

# Using AI for Talent Acquisition, Management and Intelligence

**FEDERAL AGENCIES TODAY ARE** increasingly using artificial intelligence and machine learning to increase productivity, improve citizen interactions, ensure battlefield preparedness, streamline administrative tasks and much more. While HR might not be top-of-mind, applying the principles of AI and machine learning to the realm of human resources makes good business sense. Used correctly, it can improve job descriptions, evaluate resumes and help ensure that agencies are choosing the best candidates for open positions.

And agencies could use the help. Anticipating a hiring surge, the Office of Personnel Management recently issued a [memo](#) to federal HR leaders encouraging agencies to fill essential and mission-driven roles.

AI can make a big difference, said Dan Hopkins, vice president for global public sector at Eightfold AI, which offers an AI-based talent intelligence platform. Hopkins said the current way of matching job applicants with employers is fundamentally broken and inefficient, starting with job descriptions.

Job descriptions are notoriously vaguely worded, he said, yet it's the primary matching mechanism that job applicants have in assessing their own fit for a particular role. For example, terms like "team player" don't say much, and can cause applicants to apply for the wrong jobs. The same problems plague the other side—the applicants. Resumes present a historical view of what a candidate has done, but it's often an incomplete picture. It can omit relevant skill sets or roles and responsibilities that the HR department actually cares about. All of this creates a broken job matching process.

These are exactly the types of challenges AI can address. The right technology can help agencies quickly discover the right candidate for a specific job, and can also have a tremendous impact on recruiting.

"Organizations get hundreds, if not thousands, of applicants for open roles, yet when the role is filled, they rarely go back and look

at those past applicants. But there are a lot of silver and bronze medalists there, yet they are never rediscovered," Hopkins said. AI enables HR organizations to create a talent network of

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all past applications, along with the “silver and bronze medalists” and people who applied for the wrong role but have strong potential. With that information, agencies can write more effective job descriptions and send targeted messages to potential candidates to urge them to apply.

This method also enables agencies to inventory the skills and capabilities that currently exist to determine what’s needed. It can also improve succession planning and allow agencies to prioritize key hires. Additionally, it can help identify upskilling and reskilling opportunities to assist agencies develop their resources and meet the roles of the future. Finally, it can go a long way toward supporting President Biden’s [executive order](#) around diversity, equity, inclusion by ensuring that the hiring process guards against unconscious bias.

One way to embrace AI in the HR world is by using a talent intelligence platform as a base, ingesting agency data so it reflects the agency’s specific goals and requirements. This information informs AI models and insights, refining them over time so outcomes become even more optimized.

Today especially, with job applicants in the driver’s seat, an AI-fueled recruitment process can narrow the field quickly, evaluating candidates as they

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apply and inviting good prospects to apply.

“The goal is to provide the human in the loop with a complete picture of each candidate so they can make the qualitative and quantitative decision to move that candidate forward, invite them to apply, or enable them for upskilling and reskilling,” Hopkins said. ■



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