STOP LOGGING. START LEADING.

Start Here

Your first OpsSprint™: one task, mapped and tested, in seven days

A TAKE-HOME FROM JEFF ARNOLD

If you were in the room, you heard three steps: identify the friction, document the steps, automate the clicks. This guide is the how-to behind them, and it starts with the map. Pick one task and work through it, one step a day.

01	02	03	04
PICK IT	**MAP IT**	**BUILD IT SMALL**	**CHECK IT**
One task that repeats and needs almost no judgment.	How it really runs today, with every if-then.	Connect the tools you already own. Test on yourself first.	A person decides anything that affects a person.

Start with the map

Most people deploy automation and AI before they've mapped the process. When the map comes first, the build does exactly what you planned.

A map shows you exactly what to build. It lists each step the way it happens today, the system each step happens in, and every if-then along the way: what happens when a field comes in blank, when a manager never replies, when a candidate withdraws. Most people don't think through every option. The map is where you find the ones you'd have missed.

> **If you can draw your process on a whiteboard, you can automate it. If you can't, there are people like me who do this for a living.**
>
> JEFF ARNOLD

Automation first, then AI. Automation standardizes the steps. AI handles the messy, unstructured parts on top of that structure. AI built on a process nobody has mapped fails.

A WORKED EXAMPLE

What a finished map looks like

Here's a map for a task nearly every HR team has: scheduling an interview. Your steps and timing will differ. Start with the right-hand column.

#	Step, as it happens today	Where	If this goes wrong or changes
1	A candidate reaches the interview stage.	ATS	If the hiring manager isn't set up as an interviewer, tell the recruiter before anything goes to the candidate.
2	Check the hiring manager's open times.	Calendar	If there are no open times in the next five business days, ask the recruiter to widen the window or pick another interviewer.
3	Send the candidate three time choices.	Email	If the candidate doesn't reply in two days, send one reminder. If there's still no reply after four, tell the recruiter.
4	The candidate picks a time.	Email	If none of the times work, offer new ones and release the old ones. If the candidate is in another time zone, show both zones.
5	Book it and add the video link.	Calendar, video tool	If the slot was taken in the meantime, offer the next open time and tell both people.
6	Update the candidate's record.	ATS	If it's a panel interview, add every interviewer to the record so each one gets the reminders and the feedback request.
7	Send reminders to everyone.	Email	If the candidate cancels or reschedules, free the slot, tell the manager, and start again at step 2.
8	After the interview, ask the manager for feedback.	Email, ATS	If feedback isn't in by the next business day, send a reminder, then tell the recruiter.

FIVE QUESTIONS FOR EVERY STEP

- What starts it?
- Which system does it happen in?
- Who decides, if anyone?
- What happens when something is missing, late, or wrong?
- Who gets told?

Eight steps, and every one carries an if-then. Write them all down before you build anything.

THE SAME MAP, DRAWN

Eight steps, ten if-thens

The straight line down the left is the plan. Each orange card is a place it can change. Decide what happens there now, while it is still on paper.



THE PLAN

Your first seven days

One task, one week. Do not add a second task until the first one runs clean.

When	What to do	Done when
Day 1	**Pick the task.** Choose one that happens several times a day, drives you crazy, and needs almost no judgment, just clicks and keystrokes, like data entry between systems or candidate follow-ups.	You can name it in one sentence.
Days 1-2	**Find your number.** Run the OpsMap™ Quick Audit (about ten minutes) to name your biggest automation target and what it costs you each year. Or log your small repeat tasks for a week with the Time-Thief Catcher.	You know how many hours the task takes and what they cost.
Days 2-3	**Map it.** Write the steps the way they actually happen today, not the way they should happen. Add every if-then. Use the blank maps at the back.	Someone else could do the task from your map.
Day 4	**Choose the tool.** Connect the systems you already own, like your ATS, email, and calendar, with a no-code tool such as Make.com. It sits between your software and uses the connection points already built in.	You know which of your systems connect.
Days 5-6	**Test small.** Test on yourself first. Then test on a dummy record.	It handles every if-then in your map, including the ugly ones.
Day 7	**Run it small.** Turn it on for one team or one requisition. Watch it for a week and write down what you change.	One task runs without you touching it.

> **Automation multiplies your good decisions and your mistakes at exactly the same speed. Done right, it's invisible. Done wrong, it's a 5 AM text message.**
>
> First, do no harm: test on yourself, test on a dummy record, and run it small before you run it wide.

Guardrails

- **Keep a person in the loop on every decision about who gets hired.** The AI reads the resumes. The humans read the people.
- **Tell people when AI is part of the process,** and give them a way to ask for a human review.
- **Know the rules.** New York City already requires an independent bias audit and candidate notice for automated hiring tools, and other states are following. Confirm the current rules in your states with your own employment counsel before you build.

WHERE AI FITS

Four patterns you can build without code

The HR leaders I teach aren't coders. They build in Claude, and the same ideas carry over to ChatGPT and Gemini. Start with one pattern.

Pattern	What it does	A first use in HR	What stays with a person
The reader and checker	Reads a form or document and checks it against your rules.	A new-hire intake form: it flags blank fields and checks that the state they live in matches the state they'll work in.	Fixing what it flags.
The writer	Drafts a message for one specific person.	A welcome note with benefits that fit that person's situation, the top training courses for their role, and a few lines about their new area.	Approving the template and spot-checking what goes out.
The connector	Moves information between systems and starts the next step.	The moment an offer is signed: the IT ticket goes out, equipment gets ordered, payroll gets set up, and a welcome meeting shows up on the supervisor's calendar.	Handling the exceptions it can't resolve.
The screener	Sorts a pile and writes a short summary so people decide faster.	Pull every resume into the same fields, cut only on absolute job requirements (and tell the candidate why), then have AI write two lines per applicant: why this person fits and what's missing.	Every decision about who gets a call.

Other HR leaders have built agents that analyze survey feedback to find the highest-performing teams, help supervisors coach their employees, and standardize HR policies after a merger.

Pick your first pattern

- **Mostly reading and checking?** Start with the reader and checker.
- **Mostly writing the same kind of message?** Start with the writer.
- **Mostly moving data and starting the next step?** Start with the connector, built in Make.com.
- **Mostly sorting a pile?** Start with the screener, and keep a person on every decision about who gets a call.

> **Whichever pattern you pick, the map comes first. It becomes your instructions: what to read, what to write, and when to hand off to a person.**

Disclosure: the Make links in this guide are affiliate links. If you sign up through one, 4Spot Consulting may earn a commission.

THE PAYOFF

What it's worth

Savings show up in three places: hours your team gets back, mistakes that stop costing you, and candidates you stop losing to slow follow-up. Sarah, an HR director, got back 12 hours a week. Nick, a recruiter, got back 15. David's one wrong manual entry meant a $27K overpayment. Ten minutes a day of avoidable admin is a week of lost time every year.

Do the math for your task: hours a week × people × 50 weeks × what an hour costs. The Quick Audit does it for you.

After day seven

- **Count the win.** Compare how long the task took before and after to your Quick Audit number.
- **Keep the map.** The next task starts half done.
- **Pick the next task.** Score your ideas with the Automation Opportunity Prioritizer below.

Free tools to use next

Free tool	What it does	Where
OpsMap™ Quick Audit	Names your biggest automation target and what it costs you each year. About ten minutes.	4SpotConsulting.com/opsmap-quick-audit/
10 Recruiting Tasks to Automate First	The ten tasks that give back the most hours for the least setup. Each is small enough to build in a week.	TheAutomatedSeries.com/the-automated-recruiter/qr/tar-3-recruiting-tasks-to-automate/
Time-Thief Catcher	Log the five-minute leaks for one week and the pattern shows up on paper.	TheAutomatedSeries.com/the-automated-recruiter/qr/tar-2-time-thief-catcher/
Automation Opportunity Prioritizer	Score each idea on effort, impact, and data readiness. The build order sorts itself.	TheAutomatedSeries.com/the-automated-recruiter/qr/tar-4-automation-opportunity-prioritizer/
One-Page AI Savings Audit	Send your finished Quick Audit and the tools you use. You get a yearly savings estimate back, with the math shown.	4SpotConsulting.com/ai-savings-audit/

More one-page tools, including the AI Roles and Responsibilities Matrix and the AI Hiring Compliance Checklist: TheAutomatedSeries.com/the-automated-recruiter/qr/

Want a second set of eyes on your map?

Book a free call and we'll walk through your processes together: **4SpotConsulting.com/30**

YOUR TURN

Your map

Write the steps the way they happen today, not the way they should happen. In the right-hand column, write every if-then you can think of. Then ask someone who does the task to find the one you missed.

Task	**Who does it today**
How often	**Minutes each time**
Systems involved	**What starts it**

#	Step, as it happens today	Where	If this goes wrong or changes
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			

Who decides? Who gets told? What happens when something is missing, late, or wrong? Answer those for every row before you build.

YOUR TURN, DRAWN

Draw your map

Copy your steps from the table into the boxes, in order. Write every if-then on the right. A step with no if-then is a question to answer before you build. Need more room? Print this page twice.

