

greenhouse

The Green Room guide:

The hiring experience, reimagined

Conversations with the leaders shaping UK hiring

September 2026



More than a CV. More than automation. More than an ATS.

As AI reshapes hiring, UK organisations face a growing challenge. We explore how teams can separate the signal from the noise, rebuild trust and make better hires.

Meet the voices

For this report, we spoke to TA leaders, recruiters, hiring managers and product specialists shaping how UK organisations hire in the age of AI. These conversations have given us valuable insights into how to improve the experience for all.

Melissa Shannon
Senior Talent Acquisition Manager,
Greenhouse



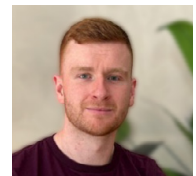
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AI has changed the shape of UK hiring, for candidates and recruiters alike

There's a backdrop of economic pressure, tightening regulation, and job scarcity or acute skills shortages, depending on the sector. AI has changed what's easy to produce and what's easy to process. Polished applications can be generated at speed and scale, with hiring teams able to screen and summarise more material than ever before.

But it's finding authentic signal for genuine consideration in a system that rewards volume that's become a key issue.

“UK hiring hasn't gotten any slower. There's simply an overwhelming amount of activity. And more activity doesn't automatically create a better hiring experience.”

Robby Perdue

VP of Product Management, Greenhouse



The signal crisis

We call it the AI doom loop. Candidates mass-apply, tailoring applications with AI and keywords, which means most CVs look the same and few, if any, candidates stand out. Recruiters respond by using AI to rank and filter the flood of applications. Unique skills and traits often get overlooked, making it harder for candidates to stand out. So candidates apply to even more roles, hedging their bets to beat the odds.

And the loop continues: more applications, more filtering, less differentiation and less confidence on both sides.

43%

of candidates use AI to
save time on applications

Greenhouse, UK data, 2025

129%

increase in application volume
seen by UK companies

Greenhouse, global data, 2026



Then comes the trust crisis

As application volumes rise and hiring becomes increasingly automated and online, trust breaks down on both sides of the desk.

Recruiters are contending with: proxy candidates attending interviews or tests for the real candidate, AI co-pilots feeding the real candidate live answers during their own interview, deepfake applicants and outright hacking attempts.

Candidates are contending with: fake job postings that harvest their data and scam offers that lead to identity theft and payroll fraud. This means that neither side is entirely sure whether the person or the opportunity really exists.

The resolution

In the AI era, signal was the first casualty. Trust was the second. Neither can be solved in isolation, and the fix for both applies across the two.

Fixing the signal crisis means having worthwhile, real signal at the top of the funnel, not filtering further down. Fixing the trust crisis means transparent processes redesigned for how people work and apply today.

Percentage of
candidates caught
misrepresenting
themselves

Global data, Greenhouse, 2026

91%

Percentage of
candidates that
have encountered
fake job postings

Global data, Greenhouse, 2026

69%



Three ways to build the advantage

Restoring signal and rebuilding trust starts with rethinking three things: the evidence you rely on, the judgement you apply to it and the system that holds it all together.

1

More than a CV: Finding stronger hiring signal

Where does real signal come from now? AI creates more applications and richer possibilities but also similarity and noise. The goal now is to prioritise intent over volume, so recruiters can tell AI polish from genuine candidate potential.

2

More than automation: Evolving the role of recruiters

Doing the same tasks faster doesn't help. How AI sharpens judgement and reshapes recruiters' work matters more than how it speeds up an old process.

3

More than an ATS: Where signal meets trust

Signal and judgement only create an advantage when trust is rebuilt and underpinned by a strong regulatory framework.



filtering

hiring

onboarding

automation

More than a CV

an ATS

recruitment

analytics

software



Chapter one

More than a CV: Finding stronger hiring signal

AI has expanded what candidates can communicate and how fast they can find and apply for opportunities. Used well, AI can also help hiring teams spot relevant, non-obvious potential.

But when every application is polished and AI-tailored with the same keywords, at the same scale, the CV alone stops being a reliable proxy for capability, motivation or likely success in the role. We don't need to discard the CV, just stop treating it as the primary application method.

The goal now is to prioritise intent over volume, so recruiters can tell AI polish apart from real potential. And a fair, transparent candidate experience has to be part of that signal quality.

As AI makes it easier to create polished applications at scale, hiring teams need other ways to identify meaningful signals of intent, motivation and experience. Looking beyond how an application reads can give recruiters richer evidence of a candidate's interest and potential.

Those signals can take different forms. Candidates might have a way to show which opportunities matter most to them, for example, or take part in structured conversations that assess their experience against consistent, role-specific criteria earlier in the process.



25%

of UK candidates feel AI is making it harder to stand out

Greenhouse, 2026

“I’ve seen hundreds of HR tools in the course of my work, and I see some patterns showing up. Teams are looking at buying AI to improve their processes, but not enough at the actual processes themselves. When it comes to getting through applications, the area that needs the most attention and doesn’t get enough focus is knowing what you’re hiring for in the first place.

The effort needs to move upstream. We need to define what good looks like and how we spot it early on, before we add AI into the existing processes. Otherwise you end up reviewing 400+ CVs without knowing what is truly a good fit.”

Jessie Schofer, Founder
Stakkd



The amount of MyGreenhouse
Dream Job candidates that
are more likely to be hired

Greenhouse, 2026

4–5x

“I’ve stopped treating the CV as the thing that tells me who to hire. When every application is AI-polished, they all read the same. So I’ve moved where I look for signal to intent and evidence. Someone who’s been referred, or who’s flagged they want this job, is worth 10 anonymous applications. And I predict the human side is coming back, such as in-person events, networking and direct sourcing. Because once you’ve met someone, you know they’re real.”

Melissa Shannon

Senior Talent Acquisition Manager, Greenhouse



Greenhouse is putting this thinking into practice with tools including Dream Job, which lets candidates signal which opportunity matters most to them, and Voice AI, which brings structured, role-specific assessment earlier into the hiring process. Voice AI lets candidates complete an on-demand conversation in their own time, responding to consistent, role-specific questions. Recruiters receive structured transcripts, scores and notes to support faster, more informed review.

Successful recruitment isn't about generating more applications. It's about finding stronger signals within them – then using AI to interpret that evidence and make better-informed hiring decisions.



Practical actions to take:



- 1 Identify stronger signals of intent beyond the application itself**
Look for behaviours that demonstrate genuine interest, such as candidates actively prioritising a role, engaging with your talent network or responding to direct outreach.
- 2 Build offline sources of signal**
Use referrals, events, networking and direct sourcing to uncover potential, particularly for scarce or high-stakes roles.
- 3 Treat your own pipeline as a warm source**
The hundreds of candidates who applied to a similar role months ago haven't disappeared, yet. Revisit those candidates rather than starting every search from scratch.
- 4 Explore Voice AI for richer early-stage evidence**
Use role-specific conversations to let candidates demonstrate motivation and experience. This creates richer, scorable signals earlier, and lets some candidates complete a first-stage screen without submitting a CV at all.
- 5 Triangulate the evidence**
Use at least two additional evidence sources beyond the CV: structured responses, role-relevant work samples or structured interviews.

filtering

hiring

onboarding

a CV

More than automation

an ATS

recruitment

analytics

software



Chapter two

More than automation: Evolving the role of recruiters

As candidate behaviour shifts, hiring teams face growing pressure to deploy an ever-wider array of AI tools.

This pressure opens the door to something more powerful. The supercharged recruiter: same role, just more empowered. But AI can only amplify the process that it's been given. If that process is weak, it will only help teams process risk faster. If it's strong, AI can help recruiters focus on stronger signal, better judgement and a better candidate experience.

Better hiring isn't just about moving candidates through the funnel faster. It's about creating stronger evidence, more consistent decisions and greater trust in the outcome. That means structured interview plans, standardised scorecards, documented decisions, clear AI guardrails and verification built into the process.



87%

reduction in manual screening time for UK
recruiters – AI cuts hiring workload from 23
hours per placement to under 3

Groundworks, 2026

When applied correctly to the recruitment process, AI can make hiring more efficient, improve consistency and free recruiters to focus on judgement, stakeholder alignment and candidate relationships.

Automate the admin. Tailor the process.

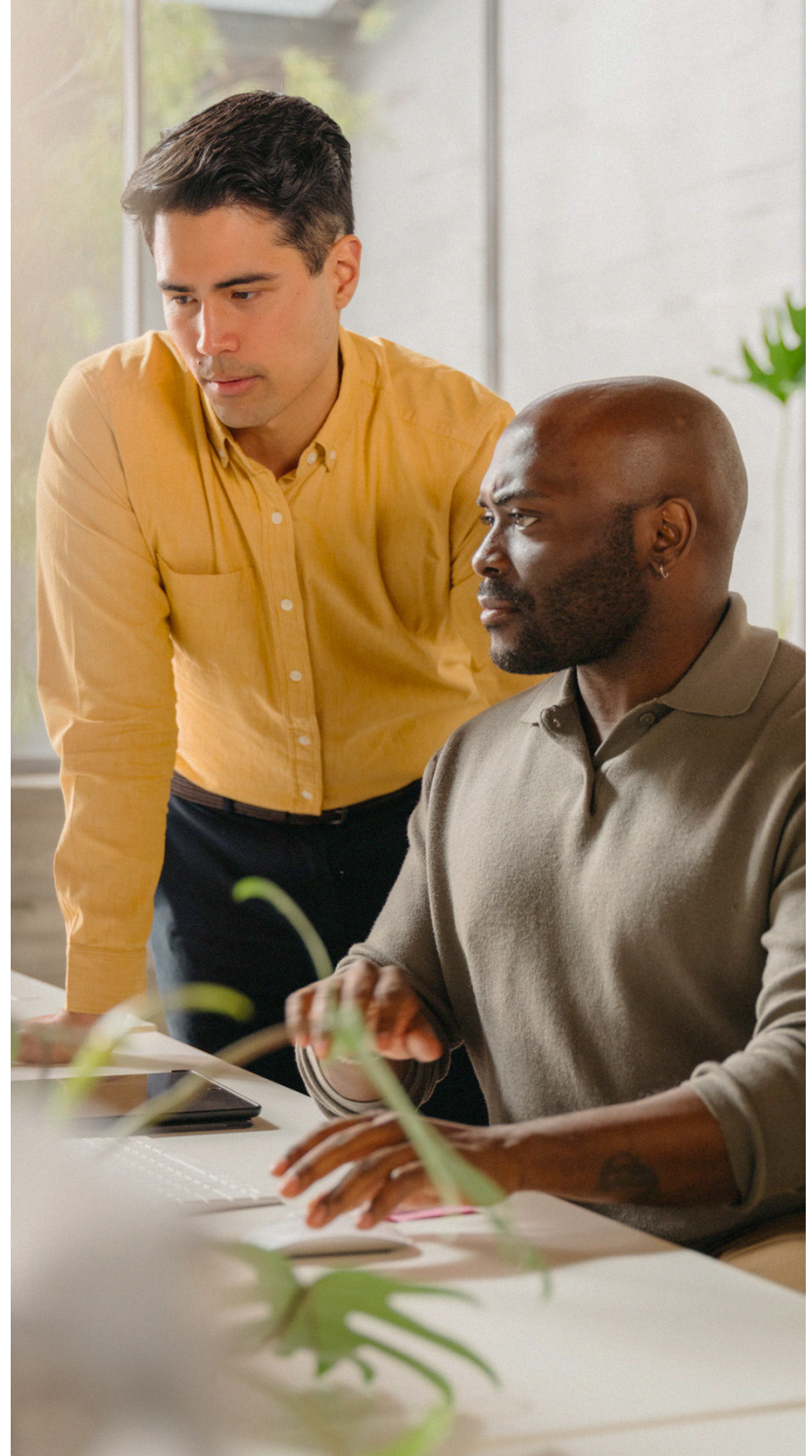
Automating repeatable admin is the easy part. The process element is more complicated but holds more opportunity. AI can help build and customise workflows with less admin, better context, stronger evidence and more time left for judgement.

As AI becomes more embedded in hiring, its value extends beyond automating individual tasks. When AI can work securely with hiring data, recruiters can use it to ask questions, uncover patterns and understand what's happening across the hiring process – without relying on manual reports or disconnected information. That could mean identifying where candidates are dropping out, understanding pipeline health or bringing together the context behind a hiring decision. The goal isn't simply to complete the same tasks faster, but to give recruiters more time and better evidence to interpret what's happening and decide what to do next.

129%

of UK recruiters are now using AI
at some point during hiring

Zinc, 2025



“There is both a strategic and an administrative side to recruitment. Broadly, the strategic side covers directly helping the business bring in the right people, through human judgement and building effective relationships internally and externally. The mistake I see teams making is using automation to support that relationship, then trying to use it to replace the relationship. For me, work remains a team sport where people want to work with people. This means recruiters still need to build great relationships with candidates, and hiring leaders still need to decide who to bring into the company. Automating the prep for a late-stage candidate call makes sense; automating the call itself does not. Smart use of automation replacing administration creates time for strategic work, while smart use of AI allows us to become more strategic than ever before.”

Joe Atkinson
Co-founder, PromptMates

Greenhouse is putting this principle into practice through its MCP (Model Context Protocol) availability, which gives approved AI tools governed, permissioned access to live Greenhouse data. It enables teams to work more naturally with their hiring data while maintaining control over what AI can access and use.

“What used to take about two hours now takes minutes, and the team gets a much more complete picture of what’s happening.”

Melissa Shannon

Senior Talent Acquisition Manager, Greenhouse

Better access to insight can make the recruiter’s role more strategic and support better decisions. But those decisions still need a system around them – one that connects signal and protects trust across the whole journey.



Practical actions to take:



1

Get the process right before adding AI

Design and standardise the hiring decision process across areas like criteria, stages, owners, evidence and escalation points, before adding AI.

2

Start with repeatable, time-consuming workflows

Use AI to support recurring tasks such as QBRs, board-ready summaries, pipeline bottlenecks, candidate status, and offer and forecast digests.

3

Bring AI into the tools your teams already use

Build AI-native workflows with internal hiring co-pilots in Slack or Microsoft Teams, so recruiters can access hiring context and support without adding another destination to their workflow.

4

Make insight easier to access

Deploy AI assistants that answer questions on demand, surface relevant information and run analyses, helping recruiters get to the context they need more quickly.

5

Ground AI in your own hiring data

Working alongside legal and security teams, explore governed ways to connect approved AI tools to live ATS and talent data, such as through MCP, so outputs are based on your organisation's data rather than guesswork.

6

Build in governance from day one

Define where human review and override are required and maintain an auditable record of how and why each decision was made.

filtering

hiring

onboarding

automation

More than an ATS

a CV

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analytics

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Chapter three

More than an ATS: Where signal meets trust

Better signal and better judgement only create an advantage if both sides trust the process they sit within.

Trust has to be rebuilt on both sides of the desk. Candidates need transparency about how they're assessed, fair treatment and a clear sense of where they stand. Recruiters need confidence that applicants are genuine, which means real people, with real experience, as AI-assisted misrepresentation rises.

Restoring signal is a wasted effort if neither side trusts the process it feeds into. Trust is built by designing hiring to be responsible, well governed and transparent about where AI is used. This keeps people accountable for decisions, and able to withstand regulatory scrutiny.

In the UK, that means navigating a genuine patchwork that exists under the UK GDPR, the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025, the Equality Act 2010 and the Data Protection Act 2018. Done well, with an intentionally designed experience, AI can be governed responsibly through transparency, verification and human-in-the-loop processes.



42%

of UK candidates experienced
ghosting by the company

Greenhouse, UK data, 2026

“From a legal perspective it is crucial that AI in hiring is performed in a compliant fashion. The potential penalties are huge for those that get it wrong. And from a reputational perspective the downsides could be even more impactful.

Teams need to ensure that the platform they use takes transparency, governance and the thoughtful provision of AI seriously.”

Cian Martin

Director of Legal, EMEA, Greenhouse

What “more than an ATS” looks like in practice

As AI plays a greater role in hiring, trust needs to be built into every stage of the experience. Candidates need transparency about how they’re being assessed, while recruiters need confidence in the people and evidence behind their decisions.

In practice, that means verifying identity and experience where it matters, being clear about when and how AI is being used, and keeping human judgement and oversight at the centre. These safeguards give hiring teams a stronger foundation for using AI with confidence.

Greenhouse puts these principles into practice through tools such as Real Talent™, which helps verify candidate identity and work history, and Voice AI, which can help flag AI-generated or scripted responses while making clear to candidates when AI is involved and what it’s assessing.

“We spend enormous energy on finding the right candidate and nowhere near enough on whether we can trust what we’re looking at. That’s exactly why the Better Hiring Institute built the ‘Better Hirer’ Standards and brought the RecTech industry together under one trade body for the first time – because fake applications, deepfakes and impersonation don’t stay solved by one company acting alone. Trust isn’t a feature you switch on at the end. It has to be designed into how the whole industry hires, from the standards up.”

Keith Rosser

Chair, Better Hiring Institute &
Association of RecTech Providers (ARTP)

Practical actions to take:

1

Design transparency into the candidate journey

Review each stage so candidates understand what they're being assessed on, where AI is used and what happens next. Set clear expectations upfront, use consistent assessment criteria, and make it easy for candidates to ask questions or challenge an outcome.

- Under UK GDPR AI hiring rules, a reviewer must have the authority, discretion and competence to change the outcome of a candidate assessment before it takes effect.
- Token approval – clicking “approve” on an AI-generated ranking without independent analysis – doesn’t qualify.

2

Set clear AI and compliance guardrails

Define where AI can and can't be used, who is accountable for its use and how decisions are documented and reviewed.

- UK government AI principles for recruitment emphasise transparency and explainability, fairness, accountability and contestability.
- Getting this right builds candidate trust and supports compliance at the same time.



The hiring advantage, redesigned

The hiring advantage in the AI era comes from designing a better experience – one where signal and trust strengthen each other, instead of working against each other.

That means moving:

- From disconnected CVs and interviews, to richer evidence
- From task automation, to supported judgement
- From a system of record, to a connected, intentional hiring experience

The hiring advantage isn't found in more AI. It's found in a better experience.

“The future isn't AI layered onto hiring.
It's AI built into a better hiring system.”

Robby Perdue

VP of Product Management, Greenhouse



Three things to remember:

1 **More than a CV:** improve signal and look beyond the polished document for richer, role-relevant evidence.

2 **More than automation:** support judgement and use AI to strengthen decisions, not just speed up activity.

3 **More than an ATS:** connect signal and build trust with a two-sided, compliant, responsibly innovative platform, not a system of record.

Greenhouse is reimagining what the hiring experience looks like by combining structured hiring, responsible AI and connected experiences, so teams can turn better signal into stronger hires.





Greenhouse is the leading hiring platform to help companies get measurably better at hiring. Our AI-powered software supports every stage of the hiring process, from sourcing to onboarding, giving businesses everything they need to hire top talent quickly, consistently and fairly – today and as their business grows.