



& YOUR TALENT ACQUISITION MATURITY

Inspired by the RL100 Talent Acquisition Maturity Matrix



The_World's_Most_Useful

**TALENT
ACQUISITION
TECHNOLOGY**

#YouCanDoThatInPoetry

Foreword

The RL100 Talent Acquisition Maturity Matrix has been one of the most useful frameworks for helping organisations think about the evolution of Talent Acquisition. Rather than focusing purely on technology, it recognises that maturity comes from the combination of people, processes and technology across every stage of hiring.

Although published in 2022, many of its principles remain highly relevant today.

However, Talent Acquisition has changed dramatically in a short space of time. Artificial intelligence has moved from experimentation to production. Recruiters are expected to become strategic advisers rather than administrators. Hiring managers expect faster, better informed support. Recruiters are managing increasing workloads while candidates expect increasingly personalised experiences.

This guide explains how organisations can use Poetry to accelerate their Talent Acquisition maturity using the RL100 framework as a reference point.

It is not intended to replace the matrix, nor to suggest that software alone creates maturity. The most mature Talent Acquisition functions still rely on excellent leadership, clear processes and capable people.

Instead, this guide demonstrates where Poetry can help organisations progress more quickly, where it complements existing practices, and where maturity still depends on wider organisational change.

Where **Poetry** does not directly influence a particular aspect of the framework, that is stated openly.

Throughout the guide I also highlight areas where the Talent Acquisition landscape has evolved since 2022. These are not intended as criticisms of the original framework, but as additions that reflect how AI, automation and hiring enablement are changing the way leading Talent Acquisition teams operate today.

How to Use This Guide

This guide is based on the RL100 Talent Acquisition Maturity Matrix, one of the most widely recognised frameworks for assessing the maturity of Talent Acquisition functions. Rather than replacing the matrix, it explains how **Poetry** can help organisations accelerate their progression across each area of the framework.

You don't need to read the guide from cover to cover. If your immediate priority is improving recruitment marketing, jump to **Engage**. If you're focused on interview quality, start with **Assess**. If you're looking to strengthen hiring manager partnerships or workforce planning, begin with **Plan**. Each section can be read independently while contributing to a broader understanding of Talent Acquisition maturity.

As you read each chapter, consider three simple questions:

- Where would you place your Talent Acquisition function today?
- What would need to change for you to move to the next level of maturity?
- How could Poetry help you get there more quickly?

The objective isn't simply to implement another piece of recruitment technology. It's to build a Talent Acquisition function that is more consistent, better informed and better equipped to support the business.

Whether you're a recruiter, Talent Acquisition leader or HR executive, I hope this guide gives you practical ideas that help your organisation move forward.

A NOTE ON THE RL100 TALENT ACQUISITION MATURITY MATRIX

This guide is inspired by the RL100 Talent Acquisition Maturity Matrix and uses it as a framework for discussing Talent Acquisition maturity. The views, commentary and recommendations throughout this guide are my own and should not be interpreted as those of RL100.

Talent Acquisition Maturity in 2026

The RL100 Talent Acquisition Maturity Matrix remains an excellent framework because it focuses on the outcomes that define a mature Talent Acquisition function rather than the technologies used to achieve them.

Mature Talent Acquisition teams still need clear processes, capable people and technology that supports both. They still need to plan effectively, engage talent, source proactively, assess consistently and onboard successfully.

Those fundamentals haven't changed.

What has changed is the role technology can now play in helping organisations achieve those outcomes.

When the RL100 matrix was published in 2022, most recruitment technology focused on individual tasks. Recruiters used one system to manage applicants, another to source candidates, another to create recruitment marketing, another to prepare interviews and another to collaborate with hiring managers.

Today, artificial intelligence allows technology to work differently.

Rather than simply helping recruiters complete individual activities more quickly, AI can help connect the entire hiring process. Research can be automated. Context can be retained throughout the lifecycle of a vacancy. Hiring assets can be generated from a shared understanding of the role. Recruiters and hiring managers can work from the same information, reducing duplication while improving consistency.

This is where the concept of **hiring enablement** becomes important.

The objective is not to replace recruiters or automate hiring decisions. It is to give recruiters everything they need to perform at their best. That means reducing administrative effort, providing better information, embedding organisational best practice and allowing recruiters to spend more time advising hiring managers and engaging candidates.

One of the biggest shifts is that the **job** itself is becoming the centre of the hiring process.

Historically, information has been spread across multiple systems, documents and conversations. Job descriptions, market research, interview guides, recruitment marketing, hiring manager notes and stakeholder discussions have often existed independently of one another.

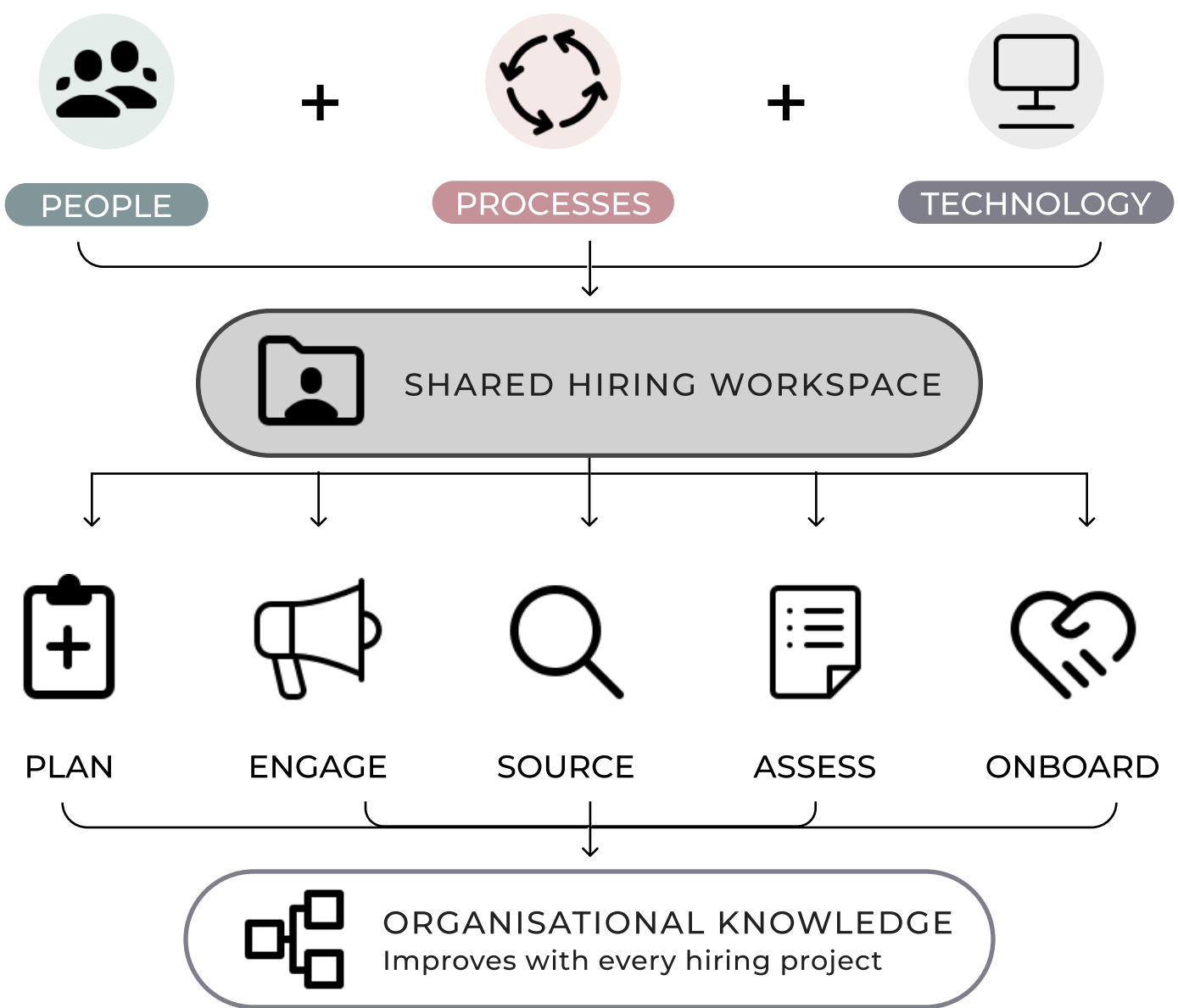
Increasingly, mature Talent Acquisition functions are bringing that information together into a single shared workspace around each hiring project. As context builds, every stage of the process benefits. Research informs recruitment marketing. Recruitment marketing informs sourcing. Sourcing informs assessment. Assessment supports onboarding.

Knowledge no longer disappears when a vacancy closes. It becomes part of the organisation's collective experience. Throughout this guide, I use the RL100 Talent Acquisition Maturity Matrix as the benchmark for what good looks like. For each area of the framework, I explain how Poetry can help organisations reach that level of maturity more quickly, more consistently and with less manual effort.

Technology alone will never make a Talent Acquisition function mature.

Used well, however, it can remove many of the barriers that prevent talented recruiters from performing at their very best.

TALENT Acquisition Maturity



PART 1

Plan

"What I love about **Poetry** is that it enables us to provide white-glove service very quickly. Recruiters can get up to speed much faster, spend more time with hiring managers and candidates, and less time locating resources."

Alicia O'Brien
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT
Wilson

Planning – Process

The RL100 Talent Acquisition Maturity Matrix describes planning as progressing from reactive recruitment to strategic workforce planning.

At the **Baseline** level, recruitment is driven by hiring demand as it arises. Recruiters respond to vacancies, often with limited visibility of future needs.

At the **Developing** level, organisations begin forecasting talent requirements over the coming 12 months. Recruitment becomes more predictable, allowing better resource allocation and more targeted attraction strategies.

At the **Maturing** level, Talent Acquisition becomes part of business planning. Workforce planning looks several years ahead, Talent Acquisition leaders advise the business on future talent challenges, and hiring plans become increasingly agile as market conditions change.

These remain good indicators of Talent Acquisition maturity.

The challenge is that strategic planning has traditionally required significant manual effort. Recruiters gather labour market intelligence, research competitors, analyse previous hiring activity, consult hiring managers and produce planning documents. The work is valuable, but it is also time consuming and often repeated every time a similar role is recruited.

This is where Poetry can significantly accelerate maturity.

Example

A recruiter receives a new vacancy for a Senior Software Engineer. Instead of starting with a blank document, Poetry automatically researches the organisation, analyses the role, identifies competitors for talent, summarises relevant labour market insights and prepares a structured hiring workspace. By the time the recruiter meets the hiring manager, the discussion can focus on refining the hiring strategy rather than gathering basic information.

Rather than treating every vacancy as a separate project, Poetry creates a dedicated workspace for every job. As soon as a role is created, the platform begins building the context needed to support better hiring decisions. Research is automated, market intelligence is assembled, organisational knowledge is retained and hiring assets are created from a shared understanding of the role.

The practical effect is that recruiters spend less time assembling information and more time using it.

Planning also becomes more consistent. Instead of every recruiter following their own process, organisations can embed agreed workflows, templates and governance into every hiring project. Experienced recruiters continue to apply their judgement, but they no longer need to recreate the foundations each time they recruit.

This is an important distinction.

Technology cannot create a workforce strategy. It cannot decide which markets an organisation should enter or determine future headcount requirements. Those remain leadership decisions.

What it can do is remove much of the operational effort required to turn strategy into execution.



How **poetry** accelerates maturity

- ✦ Creates a consistent planning workspace for every vacancy.
- ✦ Automatically gathers and organises hiring context.
- ✦ Produces reusable hiring assets from shared information rather than starting from scratch each time.
- ✦ Makes planning activities repeatable across recruiters, teams and business units.
- ✦ Preserves knowledge that would otherwise disappear when vacancies close or recruiters leave.

Planning – Data & Technology

The RL100 Talent Acquisition Maturity Matrix describes technology maturity as progressing from basic HR and Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) to integrated talent intelligence, agile recruitment technology and sophisticated market insight.

At the **Baseline** level, organisations typically rely on a core HR system and an ATS to manage recruitment processes and provide basic reporting.

At the **Developing** level, technology begins supporting workforce planning through CRM platforms, internal talent visibility and more agile recruitment processes.

At the **Maturing** level, organisations have a clear understanding of internal talent supply and external market conditions. Talent demand can be aggregated across business units, market intelligence informs hiring decisions and technology helps Talent Acquisition operate proactively rather than reactively.

These principles remain highly relevant.

The biggest change since 2022 is not that organisations have bought more technology. It's that many have bought more disconnected technology.

A typical Talent Acquisition function now uses an ATS, CRM, sourcing tools, market intelligence platforms, content generators, interview software, assessment platforms and internal collaboration tools. Individually these products solve important problems. Collectively they often increase complexity.

Technology maturity is therefore becoming less about adding another application and more about connecting information across the hiring process.

This is where **Poetry** takes a different approach.

Rather than replacing existing systems, Poetry sits alongside them. The ATS remains the system of record. Existing recruitment technology continues to perform the specialist functions it performs well.

Poetry provides the layer that connects hiring information, research, content, workflows and collaboration around the job itself.

When a recruiter opens a role, they shouldn't need to manually collect company information, produce a briefing document, research competitors, create a job advert, write outreach messages and prepare hiring managers as separate activities. Each of those tasks uses much of the same underlying information.

Poetry captures that context once and allows it to flow through the hiring process. Research informs job advertising. Job advertising informs sourcing. Sourcing informs interview preparation. Feedback improves future hiring.

The result is not simply faster content creation. It is greater consistency, less duplication and better informed decision making throughout the hiring lifecycle.

How **poetry** accelerates maturity

- ✦ Works alongside existing ATS platforms rather than replacing them.
- ✦ Connects research, content, collaboration and hiring workflows around a shared job workspace.
- ✦ Reduces duplication by allowing information gathered once to be reused throughout the hiring process.
- ✦ Enables recruiters to work from a consistent source of hiring intelligence.
- ✦ Supports governance through templates, permissions and shared ways of working.
- ✦ Creates organisational memory so valuable hiring knowledge is retained rather than lost.

Planning - People

The RL100 Talent Acquisition Maturity Matrix recognises that the maturity of a Talent Acquisition function is determined as much by its people as its processes and technology.

At the **Baseline** level, recruiters typically operate as recruitment generalists with strong relationships with hiring managers and a good understanding of the roles they recruit.

At the **Developing** level, Talent Acquisition teams begin developing specialist skills. Recruiters become career advisers, strengthen their understanding of employer branding and marketing, and increasingly use data to support decision making.

At the **Maturing** level, Talent Acquisition becomes a strategic business function. Recruiters influence senior stakeholders, advise on future talent challenges and act as ambassadors for the organisation in the external market.

I strongly agree with this progression.

Where I believe the conversation has evolved is in how recruiters reach that level of maturity.

Historically, organisations have relied heavily on experience. Recruiters became trusted advisers because they had recruited similar roles many times before, built strong internal relationships and accumulated market knowledge over many years.

That experience remains invaluable.

The difference today is that technology can help make more recruiters perform like experienced recruiters.

One of the biggest challenges facing Talent Acquisition leaders is inconsistency. Within the same team, some recruiters naturally produce excellent hiring plans, insightful market analysis and compelling recruitment marketing. Others are still developing those skills.

Poetry helps reduce that gap.

Instead of expecting every recruiter to begin with a blank page, **Poetry** provides structured guidance, shared hiring intelligence and organisational best practice throughout the hiring process. Recruiters still make the decisions, challenge hiring managers and apply their judgement, but they do so with significantly better preparation.

This also changes the relationship with hiring managers.

Rather than spending meetings gathering basic information, recruiters arrive having already researched the market, prepared questions, identified potential risks and developed informed recommendations. Conversations become more strategic because much of the administrative work has already been completed.

That benefits experienced recruiters just as much as those earlier in their careers.

The most capable recruiters are rarely looking for software that replaces their expertise. They want software that removes repetitive work, surfaces better information and allows them to spend more time influencing hiring decisions.

In my experience, that is where real Talent Acquisition maturity begins.

How **poetry** accelerates maturity

- ✦ Gives every recruiter access to structured hiring guidance and best practice.
- ✦ Reduces reliance on individual experience by making organisational knowledge reusable.
- ✦ Helps recruiters arrive better prepared for stakeholder conversations.
- ✦ Encourages greater consistency across teams without forcing every recruiter to work identically.
- ✦ Frees recruiters to spend more time advising, influencing and building relationships.

PART 2

Engage

"As a global organisation built through acquisition, consistency of approach and employer brand is critical. Poetry gives us a single space to bring our recruitment content, messaging and best practice together."

Katie Hughes

DIRECTOR OF TALENT ACQUISITION

Jensen Hughes

Engage – Process

The RL100 Talent Acquisition Maturity Matrix describes engagement as evolving from reactive employer branding towards highly targeted, insight-driven attraction strategies.

At the **Baseline** level, organisations rely primarily on paid advertising and third-party recruiters to attract external talent.

At the **Developing** level, employer branding becomes more deliberate. Organisations establish an Employee Value Proposition (EVP), develop job-specific campaigns and begin building internal mobility programmes and talent pipelines.

At the **Maturing** level, engagement becomes increasingly sophisticated. Talent is segmented, campaigns are informed by forecasting, referrals become a significant source of hires and Talent Acquisition builds long-term relationships with talent communities rather than simply filling vacancies.

The principle behind this progression is straightforward.

Mature Talent Acquisition functions don't simply advertise jobs. They actively engage the right people with the right message at the right time.

That has become even more important as candidates have gained greater control over how they discover opportunities.

Recruiters can no longer assume that posting a vacancy will generate the right applicants. Every interaction with the market contributes to an employer's reputation, whether that's a LinkedIn post, an outreach email, a careers page, an employee story or a hiring manager conversation.

Consistency matters.

This is an area where **Poetry** can make a significant contribution.

Rather than producing isolated pieces of recruitment marketing, Poetry helps recruiters build complete engagement campaigns from a shared understanding of the role, the organisation and the target audience.

The same research that informs the hiring strategy can also shape job adverts, social media campaigns, outreach messages, hiring manager briefing documents and interview preparation.

That means candidates experience a more coherent story throughout the hiring journey.

Just as importantly, recruiters spend less time recreating information in different formats and more time refining the message for different audiences.

The result isn't simply more content.

It's better connected communication.

Example

*Once the hiring strategy has been agreed, **Poetry** generates a coordinated recruitment marketing campaign from the same shared context. A job advert, LinkedIn post, employee referral message and outreach campaign all communicate the same core proposition while being tailored for different audiences. Recruiters spend less time rewriting content and more time refining the message.*

How **poetry** accelerates maturity

- ✦ Produces consistent recruitment marketing from shared hiring context.
- ✦ Generates role-specific campaigns rather than isolated assets.
- ✦ Supports employer brand consistency across different communication channels.
- ✦ Makes it easier to tailor messaging for different audiences without rewriting everything from scratch.
- ✦ Enables recruiters and hiring managers to communicate from the same understanding of the opportunity.

Engage – Data & Technology

The RL100 Talent Acquisition Maturity Matrix describes engagement technology as progressing from basic recruitment channels towards integrated talent networks and personalised candidate engagement.

At the **Baseline** level, organisations use social media and traditional recruitment channels to reach potential candidates.

At the **Developing** level, CRM platforms, agile recruitment technologies and self-service capabilities help recruiters engage talent more effectively.

At the **Maturing** level, organisations build talent networks through ongoing marketing activity and maintain candidate relationships throughout the employee lifecycle, extending even to alumni communities.

The direction of travel remains correct.

The biggest change since 2022 is that engagement technology is no longer judged simply by where recruiters can publish content or store candidate information. Increasingly, it's judged by how intelligently it helps recruiters communicate.

Many Talent Acquisition teams now have excellent recruitment technology but still rely on recruiters manually piecing together information from multiple systems before producing a campaign.

A recruiter may need to review the job description, employer brand guidance, previous campaigns, labour market intelligence and hiring manager notes before creating content.

None of those activities are difficult.

They're simply repetitive.

Poetry addresses this by bringing together the information required to create high-quality engagement into a single hiring workspace.

Rather than asking recruiters to search for information across multiple systems, Poetry automatically assembles the relevant context around each job. Recruitment marketing, outreach campaigns and hiring communications are then generated using that shared understanding. This improves consistency without making communication generic.

Recruiters remain in control of the final message, but they spend less time gathering information and more time adapting communications for the audience they're trying to reach.

The technology becomes an enabler of better judgement rather than a replacement for it.

How **poetry** accelerates maturity

- ✦ Brings together the information needed to create effective recruitment marketing.
- ✦ Generates campaigns using shared job context rather than isolated prompts.
- ✦ Maintains consistency across adverts, outreach, social content and hiring communications.
- ✦ Works alongside existing ATS and recruitment technology rather than replacing them.
- ✦ Reduces repetitive administration so recruiters can focus on candidate engagement.

Engage - People

The RL100 Talent Acquisition Maturity Matrix describes the people dimension of engagement as a progression from capable recruiters to influential talent ambassadors.

At the **Baseline** level, Talent Acquisition teams consist primarily of recruitment generalists with strong relationships across the business.

At the **Developing** level, recruiters deepen their understanding of the external talent market and build stronger partnerships with hiring managers and business leaders.

At the **Maturing** level, Talent Acquisition professionals become recognised talent relationship experts. They influence the external market, navigate complex stakeholder environments and help create a culture where everyone contributes to attracting talent.

This is one of the strongest sections of the RL100 matrix because it recognises that engagement is fundamentally about people.

Technology can help recruiters communicate more effectively, but it cannot build trust. That remains a human skill. **Poetry** helps by removing much of the preparation that sits behind those interactions, giving recruiters more time to focus on the conversations that really matter.

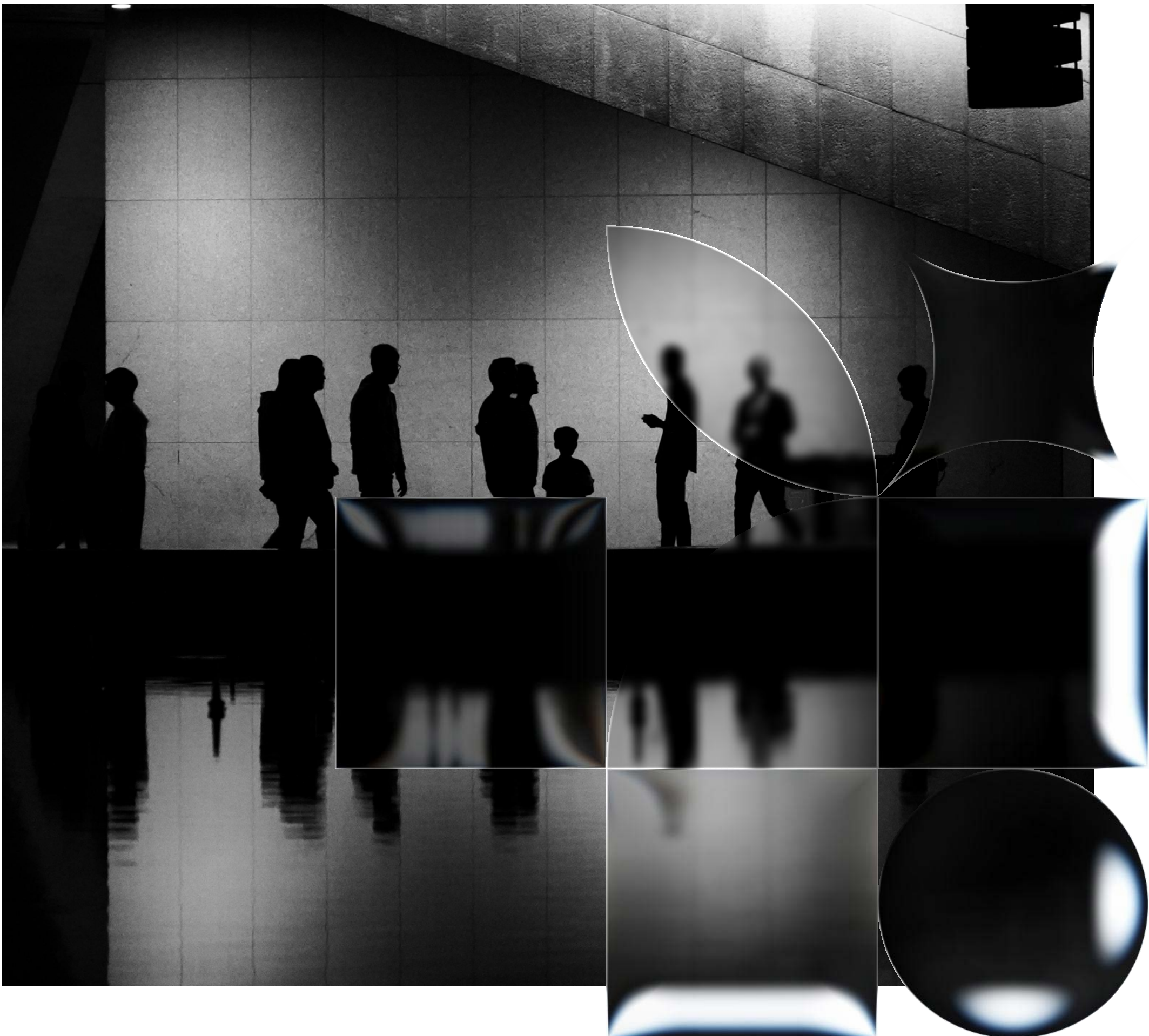
Every recruiter has experienced preparing for an important meeting with a hiring manager, only to spend much of it asking questions that could have been answered beforehand. Similarly, recruiters often spend hours preparing recruitment marketing materials, researching competitors or creating outreach campaigns before they have spoken to a single candidate. Those activities are necessary, but they do little to strengthen relationships.

Poetry completes much of that preparation automatically. By the time a recruiter meets a hiring manager or begins engaging candidates, they already have structured market research, recruitment marketing, campaign assets and role-specific insights available within the job workspace.

The result is a different type of conversation. Rather than discussing administration, recruiters can focus on hiring strategy, challenge assumptions and provide informed recommendations. Over time, that changes how Talent Acquisition is perceived within an organisation. Recruiters become recognised not because they work faster, but because they consistently arrive better prepared.

How **poetry** accelerates maturity

- ✦ Gives recruiters better information before stakeholder conversations.
- ✦ Reduces administrative preparation so more time can be spent building relationships.
- ✦ Supports consistent, high-quality engagement regardless of individual experience.
- ✦ Helps recruiters approach hiring manager meetings as advisers rather than coordinators.
- ✦ Enables teams to share knowledge rather than relying solely on individual expertise.



Source

"Recruiter enablement is the processes, content and technology that empower recruitment teams to recruit efficiently and at a higher velocity. It's how we get recruiters to spend more time with qualified candidates and less time on everything else."

Holland McCue
EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE LEADER
Cox Enterprises

Source – Process

The RL100 Talent Acquisition Maturity Matrix describes sourcing as evolving from a reliance on external recruitment methods towards proactive talent pipeline management.

At the **Baseline** level, organisations primarily use paid advertising and third-party recruitment agencies to fill vacancies.

At the **Developing** level, internal mobility programmes, external talent pools and talent communities begin to reduce reliance on reactive sourcing.

At the **Maturing** level, Talent Acquisition develops sophisticated talent segmentation, leverages referrals and alumni networks, and builds long-term talent communities that provide sustainable access to skills and expertise.

This progression remains highly relevant. The most mature Talent Acquisition teams don't begin sourcing when a vacancy opens. They already understand the market, know where talent is likely to come from and have clear strategies for engaging different audiences.

What has changed is how quickly recruiters can build that understanding. Historically, sourcing strategy relied heavily on the personal knowledge of experienced recruiters. They knew which competitors employed the right people, where particular skills were concentrated and which messaging was most likely to resonate. Much of that knowledge existed only in their heads.

Poetry helps make that expertise more accessible. When a new job is created, it automatically researches the organisation, the role and the external market before helping recruiters develop sourcing strategies and outreach campaigns. Rather than starting with a blank page, recruiters begin with structured intelligence that supports better sourcing decisions.

This doesn't replace specialist sourcing expertise. Instead, it gives every recruiter a stronger starting point while creating greater consistency across the organisation. Recruiters working on similar vacancies can build from the same market understanding rather than independently researching the same information, allowing knowledge to accumulate instead of disappearing when a vacancy closes.

How **poetry** accelerates maturity

- ✦ Automates much of the early market and role research required before sourcing begins.
- ✦ Helps recruiters identify and articulate the characteristics of the talent they want to attract.
- ✦ Produces sourcing campaigns and outreach content based on shared hiring intelligence.
- ✦ Reduces duplicated research across recruiters and hiring projects.
- ✦ Preserves sourcing knowledge for future hiring rather than treating every vacancy as a fresh start.

Source – Data & Technology

The RL100 Talent Acquisition Maturity Matrix describes sourcing technology as progressing from an ATS-centric approach towards integrated talent intelligence and increasingly sophisticated matching capabilities.

At the **Baseline** level, organisations use technology primarily to manage recruitment workflows and automate repetitive administrative tasks.

At the **Developing** level, integrated systems provide greater visibility of internal talent while CRM platforms help recruiters build and manage talent pipelines.

At the **Maturing** level, organisations experiment with machine learning, skills-based matching and smart data to improve sourcing decisions across the organisation.

That evolution has largely taken place. The biggest shift since then has been where organisations now look for value. For many years, sourcing technology focused on finding more candidates. Today, most Talent Acquisition teams already have access to more candidate data than ever before. The challenge is turning that information into better hiring decisions.

That requires context.

Knowing who to approach is only one part of successful sourcing. Recruiters also need to understand why someone might be interested, how the opportunity compares with competitors, what makes the organisation distinctive and how to communicate those points consistently.

Poetry provides that context by bringing together the information surrounding a hiring project into a single workspace. Market research, organisational knowledge, hiring manager priorities, employer branding and campaign content are connected, allowing recruiters to move from collecting information to applying it.

When recruiters use specialist sourcing platforms, they do so with a much clearer understanding of the market they're entering and the message they want to communicate. Instead of operating as a collection of independent tools, technology becomes connected around the hiring process, helping recruiters make better-informed sourcing decisions.

How **poetry** accelerates maturity

- ✦ Provides the context needed to support better sourcing decisions.
- ✦ Connects market research, employer messaging and recruitment campaigns within a single workspace.
- ✦ Enables recruiters to move quickly from research to sourcing without recreating information.
- ✦ Works alongside sourcing platforms rather than competing with them.
- ✦ Improves consistency across sourcing campaigns, recruiter outreach and hiring communications.

Source – People

The RL100 Talent Acquisition Maturity Matrix recognises that sourcing maturity is driven as much by recruiter capability as by technology.

At the **Baseline** level, recruiters rely primarily on their own networks, job advertising and agency support to identify talent.

At the **Developing** level, Talent Acquisition professionals build stronger relationships with the external market, understand talent segmentation and become increasingly confident engaging different candidate audiences.

At the **Maturing** level, recruiters become recognised talent relationship experts. They influence external talent markets, leverage extensive professional networks and help create a culture where everyone contributes to attracting talent, from employees and alumni to customers and industry partners.

This remains one of the defining characteristics of Talent Acquisition maturity because great sourcing has never been about finding people. It's about understanding them.

The strongest recruiters don't simply know where talent is. They understand what motivates candidates, the concerns they are likely to have, how competitors position themselves and which conversations are most likely to result in meaningful engagement. Traditionally, developing that level of understanding took years of experience.

Poetry helps recruiters build that understanding more quickly. By automatically researching organisations, markets and hiring requirements, it equips recruiters with the background knowledge they need before approaching candidates. Rather than relying entirely on personal experience, recruiters have access to structured insights that help them ask better questions, personalise conversations and communicate opportunities more effectively.

Importantly, **Poetry** doesn't replace recruiter judgement. Two recruiters may review the same research and take different approaches to the market, and that's exactly as it should be. The value lies in ensuring they both begin from an informed position.

This is particularly valuable for growing Talent Acquisition teams. Experienced recruiters naturally accumulate knowledge over time, but without a mechanism for sharing it, newer colleagues often have to learn the same lessons independently.

Poetry helps organisations retain and distribute that expertise, allowing successful sourcing approaches to become part of the team's collective knowledge rather than remaining with individuals.

How **poetry** accelerates maturity

- ✦ Helps recruiters understand a market before engaging it.
- ✦ Makes organisational sourcing knowledge reusable across teams.
- ✦ Supports less experienced recruiters with structured market and role insights.
- ✦ Enables more consistent sourcing conversations across the organisation.
- ✦ Frees recruiters to spend more time building relationships rather than researching basic information.



Assess

"Create a brilliant recruiter experience because downstream, that becomes a brilliant candidate experience."

James Gardner
TALENT ACQUISITION LEADER

Assess – Process

The RL100 Talent Acquisition Maturity Matrix describes assessment as progressing from subjective decision-making towards structured, reliable and evidence-based hiring.

At the **Baseline** level, assessment processes are repeatable but rely heavily on human interaction and personal opinion when making hiring decisions.

At the **Developing** level, organisations adopt smoother, more inclusive assessment processes that improve consistency and candidate experience.

At the **Maturing** level, Talent Acquisition leads thinking around assessment methodology, helping the organisation evaluate both current capability and future potential while embedding fair hiring practices across the employee lifecycle.

Few areas of Talent Acquisition have a greater impact on hiring quality than assessment. The strongest organisations don't simply interview candidates well, they make consistent hiring decisions regardless of who conducts the interview. Achieving that level of consistency has always been one of the biggest challenges in recruitment.

Different hiring managers ask different questions, assess different competencies and often record feedback in different ways. Even organisations with structured interview processes frequently see significant variation between interviewers. Poetry helps reduce that inconsistency.

Once the hiring strategy has been established, **Poetry** generates structured interview packs tailored to the role, including competency-based interview questions, technical questions where appropriate, scorecards and guidance for interviewers.

Because these materials are created using the shared context already established throughout the hiring process, assessment becomes aligned with the original hiring objectives rather than being treated as a separate activity.

This creates continuity throughout the hiring process. The priorities identified during planning influence sourcing, the messaging developed during engagement shapes candidate conversations, and the qualities sought during sourcing become the basis of structured assessment. Each stage builds on the one before, creating a more consistent approach to hiring. While that doesn't guarantee better hiring decisions, it creates much stronger conditions in which to make them.

Example

Before first-round interviews begin, every interviewer receives a role-specific interview pack containing competency-based questions, suggested follow-up questions, evaluation scorecards and guidance on what good looks like. Rather than each hiring manager preparing differently, everyone assesses candidates against the same objectives established at the beginning of the hiring process.

How **poetry** accelerates maturity

- ✦ Produces structured interview packs aligned to the hiring strategy.
- ✦ Improves consistency between interviewers.
- ✦ Helps hiring managers prepare more effectively.
- ✦ Reduces reliance on ad hoc interview preparation.
- ✦ Supports fairer, more repeatable assessment processes through consistent documentation.

Assess – Data & Technology

The RL100 Talent Acquisition Maturity Matrix describes assessment technology as progressing from systems that simply support recruitment workflows to technology that improves the quality, fairness and effectiveness of hiring decisions.

At the **Baseline** level, technology primarily manages recruitment processes and administrative tasks.

At the **Developing** level, organisations introduce specialist assessment technologies and structured approaches that improve consistency, reduce unconscious bias and increase confidence in hiring decisions.

At the **Maturing** level, assessment becomes increasingly data-informed. Organisations use technology to understand which assessment approaches predict success, integrate onboarding and performance data, and continually refine their hiring methodology.

This evolution reflects an important principle: the purpose of recruitment technology isn't simply to make interviews easier to organise, but to help organisations make better hiring decisions.

Most organisations already have access to excellent assessment technology. The challenge is ensuring that every interview begins with the right preparation, the right context and a consistent understanding of what success looks like. Too often, however, assessment is supported by disconnected systems. Recruiters create interview guides in one application, competency frameworks are stored elsewhere, hiring manager notes sit in email threads and interview feedback is captured in the ATS. That fragmentation inevitably leads to inconsistency.

Why it matters

Candidates experience recruitment as a single journey. They don't distinguish between the briefing document, the interview guide, the competency framework and the scorecard. When these elements are disconnected, interviews become less consistent, hiring managers receive varying levels of preparation and candidates are assessed against subtly different expectations.

The result isn't necessarily unfair hiring, but inconsistent hiring. Consistency is one of the clearest indicators of Talent Acquisition maturity because it gives every candidate the opportunity to be assessed against the same standards and objectives.

How **poetry** accelerates maturity

Poetry connects assessment to everything that came before it. The hiring objectives established during planning, the market research gathered during sourcing and the messaging developed through recruitment marketing all become part of the context used to prepare interviews.

Rather than generating generic interview questions, Poetry creates interview packs that reflect the specific role, organisation and hiring priorities. Interviewers receive structured guidance, competency-based questions, scorecards and supporting information that align with the wider hiring strategy.

Because every asset is produced from the same shared job workspace, hiring managers spend less time preparing individually and more time evaluating candidates. The result is greater consistency across interviewers, better prepared stakeholders and assessment processes that remain aligned with the original objectives of the hire.

Technology doesn't determine who should be hired, but it can help ensure every hiring decision is supported by the best possible preparation.

Assess – People

The RL100 Talent Acquisition Maturity Matrix describes assessment maturity as a progression from recruiters who facilitate interviews to Talent Acquisition professionals who shape how organisations identify future potential.

At the **Baseline** level, recruiters understand the importance of fair hiring and work with hiring managers to deliver a repeatable recruitment process.

At the **Developing** level, Talent Acquisition professionals build stronger relationships with the business and embed fair, consistent assessment practices into hiring.

At the **Maturing** level, Talent Acquisition leads organisational thinking on assessment methodology, helping evaluate not only a candidate's experience but also their future potential and long-term fit within the organisation.

This is one of the clearest examples of Talent Acquisition evolving from an operational function into a strategic business partner. The best recruiters don't simply arrange interviews, they improve hiring decisions by helping hiring managers assess candidates more consistently, more objectively and with a clearer understanding of what success looks like.

Why it matters

Hiring managers are experts in their own disciplines, but few are experts in interviewing. Many recruit only occasionally and naturally revert to familiar questions or instinctive decision-making. Left unsupported, this creates significant variation between interviewers, departments and ultimately hiring outcomes.

One of the most valuable roles a recruiter can play is helping hiring managers become better interviewers. That doesn't mean taking control of the interview. It means providing the structure, preparation and confidence that allows hiring managers to focus on evaluating candidates rather than deciding what to ask next.

When recruiters consistently do this, their role evolves. They are no longer seen as coordinators of the recruitment process, but as trusted advisers who improve the quality of hiring decisions across the organisation.

How **poetry** accelerates maturity

Poetry helps recruiters arrive at every assessment conversation better prepared.

Interview packs are created automatically using the context built throughout the hiring process. Hiring managers receive structured interview guides, competency-based questions, suggested follow-up questions, evaluation scorecards and supporting information that reflects the objectives of the role.

This gives recruiters a stronger platform from which to advise. Instead of spending time creating interview documentation, they can focus on coaching hiring managers, discussing potential risks, challenging assumptions and helping stakeholders reach balanced hiring decisions.

The benefits extend beyond individual recruiters. Because interview guidance is generated consistently across the organisation, new recruiters gain access to the same standards and best practice as experienced colleagues. Institutional knowledge becomes organisational knowledge, creating greater consistency, improving hiring manager confidence and helping establish Talent Acquisition as a genuine strategic partner rather than simply a recruitment service.

Ultimately, mature assessment isn't created by asking better questions alone. It's created by helping every interviewer make better decisions.

Onboard

"Recruitment's a simple process complicated by people."

Jonathan Cohen

BOOST RECRUIT PROJECT MANAGER, THE BARNET GROUP

Onboard - Process

The RL100 Talent Acquisition Maturity Matrix recognises onboarding as far more than an administrative exercise. It describes a progression from basic induction towards a strategic process that supports employee engagement, performance and long-term retention.

At the **Baseline** level, onboarding focuses primarily on introducing the organisation, completing documentation and ensuring new starters have the equipment and access they need.

At the **Developing** level, organisations implement structured onboarding programmes that align with wider talent management objectives and begin measuring engagement and assimilation.

At the **Maturing** level, onboarding becomes the first stage of employee development. It integrates with performance management, mentoring and long-term career planning, while Talent Acquisition uses data to continually improve the experience for future hires.

This is an important reminder that Talent Acquisition doesn't end when an offer is accepted.

The quality of the onboarding experience influences employee engagement, productivity and retention long before formal performance reviews begin.

Why it matters

Candidates don't separate recruitment from onboarding. To them, it's one continuous experience, and an excellent recruitment process followed by a poor onboarding experience can quickly undermine confidence in both the organisation and the hiring decision.

Recruiters also possess valuable context that is often lost once a candidate joins. They understand what motivated the individual to apply, the concerns raised during the recruitment process, the expectations discussed throughout interviews and the strengths that influenced the hiring decision. When that information isn't transferred effectively, managers are forced to start again.

Mature organisations ensure that knowledge flows seamlessly from recruitment into onboarding, allowing new employees to experience a consistent journey from first conversation to first day.

How **poetry** accelerates maturity

Although **Poetry** is primarily designed to support Talent Acquisition rather than employee onboarding, it plays an important role in ensuring continuity between recruitment and a candidate's first day.

Because every hiring project is managed within a shared job workspace, recruiters, hiring managers and other stakeholders retain access to the context built throughout the recruitment process. Interview notes, hiring objectives, role expectations, key selling points and stakeholder discussions remain available rather than disappearing once the offer has been accepted. This helps managers begin onboarding with a much clearer understanding of the individual they have hired and the commitments made during recruitment.

Poetry also produces consistent hiring documentation that supports more effective handovers, reducing the risk that valuable knowledge is lost between Talent Acquisition and the hiring manager. Rather than replacing dedicated onboarding solutions, it ensures recruitment ends with a well-informed transition instead of an information handover built around emails, spreadsheets and memory.

The most mature Talent Acquisition functions don't simply fill roles. They lay the foundations for successful employees.

Onboard - Data & Technology

The RL100 Talent Acquisition Maturity Matrix describes onboarding technology as evolving from simple workflow automation towards fully integrated employee experiences that connect recruitment, learning and long-term development.

At the **Baseline** level, technology supports approvals, documentation and onboarding workflows.

At the **Developing** level, dedicated onboarding platforms help organisations create more engaging and collaborative experiences for new starters.

At the **Maturing** level, onboarding technology integrates with ATs, Learning Management Systems and other enterprise platforms to deliver personalised experiences while measuring engagement and knowledge acquisition.

This progression reflects a broader principle that applies throughout Talent Acquisition. Technology should reduce friction. The less effort required to move information between people and systems, the more time organisations can spend helping new employees succeed.

Why it matters

One of the biggest frustrations during onboarding is the amount of information that has to be recreated. Recruiters gather extensive knowledge throughout the hiring process, hiring managers provide context about the role, and candidates share their motivations, aspirations and concerns.

Yet much of that insight remains trapped inside emails, interview notes or individual conversations. When onboarding begins, managers often find themselves reconstructing information that already exists, creating unnecessary work and increasing the likelihood that important details are forgotten.

The most mature organisations ensure that context travels with the employee, allowing each stage of the hiring journey to build on the last rather than starting from scratch.

How **poetry** accelerates maturity

Poetry helps preserve the knowledge created throughout recruitment. Every hiring project captures research, planning, stakeholder discussions, interview preparation and hiring decisions within a single workspace, making that information available beyond the point of offer acceptance.

Rather than onboarding beginning with a blank page, managers have access to the thinking that led to the hire. This provides valuable context when introducing the employee to the organisation, discussing expectations and planning their early development.

Poetry also supports greater consistency by ensuring that documentation produced throughout recruitment remains connected and accessible rather than becoming fragmented across multiple systems. As organisations increasingly connect their Talent Acquisition technology with HR and onboarding platforms, this continuity becomes even more valuable.

The objective isn't simply to automate onboarding. It's to ensure the knowledge gained during recruitment continues to create value long after the hiring decision has been made, so every conversation starts with context rather than guesswork.



Onboard - People

The RL100 Talent Acquisition Maturity Matrix describes onboarding maturity as a progression from recruiters handing over new hires to line managers, towards Talent Acquisition playing an active role in helping employees succeed beyond their first day.

At the **Baseline** level, Talent Acquisition remains available to support new starters where required, although primary responsibility for onboarding sits with the hiring manager.

At the **Developing** level, recruiters help create a more consistent onboarding experience, ensuring employee engagement extends beyond Day One and supporting stronger relationships between Talent Acquisition and the wider business.

At the **Maturing** level, Talent Acquisition uses data to influence onboarding strategy, demonstrating how onboarding affects engagement, retention and long-term organisational performance.

This is one of the RL100 matrix's most important observations. Talent Acquisition shouldn't measure success by accepted offers alone, but by successful hires. The true outcome of recruitment isn't someone joining the organisation, it's someone who thrives once they're there.

Why it matters

Every recruiter has experienced the disappointment of seeing an excellent candidate leave within a few months. Sometimes the reason is the role itself. More often, however, it's a mismatch between the expectations created during recruitment and the reality of the role.

Candidates join organisations based on the conversations they have throughout the hiring process. Those conversations shape their understanding of the role, the culture, the manager and the opportunities ahead. If that shared understanding is lost during the transition into employment, new hires can quickly become disengaged.

The best Talent Acquisition teams create continuity. They don't disappear once an offer has been accepted. Instead, they help ensure that the understanding developed during recruitment continues into onboarding, giving new employees the best possible start.

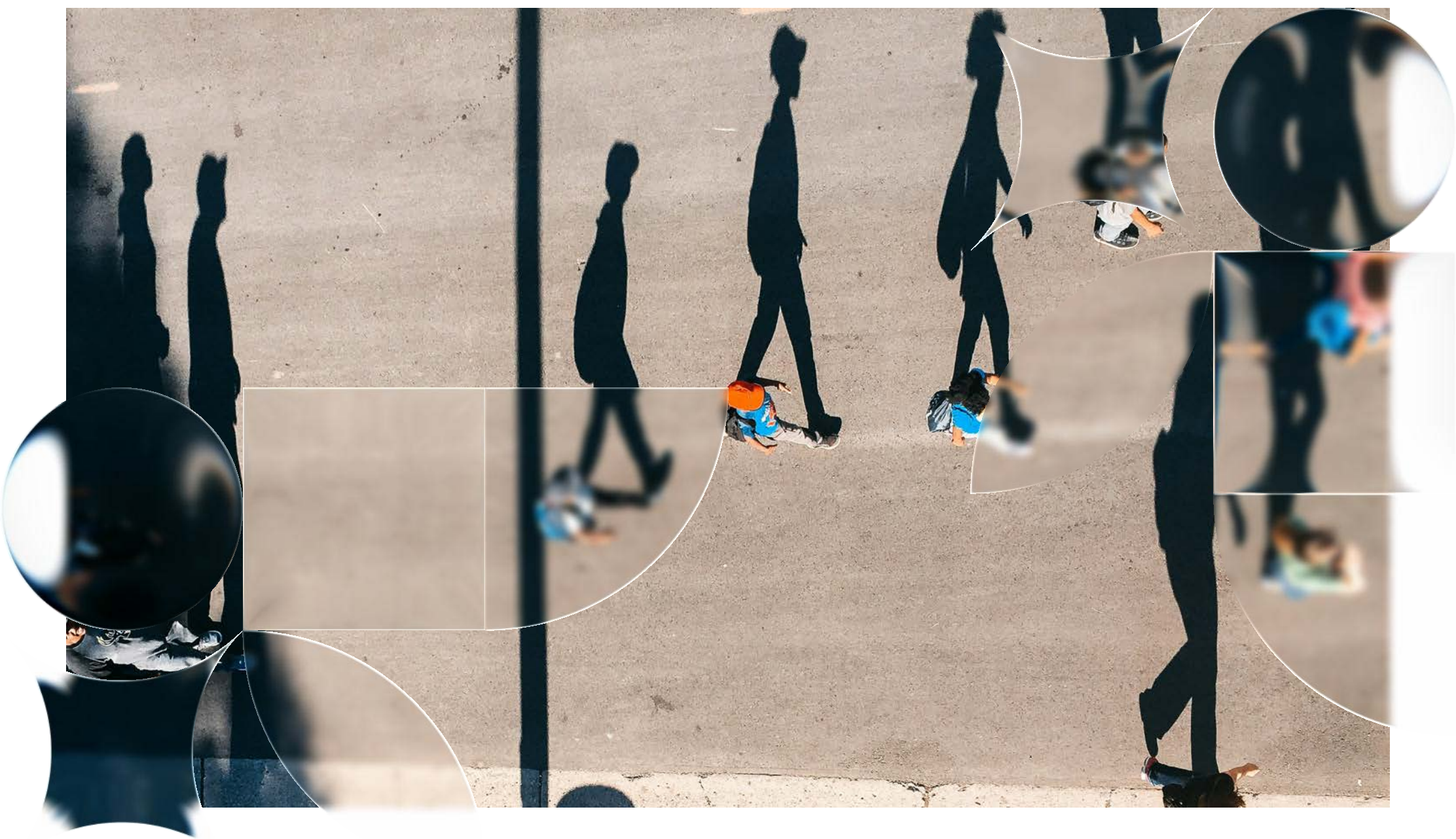
How **poetry** accelerates maturity

Poetry helps Talent Acquisition teams retain the knowledge that underpins successful hiring. Because every job has a shared workspace, recruiters, hiring managers and stakeholders can continue to reference the research, hiring objectives, interview discussions and agreed expectations that shaped the recruitment process.

That continuity leads to better conversations. Hiring managers are reminded why a candidate was selected, recruiters can support smoother handovers, and new employees benefit from a more consistent experience because the context behind the hire has not been lost.

Just as importantly, **Poetry** reinforces the role of Talent Acquisition as a strategic partner rather than a transactional service. Recruiters contribute value beyond filling vacancies by ensuring the knowledge created during recruitment continues to support the employee, the hiring manager and the organisation.

The most mature Talent Acquisition functions recognise that successful recruitment doesn't end with an accepted offer. It ends when a new employee has the best possible opportunity to succeed.



Conclusion

The Next Stage of Talent Acquisition Maturity

The RL100 Talent Acquisition Maturity Matrix remains one of the clearest frameworks for understanding how Talent Acquisition evolves.

Its central message is as relevant today as it was in 2022: maturity is not created by technology alone. It is achieved through the combination of capable people, well-designed processes and technology that enables both. That hasn't changed. What has changed is the role technology can now play.

When the matrix was published, most recruitment technology focused on helping recruiters perform individual tasks more efficiently. ATSS managed workflows. CRM platforms managed relationships. Assessment platforms supported interviews. Recruitment marketing platforms created campaigns.

Today, AI enables technology to contribute in fundamentally different ways. The role of the recruiter has not become smaller. If anything, it has become more important. The difference is that technology increasingly prepares recruiters for higher-value work instead of replacing it. Technology can now assemble research automatically, retain organisational knowledge, generate connected hiring assets, prepare recruiters and hiring managers, coordinate activity across multiple systems and reduce much of the repetitive work that has traditionally occupied Talent Acquisition teams.

The objective is not to replace recruiters. It's to allow them to spend more time doing the work that only people can do: building trust, influencing hiring managers, understanding candidates, making balanced hiring decisions and developing long-term talent strategies.

Throughout this guide, I've shown how **Poetry** supports that evolution. Not by attempting to replace the systems organisations already rely upon, but by connecting them through a shared hiring workspace that captures context, preserves knowledge and enables more consistent execution.

The result is more than faster recruitment. Organisations become more consistent, recruiters become better prepared, hiring managers become better supported and knowledge becomes organisational rather than individual. Every hiring project becomes an opportunity to strengthen the next.

To me, that is the next stage of Talent Acquisition maturity: not replacing people with AI, but helping people perform at their very best.

Every organisation is on its own Talent Acquisition maturity journey. Some are focused on improving recruiter productivity, others on creating greater consistency, strengthening hiring manager engagement or delivering a better candidate experience. Whatever your priorities, the question isn't whether Talent Acquisition will continue to evolve. It will. The question is how quickly your organisation can evolve with it.

I hope this guide has given you practical ideas for strengthening your own Talent Acquisition function. We'd love to show you how **Poetry** could help accelerate your own Talent Acquisition maturity journey.





The Next Stage of Talent Acquisition Maturity

Poetry is a hiring enablement platform that helps Talent Acquisition teams plan, execute and improve every hiring project.

Working alongside your ATS, **Poetry** brings together research, recruitment marketing, sourcing, hiring manager collaboration, interview preparation and hiring workflows within a shared job workspace. As each project progresses, knowledge accumulates and is reused throughout the hiring process, creating greater consistency while reducing repetitive work.

Poetry helps recruiters spend less time on administration and more time advising hiring managers, engaging candidates and making better hiring decisions.

Key capabilities

- ✦ Automated market, company and role research
- ✦ Recruitment marketing and employer branding
- ✦ Multi-channel sourcing and outreach campaigns
- ✦ Interview packs, scorecards and hiring manager preparation
- ✦ Shared job workspaces and collaboration
- ✦ Hiring templates, governance and best practice
- ✦ AI-powered hiring workflows and automation
- ✦ Integration with leading ATSs

To learn more or arrange a personalised demonstration, visit www.poetryhr.com.

References

- RL100. *Talent Acquisition Maturity Matrix*
- Poetry. Product documentation and platform capabilities.
- Interviews conducted by Adam Gordon as part of the *Recruiter Enablement* YouTube channel interview series (2024–2026).
- Customer interviews and testimonials from Poetry customers including Jensen Hughes and Wilson.

About the Author

Adam Gordon is Founder and CEO at Poetry.

He has spent more than 20 years working in the recruiting and talent acquisition world, helping employers to improve hiring through better processes, data and technology.

Prior to founding **Poetry**, Adam co-founded Candidate.ID, an award-winning recruitment marketing platform acquired by iCIMS in 2022. Throughout his career he has worked with organisations ranging from global enterprises to growing businesses, helping Talent Acquisition teams improve recruiter productivity, hiring manager engagement and candidate experience.

Adam is a regular speaker at Talent Acquisition conferences and events and writes about the future of hiring, AI and recruitment technology.

He lives in Glasgow, Scotland with his wife, their two children and Buddy, a poodle.

Outside Poetry, Adam is also Managing Director of GHA Rugby Football Club, a 700-member sports organisation playing in the Scottish Premiership.

To learn more or arrange a personalised demonstration, visit www.poetryhr.com.



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