Overture WHITE PAPER

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The case for a *new recruitment paradigm.*

Why the gap between senior talent and the people who hire it is a failure of design, and what a platform built around the candidate does about it.

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Every figure in this paper carries a numbered source. Figures about the market are drawn from the published sources at the end; nothing about Overture's own outcomes is claimed until there are outcomes to cite.

SUMMARY

The intermediaries are the only party the system is *designed around.*

Recruitment is one of the few large professional services markets where the person with the most at stake has the least control. A senior professional who wants to move relies on agencies paid by the other side, job boards built for volume, and HR screens run by people who cannot assess the work. Employers pay 15 to 30% of first-year salary for this arrangement and keep nothing once the hire is made [6][9]. Both sides lose.

Overture starts from an observation drawn from twenty years of executive search in digital assets and financial services: the placements that work are the ones where a strong candidate reaches the decision-maker who owns a problem, with evidence of how they solve it, before any gate is involved. Everything else is friction. A platform that reproduces that path at scale, with the candidate as the client, removes the fee, the noise and the gatekeeper at once.

The model has four parts.

Evidence, not keywords.	A recorded interview and the CV together establish what a candidate actually does.	INTERVIEW
Prediction, not search.	Overture works out the realistic next move and the companies with that problem now.	DIRECTION
Direct, anonymous approach.	Named decision-makers, no name attached until the candidate releases it.	APPROACH
Aligned economics.	The candidate pays a modest subscription. Nobody is paid a percentage of a salary.	PRICING

> *"The gap between recruiters and clients is not a feature of the market. It is a failure of design."*

01

The broken state of *modern recruitment.*

The agency model: high cost, mixed value

Agencies exist to solve a real problem. They reach passive talent, take overhead off internal teams, and move quickly on specialist roles [4][5]. The price of that service is out of proportion to what is retained.

15-30 %	**68** vs 82%	**$750** K
of first-year salary in contingency fees: $24,000 to $36,000 on a $120,000 engineering hire [6][7][8].	offer acceptance on agency hires against internal ones. Agencies are paid for speed, not fit [9].	a year in fees for a company hiring 25 people at $100,000, with no pipeline retained at the end [9].

Several agencies competing on the same role produce duplicated outreach, confused candidates and damage to the employer's brand [9]. And the talent intelligence evaporates the moment the invoice is paid: the company pays for one hire and owns nothing afterwards.

The job board illusion

Job boards were meant to open hiring up. What they produced is a structural mismatch between who applies and who is wanted.

Active-only bias	Boards reach people who are looking. More than 70% of top talent is not [2].
Volume over fit	The platforms are optimised for applications, so hiring teams receive hundreds of keyword-tuned CVs that loosely match [2].
Technical blind spots	In Web3, quantitative trading and AI engineering, keyword matching cannot tell depth from vocabulary [2][10].

The gatekeeper problem

The most damaging failure sits at the screening stage. HR and generalist recruiters screening for PhD-level scientific work or senior engineering roles frequently have no understanding of the work itself [3]. Lacking fluency, they fall back on keyword matching, which passes unqualified candidates through and filters out exceptional ones who do not fit the template [3][10]. Technical hiring managers respond by losing trust in the whole function: irrelevant candidates, poor communication, vague job descriptions that put good people off [10].

The net effect is that **the best candidates never reach the person who would hire them**, and employers never see the people they most need, because an intermediary who could not assess fit stood in the way [1][3].

02

Why the existing fixes *have not worked.*

The industry has tried to solve this several times. Each attempt made the same structure faster without changing who it is built for.

Applicant tracking systems	Made the gate faster, not smarter.	SAME GATE
Professional networks	Made passive talent visible but left the approach with recruiters, so senior people now ignore most inbound.	SAME APPROACH
Recruitment as a service	Reduces the fee but keeps an intermediary, paid by the employer, deciding who gets through [9][11].	SAME BUYER

None of these change the position of the candidate. In every model the candidate is the product, not the client. That is the design flaw. A senior professional is the one party who knows exactly what they do, what they want next and which problems they can solve. The system treats that knowledge as an input to be parsed, not as the thing that should drive the process.

03

A research team that *answers to the candidate.*

Overture inverts the model. The candidate is the client. The platform's job is to establish what they actually do, work out where that is wanted, and put them in front of the decision-maker without anyone in between. Four principles govern the design.

1. Evidence, not keywords

The candidate's primary evidence is a recorded interview, not the CV. They answer structured questions in their own words; the CV supports rather than leads. This produces a record of judgement, scope and outcomes that a keyword filter cannot see and a generalist screener cannot fake. The extracted profile is shown back to the candidate for review and confirmation before anything is done with it.

2. Prediction, not search

Given the interview and CV, Overture predicts the candidate's realistic next move and the two most credible alternatives, each with the evidence that supports it. The prediction model is built on two decades of placement outcomes in digital assets, fintech and financial services: which backgrounds actually moved into which roles, and why. The candidate approves or rejects a direction. Only an approved direction goes to market.

From there the platform identifies companies with that problem now: in-house employers, specialist funds, exchanges and infrastructure firms, filtered to seniority, location and freshness. The result is a short list of organisations and the named decision-makers inside them, not a page of job adverts.

3. Direct, anonymous approach

The candidate is introduced to the decision-maker who owns the problem, framed around the problems they solve rather than the job they had. Every approach is anonymous. The employer sees the evidence and the fit; they do not see a name until the candidate decides to release it, to that employer specifically. A discreet senior professional can explore the market without the exposure that stops most of them from looking at all.

The candidate sets the targets and approves every approach. Sending is then handled by the platform, and any reply hands control straight back to the candidate. Employers that must never be approached, including current and recent ones, are excluded from the outset.

4. Aligned economics

No fee is charged on placement. The candidate pays a modest subscription for a research and outreach system that works for them. The employer pays nothing to receive a well-evidenced, pre-verified senior candidate directly. Compared with the 20 to 30% agency tax, a platform model for a company hiring three or more roles a year costs a fraction of the equivalent agency spend while retaining the pipeline and the data [9][11].

> *“The candidate is the one party who already knows what they do and what they want next. Overture treats that as the driver of the process, not an input to be parsed.”*

04

Confirm it. Say it. Approve it. *Send it.*

Six stages. Each one ends on a decision the candidate makes; Overture never advances on their behalf.

01

Upload

The CV is parsed into a structured profile the candidate corrects.

ENDS WHEN

You confirm the profile.

02

Interview

A recorded, spoken interview around their work, decisions and results.

ENDS WHEN

You approve the transcript.

03

Direction

Overture predicts the next move, with the evidence behind it.

ENDS WHEN

You approve a direction.

04

Targets

Companies hiring in that space now, and the decision-makers inside them.

ENDS WHEN

You choose who to approach, and who to block.

05

Approach

Anonymous, problems-I-solve outreach. A reply returns control to the candidate.

ENDS WHEN

You send.

06

Disclosure

Identity released to an interested employer, one employer at a time.

ENDS WHEN

You release your name.

Identity is verified before a candidate's first approach. This is deliberate. Digital asset and fintech markets attract impersonation and fraud, and the value of the channel to employers depends on every approach being from a real, checked person. That verification, and the evidence behind each approach, is what makes a decision-maker open the message where they would ignore a recruiter.

05

Why this is *defensible.*

Domain intelligence that cannot be scraped.

Twenty years of real placement outcomes in a narrow, high-value market: which backgrounds moved into which roles, which moves failed, which titles mean what where. A generalist platform cannot reproduce it by crawling job adverts.

ENGINE

A trusted channel to decision-makers.

Every approach is evidenced, verified and anonymous. The recipient learns that a message from this channel is worth reading. That reputation compounds and is hard for a late entrant to buy.

CHANNEL

The candidate as client.

Because the candidate pays and controls every step, Overture's incentives point the same way as the user's. No pressure to push a placement, no split loyalty. That alignment is the product.

INCENTIVES

Starting narrow.

Senior professionals in digital assets, fintech and adjacent financial services, in the UAE, the UK, the US and remote roles. Acute agency fees, thin domain fluency in HR, discreet passive talent. The architecture extends to any specialist domain where those three hold.

MARKET

06

Risks, and how the design *addresses them.*

Fraud and impersonation	Verification is a hard gate before any approach. In the first phase it is carried out by hand; automated document and selfie verification follows funding.
Employer response rates	Approaches go to the person who owns the problem, framed around the problem, with evidence attached. Volume is small and deliberate. The candidate blocks any employer that must not be approached.
Data and consent	The candidate confirms every extracted profile, every transcript and every direction before use. Identity is never released without an explicit decision, per employer.
Reliance on model output	Predictions carry their evidence and the candidate can reject them. Overture proposes; the candidate decides.
Positioning	Overture is a career research and outreach system, not an automated job application tool. It will not mass-apply, and it will not act without approval.

07

Three models, *side by side.*

The dimensions that determine cost, quality and control.

DIMENSION	TRADITIONAL AGENCY	JOB BOARDS	OVERTURE
Cost per hire	15 to 30% of salary; $20K to $36K typical [6]	Low upfront, high internal time cost	Predictable subscription; roughly $5K to $7K amortised [11]
Who is assessed	Active and some passive; surface-level vetting	Active only; keyword-matched	Passive and active seniors; interview-evidenced
Who decides fit	A recruiter, often without domain fluency	An applicant tracking filter	The decision-maker who owns the problem
Pipeline ownership	None; disappears after the placement	None	Retained by employer and candidate
Decision-maker access	Filtered through the recruiter	Self-serve, no curation	Direct, anonymous first approach
Candidate control	Low; CV sent widely	Low; applications tracked by others	Full; identity released per employer

Figures are drawn from the published sources listed at the end of this paper and are indicative rather than audited.

CLOSE

The imperative *for change.*

The current architecture of recruitment serves neither the employer nor the professional. Agencies charge a premium to add friction. Job boards produce noise. Gatekeepers without domain fluency block the very people companies most need [1][3][9]. The industry's attempts to fix this have made the same structure faster without changing who it is built for.

A platform that puts the candidate in the position of client, replaces keywords with evidence, replaces search with prediction, and connects verified senior talent directly and anonymously to the people who hire it removes the intermediary rather than re-pricing it. The case is clear and the operating model has been proven by hand for two decades. What remains is to run it at scale.

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