

Should I optimize my CV for AI?

First of all: I cannot tell you whether your application documents will be selected using artificial intelligence. However, based on my recruitment experience, I do see narrow limits to the use of AI, at least when recruiting highly qualified applicants. More on this in a moment. Even the recruiters I know still work primarily with their natural intelligence. I am therefore all the more surprised by the certainty with which many commentators claim that AI is being used across the board and that CVs should therefore be optimized accordingly.

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The headlines about artificial intelligence in recruitment are crisp and the articles create a spine-chilling sensationalism. It's no wonder that many representatives of the writing profession are keen to address this topic. Unfortunately, they have a negative impact on applicant behavior, as the following example shows:

A customer had prominently described herself as a team player on her CV. I advised her not to mention soft skills - although they are important in recruitment - in her CV, as they can only be meaningfully tested in a job interview. She replied that the advertisement was looking for a team player. The term had to be included in her CV so that she would not be rejected by the algorithm that selects applicants. What do we make of this?

AI isn't quite that stupid after all

Successful recruitment is about selecting the most suitable applicants from a large number of CVs. If the process were so simple that I told an algorithm to search for terms such as team player or certain hard skills, I could be selected with an

unsuitable background, provided I placed the right search terms in my CV. A highly qualified applicant who had not AI-optimized her CV would not be considered using the same logic.

Companies that can afford such an approach are not experiencing a skills shortage.

Optimization can be counterproductive

Even with more intelligent algorithms, the following challenge remains in recruitment: in my experience, there is no correlation between the quality of applicants and the quality of their applications. Outstanding professionals are often bad at selling themselves. And applicants who have less to offer tend to invest more time in CV optimization to improve their chances.

For an algorithm to achieve the best results, it would have to weed out all those applicants who try to trick it through optimization. We know the problem from search engine optimization: the algorithms have to be constantly changed so that users cannot gain an advantage in the results ranking through pure optimization.

The problem with many CVs is not the lack of AI optimization, but that they are written carelessly and are therefore incomprehensible. Anyone who prepares their experience and knowledge properly automatically uses the terms that are mentioned in a job advertisement for which they are being considered.

In my opinion, more optimization is not necessary and should - if we assume algorithms that deserve the name intelligent - be sanctioned.

#application #cv #strengths #selfmarketing

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