



# *The Value of* Predictive Talent Models

**Hiring based on Predictive Talent Models led to better Quality of Hire and decreased Time to Productivity by 25% at Snapdocs.**

All people leaders want to hire great people who will stay, thrive and help their organization do amazing things. But **46% of all hires** either leave or are underperforming within 18 months. Predictive Talent Models help improve hiring quality by creating a scorecard of attributes that predict success in a role, specific to an organization.

## What is a Predictive Talent Model?

A predictive talent model analyzes highly successful employees at an organization and then uses that data to improve their hiring process. Its goal is to produce **a holistic picture of the characteristics that make employees successful**, which includes power skills, cultural tendencies, career interests, and hard skills, as well as traditional metrics like their experience, education and background. This talent model can then be used to inform the company's talent strategy to attract, hire, and retain more candidates likely to excel.

Since every organization is different, every model will be unique. There are no universal traits for highly successful employees — it's all about the **bidirectional fit** between the employee and the organization. All employees also have weaknesses or growth areas, but a good Predictive Talent Model can help organizations understand which growth areas can be managed for and which ones may predict early attrition or performance issues.



A successful model will understand what sets highly successful employees apart from the norm, quantify their characteristics with hard numbers, and actively counteract any bias that could derail the results.

Specific benefits of predictive talent modeling include:

**Hire faster and more efficiently.** A Searchlight customer reduced recruiting costs by 20-30% and decreased time-to-fill by weeks by knowing the profile they were selecting for.

- › **Reducing prestige bias** and **unconscious bias** to identify desired candidates more accurately. More effectively hire for competencies and skill, rather than credentials.

- › Create a **virtuous cycle** where knowing the talent model of successful employees equips the recruiting and hiring teams to hire more successful employees and further refine the talent model.

- **Set new hires up for success and reduce time to productivity** by training up the important strengths, capabilities and behaviors they'll need to thrive in their new organization.
- Improve **Quality of Hire** to drive stronger business performance. Psychology research has found that high performers are 400% more productive than average performers.

## Predictive Talent Models: A Case Study

To illustrate how Predictive Talent Models work, here's a walkthrough of the process with a Searchlight customer, **Snapdocs**. Snapdocs is the mortgage industry's leading digital closing platform. Powering millions of closings each year, Snapdocs combines an open platform, patented AI technology, the largest settlement network, and a team of industry experts to ensure digital closing success. Snapdocs has 500-1000 employees across the U.S. with more than a \$1.5 billion valuation.

In 2021, Snapdocs' Chief People Officer Chad Herring embarked on a talent analytics project to research the attributes, knowledge, skills, and experience that their best employees possess. Given how critical top talent is to the success of the business, this project had buy-in across the business, from the Head of Talent to the CEO.

Chad has over 10 years of experience as an HR executive at leading global organizations such as Polycom, Sunrun, and BrandSafway. His prior experience leading similar initiatives convinced him that data is vital for enabling organizations to predictably attract and retain top performers. It also taught him that the work required, if done manually, exceeded his team's capacity. His need for fast impact without compromising quality led him to partner with Searchlight.

Chad said:

"Whereas before we may easily spend a year or more gathering talent data, Searchlight helped us complete those steps 80% faster. **earchlight's software and analytics is a game-changer. It replaced having to search through resumes, LinkedIn profiles, interview notes, completed 360s, structured interviews,**



## **exit survey data, and ADP data. We also did not have to crunch regression models by hand.”**

Chad and the Snapdocs HR and Talent team segmented a yearlong engagement with Searchlight into 2 parts.

- Part 1 was the **research** phase, where Searchlight analyzed Snapdocs current employees for three roles, differentiated between High Performers (“HPs”) and Non-High Performers (“NHPs”), and surfaced patterns and trends in the attributes and experience that predict HPs.

- Part 2 was the **implementation** phase where Searchlight and Snapdocs worked together to use Searchlight talent models to hire candidates that aligned with their new talent profile. After hiring was complete, we ran a comparison test to understand how employees hired with Searchlight compared to employees in the same role hired without Searchlight.

In this White Paper, we focus on the outcomes for Snapdocs’ Customer Success Manager role.

## **Part 1 The Research: Creating the Model**

The research collection and analysis took less than 4 weeks to complete through Searchlight.

Snapdocs invited employees in the Customer Success Manager role to the Searchlight platform to participate in a 360 People Assessment. Each team member completed a self-assessment and was reviewed by 2-3 others including at least one manager. The surveys each took 15 minutes to complete and focused on Searchlight’s four dimensions of Behavioral Data: Competencies, Strengths & Gaps, Cultural Alignment and Career Interests. Our People Assessment has previously been found to be scientifically valid per best research standards in people science (see our [white paper](#)).

Survey completion was 90% within 10 business days, and reached 100% soon after with automated reminders through the Searchlight platform. All personal information was redacted in Searchlight.

As the data came in, Snapdocs tagged each participant with their most recent performance review rating on a scale from one to four.

Four meant that the team member exceeded expectations, while one meant that the team member was on a performance improvement program. For each person, Searchlight created a unique talent profile representing where they fell on four dimensions: Competencies, Strengths and Gaps, Cultural Alignment, and Career Interests. Searchlight used various data analysis techniques to surface the most prominent characteristics that differentiated high performers versus the rest of the team.

Before presenting the results to the customer, Searchlight vetted the results to check against adverse impact of bias and found no evidence of adverse impact.

The resulting Predictive Talent Model for Snapdocs’ Customer Success Manager role is on the following page. For comparison, we include a Predictive Talent Model of a comparable company’s Customer Success Manager role to demonstrate how different companies will have different success profiles for the same role.



## Snapdocs – Customer Success Manager

**Education/Background:** Bachelor’s Degree

**Work Experience:** 15 years of work experience & 10 years of relevant experience

HP DISTINGUISHING STRENGTHS		Frequency Over NHPs
Fast Learner	Masters situations or information easily and quickly.	2.6x
Results-Driven	Focuses on achieving results and outcomes.	2.2x
Resourcefulness	Finds alternative solutions to overcome obstacles.	2.2x
Strategic Thinking	Anticipates and prepares for future events.	2.2x
Intuition	Successfully uses insight not supported by obvious facts and data.	1.9x

### BEHAVIORAL CONTINUUMS

**Openness – HPs are 25% more biased towards being fluid.**

<b>Fluid</b> Love taking on a variety of challenges with exposure to stimulating opportunities.	<b>Structured</b> Love diving deep into one area to become an expert.
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**Execution – HPs are 18% more biased towards speed.**

<b>Quality-Oriented</b> Produce work with no errors, even if it takes longer.	<b>Speed-Oriented</b> Executes quickly and deals with errors later.
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## Comparable Company – Customer Success Manager

**Education/Background:** Bachelor’s Degree

**Work Experience:** 5 years of work experience & 2 years of relevant experience

HP DISTINGUISHING STRENGTHS		Frequency Over NHPs
Attention to Detail	Is rigorously detail-oriented and meticulous.	4.6x
Dependability	Can be relied on and accountable for one’s own work	3.6x
Collaboration	Works well with others to realize better results	3.2x
Hardworking	Is disciplined and works vigorously	2.0x
Problem Solving	Effectively identifies and solves challenging problems	1.8x

### BEHAVIORAL CONTINUUMS

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**Execution – HPs are 10% more biased towards quality.**

<b>Quality-Oriented</b> Produce work with no errors, even if it takes longer.	<b>Speed-Oriented</b> Executes quickly and deals with errors later.
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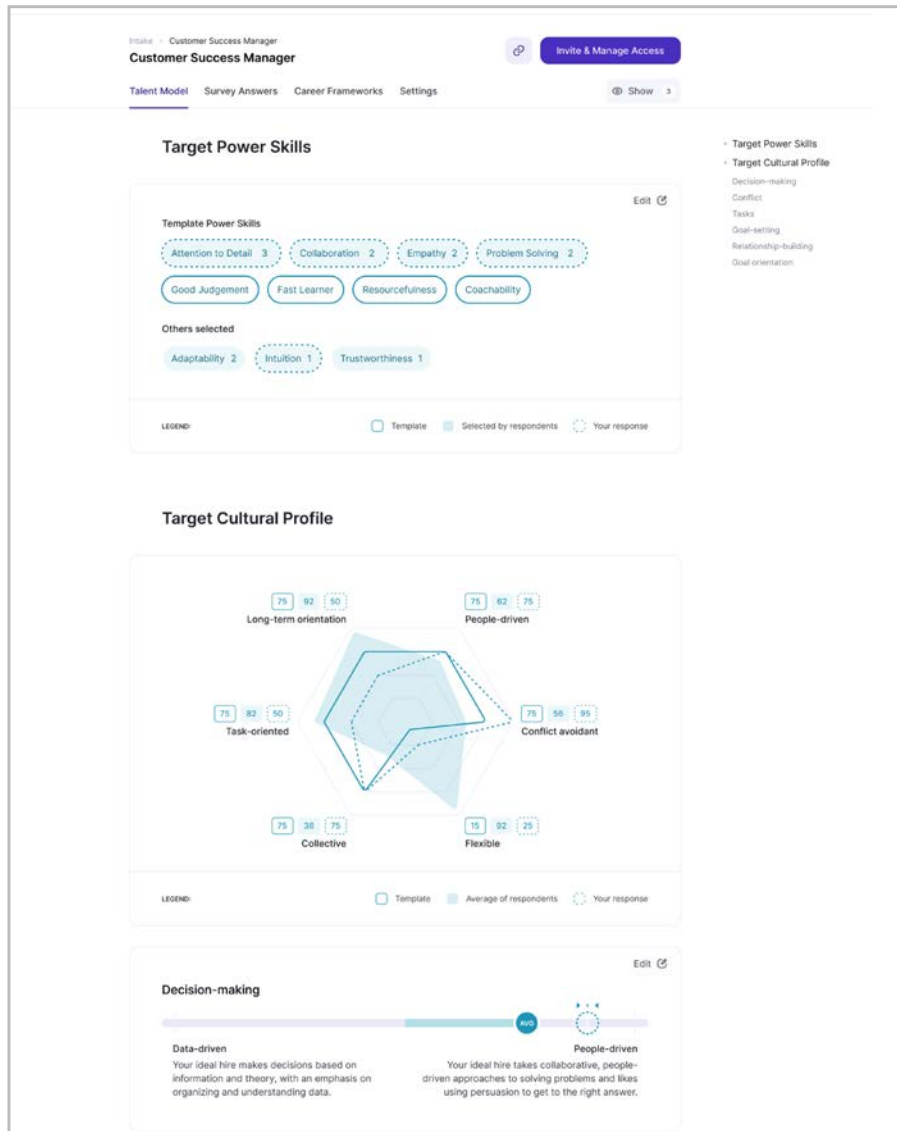


## Part 2 The Results: Improved Quality of Hire and Decreased Time to Productivity

After the Predictive Talent Model was complete, the scorecard with attributes that were most correlated to high performance was added into Searchlight’s Intake form for Customer Success Manager. Recruiters and hiring managers were trained to assess candidates with this new scorecard, and Searchlight’s Reference Assessments were calibrated to match candidates to it. With this data-driven approach, Snapdocs was able to find candidates that more closely fit elements

of the Talent Model, and in turn, were more likely to excel.

After some time had passed, we compared the batch of new Customer Success Managers hired using this revised scorecard to prior hires in the same role. This let us measure the business impact of Snapdocs’ Predictive Talent Model and see if it was producing high-quality candidates as intended.





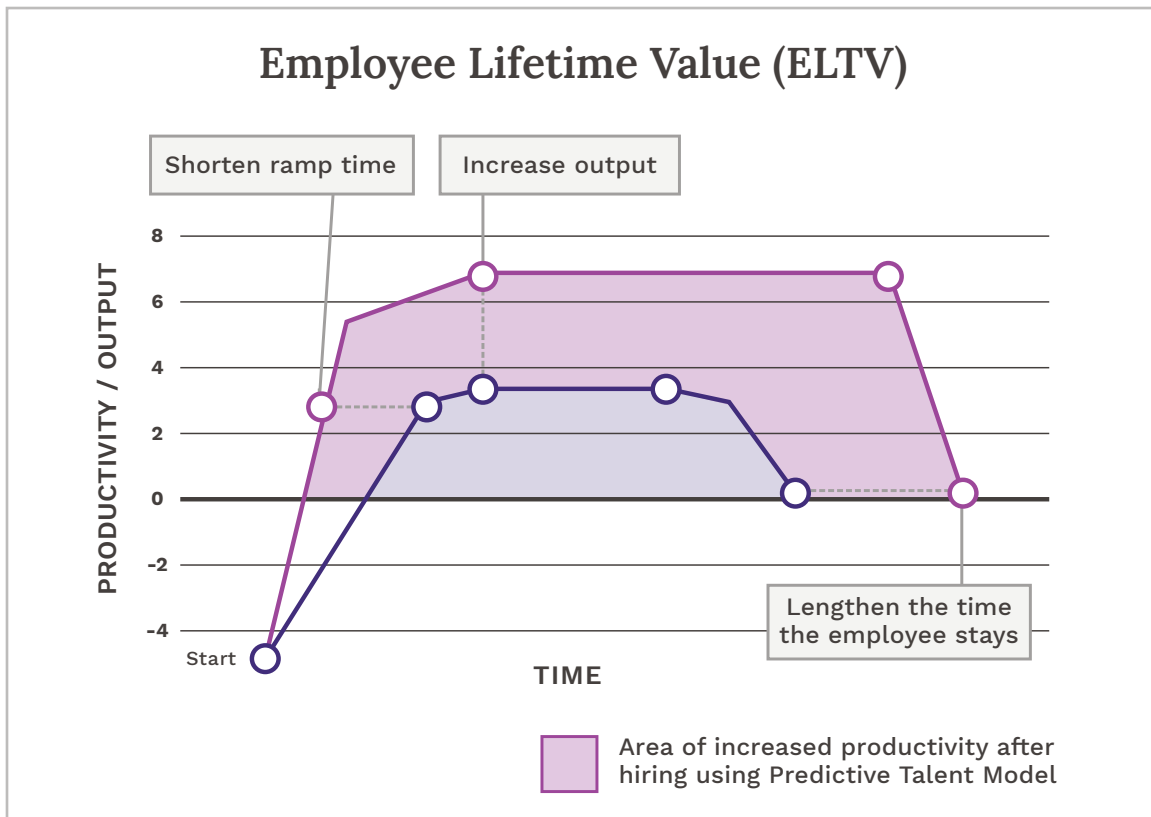
## RESULTS

For these new Customer Success Managers, the average **Ramp Time (Time to Productivity)** decreased by 1 month, from 4 months to 3 months. Since Ramp Time is the amount of time it takes a new hire to reach full productivity in a role, this gave the business 1 more month of value (e.g. customers served, sales closed, or product shipped) and saved 1 month in training cost, positively impacting the bottom line.

Outside of monetary value, Snapdocs also noted that the better onboarding experience and reducing Ramp Time had a positive impact on morale, culture, teamwork, and other key elements to productivity in ways that were difficult to measure. To illustrate this, take a look at the graph below.

Hiring a top performer and decreasing Ramp Time improves an employee’s lifetime value by 1.5-4x. This value comes from increased output in their role, decreased cost from the company in terms of onboarding and training, and increased tenure (because employees stay in a job longer when they are succeeding). Specifically, in a Customer Success role, this translates to 1.5-4x more customers served by 1 hire compared to the benchmark.

This graph also helps explain the **research out of Indiana University** that high performers can deliver up to 400% more productivity than the average employee.



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Chad shared:

“After using Searchlight, **the Customer Success hires we made post-Searchlight were by far the strongest people we’ve hired in the 2 years we’ve recruited for our team.** This success has created demand for Searchlight in other departments across the business.

The only variable that has changed in how we hire is that we have completed the analysis through Searchlight, and we’re running people through the predictive talent model we created in Searchlight. None of the other variables (i.e. who is making the hiring decision, who’s on the recruiting team

and doing the sourcing and recruiting, who is the leader of that team, and the current compensation model) have changed. **On whether or not Searchlight has improved the quality of hires, it’s an unequivocal, strong yes.**

With Searchlight we’ve created a hiring system in one quarter that took more than a year at my previous company, saved \$3M+ in recruiting costs, and generated \$3M+ in increased revenue because of increased performance. I will be taking Searchlight to my next company, ZoomInfo.”

## A Note on Counteracting Unconscious Bias

We hear from People and Talent leaders that one of their most significant pain points is that prestige bias and unconscious bias can unfairly favor advantaged gender and ethnic subgroups. How can People and Talent leaders leverage technology to hire and retain better while remaining free from bias?

Searchlight works actively to mitigate disparate impact and our audits show our Predictive Talent Models have no adverse impact. We accomplish this by working with organizational psychologists to validate that our power skills, cultural alignment, career interests, and hard skills assessment are unbiased against different demographic groups.

More specifically, Searchlight’s models are continually monitored and improved by testing a range of suitable models such as regression, NLP, and topic clustering against prediction objectives. Searchlight corroborates our

recommended behavioral profiles and success signals through **predictive, concurrent, and incremental validation** with performance ratings of candidates post-hire. We only ship models that meet a validity threshold.

You can read more about our stance on ethical AI [here](#).

### NEXT STEPS

Snapdocs is now implementing Searchlight’s Predictive Talent Models for additional roles in their Engineering, Product, Data, and Design teams. In addition, they are using Searchlight’s software platform to continuously measure Quality of Hire with every new hire. The additional input and outcomes data allows Snapdocs to easily update and refine their Predictive Talent Models even as their business grows and changes.



“The Customer Success hires we made post-Searchlight were by far the strongest people we’ve hired in the 2 years we’ve recruited for our team. This success has created demand for Searchlight in other departments across the business. On whether or not this has improved the quality of hires, it’s an unequivocal, strong yes.”

**Chad Herring**, VP, Snapdocs



If you’re interested in learning more about Searchlight’s Predictive Talent Platform, [click here](#) to schedule a demo.



Searchlight’s Predictive Talent Platform helps companies hire the right people faster by building complete Talent Stories. By connecting candidate reference and self-assessment insights to post-hire outcomes, Searchlight creates a virtuous talent cycle for retention that operationalizes Quality of Hire. Real-time information enables hiring professionals to increase efficiency, eliminate mishires, decrease time-to-fill, and make better data-informed decisions when identifying high performers. Searchlight is on a people-first mission to make hiring a win-win for everyone by understanding talent holistically. See the light with Searchlight. Learn more at [Searchlight.ai](#).