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Manpower

Talent Acquisition in the Age of AI: Equal Tools, Equal Rules

The use of artificial intelligence tools in the hiring and recruitment process is no longer a novelty. Today, nearly every HR professional or hiring manager incorporates AI at some stage of the selection process. And let's not forget the seminars, conferences, and training sessions where professionals enthusiastically exchange insights about new tools or refined prompts they've discovered.

Yet, let's be honest - have you ever felt misled or even "cheated" when you realized that a candidate used AI to support their application? And if so - could it be that we're being a little hypocritical?

As recruitment specialists, we believe that both sides - employers and candidates, should have equal rights to use smart technologies to reach their goals. That said, we also recognize the importance of setting boundaries to ensure fairness and preserve authenticity.

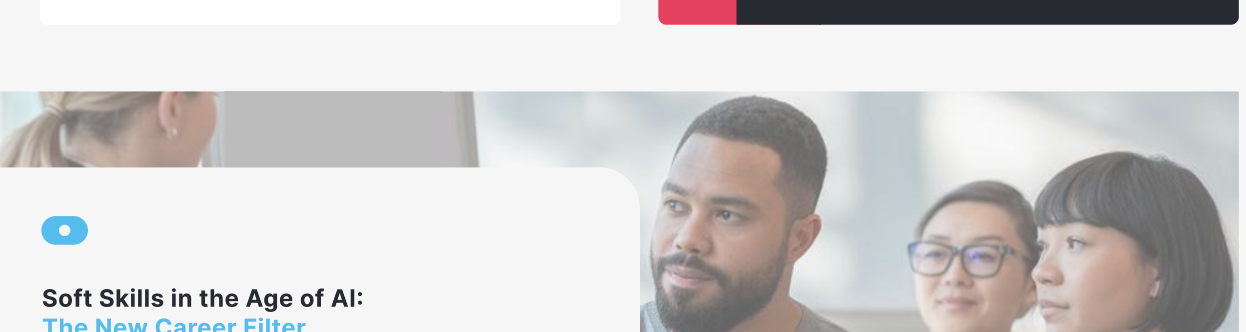
We encourage candidates to use AI to:

- Create a standout CV template or enhance its visual presentation.
- Improve phrasing and structure in their CV, such as refining role descriptions or responsibilities.
- Research the company they're applying to.
- Prepare for job interviews (e.g., by generating a list of potential questions and practicing responses).
- Better understand their market value and assess their fit for a specific role.
- Optimize technical tasks such as video editing, slide deck design, visual creation, etc.
- Acquire new skills required for a role through accelerated, AI-assisted learning.
- Polish their motivation letter - not to fabricate it, but to express their ideas more clearly.
- Present themselves creatively and uniquely (e.g., by creating an interactive CV, website, video, or even a poem expressing their motivation instead of submitting a traditional PDF resume).

We do not support the use of AI in the following situations:

- Misrepresenting or fabricating personal information to mislead employers (e.g., using AI to write a CV that includes false qualifications or work experience).
- Generating a CV photo with AI (and if you do - at least use a less common or premium tool, as we've seen many nearly identical photos recently).
- Getting real-time answers to interview questions during a live session.
- Creating a digital avatar to attend the interview in the candidate's place.
- Mass-emailing applications to various job posts without genuine engagement.
- Faking references or endorsements from former employers.

We encourage both candidates and employers to learn how to use AI ethically and effectively - not as a tool for deception but as a means of personal and professional growth.



Soft Skills in the Age of AI: The New Career Filter

Imagine this: you have strong technical skills, solid professional experience, and you know how to leverage AI. You use ChatGPT to craft a polished CV and a tailored cover letter that perfectly fits a job posting.

You land the interview.

But here's the thing - the interview is where your true competencies come to light. AI can't speak for you anymore. Now it's your voice, your story, and your presence.

Interviewers don't just evaluate your education, work history, or technical abilities. They also pay close attention to how you communicate, how you respond under pressure, and how you connect as a human. This is where soft skills shine - emotional intelligence, adaptability, clear communication, resilience, critical thinking, and the ability to collaborate.

When employers make their final decision, it's not just the polished application that matters. It's the person behind it. The ones who stand out are those who know how to show up - not just on paper, but in person.

To articulate your soft skills during interviews, you first need to recognize and define them clearly.

For example, you might write: "Worked as an administrative assistant." But it's far more impactful to say: "I coordinated multiple workflows, prioritized tasks, handled unexpected situations, ensured smooth communication across teams, and maintained consistency under pressure."

Or instead of: "Worked with clients," say: "I communicated with diverse client groups daily, resolved complex issues, managed emotional dynamics, and maintained professionalism in high-stress environments."

Such framing gives a clearer picture of what you bring to the table - not just what your title was, but what you learned and achieved through that role.

How can you better prepare to talk about your experience?

01 Reflect not only on what you did, but how you did it: what kind of environment did you work in? Did you regularly interact with a variety of people? How did you manage stress or unpredictability? How did you take initiative - even when it wasn't asked of you?

02 Think back to what others said about you: what feedback did you receive from colleagues or supervisors? When were you the go-to person for support? What strengths were consistently recognized?

03 Recall specific situations you handled: what was the challenge? How did you solve it? What did you learn from it?

Doing this not only helps you understand your strengths - it also empowers you to present them convincingly in an interview.

AI can draft your CV. But to show the ability to reflect, adapt, and grow - that's on you.

Sources: Content developed based on the expertise of Manpower professionals in recruitment. Text structure and fluency were refined with the help of AI.

Summer: Not Just for Vacations, but for Recruitment Too

Summer is often associated with rest and vacations, but recruitment processes don't come to a complete halt – they simply slow down. And while we do notice that candidates tend to be less active in the summer, statistics show that hiring an employee, regardless of the time of year, requires a significant investment of time and resources. For this reason, it's worth planning recruitment needs in advance and not pausing the hiring process during summer – suitable candidates don't appear overnight.

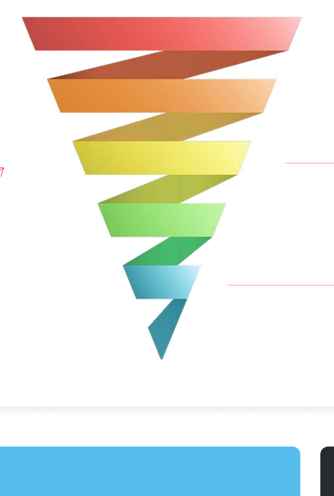
We'd like to share with you Manpower's annual statistics, which reflect how much effort and comprehensive involvement it takes to find "the one". Candidate activity varies across different sectors, as does candidate "quality" (i.e., how well candidates match the requirements). The data* in the table can serve as a rough guide to help forecast candidate activity and the number of potential finalists in your recruitment process.

Position field	Applicants CVs (avg.)	Interviews (avg.)	Presented to the client (avg.)
Engineering & Manufacturing	37	8 (22 %)	5 (14 %)
Human Resources	107	11 (10 %)	8 (7 %)
Administrative	83	8 (10 %)	5 (6 %)
Sales and Marketing	70	6 (9 %)	5 (7 %)
Finance	97	8 (8 %)	7 (7 %)
Overall Average	**79**	**8 (10 %)**	**6 (8 %)**

*The table and data are based on statistics from Manpower's internal 2024 study.

To summarize the information provided, we can also share what our typical recruitment funnel looks like.

That means **only 1 out of every 13 applicants** make it to the shortlist. This shows that finding the right person takes time and consistent effort.



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We receive approximately **79** CVs.

#
On average, we invite **8** of them for a detailed job interview.

#
Of whom, on average, **6** candidates remain, whom we present to the client.

More CVs doesn't always mean better results

Especially in HR and finance, you may get a flood of applications – but very few truly match the role. Quality > Quantity.

Fewer candidates ≠ a more difficult recruitment process

Engineering and production roles attract fewer people – but because the requirements are more specific, the candidates are often a better fit.

The summer season ≠ a standstill in the job market

For employers – an opportunity to start preparing the sled for the winter ahead in summer.
For candidates – a great chance to stand out when competition is lower.

4-Day Workweek: A Model Transforming Work Culture

In recent years, many organizations across different countries have tested the 4-day workweek model. This is not only an attempt to improve work-life balance – the model demonstrates that a shorter week can maintain (or even increase) productivity, reduce employee turnover, and encourage long-term engagement.

We review some of the largest global examples of the 4-day workweek, their motivations, results, and what employers need to know when considering such a step.

United Kingdom (2022)

The world's largest 4-day workweek trial, involving 61 companies and around 2,900 employees. Results:

- 92 % of companies decided to continue with the shorter workweek.
- Employee stress levels decreased by 39%, and burnout cases dropped by 71%.
- Employee turnover fell by 57%, while company revenues increased on average by 1.4%.

Iceland (2015 – 2019)

A government-supported trial involving about 1% of the country's workforce, where the workweek was reduced from 40 to 35–36 hours without a reduction in pay. Results:

- Employee well-being improved, and productivity remained the same - or even increased in some cases.
- Due to the trial's success, the model was expanded – approximately 86% of Iceland's workers now have the right to reduced working hours.

Belgium (since 2022)

A legal option was introduced for private sector employees to work 4 days a week without a reduction in pay. Results:

- In October 2023, 0.75–0.9% of private sector employees in Belgium opted for this model, and around 1.9% of companies implemented it.
- Belgian company stock prices reacted positively due to anticipated gains in productivity.

United Arab Emirates, Dubai (Summer 2025)

A renewed 4-day workweek model in the public sector during the summer season.
Based on the success of the 2024 pilot project (employee satisfaction improved (up to 98%), along with productivity and the work environment), Dubai expanded the initiative to include all government entities in the summer of 2025. For the period from July 1 to September 12, 2025, employees were divided into two groups: for the first group, the workweek was shortened, and they will work 8 hours from Monday to Thursday, with Friday being a full rest day. The second group will work 7 hours from Monday to Thursday and 4.5 hours on Friday.

Poland (since 2025 m.)

A national 4-day workweek study.
According to the latest data, Poland launched a national study in spring 2025 to evaluate the impact of the 4-day workweek model on employee well-being and the economy. This is one of the first large-scale trials of its kind in Eastern Europe. Employees can choose between two working models:

- Working 6 hours per day with a three-day weekend.
- Opting for additional vacation days while maintaining a standard work schedule.

Financial support: The Polish government allocated approximately USD 3 million in funding for participating companies that may not experience direct financial benefits from adopting the 4-day model.
This experiment could serve as a significant example for other countries, including Lithuania, which faces similar demographic challenges. While discussions around the 4-day workweek in Lithuania currently remain in the academic sphere, Poland's experience may become a key reference point for shaping future labor policies.

Japan (since 2025)

The 4-day workweek as a response to the demographic crisis.
Since April 2025, a 4-day workweek has been introduced for Tokyo's public sector employees – not as a productivity initiative, but as a social policy measure. The aim is to improve work-life balance, encourage higher birth rates by allowing more time for family and childcare, and support women in continuing their careers without sacrificing motherhood.
This decision sets Japan apart from other countries where the shorter workweek is driven by efficiency or well-being goals – here, it has become a state strategy to address long-term societal challenges.

Are We Ready for a New Work Reality?

The 4-day workweek is more than just an extra day off. It's a strategic shift in the way we work – one that requires planning, trust, and flexibility. The experience of various countries shows that this model can become a true breakthrough for both employee well-being and organizational efficiency.

So, is your organization ready to seek not more working hours, but more value in less time?

Sources:
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Shorts, Slides, and a Smile – Is That Enough for Summer Workwear?

Summer – the time when half your thoughts are by the lake, and the other half... staring at your screen. Some people show up to the office with sunglasses on their heads, while others log into MS Teams wearing shorts and holding a slice of watermelon. The summer dress dilemma is real – whether you're working from the 18th floor or from a hammock in your garden.

When the heat hits both your shirt and your screen

In the office, hot weather makes you question whether a blazer is necessary. At home, it's tempting to stay in pajama tops (after all, cameras only show the upper half). Still, even remote work benefits from a hint of professionalism – even if your cat is the only colleague watching.

The golden middle ground: somewhere between flip-flops and "executive forum" attire

Summer clothing can be casual but still appropriate for the workplace. Linen, lightweight fabrics, light colors, and looser silhouettes work perfectly both in-person and online. For remote workers, a "MS Teams outfit" is key: a sharp top and... well, let's not ask about the bottom half.

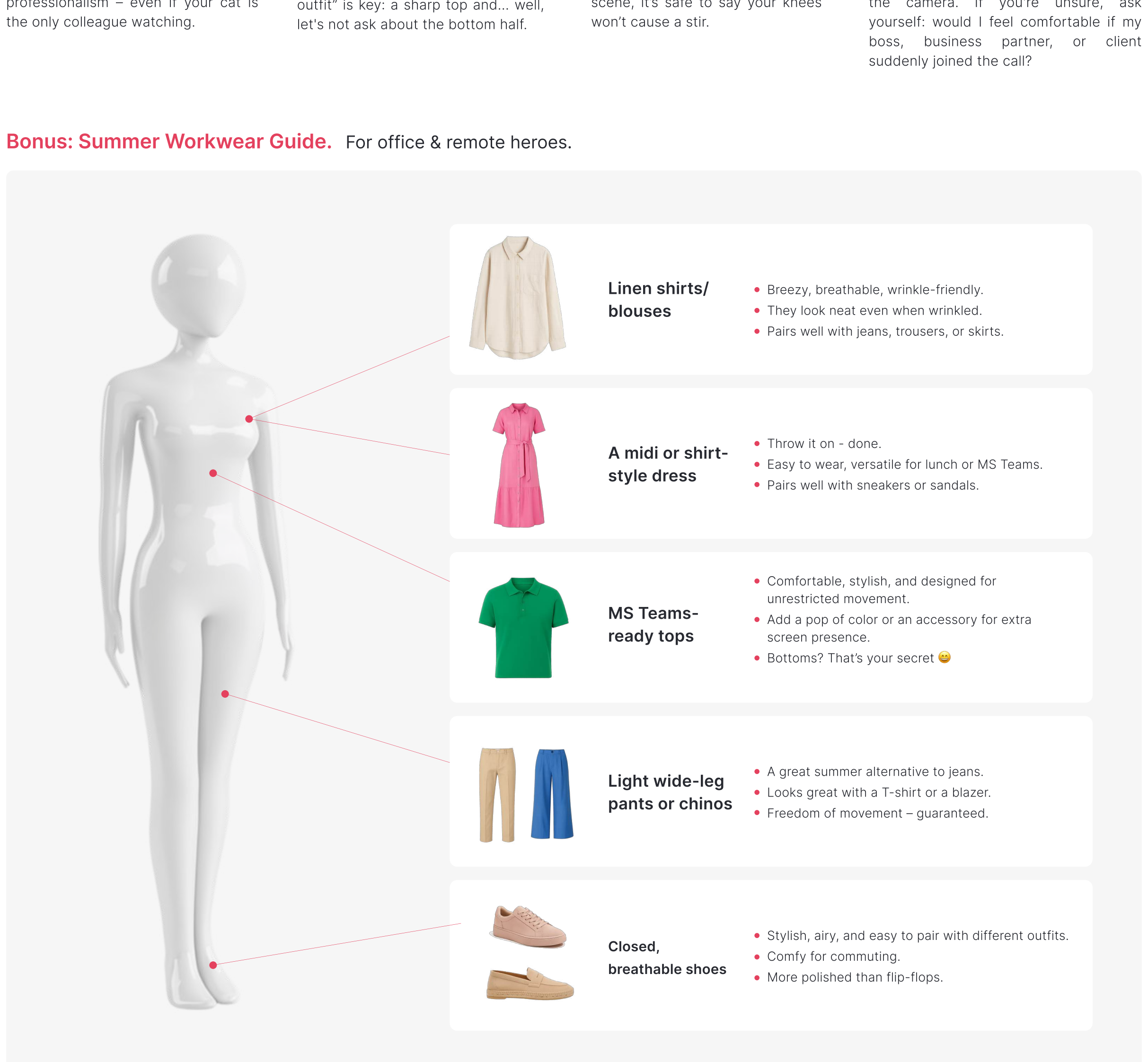
The shorts dilemma: yay or nay?

Some workplaces have long accepted shorts as the summer standard. Others – not so much. The answer? Know your environment. If your virtual meeting background is a beach scene, it's safe to say your knees won't cause a stir.

The key: comfort with a conscience

It doesn't matter where you work – in an office, at home, or on a terrace – your outfit still sends a message. Summer allows for some relaxation, but only to the point where you wouldn't be startled by your own reflection when turning on the camera. If you're unsure, ask yourself: would I feel comfortable if my boss, business partner, or client suddenly joined the call?

Bonus: Summer Workwear Guide. For office & remote heroes.



Linen shirts/ blouses
- Breezy, breathable, wrinkle-friendly.
- They look neat even when wrinkled.
- Pairs well with jeans, trousers, or skirts.

A midi or shirt-style dress
- Throw it on - done.
- Easy to wear, versatile for lunch or MS Teams.
- Pairs well with sneakers or sandals.

MS Teams-ready tops
- Comfortable, stylish, and designed for unrestricted movement.
- Add a pop of color or an accessory for extra screen presence.
- Bottoms? That's your secret 😉

Light wide-leg pants or chinos
- A great summer alternative to jeans.
- Looks great with a T-shirt or a blazer.
- Freedom of movement – guaranteed.

Closed, breathable shoes
- Stylish, airy, and easy to pair with different outfits.
- Comfy for commuting.
- More polished than flip-flops.

Sources: www.vogue.com www.whowhatwear.com www.harpersbazaar.com

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