

Transcript: Reimagining employee engagement

How Seagate's Workforce Agility Platform paves the way for more fulfilling careers

Riddhika Rathod:

Welcome. Glad you could join us. I'm Riddhika Rathod, senior solution consultant at Gloat. I'm honored to be your host for this session.

Okay. Today's session is one that I am particularly excited about for a couple of reasons. One is a former OD practitioner and organizational psychologist. The topic of employee engagement is very dear to my heart. It's also extremely timely in this very turbulent environment we're in. We talk about the great recession, the great reshuffle, the great reassessment, whatever we want to call it. People are quitting their jobs in higher numbers than ever before.

We've also heard about the great retirement, with folks late in their career, retiring early. Employee morale is more important than ever before. Who better to have this conversation with than someone who I think is one of the best thinkers and most experienced practitioners in this space, Divkiran Kathuria, global director of talent mobility and talent acquisitions programs at Seagate. Also, the very first person I've met who's ever held the title of director of talent marketplace, very cool. Divkiran, thank you so much for joining us today.

Divkiran Kathuria:

My pleasure, Riddhika, Gloat, we've been associated for a long time. It's always a pleasure to discuss something new, something interesting about what's going on with the world of talent, really. Because talent really is something that makes all the difference in the directions that companies have today.

Riddhika Rathod:

Yeah, I couldn't agree more. As you've just pointed out, Div, as we like to call you affectionately at Gloat, you're not just a Gloat customer, you're a Gloat friend, spoken with us a handful of times on topics ranging from how to build a workforce of a future, diversity and inclusion benefits of a talent marketplace to the role that a talent marketplace can play in democratizing opportunities. We want to dig into that a little bit more today.

Of course, you have an impressive career spanning from Deloitte India to Schneider Electric, and now at Seagate. Before we get into the conversation, please share for our audience a bit about yourself and about your own career journey.

Divkiran Kathuria:

As of today, I am working with Seagate as, like you said, director for talent marketplace and talent acquisition programs. I look after all the programs, all the tools that support anything that we do with talent acquisition, internal, external, university relations, alumni or even interns and graduates. This is my first pure HR role, interestingly, but before this, I come from a background of HR consulting and HR technology and transformation for a good about 12, 13 years before stepping into a pure HR role. More interestingly, I actually started with coding in my first job. During that, one of the systems that's why I was asked to code and design was a performance management system. That's when I found out what HR really does and what impact it can have.

That's been the journey that I've had. To me, one thing which is always motivated me and interested me is how digital disruptions are really revolutionizing the way workplaces function. Especially usage of AI, personalization, automation, augmented reality and now the big hype of MetaWare. For me, it's really interesting to pick up this new digital disruption that's in the market and figure out what it can do for the people. Because like I said, they are the true differentiator of any organization considering everybody has access to technology now. Everybody has access to data now. This is probably going to be the topic again today, Riddhika. Google has democratized information. A lot of online universities have democratized education. Today's topic is really how talent marketplaces have democratized that employee experience, really.

Riddhika Rathod:

Yeah. Excellent. Wow. What a fascinating career. Really, really interesting in so many great moves. So glad that you're here with us today.

Okay. Let's start off with a brief overview of Seagate's Workforce Agility Platform. Seagate was founded in 1978, have about 40,000 odd employees globally. You saw 90% of employees registered onto the talent marketplace platform within the first 45 days of implementation. So a very, very good start. But let's go back to the beginning. What prompted such a large and established company to prioritize and implement a talent marketplace amongst so many other possible initiatives.

Divkiran Kathuria:

So like many other organization, when COVID-19 disrupted our lives as we knew it, Seagate also had to pivot to hybrid work, adjust to changes in the market and customer demands and more importantly, build agility and scalability into how we prioritize emerging areas of growth. At the same time we had to realign areas that were not operating at full capacity. We realized that we need to lift and shift our resources to new areas of business to grow.

We weren't going to lay off anyone or do a reduction in force. Instead, we decided to grow these new operations from within, by taking the internal first approach. This was also an opportunity for us to grow new operations from within and up level and up skill our global talent development strategy. What could be a better solution for this challenge than an AI driven talent marketplace that doesn't just bridge and balance the supply and demand of the talent and skills within the organization, but also gives an organization visibility into its skill supply, giving its managers access to a global and a more diverse talent pool.

In the meanwhile also bringing in transparency and visibility for employees to open opportunities within the organizations. For us, which are now not limited to just open jobs, because internal opportunities were generally always thought of as an internal job. But in our case now it also includes career development opportunities like internal gigs and mentorship. In just that problem, that a talent marketplace solves in terms of matching the demand and supply of talent and skills, that's what we needed to grow our internal talent and move them into the areas of new operations and areas of growth, really.

Riddhika Rathod:

That's fantastic. Because you say we've constantly got these two dynamics playing out. On the one hand you've got these employees are wanting to access internal growth opportunities, on the other you've got employers seeking out ways to discover untapped talent or even capacity. Then you've got sort of areas of growth. You've got areas where you're starting to perhaps a little bit of a decline. It often sounds easy in theory that we can marry the two, but in practice, very hard to do at scale. It's really encouraging to see and hear that you've been able to do that.

Can you maybe just also link that and help us understand? How does that fit into Seagate's broader organizational goals? Where you're going as an organization, your mission and so forth.

Divkiran Kathuria:

Right. A little bit about Seagate. Over and above what you just shared is it is one of the leading providers of data storage solutions globally. In the 40 years of our history, we have shipped over 3 zettabytes of data storage solutions. To be able for such a company to not just survive, but thrive in a niche tech industry like ours, we need very specific skills, experiences and knowledge. Placing the right talent and developing the right talent and the right roles, then requires an in-depth understanding of everyone's competencies. Considering the purpose-driven workforce that we are seeing today, very important to consider their ambition as well. What is their aspiration?

With a headcount of more than 40,000 colleagues, it's impossible to manually keep track of each employee's unique blend of skills and experiences and aspirations too. So that we can redeploy them in the right roles and at speed and scale. There's so many moving parts there. That's where our talent marketplace, which we named Career Discovery has been a game changer for us.

It's a win-win for everyone. Employees can stay and grow at Seagate, the organization they have chosen to be at. They can transition more easily into a role they aspire to be in. They can find projects and mentors that help them bridge the skill gap and navigate their career

internally. As an organization, this has given us the ability to move our talent dynamically and be agile in face of a global adversity like COVID.

It doesn't just save costs associated with external hiring. Everybody knows that if you hire internally, you save costs. But it also helps retain employees who are already a culture fit and can add value from day one, when they join. We believe that this is one of the reasons that we've been able to maintain a rate of internal deployment at one person per day, since the launch between one and a half years now. Also, this is what has, I would say, contributed to keeping our attrition rates to single digits, even during the great resignation. Whereas you'll see industry trends in double digits. Like Patricia who's our CHR would say, "Knock on the wood, we are still doing well on these numbers. And hopefully we'll continue that case."

Riddhika Rathod:

Yeah. I just touch wood. But honestly, congratulations on again to that point, you bucking the trend there with what we're seeing and happening outside in the market shift. That's really amazing. I actually want to talk a little bit more about the retention aspect and all of that. But before we do that, can you maybe just elaborate for us or paint a picture of what democratization of career development looks like for your team? What are they doing now? I know you talked about jobs, you talked about projects, but how is all that happening?

Divkiran Kathuria:

Let's hit a little bit on what democratization really means before we go ahead.

Democratization by dictionary definition is defined as the action of making something accessible to everyone. If you ask someone, what do you think about democracy? Freedom of choice, equality in participation, fair chance of phases often associated with the word democratization. This ties very beautifully into one of our core values of inclusivity. Making it extremely important for us to ensure that all our employees are empowered to pursue the career they wanted.

On the other hand, as an organization, it was critical for us to achieve talent agility. So we can serve business needs on demand at that scale, like I mentioned. This then call for our HR teams to work together, come together, work on multiple talent programs that bridge this employee skill gap, initiatives that reduce hiring bias and cultivate a culture that really

supports employee growth and not just make them grow, but also make them future fit and our organization future ready.

We launched not just Career Discovery. Career Discovery, this talent marketplace was one of the many programs that we launched. We launched Talent Acceleration Program. We launched Manager Essentials, Core People Skills. All of this to ensure that we are also enabling employees to tap into opportunities that are available in Career Discovery. It was like two sides of the coin. On one hand, with Career Discovery, we opened up all of the opportunities globally to this huge talent pool that we have. On the other hand, we have program supporting them to be able to tap into these opportunities.

I'm happy to share that our efforts and deep collaboration across our One HR team to future proof our organization and employees recently won us The Economic Times' Future Fit Organization Award as well.

Riddhika Rathod:

Wonderful.

Divkiran Kathuria:

A little bit of why it was important and how we collaborated across different HR teams to support this initiative. My take away from this is really that great technology is an enabler. If it did not have load, we couldn't have done it. But beyond that, there's a lot more to the program, collaboration that you need from everyone. Buy in and support that you need from all your business leaders and your HR teams is very, very important.

Riddhika Rathod:

Fantastic, great. Very well said. Definitely, it's not just the technology. There's so much stuff that goes around it. Well done on that. We're happy that Gloat played a little part in that award. Fantastic, keep it going.

Now I'm going to take a little bit of a detour. Then I want to come back to this topic that we're talking about. The reason for that is, you talked a little bit about how there were all these

other things that were enabling the technology and win-win for employees and the organization. But I have conversations with HR leaders, business leaders every day about the tele marketplace. The one thing that keeps coming up is manager resistance. That hoarding of talent if we want to call it. So very briefly, if you can just share maybe some of the things that you did to curb that resistance, get people on board, managers specifically.

Divkiran Kathuria:

Right. I think there are a lot of things we did. But one important thing is to make sure that you have the change management plan, like a proper change management plan, knowing who your stakeholders are, who your opposers are, who your influencers are and be ready with it. I think that's the one takeaway for me, after launching three different talent marketplaces in three different organizations now.

Two things, if I have to really pick out of the change management plans that we focused on is one, have your leadership buy in. Have your leadership be on your side, supporting you, spreading the message. Because when a leader speaks up and says, "Why this is important? What's the benefit? How does it tie to your business goals and your own of business alignment?" It does get heard. People act on it. That's really number one that is important. Secondly, there is also this peer-to-peer connection. In marketing terms, it's that word of mouth that everybody uses. But in terms of a disruptive change, like a talent marketplace, it's very important for people to hear those success stories, how someone else benefited from it. Create that messaging around, what's in it for me and create that form. Fear of missing out. What is it that I am missing out? I think for me, those are the important learnings from my journey and my experience.

Riddhika Rathod:

Excellent. Thank you so much. That's great, because that really is something that comes up over and over again. It's nice to see that you had a program in place, but you've gotten there. When we were talking about these last week, you said, "We've gotten people from being talent resisters or, can't remember the word you used, but then to talent enabled."

Divkiran Kathuria:

Talent stewards. Right. That's an important point that you reminded me of. Because we were doing some analysis and it turned out that we have now, more managers going in and giving a thumbs up to a discovered candidate or a candidate of their choice versus the employees, which is first time I have seen. Which is very encouraging also. In fact, one of the recent examples that I can share is that I hired internally.

I hired from a team which was in the middle of a really, really big project. The hiring manager actually supported the transition. We had to work out a transition plan because the business continuity is important, but we figured it out. The person I hired was two weeks fully on the job that they were doing. The next two weeks, they were on a 50, 50 model. After that, they were on a 75, 25 model. Then they were completely working on one of the programs that I'm leading internally.

That gave the internal releasing line manager the flexibility to own that knowledge, have time for enough knowledge transfer. And on top of that, this person is still a consultant for that team anytime they need, which would not be the case if you lose that person to some other organization.

Riddhika Rathod:

Yeah, exactly. Great. You've actually flipped the script now. It's great. Some of these strategies just sounds like you get the advantage on board. You allay their fears and concerns and really that's the way to go about it. Thank you so much for sharing that.

Let's turn to some of the results. We've talked a bit about this before. We've touched on a lot of different areas, but really would like to understand, how are you measuring impact? You've touched on a few things, but also what results did you see that you can share with us in this session?

Divkiran Kathuria:

For us, the measurement has changed. When we launched, it is important to get people on the platform, making sure that they're using it efficiently and effectively. Also, look at, are we

getting the right ROI or not? Because that's just the beginning phase. There's still scope for course correction. That's what we measured in the initial 45 days.

In fact, for the first one year we measured, how many people registered? How many have a good profile completion? Because data matters when AI is walking behind the scenes. We had about 90% registration within 45 days of our launch. We had 87% high profile completion. Within just four months, we had unlocked about 35,000 hours in productivity with part-time projects, which I think contributed to an approximate 1.4 million USD. This is all just in four months of usage.

Very interestingly, we also saw 58% increase in participation and assignment of women. Again, this ties back really well with our value of inclusivity. Something we live in and live out with. This was in the initial phase, but as we move from our established phase, we call it an established phase. As we move from established to enhance phase now, we can enhance the usage based on data and everything else that we have done in the past year.

In this phase, now we are not looking at registrations or we don't want to look at registrations only because we already have 90% registrations, which is way above industry standards. This year we plan to look at monthly average users. How many people are actually coming back and using it. Activities from employee side, activities from manager's side. So we can focus on who needs more training or who needs more education and awareness around this. We also want to look at cross team movement because that's our final agenda. This is what we look at. If I can say in terms of BCG metrics, how many people are moving from cash cow to the rising star? How many people are moving across different domains is something we really want to look at.

Riddhika Rathod:

Okay, great. It's definitely taking a very thoughtful position on this and really interesting to hear how the metrics have evolved over time. I do want to congratulate you on the diversity statistic, not to just call that out simply, but only because we've been talking about that for decades and decades. Dare I say made not a lot of progress. It's very encouraging to see that the talent marketplace is actually helping with that shift in the right direction.

I think BCG recently put out an article talking about talent marketplaces and the role that it plays in diversity, gender, equity in particular. You did get a shout out. So kudos on that.

All right. Let's maybe now talk about employee engagement, specifically focusing on that. As a result, it's something that all HR and business leaders are thinking about. Firstly, where do you see the talent marketplace fits into this discussion from your perspective? Looking at the data and then what's happening at Seagate.

Divkiran Kathuria:

Right. One interesting fact to share, it always shocks me when I look at these numbers. I shared it with you earlier. Then I went back and looked at the exact numbers. According to Gallup State of the Global Workplace 2022 report, employees were not engaged or who are actively disengaged cost the world \$7.8 trillion in lost productivity.

Riddhika Rathod:

Wow.

Divkiran Kathuria:

That's equal to 11% of the global GDP. Imagine if we could solve even 1% of that problem with talent marketplace and initiatives that support such a talent model, that would be saving that much amount of US dollars. Based on the same study by Gallup, the key drivers of employee engagement are purpose development, caring manager, ongoing conversations and a focus on strengths.

I feel like that's something that's core to how a talent marketplace is implemented, if it is implemented correctly. It provides you a purpose. You can look for whatever you want to pursue. It gives you development opportunities. Over a period of time, the same thing that we talked about, you move from a talent hoarder to being a talent steward. That's a caring manager we are talking about.

Again, going back to my statement that technology is an enabler, but this is a whole program where people are involved. There's this whole cultural shift which comes in if done right.

There's an ongoing conversation, because if people in your team are pursuing development opportunities, mentoring or something else, there has to be this ongoing conversation about your careers with your managers. There is a focus on your strengths because it's about what skills you have or what skills you want to have. Which is, what is your strength in terms of experience and knowledge that is used to really match you to the sea of opportunity that you get with talent marketplace.

That's my perspective in terms of how talent marketplace can support solving this employee engagement problem. People need more than a fleeting, warm, fuzzy feeling and a good paycheck to be actively engaged and achieve more for their [inaudible 00:25:22]. Invest more of their thought and energy there. People want purpose, meaning from their work. They want to be known for what makes them unique. Especially for millennials and other generations, this has become extremely important. The work means more to them than just a way of earning money. This is what drives employee engagement.

In Seagate, our employee engagement survey clearly showed that career growth is the top driver of engagement. We have 83% employees feeling that their career goals can be met at Seagate. 92% of employees stating that Seagate provided them with the opportunity for learning and development. Other than that, we also believe that employees want relationships, particularly with the manager who can coach them to the next level. This is who drives employee engagement. Not just manager for that matter. Someone else in the organization who can help them drive their career.

This is also reflected in our engagement survey at Seagate, which showed that 89% of employees experienced a positive manager impact. We have a very strong score for manager impact with goal setting, development feedback, et cetera. I would say, this is a great reflection of both the time and effort of not just current discovery team, but our L&D team and the HR VP who really help support this talent model holistically and help us take this to the employees on the ground.

Riddhika Rathod:

Yeah. Really high numbers that you've got there. Again, well done. As you say, you've got the talent marketplace. It's certainly an enabler. But you've got so many other things around

there that are working for you and putting in the time and the effort and the thought into it. Certainly taking it to the next level. It's just really amazing to see.

Wanted to also touch on I guess, what are some things that you are thinking about for the future? Where do you want to take all of this? How do you see the strategy, the things that you're doing today, working towards those future goals that you have?

Divkiran Kathuria:

At Seagate, our vision is we craft the data sphere. Our mission is we help maximize humanities potential by delivering precision engineered data solutions developed through sustainable and profitable partnerships. That's our vision and mission statement. If you notice, it literally says, "Maximize human potential." I feel like out of all the initiatives that we are doing for this new talent model, all of them including Career Discovery really helps us do that internally for our workforce every single day. That's our plan.

We plan to continue investing in change and enablement efforts to make sure that we move the needle for everyone. Hopefully someday from everyone being a talent hoarder to a talent nurturer or a talent steward. We plan to take this journey that we started forward. We want to make sure that we change that mindset of saying, "Letting go of my employee will hurt business continuity. I need to find a perfect fit." We need to solve all those mindset issues. Then we also need to take Career Discovery to the next level. We want to launch career paths so our employees don't just have a view of their immediate next step, but also a peek into their long term career options. What are their skill gaps? How can they leverage other initiatives to learn these skills and find their way forward internally?

We also want to expand the Career Discovery footprint from our knowledge workers to our manufacturing specialists who are really the heartbeat of our organization. We think that's the best way to celebrate them. Because when we were sitting at our homes on our laptops, in a comfortable air conditioned room, they were the ones who were going to the manufacturing sites every single day to keep the business running.

We are also looking to then integrate our talent marketplace with learning opportunities that are available internally. It's like a full circle. You know what you want to do, you know what's there in the organization and how you can get there. So all packaged into one.

Riddhika Rathod:

Fantastic. That's great. I do want to go back to the mindset thing and just tease it out a little bit. Where do you think you're at now with the changing of the mindset? That's a topic of itself, obviously that we can explore. I'm actually seeing the questions on the chat are really around that, all the Q&A. Please keep those questions coming on the Q&A, not the chat, which has been disabled. But where are you at, do you think?

Divkiran Kathuria:

Again, going back to our model, we divided our journey into three phases. Maybe we'll have future phases as well. But we said, you establish first, take care of the basics, get everything working, whether it's your technology process or policy, everything under the program. The next phase was to enhance whatever is working, see what else we can do with it. And then evolve to the next stage. That's where we are talking about evolving from talent hoarding to talent nurturer to a talent steward.

I think we are somewhere between moving away from talent hoarding to talent nurturers. People have started understanding that when you lose your talent to an external organization, you do not have access to them at all. Notice periods differ from countries to countries. In some countries, you can leave your work in two weeks. There are countries where you have a 90 days notice period. Then I don't know if anybody's working for those 90 days, really. Different type of challenges. But I think we are somewhere between talent hoarding and talent nurturer. But we are far away from being a talent steward. That model is when one day when your manager will stand up and say, "Hey, have you looked at this opportunity? You will be a great fit for this. Let me help you develop for it."

That's a dream. Definitely, one day we'll get there. But I'm very happy to share, we've already moved the needle a little bit. Last year when we were six months into the program, we heard a lot of feedback from managers and business leaders come back and saying, "I have a lot of attrition in my team. Someone else is attracting them with a higher offer or the next level of

job," et cetera, et cetera. Then we went back and looked at the data. A lot of moves were lateral. So that was, I would say another good thing to note, is that it's not just about growing vertically. There are lateral moves and careers are not just vertical movements. There are a combination of horizontal and vertical movements. That's happening. I think we are getting there and hopefully we will get to the talent steward stage as well.

Riddhika Rathod:

It certainly sounds like it. I love this framework actually, that you've just outlined for us. From hoarders to nurturers, to steward. I have no doubt that you are going to get there. I actually can see there's a lot of questions more around, how did you do that? It is clearly a topic that everyone's really interested in it. I feel like we almost need to come back and have a session that's really just focused on that.

I can see a lot of questions on the Q&A. I want to maybe take a few more than we normally would, but I do want to just ask you one final or maybe second to last question is, with all the things that you were doing, talent marketplace or Career Discoveries it's called at Seagate, talent accelerator program, all sorts of other things, packaging that talent program up in its entirety, with the collaboration across the teams and HR VPs and talent teams and all of that, how is all of this stuff changing the way that Seagate approaches economic uncertainty? Because there is absolutely no doubt that we are living in extremely turbulent times. What's next? We just don't know what's next. There's things that have happened in the last couple of years. We never would've imagined. How has this changed I guess the organization DNA or it's changing the organization DNA in the way that you approach what's coming next? Which could be anything.

Divkiran Kathuria:

I think for us, if you look at how the market has changed, if you look at how the data storage has changed over the years, I don't know how many in the audience would have ever used a floppy disk. I don't know if anybody has even written a CD. But I've seen all of that. I'm sure a lot of other people have. We used to store data in MBs. Now we are talking about terabytes. The globalization, the acceleration in the way technology is growing, so many other things going on in the world, all the Netflix and other OTT platforms that we binge on, games you can think of, all of this generates data. All of this needs data storage.

There are a lot of other niche intricacies to it because when you are storing data or reading data for a high definition OTT platform, CDs is different. How you do it for emails and everything else, or any applications on the cloud is different. The needle for the industry has also moved for high capacity cloud-based data storage. And so are we. For us, the focus has moved from IT 2.0 skills to IT 4.0 Skills, which is really about robotics, AI, machine learning, cybersecurity systems, cloud architectures and all of that.

Some of these skills are not even available in the market, say for someone who has 10 years of experience or 20 years of experience in this. In this case, it becomes even more important for us and our business continuity. I would say goal to delight our customers that along with the right skill, we also retain the right knowledge and experience, which our existing employees have.

Skills is something we can teach. Then the question is whether you buy, build or borrow skills. If that skill is not there in the market, how can you borrow it? How can you buy it? We are really left with this choice of building that skill internally. That's where for us and our business continuity and our business resilience, it's extremely important to provide the opportunity for our internal employees to grow, fill that skill gap through other programs that I mentioned. Through Career Discovery, through mentoring and then help us grow in the market as well. Again, going back to what I said earlier, we feel like this is the reason we've had lower attrition. We had higher engagement because of this talent model that we are working towards. Also, going back to the fact that these are the things which also help you retain people in the face of adversity, because they need more than just a big fat paycheck to stay with you.

It has happened with me. There are people I was planning to hire as I expand my team. They were very clear that I will not leave my organization even for double the compensation, because I have the best work life. I have the best manager. I have the best career path here. All of these really matters.

Riddhika Rathod:

Yeah. It's so true. You say, like all of these things matter, people looking for the human connection, something beyond the money aspect, the dollars, they're looking for purpose. As you said, more so like, I want to say the younger generation's probably not the right way to

say it, but people who are early in their careers who are into the market, are looking for that more than anything. That's why we're seeing the pandemic was a time for people to reflect. They went off and did their own businesses or went off and quit the jobs that were just not that satisfying. It's really interesting.

The point that you highlighted here is, we are now moving into this world where the skills that we need are just not available in the market. AI, all of these things, we've not been talking about that for a very long time. They're relatively new skills. Where are we going to get them from? Thinking about things like blockchain and NFTs, that's really these conversations. Just the last couple of years, NFT has become a buzz's word. Now we're all looking for skills in blockchain.

As you say, we simply cannot go out and buy these skills, that internal build strategy needs to be front of mind and front and center for any business leader, any HR executive, HR leader, the business at large. So it's great. You have some really thoughtful points there.

I've seen a lot of questions coming up on Q&A. Let's take some of these. I don't know if you can see them as well, Div. But the first one I'm going to pick out is a question around, can you talk about how important executive stakeholder engagement is or was? Was your CHRO involved? What role did they play?

Divkiran Kathuria:

I think for us in Seagate to be very, very honest with you, I think we had it very easy. Because both our CEO, Dave Mosley, and our CHRO, Patricia Frost, were actually the ones who said, "We wanted to do it. Let's go ahead and do it." They were pushing to get it done. I think we got very lucky with that. I think that messaging really helped the impact when a CEO and a CHRO walks into a room full of business leaders or board members and talks about something that is so valuable. Talking about the business case, talking about the business continuity, talking about the benefits that it brings over and above the return on investment, it does make a lot of difference.

It's not to say that it's a top to bottom approach or it's hierarchical. Not exactly. I would always be influenced by multiple people. My peers are a part of that influencer group. So who is the influencer for a C level executive? It is the CHRO and CEO. It's very, very important to get their

buy in and have them on board to support you with your messages as well and not just have the buy in. When they speak up, their peers listen to it. Even if they are opposers, they will think about it. It's very, very important to get your executive stakeholders on board.

Riddhika Rathod:

Absolutely. Just as a follow-up question that's come up in the Q&A, has that role or the way that they talk about the talent marketplace changed from when you first started this journey to where you're at right now?

Divkiran Kathuria:

Oh, yes, drastically. Two examples to shared with you. When we joined, one of the leaner teams that we had compared to our engineering and R&D teams, one of the business functions was very lean and quite a few people moved around. We constantly got this feedback that, "Other people are coaching my talent." Other people are coaching my talent. We went back and said, "If they are leaving number one, look at why they are leaving. Number two, you're not losing them to someone else. They're just going to be in the organization. You can always reach out to them. And number three, why don't you look for the talent internally as well? If someone else has benefited from it, what is stopping you from going and looking at this diverse, global talent pool that you have with yourself?"

That's what helped. Then some of their positions were filled internally. This was a support function wherein somebody from business came in and performed really well. They were very happy. I think those stories when you share over a period of time, when people see the benefit that it's bringing in, they start lining up and aligning with you. Sometimes become your ambassadors as well.

Riddhika Rathod:

That's great. The positive stories and the FOMO of what they're missing out. Everybody responds to FOMO, right?

Divkiran Kathuria:

Yes.

Riddhika Rathod:

It's the way it is. Okay. I have this really interesting question here, a really good one I think. Your remit expands across talent marketplace and talent acquisition. So how has that broad view helped you be more impactful to the company? Because when typically they're separate and sometimes working through opposing [inaudible 00:44:41] so I'm going to throw it at you.

Divkiran Kathuria:

I think for us, it was an easier alignment. Again, because our use case was that of making sure that we are lifting, shifting and redeploying talent in the right roles. That was our priority use case for talent marketplace. This is why initially talent marketplace, which was my responsibility was aligned to talent acquisition. But as we started growing other programs, we realized that it doesn't matter where talent marketplace sits. If it sits in talent development and learning or it sits with talent management, you would still have to work with the learning team.

You would still have to work with the talent acquisition team because recruiters and TAVPs are a great driver of this internal talent discovery process. Literally are partners in educating managers on how to look for that talent internally, how to fill in the right skills, not too many, not too less. What does experience mean? How can you change the location from say if you're looking for an internal role and geography doesn't matter, better to look globally. You can find talent anywhere.

If you don't have a position being filled till the person joins, maybe run some of your projects using the internal gigs. For us, the reason we aligned with the talent marketplace within a TA role is because that was our primary use case. But it doesn't matter where you are in the organization, leading talent marketplace, you will have to work with extended HR teams. It cannot be done without that collaboration and everybody coming together and supporting you.

Riddhika Rathod:

Yeah, no doubt. Absolutely, that synergy seems like it's working for you. You're right. It's a team village or it takes a village as we would say. Going back to question on change, adoption, question from sand bar, what were the two to three levers you use to have 90% of your workforce on board in 45 days? That's easy, super impressive. What did you focus on essentially?

Divkiran Kathuria:

At the cost of sounding repetitive, definitely it was the message all the way from the top. That worked. When you send out an email, a video or a live communication from your C level executives talking about why you are doing it and what's the benefit and how does it align with the organization goals, was extremely important. Definitely executive stakeholders' involvement and messaging.

Secondly, being transparent about why we are doing it. How does it align with the business goal? Going back to the message of what is in it for me, what is in it for everyone to align with this was important. The third was that we didn't just stop it saying, "Okay, here is the message." Day one, go live. That's it. We also trickled it down all the way to our knowledge workers and our individual contributors through their managers and peers. To ensure that they all know that this is a huge disruption that is coming in. They have a chance to create the future of work for Seagate, future products for Seagate or being future fit as an organization for Seagate.

I think giving them the right message through the right channels and the right people. Again, we discussed about this, giving them the purpose, why are we doing it? Why should we do it, was very, very important.

Riddhika Rathod:

Yeah. And change management 101, you can never communicate enough.

Divkiran Kathuria:

Absolutely.

Riddhika Rathod:

Keep doing it. You're doing it. Even if it's repetitive, you keep doing it. On that change piece, the enablement, that program of work, question on the Q&A, did you do all of that in house? Or did you include a partner, somebody else, an external resource?

Divkiran Kathuria:

This question is just like somebody in my mind. Gloat has been a great partner. Our internal communication teams has been a great partner. We of course had a change management strategy. We had a communication strategy. We knew what we wanted to talk about. But these two teams have played an extremely important role. Gloat brought in the best practices. What are other people or other customers in the market doing? What is the right message if you want to reach out to a manager with a talent hoarding mindset? What's the right message that can be used to reach out to someone who's scared of applying because their manager may disagree or may not like that?

Then we built on those basics and best practices. Then our internal communication team stepped in to help us with contextualizing all of this in Seagate environment and according to the Seagate culture. Whether it be using the right image, the right tone in your messages, the right person who should be sending the messages. I think I would say it was a 50, 50 collaboration between Seagate and Gloat. I will take this opportunity to say, I just totally love working with Ifa. She's the best ever.

Riddhika Rathod:

Thank you.

Divkiran Kathuria:

She has the best ideas ever.



Riddhika Rathod:

Yeah. I'm going to make sure that she at least listens to this piece of our session. If not, I will certainly reach out to her and tell her that everything that she's doing is very much appreciated and had been a great job. So definitely. I'm really glad that you found enormous value in what Gloat has put together from a changed methodology, templates and all of that. We absolutely want our customers to take that on board as you have.

Divkiran Kathuria:

I just want to add that this kind of cultural disruption is not something we do every day. There is that you need a partner. You need a partner to help you and support you with that. I feel like I couldn't have done it without any of these two partners, either our internal communications team or Gloat's change enablement team.

Riddhika Rathod:

Excellent. Yeah. Great point. An easy one now. Do you continue to or do you network with other Gloat customers to learn, brainstorm?

Divkiran Kathuria:

Sometimes, yes. Actually, I used to do a lot more of it. But in all honesty, being a new mom to a 1 year old, it's not leaving a lot of time. But yes, we do collaborate. Again, largely because of Gloat, we do come together for some of these sessions, Gloat Live. Some of the case studies, some of the other talent circles that Gloat is supporting and some of the other customers are running. It's always good to interact and learn from each other.

Some of the top names that come to my mind that we have collaborated and talked to, there's Novartis, there is Standard Chartered. There is Schneider. I still talk to some of them. Initially, we got a lot of support from even Unilever, which was probably your first customer to really help us figure out what talent marketplaces looked like. It's a great community. It's a thriving community.



I tried starting a LinkedIn group for open talent marketplace questions and answers, but not very active now. I'm very thankful to Gloat also for that, that we get a chance to talk and learn from other customers really on and off.

Riddhika Rathod:

We love that community collaboration and people talking to each other. That's why we do these types of sessions. This session will be watched by many, many other customers to learn from all the things that you're doing. That's why we really appreciate as well, Div, people like yourselves coming on and giving your time and your energy in preparing for this and sharing so much to the wider audience.

Now we've got two minutes left. I'm going to maybe just pick one last question. Then we'll wrap things up. Okay. Do the project costs in ROI need to be revisited each year or is the organization accepting of this for the long term?

Divkiran Kathuria:

I think it would depend from organization to organization. If you are just starting to launch the talent marketplace as an experiment and you're going from pilot to pilot, then yes, you would need to look at it at the end of every pilot. Figure out what's working, what's not working, how do you go live? Do you go live? It would be important to look at it if you are doing a phased approach.

For Seagate, we did look at it initially. But we went live big bang for everybody in one go. For first month and a half, we launched projects. We then launched jobs. Then within six months, we launched mentorship as well. For us, the business case was very clear from the beginning. We did look at the ROI. We still do calculate the productivity numbers in terms of how much cost we have saved in terms of productivity. But we don't necessarily have to look at ROI every phase or at the end of every year. It's just established already.

Riddhika Rathod:

Great. Awesome. All right. Thank you for that. We are on the top of the hour now. Div, honestly, amazing conversation. I want to thank you for joining us today. Just another really great session.

Divkiran Kathuria:

My pleasure.

Riddhika Rathod:

We always love having you. I hope that everyone on the call today found it as informative, inspiring and interesting as I have. I always want to take the time to thank everyone who joined the conversation, asked questions. We will post the recording of the session on our events page. They'll be there for you to go back to and also keep an eye out for more Gloat Learn invites, making their way to your inbox. With that, thank you all. Thank you, Div. We'll say goodbye.

Divkiran Kathuria:

Thank you so much. It was my pleasure. Who wouldn't like to talk to someone with such a bright smile? Thank you so much, Riddhika.

Riddhika Rathod:

No, it's a pleasure. It's a joy. All right. We'll chat soon.

