



Guild

Career mobility fundamentals workbook

**Help your organization strategize around
career mobility.**

Use this workbook as a guide to help you pave the way for sustainable internal talent pipelines and accessible opportunities for your entire workforce.

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The purpose of this workbook, and how to use it

Welcome! You're here because you want to grow your workforce, your Employer Value Proposition (EVP) and your business by investing in career mobility.



Jen Stickley
Guild Learner, Bon Secours Mercy Health

To start, what is career mobility?

Career mobility is any job movement that makes the life of an employee better. This can mean a promotion, and it can also mean a lateral move that prepares an employee for roles in a job family that better aligns with their interests and strengths, or a move into a role that better fits their life and priorities. And if you believe — as we do — that talent is everywhere, then growth opportunities within your organization must be accessible from anywhere.

A strong talent mobility program not only helps your people grow their skills and their careers, it empowers a more agile and resilient workforce. Your talent development investments in education, skilling, and career mobility should attract new employees, retain existing talent, and align closely with business KPIs to ensure you close talent gaps, see measurable ROI for your talent programs, and set yourself apart as an employer who is committed to employee career advancement.

That means education benefits without advancement pathways, or development programs limited to growing executive leadership aren't going to cut it.

In a nutshell, career mobility is the single most important talent investment employers can make today. As opposed to offering education benefits alone, you're aligning education to the jobs at your organization in highest demand for talent — a demand that will continue to grow in the years to come.

The following activities and resources will help you create a career mobility framework — the foundation of building career mobility at scale. Each section offers resources that you can explore with your HR team. We use these exercises with Guild customers to create the building blocks of career mobility for our employer partners. In fact, more than 5 million U.S. workers now have access to Guild, and the number keeps growing.

The future of work can work for everyone.

Let's get started.

Gather data.

Bring together the right internal and external data points to gauge the impact of your current talent mobility efforts, internal opportunity awareness, and how your people feel about the potential to grow with your organization. It's time to zero in on opportunities for adjustment, and assemble strong proof points to help build internal momentum for career mobility.

You'll need to...

- Be able to conduct an internal survey with a representative group of managers and employees in different roles.
- Have access to internal data connected to your org's mobility efforts.

Things to consider:

- ✗ Don't limit data gathering to internal or external alone — both are necessary.
- ✓ Pay attention to trends in demographics and role types (e.g. are people in certain roles more/less likely to look at job boards?)
- ✓ Identify qualitative data that can help you tell a story (e.g. frontline + manager quotes).



Practical exercises:

List out your existing major talent and internal hiring goals as specifically as you can. (Tip: If specific goals haven't been articulated yet, it's ok to leave it at a high level.)

List your current mobility efforts that can be defined over a period of time, such as incentive policies for managers and internal job boards. Make sure to highlight any existing high potential leadership development programs.

Gather internal data that can be leveraged to indicate how much or how well you are currently meeting your talent / internal mobility goals. This often includes:

- Retention data
- Separation rates
- Internal job movement (e.g. percentage of roles filled internally in the last year)
- Job board visits / application data
- Changes in internal mobility from incentive programs

Based on this data, where do you think your mobility efforts stand today?

- All potential - mobility efforts are just beginning
- Ready to grow - mobility is offered to some — but not all — employees
- Ready to scale - mobility is offered to all employees, but we are ready to expand impact and outcomes.

Leverage and aggregate data from brief internal surveys or representative populations of managers and individual contributor employees to get a sense of awareness and sentiment on career mobility. You should be looking for:

- Whether employees and managers perceive mobility as possible (e.g. awareness of opportunities and benefits, and sentiment toward them)
- What managers perceive their role in internal mobility to be
- Patterns in sentiment and awareness (e.g. people in non-exempt roles are less likely to be aware of funded learning opportunities than people in exempt roles)

Look at your current job boards for your most critical job families, and calculate the ratio between higher-level and lower-level open positions. For example, if hiring for data analysts, how many Data Analyst IV versus Data Analyst I positions do you see? If hiring for marketing, how many entry-level marketing positions versus senior-level positions do you see? Note initial insights you're seeing from your preliminary internal discovery.

Step 01

Identify macro labor market trends likely to impact your organization. Look at horizontal industry indicators: Are the priority roles your business needs growing or declining across industries outside of your own? Are you seeing industry lay-offs or talent shortages? (Tip: Good sources include the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics [Occupational Outlook Handbook](#) for roles.)



Additional Resources

- Take the Quiz: [Career Mobility Assessment](#)
- Blog Post: [3 keys steps to matching today’s skills with tomorrow’s careers](#)
- White Paper: [Getting started guide: Prepare to build career mobility for your entire workforce.](#)
- [BLS Occupational Handbook](#)





Begin forecasting your talent needs.

Talent needs overlap with people needs. You need talent to fill open roles, but your people need achievable opportunities that are worth their time and effort. Aligning the goals of your business and your workforce is critical for building a sustainable, effective and impactful talent strategy.

You'll need to...

- Know your internal hiring goals, and what data is available to gauge progress (hard data + qualitative).

Things to consider:

- ✗ Don't overfocus on short-term needs.
- ✓ Think of what your talent needs are likely to look like for high-priority roles over the next 3-5 years.

Practical exercises:

Look at your various business units, and identify the priority destination roles needed in each.

Determine how many prospective hires you will need to find in 1 year, 3 years and 5 years.

Identify business units and roles with high turnover rates.

Do you see a lot of roles that would be considered a career dead-end (i.e. little to no advancement opportunity)?
Based on your internal discovery, do you have evidence that people in high turnover roles and business units have a sightline into career growth? Do they believe growth is possible?

Identify business units and roles with high automation risk. Summarize your organization’s current approach to help employees move out of automation-risky roles.



Pay attention to *role types* when forecasting talent needs.

Thinking through types or levels of roles can help you lay the foundation for a pathway to career mobility. Many organizations will see a bottleneck in the gateway or transition roles from frontline into entry level.

Frontline

Not upwardly mobile without further education; low wages: and are particularly vulnerable in the present economy.

Does not require prior experience

Ex. Tailors, Customer Service Representative, Stockers

Gateway

Managerial upskilling from frontline roles or roles that are well-positioned to allow career advancement into entry level positions through education/training.

Requires skills but no prior experience

Ex. IT Support Specialist, Frontline Manager

Entry Level

Providing significant earnings potential and upward/lateral mobility: often-require a Bachelor's degree or formal support for entry talent, like an internship program.

Requires brief prior experience in skill set

Ex. Asst. Software Eng, HR Coordinator, Branch Mgr.

Destination

High demand roles with relative stability: significant upward mobility into highly skilled jobs through upskilling and gaining years of experience in the field.

Requires significant prior experience

Ex. Software Engineer, Data Analyst, HR Manager

Typically, non-exempt, "frontline" roles

Typically exempt, "corporate" roles

Refer to your data around job postings from Step 01. If your organization is like most companies, you'll see more high-skill job postings than entry level. This represents a bottleneck in gateway roles – missing stepping stones to help people in frontline roles advance. Consider the following two questions and use the space to the right for notes:

- Is there a way to lower inflated entry-level job requirements, offer more "equivalencies" around experience and education, OR open junior-level roles to create more opportunities for frontline advancement that bypasses gateway job?
- Are there other business units with higher volumes of gateway roles with transferable skills? (This is an indicator of pipeline potential across business units through skill adjacencies.)



Additional Resources

- Report: [Career pathways: Building tomorrow's workforce today](#)
- Blog: [3 distortive trends to avoid around career mobility](#)

Identify where your greatest “source” talent is — and define “high potential” talent equitably.



A lot of companies confuse high-potential (HiPo) with pedigree: Beyond a certain job level threshold, people with the “right” experience and credentials are considered worthy of an investment in their upward mobility.

But there are people on your frontline payroll today who have the potential to become leaders and success drivers for your business — if offered the same opportunities to grow. This represents the “source” talent you want to target — higher-volume frontline roles, particularly those whose roles are at risk of elimination due to automation.

Some of the strongest CEOs started on the frontline of their companies: Doug McMillon at Walmart, Mary Barra at General Motors, Michael Corbat of Citigroup, Alex Gorsky at Johnson & Johnson. What untapped talent is waiting inside your company right now for the right opportunity?

You’ll need to...

- Know which business units and frontline roles have the highest volume of talent.
- Know how your organization currently defines and develops high-potential talent.
- Know which frontline roles are at the highest risk of elimination.

Things to consider:

- ✗ Don’t limit HiPo to a specific job level.
- ✓ Think of skills in terms of transferability, in addition to their half life.

Practical exercises:

Determine which destination roles you need to prioritize first. Pick the top 4 that will impact your business most if not filled.

List the skills — both [durable and perishable](#) — that are essential to filling these roles (Tip: LinkedIn is a good resource to examine [in-demand skills](#)).

Role 1:	Role 2:	Role 3:	Role 4:
Skills Needed:	Skills Needed:	Skills Needed:	Skills Needed:

Identify the frontline roles where the greatest number of *potential* “source” talent sits. Think your largest pools of employees that might not yet be considered for a gateway or entry level role, but — with the right skilling or education trajectory — could be.

Can you identify any adjacent skills those populations might currently have that could be applied to gateway roles?

Example: John is working as a cashier at a major retailer and engaging with customers throughout the day. As a result, he is developing strong, interpersonal skills and customer service acumen which can be applied in many future roles. This would be considered an **adjacent skill**.

How are you defining “high potential” in job candidates? Are you basing it off of prior credentials (college pedigree), background or other predetermined factors? List them here.



Additional Resources

Learner Story: [Meet Jarryn — From Floor Associate → Recruiting at Walmart](#)

Blog: [‘Own Your Own Development’ Is Out of Touch: To Invest in Talent, Do This Instead](#)



Rally internal champions.

You'll need to...

- Prepare internal mobility stories.
- Have peer or competitor case studies at the ready as illustrative examples.

Things to consider:

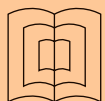
- ✗ Don't discount the necessity of advocacy and buy-in at every level — even with C-suite sign-off.
- ✓ Present career mobility opportunity creation as a function of every role.

Practical exercises:

Identify internal, individual impact stories as well as external case studies to help illustrate the multi-layered impact potential of opportunity cultures.

Download and share [Guild's career mobility champion's toolkit](#) to help you handle objections and generate excitement. The toolkit includes success stories, research, and thought leadership from other HR leaders investing in career mobility at scale.

Ask for — and incorporate — cross-functional champion feedback from a variety of roles across your business, including frontline and hiring managers.

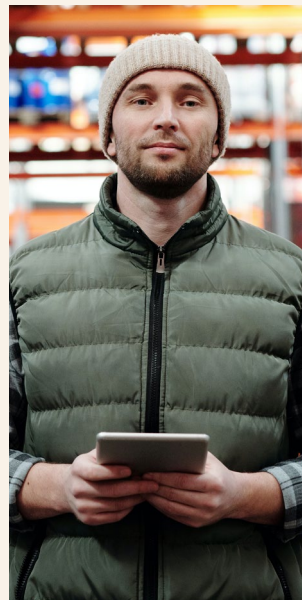


Additional Resources

Self-serve toolkit: [Career Mobility Champion's Toolkit](#)

Report: [How Rocket Central transformed and unused tuition benefit into a world-class career growth program.](#)





Turn your talent and mobility goals into actionable steps.

Get in touch

Guild can help you take this data to build career pathways within your organization.

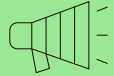
- Guild's Learning Marketplace and learning program catalogs are designed for working adults' learning needs and curated for your business needs.
- Growth and Career Coaching help employees build confidence alongside career readiness skills to take the next step in their careers.
- Our career pathways framework and priority pathways aligned with today's most in-demand roles and skillsets.

About Guild

The Guild Career Opportunity Platform™ helps employees build the careers they want by gaining the skills their company needs. We work with some of America's largest employers to:



- Co-create a career mobility strategy



- Launch and market programs to employees and the public



- Curate a custom catalog of foundational skilling and higher ed degrees



- Align learning to career pathways and priority roles in the business



- Provide 1:1 coaching for learners throughout their journey



- Turn learning into career advancement



- Measure program ROI

The future of work can work for everyone.

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