

# The 7-Step Founder Pitch Framework

A practical structure for turning innovation into investor buy-in

By **Michael Rickwood Vortolo Coaching:**

Helping innovators cut through with clarity and impact.



# The 7-step Founder Pitch Framework

1. The Disconnect
2. Bring out the real value
3. The 7 step Clarity Navigator
4. Translate Complexity
5. Speak to risk: don't just showcase features
6. Close the meeting
7. Take the lessons learned, rinse and repeat.

The document also contains **3 quick-win** exercises

# The Disconnect

Why brilliant tech often falls flat in investor meetings.

- 1. Decision makers don't speak technical language.**

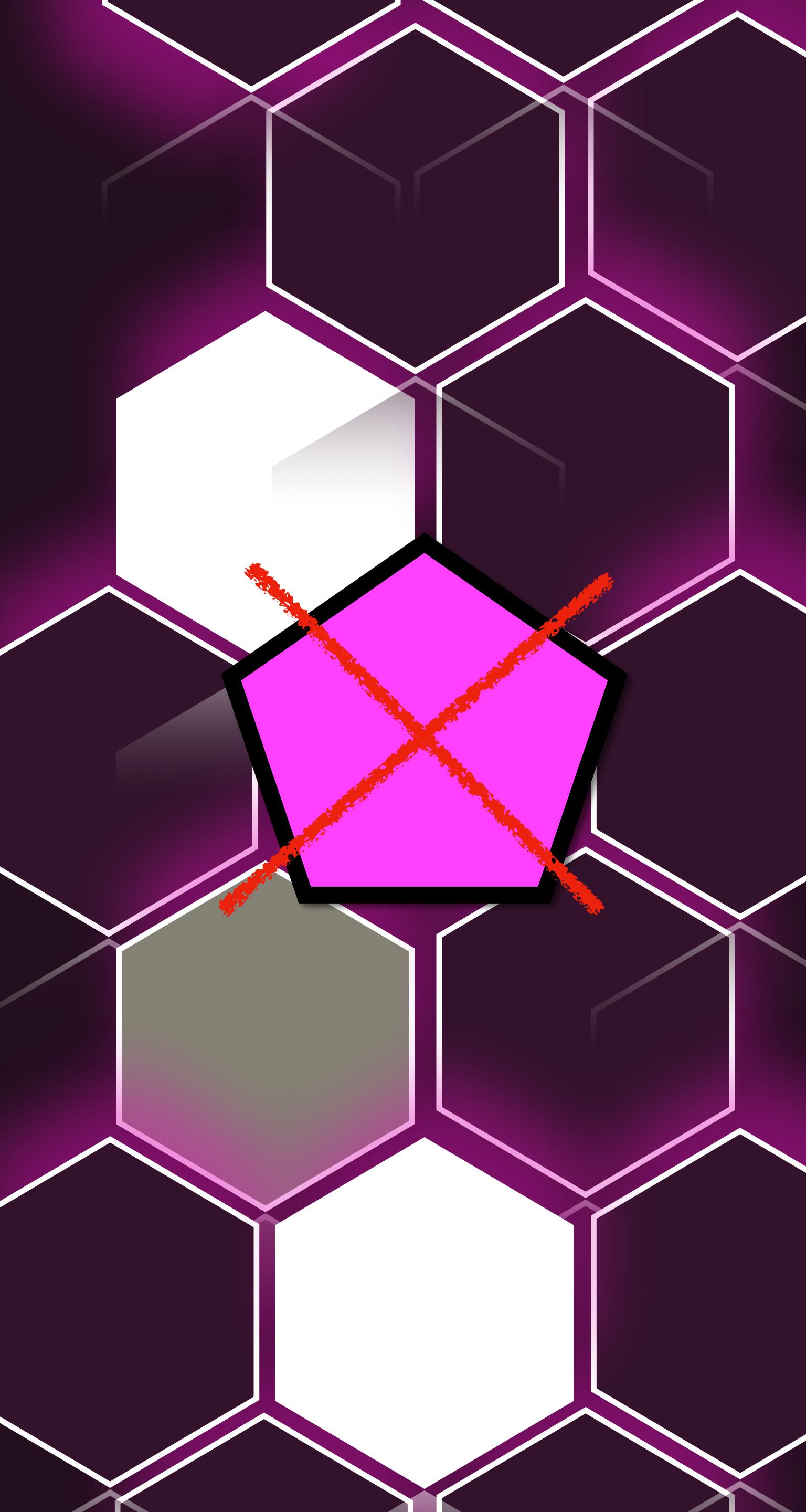
They need to understand why it matters, not just how it works

- 2. Jargon hides value.**

When you're deep in the product, it's easy to fall into technical bias. Step back, tell the story from the business lens.

- 3. Timing and framing matter.**

Even a great deal can fall flat if it's not positioned for today's priorities. Adapt the message, not just the model.



# Quick win #1: The 5- Minute Jargon Audit

A simple self-assessment you can do *right now*

Open your pitch deck. Find your problem statement (usually slide 2-3).

Now answer these 3 questions:

- Would someone completely outside of my industry understand what problem I'm solving?
- Did I use any acronyms or technical terms in the first sentence?
- Can someone repeat the problem back to me after hearing it once?

If you answered NO to any of these → your pitch has a clarity problem.

Quick Fix: Rewrite that slide using only words a business journalist would use.  
This means phrases containing complete messaging with nouns and verbs.

Before: "Our API aggregates fragmented data silos via microservices"

After: "We connect disconnected company data so teams stop wasting time searching"

# Bring out the real value

What a clear pitch actually achieves

## Turns complexity into clarity.

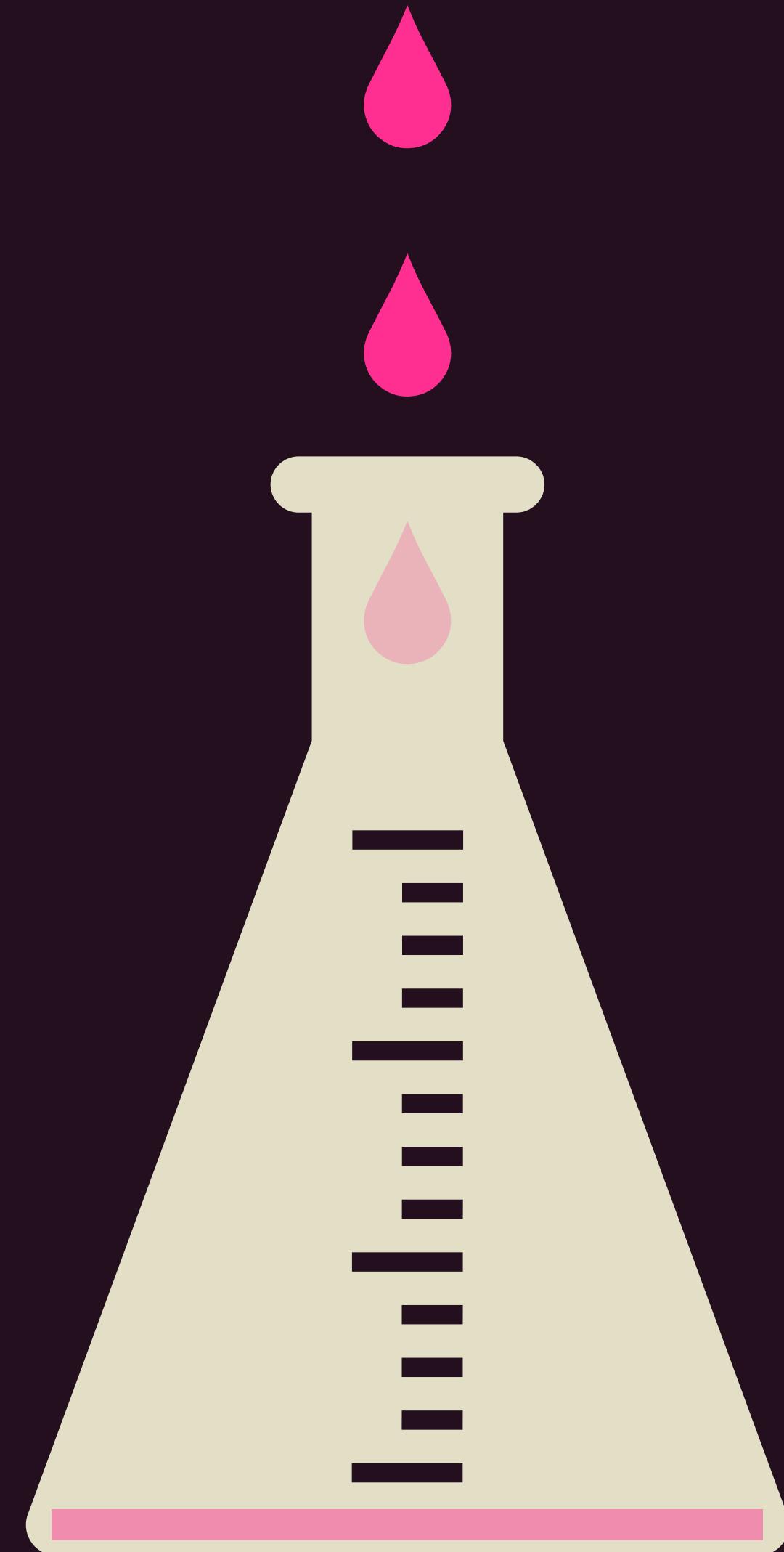
Makes your innovation clear, investable, and actionable, so decisions happen faster and with more confidence

## Builds instant credibility.

Focus and proof replace jargon and hype. Even if they don't invest today, your clarity earns lasting respect and referrals

## Closes with certainty.

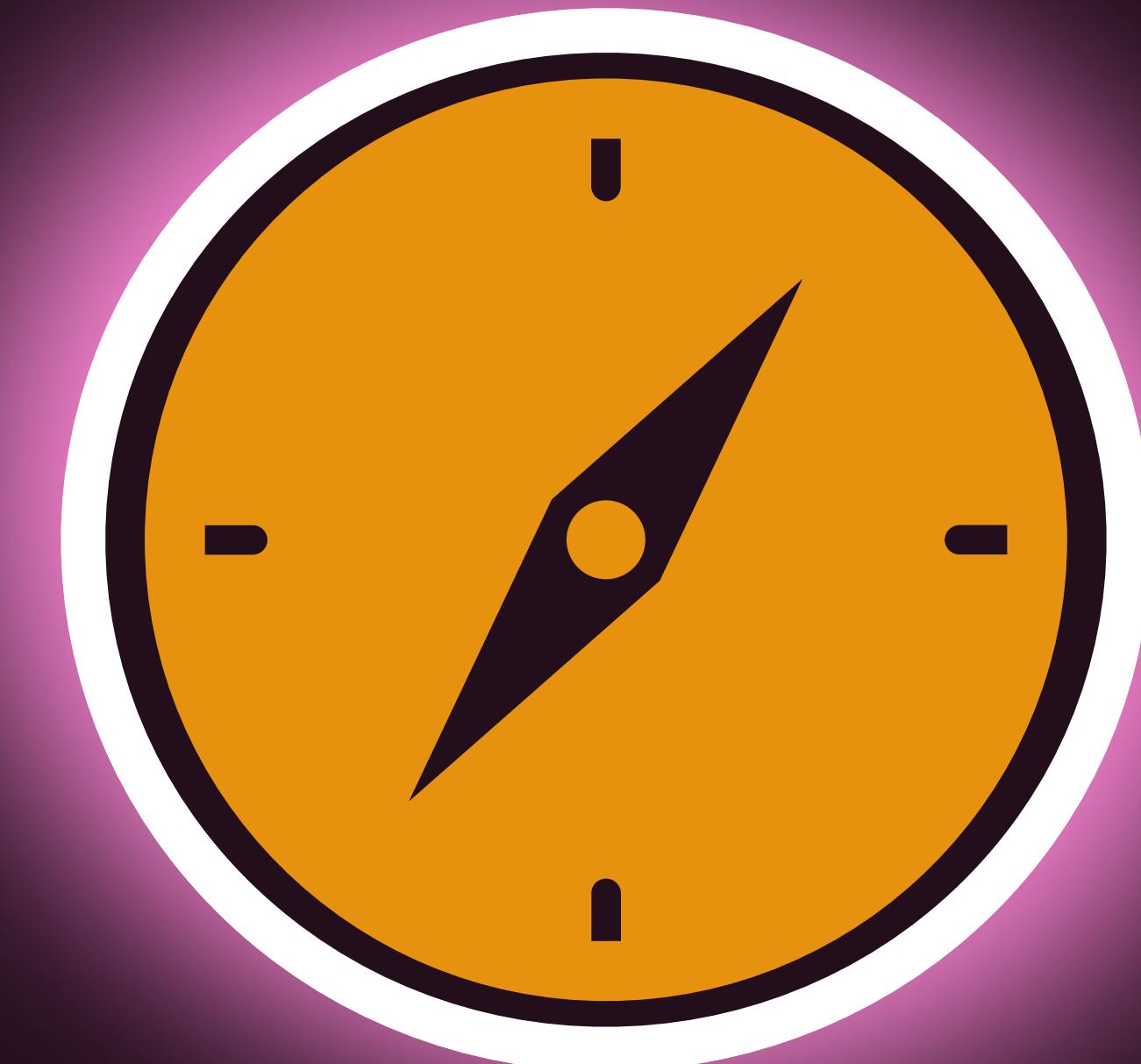
A clear ask leads to aligned next steps, not confusion or polite silence.



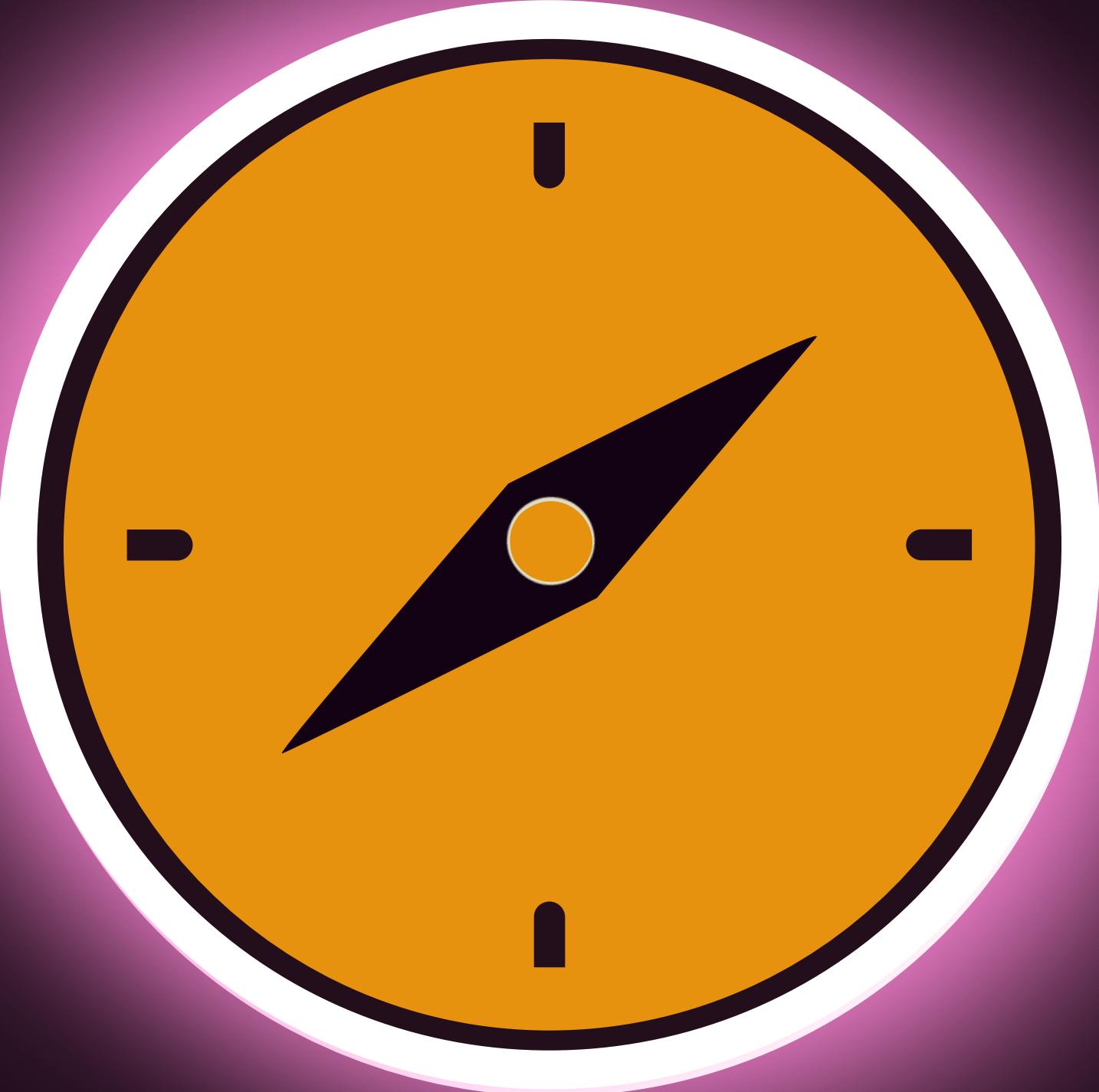
Clarity Converts

# The 7 step Clarity Navigator

Get out of the weeds. Tell them ***why*** the world needs your solution



Your message aligned with investor logic



**Context:** What changed and why now?

**The Need:** The business pain your innovation solves

**The Solution:** How it works, in simple, outcome-focused language

**Proof:** Traction, validation and evidence of demand

**Model:** Who pays, how much, and how it scales?

**Why now?:** The shift that makes this moment right.

**Ask:** The next step, funding, pilot, or partnership?

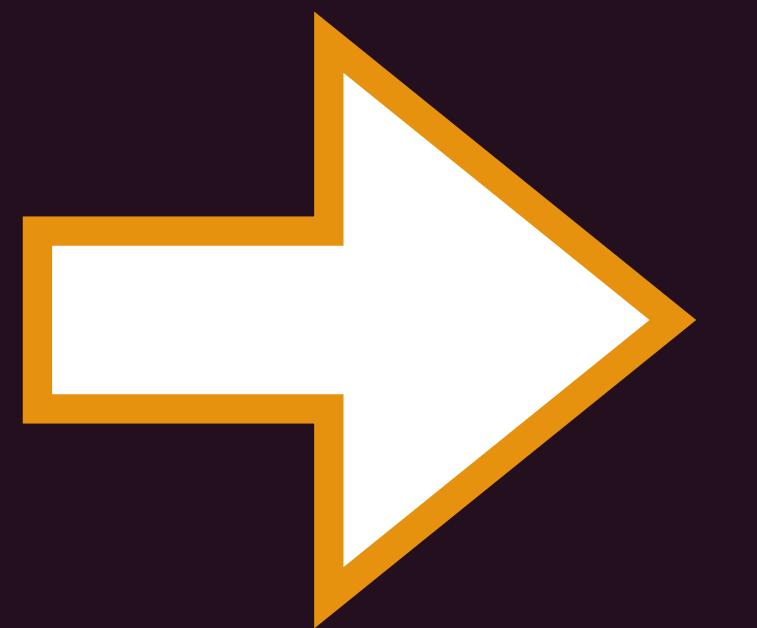
A framework used by innovators from Web3 to Pharma to secure clarity and buy-in.

# Translate complexity

Turn deep tech into *clear business value*

Before (tech lens)

Our L2 zk-roll-up  
leverages multi-proof  
architecture to achieve  
10k TPS



Clarity shift will **double**  
comprehension speed

**After (Business lens)**

**We cut transaction  
costs by 70% and settle  
in 2 seconds with bank  
grade security**

The principle here is to lead with impact, then reveal the innovation.

# Translate complexity

Turn deep tech into *clear business value*

As a speaker you can help your cause with **Precise Clarity**

Resist the temptation to try to charm your audience with a show  
People *do not remember* your energy —  
**They remember whether they understood you.**

In a noisy world, clarity has become a form of generosity.  
So build your pitch step by step, transition by transition.

# Quick Win #2: The Investor Translation Test

## A specific exercise with immediate feedback

Step 1: Record yourself explaining your solution in 30 seconds (voice memo on your phone)

Step 2: Listen back and count how many times you:

- Use an acronym
- Say a word your investor wouldn't know
- Describe HOW it works instead of WHY it matters

Step 3: Your score:

0-1 jargon words = You're ready to pitch

2-3 jargon words = You're at risk of losing them

4+ jargon words = You need a translation strategy

(Want help translating your pitch into investor language?

That's exactly what we do in a clarity call: [www.vortolocoaching.com](http://www.vortolocoaching.com))

# Speak to risk: don't just showcase features

Investors are buying into *perceived* certainty

Investors assess four risks:

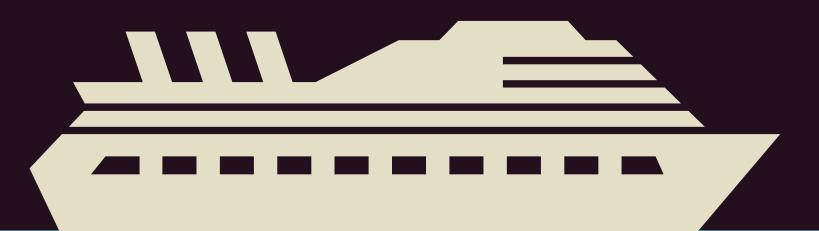
**Team - Market - Product - Distribution**

Counter each with proof: pilots, retention, revenue pipeline, early partnerships

**Golden Rule**

If it doesn't reduce uncertainty, it doesn't belong in the pitch.

Clarity means surfacing what matters most



Features

Risks

# Close the meeting

Every pitch ends with clarity, confidence, and the next step.

**The ask:** amount/ use of funds /runway

**Timeline:** due diligence milestones / next decision point

**Next step:** book the follow-up in the room -before they leave

If there's no clear next step, the pitch isn't over - ***it's incomplete***



# Take the lessons learned

No pitch will ever be the same twice.

**Clarity:** Did they get the pitch? What was not clear?

**Signal:** What was their level of enthusiasm? Did they lean in or tune out? How is your clarity as a speaker? (Charisma vs Clarity)

**Battle:** How hard were the questions? Why were they hard?

**Momentum:** What moment created the most traction or curiosity?

**Forward:** What needs to be done now to take the pitch to the next level?

What would increase the confidence of an investor by 20% before next pitch?



# Quick Win #3: The “Before you pitch” checklist

A one-page check-list to print and use *before* any investor meeting

## THE PRE-PITCH CHECKLIST

(Check these off 24 hours before your meeting)

- I can explain my solution in one sentence without jargon
- I know exactly how much money I'm asking for
- I can name the #1 risk an investor will worry about
- I have one proof point ready (traction, pilot, letter of intent)
- I know what "next step" I want from this meeting
- I've practiced my opening 60 seconds out loud

Missing any? Fix it before you walk in the room.

# Built on tried and tested experience

This framework is built on over 12+ years of my working with innovators across:

- French Tech
- Biotech & Pharma
- Web3 and blockchain
- Clean Energy
- AI and Deep Tech

Built on tried and tested experience

# Time to turn your clarity into *traction*

Let's audit your pitch together

[vortolocoaching.com](http://vortolocoaching.com)

✉ [vortolocoaching@gmail.com](mailto:vortolocoaching@gmail.com)

🔗 Book a 20-minute Clarity Call

