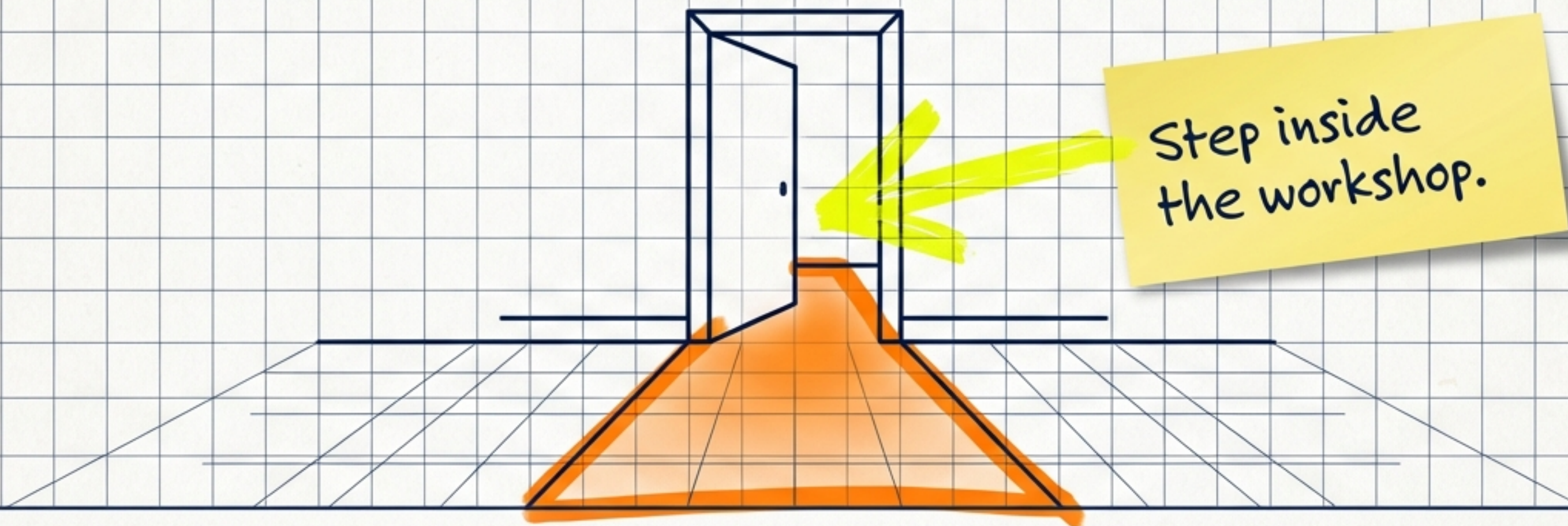


Why Everyone Needs a Personal AI Lab

Moving from casual AI user to co-intelligent builder.



You don't need a computer science degree to start building.

EXPECTED PROFILE

30 Years Enterprise Tech

AI Strategy at Thermo
Fisher Scientific
(100,000+ employees)

ACTUAL REALITY

66 Years Old

Zero Coding Experience

No GitHub Account

5 AM with coffee
and Claude.
Not for work.
Because I couldn't
stop thinking
about it.

The Great Misconception: AI as a Search Engine.

Most people use AI like standing at the door of a workshop and asking someone inside to hand you a screwdriver.




You never actually walk in.
You never pick up the tools yourself.
You never build anything.

The Paradigm Shift: Watchers vs. Builders.

	The Casual User	The Lab Builder
Mental Model	Search Engine	Workshop
Interaction	Transactional Q&A	Iterative Dialogue
Goal	Perfect Answer	Learning by Doing
Mindset	Seeking Permission	Permissionless Experimentation

Key to Co-intelligence



A lab is not a funded project. It is an equation.

Not assigned by a boss.

**Lab = [Curiosity] + [Something to Build]
+ [The Willingness to be a Beginner]**

*At 66, this is humbling and
weirdly liberating.*

The Output of a Single 6-Month Personal Lab

13

Active Projects

67,000

Words

Drafted manuscript: Bears & Mosquitoes: Trust
Your AI from the Inside Out, June 2026

4

Live
Websites

TECH: Auto-deployed
from GitHub through
Cloudflare Pages

1,685

Indexed AI
Conversations

TECH: Personal
Knowledge Graph /
Obsidian

The Leverage Equation.

AI Hours

33

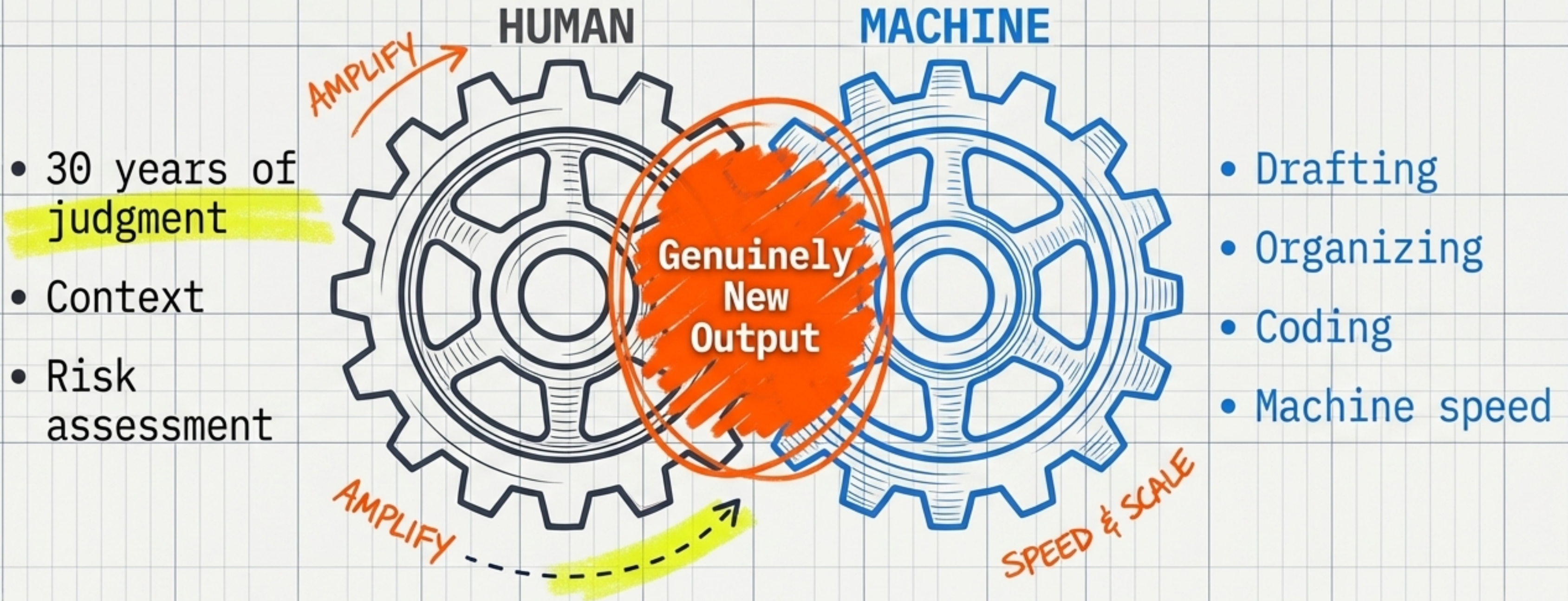
I didn't do this because I'm special.
I did this because I showed up, asked
dumb questions, and kept going.

Equivalent
Human Hours

890

The Engine of the Lab: Cointelligence.

Humans and AI amplifying each other. Not replacing, not ignoring.



The Reality Check: It will not be smooth.

Lost three days of work to an overwrites disaster. (Twice.)

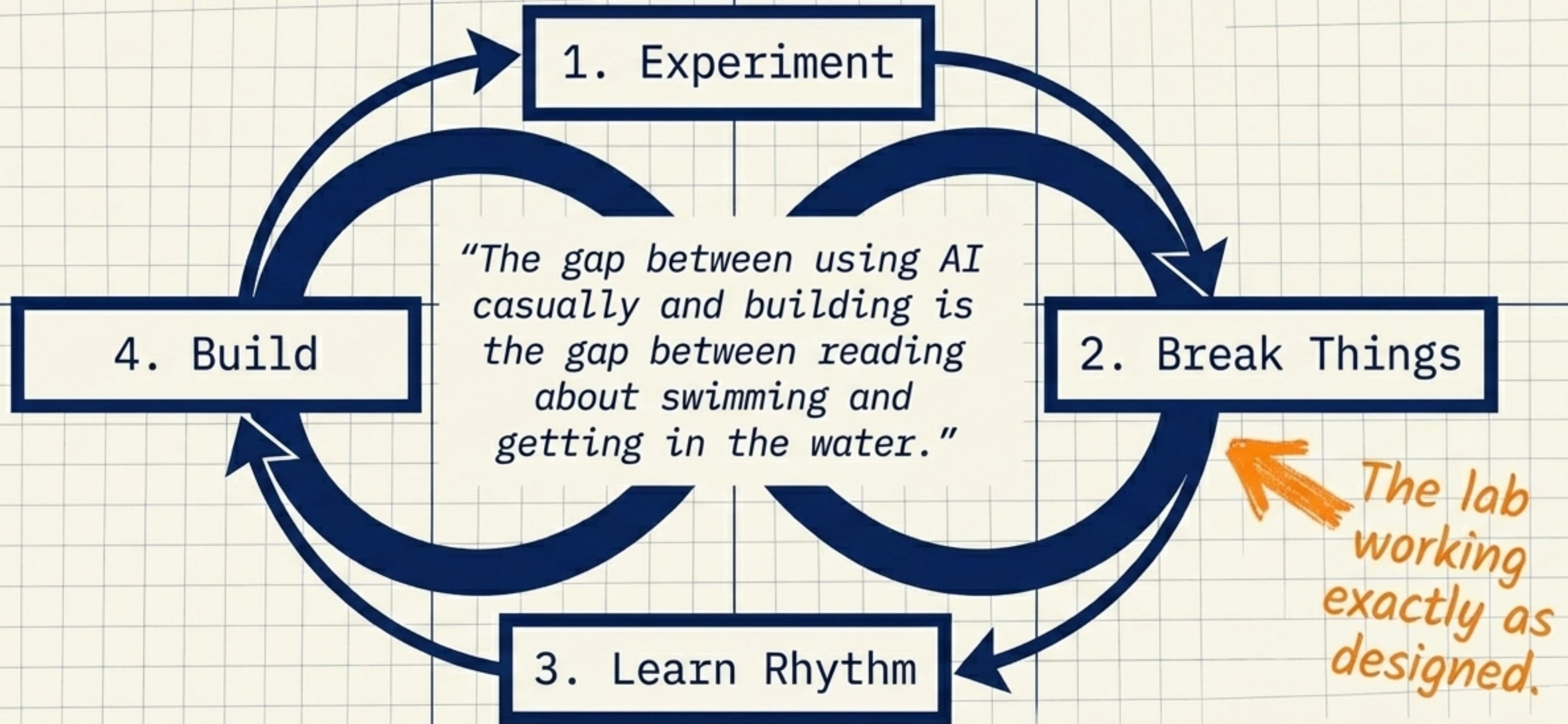
Battling stubborn PDF generation.

Building a website before understanding deployment (like building a house before knowing where the road is).

Confident-sounding AI hallucinations.

NORMAL

Reframing Friction as the Design, Not a Bug.



The Coming Divide: Watchers vs. Builders.

Those who waited for someone else to run the numbers.

1980s

Those who learned spreadsheets.

Those who just browsed.

1998

Those who built websites.

Those who watch others work with AI.

Today

Those who build in AI Labs.

Learn by doing, not by watching.

Permission to Experiment

I'm retiring July 10, 2026. I could have spent these last months coasting.

Instead, I'm building the most interesting body of work of my career.

You don't need anyone's approval but your own.

Your First Lab Entry.

What is the thing you haven't started because it feels too technical or too late?

1. Open Claude or ChatGPT today.
2. Shift from "How do I?" to "I want to."
3. Tell the AI:

I want to build [X].

4. Save that conversation.

Day 1 of your Lab begins now.