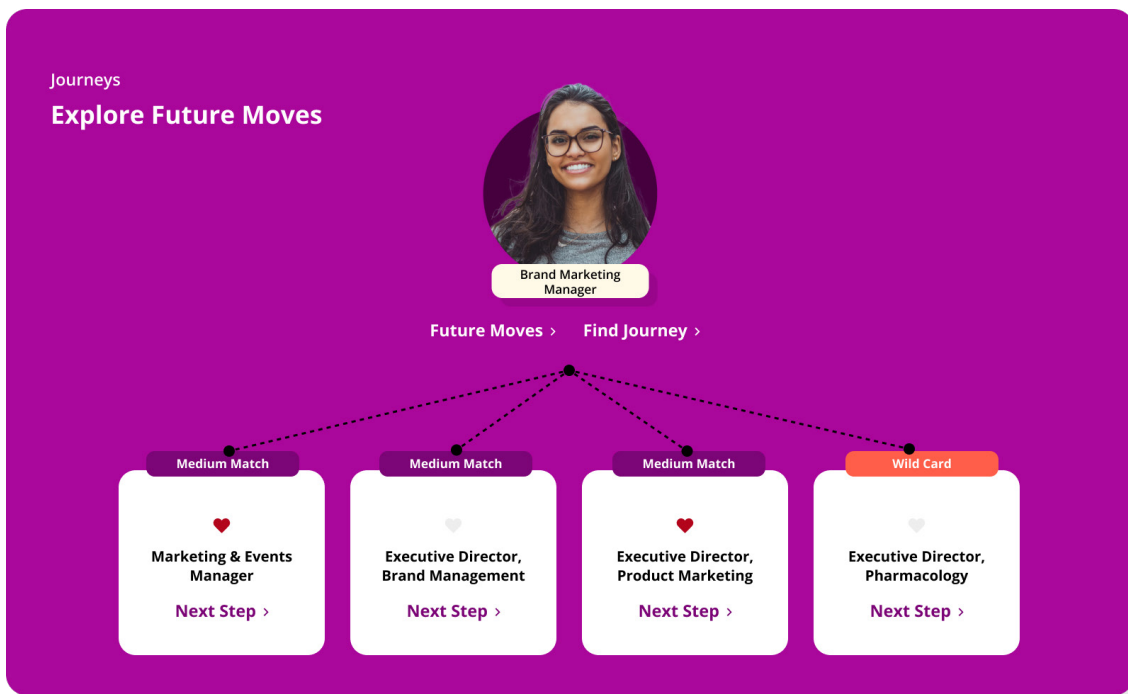
Jun 2 - Aug 10

Assist HR and the creative team in managing timelines and budget for the office re-brand.

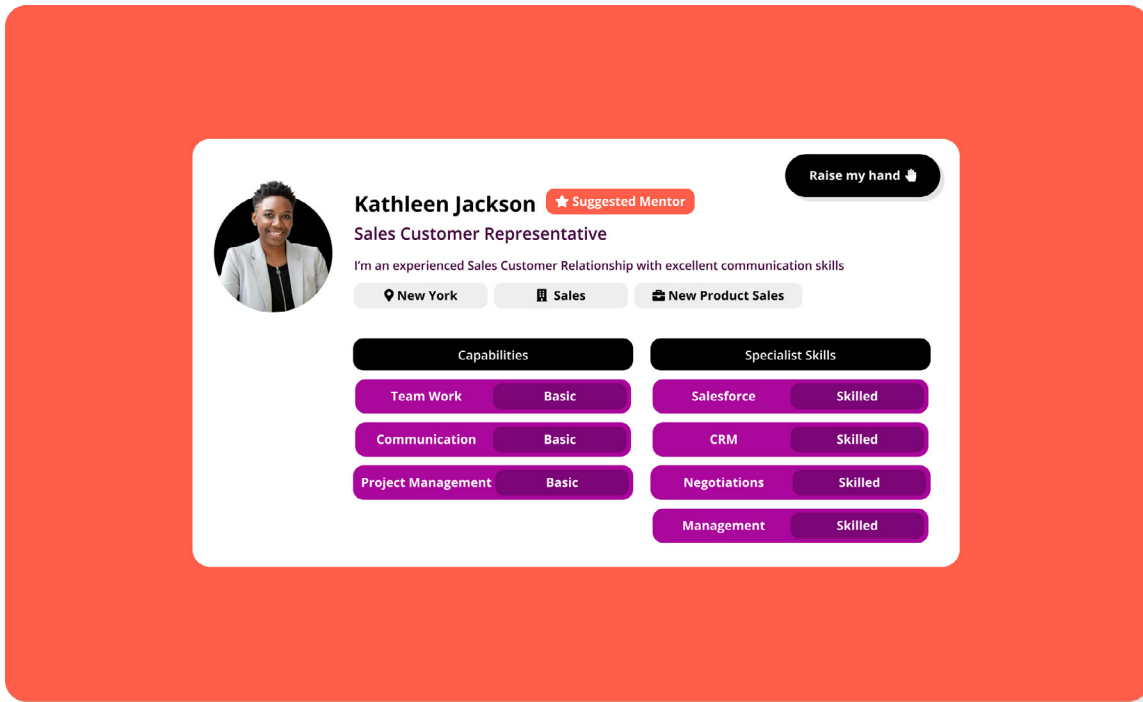
Learn More

Fuel50 solves the career visibility issue with dynamic, skills-based career pathing. Instead of a static job board or vague promotion chart, each employee views a personalized roadmap that shows:

- Their current skills, benchmarked against expectations for their role
- Transparent visibility into lateral, vertical, and diagonal moves across the business
- Skill gaps they need to close and recommended ways to do so (i.e., learning, gigs, mentorship)



This clarity transforms internal mobility from a hidden opportunity into a daily experience. When people can see their future and know how to reach it, they're far more likely to stay and grow.



Fuel50's talent marketplace helps you intelligently match the right skills to the right opportunities

Posting jobs internally isn't mobility; matching people to existing opportunity is.

Fuel50's talent marketplace goes beyond static listings to deliver live, AI-driven matches between:

- Employees and open roles aligned with their skills and career goals
- Learning programs that bridge skill gaps
- Internal gigs and stretch projects for real-world development
- Mentors and coaches who align with career aspirations

These recommendations evolve as people grow and business needs change. It ensures talent flow doesn't rely on manager networks or hallway conversations but on smart, inclusive data.

Instead of waiting for someone to ask, Fuel50 helps you show them what's next before they even realize they're ready.

Medium Match

CFO**Opportunities For You**

As our chief technology officer, you'll be the visionary leader shaping our technological landscape. Your approach will be application specific, meaning you can translate business goals into robust, scalable tech solutions that perfectly align with our industry and user base. You'll be responsible for drive innovation, overseeing software development, and ensuring our technology stack remains agile and future-proof.

Your Skills

✓ Customer Centricity ✓ Business Savvy ✓ Lateral Leadership

Required Skills

Financial Forecasting Financial Reporting Financial Risk Management Finance and Accounting Platforms
 Finance and Accounting Policies and Procedures Finance and Accounting Trends Strategic Cost Management

Fuel50's skills architecture crafts a common language for growth

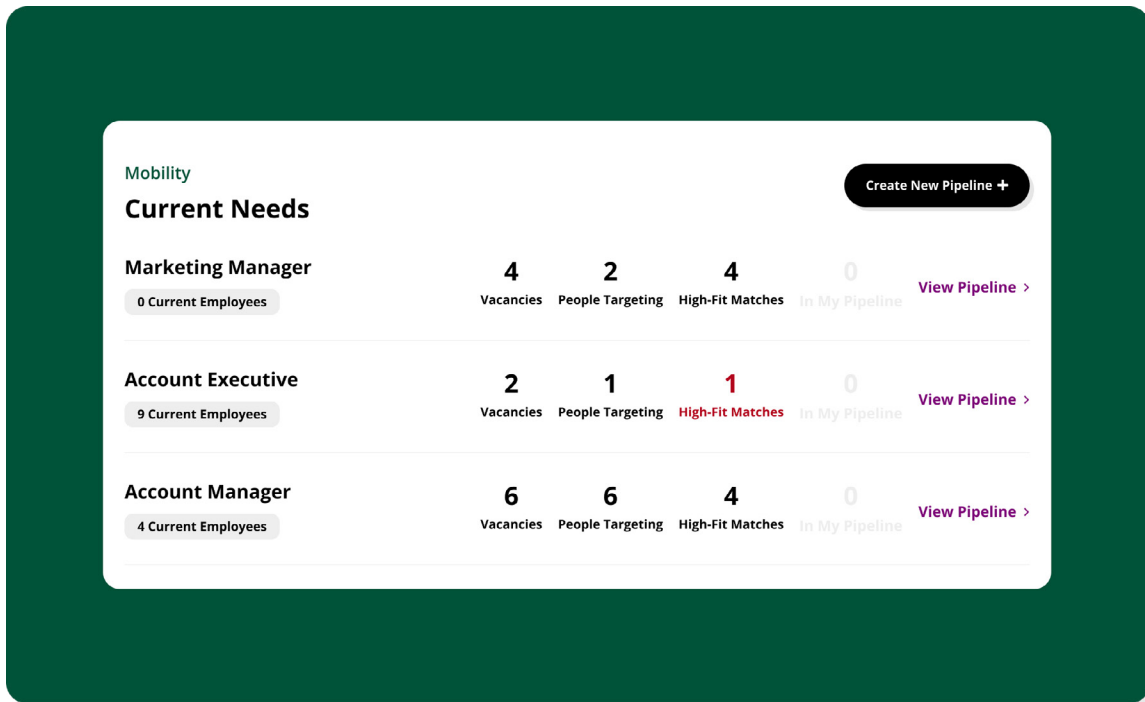
Mobility runs on skills, but most organizations can't see the skills they have or the ones they need.

Fuel50's skills ontology, backed by IO psychologists, gives you a dynamic, living view of your workforce capabilities. Employees self-assess, managers and peers validate, and skill profiles are mapped across roles.

This enables:

- Cross-functional visibility of talent potential
- Tailored development plans that reflect business needs
- A shared language between HR, managers, and employees

When everyone speaks the same skills language, mobility becomes coordinated.



Fuel50's manager tools turn personnel leaders into mobility coaches

Managers often aren't blockers on purpose. They simply lack visibility, training, and tools.

Fuel50 makes it easy for managers to:

- See an employee's current skill set, career goals, and readiness for movement
- Facilitate structured one-on-ones using built-in conversation guides
- Recommend gigs, learning, and roles that align with each team member's journey

This transforms the manager's role from talent gatekeeper to talent accelerator. It removes guesswork, unifies action, and fosters a culture where developmental conversations are consistent.

“Talent Gatekeeper to talent accelerator.”

Specialist Skill
Python Programming
Uses Python to develop and maintain applications and systems to meet business goals

Basic Skilled Advanced Expert

Talent Growth
Python Programming
We've lined up some actions that we think will help you achieve this goal.

Jan 25	View a Python beginner's tutorial online. Share four critical learnings with my manager for feedback. Cement my knowledge by practicing the programming language often.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Jan 28	Request participation in a project using python programming language to build a web application. Obtain feedback from the manager on my performance. Record three best practices for future use of Python.	<input type="checkbox"/>

***Bonus:* How to measure your organization's talent mobility maturity**

Ask any HR leader where they are in their talent mobility journey, and most will give you the same answer: "We're working on it."

Does that mean you've posted jobs internally? Offered mentorship programs? Are piloting a talent marketplace? Or are you cultivating a future-fit workforce strategy that treats mobility as core infrastructure?

Not all mobility efforts are equal. There's a huge gap between having an internal jobs board and operating with full skills visibility, predictive talent intelligence, and a clear career architecture that guides workforce planning.

To help companies navigate this path, we use a simple but powerful framework: the Talent Mobility Maturity Curve. It outlines the four most common stages of maturity we see across our clients at Fuel50 and helps you pinpoint where your organization is today, what's holding you back, and what "great" looks like.

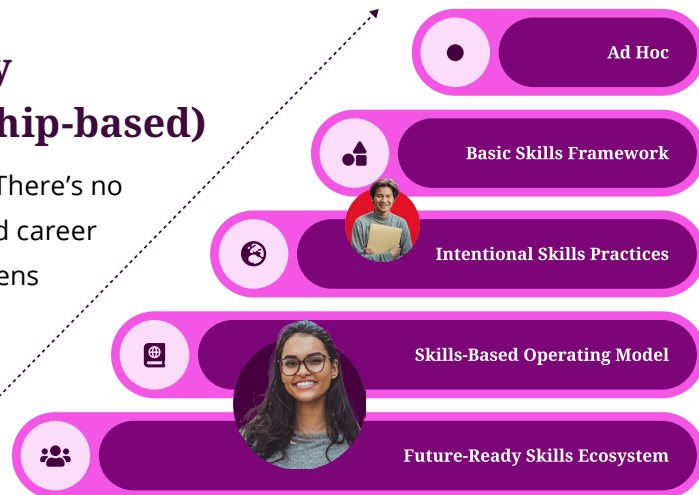
You can also use our [Skills Maturity Assessment](#) here.

Stage 1: Ad hoc mobility (Random and relationship-based)

This is where most companies start. There's no formal system, visibility, or structured career framework. Talent mobility, if it happens at all, is driven by personal networks, manager relationships, and chance.

Employees have little clarity around what's possible.

Meanwhile, managers tend to hoard talent because they don't want to lose top performers, and HR is often the last to know when someone moves roles, if at all.



The symptoms of Stage 1 are:

- High attrition among high-potential employees
- Promotions and moves that rely on who you know, rather than what you can do
- Low perception of growth opportunities in engagement surveys
- Siloed talent data (if it exists at all)

The result is stuck talent, untapped potential, and when roles open, you're more likely to post externally than search internally.

How to move forward:

- Start mapping existing internal moves. What works? What doesn't?
- Run a diagnostic on employee perception. Do people feel like they can grow here?
- Educate leadership on the cost of lost talent and the ROI of internal mobility.

This stage isn't inherently bad, but staying there too long is a growth killer.

Stage 2: Internal job board (access without insight)

At this stage, most companies have taken the first tangible step by offering a centralized place for internal opportunities. Employees can see open roles and, in theory, apply.

But in reality, most don't because the system is transactional. It treats people as applicants, not assets. There's little support for readiness or development, no context on what's next, no visibility into skills, and no ability to see beyond a job posting.

The symptoms of Stage 2 are:

- Internal applications that mirror external hiring
- No matching between skills and roles
- Employees unsure of what's next or how to get there
- Managers still reluctant to promote or move talent

The upside is that you've made mobility visible. Now, it's time to make it meaningful.

How to move forward:

- Craft a shared language around skills: What do we value? What do we measure?
- Identify key mobility barriers: Is it managers, culture, incentives, or infrastructure?
- Pilot career conversations: Equip managers to talk about growth without fearing attrition.

Companies often become stuck here, mistaking access for action. But to truly unlock mobility, you need intelligence.

Stage 3: Talent marketplace (skills + AI-driven matching)

This is where mobility grows smarter.

You've implemented a talent marketplace that understands your people—their skills, values, goals—and connects them to relevant opportunities across the business, including roles, projects, gigs, learning pathways, and mentors.



Fuel50 clients at this stage see real transformation:

- Engagement scores rise
- Attrition drops
- Internal movement increases (often two to three times)
- Leaders have real-time insights into who's ready for what

The symptoms of Stage 3 are:

- Talent moves fluidly across teams and geographies
- Career paths are more transparent
- Development is tied to actual skill gaps, not gut feel
- Succession planning is based on live data

How to continue to grow:

- Integrate with your LMS and HCM to bring learning and talent data into one view
- Coach managers to use marketplace insights in one-on-ones and development plans
- Use mobility analytics to inform workforce planning and strategic hiring

This is where companies start playing offense with talent.

Stage 4: Integrated career architecture (mobility as operating system)

Stage 4 is about the operating system.

Career architecture becomes the backbone of your workforce strategy.

Roles are clearly defined, mapped to skills, and connected via transparent pathways.

Every employee knows where they are, what's next, and how to get there.

The symptoms of Stage 4 are:

- Talent decisions are informed by deep skills intelligence
- Movement is expected, encouraged, and rewarded
- Managers are growth coaches, not gatekeepers
- Organization-wide agility is real; you can shift talent in weeks, rather than months

Fuel50 clients like Trane Technologies, KeyBank, and UCI are leading at this level. They’ve embedded mobility into the fabric of how the business runs, and the results are hard to ignore:

- 50%+ internal hire rates
- 60% reduction in attrition
- Improved engagement and leadership pipelines


To stay here:

- Continuously evolve your skills taxonomy to reflect changing business needs
- Use AI to anticipate future gaps and workforce shifts
- Treat your career architecture as a living system

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The bottom line

Mobility doesn't fail because the business lacks talent. It fails because the systems around that talent aren't built to support movement—at scale, in time, or in ways that align with how work actually gets done.

When skills are visible, career paths are transparent, and opportunities are connected to real business need, internal mobility stops being a point-in-time solution and becomes part of how the organization operates.

That's the work Fuel50 is doing every day—with clients who are moving from one-off wins to scalable systems that keep people growing and business moving forward.

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If that's what you're building, we'd love to show you what's working.