



 The Driving Force Case Study
Group of Companies

Powering a Mission to Mars: Delivering Results Through People-First Culture at The Driving Force Group of Companies



The Driving Force Group of Companies is known across the Canadian and U.S. transportation sectors for its vehicle rentals, sales, leasing, and fleet management. In its latest journey, the company has launched into a whole new orbit of transformation. To power its five-year “Mission to Mars” growth initiative, the company has created a game-changing ‘people-first’ strategy — turning a fragmented performance management practice into a streamlined, strategic process that prioritizes well-being — and it’s winning employee praise and industry awards along the way.

The secret to its meteoric growth has been ensuring that every employee feels appreciated and aligned with the company’s goals. By putting people first, the company is creating a model where worker satisfaction drives productivity. The technology partner they’ve chosen to support that mission is Betterworks.



Before Betterworks

“We didn’t have a formal performance process in place,” explains Andrea Malec, manager of talent management and development at The Driving Force Group of Companies. “Performance management was done at a local level, with whatever process or tool the manager chose to use.”

A patchwork solution meant that the company’s 600+ employees had no consistent approaches to measuring performance. In many cases, managers and employees weren’t having conversations at all. “We needed to have a better process and a tool to support our goals,” Andrea explains, “which is where Betterworks came in.”

Choosing a true partner with Betterworks

“We were looking for an outstanding performance management tool,” Andrea says. “When we learned we could set up goals, do recognition, and use Betterworks Engage for surveys, those were all bonuses for us, but we chose Betterworks as a solution because of the customer service we received. The partnership was very clear, right from the first person I spoke with. There’s a whole team working together to help us succeed — and that’s been true from the support we received through integration to the support we receive today from our client success manager.”



Betterworks has gone over very, very well. Leaders love it. Employees also love it. They describe it as intuitive to use.

Andrea Malec | Manager of Talent Management and Development | The Driving Force Group of Companies



Program goals and implementation

Andrea and her team set clear goals from the start, including:

- 100% of full-time employees receive meaningful development feedback
- 75% of employees with a development plan
- 85% of employees clear on roles and responsibilities
- 10% increase in scores for key drivers of engagement

The Betterworks rollout and results so far have been terrific, Andrea says. “Everyone, including leaders and employees, found the platform easy to use. The Betterworks platform navigates smoothly from an admin perspective and our employees find it intuitive to use. The process was smooth and seamless.”



The Mission to Mars initiative

What Driving Force Group of Companies is trying to accomplish is significant. Its five-year “Mission to Mars” initiative— which it also calls Vision 2025 — has two components: financial profitability and return on asset revenue and a people component around teamwork, collaboration, delighting customers, and looking after the environment. “For us, it shows the importance of a balance between performance and relationships,” Andrea explains.

Every employee has a role in the mission, which makes understanding the company’s goals essential. “Betterworks really contributes to that,” she says, “because people have visibility into the goals at the top. They’re written in clear language that people understand. When people are clear on goals and feel they are part of our bigger ‘Mission to Mars’ picture, that makes them feel like they belong.” These also tie into the Betterworks Conversations module, and the company measures people on both performance and relationships.”

The Driving Force Group of Companies has achieved 100% adoption among executives. “Goals are tied to the top Mars priorities, and we share our CEO’s goals, and other C-suite executives down to the SVP level, so everyone can see them.” These goals will soon be rolled out to the manager level.

And having clear executive goals is helping everyone stay aligned. The company has achieved 88% clarity on goals and responsibilities among employees, exceeding its target of 85%.

Using an employee-first approach

Belonging is also absolutely key. “People and culture are really important to us,” Andrea says. As part of that philosophy, the company launched its Thrive employee wellness program in 2022. “We aim to create an environment where employees can thrive and truly feel part of an irresistible organization, fostering a sense of belonging,” she explains.





Leveraging Betterworks' tools for growth and belonging

Betterworks is instrumental to that goal, not only in helping people feel aligned and developed, Andrea says, but also due to the platform's robust recognition features, which the company calls its Appreciation Wall.

Additionally, Betterworks is helping deliver on the organization's mission through employee-led performance, particularly the platform's manager conversations module. "Our philosophy is that we believe learning and development is employee-owned," Andrea says. "But with Betterworks, it's also manager-supported. We help remove obstacles and identify people or programs—whatever employees need. It's employee-owned but manager-supported and organization-enabled."

This includes the ability for managers to have conversations with employees and support for employee-led performance reviews — both changes that employees had been asking for. "Employees expressed a strong desire for performance discussions," Andrea says. "And they're very content that these conversations are taking place."



I've used Conversation Assist, and some managers are using it in their performance conversations. People say they love it, making comments like, 'Oh, this is so cool and neat!'

Andrea Malec | Manager of Talent Management and Development | The Driving Force Group of Companies



Making employees part of the performance program design

Andrea and the team wanted to develop a program based on design thinking that would generate stakeholder buy-in and be well-adopted.

“The first year that we launched our performance conversations, we tied them to values,” she explains. “This year, they will be tied to how employees rate themselves on our leadership competencies. And I built the competencies so that they reflected things that are important to people and they can be proud of.” Those are growth and development, customer focus, valuing differences, teamwork and collaboration, accountability, and change agility.

Employee feedback has confirmed that this approach is working. “People are happy that we’re having positive performance conversations, and managers share that they find the process we built to be easy,” she says.

Continuous improvement and feedback with AI

Andrea’s team also uses the Betterworks Engage survey tool to listen to and act on feedback and ideas. This helps the company focus on providing a strong and positive employee experience.

“Having the Engage platform helps us know where to focus,” Andrea says. “It’s very powerful. This year, the AI picked up comments about where we could do better, so our focus will be on teamwork and collaboration. Even though we did quite well, we want to focus on enhancing this competency.”



Future plans for the Betterworks platform

The company aspires to fully utilize Betterworks with a staged approach. For now, they have been using Betterworks Engage, recognition, and performance features for employees and plan to add more conversations and check-ins. They will also roll out succession planning and employee development plans later this year.

“All these things were add-ons to what we were originally looking for,” she notes. “We’re very pleased to have a nice, all-in-one platform. Our main intent was to have a performance management tool, but the other modules have been really nice bonuses.”



Measuring effectiveness and results

Andrea and the team measure effectiveness through regular employee surveys in Betterworks Engage and qualitative feedback, such as focus groups — and they are extremely pleased with how the organization has responded.

“We have seen big improvements in how people feel about recognition, teamwork, and collaboration,” she shares, noting that 70% of positive employee sentiments relate to teamwork and collaboration.



Managers particularly like the structure Betterworks provides. “I think the reason some managers weren’t having conversations is that we didn’t have a structure,” she explains. “They weren’t sure what to say, what they could or should say. They really appreciate having that structure now. They don’t have to feel anxious about it.”

“We just love Betterworks as a tool, but we really love our relationship with Betterworks,” Andrea says. “We launched something new that we haven’t done historically, and it went so smoothly. There was no pushback or real challenges, just people embracing it with positivity. We help people connect to goals and to each other as humans. We did this well before — and now we can utilize the Betterworks platform to excel further.”

Andrea says connecting to clarity and human relationships is absolutely critical to success at The Driving Force Group of Companies, Andrea says, because it will ultimately enable the company to complete its mission to Mars.

