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# HR TECH AWARDS

*powered by lighthouse research & advisory*

**TALENT ACQUISITION**

BEST COMPREHENSIVE SOLUTION

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**2022**

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**LEVER**

## Case Study: 2022 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.](#)

<b>Company Name:</b>	Lever
<b>Website URL:</b>	<a href="https://www.lever.co/">https://www.lever.co/</a>
<b>Insert Logo (JPG/PNG):</b>	 The logo for Lever, featuring a stylized grey icon of a lever on the left and the word "LEVER" in a bold, sans-serif font on the right.
<b>Key Customers:</b>	Netflix, Spotify, Atlassian, KPMG, and Nielsen

### About the Company

For a long time, hiring was a transactional process: moving from resume to interview, interview to offer, offer to first day in the office. In this world, applicant tracking systems supported traditional, inbound hiring needs.

But today's talent acquisition isn't a transaction. It's a dialog. A network of relationships among people — candidates, recruiters, hiring managers, teams, and executives that nourish the health of a company, equally. And like any relationship, it calls for a rich and complex discovery of shared values and meaningful communication. Do we understand each other's needs? Are we a good fit? Where are we going? How can we get there together?

In this world — the world of human-to-human hiring — ATS isn't enough.

So Lever began, like most businesses do, with a mission to solve the problem from the ground up. We created the first natively integrated ATS + CRM platform — a complete talent acquisition solution to enable relationship-based hiring at scale.



Lever contains several features that, when used together, harmoniously grow people pipelines for active and passive roles, build authentic and long-lasting relationships, and most importantly, source and hire the right people. LeverTRM features allow leaders to scale and grow their people pipeline, build authentic and long-lasting relationships, and source the right people to hire. Lever Analytics provides customized reports with data visualization, see offers completed and interview feedback, and more, to inform strategic decisions between hiring managers and executives alike.

In 2016 and on, many industry influencers claimed that the ATS was “dead”, and that the need for ATS and CRMs to combine and work together was high. Back in 2012 when Nate and Lever’s co-founders started their research to fill a market gap they knew that the way people were hiring talent wasn’t cutting it anymore. The solutions out there were not fitting the needs that they had. We took that approach and grew it further, innovating the way ATS’ and CRMs worked together. We exemplify user research and leverage existing market research to inform our product strategy in the way that we message and talk about our products. And that was before the “ATS is dead” conversation grew four years later...

Lever’s goal is to uplevel the effectiveness of talent acquisition teams around the world. We believe that we can provide a better solution for talent acquisition teams to be able to do their job more effectively and increase their strategic value at the organization. The way that we support the growth of the SaaS industry in general is that we’re upleveling the productiveness and effectiveness of talent acquisition teams and their companies can grow faster because they’re hiring the talent they need to fuel their growth. A good majority of our customers are currently SaaS companies, so if they continue to grow and we are supporting them in their growth, we are creating a full circle to scale the SaaS industry as a whole.

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## Problem(s) Your Technology Solves

LeverTRM provides natively integrated ATS and CRM capabilities in one platform, empowering talent acquisition teams with data and solutions to create scalable talent strategies.

Lever saw the need to build a tool that supports talent acquisition teams to scale company growth. Talent acquisition teams needed a way to improve strategy and tactical hiring experiences, including the candidate experience, a way to integrate and scale seamlessly into their tech stack, and a way to deliver actionable insights across departments in a single place. Currently, many talent acquisition teams used disparate ATS and CRM systems and had to piece together their own data to truly understand team



performance. This was not time efficient or accurate, and was difficult to compile. This data story wasn't built for long-term scalability and weakened the potential from talent acquisition teams and business growth.

Built from the conviction that responsibility for recruiting extends well beyond the HR function, LeverTRM draws the entire organization together to effectively source, nurture, interview and hire top talent through collaboration. It is a fully featured applicant tracking system (ATS) with features built to increase efficiency and hiring manager collaboration through automation, increased transparency into the hiring process, scheduling feature, video interview solutions, and more. It's also a fully featured candidate relationship management system (CRM) a sourcing-automation product designed to proactively and personally engage with candidates at scale. As the candidate database scales, customers can easily search and identify candidates they have previously engaged with for future opportunities.

Talent acquisition teams using LeverTRM have noted that it keeps their organization in lockstep with the evolution of work, streamlines recruiting tasks, improves hiring experiences, provides one complete source of truth, and adapts to meet the new needs and challenges with hiring. LeverTRM supports achieving DEI goals, creating proactive hiring strategies, and makes hiring consistent and scalable.

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## Client Case Study

One of our customers is Talend, a company that delivers trusted data to businesses around the globe to help them make better, more informed decisions.

Their hiring managers were facing an almost impossible challenge. On one hand, they're asked to satisfy their business's "need for speed"—filling roles quickly to meet growth demands. While on the other hand, getting to know future employees takes time. Where others might see an impossible contradiction, Talend's recruitment team embraced an opportunity. Jon Hehir, Global People Marketing Manager at Talend, explains: "We began taking an almost 'sales-like' approach to hiring. We asked ourselves: How do we find hooks that resonate with the talent we're after? How do we build a

relationship with great candidates even if we don't have a job for them right now? How do we keep them interested in future roles?"

This mindset shift was a turning point for Talend. If the talent acquisition (TA) team could preemptively seek out, engage, and nurture future talent, they'd have top candidates in the pipeline as the need arose.



The challenge then became logistical, according to VP of Talent Acquisition, Lance Sapera: “The thought process was that we should get to know our top candidates. If we hire them—great! But if we don’t, they might be good for Talend in the future. So, how do we stay connected with them and have them readily identifiable and findable the next time a similar role—or maybe a better role—becomes available?”

At the same time, Shawna Mathe, Senior Manager of Global Operations, was solving a different challenge: how to use recruitment tools to foster company-wide diversity. “It’s a candidate-driven market. Diversity is being demanded by our employees and the people we’re interviewing. We can’t risk losing candidates because we’re not pivoting,” she says. With these needs identified, the final hurdle was finding the best platform. But none of the Candidate Relationship Management (CRM) software nor Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) they tried had these capabilities... until Talend partnered with Lever.

Because LeverTRM is the first and only talent acquisition platform to provide natively integrated ATS and CRM capabilities in one product, the platform gives Talend’s TA team a single place to source, engage, and hire new talent:

- Sourcing automation empowers Talend to find the right person for each role without hunting on LinkedIn.
- Recruiting CRM gives the TA team a complete history of every candidate and the ability to filter each candidate by job or where they are in the recruitment pipeline.
- Reporting delivers meaningful analytics at a glance, including historic time to fill and overall diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) company health.

Leveraging Lever has enabled Talend to transform the recruitment process top-to-bottom. Benefits include:

### **1. Building a list of top-tier talent**

Jon finds it puzzling how many recruiters are willing to drop 2 or 3 final-stage candidates (i.e., “silver medalists”) after a role is filled. Lever empowers Talend to continue nurturing these “silver medalists” until a similar or better position opens up.

He shares an example: “A recent hire was a ‘silver medalist’ 3 times. One day, we created a new role that was perfect for him, and he was quick to accept the role. Lever enabled us to keep the conversation going the entire time.”

### **2. Maintaining long-term relationships with candidates**



Talend's TA team created a "consider for future roles" tag within LeverTRM. When a candidate demonstrates that they'd be a great fit at a later date, recruiters add this tag alongside other helpful identifiers such as "role" and "location."

Recruiters also add notes on what made that candidate stand out and why they weren't hired the first time. This makes it easy for other team members to connect with the candidate and carry on the conversation at a later date.

"Talend is committed to internal mobility, referrals, and nurtured candidates. Leveraging these talent pools means fewer than 1/4 of our roles require us to start from square one. When you're resource-limited, that's how you win," Lance says.

### **3. Eliminating cold outreach**

The Global Talent Engagement Lead, Nath Hollis, has an ambitious goal: eliminating cold email recruitment altogether. Before Lever, that would have been impossible. But with so many candidates in the pipeline, his goal is quickly becoming a reality.

"The traditional process is long: speak to a hiring manager. Figure out what they want. Go to LinkedIn. Do a massive search. Boil it down. Reach out to people. Wait for them to respond. Get them on the phone. Then, finally, begin the process," he says.

"With Lever, it's simple: Click on a candidate that was previously a 'silver medalist.' Call them up. You already have everything you need to recruit that candidate."

### **4. Gaining EEO and DEI insights**

Being a publicly-driven company that services global customers, Talend takes Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) seriously. DEI reporting helps Talend understand diversity at the top of the funnel and track potential bias throughout the recruiting process.

Shawna explains, "Because of Lever's robust reporting, we're able to gather and communicate important EEO and DEI information. The platform's flexibility enables us to track it from a global perspective. Giving people access to that data is incredibly powerful."

In 8 months, Talend hired 23 "silver medalists." Each candidate applied for one position, only to later be offered another role within the company. Nurturing each candidate through Lever has had a dramatic impact on Talend's average time to fill.



“With ‘silver medalists,’ our average time to fill is 32 days—over 4 business weeks faster than hiring someone new. That makes a huge difference,” Lance says.

Before Lever, Talend’s time to fill was 59 days, which Jon describes as a better-than-average rate. With Lever, they’ve reduced that time by nearly 46%. Now, some hires are so quick, the end-to-end process is done within days.

“Last month we hired one candidate within 48 hours—from that initial call to the role being filled. It was so fast that Jon wasn’t sure if we should record the time to fill because it lowered the average so dramatically!” Nath laughs.

“It’s true. But it was a legitimate time to fill,” Jon says. “But even if we take that case out of the equation, our average is still around 35 days. It’s still a month lower than our previous time to fill.”

Employees and candidates are thrilled with the steps Talend is taking, and excited by the opportunity to work for a forward-thinking company. In 2021, Talend’s EEO and Global Diversity Survey averaged a high 91% response rate.

“We’re VERY happy to have the diversity survey launched globally. It’s definitely allowing us to track and measure what our diversity looks like as we monitor conversions and hires,” Shawna says. As for big-picture impact, the ability to quickly recruit new talent and nurture relationships enables Talend to stay agile, even against large competitors.

“How does a company compete against giants to win top talent? For us, it’s about building a relationship with the people we’ve identified and engaged with, whom we know might be right for Talend at some point in the future,” Lance says.

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## Key Differentiators

Lever is a leading Talent Acquisition Suite that makes it easy for talent teams to reach their hiring goals and to connect companies with top talent. Lever is the industry’s only platform that provides all talent acquisition (TA) leaders with complete applicant tracking systems (ATS) and robust candidate relationship management (CRM) capabilities in a single platform, LeverTRM (talent relationship



management). We built LeverTRM in 2012 to bridge the critical gap between traditional ATS and CRM systems.

Lever Analytics is a key differentiator within the Lever solution, as it provides leaders with the ability to see the end-to-end pipeline and each step of the candidate to company interaction. This helps leaders uncover tactical and strategic insights that not only track towards strategic initiatives, but also strengthens relationships with hiring managers and elevates themselves from being a more reactive department to a proactive, strategic, and revenue generating team.

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## The Company Behind the Technology

Many teams faced over the past year this one question: how do we make sure people care and feel supported to be productive and mentally/physically well? At Lever, we wanted to better understand the unique needs each of our employees had in the past year, so we selected a randomized sample of people to meet for a listening tour to hear their various situations. This really took into account the special circumstances our employees had and what they were dealing with on a day-to-day basis. We ended up doing a complete overhaul of our benefits and perks plan after listening to the various needs of our employees. We were able to adjust our benefits to meet these needs including ergonomic set-up stipends, WFH and internet reimbursement plans, a monthly stipend that helps cover babysitter, dog walkers, and grocery delivery fees. We additionally doubled down on healthcare and mental health resources for our employees. We ensured that every employee had access to virtual care and a stipend for accessing therapy, counseling, classes for stress reduction, and more. We also introduced Carrot, a family planning benefit program with a lifetime reimbursement. In our listening tours, we found that this was highly requested by many employees, so we wanted to offer a benefit to help employees achieve their goals of starting, or growing, a family, no matter where they are in their family planning journey.

At Lever, we've taken care to make sure diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) is a core part of how we operate and not using it as a "splashy" set of activities separated from core processes, and we've done this since Day 1. This includes how we approach job descriptions, go about our performance and compensation reviews, provide support to Employee Resource Groups (ERGs), and seemingly small, but very important, actions like encouraging employees to put their pronouns in their email signature and Slack profile. We talk about these initiatives, why we do them, and our remaining gaps with candidates



openly, not only to convey how deeply DEI is rooted in our culture, but also to make sure that our candidates are aligned with these values. We also increased the diversity of our own executive team,

and instated specific recruiting pipeline diversity goals as hiring picked up this year. Stats on our progress on these efforts can also be seen here: <https://www.lever.co/diversity-and-inclusion/>.

We additionally spent time crafting virtual experiences for employees to stay connected like virtual movie viewing parties, additional social Slack channels, and a virtual retreat with optional local in-person activities (outdoors in accordance with local guidelines).

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## 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 Principal Analyst 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.

