



The secrets behind the award-winning platform for working families at Spirax Sarco Engineering

How Talking Talent's digital coaching is helping parents at Spirax Sarco

Early in 2020, Spirax-Sarco Engineering plc (Spirax Sarco), partnered with Talking Talent to enhance their support for working parents and carers across the UK, **with a focus on providing an inclusive offer that spoke to all parents.** Spirax Sarco wanted to supercharge their existing inclusion programmes by offering **accessible, confidential, and high-quality third-party coaching support.** The result was Talking Talent Online – a digital coaching platform which provides 24-hour access to personalised advice from world-class coaches specialising in the issues most challenging to working parents, as well as offering advice and training to managers of first-time parents.

“*Personal wellbeing... can be a real challenge when you're a new parent or have caring responsibilities to juggle with work so being able to provide advice and guidance to employees, at whatever time of the day or night they need support, is a really practical way to make a positive difference to life at work and beyond.*”

Talking Talent Online is an online coaching experience that's truly personalised for each and every employee – it's user-driven and user-centric. **Unlike traditional learning management systems, Talking Talent does not just 'deliver content', rather it supports thoughtful decision-making, reflection and exploration.** By giving users decision points such as 'I want more help' or 'I'm feeling ready', the AI-powered logic ensures that **the user journey is self-directed, encouraging individuals to build the habit of checking in with themselves, as would any other coaching relationship.**

There's also a unique feature called **ASK A COACH** which allows individuals around the world to **connect confidentially with world class, specialist coaches.** Talking Talent Online was designed to meet all parents' needs – anywhere, at any time, in the way they need it e.g. 2 minutes of help at midnight, or a 15-minute wellbeing break at lunchtime. **The average person logs in twice a week and spends 3-minutes per session.**

Darren Towers, Group Head of Inclusion, Diversity and Wellbeing at Spirax Sarco explains why offering such support is so important - **"At Spirax-Sarco Engineering, we believe in safe, inclusive, supportive workplaces where all of our people can be themselves and perform their best.** For us, personal wellbeing, and looking out for the wellbeing of those around us, is a big part of this. That can be a real challenge when you're a new parent or have caring responsibilities to juggle with work, so being able to provide advice and guidance to employees, at whatever time of the day

or night they need support, is a really practical way to make a positive difference to life at work and beyond.”

Nicky Harvey, Human Resources Lead at Spirax Sarco, and programme owner of Talking Talent Online, was thrilled with the implementation. Nicky said, “we did a big launch earlier this year but with COVID and the lockdowns we haven’t had as much ‘face time’ to talk about or promote this great platform.

“However, myself and the other HR teams have been mentioning Talking Talent Online whenever we’ve sent any communications about our employee support mechanisms over the last nine months. Even doing a soft touch launch, the uptake has been really good, which is evidence in itself that it was needed and our employees are using it. Unknown to us at



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the time, **we couldn’t have set up this additional support offering at a better time with the stresses and challenges the COVID-19 Pandemic has brought on our employees, especially our working parents and working carers”.**

In a recent poll, 100% of respondents at Spirax Sarco said it was easy to sign up for and to use Talking Talent Online. Nicky’s views were echoed by the judges of the Learning Technologies Awards who **praised Talking Talent Online for its ‘deeply ethical approach’** and expressed ‘hope that this is the first of many such digital products where users’ wider wellbeing is prioritised above so-called ‘engagement’.

Spirax Sarco want to ensure their people are not just signing up, but using the platform as needed, and getting value from their time. **Typically, 2% of an employee population will be engaged in a parental leave and looking for extra support in any given month,** but Spirax Sarco found **over 6% of their employees actively signed up and engaged with the platform** – and this is growing daily.



Talking Talent Online has performed well in the twin challenges that face all learning products — getting people signed up and maintaining an active user base who feel they are actually benefiting. **The Talking Talent Online approach is to offer unlimited users and unlimited usage for a subscription fee.** This strategy has proven helpful in creating an environment where HR stakeholders can freely encourage as many people as possible to sign up.

This has resulted in average enrolment rates above 86% and a showstopper enrolment rate of 300% of our expected engagement rate at Spirax Sarco. But users don’t just sign up, they consistently engage and report positive experiences. **In fact, 30% of individuals instantly felt better equipped to manage their career and family. The average coach rating is also 4.8 out of 5 stars.**

Spirax Sarco have achieved their goal of better involving managers in the process of supporting working parents and giving them more insight into the process and challenges of parental leave and



return. **A poll of registered, active users showed positive results, with 100% of respondents at Spirax Sarco saying that Talking Talent Online met or exceeded their expectations for working parents support** and 100% agreeing or strongly agreeing that the platform had the tools they needed to successfully manage their parental leave and return.

Spirax Sarco have recently added to their employee benefits offering by launching specific support for their working carers such as providing 5 days paid Carers Leave for when their employees who are also carers need an extra bit of support. Like for working parents, it can be challenging juggling caring duties and work as a working carer, and the HR Teams at

Spirax Sarco are very excited that Talking Talent Online has also now increased its support to help those with caring responsibilities.

For companies wanting to get high-quality additional support to working parents and carers, especially during the pandemic, Talking Talent Online has been a lifeline. The technology allows the platform to **deliver coaching with rapid reach, continuity and sustained support, untouched by COVID-19**. Nicky Harvey said, *“the remote access and thorough content has meant it’s been easy to access and use while in lockdown and working remotely – and I feel really proud knowing that extra support is there for everyone and that this support is making a difference to our employees”*.



TTO’s standard and ongoing, system-wide user surveys show:



The average person in the system logs in twice a week and spends 3-minutes per session.

+10/20%



Talking Talent’s coaching support has been shown to deliver a 10-20% increase in retention in the first year.



22% of people report a confidence boost immediately.



72% feel more supported by their employer.



Talking Talent coaches are regularly rated as 4.8 out of five

The Results



100% of people using the platform at Spirax Sarco, said that Talking Talent Online met or exceeded their expectations for working parents support.



30% instantly felt better equipped to manage their career and family.



50% reported a positive effect on their wellbeing.



100% of people also agreed or strongly agreed that Talking Talent Online had the tools they needed to successfully manage their parental leave and return to work.