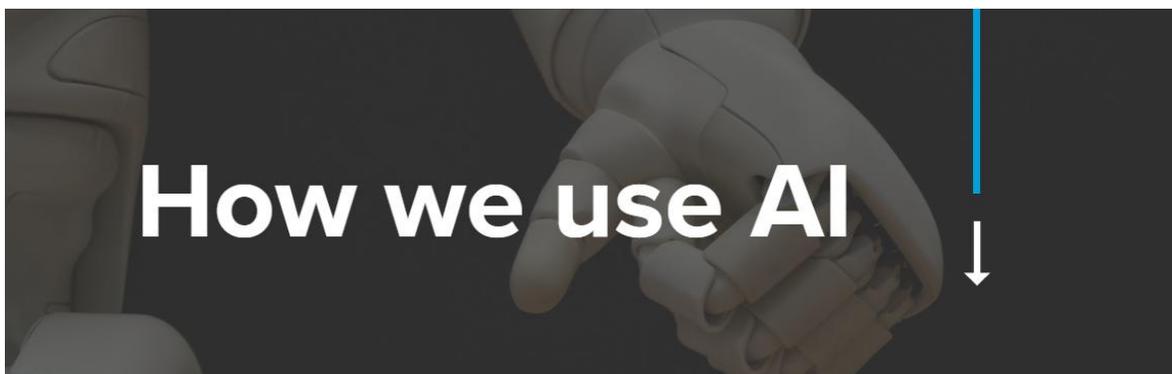




AI in Recruitment, Words – Meareg Hailu

It is no secret that recruiters have a lot to do nowadays. There is so much work that goes into hiring a new employee, from advertising the job to sourcing, scheduling, paperwork and so on. This task has proven burdensome in the past, in part due to inefficient manual tasks that plague the recruiting process and the lack of access to the right data to make informed decisions. There is simply not enough time in a day for a recruiter to do all these tasks at once and that is why most hiring processes take much more time than they should. In fact, according to research conducted by LinkedIn, 46% of recruiters and hiring managers have identified “finding the right candidate” as the biggest hurdle today. To tackle these challenges, new technology companies are rapidly emerging with AI to automate and improve everything in your recruitment process from job advertising and resume screening to applicant engagement, scheduling, and recruiting by text. These new tools offer us ways to help overcome the limitations and biases inherent in hiring people with automated processes that are hyper-responsive to market data, complex metrics, and even budget constraints.

As a Team Leader in an outsourcing company I believe AI can make hiring easier and quicker — it can improve the recruitment process and help with those mundane tasks that no one appreciates. The business landscape is evolving with greater focus on quality-based productivity. Just as employees’ expectations from companies have gone up, companies have raised the bar on their expectations and want their future employees to meet specific job requirements. AI can play a large role in reducing biases in candidate assessments, improving relationships with employees, improving metrics and, bettering the workplace environment. Apart from automating transactional activities, AI systems can also process huge volumes of data and carry out deep or wide learning.



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AI in Talent Acquisition: CASE STUDIES

Intuit



Intuit, a global financial software company tasked with hiring over 6,000 employees a year. It uses AI to significantly narrow down talent pools, to identify resources that are most likely to engage with the company and also find candidate leads not previously considered. The company is developing an algorithm-driven platform which scores and matches potential recruits to open positions - also based on their similarity with profiles of top performers.

Vodafone



Telecommunications Company Vodafone saves time and money while assessing many more applicants than human recruiters ever could by using AI-powered video interviews instead of phone screening. Job seekers record themselves answering standardised questions, whereupon robots analyse the interviews and assess candidate suitability across 15,000 different dimensions; from body language and facial cues to voice intonation and speech cadence. The top-ranked candidates are then invited into face to face interviews.

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Unilever



Unilever, the global FMCG giant, has used artificial intelligence to screen all entry-level employees. Candidates play neuroscience-based games to measure inherent traits and have recorded interviews which are then analysed by AI. The company considers the experiment a big success and will continue it indefinitely. Unilever says that it has dramatically increased diversity and cost efficiency.

AI in Talent Acquisition: The Present Perception, The Future Perception

A global study by Deloitte in 2017 on Global Human Capital Trends, concluded that attracting skilled resources no longer remained the responsibility of just HR. It now stands as a top concern of business leaders, ranking third in the survey. More than 83 percent of executives surveyed said improving the talent acquisition process is important or very important.

One of the most critical findings of a recent LinkedIn study run across the globe was that Automating the screening and hiring process in order to eliminate human bias and time limitations will shape the future of recruiting. A study on “Role of Technology in Recruitment” in 2017 was the People Matters and Param.ai study that was designed and conducted with the objective to understand how leading companies in India use technology at every stage of recruitment-sourcing, screening and interview and selection. The study found that organisations in India are still at a nascent stage when it comes to adopting AI recruitment technology as there was a stark difference between current and desired rate of technology adoption (approx 40%). However, in the future they see themselves leveraging AI technology in an even bigger way to aid recruitment.



Downsides of AI in Recruitment:

Issues with accuracy and reliability

Although AI has come a long way, it is still far from being considered perfect. One of the major faults of an applicant tracking system is that it lacks accuracy and reliability as it can easily be confused by formatting options. For example, an applicant might have all the good qualities that a recruiter seeks, but still fail to qualify into the AI's list due to some unorthodox style of bullet points used in the application or resume.

Too much dependency on certain keywords

AI depends very much on certain keywords to scan through their pile of candidates. This can become a loophole for candidates who are familiar with how the system in AI is programmed, where they may include certain keywords that have the potential to trick the system and camouflage them as good fits for various positions, even though they are not.

Lacks nuance of human judgement

If a company is looking to diversify its workforce, using an AI in its hiring process may not be the best option. There are candidates out there who have mediocre work experience but might still be the best fit for the position based on his or her personality, interests, character and work ethics. These are factors that require human judgment. Using an AI in this sense can greatly reduce the diversity in a workforce.

Conclusion

Automating the recruitment process will save time, and consequently money as well as allowing recruiters to concentrate on other important tasks. Some of the disadvantages in implementing AI in recruitment are there for now, but eventually these problems will be solved just like any other challenges prior to them. More importantly, with the implementation of AI in every aspect of our lives, it is only a matter of time before it becomes mainstream even in recruitment.

Now is the time to adopt AI to gain a competitive edge in recruiting. AI is empowering recruiters today to become smarter and more efficient by significantly enabling the hiring process. Utilising AI means hiring managers can revolutionise their recruiting strategy but it needs to be blended with human agents in order to be effective and work properly.