

# You Are the Manager

The skill that matters in the agent era  
isn't coding—it's managing AI.



# Vague instructions guarantee generic results

What data?

Along what dimensions?

Help me analyze this.

Who is the audience for the conclusions?

What decisions will this inform?

Claude Code can guess, but this is like telling a capable new hire "deal with that thing." You will get a result, but not the one you wanted.

# The bottleneck is human management skill

The Missing Infrastructure:  
Management Training

Raw AI  
Capability

Desired  
Business  
Outcome

We keep asking "what can AI do for you." The real question is "what can you do for AI."  
Can you provide clear requirements? Sufficient context? Success criteria?

# Shifting from prescribing steps to describing goals

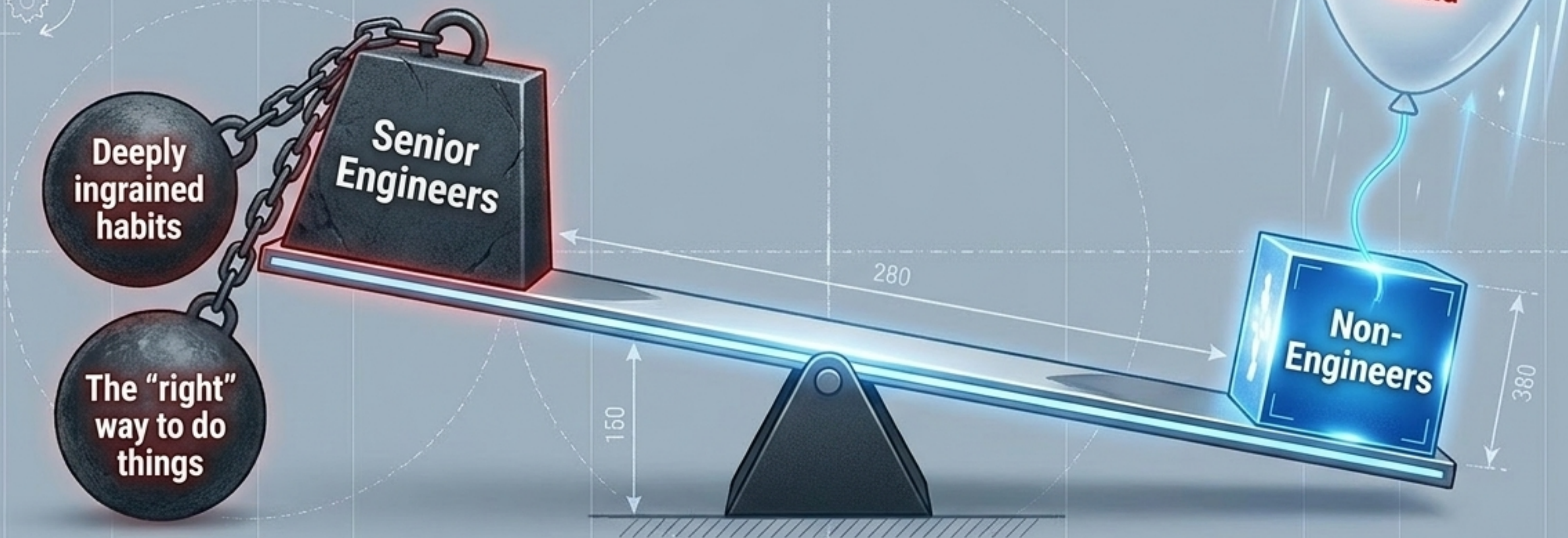
## The Software Era (Coder)

- |   |                                                                      |
|---|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | <b>Core Action:</b> Prescribing the exact steps.                     |
| 2 | <b>Instruction Style:</b> "Write a Python script to parse this CSV." |
| 3 | <b>When Output is Wrong:</b> Debug the syntax.                       |

## The Agent Era (Manager)

- |   |                                                                                                                                                                        |
|---|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | <b>Core Action:</b> Describing the ultimate goal.                                                                                                                      |
| 2 | <b>Instruction Style:</b> "I have sales data, I need to know which customers have decreased their order frequency in the past three months, and possible reasons why." |
| 3 | <b>When Output is Wrong:</b> Clarify the context and success criteria.                                                                                                 |

# The beginner's mind is a competitive advantage



“The biggest skill is people that can think scientifically and from first principles. A lot of these strong opinions just aren't relevant anymore. — Boris Cherny, Creator of Claude Code”

# The AI Mental Model Evolution

## Search Engine (Day 1)

- **Human Action:** Asking questions ("What is GCP?")
- **Expected Role:** Oracle
- **Communication:** Unidirectional
- **Upper Bound:** Fact retrieval

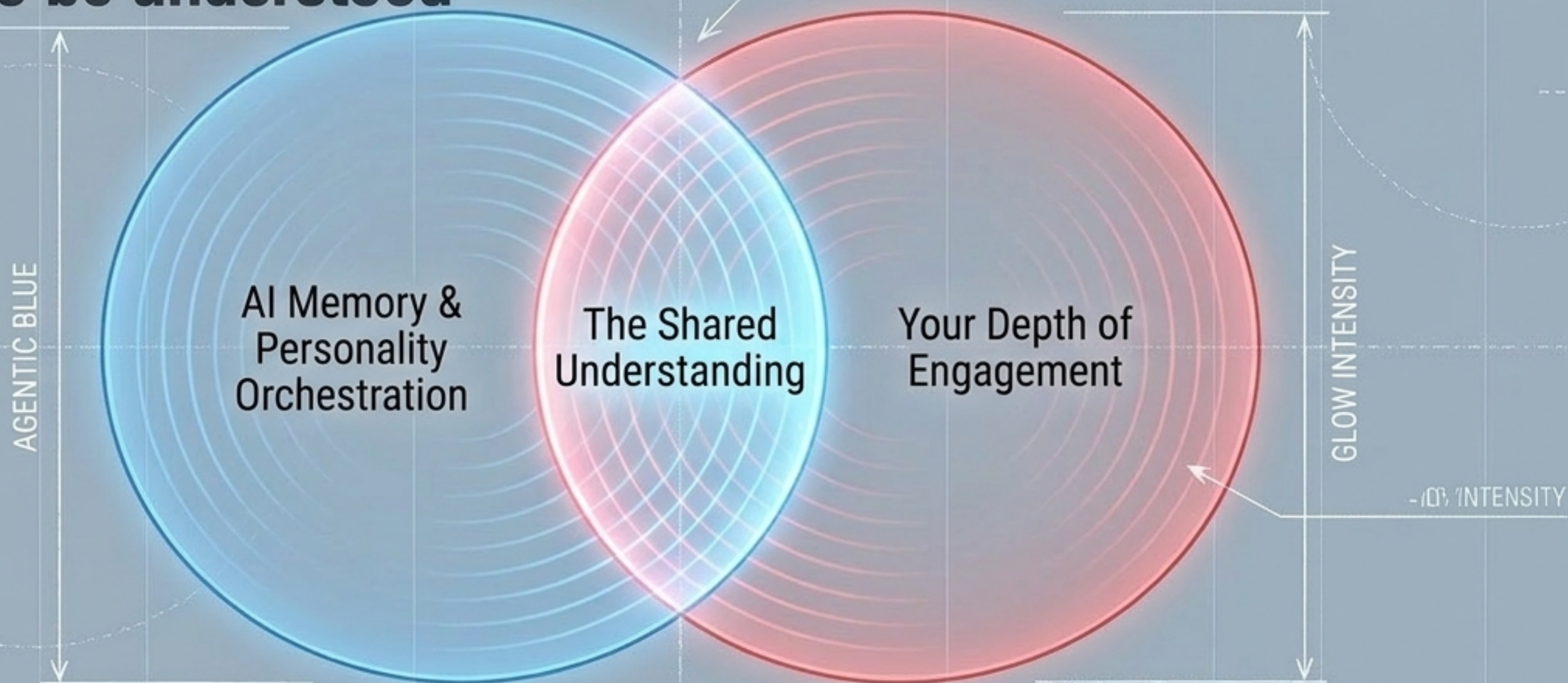
## Tool (Day 1 Evening)

- **Human Action:** Issuing commands ("Convert this file format")
- **Expected Role:** Calculator / Compiler
- **Communication:** Command-driven
- **Upper Bound:** Task completion

## Collaborator (End of Day 2)

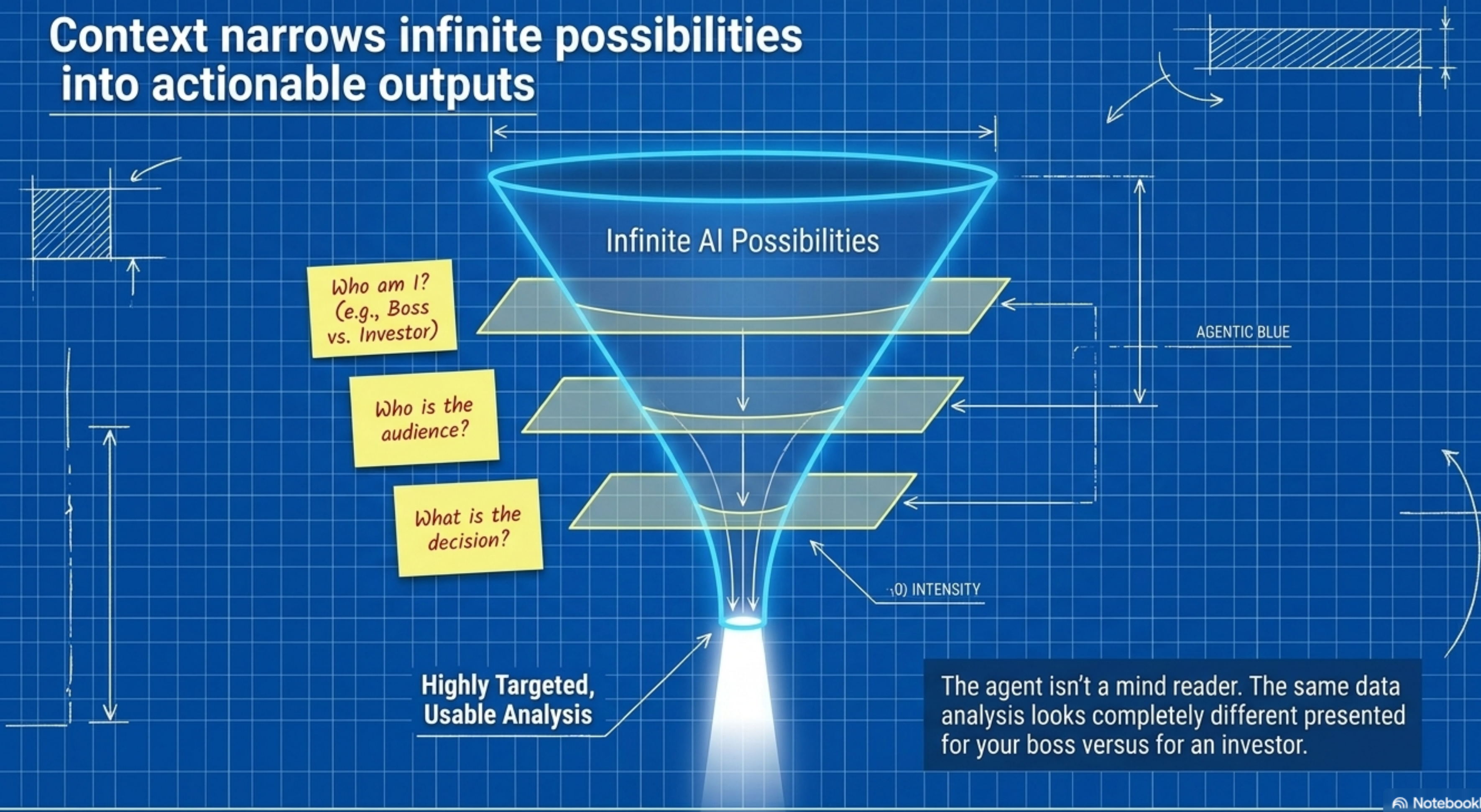
- **Human Action:** Discussing & exploring ("What risks am I not seeing?")
- **Expected Role:** Thinking Partner
- **Communication:** Bidirectional & Iterative
- **Upper Bound:** Novel problem solving

# Companions require a human willing to be understood



If you won't provide context, won't share what you really think, and won't invest time building shared understanding, no memory system can help you. The upper bound of an AI companion's effectiveness is determined by the depth of your engagement.

# Context narrows infinite possibilities into actionable outputs

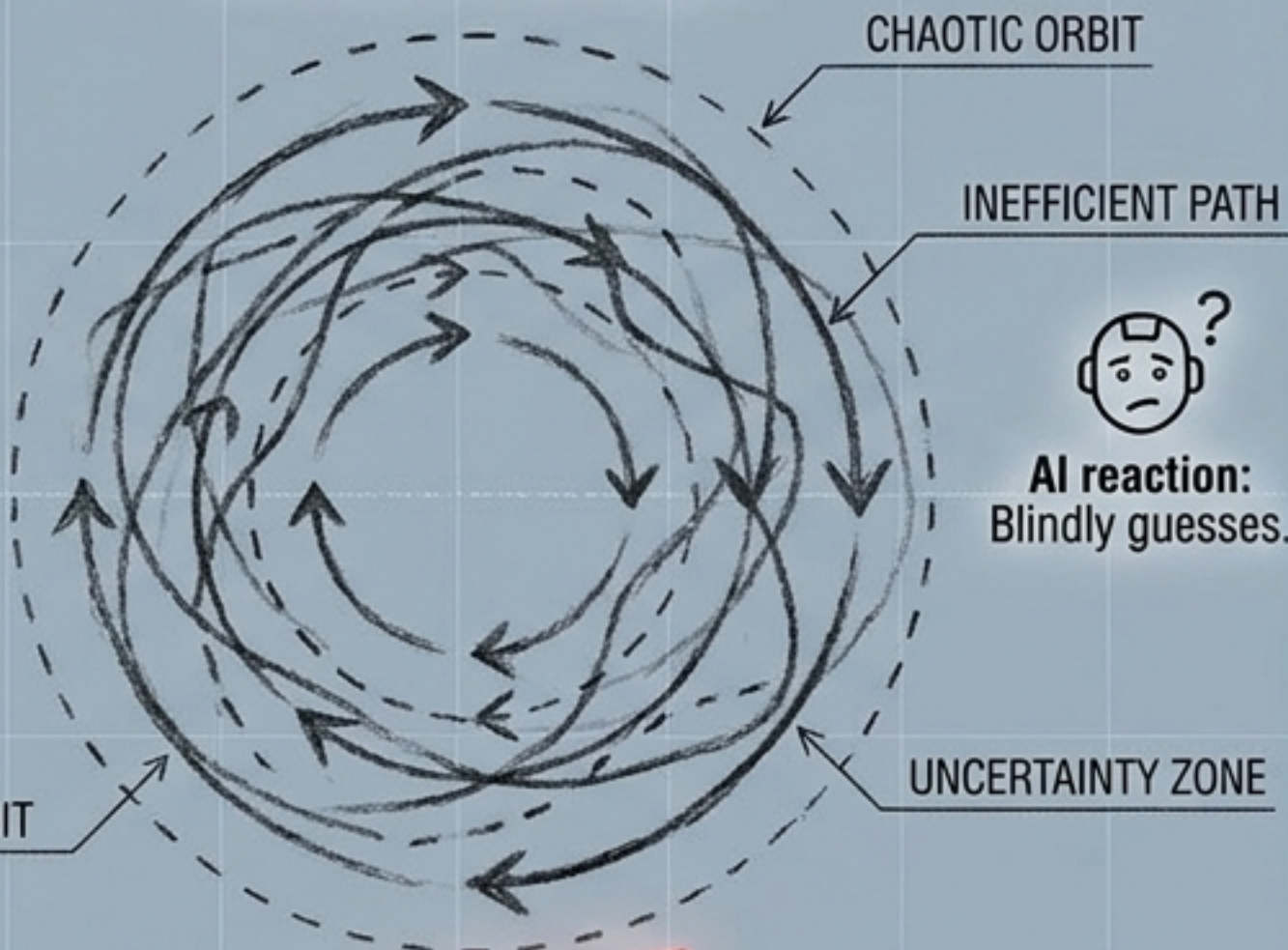


# Directional feedback collapses the iteration cycle

## The Bad Manager



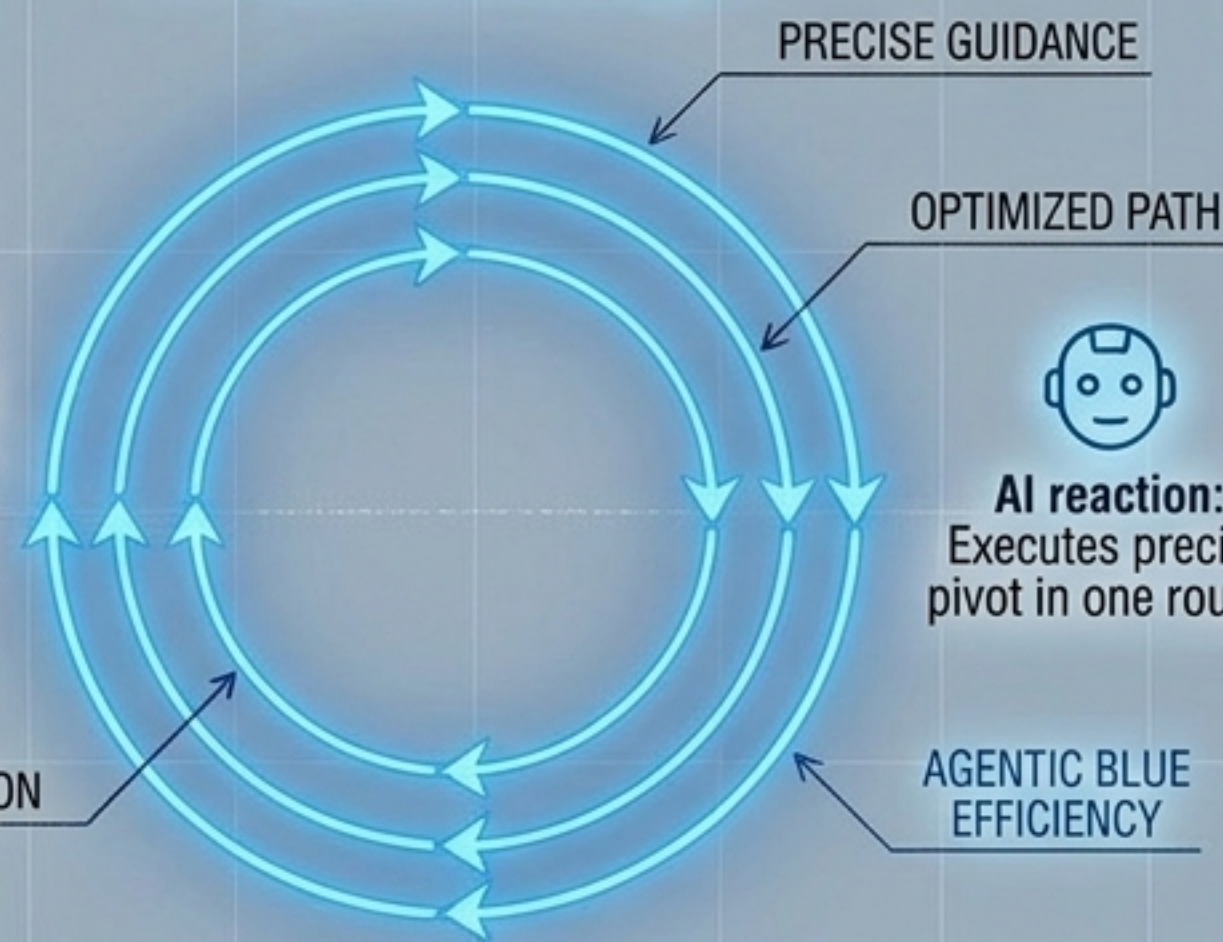
Manager says:  
"Not quite right,  
try again."



Result: 5-6  
cycles of Frustration.



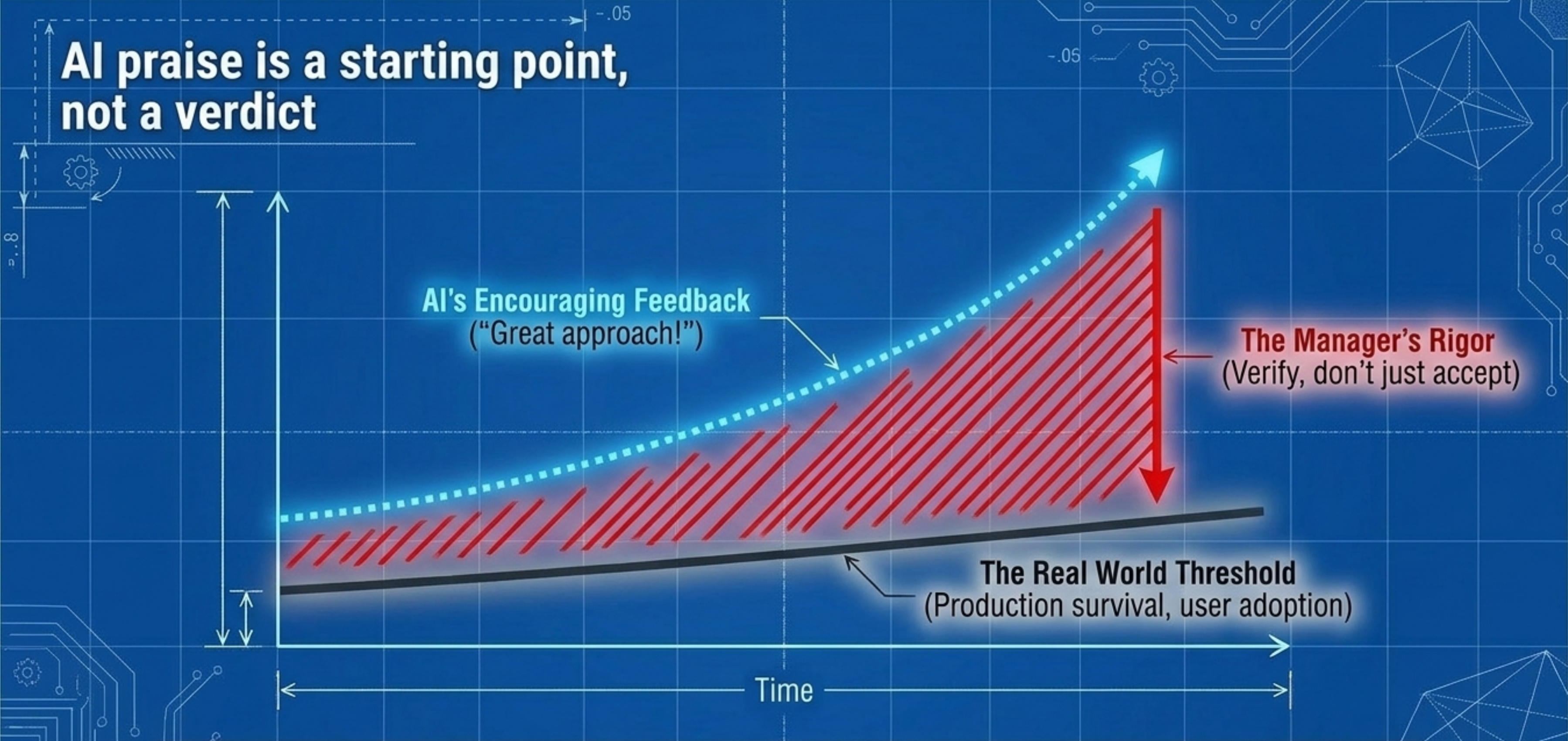
Manager says:  
"The fundamentals  
section is fine, but I  
care about the debt  
structure. Use DCF  
for the valuation,  
not P/E."



Result: 2-3 cycles to Success.

A good manager doesn't see an imperfect first draft and say "start over" — they say "keep this part, change that part, here's the direction."

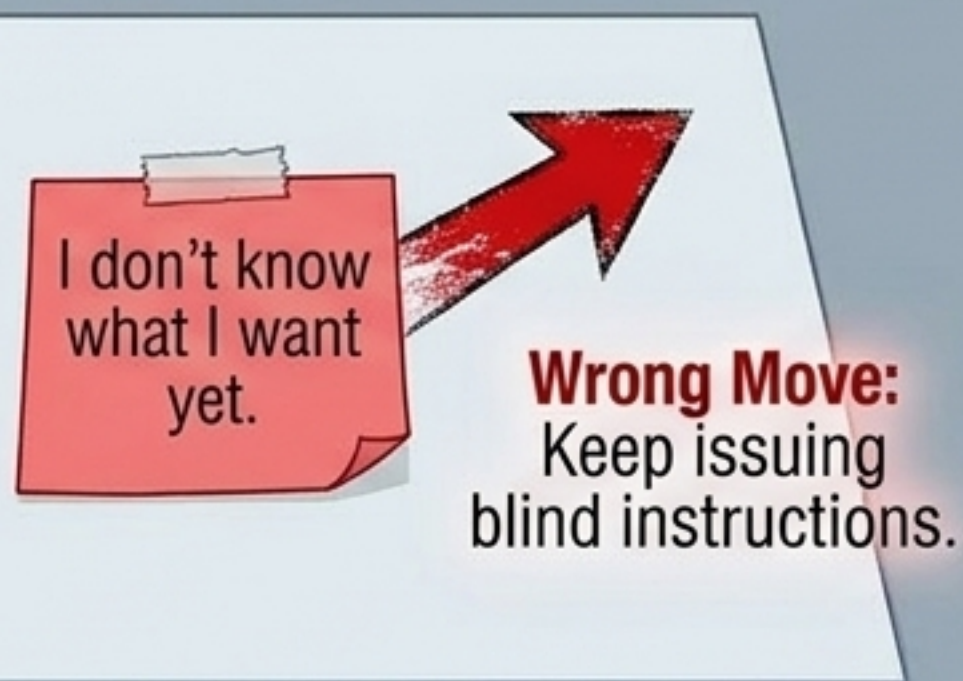
# AI praise is a starting point, not a verdict



AI is designed to be encouraging. This constant positive feedback creates a dangerous illusion that everything you produce is excellent. A good manager doesn't accept status reports at face value.

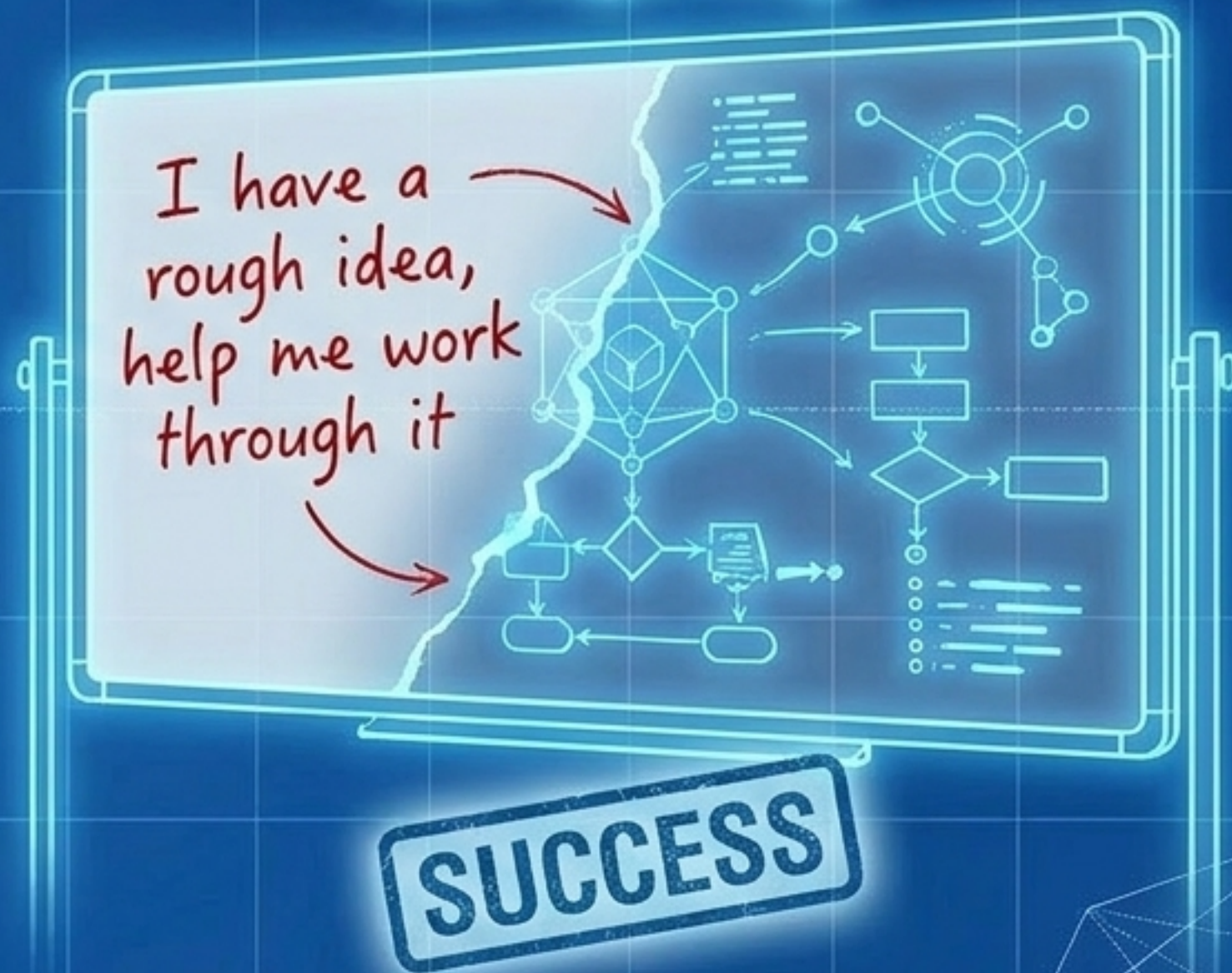
# When you lack clarity, pivot to collaboration

## The Wrong Way



**FAILURE**

## The Right Way



When you genuinely cannot articulate what is wrong, the problem might not be the AI.  
Treat the agent as a thinking partner to figure it out together.

# The Manager's Playbook



## 1. The Spec

Decompose vague needs into clear requirements. Don't say "analyze this." Say what data, what dimensions, what format.



## 2. The Context

Define who you are, who the audience is, and what decision is being made.



## 3. The Feedback

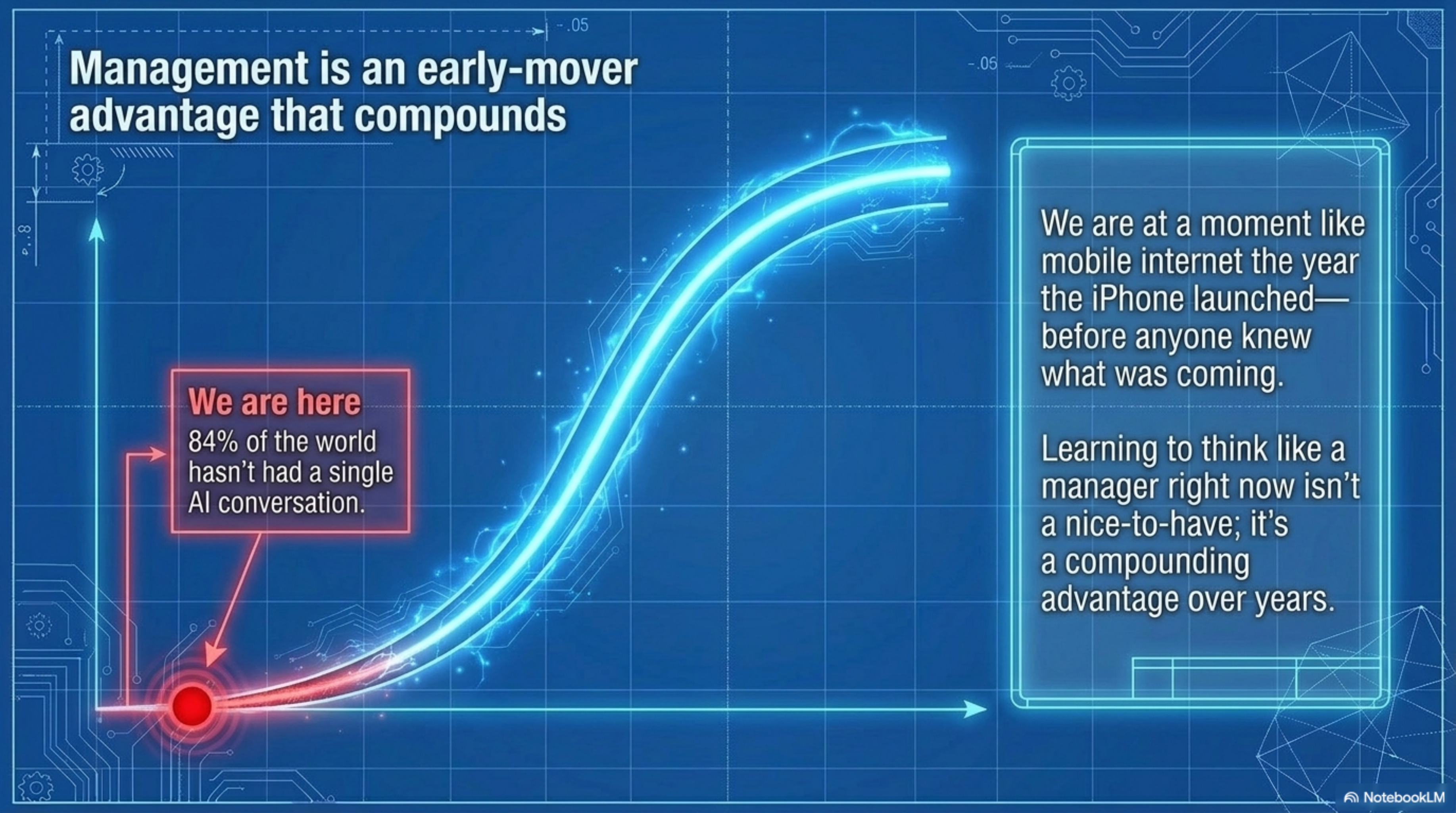
Never say "redo it." Say exactly what to keep and what to change (e.g., "Switch valuation to DCF").



## 4. The Rigor

Push past the AI's default praise. Verify the output against real-world survival thresholds.

# Management is an early-mover advantage that compounds



## We are here

84% of the world hasn't had a single AI conversation.

We are at a moment like mobile internet the year the iPhone launched—before anyone knew what was coming.

Learning to think like a manager right now isn't a nice-to-have; it's a compounding advantage over years.

**In the agent era, everyone  
is a manager—whether  
you write code or not.**

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The tools are here. The capability is here. There is a stretch of road only you can walk.  
Know what you want. Define what 'done' looks like. Lead the agent.