



• ARCHITECTURE NOTES · RESOURCE

Seven n8n workflows every agency should run

A ranked build order companion. The seven workflows that compound at five clients and beyond, with build cost and payback windows quoted from the article.

Companion to: [Seven n8n workflows every agency should run before the next hire.](#)

Five clients is the breakpoint where coordination starts eating opera

Status updates, brief routing, asset shuttling, retro reports, invoice nudges. The first hire most agencies make at this stage is a project coordinator. The second-best move, per the article, is to build seven workflows in n8n first and find that the coordinator hire can wait six months. This deck is the working build order. Use it to plan an engineer-week of n8n work and decide what to leave for the next quarter.

- For agency partners and ops leads at five clients and above, planning the next hire.
- Each workflow is ranked by payback window, with build cost in days from the article.
- Workflows replace coordination work, not creative work. The boundary is load-bearing.
- Total build cost across all seven is roughly one engineer-week if you have someone fluent in n8n.



The seven workflows, ranked by payback

01 1. Inbound brief router

A form on the agency site lands the brief in n8n, gets routed by service line and engagement size, and lands in the right specialist queue with relevant context attached. Replaces the "let me forward that to the right person" Slack thread that loses an hour a week.

02 2. Weekly retro auto-draft

Friday afternoon, a workflow pulls last week shipped work from the project tool, recent client messages from the inbox, and ops board state. Drafts a six-section retro post (Shipped, Broke, Numbers, Learned, Ahead, Ask) into a doc the team edits before the cadence ships.

03 3. Client asset chase

Tracks what was requested, what arrived, what is overdue, and sends a context-aware nudge twice a week until the asset lands. Replaces the manual "did you ever send..." thread that every project carries.

04 4. Invoice nudger

Reads paid and unpaid status from the accounting tool. Polite reminder at +7 days overdue. Firmer one at +14. Pings the partner at +21. Per the article, cuts mean days-to-pay across the book by a third inside a quarter.

05 5. Talent inbound triage

Inbound applications get parsed for years experience, stack, location, salary expectation, tagged, and routed to the right loop. Matches land in front of the partner. The rest get an honest "we are not hiring for this right now" reply that maintains the relationship.

06 6. Lead-call follow-up

After every fit call, the workflow reads the call transcript, drafts a tailored follow-up email that quotes back the prospect actual situation, and queues it for the partner to send. Lifts reply rate against a generic "great chatting today" follow-up by a measurable margin.

The boundary that decides whether a workflow earns its keep

Coordination work workflows can absorb

- Routing inbound briefs to the right specialist queue.
- Pulling shipped work, messages, and ops state into a retro draft.
- Tracking what assets the client owes and nudging on cadence.
- Reading invoice status and sending tiered reminders.
- Parsing structured signals from inbound applications.

Creative work workflows should not own

- Drafting voice-bearing copy without a written voice spec.
- Owning the final retro narrative without operator edits.
- Sending follow-up emails that have not been queued for the partner.
- Replacing the partner judgment on which inbound applications matter.
- Publishing the public status post without a human edit pass.

Build cost and payback windows, quoted from the article



INBOUND BRIEF ROUTER

Half a day

Pays back inside the first week, per the article.

CLIENT ASSET CHASE

Half a day

Pays back inside the first month, measurably, per the article.

INVOICE NUDGER

1 day

Cuts mean days-to-pay by a third inside a quarter, per the article.

TOTAL BUILD COST

~1 engineer-week

Across all seven, with someone fluent in n8n. Below this fluency threshold the exercise does not



The build order, with a one-line guidance for each

- **Build the inbound brief router first.**
Half a day. Pays back inside the first week. Removes a recurring Slack thread immediately.
- **Ship the client asset chase second.**
Half a day. Recovers operator hours that were spent on "did you ever send..." threads.
- **Wire the invoice nudger before quarter close.**
One day. The cash impact is the most direct on the list.
- **Schedule the weekly retro auto-draft for Friday afternoon.**
One day. Pays back at month two when the cadence stops slipping for the first time.
- **Add the talent inbound triage when the careers page goes live.**
One day. Goodwill compounds even when no role is open.
- **Layer the lead-call follow-up after the next fit-call cycle.**
One day. Pays back inside the first quarter on reply rate.
- **Ship the status post auto-draft last.**
One day. The cadence holds for a full quarter once the draft is in front of the operator on schedule.



Anti-patterns to avoid when building the seven

What goes wrong

- Building a workflow that drafts creative content without a voice spec.
- Treating the workflows as set-and-forget after the first week.
- Routing the inbound brief without attaching the relevant context.
- Sending the invoice nudge without the partner ping at +21 days.
- Hiring the project coordinator before the first three workflows ship.

What works instead

- Build with the coordination-versus-creative boundary clear.
- Plan a quarterly review of every workflow against its payback claim.
- Attach service line, engagement size, and prior context to every routed brief.
- Hold the +7 / +14 / +21 escalation as a written contract, not a feeling.
- Build the seven first. Reassess the coordinator hire six months later.



Signals to watch once the seven are running

OPERATOR HOURS RECOVERED WEEKLY MEAN DAYS-TO-PAY

PUBLISHING CADENCE HELD

HIRE DEFERRAL WINDOW

Meaningful Down ~33% >= 1 quarter ~6 months

Track hours previously spent on routing, asset chasing, retro drafting, invoice chasing.

Article cites a one-third reduction inside a quarter from the invoice nudger alone.

The retro and status workflows pay back when the cadence holds for a full quarter without slipping.

Article frame: the coordinator hire can wait six months once the seven are live.



- NEXT STEP

Coordination work is what workflows are for

Build the seven in the order above. Hold the boundary against creative work.
Reassess the coordinator hire six months later, after the cadence has held.

[Read the full architecture note ->](#)