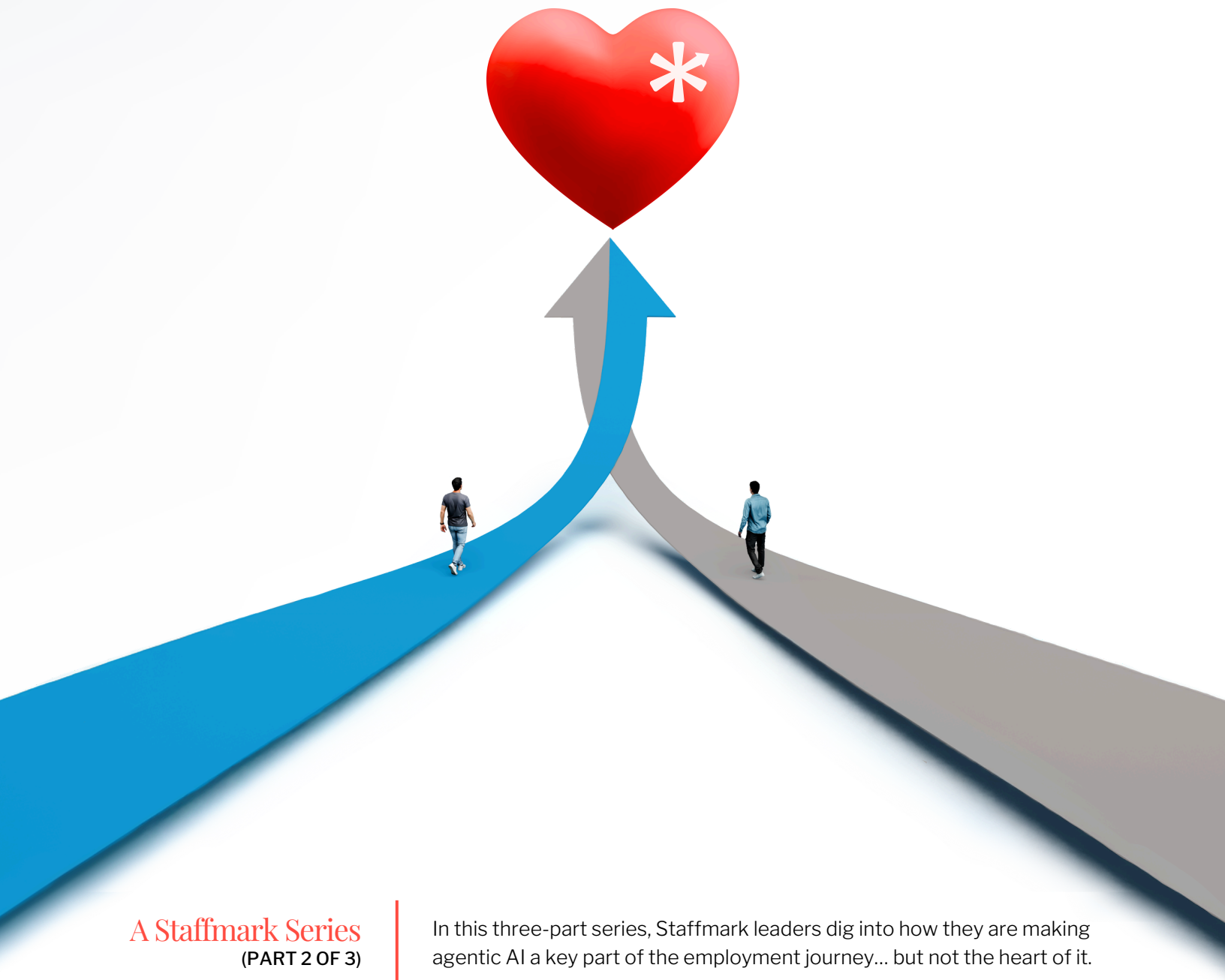


Finding **Heart** in the Agentic Era

TWO AI AGENTS, ONE HIRING JOURNEY

By Stacey Lane, CEO, and Radi Jaarsma, VP of Digital Strategy and Transformation
- Staffmark Group



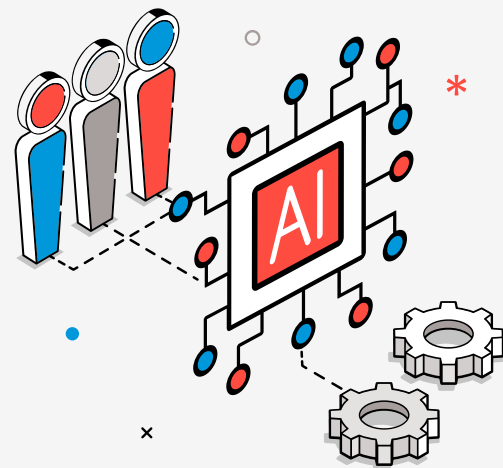
A Staffmark Series
(PART 2 OF 3)

In this three-part series, Staffmark leaders dig into how they are making agentic AI a key part of the employment journey... but not the heart of it.

Remove. Create. **Orchestrate.**

Agentic AI is often described as autonomous systems that can act, decide, and collaborate within workflows. At Staffmark, we take a more grounded view. Agents are micro-automations. They are not synthetic humans. They are not robots doing jobs that once belonged to people. And they are not replacements for judgment, empathy, or accountability.

Micro-automations are purpose-built AI capabilities designed to remove friction from work, orchestrate complex workflows, and create better starting points for human engagement. This distinction matters because it changes the question from “What can AI do?” to something more responsible: What should AI do, and what should remain human?



Two Categories of AI Agents at Work

At Staffmark, we see two categories of agents successfully supporting the talent journey and workforce management.



Category 1:

Quiet, Background Agents

Quiet agents operate behind the scenes, organizing data, coordinating workflows, and managing repetitive tasks at scale. Their role is to reduce manual effort and improve consistency. Examples include:



Talent profile intelligence:
Keeping availability, preferences, certifications, and work history current.



Compliance and credential risk monitoring:
Monitoring expirations, predicting compliance gaps, prompting renewals, and flagging exceptions before they impact fulfilment.



Intelligent matching and scheduling:
Ranking qualified, available workers based on skills, experience, performance, and fit.

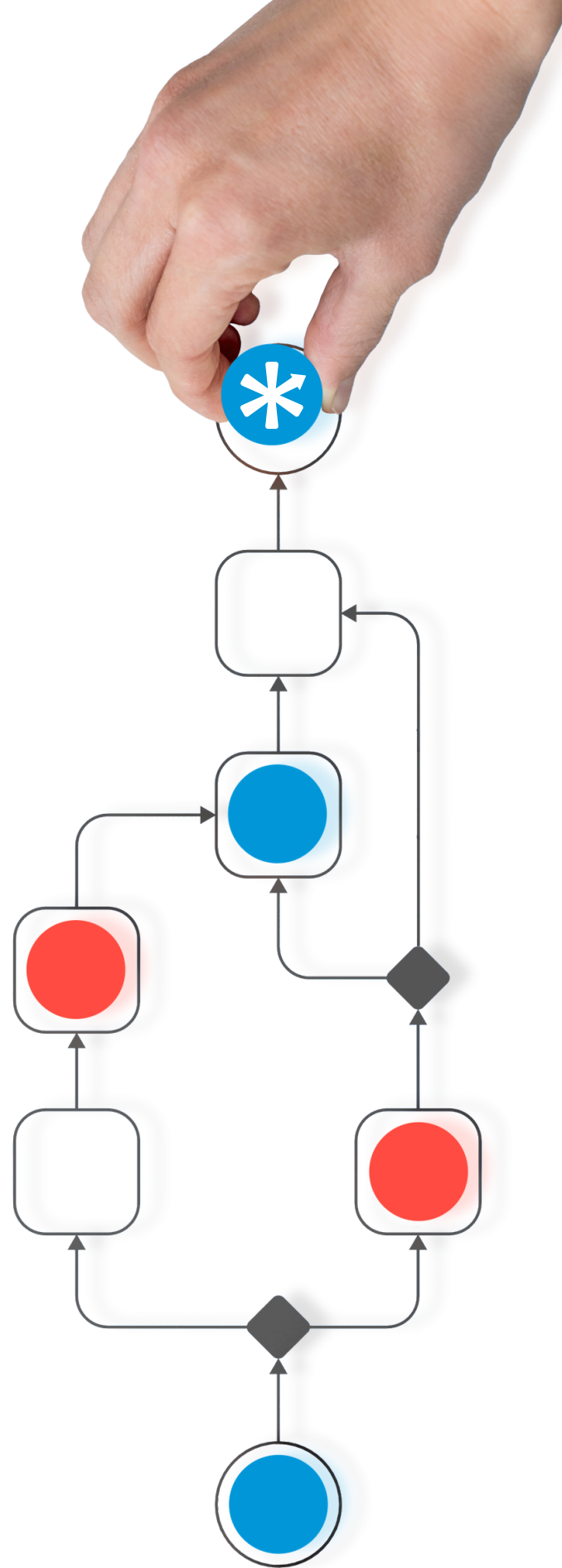


Onboarding workflow orchestration:
Tracking forms, screenings, and background checks while predicting drop-off risk.



Workforce reliability signaling:
Surfacing patterns like declining engagement, repeated no-shows, or early attrition.

Quiet agents do not replace people. They prepare people so they can focus on what people do best: building relationships, making strategic connections, and providing sound judgement.



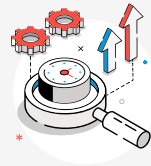


Category 2:

Conversational Agents

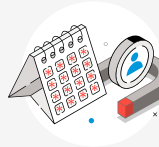
Conversational agents interact directly with job seekers and employers. They carry brand voice, shape experience, and must include clear escalation paths to human teams.

Examples include:



24/7 engagement:

Handling after-hours inquiries, confirming interest, capturing availability, and ensuring no inbound demand goes unanswered.



Screening and qualification:

Confirming role requirements, interest, and availability before scheduling the next step: a person-to-person interview.



Onboarding support:

Guiding next steps and forms while routing complex issues to human teams.



Client support:

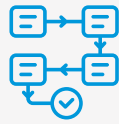
Managing routine requests while escalating relationship-sensitive issues to account teams.

Conversational agents create immediacy and clarity, but they must be designed carefully. **The moment a candidate feels trapped in automation, trust disappears.**

LESSONS IN AI AGENT BUILDING FOR EMPLOYERS



Define what AI should do and what needs to stay human.



Build the agent layers that fit your business, from behind-the-scenes support to candidate-facing experiences.



Make data integrity the engine of AI.



Design escape hatches to real people when agents are not enough.

No Matter the Agents, **Values Must Lead**

In the end, defining and assigning agents is not just a technical exercise. It is a values-driven one. Background agents protect accuracy and consistency. Conversational agents protect experience and trust. Together, they ensure automation strengthens human work rather than displacing it.

Be sure to check out Part 3 of this series in which we share more AI best practices including how we test agentic AI in real environments to ensure our principles and commitment to heart-centric hiring endure.

Explore **AI + Heart at Staffmark**

Staffmark combines agentic AI with experienced recruiters to deliver faster hiring, stronger retention, increased capacity, and measurable workforce performance. To learn how we're doing it while remaining the heart between people and jobs, visit www.staffmark.com or reach out to our team directly.