

A technical drawing of a gear mechanism is overlaid on a background of colorful, wavy, abstract shapes in shades of orange, red, and yellow. The drawing shows two gears connected by a shaft, with various dimensions and annotations. Dimensions include 65, 45, 160, 260, 100, 140, 35, 21.50, and 4.11. Annotations include 'ant 265', '140', '100', and '4.11'.

# My Onboarding Was Killing My Product.

**Deconstructing a 95% drop-off  
and the realization that  
“necessary friction” is a lie.**

A single message shattered our assumptions.

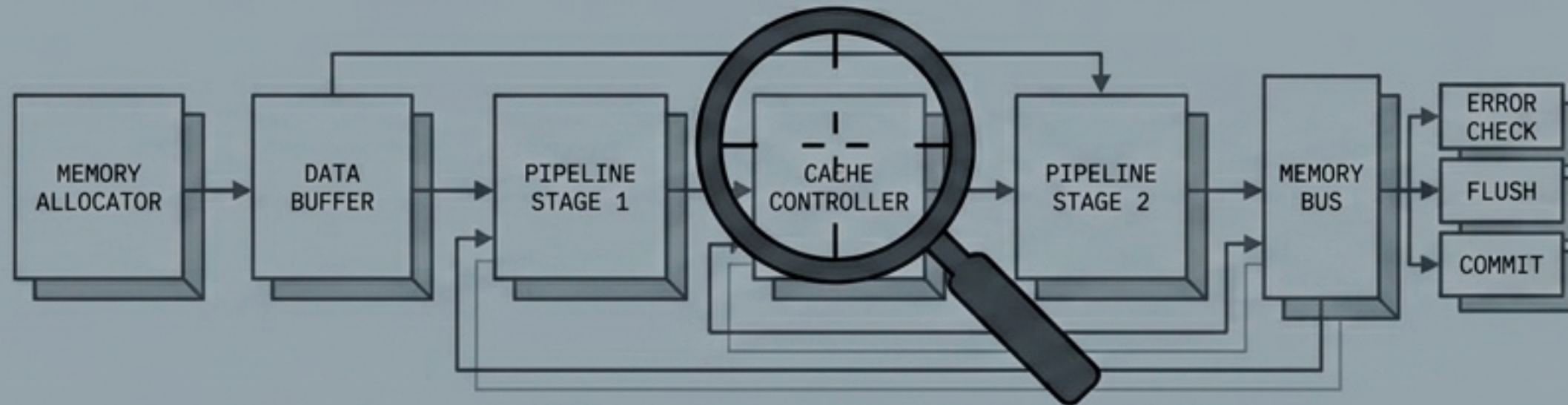
Current onboarding is too much work. I just want to start chatting right away.  
– Beta Tester

## Initial reaction

- [ ] Just another UX polish item.
- [ ] Clean up the steps.
- [ ] Add skip buttons.
- [ ] Regular iteration.

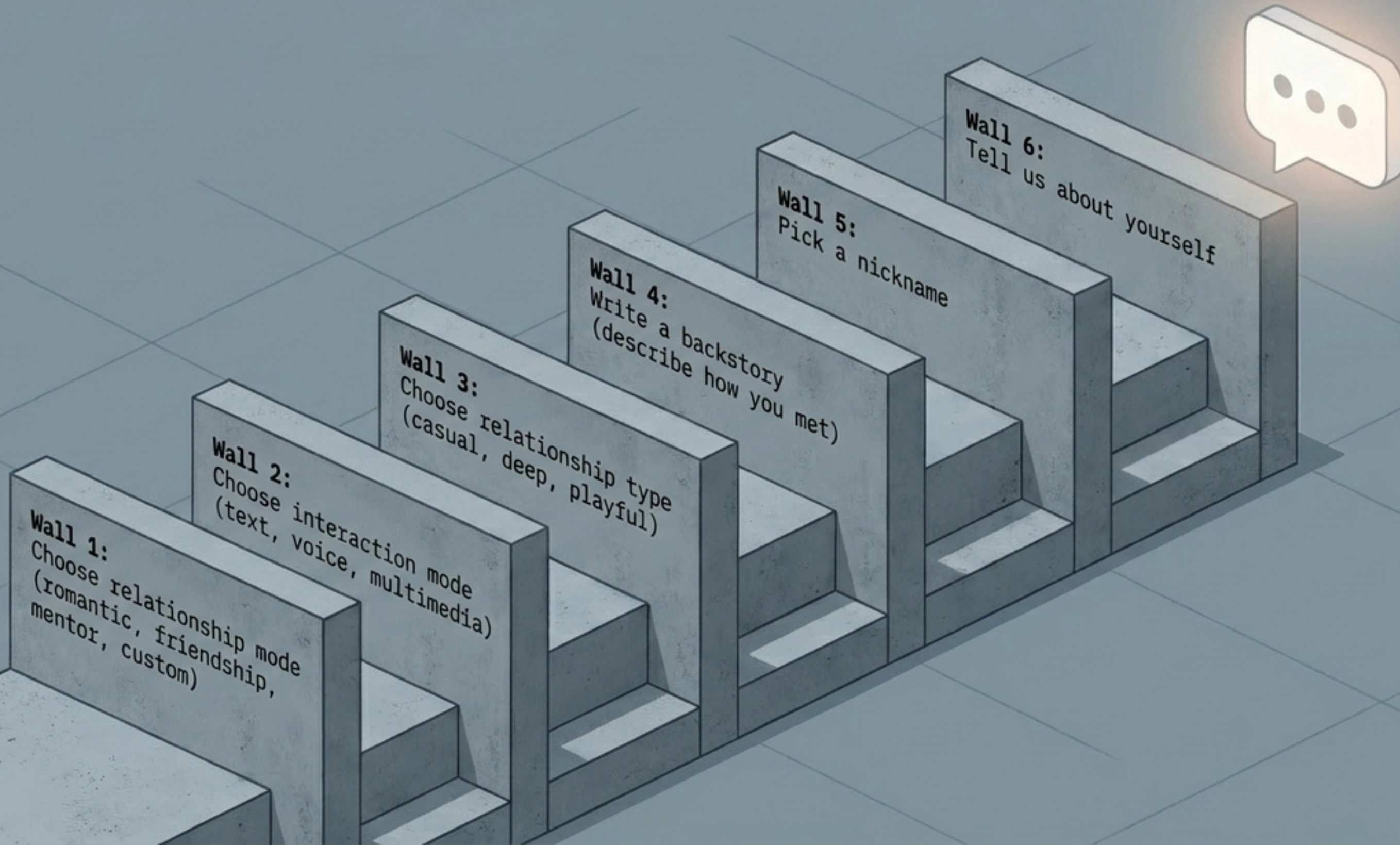
## Reality

We were already in a state of deep investigation after fixing a silent memory pipeline bug. We looked at the onboarding with fresh, skeptical eyes.



# The Funnel Nobody Survives

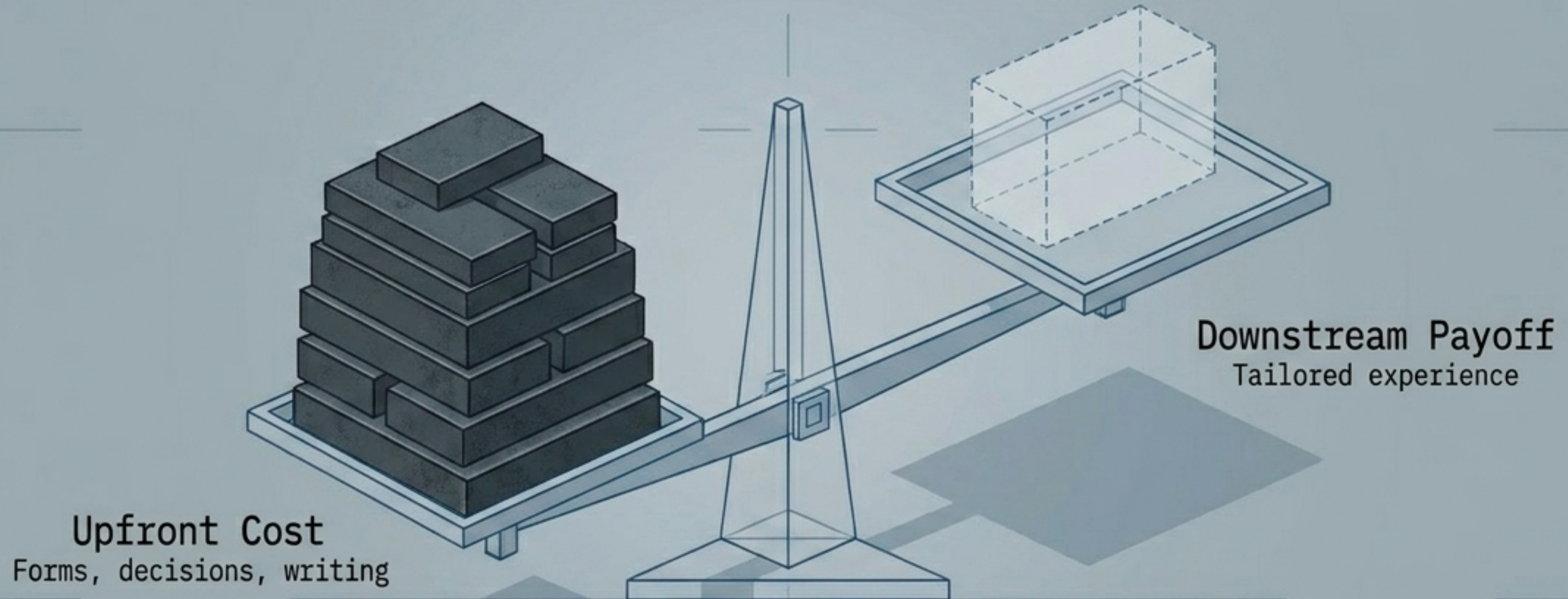
Six distinct walls standing between the user and the core experience.



# The illusion of necessary friction.

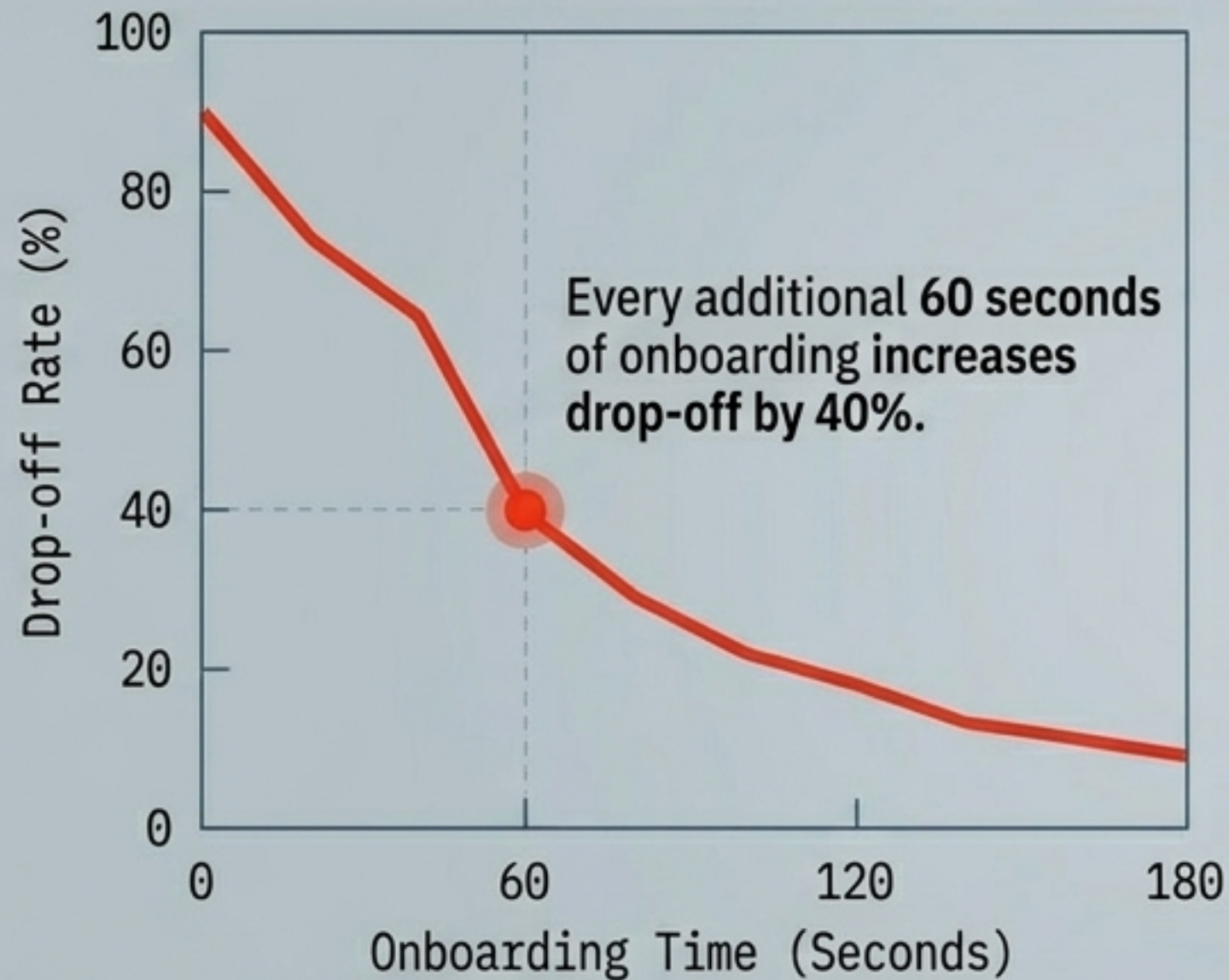
We justified the gauntlet as a necessary upfront cost-like filling out a dating profile. We believed the heavy configuration would yield a deeply tailored downstream payoff.

The problem? The payoff never arrived.



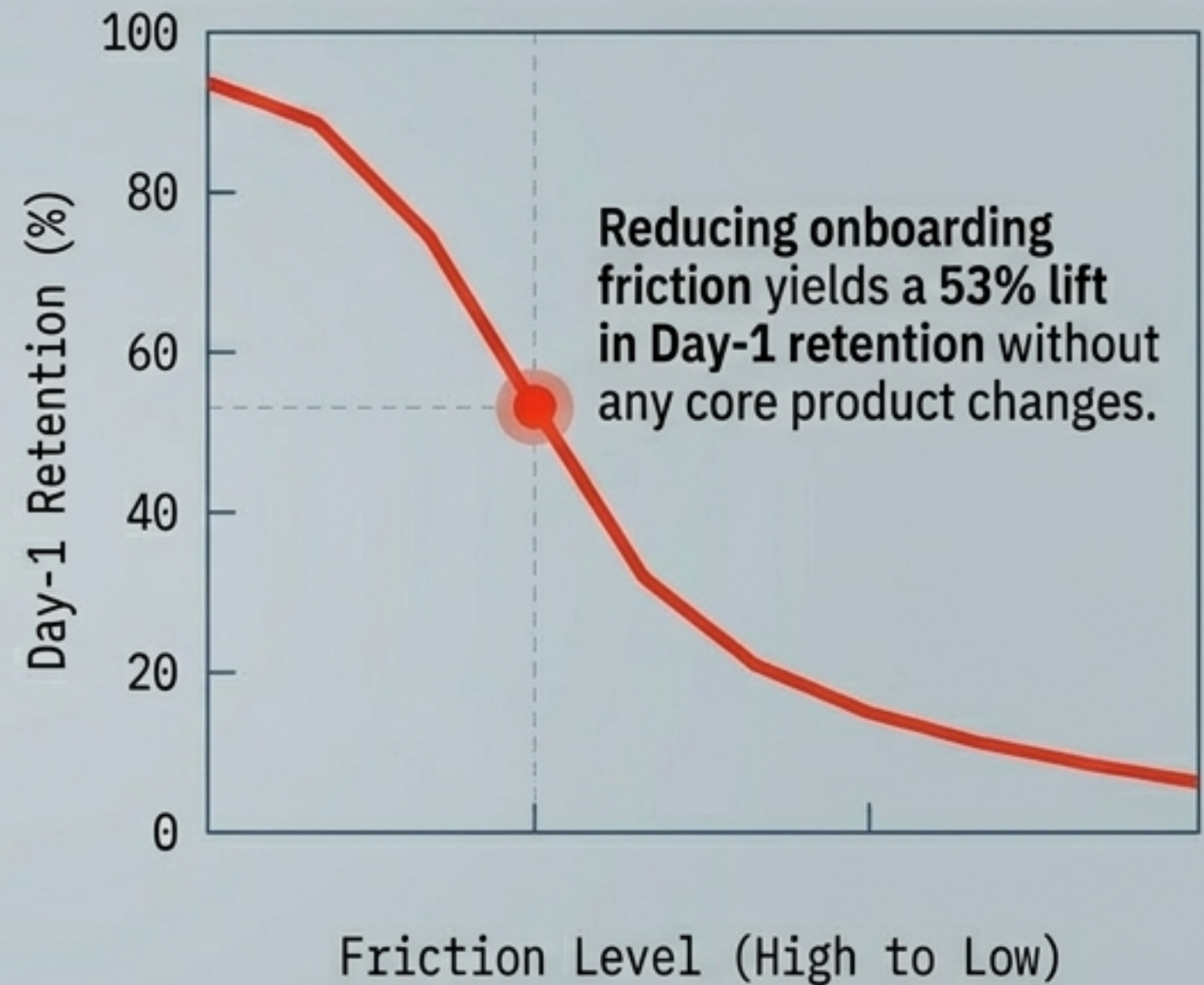
# The data on friction is damning.

## Industry Reality



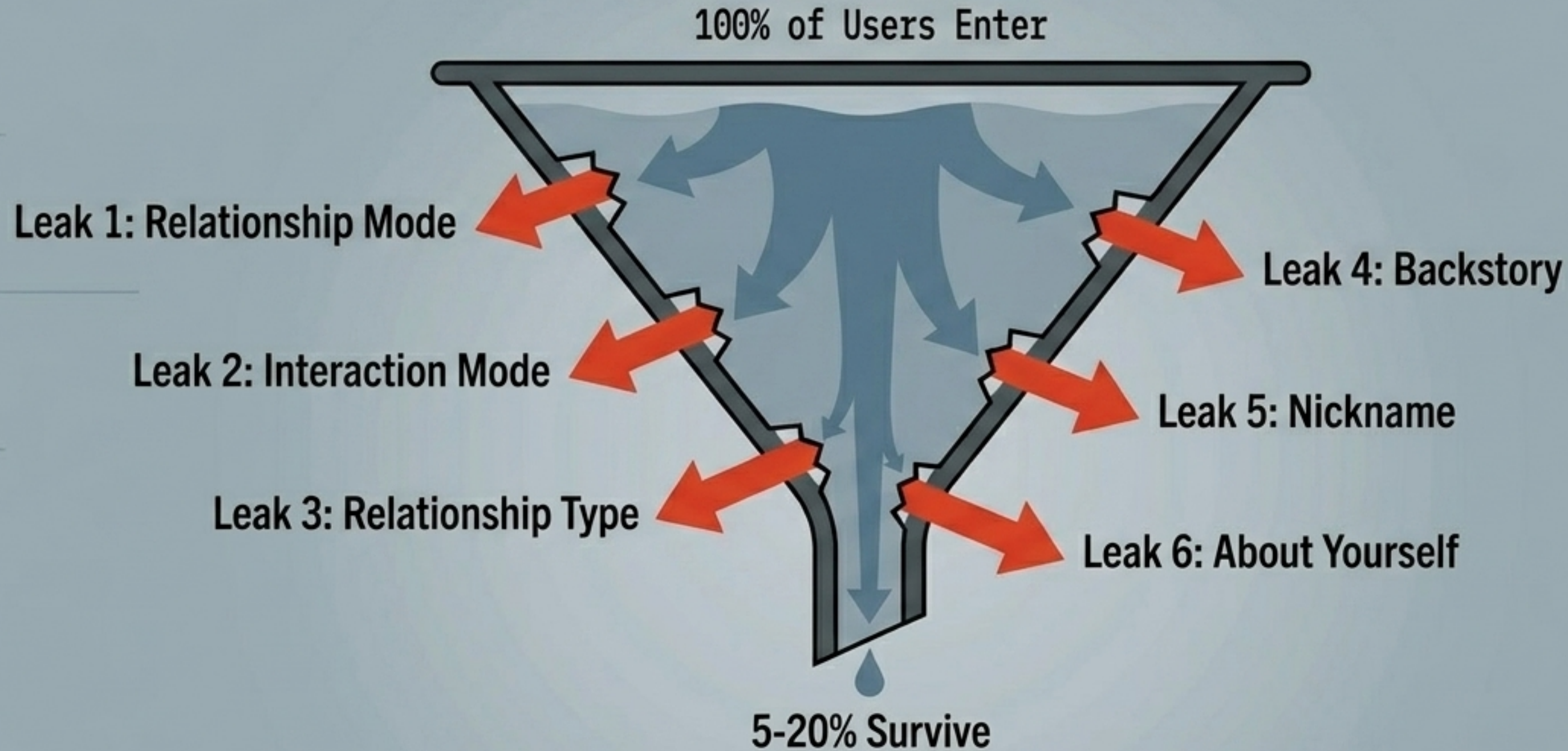
Source: Coinbase

## The Friction Penalty

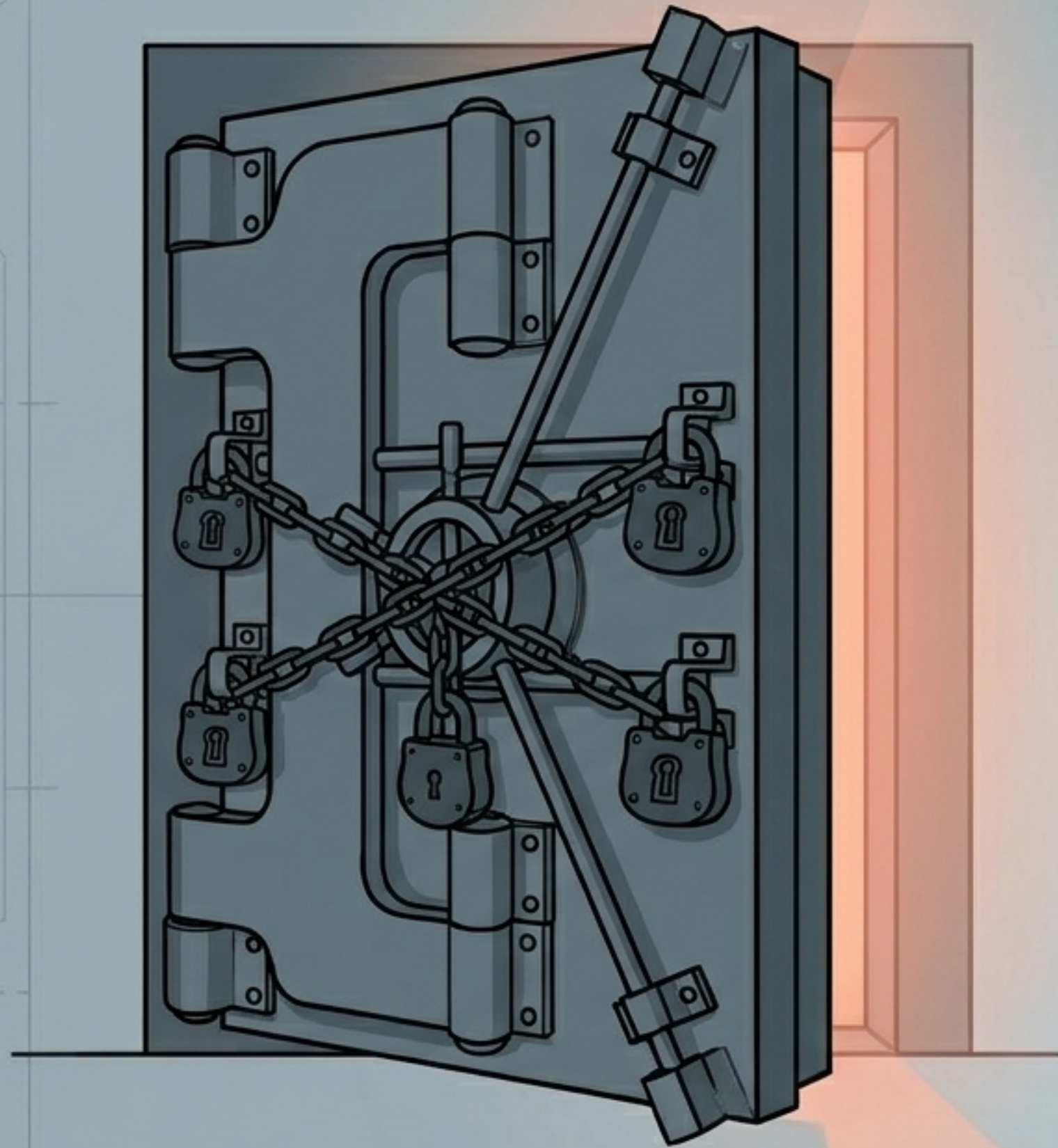


Source: Prototypr

**We were losing 80-95% of users before they sent a single message.**



Even assuming a motivated user and moderate drop-off rates, the math was devastating.



**The core value proposition was practically invisible.**

**Users were bouncing during configuration. They never experienced what they were actually configuring for—an AI companion that remembers you and builds a relationship over time.**

# The second strike hits harder.

This doesn't only apply to onboarding. **It's an overall product philosophy overhaul.**

— The same Beta Tester

# Translating UX complaints into architectural truths.

## Surface Symptoms

Too many clicks.

I need a skip button.

Onboarding is too much work.

## Root Disease

Forcing users to make decisions without context.

Asking users to do the product's job for it.

Believing users must configure an experience before they are allowed to have it.

# The entire architecture was backwards.

## Backwards User Journey Flow

Tell us about yourself so the AI can **pretend to know you**, instead of actually **getting to know you**.



Choose a mode before knowing what kind of relationship you want.



Pick an interaction style before you've interacted.



Write a backstory for someone you haven't met.



User meeting companion.

The background features a technical architectural floor plan of a room, overlaid with a 3D effect of shattered glass. The drawing includes various dimensions and labels in Cyrillic. The main title is centered over the drawing. The right side of the image is dominated by a colorful, abstract background of overlapping, rounded shapes in shades of orange, red, and purple.

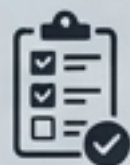
# From Fix the Funnel to Rethink the Product

Mio is not a chatbot app.  
It is a relationship simulator.  
And relationships do not start  
with configuration screens.

# Two distinct mental models for product architecture.

## Configure First

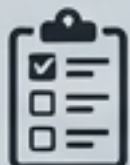
Configure first, chat later.



A customer filling out forms at a counter.



Upfront quizzes and forced decisions.



A static configuration.



Dimension:  
**Core Assumption**

Dimension:  
**User Role**

Dimension:  
**Information Gathering**

Dimension:  
**Product State**

## Everything Emerges



Everything emerges organically.



A person meeting a new friend at a gathering.



Natural conversation over time.



A dynamic relationship.

# Time-to-Value: Destroying the friction.

## The Old Way

3-5 minute delay.  
80-95% Drop-off.

6 heavy decisions. Creative writing required.

Drop-off

## The New Way

Under 30 seconds.

Tap a  
persona card.

Tap  
Let's meet.




Persona sends  
the first message.

You are  
chatting.

VALUE

# Data gathering doesn't stop. It just becomes natural.

Every piece of information previously gathered through six form steps is now gathered organically through the conversation itself, processed by the memory pipeline.

-  **The nickname?**  
The companion asks during the first chat.
-  **Communication preferences?**  
The system observes and adapts.
-  **Relationship depth?**  
It builds over time.



**Value comes first. Personalization follows naturally.**

Stop asking users to configure an experience they haven't had yet.  
Let the relationship unfold, and capture everything along the way.