



# Attraction Plus

Five talent tactics to help you  
navigate the new world of work

Personio



## Executive Summary

### Attraction Plus: The Key to Top Talent

The “Great Resignation” is neither a blip on the radar nor a one-time emergency for organisations looking to hire. From where we stand, it’s the beginning of an entirely new era: one entitled Attraction Plus.

While businesses have had plenty to contend with throughout the pandemic, a fundamental shift has occurred – employees have gained accelerated influence over their working environment. These raised expectations are not influencing the conversation, but redefining it completely.

The new laws of talent attraction are both internal and external and require an exacting blend of both. Defined by the idea that talent needs to be attracted afresh at every stage of their career journey.

New laws of talent attraction are needed. Employees are far more open than ever before to move jobs for professional development and increased purpose. Among UK SMEs, the challenge is particularly acute. Old talent models simply are not cutting it.

### Five talent tactics to help you navigate the new world of work

- 01** Designing a more purposeful employer value proposition (EVP)
- 02** Revising and rebooting talent acquisition strategies
- 03** “Crossing the rubicon” from candidate to employee more effectively
- 04** Nurturing top talent through the prism of performance
- 05** Maximising learning and career development

### We sought to explain talent in a different way

One in which the battle for talent is never won but can be fought differently and much more effectively. We hope this guide helps your team reposition HR’s role in a different way: one truly focused on Attraction Plus.

**Skip to the end of this guide to see the five things you could do today to put Attraction Plus into practice.**

# The new laws of attraction

Businesses need to understand that the laws of talent attraction have changed. Chances are they already know that they will have to work extra hard to attract increasingly-scarce new talent. What they also need to realise is that talent attraction is far from over when a candidate becomes an employee.

**That requires continuing to attract this talent afresh, at every single stage of the employee lifecycle.** The interest, engagement and loyalty of talent must be won repeatedly – and never taken for granted.

It's time to ditch the negative language and mindset of talent retention. Instead, HR and business leaders need to adopt the mindset of "Attraction Plus". That the onus on businesses to attract talent is not over simply when the hire has been made. To get to this stage, however, UK employers need to understand why the old models of talent attraction and retention are broken.

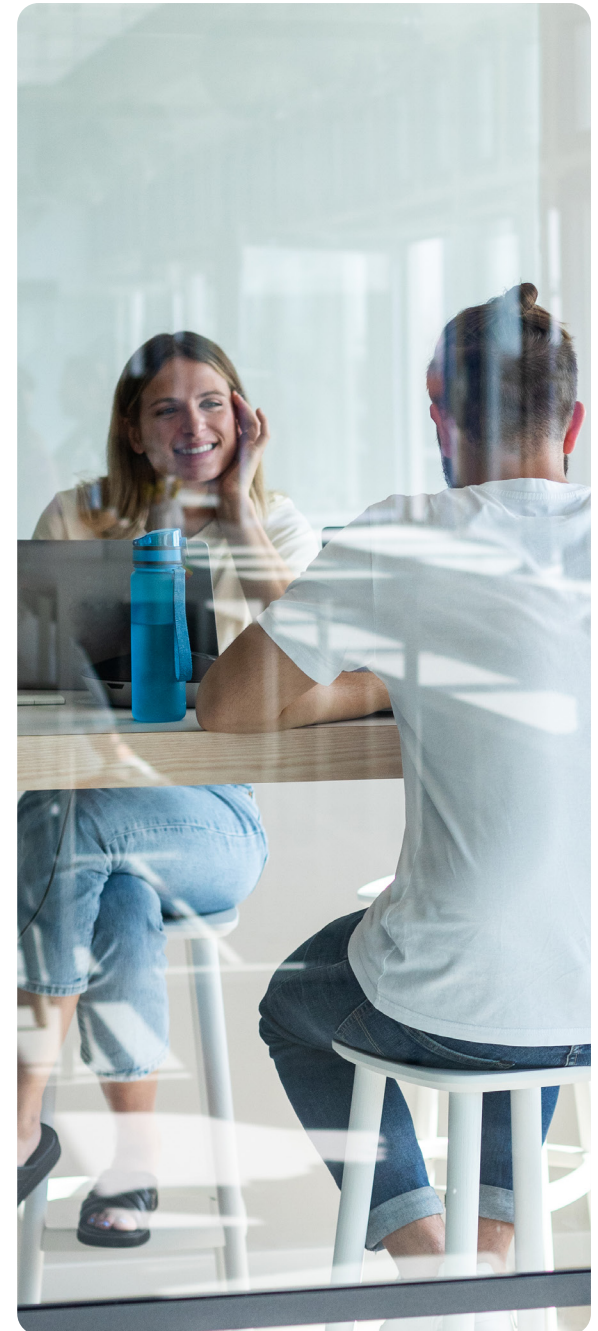
## The Cost of a Failed Talent Strategy

In our **2021 Personio survey**, only a quarter (26%) of HR decision-makers in the UK and Ireland said that talent retention is a priority for their organisation over the next 12 months. This was a big worry even then, because it was clear that businesses would soon need to change their focus from one of short-term survival to a winning long-term talent strategy as the UK economy recovered.

Why does this matter? Business leaders should care because losing talent:

**Has a financial cost.** Every vacancy costs the average UK employer £3000 and takes an average of nearly a month to fill.

**Has a contagion cost.** A high-turnover environment can hurt morale, lower productivity and has a further impact on turnover, especially among the most talented or highly-skilled employees.





## The New Laws Disrupting Old Talent Models

Talent Attraction has, until recently, been seen as an external strategy, in which the perception of a business is seen as the main driver through which to attract candidates. We see this in the way many employers talk about **Employer Value Propositions (EVP)** when recruiting, but less so once recruitment is over.

Talent Retention, by contrast, has been seen as an internal strategy. One in which the potential and performance of employees, as well as their learning and development, are handled solely by their leaders, managers and the HR department.

**The truth, of course, is a bit more complicated.**

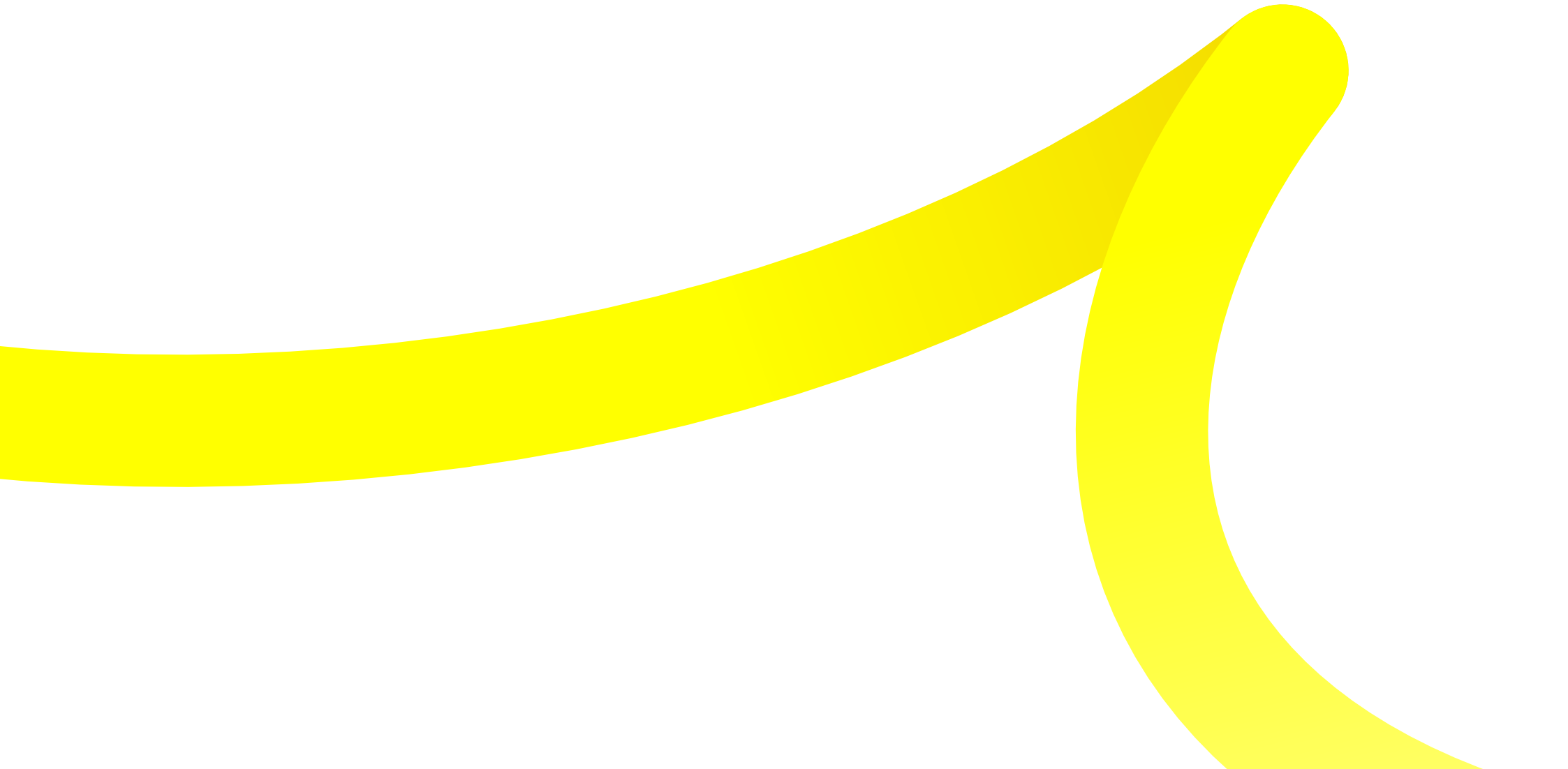
That's why enlightened employers are realising two key things:

1. Talent attraction can benefit from **internal input** (like feedback on recruitment experiences).
2. Talent retention can benefit from **external input** (like peer feedback, secondments or shared learning).

These new laws of Talent Attraction are blurring the lines between internal and external, attraction and retention. Attracting, engaging and retaining is being seen as part of the same strategy – rather than separate ones.

Businesses need to move from concepts of attraction and retention towards a model of what we now know as Attraction Plus.

**Attraction plus: what  
does it mean in practice?**



# Designing A More Purposeful Employer Value Proposition (EVP)

For businesses, the journey to Attraction Plus begins where many organisations, unfortunately, end: creating an employer value proposition (EVP). In fact, simply having or dictating one is no longer the end goal, but the start of using it to form concrete actions and foster a purpose-driven organisation. Let's explain how to do it...

# 01



## Move from intentions to actions

The best employers take their EVP very seriously. Our Personio Guide to Employer Branding makes the idea of having an EVP in the first place clear, but how do you make this suit the new laws of talent attraction? By embracing an internal shift. Current employees should be encouraged to be more involved in the process. They could be asked for their views on:

- Why would applicants be interested in our company?
- What differentiates us from our competitors?
- As an employer, what do we expect of employees?
- As employees, what do we expect of each other?

## Define the “purpose” in what your business does

What does an EVP really mean? For candidates and employees alike, it's the set of values that a company promises to provide in relation to the work environment and the way work is done:

**Internally** – Including everything from workplace design, career development programmes and training opportunities.

**Externally** – How employees speak to customers, suppliers and partners.

Employees need to feel genuinely immersed in their EVP, particularly around the purpose of their work. This means defining what it means to work for a business in terms of broader concepts, such as ethics, inclusion and sustainability.

## Listen – then listen some more

The success of an EVP lies in its evolution. It's difficult to do this well. Keep the following in mind when it comes to communicating and building on an EVP: It needs to capture the hearts and minds of both candidates and employees alike. Employees need to see themselves, and their actions, in an EVP – to spur them into ongoing action. Businesses need to remember that an EVP is just a snapshot of time – it needs to keep evolving. A commitment to an EVP means a commitment to feedback and welcoming change.



# Revising & rebooting talent acquisition strategies

Many businesses are realising the need for an overhaul of their talent acquisition strategy. The battle for talent remains intense across the board. In our view, the Attraction Plus philosophy requires three further innovations to take hold to get the best talent on board.

# 02

## Make the candidate-employee connection

Particularly for SMEs, the connection made between candidates and the employees they hope to become is vital to success. The best employers are:

- Connecting their employer value proposition (EVP) to their **recruitment strategy**.
- Using **testimonials from employees** (especially new ones) to attract fresh candidates.
- Finding other candidates through **employee referral programmes**.

Overall, these methods often lead to better quality hires and higher retention rates.

## Use the quirks that work

Businesses need to stand out to be attractive. This means using innovative or potentially quirky talent attraction strategies to get noticed. Some UK businesses, for example, are looking for ways to hire across multiple vacancies that have a common focus on collaboration and teamwork, so that candidate selection can be made in days, rather than weeks or months.





## Make a virtue of the virtual experience

The pandemic forced most employers toward virtual hiring processes. But while many are moving back to face-to-face systems of hiring, many SMEs can make a virtue of the virtual experience. Virtual recruiting has limitations, but it does speed up the recruitment process and save time.

While going virtual doesn't really let candidates experience workplace culture, with a little imagination, businesses can provide "immersive" virtual experiences.

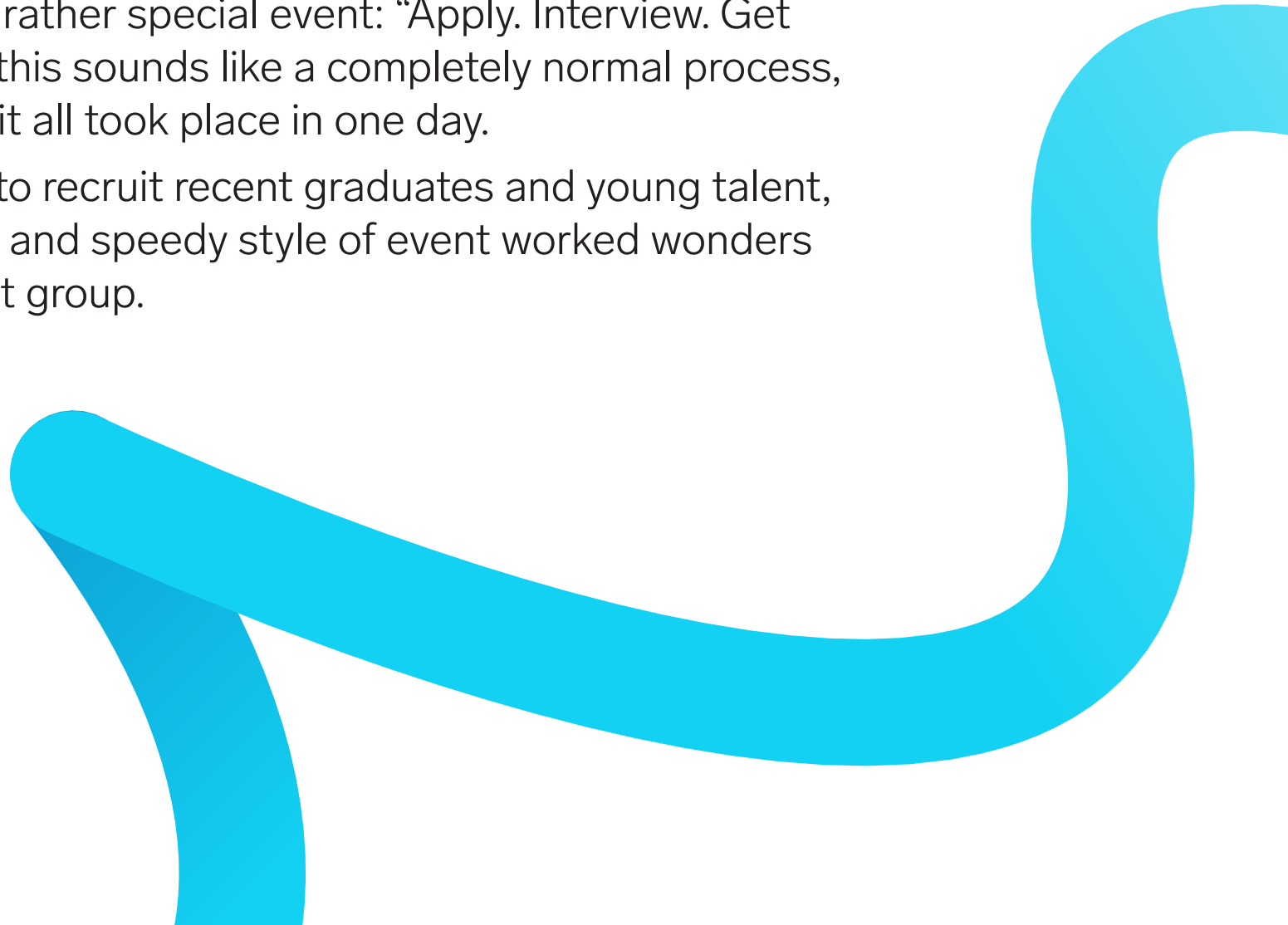
**The "experience" is vital. The most important thing to remember is that the real value of a well-thought-through recruitment strategy is not whether it is virtual or face-to-face but whether, to the candidate, it feels like an "experience" rather than a "process".**

At Personio, we've faced similar challenges. We recently made the hiring process for a crucial role 40% faster. By experiencing the need for rapid recruitment ourselves, we highlighted several ways (like swapping take-home tasks for real-time discussions) to speed up the experience in a recent blog post you can find [here](#).

## Case study

Personio's "Get Hired In One Day" Event: As we recently doubled in size in just one year at Personio, we needed to find new, innovative and sometimes quirky ways to find and hire new talent. That is why our team introduced a rather special event: "Apply. Interview. Get Hired." Granted, while this sounds like a completely normal process, there was one twist – it all took place in one day.

As an event designed to recruit recent graduates and young talent, this kind of responsive and speedy style of event worked wonders for our team and target group.



## Helping “cross the rubicon” more effectively

The central principle of Attraction Plus is that talent attraction does not end when candidates become employees. Far from it. “Crossing the Rubicon” from candidate to employee is not the end. It is simply “the end of the beginning” of the attraction process.

Businesses need to move on from old divides of talent attraction and retention. They need to attract new talent and continue to attract the talent they already have. Talent attraction never ends.

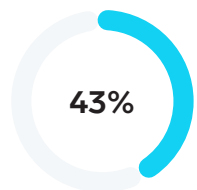
# 03

## The impact of onboarding

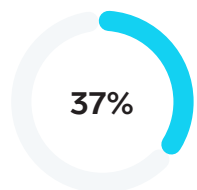
The hallmark of an excellent onboarding process is to take successful candidates to a higher state of engagement and motivation from their first day on the job – and well beyond. For their part, candidates will of course be looking at the experience as an early measure of an employer's reputation.

Published research has already shown how an efficient and engaging onboarding and induction process could have a positive impact and effect on retention, employee engagement and productivity.

One survey of 1,000 full-time UK employees for People Management magazine revealed that:



43% of respondents admitted to **changing their minds** at least once after accepting a job offer.



37% said that this was because of **poor or no follow-up**, or because of a bad experience with the organisation after the offer had been made.

More businesses are investing in onboarding as part of their talent strategy, with clear roles and responsibilities and a common pre-employment package for employees. Attention to detail for onboarding programmes is important – because the smaller details can make the biggest difference.

## Case study

LUSH is a bath, body, skin and hair care company. As a growing organisation with in-office and retail-based teams, they focused on incorporating a holistic solution that would make the onboarding process easier.

In effect, they helped candidates “cross the rubicon” into employees by relying on one solution that could bridge that gap.

**“The whole candidate journey is from Personio, and when we transfer that data when they become an employee, then the onboarding journey starts in Personio, too.”**

**Kristin Brandt - Senior HR Manager, LUSH**

# Nurturing top talent through performance

Attraction Plus dictates nurturing and developing talent throughout every level of an organisation. This means to consider the regularity of performance management conversations in the UK market, the growth of two-way conversations and to establish the link between performance and wellbeing.

In order to retain employees, it's imperative that they are regularly reminded of two things: Why they were attracted to the business in the first place, and how their development remains a business priority.

# 04



## Ongoing performance conversations

In the UK, there is a growing trend toward more frequent performance conversations. Our research at Personio has found a distinct uptick – **with 44% of employees reporting an increase in their formal performance talks.**

Frequency aside, what is becoming more clear is that organisations need to focus on the quality of these conversations. Not only as a means to handle underperforming employees but to truly engage their top performers and to keep them attracted to their own work.

**Performance management can and will reinforce that sense of attraction.**

Performance conversations at their best are a two-way street. Along with the growing influence of the employee in shaping their working environment, this can cover factors that have helped or hindered the employee, the practical support or development they need and how they want their role and career to develop.

**Our Personio Guide, “How to Identify a High Performer in your Organisation” identifies the best ways to nurture and develop talent:**

- 01 Identify.** You need to see what their skills and goals are. From there, you can create a learning and development program that suits their personal needs.
- 02 Recognise.** To keep your high performers motivated, meet with them regularly to encourage them, give constructive criticism and reward their achievements.
- 03 Let them grow.** Assign them challenging new tasks, bigger projects or more leadership responsibilities.
- 04 Grant autonomy.** Give them projects they can own and lead, so they have an opportunity to innovate in their own way.
- 05 Build a community.** Connecting high performers with others builds a powerful team wherein they can network, inspire each other and become even more engaged.
- 06 Listen (all the time).** Ask for feedback, consider their suggestions and listen to their ideas and experiences.

## Performance and wellbeing are now inseparable

reaction to the pandemic, but today is seen in a more proactive way, as a driver of change and growth. The best businesses have seized on the opportunities that wellbeing creates for better performance.

The People and Organisation team at Emma ran a series of wellbeing surveys throughout the course of the pandemic. The goal was to understand how people were feeling and identify how they could support their employees, especially those who were struggling with the isolation of working at home.

These surveys allowed Emma to adjust the support provided in line with changing requirements. While the physical sessions were no longer needed, managing energy levels and achieving a positive work-life balance had become bigger issues. Emma shifted focus and put additional measures in place to address these new concerns by providing, for example, guidance on how to set up a daily routine.

## Case study

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# Maximising learning & career development

Attraction Plus demands a relentless focus on career development and learning. Irrespective of tenure, focusing on development, mentoring and recognising the value of personalised, social and microlearning opportunities.

# 05

## Develop careers, no matter how long they last

In a working environment where continuing to “attract” the interest of existing employees is becoming a given, there is effectively a new “careers contract” emerging between employers and employees. The expectations of employees are increasing – they see it as the duty of an employer to actively help them develop their careers, however long they choose to stay. The best employers have a clear **career progression framework** to support this, with managers understanding the importance of career development to all employees.

## Make the most of mentoring

The pandemic has changed many things. Against the background of near-constant change, the way in which managers communicate with team members has helped a mentoring culture to prosper. Managers are realising they have the skills to act as mentors, while employees themselves can feel supported by mentoring in developing their careers. The increased use of virtual technology has also made it far easier to have private mentoring conversations, both inside and outside businesses.

## Keep learning personal

Personalised learning, delivered at scale and the pace to respond to changing circumstances, has become a key feature of learning and development (L&D) in the UK. In order to sustain and improve employees’ own engagement with learning, a purposeful and customised approach is a must. Peer support, mentoring and reverse mentoring are crucial tools. **Job rotation programmes** and gamified learning are also gaining popularity.

## Embrace social

With the changing business environment demanding new kinds of skills, learning is now a more self-driven process. Technology is helping employees access learning at any time, from anywhere. Traditional competency-based training is no longer relevant and the learning process for technical skills is fast becoming “learning by doing”.



## Attraction plus: never stops

The purpose of this guide has been to explain the battle for talent in a very different way. One in which the battle for talent is never won, but can be fought far more effectively. We know that HR's strategic role means a move to what is now regarded as Attraction Plus.

**Don't forget:** Attraction now needs to happen at every single stage of the employee lifecycle. Whether that is before they even apply, during the recruitment process, as they become an employee and onboard, how their performance is rated and recognized, how their learning needs are met (and, ideally, exceeded) and how their careers develop and grow.

What does this entail for you in your work? In the next section, we offer some concrete next steps that you could take – depending on whether you're leading a business or a business's HR function.

# Next steps for CEOs and HRDs

## Three things a CEO needs to do right now

- 01 Rethink “Talent Attraction”** – Make and encourage the organisational-wide move away from simply hiring staff, no matter how acute your current need, to attracting them at each stage. Remember: When a candidate becomes an employee, attraction is only just beginning.
- 02 Ask the Tough Questions** – Find out what your HR function is doing to attract, enthuse and engage your people afresh and at every stage of the employee lifecycle. Begin by asking what they are doing in terms of your employer value proposition (EVP).
- 03 Showcase Support** – Ask your employees directly for feedback on the way talent attraction, development and retention is handled within the business. Gain an “on the ground” view and empower teams to not only share but to be involved in decision-making.

## Five things an HRD needs to do right now

- 01 Analyse Your EVP** – Does it exist? Is it as strong as it could be? Try and chart the evolution of your EVP if it has changed over time and if you are presently due for a refresh. If it is, it's time to involve your employees in its design and to do so with great intent.
- 02 Overhaul Recruitment** – Take a long look at your recruitment strategy: Are you encouraging a connection between candidates and employees? Are your recruitment tactics distinctive? How can you take measurable steps to speed up the process or boost your offer acceptance rates?
- 03 Focus on Onboarding** – Do you presently have an onboarding programme? How can you tie it into early-career KPIs to determine if it's successful? How can you better engage and enthuse employees from their first day on the job? Consider “re-onboarding” employees to see how the process now squares with their institutional knowledge.
- 04 Prepare to Perform** – Do your performance cycles need a longer look? How regularly are they happening? Are they meeting the needs of your workforce (i.e. are they happening enough)? What kind of recognition program do you have built for your top talent? Find out how that is squaring with your overall total reward framework.
- 05 Career Journeys & Lifelong Learning** – Do you have learning and development options available for employees? What about your leaders? Are they varied and do they meet the needs of your workforce? Consider introducing a mentorship, buddy or job rotation/shadowing program. Can you adapt to new working environments and facilitate the best work of people's careers?

# Focus on your top talent today

To realise Attraction Plus in your organisation, Personio allows your HR function to focus on attracting, growing and retaining talent by unifying people data, operations and talent management in one centralised solution.

That starts with hiring. Personio allows you to attract and hire the right talent faster with the ability to source across a multitude of job boards, communicate with and collect feedback on candidates and ensure a smooth (and convincing) candidate experience.

Then, let Performance & Development take the reins. Personio enables your org to develop your top talent, reward them fairly and maximise performance across the board. Schedule a demo today to see it all in action.

**Book a demo today**



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