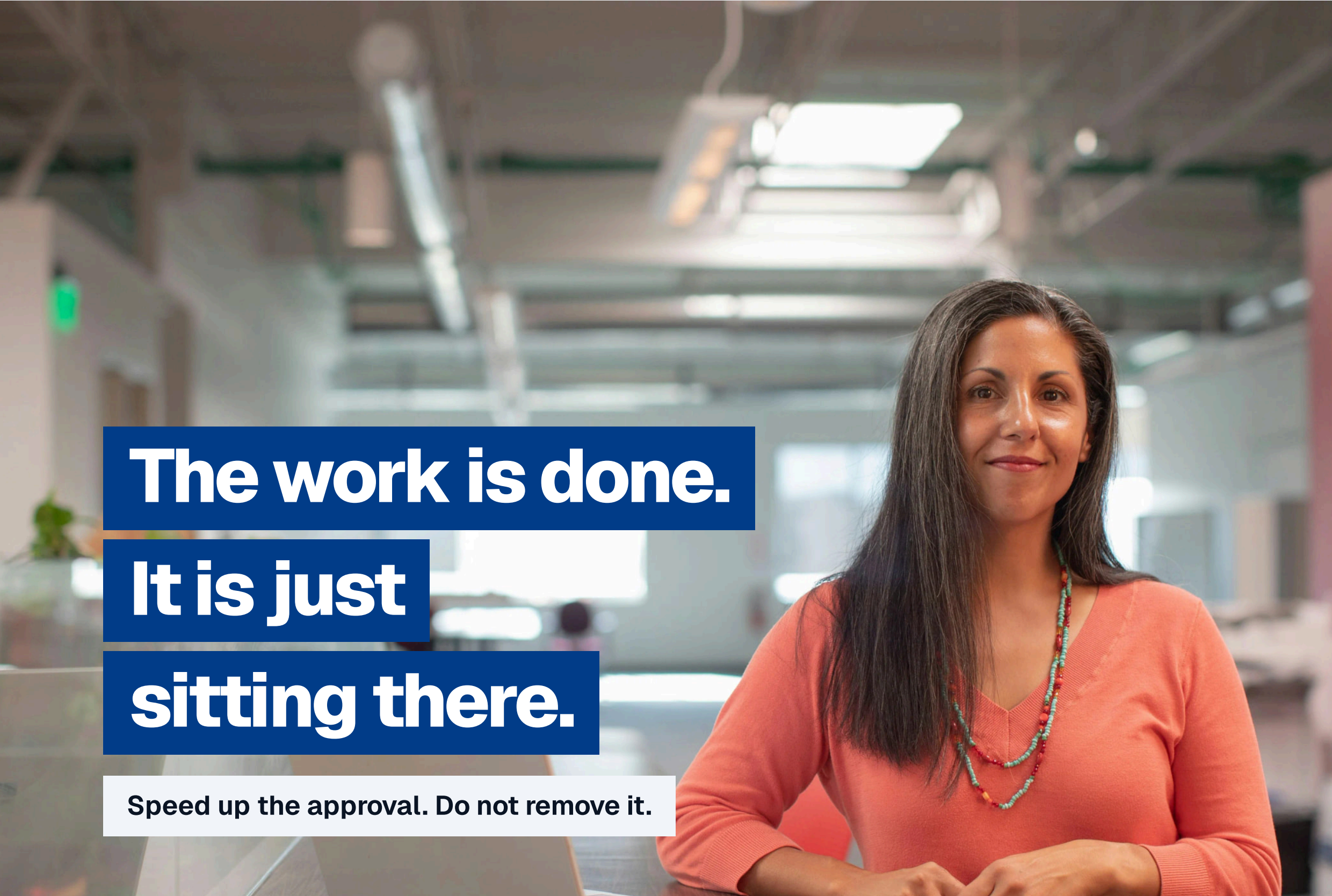


Speed them up, do not remove them

THE LEAK REPORT

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The work is done.
It is just
sitting there.

Speed up the approval. Do not remove it.

Irreversibility approval is about reversibility, not importance

Second approver one person is the bottleneck because nobody named another

Context most delay is context-loading, not deliberation

The log “who approved it, and when” ends a dispute in a minute

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The quote was finished at 11am

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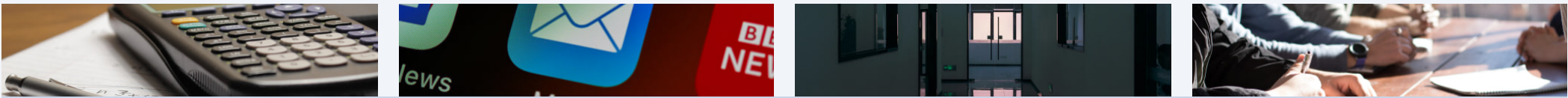
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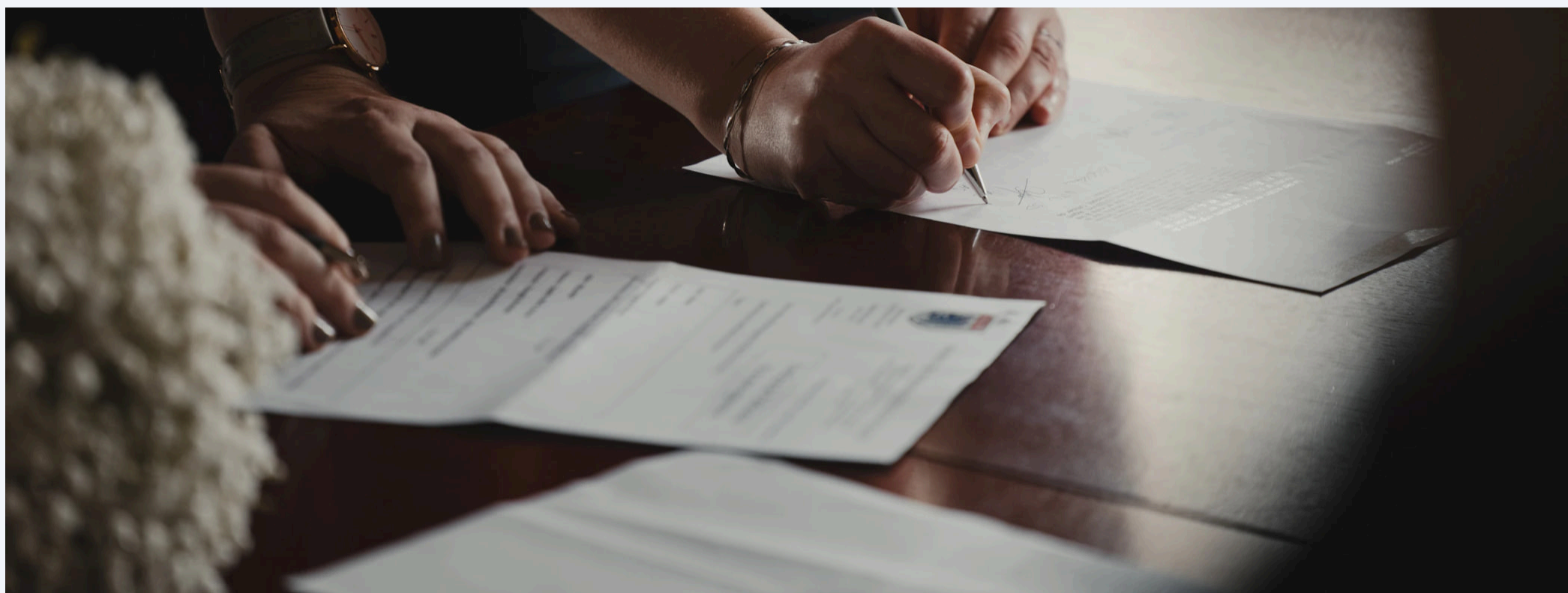


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Finished at 11am. Sent at 4pm.



| The work is done. It is waiting on somebody's availability.

The work is finished. The quote is written, the reply is drafted, the document is ready. It is sitting in a queue waiting for one person who is on site, in a meeting, or simply has ninety unread emails.

The customer, meanwhile, reasonably concludes you are not that interested.

This is the workflow where AI produces the most obvious win and the most avoidable disaster,

because the apparent solution — **let the machine send it** — is the one thing you should not do.

Most automated replies are fine. A small fraction are wrong in ways that are expensive, and you will not find out from a log. You will find out from the customer, usually late, and by then the thing you automated has been repeating the error for a fortnight.

Ramanjit Singh Founder, AT Innovators



THE FEATURE

Approval is about irreversibility, not importance

Not everything needs a gate, and treating every step as consequential produces a system so slow that people quietly work around it.

An internal report can be very important and still not need a gate.

Reversible, or out of the building.



No approval needed

Anything reversible and internally visible — classifying an enquiry, drafting text, summarising a thread, routing to an owner, preparing a report, flagging something for attention.

If it is wrong you fix it, and nobody outside the business ever knows.

Automate freely.



Approval required

Anything that leaves the building or commits the business — customer replies, quotes and prices, contractual dates, refunds and discounts, anything a regulator or a lawyer might read later.

If it is wrong, the customer finds out before you do.

Keep a person in the path.

The useful reframe is that approval is about irreversibility, not importance. Sort your workflow list that way and most of the arguments about it stop.

What actually fixes the stall

01

Make the decision small

Most approval delay is not deliberation, it is context-loading. Put the draft, the original request and the relevant history on one screen and the decision takes seconds instead of minutes.

02

Batch, do not interrupt

Twelve separate notifications produce twelve context switches and get ignored. One queue, reviewed twice a day, gets cleared.

03

Widen who can approve

Very often one person is the bottleneck because nobody ever defined a second approver. Role-based approval with a value threshold removes most of the delay without removing control.

04

Auto-approve the boring tail

Appointment confirmations, “we received your message”, scheduling acknowledgements. Carve those out deliberately, list them, and review the list.

Deliberately, not by default. Carving out a named list of categories that genuinely need no human is a different thing from removing approval because it was in the way.



| In a demo, removing the person looks like pure gain.

TEMPTING

The arithmetic looks unanswerable. If the bottleneck is a person and you remove the person, the bottleneck disappears and response time collapses from hours to seconds.

What the demo does not show is the distribution of outcomes. Most automated replies are fine.

A small fraction are wrong in ways that are expensive: a price you cannot honour, a deadline you will miss, a confident answer about a policy that changed last month.

EDIT

If editing is awkward, approvers do one of two things, and both of them are bad.

They rubber-stamp drafts they have not really read, or they abandon the system and go back to writing replies from scratch.

The edit path is the one to make fast. It is the difference between a gate people use and a gate people route around.



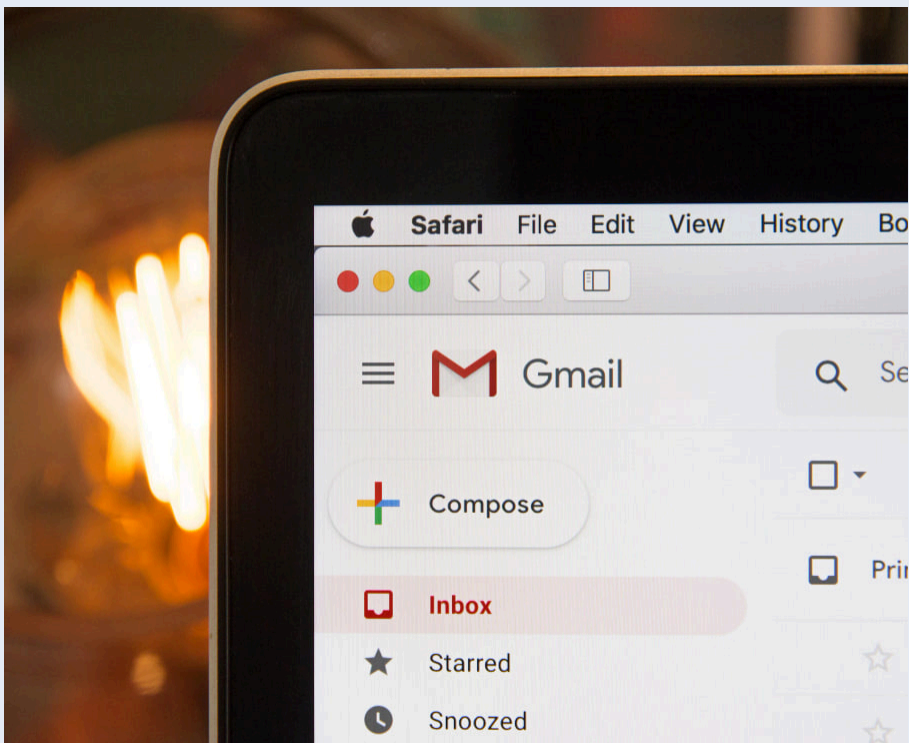
| Edit must be as easy as approve.

REJECT

Not for compliance theatre, and not to build a case against anybody.

The pattern of rejections is the most useful signal you will get about where the drafting is weak — which categories it handles badly, which tone it gets wrong.

Without the reason, you have a count of failures and no idea what to change.



A rejection should be recorded with a reason.



It sounds like compliance. It is what makes the system trustable.

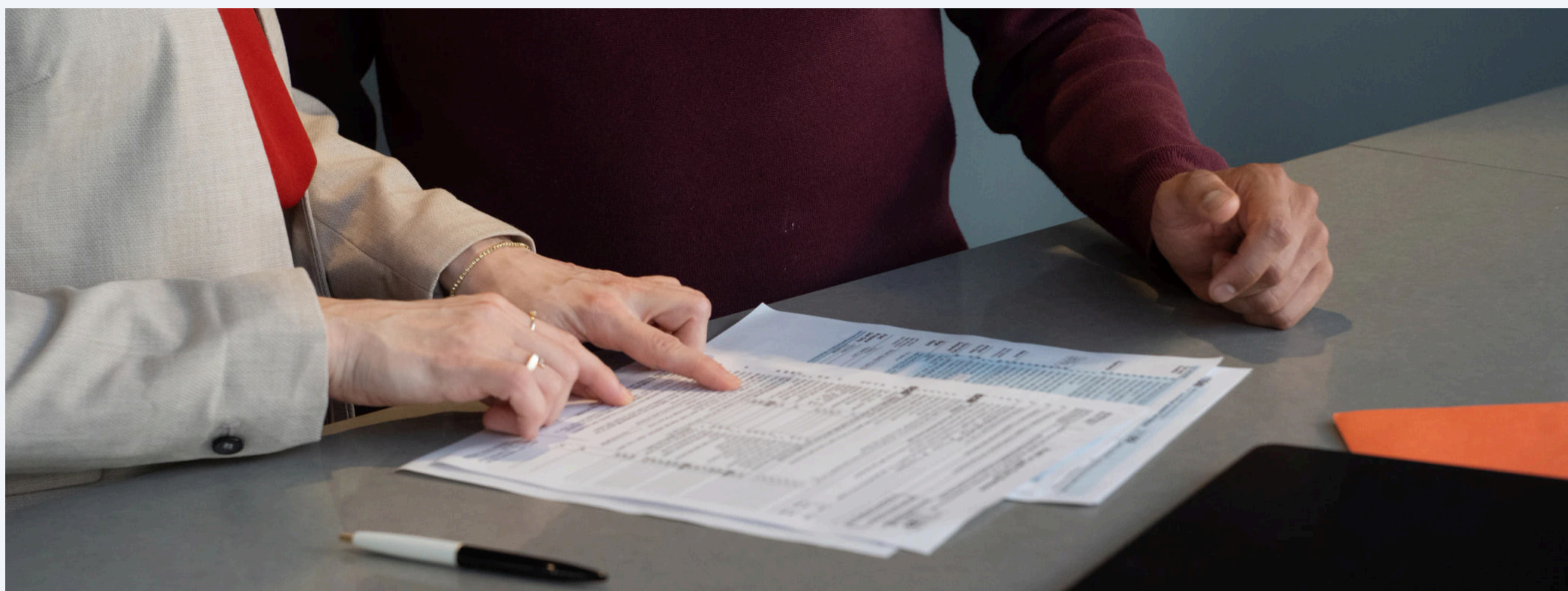
THE LOG

Every step recorded: what was drafted, who approved it, what they changed, and when it went out.

When a customer disputes what they were told, “here is the message, who approved it, and when” ends the conversation in a minute.

Without it you are reconstructing events from memory and inboxes, which is how a small dispute becomes an expensive one.

Take one quote and time it.



| Draft, full context, one decision, then the log.

Look at one recent quote or customer reply and work through these. The answers tell you whether this is a workflow problem or a staffing one.

1

How long did it sit finished before it went out?

Not how long it took to produce — how long it waited once it was ready.

2

Was the delay availability, or deliberation?

Genuinely thinking about it is the process working. In a meeting is not.

3

Is there a second approver?

If only one person can approve, the bottleneck is structural, not behavioural.

4

What is the service level on the queue?

“Cleared twice a day”, written down. Without one, the queue is where work dies.

Hours rather than minutes, and availability rather than deliberation — that is this workflow. The fix is not removing the gate.

Three costs of keeping the gate.

Approval queues need a service level or they rot.

If nothing enforces “cleared twice a day”, the queue becomes the new place work goes to die — and it will be harder to see than the original problem.

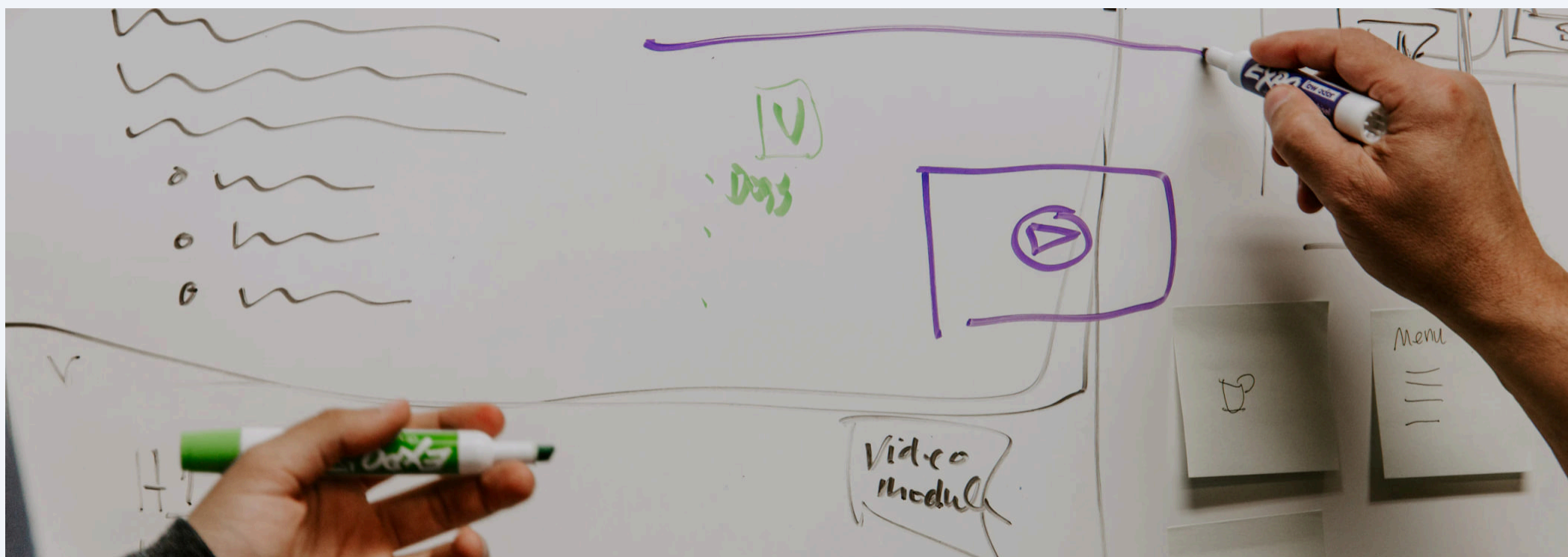
A human gate caps your response time.

If you genuinely need sub-minute replies at 2am, this pattern will not deliver it. You are choosing between speed and control, and it is better to say so out loud than to discover it later.

Approver fatigue is real.

Past roughly thirty items a day, people stop reading carefully. If volume is that high, the answer is better auto-approve carve-outs, not a more determined approver.

Four steps, and a record of each.



Every step logged: who did what, and when.

1

Draft prepared automatically

The reply, quote or document is written by the system as soon as the trigger arrives. Nothing waits on a person to start.

2

Shown with full context

The draft, the original request and the relevant history on one screen, so the approver is not reconstructing the situation before judging it.

3

A person approves, edits, or rejects

All three are first-class. Editing must be as fast as approving, and a rejection is recorded with a reason.

4

Send happens, and everything is logged

Who did what, and when. This is the part that sounds like compliance and turns out to be what makes the system trustable enough to keep using.

Nothing in this pattern removes the approval. It removes the waiting, which is the part that was actually costing you the work.



WHAT IT COSTS

Published, because
“contact us for a quote”
wastes your time.

AUDIT

Free

One workflow, mapped. Often concludes you should not build yet.

PROTOTYPE

from \$800

A working slice you can put in front of one real user.

PILOT

\$2,500–\$7,000

A system a real team uses in production, with a run log.

Send me one quote that sat finished for hours.

The useful first message is one sentence: what gets missed, repeated, delayed, or is hard for you to see.

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