



# Optimizing Scale Through Digital Excellence: Apexon Unified Talent Acquisition

Apexon

Best Advance in Talent Acquisition Process

December 2024



## Company Background



# Apexon

Company-at-a-Glance	
<b>Headquarters</b>	Santa Clara, CA
<b>Year Founded</b>	2004
<b>Employees</b>	3750
<b>Global Scale (Regions that you operate in or provide services to)</b>	North America, APAC, EMEA
<b>Customers/Output, etc. (Key customers and services offered)</b>	Apexon is a digital-first technology services firm combining best-in-class talent and solutions in engineering, experience, and data to help companies accelerate the pace and success of their digital efforts from concept to market. Our reputation is built on a comprehensive suite of engineering services, a dedication to solving clients' toughest technological



	<p>problems, and a commitment to continuous improvement. Using the best people, process, and technology this industry has to offer, we aspire to elevate the human experience through digital innovation.</p> <p>Apexon brings together distinct core competencies – in AI, analytics, app development, cloud, commerce, CX, data, DevOps, IoT, mobile, quality engineering and UX, and our deep expertise in BFSI, healthcare, and life sciences – to help businesses capitalize on the unlimited opportunities digital offers.</p> <p>Backed by Goldman Sachs Asset Management and Everstone Capital, Apexon now has a global presence of 15 offices (and 10 delivery centers) across four continents.</p> <p>We enable #HumanFirstDIGITAL</p> <p>Apexon serves Fortune 500 clients such as Goldman Sachs, Fiserv, JPMC, Silicon Valley Bank, World Bank, TD Bank, Mastercard, Knipper, Roche, Blue Cross Blue Shield, Navigating Cancer, LabCorp, Ford, Volkswagen, Marriott, Sling TV, and more.</p>
<b>Industry</b>	IT Services & Consulting
<b>Stock Symbol</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Website</b>	<a href="https://www.apexon.com/">https://www.apexon.com/</a>

**Budget and Timeframe**

<b>Budget and Timeframe</b>	
<b>Number of (HR, Learning, Talent) employees involved with the implementation?</b>	2-8 employees (based on various phases/ processes/ tools of the Talent acquisition cycle)
<b>Number of Operations or Subject Matter Expert employees involved with the implementation?</b>	1- 5 employees (based on various phases/ processes/tools of the Talent acquisition cycle)



<b>Number of contractors involved with implementation</b>	<b>6 Contractors (for various phases/processes/tools of the Talent acquisition cycle)</b>
<b>Timeframe to implement</b>	<b>3-9 months for various Talent Acquisition processes</b>
<b>Start date of the program</b>	<b>Jan 2023</b>

### **Business Conditions and Business Needs**

In 2020, the acquisition by Goldman Sachs Asset Management amidst the COVID-19 pandemic marked the beginning of a transformative journey. Subsequent acquisitions of Saggezza and Gathi Analytics in 2021, followed by mergers with Apexon and the inclusion of Adapty, further intensified the change process. These mergers and acquisitions reached their conclusion in March 2022, paving the way for the integration of One Apexon in April 2022.

Each stage of this journey introduced additional complexity, intertwining distinct corporate cultures, values, and employee engagement frameworks into the organizational structure. As the Apexon mergers reached their conclusion in December 2022, the onset of 2023 presented new challenges in talent acquisition, impacting the capacity to attract, onboard, and retain top talent, with significant consequences for the return on investment.

The fragmented nature of talent acquisition within the organization led to significant challenges in streamlining hiring practices.

#### **1. Suboptimal Employee Experience**

Post-merger, the convoluted procedures & lack of Pre-onboarding / Post Onboarding support overlooked prioritizing the candidate experience, impeding the recruitment of top talent.

#### **2. Fragmented Talent Acquisition Processes**

The lack of uniformity not only impeded the precise assessment of recruitment efforts but also hindered the identification of enhancement opportunities. This inconsistency also heightened the risk of non-compliance, potentially subjecting the organization to legal challenges.

#### **3. The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Gap**



Talent Acquisition strategies fell short on integrating DEI, impacting the organization's innovation and reputation. Moreover the Inadequate DEI focus in recruiting , supplier diversity risked legal issues and restricted access to a diverse talent pool.

#### **4. Absence of Standard Policies**

At Apexon, the employee referral system was marked by inconsistency, exhibiting several conflicting policies and a wide disparity in referral rewards. Additionally, the Talent Acquisition team's incentive structure was misaligned, leading to variances in recruitment motivations. This was compounded by the onboarding of vendors through inadequate vetting processes and the establishment of vendor agreements with divergent terms, impacting operational coherence and efficiency.

#### **5. Under-Utilization of Talent Acquisition team**

Inadequate distribution of work across recruiters resulted in lowered productivity and a compromised return on investment for the company.

#### **6. Lack of Centralized Vendor Management Office**

Absence of vendor management policies and processes led to the onboarding of over **280 vendors** without vetting their quality or performance.

#### **7. Inconsistent & Insufficient Data Reporting and Analytics**

The lack of key recruitment data, such as Turn Around Time, Offer to Joiner Ratio, and other critical metrics, led to profound inefficiencies in the recruitment process and magnified hiring challenges.

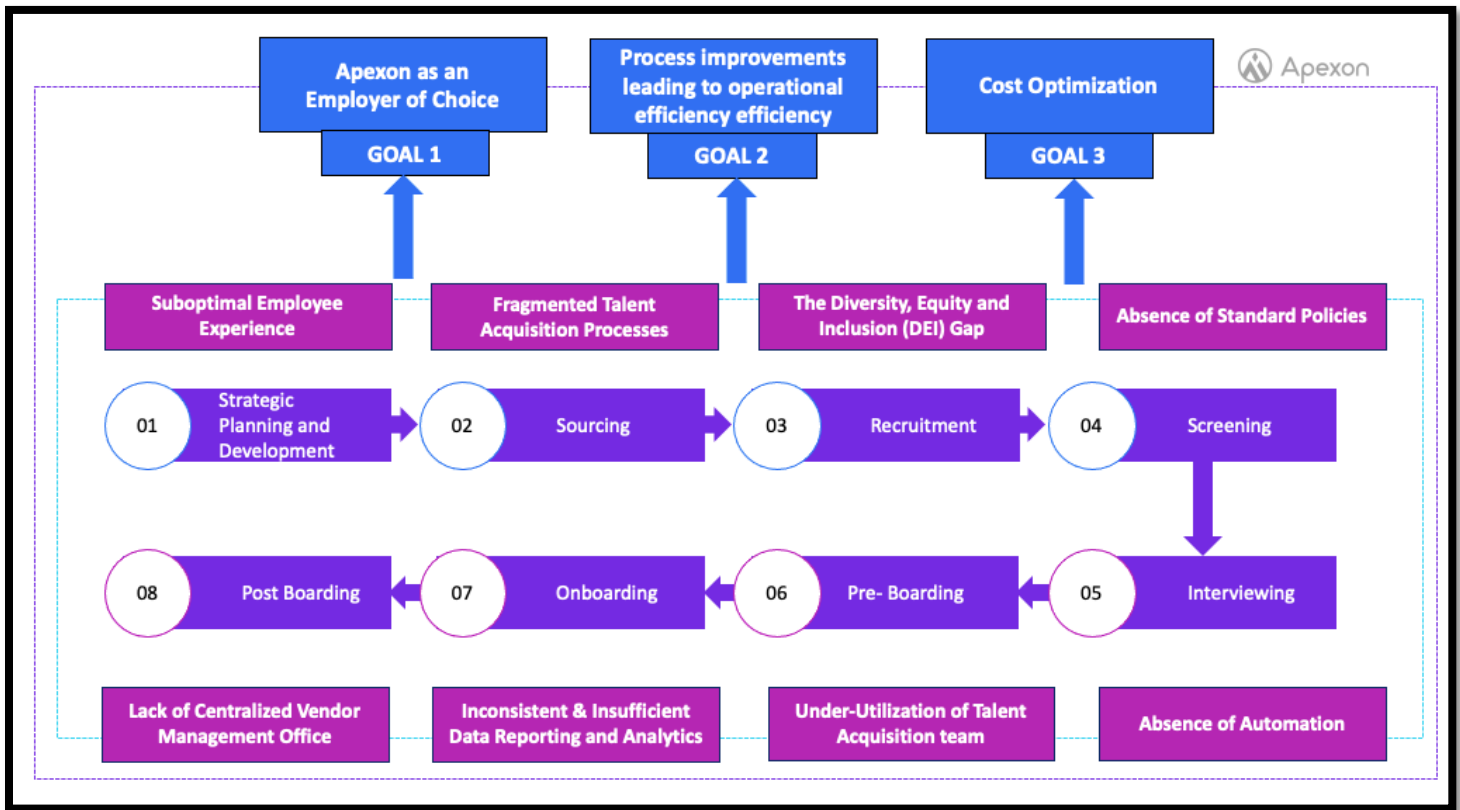
#### **8. Absence of Automation:**

Apexon's reliance on manual processes for transferring data from HRMS NEST to ATS Jobvite, margin calculations, and interview scheduling created bottlenecks, adversely affecting its "in-time" hiring goals. Furthermore, the failure to extract and leverage performance data from various recruitment tools compounded inefficiencies, impeding the overall recruitment momentum.



**Overview**

“Effective Talent Acquisition starts with a sound Talent Strategy: a conscious decision regarding what methods and approaches to use to identify, source & secure the best talent in the market” - Leslie Joyce



**Figure 1: Talent Acquisition Process, Challenges and Goals**

To mitigate the outlined challenges and elevate the talent acquisition strategy as well as the overall candidate and employee experience, the following Key Result Areas (KRAs) centered on **cost**-efficiency, **quality** enhancement, **speed** of hiring, and superior **employee experience**, all aimed at supporting and fulfilling the three (3) organization's strategic goals.

**GOAL 1- Apexon as an “Employer of Choice”**



**GOAL 2- Process improvements leading to operational efficiency.**

**GOAL 3- Cost Optimization**

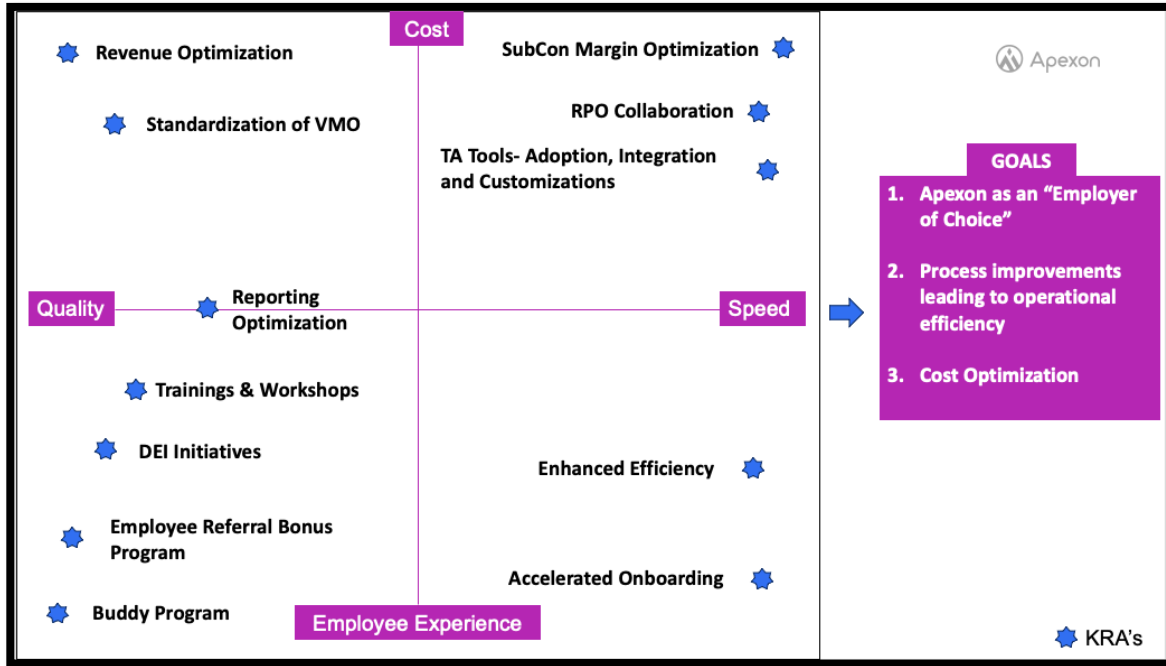


Figure 2: KRA's aligned to Organizational Goals

**GOAL 1- APEXON AS AN "EMPLOYER OF CHOICE"**



In the quest to fortify Employee Experience, Apexon placed strategic emphasis on the onboarding and assimilation of new hires automated via ATS in collaboration with the HR & Delivery Team. The introduction of the **Buddy Program** exemplifies a tailored welcoming approach, ensuring that each new member of the Apexon family is greeted with a personalized and supportive experience.

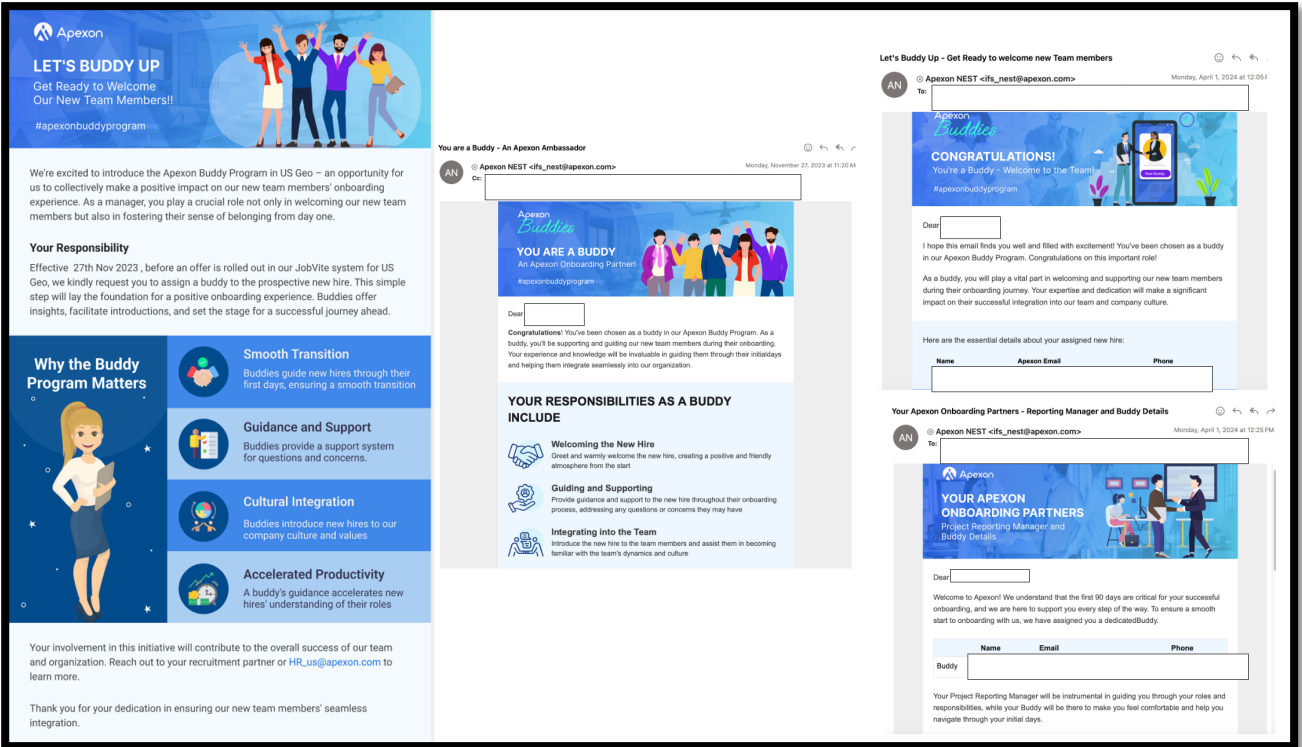


Figure 3: Apexon's Buddy Program

A dedicated one-stop information portal ensures seamless access to all necessary resources, enabling new employees to achieve accelerated productivity from day one in collaboration with HR, IT & Finance



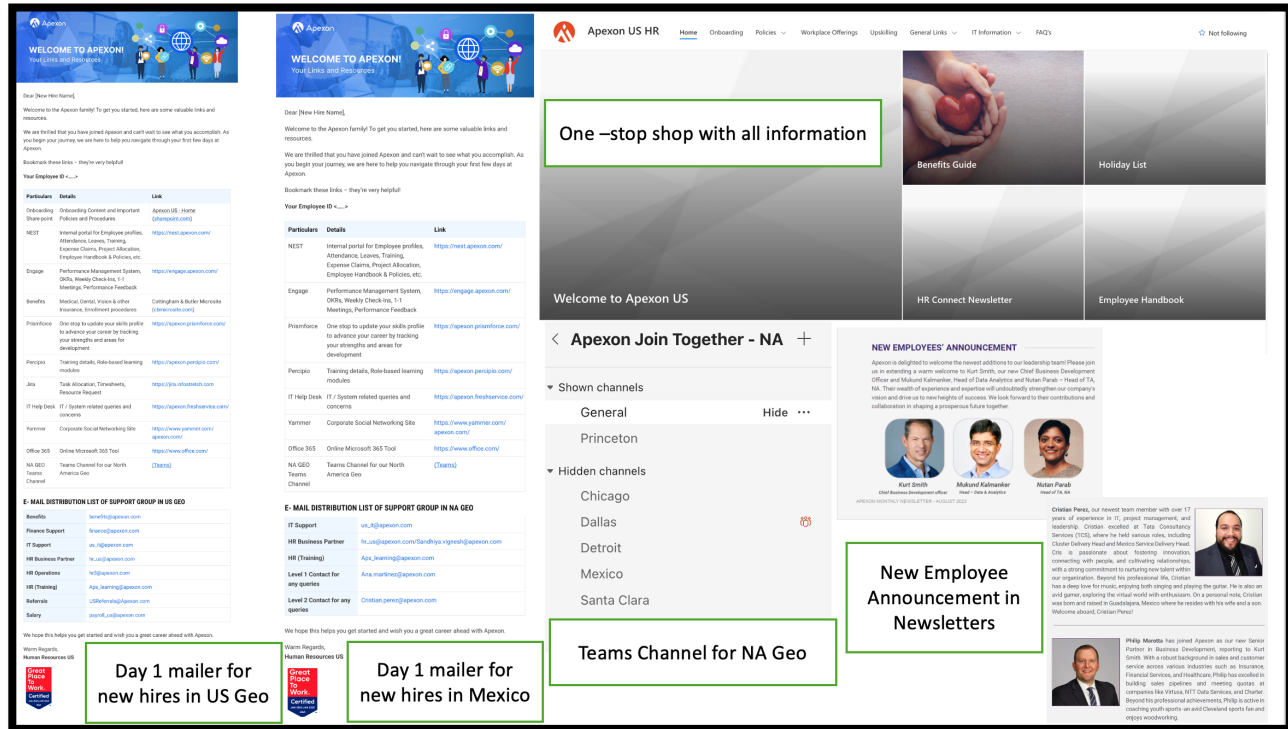


Figure 4: One-Stop Information Portal

- **Employee Referral Bonus Program (ERBP) & DEI Focus:** Apexon has unified its approach by establishing a consistent Employee Referral Bonus Program, underpinning its commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. This structured initiative empowers employees as brand advocates, incentivizing them to introduce diverse and skilled talent that echoes the company's core values and vision for an inclusive future.



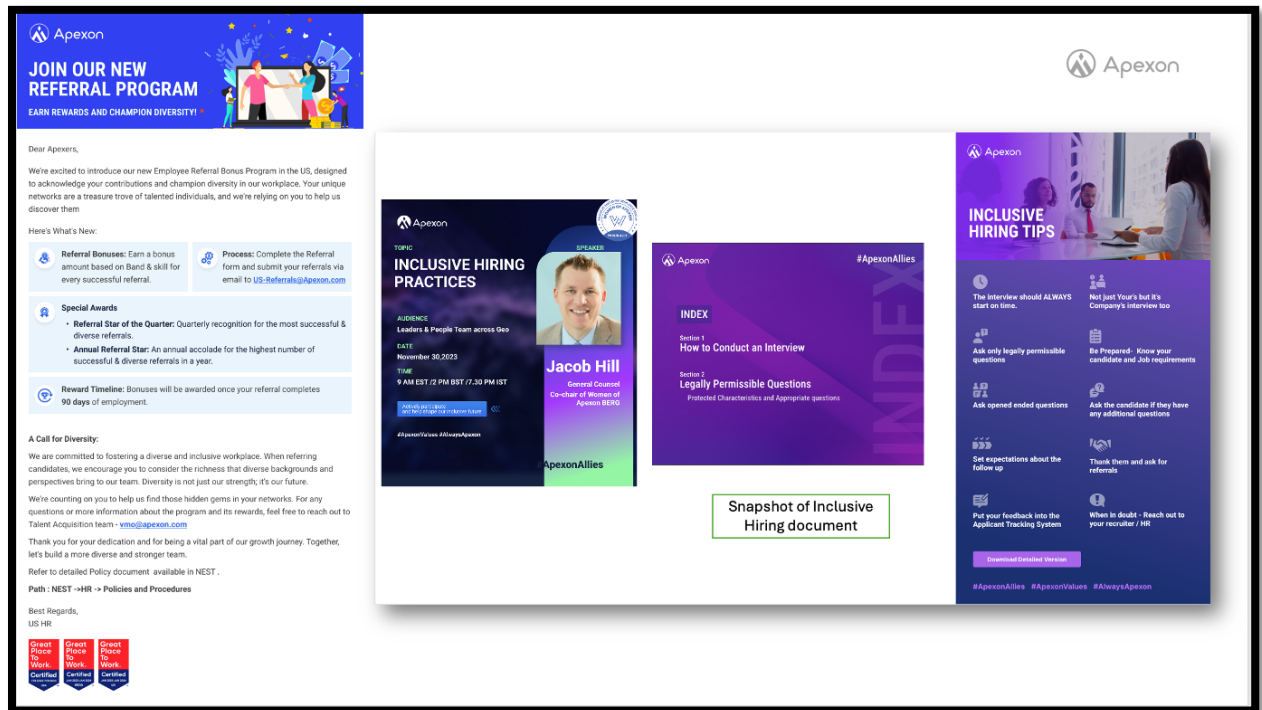


Figure 5: Referral Policy and Inclusive Hiring Practices

The Talent acquisition Team is committed on Inclusion & focused to incorporating great candidate experience throughout the hiring process.

**GOAL 2- PROCESS IMPROVEMENTS LEADING TO OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY**

Apexon's commitment to process enhancement for operational efficiency is evidenced by AI integration, ATS system customization and strategic collaborations with RPOs, resulting in automation of key hiring tasks, expediting hiring processes, improving Talent quality, achieving cost reductions, and enhancing user experience in North America.

This investment in professional development has enabled the TA Team to utilize best practices for attracting top talent and uphold the organizations' reputation as an employer of choice. Lastly, the Reporting Optimization Initiative solidifies this approach through standardized dashboards and metrics that enhance strategic decisions, ensuring data integrity, and facilitating performance accountability.



Figure 6: Talent Acquisition Team workshop

### GOAL 3- COST OPTIMIZATION

Apexon has harnessed a SharePoint tool for SubCon Margin Optimization, seamlessly integrating with ATS for cost-effective hiring while leveraging data analytics to fuel revenue growth and profitability. Strategic RPO partnerships and the standardization of Vendor Management Operations have significantly quickened hiring, optimized costs, and ensured uniformity in vendor performance, driving operational efficiency, and reducing liabilities.

#### **Design and Delivery**

A well-planned design and delivery model was built around the critical pillars outlined below, ensuring that the talent acquisition process remains agile, effective, and focused on delivering unparalleled value to both candidates and the organization as well.

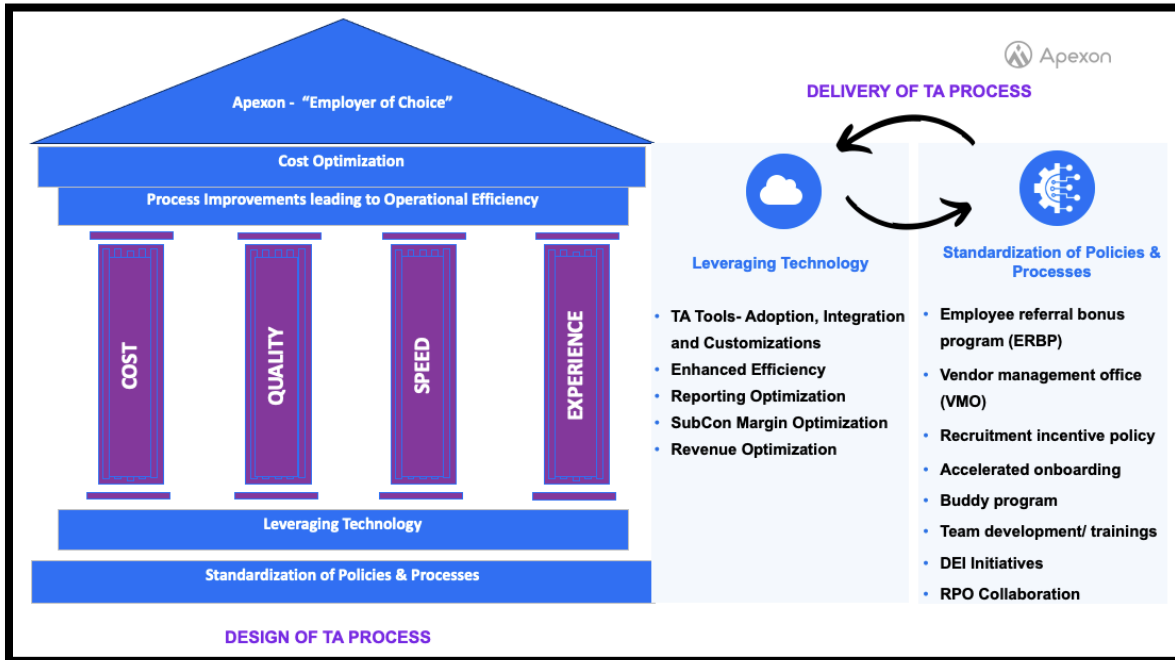


Figure 4: Design and Delivery of TA Process at Apexon

Apexon's Talent Acquisition (TA) process is based on strong foundation of Leveraging Technology and Standardizing Processes & Policies, which together form the blueprint for our operational excellence and innovative edge.

### 1. LEVERAGING TECHNOLOGY:

Apexon's TA processes have been transformed through the adoption of GenAI tools and automated systems. By deploying AI for candidate sourcing and utilizing Job Description Graders, we've enhanced the precision and inclusivity of our hiring. This technological prowess extends to automated margin calculations and buddy assignments, streamlining the recruitment lifecycle. The AI enhancements in our Applicant Tracking System (ATS) not only tailor the candidate experience but also provide robust analytics for decision-making.

#### A. TA Tools - Adoption, Integration & Customization:

##### • Adoption of GenAI tools:

The Talent Acquisition team leveraged AI-driven interviewing platforms such as Jobtwine, FloCareer, and HackerRank to provide intelligent feedback, minimize bias, and improve the quality of hires. Apexon's Talent



Acquisition Team utilized AI tools to optimize job descriptions for search engines.

**B. Automation of various TA process via ATS:**

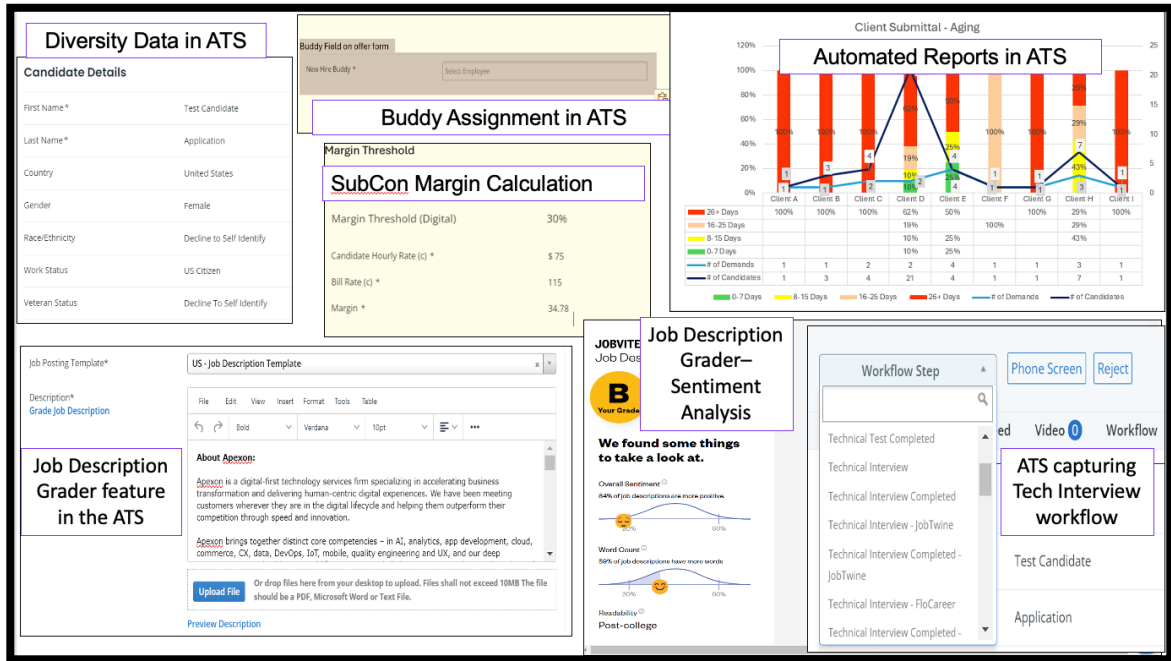


Figure 5: ATS Automation Capabilities at Apexon

- **Subcon Margin Automation:** Automated margin calculations and approval within ATS, enhancing speed and visibility in hiring.
- **Employee Referral Module Automation:** Simplified global referral process through ATS automation, broadening candidate reach.
- **Buddy Assignment Automation:** Streamlined integration of new hires with automated buddy assignments via ATS, promoting rapid acclimatization.
- **Centralized Communication Automation:** Enhanced team efficiency with automated communication tools like RingCentral within ATS.
- **Procure-to-Pay Process Automation:** Partnered with Finance, automated P2P with Oracle Netsuite, aligning financial operations with TA activities.
- **ATS Zero Click Intelligent Sourcing (ZTIS):** Deployed ZTIS for automated candidate matching, driven by job criteria.
- **ATS Job Description Grader:** Integrated JD Grader for bias identification and recruitment strategy enhancement.



- **ATS Career Sites Tool:** Implemented AI-driven personalization features for job seekers, optimizing candidate engagement.
- **ATS Sentiment Analysis:** Introduced sentiment analysis to evaluate candidate feedback for engagement quality.
- **DE&I Initiatives Automation:** Embedded DE&I aspects into ATS, automating inclusive practices in sourcing and applications.
- **Screening & Interviewing Process:** Automated systematic screening and interviewing workflows, including performance tracking through ATS.
- **HRMS Integration:** Internal HRMS integration for automated demand management
- **Enhancing Efficiency – Reports & Dashboards:** Automated insight generation into the duration of open job requisitions to prioritize recruitment actions.

Enabled consistent and effective decision-making through standardized ATS dashboards including Executive Board Dashboard and metrics captured via reports such as Aging Report, Daily Joiners Report, Recruitment Efforts lost Report.

### C. Vendor Management Process Automation

Apexon has revolutionized its Vendor Management approach, integrating end-to-end recruitment processes with the Applicant Tracking System (ATS) to fortify vendor requirement clarity, performance tracking, and recruitment efficiency.

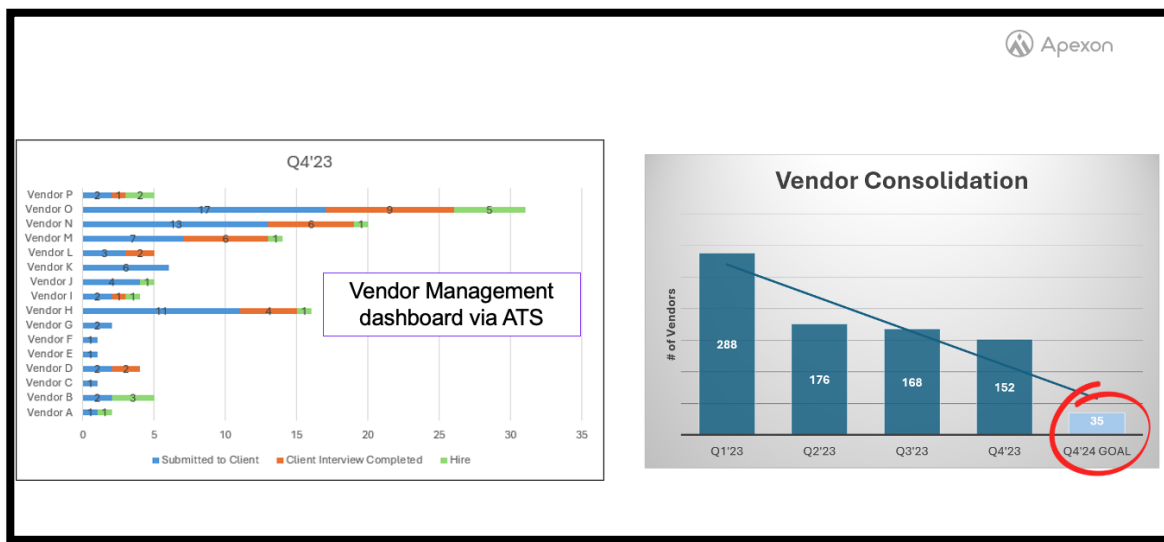


Figure 6: Vendor Management & Vendor Consolidation at Apexon



## 2. STANDARIZING PROCESSES & POLICIES:

The harmonization of policies across the organization reflects our unwavering dedication to consistency and efficiency. Our Centralized Employee Referral Bonus Program exemplifies this, encouraging a diverse array of referrals while promoting a culture of inclusivity and reward. Vendor management has been meticulously refined, with consolidated vendors and standardized agreements reducing cost and improving service quality.

- **Inclusive Hiring Practices:** Raised awareness of biases and stereotypes in recruiting for fairer candidate evaluations. Improved candidate journeys and company perception with welcoming, inclusive practices and tools like [AMBER](#).
- **Interview Panelists - Training & Feedback:** In collaboration with HR team, TA team at Apexon implemented comprehensive training for interview panelists, focusing on inclusive interviewing techniques and unconscious bias awareness. Formed diverse interview panels and set structured feedback processes for comprehensive candidate evaluations.
- **Employee Referral Bonus Program (ERBP):** Launched a centralized ERBP to incentivize employee-driven talent sourcing, optimizing cost savings and hiring quality.
- **Vendor Management Office (VMO):** Implemented standard processes for vendor onboarding, evaluation, and performance management. Consolidated the vendor base significantly, improving efficiency and candidate quality. Standardized MSAs and renegotiated contracts for greater profitability and legal protection. Increased supplier diversity by engaging with minority-certified vendors, enhancing diversity in talent sourcing.
- **Accelerated Onboarding:** Streamlined new hire integration and productivity with immediate access to resources and support through a centralized online platform and buddy assignments.
- **Team Development/Training:** Invested in comprehensive training programs to keep the TA team updated with industry best practices, empowering them to excel in their roles. Boosted productivity with Sapience analytics, providing actionable insights for decision-making and utilized Sapience to automate performance tracking, identifying areas for team improvement. Recognized and rewarded top performers





in the TA team, aligning incentives with diverse sourcing and candidate experience goals through streamlined Recruitment Incentive Policy

## Integration

The integration of talent acquisition with Apexon's broader talent management strategy has been pivotal in driving organizational synergy and workforce excellence through:

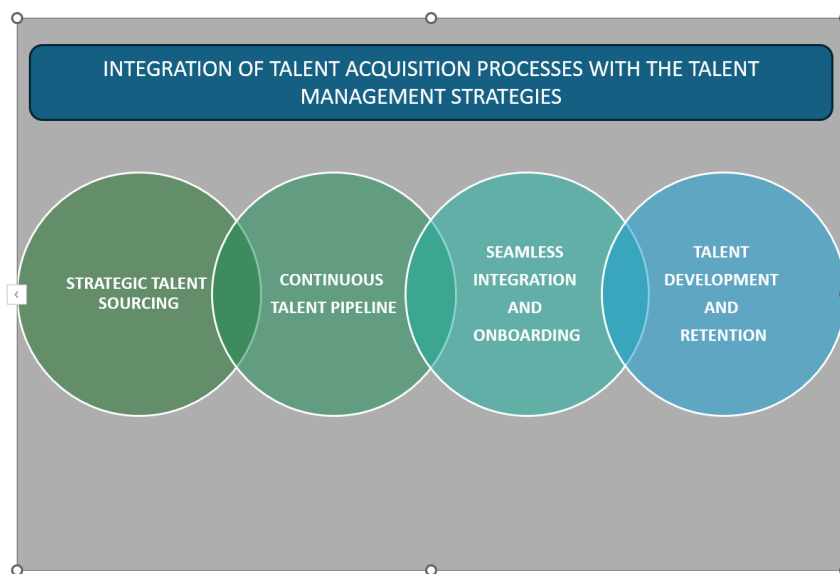


Figure 7: Integration of Talent Acquisition processes with Talent Management strategies

- **Strategic Talent Sourcing:** Directing recruitment to meet immediate and futuristic organizational talent requisites, with a keen focus on diversity and skill-specific sourcing.
- **Continuous Talent Pipeline:** Fostering a dynamic flow of talent ready for developmental initiatives, aligning new hires with opportunities for growth and internal mobility, enriching the talent pool.
- **Seamless Integration and Onboarding:** Ensuring new hires transition smoothly into the organizational fabric, imbibing Apexon's culture and values rapidly for immediate and effective engagement.
- **Talent Development and Retention:** Committing to the advancement and fulfillment of employees, nurturing a culture that values growth, thereby fortifying retention of a diverse and skilled workforce.





### Measurable Benefits

The post-merger phase led to entangled and ambiguous talent acquisition processes, resulting in chaos, revenue loss, and wasted efforts. To enhance efficiency, optimize costs, and increase the Talent Acquisition Team's productivity, it was crucial to streamline these processes.

In addressing the complexities within talent acquisition, Apexon prioritized problem areas by scrutinizing cost impact, growth potential, and market position. Cost-centric issues like high turnover rates demanded immediate action due to their extensive financial drain from recruitment and onboarding processes, prolonged vacancies, and ineffective recruitment strategies leading to resource wastage and productivity loss. Concurrently, obstacles impeding growth—such as limited workforce diversity and prevalent skills gaps—were targeted to ensure sustained expansion and innovation. Furthermore, recognizing the profound influence of talent acquisition on market competitiveness, the company meticulously refined recruitment methodologies and employer branding to strengthen its standing in the industry, thereby bolstering its ability to attract and retain top talent.

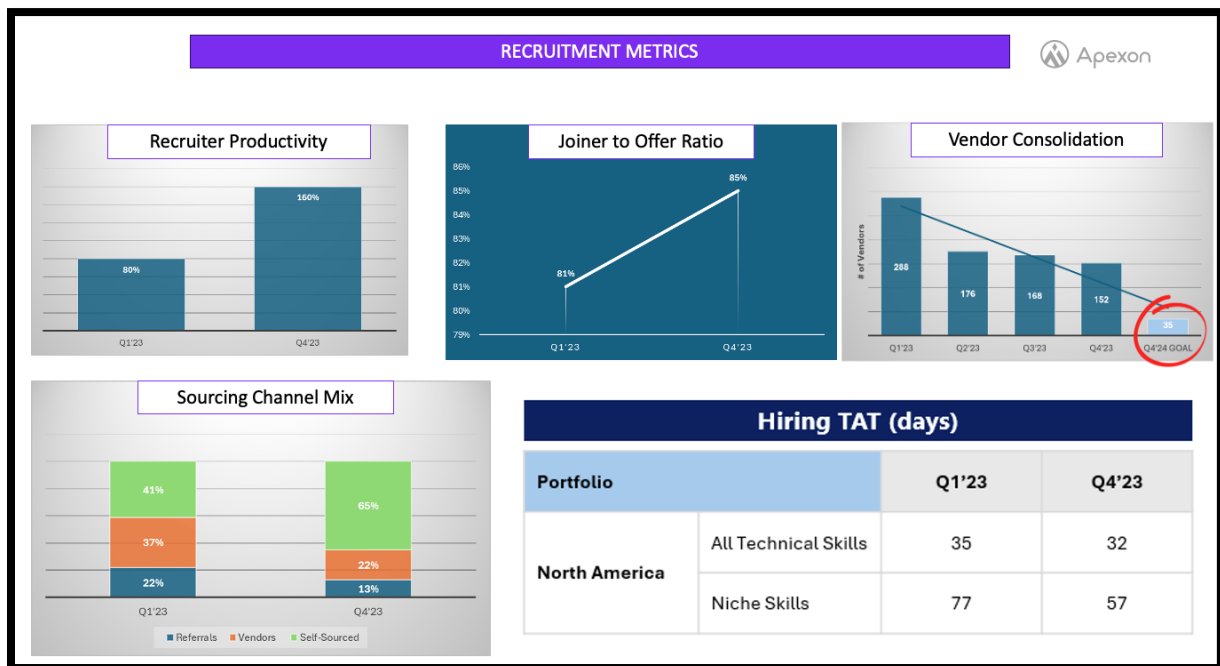


Figure 8: Recruitment Metrics

- **Hiring Success Metrics:**



- Improved the **joiner-to-hire ratio** from **81% in Q1 to 85% in Q4**, demonstrating effective offer acceptance and successful onboarding.
- Onboarding Experience increased from **72 to 80 ( [Amber](#) )**, reflecting the effectiveness of personalized induction and the introduction of a Buddy Program
- **Team Productivity:**
  - Doubled Talent Acquisition productivity reflecting a **100% increase** in efficient and aligned hiring processes.
- **Operational Efficiency Metrics:**
  - Cut down **Turnaround Time (TAT)** in North America from **35 days in Q1 to 32 in Q4**, showcasing faster and more agile talent acquisition.
  - Increased **in-house sourcing** from **41% in Q2 to 65% in Q4**, indicating a stronger utilization of internal resources for talent acquisition.
  - Reduced vendor dependency from 37% in Q2 to 22% in Q4, enhancing in-house recruitment capabilities and operational autonomy.
- **Cost Savings:**
  - Achieved a **27% annual reduction in hiring costs** through strategic contract management, optimizing recruitment expenditure.
  - Attained a **41% reduction in Talent Acquisition team size**, boosting efficiency and maintaining hiring targets with reduced costs.
- **Vendor Consolidation:**
  - Streamlined vendor database from **288 in Q1 to 152 in Q4**, resulting in better operational efficiency, candidate quality, and cost savings.

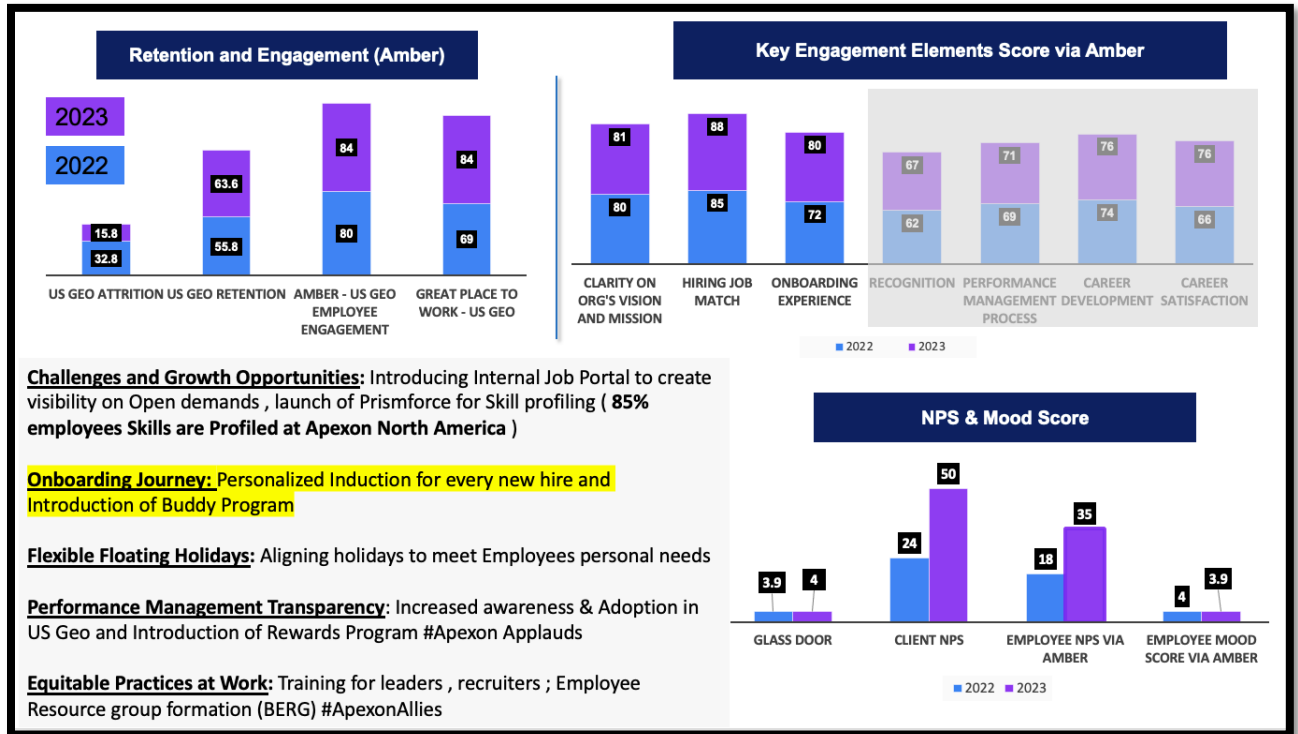


Figure 9: Candidate Experience to Employee Experience at Apexon

• **Candidate/Employee Experience:**

- Employee engagement surged with a 15% increase in [Great Place to Work® scores](#) and a 14-point rise in Employee NPS, signaling a boost in job satisfaction and organizational alignment.

**Overall**

*“Nothing we do is more important than hiring and developing people. At the end of the day, you bet on people, not on the strategies”- Lawrence Bossidy*

**KEY FINDINGS:**

**1) Standardization is the Key.**

Standardization across different stages of the talent acquisition process can streamline workflows and provide clear guidelines to the talent acquisition team. It will foster better communication & collaboration among the team



members. Standardized processes are scalable and hence can adapt to dynamic business needs.

**2) Data Analytics is the guiding principle.**

Leveraging Data Analytics can help an organization make informed decisions. Recruitment metrics can help identify bottlenecks, inefficiencies, track progress and measure success. Valuable insights from data analytics can help refine inadequacies and foster continuous improvement.

**3) Automation drives efficiency.**

Automation saves time, reduces costs, enhances efficiency & improves overall candidate experience.

By incorporating Standardization, Data Analytics & Automation in the Talent Acquisition process, an organization can achieve top talent and drive long term growth.

**LESSONS LEARNT:**

Apexon's strategic evolution has imparted crucial insights:

- Elevating the onboarding experience has become integral to reinforcing employer brand and improving retention.
- The standardization of recruitment practices has significantly enhanced team synergy and operational efficiency.
- Concentrated diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives have proven vital in cultivating a dynamic and inclusive workforce.
- The establishment of transparent talent acquisition policies has reinforced fairness and accountability in recruitment framework.
- By refining the talent acquisition roles, Organization has optimized its recruitment productivity.
- The centralization of Vendor Management Office has streamlined vendor relations, yielding cost savings and reducing risk.
- Leveraging data analytics has been instrumental in pinpointing areas for improvement and measuring the impact of strategic initiatives.



- Automation has transformed Organization’s talent acquisition, delivering time savings and reducing bias, underscoring their commitment to innovation and continuous improvement

Figure 10: [Great Place to Work Certified](#)

### **FUTURE OUTLOOK:**

Looking ahead, Apexon is crafting a talent acquisition landscape marked by cutting-edge personalization and a deepened commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion:

#### **1. Personalized Recruitment Journey with GenAI:**

Apexon is leveraging the prowess of GenAI to transform the recruitment journey into a bespoke experience for each candidate. By utilizing AI's analytical capabilities, the organization is poised to become the employer of choice, offering hyper-personalized feedback, matching candidates to roles that suit their unique skill sets, and nurturing their potential from first contact. This technology is not just a tool but a gateway to building meaningful connections, setting the stage for long-term engagement and positioning Apexon at the forefront of talent acquisition



innovation.



## 2. Deepened DEI Commitment with Returnship Programs:

- Apexon's dedication to DEI will intensify, with targeted programs aimed at increasing diversity in leadership roles and promoting a workplace that values diverse contributions.
- Apexon is also determined to take a proactive stance with the introduction of Returnship programs. These programs are designed to support individuals who are re-entering the workforce after a career break, such as parents returning from parental leave or those who have taken sabbaticals for personal or professional growth. By providing structured support, training, and mentorship, these Returnship programs aim to bridge the gap, ease the transition back into the workforce, and enrich the organization's talent pool with diverse perspectives and experiences. This strategic initiative not only reflects Apexon's inclusive culture but also enhances its competitive edge in attracting a multifaceted workforce.

**In the dynamic interplay of GenAI-fueled personalization and steadfast DEI principles, Apexon's talent acquisition strategy stands as a beacon of innovation, inclusivity, and strategic foresight, propelling the organization towards becoming an unparalleled employer of choice in an ever-evolving marketplace.**



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