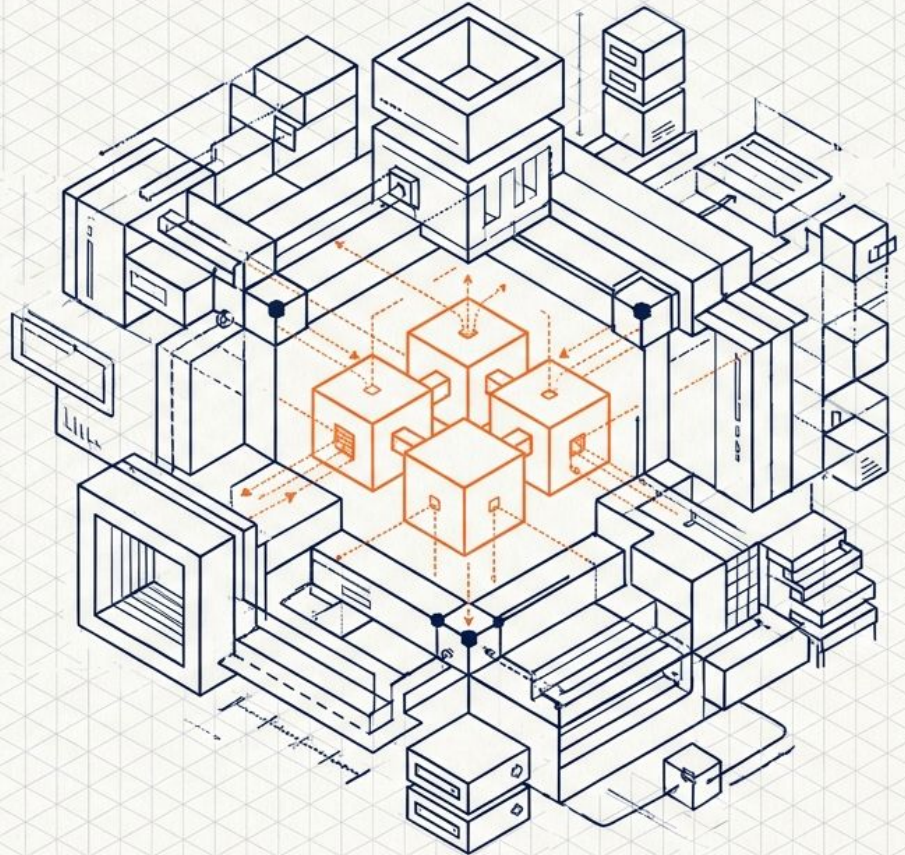


Rebuilding Work After AI Layoffs

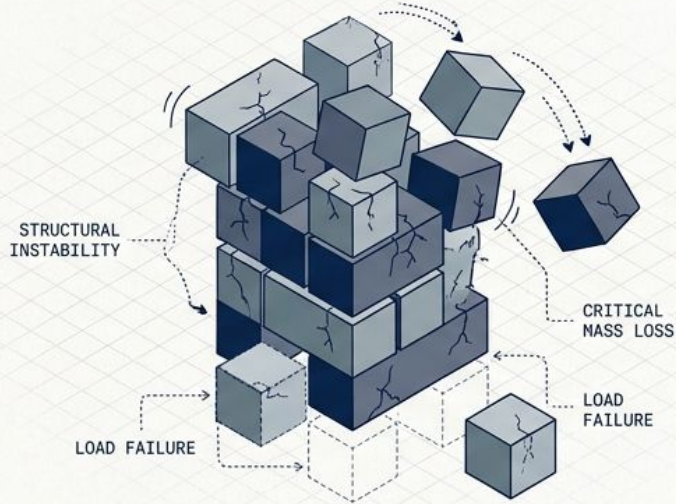
A Strategic Blueprint for
C-Suite and Operations
Leaders

From Headcount Reduction
to Workflow Redesign



A Smaller Organization Is Not a Better-Designed One

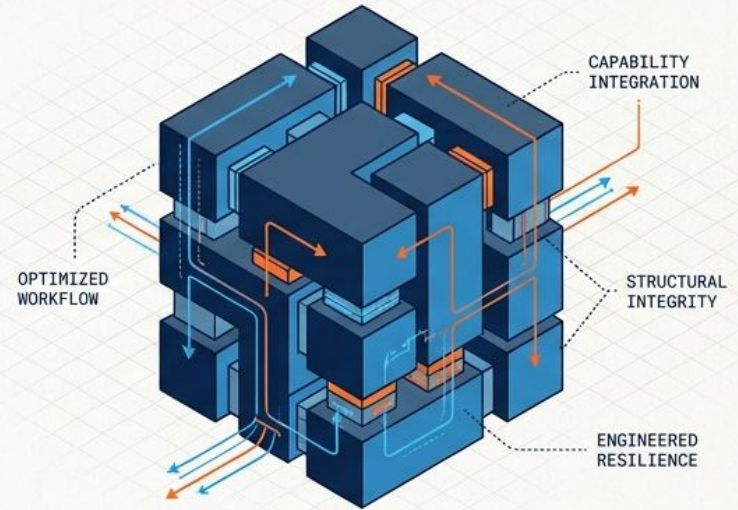
The Downsizing Illusion



Decades of downsizing research caution against treating a change in workforce size as an adequate explanation of subsequent performance (Datta et al., 2010).

The most important post-layoff question is not:
How much did we save?

The Rebuilding Thesis



The critical operational question:

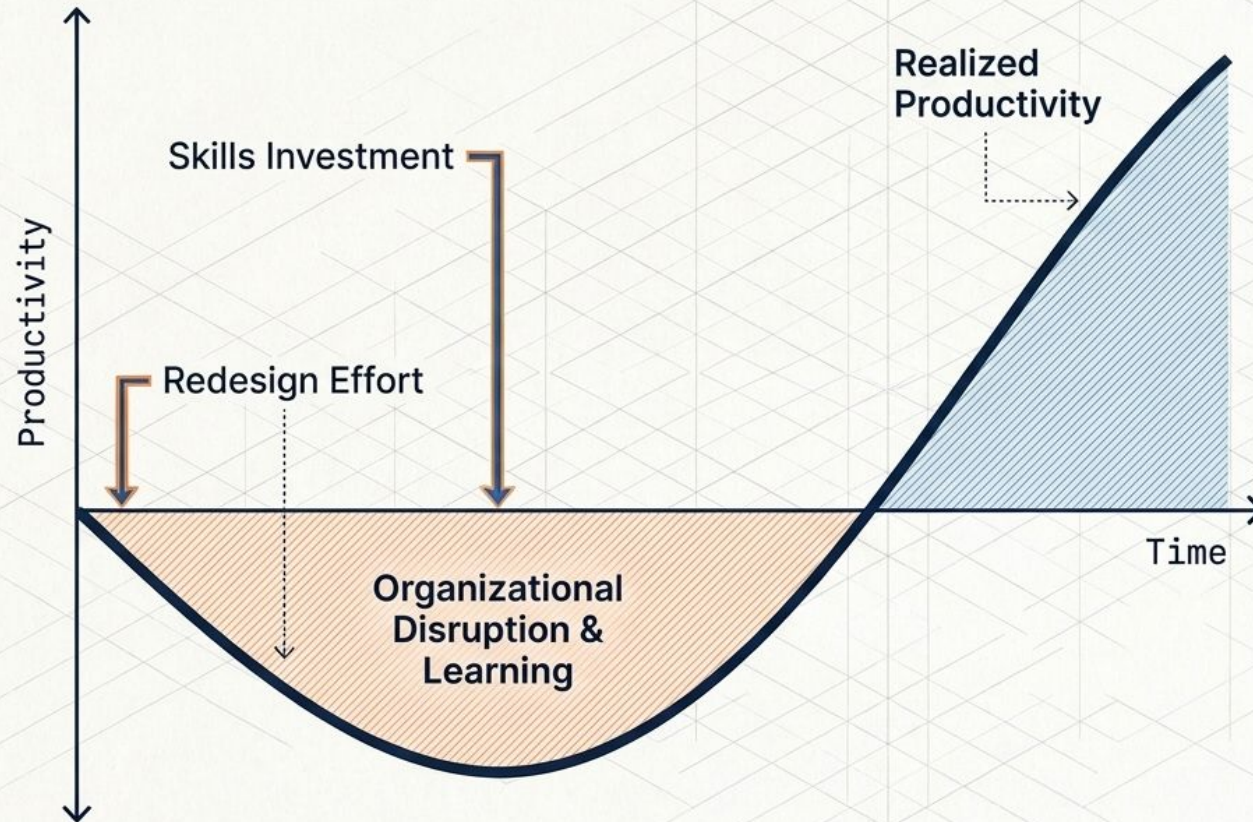
**What can this organization
now **do better**—and what has it
become less able to do?**

The Math on Paper vs. Operational Reality



Exposure is not an operating model. Rebuilding requires separating **potential time savings**, **redeployable capacity**, and **realized economic value**. Record each separately.

The AI Productivity J-Curve



Purchasing technology and realizing value are different events.

General-purpose technologies require complementary investments in processes, skills, and organizational arrangements (Brynjolfsson, Rock, & Syverson, 2021).

Investment and operational adjustment always precede visible productivity gains.

Deconstructing the Anatomy of Work

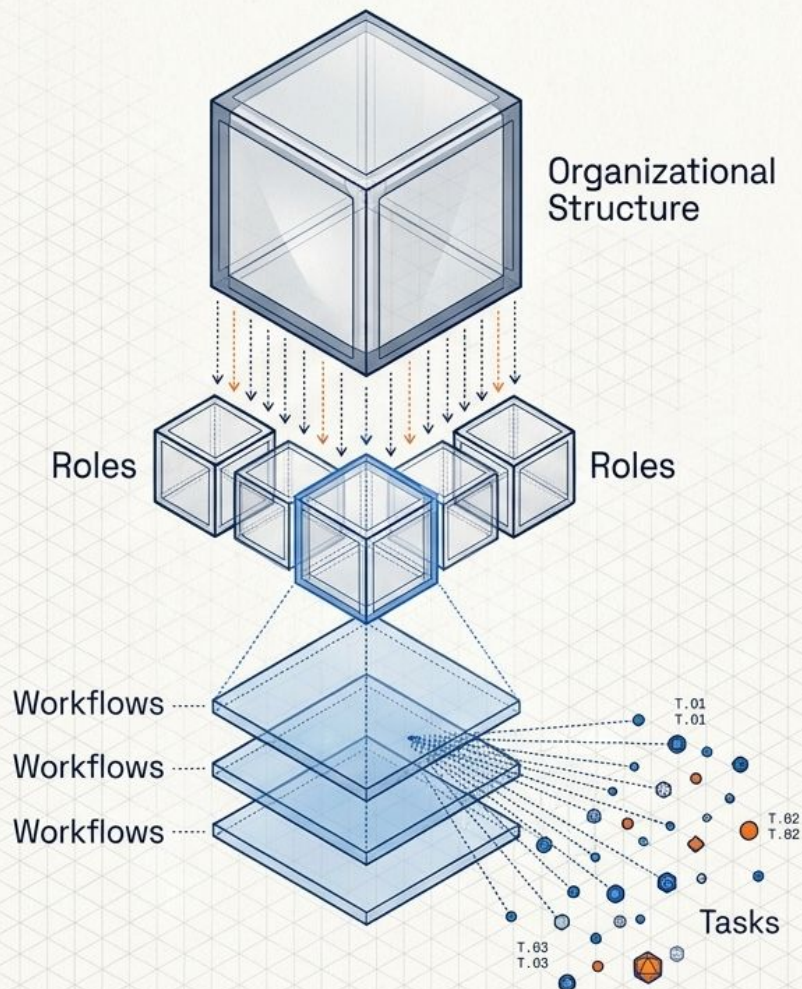
①

One in four workers globally is in an occupation with exposure to generative AI (ILO, 2025).

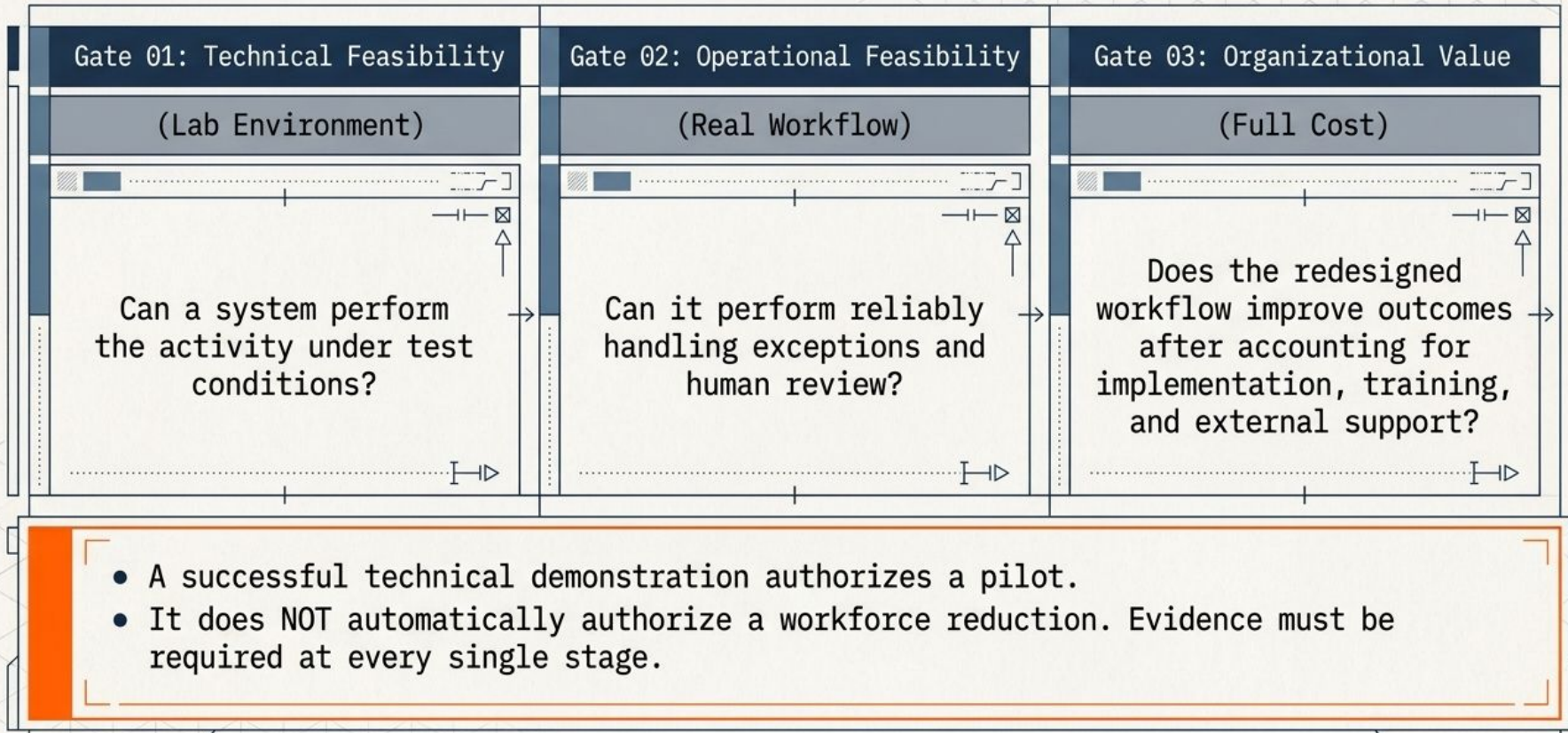
Crucial distinction: Exposure is a measure of potential technological influence, not a forecast of job losses.

Stop asking:
Can AI do this job?

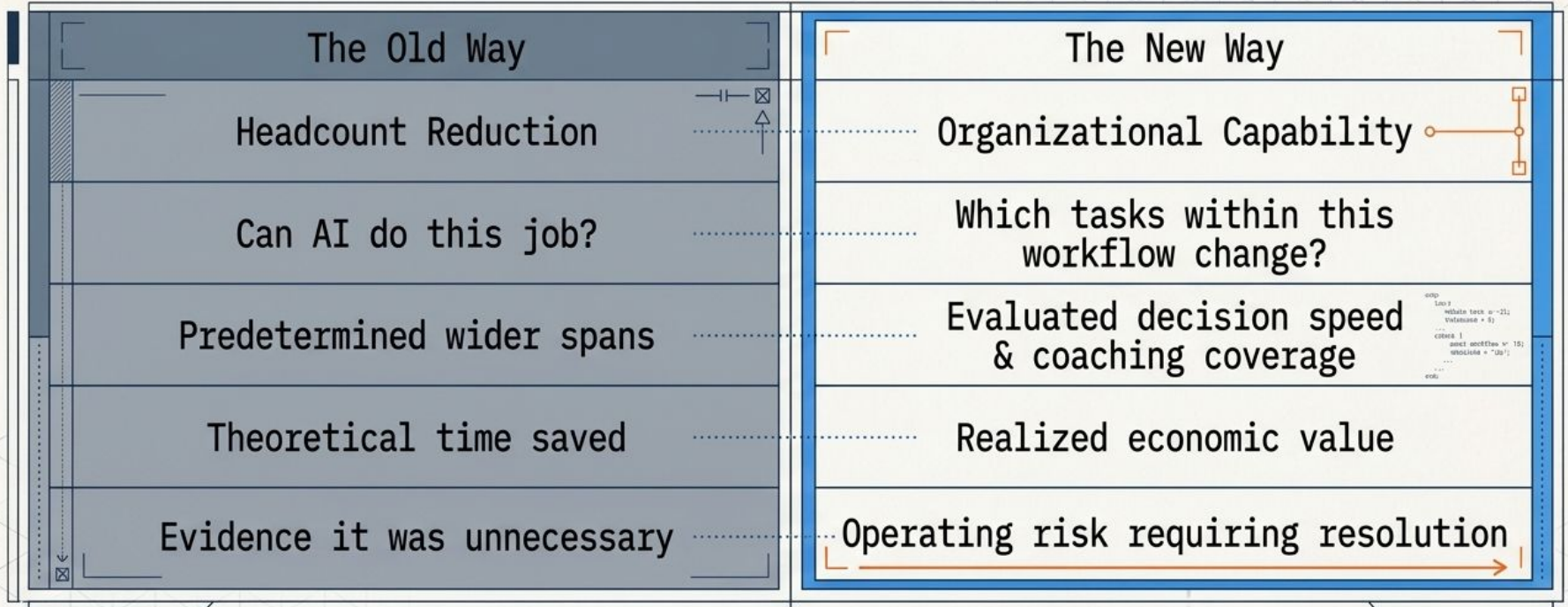
Start asking: **Which tasks change, under what conditions, with what oversight?**



The Feasibility Filter

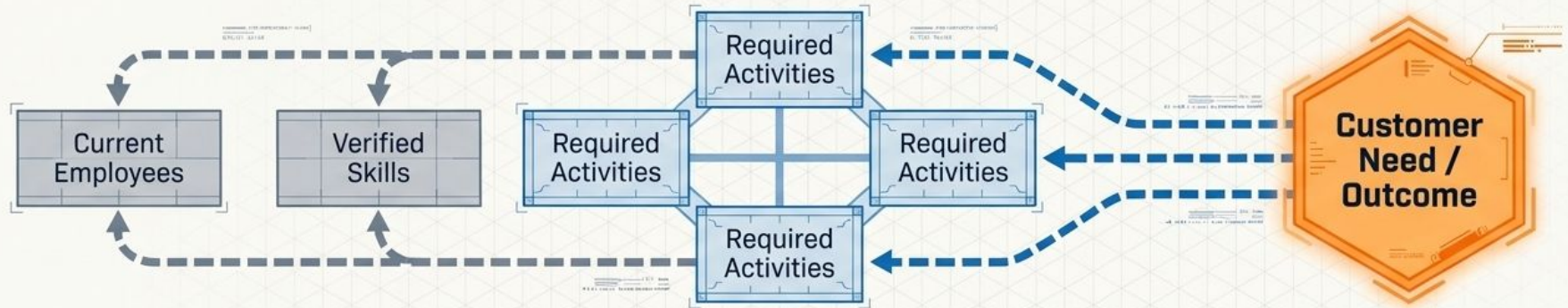


The Redesign Paradigm



The leadership standard must be more demanding than simply becoming leaner.

Step 1: Baseline Work Connected to Outcomes

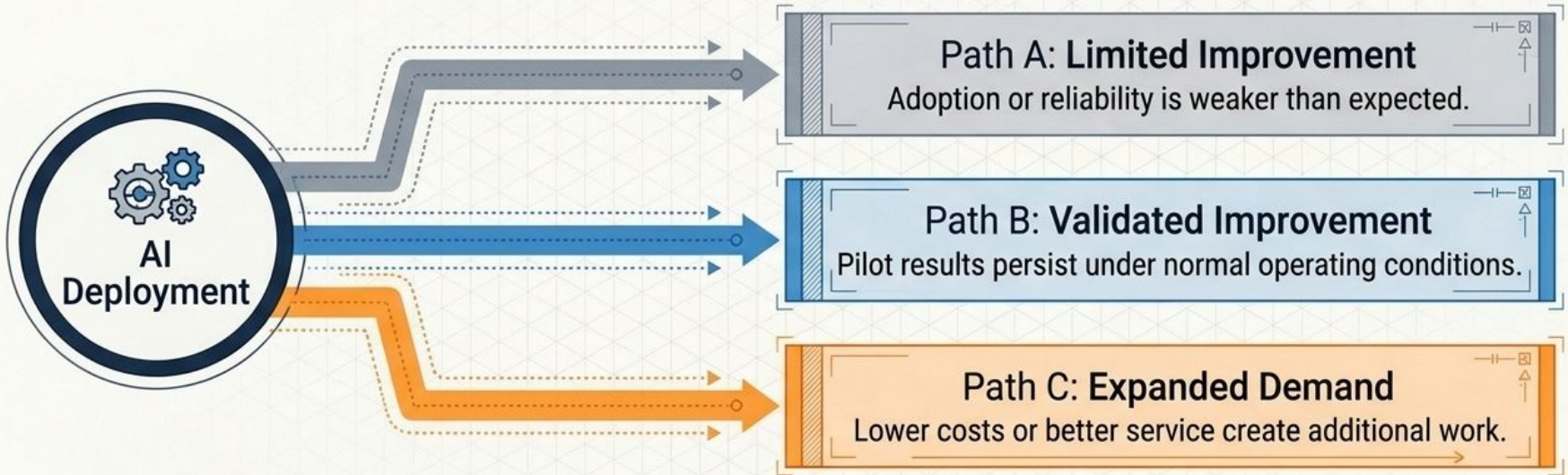


- Map intended outcomes before mapping reporting lines.
- Separate duplication from deliberate quality checks.
- Test internal movement and assignments before recreating old vacancies.

Evidence in Practice: Schneider Electric

The Open Talent Market connected 3,000 employees with internal projects and formed 4,000 mentorships in 2023. This is evidence of an organization making internal capabilities and opportunities more visible.

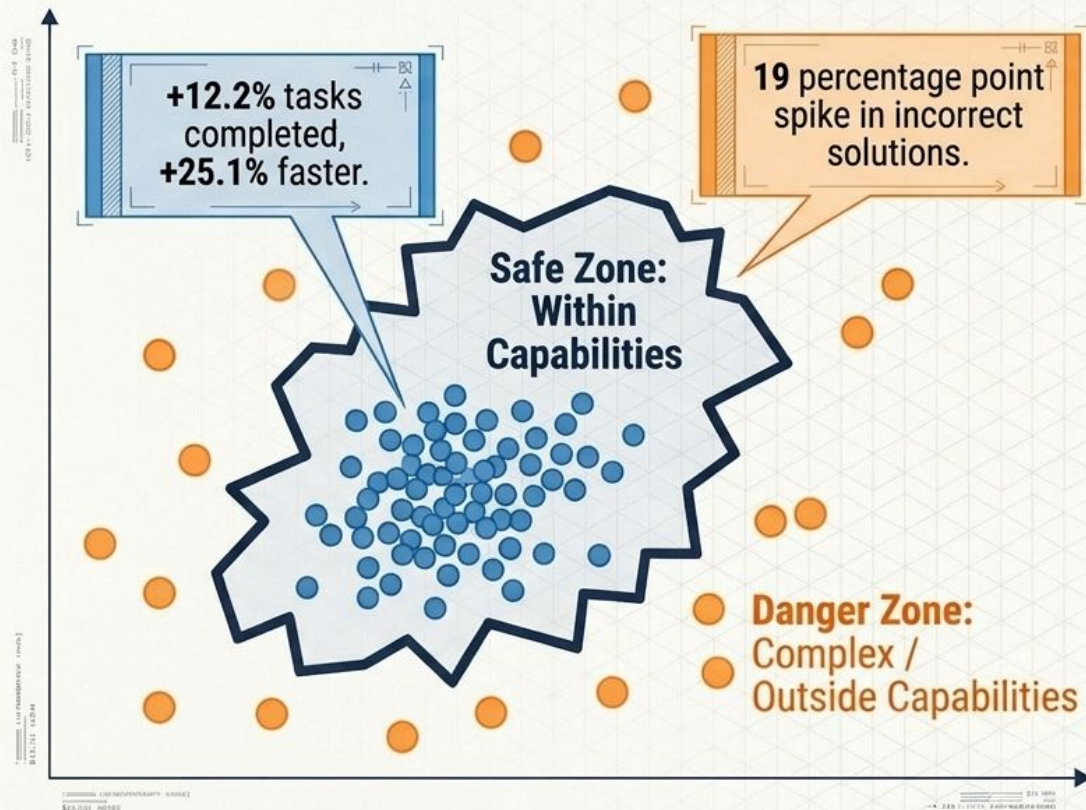
Step 2: Continuously Model and Test Scenarios



Evidence in Practice: IKEA's Ingka Group (2023)

The Billie chatbot resolved 47% **of inquiries**. Freed capacity was not simply cut to lower employment costs; 8,500 call-center coworkers were reskilled for **remote interior design** and **complex inquiries**. Compare growth against workforce alternatives.

The 'Jagged Frontier' of AI Assistance



Context

Based on BCG's field experiment of 758 knowledge workers (Dell'Acqua et al., 2026).

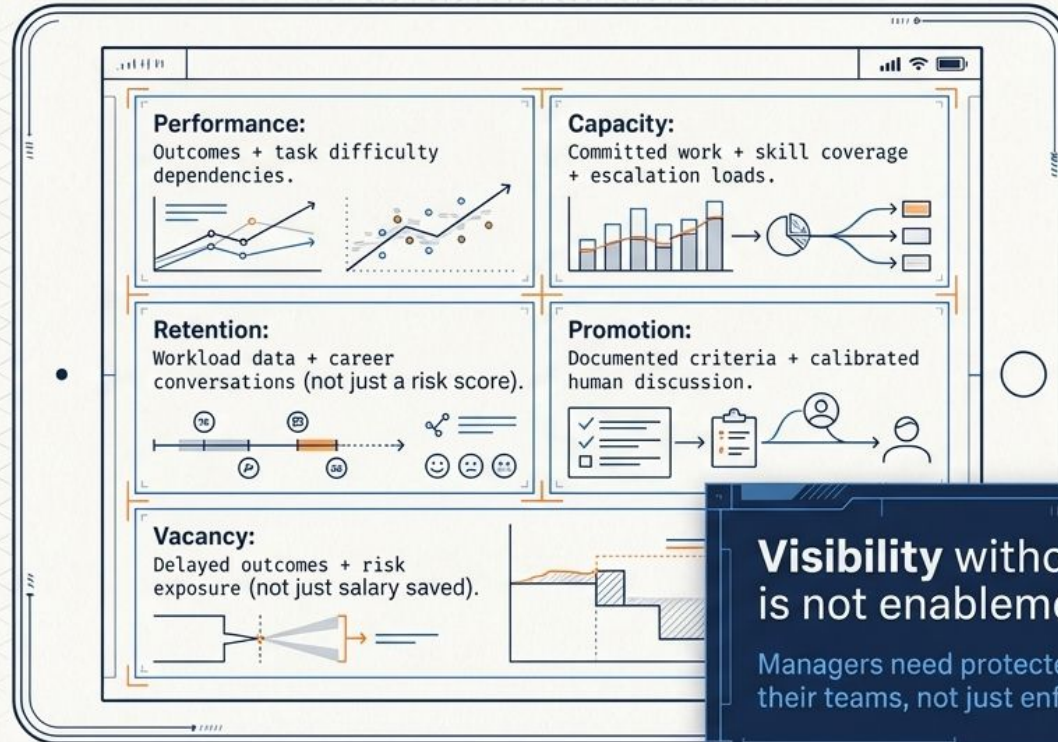
The Mandate

The practical mandate:
Redesign must measure both acceleration and correction.

Action

Quality scorecards must track errors, rework, and independently reviewed output alongside raw speed.

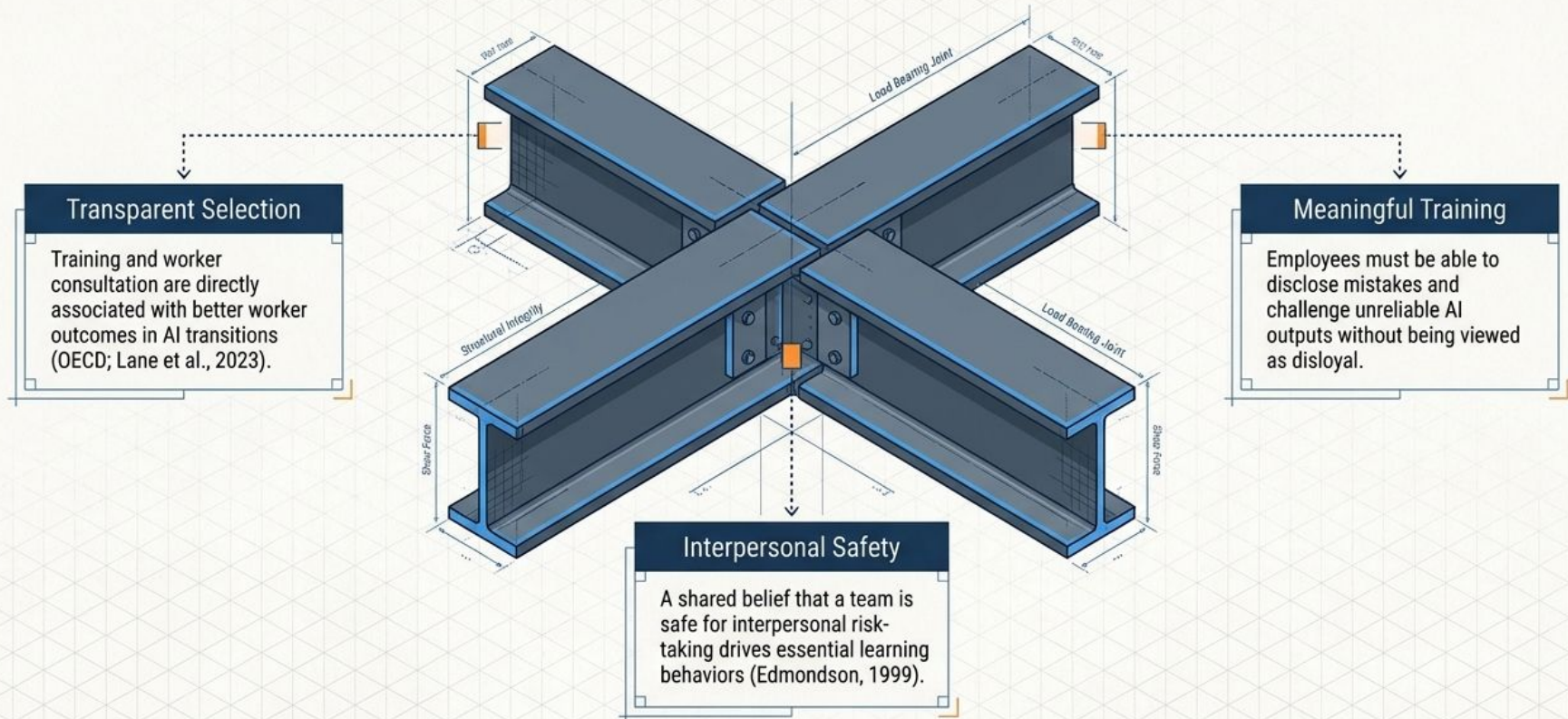
Step 3: Equip Managers with Decision Support



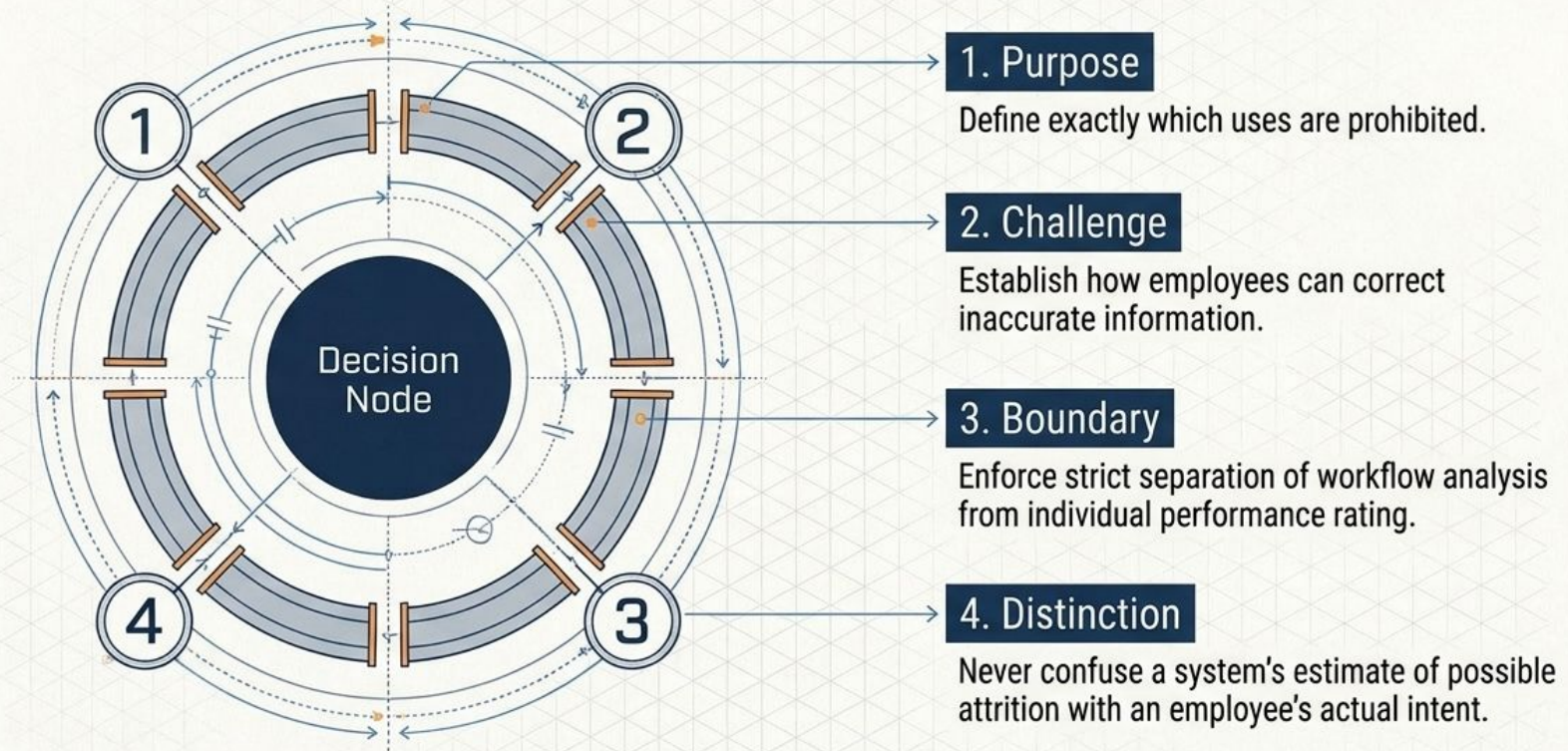
Visibility without authority
is not enablement.

Managers need protected time to learn with
their teams, not just enforce a finished design.

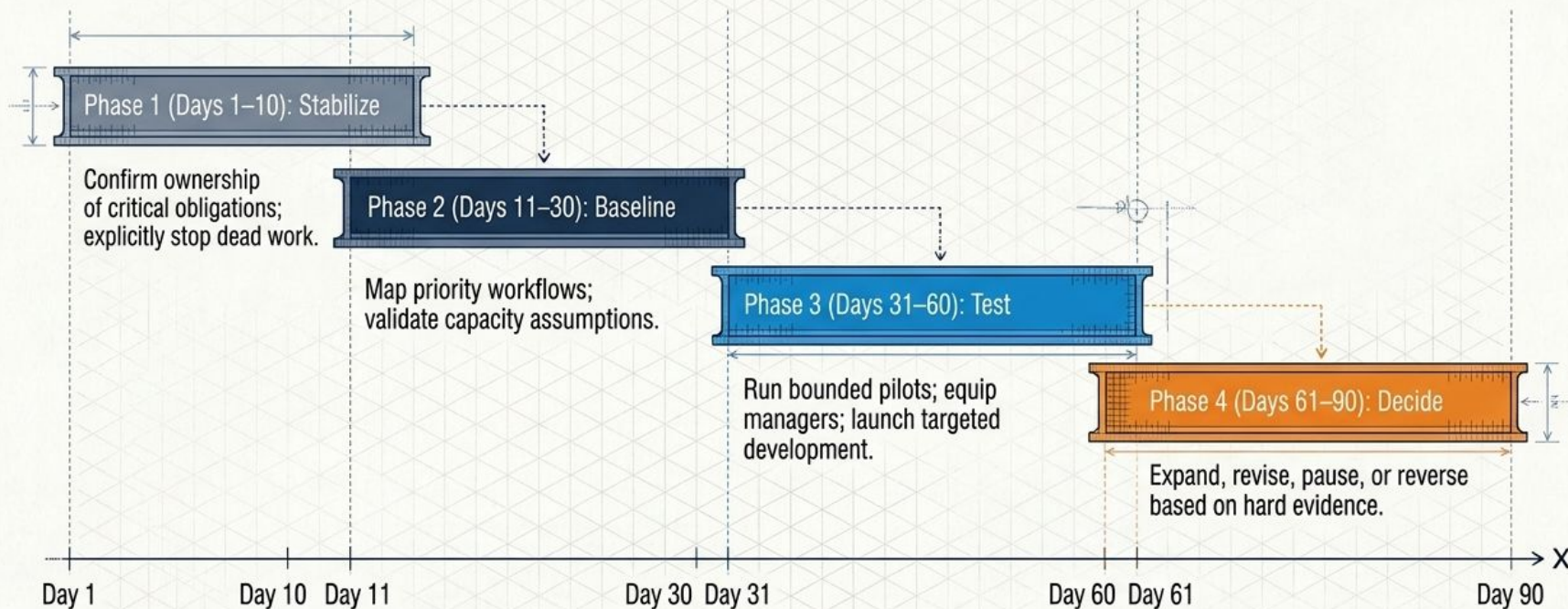
Governance Pillar 1: Mobility & Psychological Safety



Governance Pillar 2: Data as Decision Infrastructure

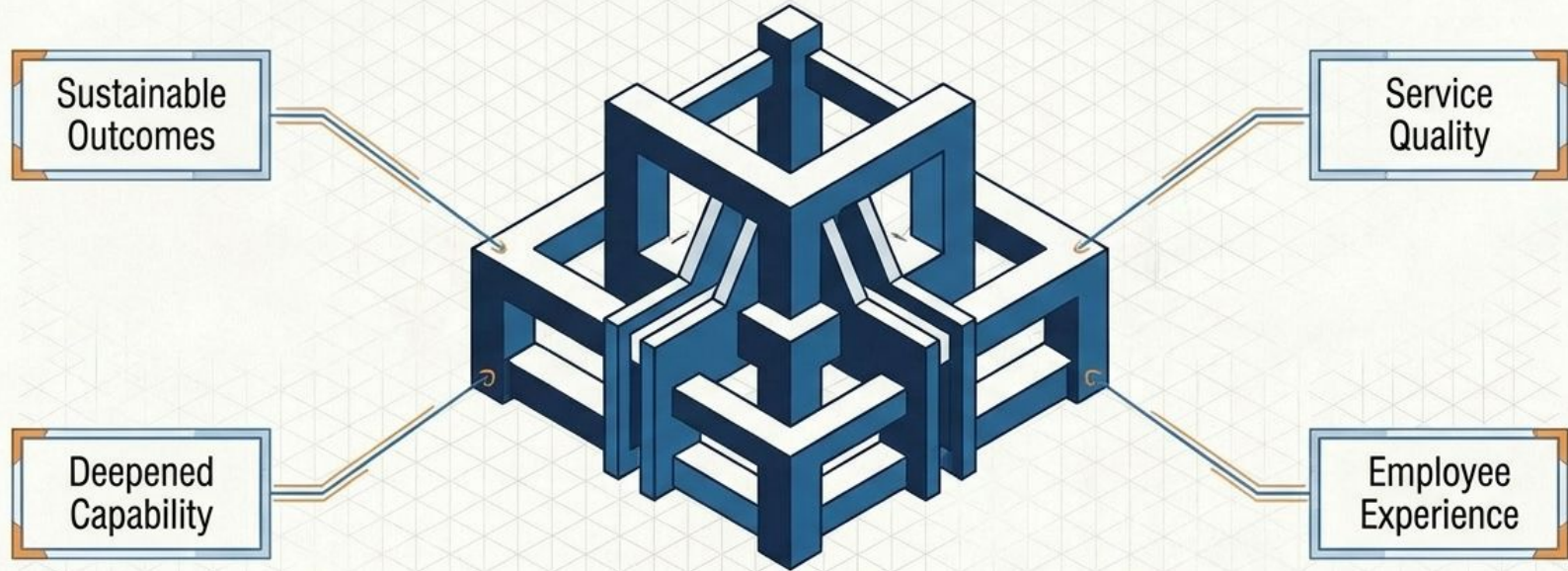


Execution: The 90-Day Test-and-Learn Rhythm



Treat rebuilding as a portfolio of hypotheses, not a single organization-chart event.

The Measure of a Rebuilt Organization



- A workforce reduction only changes your starting point.

- What you build from that point is the consequential test.

- Success is not a smaller denominator in a productivity calculation—it is a structurally stronger, more adaptable organization.