

Vodafone calls on Eightfold

to achieve a skills-centric talent strategy



Industry: Telecommunications
Career site: jobs.vodafone.com/careers
Headquarters: Newbury, UK
Employees: 98,000+
ATS: SAP SuccessFactors
HRIS: SAP SuccessFactors

Eightfold Products: Talent Acquisition, Talent Management
Eightfold Capabilities: Personalized Career Site, Campaigns, Events, Jobs Intelligence Engine, Internal Mobility, Skills Assessment, Learning, Projects



“Eightfold puts skills at the core of the platform.”
Adrian Boruz, Senior Global Product Portfolio Manager – HR Systems

Vodafone HR's strategic priorities aim to accelerate the execution of its refreshed business strategy focused on Customer, Simplicity and Growth. One of its priorities has been to drive a culture transformation through simple, digital, and outcomes-focused people interventions to accelerate growth while continuing to digitize and simplify some of its core people processes. To bring this to life, the company sought a digital learning and career development platform to provide an intuitive and end-to-end people experience, powered by AI and anchored to skills. HR leaders now have a complete and current view of the skills in Vodafone's global talent community and can deliver personalized digital experiences to attract, upskill, and reskill talent in line with business objectives

The challenge

Since launching the UK's first mobile network in 1985, Vodafone's vision has been to improve people's lives through connectivity. This purpose has fueled Vodafone's growth from a traditional telecommunications company into a next-generation connectivity and digital services provider with operations in 21 countries across Europe and Africa.

HR has contributed to this transition by undertaking a global, multi-year transformation encompassing talent data, systems, processes, and culture. To effectively drive business outcomes, HR leaders knew that skills and skills intelligence had to be at the heart of their strategy to build a Future Ready Vodafone.

"We wanted to recruit for skills, and we wanted employees to think of their careers in terms of the skills they want to keep, develop, or grow," Adrian Boruz, senior global product portfolio manager – HR systems, explained.

Unfortunately, Vodafone had little visibility into the skills within its global talent community. Without this data, the company couldn't strategically upskill, reskill, or redeploy its 98,000-person workforce.

In addition, despite upgrading its core HR systems, the company lacked the tools to create engaging, personalized digital experiences for candidates and employees. This limited its ability to recruit, develop, and retain diverse talent with the skills needed to keep Vodafone at the forefront of a competitive, dynamic industry.



The solution

Recognizing the power of AI-based skills intelligence, Vodafone decided to integrate the Eightfold Talent Intelligence Platform into its cloud-based HR stack.

According to Boruz, Eightfold stood out during an extensive selection process because the platform provides a unified definition and understanding of skills for the entire talent lifecycle. “We really wanted an integrated platform and experience across talent acquisition, talent management, and learning. Skills are what glue these areas together, and Eightfold puts skills at the core of the platform,” he explained.

Boruz said other factors in Eightfold’s favor included the technical superiority of its AI, a commitment to using AI responsibly and ethically, and a willingness to partner with Vodafone to extend the value of its integrated talent platform.

Vodafone went live with Eightfold Talent Acquisition and Eightfold Talent Management in early 2022. The company phased its global rollout based on the readiness of local markets and continues to deploy new capabilities in three-month sprints.

“Eightfold democratizes talent. It gives recruiters and managers more access to talent, and it gives talent more visibility to roles and opportunities.”

Adrian Boruz, Senior Global Product Portfolio Manager – HR Systems

The results

14,000+

employees with a skills profile

Vodafone can devise data-driven talent strategies that align skills with business needs.

50%

decrease in time-to-hire

Vodafone stays agile and innovative by quickly filling roles with skilled talent.

67%

increase in learning hours per employee – the partnership between Eightfold and Blend playing a significant role

Employees are more engaged in growing their skills and careers at Vodafone.

Vodafone has realized significant value from Eightfold “both in terms of what we’ve accomplished to date and what it sets us up for in the future,” Boruz said. The company has achieved strong results in four talent capabilities critical to business success.

1. Talent Planning

Vodafone has improved talent planning by focusing on skills. Eightfold's AI continuously analyzes data from Vodafone's ATS and HRIS systems as well as publicly available sources. This gives Vodafone unprecedented insights into the skills a job requires and the skills an individual has or wants to develop over time.

Vodafone uses this skills intelligence to inform build-or-buy decisions and investments in reskilling, upskilling, and other development programs. With a deeper internal pipeline than it realized, the company can reduce its reliance on external hiring and pivot quickly by fortifying efforts to develop, redeploy, and retain existing employees.

With Talent Acquisition and Talent Management on the same platform, Vodafone can devise holistic talent strategies since both functions share a common skills framework for matching people with jobs, whether for recruiting or internal mobility.



2. Talent Attraction and Acquisition

Vodafone has used Eightfold to take a skills-driven approach to talent acquisition that has slashed time-to-hire by 50% and reduced cost-per-hire by 50%.

Vodafone's new [Eightfold-powered career site](#) personalizes the candidate experience by presenting the most relevant job openings given a job seeker's skills. The interactive global site has increased engagement with the Vodafone brand and boosted the volume and diversity of applications. In addition to improving the experience on the career site, Vodafone has spent time simplifying the application form resulting in a 77% increase in the application completion rate. All of these improvements have resulted in a 101 point increase in candidate (internal and external) NPS.

Vodafone's streamlined talent acquisition process has also benefited recruiters. Tasked with hiring 16,000 people annually, they can quickly engage the top candidates on stack-ranked lists generated by Eightfold. Recruiters have more time to proactively nurture a pipeline of diverse

and high-potential talent. And with better information on the organization's skills needs, they can act as strategic talent advisors to hiring managers.

3. Talent Development and Learning

Eightfold has helped Vodafone make skills the guiding force behind talent development, learning, and internal mobility by creating visibility of skills and opportunities – a move that will improve employee retention while fulfilling immediate and future business needs.

Vodafone integrated Eightfold with technologies from SAP SuccessFactors and TalenTeam to deliver a purposeful, personalized learning experience. The solution, which recommends courses based on an individual's skill set and career goals, has increased learning hours per employee by 67%. Moreover, nearly 500 employees have already transitioned to new roles at Vodafone after going through reskilling—a testament to Eightfold's ability to unlock latent workforce potential.

Vodafone also piloted Project Marketplace to cultivate and share skills through experiential learning. The win-win solution empowers employees to gain relevant skills outside their daily work, while managers can quickly resource projects critical to the business.

4. Diversity and Inclusion

Since integrating Eightfold into its HR processes, Vodafone has made meaningful advances in its commitment to diversity and inclusion. Vodafone has exceeded expectations in terms of the number of women hired overall as well as women hired in leadership positions. This can be credited to:

- The ability to access a larger, more diverse talent community, including people who might not have been considered before
- Matching algorithms that level the playing field by ignoring personal characteristics like gender or ethnicity
- Explainable AI which helps diverse talent overcome imposter syndrome by providing proof of a strong job match
- CV masking which mitigates unconscious bias throughout the hiring process



The future

Vodafone now views and engages its global talent community through the lens of skills rather than jobs. As the company continues to attract and develop talent with the integrated Eightfold platform, its skills intelligence will grow even richer and more powerful.

Looking ahead, Vodafone sees opportunities to use Eightfold in succession planning, employee development plans, and improving candidate experience further through mobile-friendly communication channels and more personalized interactions. The company is also excited to further its diversity agenda by using Eightfold's generative AI product, Copilot, to create unbiased job descriptions.

"When you step back and ask, 'How does HR contribute to achieving our business priorities?' it's about attracting, engaging, developing, and retaining diverse talent – and doing this in a way that shows tangible return on investment. Eightfold, fundamentally, is part of the ecosystem that helps us do all that," Boruz concluded.

About Eightfold AI

Eightfold AI's market-leading Talent Intelligence Platform™ helps organizations retain top performers, upskill and reskill their workforce, recruit talent efficiently, and reach diversity goals. Eightfold's patented deep learning artificial intelligence platform is available in more than 155 countries and 24 languages, enabling cutting-edge enterprises to transform their talent into a competitive advantage. For more information, visit www.eightfold.ai.