

How McDonald's reinvented succession planning and enabled enhanced career conversations



McDonald's moved from a paper- and spreadsheet-based talent management approach to deploy Talent Successor® across its corporate office staff and the operations management team which supports the company restaurants. From using Talent Successor® it can now:

- Capture career aspirations from across the groups;
- Support managers to have more open and honest career conversations;
- Highlight lateral moves as part of career progression;
- Interrogate a centralised talent system;
- Manage succession and talent risk.

Digitising talent management and encouraging career ownership

Historically talent management in McDonald's has been carried out using spreadsheets and presentation software. Paper-based and admin heavy, it was not wholly effective or fit-for-purpose for such a fast-paced organisation. It neither offered up-to-date, useful information to the central team, nor support to those planning their career within the business.

Meeta Zakharia, Consultant at McDonald's comments on the two challenges: "We needed to overcome the limitations of our manual, labour intensive process. We also knew that we wanted to change the way in which we were supporting the career development of our talent."

And so, for the 600 or so members of the corporate office staff and operations leadership team which support the company restaurants across UK and Ireland, Meeta and her team decided to introduce an online, mobile-enabled talent management system.

Talent Successor® – flexible and customisable, and with the benefit of being off-the-shelf

A review of potential vendors highlighted a range of systems both large and small, both off-the-shelf and wholly bespoke.

"What really attracted us to Head Light and the Talent® system was the ability to customise and create something bespoke from this off-the-shelf system. In addition, the team at Head Light really understood us, our challenges and what we needed to do."

Talent Successor® was selected and deployed across the selected areas of the business. Megan Jarman, Talent Officer, comments on this; "It was quite a straightforward implementation. People found it easy to get up and running after just a quick ten minute demo."

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Megan Jarman,
McDonald's



“Using Talent Successor® allows transparency and honesty; it empowers our people and enables a career conversation to occur.” Meeta Zakharia, McDonald’s

“It’s been really useful in bringing the career conversation to life and demonstrating that the organisation is listening.”

Ownership of career planning and central data analytics

McDonald’s people are now able to access the system and to start to map out their own career paths and, as Megan comments, “Early feedback has been really positive. People have found it both easy and intuitive to use.”

“People are now more invested in their careers and how they want to move these forward. They think about the cross functional moves that they would consider as they start to build their career paths and are able to now articulate their career aspirations. Capturing this in a central place means that when there are management changes, we can access this information.”

This ability to interrogate the data has moved talent management on at a pace in McDonald’s. The team make good use of the analytics functionality which comes as standard with Talent Successor®.

As part of its talent process, McDonald’s evaluates potential – and looks at the readiness of people to move into new roles, making use of Talent Successor’s Talent Grid. It has developed its own interrogatable, talent pools; specific groups of people – such as its ‘rising stars’ or those with a specific career aspiration – and plots their progress. The team is now able to calibrate the ratings across competency areas and take action to develop skills in the relevant areas.

Meeta continues, “Initially our talent management process with Head Light was only touching mid to senior management level. Now that they are using the system, we’re pushing out to our mass corporate base.

We know that it takes time to bed down fully, but we’re already seeing more robust, more often and more honest career conversations between manager and team member. It’s been really useful in bringing the career conversation to life and demonstrating that the organisation is listening.”

Working with Head Light

Meeta comments; “I enjoy the partnership with Head Light. We work together to identify business needs and then to design what we need to do to address those needs. It’s been really useful to work with the Head Light team.”

Client involvement in the development of Head Light’s Talent software is important to Head Light. Ian Lee-Emery, CEO and founder comments, “Our approach to product development is focused on three drivers - client need, innovation and sound practice and McDonald’s has been able to shape the functionality of the talent software for its people.”

Meeta sums up; “It’s important to us that our people understand that talent management is not something that is done to our people, but with them. Head Light enables this to now happen. Using Talent Successor® allows transparency and honesty; it empowers our people and enables a career conversation to occur.”

Talent Cloud®. Breakthrough software. Raise expectations.

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