

### Final Research Question

How are organizations using AI to improve candidate (full-time, U.S.-based) & recruiter experience and efficiency (faster processes or better candidates) while preserving data privacy, human touch, and inclusivity?

### Exploring the AI Landscape in Recruitment: Efficiency, Ethics, and Evolution

In the dynamic landscape of modern recruitment, organizations are increasingly turning to Artificial Intelligence (AI) to revolutionize the candidate and recruiter experience, as well as enhance overall operational efficiency. This strategic integration of AI aims to streamline processes, expedite hiring timelines, and identify top-tier candidates while maintaining a commitment to preserving data privacy, preserving the human touch in interactions, and upholding inclusivity. Nearly 1 in 4 organizations uses AI to enhance HR-related activities with the highest percentage of usage in the recruitment and hiring space<sup>1</sup>. The major reasons cited by organizations for using AI in recruitment are to save time, improve efficiency, and identify top talent<sup>1</sup> (*See figure 1 in appendix*).

As organizations seek innovative solutions to navigate the competitive talent market, the challenge lies in striking a balance between leveraging AI's capabilities for efficiency gains and safeguarding essential human-centric and ethical considerations within the recruitment framework. This inquiry delves into the multifaceted ways in which AI is harnessed to elevate the experiences of both U.S.-based candidates and recruiters, and explores how technology can be wielded as a tool for progress without compromising essential human elements and ethical principles.

### IBM Watson

AI is making strides in recruitment towards efficiency and effectiveness. It is not only helping recruiters derive insights from a multitude of data sources but also streamlining the recruitment process to leverage speed and time gains. One such pioneer in this space is the IBM Watson tool. Watson proves instrumental for recruiters, providing insights into the challenges of filling diverse job roles and assisting in the strategic prioritization of requisitions. It also automates repetitive tasks enabling recruiters to focus on more strategic endeavors<sup>2</sup> (*See figures 2 & 3*). For example - FloCareer uses Watsonx Orchestrate to automate outreach to qualified candidates, with plans to further automate interview scheduling, aiming to expedite their hiring process and enhance efficiency<sup>3</sup>. Its predictive prowess ensures precise evaluations of candidate success probabilities and effort estimation, empowering recruiters with informed decision-making capabilities. Furthermore, Watson engages in social media 'listening', extracting valuable insights that enable recruiters to enhance messaging strategies and cultivate more impactful communication with candidates<sup>2</sup>.

However, one has to be cognizant about the concerns regarding the ethical use of AI. The two biggest areas where one has to be mindful, especially in the case of IBM Watson, is that of data privacy and bias<sup>4</sup>. AI systems, if trained on biased data, may perpetuate discrimination in hiring decisions, reinforcing existing inequalities<sup>4</sup>. Similarly, IBM Watson tool parses through large amounts of personal data, especially through its social media 'listening' analysis. Ensuring compliance with data protection regulations and maintaining candidate privacy can be challenging.

### SeekOut

Taking inspiration from ChatGPT, companies like SeekOut are developing AI solutions specialized in talent acquisition to fulfill companies' hiring needs. In the status quo, recruiters need to spend a lot of time searching for candidates and personalizing messaging. With only a job description as the input, SeekOut generates a list of qualified candidates by analyzing each person's skills and experiences. Then, it uses both the candidate profile and job description to write a personalized outreach message to the candidate<sup>5</sup>. Aerospace and defense company L3Harris Technologies was able to achieve a 4x larger talent pool, 2x weekly phone screens, and comprehensively streamlined hiring process by utilizing the tool to attract not only job board applicants, but passive candidates as well<sup>6</sup>. Up to 45% employers are opting for these types of Software as a Service (SaaS) AI solutions<sup>7</sup>. Almost 75% of organizations increased investment in talent acquisition technology last year and 70% plan to continue even if a recession occurs.

A specific issue to note with using recruiting AI solutions like SeekOut is the impact on an organization's entry-level and junior workforce<sup>8</sup>. The increased ability to identify and hire experienced talent will reduce the need to train skillsets internally, and thus shrink the proportion of early-career employees in both the company's main business and recruiting team. Long-term, this could put a strain on the ability to internally promote to mid and senior-level positions. For the few that they do hire, organizations will need to develop accelerated promotion plans to move their early-career employees to the mid-level within two years so that they can generate value for the business areas that GenAI presently cannot.

### Affectiva

Artificial intelligence has also found its way into the video-interviewing platforms of various vendors. A case in point is Affectiva, a Boston-based company specializing in emotion recognition software<sup>2</sup>. Affectiva uses AI to evaluate candidates' emotional intelligence and honesty during video interviews by scrutinizing facial expressions, speech rate, word choice, and vocal tones<sup>2</sup>. While the interpretation of emotions through facial expressions is an intriguing application, it is still in its early phases. Voice analysis, on the other hand, is a more developed technology, considering factors like the frequency of hesitation and tone of voice. Companies like Hire IQ leverage voice analytics to assist recruiters in hiring employees for positions such as customer contact representatives<sup>2</sup>.

As Affectiva's technology and other machines become more adept at understanding human emotions, ethical considerations arise concerning this evolving form of AI<sup>9</sup>. Questions emerge regarding the ownership of data extracted from the analysis of people's feelings. Concerns about protecting consumer privacy prompt discussions on establishing mechanisms for individuals to safeguard their personal information<sup>9</sup>. The ethical intricacies surrounding the potential misuse of this technology by malicious actors, akin to incidents involving social media and other technologies, introduce an additional layer to the discourse<sup>9</sup>.

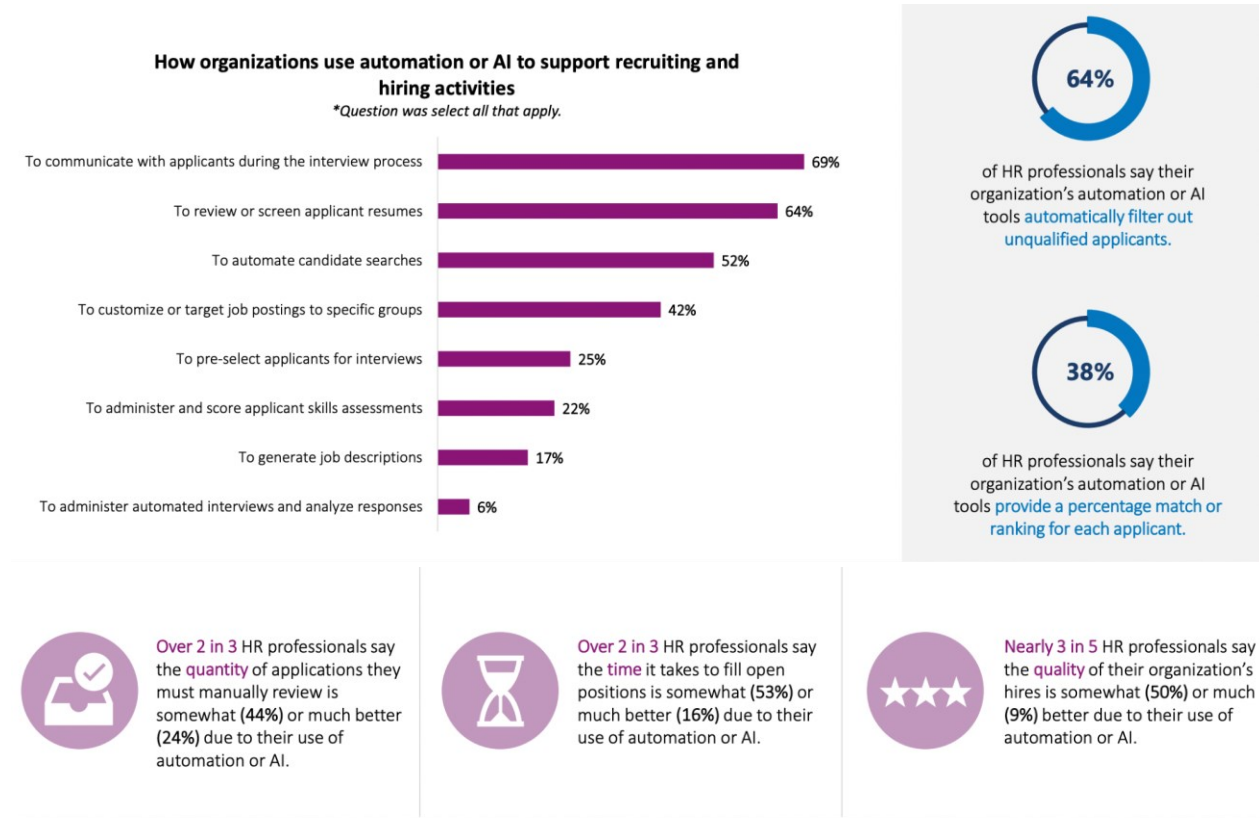
### Conclusion

Broadly, most AI tools being developed for talent acquisition are either focused on efficiency orientation (interview scheduling, managing application processes, assisting recruiters with follow-ups, and applicant pipeline management), bias-mitigation (coding job description language and candidate communications to be more inclusive), or interview automation (remote video interviews)<sup>9</sup>. As we look ahead at navigating the ever-evolving landscape of AI-driven recruitment, the delicate balance between efficiency gains and ethical considerations remains paramount and essential.

**References**

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8. Mearian, L. (2023). [How AI can help find new employees: Artificial intelligence can help hiring managers and recruiters discover talent, reducing the time it takes to get them onboard a company. But there are risks associated with a process often automated by a chatbot](#). *Computerworld (Online Only)*, 1.
9. Forbes. (2019, May 6). [Designing AI that knows how you feel](#).

**Appendix**



**Fig 1. Information and statistics on usage of AI in recruitment**

**Source:** [https://advocacy.shrm.org/SHRM-2022-Automation-AI-Research.pdf?\\_ga=2.112869508.1029738808.1666019592-61357574.1655121608](https://advocacy.shrm.org/SHRM-2022-Automation-AI-Research.pdf?_ga=2.112869508.1029738808.1666019592-61357574.1655121608)

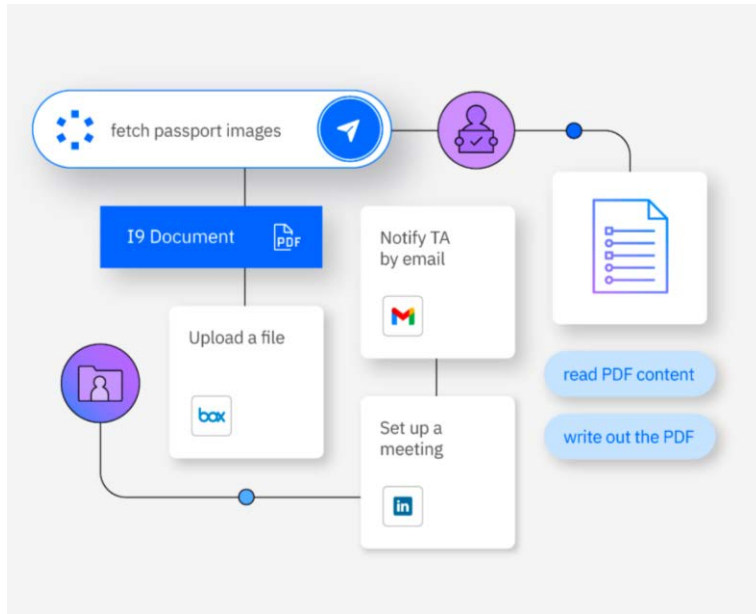


Fig 2. Simplifying the recruitment process and nurturing candidates

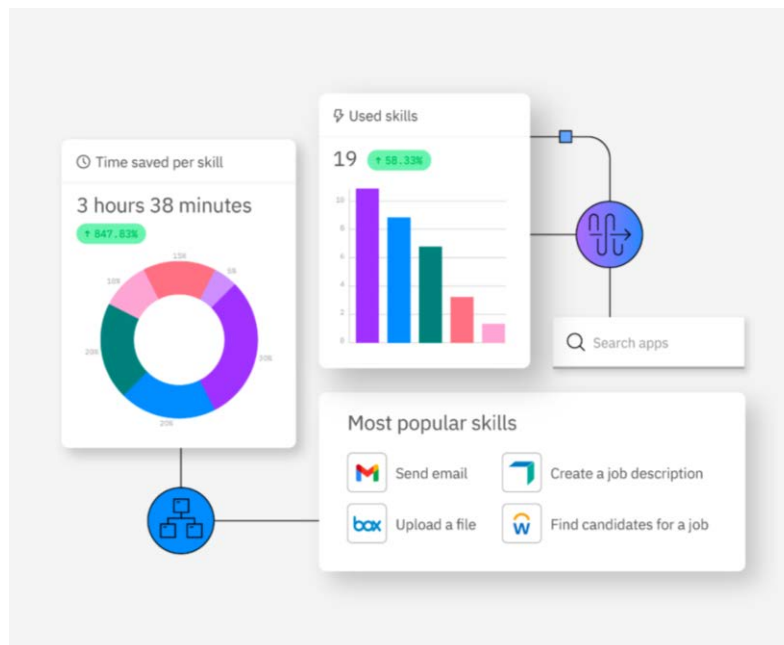


Fig 3. Sourcing candidates from diverse sources and automating the process from discovery to engagement

Source: <https://www.ibm.com/products/watsonx-orchestrate/candidate-sourcing>