Case Study: 2020 HR Tech Awards

Each year, technology companies across HR, talent, and learning apply for the HR Tech Awards to demonstrate the value they bring to their clients and to the broader industry. These case studies represent a sampling of the capabilities from the award winners in our program.
Learn more about the HR Tech Awards.

Company Name:	15Five
Website URL:	www.15five.com
Insert Logo (JPG/PNG):	
Key Customers:	Pendo, HubSpot, Credit Karma, Capital One
Category:	Talent Management: Best SMB-Focused Solution

About The Company

15Five is a leading provider of people management software that not only guides employee growth and development but empowers people to become their best selves. Through continuous feedback, objectives (OKR) tracking, recognition, 1-on-1s, and 360° reviews, 15Five delivers everything a manager needs to maintain visibility and impact employee performance. 15Five is a top-rated performance management software on G2 and has won top culture and workplace awards, including ranking #3 Best Workplace in the nation on Glassdoor. Over 2,200 forward-thinking companies use the solution to bring out the best in their people.

Problems The Technology Solves

What organizations need most from their people now are aligned with what these people want for themselves. People want to work in an environment where they can truly thrive and put their unique strengths and talent to work for a mission they believe in. 15Five was made to revolutionize the employee feedback system and help employees come to work excited, and bring their best selves to work.

15Five is an HR solution built on their Best-Self Management philosophy that allows organization to create highly engaged, high performing organizations through their software, online educational programs, and consulting. They offer the only people management software that is integrated with research-backed educational programs for the entire team; culture design; leadership coaching; and development services that work together to guide companies towards becoming world-class workplaces.

To fulfill basic human needs, people have to cultivate a deeper sense of belonging and self-esteem. 15Five allows managers to understand each employee's unique set of talents, passions, and perspectives, and align them to make their greatest contribution possible. High care for people leads to their high care for performance.

Using their full solution, organizations can:

- Establish stronger relationships between managers and employees using Check-ins and 1-on-1s,
- Help all employees recognize each other for the big and small things with the High Five feature,
- Have quarterly or bi-annual Best-Self Reviews™, which are lightweight and easy to administer and complete because they can pull data from the 15Five Weekly Check-In,
- Help people achieve their goals quarter over quarter using OKRs,
- And support managers to bring out the best in themselves and others through their Best-Self Academy courses.

15Five also solves the inherent challenges of managing remote and distributed teams. The Objectives and Check-In features confirm priorities between a manager and their team to enable high performance, productivity, and efficiency, and the High-Five feature can help combat isolation and disengagement that result from feeling unrecognized and underappreciated.

There have been well over 5 million High Fives given in 15Five since the feature was rolled out in 2016.

Client Case Study

Envato is a family-owned company that supports a global community of digital creatives, from a digital asset marketplace, to a creative subscription service. Envato is a truly values-led company and as they're continuing to grow, their biggest challenge has been ensuring that individuals across the company rise to the challenge of being outcomes-focused, without compromising the core values Envato was built on. Rebecca Covington, the Organizational Development Manager at Envato, reached out and shared that, she thinks, "15Five is really going to come into its own as we start to build out our performance culture and hold people a little more accountable, without losing our Envato magic."

While enabling meaningful conversations and recognition have been identified as critical to Envato's ability to manage performance through clarity of expectations, these weren't initially thought to be the company's primary drivers for employee performance.

Rather, Envato thought its main challenge was aligning OKRs across the company by cascading goals from Leadership down to individuals, which it was thought would create a connection to purpose and mission.

"One of the key things I loved about 15Five is that when you do your 15Five Check-in, you have to update your goals. There's the ability to have wins and challenges and goals show up in one place when you do your quarterly review," said Covington. Along with this, a major reason Envato decided to go down the path of implementing 15Five was the simplicity of the product and how immediately helpful the majority of the company found it to be. "Our executive team has been fully on board and really loving 15Five. Our managers and teams are giving that same feedback. We never get feedback like that about HR systems." When Envato implemented 15Five, their focus was still on aligning goals. But as the rollout process has continued, their primary focus has shifted to empowering meaningful conversations and recognition, which the company has found helpful for establishing a connection to mission and purpose for employees.

One of the biggest hurdles to achieving clarity of expectations at Envato has been defining the company's long-term vision as it grows. But the company has found that as leaders continue to communicate the vision, employees are motivated to meet and exceed clear expectations. In turn, leaders gain clarity on how to hold each other and employees accountable for performance and delivering outcomes.

Envato sees 15Five helping it achieve this cultural growth through a unique performance management philosophy by enabling more meaningful conversations through 15Five's Weekly Check-in and 1-on-1s, creating more transparency, visibility, and clarity of expectations.

"I see 15Five helping set a clear path for our leaders on how to have the best conversations that will ultimately help people be their best-selves, because they will be having more coaching-based conversations about development opportunities and strengths."

15Five is also helping Envato uphold its values through better recognition of others with the High Fives feature in 15Five. In just six months, Envato employees had given nearly 14,400 High Fives to each other.

After conducting its most recent engagement survey, employee sentiment around feeling recognized for good work had risen 15%, which Rebecca believes is attributable to High Fives.

In addition to improving recognition and meaningful conversations, Envato is equipping managers with the skills necessary to be great people leaders, which will help the company uphold its values and drive higher performance. To help, Envato is rolling out 15Five's Best-Self Certification course through the Best-Self Academy, a learning platform based on 15Five's Best-Self Management philosophy, which emphasizes creating the right context for people to be and become their best selves at work and in life. "The Best-Self Academy is going to be such an integral part of our manager fundamentals program. And obviously, that then just helps us explain why 15Five is such a crucial part of managers' roles," Rebecca said.

Rebecca sees 15Five as a partner with values and a mission that aligns extremely well with Envato's values. "What I love about 15Five is that they've set great foundations and have a clear, thoughtful vision for what they're trying to achieve. How I see this playing out is that all the improvements they make are consistent with their vision, which has meant that, as the platform has developed, it has remained enjoyable and simple to use. It's brilliant for us as our philosophy on performance is so aligned with 15Five, so it feels like they've been reading our minds every time they release a new feature!"

About Lighthouse Research & Advisory

Lighthouse Research & Advisory is a modern, independent analyst firm dedicated to setting the standard for excellence in talent, learning, and HR with practical research and a hands-on approach. By providing compelling research and actionable insights, our team enables HR, learning, and talent leaders to deliver more value to the business. Our research examines competitive practices, cutting-edge technologies, and innovative strategies.

Ben Eubanks is the Chief Research Officer at Lighthouse, providing insights for today's talent leaders and vendor partners. He works with practitioners from areas across the HCM spectrum, delivering high-quality research, insights, and advisory services to enable better business performance. His book, Artificial Intelligence for HR, was published in 2018.

Prior to joining Lighthouse, Ben worked as a researcher, writer, and speaker for nearly more than 10 years, focusing on learning, talent acquisition, and talent management. During his tenure as a researcher, he has published more than 1,000 reports, case studies, and articles in addition to providing advisory services to executives from some of the largest and most respected organizations in the world.

He also has hands-on experience working as an HR executive, leading both strategic and tactical talent practices and giving his research a distinctly practical perspective. Ben has interviewed business leaders from notable organizations such as Southwest Airlines, IBM, H&R Block, McDonald's, AARP, and AlliedUniversal in his role as the host of We're Only Human, a podcast focused on the intersection of people, technology, and the workplace. In addition, he founded and operates upstartHR.com, a community serving HR leaders that has reached more than one million readers since its inception.