10 free AI tips for recruitment agencies.

A guide on where to get started with AI in your organisation. Ten practical steps for recruitment agencies with 10 to 100 staff. No new platforms and no big technology spend. These are the things we see make the difference when we train and work with recruitment teams, in the order we would do them.

IF YOU ONLY DO ONE THING

Write an AI Policy and keep a person signing off anything that matters.

71%

of UK employees have used unapproved consumer AI tools at work, and 51% do so every week.

MICROSOFT UK, OCT 2025

32%

of UK employees said they were concerned about the privacy of company or customer data.

MICROSOFT UK, OCT 2025

296

recommendations made by the ICO after auditing providers of AI recruitment tools.

ICO, NOV 2024

01

Train your team and name your AI champions

Most consultants have taught themselves AI from videos and guesswork, and it shows in the results. Train everyone who will use it on real work, then pick two or more champions and give them time for the role, ideally one billing consultant and one from resourcing or compliance.

TRY THIS Keep sessions short and early in the day so billing time is protected.

02

Write an AI policy people will actually read

Two pages your team follows beat twenty they ignore. Say which tools are approved and what must never go into them. Give it a named owner who understands AI well enough to sign it off, then tell the whole agency, not only the directors.

TRY THIS Ask three consultants to explain the policy back to you.

03

Find out what is already being used

Your consultants are almost certainly using AI already, some of it on personal accounts nobody has signed off. This is shadow AI. Ask openly and without blame, because people hide what they think will get them into trouble, and you cannot manage what you cannot see.

TRY THIS A five-minute anonymous survey: which tools, and on whose account.

04

Protect candidate and client data

CVs, salaries, health disclosures, right-to-work documents and confidential client briefs stay out of free public AI tools. Some free tools can use what you type to improve their models unless that setting is switched off. Candidates and clients are starting to ask how agencies use AI, so have an answer ready.

TRY THIS Use the never-paste list on page 2 as your starting rule.

05

Choose your go-to tools, on business accounts

Pick one or two main AI tools and pay for business accounts, so your data sits under proper terms and you can remove access when somebody leaves. Check what AI your CRM and job board tools already include before adding another subscription.

TRY THIS Running Microsoft 365? Check what Copilot your licences already include before buying anything new.

06

Start with the admin, not the hiring decision

Job adverts, candidate summaries, interview notes, client updates and shortlist write-ups eat hours and need no judgement about a person. That is where the quick wins sit. Anything that screens, scores or ranks candidates comes later, with proper checks, because that is where bias and the law both bite.

TRY THIS Turn a client brief into a first-draft job advert, then have the consultant rewrite it in your voice.

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07

Measure the time before you change anything

Pick one job, such as writing a job advert, and time it for a week. Then time it again with AI. Minutes per advert is a number your directors will listen to, and a feeling that it is quicker is not. If a task does not get faster or better, stop using AI for it.

TRY THIS Ten adverts written the old way, ten the new way, same consultant.

08

Test it side by side, then roll it out

Run the new way alongside the old one for a few weeks before you rely on it, and keep a manual fallback for every workflow. Confidence comes from seeing it work on your own jobs. Once it holds up, write it down so the next person can repeat it.

TRY THIS Keep the prompts that work in a shared library your team owns.

09

Review your tools every three months

AI tools change month to month, and their prices and features change with them. Put a quarterly review in the diary that covers what is being used, what it costs, what it saves and what to drop. Licences nobody opens are money leaving the business.

TRY THIS Add it to an existing management meeting rather than creating a new one.

10

Keep a human in the loop

Anything that affects a candidate's chances or goes to a client is checked and signed off by a named person before it leaves the building. AI drafts and your consultants decide. Keep a person making every shortlisting decision, and be able to explain how it was made.

TRY THIS Write down who signs off which kind of AI output, and record that they did.

A STARTING RULE FOR THE WHOLE TEAM

Never paste into a free AI tool

- CVs and candidate contact details
- Health, salary and right-to-work information
- Confidential client briefs and fee terms
- Anything a candidate told you in confidence

Usually fine on an approved business account

- Your own published job adverts
- A rough draft you want tidied up
- A standard interview question set
- Meeting notes with names and numbers taken out

Adjust it for your clients' terms, then put it in your AI policy. This is practical guidance, not legal advice.

WHERE TO GO NEXT

See where your agency stands.

The free Recruitment AI Trust Scorecard. Twenty questions and about five minutes, and you get a score you can put in front of your directors.

https://recruitment-ai-trust.scoreapp.com/

Train the team.

In-person and online AI workshops, from a one-hour introduction to a half day.

https://powerhouse-digital.com/ai-training-workshops/

Want it done with you?

The AI Trust & Productivity Sprint puts the policy and three to five working workflows in place in 30 days.

https://powerhouse-digital.com/ai-trust-productivity-sprint-recruitment/

Tim Bennett is the Founder and Managing Director of Powerhouse Digital Limited, an AI training and implementation business based in Huddersfield, West Yorkshire. In recruitment he has spoken at the Recruitment Expo, opened TEAM Network's AI Impact webinar series, run a workshop at the TEAM Conference and joined the Amplifying Recruitment podcast.

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2025/26 and 2026/27

Sources. Microsoft UK, research by Censuswide with 2,003 UK employees, 13 October 2025: https://ukstories.microsoft.com/features/rise-in-shadow-ai-tools-raising-security-concerns-for-uk

ICO, AI tools in recruitment: audit outcomes report, 6 November 2024, page 12: https://ico.org.uk/media2/migrated/4031620/ai-in-recruitment-outcomes-report.pdf

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SCAN FOR THE WEBSITE