

## Artificial intelligence bias: Amazon shut down AI recruiter engine that ‘penalized women’

Amazon.com Inc’s machine-learning specialists uncovered a big problem: their new recruiting engine did not like women.

The team had been building computer programs since 2014 to review job applicants’ resumes with the aim of mechanizing the search for top talent.

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But by 2015, the company realized its new system was not rating candidates for software developer jobs and other technical posts in a gender-neutral way.

That is because Amazon’s computer models were trained to vet applicants by observing patterns in resumes submitted to the company over a 10-year period. Most came from men, a reflection of male dominance across the tech industry.

In effect, Amazon’s system taught itself that male candidates were preferable. It penalized resumes that included the word “women’s,” as in “women’s chess club captain.” And it downgraded graduates of two all-women’s colleges, according to people familiar with the matter.

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Amazon edited the programs to make them neutral to these particular terms. But that was no guarantee that the machines would not devise other ways of sorting candidates that could prove discriminatory.

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As for Amazon, the company managed to salvage some of what it learned from its failed AI experiment. It now uses a “much-watered down version” of the recruiting engine to help with some rudimentary chores, including culling duplicate candidate profiles from databases, one of the people familiar with the project said.

**Read full, original post:** [Amazon scraps secret AI recruiting tool that showed bias against women](#)