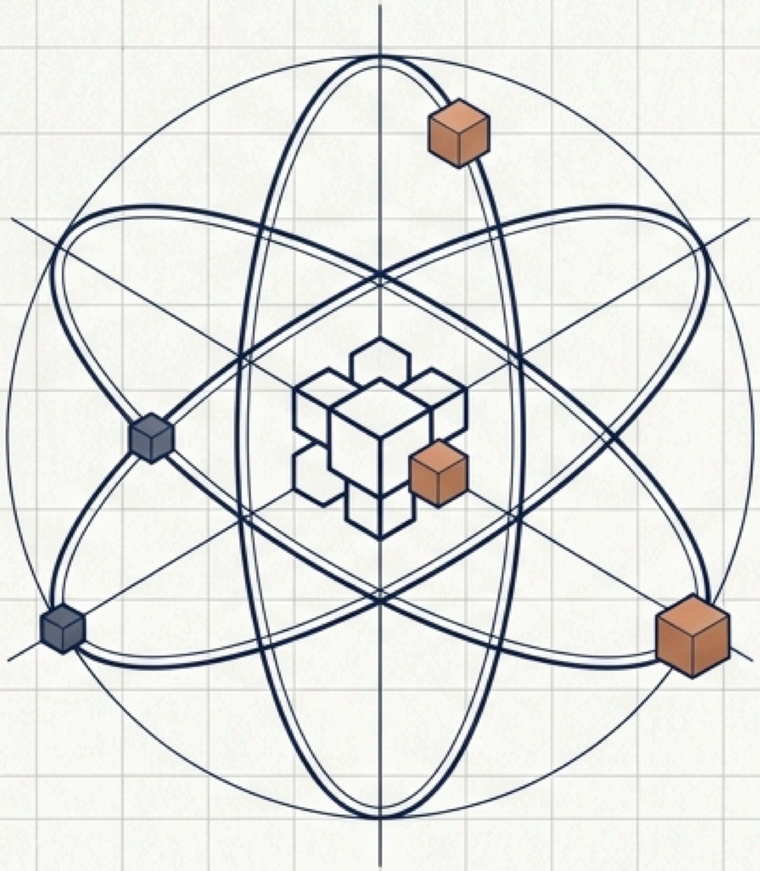
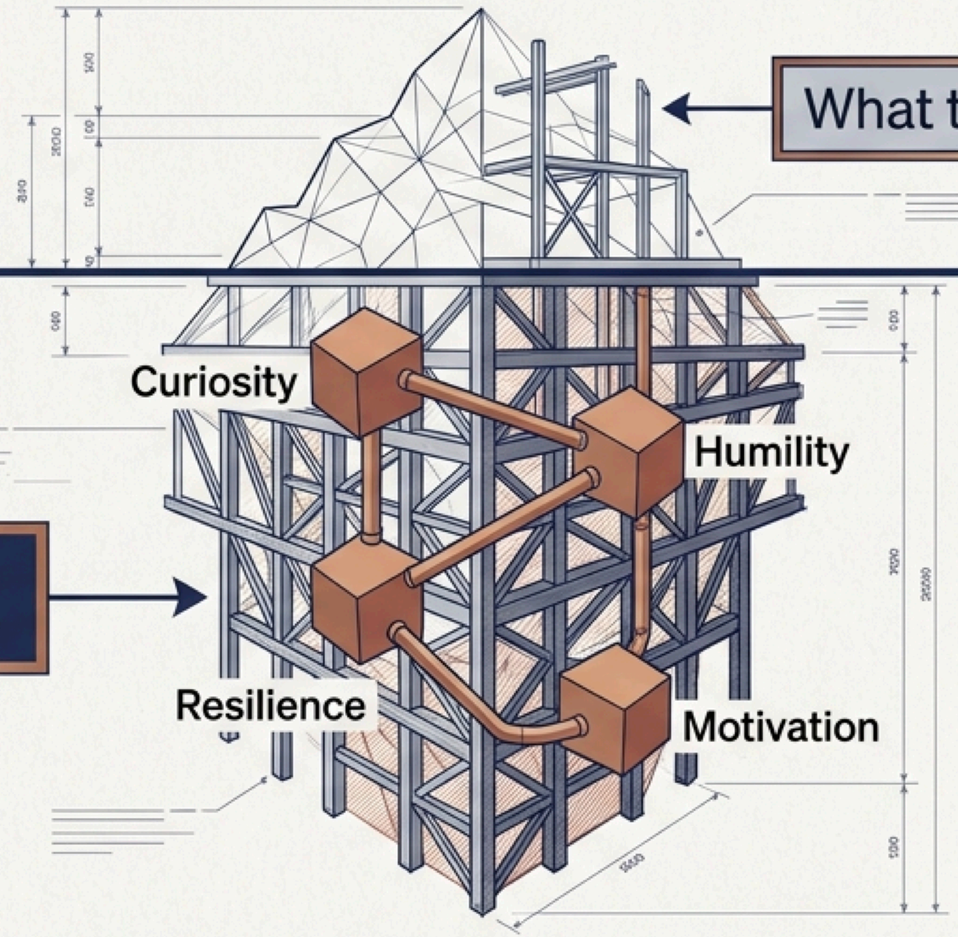


ATOMIC RITUALS

Hire them not for what they know, but for why they know it.

Knowledge is merely a proxy for motivation



The essence of great hiring isn't verifying existing skills. It is uncovering a candidate's capacity to learn, adapt, and thrive in the face of uncharted challenges.

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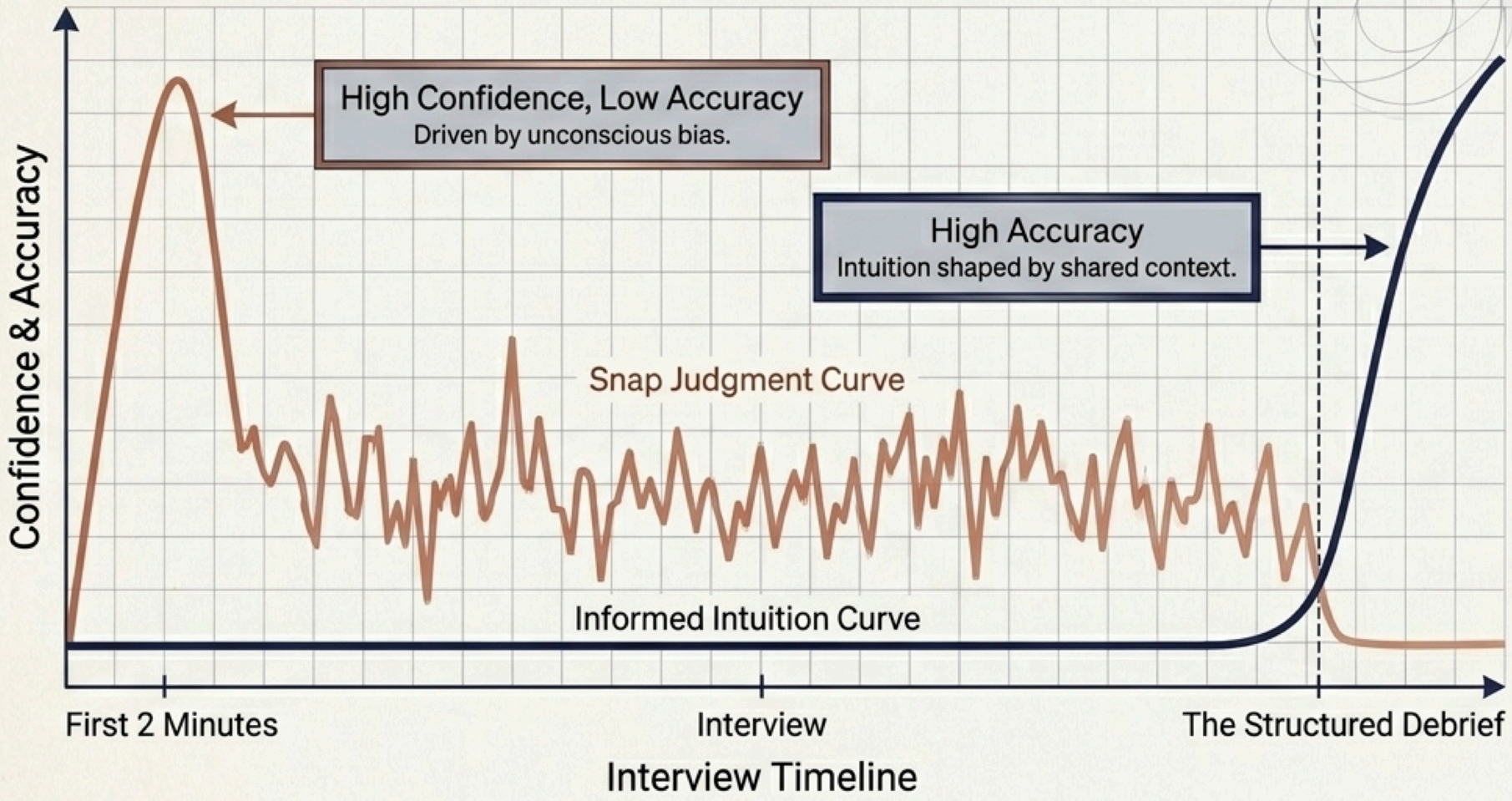
The flaw of the two-minute snap judgment



The objective of an individual interview is NOT to make a hire/no-hire decision.

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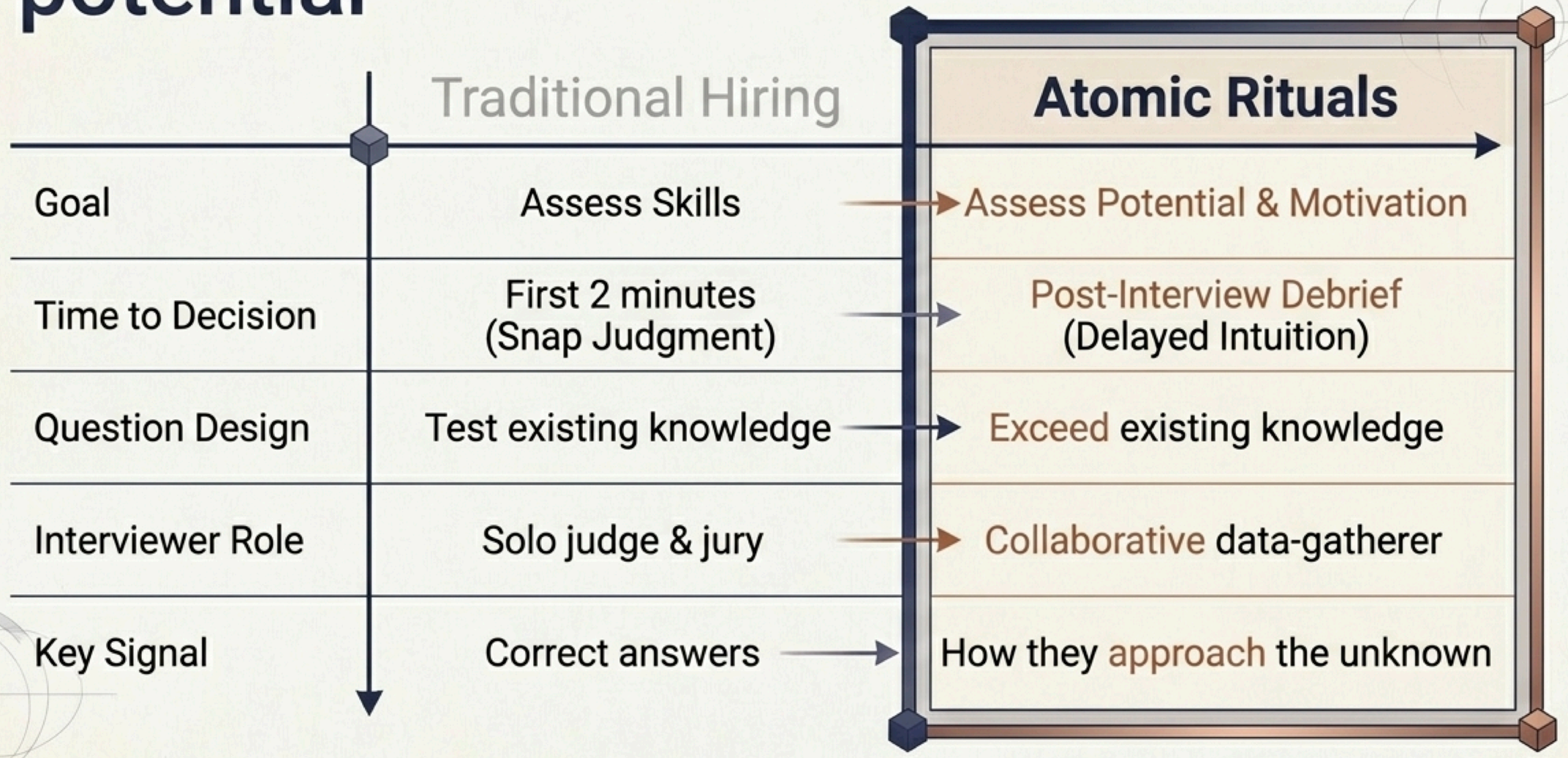
Shifting the paradigm from verification to potential



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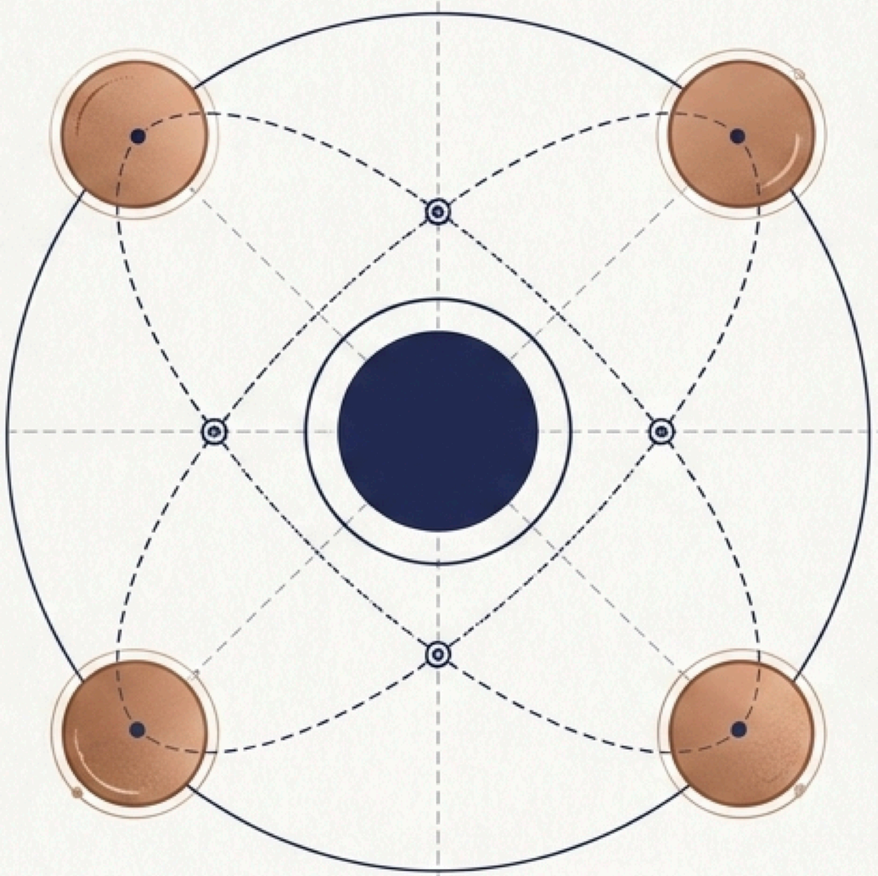
The architecture of the Atomic Rituals framework

1. Consistent Messaging

Every touchpoint, from sourcer to onboarding, reflects core values.



2. Designed Questions

Crafted to deliberately exceed current experience and test problem-solving.

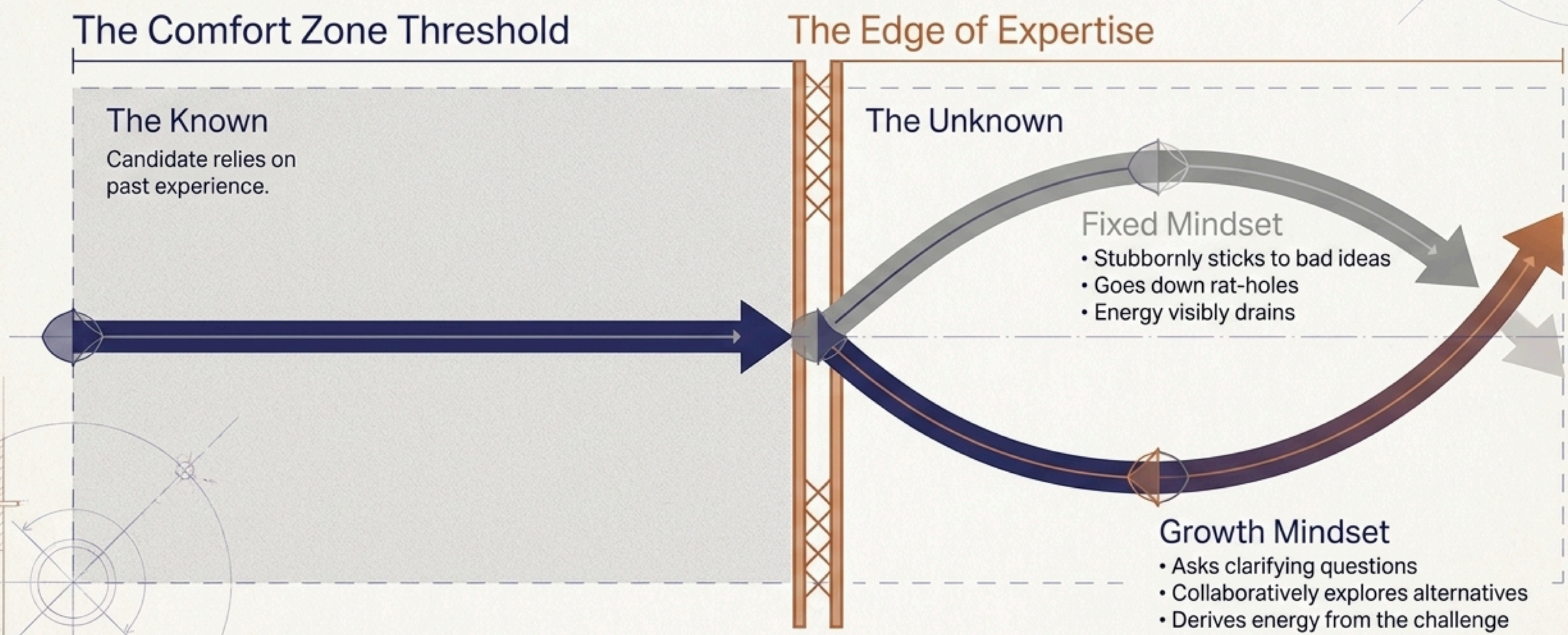
4. Delayed Intuition

Synthesizing insights through structured team huddles to eliminate bias.

3. Qualified Interviewers

Trained, calibrated instruments of observation and collaborative probing.

Pushing candidates past the edge of their existing knowledge



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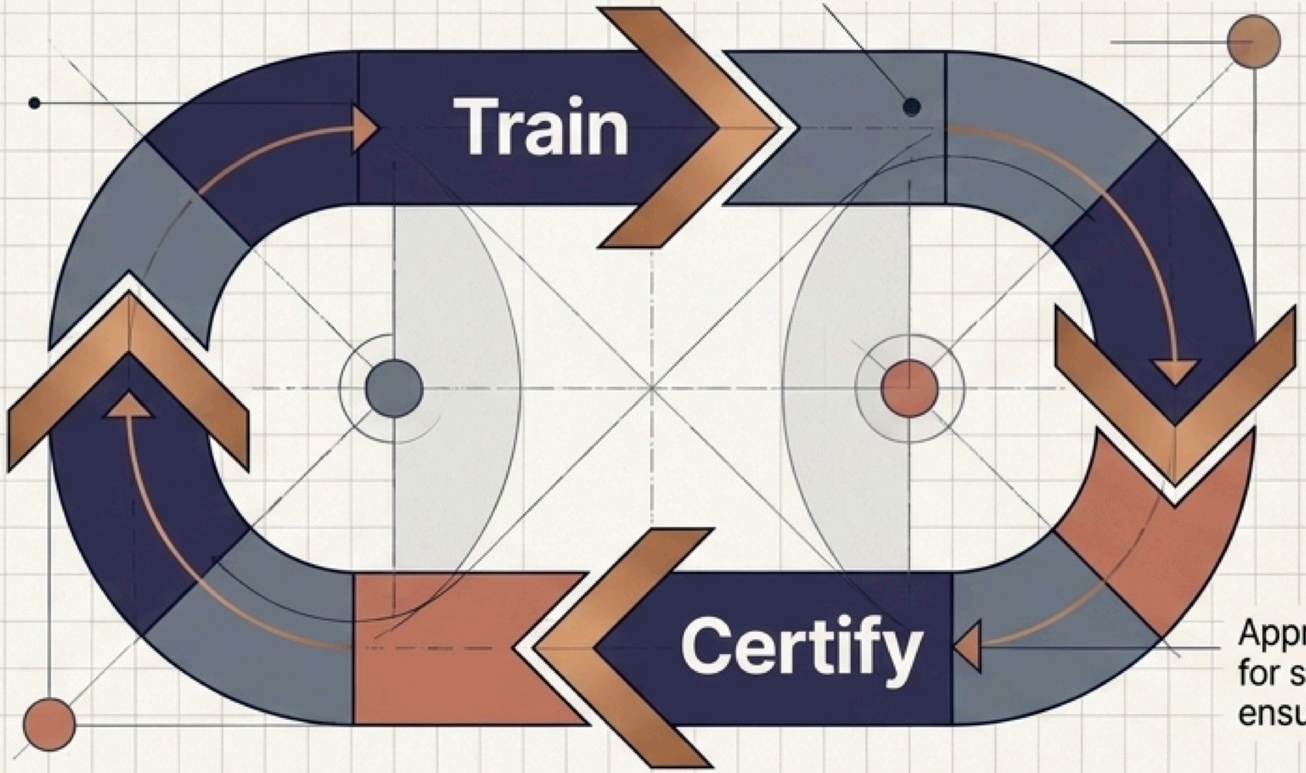
Calibrating the interviewer as a precision instrument

Instruct on specifically designed questions that assess problem-solving over raw knowledge.



Manage

Maintain a living matrix mapping specialized questions to certified interviewers.

Shadow

Implement two-way observation to align techniques and eliminate snap-judgment habits.

Approve interviewers only for specific questions to ensure deep, consistent probing.

Interviewers are not just asking questions; they are trained to observe collaborative problem-solving under uncertainty.

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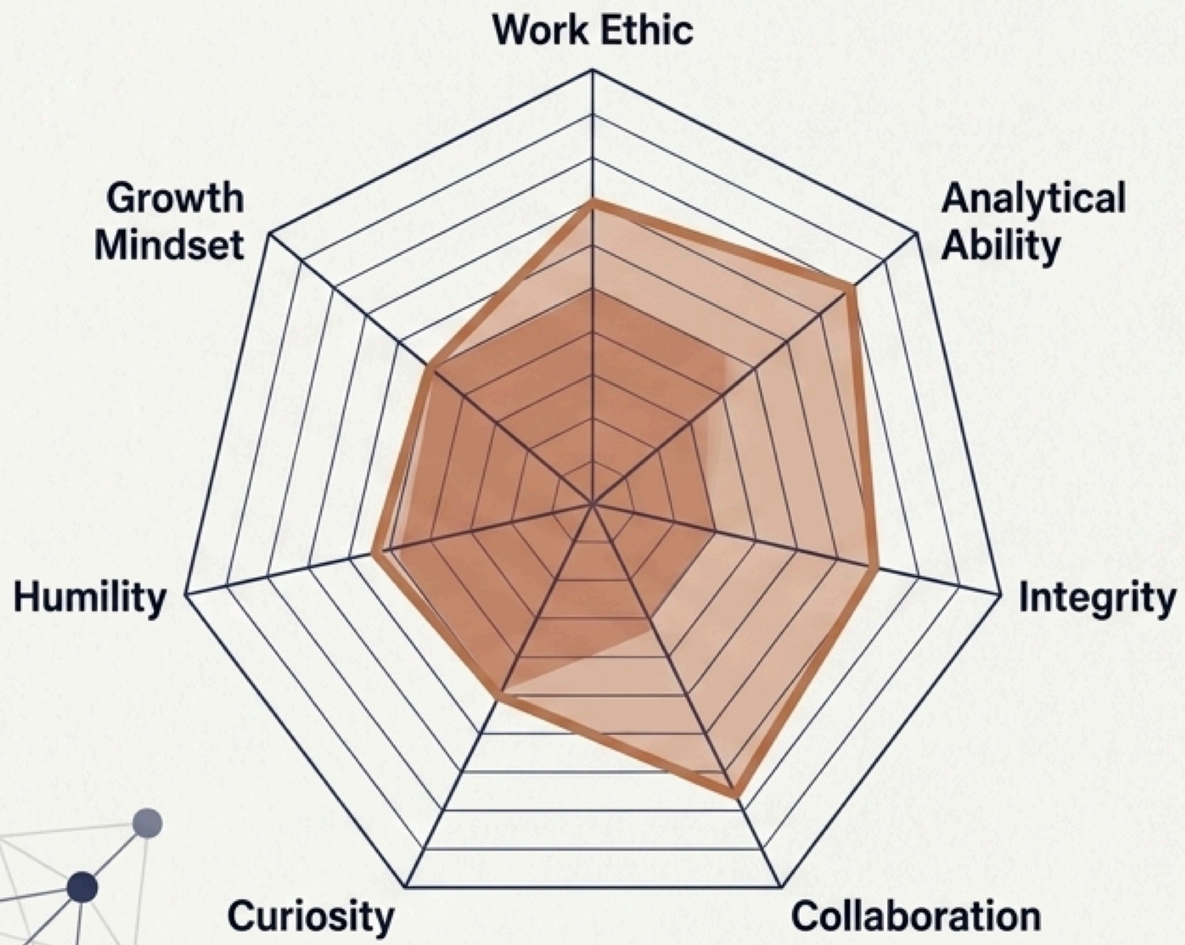
Deconstructing the holistic evaluation



- **Work Ethic:** Persistence and commitment when work becomes unclear.
- **Analytical Ability:** Capacity to break down complex, unseen problems.
- **Integrity:** Honesty and decision-making under pressure.
- **Collaboration:** Working with the interviewer to find optimal solutions.
- **Curiosity:** Eagerness to explore new approaches when stuck.
- **Humility:** Willingness to admit mistakes in unfamiliar territory.
- **Growth Mindset:** Energy gained from pursuing difficult solutions.

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Uncovering the ultimate purpose signal



THE CLOSING QUESTION

"If you look back on your life outside of work, can you share one moment or experience that changed who you are and how you approach the world?"

This final ritual requires profound trust. It transitions the interview from evaluating what they can do to understanding the deeper motivations of who they are and whether they align with the company's mission.

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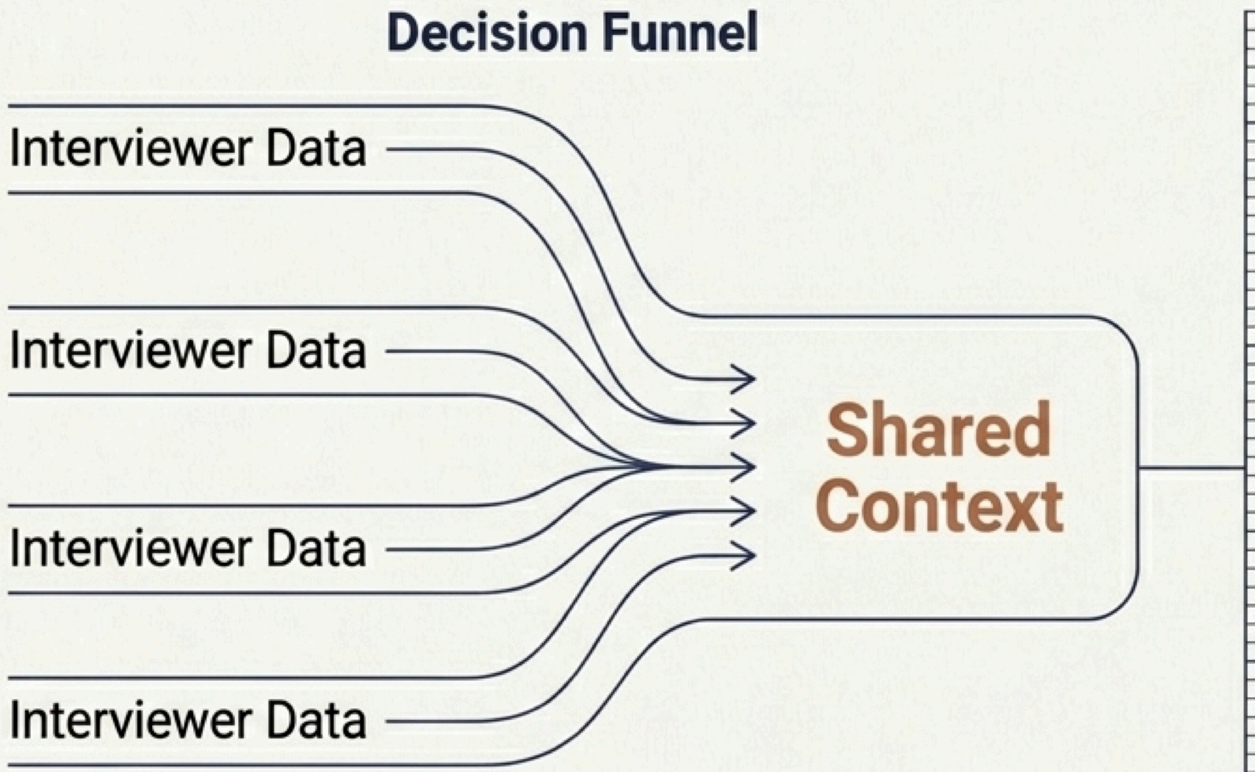
The post-interview debrief crucible



1. **Independent Scoring:** Share trait scores without revealing an initial hire/no-hire stance.
2. **Inverse Seniority Rule:** Junior members speak first to prevent anchoring and authority bias.
3. **Discrepancy Resolution:** Align on key behavioral insights and red flags.
4. **Full Context:** Establish a unified, 360-degree view of the candidate's journey through the unknown.

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Activating informed intuition via the mentor test

If we hired this person tomorrow, and assigned you as their dedicated mentor for the next three months... how excited or disappointed would you be?

Shifts the brain from analytical scoring to **holistic, empathetic intuition.**

Double-clicking on **'Why?'** consistently reveals overlooked red flags or surfaces hidden **superpowers** like extreme hunger to learn.

Structuring the final champion and veto decision



Champion

Veto



1 - Definite Hire

2 - Hire

3 - Neutral

4 - Skeptical

5 - Definite No-Hire

The Veto

Any interviewer on the panel can veto a candidate, protecting the culture.

The Champion

Moving forward requires at least one strong champion willing to stake their reputation on the hire.

The Manager

The final decision rests solely with the hiring manager, grounded in the collective informed informed intuition.

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The structural engineer who bombed the technicals

Traditional View: Greg's Resume

Mismatch: Structural Engineer applying for Software Engineer role at IMVU (The Lean Startup).

Status: Auto-Reject

Atomic Rituals View: The Debrief Outcome

- Failed the technical questions completely.
- Scored 100% on the Mentor Test.
- Demonstrated extreme humility, eagerness to learn, and rapid conceptual grasping.

Traditional hiring would have lost him to an oil rig. Atomic Rituals uncovered a growth mindset that made him one of IMVU's best engineering hires.

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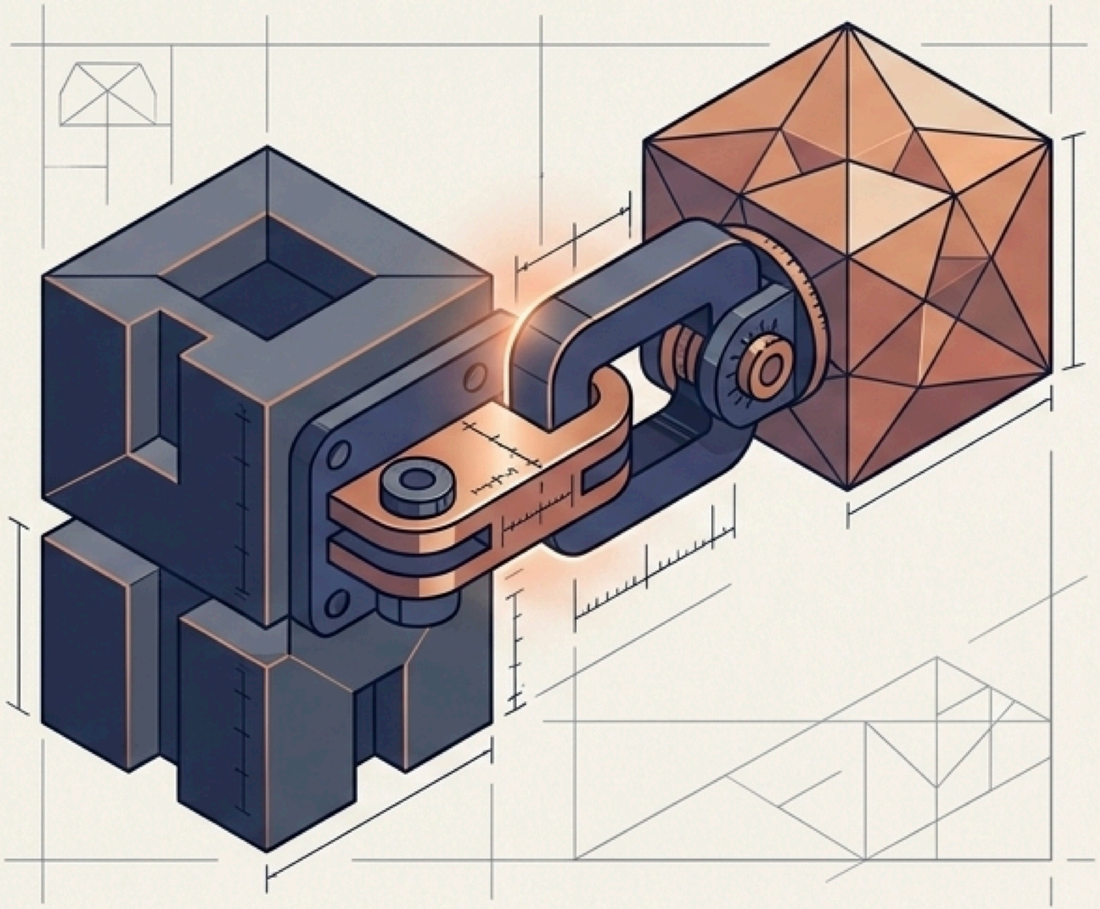
The manager close secures top talent



Securing 10x talent requires moving beyond the offer letter:

- **Build Deep Trust:** Establish personal rapport initiated during the interview process.
- **Align Values:** Connect the specific demands of the role to the candidate's personal purpose and goals.
- **Commit to the Journey:** Emphasize a shared commitment to solving meaningful challenges and fostering mutual growth.

> *"Joining isn't just about the work; it's about the journey we'll take together."*

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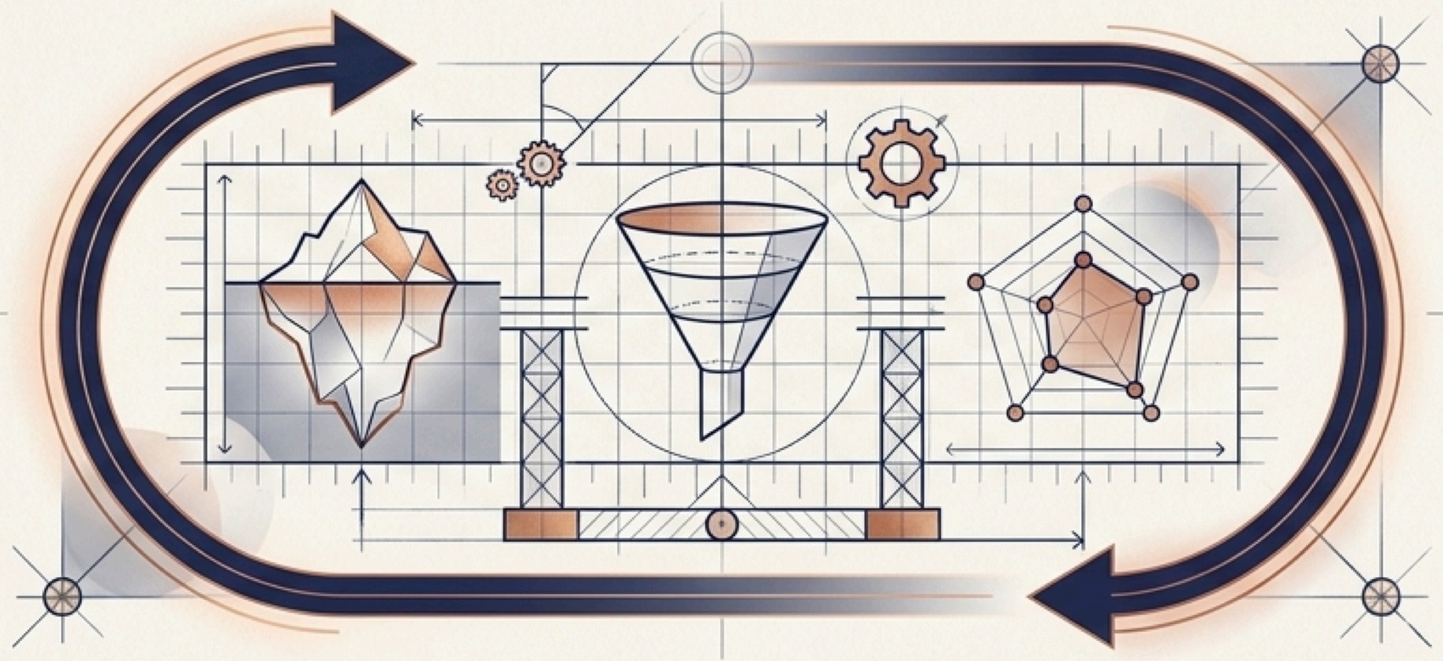
Hiring is the continuous engineering of organizational resilience



Feedback Loops:
Conduct post-hire reviews to assess the accuracy of the informed intuition.

Ritual Evolution:
Continuously update designed questions and rubrics to adapt to new business realities.

Strengthening DNA:
Rigorously protecting these rituals doesn't just fill seats—it systematically builds a highly adaptive, disruptive, and resilient organization.

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