



The Future of Recruitment

Scan Club output for August 2022



Employment and
Social Development Canada

Emploi et
Développement social Canada

Canada



In August 2022, the Human Resources Innovation Foresight Team (“HRI”) hosted its monthly Scan Club on “The Future of the Recruitment”. Participants from across the Government of Canada participated in the hour and a half activity.

HRI provided participants with three specific “Weak Signals”:

- [The “Great Resignation” Disruption Forces...Equity](#)
- [Are AI Recruitment Tools Ethical And Efficient?](#)
- [Nike commits to releasing hiring data for women and minority groups](#)

Participants then discussed the importance of these signals and their potential impact on the Federal Public Service. The following infographics summarize each Weak Signal and organizes the participant’s’ insights and discussions into various areas of implications using a [STEEPV framework](#).

Visit HRI at:

GC-wiki: https://wiki.gccollab.ca/EDSC_Innovation_RH_-_HR_Innovation_ESDC

GC-collab: <https://gccollab.ca/groups/profile/928221/esdchuman-resources-innovation-innovation-en-ressourceshumaines-de-edsc>



The “Great Resignation” Disruption Forces... Equity

Employers across the world are experiencing a labour shortage. In the iCIMS 2022 Workforce Report, 92% of C-Suite leaders said, that without the right talent, they would fail to meet their corporate goals. The Great Resignation, which many saw as a temporary post-pandemic trend, has already negatively impacted more than 80% of companies.

A dwindling cycle of supply and demand magnifies the problem. But, it also means, that people traditionally prevented from accessing higher paying jobs for any number of prejudicial reasons – nationality, race, class, educational background, criminal record, etc. - are now given the opportunity to use their relevant skills, to receive training, or to apply analogous abilities (not

necessarily needing a graduate degree) to specific jobs.

Multiple start-ups, large corporations, and not-for-profits are creating new ways for these groups of people to enter labour markets through non-traditional means.

Impacted groups:

- Marginalized groups
- People traditionally prevented from entering labour markets
- Employers

So what?

How might this impact us in the future?



Social + Cultural

- **Bias Ballyhoo:** An emphasis on hiring beyond typical labour forces is a win for combatting bias and achieving diversity.
- **Bias Bind:** It's possible that companies touting equity, diversity, and inclusion use it as a shelter from criticism

and having to implement true systemic change.

Bye Bye Baddies: Opening corporate hiring practices to the public or, conversely, those corporations refusing transparency, will allow users (candidates) to rate their experiences (think of HR Yelp) forcing companies to improve and demonstrate good behaviour.

Third Order Implication: companies might hire bots or “job influencers” to falsely promote equitable workspaces.



Technological + Infrastructural

***This signal provided several start-ups and companies looking at more hiring equitable practices and include the following:**

- **WithYouWithMe:** a social impact firm providing underrepresented groups access to the labor market and filling the chronic tech skills gap.
- **Flexa:** a search engine for flexible roles by enabling companies to showcase their working environments to candidates who want to know how they operate and how transparent their working policies are around flexibility and benefits before applying for a role.
- **Screenloop:** a hiring intelligence platform helping

companies build the best teams by avoiding costly bad hires and removing unconscious biases from the recruitment process.

- **Knockri:** an asynchronous interview assessment tool that reduces time and cost to fill and assesses thousands of candidates objectively and equitably.
- **Marketplace Overload:** What happens when the market is oversaturated with “helpful” databases and applications? Will there be a blowback against equitable hiring practices in a response to decision-fatigue and inefficacy?
- **HR Advisor 3000:** The emphasis on analytics and AI elevates the expectations of HR. They are not only expected to fulfill their traditional responsibilities, but also maneuver within the realm of advanced technologies and data science. And manage the overall cost...



Values + Ethics

- **Fair Chance Hiring Policies Boon:** *A more American-relevant signal* Indeed, the online job board, noted that in May 2022 there were 31% more job postings advertising fair-chance hiring – a practice of allowing candidates with previous involvement in the legal system to apply for jobs.

- **Data Consciousness:** Once again, with new advancements in the realm of analytics, data privacy is tantamount. What are third-party providers doing with the data they collect, who owns it, and where does it ultimately end up? Particularly important, if the data collected refers to more vulnerable groups of people.



Policy + Government

- **Unorthodox Hiring Practices:** How will analogous hiring (candidates hired without having the exact advertised skill) affect unions, collective bargaining agreements, and hiring requirements? Bilingualism for example is a major barrier to a large percentage of the Canadian population.
 - **Canada Catch-Up:** Like the private sector, the Government of Canada needs to consider its ability to hire newcomers and international talent. According to one participant, cohorts in some Canadian universities are 50%+ international students.
 - **Geolocational Hiring:** Some groups of people are unable to work for parts of the Federal government because of where they live. Removing the requirement of living in a certain location diversifies the workforce and provides job opportunities for people living outside of urban areas.
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Are AI Recruitment Tools Ethical And Efficient?

A large number of employers – including a majority of Fortune 500 companies – are now using and relying on artificial intelligence-driven technologies and applicant-tracking systems to perform tasks like screening resumes and scheduling interviews.

Recruitment software applies machine learning algorithms to complex recruitment data to make high-volume tasks more efficient and optimize decision-making.

These tools have become an indispensable part of HR minimizing CV sorting times, optimizing interview scheduling, and shortening hiring periods.

Impacted groups:

- HR Advisors
- Non-traditional Applicants
- Diverse Applicants
- Organizations seeking comprehensive labour force

So what?

How might this impact us in the future?



Social + Cultural

- **Awkward Hiring Turtle:** Candidates chosen by an AI may not feel exactly connected to the employer. If they are one of many data points, their candidacy becomes less about their unique value and more about fitting a “model”. This may spurn those wishing for a more intimate connection to their employer.
- **Give the System What it Wants:** This isn't exactly novel, but candidates could figure out how to gamify the process and feed AI the exact information needed to bypass that filtration process, disadvantaging better, more honest – or less shrewd - more deserving candidates.



Technological + Infrastructural

- **Application Analytics Dilemma:** AI can now seek for data points and information in applications that were never intended by the applicant. For example, the choice of font or the use of certain words could, by AI, be attributed to certain characteristics. Is this insightful or misleading information?
- **The Great Access:** Ultimately, AI enables organizations to optimize the search, find, and classify functions of the hiring process. Human bias – contextual, confirmation, anchoring etc. - is removed with AI sorting endless volumes of data. Applicants who would otherwise be lost in the piles or overlooked by tired eyes, now have a “fair” fighting chance.
- **Noisy Bias:** “Noise” is the distracting parts of applications that slows hiring processes. However, in “classifying” and “eliminating” noise, AI can be avoiding or missing or including “colour” as noise in what would otherwise be integral to an applicant’s CV.
- **Psychometrical:** Instead of applications “alluding” to a candidate’s “intangibles”, AI can read further into applications and predict, on HR Advisors’ behalf, what is unsaid on a candidate’s CV. More ethical challenges abound.



Values + Ethics

- **Bias Bias:** Setting an AI’s parameters risks bias at both an organizational and AI level. An HR Advisor wishing for “the best university” or the “best past experience” is streamlining a process, but also eliminating the nuance of uniqueness and inhibits the potential for diverse candidates. Will we hold AI to the same standard as human bias?
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Nike commits to releasing hiring data for women and minority groups

By 2024, Nike will publish employment statistics based on gender, race, and ethnicity. Nike joins approximately 80 S&P 100 companies that have publicly committed to enhancing hiring and promotion transparency. Investors have also asked for information on retention rates, but Nike has so far refused to provide it.

An increasing number of businesses have recently taken steps to be more open about their workforce's diversity or lack thereof. However, many continue to doubt diversity and inclusion initiatives, despite media-attention efforts.

Impacted groups:

- Marginalized employees
- Other Large Organizations
- Lookout Status Quo

So what?

How might this impact us in the future?



Social + Cultural

- **Normalizing our Failures:** Having shareholders hold major corporations to a higher moral standard could be the spark a seachange in consumer/shareholder values. Where the money is is where change will happen. Ripple effects of other organizations looking to get ahead of corporations like Nike or at least stay on par could be obliged to make similar commitments.
- **Equiwashing:** As seen in other industries, like corporate social responsibility initiatives and greenwashing, the use of grandiose announcements regarding equity and diversity could be simply placating the masses, enabling corporations to continue to do what they're doing at a core level.



Policy + Government

- **More Info is not More Equity:** Targeting “unmet” goals of certain groups of people can also create additional barriers for those groups or others – applying the same hiring/meritocratic principles to one group may not be equitable to another group (i.e. People with disabilities). In other words, having the demographic data is only the first step in rewiring hiring practices.



Economic + Legal

- **Logging Longterm Liability:** Will lawsuits begin to pop up if organizations’ hiring practices and rates made public reveal significant disparity between race, gender, ethnicity, accessibility etc.?
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*“The future is already here –
it’s just not evenly distributed.”*

— *William Gibson*



