

# Audit asks 'who approved this?' The only honest answer: 'the stack did.'



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Swipe >>

— THE FRAMEWORK GAP

**The thing on the screen is not the thing being bought, trusted, governed or blamed. The deployed system is a stack.**

— THE REFRAME

# Stack, not model.

THE OLD QUESTION

## Is the model trustworthy?



THE QUESTION THAT HOLDS UP

## Is the stack accountable?

## — WHY THE FRAME HOLDS

# ~30 hr outage

**A coding agent deleted a production database and its backups in nine seconds; the resulting outage ran roughly thirty hours.**

**SOURCE**

Railway architecture write-up and the OECD.AI incident monitor, which summarised the resulting outage as roughly thirty hours.

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— HOW IT WORKS

# Capability is not trustworthiness.

- 01 Read the **model** as capability only: the possibility of useful work.
- 02 Audit the **stack** for what catches errors, contains mistakes, bounds escaped harm.
- 03 Locate **trust** (a tested boundary plus a named owner), not in the model's score.

## — THE ARTIFACT

# Eight things, accountable as one.

— FIGURE E01.1 · E01 - THERE IS NO "IT"

## There is no "it". There is a stack.

The model is one component. Seven more produce, check, contain and own the system's behavior.

08

**Owner** HUMAN STEWARDSHIP

The named person who sets the limits before the incident and answers for the result.

07

**Evaluation** EXTERNAL VERIFICATION

Independent checks that can fail differently from the thing they are checking.

06

**Runtime evidence** THE TRACE

The record that lets a post-mortem reconstruct what actually happened.

05

**Checks** CONTAINMENT

Engineering that limits how far a mistake can travel before it reaches the world.

04

**Permissions** SCOPED AUTHORITY

What the system may touch, matched to the task and no wider.

03

**Memory** CARRIED STATE

The running context the system relies on across turns and steps.

02

**Tools** REACH

The software the system can call to change records in the world.

01

**Model** CAPABILITY CEILING

Supplies possibility. Sets what the system could do, not whether it does it reliably.

• CONCEPTUAL MODEL

ARCHITECTING THE AI COWORKER

*Model, tools, permissions, memory, checks, runtime evidence, evaluation, owner: eight components working together, accountable as one whole.*

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— APPLY THE INSTRUMENT

**Pick one AI system near your work this week. Rewrite "it did X" naming the generator, tool, verifier, authority boundary, evidence trail and owner. Any role you cannot name is the next thing to design.**

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— WHERE TEAMS MISREAD IT

**Evaluating the model, then deploying the stack. The score covers capability only; the stack decides whether mistakes escape. Judge the same object you ship.**

— READ THE FULL FRAMEWORK

# There Is No "It"

Read the full essay – the argument, the sources, the figures and a reader-ready working artifact.

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New essays twice weekly, 2 June - 21 July 2026.

Next: [E02 – The Coworker Illusion](#)

## — THE STACK SO FAR

E01 · Essay 1 of 22 complete · Arc I: See the object

YOU JUST ADDED

**The stack map**

STACK LAYER LIT UP

**Whole stack**

YOU CAN NOW ASK

**see the AI coworker as a stack, not an "it".**

NEXT

**E02 asks how the coworker word collapses roles, permissions, checks and ownership.**

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— THE ARTIFACT, CONTINUED

## **Eight things, accountable as one.**

### THE REMAINING NODES

Model and tools: capability and the actions it can take in the world.

Permissions and memory: what it is allowed to touch, and what it carries to the next call.

Checks and runtime evidence: independent checks, and the trace that records what happened.

Evaluation and owner: how capability is measured, and who answers for the result.



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