Talent Strategy Mix

12 Examples of Talent Strategies and Ideas for Consideration

Upskill (Build)
Enhance existing or adjacent skills of current employees.

✅ **Best Used When:** Roles are evolving, employees have a solid foundation, and business needs can be met through targeted development.

❌ **When Not A Good Option.** Foundational skills are lacking, or a rapid transformation is needed.

⚙️ **Example in Practice.** A bank introduces digital literacy programs for front-line staff to adapt to new financial tech.

Reskill (Build)
Develop new skills to help employees pivot into new roles.

✅ **Best Used When:** Current roles are becoming obsolete, but employees can adapt.

❌ **When Not A Good Option.** The gap is too large, or the staff lacks motivation for change.

⚙️ **Example in Practice.** A logistics firm retrains warehouse staff to become supply chain analysts as automation is introduced.

Outsource (Borrow)
Engage external partners for specialized/swing capacity.

✅ **Best Used When:** Work is non-core, project-based, or efficiency is critical.

❌ **When Not A Good Option.** Control, quality, or confidentiality are critical.

⚙️ **Example in Practice.** A retailer outsources payroll management to an HR services provider to improve efficiency and compliance.

Redeploy (Build)
Move employees into new, priority roles.

✅ **Best Used When:** Urgent shifts in business require internal agility and skills.

❌ **When Not A Good Option.** Poor skill match or high risk of disrupting vital teams.

⚙️ **Example in Practice.** A retail brand redeploys store managers into e-commerce fulfillment roles during a digital transformation.

Redesign Work (Build)
Change workflows, roles, or structures to improve alignment.

✅ **Best Used When:** Tech/process or strategy shifts require new ways of working.

❌ **When Not A Good Option.** Lack of readiness, leadership support, or ability to adapt.

⚙️ **Example in Practice.** A retail chain replaces assistant manager roles with hybrid team leads who oversee both in-store experience and digital fulfillment.

Automate /Augment (Bot)
Use technology or AI for repetitive/scalable tasks.

✅ **Best Used When:** Tasks are routine, high-volume, or easily standardized.

❌ **When Not A Good Option.** Judgment, creativity, or human connection is central.

⚙️ **Example in Practice.** A telecom provider implements chatbots to automate customer service inquiries and free agents for complex tasks.

External Partnerships (Borrow)
Collaborate with other organizations to share/borrow talent.

✅ **Best Used When:** Needed skills are available externally and align with both partners' interests.

❌ **When Not A Good Option.** Regulatory risks, IP/compliance issues, or misaligned priorities.

⚙️ **Example in Practice.** A hospital and university partner to temporarily share clinical IT specialists.

Rotations / Assignments (Borrow/Build)
Move employees into temporary roles or functions internally.

✅ **Best Used When:** For flexible staffing, talent development, or covering gaps.

❌ **When Not A Good Option.** Teams are stretched thin, or ongoing stability is required.

⚙️ **Example in Practice.** A pharmaceutical company rotates analysts through R&D and regulatory teams for cross-functional growth.

Hire (Buy)
Hire individuals for ongoing, strategically critical roles.

✅ **Best Used When:** Specialized, long-term capability is needed for the organization.

❌ **When Not A Good Option.** Needs are temporary, may change, or external talent is scarce/expensive.

⚙️ **Example in Practice.** A manufacturer hires permanent robotics engineers to lead automation strategies.

Hire Through Acquisition (Buy)
Acquire a company or team, primarily for its talent.

✅ **Best Used When:** Intact, high-performing teams are needed urgently.

❌ **When Not A Good Option.** Integration/culture fit risks, or cost outweighs benefit.

⚙️ **Example in Practice.** A social media company acquires a small tech startup to quickly strengthen its AI team.

Hire Contingent Talent (Borrow)
Engage freelancers or temps for flexible, short-term needs.

✅ **Best Used When:** Specialized skills or short-term workloads are required.

❌ **When Not A Good Option.** Need for deep organizational knowledge or long-term engagement.

⚙️ **Example in Practice.** A software company hires freelance QA testers for a product launch cycle.

Transition Out (Bridge)
Support employees moving out of the organization with reskilling, career coaching, etc.

✅ **Best Used When:** When roles are eliminated due to transformation and there are no relevant opportunities matching employees' skills, career desires, etc.

❌ **When Not A Good Option.** Critical knowledge transfer is incomplete or legal/cultural issues complicate exits.

⚙️ **Example in Practice.** A regional utility offers severance plus local retraining programs when shifting field service roles to remote operations.