

A Better Approach to Deploying AI in Recruitment



Organisations are faced with an **overwhelming deluge** of applications, as candidate-side automation meets the ever more frictionless application process.

AI-based approaches offer a potential solution, at the same time as **improving consistency** and the **candidate experience**.

The tools are not perfect, however, and applying them to a process which we already know is flawed **risks legal, regulatory and reputational damage**.

The solution is to take the tools out of the selection process and apply them, instead, to **engaging** with, and **guiding**, your candidates outside the pressure and negativity of a current application.

In this paper, we will describe this better approach, delivering the **benefits** of the new technology while avoiding the associated **risks**. Embedded in the proven Hollaroo intelligent engagement platform, this delivers **better results for everyone**.

The State of Play – A Tsunami of Applications

Since the launch of internet-enabled recruitment, the goal has been to make the initial application process as **simple** and **accessible** as possible. Candidates can apply for roles from anywhere in the world, and the focus has been on making that initial contact as close as possible to “**one-click**”.



At the same time, the application process remains relatively **opaque** and **one-way**. An application is submitted, it may be acknowledged but beyond that there is often **very little feedback**. This generates the perception that the outcomes are a bit of a lottery and, therefore, the best strategy is to “buy all the tickets” by applying to **as many jobs as possible**.



To date, organisations have relied on technology to manage the volume of applications. Now candidates are also gaining access to tools that **automate the application process**. This has resulted in a large **increase in the quantity** (but not necessarily the quality) of applications and everyone is **drowning in a tsunami of data**.



Is AI the Answer?



In theory, machine learning technology (AI) is ideally suited to solving the issue of **sifting large volumes of candidates** and reducing them to a number that is manageable by the organisation.

The strength of the technology is in **pattern recognition** – which can be used to compare candidate data to the requirements of a role or to other candidates. It is also very good at **extracting structured data** from unstructured sources. So, for example, taking a candidate CV and turning it into a standardised summary or generating a list of key skills or traits.



This has the potential to robustly and consistently **perform the initial screen** of candidates, at large scale and greatly **reduced cost** compared to a manual process. As an added bonus, the generative capabilities of AI tools enable engagement with candidates in a **personalised** fashion, improving the **candidate experience** as well as saving costs.



What's not to like? Well, it is a genuinely exciting time, and the new technologies do have the potential to **transform activities like recruiting**. Nevertheless, there are challenges that need to be understood and addressed.



The Challenges of Deploying AI

Firstly, it should be clear that any issues with screening candidates, especially from their initial applications, are not necessarily due to flaws in technology. Whoever or whatever is making the decision is working with a very limited (and potentially flawed) set of information so **errors are inevitable**.

Secondly, conventional processes are already known to be **flawed** and **subject to bias**. It can be as simple as not having the time and resources to properly consider each application in a consistent fashion. At the other end of the spectrum is the introduction of **conscious and unconscious bias** from the person doing the screening.

Alongside this, AI Tools have their own specific flaws, typically due to the nature of the models and ways in which they are trained. Research shows that this introduces alarming **inconsistencies** in results alongside mirroring **biases** contained in the training data.

The tools are continuously being **improved** and flaws **corrected**. It can be argued that they are already as good as, if not better than, manual screening. Nevertheless, there are three challenges that will not go away, no matter how good the tools become.



The Three Challenges

If a candidate is wrongly treated as part of a manual process, and it can be shown that the issue is not systematic, then this can be treated in isolation. If, instead, the organisation has chosen to use technology to conduct a process, and that process is shown to be flawed, then the liability belongs to the organisation and can cover anyone impacted by the technology.



Governments and Institutions are concerned about the impact of AI and are putting in place regulations to manage its use. The GDPR already covers the use of automated processes, and the EU AI Act considers recruitment as a High-Risk area for the deployment of AI which will result in strict obligations to be met.

The early stages of recruitment are almost entirely negative. The vast majority of applications will be rejected at this stage and decisions will be made under significant time pressure. Managing the candidate relationship at this stage has always been problematic. Adding automation, especially using potentially flawed models, risks provoking a significant backlash.

There is a Better Way

How do we take advantage of new technology while avoiding the three challenges? The secret is to avoid using AI for selection but instead use it to guide someone to their best role within the organisation.



Imagine if you could have a conversation with everybody interested in working with you, understanding what capabilities they bring and where they might best fit, and you did this before they even applied.



Straight away you could give feedback that enables them to make better and more focused applications. That would be a positive experience for the candidate at the same time as greatly improving the quality of any applications made.



Historically this has been the domain of high-end head-hunters, offering a bespoke (and expensive) service. Now technology potentially enables this experience to be provided to every single person interested in your organisation.

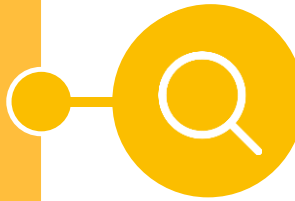


How Does it Work?



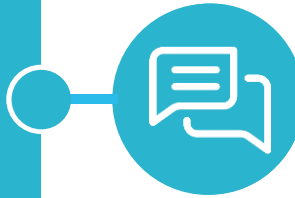
Anyone interested in your organisation joins the talent community and is engaged in a way that fits their situation.

Once you understand their preferences and capabilities you present them best fit roles to apply for.



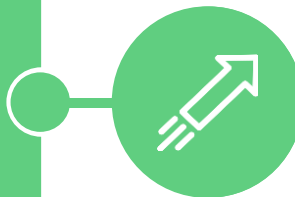
Deeper analysis enables more detailed feedback on fit (and gaps) along with suggested development paths.

Job-aligned groups enable early feedback and matching to typical roles before the job is even posted.

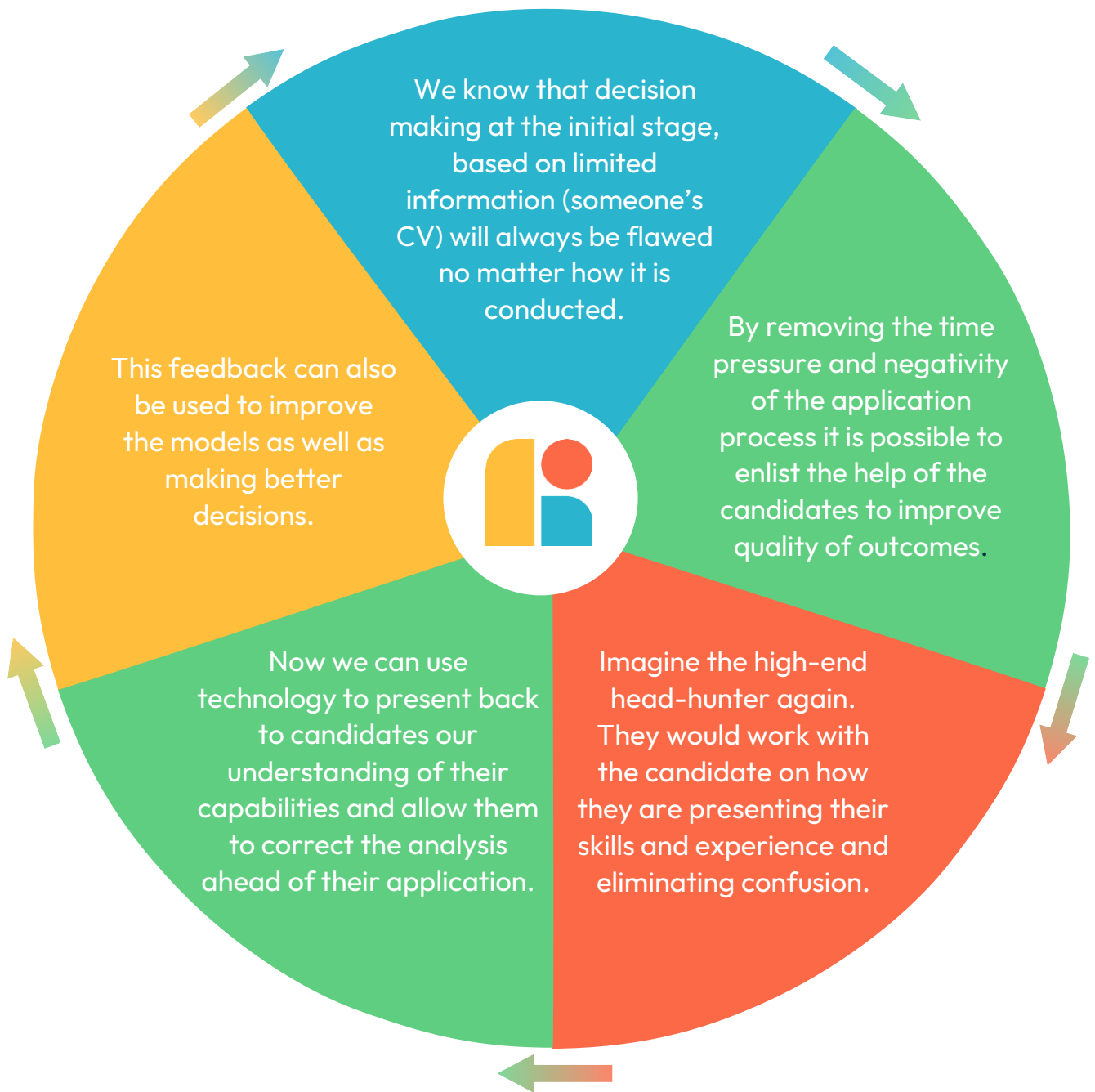


Engagement and move-readiness metrics augment matching and pipeline quality feedback to recruiters.

Making sure your pipeline delivers an informed stream of quality matched applicants for future roles.



Putting Humans in the Loop – Your Candidates



What about existing applicants?

With an integration to your ATS, current applicants can also be analysed using the same technology.

This can be used as a first-pass review of applicants, identifying those to be invited directly to the talent community and those to be manually reviewed.

The Results

Happier
Candidates

Happier
Recruiters

Happier
Organisation

In the past the challenge has been to justify spending resources on this engagement. The success of the Hollaroo intelligent engagement platform has shown that even an automated self-service approach delivers great results.

Now we have the opportunity to deploy AI technology to make the engagement even better, delivering measurable benefits to your three key audiences:



Conclusions

It is clear that AI-based approaches offer **exciting improvements** in two important areas of recruitment: matching and summarising. These could make recruitment **faster, better and cheaper**.

What is also clear is that the tools are **not perfect**, and never will be, and applying them to a process which we already know is flawed risks **legal, regulatory and reputational damage**.

The solution is to take the tools out of the selection process and apply them, instead, to **engaging** with, and **guiding**, your candidates in a more open-ended and conversational environment.



Offers a **better approach** to deploying AI in recruitment, which enables you to deliver all the **benefits** of the new technology without the associated risks. Delivered within the proven **engagement platform**, new technology enables better targeting, personalisation and outcomes.

A better experience for all.