Beyond the CV: Evidence-based hiring in the age of analytics

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Abstract: The current recruitment landscape is experiencing a significant transformation, moving beyond traditional resumes (CVs) toward evidence-based approaches supported by data analytics and artificial intelligence (AI). This comprehensive literature review, guided by the framework of Whittemore and Knafl (2005), synthesizes recent research (2020-2025) to examine the key drivers, tools, and implications of this shift. The review finds that although the traditional CV has notable limitations such as unconscious bias and limited predictive validity its replacement involves a multifaceted framework rather than a single tool. This framework combines well-established, high-validity methods like structured interviews and work samples with emerging technologies such as gamified assessments and AI-driven screening tools. However, adopting these advanced solutions presents ethical and practical challenges, including algorithmic bias, transparency issues ("black box" problem), and possible negative candidate experiences. Based on principles of Evidence-Based Management (EBM), the analysis emphasizes that successful evolution in hiring practices depends on a balanced, human-centered approach. Organizations should critically and continually evaluate technological tools against organizational data and stakeholder values to ensure that improvements in efficiency and objectivity are aligned with fairness, transparency, and effective talent identification. The future of hiring does not lie in replacing human judgment but in enhancing it through the integration of comprehensive, multi-source evidence.

Keywords: Evidence-Based Hiring, People Analytics, Artificial Intelligence, Recruitment, Algorithmic Bias, Predictive Validity, Talent Acquisition.

Introduction

The modern recruitment landscape is experiencing significant transformation, driven by advancements in big data, artificial intelligence (AI), and a growing focus on organizational effectiveness. Traditionally, the resume has been the cornerstone of hiring decisions, serving as a proxy for a candidate's potential based on prior experience and qualifications. However, extensive research now highlights the limitations of this approach, including its susceptibility to unconscious bias, limited predictive validity for future performance, and inability to provide a comprehensive view of a candidate's capabilities (Newman, Lyon & Colarelli, 2023; Roth, Bobko & Van Iddekinge, 2022). In response, a paradigm shift towards evidence-based hiring is emerging, utilizing data and analytical tools to make more objective, reliable, and forward-looking staffing decisions.

This movement, often referred to as 'people analytics' or 'data-driven recruitment,' aims to replace intuition with data-backed evidence. It involves a range of tools and methodologies designed to assess candidates based on demonstrable skills and competencies rather than background or pedigree. These include structured interviews, validated psychometric assessments, gamified evaluations, work sample tests, and advanced AI-powered screening systems that analyze various data points (Chamorro-Premuzic, Akhtar & Winsborough, 2020; Langer, König & Papathanasiou, 2020). The core objectives of this approach are to improve hiring quality by selecting candidates who are more likely to succeed and to enhance fairness by reducing human bias (Cowgill & Stevenson, 2020).

The integration of AI and machine learning marks a significant development in this field. These systems can process thousands of applications, identify patterns associated with high performance, and evaluate soft skills through automated video interview analysis (van Esch & Black, 2021). Proponents argue that such technologies can significantly increase efficiency and scalability, while also standardizing evaluation processes beyond what humans can consistently achieve (Tambe, Cappelli & Yakubovich, 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated this shift, prompting

Organization Development Journal
Volume 43, Issue 4, 2025

ISSN: 0889-6402
http://www.odjournal.org//

widespread adoption of digital and remote hiring solutions and paving the way for more sophisticated analytical tools (Hmoud, Varallyai & Laszlo, 2021).

However, the rise of evidence-based hiring presents notable challenges and ethical considerations. Poorly designed algorithms risk perpetuating or amplifying societal biases if trained on biased historical data (Raghavan et al., 2020). The "black box" nature of some AI models creates transparency concerns, as candidates and employers may not fully understand how decisions are made (Newman, Fast & Harmon, 2024). Additionally, candidate perceptions of fairness, privacy invasion, and the dehumanization of the recruitment process pose risks to employer branding and candidate experience (Langer, Trevisan & Konig, 2023; Mirowska & Mesnet, 2022).

This comprehensive literature review aims to explore the landscape of evidence-based hiring within the context of analytics. Guided by the framework of Whittemore and Knafl (2005), it synthesizes recent research (2020-2025) to address key questions: What are the most effective evidence-based tools and their predictive validity? How are AI and people analytics transforming recruitment processes and decision-making? What are the main ethical, legal, and practical challenges associated with their adoption? And how can organizations balance technological efficiency with fair, person-centered hiring practices? By examining both technological opportunities and ethical considerations, this review seeks to provide a nuanced understanding of what it truly means to move "beyond the CV.

Theoretical Framework: Evidence-Based Management (EBM)

The examination of evidence-based hiring practices is primarily grounded in the principles of Evidence-Based Management (EBM). EBM is a structured approach that promotes the deliberate, explicit, and prudent use of the best available evidence from various sources to inform managerial decisions and organizational practices (Barends & Rousseau, 2018). Originating from the field of evidence-based medicine, EBM asserts that decisions supported by rigorous evidence and critical evaluation lead to better outcomes than those based solely on tradition, intuition, or unexamined practices.

At its core, EBM relies on the systematic collection and integration of four key sources of evidence (Rousseau & Barends, 2019):

- **Scientific Evidence**

Empirical findings from peer-reviewed research that have undergone comprehensive testing. In hiring, this includes meta-analyses on the predictive validity of selection tools (Sackett et al., 2022), longitudinal studies on hiring outcomes, and controlled experiments on assessment methods.

- **Organizational Data**

Internal metrics such as employee performance, turnover, and retention data linked to specific hiring practices. This enables organizations to validate scientific findings within their unique context and adjust practices accordingly (Gupta et al., 2020).

- **Stakeholder Values and Concerns**

Ethical considerations, preferences, and expectations of candidates, employees, and other impacted parties. This component ensures that evidence-based practices are not only effective but also perceived as fair and legitimate (Rynes & Bartunek, 2023).

- **Professional Expertise**

The judgment and experience of HR professionals, recruiters, and managers. EBM recognizes the importance of expertise but emphasizes that it should be integrated with and critically assessed alongside other evidence sources (Banks & Gannon, 2022).

This framework offers a valuable perspective on the evolving landscape “beyond the CV.” Traditional hiring methods, heavily reliant on professional judgment and intuition, have often overlooked systematic scientific and organizational evidence (Rynes, 2020). The rise of data-driven recruitment and people analytics exemplifies the application of EBM by prioritizing scientific research (such as validation studies of gamified assessments) and organizational data (like performance analytics) in recruitment decisions. Moreover, EBM sheds light on key tensions involved in adopting new technologies. While the push for efficiency through AI and analytics aligns with the pursuit of scientific and organizational evidence, EBM also underscores the importance of considering stakeholder concerns and ethical values. This provides a foundation for critically assessing

technologies that may introduce issues like algorithmic bias, lack of transparency, or adverse candidate experiences. A true evidence-based approach involves not just embracing technological innovations but evaluating them comprehensively against all four evidence pillars, ensuring that advancements support broader organizational and human values (Ferraro & Pfeffer, 2023). Using this framework, the review aims to go beyond merely describing new hiring tools to analyzing how these tools can be integrated ethically and effectively into a holistic, evidence-informed approach to talent acquisition.

Literature Review

This review consolidates recent empirical and conceptual research to illustrate the transition from traditional, résumé-centered recruitment to evidence-based hiring practices. It explores the primary drivers, key tools, and notable challenges influencing this evolution within contemporary talent acquisition.

Limitations of Traditional Hiring and the Emergence of the CV-Optional Approach

An increasing body of literature emphasizes the limitations of relying solely on curricula vitae as predictors of job performance. Studies have shown that resumes can inadvertently introduce unconscious bias, affecting screening decisions based on age, gender, or ethnicity, which may hinder diversity and inclusion initiatives (Peters et al., 2021). Additionally, the predictive validity of resumes for assessing long-term job success remains limited, as they mainly highlight past experiences and qualifications rather than current skills or cultural alignment (Sydell & Tuzinski, 2023).

This recognition has led to a movement towards "de-resuming" the early stages of recruitment. Evidence suggests that skills-based hiring focusing on demonstrable competencies rather than educational background or work history can broaden the talent pool and enhance hiring quality (Fuller et al., 2022). The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated this shift by normalizing remote digital hiring, removing geographical barriers, and increasing the demand for scalable assessment methods that do not depend on physical documents (Bennett & McWhorter, 2021).

The Evidence-Based Toolkit: From Structured Assessments to Artificial Intelligence

The portfolio of evidence-based hiring tools is diverse and includes both established and innovative methods validated for their predictive effectiveness. Structured interviews, which employ standardized questions and scoring systems, continue to be valued for their high validity and ability to minimize interviewer bias relative to unstructured interviews (Levashina et al., 2021). Psychometric assessments measuring cognitive abilities and situational judgment have also proven reliable predictors of candidate performance across various roles (Shibe et al., 2023).

Advancements in technology have further expanded this toolkit. Gamified assessments are increasingly popular for evaluating cognitive and soft skills through engaging, immersive activities, generating behavioral data that are difficult to manipulate (Georgiou & Nikolaou, 2022). Digitized work sample tests enable candidates to perform realistic job tasks remotely, offering high fidelity in assessment (Koch et al., 2021). The most transformative development involves AI and machine learning algorithms used in CV screening, video interview analysis, and candidate sourcing. These systems analyze large datasets to identify candidates with profiles linked to high organizational performance (Schmidt et al., 2021).

Addressing Ethical and Practical Challenges

Despite their promise, evidence-based and AI-driven hiring technologies present new ethical and practical considerations. A significant concern is algorithmic bias: AI systems trained on historical organizational data may inadvertently perpetuate existing discrimination related to gender, race, or socioeconomic status (Bogen & Rieke, 2020). The opacity of some complex AI models, often referred to as the "black box" problem, further complicates transparency, making it difficult for organizations to explain hiring decisions or provide meaningful feedback to candidates (Ajunwa, 2021).

Candidate experience is another key issue. Research indicates that applicants may perceive AI-enhanced processes as impersonal, unfair, or intrusive particularly when analyses involve facial recognition or vocal tone assessment. Such perceptions can harm employer branding and discourage top talent from engaging with the organization (Langer et al., 2021). Practical challenges include the financial costs of implementing these technologies, their accessibility for smaller organizations, and compliance with legal and regulatory frameworks related to automated decision-making across different jurisdictions (De Cremer & Turel, 2022). The literature underscores that a purely technocratic approach, disregarding human and ethical considerations, is unlikely to succeed. A balanced, critically informed adoption of new hiring technologies is essential.

Research Methods

This study employed an integrative literature review approach to thoroughly examine the principles, tools, effectiveness, and ethical considerations of evidence-based hiring practices within the modern, data-driven recruitment environment. The review followed the structured framework outlined by Whittemore and Knafl (2005), emphasizing problem identification, literature search, data evaluation, and data synthesis. This methodology was chosen to facilitate the integration of diverse research findings from both organizational psychology and data science disciplines, providing a comprehensive understanding of this rapidly evolving field. To ensure a robust and high-quality evidence base, a systematic search strategy was implemented across multiple leading academic and industry databases.

Primary sources included: Scopus, Web of Science, EBSCOhost (such as Business Source Complete and PsycINFO), and the ACM Digital Library, selected for their extensive collections of peer-reviewed literature in business, psychology, and computer science. To incorporate emerging industry insights and grey literature, additional searches were conducted using Google Scholar, ResearchGate, and repositories from prominent HR research organizations such as the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) and the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD).

The literature search was limited to publications from 2015 to 2025 to capture the latest advancements, empirical research, and scholarly debates following the widespread integration of AI and people analytics in recruitment processes. Search queries utilized a combination of keywords and Boolean operators to refine results. Key terms included: “evidence-based hiring,” “data-driven recruitment,” “people analytics,” “predictive hiring,” “AI in recruitment,” “talent analytics,” “pre-employment testing,” “gamified assessment,” “work sample tests,” “hiring bias,” “algorithmic fairness,” and “predictive validity.” These terms were combined to create targeted search strings, for example: (“AI in recruitment” OR “predictive hiring”) AND (“bias” OR “algorithmic fairness”).

Inclusion criteria were rigorously applied to ensure relevance and focus. Selected studies had to: (1) specifically investigate evidence-based hiring tools, methodologies, or frameworks that extend beyond traditional resume screening; (2) include empirical data or comprehensive conceptual analysis on their efficacy, validity, or implementation; (3) be published in English within peer-reviewed journals, dissertations, reputable institutional reports, or recognized industry white papers within the specified time frame; and (4) address either technological opportunities or the ethical and practical challenges associated with these methods. Studies focusing solely on traditional hiring practices or lacking a data-driven or evidence-based orientation were excluded.

A multi-stage screening process was followed to identify relevant, rigorous literature. Initially, titles and abstracts were reviewed against the inclusion criteria. Subsequently, full texts of promising articles were examined for conceptual clarity, methodological robustness, and direct relevance to the research questions. Data extraction was performed using a standardized protocol, capturing essential details such as author(s), publication year, research objectives, methodological approach (e.g., longitudinal study, randomized controlled trial, case study), specific evidence-based tools analyzed (e.g., structured interviews, psychometric assessments, AI screening), key findings on predictive validity and effectiveness, and noted challenges or opportunities (e.g., bias, cost, candidate experience, scalability).

Data were analyzed through a thematic synthesis approach, identifying recurring patterns and themes across the literature. These themes were organized into an analytical framework that maps the current landscape of evidence-based hiring, comparing established tools with emerging technologies, and weighing observed benefits against ethical and operational considerations.

Discussion

This comprehensive review consolidates recent research to outline the evolving landscape of evidence-based hiring, highlighting the ongoing tension between technological advancements and ethical considerations. The following discussion interprets these insights and explores their implications for organizations navigating the new era of recruitment beyond traditional resumes.

The Evidence-Based Hiring Framework

The literature consistently indicates that progressing beyond reliance on resumes involves developing a comprehensive, validated hiring approach rather than seeking a single, superior tool. The most effective strategies combine established methods with innovative technologies. For example, structured interviews and work sample tests have demonstrated high predictive validity, as shown in recent meta-analyses (Lee & Dalal, 2021), providing a reliable foundation for integrating newer tools. Incorporating AI-driven sourcing and gamified assessments enhances scalability and depth, enabling organizations to efficiently evaluate larger candidate pools across a broader range of competencies (Chen & Lee, 2022). This synthesis suggests that the future of hiring will be characterized by hybrid systems, where AI manages high-volume screening and pattern recognition, while human judgment guided by structured protocols focuses on assessing complex social and cultural fit (Harris & Mehrotra, 2023).

Addressing Ethical Challenges: From Bias to Transparency

A key insight from this review is that technological sophistication does not inherently ensure fairness. The risk of algorithmic bias presents a significant challenge; reliance on AI systems trained on historical data can perpetuate exclusion of qualified candidates from non-traditional backgrounds (Davidson & Berkel, 2024). This issue is further complicated by the "black box" nature of some algorithms, which can undermine organizational accountability and candidate trust. To mitigate these concerns, the literature emphasizes the importance of rigorous algorithmic audits and the development of explainable AI (XAI) capable of providing clear justifications for its recommendations (Kleinberg & Ludwig, 2023). Additionally, negative reactions from candidates towards automated processes highlight that efficiency gains must be balanced with maintaining a positive employer brand. Transparency about the use of these tools is thus a strategic necessity, not just an ethical consideration, for effective talent attraction (Mosley & Lee, 2022).

Moving Forward: Balancing Efficiency with a Human-Centric Approach

The findings indicate that successful implementation of evidence-based hiring depends on a balanced, critical, and human-centered strategy. Organizations should avoid relying solely on technology and instead adopt a continuous validation approach, regularly assessing the predictive accuracy of their tools against internal performance data (O'Connell & Nguyen, 2023). This aligns with principles of Evidence-Based Management, where organizational data acts as a crucial complement to scientific evidence and professional judgment. Furthermore, processes should prioritize the candidate experience, ensuring gamified assessments are engaging rather than patronizing, and that AI-mediated interactions are transparent and respectful (Zhang et al., 2021). Ultimately, the aim is not to eliminate human involvement but to enhance decision-making through robust evidence, minimizing bias and improving the ability to identify genuine talent.

Conclusion

This review highlights the importance of advancing beyond traditional resumes toward a more rigorous, evidence-based approach to hiring. The limitations of conventional resume screening—such as susceptibility to bias and limited correlation with future performance—are well recognized in the literature. In response, a new paradigm has emerged, characterized by a versatile set of validated assessment tools, including structured interviews and AI-powered analytics, aimed at making hiring processes more objective, predictive, and efficient.

Nevertheless, this transition presents complexities. While technologies intended to eliminate human bias can potentially reduce it, they also risk embedding and amplifying existing biases if not carefully designed and overseen. Ethical considerations surrounding algorithmic fairness, transparency, and

candidate experience are essential components of responsible implementation. As suggested by Evidence-Based Management principles, effective hiring strategies should not rely solely on scientific data or technological solutions alone. Instead, they should adopt a comprehensive approach that balances organizational insights, professional expertise, and stakeholder values.

The goal is not to establish a fully automated, impersonal hiring process. Rather, it is to develop a hybrid, human-centric system where technology supports scalable data analysis and pattern recognition, allowing human professionals to focus on higher-level evaluations, relationship building, and strategic decision-making. Organizations should commit to ongoing validation, ethical oversight, and transparent communication to realize the full benefits of analytics. This approach enables organizations to move beyond traditional resumes, fostering a workforce that is more skilled, high-performing, and diverse, while also promoting fairness and resilience.

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