

From High School Dropout to OpenAI Researcher



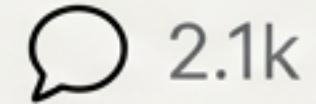
The New Rules of Learning and Success in the Age of AI

The Journey Starts with a Single Tweet.

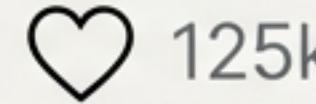


Gabriel Petersson
@gpe”

Five years ago I dropped out of high school in Sweden to join a startup with close to zero experience as an engineer today I'm joining OpenAI as a research scientist to build AGI with Sora.



2.1k



18.4k



125k

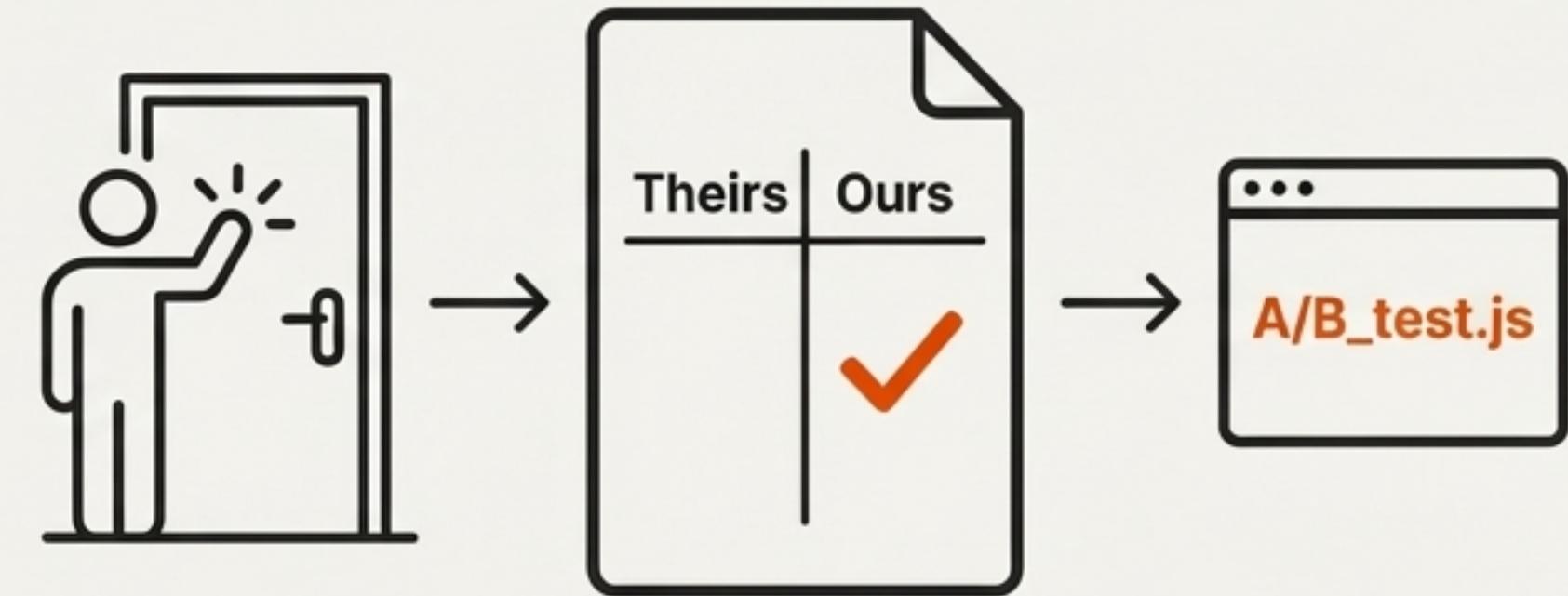


5.8M

This isn't just a story. It's a playbook for a new era.

Conviction Doesn't Wait for a Plan.

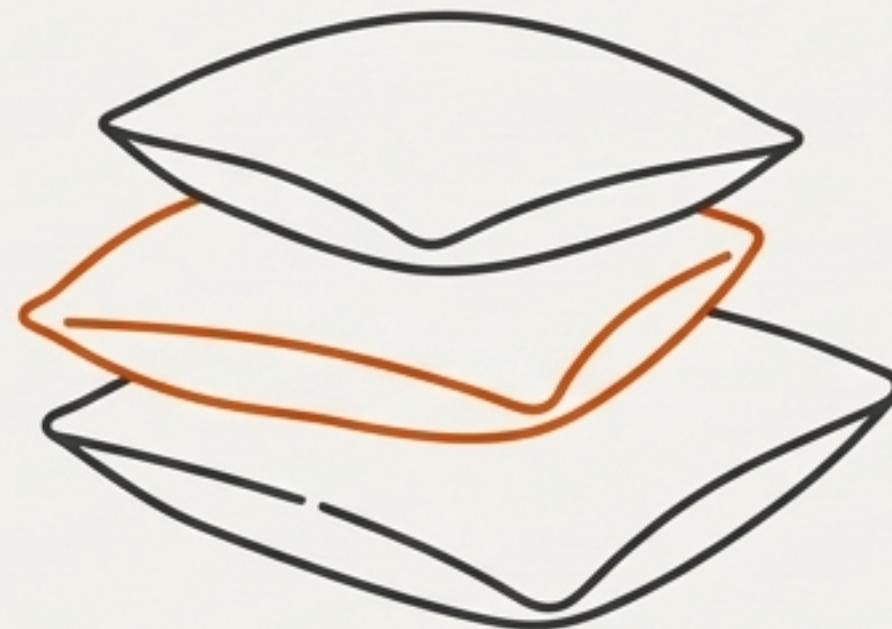
“My cousin called...
I took the next bus to
Stockholm and I just
never returned.”



THE HUSTLE

This wasn't just luck. To get his first clients, Gabriel knocked on company doors with A3 printouts comparing their product recommendations to his. He even brought a pre-written script to paste into their website's console for an instant A/B test. The core principle: create undeniable value upfront.

Fuelled by Delusion and Couch Pillows.



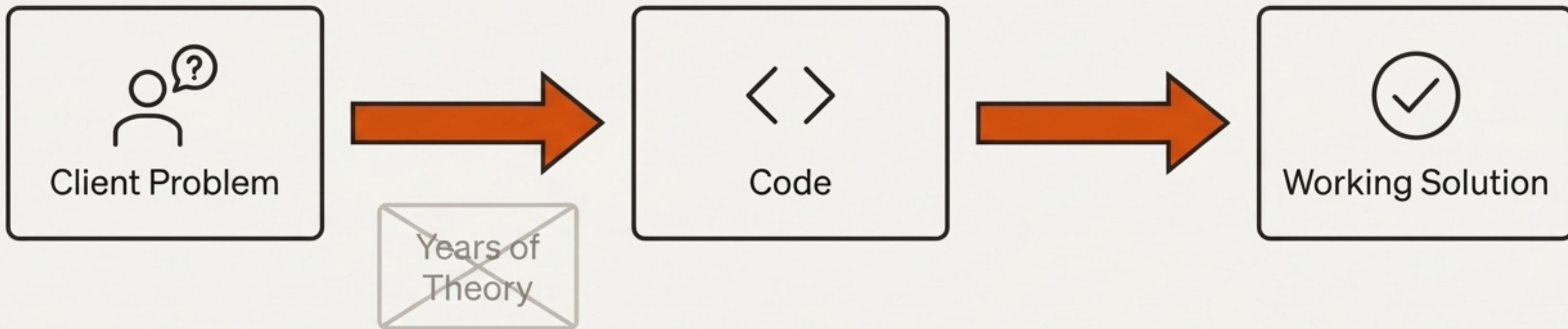
The early days: living in a cousin's tiny dorm room in Stockholm, sleeping on couch pillows found in the common room for a year.

I've always had a very distorted view of reality.
I was 100% sure that this would make me a billionaire.
100%. There was like no doubt in the world.

**Unwavering self-belief, even when it feels delusional,
is the engine for overcoming extreme adversity.**

The Best Teacher is a Real Problem.

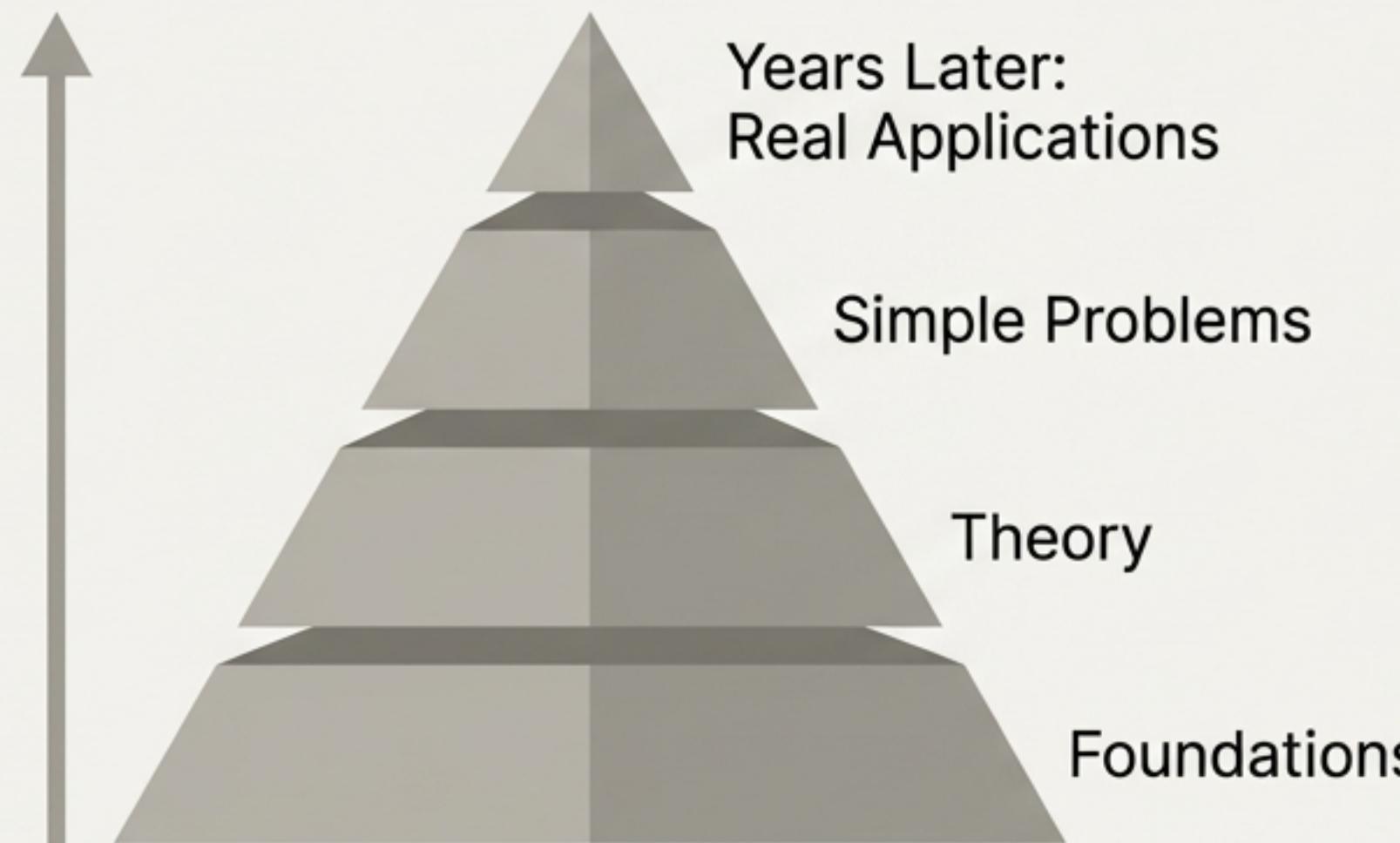
Gabriel learned to code not in a classroom, but because he was forced to. He had to build integrations, scrape websites, and set up A/B tests for actual clients.



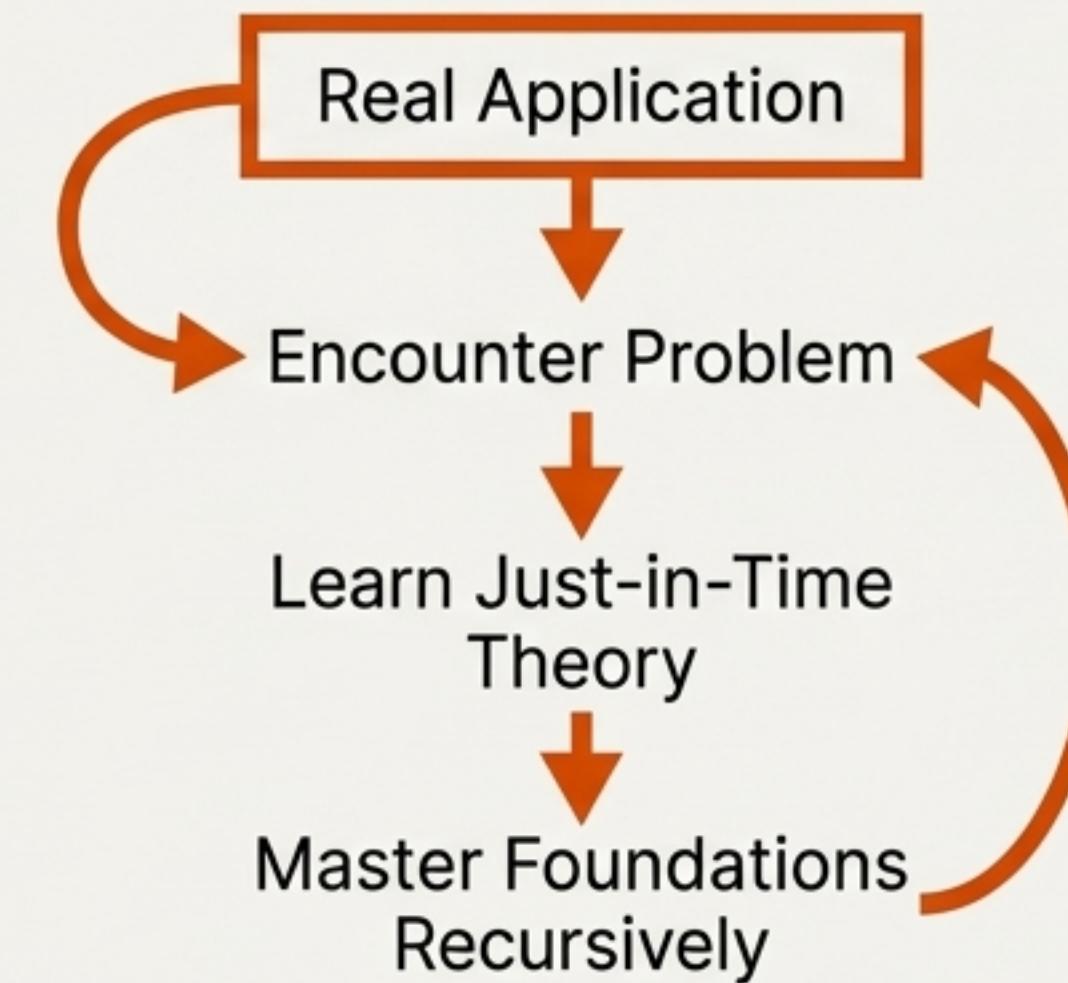
“You always have a real problem, which makes everything so simple... I could never learn anything without pressure.”

Universities Teach from the Bottom-Up. AI Unlocks the Top-Down.

BOTTOM-UP: THE OLD WAY

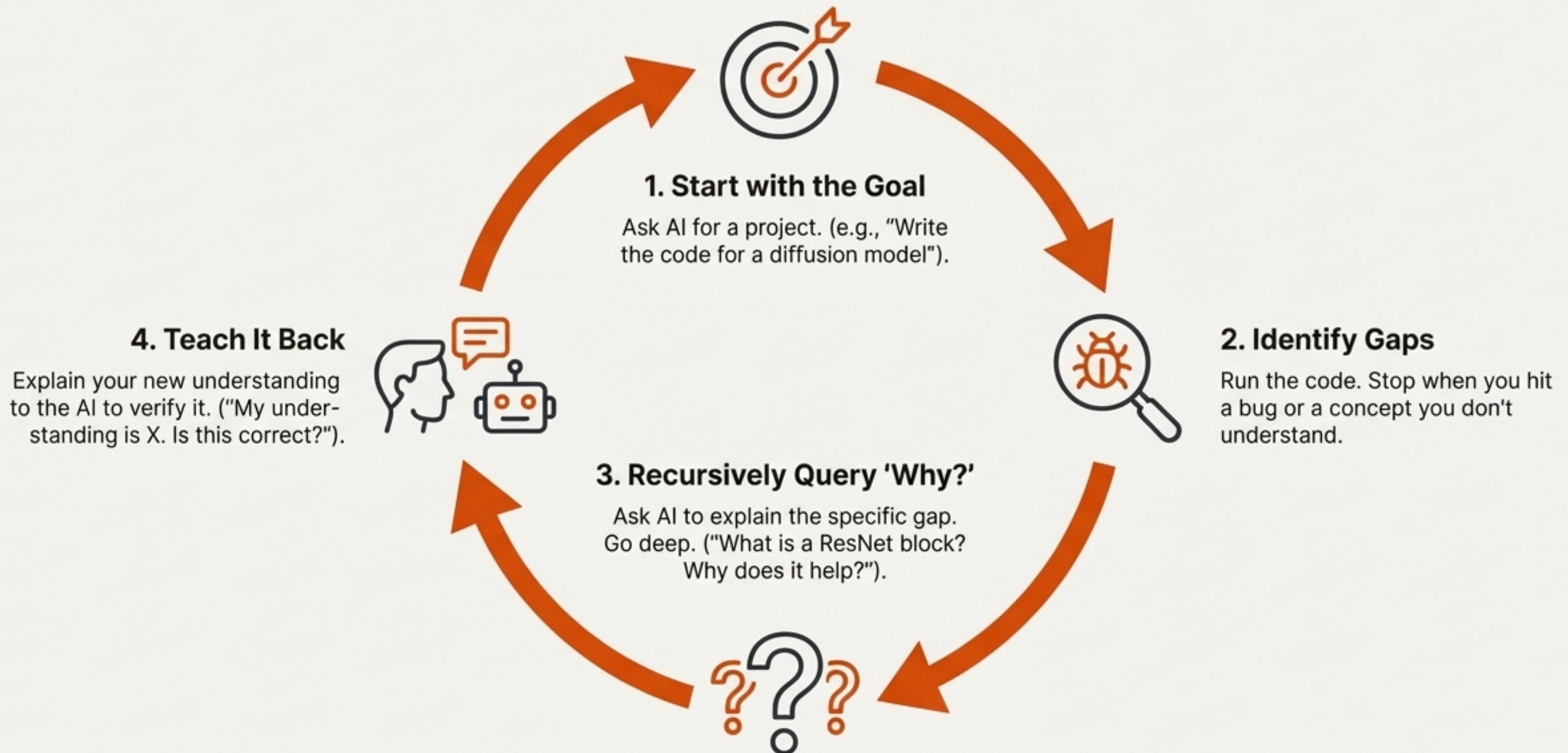


TOP-DOWN: THE NEW WAY



"I can barely take **universities seriously** that **don't teach [AI]**
as part of their curriculum. It's like actually insane."

How to Learn Anything: The Recursive Gap-Filling Loop.



Your Goal isn't Answers. It's the 'Aha!' Moment.

Learning with AI is a skill. The objective is to optimise for the 'click' of deep intuition—the moment you fundamentally grasp a concept. You have to train yourself to recognise when you don't *truly* understand something.

Toolkit: Pro-Prompts to Chase the Click

`Explain this concept like I'm 12, using a real-world analogy.'

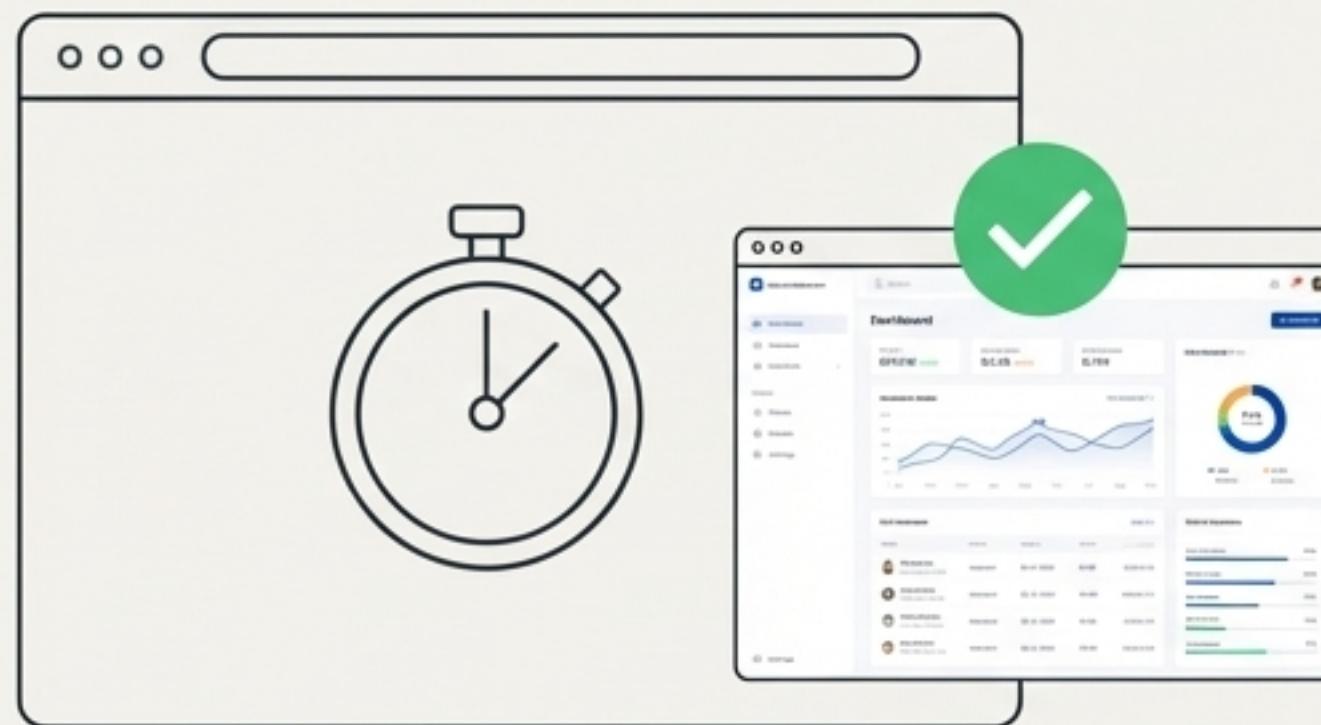
`Be extremely direct and concrete. Show all the intermediate states and the shapes of the code you produce.'

`What are the first principles behind this technique? If this didn't exist, what problem would I have?'

Degrees are a Proxy. Value is the Truth.

Drop what you've been told. Start from this principle: **Companies just want to make money.** Your job is to show them how you can help. Degrees are a proxy for this when no direct evidence exists.

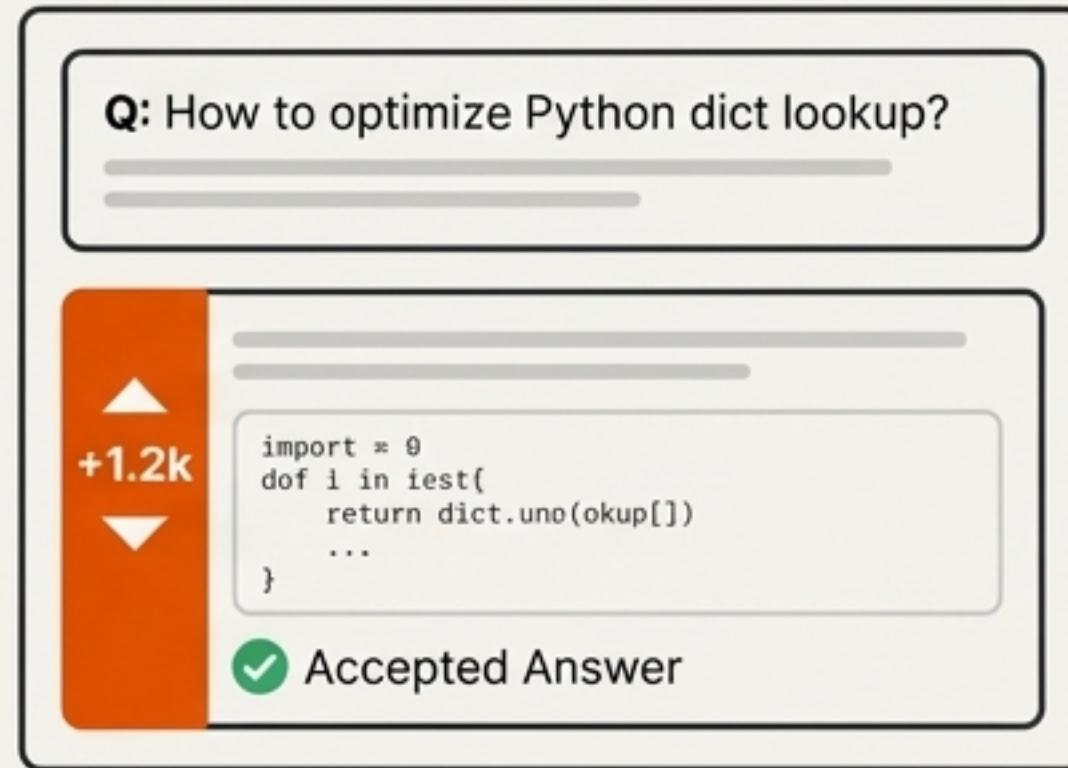
THE HACK: THE 3-SECOND DEMO



Build something impressive that a hiring manager understands within three seconds. **Show, don't tell.** Instead of saying "I streamlined data pipelines," show them a working demo that is undeniably fast and effective.

Your work is your credential.

Hacking the System: From Stack Overflow to an O-1 Visa



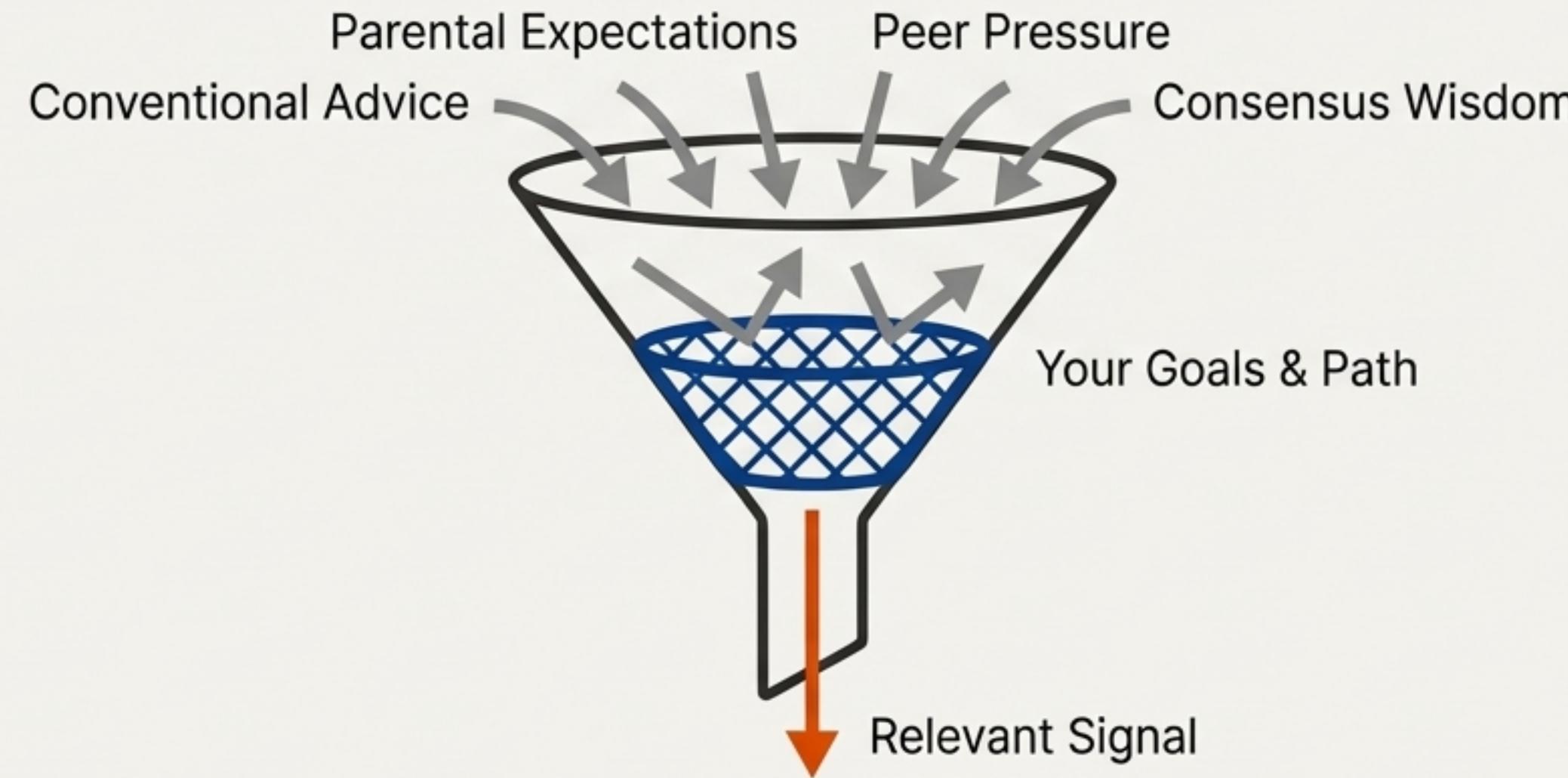
The Argument: Rigorously peer-reviewed with millions of views.



To get his O-1 visa, Gabriel needed to satisfy criteria like "academic publishing." He successfully used his high-reputation Stack Overflow posts, arguing they fulfilled the spirit of the requirement through community peer review.

Credentials can be created, not just earned through traditional institutions. Be creative and find the loopholes.

Your Career Belongs to You, Not the Consensus.



Most people give well-intentioned but useless advice based on their own limited, conventional path. Their incentives are not aligned with yours.

"Drop everything you ever have been told about getting a job and start from this simple statement: Companies just want to make money."

Talent is a Network Effect



The primary advantage of a hub like San Francisco is the extreme talent density. It creates compounding advantages in ambition, capital, and opportunity.

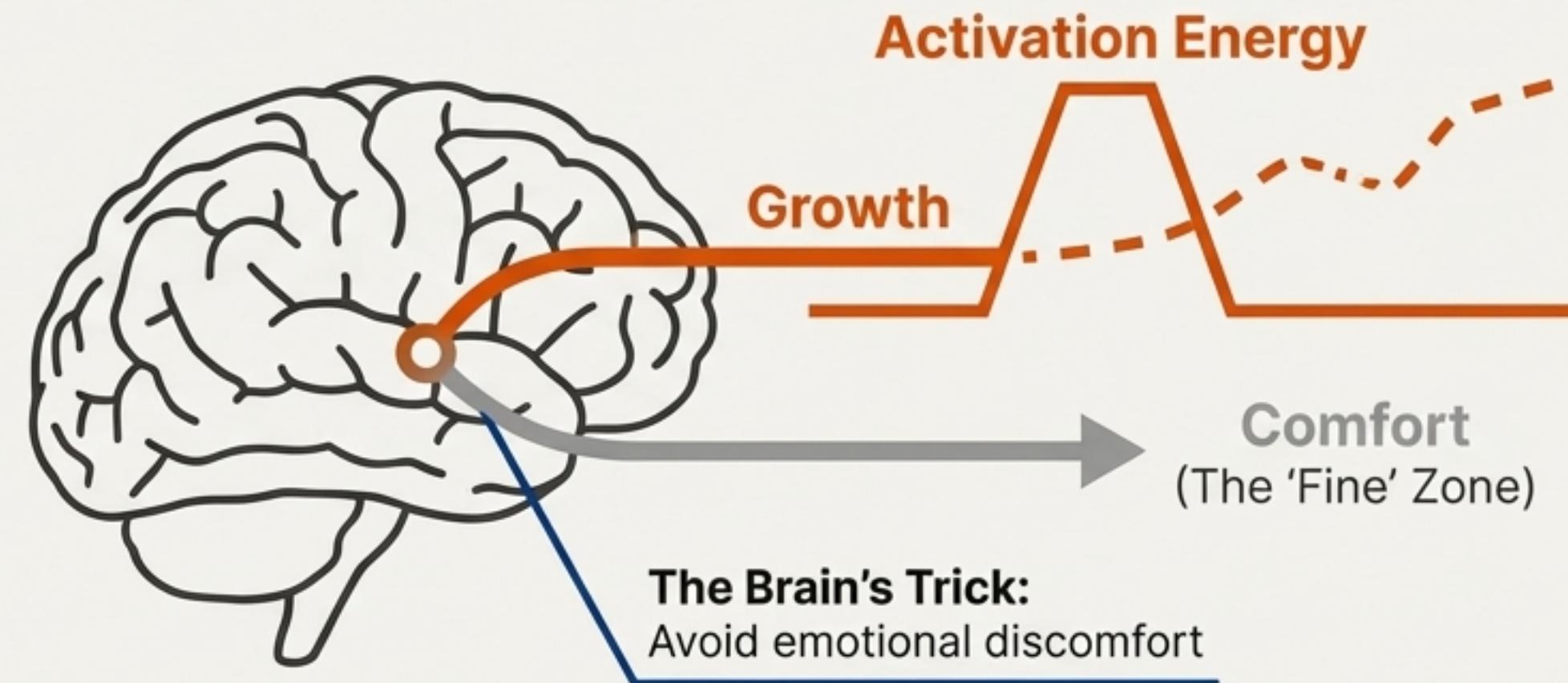
- ✓ Higher concentration of top-tier talent.
- ✓ Order-of-magnitude higher salaries.
- ✓ Ambition becomes the norm, not the exception.

To operate at the highest level, immerse yourself in an environment that acts as a force multiplier for your career.

The Diagnosis: Escaping 'Permanent Light Suffering'

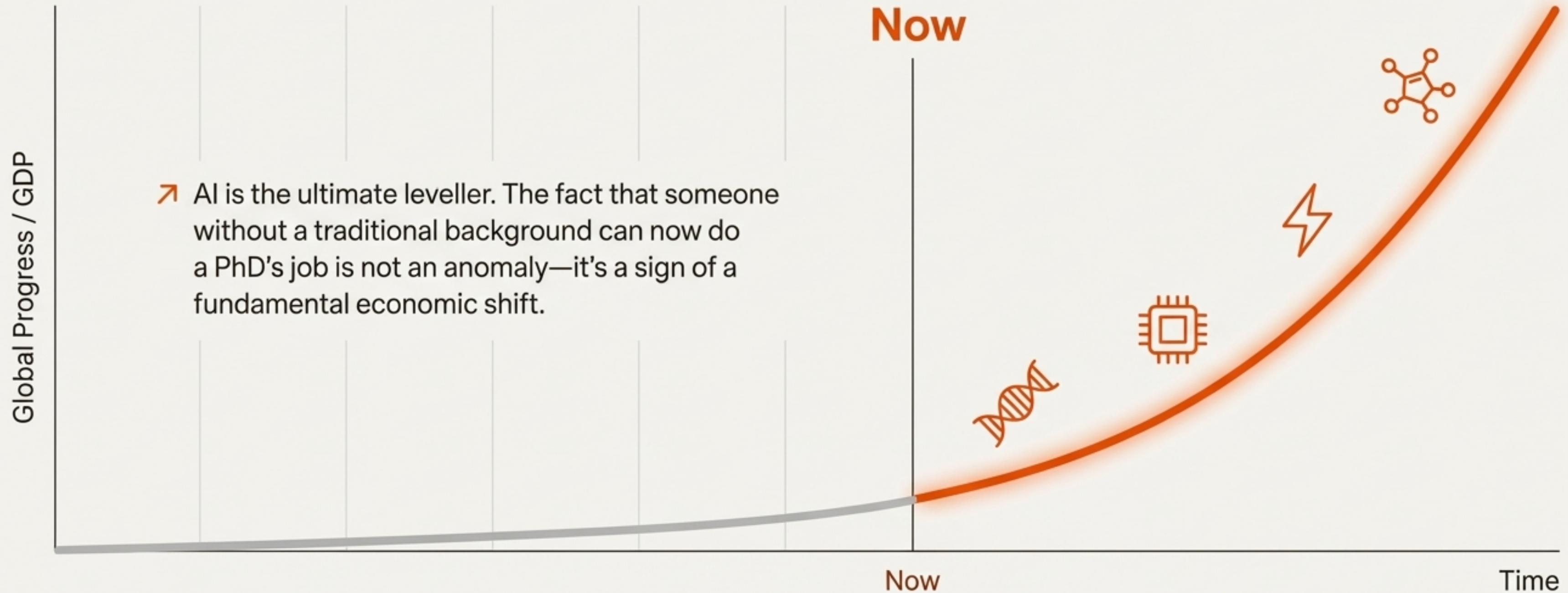
The Theory

Most people are allergic to mentally tough decisions. They remain in sub-optimal jobs because the activation energy to change (interviewing, negotiating, quitting) is immense.



**Be ruthlessly honest with yourself.
Are you optimising for comfort or for growth?**

We Are at the Dawn of an Unprecedented Age of Leverage



“This will be like a double-digit increase in world GDP... just coming from large language models... and anyone can do it.”

Your Turn.

The New Rules Summarised

Act First

Develop a profound bias for action over planning.

Learn Top-Down

Solve real problems now; master theory recursively.

Prove Value Directly

Let your work be your only credential.

Leverage AI Relentlessly

Turn curiosity into expertise, instantly.

What problem will you solve first?