



Bridging the communications gap for internal mobility

How to embed talent development into your business, break down barriers to progression, and empower your employees to succeed

Meet & Engage

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Introduction

Internal mobility is having a moment. Employee promotions and side-steps into new roles are certainly nothing new and have long formed a part of talent strategies, but if you feel like you're hearing more and more about "internal mobility" as a strategy, you may not be wrong.

In the state of permacrisis we currently find ourselves in, obtaining and retaining talent has never been more valuable, and as talent managers continue to seek out ways to maximise their talent attraction and retention, developing opportunities for employee mobility has become an urgent necessity.

In this guide we'll explore the many facets of internal mobility; why bridging the communications gap between your internal mobility initiatives and the employees who would most benefit from them is essential to good business in 2023, and how to achieve this through the intelligent use of technology.

Let's dive in!





We often speak with our clients about creating a standout recruitment experience for candidates and the benefits this provides.

Designing an internal mobility strategy that your employees can easily access and understand is so important and speaks volumes about what's important to you as a business.

Creating an approach that considers how to connect with your various internal audiences (and who can help to deliver the message) is the key to generating a buzz around new opportunities.

Not only is this a positive thing to do from an employee sentiment perspective, the impact of a successful talent mobility plan has an impact on the business bottom line.



Ali Hackett
CEO
Meet & Engage

Surveying the landscape

LinkedIn's [2023 Future of Recruiting Report](#) found that 75% of recruiting professionals think internal recruiting will be an important factor shaping talent acquisition over the next five years. The same report also points out that as candidates seek more security and future-proofing in their career choices, career development and internal mobility could become a priority not just for HR and L&D teams, but for recruitment teams as well, so cross-team collaboration will become essential for success. This growth chimes with what we've seen developing over the years since the Covid-19 pandemic began: as the [2021 LinkedIn Future of Hiring report](#) noted, in the first two years after the initial outbreak, internal mobility increased by almost 20% year-over-year, and this appears to be a trend that just keeps gaining momentum.

So, we know it's front of mind for leaders, but before we go any further, let's define what we mean by internal mobility.

The concept of internal mobility crops up in many guises (talent mobility, talent development, internal hiring, internal recruitment...) and is related to several other concepts that many of us are used to hearing about: learning and development, upskilling, reskilling, and employee engagement. Fundamentally, when we refer to internal mobility, we're talking about the practice of moving employees within an organization to different roles, departments, or locations, rather than hiring externally to fill those positions. As we'll lay out in this whitepaper, it offers numerous benefits and plays a crucial role in fostering a dynamic and adaptable workforce.

And why is internal mobility having a moment right now?

In this difficult hiring climate, competition for top talent is high and employers are considering alternative tactics to attract and retain talent.



employees at companies with high internal mobility stay 60% longer



And they have good reason to do so. Let's kick off with some stats:

Data from [LinkedIn](#) shows that employees at companies with high internal mobility stay 60% longer. Internal hires perform significantly better than external ones in their first two years in a new role, are 61% less likely to be laid off, and take 18% lower compensation than their external counterparts, according to a [Wharton study](#).

According to [Gallup](#), employees who have opportunities for development and growth are more engaged and motivated: 'Employees who are actively engaged are less likely to be actively looking or open to a new job opportunity. In fact, low engagement teams typically endure turnover rates that are 18% to 43% higher than highly engaged teams.' Not only that, but research by [McKinsey & Co](#) found that companies that actively promote internal talent mobility have 33% higher revenue and 20% higher total shareholder return.

Sounds like a no-brainer, doesn't it?

But here's where it gets complicated. While it's clear that employers and employees need internal mobility to succeed, and that leadership teams know that it needs to be a priority, evidence shows that right now, the majority of employees are not receiving the support they need to develop their career at their current organisation. Only 15% of employees asked reported they had been encouraged by their organisation to move into a new role. According to research by Aptitude, despite the increased focus on internal mobility over the past few years, only one in four companies are confident with their strategies moving forward, and 77% have lost talent due to a lack of career development opportunities.



The evidence is clear: if employees are not able to access the support they need to grow their career within the organisation, they will move somewhere they can



The evidence is clear: if employees are not able to access the support they need to grow their career within their current organisation, they will move somewhere they can. When asked, employees consistently rank career growth and learning opportunities among the most important factors when considering a new job. And this is particularly marked among the younger generations: employees in the 18-34 age category ranked 'opportunities for career growth' third after pay and benefits and work flexibility, while over-50s voted higher in favour of 'challenging and impactful work' in a [recent survey](#). With only 23% of global employees ranked as 'engaged' with their jobs by a [recent Gallup report](#) (and only 10% in the UK!), there is a long way to go to bridge the gap between employee needs and expectations, and what is currently being provided.

So, what's stopping employees accessing opportunities for development and progression? One possible factor is that creating and implementing solid learning and development and internal mobility strategies takes time, and although leaders now know they need to be prioritising these things, and in some cases initiatives are in motion, they just haven't reached all employees yet. Another consideration is that, while awareness is growing, strong internal mobility programmes are still seen as a 'nice-to-have' by many. As the [Workplace Learning report](#) points out, successful internal mobility depends on joined-up efforts between HR, Talent Acquisition and Learning & Development teams. If that cross-team communication isn't there, your efforts will falter before your employees are even aware of what is available to them.

Let's take a look at some of the key areas where internal mobility initiatives can have impact, and the stats that back up our reasoning.

Identifying key areas for targeting your internal mobility efforts

1. Helping early-career employees know where their career is headed after their initial programme ends

Retention is a primary objective for early careers development programmes, but only 56% of graduates remain employed with the same firm after five years, according to the ISE's recent [Student Development Survey](#). While it's true that most early careers employers expect a percentage of their cohort to leave, given the costs involved in recruiting and onboarding early careers talent, it makes sense to try and retain as many of these valuable assets as possible. Even if they don't end up as a senior leader, they'll no doubt still be adding considerable value in whatever role they land in, whether it's through their skills, knowledge, or fresh perspective.

Employers can increase their long-term retention rates by educating their graduate hires about the possible career routes open to them as early as possible. By providing their early careers hires with a clear understanding of the career paths available, employers can help to ensure that their talent stays engaged and motivated, and ultimately, more likely to stay with the company for the long haul.

“The most cited reason for leaving the organisation after the development programme was either moving to a similar role in a different company (identified by 62% of employers) or moving to a different sector or occupation (39%).

These common reasons provide insights into where they are going, but not so much about why they are leaving, but the data suggests that common reasons include dissatisfaction with pay (40%) and progression (18%).”

(ISE [Student Development Survey](#))



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Building confidence and knowledge around skills self-assessments - in conjunction with reviewing your skills assessment programmes - can facilitate stronger career progression and address gender and diversity gaps in leadership roles



2. Increasing diversity in all its forms and at all levels

As the ISE Student Development Survey notes, 'retention is an important indicator of a culture of inclusion within a workplace. Where organisations have less inclusive cultures, they typically experience higher turnover rates from those who experience a lack of belonging in the workplace.'

Research from McKinsey found that companies who invest in building gender and ethnic diversity perform up to 35% better, particularly where that diversity is reflected at the highest levels of management: 'In the United Kingdom, greater gender diversity on the senior-executive team corresponded to the highest performance uplift in our data set: for every 10 percent increase in gender diversity, EBIT rose by 3.5 percent.'



Researchers from Harvard and Pennsylvania Universities uncovered a large gender gap in self-promotion (reporting of skills and abilities) at work – with men rating their performance 33% higher than equally performing women. They identified two factors influencing this: confidence (being sure of your own performance), and strategic incentives (talking up your performance to get a raise or promotion). Building confidence and knowledge around skills self-assessments - in conjunction with reviewing your skills assessment programmes - can facilitate stronger career progression and address gender gaps in leadership roles.

You can't become what you can't see: instilling anti-bias adjustments in hiring is important at all levels, but ensuring that there are measures in place to adjust diversity at Directorate and Board level (and not just hoping that eventually the diversity will work its way up from entry-level) is essential to demonstrate that there are pathways to success for employees from all backgrounds. The UK Leadership Diversity Report states that those 'working for an organisation with strong diversity on their board are twice as likely (73%) to also be working for an organisation that has measures in place to reduce bias in the recruitment of board members. Only 31% of non-diverse organisations had these measures in place.'


3. Investing in employee wellbeing benefits everyone

Investing in employee learning has myriad benefits, not just for retention and business development, but also for employee health. Research from the Open University found that access to learning and development at work had huge benefits for employee wellbeing and mental health. Even short-term L&D opportunities boosted immediate employee wellbeing by 36%!

Being in an environment that facilitates learning increases confidence and self-esteem, creates a sense of achievement and reward, and reinforces employee commitment to their role and employer. Learning also improves brain health, especially among older workers, and reduces sickness absence.



Investing in reskilling employees who are already bought-in to your culture and proven to be committed is a win for everyone



4. Filling gaps in under-subscribed roles or locations

Relocation is often seen as a hard sell, but framing it as an opportunity for upskilling or reskilling, or as a secondment to try out something new, can be a way of garnering more interest.

Likewise for filling those hard-to-fill specialist roles: investing in reskilling opportunities for employees who are already bought-in to your culture and proven to be committed is a win for everyone.

In their 'Talent Acquisition Trends 2023' report, [Korn Ferry](#) stated that 'thanks to a dynamic job market, professionals are no longer thinking of career growth in traditional terms. Instead, they are ditching the 'career ladder' for the 'career lattice', making moves to other areas within their current organisation, signalling a growing internal mobility trend'. With strong internal movement initiatives in place, businesses can maintain operational levels and ensure they have the right people in the right roles for the future, and employees get to grow and develop without the upheaval of changing organisation.

BT won Best Internal Mobility Strategy at the FIRM awards this year for their reskilling initiative for cyber roles. By investing in reskilling their employees in this high-demand area, BT have shown commitment to the future not just for the business but also for the employees who have benefitted from life-changing career development. Laura Price explains how:



There's a well-documented cyber skills shortage worldwide and all organizations are facing a very competitive labour market as a result. BT is no exception.

The program, in partnership with learning provider CAPSLOCK, was driven by our desire to create high-value career paths within BT Group and to build a pipeline of talent to help keep BT and our customers safe online.

It was all about opening doors for colleagues who might not have seen an obvious way into a security career and welcoming people with different skillsets, backgrounds and ages.

This investment in our people will reap significant rewards in a high-priority business area for BT, but just as importantly, it has been — and continues to be — a life-changing experience for those involved.



Laura Price
Employer Brand, Skills & Partnerships
BT Security

The communications gap: what's your fantastic, supportive company culture worth if your employees don't know about it?

The greatest challenge we've identified when talking to our clients and surveying the market around internal mobility, is communication.

Even the most committed companies struggle to communicate their brilliant development opportunities consistently to their employees, and this can lead to the false perception that there isn't much demand for upskilling or internal roles. The surveys tell us otherwise: up to 94% of employees reported that they would stay longer in a company if it invested in their career development, and as we've seen above, internal mobility can boost retention by 60%.

Employees want your support. They just don't always know where and how they can get it.

As we've already seen, the gap between talent leaders' plans and employee reality only seems to be widening in this area. So, how can you bridge this gap and provide the support and communication that your employees expect?



**Employees want your support.
They just don't always know
where and how they can get it.**





The era of the one-size-fits-all employee communications strategy is over

When thinking about employee communications, it's worth taking a look at the ways your people are consuming and receiving information in other areas of their lives. Like all of us, your employees are used to personalised, always-on communications as standard in almost every part of their lives. As consumers, we're so used to emails using our first name, and websites and apps frictionlessly incorporating our preferences. We expect to be able to toggle elements on and off according to our preferences, to be given choices around how we consume information, and to be able to do all of this on the go, wherever we are.

The era of the one-size-fits-all employee communications strategy is over; it's no longer enough to send out the same email to all employees once every few weeks, and expect them to engage with your initiatives (no matter how well-meaning or effective those programmes may be). We're now in the era of the 'micro-moment'. In our age of always-on communication, we consume information in bitesize chunks while scrolling, often switching between multiple apps or websites every few minutes. A micro-moment occurs when we automatically turn to our devices to act on a need to learn something, do something, discover something, watch something, buy something, or apply for something. Micro-moments fill our days without us even realising, and they are crucial. They shape our preferences and our decision-making and have fundamentally changed the way we consume information.

In light of this shift, it's no wonder there's a disconnect if employers are only providing crucial information around life-changing things such as career development in long-form, difficult-to-find documents, emails, and webpages - or simply relying on word of mouth and manager buy-in.

If we're going to eliminate departmental silos and bias and focus on invigorating our workforces and empowering our people to succeed and progress against the grain of the traditional career ladder, we must approach internal mobility collaboratively and dynamically.

In the next section, we will outline ways that you can apply technology to overcome this communications gap - by providing the kind of personalised, frictionless feed of information and support that we've all come to expect in our online interactions, in a way that feels authentic to your employer brand and culture.



Every individual brings a rich tapestry of skills, some of which may be hidden or underutilised.

By prioritising open and inclusive communication, you can help your employees connect the dots between what they know and what they could achieve, empowering employees to see broader horizons and greater possibilities and propel your organisation forward.



Simon Wright
Global Head of
Talent Advisory Consulting
PeopleScout




How technology can bridge the communications gap

As with any ongoing engagement initiative, consistent delivery of meaningful content and information will need to form the backbone of your strategy, and even in a small- to medium-sized business, that's no small undertaking.


The good news is that interactions needn't be onerous or admin heavy, and creating a strategy which blends 'live' engagement with smart automation is eminently achievable with the right technology.


Here's a breakdown of how our engagement technology can support your business to achieve hybrid internal mobility strategies via solutions which are suitable for use with small cohorts, or at scale.




 **Ali**
a few seconds ago

We're really excited you'll be joining our Bristol office, Zara - and can't wait to welcome you to the team!



 @ me

 **Priti**
a month ago


Hi, I'm Priti - a Learning & Development Manager at Intriga. Check out this 5 minute video helping you to work on your influencing skills in the workplace.


Learning module: Influencing



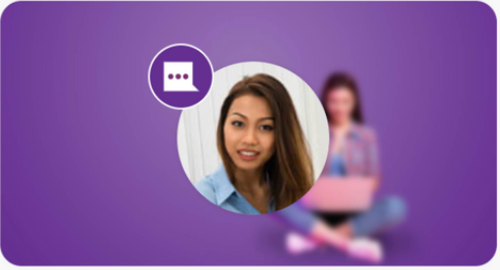
Check out this 5 minute video helping you to work on your influencing skills, hosted by Priti, one of our Learning and Development experts


Intriga

 @ me

 **Pip**
a few seconds ago

Have a question out of hours? Our friendly chatbot is here to help!

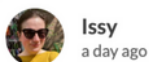


 @ me

Nurture

Firstly, you need a hub; somewhere your employees know to go when they're looking for information, inspiration, or encouragement about progressing their career with you. We refer to our automated content delivery platform as 'Nurture', because that's what it does; it nurtures your people.

We take your content and make each individual piece live on our social media style platform in the form of wall posts – think videos, images, memes and snappy text – highly engaging and quick to digest. The content can work hard to address the internal mobility challenges you most need to overcome, whether that's demystifying business areas, providing development advice, or signposting to available roles. We can also personalise what's surfaced depending on key employee criteria, and even blend in our other tech such as live online events, FAQ chatbots, or live 121 chat support, to further boost engagement.



Issy
a day ago

Hi, Jennifer! Did you know there's a whole team at Intriga dedicated to helping you learn and develop your career? We're called the Internal Mobility Team and over the coming weeks we'll be introducing ourselves and the services we offer. Make sure you check back regularly to see new content, and we'll be sending out reminders via email and SMS every now and then, so you'll never miss something important.



Ali
4 minutes ago

A secondment is a great way to get a taste for a different department and develop new skills. Find our current secondment options and apply [here](#).

Meet the Internal Mobility Team

Did you know we have a whole team of people dedicated to supporting your career progression?

here they are!



Secondment applications now open!

Secondment opportunities available in:

- Operations
- Resourcing
- Finance
- Marketing
- Technical



Giving employees the opportunity to hear directly from colleagues or leaders who they wouldn't usually encounter, is a great way of building connection, but also showcasing the breadth of opportunities available for those who desire progression.

Live virtual events

Live virtual events can give employees the chance to find out about internal opportunities, whilst providing hiring managers an easy and effective way to showcase their departments, people, and requirements.

With many organisations looking to utilise transferrable skills and not lose employees who possess the potential to thrive in myriad roles, the best way to get your message across is often to hear it from the source.

The collage features a woman with long dark hair smiling at a laptop. Overlaid on this is a Zoom meeting interface for 'Intriga Careers' with four participants: Paul, Monica, Dhru, and Naomi. A chat window on the right says 'Welcome to today's event, it's great to see so many of you join us!'. Below the Zoom interface is a social media post from Sarah, dated 'a few seconds ago', with the text 'Find out about the different Career Pathways available at Intriga in this live online event!'. The post includes a 'Career Pathways' event card with dates 'Mar 27, 2023 12:00 AM - Dec 31, 2026 12:00 AM', a 'LIVE' indicator, and a 'Join now' button. At the bottom left, a feedback widget from Hannah asks 'Has our content helped you feel more prepared?' with three emoji options: a green smiley, a yellow neutral face, and a red frowny face.

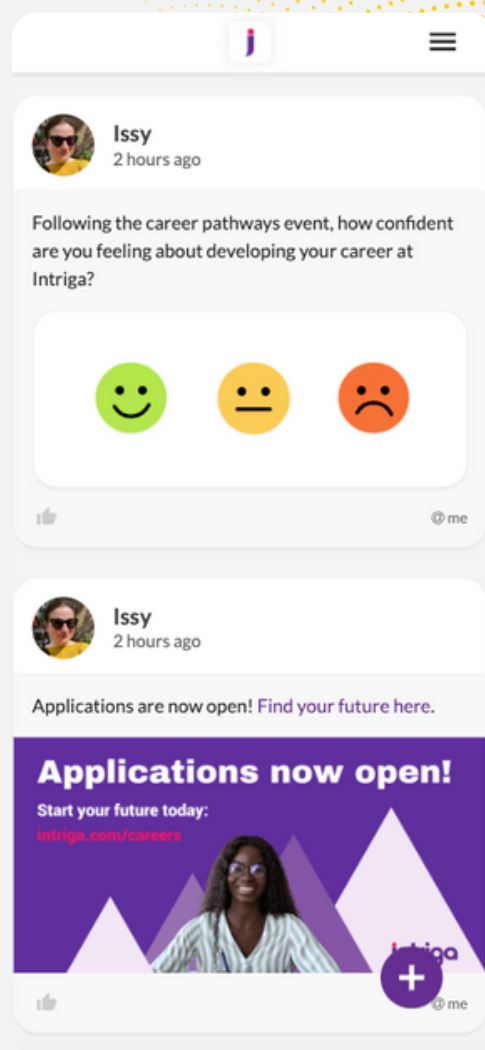
Live virtual events not only democratise access to vital information and allow your people to tell it in their own words, but they show you're aware of the fact that many employees are remote or hybrid workers, and that even for those who could meet in person, taking more than 45 minutes out of a day to attend a face-to-face event isn't always possible.

Like our nurture technology, live events can flex to meet individual requirements; whether you want to introduce a project or new office location to hundreds of employees, or you feel a skills workshop would be of benefit to a small group of employees who are ready to progress, the flexibility exists to run the events you need and invite the employees you'd like to target.

Chatbots

Whether you're engaging with internal or external talent, the prospect of taking on a new role inevitably brings with it a whole host of questions. Some may be personal and require an in-depth conversation, but it's usually safe to say, most queries will fall into the FAQ bucket; and it's the volume that takes the most time to answer, even if you have a solid copy and paste system going.

What we know thanks to our candidate experience chatbot technology is, when looking for a simple answer, people favour expediency over personal contact, and this is where automated, always-on solutions shine.



Need to quickly know what roles are available that match your skills? Match Me bot! Have a generic question about an office location? FAQ Bot! Make it conversational, and include some video and picture content, and your simple Bot also provides an engaging experience, and people will come back for more.

And it's not just about providing information and saving time, here at Meet & Engage we're big fans of meaningful data and a Chatbot which requests feedback in a conversational way, is a great standalone or integrated addition to your internal mobility strategy. After all, if you don't know what your people want, how they feel about your processes, or even how they feel about you as an employer, how will you know what you need to be doing? A yearly employee engagement survey is great, but we all know that a year is a long time for employees who are yearning for more!



if you don't know what your people want, how they feel about your processes, or even how they feel about you as an employer, how will you know what you need to be doing?



Case study: Banking client enhanced internal mobility service

Our client, a UK-Based large banking organisation, wanted to increase awareness of their enhanced internal mobility team and encourage existing employees to use the enhanced internal mobility services.

We supported them to produce a series of live online 'lunch and learn' events, which were easy for employees to slot around their working day, focused on raising awareness and demystifying what the EIM team do.

Results

- **96% of event attendees answered 'yes' to using the EIM team services after the event**
- **Strong attendance: average of 73 attendees per event**
- **82% rated the event 'informative' or 'very informative'**

Candidate Feedback

"This is exactly the help I have been looking for, I will be using you for development"

"I will definitely be contacting you for a session, today's event was great, I learnt lots! thanks again"

"Informative and very helpful with all things to do with job applications, CVs - really encouraging and supportive, thank you"

Final points

Using technology can help you to break down the challenges of communicating across a business network to your employee audience in an engaging way, where you can also gather data and insights whilst informing and inspiring your workforce.

Clear communication channels and transparent promotion of internal opportunities are essential to ensure employees are aware of and can explore new roles within the business.

Overcoming employee resistance to change requires effective change management strategies, open communication, and support during transitions to new roles.

Get your messages to the right people, in the right way, designed around your internal mobility strategy and priorities using technology that resonates with your employees.

Technology can help build confidence and knowledge around skills self-assessments and in conjunction with reviewing your skills assessment programmes can facilitate stronger career progression and address gender gaps in leadership roles.



Content Recommendations

Here are some ideas on the type of content you could be sharing as part of your internal mobility communications strategy:

- You can educate employees on what your organisation's internal mobility team does, what it can do to support them and how they can find out more about L&D opportunities
- Share information on a specific business area that's hiring, highlight what skills are required, any training provided, details of the roles etc.
- Let people know they could consider being trained for a completely different role - especially important as we think of the skill shortages we face now, and in the near future.
- You could use our technology as a vehicle to empower and support diverse talent - For example, are there cohorts who need more support when it comes to career progression? Could you share content that helps to build confidence e.g. women who may not apply for internal roles as they don't think they're skilled enough?
- Nurturing early careers talent through their programmes so they understand the opportunities available to them once they finish (as mentioned, this can help reduce attrition).
- Use it to communicate current internal opportunities that may be available e.g., secondments
- Perhaps you're looking to relocate a business unit or set up a new office - use this to connect with potentially interested employees, where they can find out more about the move, the new location, types of roles etc

The possibilities are endless, and we hope that this document has inspired you to think about where the gaps in communication and engagement might be within your organisation, and the ways in which you can bridge them.

We developed our technology based on the understanding that bite-sized content in visual forms – videos, memes, pictures – delivered via an always-on social style platform, is much more appealing and engaging to people than long emails or text-heavy websites.

We collaborate with employers to build bespoke employee engagement journeys which enables you to get your messages to the right people, in the right way, designed to elevate your internal mobility priorities and strategy.

Our consultative approach enables us to get to the heart of your particular goals and obstacles, and design solutions to suit you. If you'd like to learn more, [book a consultation with our Solutions team.](#)



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