

Execution is becoming cheap, trust is not.

What AI agents change about work - execution vs. verification

Dr. Jane Wu, UCLA

Based on Catalini, Hui & Wu “Some Simple Economics of AGI” (2026)
AI & The Future of Work Town Hall - Office of Senator Josh Becker - July 16, 2026

If it can be measured, it can be industrialized

old lens

Routine vs. Non-routine

- Automation eats repetitive work from the bottom of the org chart up.
- Education, complexity, and prestige protect a role.

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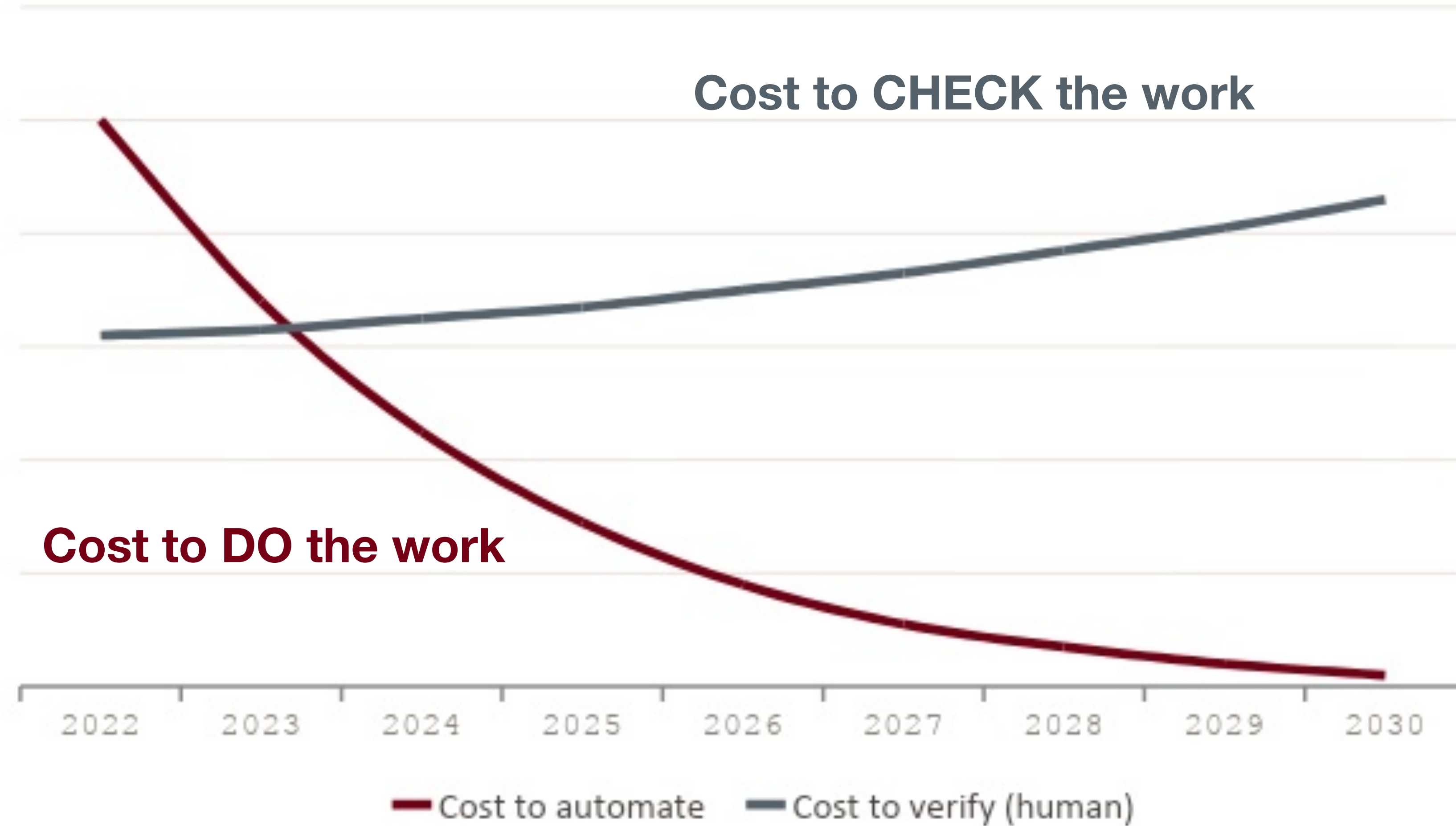
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new lens

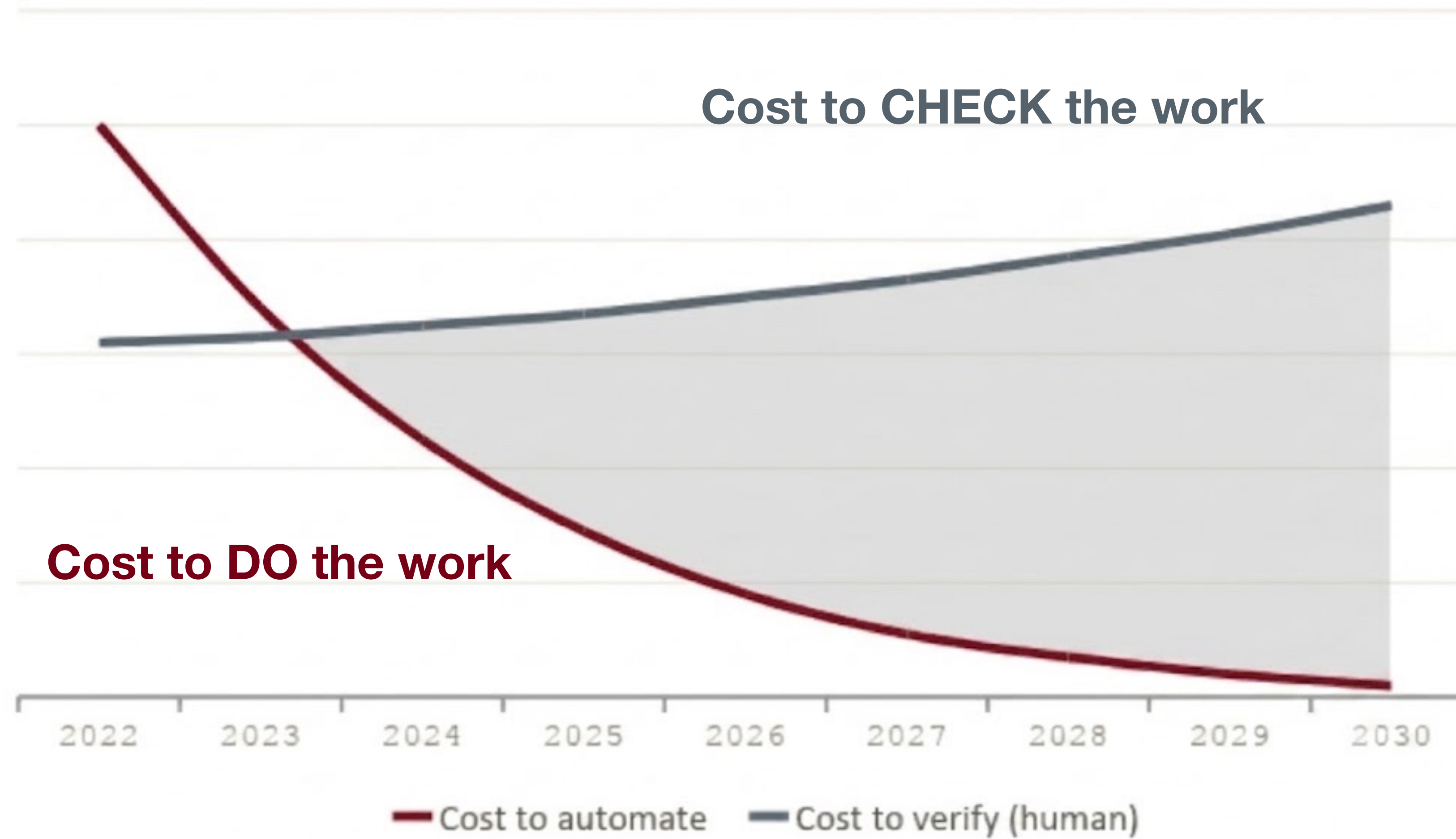
Measurable vs. non-measurable

- Task that are measurable and have a feedback loop can be automated
- Non-measurable tasks is where value remains

Two cost curves

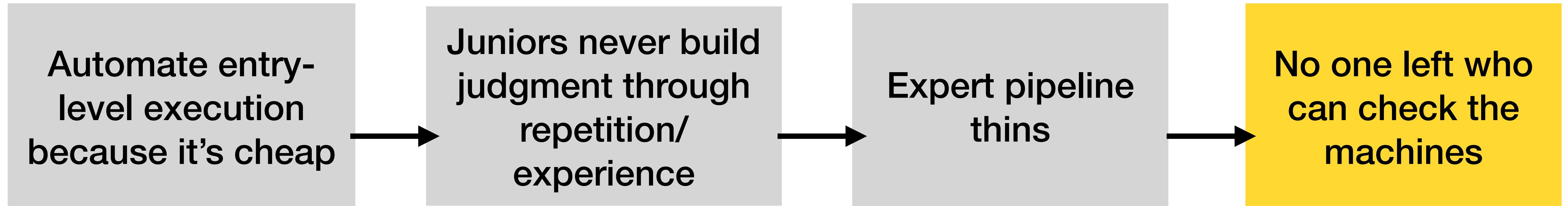


Unchecked work isn't value, it's (hidden) debt



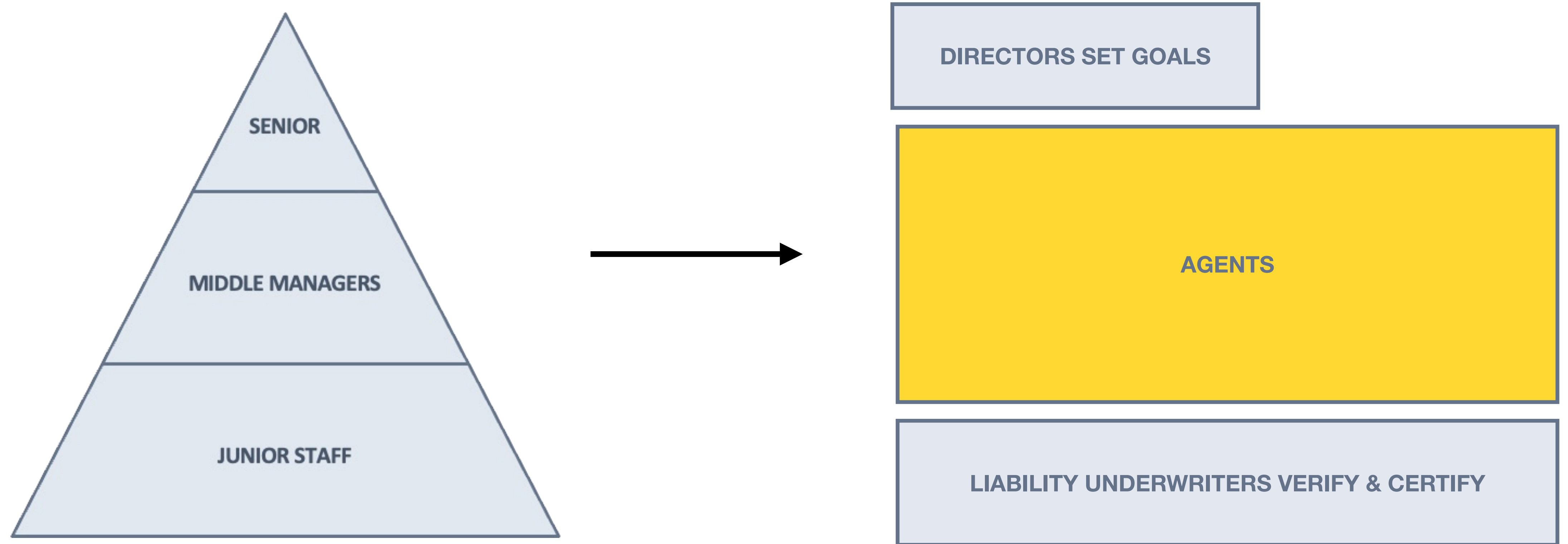
We're increasingly capable of generating output we are decreasingly capable of verifying

The Missing Junior Loop



-16% relative early-career hiring
in AI-exposed occupations.

The pyramid becomes a sandwich



Foster and safeguard human verification



Price the risk

Liability for unchecked output will make safety a competitive advantage for firms



Fund verification as a public good

Shared benchmarks, audit trails, registries of incidents



Rebuild around verification, not throughput

Synthetic practice, supervised verification apprenticeships