

PROJECT INTENT WORKING PAPER SERIES

Governance in Abundant Execution

First Edition

Alan Florschuetz

projectintent.com

The Moment You Recognize It

Anyone who has worked alongside an autonomous agent for more than a week has experienced the moment: you ask for one thing, and by the time you look up, there are fourteen artifacts, three tangential initiatives, and a fully-tested implementation of something you never intended to build.

The output was fast. The output was wrong. And it took longer to untangle than it would have taken to build correctly in the first place.

This is not a story about bad tools. It is a story about what happens when an organization's constraints were carried in people's heads — and then execution moved to machines that cannot read heads.

The Mechanism

When execution was expensive, organizations invested in planning and coordination to ensure that scarce effort was aimed correctly. The cost of doing created a natural filter: most bad ideas never survived long enough to become real, because building them was too hard.

When execution becomes abundant, that natural filter disappears.

Ideas that would have died as whiteboard sketches now become working prototypes overnight. Strategies that would have been debated for weeks materialize as fully-formed initiatives before anyone evaluates whether they should exist. The friction that once protected organizations from their own misalignment is gone.

The new bottleneck is not "can we build it?" The new bottleneck is "should we build it, and how do we know it worked?"

This is a constraint migration. The scarce resource moved from production to discernment.

The Failure Pattern

Organizations adopting AI execution at scale report a consistent sequence:

Output velocity increases in the first weeks. Then review queues grow faster than humans can process them. Small misalignments compound because nothing catches drift at the rate it's produced. Coordination Tax increases rather than decreasing, because more output requires more meetings to determine what's relevant. Eventually teams retreat to manual approval gates — reintroducing the exact friction that AI was supposed to eliminate.

The organization ends up slower than before, with more artifacts to maintain and less clarity about which ones matter.

This is not a failure of capability. It is a failure of constraint.

The Physics

Human organizations have always relied on implicit constraints. An experienced developer makes hundreds of micro-decisions informed by context that was never written down. A senior leader filters bad proposals instinctively, drawing on pattern recognition that lives entirely in her head. The constraint was embedded in the person.

When a machine executes, none of that implicit knowledge is available. The agent optimizes for exactly what it was told — with absolute fidelity and zero judgment about whether the objective serves the broader organization. It cannot distinguish a good intent from a misaligned one. It cannot self-correct for drift. It has no taste.

This reveals a structural truth:

The constraints that were once carried implicitly by experienced people must become explicit when execution is performed by machines.

What lived in people's heads must live in a form that machines can read, enforce, and respect without being asked.

The Economic Shift

In the industrial era, organizations invested primarily in production capacity.

In the knowledge era, organizations invested primarily in expertise.

In the era of abundant execution, organizations will increasingly invest in constraint design.

Not constraints in the bureaucratic sense — not approval committees or review boards. Constraints in the architectural sense: clearly defined perimeters that channel execution toward outcomes rather than noise. Boundaries that don't slow work down, but ensure that fast work moves in the right direction.

The organization that can articulate its constraints precisely — what must be true, what must not happen, what evidence constitutes proof — will channel abundant execution into compounding progress. The organization that cannot will experience abundant execution as entropy.

The Implication

This changes where human value sits in the system.

The legacy model: humans do work, other humans review it, leaders approve it.

The emerging model: machines do work, constraints filter it, evidence verifies it.

The human role shifts from performing execution to defining the environment in which execution occurs. Not supervising the work, but engineering the perimeters that make supervision unnecessary.

This is not a reduction in human importance. It is an elevation to a higher altitude of contribution. But it requires a capability most leaders were never trained for: the ability to think in boundaries rather than instructions. To specify what must remain true rather than what must be done.

Open Questions

At what volume of machine-generated output does implicit human filtering become structurally insufficient? Is there a measurable threshold, or does it depend on the coherence of the organization's existing constraints?

Can the constraints themselves be produced by machines, or does this create a recursive governance problem — who governs the governance?

What happens to organizational identity when the primary human contribution shifts from "what we build" to "what we choose not to build"?

The organization is no longer differentiated by what it can build. It is differentiated by what it chooses not to build — and how precisely it can articulate why.

Alan Florschuetz Project Intent | Optimized for Yesterday

projectintent.com