



VERSION 1

Driving Growth Through Continuous Skill Development



A market leader

Version 1 is a market leader in Digital, Data and Cloud Services, and Software Asset Management. Founded in 1996, Version 1 has always maintained an innovation edge as a preferred IT Innovation Partner and continues to be on the forefront of disruptive technology. To provide their customers with the highest quality solutions and services, Version 1 partners with global technology leaders, such as Amazon Web Services, Microsoft Cloud, Oracle, and Red Hat. Since its inception, Version 1 has demonstrated substantial year-over-year growth, reaching \$140+ million in revenue, 2000+ employees across the UK, Ireland, and Northern Ireland, and has a 98% customer retention rate. To deliver extraordinary services and results, Version 1 prides itself on its greatest areas of strength: their customers, people, and company.

The challenge to stay on top

In order to be at the forefront of disruptive technology and keep up with the growing requirements of IT and their customers' needs, Version 1's employees must develop and maintain the skill, knowledge, and experience to prove their competence to sell their services and effectively respond to tenders. As one of the fastest growing IT services teams in Europe in a rapidly changing industry, Version 1 needed the right solutions in place to scale their employees' professional development, and accurately and transparently understand who is equipped to join and lead a project today and in the future.

In search of a solution

Version 1 began their search for a solution in 2018. At the time, they had a manual process for managing their employees' skills and career development, which provided no visibility into required skills, certifications, and career progressions for employees. As IT requirements continued to evolve, Version 1 needed to prove that their employees' credentials could service their customers, while internally they needed a formal process to provide transparency to both employees and managers. Out of this pressure, Version 1 found TalentGuard and soon their award-winning professional development, Pathways, model was born.



PATHWAYS

Pathways is Version 1's career development framework that empowers and supports their people to build the skills and knowledge they need to grow their career and deliver great service to their customers. Pathways makes it easy to assess where employees' skill gaps are and understand how to close them through learning and experience, both on the job and through training and development. In 2019, Version 1 and Pathways was named winners of the "Excellence in Talent Development" award at the 2019 Annual Technology Ireland Industry Awards. In 2021, the IITD (Irish Institute of Training & Development) crowned Version 1 the proud winners of the "Best Talent Development Initiative" at their annual awards for their Pathways framework. Thanks to Pathways, Version 1 also became 1 of 105 Microsoft partners globally to receive Microsoft Azure Expert MSP status.



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Microsoft Partner
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TalentGuard lays the pathway to growth

Version 1 partnered with TalentGuard to drive enhanced customer service through the power of their people. As a leader in IT services, Version 1 embodies the mantra that “employees are a company’s greatest asset.” In their case, people are the lifeblood of the company, and at the end of the day, the source of revenue and growth. In search of a solution to perfectly align with their mission, TalentGuard’s data quality and platform capabilities made it clear that they could be the solution that would make Pathways a world-renowned program.

Version 1 signed up for a suite of products including, Career Pathing, Succession Planning, Performance Management, Development Planning, Certification Tracking, Learning Management (integrated), and TalentGuard’s Talent Frameworks. These solutions formed what their career development model is today and laid down the “Pathways” toward service excellence and record setting growth.

The employee experience

With TalentGuard, Version 1’s employee experience evolved into an easy and effective one-stop hub to track their skills, credentials, and career progressions. Employees can now easily understand what is required of them in their roles and map out future career moves in a logical manner within the technology field or explore career paths across another department.

This quick and efficient process allows employees to engage in learning, both on the job and through training and development, and later facilitate objective promotional discussions with their managers. Before TalentGuard, it was not clear how to take the next step in their career journey, and conversations with managers were subjective and lacked the formal structure needed. TalentGuard’s data removes the far too familiar awkward conversations with management and sets clear expectations that both managers and employees pre-define and agree on.



When employees attain a new skill, they are adding tremendous value to their organization. In Version 1's line of business, people and their capabilities drive revenue by responding to tenders and delivering excellent services. Not only are employees becoming more competent IT professionals, completing higher value projects, all the while exploring career progressions, but they are also becoming more valuable assets to their organization, and want to stay at the company longer! Employees are excited about completing their learning requirements and have all the resources they need to make this process simple and efficient. In a business where time is chargeable, time cannot be wasted figuring out what they need to do and where to go. This is the win-win situation every organization dreams of.



“TalentGuard is the foundation for this [Pathways]. It’s the solution that enables our vision to become a reality.”

—Alan Reilly, Organization Learning & Development Manager

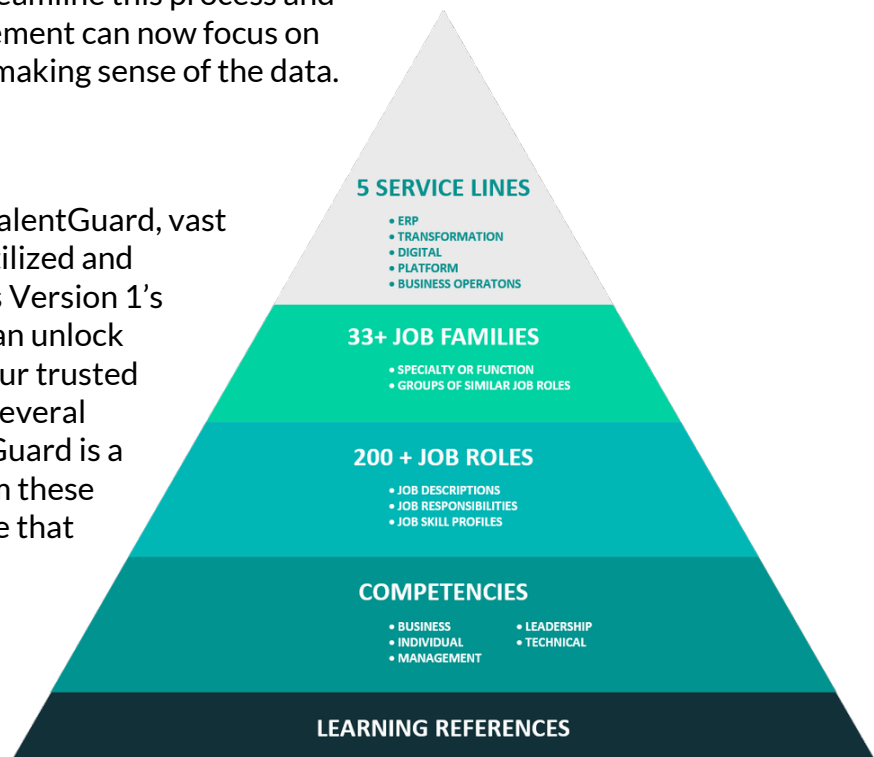
The manager experience

While employees are leveling up their skills, management has a clear line of sight into who is adding new skills and who needs to get to work. As a technology partner with Amazon Web Services, Microsoft Cloud, Oracle, and Red Hat, keeping up to date on certifications is much more than a nice badge to hold, it is whether the business make a sale or not. TalentGuard allows Version 1 to be proactive on their certifications well ahead of time so employees can continue to thrive, and no one is left wondering what went wrong. Managers can easily know who has what skills, what team they are on, what project they are working on, and which roles they aspire to reach. When an employee believes they are ready for the next step in their career, managers have all the objective information they need to assess their employees’ readiness. TalentGuard provides the structure and quality

data management needs to streamline this process and inform their decisions. Management can now focus on leading instead collecting and making sense of the data.

Critical data

Through the everyday use of TalentGuard, vast amounts of data is accessed, utilized and updated. The data that informs Version 1's people decisions and actions can unlock deeper insights that make up our trusted Talent Profiles. Version 1 has several systems in place which TalentGuard is a part of. Together, the data from these systems are forming a data lake that can be used to understand employee efficiencies and optimize their resources.



TalentGuard's system is rich with data on jobs, skills, assessments, competencies, preferences, qualifications, learning and development options and more. From a team level, Version 1 can understand which areas are lacking certain skills, training, and resources to identify gaps surrounding learning and can even inform the company on roles that need to be filled. With the right data, the right decisions can be made.

Record growth

Through the use of TalentGuard and the execution of their Pathways professional development program, Version 1 has soared to new levels. "Business is going well" is an understatement; Version 1 has had their busiest quarters of business in their 25-year history, acquired another company, and has grown to 2000+ employees. Employees are excited about growing their career and the numbers show it.

- **92% Completion Rate [for validating skills and certifications]**
- **87% Employee Engagement Rate**
- **96% Promotional Success Rate**
- **86% Customer Satisfaction Rating**
- **98% Customer Retention Rate**

Last year, hundreds of career progression submissions were requested with a 96% promotional success rate. In addition, Version 1 obtained a 92% completion rate for validating the skills and certifications within their job role and holds an 87% employee engagement rate.

This success on the career development front is proving to demonstrate tremendous value for their customers. The Pathways initiative has significantly contributed to increasing their customer satisfaction ratings from 79% to 86%, which helped elevate their status (as ranked by certified professionals) for their top three Partners to top quartile. Version 1 became 1 of 105 Microsoft partners globally to receive Microsoft Azure Expert MSP status.

TalentGuard's quality data, structure, and platform capabilities have enabled Version 1 to weather any storm and stay up on top. As one of the fastest growing IT services teams in Europe, talent is thriving, higher value projects are being worked and Version 1 can maintain their standard of excellence for customer success. With a 98% customer retention rate, Version 1 is a leader in their space and can truly back it up.

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