The agency ladder

When do you let the agent press publish?

5	**Autonomous**	It acts within a mandate. You review outcomes.
4	**Publish and report**	It acts, then tells you what it did.
3	**Veto window**	It ships unless you stop it in time.
2	**Review**	It produces. You read all of it and approve.
1	**Draft**	It produces. You rewrite.

What is horizontal thinking?

Vertical vs. horizontal

> **Connecting domains you don't fully own, while machines supply the depth.**

	Vertical	Horizontal
Shape of a career	A ladder: one field, one identity deep	**Across domains you don't fully own**
Where the depth comes from	Years of specializing	**Machines supply it**
What you own	Tasks	**Outcomes, with your name on them**
What you do with expertise	Stack it	**Connect it**
Built for	The specialist era	**What comes after it**

Owning

Task, problem, ownership

> **Deciding is easy. Owning is the part we build whole org charts to avoid.**

	A task	A problem	Ownership
What moves	The doing	The solving: the how is theirs	**Nothing. It stays at your name.**
Can it be delegated?	Yes: to a junior, a supplier, now an AI agent	Yes, and generously	**No**
What it does	Unloads you	Grows them	**Gives consequences somewhere to live**

Position crafting

A position is what breaks if you leave

Outcomes you own

Not things you do. Things where, if they fail, the failure is yours by name, not by committee.

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Bridges

Connections you personally built across teams, functions and domains. They live in people, not in any system of record.

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Your position

Everything else is cargo: the part of your calendar the machine will carry.

Leading humans vs. leading agents

> If leading humans is a relationship, leading agents is an architecture.

	Leading humans	Leading agents
What it is	A relationship: maintained, never finished	**An architecture: designed and versioned**
When it underperforms	The cause can live anywhere	**The cause usually lives in something you built**
The craft	Attention, timing, repair	**Specification, verification, hearing the whole piece**
What you get for free	Context, pride, goodwill	**Depth on tap, and not one gram of goodwill**

Quiet quitting vs. back-sitting

> **Sitting with their backs to the future. Not looking forward, not steering. Just sitting. Waiting. Holding on.**

	Quiet quitting	Back-sitting
Shows up	Yes, doing the minimum	**Yes, as many days as you asked**
Faces	Forward, even if forward meant the exit	**Nowhere**
Driven by	Disengagement	**Fear**
On the dashboard	Looks like a problem	**Looks like loyalty**
Over time	A trend that moved on	**Does not fix itself. It compounds.**