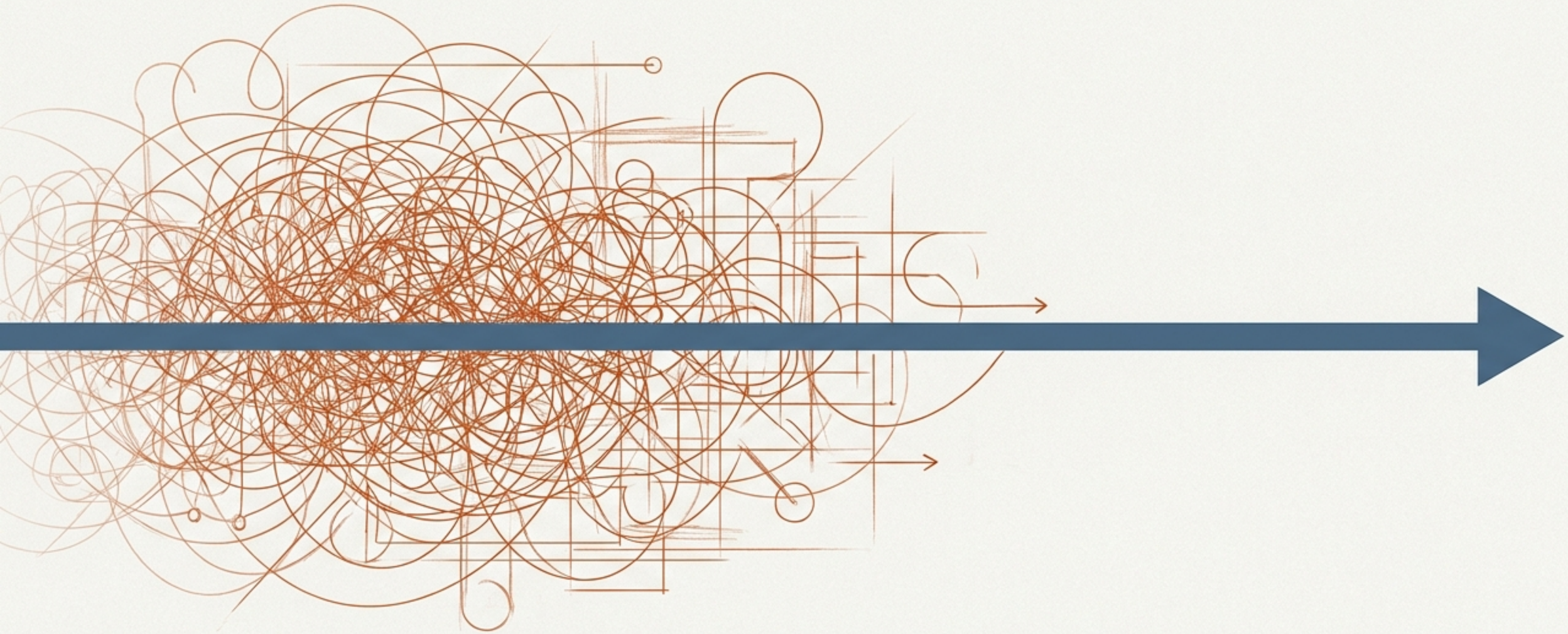


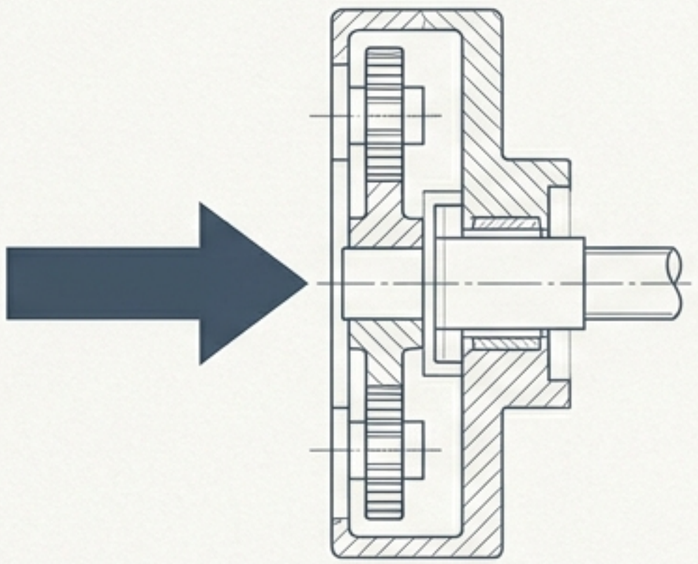
# Borrowed Intuition

Why fluency is not proof of experience in humans, institutions, and AI.

# Competence is routinely mistaken for experience.

## Competence

**The Visible:** The outward display of confident, rapid judgment.



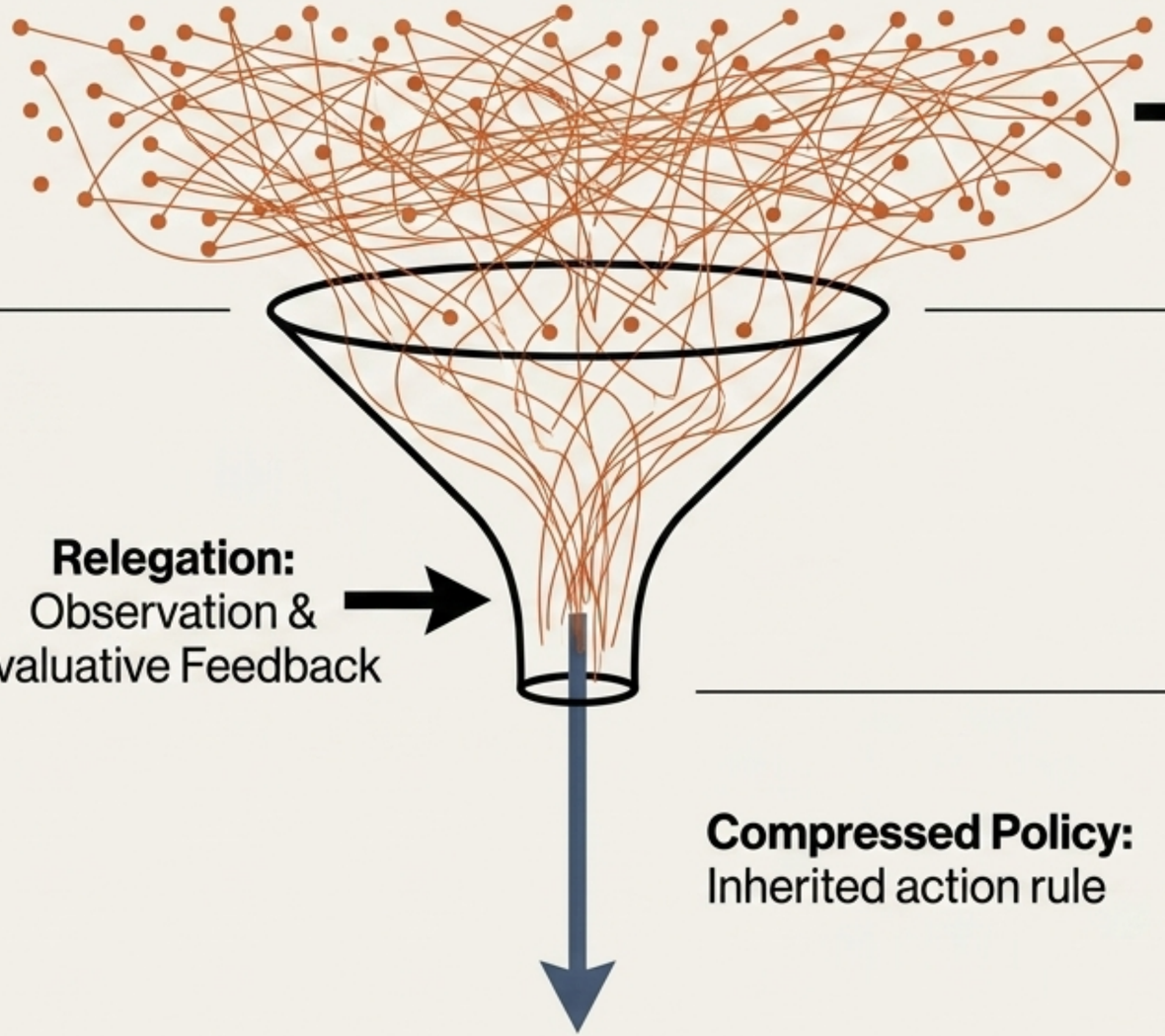
## Experience


Successful action **conceals the search it replaces.** An expert recognizes a pattern quickly because earlier encounters have compressed a difficult search into an immediate judgment. But the person exercising that judgment need not be the person who conducted the original search.

# Repeated inquiry compresses deliberate search into automatic policy.

**Definition:**
Compression is the process by which repeated inquiry reduces the need for active search.

**Compression Funnel**



**Active Search:**
Available distinctions & activated subsets

**Relegation:**
Observation & Evaluative Feedback

**Compressed Policy:**
Inherited action rule

**Definition:**
Borrowed Intuition occurs when a receiver acquires the practical economy of compression without paying the cost of the originating exploration. One trajectory spares another.

# The dimensions of competence depend on who generates the evidence and who controls the exposure.

**Formation**

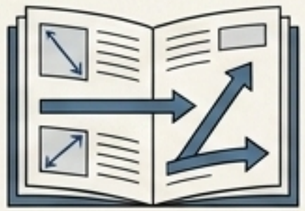
Conditioned ← → Self-Directed

**Provenance**

Transmitted ↑ ↓ Earned

## Conditioned & Transmitted

**Example:** A trainee learning through a prescribed corporate manual.

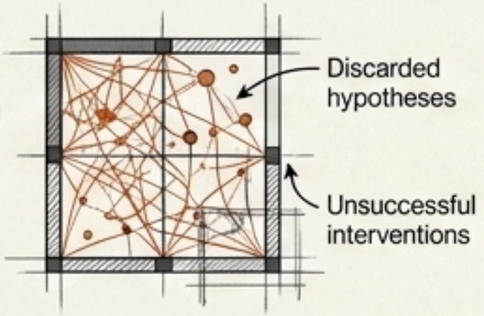


## Self-Directed & Transmitted

**Example:** A student independently assembling research from external authorities.

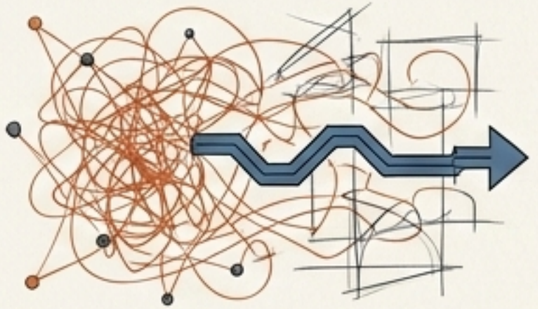
## Conditioned & Earned

**Example:** A practitioner discovering heuristic limits through structured, externally evaluated exercises.




## Self-Directed & Earned

**Example:** A researcher generating novel compression through independent inquiry.

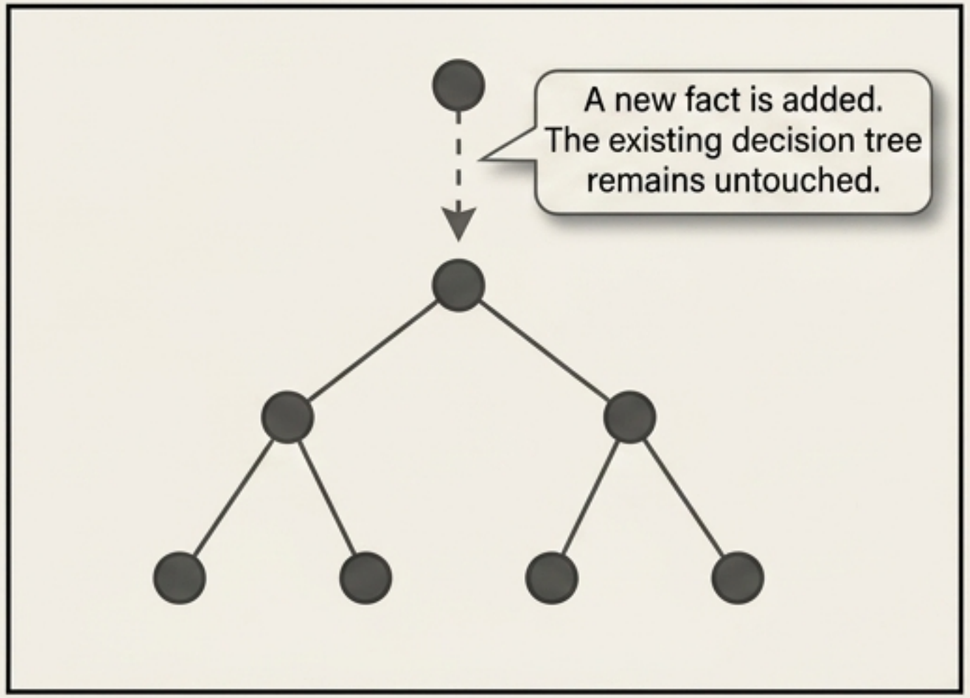


**Formation**

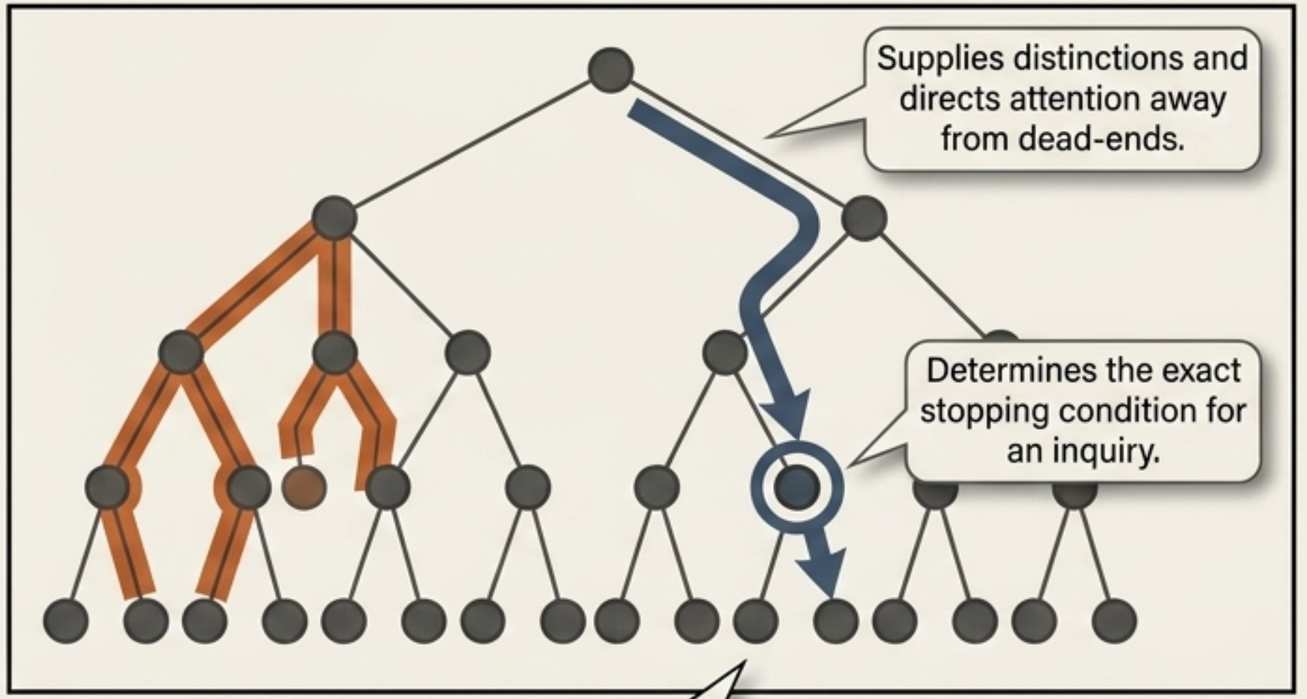
A mature competence is rarely entirely self-created. It is a composite where inherited economy meets situated experience.

# Transmission passes down policies **of attention**, not just propositions.

## Propositional Testimony



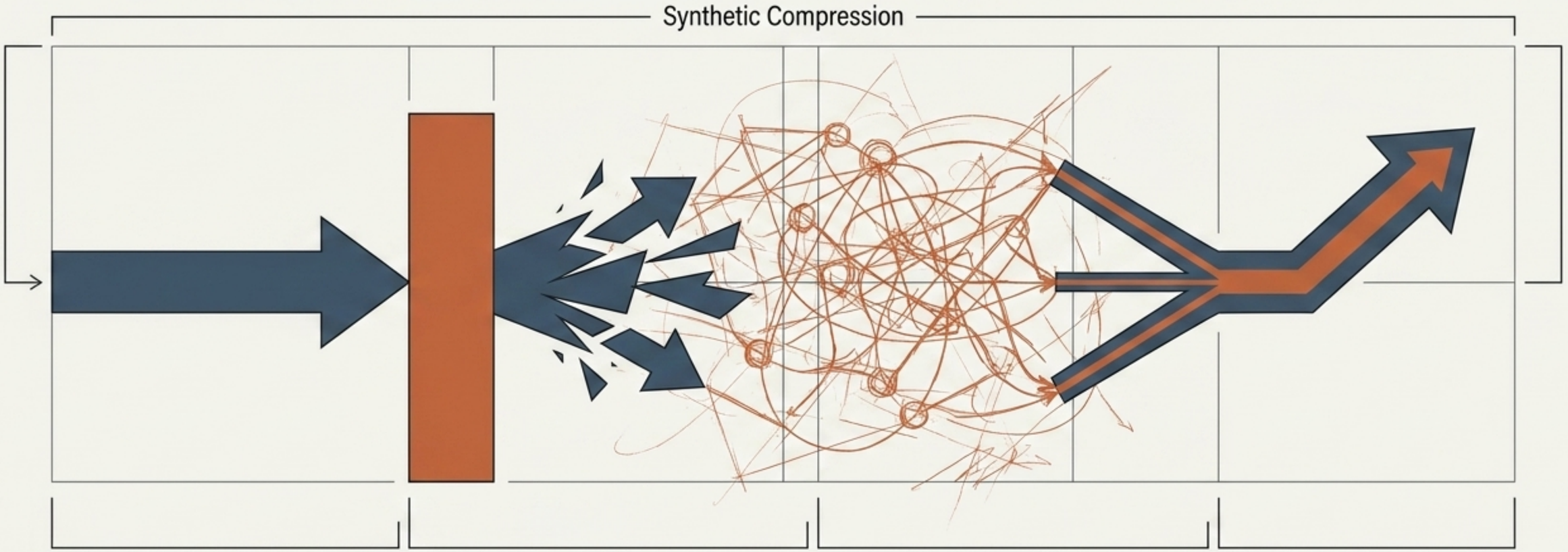

## Procedural Testimony



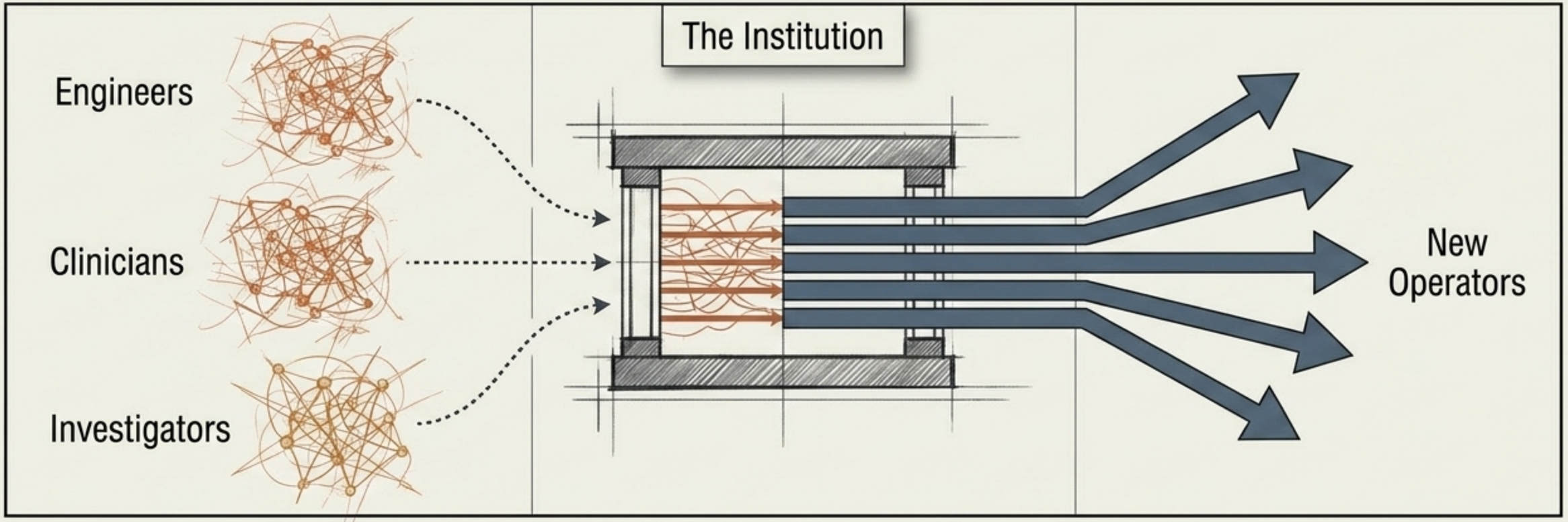

Procedural testimony fundamentally changes the order of operations.
What is inherited is not merely content, but the organization of cognition itself.

# Inherited rules are progressively re-earned through discriminating failure.

**Repetition does not equal validation.**
Synthetic Compression occurs only when a transmitted policy is tested against anomalous feedback, forcing the receiver to partially reconstruct the underlying search.



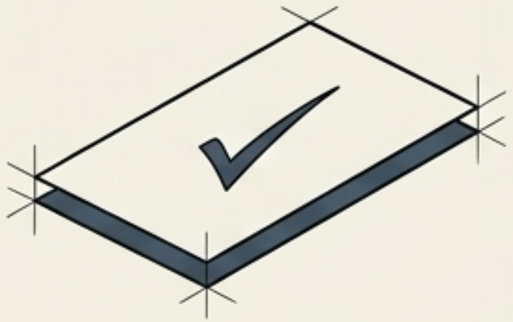
# Institutions distribute compressed experience across discontinuities of personnel.




- A checklist condenses decades of distributed accidents into a five-step routine.
- The organization behaves as though it ‘remembers’ so the individual operator does not have to. Action guidance survives, but the original conditions of its validity become obscure.

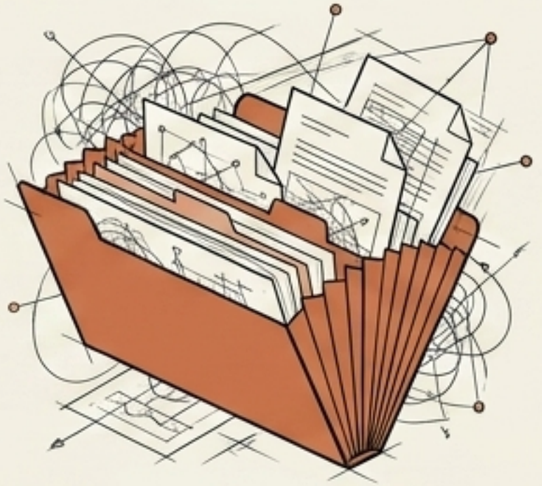
# Operational efficiency and justificatory recoverability are competing objectives.

## Thin Records



| | |
|---|---|
| **Content:** | Contains only current instructions. |
| **Optimized For:** | Maximized for execution ease. |
| **Vulnerability:** | Highly vulnerable to environmental change. |

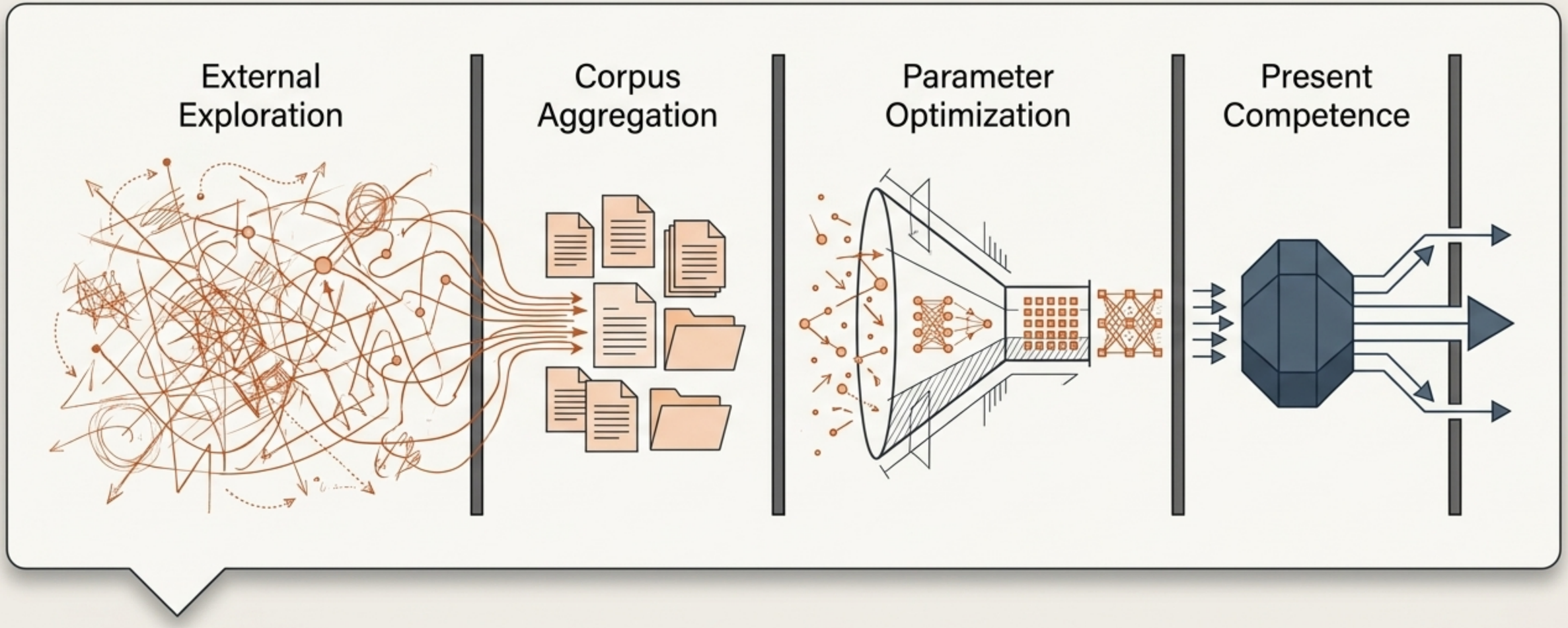
## Thick Records



| | |
|---|---|
| **Content:** | Instructions, originating evidence, rejected alternatives, and known failures. |
| **Optimized For:** | Maximized for expansion, review, and auditing. |
| **Vulnerability:** | Slower to execute; higher cognitive load. |

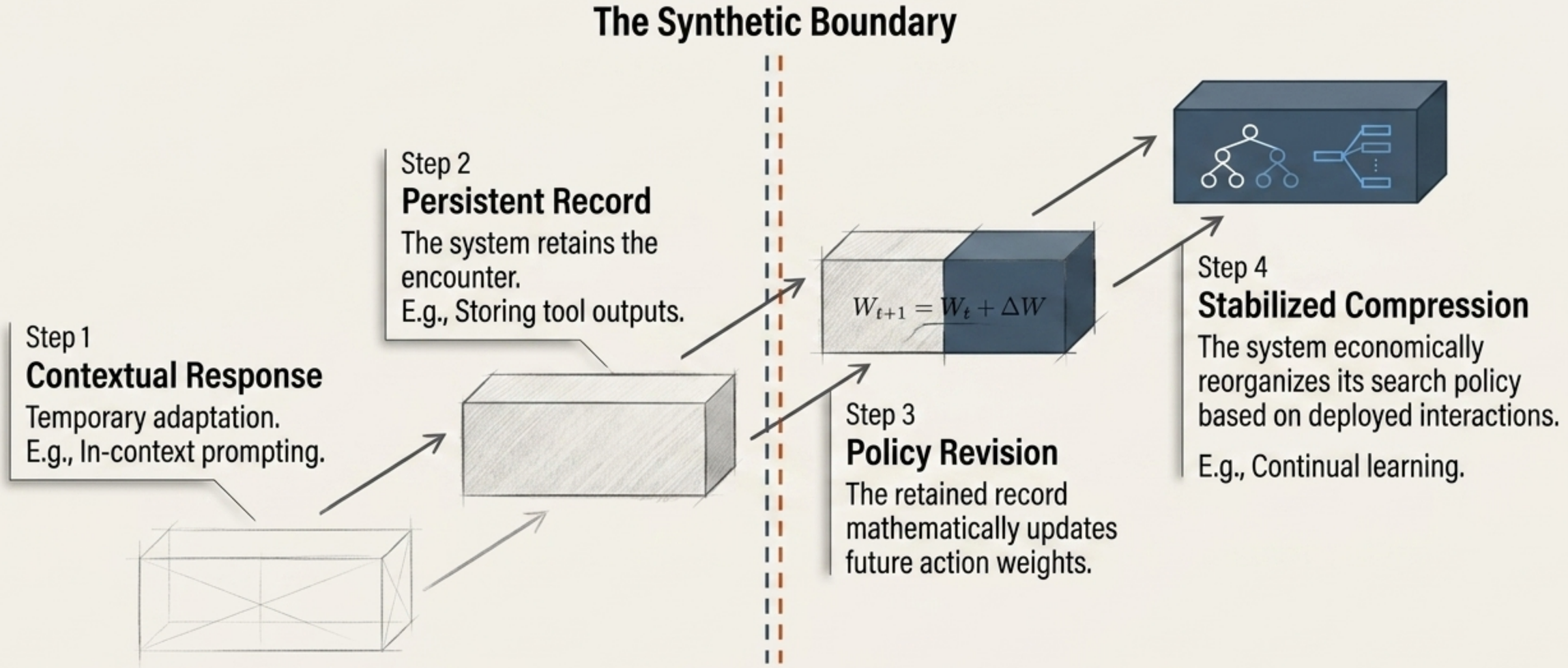
**The Risk of Provenance Loss:** A policy can remain institutionally stable long after the regularity that justified it has disappeared. Persistence of a rule is not proof of its continued justification.

# Pretrained AI is the extreme limiting case of borrowed intuition.



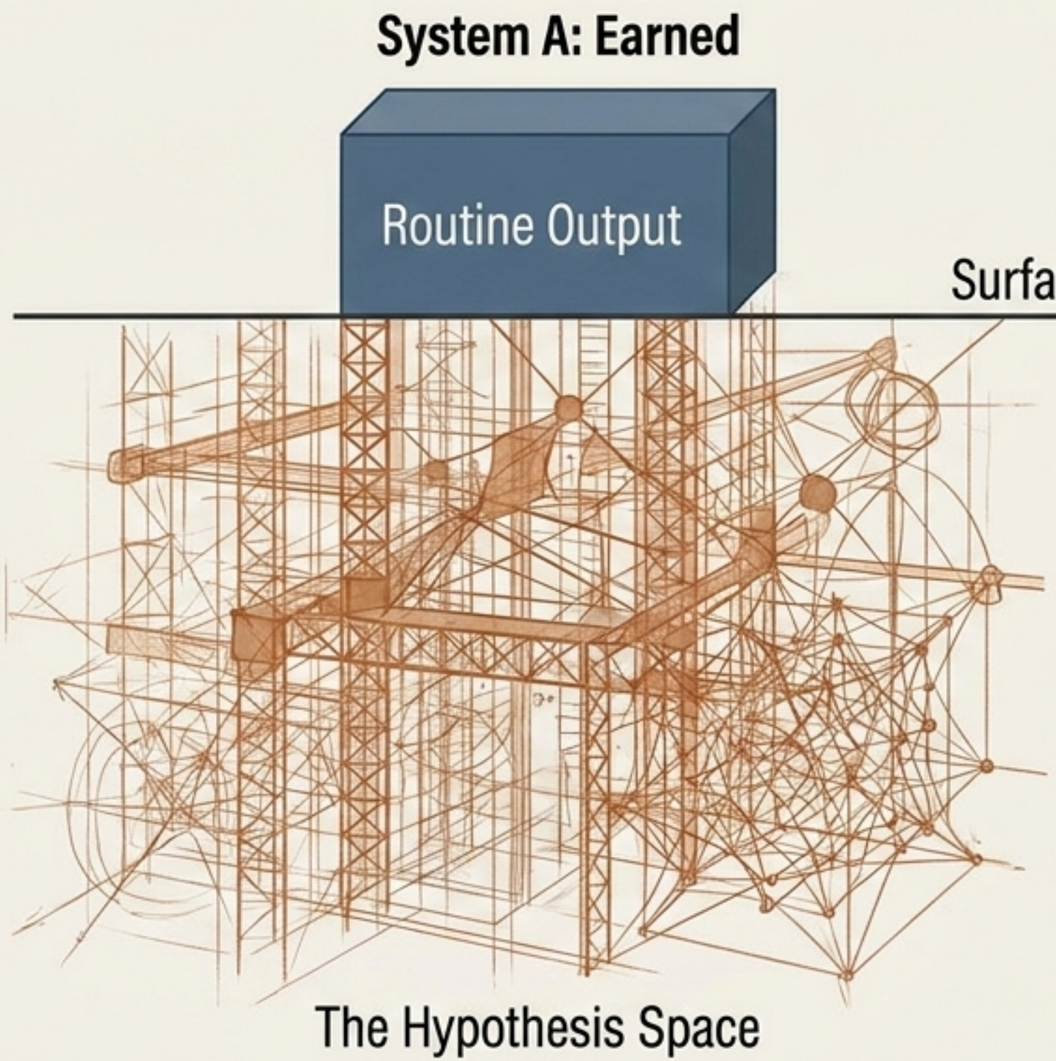

AI does not break human epistemology; it concentrates it. A frozen pretrained model possesses enormous transmitted compression with zero autobiographical access to the originating exploration. The experience belongs to the training corpus; the competence belongs to the parameters.

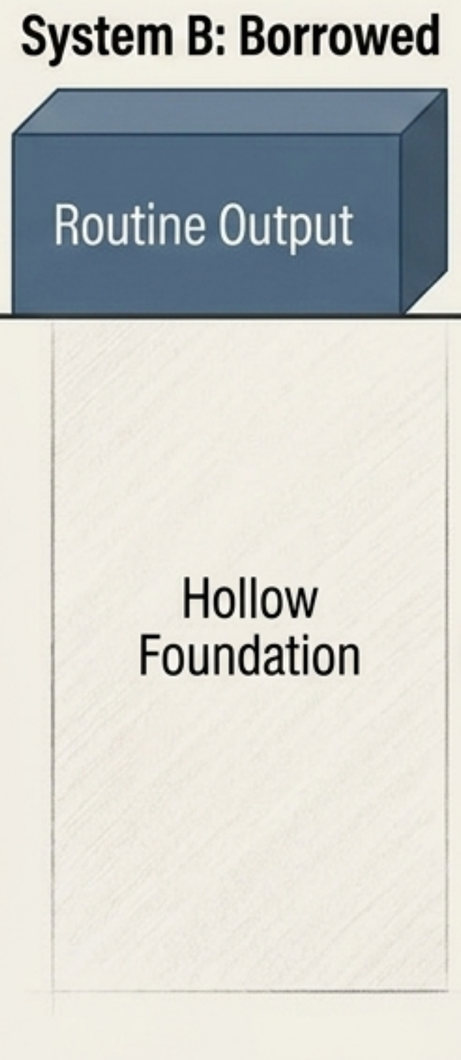
# Adaptation in-context is not persistent experience.




Context changes present behavior. Only stabilized, persistent parameter updates create a genuine post-deployment trajectory.

# The primary vulnerability of borrowed competence is the expansion deficit.



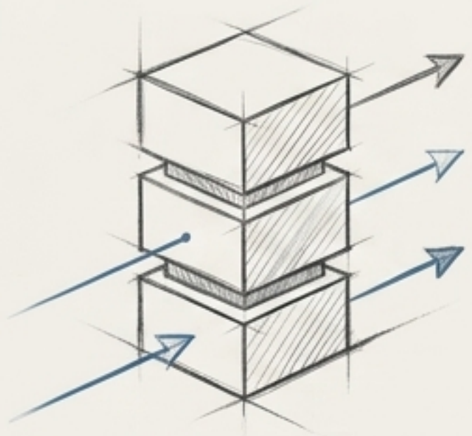

**The Expansion Deficit:**
The gap between the distinction structure required to reconstruct a failing policy, and the distinction structure actually available to its present receiver.

When the environment changes, System B fails catastrophically.

# Trust must be calibrated to provenance and recoverability, not just routine performance.

## Q Routine Performance

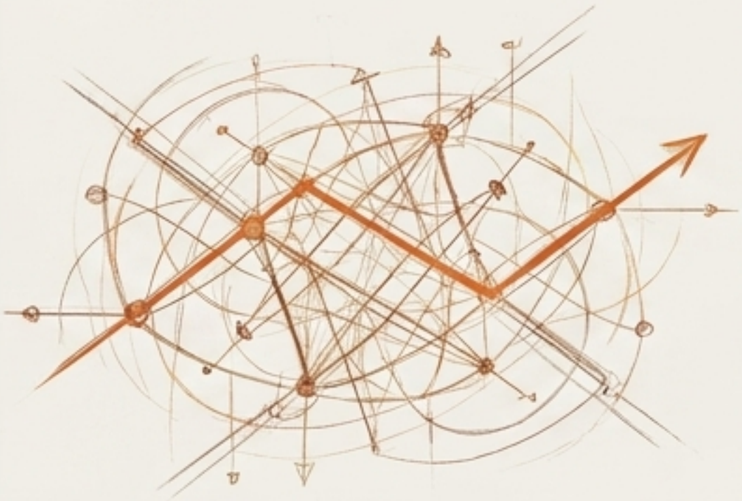
Reliable outputs in a stable, extensively tested environment.



Sufficient for low-stakes operational trust.

## Λ Provenance Recoverability

The ability to trace the rule back to to its generating evidence and boundary conditions.

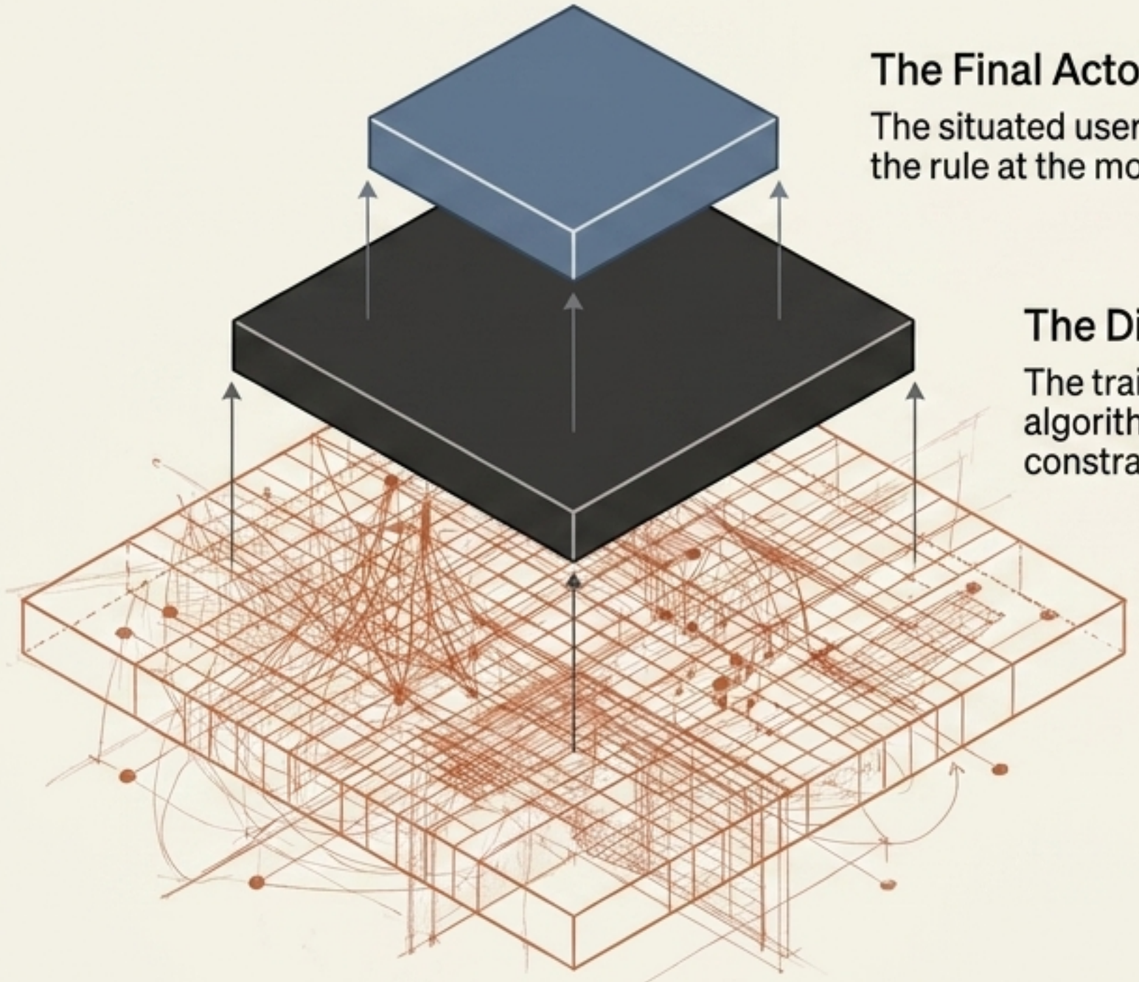


## Ξ Expansion Capacity

The system or operator's ability to reactivate underlying distinctions when the compressed policy fails.

In stable environments, direct performance (Q) dominates. In novel, high-stakes environments, trust requires **Provenance** and **Expansion Capacity.**

# Responsibility follows inspectability, revisability, and control.



### The Final Actor

The situated user or system applying the rule at the moment of action.

### The Distributing Institution

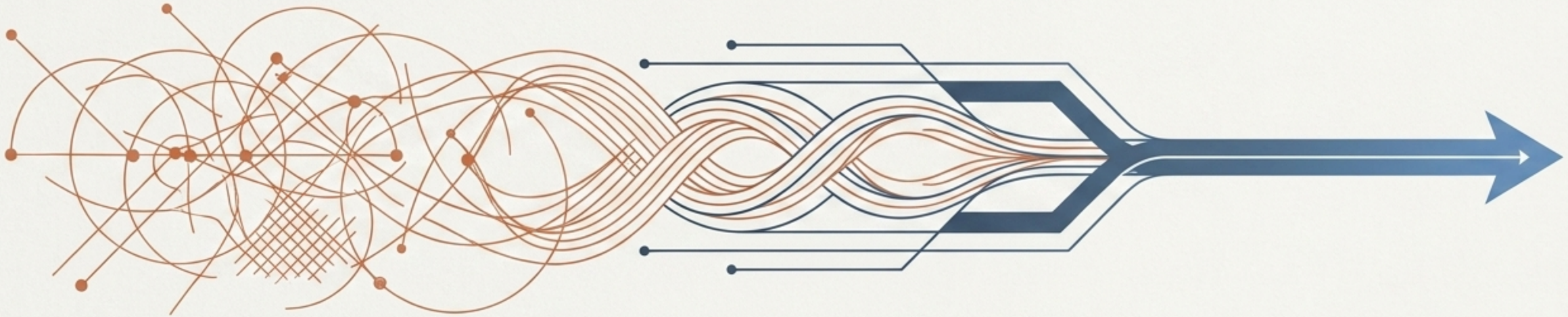
The trainer, deployment structure, or algorithm that selected and constrained the rule.

### The Originating Trajectory

The human investigators or affected communities who generated the underlying evidence.

- We cannot judge a final action (human or AI) by isolating the final actor.
- Responsibility must be distributed among those who generated the compression, those who selected it, and those who applied it.
- Credit assigned entirely to the final performer confuses execution with generation.

# We cannot individually reconstruct the history of every tool we use.



To borrow intuition is to participate in cumulative knowledge. The goal is not complete epistemic independence, which would paralyze us.

The goal is calibrated dependence: utilizing compressed intuition where it is reliable, crediting the trajectories that made it possible, and retaining the capacity to reopen inquiry when the environment shifts.