

# THE JILTED RECRUITER

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## HOW TO USE AI IN YOUR JOB SEARCH

A practical guide for the 40+ professional — no tech background required

### INTRODUCTION

#### AI is not going to take your job. But someone using it well might.

Here's the honest truth: AI tools won't write a better resume than you — but they'll help you write one faster, tailor it smarter, and catch the things you missed at 11pm the night before a deadline.

This guide is for the business professional over 40 who hasn't grown up with these tools and finds the whole thing a little overwhelming. You don't need a tech background. You don't need to understand how any of it works under the hood. You just need to know what to type.

We're going to cover six practical use cases where AI saves you real time in your job search — and a few places where leaning on it too hard will hurt you.

*The tools in this guide are either free or have a free tier that's more than enough for job searching. You do not need to pay for anything to get started.*

### SECTION 1 OF 7

#### The tools worth knowing about

You don't need all of these. Start with one — ChatGPT or Claude — and get comfortable before adding others. They all work similarly: you type a request, they respond, you refine.

Tool	Best for in job searching	Free?
ChatGPT	General writing, resume tailoring, interview prep, cover letters. The most widely used tool — huge community of job search prompts available online.	Free tier available
Claude	Longer documents, nuanced writing, following complex instructions. Particularly good at matching tone and style in cover letters.	Free tier available
Gemini	Research, summarizing company news and financials, quick fact-finding before interviews.	Free

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Perplexity	Real-time web research with cited sources. Excellent for researching companies, industries, and salary data.	Free tier available
Grammarly	Proofreading and clarity. Catches errors AI-generated text sometimes introduces.	Free tier available
Jobscan	ATS keyword matching — paste your resume and a job description, it scores your match and suggests improvements.	Free tier available

*You don't need a paid subscription for any of these to do the job search tasks in this guide. The free tiers are genuinely useful. Start there.*

## Tailoring your resume to a job description

This is the highest-ROI use of AI in your job search. ATS systems score your resume against the job description for keyword match. A generic resume loses every time. AI makes tailoring fast enough to do it for every single application.

### How to do it

- Copy the full job description from the posting
- Open ChatGPT or Claude
- Paste your resume and the job description into the chat using the prompts below
- Review every suggestion before accepting it — you know your experience better than the AI does

### Prompts to use

#### Prompt 1 — Identify keyword gaps

```
Here is a job description:  
[paste full job description]
```

```
Here is my current resume:  
[paste your resume]
```

```
Compare the two and list the keywords and phrases from the job description that are missing or underrepresented in my resume. Group them by: (1) must-add, (2) nice-to-add, (3) not relevant to my background.
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**What this does:** Gives you a prioritized list of keywords to work into your resume without guessing.

#### Prompt 2 — Rewrite a bullet point

Here is one of my resume bullet points:  
[paste bullet point]

Here is the job description I'm applying to:  
[paste or summarize key requirements]

Rewrite this bullet point to better align with the role's language and priorities. Keep it accurate to my actual experience. Give me 3 versions.

**What this does:** Gets you three options so you can choose the one that sounds most like you.

### Prompt 3 — Rewrite your professional summary

Here is my current professional summary:  
[paste summary]

Here is the job I'm targeting:  
[paste job title and 3-4 key requirements]

Rewrite my summary to speak directly to this role. Keep it in first person, under 4 lines, and make it specific — not a list of generic adjectives. Match the tone of my existing summary.

**What this does:** Produces a targeted summary in under a minute — the thing most people spend an hour agonizing over.

#### **Don't let AI fabricate experience you don't have.**

AI will sometimes add accomplishments, skills, or tools that sound plausible but aren't true to your background. Read every suggestion carefully. If you didn't do it, don't claim it. Your credibility in an interview depends on being able to speak to everything on your resume.

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### Writing cover letters that don't sound like AI wrote them

The biggest mistake people make with AI and cover letters is accepting the first output. The default AI cover letter is immediately recognizable — overly formal, full of phrases like 'I am writing to express my interest in,' and completely devoid of personality.

The fix is giving it more to work with and then editing aggressively.

#### The better approach

##### Prompt — Cover letter that sounds like you

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I need a cover letter for this role:

[paste job title and company]

Key requirements from the job description:

[paste 3-4 key requirements]

About my background:

[2-3 sentences about your most relevant experience]

One specific reason I want to work at this company (not generic):

[write this yourself – do not leave it blank]

Write a cover letter that is direct, confident, and specific. No opening with 'I am writing to express my interest.' No clichés. First person. Under 300 words. Match this tone: professional but conversational, slightly informal, not stiff.

**What this does:** Produces a usable first draft. Then edit it to add your voice — change words that don't sound like you, add a specific detail, cut anything generic.

The 'one specific reason' field is the most important part of this prompt. You have to write it yourself. AI cannot research what actually interests you about a company — and a vague answer there is the first thing a recruiter notices.

## Interview preparation and practice

This might be the most underused AI application in job searching. You can use AI as a mock interviewer, a question generator, and a feedback machine — available at midnight, infinitely patient, and brutally honest if you ask it to be.

### Generate likely interview questions

#### Prompt — Custom question list

Here is the job description I'm interviewing for:

[paste job description]

Based on this role, generate the 10 most likely behavioral interview questions I'll be asked. Focus on the skills and experience most prominently featured in the JD. Format as a numbered list.

**What this does:** Gives you a role-specific prep list instead of a generic 'tell me about yourself' lineup.

### Practice your STAR answers

#### Prompt — STAR answer feedback

I'm preparing for an interview for a [job title] role. Here is my answer to the question: "[interview question]"

[paste your answer]

Give me honest feedback on this answer using the STAR method (Situation, Task, Action, Result). Tell me: (1) what's missing, (2) what's too vague, (3) what I should cut, and (4) whether the result is strong enough. Be direct – don't soften the feedback.

**What this does:** Acts as a prep coach. Ask it to be direct or it will be too kind.

## Prepare for ageism defense questions

### Prompt — Ageism question prep

I'm a business professional in my mid-40s interviewing for a [job title] role. I want to prepare confident, forward-looking answers for questions that are sometimes used to screen out experienced professionals.

Help me prepare answers for these questions that:

- Don't mention retirement or wind-down
- Position my experience as an asset, not a liability
- Sound natural, not rehearsed

Questions:

1. Where do you see yourself in 5 years?
2. Are you comfortable working for a younger manager?
3. How do you stay current with new technology?
4. You seem overqualified – why do you want this role?

**What this does:** Produces draft answers you can personalize. Never use the AI output verbatim — it won't sound like you and interviewers will notice.

For interview prep specifically, practice your answers OUT LOUD after AI helps you write them. Reading a good answer and being able to say it naturally in an interview are completely different skills.

## Company research before interviews

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A candidate who references something specific about a company — a recent product launch, a leadership change, a strategic shift — stands out immediately. AI makes this research faster, but you need to use the right tool for current information.

*For real-time company research, use Perplexity or Google Gemini — not ChatGPT or Claude. The latter two have knowledge cutoff dates and may give you outdated information about recent news.*

### Prompt — Pre-interview company brief

I have an interview with [Company Name] for a [job title] role next week.

Give me a briefing covering:

1. What the company does (in plain language, not marketing copy)
2. Their recent news — last 6 months (layoffs, launches, acquisitions, leadership changes)
3. Who their main competitors are
4. Any public information about their culture or values
5. One smart question I could ask that signals I've done my research

[Use Perplexity or Gemini for this prompt — they search the live web]

**What this does:** Gives you a pre-interview briefing in minutes. Read it, but also verify anything you plan to mention — AI can get details wrong.

## Research your interviewer

### Prompt — Understand your interviewer's background

I'm interviewing with [Interviewer Name], who holds the title [their title] at [Company].

Based on what you know about this role type, what topics or priorities are they likely to care most about? What angle should I take when answering questions about my experience to resonate with someone in their position?

**What this does:** Helps you tailor your answers to what matters to the specific person across the table.

## Drafting networking messages and follow-ups

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Writing outreach messages is one of the most procrastinated parts of job searching. The blank page is the enemy. AI can generate a solid first draft in 30 seconds — and that's all you need to get unstuck.

### Prompt — Cold LinkedIn connection request

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Write a short LinkedIn connection request (under 250 characters) to someone I don't know.

Their name: [First Name]

Their role: [Title] at [Company]

Why I'm reaching out: I'm exploring opportunities in [industry/function] and found their background interesting.

Make it specific, not generic. No "I'd love to add you to my network." Don't mention I'm job searching.

**What this does:** Gets you a personalized draft you can trim down and send. Add one real detail about their work before hitting send.

### Prompt — Thank you email after an interview

Write a thank you email to send within 24 hours of an interview.

Interviewer name: [Name], [Title]

Company: [Company]

Role: [Job Title]

One specific thing we discussed: [write this yourself]

One thing I want to reinforce about my fit: [write this yourself]

Make it under 150 words. Specific and warm. Not stiff. Don't start with 'I wanted to reach out to thank you.'

**What this does:** The 'one specific thing' and 'one thing to reinforce' fields are mandatory — don't skip them. They're what make the email worth reading.

## Salary research and negotiation prep

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AI won't replace proper salary research — you still need real data from LinkedIn Salary, Glassdoor, and Levels.fyi. But it can help you make sense of conflicting numbers and prepare your negotiation language.

### Prompt — Interpret conflicting salary data

I'm researching salary for a [job title] role in [city] at a [company size] company in [industry].

Here's what I found:

- LinkedIn Salary: \$[X]-\$[Y]
- Glassdoor: \$[X]-\$[Y]
- Payscale: \$[X]

Help me understand: which range is most reliable? What factors would move my number toward the high end vs. the low end? What should my target, floor, and ceiling be?

**What this does:** *Helps you synthesize messy data into a defensible range before any conversation.*

### Prompt — Negotiation script

I received a job offer with a base salary of \$[X]. Based on my research, the market rate for this role in [location] is \$[Y]-\$[Z], and I have [X] years of experience.

Write me a negotiation script for a phone call where I:

1. Express genuine enthusiasm for the offer
2. Ask for \$[target number] in base salary
3. Have a fallback position if they can't move on base (signing bonus or extra PTO)

Make it confident but not aggressive. Short. Natural. Something I can actually say out loud.

**What this does:** *Read it out loud at least three times before the call. The goal is to say your number without hesitating or immediately offering to go lower.*

### Never share sensitive personal information with AI tools.

Do not paste your actual salary, social security number, full contact details, or confidential employer information into AI tools. Use placeholder values in your prompts (e.g., '\$120,000' instead of your real number if you prefer). Most AI tools retain conversation history by default — check your privacy settings.

## IMPORTANT LIMITS

### What AI cannot do — and where it will hurt you

AI is a tool, not a strategy. Here's where leaning on it too hard will backfire:

Limitation	Why it matters
<b>It cannot replace your voice.</b>	AI-generated cover letters and LinkedIn summaries all sound similar. If you don't edit them to sound like you, recruiters will notice. The tell is usually a certain formality and cadence that's identifiable after you've read enough of them.
<b>It cannot fake experience you don't have.</b>	AI will confidently suggest adding skills, tools, or accomplishments that sound plausible but aren't yours. If you claim it on your resume and can't speak to it in an interview, you will not get the offer.
<b>It doesn't know what happened last month.</b>	ChatGPT and Claude have knowledge cutoff dates. For recent company news, leadership changes, or market events, use Perplexity or Google Gemini — they search the live web.
<b>It cannot build your relationships.</b>	No AI tool can replace a genuine conversation with a former colleague, a warm referral from a mutual contact, or a recruiter who remembers you from three years ago. Networking is still human.
<b>It will over-polish if you let it.</b>	AI defaults to formal, thorough, and complete. Your actual voice is probably more direct, more specific, and more interesting. Cut the AI throat-clearing and add your personality back in.

QUICKREFERENCE

## The AI job search cheat sheet

Task	Best tool
Resume keyword matching	ChatGPT or Claude + Jobscan for scoring
Resume bullet rewrites	ChatGPT or Claude
Professional summary	ChatGPT or Claude — edit heavily
Cover letter first draft	ChatGPT or Claude — always personalize
Interview question list	ChatGPT or Claude with the job description
STAR answer feedback	ChatGPT or Claude — ask for honest critique
Company research (recent)	Perplexity or Google Gemini
Salary data interpretation	ChatGPT or Claude to synthesize
Networking message drafts	ChatGPT or Claude — add one real detail before sending
Negotiation scripts	ChatGPT or Claude — practice out loud after
Proofreading	Grammarly or ChatGPT

### A final note from Angela

*AI is the great equalizer in this job market. Companies are using it to screen you. You should be using it right back — to get past their filters, prepare for their interviews, and negotiate what you're worth.*

*The professionals who figure this out fastest will have a real advantage. You just did.*