The agent license ladder

Give authority in steps

Use one ladder for each AI agent or automation that can send, pay, order, change or delete.

Rung 1: Learner's Permit. The agent prepares the work, and a person approves every action. Decide how long this lasts, for example six weeks.

Rung 2: Supervised Hours. The agent acts on small, low-risk cases on its own. A person checks a sample every week.

Evidence Gate. Before the next rung, agree on the evidence: how many actions, how many errors, which errors, and who decides.

Rung 3: License, with limits. The agent acts on its own within a written limit, for example routine invoices up to a set amount.

Stop Conditions, on every rung. Write the situations where the agent must stop and hand over to a person. Example: a supplier changes its bank details. A person calls the supplier on a number they already trust.

The License can be suspended. Name who can pause the agent, and check that they can do it within minutes.

Three questions to answer for every agent:

1. What exactly is it allowed to do, and up to what limit?
2. What evidence earned it that authority?
3. Who can stop it, and how fast?

If you cannot answer all three, put the agent back on Rung 1.

Watch the episode: AI agents: how much should you trust them?, on the TechTonic Conversations channel on YouTube.
Read the framework for free: thesummitla.com/the-intelligent-organization

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