

The Job-Search Workflow

A step-by-step guide to running a job search like a software project, with an AI assistant that prepares every application and a human who sends each one: a private repository, one tracking file, written content rules, interview preparation as a test suite, a CASP cockpit whose roadmap ends at a signed contract, and mail automation that fills your Drafts folder and never presses Send.

EDITION 1.0 — 24 SEPTEMBER 2026

- S1 One private repository, one folder per employer
- S2 One tracking file — sent means dated
- S3 Written content rules — no unprovable sentence
- S4 Masters and routing — which CV, which letter, where
- S5 Interview preparation as a test suite
- S6 Offer watch — sources, filters, deduplication
- S7 CASP — a roadmap that ends at a signed contract
- S8 Mail automation — prepare everything, send nothing



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Where this comes from. This guide is the written-down version of one real session, on 24 September 2026: a bank teller moving up to head cashier, a CEO, and Claude as AI CTO. No product code was written that day; the tooling ZeroSuite uses to ship software ran a job search instead. Names, employers and addresses are withheld. The full story is the companion article on thalesandhisaictoclaude.com.

00 · The Operating Model

Most people use an AI assistant for a job search the way they use a spell-checker: paste a letter, take what comes back. This guide uses the opposite contract:

- **You own:** the target role, the list of employers, every claim about yourself, every send.
- **The assistant owns:** structure, drafting, consistency between documents, verification of every exported file, the tracking file, the roadmap — and saying no to a sentence you cannot defend in an interview.
- **The interface:** you give facts and decisions; the assistant gives drafts and recommendations, and argues when it disagrees. You decide. Decisions and reservations are written down.

Five rules hold everything together. **1.** The assistant never sends anything. **2.** An application counts as sent only when it carries a date. **3.** No claim you cannot prove in the interview. **4.** What an employer received is frozen, even when your master CV evolves. **5.** The project ends at a signed contract, not at "applications sent".

What you need: a computer, git (or any folder you back up), an AI assistant that can read and write files — Claude Code is what we use — and a word processor that exports PDF. CASP (Step 7) is optional and free.

01 · The Repository

ONE PRIVATE REPOSITORY PER CANDIDATE, SEPARATE FROM ANYTHING PUBLIC

If you have a personal CV website, it lives in its own repository. The job search never rides along with a site deploy, and a site change never lands in the job search. Two repositories, two lifecycles: the private one can take a commit every ten minutes without anything going live.

```
job-search/
  CLAUDE.md           # the rules the assistant must follow (Step 3)
  tracking.md         # the ONE tracking file (Step 2)
  contacts.md         # employers, type, verified contact, source
  _masters/          # CV per target role, generic letters, e-mail templates
  _interview/         # questions and coached answers (Step 5)
  BANK-A/            # one folder per employer, capitals and hyphens
    Letter_BANK-A.docx Letter_BANK-A.pdf
    Mail_BANK-A.txt    # To, Subject, Attachments, body
    CV.pdf            # the CV exactly as sent – frozen
  RECRUITER-B/
  casp/              # optional cockpit (Step 7)
  .env               # mail credentials – git-ignored from the first commit
```

Why a folder per employer. At three applications you remember everything. At fifteen you no longer know which letter version went to which bank or which CV the second recruiter received. The folder answers it, forever.

02 · The Tracking File

ONE FILE, ONE ROW PER APPLICATION, A FIXED CHAIN OF STATUSES

EMPLOYER	ROLE	TYPE	STATUS	SENT ON	FOLLOW-UP	NOTES
Bank A	Head cashier	spontaneous	ready			Former employer
Recruiter B	Head cashier or teller	spontaneous	sent	2026-09-24		Staffing firm

Plus two columns in the real file: **channel** (the verified address or the online form) and **folder**. **Statuses:** to prepare → ready → sent → followed up → interview / rejected / no answer .

The one rule: a row is submitted if and only if "Sent on" holds a date. A check-mark is a claim; a date is evidence. With twenty rows you cannot fake it by accident. A follow-up is a new date in its own column, once, ten working days after sending with no answer.

Contacts: an address enters contacts.md only if you read it on the employer's own site or in the offer, with the source noted. Otherwise it stays "to find". Never a guessed jobs@company.com .

03 · The Content Rules

WRITTEN ONCE IN CLAUDE.MD, SO EVERY SESSION – AND EVERY FUTURE AGENT – INHERITS THEM

```
# CLAUDE.md – job search of <name>
– The assistant never sends anything. It prepares and sets the row to "ready".
– No guessed address. A contact needs a source; otherwise "to find".
– One application per employer and per role. Check tracking.md first.
– The master CV is the truth for dates, employers and job titles.
– No claim that cannot be defended in an interview. No record, no "zero errors".
– No internal figures of the current employer. No criticism of it.
– PDF only as attachments. Every exported PDF is re-read, not trusted.
– Credentials live in .env only, never committed.
```

The rule that matters most is the unprovable sentence. In our session the draft said the candidate "beats almost every record" for speed at the counter. It came out: no one publishes those records, and "which records?" has no answer. What stayed is true and defensible — *her handling time per client is among the shortest in the branch* — paired with the counterweight a recruiter worries about: *without speed costing accuracy*. The same discipline removed "zero discrepancies": nobody in the trade believes it, and it invites the wrong question.

04 · Masters and Routing

DERIVE, DON'T REWRITE – AND MAKE THE ROUTING A RULE, NOT A MOOD

One CV per target role (for us: head cashier, experienced teller), one generic letter per role, one e-mail template per role with [bracketed] placeholders and one line at the top: *no bracket may survive in a sent e-mail*. The second letter is the first one with the role-specific paragraph replaced — diffed, not rewritten, so the claims cannot drift apart.

EMPLOYER TYPE	CV	LETTER	E-MAIL SUBJECT
Direct employer	Target-role CV	Names the employer	Spontaneous application – <role> – <name>
Recruiter / staffing firm	Same CV	Generic	<role> or <adjacent role> – <name>
Published offer	CV matching the offer	Names employer and offer	Exact offer title and reference, as the offer demands

The e-mail is a summary, not a cover note. Three short paragraphs: the employer's need, your proof, the invitation (the letter, the CV, the interview). "Please find attached" alone reads like a circular.

A trap to write down: a staffing-firm placement can reproduce the very contract you want to leave. It is worth taking only for a step up or a direct hire.

05 · Interview Preparation as a Test Suite

QUESTIONS YOUR TARGET ROLE REALLY TURNS ON, EACH WITH A COACHED ANSWER YOU CAN SAY OUT LOUD

Ours has 32 questions in six sections: presentation and motivation; the job itself; **software, incidents and security**; managing people; personal questions; conditions. The third section is the one generic "top 50 questions" lists never have, and the one we recommend to everyone. Adapt it to your trade:

- Which software do you use, and what can you do in it without help?
- The system goes down with a queue in front of you. What do you do, in order?
- An operation is validated in the system but the client was not paid. How do you resolve it?
- A partner network you depend on is down. What do you tell the client?
- Someone from "IT support" calls and asks for your password. Walk us through it.
- How do you secure a cash or equipment loading? What do you never do alone?

Add one question for every strong claim in your letter. If the letter says you are fast, the interview will ask "*how do you know?*" — write that answer now.

06 · Offer Watch

WHERE TO LOOK, WHAT TO KEEP, WHAT TO REFUSE

- **Sources:** national job boards, employers' own career pages, the recruiters already in `contacts.md`. No automated collection on sites whose terms forbid it (LinkedIn included) — apply there by hand.
- **Filter on the trade, not only the title.** In our market "head cashier" also means a supermarket cash desk: of ten showcased head-cashier profiles on one recruiter's site, about seven came from outside banking. Our filter is "*cash*" + *banking sector*.
- **Deduplicate against the tracking file:** one application per employer per role.
- **Read your competition.** Those profiles had more years than our candidate; her edge was banking-specific cash work. That became the angle of every letter.
- **A published offer beats a guess:** copy its exact subject line, reference and required attachments (some demand a salary expectation in the letter).

07 · CASP – A Roadmap That Ends at a Signed Contract

THE STATE LAYER ZEROSUITE RUNS ON EVERY PRODUCT, USED HERE WITH NO CODE AT ALL

```
npm i -g @justethales/casp
cd job-search && casp init      # casp/state.json · now.md · roadmap.md + first session prompt
casp status                    # "where are we?" on one screen, at the start of every session
casp close && casp check        # at the end: state bumped from git, then validated – exit 1 on drift
```

PHASE	CONTENT
1 – Application kit	CVs, letters, e-mail templates, interview preparation, website aligned
2 – First wave	One employer folder at a time; each one sent by you before the next is prepared
3 – Offer watch	Sources, filters, folders prepared up to "ready"
4 – Follow-ups, interviews	One follow-up at ten working days; one interview sheet per employer
5 – Offer and transition	Compare with the current job, negotiate, notice period — the cockpit closes at signature

Keep a **"Blocked / to decide"** table in `roadmap.md` (a salary expectation to provide, a recruiter to identify) and record decisions with their reservations in the session log. Three weeks later, nobody reconstructs why a folder exists.

08 · Mail Automation – Prepare Everything, Send Nothing

THE CREDENTIALS EXIST TO FILL YOUR DRAFTS FOLDER, NOT TO SEND

A sent application cannot be recalled: a wrong attachment or a leftover `[placeholder]` stays in the recruiter's inbox. A burst of scripted sends from a new mailbox is what spam filters catch. Your manual send is the last review, and it costs two minutes. So the script **appends the prepared message to Drafts over IMAP**; you open your mail client, read, press Send, and write the date in `tracking.md`.

```
# drafts.py – python3 drafts.py BANK-A (IMAP_HOST, IMAP_USER, IMAP_PASSWORD in .env)
import imaplib, os, sys, time, pathlib
from email.message import EmailMessage
d = pathlib.Path(sys.argv[1]); lines = (d / f"Mail_{d.name}.txt").read_text().splitlines()
head = dict(l.split(" : ", 1) for l in lines[:3])          # To / Subject / Attachments
body = "\n".join(lines[3:]).strip()
assert "[" not in body, "placeholder left in the e-mail"
msg = EmailMessage(); msg["From"] = os.environ["IMAP_USER"]
msg["To"] = head["To"]; msg["Subject"] = head["Subject"]; msg.set_content(body)
for name in head["Attachments"].split(", "):
    msg.add_attachment((d / name).read_bytes(), maintype="application", subtype="pdf", filename=name)
with imaplib.IMAP4_SSL(os.environ["IMAP_HOST"]) as m:
    m.login(os.environ["IMAP_USER"], os.environ["IMAP_PASSWORD"])
    m.append("Drafts", r"(\Draft)", imaplib.Time2Internaldate(time.time()), msg.as_bytes())
```

The Drafts folder name depends on the provider (Drafts, INBOX.Drafts, [Gmail]/Drafts): list it once with `m.list()`. Load `.env` into the environment before running, and check SPF, DKIM and DMARC on your domain before the first real send.

09 · Checklists and the First Message

BEFORE EVERY SEND

- ▶ Recipient address has a source in `contacts.md`
- ▶ Subject matches the rule (or the offer, exactly)
- ▶ No `[bracket]` left in the e-mail
- ▶ Letter names the right employer; one page
- ▶ PDF re-read after export, not trusted
- ▶ Attachments are PDF, frozen in the employer folder
- ▶ After sending: date in "Sent on", commit

EVERY WEEK

- ▶ Rows sent ten working days ago without answer: one follow-up
- ▶ New offers checked against the tracking file
- ▶ "Blocked / to decide" table emptied or dated
- ▶ `casp status` read, `casp check` green

BEFORE AN INTERVIEW

- ▶ The letter you sent that employer, re-read
- ▶ Every claim in it has a rehearsed proof
- ▶ The incident section said out loud once

THE FIRST MESSAGE TO YOUR ASSISTANT

```
I am looking for a job as <role>. Here are my CV and my current letter: <paths>.
Set up a private repository following this structure: one folder per employer, one
tracking file where a row counts as sent only when it has a date, and a CLAUDE.md with
my content rules. You never send anything: you prepare, I send.
Challenge any sentence I cannot defend in an interview. Show me the plan first.
```

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