Anatomy of a decision: ClearCo

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The Bottom Line

As disconnected tools and processes impede full visibility and efficiency in talent management, organizations are increasingly adopting unified approaches. This has increased the competitive advantage of vendors that specialize in offering deep functionality across the talent lifecycle. ClearCo, a long-established provider of talent management software, has delivered incremental benefits to its clients due to its high levels of functionality and usability, spanning processes from recruiting to performance management, learning and development, and compensation management. Customers interviewed reported efficiency gains in previously manual areas, such as performance management and onboarding, where processes are reduced by up to 60 percent and more than 50 percent, respectively, when automated. These organizations also cite the quality of the vendor's customer support, ease of integration, and ability to surface insights through reporting and analytics tools as significant drivers of ongoing value as their deployments have expanded.

Overview

The ability to track and execute the full spectrum of talent management processes is crucial. However, organizations with disparate point solutions, manual processes, or lightweight capabilities through an HCM provider, or a combination of all three, often create inconsistent processes and fragmented data that hinder companies from achieving full visibility and operational efficiency. As talent management requirements grow in complexity, manual or disjointed methods of managing tasks across talent acquisition, candidate engagement, new employee onboarding, talent development, learning experiences, employee sentiment, and compensation planning are no longer sustainable. For this reason, more organizations are opting to consolidate their talent management functionality with a single provider to gain the visibility, consistency, intelligence, and efficiency needed to operate at scale – connecting data across the lifecycle, standardizing workflows, and turning insight into action to improve hiring, employee success, development, and retention.

> The complexity of talent management necessitates deep integration of data and processes to effectively adapt to changes.

ClearCo

ClearCo is a provider of talent management solutions, offering a unified platform that spans recruiting, candidate experience, background checks, onboarding, learning, performance, compensation management, and employee engagement. The vendor's advanced recruiting functionality is built to meet high-volume hiring requirements and includes a sourcing engine that provides access to a global talent pool of more than 800 million professionals. ClearCo has also added AI-powered tools to its recruiting solution, including Talent Match capabilities, candidate outreach automation, career site chatbots, interview intelligence, and the Virtual Recruiter AI chatbot. Analytics through ClearInsights provides real-time, interactive dashboards that offer visibility into key metrics, enabling teams to customize reporting to focus on what matters most to them. Onboarding functionality includes workflow automation, background checks, onboarding checklists, new hire reviews, and employee feedback gathering, as well as a self-service portal to guide new hires for immediate impact from day one.

> The ClearCo platform includes functionality for recruiting, onboarding, learning, performance management, compensation planning, and employee engagement.

ClearCo offers learning and development functionality powered by its acquisition of Brainier, providing users with advanced LMS administration, certification and compliance tracking, and a content marketplace for advanced content integrations and extended learning available to customers and partners. AI has also been integrated here,

with the introduction of an AI Course Builder that can generate interactive courses from prompts or documents. Performance management in ClearCo supports several review types and provides leaders with access to performance analytics and goal tracking. For example, it can support check-ins at the first 30 days of employment, annual or biannual evaluations, and ad-hoc pulse checks with benchmarked action planning insights, real-time feedback channels, and engagement analytics. ClearCo has more than 100 pre-built integrations with HCM platforms and other business solutions through its partner network, enabling customers to easily connect talent data and processes to their existing systems.

Why ClearCo

ClearCo customers interviewed by Nucleus reported that feature breadth relative to cost and ease of use were the primary drivers of their selection of the vendor over solutions from competing providers.

Value for Cost

When compared with other evaluated solutions, customers reported that the ClearCo platform offered the broadest set of capabilities relative to its cost. The vendor's noted feature strength, particularly within its ATS, served as an entry point for all interviewed organizations. These deployments organically expanded over time into areas such as performance management and learning, highlighting the demonstrated value of taking advantage of additional features within the platform to connect talent management data and processes.

Ease of Use

Customers also noted that ClearCo was chosen due to its intuitive interface and the ease of use it was expected to provide. In practice, all reported that the platform was not only easy to implement and integrate with existing business systems but also presented a minimal learning curve for managers and employees. A solid return on investment is impossible to achieve without adoption, making the usability of a chosen solution crucial. In one case, ClearCo representatives assisted an organization in designing initial training materials for end-users to facilitate a smooth transition from incumbent tools and processes. In today's technology landscape, feature breadth means nothing without accompanying vendor resources to establish baseline success and drive positive, incremental value.

ClearCo offers more than 100 pre-built integrations with HCM platforms and other business solutions through its partner network.

"We were impressed at the time [of selection] and continue to feel that [ClearCo] is very interested in continuing to improve the platform."

- SVP of HR, Nonprofit organization

Primary Benefits

Primary benefits experienced by organizations that implemented ClearCo include reduced software and services costs, increased productivity across talent-centric processes, and improved decision-making.

Retired and Avoided Costs

All interviewed organizations had a combination of systems and processes to manage their recruiting, onboarding, and performance management initiatives prior to deploying ClearCo. The typical "before" situation involved lightweight HRIS features, as well as point solutions to address feature gaps in areas such as background checks and pulse surveys. Many of these tools were poorly integrated, resulting in many manual workarounds. Upon consolidating talent management with ClearCo, customers were able to eliminate the costs associated with fragmented tools and services. For learning and development, one organization was able to run an internal certification program within ClearCo and is currently upskilling 65 percent of its employees. This effort leads to substantial increases in productivity and engagement while enabling organizations to avoid third-party training costs and redeploy existing resources to higher value work.

Increased Productivity

In addition to offloading the costs of cobbled-together point solutions, the unification of data and workflows across talent processes led to substantial efficiency gains. First, organizations noted the ease of integration with existing HCM systems, touting the bidirectional flow of data and standardization of processes. This eliminated the need for manual data entry and tracking of progress for things like performance evaluation completions. Onboarding, which was largely manual before ClearCo was deployed, benefited from the use of automated workflows. Nucleus found that, on average, introducing automation can cut time spent on new hire onboarding by at least 50 percent by eliminating the busywork associated with manual, paper-based approaches. Performance management is another area where ClearCo can streamline processes, with real-time tracking of progress and the ability to send reminders to employees and managers who have not yet completed assigned tasks. This can yield productivity gains of up to 60 percent for managers involved in the process, and lead to more accurate, up-to-date tracking and timely actions that drive improved on-time completion rates.

> Prior to implementing ClearCo, customers interviewed faced several manual workarounds with existing systems.

> Automated workflows can cut time spent onboarding new hires by at least 50 percent while ensuring accuracy and compliance.

Improved Decision-Making

Customers that took advantage of ClearInsights reporting and analytics capabilities were able to track metrics that they were previously unable to due to solution fragmentation. Keeping track of important metrics across hiring, onboarding, learning, and performance, is instrumental in quickly identifying and rectifying any bottlenecks in processes. Additionally, unified data across hiring and performance can help leaders identify and measure the factors that contribute to quality of hire. Overall, insights gained from using the ClearCo platform enable organizations to shift from reactive to proactive talent strategies, leading to more informed decision-making.

Insights delivered through the ClearCo platform enable more proactive talent strategies based on informed decisions.

Customer Experience

Hospitality

This hospitality organization has rapid growth of employees during its peak season and has been using ClearCo for approximately eight years. Prior to deploying ClearCo, standalone solutions were used for recruiting, background checks, and learning. Additionally, processes such as new hire onboarding and goal tracking were managed entirely manually. After switching HRIS systems, leaders attempted to utilize some of the new solution's talent functionality in an effort to consolidate processes with as few providers as possible. However, it lacked robust capabilities, specifically for recruiting and hiring.

"One thing that I have loved is that we've had the same [support] rep throughout the entire scope."

- *VP of HR, Hospitality*

Prioritizing the talent acquisition portion of its technology stack, the organization evaluated solutions strictly from an ATS and onboarding perspective. ClearCo was ultimately selected for the strength of its recruiting capabilities. After implementing ClearCo's recruiting solution, the organization soon took advantage of the vendor's onboarding functionality. Since then, the vendor's performance management, background check, and LMS capabilities have been incorporated into the deployment. One leader noted that adding new functionality with ClearCo was seamless, with the vendor offering support throughout the process. ClearCo was also able to easily integrate with the organization's new HRIS, which unified HR and talent data and streamlined several processes. The initial efficiency gains from integrating with the recruiting solution were a significant driving factor for transitioning to the onboarding, learning, and performance portions of the ClearCo platform, underscoring the value of having everything in one place.

Upon implementing ClearCo's onboarding functionality, the organization was able to retire its manual process, eliminating manual work for HR per new employee. With approximately 200 new hires per year, these savings amount to 50 hours annually. Additionally, prior to adopting performance management within ClearCo, evaluations were completed in the organization's HRIS and data was tracked separately in spreadsheets. Upon transitioning to performance management with ClearCo, the organization was able to gain real-time visibility into review progress, enabling leaders to manage performance proactively rather than reactively. As a result, evaluations were completed more consistently and on schedule, improving the organization's ability to make timely compensation, promotion, and development decisions.

The organization was able to eliminate manual onboarding work for each new hire, which translates to approximately 50 hours saved annually.

The functionality has also enabled the organization to implement 30-day reviews for new hires, an important milestone that had previously been avoided due to the manual effort required. By enabling early performance check-ins, leaders were better positioned to identify risk, provide guidance, and strengthen engagement during the first 90 days of employment, a period traditionally associated with higher attrition. In addition, ClearCo replaced manual goal tracking with dedicated goal-setting and monitoring capabilities. These were previously managed in spreadsheets and were rarely updated due to a lack of notifications. Automated reminders and simplified access increased the frequency and consistency of goal updates, helping employees maintain clarity on expectations while giving managers better insight into progress and alignment with business priorities. Collectively, these changes shifted performance management from an administrative exercise into an active management solution. The organization reported a stronger culture of continuous development, contributing to better talent retention and well-informed workforce decision-making.

"The performance management piece has quite frankly changed our culture [around development] and aligned our goal-setting process."

- VP of HR, Hospitality

The organization uses ClearInsights, ClearCo's analytics layer, to automatically deliver monthly reports that give leaders timely visibility into hiring volume, candidate flow, and year-to-date trends. This was noted to be helpful in keeping operations proactive, rather than reactive. Overall, although not tracking usage granularly, leaders observed stronger adoption of talent workflows compared to prior manual and fragmented solutions.

Retail

This retailer operates around 29 stores and employs nearly 1,000 people. ClearCo has been deployed for three years and is currently used across recruiting, onboarding, and performance management. Prior to implementing ClearCo, the organization used solutions from

another talent management software provider. This vendor lacked depth in its talent acquisition capabilities, specifically for candidate engagement, prompting the search for a new talent management solution to better meet its needs.

ClearCo was ultimately chosen due to its cost relative to value. One leader noted that there were many things about recruiting within ClearCo that their team liked better than with the incumbent solution. For example, there were more tools available to connect with candidates. Eliminating the need to move between systems reduced friction for recruiters, increased engagement with candidates, and enabled more timely communication across the candidate funnel. This enabled improved hiring efficiency and reduced the risk of candidate drop-off caused by delayed or inconsistent follow-ups. Previously, emails were sent manually, and there were no tools in place for texting candidates.

The retailer started its journey with ClearCo by implementing the vendor's recruiting and onboarding solutions, which was completed within a matter of weeks. This transition, including the subsequent addition of performance management, was reported to be very easy and enabled the organization to expand capabilities without adding operational complexity. Upon implementing the recruiting solution, one leader mentioned the relative ease of communicating key logistics, such as start details and reporting instructions, directly through the ClearCo platform. This reduced confusion, improved readiness, and helped ensure that new hires arrived prepared on day one. Additionally, the organization brought employee pulse surveys in-house, using ClearCo's performance management capabilities. What had previously been outsourced to a third party is now managed internally, reducing external spend while giving leaders faster access to sentiment data. This shift enabled leadership to act more quickly on engagement insights without added cost or administrative overhead.

Nonprofit

This nonprofit has a presence in more than 10 states and has more than 600 full-time employees. The organization has been with ClearCo for around six years and is currently using the vendor's recruiting, onboarding, and performance management capabilities. Prior to deploying ClearCo, the organization was using talent management features within its HRIS, paired with manual onboarding. Leaders felt that the incumbent vendor was behind in the breadth and depth of its talent acquisition and performance capabilities. Additionally, the system was noted to be clunky, and users found it difficult to use. Overall, the

> Before implementing ClearCo, the retailer lacked depth in recruiting capability with its previous talent management solution.

> The implementation of ClearCo's recruiting and onboarding solutions was completed within weeks, resulting in quick time-to-value.

solution was reported to not deliver much value for these initiatives, prompting the need to seek out a dedicated talent management solution.

The nonprofit evaluated four to five vendors and selected ClearCo based on its ability to deliver strong functionality at a cost aligned to organizational constraints, without compromising usability or support. Leaders cited ease of use and customer service and primary decision factors, enabling the organization to adopt modern talent capabilities without overextending internal resources. The organization started with the recruiting and onboarding pieces, and based on positive experience, decided to add performance management a few years later. This phased approach enabled the organization to scale capability over time while maintaining continuity and minimizing change fatigue. The organization credited ClearCo's substantial levels of support with the ease of adding new functionality. ClearCo provided implementation guidance and assisted with the development of initial training materials during the performance management rollout, helping ensure strong early adoption and consistent use.

Upon implementing ClearCo, it was easier to get users up to speed due to the platform's visibility and usability, especially compared to similar features within the organization's HRIS. Replacing its manual onboarding process, which required scanning massive amounts of paperwork, resulted in significant time savings. On the performance management side, leadership noted continuous visibility into review progress, enabling more timely intervention and follow-up where needed. This improved oversight supported greater consistency in performance conversations and reinforced the organization's development-focused culture.

The nonprofit is able to move data bidirectionally between ClearCo and its HRIS, which has helped to maintain accurate, up-to-date data that drives its people processes. Additionally, there was substantial value derived from implementing single sign-on features with ClearCo. Previously, users had to frequently update passwords to log into the system, which hindered necessary tasks related to performance evaluations.

The organization is anticipating high levels of growth in the new year as it expands its business. One leader noted that they are confident that ClearCo will enable them to successfully endure the increase in scale. It has also prompted the organization to assess how the platform's capabilities can be utilized in new ways. Having a dedicated success

> "I feel like [ClearCo] invests a lot of time and provides good support, especially when adding functionality."
>
> - SVP of HR, Nonprofit Organization

> Setting up single sign-on capabilities in ClearCo drove higher adoption of the system, as users no longer had to remember passwords.

manager has been instrumental in helping leadership think through any questions that arise and ensure they are driving the most value from the solution as possible. As ClearCo continues to grow and add more clients, the organization maintains that the vendor has remained customer-focused and committed to its success.

Professional Services

This construction-focused professional services organization, with more than 2,500 employees, has been utilizing ClearCo's learning management system (LMS), previously known as Brainier, for more than ten years. Prior to the implementation, there was no structured system in place for learning. Instead, spreadsheets were used in tandem with the organization's HRIS to document training activities.

Since transitioning to a formal LMS, the organization is able to track learning participation more granularly. One leader noted that all employees now actively use the LMS, with approximately 65 percent engaged in internal certification programs, providing clearer insight into workforce readiness and progress against critical skill requirements. The usability of the solution has been vital, as turnover is higher within the construction and engineering industry and new hires must be able to get up to speed quickly. By granting access to learning on an employee's first day as part of onboarding, the organization is able to shorten time to productivity and reduce ramp-up risk for new hires and safety- and skill-sensitive roles. The organization has also been able to configure the solution to fit its specific branding and certifications, helping employees understand expectations quickly and engage with training more consistently. As a result, the organization is now considering the opportunity to unify learning more tightly with performance and other talent processes, using shared insight to support retention.

Looking Ahead

While ClearCo has a solid reputation in the talent acquisition space, the vendor has proved to be adept at understanding customer needs across several areas of the talent lifecycle. By delivering consistent capability across hiring, development, and retention, ClearCo enables customers to expand their deployments while benefiting from unified data, connected workflows, and a single strategic partner. Overall, this unified approach can help organizations respond more effectively to change, whether navigating restructuring, managing rapid growth, or adapting to shifting workforce demands.

> The organization has been able to configure the LMS to specific branding and requirements, which has helped to make the solution easier to use.

> The professional services organization has all of its employees in ClearCo's LMS, with 65% actively upskilling through an internal certification program.

As the labor market volatility persists and competition intensifies, ClearCo's ability to connect talent processes and deliver insight across the lifecycle positions the vendor to support more agile, informed workforce decisions and strengthens its competitive standing as customer expectations continue to rise.