

TALENT ACQUISITION IN THE GENERATIVE AI ERA

AI Has Changed Hiring.

Report: Future of Hiring in 2027–2028

But has your hiring process changed with it?

Why AI-generated applications are overwhelming high-volume hiring in India, and how evidence-led screening helps employers find the candidates who are genuinely right for the role.

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FOREWORD

A well-optimised resume is now easier to produce than it is to verify.

For two decades, the resume was the cheapest reliable signal in recruitment. Candidates had to invest effort to write one, and that effort said something. Applicant tracking systems and keyword matching were built on that assumption.

Generative AI has quietly removed the effort. A candidate can now tailor a resume to a job description in minutes, and AI agents can submit tailored applications at a scale no individual could manage. The result, as recent LinkedIn and Robert Half research shows, is more applications, more matching keywords, and more recruiter time spent on candidates who look right on paper but may not be.

This is not an argument against candidates using AI; most use it responsibly. It is an argument that employers need a better first signal, one that reflects aptitude, interest, motivation and behavioural fit for the role, and that can be gathered before recruiters commit their time.

This paper sets out what the data says, what the problem costs, and a practical, human-in-the-loop model for evidence-led screening that high-volume employers can pilot in a single quarter.

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ABOUT THIS PAPER

This Point of View draws on published 2026 research by LinkedIn and Robert Half, combined with CareerTests.in's experience in psychometric assessment. Illustrative models are labelled as such; their assumptions are stated so readers can replace them with their own figures. Full sources are listed on page 14.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Hiring volume is up. Hiring signal is down.

Generative AI has made applying effortless and choosing harder. Employers that keep relying on resumes and keywords as their first filter will spend more recruiter time to get the same, or weaker, shortlists.

74%

of recruiters in India struggle to find qualified candidates

LinkedIn, 2026¹

2×+

applications per job opening in India since early 2022

LinkedIn, 2026²

67%

of US HR leaders say AI-generated applications have slowed hiring

Robert Half, 2026⁴

84%

of US HR teams report heavier workloads as a result

Robert Half, 2026⁴

WHAT WE FOUND

- 1 Keyword matching has lost its power to discriminate.**
Generative AI lets candidates tailor resumes to each job description in minutes, so close matches no longer indicate genuine fit.
- 2 The bottleneck has moved, not disappeared.**
Over half of Indian recruiters who find hiring harder cite AI-generated applications. Teams compensate with extra review and extra interviews.
- 3 Most screening effort happens before any real evidence exists.**
In an illustrative 2,000-application campaign, over 70% of recruiter hours are spent before a structured suitability signal is collected.

WHAT LEADERS SHOULD DO

- 1 Move evidence to the front of the funnel.**
Add a short, mobile-first, role-specific assessment at the point of application, before recruiter review.
- 2 Sequence signals by cost and credibility.**
Use resumes for eligibility, assessments for suitability, and reserve interviews for candidates who meet the benchmark.
- 3 Keep humans in the loop and measure.**
Pilot on one high-volume role for 90 days, and judge success against your own baseline on time, conversion and retention.

The question is no longer “how do we process more applications?” It is “how do we gather better evidence, earlier?”

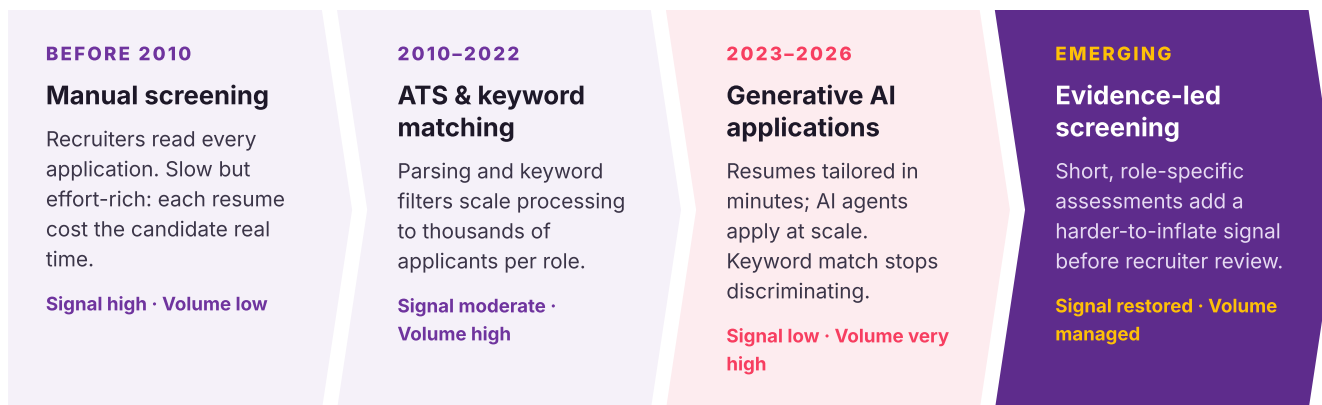
01 HOW THE EQUATION CHANGED

Resume screening was built for a world where resumes were costly to write

Each wave of recruitment technology solved the volume problem of its time.

Generative AI is the first wave that increases volume and erodes signal at the same time.

EXHIBIT 1 Four eras of first-stage screening



The keyword era worked because effort was a filter

Over the last decade, resume parsing and keyword matching let recruiters process large applicant pools and surface candidates whose education, experience and skills appeared to match a job description. The approach rested on a hidden assumption: writing a tailored application took time, so a close match was itself weak evidence of intent and fit.

Generative AI has removed that cost. Candidates can now tailor a resume to a specific job description in minutes, and AI agents can automate repetitive application tasks, submitting customised applications at scale.

The result: more matches, not more suitable candidates

When every resume can be optimised to the job description, keyword match stops discriminating between candidates. Shortlists grow, but the share of shortlisted candidates who are genuinely suited to the role does not.

Recruiters compensate with more manual review and more interviews, which is exactly where their time is most expensive. The bottleneck has moved from *processing* applications to *separating signal from noise*.

IMPLICATION

Faster resume parsing cannot fix a signal problem. Employers need an additional, harder-to-inflate source of evidence at the top of the funnel.

02 WHAT THE DATA SAYS

India's recruiters face a volume–quality mismatch

Hiring demand in India is strong, yet recruiters report that finding the right people has become harder, and they name AI-generated applications as the leading cause.

40%

India hiring activity above pre-pandemic levels

LinkedIn, Feb 2026¹

53%

of recruiters who find hiring harder blame a surge in AI-generated applications

LinkedIn, Feb 2026¹

47%

point to continued shortages of in-demand skills

LinkedIn, Feb 2026¹

81%

of recruiters in India say AI has changed their organisation's hiring process

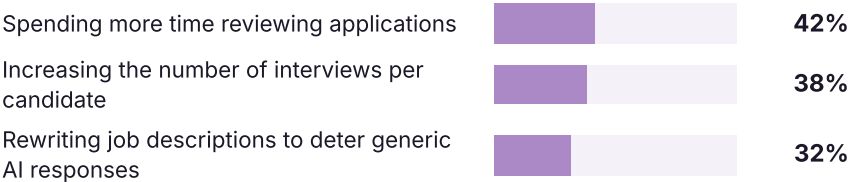
LinkedIn, 2026³

EXHIBIT 2 The default response adds friction: how HR teams are coping with AI-generated applications

IMPACT REPORTED



STEPS ADDED TO VALIDATE CANDIDATES



Share of respondents. Robert Half survey of 2,000+ US hiring managers, conducted November 2025, published March 2026.⁴

READING THE EXHIBIT

Every common coping strategy (more review time, more interviews per candidate, rewritten job descriptions) adds recruiter hours at the stages where those hours are most expensive.

The pattern is not confined to the US: a June 2026 Robert Half survey in the UK found 67% of hiring managers say AI-generated applications have increased time-to-hire.⁵

OUR VIEW

The data describes a structural shift, not a temporary spike. Candidate use of AI will keep rising; the response cannot be to work harder at reading resumes. It must be to change what is measured first.

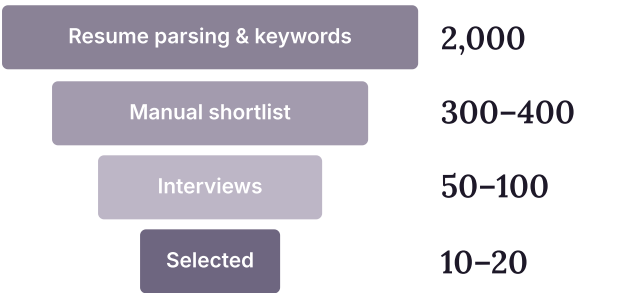
03 THE COST OF NOISE

Where recruiter time goes in a 2,000-application campaign

An illustrative campaign for a single high-volume role shows how much effort is spent before any real evidence of suitability is collected.

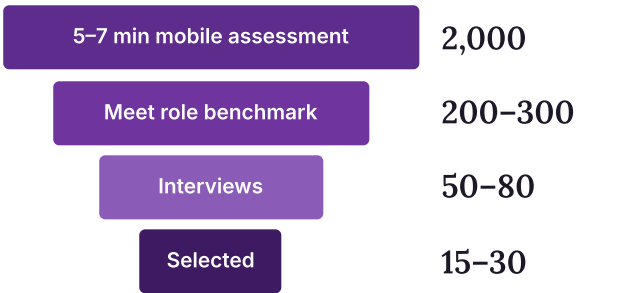
EXHIBIT 3 Illustrative hiring funnel: resume-first versus assessment-first screening

RESUME-FIRST (TODAY)



Shortlist driven by keyword match; suitability assessed only at interview.

ASSESSMENT-FIRST (EVIDENCE-LED)



Shortlist driven by role-specific evidence; recruiters review results plus resume.

Illustrative scenario for one role. Stage volumes are assumed ranges for a typical high-volume campaign; midpoints are used in Exhibit 4. Actual outcomes depend on role, labour market and benchmark design.

EXHIBIT 4 Illustrative recruiter and interviewer hours

STAGE	RESUME-FIRST BASIS	HOURS	ASSESSMENT-FIRST BASIS	HOURS
First-stage screen	2,000 resumes × 3 min	100.0	Candidates self-complete assessment	0.0
Shortlist review	350 phone screens × 15 min	87.5	250 results + resumes × 5 min	20.8
Interviews	75 × 60 min	75.0	65 × 60 min	65.0
Total effort		262.5		85.8
Hours per hire	÷ 15 selected	17.5	÷ 20 selected	4.3

≈67% fewer total recruiter and interviewer hours in this illustrative scenario, roughly 177 hours redirected to higher-value work.

Assumptions: manual resume screen 3 min each; phone screen 15 min; review of assessment results plus resume 5 min; interview 60 min of interviewer time. Candidate assessment time (5-7 min) is not recruiter time. Selection midpoints: 15 (resume-first) and 20 (assessment-first, conservative versus the 15-30 range).

WHAT THIS MEANS

In a resume-first funnel, over 70% of effort is spent before any structured evidence of suitability exists. Moving a short assessment to the front redirects that time to candidates who already meet a defined benchmark. Test it against your own baseline with a pilot (Section 08).

04 EVIDENCE-LED SCREENING

Not all signals are equal. Sequence them by cost and credibility.

Evidence-led screening layers several sources of evidence, collecting the cheap, hard-to-inflate signals first and reserving expensive human judgement for candidates who have already met a role-specific benchmark.

EXHIBIT 5 The candidate signal matrix

SIGNAL	WHAT IT TELLS YOU	EASE OF AI INFLATION	RECRUITER TIME NEEDED	BEST USED
Resume / cover letter	Education, experience, claimed skills	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	Eligibility check
Keyword / ATS match	Alignment with job-description language	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	Use sparingly
Recruiter-selected questions (5)	Role knock-outs: location, availability, shift, licences	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	At application
Structured assessment	Aptitude, interests, motivation, behavioural fit vs. benchmark	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	At application
Documents & proctoring	Mark sheets, payslips; identity integrity of the assessment	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	Shortlisted pool
Structured interview	Depth, communication, judgement, culture add	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	Benchmark-qualified pool

CareerTests.in assessment of signal characteristics. Ratings are qualitative and relative. Structured assessments reduce, but do not eliminate, the scope for inflation; optional proctoring further strengthens integrity.

1 · Claimed

Resume and application data. Still essential for eligibility (location, qualification, experience), but no longer sufficient to rank candidates.

2 · Assessed

Aptitude, interests, motivation and behavioural fit, measured in a standardised way against benchmarks for the specific role.

3 · Verified & judged

Supporting documents, optional proctoring and focused interviews, applied where they add most value: to a smaller, better-qualified pool.

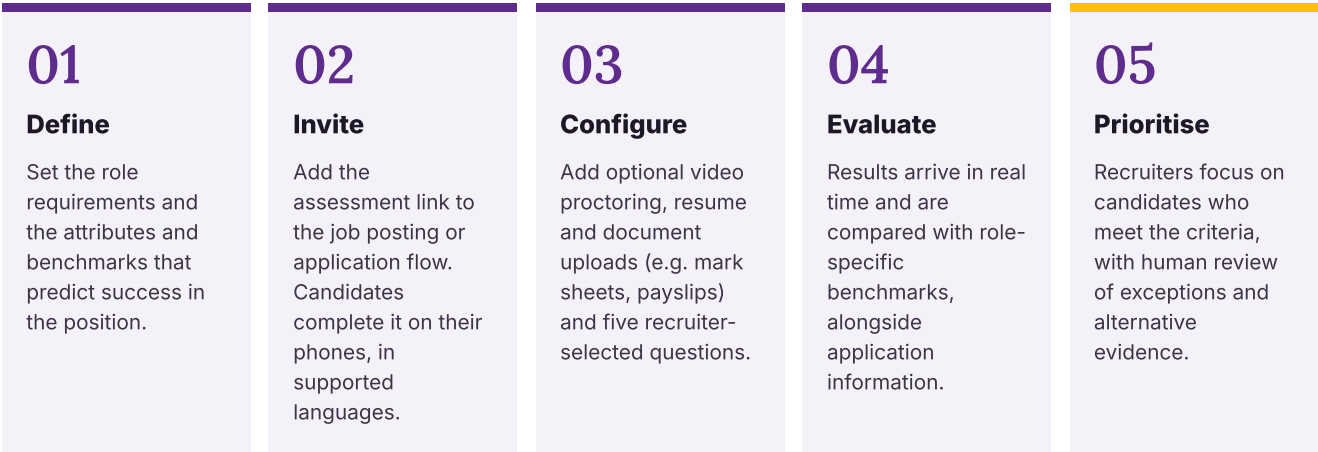
The goal is not to reject candidates for using AI. It is to stop letting the most easily optimised signal decide who gets a recruiter's attention.

05 THE OPERATING MODEL

A five-step, assessment-first workflow

The workflow complements existing applicant tracking. It adds a short, mobile-first assessment at the point of application, so the first shortlist is based on evidence rather than keywords alone.

EXHIBIT 6 Evidence-led screening workflow



Five design principles

PRINCIPLE	WHAT IT MEANS IN PRACTICE
Human in the loop	Assessments inform, not replace, recruiter judgement. Exceptions and alternative evidence are reviewed by people, and no candidate is rejected by an unexplained score.
Role-specific benchmarks	Benchmarks reflect what success looks like in the specific job, for example goal orientation for field sales or service orientation for customer care, not a generic “good candidate” profile.
Low candidate friction	A 5–7 minute assessment on a phone, in the candidate's supported language, keeps completion rates high and widens the reachable talent pool.
Consistency at scale	Every applicant in a campaign is evaluated against the same criteria, across locations and recruiters, which improves fairness and comparability.
Measured, not assumed	Screening time, interview conversion and early retention are tracked against the organisation's own baseline before any decision to scale.

06 SECTOR LENS

Where evidence-led screening creates the most value

The value is highest where application volumes are large, roles are repeatable, and early attrition is costly: the profile of most mass-hiring sectors in India.

EXHIBIT 7 Sector priorities for assessment-first screening

SECTOR	TYPICAL ROLES	SCREENING CHALLENGE	ATTRIBUTES THAT MATTER	STARTING POINT
IT & technology	Graduate intake, support engineers, non-technical operations	Very large campus and lateral pools with near-identical, keyword-rich resumes	Aptitude, learning orientation, interest fit	Career Success
Financial services	Sales officers, relationship and customer service executives, branch operations	High early attrition in target-driven roles	Goal orientation, motivation, customer orientation	TRIM + Career Success
BPO & shared services	Customer care and process executives	Continuous hiring across multilingual candidate pools	Service orientation, work-environment fit	TRIM, multilingual
Supply chain & logistics	Coordinators, supervisors, field operations	Distributed locations; candidates often mobile-only	Reliability, target orientation, people management	Career Success
Large enterprises	Multi-role, multi-location hiring campaigns	Inconsistent screening across recruiters and sites	Role-specific benchmarks applied consistently	Configurable workflow

CAREER SUCCESS ASSESSMENT

A short assessment of approximately 5–7 minutes providing insight into aptitude, interests, motivation and, where applicable, people-management orientation. Suited to a broad range of entry and mid-level roles.

TRIM ASSESSMENT

Designed for sales executives, customer care executives and similar roles, where goal orientation and suitability for the working environment are important predictors of fit.

07 READINESS DIAGNOSTIC

Is your screening process ready for AI-generated applications?

Score one point for each statement that is true for your organisation today. Be strict: "partly" counts as no.

- | | | |
|-----------|--|--|
| 01 | We know our applications per role, and how that number has changed since 2022. | ☐ Yes ☐ No |
| 02 | We track the recruiter hours spent on first-stage screening for each campaign. | ☐ Yes ☐ No |
| 03 | Our shortlisting criteria go beyond keywords, qualifications and years of experience. | ☐ Yes ☐ No |
| 04 | Every applicant in a campaign is evaluated against the same role-specific benchmark. | ☐ Yes ☐ No |
| 05 | We collect structured evidence of aptitude and motivation before committing to interviews. | ☐ Yes ☐ No |
| 06 | Our first screening step works on a mobile phone and in candidates' preferred languages. | ☐ Yes ☐ No |
| 07 | We can verify key documents before investing interviewer time. | ☐ Yes ☐ No |
| 08 | We measure interview-to-offer ratio and 90-day retention by role and screening route. | ☐ Yes ☐ No |

EXHIBIT 8 Interpreting your score

0-3

Keyword-dependent

Your first shortlist is exposed to AI-optimised applications. Recruiter time is likely being spent on candidates who match on paper only. A pilot is a priority.

4-6

Transitioning

Some structure exists but evidence arrives late or inconsistently. Moving assessment to the point of application can release recruiter capacity quickly.

7-8

Evidence-led

You are ahead of most employers. Focus on benchmark calibration, multilingual reach and linking screening data to retention outcomes.

Scored 6 or below? We will walk through your answers with you and map the quickest wins for one high-volume role. See page 13.

08 GETTING STARTED

Prove it in one quarter: a 90-day pilot

The fastest way to build the business case is a controlled pilot on one or two high-volume roles, run alongside the current process and measured against your own baseline.

EXHIBIT 9 90-day pilot roadmap



EXHIBIT 10 Pilot scorecard: measure against your baseline

METRIC	WHY IT MATTERS	YOUR BASELINE	PILOT RESULT
Recruiter hours to shortlist	The direct cost of first-stage screening; the clearest capacity gain.		
Time to shortlist (days)	Speed matters most for in-demand candidates who hold multiple offers.		
Interview-to-offer ratio	Shows whether interview time is going to better-suited candidates.		
Assessment completion rate	Confirms the candidate experience is low-friction on mobile.		
Offer acceptance rate	Indicates candidate engagement and role-fit at offer stage.		
90-day retention	The ultimate test of fit, especially in sales, BPO and field roles.		

THE SOLUTION

CareerTests.in: a forward-looking first filter for high-volume hiring

CareerTests.in gives employers a configurable, assessment-led first-stage screening workflow that complements conventional resume screening, so recruiters focus on candidates who meet role-specific benchmarks.

<div>5–7 minute assessments</div> <div>Quick for candidates, so completion stays high even for large pools.</div>	<div>Mobile-first</div> <div>Completed on any phone; no laptop or test centre required.</div>	<div>Multilingual</div> <div>Supported languages widen the talent pool beyond English-first applicants.</div>
<div>Real-time results</div> <div>Results compared with role-specific benchmarks as candidates complete.</div>	<div>Configurable workflow</div> <div>Optional video proctoring, resume and document uploads, five custom questions.</div>	<div>Scales across campaigns</div> <div>One consistent workflow across job postings, roles and locations.</div>

AT A GLANCE What changes for each stakeholder

STAKEHOLDER	BEFORE	WITH CAREERTESTS.IN
Recruiters	Manually read hundreds of near-identical, keyword-matched resumes.	Start from a view of candidates against a role benchmark, with resume and documents alongside.
Hiring managers	Interview many candidates who look right on paper.	Interview a smaller pool with structured evidence on aptitude, motivation and fit.
Candidates	Apply into a black box; often never hear back.	Complete a short assessment on their phone, in a supported language, and are evaluated consistently against the same criteria.
CHRO / leadership	Limited data on why shortlists and early attrition vary.	Consistent screening data across roles and locations, measurable against baseline outcomes.

Assessments complement resume screening and recruiter judgement. They do not replace human decision-making or guarantee job performance or retention.

NEXT STEP

Request a Hiring Workflow Demo

A 30-minute working session for talent acquisition leaders hiring at scale. Bring one high-volume role; leave with a clear view of what evidence-led screening could change.

Book your demo at careertests.in →

IN THE SESSION WE WILL

- 1 **Map your funnel** for one high-volume role: volumes, stages, recruiter hours and drop-offs.
- 2 **See the candidate experience** live on a mobile phone, including language options.
- 3 **Configure a sample workflow** with role benchmarks, document uploads, proctoring and your five questions.
- 4 **Estimate the capacity gain** using your own numbers in place of the assumptions in Exhibit 4.
- 5 **Outline a 90-day pilot** with a scorecard tailored to your hiring goals.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND

CHROs, Talent Acquisition Heads and hiring managers in IT, financial services, BPO and shared services, supply chain and logistics, and multi-location enterprises.



Scan to visit

<https://careertests.in>

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SOURCES AND NOTES

Sources

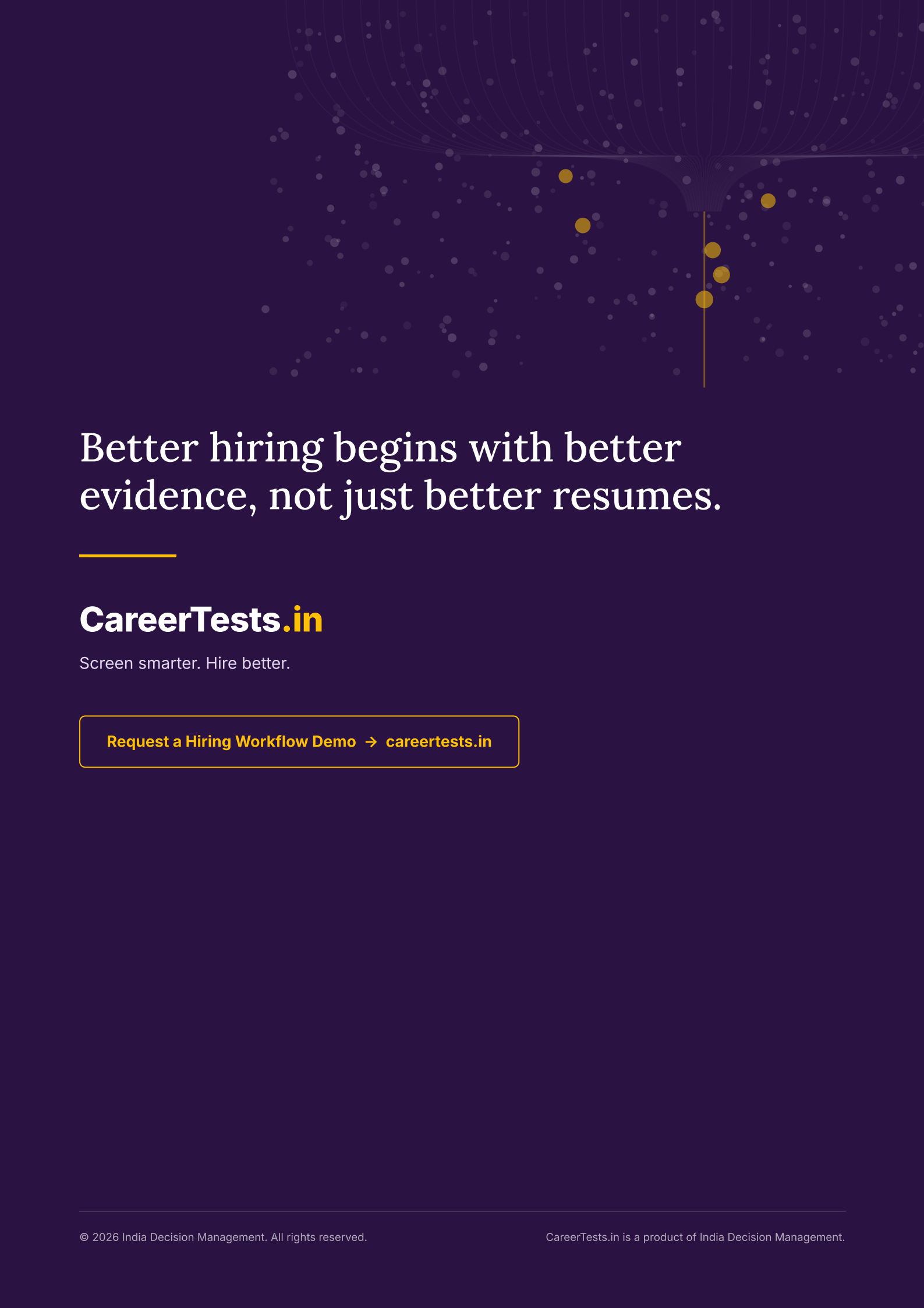
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About the author

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Important notice

This document is a point of view intended for general information. Statistics are reported from the third-party sources listed above and have not been independently audited by India Decision Management. Illustrative models (Exhibits 3 and 4) are hypothetical, rely on the stated assumptions, and are not a forecast or guarantee of results for any organisation. CareerTests.in assessments are designed to complement resume screening and recruiter judgement; they do not replace human decision-making or guarantee job performance or retention. Employers remain responsible for ensuring their selection processes comply with applicable law and are fair to all candidates.



Better hiring begins with better evidence, not just better resumes.

CareerTests.in

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