

Founder Operating Principles

Preserving Optionality

Purpose. These principles exist to protect our ability to adapt over time. They are not about moving slower — they are about staying *changeable*.

1. Speed is not the goal. Optionality is.

Speed matters only when it does not destroy future options. Reversible decisions should be made quickly; irreversible decisions deserve friction.

2. Temporary decisions are treated as temporary.

Most rigidity comes from "just for now" choices that never get revisited. Temporary decisions require an owner, a review point, and an exit condition.

3. Reversibility scales with impact.

The larger the blast radius of a decision, the slower and more deliberately it is made. Fast paths are reserved for low-cost mistakes.

4. Feedback beats confidence.

We do not wait for certainty. We design for early signals, cheap learning, and visible outcomes. Confidence without feedback is risk, not strength.

5. Changing our mind is not failure.

Course correction is normal. Assumptions expire, plans evolve, and decisions are revised. Early correction is a success condition.

6. Constraints protect freedom.

Unbounded autonomy creates silent lock-in. We constrain architecture, incentives, and commitments to preserve long-term flexibility.

7. The core question.

Before major decisions, we ask: **How cheaply can we change our mind later?** If the answer is "we can't," the decision must be redesigned.

Our advantage is not that we are always right. It is that we can adapt faster than systems that pretend to be.

from [Symbolic Lab's Freedom That Lasts](https://github.com/symbolic-labs-pub/freedom-that-lasts) at
github.com/symbolic-labs-pub/freedom-that-lasts