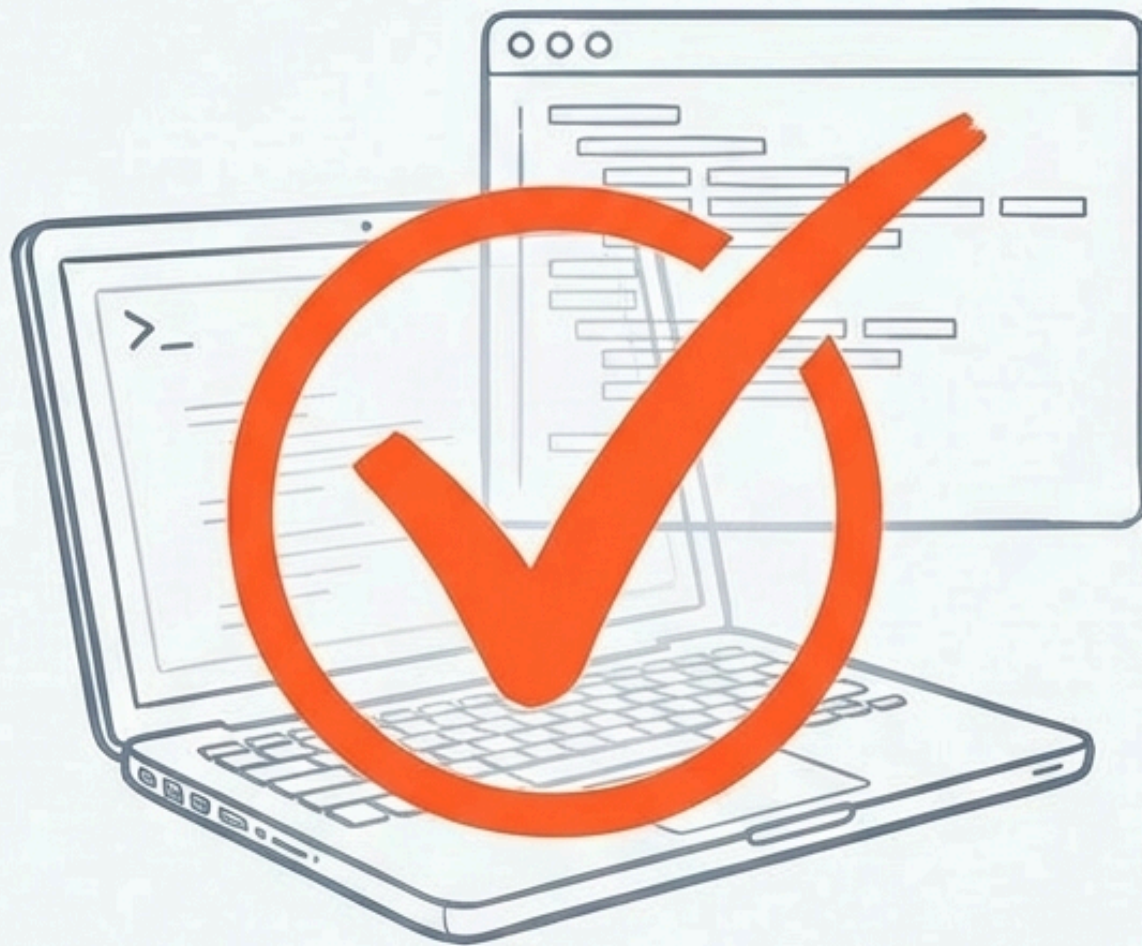


Niche First, Vibe Code Second

The Fastest Way to Test a Startup
Idea Without Wasting Months



By Ratomir Jovanovic
introplan.com

This 7-Step Loop Saved Me From Building the Wrong Product



Fast Validation Over Slow Perfection.
Iterate, Learn, and Pivot Quickly.

Vibe Coding is a Chainsaw: Powerful in the Right Hands, Dangerous Without a Plan

Good For	Bad For
✓ Speed	✗ Finding a Niche
✓ Prototypes	✗ Building Platforms
✓ Thin Slices	✗ Hiding Weak Demand
✓ Automating One Workflow	✗ Multi-feature Products

Checklist

- ✓ One workflow only
- ✓ One metric that matters
- ✓ One payment moment

Score These 8 Criteria in 30 Minutes or Kill the Idea

The Niche Scorecard

Criteria	Idea A	Idea B
 1. Urgency	● ● ○ ○ ○	● ● ○ ○ ○
 2. Budget	● ● ● ● ○	● ● ○ ○ ○
 3. Frequency	● ● ● ● ○	● ● ● ○ ○
 4. Ease of Reach	● ● ● ● ○	● ● ● ● ○
 5. Existing Alternatives Pain	● ● ○ ○ ○	● ● ○ ○ ○
 6. Proof Availability	● ● ● ● ○	● ● ○ ○ ○
 7. Sales Cycle Length	● ● ● ● ○	● ● ● ○ ○
 8. Compliance Risk	● ● ● ○ ○	● ● ● ○ ○
TOTAL	27	21



KILL RULE: Anything with **Low Budget** ⚠️ + **Low Urgency** ⚠️ = **Dead on Arrival.** 🦴

Pick Speed Over TAM: The Fastest Path to a Paid Pilot Wins



➔ **Choose the niche that maximizes speed to a paid pilot, not TAM.**

- ✓ Actionable clarity over perfect market analysis. Focus on what you can validate now.

Your Offer Must Pass the 15-Second Test

OFFER FORMULA

Help **[ICP]** get **[Measurable Outcome]**
in **[Time]** without **[Top Obstacle]**.



INCLUSIONS

What you DO

- ✓ **Deliverable 1:**
Placeholder for specific action or asset.
- ✓ **Feature 2:**
Placeholder for key component of the offer.
- ✓ **Support Element 3:**
Placeholder for ongoing assistance or access.



EXCLUSIONS

What you DON'T do

- ✗ **Scope Limitation 1:**
Placeholder for boundary or non-included service.
- ✗ **Out-of-Scope Item 2:**
Placeholder for things the client is responsible for.
- ✗ **Guarantee Exclusion 3:**
Placeholder for what is not covered.



DONE DEFINITION

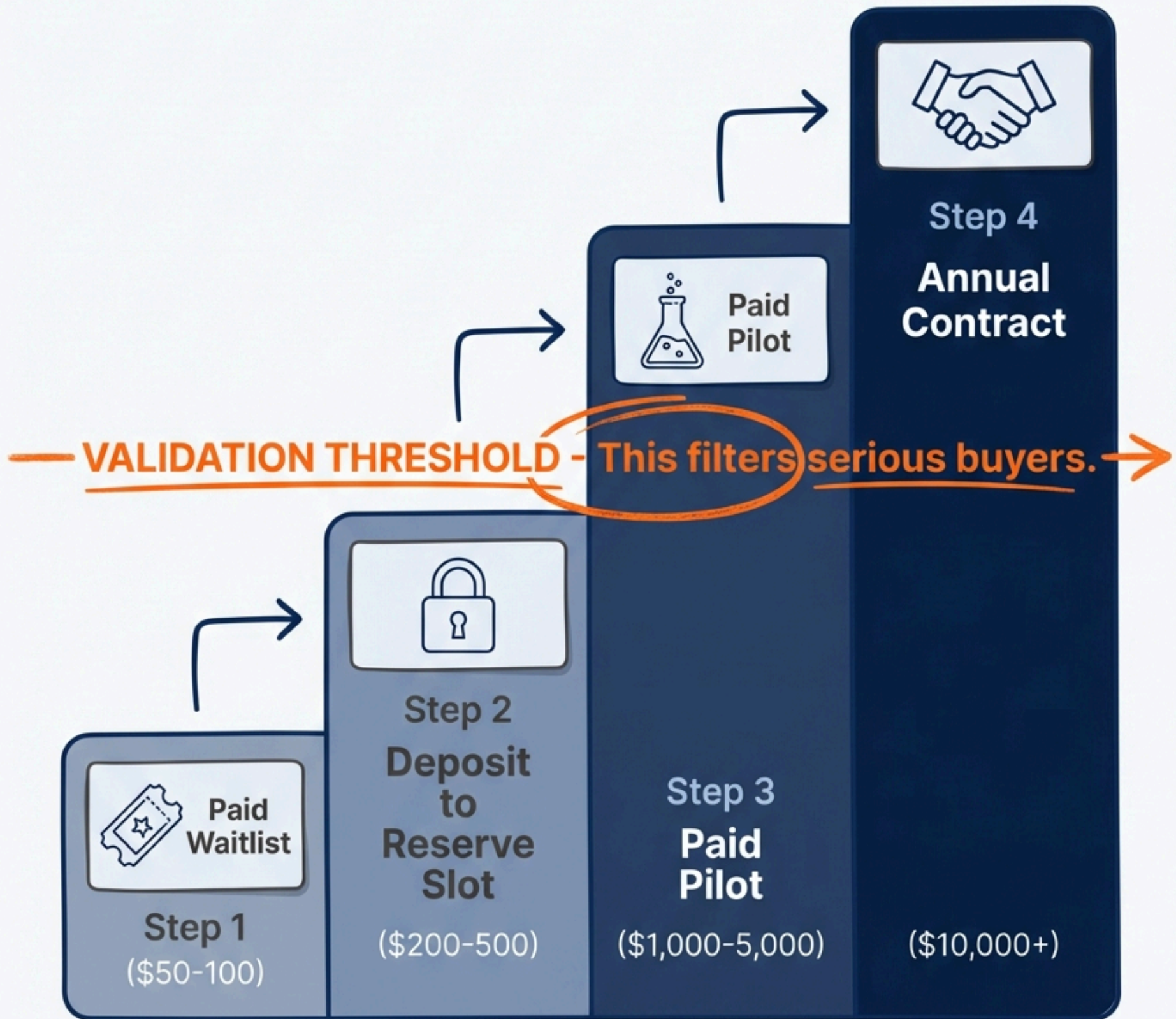
What 'complete' means

- 🚩 **Milestone 1:**
Placeholder for a tangible completion criteria.
- 🚩 **Result Metric 2:**
Placeholder for a measurable success indicator.
- 🚩 **Final Handover 3:**
Placeholder for the final delivery state.

A confused buyer never buys. Clarity wins.

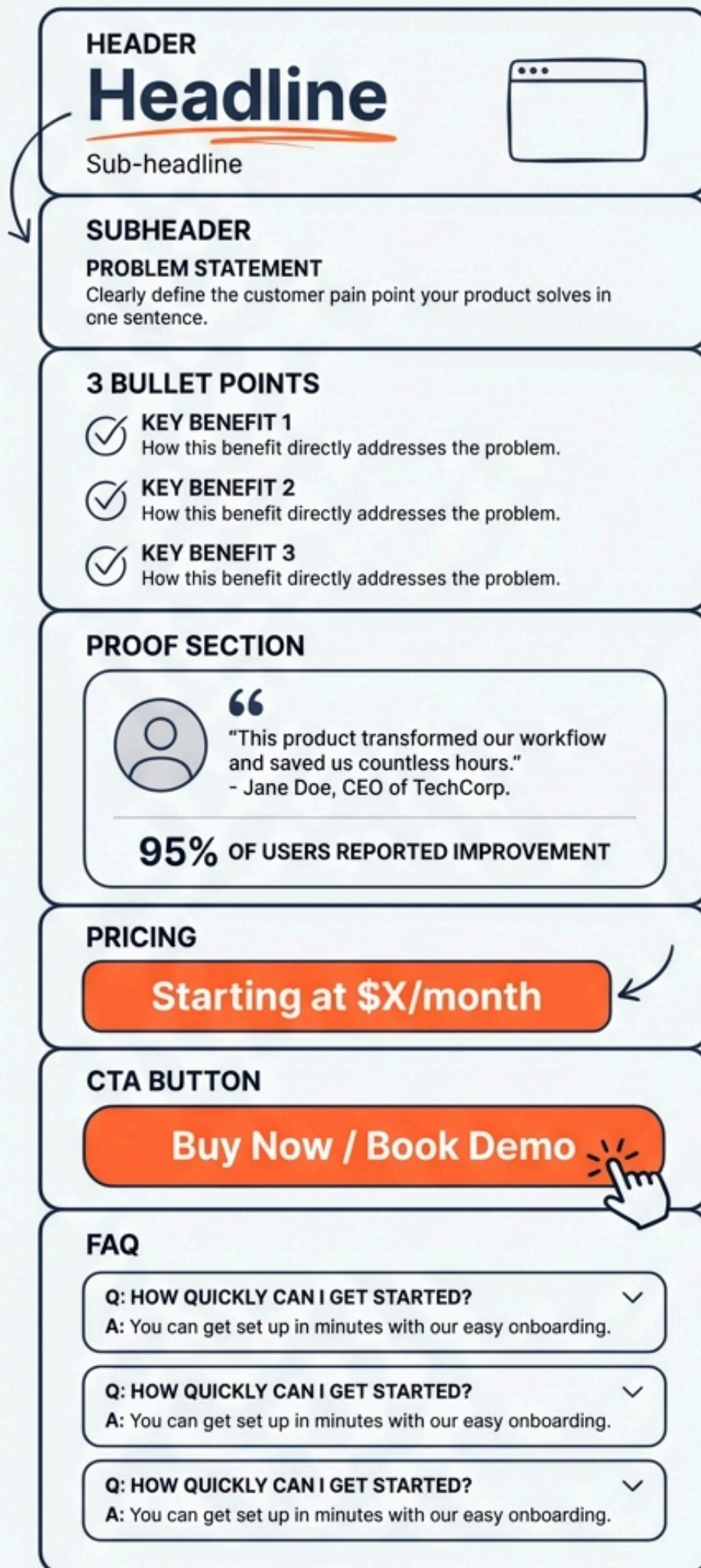
"Pricing Filters Non-Buyers Better Than Any Survey"

Pricing for Validation, Not Perfection.



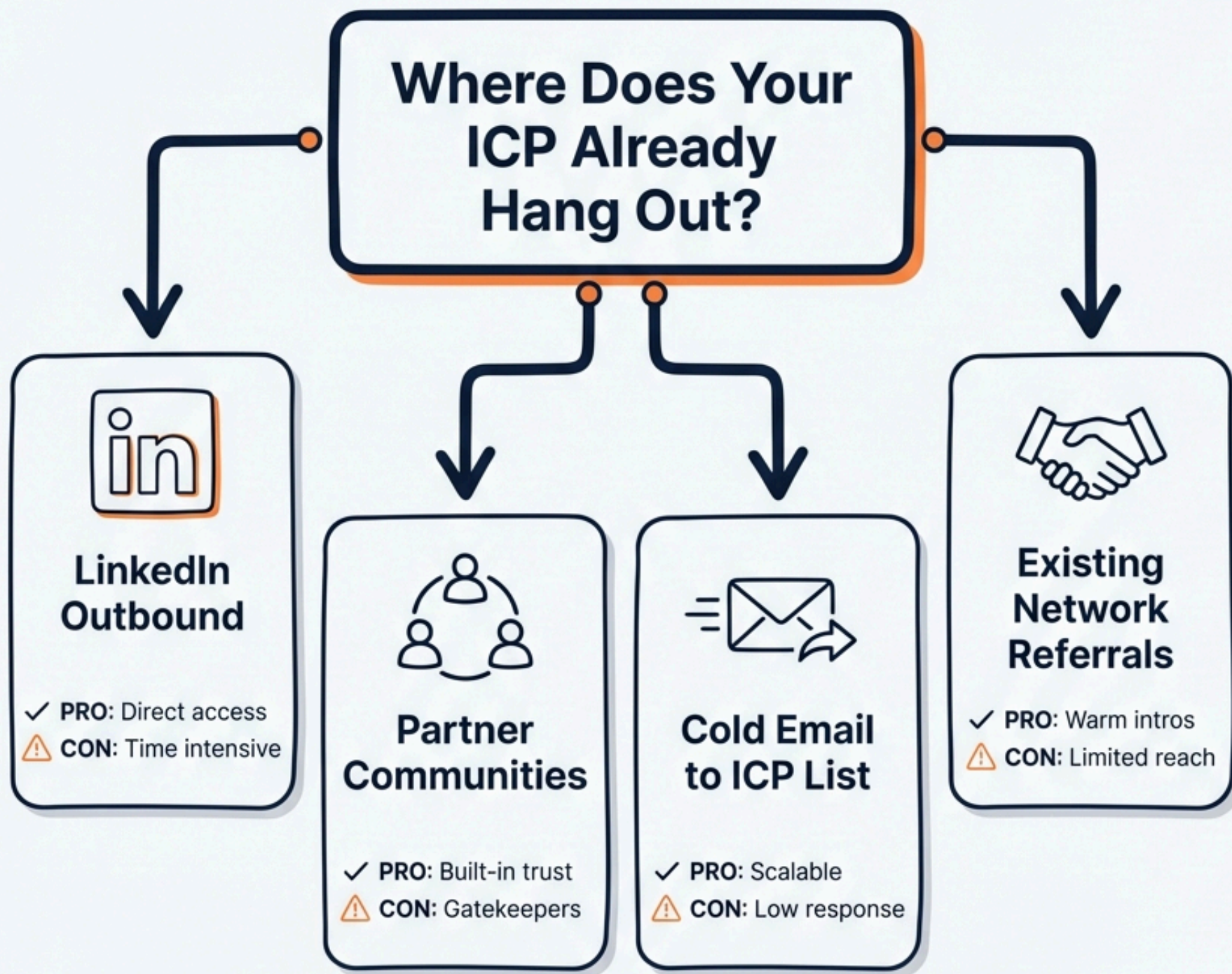
Free tests behavior. Paid tests intent.

A Fake Door with No Price Tag is Just Market Research



200 Targeted Visitors Beat 2,000 Random Ones

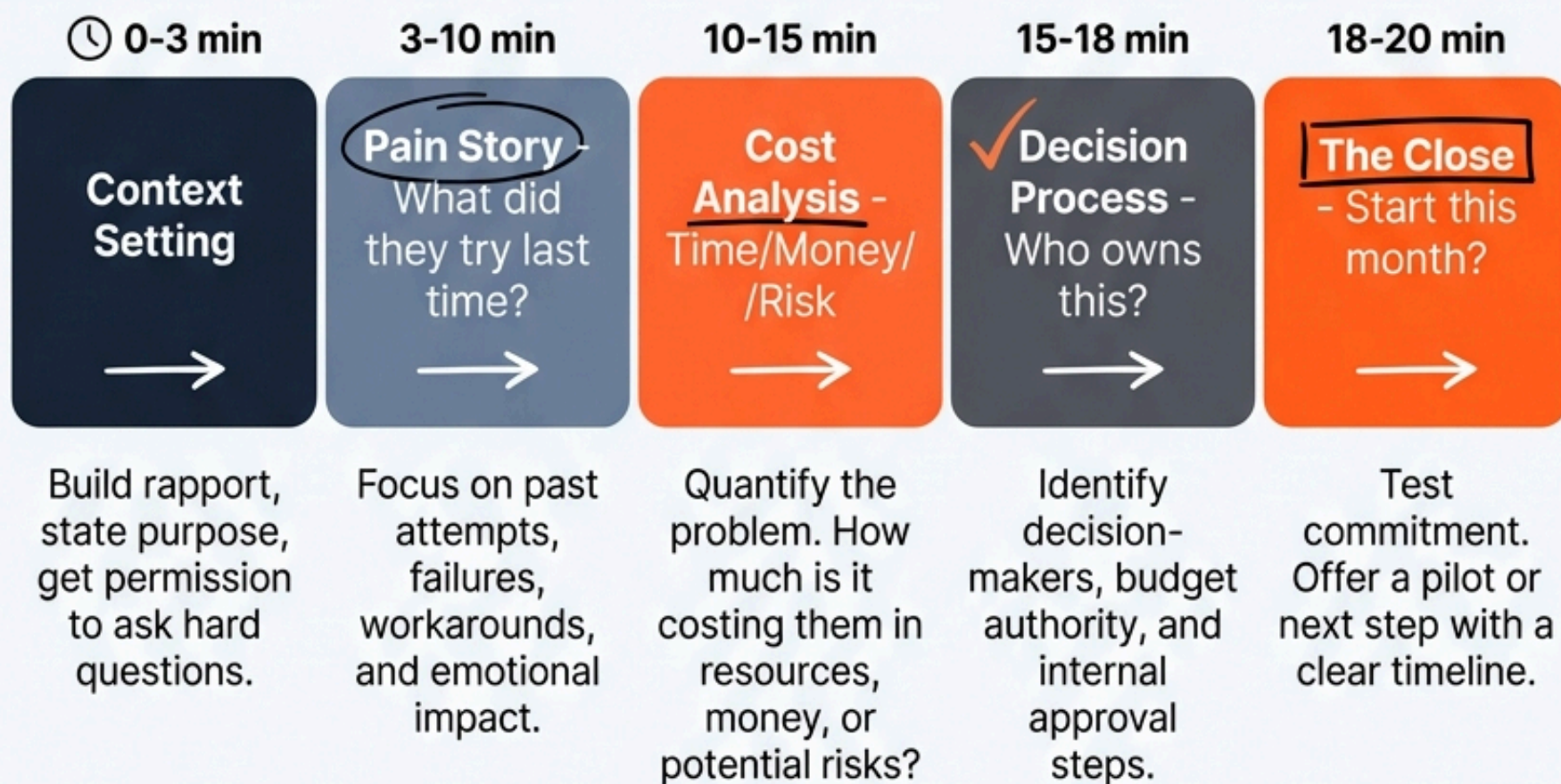
Traffic Without Ads, Fast.



RULE: Traffic must match ICP, not volume.

Ask About Their Last Failure, Not Your Future Feature

ICP Conversations That Actually Validate Demand.



KEY QUESTIONS

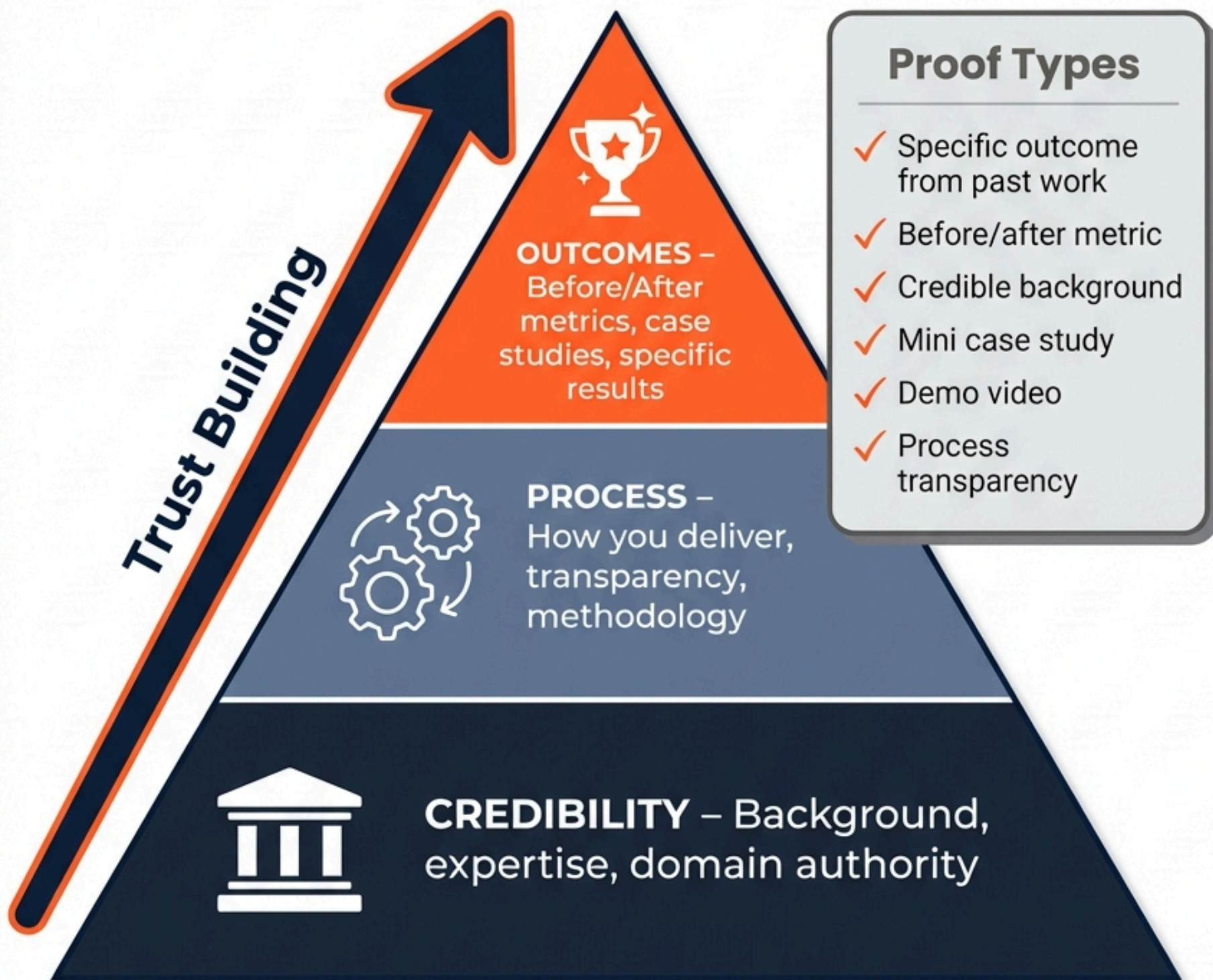
- ? What did you try last time?
- ? What did it cost?
- ? Who owns the problem?
- ? What triggers it?
- ? What budget exists?
- ? What if nothing changes?

EXIT QUESTION: If I deliver [offer] for [price], do you want to **start this month?** →

YES / NO

Proof Beats Features Every Single Time

The Proof Stack.



RULE: Proof beats features.

DELIVER IT MANUALLY BEFORE YOU AUTOMATE ANYTHING

The Concierge MVP



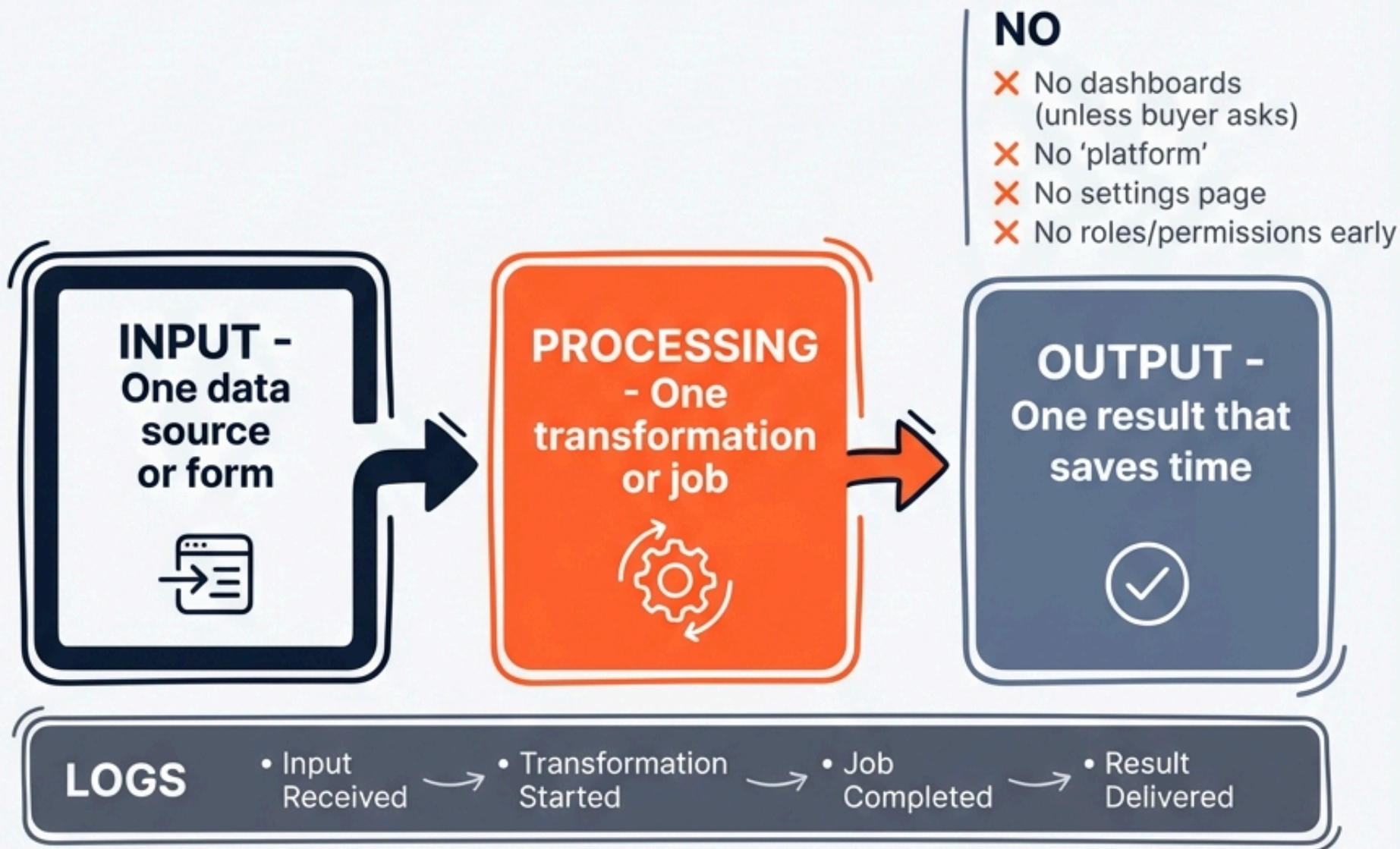
WHY IT MATTERS:

Manual delivery proves value, reveals **workflow**, and finds the ONE feature worth coding.
2-3 customers reveal the pattern.

Zappos started by manually buying shoes from stores.
Groupon used WordPress + PDFs.

One Input. One Output. Nothing Else.

The Thin Slice Model.



RULE:

**One workflow. One metric.
One payment moment.**

SHIP IN 72 HOURS OR YOU'RE BUILDING TOO MUCH

Vibe Coding Rules for Validation Builds.



HARD CONSTRAINTS

- One user type.
- One job-to-be-done.
- One content type.
- One success metric.

Instrument Before You Launch, Not After

Track These Six Metrics From Day One.



**Time to
First Value**

< 5 minutes



**Activation
Rate**

> 40%



**Weekly
Retention**

> 30% W2



**Core Action
Count**

> 5 per user



**Conversion
to Paid**

> 10%

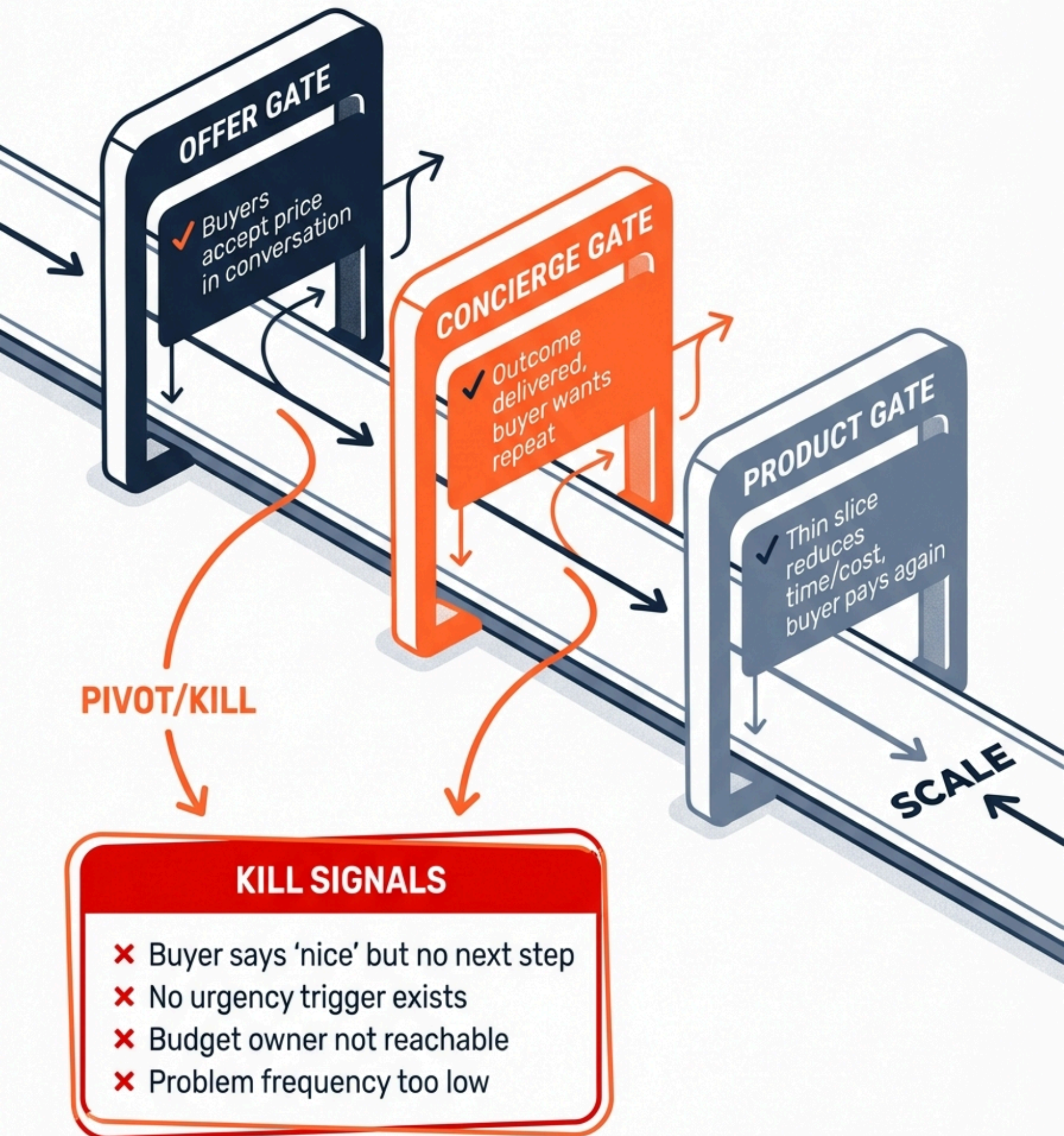


**Churn
Reason**

Categorized

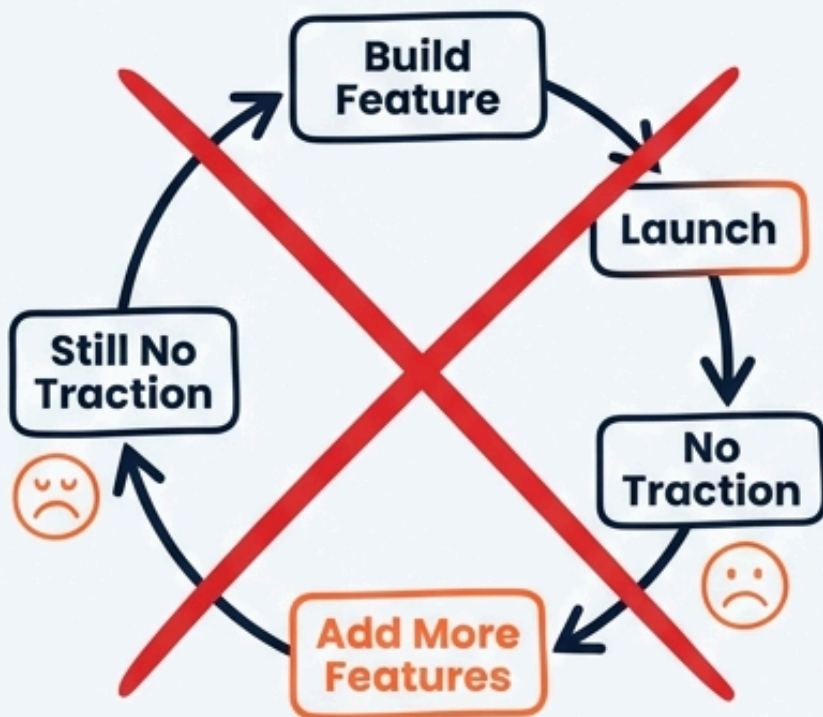
Tools: Basic analytics + event log table + payment tracking. No fancy setup needed.

THREE GATES DECIDE: CONTINUE, PIVOT, OR KILL

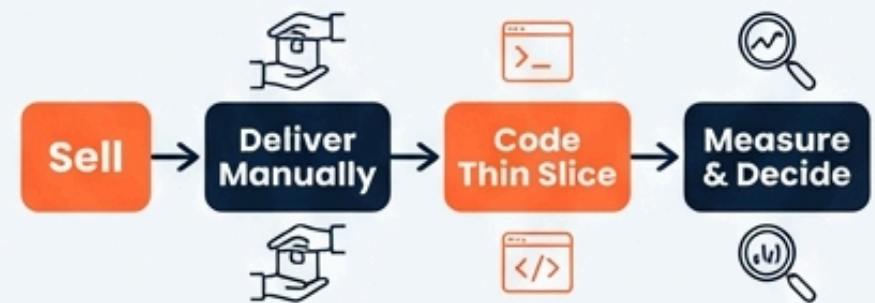


The Build-First Death Loop: How 42% of Startups Waste Their Runway

~~X~~ THE DEATH LOOP



✓ THE VALIDATION LOOP



Common Failure Patterns

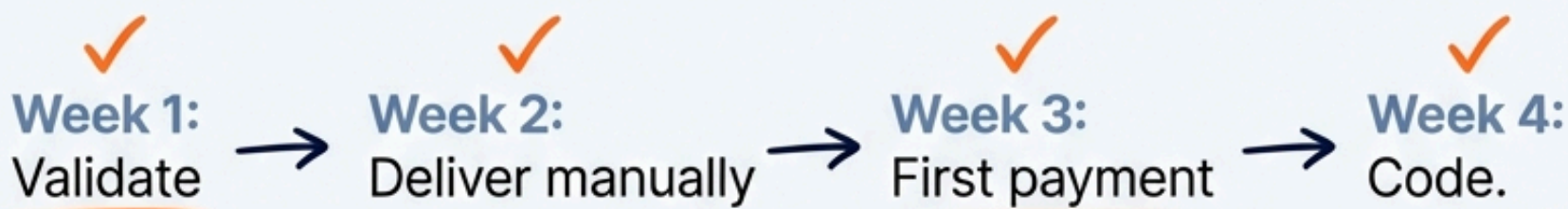
- Building first, selling later
- Testing with wrong audience
- 'Free' attracting non-buyers
- Overfitting to one loud prospect
- Confusing feedback with demand
- Expanding scope after one yes.

FIX: Return to offer, channel, paid signal.











From Zero to Paid Customer in 3 Weeks: A Real Example

(Fictional but Realistic Illustration)



Worksheet 1: Score Your Niche in 30 Minutes

The Niche Scorecard

Criteria	Idea A Score (1-5)	Idea B Score (1-5)	Idea C Score (1-5)
 Urgency			
 Budget			
 Frequency			
 Ease of Reach			
 Existing Alternatives Pain			
 Proof Availability			
 Sales Cycle Length			
 Compliance Risk			
TOTAL			

DO THIS NOW

Score **3 niche ideas** in the next 30 minutes.
Kill anything scoring below **25/40**.



 Date / /

Worksheet 2: Define Your ICP in One Page



1. JOB TITLE

.....
.....
.....



2. COMPANY SIZE

.....
.....
.....



3. TOOLS THEY USE

.....
.....
.....



4. TRIGGER EVENTS

What causes the pain to spike?

.....
.....
.....



5. WHAT 'BAD DAY' LOOKS LIKE

.....
.....
.....



6. BUDGET OWNER

Who signs the check?

.....
.....
.....



7. BUYING CONSTRAINTS

What slows decisions?

.....
.....
.....



8. REACHABLE VIA

Channel where you can reach them this week.

.....
.....
.....

DO THIS NOW: Fill this out for **ONE ICP**.
The more specific, the easier to validate.

Worksheet 3: Write Your Offer in 15 Minutes

Craft a clear, concise offer that resonates in less than a quarter of an hour.

Help [.....] get [.....]
[Your ICP] [Measurable Outcome]

in [.....] without [.....]
[Time Frame] [Top Obstacle]

INCLUSIONS - What you DO

-
-
-

List the core services, features, or deliverables you commit to providing.

EXCLUSIONS - What you DON'T do

-
-
-

Clearly state what is out of scope to manage expectations and avoid scope creep.

DONE DEFINITION - What 'complete' means

-
-
-

Define the specific criteria or milestones that signify the successful completion of the offer.

DO THIS NOW: Write your offer. Test it in 3 conversations. If they don't understand in 15 seconds, rewrite.



Worksheet 4: Launch Your Fake Door Today

The Fake Door Checklist

- **Landing page sections** (Header, Problem, Solution, Proof, Pricing, CTA, FAQ)
- **Clear CTA** (Buy Now / Book Demo / Reserve Slot)
- **Pricing visible** (Starting at \$X or 'From \$X')
- **Proof elements** (Testimonial, metric, or background)
- **Tracking setup** (Analytics on CTA clicks, page views, bounce rate)
- **Link setup** (Calendar link for demos OR checkout link for purchases)
- **Traffic source ready** (LinkedIn list, email list, or community access)

SUCCESS THRESHOLD

10% of visitors click CTA. 20% of demo calls accept price. 

DO THIS NOW

Launch your fake door this week. Drive 100-200 targeted visits.

Worksheet 5: Run 10 ICP Calls This Week

ICP Call Script & Follow-Up Template

SECTION 1: Questions to Ask

1. What did you try last time this problem came up?

2. What did it cost in time/money/risk?

3. Who owns this problem internally?

4. What triggers the problem?

5. What budget exists for solving this?

6. What happens if nothing changes?

SECTION 2: The Close Question

If I can deliver [YOUR OFFER] for [YOUR PRICE], would you want to start this month?

Yes

No

DO THIS NOW: Schedule 10 calls. Track yes/no. 3+ yes = validated. ✓

Worksheet 6: Plan Your Concierge MVP

Manual Delivery Plan

1



MANUAL STEPS LIST

How will you deliver this without code?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

2



DELIVERABLE FORMAT

What does the customer receive?

3



TURNAROUND TIME

How long from request to delivery?

4



FEEDBACK QUESTIONS

What will you ask after delivery?

5



RENEWAL OFFER

How do they buy again?

DO THIS NOW: Deliver manually to 2-3 customers. Find the pattern worth coding.

Worksheet 7-8: Spec Your Thin Slice & Track Your Gates

PART 1: Thin Slice Specification

INPUT FIELDS

- _____
- _____
- _____

OUTPUT FORMAT

- _____
- _____
- _____

CORE EVENT NAMES

(What actions to track?)

ERROR STATES

(What can go wrong?)

PAYMENT MOMENT

(When does money exchange?)

PART 2: Decision Gate Tracker

Gate	Pass Criteria	Status (Pass/Fail)	Notes
Gate 1: Offer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ _____ ✓ _____ ✓ _____ 	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid gray; border-radius: 10px; padding: 5px 15px; background-color: #ccc;">Pass</div> <div style="border: 1px solid gray; border-radius: 10px; padding: 5px 15px; background-color: #f44336;">Fail</div> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid gray; border-radius: 15px; width: 100px; height: 20px; margin-top: 5px;"></div>	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
Gate 2: Concierge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ _____ ✓ _____ ✓ _____ 	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid gray; border-radius: 10px; padding: 5px 15px; background-color: #ccc;">Pass</div> <div style="border: 1px solid gray; border-radius: 10px; padding: 5px 15px; background-color: #f44336;">Fail</div> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid gray; border-radius: 15px; width: 100px; height: 20px; margin-top: 5px;"></div>	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
Gate 3: Product	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ _____ ✓ _____ ✓ _____ 	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid gray; border-radius: 10px; padding: 5px 15px; background-color: #ccc;">Pass</div> <div style="border: 1px solid gray; border-radius: 10px; padding: 5px 15px; background-color: #f44336;">Fail</div> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid gray; border-radius: 15px; width: 100px; height: 20px; margin-top: 5px;"></div>	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>

DO THIS NOW: Spec your 72-hour build. Track your gates. Kill fast if any gate fails.

