

## MARKET LANDSCAPE

# Internal Mobility and Talent Marketplace Solutions: Market Primer

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## Overview

When it comes to matching talent and individual workers' aspirations to organizational needs, many organizations fall short. This often leaves workers dissatisfied and organizations lacking access to the right talent to fill roles and efficiently execute work.

Matching talent to work requires greater organizational agility as well as mindset shifts<sup>1</sup> that recognize career progressions generally are not linear. Organizations should understand that work demand may create roles or projects, but worker interests have a hand in mobilizing, deploying, and developing talent. To support these changes, HR technology providers are delivering talent marketplace solutions to foster a talent mobility strategy based on market supply-and-demand principles.

This article explores the solution capabilities that support internal mobility and talent marketplaces by helping identify, engage, develop, and deploy the workforce for improved alignment to work opportunities.

## In This Article

- ✓ The state of the internal mobility and talent marketplace technology market
- ✓ Solution capabilities that can help deliver transparent and efficient talent mobility
- ✓ Categories of solutions that can support internal mobility and talent marketplace strategies





## The State of the Internal Mobility and Talent Marketplace Solutions Market

The concept of a talent marketplace is, at its core, simply a way to bring together buyers (managers of work within the organization) and sellers (workers) to satisfy and address both parties' needs. Marketplaces can be used not only for talent identification, engagement, and development but also to help increase awareness and deployment of certain future-focused skills.<sup>2</sup> Interest is trending in marketplace solutions for aligning full- and part-time roles as well as project-based or gig opportunities and more.

### The Progression to a Marketplace Strategy for Talent Mobility

Organizations have had to confront a dramatic shift in the talent market, increasing the need to leverage internal talent pools as part of an agile response to business disruptions. As a result, some leaders have sought to meet work needs by moving workers across or even between organizations.

Increased mobility across the workforce has led to a greater demand for transparency around both available talent and high-priority work opportunities. This need for transparency encourages the adoption of marketplace approaches to talent allocation, development, and mobility.

The HR technology market is poised to support this evolving workforce trend through an array of solutions that enable internal mobility and talent marketplace connections.<sup>3</sup> Market solutions include direct offerings to support talent access as well as offerings that require a reinvented approach to the way organizations engage with and develop the workforce. Further, the market is growing rapidly through the addition of

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enhanced product capabilities and the launch of entirely new products in the last three years.

This growth of solution options can introduce an additional layer of complexity for buyers looking to understand how these offerings align with current needs as well as their long-term talent strategy.

## Solution Delivery of Talent Marketplace Approaches

Worker-centricity, evolving operating models, and human-centered design are all influencing the rising interest in talent marketplaces. And while not all organizations are ready to fully address these influences on internal mobility and talent marketplaces, our research shows organizations can start with one of three entry-point approaches: internal mobility, developmental, and brokerage (see Figure 1).

**Figure 1:** Three Marketplace Approaches Enabled by Technology Solutions

 <b>Internal Mobility</b>	Encourages worker progression and career mobility by facilitating transitions to a new role (either lateral or promotional) within the organization
 <b>Developmental</b>	Provides workers the opportunity to develop skills and capabilities and promotes worker agility by surfacing diverse opportunities across the organization
 <b>Brokerage</b>	Encompasses the benefits of the previous two approaches and enables the organization to effectively connect internal or external full-time, part-time, and contingent workers to enterprise needs

Source: Deloitte Consulting LLP, 2021.

These approaches can help align mobility efforts to the current state of an organization's talent strategy as well as help enhance mobility practices.<sup>4</sup> Note that while organizations may continue to iterate their mobility tactics, they may look to providers with offerings to support one or more of these approaches.

### Internal Mobility

Perhaps the most common starting point for organizations looking to apply marketplace principles is to better promote internal mobility by generating insight into opportunities. This can be supported by solution

offerings that provide career-pathing or an internal career portal. Solutions can help enhance existing internal mobility practices with the ability to:

- Surface career paths that do not necessarily follow a predefined organizational trajectory
- Create linkages across departments and facilitate lateral movement

## Developmental

Some organizations may be interested in expanding beyond traditional internal mobility by deploying a developmental approach to a marketplace that can match talent for a variety of opportunities in real time. Solutions that support this approach can create additional efficiencies by facilitating a direct connection between the managers of work opportunities and the workforce. Doing so may grant workers more agency<sup>5</sup> in seeking out opportunities to support their developmental and professional journey within the organization. This approach also helps by identifying opportunities for skill-building and the types of development required for a worker to achieve their career goals.

## Brokerage

Brokerage marketplaces bring together managers of work and workers. This type of marketplace may dramatically expand both supply and demand by incorporating on- and off-balance-sheet workers and identifying roles, projects, gigs, or other opportunities for the workforce. Solution offerings that support a brokerage approach can flex to accommodate these expanded definitions of work and the workforce while incorporating additional matching inputs of preferences, interests, and career goals.

## Beyond Mobility: Additional Influences of Marketplace Solutions

Beyond enhanced talent mobility, marketplace solutions offer additional opportunities to inform and influence workforce strategy. One opportunity is the potential for capturing, tracking, and leveraging data on skills and capabilities (often in the form of a skills graph<sup>6</sup>) combined with other data inputs (e.g., worker goals and preferences, performance / developmental metrics). This data has applications for not only short-term talent alignment but also long-term initiatives for workforce planning and strategy. Organizations can respond to evolving business priorities by taking advantage of real-time information about these organizational capabilities and trends.

Talent marketplace solutions also have the potential to help democratize access to opportunities. Solutions can provide the visibility and insights that may guide individuals as they take ownership of their career, while also helping work managers tap into a broader talent network.

A third opportunity is an increased focus on workforce experience and engagement. This involves providing the workforce with an opportunity to help define their individual contribution within the organization. Our High-Impact Workforce research finds high-performing organizations are 5.6

times more likely than low-performing organizations to involve the workforce in work design.<sup>7</sup>

As the market continues to mature and develop, we expect to see organizations build upon this foundation and engage with the workforce to take advantage of these opportunities.

## Internal Mobility and Talent Marketplace Functional Support Areas

The application of a talent marketplace serves as a crossroads for several functional areas—namely, workforce architecture, talent acquisition, workforce experience, and learning and development (see Figure 2).<sup>8</sup> The cross-functional nature of a marketplace strategy creates avenues to amplify the impact to individual functions—but it also requires HR organizations to adapt and work together in cross-functional teams. The following section outlines some key considerations and points of connection from four of our research studies<sup>9</sup> that organizations should keep in mind when designing their mobility strategy and technology ecosystem.

**Figure 2:** Functional Areas Supported by Internal Mobility and Talent Marketplace Solutions



Source: Deloitte Consulting LLP, 2021.



## Workforce Architecture

The notion of a more human-centered approach to designing the work, workforce, and workplace has gained traction over the last few years. A better understanding of work and the workforce includes how different types of workers (e.g., on-balance-sheet, contingent—even artificial intelligence) can be aligned to complete work. Grounded in an understanding of the work, technology can increase visibility into current- and future-state skills and capabilities, preferences, and needs. A top-down workforce strategy<sup>10</sup> helps develop a more holistic view of the organization before deploying a solution that can support the whole workforce.

Internal mobility and talent marketplace solutions may offer insights toward developing a workforce model that incentivizes continuous development and serves as the destination and mechanism for informing workforce strategy. Solution capabilities to support this effort often include development suggestions and insights informed by an individual's preferences and goals, which may highlight growth and experiential learning opportunities.

**KEY POINT:** The cross-functional nature of a marketplace strategy creates avenues to amplify the impact to individual functions—but it also requires HR organizations to adapt and work together in multifunctional teams.

## Talent Acquisition

High-performing talent acquisition (TA) functions are aligned with the needs of the business and continuously adapt their tools, strategies, and approaches to keep up with evolving business priorities and talent markets.<sup>11</sup> These high-performing organizations also recognize the importance of internal mobility as a critical source of talent and the importance of identifying and aligning talent to new opportunities within the organization.

Given the function's responsibility for aligning the right people to the right opportunities, internal mobility and talent marketplace solutions have the potential to serve as a critical tool for TA. Not only can such technologies significantly broaden the pool of known talent but they may also generate regularly updated profiles supplemented with detailed information about skills and capabilities, experience, interests, and aspirations. These profiles can serve as invaluable sources of information for recruitment teams looking to surface best-fit candidates and can contribute to a more holistic understanding of individual workers.

High-performing organizations also seek to deliver a personalized, engaging experience that reinforces the organizational culture.<sup>12</sup> Internal mobility and talent marketplace solutions that enrich profile data can also help hiring teams have more meaningful conversations with the workforce about potential skill gaps and other areas of opportunity—regardless of whether that role or opportunity is a good fit. The ability to collect and validate information about a worker's skills and capabilities in a consolidated profile, capture organizational trends regarding skills acquisition, and forecast potential gaps are examples of the types of technology features that can help the TA function deliver strategic insight to the business.

## Workforce Experience

High-performing organizations focus on delivering an intentional and thoughtfully designed workforce experience by enabling a human-first philosophy in the workplace.<sup>13</sup> To deliver this philosophy, individual workers are empowered through a bottom-up approach<sup>14</sup> to organizational transformation. This emphasis on the human elements of work can be supported by a marketplace solution that aligns work opportunities to worker experiences, preferences, and aspirations.

Leveraging technology to enable and enhance collaboration and minimize mobility barriers is another priority area for high-performing organizations.<sup>15</sup> Internal mobility and talent marketplace solutions can help democratize access to opportunities and create a more streamlined approach to talent access and development. For example, solutions may provide visibility into the roles and opportunities awarded and completed across various identity traits to help organizations evaluate and promote equity of opportunities.

## Learning and Development

Our learning organization research reinforces the need for organizations to focus on enabling the individual, highlighting the importance of creating the conditions for continuous growth and development built off a deep understanding of what and how work is done.<sup>16</sup> The learning and development function has a critical role to play in helping support the workforce with a lifelong journey of growth and reinvention—a journey that cannot be constructed of content and coursework alone. Internal mobility and talent marketplace technology can help widen the aperture of the learning function, providing the workforce with visibility into new experiential learning opportunities and career pathways that may diverge from traditional routes.

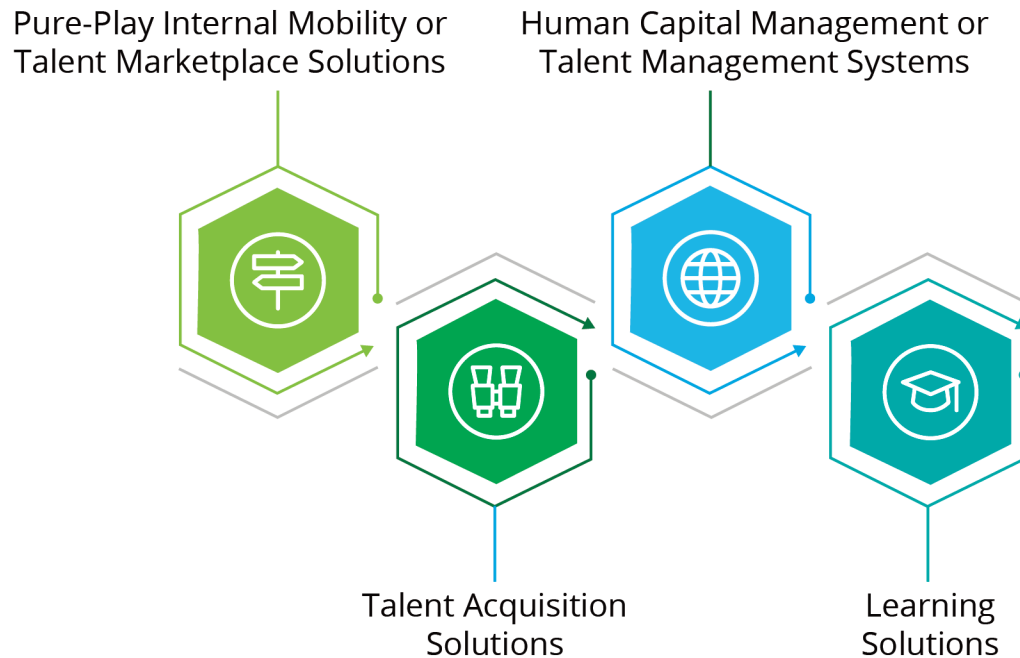
Technology can help facilitate personalization at scale. To build the environment necessary to support learning in the flow of work<sup>17</sup>, organizations should not only create a connection between learning activity and an individual's current work performance but also highlight how such an activity relates to their broader career journey. Internal mobility and talent marketplace solutions are well suited to provide workers the insights and tools necessary to manage their own development. Our research shows this is a priority for high-performing learning functions.<sup>18</sup> Example capabilities to support worker-led development include the ability to tailor learning content suggestions based on a worker's career goals and aspirations or to provide visibility to performance- or productivity-related data.

## Categories of Internal Mobility and Talent Marketplace Solutions

Because internal mobility and talent marketplace strategies cross multiple HR functions, we see providers from multiple HR technology segments as

players in this market. Those segments, described as categories of solutions, are spelled out below (see Figure 3).

**Figure 3:** Categories of Internal Mobility and Talent Marketplace Solutions



Source: Deloitte Consulting LLP, 2021.

### Pure-Play Internal Mobility or Talent Marketplace Solutions

Over the last decade, solution providers have launched standalone offerings with dedicated use cases for migrating talent around an organization. The singular focus on supporting marketplace approaches can be an appealing option for buyers who have embraced an ecosystem model to leverage multiple-point solutions.

These pure-play technologies are typically designed to work with the existing HR technology infrastructure (e.g., human resources information systems, applicant tracking systems) and serve as part of a broader talent technology strategy and blueprint.<sup>19</sup> Some solutions in this category may also be focused on an aspect of a marketplace approach (e.g., career-pathing, internal project-based or gig opportunities) or role type (e.g., IT, talent, contingent workforce). Not exclusive to internal mobility, this category also includes solutions that support talent exchanges, which facilitate the movement of talent between multiple organizations.

### Human Capital Management or Talent Management Systems

Established solution providers are deploying marketplace offerings or enhancing their existing product offerings to be deployed as part of their



broader solution suite. While some providers have long offered mobility or career-pathing capabilities, those legacy offerings weren't necessarily intended to serve as destinations frequented by the workforce outside structured performance or career-planning conversations.

We now see variance in how providers of human capital management and other talent suite systems conceptualize their marketplaces, including the audience and types of opportunities supported. For example, some providers refer to their offerings as talent marketplaces, while others describe their solutions as opportunity marketplaces to shift the onus of seeking movement to the individual worker and include opportunities for experiences and relationships outside of just the work that needs to be done.<sup>20</sup> One advantage of this category is the ability to leverage an existing system and the connection to the core data sources, potentially even without an additional implementation process or the need to activate a new module.

## Talent Acquisition Solutions

Given the talent access element of the marketplace model and the role TA functions have traditionally played in supporting internal mobility<sup>21</sup>, many providers that focus on recruitment offerings are also supporting internal mobility, matching, and career-pathing. These offerings may take the form of a mobility module, an expanded talent community, or a referral—all of which may include the ability to incorporate external candidate populations. Deploying a marketplace as part of the TA technology ecosystem may emphasize the role the function will have in supporting an ongoing mobility strategy.

**KEY POINT:** Deploying a marketplace as part of the TA technology ecosystem may emphasize the role the function will have in supporting an ongoing mobility strategy.

## Learning Solutions

Multiple learning providers (e.g., learning experience platforms, learning management systems) are building marketplace offerings that emphasize the development aspect of the marketplace strategy. Such actions help foster a continuous learning strategy that incorporates experiences and exposure in addition to traditional courses and classroom-style learning.<sup>22</sup> These offerings tend to emphasize development through internal mobility opportunities and may also incorporate other learning engagements (e.g., content suggestions, mentorship).

## Conclusion

Faced with the prospect of continuous uncertainty in the labor market, many organizations recognize a need to build greater resiliency and agility into their workforce strategy. Organizations can no longer rely on legacy career pathways, competency models, and outdated job descriptions that do not facilitate getting the right people matched to the right work at the right time. Conversely, thoughtfully designed and implemented marketplace strategies, supported by a targeted technology platform to facilitate the alignment of work and talent, have the potential to create opportunities for contribution and collaboration that could possibly remain untapped in a traditional workforce management model.

Given the impact of the marketplace strategy on talent mobility, it's important to partner with a solution provider that can align with the organization's vision for its workforce architecture and offer a set of capabilities to deliver a user experience that meets the needs of the individual and the organization. Solutions that support talent mobility can come from a variety of HR technology market segments, so buyers should understand the capabilities of each of their existing systems while also evaluating the market for new offerings.

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## Key Takeaways

- Greater demand for transparency around both available talent and top-priority work opportunities gives rise to the adoption of marketplace approaches to talent allocation, development, and mobility.
- Market solutions include direct offerings to support talent access and redeployment as well as offerings that require a reinvented approach to the way organizations engage with and develop the workforce.
- Organizational approaches to marketplace solutions can start in one of three entry points: internal mobility, developmental, and brokerage.
- The talent marketplace concept serves as a crossroads for workforce architecture, talent acquisition, workforce experience, and learning and development functions.
- Marketplace and mobility solution categories include pure-play internal mobility or talent marketplace solutions, human capital management or talent management systems, talent acquisition solutions, and learning solutions.

## Endnotes

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