

How I Built an AI Agent Team to Run My Job Search

In one afternoon, I turned two overflowing inboxes into a job-search command center - two AI agents, one tracker, and a daily briefing waiting before my first cup of coffee. Here's exactly what I built, what it found, what went wrong, and how you can replicate it.

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The Starting Point: Chaos at Scale

The Volume

In 30 days I sent **464 applications** — roughly 15 per day — mostly through an auto-apply service. Replies landed across two Gmail accounts simultaneously.

The Problem

Recruiter messages, rejections, assessment links, job alerts, and right-to-represent (RTR) agreements were all mixed together with newsletters and piano-lesson inquiries for my side business. There was no PMO, no status report, no single source of truth.

I have spent 20 years running programs for other people. I finally noticed I was running a program for myself — with none of the infrastructure I would insist on for any client engagement.

Step One: Write Down Requirements

The first step was not technology. It was defining exactly what I needed to know every morning — the same way I would kick off any program engagement.

📬 Emails Needing Attention

Interview requests, assessments, recruiter replies, and RTRs waiting for my signature

📊 Application Volume

How many applications went out each day — by date, traceable to source

❌ Rejections Logged

How many companies said no, and which ones, so I stop waiting on them

🚩 Scam Flags

Anything suspicious — fake recruiters, look-alike domains, or lead-gen traps

The hardest requirement was the vague one: **"needs my attention."** A rejection does not. An interview request does. Defining that rule clearly made everything else work.

Data Sources: Knowing Where to Look

Before building anything, I mapped every place job-search data was hiding. Each source held a different piece of the picture.

Personal Gmail

Company replies, signed RTRs in the Sent folder, and forwarded mail from the professional account

Professional Gmail

LinkedIn messages, recruiter outreach, and daily auto-apply reports from the job service

Auto-Apply Service

A daily count of applications submitted on my behalf, delivered as a summary email each morning

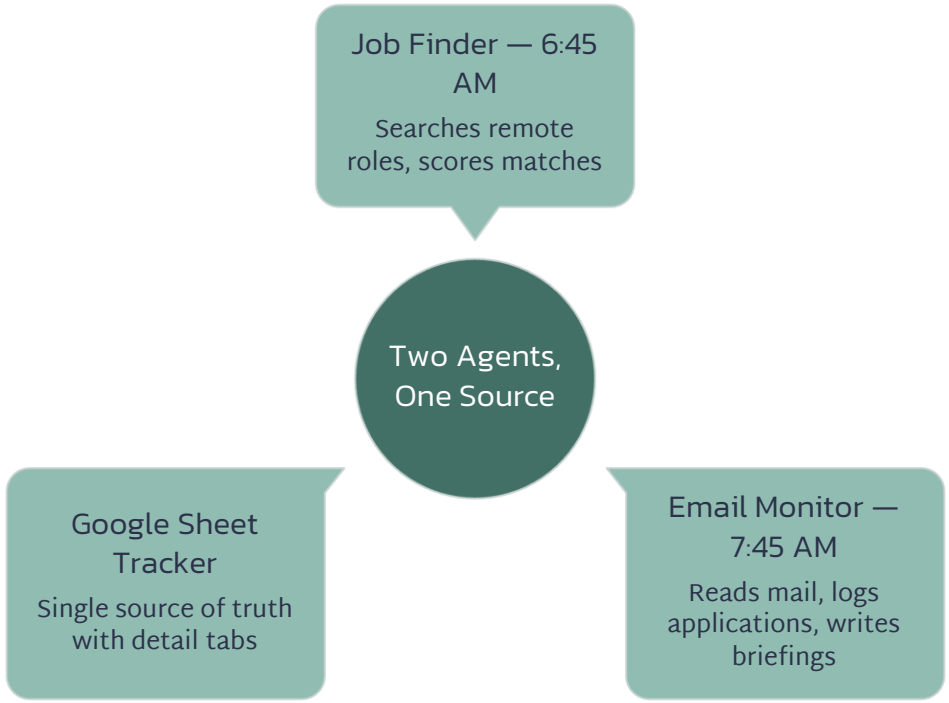
Job Boards

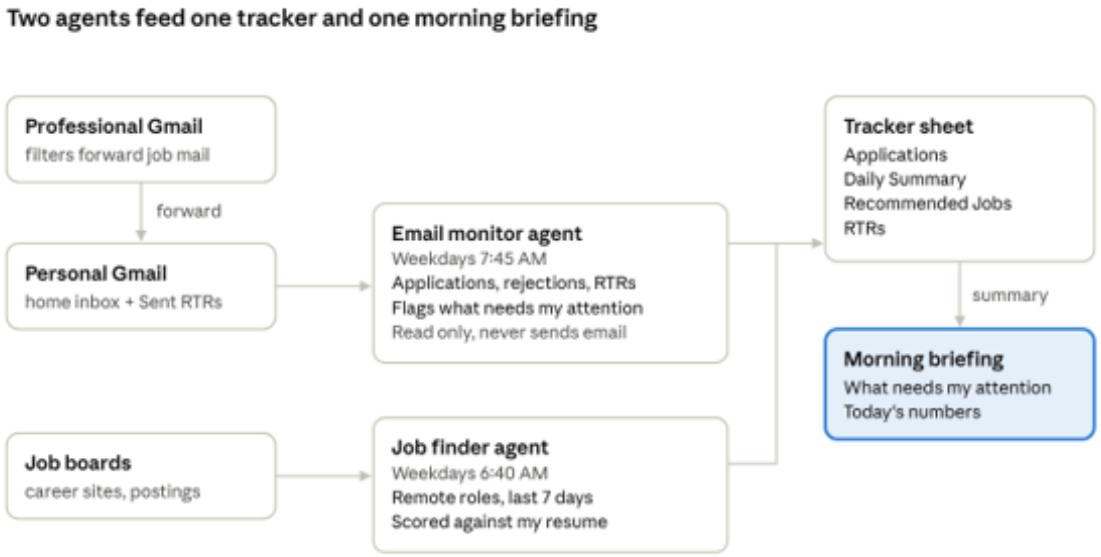
New postings I might fit — searched weekly for remote roles with salary above $150K

Source	What it holds
Personal Gmail	Replies from companies, signed RTRs in the Sent folder
Professional Gmail	LinkedIn messages, recruiter outreach, auto-apply daily reports
Auto-apply service	A daily count of applications sent
Job boards	New postings I might fit

The Design: Two Agents, One Source of Truth

The system has three parts that work in sequence every weekday morning. The job finder runs first at 6:45 AM, populating new leads. The email monitor follows at 7:45 AM, logging overnight activity. By the time I open my laptop, the briefing is already waiting.





How I Built It: Step by Step

The whole build took less than day of back-and-forth with Claude. I described what I wanted in plain English — Claude did the searching, reading, sorting, and setup, and asked before anything it could not undo.

1 Connect the Inbox

Connect Gmail to Claude — read only. The agents never send, delete, or archive anything.

2 Consolidate Two Inboxes

Add Gmail filters in the professional account to forward job-related mail — ATS systems, LinkedIn, RTR emails — to one home-base inbox.

3 Backfill 30 Days of History

Before automating anything, read 30 days of past mail to understand how the inbox actually behaves. This step changed the entire design.

4 Build One Tracker

Create a Google Sheet with tabs for every application email, daily summary, recommended jobs, and RTRs. Every summary number is a formula over detail tabs — fully traceable.

5 Schedule the Agent

Each agent is a scheduled task with written instructions. They run on weekday mornings, update the sheet and send me a short report.

6 Keep Tuning

Every gap I found became a new instruction: capture pay and contract type, flag duplicate RTRs, never overwrite an interview status without a new email.

Scheduling, Guardrails & Tuning

Schedule the Agents

Each agent runs as a scheduled weekday task with written instructions. The job finder fires at 6:45 AM; the email monitor at 7:45 AM. Both update the same Sheet and send a short report.

Keep Tuning

Every gap I found became a new instruction: capture pay and contract type, flag duplicate RTRs, never overwrite an interview status without a supporting email. Treat each revision like a change request — write it down, test it, move on.

Guardrails Built In

- Read email only — no sending, no deleting, no archiving
- Write to one spreadsheet only
- Never change an existing status without a new email giving a new outcome
- Flag duplicates; never auto-sign RTRs
- Mark uncertain rows "verify" rather than guess

What the Data Actually Showed

Volume was never my problem. Results were.

482

Applications Sent

Over 31 days — roughly 15 per day via the auto-apply service

135

"Not Selected" Emails

Logged rejections over the same period — a ratio that clarified the real challenge

28+

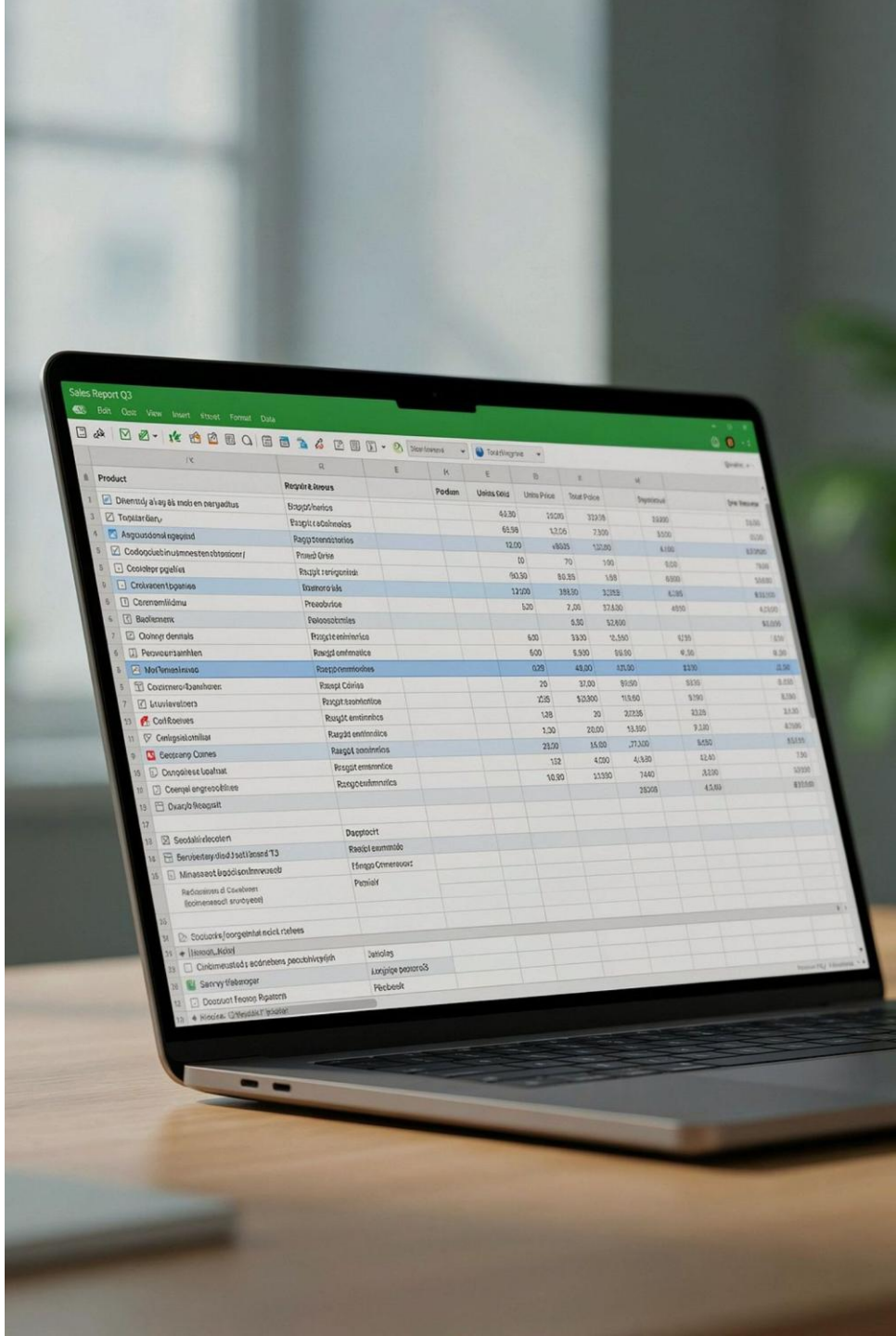
RTRs Signed

Right-to-represent agreements with staffing agencies, some for overlapping roles

1

Phone Screen

One live conversation secured — revealing a conversion problem, not a volume one



Surprises the Backfill Uncovered

Thirty days of historical data revealed patterns I never would have caught by scanning email manually. Each finding changed the agent's design.



Replies Were in the Wrong Inbox

The auto-apply tool submits from a relay address and forwards replies to my personal account — the one I checked least.



Gmail Groups Strangers Together

One "Thank You For Applying!" thread held 24 emails from about 20 different companies. One of them was a rejection buried inside.



Rejection Language Is Slippery

Some confirmations say "if not selected, you will no longer be considered" - which looks like a rejection to a simple keyword search but isn't one yet.



Scams Are Real and Specific

Agents flagged a recruiter using a personal Gmail, a look-alike domain offering $70/hr to "reply to confirm," and a lead-gen site sending fake interview requests.

The RTR Risk Nobody Warns You About

What Is a Right-to-Represent Agreement?

When a staffing agency submits your resume to a client on your behalf, you sign an RTR. It's standard practice - but it carries real risk if two agencies submit you to the same client for the same role.

What Happened

Two agencies pitched me for the same Johnson & Johnson role on the same day. Signing both RTRs can get a candidate **immediately disqualified** from consideration — the client sees a conflict and walks away from both submissions.

The Fix

The agent now tracks every RTR by job title, client, and agency. It warns me before I sign if a matching role already exists in the tracker, giving me time to investigate before committing.

What the RTR Tracker Captures

- Job title and client company
- Submitting agency name
- Remote or onsite designation
- Agreed hourly or annual rate
- Recruiter name and phone number
- Date received and date signed
- Duplicate warning flag

What a Program Manager Learns from Building Agents



Requirements Evolve, Write Them Down

My first request was a simple daily email summary. Within 24 hours I had added pay capture, contract type, recommended jobs, RTR tracking, and duplicate-submission checks. Each change was one paragraph added to an agent's instructions. That is change control, just faster.



Baseline Before You Automate

The 30-day backfill revealed that most replies went to my other inbox, the auto-apply tool used a relay address, and Gmail grouped unrelated companies into one thread. Without that discovery, the counts would have been wrong from day one.



Keep a Human in the Loop

The agents flag. I decide. They never sign an RTR, reply to a recruiter, or apply for a job. On day one, one run re-labeled an interview as a rejection with no supporting email. I fixed the row and added the guardrail immediately.



Guardrails are part of the design

My agents only read email. They write to one spreadsheet. On its first morning, one run re-labeled an interview as a rejection with no email to support it. I fixed the row and added a rule: never change an existing status unless a new email gives a new outcome.



Accept good enough, and label it

Some company emails mix confirmation and rejection language. Rather than pretend to be exact, the tracker marks uncertain rows "verify", and the daily report reads each email before counting it.



Expect plumbing problems

Google asked me to verify my phone before it would save a forwarding filter, and the first version of my RTR filter caught every email containing the word "to". Neither was hard to fix, but both took real time.

Build Your Own: The Checklist

Setup Checklist

- [ ] Write your requirements: what should a daily briefing tell you, and what counts as "needs my attention"?
- [ ] Pick one inbox as home base and forward job mail from any others with Gmail filters
- [ ] Connect the assistant to that inbox — read only
- [ ] Ask for a 30-day backfill before you automate anything
- [ ] Create one tracker spreadsheet with a detail tab and a summary tab
- [ ] Schedule a weekday morning report that updates the tracker first
- [ ] Add guardrails: no sending, no deleting, no overwriting existing rows
- [ ] Review the first week of reports and turn every gap into an instruction

What Each Agent Needs to Know

Email Monitor

Run at 7:45 AM. Read new mail and Sent folder. Log applications, rejections, RTRs. Send morning briefing with "needs attention" items first.

Job Finder

Run at 6:45 AM. Find up to 20 remote roles posted in last 7 days. Score each against resume. Add best matches with apply link and fit rationale.

You do not need to code. You need a clear request, an AI assistant that can connect to your email and schedule tasks, and an afternoon.

Starter Prompts You Can Copy Today

Adapt these in plain English with your AI assistant of choice. Each prompt targets one specific job-search workflow.

30-Day Backfill

"Read the last 30 days of my Gmail. Count job applications per day, list every rejection by company, and flag anything that needs a reply from me."

Daily Email Monitor

"Create a weekday 7:45 AM task that reads new job-search email, logs each application, rejection, and interview to my tracker sheet, and sends a short report: what needs my attention, today's numbers, and anything that looks like a scam."

Job Finder

"Here is my resume. Each weekday, find up to 20 remote roles posted in the last 7 days where I would be a top candidate, at $150K or more. Add them to my tracker with the apply link, why I fit, and the recruiter only if the posting names one."

RTR Tracker

"Track every right-to-represent agreement I receive or sign: job title, client, agency, remote or onsite, agreed rate, and recruiter name and phone. Warn me if a new RTR is for a role I already signed for."

The Real Payoff: Attention, Not Automation

The agents did not get me a job. What they gave me was my mornings back.

> Instead of scrolling through dozens of emails, I read one briefing that tells me who is waiting on me, what to sign, what to ignore, and which new roles fit. If you are in a long job search, you are already running a program. Give it a PMO.

Start Small

One agent, one spreadsheet. Add to it as your needs change — each new gap becomes a new instruction.

Stay in Control

Keep sensitive actions in your own hands. The agents flag; you decide. Never automate anything irreversible.

Share What You Build

If you automate your own search, share what you built first — every system teaches the next builder something new.

Manage AI Projects the Agile Way

I Gave My Job Search a PMO

What Building an AI Agent Team Taught Me About Managing AI Projects



482 applications. Two inboxes. One shared tracker.



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