findem

Unlock More Recruiting Potential with AI

Introduction

> It can be easy to lean into automation, app stacks, and machine learning as the answer to everything; I challenge us as leaders to look to the horizon and lean in just as much if not more on humanity because the work we do is deeply and inherently human.
>
> AJ Thomas

Today, many recruiters rely on conventional approaches to talent acquisition and management, but in a volatile job market, those approaches aren't working for companies or candidates.

Will AI change the game and accelerate the move beyond Boolean search, spreadsheets, and siloed data? We think the change has already begun, and it's about to flip. Research has shown nearly three-fourths of HR professionals are already using generative AI in some capacity.

Talent professionals are eager to learn how to balance the efficiencies and speed that AI can bring with the powerful human experience only they can provide. With responsible AI product development alongside the power of the human brain, recruiters can not only unlock their own potential, but the potential of the candidates that they never could have discovered and engaged on their own.

AI is only as good as the data that underpins it. But working together, the human and the AI tool can do more, achieve more, and transform the recruiting experience for both themselves and the candidates they engage with.

We believe talent professionals, working together with AI, make a powerful combination that will transform the recruiting process, resulting in better matched talent for every company.

Executive Summary

Talent professionals who use generative AI tools will become the most in-demand people in the space. It's time you unlock your own potential as a talent leader and grow your career with the help of AI.

In this ebook, co-authored by the Findem Team and AI thought leader Grant Weinberg, VP of Talent Acquisition and HR Operations at Eikon Therapeutics, talent professionals will learn how to discover their own potential using AI tools.

In it, you'll discover:
- where most companies are in the maturity curve of AI adoption so you can benchmark your own progress
- a guide to adopting AI tools for your talent tech stack, including guides to conversations with your CFO and chief legal officer
- success stories from companies who have adopted these tools

Along the way, Grant provides commentary from his real-world experiences so you can understand what to do when you're in similar situations.

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The Current and Future State of AI and Talent Acquisition

AI definitions

Before we dive into how AI will unlock recruiter potential, it's important to understand what we mean when we use the acronym "AI".

Artificial Intelligence (AI)
True artificial intelligence (AI), a computer solving problems the way a brain does, has not been realized yet. This definition is not what most people mean when they talk about AI today.

Machine Learning (ML)
Prior to AI breaking into the public consciousness in 2022, when people said "AI", they usually meant machine learning. Machine learning consists of algorithms trained to make classifications and predictions based on common patterns found in data.

Deep Learning
A more complex version of machine learning is deep learning. This is where the machine learns using a neural network approach, similar to the way the brain learns (not how it solves problems). This is important because deep learning works with much larger datasets and unstructured data — in other words, data that hasn't been labeled as, for example, 'this is a title,' 'this is a name', 'this is a company.'

Generative AI (GenAI)
Advances in technology have created generative AI, which is what most people now mean when they say AI today. GenAI creates something new, that's the generation part of it. It uses deep learning to encode a simplified representation of data from the large language model (LLM) used for training. They create new work that is similar to what is learned, but not identical.

Generative AI tools have made it radically simple to access and use data. The tools are deceptively easy to use and have the potential to transform many industries. But they need a lot of context, good quality data, and human supervision to perform reliably so they can be used with confidence.

Existing adoption of AI tools in the talent community

One of the most interesting aspects of AI is how pervasive and accessible it is. We have been using natural language processing and other subtypes of artificial intelligence in all sorts of ways (for example, with AI assistants like Siri, or Netflix algorithms). Now, with the arrival of LLMs like ChatGPT, we can leverage it for an even wider range of use cases, including decision making.

HR employees were among the first to adopt GenAI. The 2023 Valoir AI and Automation study showed that 75% of HR professionals are already using AI tools, second only to IT workers.

Interestingly, despite widespread use of AI tools, a recent report from HR.com found that company-sanctioned use of AI is rare. Nearly three quarters of TA professionals say that they do not use officially sanctioned AI tools in their jobs.

Share of workers who have experimented with AI by job role
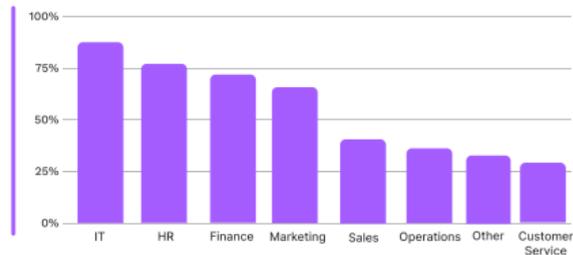
Source: Valoir AI and Automation Survey 2023

Does your company use AI for talent acquisition?
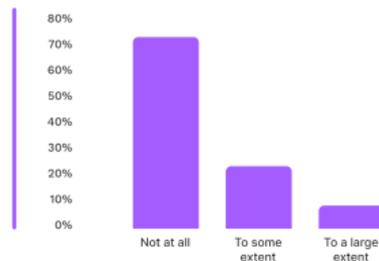
HR.com's Future of AI, Automation and Recruitment Technologies 2023-24

Mitigating risk and overcoming fears

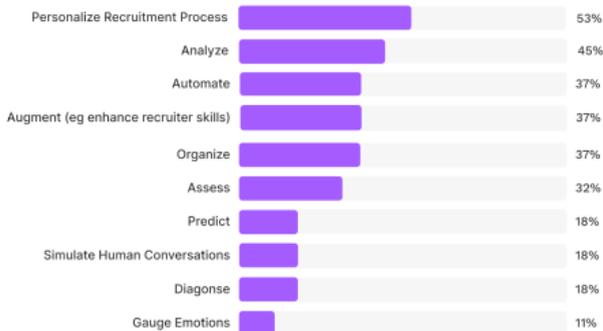It seems that the hopes and fears for AI are truly cut from the same cloth. In the recent HR.com study cited above, more than half of survey respondents selected personalization of the recruitment process as the top expected benefit. The ability to analyze and automate followed close behind.

What are the primary benefits of AI-powered talent acquisition applications?

Benefit	Percentage
Personalize Recruitment Process	53%
Analyze	45%
Automate	37%
Augment (eg enhance recruiter skills)	37%
Organize	37%
Assess	32%
Predict	18%
Simulate Human Conversations	18%
Diagnose	18%
Gauge Emotions	11%

Source: HR.com's Future of AI, Automation and Recruitment Technologies 2023-24

Which are the top concerns for AI recruitment at your organization?

Concern	Percentage
Depersonalized Recruitment Process	50%
Low trust in AI driven decisions	42%
Vulnerability to Bias	40%
Liability Due to Unintentional Employment Discrimination	40%
Lack of Understanding about Decision Making Process	38%
Lack of Accuracy of AI based Decisions	33%
Lack of Control	30%
Erosion of Employee Privacy	27%
Lack of Infromation about AI among Job Seekers	26%
Unethical Data Handling	22%
Threat to Recruiter Jobs	15%

Source: HR.com's Future of AI, Automation and Recruitment Technologies 2023-24

In the same study, 50% of respondents are concerned about depersonalization. Low trust in AI-driven decisions and vulnerability to bias followed closely.

To make the case for AI in the recruitment process, talent leaders will need to address these concerns. Indeed, they map directly to the core issues that talent teams face today:

- How to improve the candidate experience at scale
- How to increase diversity in the workforce in compliance amidst changing legal frameworks
- How to set guardrails and responsible use for AI in recruiting
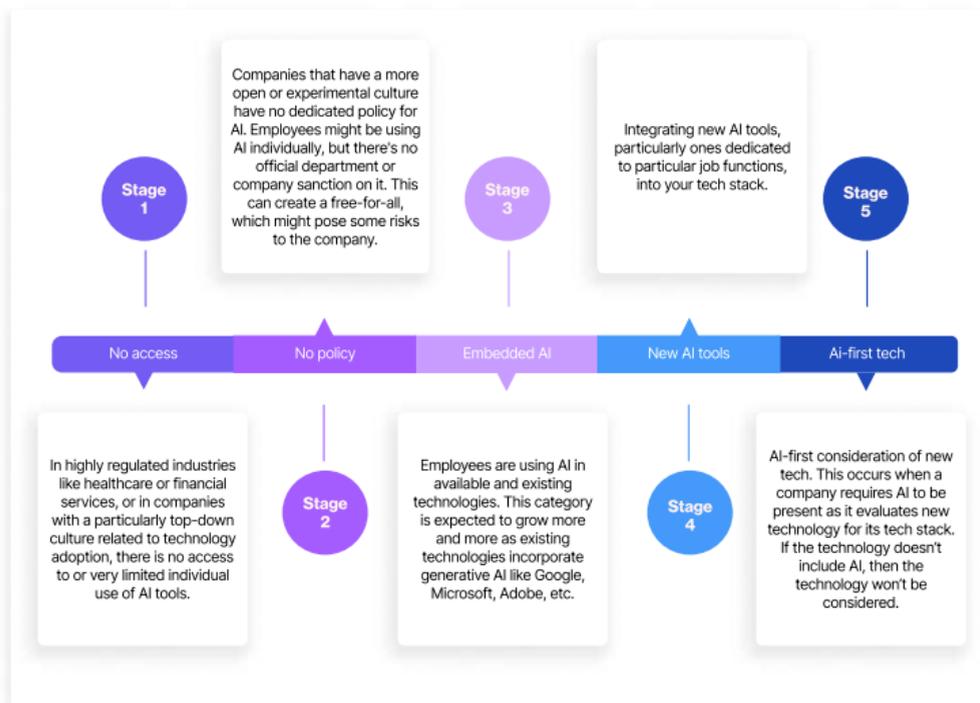- How will AI change recruitment and what will jobs in the future look like

Tip:
When advocating for adopting AI tools, prepare talent leaders for the conversations they'll need to have with the CFO, the IT and security team, and the chief legal officer.

Staff who work with generative AI tools specifically designed for talent needs will be able to help you construct those conversations.

How mature are most talent organizations in adopting AI?

In the majority of talent organizations, there are five stages of maturity in adopting AI

Stage 1

Stage 3

Companies that have a more open or experimental culture have no dedicated policy for AI. Employees might be using AI individually, but there's no official department or company sanction on it. This can create a free-for-all, which might pose some risks to the company.

Integrating new AI tools, particularly ones dedicated to particular job functions, into your tech stack.

Stage 5

No access	No policy	Embedded AI	New AI tools	AI-first tech

Stage 2

Stage 4

In highly regulated industries like healthcare or financial services, or in companies with a particularly top-down culture related to technology adoption, there is no access to or very limited individual use of AI tools.

Employees are using AI in available and existing technologies. This category is expected to grow more and more as existing technologies incorporate generative AI like Google, Microsoft, Adobe, etc.

AI-first consideration of new tech. This occurs when a company requires AI to be present as it evaluates new technology for its tech stack. If the technology doesn't include AI, then the technology won't be considered.

It's important to note that where you are in the maturity phase often depends on company size, culture, and IT or legal department requirements. Particularly at stages 1 and 2 — very early AI adoption — the company culture is the strongest determinant of what stage you're in, and it's very common for companies in stage 1 to move directly to stage 3 or 4.

According to GAI Insights, industries with the highest potential today include entertainment, software, professional services, financial services, and education due to the high level of digitization in their work and the percentage of cost base in this work.

Does the AI or the use case come first?

Many of our customers tell us they've had their executive leaders ask for AI before anything else. In other words, talent professionals will discover that their CEO has said, "I need to inform myself about what artificial intelligence can do." Then, the talent leader identifies where in the workflow process to implement AI, so the company partners with an AI vendor and the new tool is rolled out.

The challenge is that passionate conversations are now happening between chief people officers and chief legal officers. The chief people officers say that they've already aligned some of their team's KPIs to doing more with less, but now legal teams are coming in with concerns about compliance and learning more about security and how to use AI responsibly.

And some of the chief people officers are saying, "I wasn't really prepared to have these types of conversations with my chief legal officer." It often falls on the backs of people leaders now to implement AI solutions across the entire organization. It's going to become ever more important for people leaders and their teams to be able to understand and become conversant in these issues so they can balance their needs alongside the legal and security point of view.

What can AI do for recruiting?

The recruiter role is exceedingly complex. Recruiters are brought in as individual contributors within the organization and are expected to master research, marketing, sales, experience analytics, communication and collaboration.

They are consulted to coach, advise, negotiate, educate — the list goes on. There's no single role in the organization that is as complicated as the recruiter role.

The complexity of the recruiter role

Research
Analytics
Marketing
Experience
Sales

Up until now, talent leaders had to hire people to do all of these specialized functions. And as a result of this specialization, companies often had to make their talent teams bigger in order to meet hiring goals. Companies hired more talent professionals during growth periods, but had to let people go during lean times.

This boom-or-bust cycle isn't great for morale or achieving business goals. The talent team of the future is lean, agile, and able to change. Instead of hiring large teams that you may have to lay off in the future, why not hire great people and assist them to do more with AI tools.

AI assists with research:

- ☐ Analyze billions of data points to find patterns and insights
- ☐ Eliminate duplicate applicant records without manual review
- ☐ Search profiles for attributes like "Trailblazer employee" or "Past founder"
- ☐ Generate enriched, up-to-date profiles of candidates
- ☐ Query data with simple, natural language questions

AI assists with talent marketing:

- ☐ Sort and filter candidates by key attributes
- ☐ Automate nurture and outreach campaigns
- ☐ Continuously learn and apply what works

AI assists with selling the company:

- ☐ Personalize messages based on intent and source
- ☐ Focus on the best matched, highest intent leads

AI helps with candidate experience:

- ☐ Respectfully and expediently disposition not qualified talent
- ☐ Automatically schedule interviews
- ☐ Personalize experiences for candidates

AI assists with analytics:

- ☐ Provide data-based guidance to hiring managers
- ☐ Use talent pool insights to guide decision making
- ☐ Understand the universe of talent available to your company

Talent professionals' jobs will be enhanced with AI. They will be able to conquer the complexity of the recruitment role and bring more value to your organization as well as secure their position. And for talent leaders, this means achieving the key objectives that you have around speed and quality while working smarter, not harder.

"

At Eikon, my team is required to hire scientific folks that understand software, whether it's coding, automation, or other technical aspects. And we also expect the engineering folks to understand the science because when they're building these models, they build them for a particular process of single molecule tracking, tagging the proteins in the cell, etc.

With one-dimensional data, that's just not possible without a huge amount of time. It's very labor intensive and requires a human who gets tired, right?

But 3D data, coupled with the power of AI analysis, has been a game changer in identifying those profiles. We have the ability to say, "find me a software engineer who has a particular scientific profile, validate whether they have a scientific or an engineering bias, and figure out whether they have the right profile for us." With workflow automation and AI, we can continue the search and refine it indefinitely.

For the last 25 years, sourcing has been focused on keyword matching. AI will help talent professionals transition from a world of Boolean search to the transformation of talent discovery with 3D data.

Grant Weinberg

Transforming the research function in recruitment

The very baseline of a recruiter's job is to use data to discover talent and transition that talent into the recruitment processes.

Machine learning, deep learning, and generative AI provide the underlying data to find and create three-dimensional profiles for everyone your recruiters encounter in every search. It works no matter what kind of company you're in, whether you're in growth mode trying to fill 30 reqs, or whether you want to promote internal talent to open positions.

The ability of AI tools to generate 3D data, make it searchable with natural language questions, and keeping that data available for every open req could fundamentally change the equation of how talent acquisition operates.

> "

When I joined Eikon Therapeutics we were a small organization. There were about 135 employees and two of us in the TA team. I had to build a team very quickly and assemble resources that could support our needs. So I had to ask myself, "do I put my time and effort into sourcing or do I put my time and effort into recruiters?"

I decided to put time and effort into recruiters, and looked to use AI tools to help us with the sourcing part of the funnel. But with these tools, you can't just install them and hope they work straight away. You have to feed and teach the machine.

Here's how I do that. Somebody will ring me and say, I've got a role, but I'm not sure what level to open it at. Before we would have a meeting to discuss it, but now we use data. We search out the profile together, and the hiring manager can see the talent pool open and close as we do that. I could never source and process the candidates at that speed before AI.

Grant Weinberg

TA and AI — what does good look like?

Let's take a look at how AI tools in a recruiter's workflow might unlock the human potential of recruiting and provide more value for her company.

Lydia is a recruiter at a business-to-business data integration company based in Emeryville, California, and she's got a number of positions that she needs to fill in a relatively short amount of time. She needs to find great candidates fast.

With AI as her copilot, the search starts before she even opens up her laptop. The req opened in the ATS on Friday, kicked off an automated workflow to build a search based on her previous requirements.

The resulting talent pool has been curated based on 3D profiles and her preferred attributes. Verification of contact information of her talent pool has already begun.

Lydia starts with a well matched, prioritized list of talent from inbound, internal, and external sources. She's the human in the loop, checking the automation, verifying the results, and kicking off the outreach. In a matter of hours, she can disposition the shortlist at scale and start answering emails with personalized messages, providing a great experience.

The qualified "not ready" talent can be tagged and organized in her talent pool for outreach and nurturing. When a more relevant position opens, she has a ready pool of talent that knows the brand and are more likely to engage.

This means it will be far easier for her to achieve her targets every quarter, and the business will benefit from higher-quality talent and getting the right hires completed at the right time.

In addition, with the use of available 3D data, talent managers can now see who has the highest reply rate, or perhaps who might have a lower rate, and that way they can help coach and manage their teams. Instead of spending time collecting data, TA managers can now improve efficiency, make the candidate experience better, and support and coach their organization.

The Principles of Responsible AI

Using AI to make decisions seems fascinating at first. AI seems like it could enhance our natural intelligence, and we might believe that it will help us be smarter in making the right decisions, perhaps for building a talent pipeline or analyzing the workforce.

It cannot be stated enough: AI tools can only be as good as the data that supports them.

They are not information retrieval tools, they're information synthesis tools. You need to enrich the information that you feed an AI tool because without the right information, the decisions that it makes will be wrong.

In any ecosystem, even human-devised ones, when you are presented with some truth, and some extrapolated information, it's extremely hard to actually discern which is what. This is the problem with incomplete data, because AI will file it and extrapolate from it. But in the 3D approach and the data-first and BI-first approach, the data is bolstered. So the scope of extrapolation is quite limited.

Generally, the entire career of an individual is extremely hard to capture in a simple resume. 3D profiles allow you to capture an individual's whole career, so questions that you can ask and answer are going to be factually answered. AI becomes a mechanism to access the data that you already have or validated data that you trust. Instances of hallucination go down quite dramatically because of the aggregation of 3D data sets.

> "Reliance on standard, off-the-shelf solutions is consistent with the current early phase of generative AI adoption, which is primarily focused on improving the efficiency and productivity of existing activities.
> However, as use cases for generative AI become more specialized, differentiated and strategic, the associated development approaches and technology infrastructure will likely follow suit."
>
> Deloitte's State of Generative AI in the Enterprise Q1 Report

Risks of using public LLMs vs dedicated AI tools for talent professionals

The next phase of AI software will provide access to the public models in a controlled way by curating and containing data. This will become the preferred way for companies to bring the value of AI into their organization while safeguarding information and remaining compliant.

When assessing vendor capabilities, you should always verify that they're testing, training, and developing effective AI processes in their systems. Early adopters of today's AI advancements have been reviewing newly-built solutions, only to find that the workflows are not as intuitive and the data not as accurate as expected. Make sure the vendor can provide you with answers to how, why, and where they're using AI to specifically increase data accuracy and the user experience.

Overcoming bias in AI models

One of the biggest concerns people have regarding adopting AI tools is the question of bias. This is one of the most polarizing issues when it comes to AI. Findem conducted a study in 2023 of how talent professionals use AI, and discovered that 43% of respondents said that AI decreases bias in the hiring process and 42% said that AI increases bias.

By adopting technologies that adhere to responsible AI policies companies will be able to address the bias conundrum. When evaluating vendors with AI enabled solutions, consider:

- How long has the vendor been using AI in practice?

- What are the vendor's specific commitments to responsible AI?

- Does the vendor's solution fit where you are in your AI journey?

- What data is used and how is it validated and refreshed?

- What is the product roadmap for developing and improving AI workflows?

Your Playbook to Adopt AI Tools

How to get started

Talent leaders are aware that there's a tendency to put people teams at the bottom of the list when creating IT product development priorities. In most companies, there are only so many technical resources to go around and everyone wants them.

You need to be able to work with the fact that you need technical teams to vet, set up, integrate, and help you do the work of installing these tools in a responsible way, but your priorities may not always be their priorities. You must therefore be prepared to do a lot of work with the internal stakeholders. We need to have these conversations today, so you can start thinking about all this ahead of time and can have some of the answers ready to go.

91%

91 % of all organizations expect their productivity to increase due to generative AI.

Source : Deloitte State of Generative AI report

How to prepare for conversations with your CFO

> If you want to add technology, the number one question to answer is what is the talent strategy for the year? Talent professionals are very good at seeing shiny new objects. So it's important to learn what the organizational tech roadmap looks like and to know where your project fits on it.
>
> You build support for your project by getting down to real numbers. For example, you might bring a case like this to your CFO or CIO.
>
> We're going to hire 400 people next year. We anticipate 15% attrition, so we'll actually need to hire 470. If 15% of hires come from agencies, and the average fee is 25K, we will spend $1,420 million in agency fees. With automation and efficiencies, we will not need to increase headcount. In this example, there is a savings of $2 million plus over 2 years.
>
> Before you walk into a meeting with the CFO or CIO, you have to be ready to make the business case. When I can show the CFO that a request saves us a precise amount of money in a given timeframe, I get the go ahead

Grant Weinberg

How to prepare for conversations with your chief legal officer

We know talent professionals are having conversations with legal teams about adopting these tools, and it's important to be able to answer some of these questions or at least point legal teams in the right direction for their understanding.

People deserve assurance that decisions about their careers have been made on the right set of information with the right set of interpretations, and that AI is used in a very controlled way. At this stage in the development of AI technology, talent applications should use LLMs to capture intent and gradually build out a framework with a focus on accuracy. Ensuring that the data is being accurately interpreted is of the utmost importance.

Talking with your legal team about the principles of responsible AI, training your teams in those principles, and being very careful with how your teams use public LLMs will go a long way in educating them and helping answer their questions.

41%

41% of leaders say their organizations are only slightly or not at all prepared to address risk and governance issues with Generative AI

Source : Deloitte State of Generative AI report

How to prepare for conversations with your team

One of the biggest barriers to AI adoption is that TA leaders are getting swept away by the potential of these tools and getting very excited about the possibilities while their teams perceive the tools as a threat.

But talent leaders know that with strapped resources and new technology, we have to make ourselves more efficient and more productive. So they need to think about these tools from an individual contributor's perspective, from TA Ops' perspective, and bring everyone along on the journey through demonstrating efficiency and speed gains and showing that the goals can be more easily met with AI.

The vision is that one day, talent leaders will hire a new recruiter and they won't say, "who do I need to talk to so I can get a LinkedIn recruiter seat," but "who do I talk to to get a seat for a dedicated AI tool for my job?" That comes from comfort with the tool and knowing that the tool has value.

Change management success stories

Travis Baker,
VP of Talent Acquisition at Boulevard

My goal is to create a continuous talent pipeline. I look for technology partners who are thinking about our space in a progressive way, who are trying to push our industry forward. Not only is Findem an awesome technology, but it's ultimately powered by great people, and we can move faster with it.

We have a team that is going to look a lot like talent acquisition teams will look in the future — extremely small, extremely nimble, very flexible, and less specialized.

We'll need to add value from a human perspective. As long as we hire humans, they'll want to be hired by humans. If we're leaning into candidate experience, that's something that a human does better than a machine.

We have a very simple tech stack in TA — we've got two tools and one of them is Findem. The simplicity helps us stay very nimble, flexible, and cost effective. This is appreciated particularly, because we roll up to the CFO.

Legislation has made it clear that AI cannot make decisions on whether someone is a viable candidate or make an actual hiring decision. The technology must be boxed in and used where it actually does offer value. This is why dedicated AI tools for TA are so important vs building our own custom tools using ChatGPT or Gemini.

Gina Blair,
Talent Lead, Boulevard

What has set me up to be genuinely curious about AI is the fact that I have a passion for the startup space. Change management isn't scary to me. I'm used to it — as I always say, being on my toes is all I know.

With Findem specifically, I love the enriched profile section because when I meet with a hiring manager, I'll take a lot of notes. I can copy and paste my notes directly into Findem to look for X, Y, and Z skillset and capability, and find candidates a lot faster.

Tori Madonick,
Associate Director of Recruiting, Eikon Therapeutics

When I joined Eikon, Grant's assignment for me was to become the Findem subject matter expert. I was a little worried about the assignment. I wasn't afraid of AI taking my job, but I was concerned I wasn't going to be able to pick up the tool quickly enough to hit my goals or fill the requisitions that were on my plate.

As a leader, Grant gave me the time and space to learn and adopt Findem. I am now outperforming what I was doing before using the tool.

Findem is making me more efficient by helping me improve the experience for candidates. I run my messaging and outreach through different tools to make sure I'm appropriately and effectively connecting with candidates, providing the information they want to see, and understanding how they respond to increase my chances of response rates.

By testing my outreach and outbound messages with Findem, I've seen my response rates go up significantly from one to two years ago. Plus, I'm saving time and progressing talent forward through the pipeline more quickly.

Brett Beauchamp-Russell,
Senior/Executive Sourcer/I&D Champion/AI Hacker-Prompt Engineer from Intuitive Surgical

I've been an early adopter of Findem and I'm the power user here. I enjoy a lot of the AI tools that are baked into the Findem platform.

I use AI every day. I find that it's not taking away my job, but enhancing my job. As with any technological change or transformation, if you don't understand what's here and what's coming, then you're going to fall behind. And we continue to create technology that allows us to build faster, so you've got to adopt a faster learning curve to be able to stay in front of these things.

My big philosophy for adoption is: Don't be afraid to push buttons. Go enjoy the features, because there's a lot there. Push those buttons.

Conclusion: Let's improve

AI is quickly becoming a part of the software we use every day. In the past, talent teams and HR functions have lagged behind other departments in their adoption of technology due to a lack of prioritized budget and because the old ways worked well.

However, we believe that with AI, talent teams are likely to be among the first business functions to see efficiency and productivity gains. This is because:

- Their work depends on analyzing massive amounts of data

- Many TA processes can and should be automated to save time

- While AI and automation can help optimize the recruiting process, the technology should be in service to people with responsible use principles and proper guardrails

Talent leaders will need to manage the changes up to the C-level and down to their teams, but the rewards will be great, providing better candidate experiences and better talent for companies.

Fearing the future won't stop it. Those who embrace these technologies today have the opportunity to transform the talent function and unlock their own potential.

About Findem

Findem's Talent Data Cloud combines 3D data with AI to automate and consolidate top of funnel activities across the entire talent ecosystem, bringing together sourcing, CRM, and analytics into one place. By unlocking insights about people and the labor market that no one else can, Findem provides the ultimate competitive advantage and transforms the way talent teams plan, hire and manage talent. Built to solve enterprise challenges at scale, with Findem, customers like RingCentral, Eikon Therapeutics, and Intuitive Surgical are delivering continuous pipelines of top, diverse candidates while creating better talent experiences.

Visit us and request a demo at www.findem.ai

Findem's Commitment to Responsible AI

- Findem does not replace the decision maker with AI

- Findem AI assists people in making faster, better, and more fair decisions with data

- Findem is BI first, then uses AI to learn reason, and make predictions based on factual data

- Our ongoing monitoring and assessment processes are explainable and auditable

- Findem maintains compliance with current legal and regulatory frameworks