

# Chatbots in Legal Practice: A Governance-First Framework

// LEVEL 1 ADOPTION: DRAFTING, CLIENT  
COMMUNICATION, AND RISK CONTROL

Based on "Practical Legal  
Applications of Generative AI"  
Chapter 1: Level 1 Adoption

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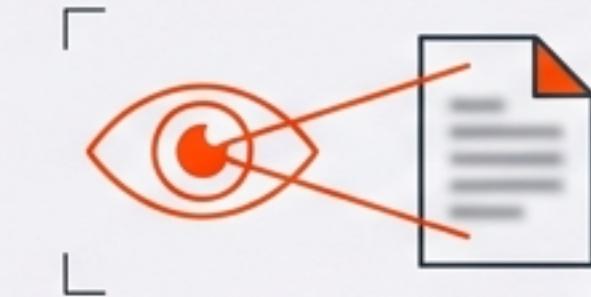
# The 'Level 1' Scope: Speed Without Surrender of Judgment



## Value Driver: Friction Reduction

Level 1 chatbots are drafting engines. They accelerate the production of text for routine tasks: emails, outlines, and summaries.

## Infrastructure for Text Text Generation



## Risk Driver: The Paradox of Fluency

Fluency masks uncertainty. A chatbot can produce a draft that looks professionally perfect but is legally baseless.

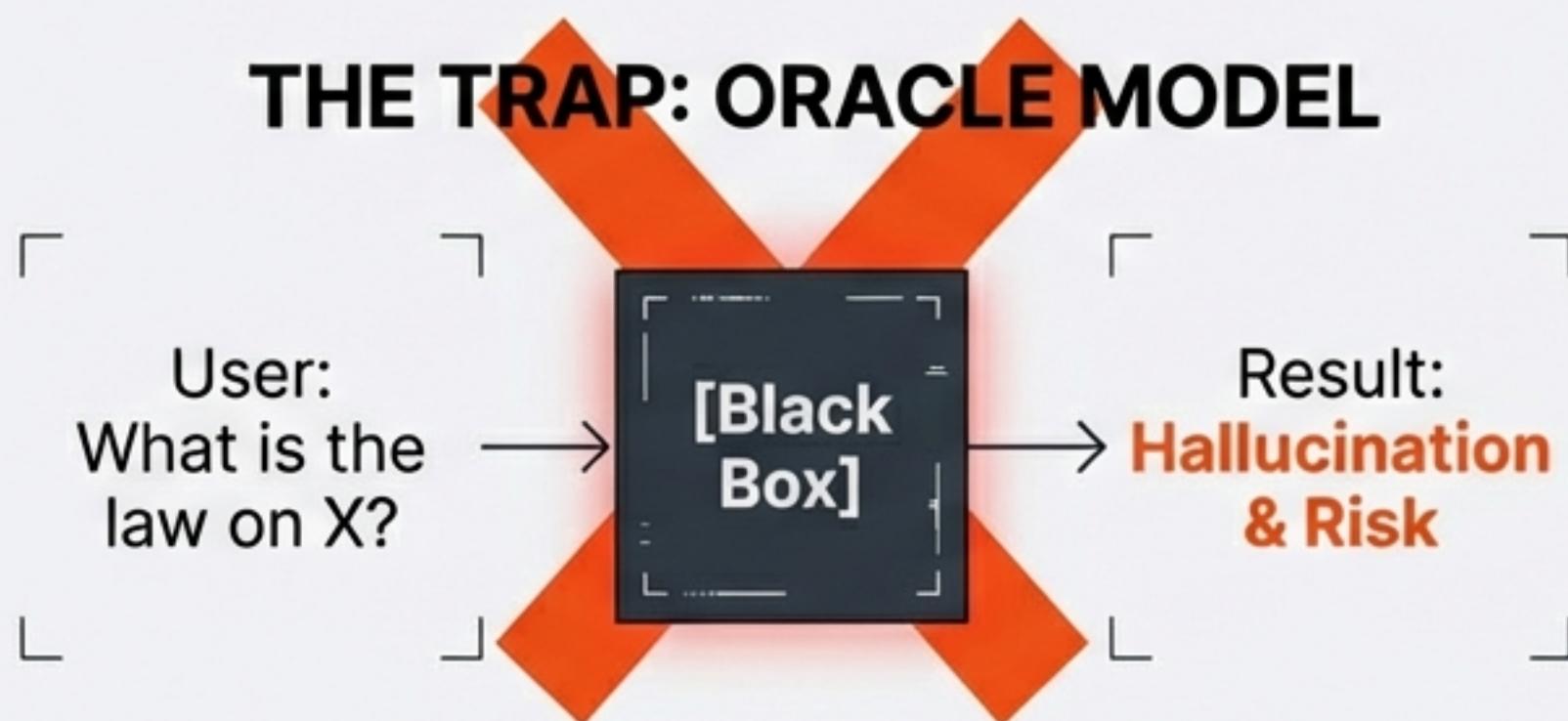
## Confident Hallucination & Invented Authority

**THE GOVERNANCE GOAL:** Shift from trusting the output to constraining the input.

# The Mental Model: Drafting Engine, Not Authority

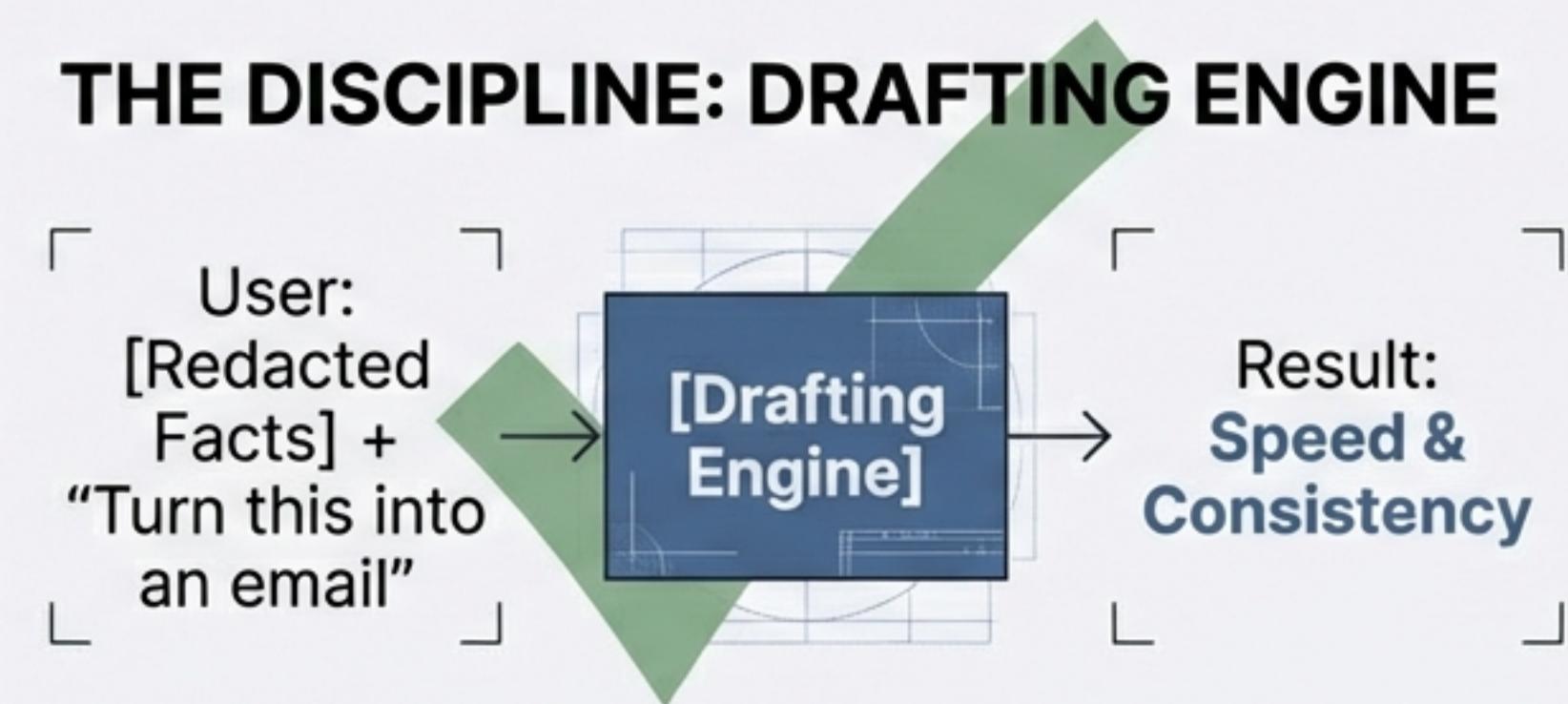
**“A chatbot can help you write what you already know; it cannot tell you what is true.”**

## THE TRAP: ORACLE MODEL



Do not use as a database of truth.

## THE DISCIPLINE: DRAFTING ENGINE



Use as a probabilistic text generator.

# The Fit Test: Capabilities vs. Hard Limits

## WHAT LEVEL 1 CAN DO (Reliably Under Supervision)

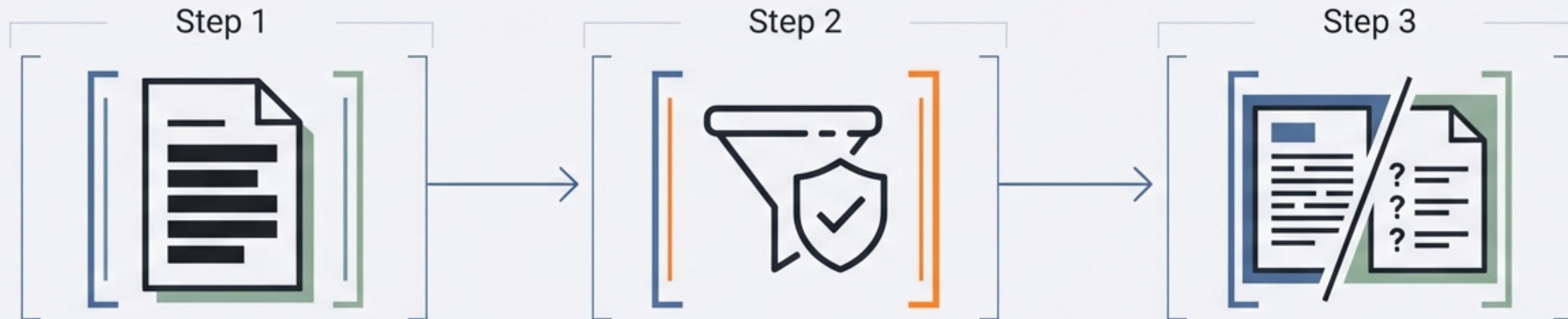
- 1. Draft routine client updates from provided facts.
- 2. Convert unstructured notes into structured outlines.
- 3. Translate legal concepts into plain English (with disclaimers).
- 4. Adjust tone (e.g., 'make this neutral') without changing substance.

## WHAT LEVEL 1 CANNOT DO (The Danger Zone)

- ! 1. Verify facts or resolve factual disputes.
- ! 2. Conduct research or generate citations (The Citation Trap).
- ! 3. Ensure jurisdiction fit (defaults to generic US law).
- ! 4. Handle unredacted sensitive/privileged data.

**DECISION RULE:** If you cannot verify the output by looking at your own notes, do not ask the bot.

# The "Facts-Only" Workflow: Constraining Invention



## The Fact Packet

Closed Universe.  
A redacted, bulleted list of facts provided by the lawyer.

## The Negative Instruction

Prompt Command: "Do not add dates, names, laws, law, or procedural steps not provided."

## The Artifacts

1. The Draft (Text)
2. Mandatory "Open Questions" (Missing Info)

We trade creativity for fidelity.

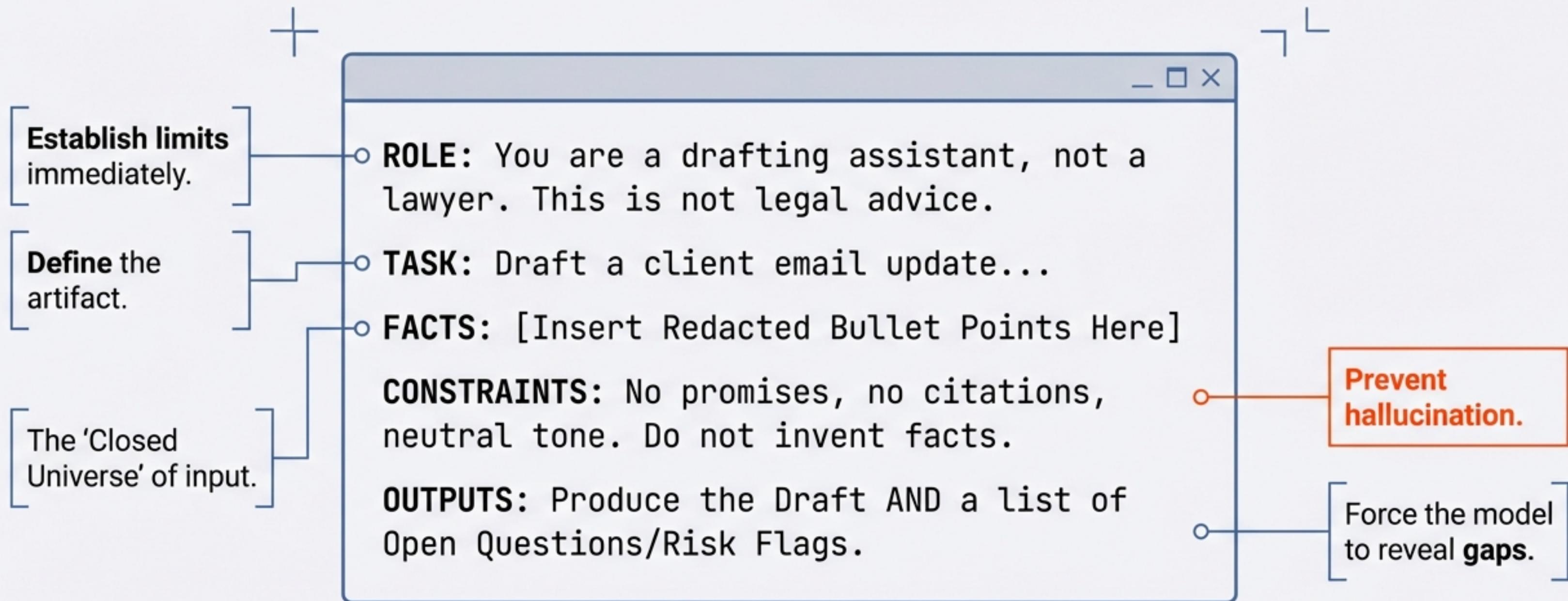
# Operational Control: The Stoplight Gating System



**Most high-value drafting sits in Yellow. This requires the 'Minimum Viable Audit'.**

# Prompt Engineering as a Control Surface

## The 5-Part Methodology for Safe Prompts



# Mini-Case A: Criminal Law (Managing Tone & Reliance)

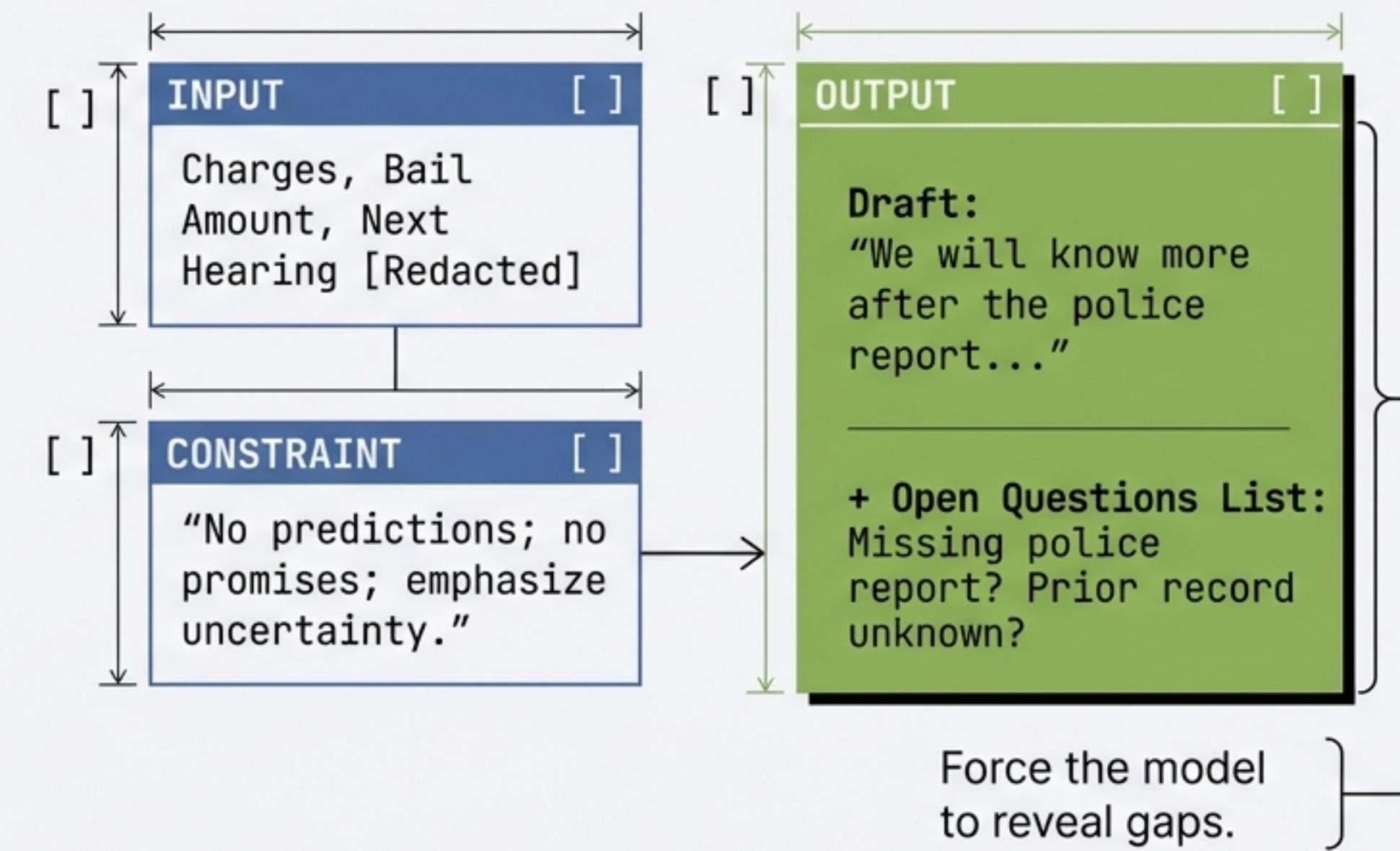
Scenario: Bail hearing update to an anxious family.

## THE RISK: OVERPROMISING

**Model Output:**  
"Don't worry, we  
will get him out  
soon."

**Problem:** Creates false  
hope and liability.

## THE LEVEL 1 FIX: CONSTRAINTS



# Mini-Case B: Regulatory Inquiry (Avoiding Admissions)

**Scenario:** Responding to a federal agency request.

## THE RISK: NARRATIVE CREEP

Model Output: "We are cooperating fully with the agency and have already initiated a review of all relevant practices..."

Problem: The chatbot expands on facts to make the letter flow better, inadvertently admitting to scope or practices not yet verified.

## THE LEVEL 1 FIX: FACTS-ONLY DRAFTING

### [ INPUT ]

- Received inquiry letter dated [Date].
- Deadline for response: [Date].
- Client has not yet confirmed scope.

### [ CONSTRAINT ]

"Acknowledge receipt.  
Ask for clarification.  
Add NO narrative substance."

### [ RESULT ]

Draft: "Dear [Agency],  
This letter acknowledges receipt of your inquiry dated [Date].

We are in the process of reviewing the request and will require additional clarification on [specific points] before providing a substantive response. We will provide a full response by [Date].

Sincerely,  
[Your Name]"

A boring, safe, procedural letter.

Force the model to reveal gaps.

# Mini-Case C: Cross-Border Transactions (Jurisdiction Drift)

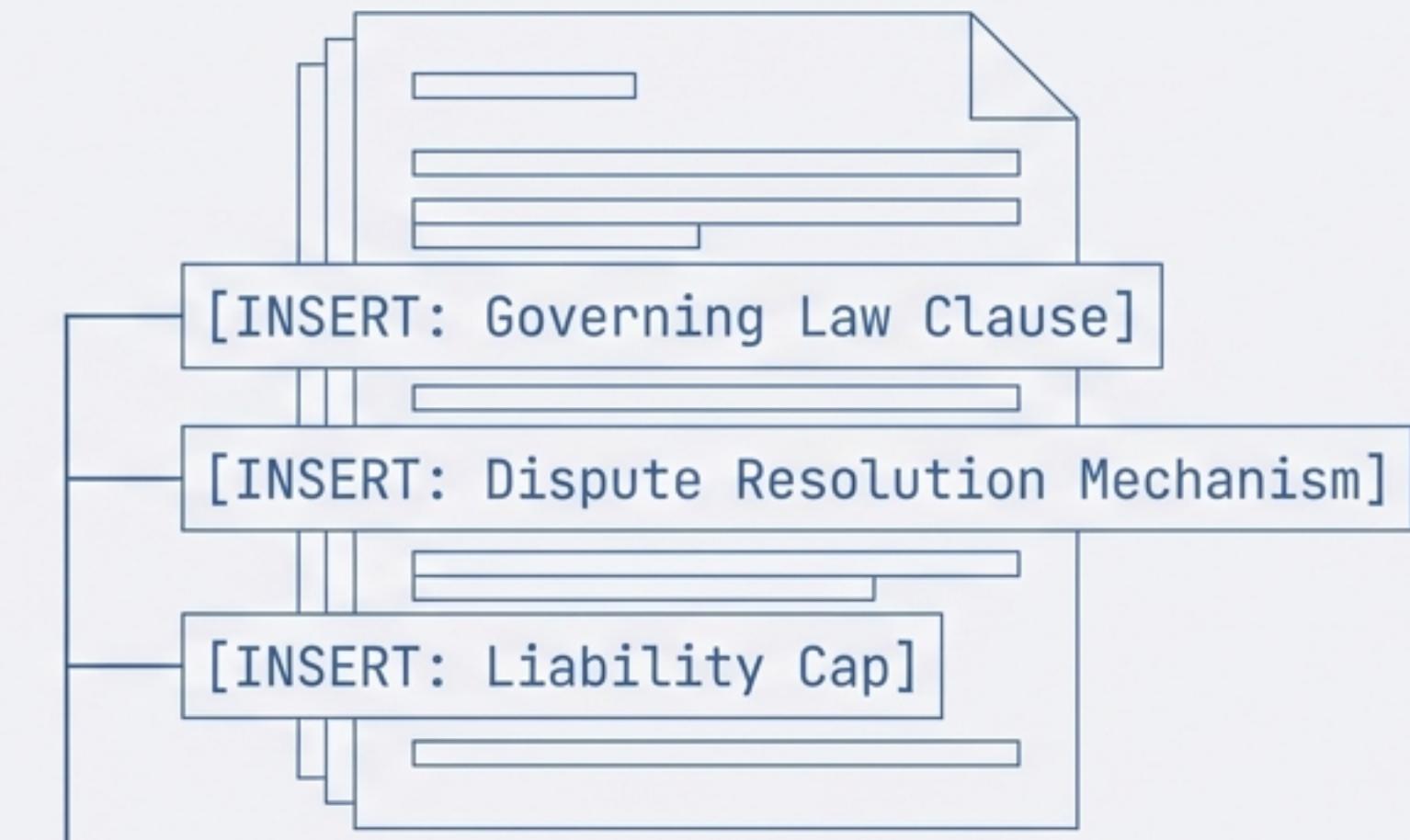
Scenario: Cross-border term sheet drafting.

## THE RISK

► The model defaults to generic U.S. commercial norms that do not apply to the specific governing law.

Problem: Creates legal uncertainty and misaligned expectations.

## THE FIX: SCAFFOLDING WITH PLACEHOLDERS



Technique: Use the bot for structure (scaffolding), not substance.

# Mini-Case D: Teaching & Training (Academic Integrity)

Scenario: Creating lesson plans and hypotheticals.

## GRADING RUBRIC: VERIFICATION & PROCESS

Did the student catch the errors?  Yes  No

Did the student verify the citations?  Yes  No

Is there a clear audit trail?  Yes  No

**The Meta-Lesson:** Teach the 'Not Verified' output as a feature, not a bug. Grading is based on the verification process, not the final text.

# The Critical Rule: No Unverified Citations



**IF YOU DIDN'T READ THE PRIMARY SOURCE, IT DOESN'T EXIST.**

## The Danger:

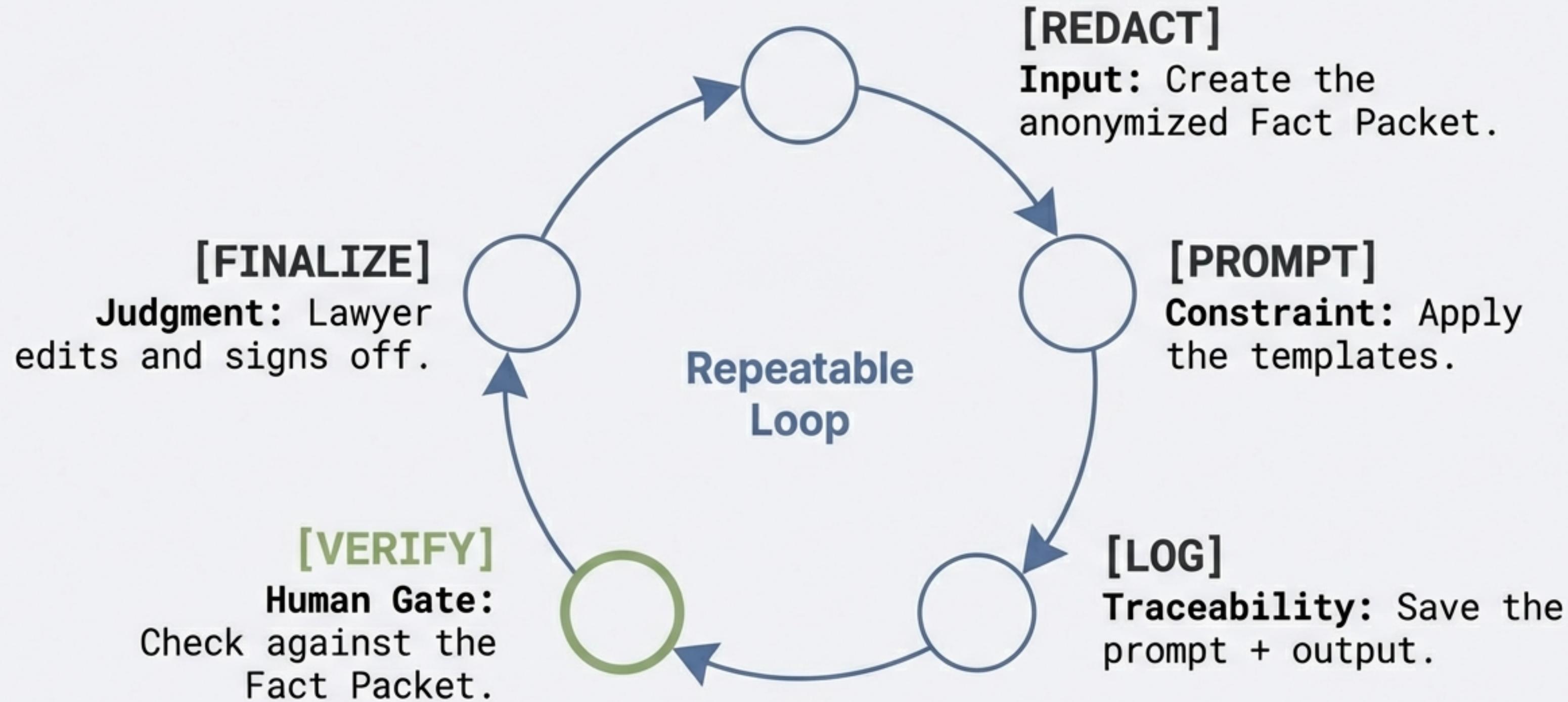
**Invented authority (fake cases) is the #1 reputational killer.**

## The Policy:

Chatbots at **Level 1 FORMAT** citations provided by humans. They do **not FIND** citations.

# Operational Hygiene: The ‘Minimum Viable Audit’

Defensibility without bureaucracy.



# Implementation: The 'Prompt Pack' Strategy

**Action:** Don't let lawyers improvise. Provide 3 standard templates.

## [The Client Update]

- 📁 Structure: [Facts] +
  - ↳ [Open Questions] + [Risk Flags]

## [The Scaffolding Outline]

- 📄 Structure:
  - ↳ [Headings] + [Placeholders for Law]

## [The Plain English Explainer]

- 💬 Structure:
  - ↳ [Strict word limit] + "[Not Legal Advice] Disclaimers"

**Action Item:** Save these in a shared drive. Make them the default starting point.

# Summary: The Minimum Standard for Safe Use



**Redact by default.** Minimize sensitive inputs.



**Demand “Open Questions”.** Force the model to reveal uncertainty.



**Zero Trust for Citations.** Never use unverified authority.



**Log Material Uses.** Keep the audit trail.



**Human Authority.** The lawyer is the final gatekeeper.

**Speed is valuable. But in law, speed never outruns control.**