

Support assessment guide

4 questions to ask a vendor about customer support — before making a purchase

If you use a technology solution long enough, you will eventually have a question or need troubleshooting assistance. And sometimes you'll need an answer fast. When that happens, it's important that your software vendor is available to guide you.

But not all vendors provide support that adequately meets customers' needs.



If you're considering a new talent management solution for your school or district, ask these questions to determine which vendors have the support structure to ensure your success.

1. DO YOU OFFER MULTIPLE CONTACT OPTIONS?

Some software questions are best handled over the phone, where you have the opportunity to provide all the details needed to address your inquiry and receive real-time feedback. In other cases, you may have a simple issue that needs to be addressed quickly, and an online chat option might be more appropriate.

Make sure any potential software vendors provide you with the option to request assistance through multiple venues — including phone, email and online chat.

For Maj. Jeremy Coombs, principal of Willamette Leadership Academy, the option to speak with a support rep online provided the convenience and agility he needed to get the most out of his performance management solution.

"Anytime I couldn't figure out how to do something, I'd go to TalentEd Chat support. The person who helped me was always really nice," he said. "They just walk me through the process, show me what to do, and I have it working within a few minutes."

2. HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW THE K-12 LANDSCAPE?

Because school and district talent management teams differ from corporate human resources teams, it's important to choose a vendor that's familiar with how K-12 institutions operate.

Barbara Burke, director of human resources and staff development at West Baton Rouge Parish, noted that TalentEd's deep understanding of the K-12 landscape — stemming from their team of [education veterans and research experts](#), as well as spending nearly 17 years serving the industry — has greatly benefited her district.

"The entire TalentEd team is amazingly knowledgeable and helpful," she said. "They've helped me more than words can express."

3. WHAT ARE YOUR HOURS OF AVAILABILITY ON WEEKDAYS, WEEKENDS AND HOLIDAYS?

Not all software issues occur between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. If you need to contact your vendor in the early morning or evening, will they be there to help you? What about on a Saturday? Or over winter break?

To help customers address problems and answer questions as quickly as possible, TalentEd support is available 12 hours a day — from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Central time — Monday through Friday. For weekends and holidays, 24/7 support is available to address major needs.

"Even when schools are closed, talent management systems still need to be operational and supported, as that may be the only free time certain job seekers have to submit applications," said Caroline Morris, senior director of customer engagement at PeopleAdmin. "Robust support should be available during your school's operational hours, but vendors committed to their customers also ensure they have support for major challenges — such as down systems — at all times."

4. CAN YOU PROVIDE REFERENCES?

The best way to evaluate any vendor's support is to talk to those who have experienced it first-hand. If schools or districts similar to yours had positive experiences, it's safe to expect yours will, too.

Always ask vendors for references, and feel free to request to speak with them directly. Vendors with nothing to hide will be glad to arrange a reference call; TalentEd invites you to contact us to learn about our many referenceable customers.

Call 877.637.5800 to learn how TalentEd can help your school or district more efficiently manage the entire talent management life cycle with innovative solutions and first-rate customer support.



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