

Schneider Electric Pioneers the Talent Marketplace

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Transforming for the Future

Schneider Electric is a global specialist in energy management with a focus on industrial automation, digitization, and sustainability. The origins of the company date back to the first Industrial Revolution when, in 1836, the Schneider brothers acquired mines and forges at Le Creuset, France.

During the next 185-plus years, the company expanded and restructured several times (see Figure 1 on the next page) and is now headquartered in Rueil-Malmaison, France. In 2014, Schneider Electric acquired the Foxboro and Invensys brands, adding to the strength of its businesses. In 2021, it had \$28.9 billion in global revenue.

Today, Schneider Electric has more than 135,000 employees worldwide and drives digital transformation. By integrating world-leading process and energy technologies, it realizes full efficiency and sustainability opportunities for businesses and provides endpoint to cloud integration connecting products, controls, software, and services. It enables lifecycle solutions (built and designed) delivering capabilities to transform from site-to-site to an integrated company management. The integrated solutions are built with safety, reliability, and cybersecurity for homes, buildings, data centers, infrastructure, and industries. Schneider's purpose is to empower all people to make the most of our energy and resources, bridging progress and sustainability for all.

Our mission is to be the digital partner for sustainability and efficiency. We are the most local of global companies. We are advocates of open standards and partnership ecosystems that are passionate about our shared meaningful purpose, inclusive and empowered values.

Mission Statement, Schneider Electric

A Need to Redesign the Employee Experience

Schneider Electric was looking for a way to empower employees to grow with the business. This was due to having nearly 50% of the company's exiting employees cite their main reason for leaving as a lack of internal growth opportunities.

Summary

Challenge

- Understanding why 50% of exiting employees cited a lack of internal growth opportunities as their primary reason for leaving the company.
- Removing obstacles that prevent employees from growing their careers.
- Harnessing the power of the gig economy while improving employee retention.

Solution

- Schneider Electric discovered how the use of AI could accelerate its three main action items: positions, projects, and mentorships.
- The company partnered with Gloat, a workforce agility and talent marketplace platform, to create an internal talent marketplace.

Results

- Within two months of the internal talent marketplace launch, 60% of employees were registered in the system, and more than 2,300 employees were exploring new roles at the company.
- Through the talent marketplace, the company unlocked nearly 127,000 hours of previously unused talent in only a few weeks.
- The talent marketplace has helped put employees in the driver's seat, giving them control of their careers and setting the company up for the future.

Schneider Electric employees are based around the world from the United States (New England and Missouri) to Germany, Turkey, Singapore, and India: more than 529 office locations across 118 countries. This geographic spread meant recruiters were often unaware they could tap internal talent instead of only hiring from the outside.

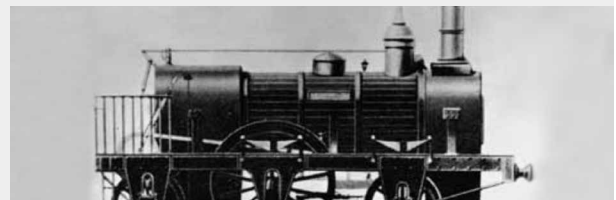
As an example, Jean Pelletier, Vice President of Digital Talent Transformation, recalls when she was meeting with other HR leaders to discuss how to mature the talent management. "I looked at how they had penciled talent acquisition on the board, and I said, 'Are you telling me that our TA folks only source externally?'" The response was "yes." Pelletier was

Figure 1: Schneider Electric's History

Beginnings

19th century

The Schneider brothers invest in the Creusot foundries and become major players in the steel and machine industry. Soon, Schneider & Cie. enters the emerging electricity market.



Reconstruction

Early 20th century

After two world wars our company emerges as a diversified business that quickly expands into new markets, including construction and electricity.



Evolution

Late 20th century

The Schneider Group grows through strategic acquisitions and focuses on the electrical industry, energy management and innovative technologies.



Today

21st century

With a unique portfolio of connected technologies: connected products, edge control and apps, analytics and services, we are the global specialist in energy management and automation.



Source: Schneider Electric, 2022

astonished—clearly Schneider Electric had to empower the recruiter to recruit internally.

People, processes, and platforms were disconnected. The company had been trying to digitalize the employee experience since 2015, but the approach was not scalable for an enterprise of such a large number of people.

In 2020, when COVID began to change the way in which employers interacted with their employees (i.e., remotely), Schneider Electric saw a rise in the data it was accumulating on its people due to the uptick in digital transactions. A tool was needed to merge the employee experience, recruiting process, and data platforms. It sought a talent marketplace that would improve employee retention, harness the dynamics of a gig economy, and empower career development.

A System of the Employee, for the Employee, by the Employee

Schneider Electric set several criteria for a platform to support its internal talent marketplace:

- Designed for the employee
- Multilanguage
- Free from HR bureaucracy
- Capable of building out features
- Able to connect to other systems

When the team started looking for a partner, they initially struggled to find solutions at scale that were designed for the employee. Ultimately, Schneider Electric partnered with Gloat. Gloat is a workforce agility and talent marketplace

platform, and it was selected due to its use of AI when addressing three action items important to the team: positions, projects, and mentorships

This solution synergized well with Schneider Electric’s innovative and technology-based approach to internal mobility and career development, and AI would enable leaders to align the supply and demand of talent within the company.

Rolling Out the Open Talent Market

Schneider Electric called the internal talent marketplace “open talent market” and began the launch process with a pilot designed for the HR department. At first, the company planned a gradual, country-by-country rollout, but this was upended with the onset of COVID in spring 2020 where employees were required to shelter in place and work remotely. Schneider Electric decided on a fast rollout to send the message that development and growth were thriving despite closed offices. Within two weeks, open talent market launched globally with amazing uptake and success.

As many employees don’t work on a computer every day, the team designed an experience for all devices—computers, tablets, and phones—making the marketplace easily accessible across the company (see Figure 2).

We post positions and projects worldwide. We want a candidate slate that is diverse and we must make sure it includes our internal talents. It’s a win/win for employees and project or hiring managers, giving people growth opportunities and getting talent to the work where it is needed.

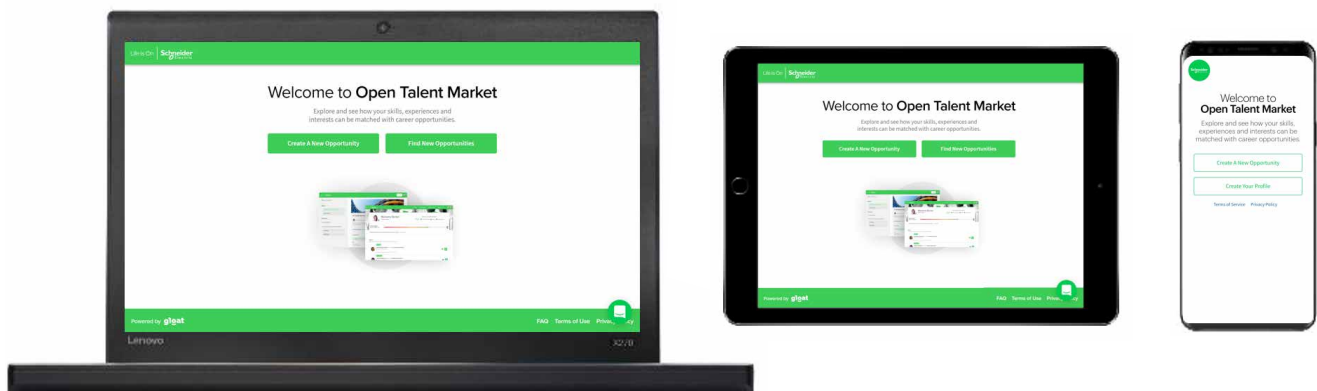
Jean Pelletier, Vice President of Digital Talent Transformation, Schneider Electric

The open talent market has two sides: employees fill out profiles and receive recommendations for career development, projects, and mentoring that align with their goals and interests; and managers post their open projects and positions and receive recommendations for employees who are aligned with these opportunities.

This allows managers to leverage AI to surface those internal candidates that may have been overlooked before due to traditional processes, and enables the company to stay up to speed with the gig economy while also nurturing talent from within.

Pelletier compared the launch of the open talent market to the first time parents give their kid the car keys. “It’s a conservative company,” she said, “but it needed to adapt. In the same way that parents need to relinquish control when allowing their children to drive, the talent marketplace pushed Schneider Electric to foster the growth of its 135,000

Figure 2: Schneider Electric Open Talent Market on Multiple Devices



Source: Schneider Electric, 2022

employees and at the same time to direct people where the company needs it the most, now and in the future.”

Putting Employees in the Driver’s Seat

In only a few weeks, the company had unlocked nearly 127,000 hours of previously unseen talent—translating into millions of dollars of savings. Within two months of the internal talent marketplace launch, 60% of Schneider Electric employees were registered in the system and more than 2,300 employees were exploring internal roles.

“We have their profile, we know who they were before, after, and who they desire to be. LinkedIn doesn’t give you that. Resumes don’t give you that. Only the open talent market does this.”

Jean Pelletier, Vice President of Digital Talent Transformation, Schneider Electric

The open talent market unlocks a complete picture of every employee who engages with it. By uploading their profile to the

platform (or connecting it to their LinkedIn profile), employees get the AI-suggested development and career opportunities based on their skills, competencies, and future ambitions such as:

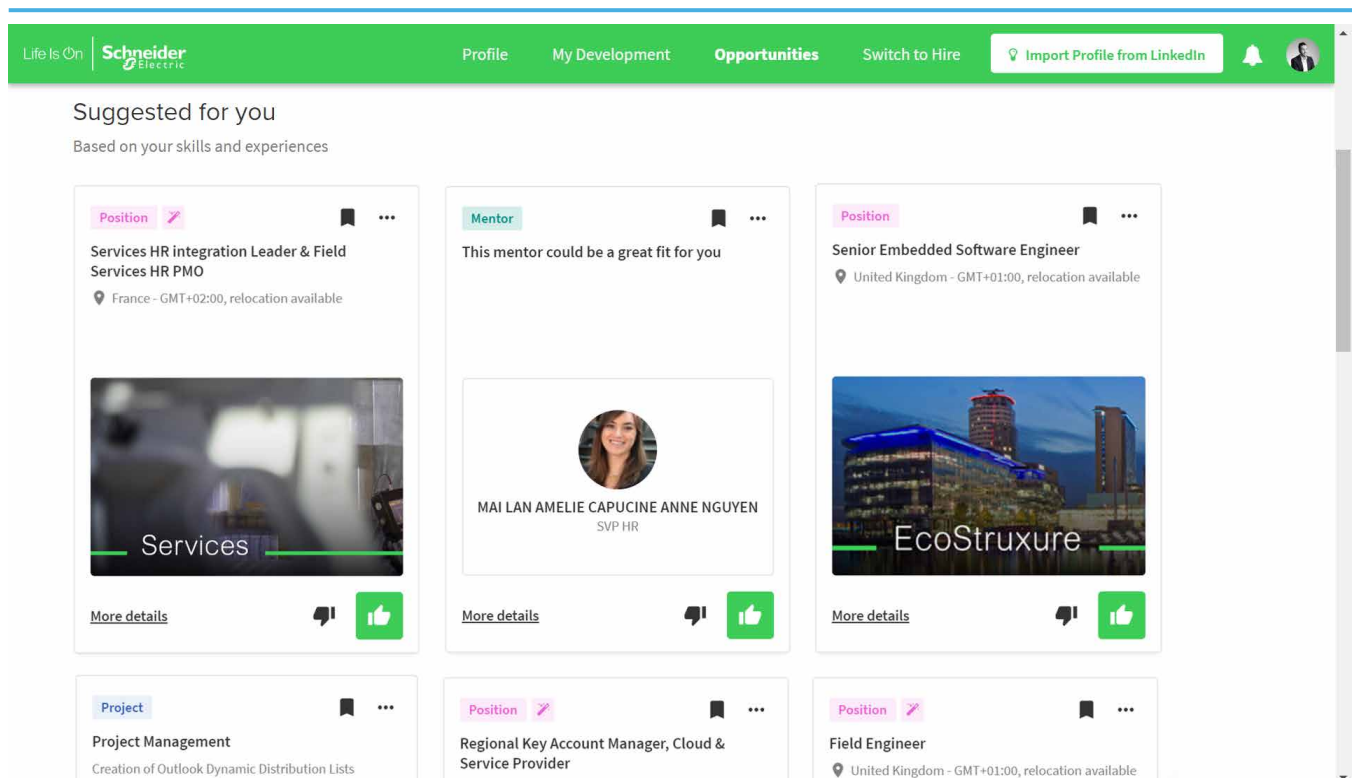
- Full-time roles and/or career moves
- Part-time projects, gigs, and/or stretch assignments
- Mentoring opportunities (bidirectional)
- Learning suggestions (see Figure 3)

The internal talent marketplace can grow and shift as the company scales and becomes more sophisticated in its use of AI. Using the platform allows employees to choose their paths based on their skills, their career aspirations, and where the company is going. “It’s creating these unique paths that nobody could ever conceive of,” said Pelletier.

Improving Employee Development and Retention

As Pelletier reported, 90% of the open talent market’s features are designed for internal employees, helping solve

Figure 3: Open Talent Market Suggestions



Source: Schneider Electric, 2022

the challenge of improving employee retention. Thousands of employees have found mentors using the talent marketplace, which strengthens global connections and broadens skill sets.

Before Schneider Electric launched its talent market, the search for new opportunities within the company was lengthy and laborious. “You’d spend two weeks on the phone talking to talent managers, other managers, or your peers, and you’d get zero matches,” said Pelletier. “But now, you launch the open talent market and you have three matches in two minutes.”

Rewriting HR and Changing the Culture

“The open talent marketplace is a rewrite of HR for the company,” said Pelletier. “The AI brought speedy, accurate connectivity that, as humans, we cannot process as fast in a company this big.” The straightforward process and simple user experience has enabled powerful internal change management.

“One of the biggest value propositions is you can actually staff a project intelligently, and manage it without running around calling people,” said Pelletier. “It’s pretty amazing.”

Because the open talent market requires transparency, it has also triggered a cultural change at Schneider Electric. “Everything used to be so super-secret and hard to break into for employees,” said Pelletier. With the new platform, however, having projects, mentoring opportunities, and positions broadly accessible not only accelerates the matching process but also fosters more transparency, which in turn helps foster trust.

Lessons Learned

Pelletier and her team learned the following powerful lessons about the company’s culture and the transformation a talent marketplace can bring.

- **Be prepared for disruption.** In a company of 135,000 employees that has been doing business since 1836, shifting to an AI-based platform required new perspectives. As Pelletier reported, managers might view the system as poaching talent, and if so, they need to

consider the bigger picture. When project and job posts have long been kept confidential, coaching managers on transparency is vital.

- **Culture change is key.** While the technology of using AI-powered insights to match people with opportunities was transformational, the biggest change enabler was a shift in the culture. Focusing on transparency, empowering employees, and allowing them to grow in their aspired directions, while also aligning that to where the company is going, was critical to the success.
- **Think of progress over perfection.** “A lot of folks are worried about making sure it’s perfect,” said Pelletier. “When it is first rolled out, it’s not going to be perfect. You have to take the first step and make it available. Then you listen to your employees and your customer base, you learn, and you want more.” A talent marketplace is an iterative rollout; it is a figurative living, breathing platform.

Conclusion and Next Steps

The talent marketplace has helped put Schneider Electric employees in the driver’s seat, and it lets them take control of their careers, which is at the heart of its employee value proposition. From an enterprise perspective, it sets the company up for the future. The talent team can now communicate where it needs to upscale and reskill and continue to compete in its market.

With the open talent market in place, Schneider Electric is exploring how AI can reinvigorate succession management. Previously, the company had the data for succession but “we did little analysis on its success because it was siloed,” said Pelletier. “It was on PowerPoint.”

The biggest change is that the platform turns succession planning on its head. “While succession planning is traditionally for the enterprise, the open talent market is of the people, by the people, for the people,” said Pelletier. Therefore, it hooks into the innate talent, desires, and passion of the entire workforce to jump-start Schneider Electric into the future.

About the Authors



Josh Bersin

Josh founded Bersin & Associates in 2001 to provide research and advisory services focused on corporate learning. He expanded the company's coverage to encompass HR, talent management, talent acquisition, and leadership and became a recognized expert in the talent market. Josh sold the company to Deloitte in 2012 and was a partner in Bersin by Deloitte up until 2018.

In 2019, Josh founded the Josh Bersin Academy, a professional development academy that has become the "home for HR." In 2020, he put together a team of analysts and advisors who are now working with him to support and guide HR organizations from around the world under the umbrella of The Josh Bersin Company. He is frequently featured in publications such as *Forbes*, *Harvard Business Review*, *HR Executive*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and *CLO Magazine*. He is a popular blogger and has more than 800,000 followers on LinkedIn.



Kathi Enderes, PhD

Kathi is the senior vice president of research at The Josh Bersin Company, leading and developing research-based insights for all areas of HR, learning, talent, and HR technology. Kathi has more than 20 years' global experience, from management consulting with IBM, PwC, and EY and as a talent leader at McKesson and Kaiser Permanente. Most recently, Kathi led talent and workforce research at Deloitte. She is a frequent keynote speaker, author, and thought leader.

Originally from Austria, Kathi has worked in Vienna, London, and Spain and now lives in San Francisco. Her passion is to make work better and more meaningful. Kathi holds a doctoral degree in mathematics and a master's degree in mathematics from the University of Vienna.

The Josh Bersin Company Membership

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For more details, contact us at info@bersinpartners.com.