AI-M FOUNDATION

Hiring With AI Across the Decision Journey

A practice-based case study on role design, selection, authority and accountability

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The case in brief. AI can help organise applications and surface information quickly, but a hiring outcome depends on decisions made before and after shortlisting. Across organisational work, the recurring design challenge is to connect role definition, evidence, human judgement, delegated authority and later review. This case study maps the complete hiring journey and shows how an organisation can use AI without treating a fast shortlist as proof of a good decision.

Focus	A management vacancy viewed as an end-to-end organisational decision.
Practice basis	Drawn from work completed across organisations; no single employer or candidate is identified.
Core insight	Automation can accelerate a step while delays, unclear authority or weak records remain elsewhere.
AI-M contribution	A PXB interpretation that links work design, people, decisions and business outcomes.

The hiring journey begins before the advert

When a vacancy opens, the organisation first has to decide whether to replace the role as it stands or redesign the work. That choice shapes the capabilities being sought, the criteria used to assess applicants and the value the new hire is expected to create. If this first decision is skipped, a more efficient application process may simply fill an outdated role faster.

The journey then moves through sourcing, application handling, assessment, selection, approvals and the employment offer. These activities may involve a hiring manager, recruitment team, HR, reward, finance, technology providers and an authorised signatory. Each hand-off can affect elapsed time, candidate experience and the quality of the final decision.

One vacancy across eleven decision stages

The table maps the full pathway. It distinguishes what AI may help with from the authority and evidence the organisation remains responsible for.

Stage	Decision point	Evidence and accountability to retain
01	**Authorise vacancy**	Business need, workforce plan, funding and the person authorised to proceed.
02	**Define work and capability**	Role outcomes, capability requirements, essential criteria and design choices.
03	**Attract and source**	Accessible advert, sourcing channels and intended candidate reach.
04	**Receive applications**	Data provenance, privacy information, missing information and adjustment requests.
05	**Evaluate and shortlist**	Consistent job-related criteria, evidence considered, exclusions and human review of AI support.
06	**Design assessment**	Assessment validity, accessibility, structured interview questions and scoring guidance.

Stage	Decision point	Evidence and accountability to retain
07	**Interview and assess**	Candidate evidence, panel observations, scoring and agreed adjustments.
08	**Challenge and calibrate**	Contradictions, uncertainty, alternative explanations, dissent and review of AI outputs.
09	**Select candidate**	Comparative evidence, reasons, named decision owner and route to raise a concern.
10	**Approve offer**	Reward and budget approval, pay equity, exceptions, affordability and delegated limits.
11	**Issue and authorise contract**	Final terms, required checks, authorised signatory and the record of the commitment.

Where time and value sit

Application parsing and summarisation may be quick. The hiring cycle can still be shaped by waiting for vacancy approval, panel availability, budget confirmation, reward review or contract sign-off. A useful assessment separates hands-on processing time from queue time, rework and candidate waiting. This case makes no quantified claim about turnaround time or hiring volume.

Speed matters when it improves the whole process and the quality of the outcome. A faster shortlist alone does not establish fairness, predictive validity, candidate experience, retention or improved team performance.

Decision architecture through PXB

The PXB lens connects the people affected by a hiring decision, their experience of the process and the business outcome sought. It asks whether five parts of the architecture fit together:

- Work and capability: Is the role still needed, and what work and outcomes should it own?
- Information and evidence: What candidate information is relevant, reliable, accessible and lawfully handled?
- AI interpretation: What does the system extract, rank, classify or recommend, and what are its limits?
- Human judgement and authority: Who reviews the evidence, can challenge the system and has authority to decide?
- Commitment and learning: How is the offer authorised, and how will performance and process quality be reviewed?

VACANCY SIGNAL → ROLE DESIGN → EVIDENCE → AI SUPPORT → HUMAN JUDGEMENT → AUTHORISED DECISION → OUTCOME → ACCOUNTABILITY

The PXB Judgement Spine™ makes the path inspectable: it records where the signal originated, how AI shaped an interpretation, what people reviewed, who made the decision, what action followed and who owns its consequences. “Human in the loop” is not enough unless the reviewer has the competence, information, time and authority to question the output.

What to measure

- **Flow.** End-to-end days, processing hours, waiting time, rework, offer acceptance and candidate withdrawal.
- **Decision quality.** Assessment validity, role performance, retention, time to effective contribution and manager outcomes.

- **Fairness and access.** Candidate experience, adjustment fulfilment, consistent criteria, outcomes across relevant groups where lawful and appropriate, and concerns raised.
- **Capacity.** Recruiter and manager hours released, how that time is redeployed, workload and hiring volume.
- **Governance.** Completeness of decision records, AI overrides and reasons, exceptions, delegated-authority compliance and time to retrieve evidence.

These measures should be interpreted together. A single selection-rate difference does not by itself prove or disprove discrimination, and a fall in recruitment time does not by itself show that hiring quality improved.

Questions for the next evidence phase

- Where does elapsed time accumulate across application handling, hand-offs, assessment and approvals, and how much is active work versus waiting?
- Do clear criteria, reviewer authority and override records improve consistency, evidence quality and candidate confidence?
- Can employers reconstruct decisions later, and where is AI-released recruiter and manager capacity redeployed?

Participating employers could provide process timestamps and anonymised decision records, with interviews helping explain the patterns. Comparisons should account for role level, labour-market conditions and process changes. Fairness analysis requires appropriate legal, privacy and research safeguards. These are research questions, not quantified results.

Legal, data and evidence note

AI use in recruitment requires context-specific review of the system, data and decision. UK data protection and equality requirements may apply; the ICO's recruitment and AI guidance is being updated following the Data (Use and Access) Act. This is research commentary, not legal advice. Organisations should check current guidance for their own deployment.

Sources and acknowledgements

The staged format was informed by Global AI Forum, Underwriting Automation (October 2026, 48-page report supplied for review). Only the decision-journey format is acknowledged; no insurance findings are used as recruitment evidence. Consult the original report for publisher and permissions details. The case analysis and PXB interpretation are original AI-M Foundation work.

- Information Commissioner's Office, Recruitment and selection
- Information Commissioner's Office, Recruitment Rewired
- GOV.UK, Employers: preventing discrimination in recruitment
- Equality Act 2010, section 39

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