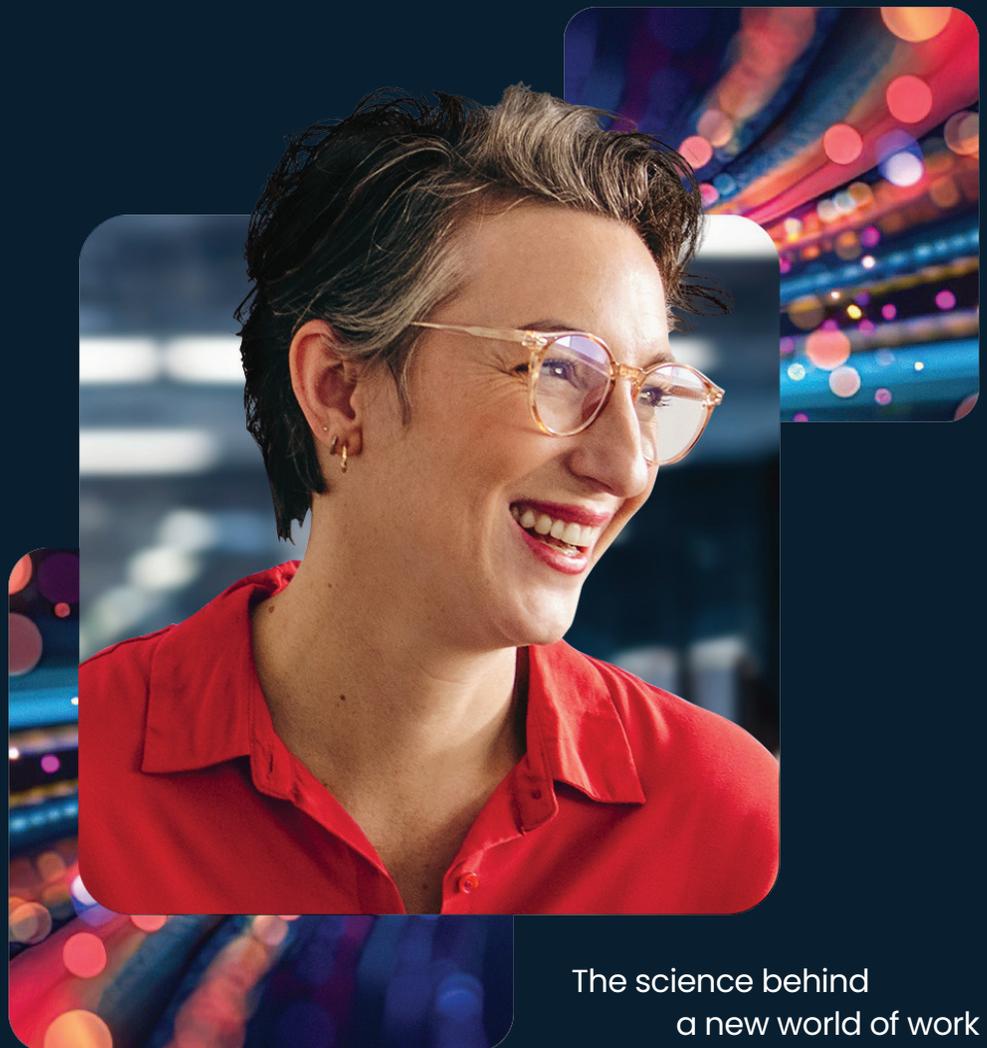




Rethink hiring in higher education

A skills-first checklist for lean HR teams



The science behind
a new world of work



About People First

People First, powered by MHR, is an all-in-one HCM platform built for lean HR teams in academia.

With modern AI-powered tools and pre-configured workflows, it helps higher ed institutions manage compliance, culture and everyday HR in one place

Hiring plays a direct role in shaping the academic experience for students, faculty and staff. But traditional processes often block strong candidates before they get a fair shot.

Legacy systems. Rigid requirements. Outdated filters.

In higher ed, where HR teams are lean and cycles are seasonal, the need to modernize hiring is urgent. That's where skills-first hiring comes in: a smarter, faster way to match with real campus needs.

Why skills-first hiring works for higher ed

A skills-based approach helps:

- Fill seasonal roles faster, with fewer manual steps
- Uncover overlooked talent beyond degree-based filters
- Build equity and consistency across departments

A skills-first model doesn't compromise standards; it clarifies them, helping you identify candidates who are ready to contribute in meaningful ways.



Skills-first hiring checklist for time-strapped HR teams

Use this streamlined checklist to pressure-test and evolve your hiring practices.



Redefine what 'qualified' looks like



Our job descriptions emphasize outcomes, not just credentials



We prioritize transferable skills over narrow experience requirements



We tailor postings to reflect institutional values and specific role needs



Key question: Are our job ads unintentionally screening out capable adjuncts, staff or internal talent?



Streamline seasonal and grant-based hiring



We use templated descriptions for faster turnaround between terms



We automate onboarding for adjuncts, student worker and grant-funded roles



We offer clear return pathways for contingent or short-term staff



Key question: How much time do we lose each term to repetitive, manual hiring processes?



Final thought

Effective hiring is foundational to your institution's future, driving culture, continuity, and impact. By moving to a skills-first model, even the most time-strapped HR teams can reduce friction, increase equity and better support the workforce powering higher education



Embed equity in shortlisting



We use blind screening to reduce bias in early candidate reviews



We evaluate applicants based on demonstrated skills, not pedigree



We support hiring panels with structured rubrics and shared scoring



Key question: Do our filters reflect real institutional needs or inherited defaults?



Support internal mobility and growth



We help staff map their skills to open roles across departments



We promote internal job visibility through employee self-service



We link reviews and development plans to real career paths



Key question: Are we maximizing the talent we already have on campus?

Ready to see how People First can transform campus HR operations?

Download the full eBook
Reinventing HR eBook





About MHR

MHR has been driving innovation across the HRIS space for over 40 years. We don't just meet the industry standard, we exceed it. Engineered by the latest SaaS technology, our product, People First enables increased employee productivity and organizational growth with a demonstrable return on investment.

People First is guided by what our customers and the market demand in a rapidly changing world.

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