AUSSIE JOB SEEKERS SHOW GROWING CONFIDENCE IN AI FOR RECRUITMENT, BUT QUESTIONS AROUND OVER-RELIANCE REMAIN

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As artificial intelligence becomes more integrated into the hiring process, a new study by Capterra reveals a growing divide between the perceived fairness of AI and the need for a human touch in recruitment. In the research, a significant 64% of Australian job seekers believe they have a better chance of being hired if AI is used in recruitment, with 74% perceiving AI as generally less biased than human recruiters when evaluating candidates.

Despite Australians' support for AI, 44% may opt to reject an offer from companies that excessively rely on AI and lack a human touch. The younger generation tends to be more sceptical of AI interactions, particularly when they are overused. While 70% of younger job seekers aged below 44 are open to the use of AI in recruitment, they are also the most likely to reject a job offer for the same reason—46% would do so if they feel that AI plays an overly dominant role in the hiring process.

Andrew Blair, Analyst at Capterra, states, *"The findings tap into a growing debate within HR circles about whether AI is truly the antidote to unconscious human bias or if it merely replicates these biases in more systematic ways. While many job seekers trust AI's perceived neutrality, the study reveals a tension between the benefits of AI in creating fairer hiring processes and the desire for human connection."*

Blair continues, *"Younger job seekers, in particular, appear open to AI's involvement but remain wary of its overuse, suggesting a need for a balanced approach that combines the efficiency of AI with the empathy of human recruiters. This tension highlights the evolving expectations of candidates. It raises critical questions about how recruitment strategies should adapt to effectively integrate AI without losing the personal touch that builds trust and engagement."*

An unbiased and equal process

A recent surge in the use of AI tools like ChatGPT on everyday tasks has increased knowledge and familiarity with the technology and resulted in more public support. Aussie job seekers are comfortable with AI in ensuring equal opportunity in the recruiting process (67%) and evaluating or ranking candidates (66%). Similarly, even in

the more critical stages of the hiring process, such as the last call on hiring a candidate, 63% are satisfied with AI making the judgement.

Some software uses a "blind hiring mode" enabled by AI to remove identifiable candidate information, and there are AI tools that detect biased language in job postings. These minimal yet impactful uses of AI can largely influence the candidate experience.

Poor implementation can turn job seekers away

While 63% are open to using AI in the screening stage, implementing AI at this stage carries risks for recruiters. Job seekers are increasingly aware of AI interactions, and it doesn't take long for them to abandon their applications if they feel the experience is impersonal or biased.

A gradual integration of technology can ensure a tailored experience for applicants, recognising that a "one size fits all" approach is insufficient. Each individual has unique needs and preferences during the job application and hiring process, meaning what works for one candidate may not suit another.

It is an ethical necessity for companies to be transparent about their AI use, although it is not currently obliged by the law. 50% of Aussie job seekers say they are more likely to apply for a job if the job application clearly states when AI is used and what data is collected.

Human touch still matters

While companies may be eager to fully integrate AI solutions into their processes, many applicants still value the human touch, such as meetings to evaluate their skills and qualifications. 66% of job seekers are more likely to apply for a position if they can speak with a human at any stage of the application process, and 59% prefer applications that clearly state that human agents make all hiring decisions.

To navigate this balance effectively, companies should structure their recruitment strategies using the appropriate AI tools tailored to their goals and the preferences of different candidate groups.

For further information, please visit capterra.com.au.

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