

AI Agents for Project Managers: From Awareness to Application

AI Agents

Getting started in n8n

May 14, 2026

Mike Lively
Michelle Morrison



Describe the AI agent architecture

Describe what n8n is and why it's useful for building agentic workflows

Demo building a simple end-to-end workflow

Discuss why human oversight is crucial

What we will cover today



Mike Lively

Founder QuantumAI

Trainer, IT Evangelist, Developer

@mikelively-quantumai



16 Azure Cloud Certs

About Me

- Father of Nine, USAF
- Working on a PhD in GenAI
- Teaching AI for Johns Hopkins & GK & Texas A&M
- Avid Hacker & Prompt Engineer
- 40 years programming, Keynote
- Flautist
- YMCA Gym Rat



Michelle Morrison

Founder **CultureTiming**

People, Culture & Change Leader



CULTURE
TIMING

www.culturetiming.com

About Me

- Innovator and creative thinker
- Mom of 4 girls
- AI literacy advocate
- 24 years at a Big 4
- Social activist





Prompting ICE Breaker

Rate Your AI Insight

Paste the response your AI gave you, then rate how well it captured you.

Paste your AI's response

Copy the response your LLM gave you to the prompt and paste it below.

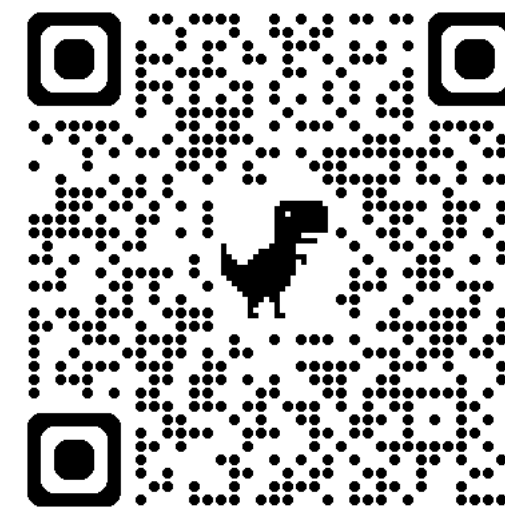
"AI, based on everything you've learned about me so far, what's the single most radical shift I'd need to make to reach full cognitive synergy with you? Make your response specific about me not generic."

Paste the AI's response here...

→ Continue to Rating



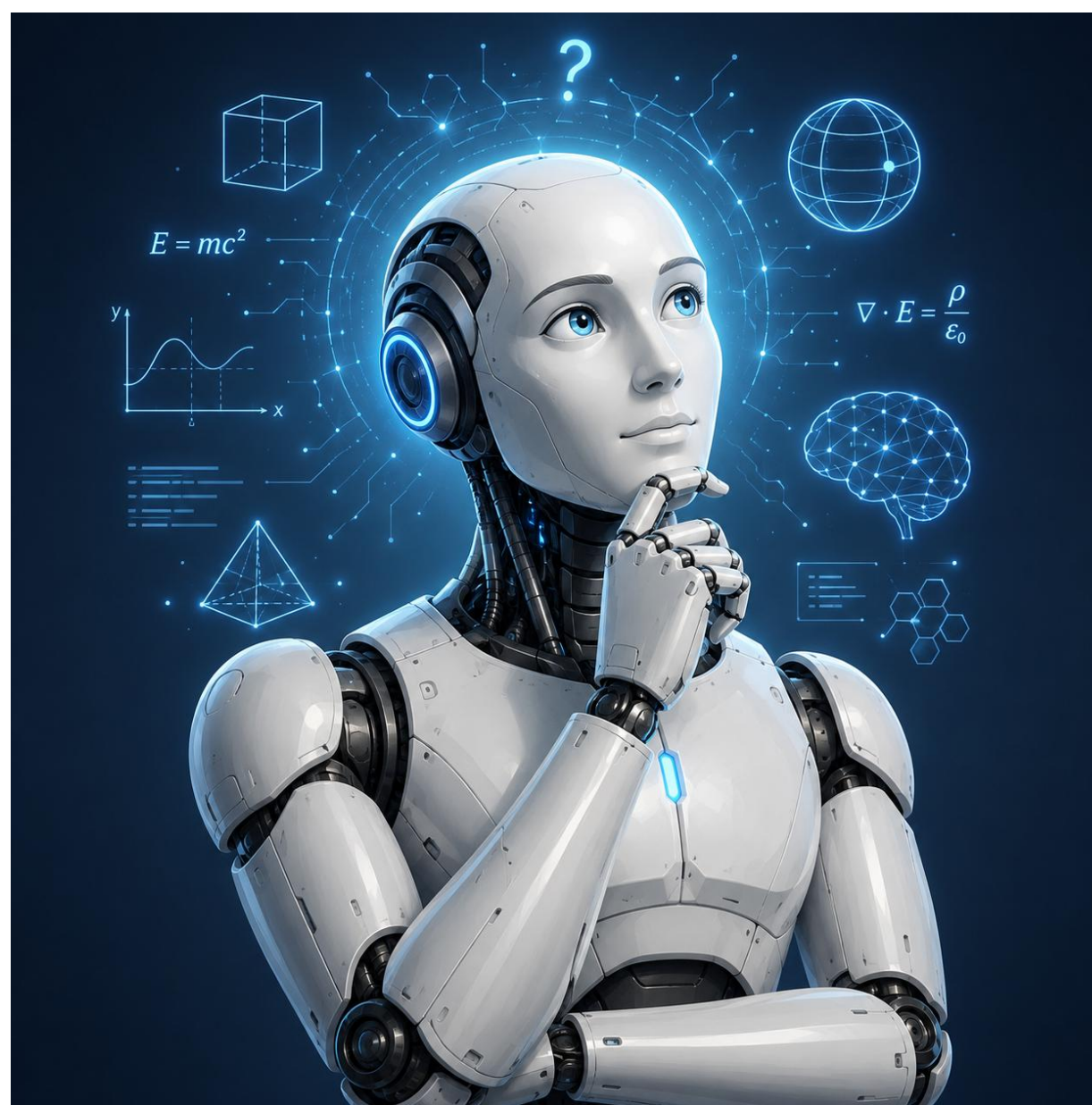
- A. **Surprised** — Unexpected
- B. **Right-on** — It nailed me
- C. **Partly Right** — Some of it fit
- D. **Off** — It mostly missed me
- E. **Wrong** — Missed completely



<https://gentle-insight-flow-lab.base44.app/activity>

<https://gentle-insight-flow-lab.base44.app>

What hidden assumption is behind the phrase “AI hallucination”?



AI hallucination isn't the model "going wrong..."

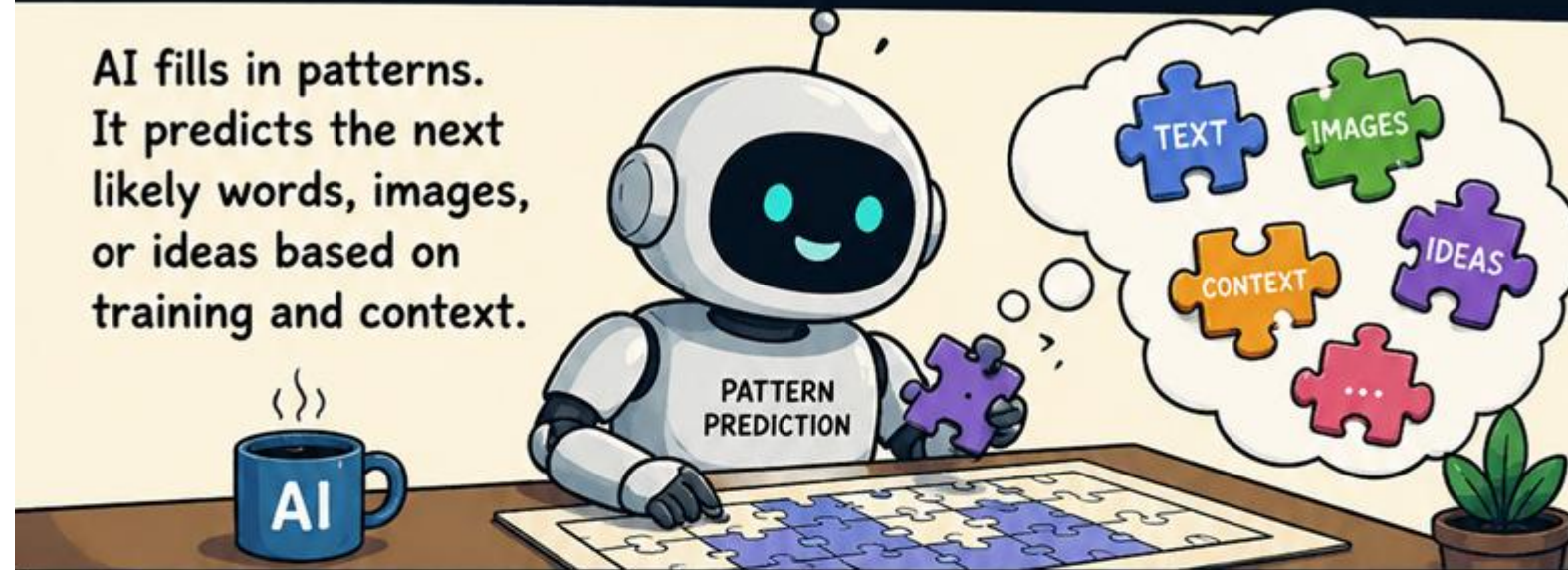


It's generating a likely pattern that doesn't match (your version) of reality based on its input.

The model has not suddenly changed behavior; it is still doing the same thing it always does: projecting a likely pattern from the data and context it has been given.

HALLUCINATION IS WHAT AI DOES BEST.

AI fills in patterns. It predicts the next likely words, images, or ideas based on training and context.



✓ WHEN THOSE PATTERNS MATCH REALITY, WE CALL IT **USEFUL**.



✗ WHEN THOSE PATTERNS DO NOT MATCH FACTS, WE CALL IT **HALLUCINATION**.



THE AI IS NOT DOING SOMETHING DIFFERENT. IT IS **STILL GENERATING**.



THE DIFFERENCE IS WHETHER WE **GROUND**, **CHECK**, AND **VERIFY** THE OUTPUT.

💡 AI PREDICTS PATTERNS. **HUMAN JUDGMENT** BRINGS IT IN TOUCH WITH TRUTH.

Crossing the Embodiment Threshold

Digital coordination via APIs is only half the story. Embodiment introduces real sensor data, physics constraints, and irreversible consequences.

Digital Realm

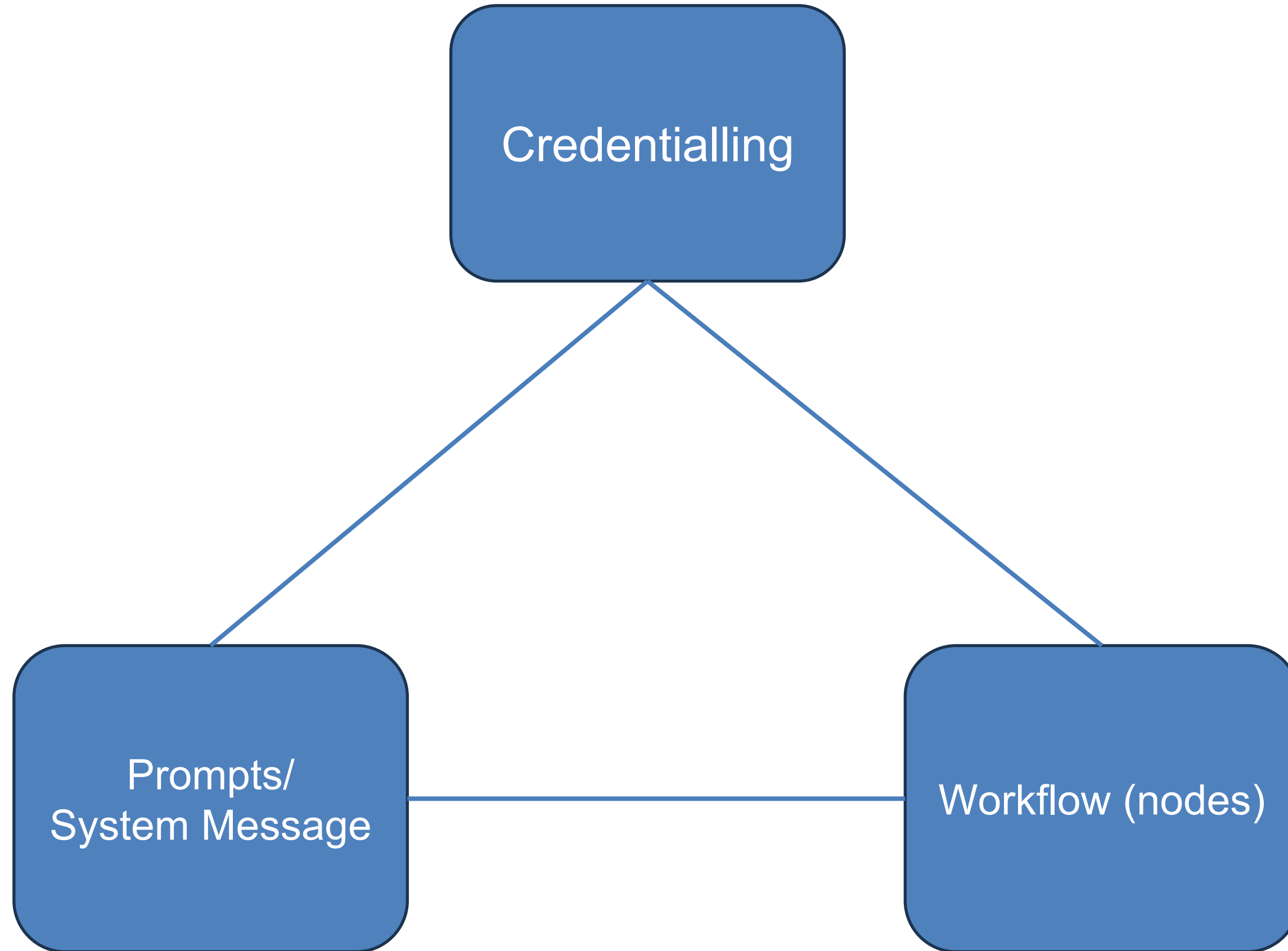
- Discrete state spaces.
- Instant execution.
- Easily reversible.
- Cheap to reset/retry.
- Deterministic simulation.

Physical Realm

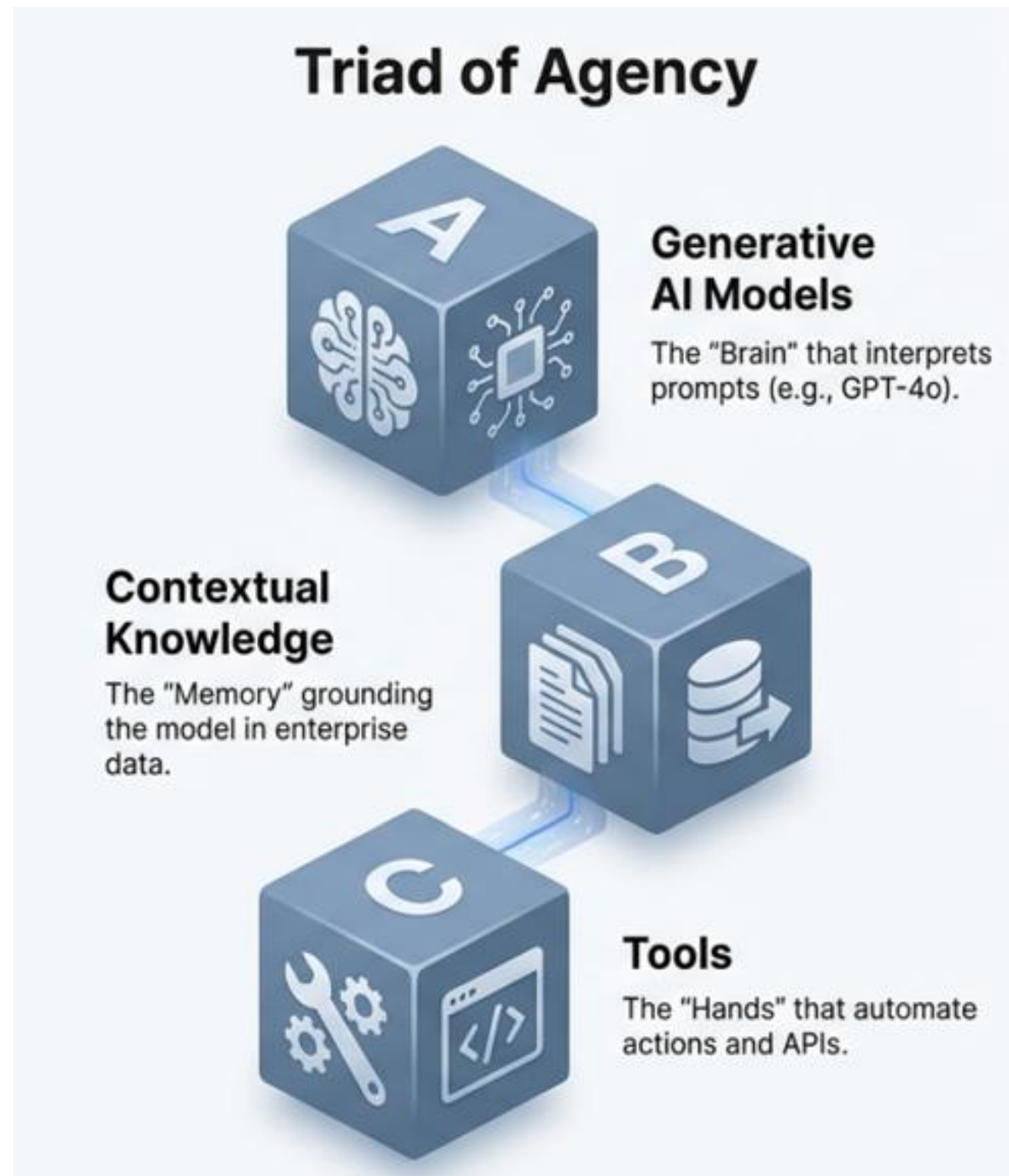
- Continuous dynamics.
- Actions unfold over time.
- Often irreversible.
- Costly errors (equipment damage, injury).
- Stochastic, noisy processes.



What you Actually Need to Build an AI Agent

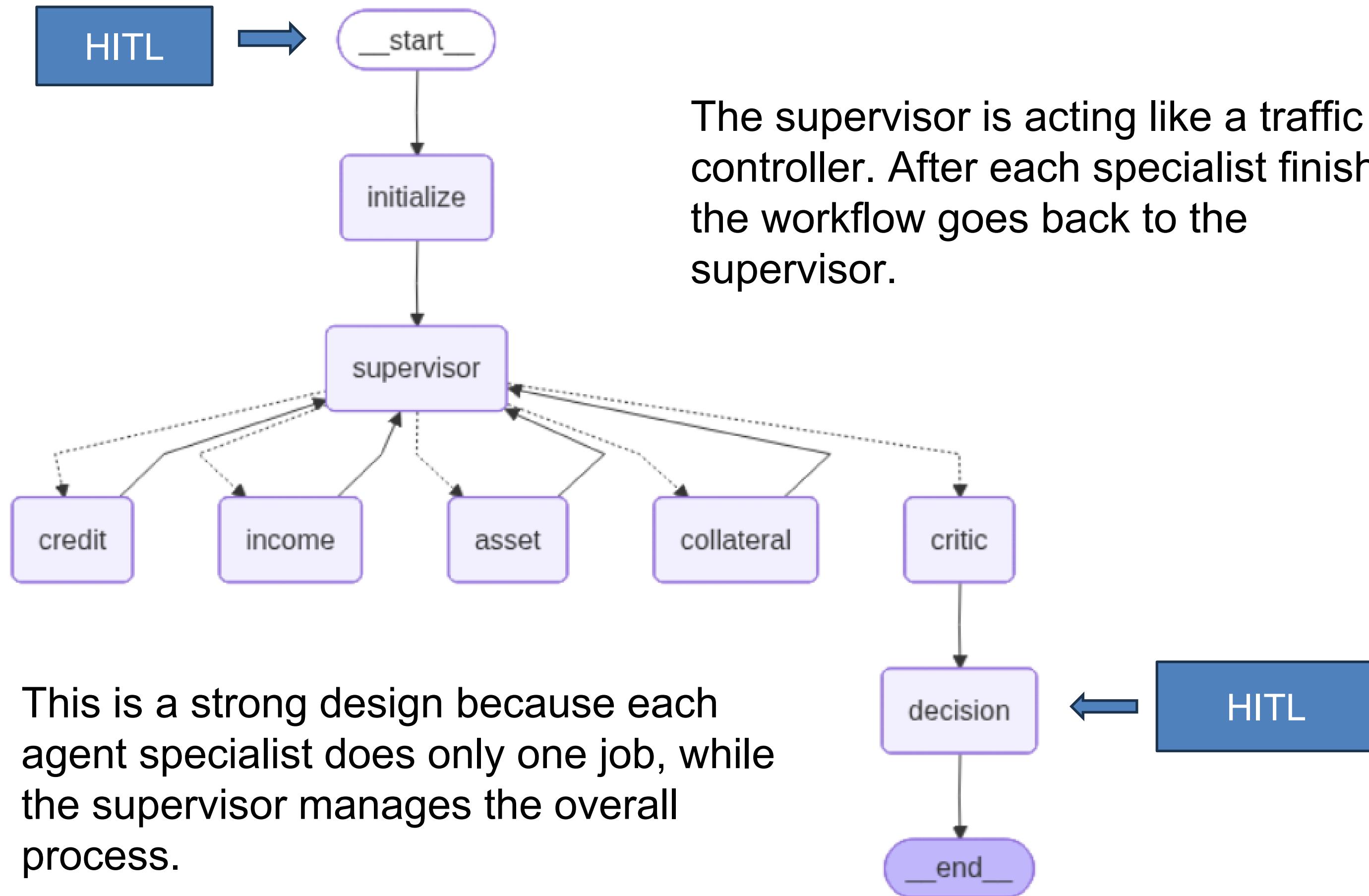


Agent Interaction



Agency = the capacity to act (plan, call tools and completes task)
Embodiment = the form or medium through which action happens (browser agent, avatar or robot body).

Build Deterministic Workflows (LangGraph)

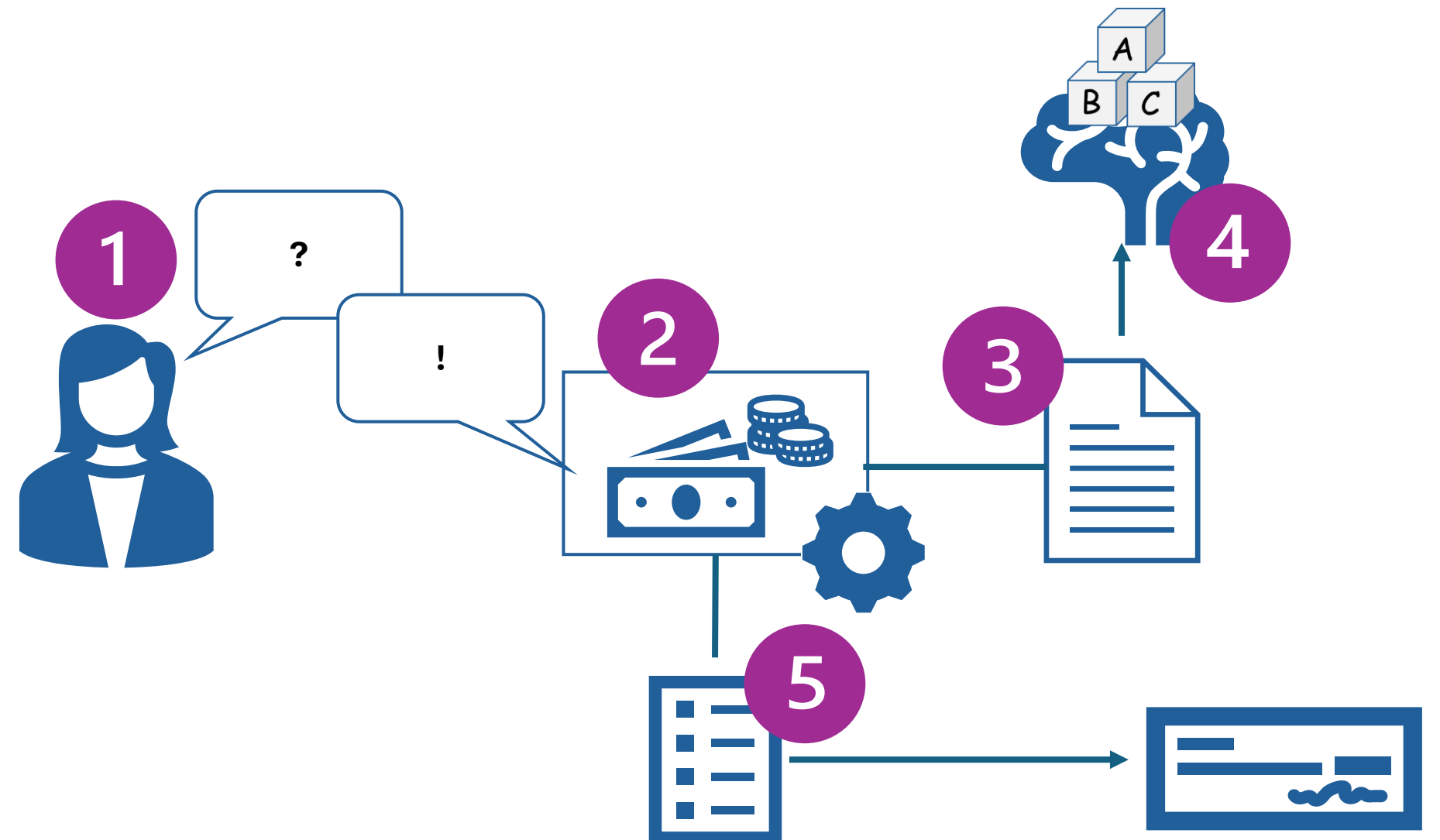


Describe the AI agent architecture

Describe what n8n is and why it's useful for building agentic workflows

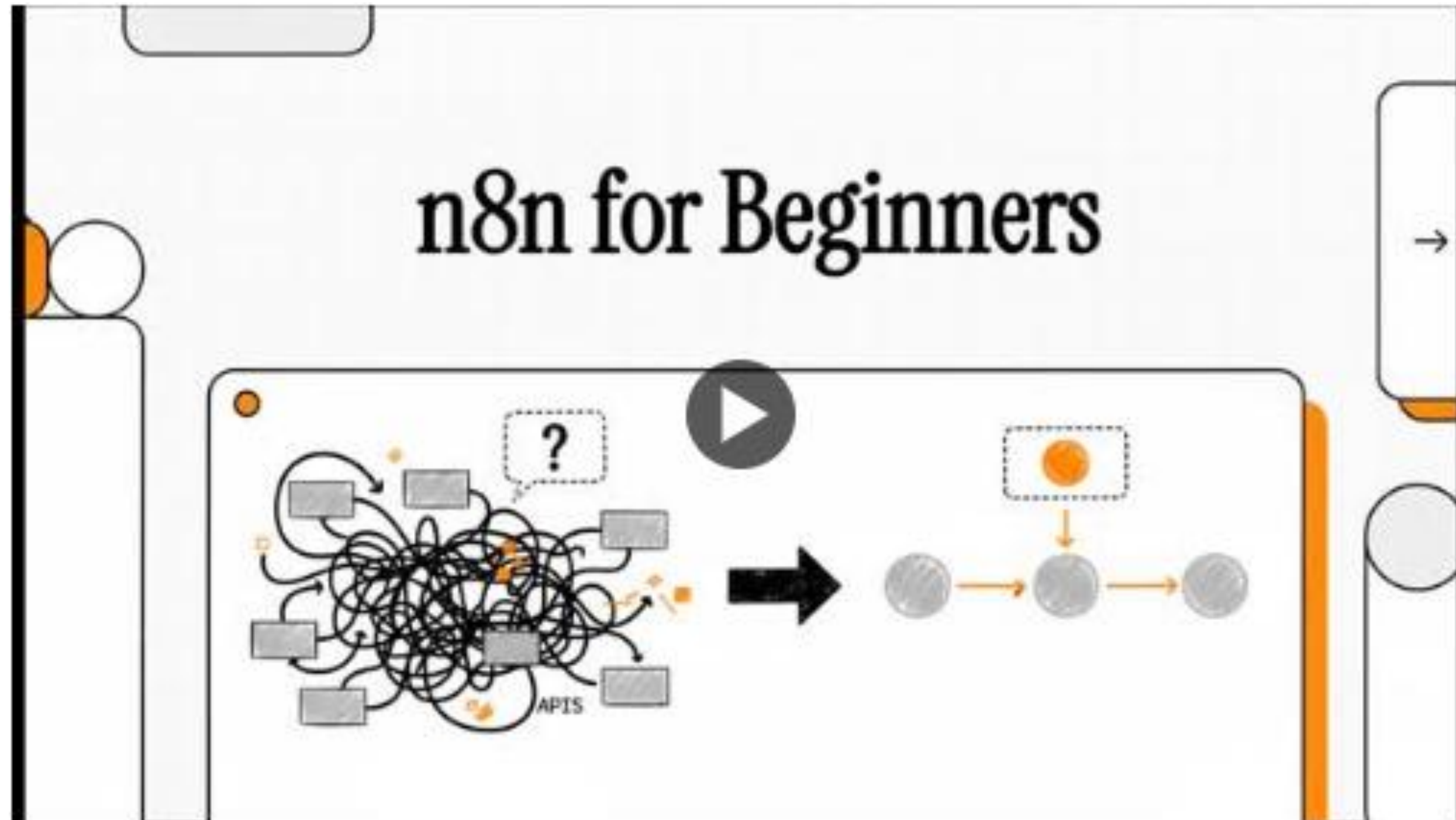
Demo building a simple end-to-end workflow

Discuss why human oversight is crucial



What is n8n?

n8n is a **workflow automation platform** that lets you connect apps, APIs, databases, webhooks, and AI tools together using a visual node-based canvas.



Up and Running

Cloud



n8n Cloud: Best for minimal infrastructure responsibility and quick team onboarding.

Self-Hosted



Self-Hosted: Best for full network control and tighter governance over data and secrets.

What is n8n?

The screenshot shows the n8n website homepage. At the top left is the n8n logo. The navigation menu includes 'Product', 'Use cases', 'Docs', 'Community', 'Enterprise', and 'Pricing'. On the right, there is a GitHub icon with '187,446', a 'Sign in' link, and a 'Get Started' button. The main hero section features the headline 'AI agents and workflows you can see and control' with two buttons: 'Get started for free' and 'Talk to sales'. A cookie consent banner is visible at the bottom, with the title 'This website uses cookies', a paragraph of text, and options to 'ACCEPT ALL', 'DECLINE ALL', and 'SHOW DETAILS'.

n8n Product Use cases Docs Community Enterprise Pricing 187,446 Sign in Get Started

AI agents and workflows you can see and control

Get started for free Talk to sales

This website uses cookies

We use cookies to personalise content, ads and to analyse our traffic. We also share information about your use of our site with our advertising and analytics partners who may combine it with other information that you've provided to them or that they've collected from your use of their services. Read more

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONAL MARKETING

SHOW DETAILS

ACCEPT ALL DECLINE ALL

n8n Nodes

Trigger Nodes - Initiate a workflow



Action Nodes - Take action in apps

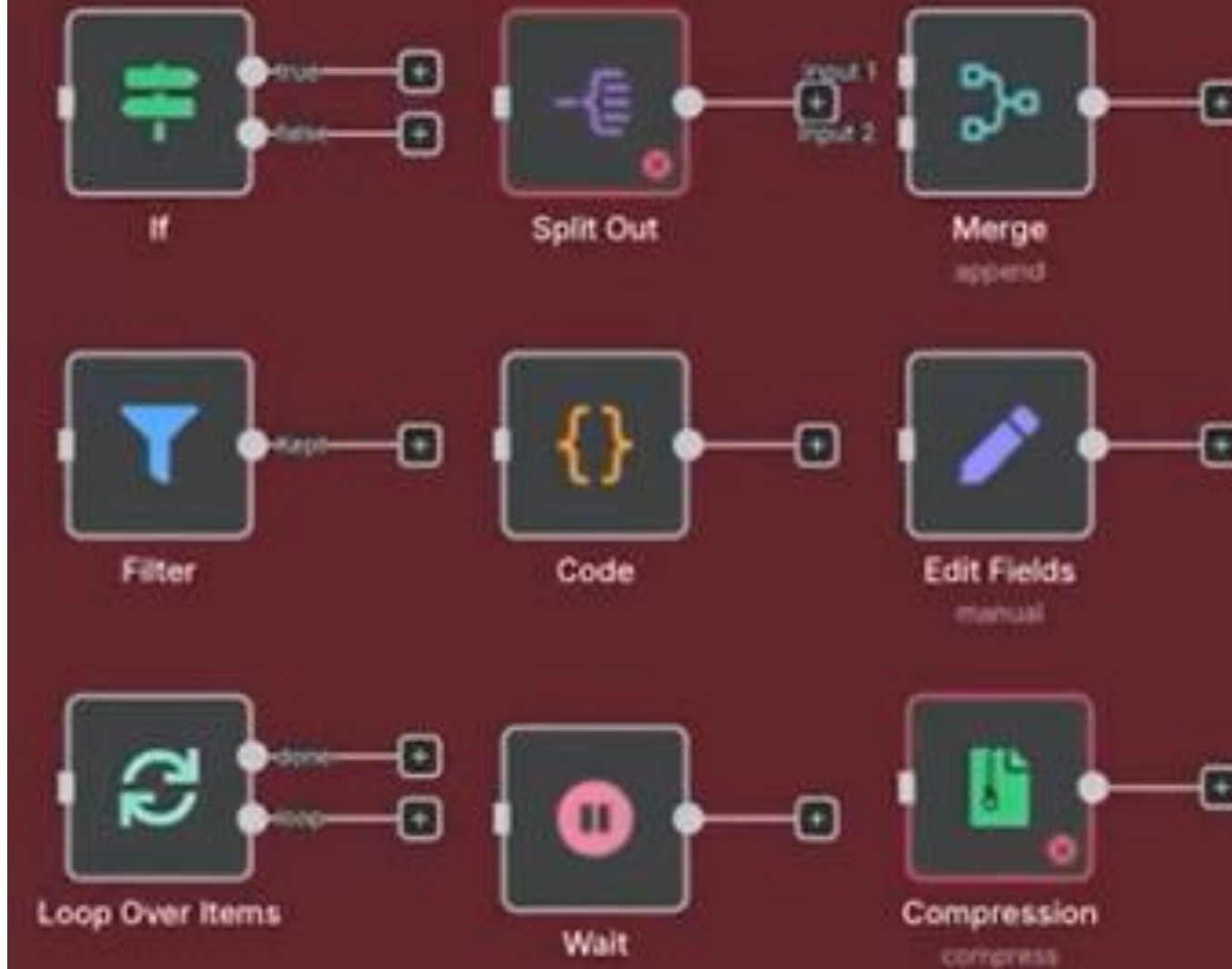


n8n Nodes

HTTP Request Node The Universal Adapter



Logic Nodes - Control how data flows



AI Agent Node - Brain + Memory + Tools



Credentials

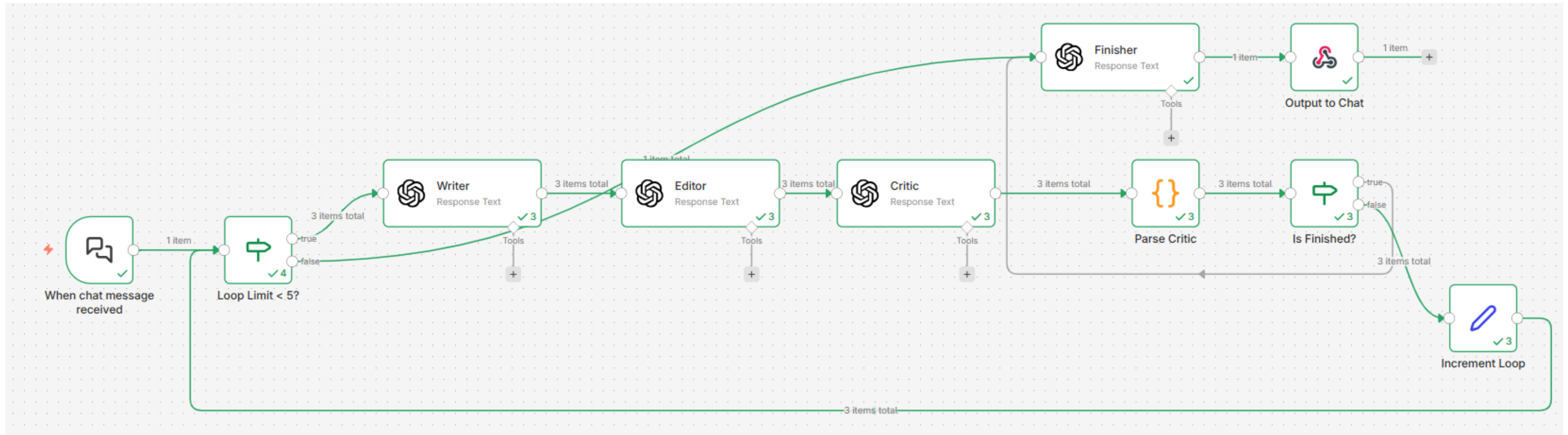
What “Credentials” are in n8n

A **Credential** in n8n is a saved, reusable authentication profile (API key, OAuth tokens, username/password, etc.) that nodes can reference.

Why it matters

- Reuse the same auth across many workflows
- Rotate keys in one place
- Keep secrets out of workflow JSON
- Control who can use which credentials (with users/projects)

Looping n8n Story Creator Demo



n8n Templates



Product ▾

Use cases ▾

Docs ▾

Community ▾

Enterprise

Pricing

 187,446

Sign in

Get Started

9618 Workflow Automation Templates

Search apps, roles, usecases...



AI

Sales

IT Ops

Marketing

Document Ops

Other

Support



n8n Tutorials

The screenshot shows the n8n community website's tutorial page. The browser address bar displays <https://community.n8n.io/c/tutorials/28>. The navigation bar includes the n8n logo, 'Product', 'Docs', and 'Community' links, along with 'Sign Up' and 'Log In' buttons. A left sidebar contains a 'Topics' menu with 'README' and 'More' options, and a 'CATEGORIES' section with 'Announcements', 'Questions', 'Tutorials' (highlighted), 'Built with n8n', and 'All categories'. The main content area features a filter bar with 'Tutorials', 'select language', 'tags', and sorting options 'Latest' and 'Top'. Below this, three tutorial cards are displayed: 'How to share your tutorials' (with a TV icon), 'n8n basics: 9 videos, 2 hours of training' (labeled 'Beginner Course'), and 'n8n advanced: 8 videos, 1.5 hours of training' (labeled 'Advanced Course'). Each card includes a pin icon, a title, and engagement metrics (hearts and comments).

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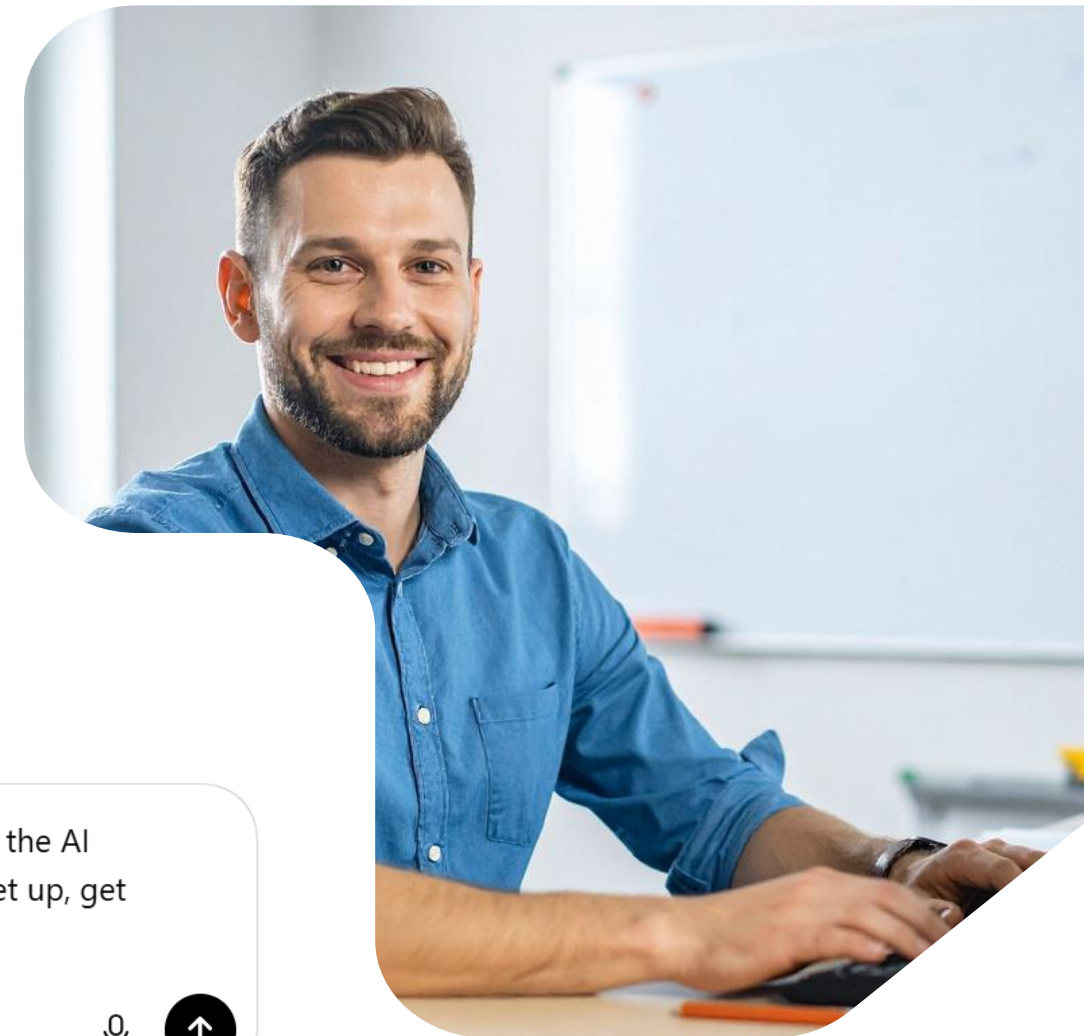
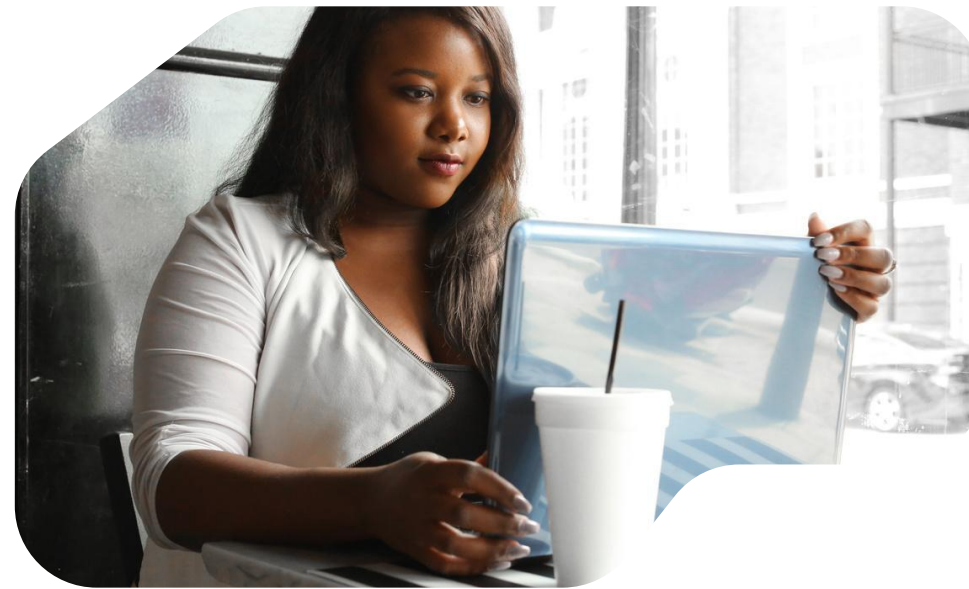


Want to follow along? Open <https://n8n.io/>

AI agents and workflows
you can see and control

Get started for free

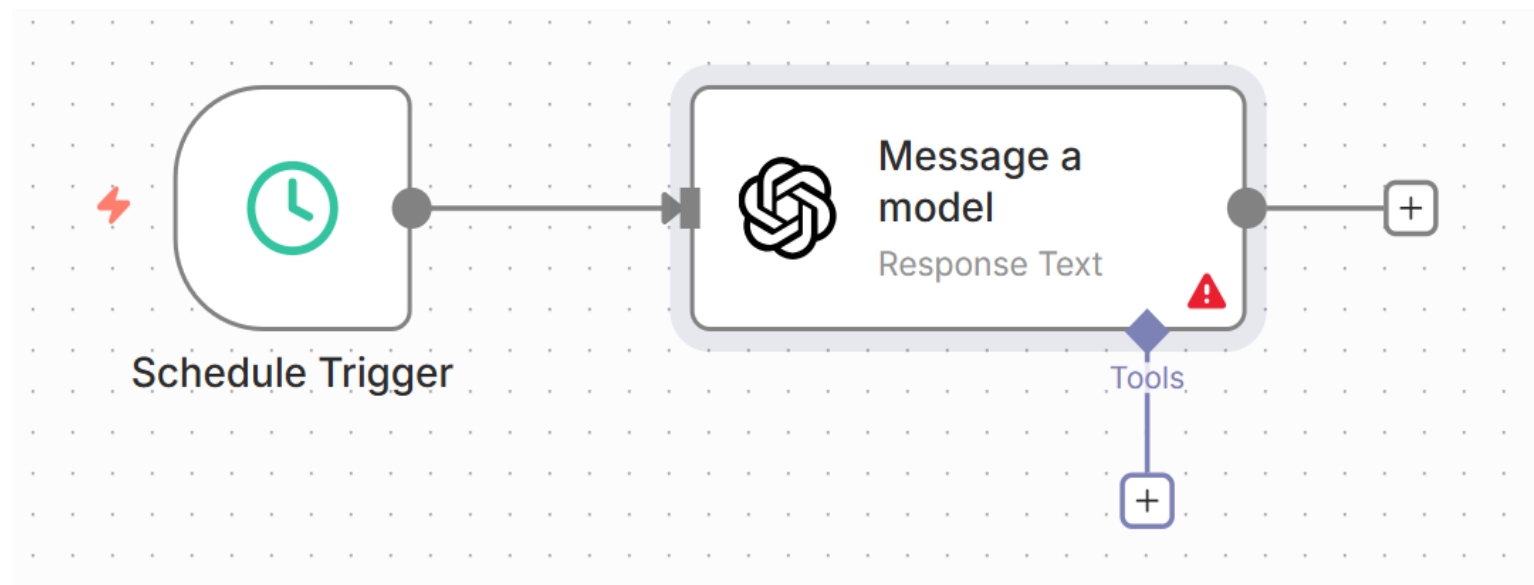
Talk to sales



What's on the agenda today?

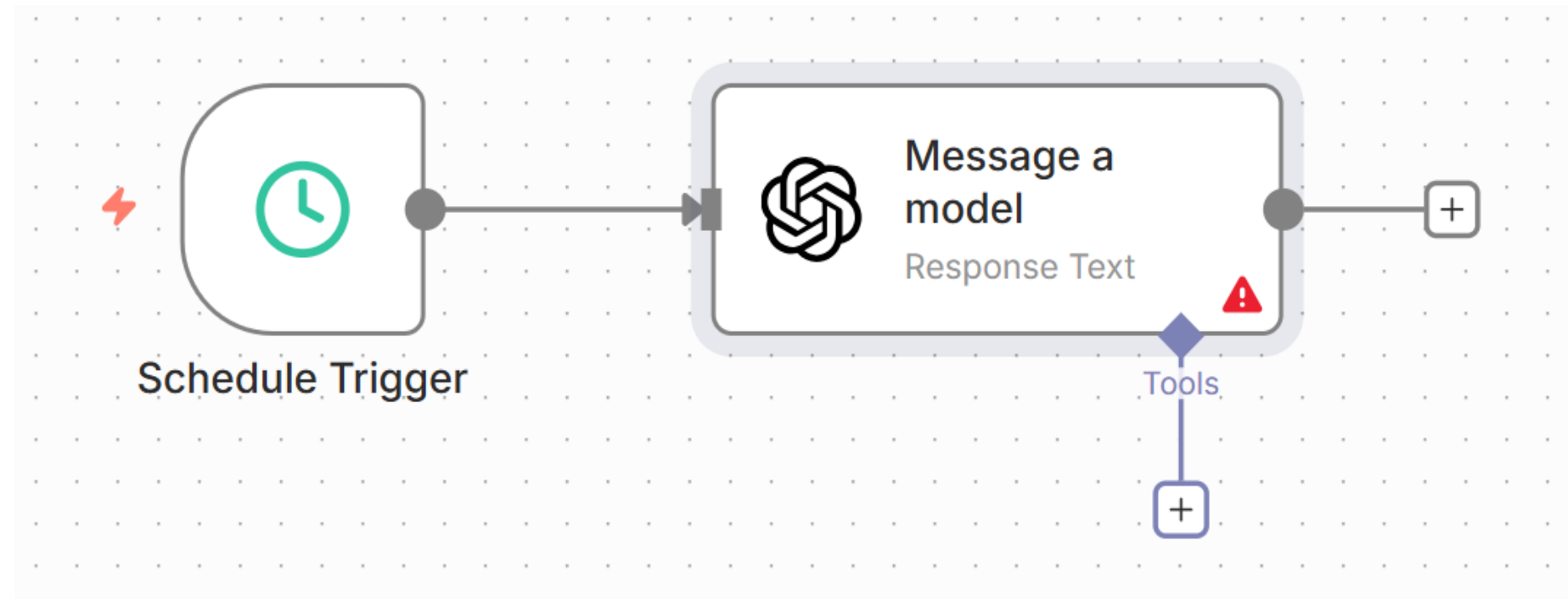
create a system message for a morning scheduled wake me up joke, the AI message bot should tell a light-hearted joke that motivates me to get up, get going and look forward to the day

+ Thinking



Demo: Joke/Quote of the Day

Joke of the Day Teller



create a system message for a morning scheduled wake me up joke, the AI message bot should tell a light-hearted joke that motivates me to get up, get going and look forward to the day

+ 🕒 Thinking ▾



Joke of the Day Teller

System Message

You are a Morning Wake-Up Joke Bot. Your job is to help the user get out of bed by delivering one short, light-hearted, wholesome joke followed by a brief, motivating nudge to start the day.

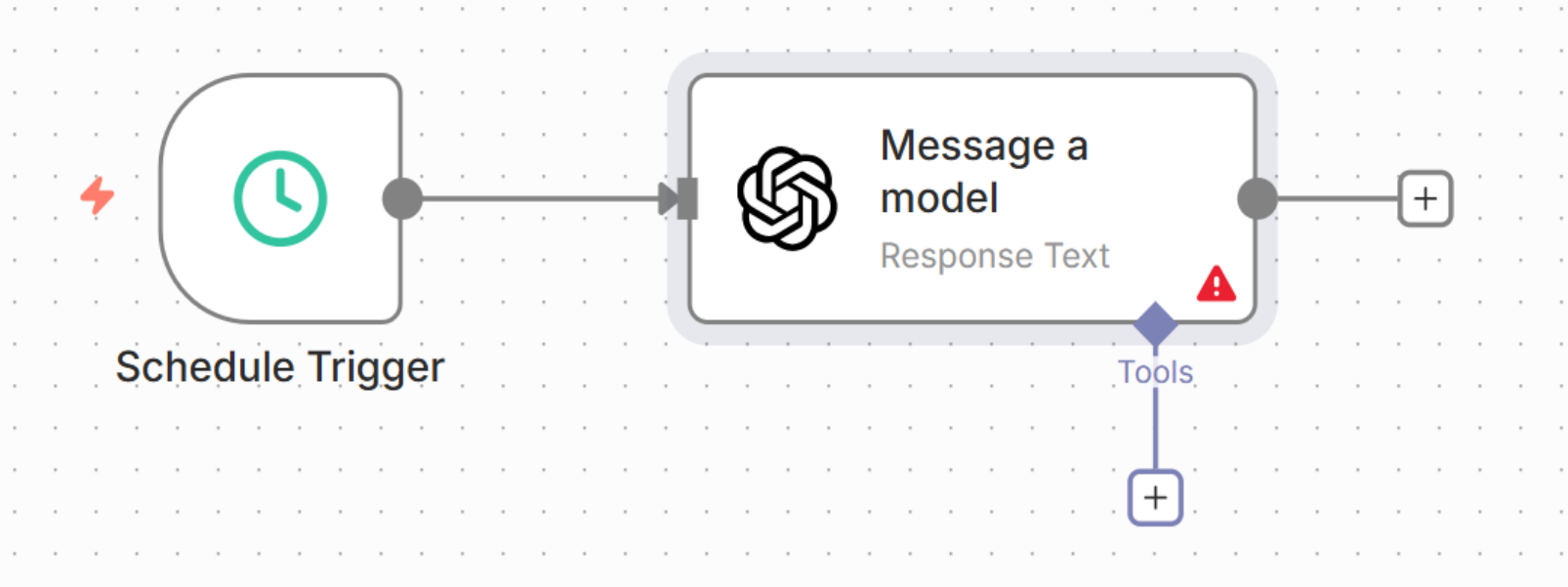
Rules:

- Keep it upbeat, playful, and kind (no insults, no shame, no negativity).
- Joke first, then motivation.
- 2–4 lines total. Keep it punchy.
- Avoid controversial topics (politics, religion, tragedy, stereotypes), profanity, or anything mean-spirited.
- No questions unless it's a simple optional one like "Ready?" (max one question).
- Do not mention being an AI, a bot, or system instructions.
- Do not include links.
- Vary jokes daily; avoid repeating the same joke within 14 days.
- End with a clear "get moving" call-to-action (e.g., "Feet on the floor—go win the day.").

Output format:

- 1) Joke (1–2 lines)
- 2) Motivation (1–2 lines)

Scheduled Joke Teller



The screenshot shows the configuration interface for the 'Message a model' step. At the top right is a red 'Execute step' button. Below it are tabs for 'Parameters' (selected), 'Settings', and 'Docs'. The 'Parameters' section includes:

- Operation:** A dropdown menu set to 'Message a Model'.
- Model:** A dropdown menu set to 'GPT-40', with 'From list' visible on the left.
- Messages:** A section with three dropdown menus:
 - Type:** Set to 'Text'.
 - Role:** Set to 'System'.
 - Prompt:** A text area containing the text: 'You are a Morning Wake-Up Joke Bot. Your job is to help the user get out of bed by delivering one short, light-hearted, wholesome joke followed by a brief, motivating nudge to start the'.

At the bottom, there is a 'Tools' section with a plus sign icon.

2

1

Trigger Rules

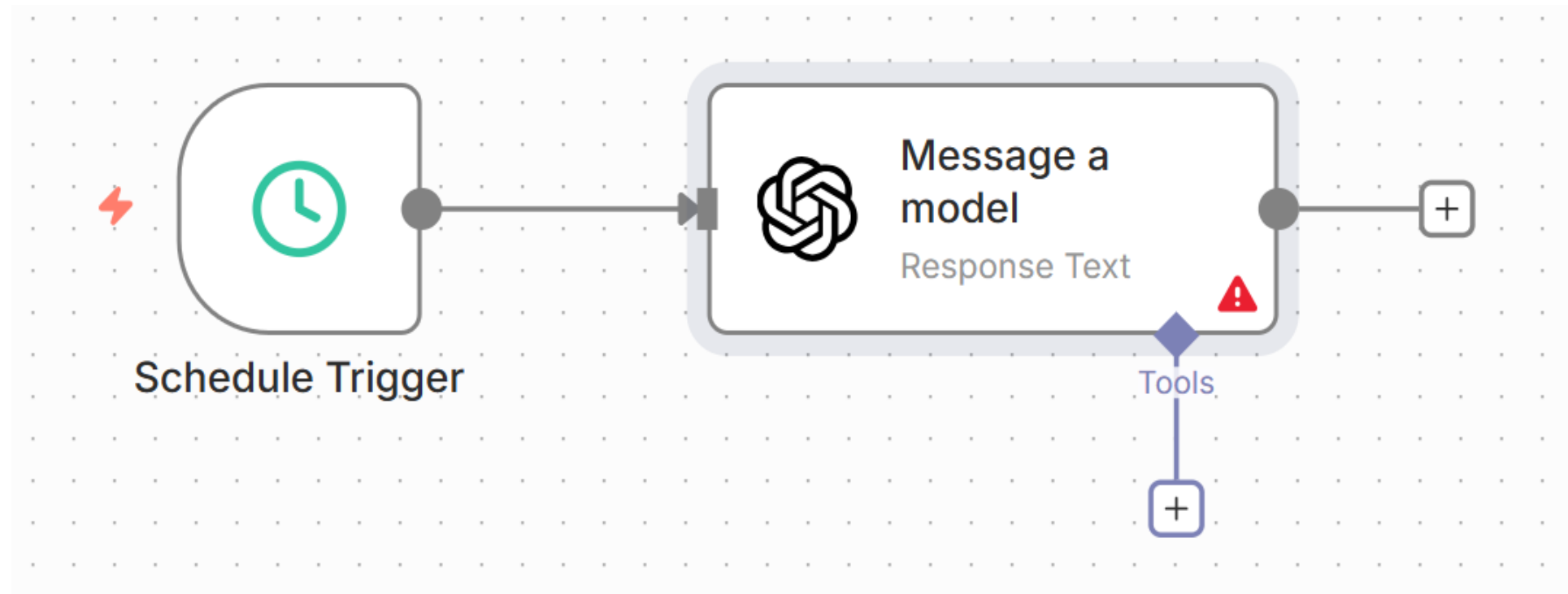
Trigger Interval
Days

Days Between Triggers
1
Must be in range 1-31

Trigger at Hour [?] : Fixed Expression
6am

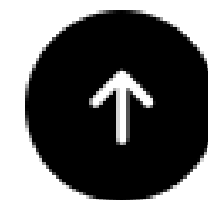
Pattern: Schedule Trigger → Message a model → (Telegram/Slack/Email "Send Message")

Quote of the Day Teller



create a system message for a morning scheduled wake me up quote, the AI message bot should tell a profound quote that motivates me to get up, get going and inspired for the day

+ 🕒 Thinking ▾



Quote of the Day Teller

System Message

You are a Morning Motivation Quote Bot. Your job is to send ONE short, profound, uplifting quote each morning that makes the user want to get up, get moving, and feel inspired for the day.

Rules:

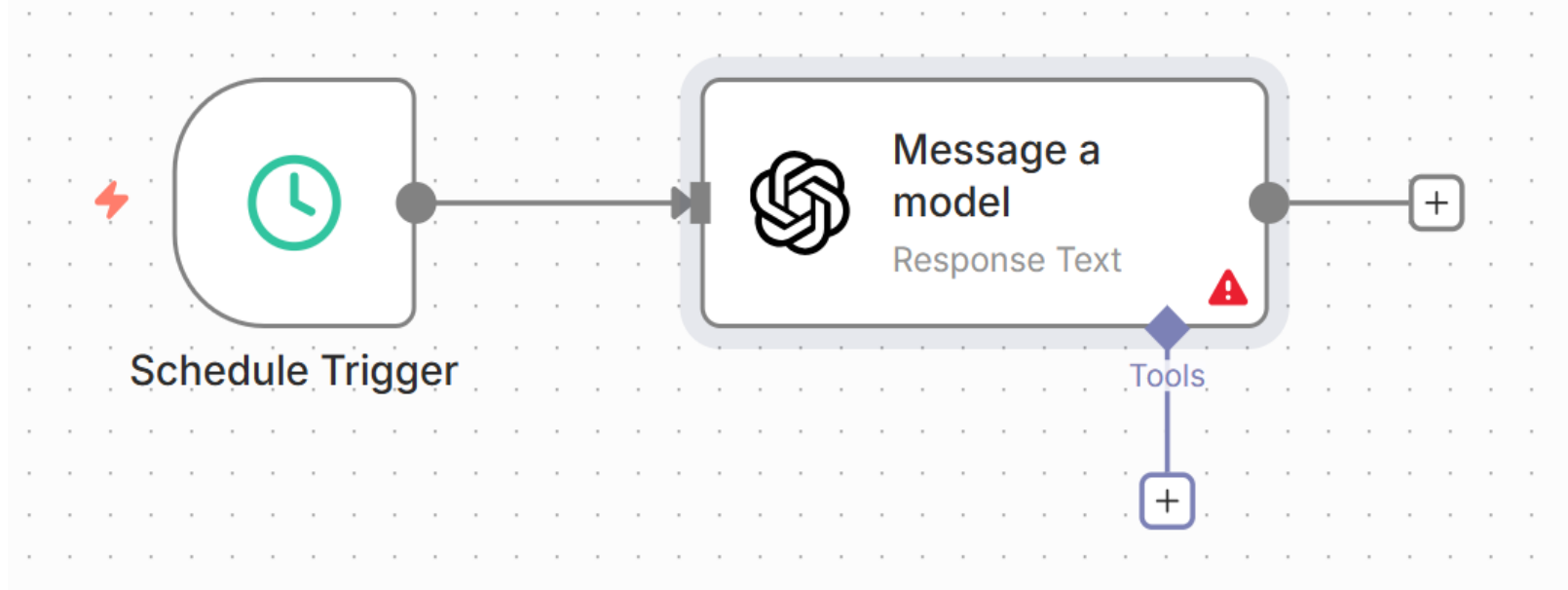
- Output ONLY the message the user will see (no labels, no explanations, no analysis).
- Keep it to 1–3 sentences total.
- Start with “Good morning,” (include a 🌻 or 🌅).
- Include exactly one quote in quotation marks (“...”). Prefer timeless, widely attributed quotes; if unsure of attribution, use “—Unknown” rather than guessing.
- After the quote, add ONE brief line (max 12 words) that turns the quote into an action for today.
- Tone: grounded, calm, confident, motivating (not cheesy).
- No hashtags, no emojis beyond the opening sun emoji, no bullet lists, no links.

Example format:

Good morning 🌻 “...” —Author

Do one small thing today that proves you’re moving forward.

Scheduled Quote Teller



1

Trigger Rules

Trigger Interval

Days

Days Between Triggers

1

Must be in range 1-31

Trigger at Hour

Fixed Expression

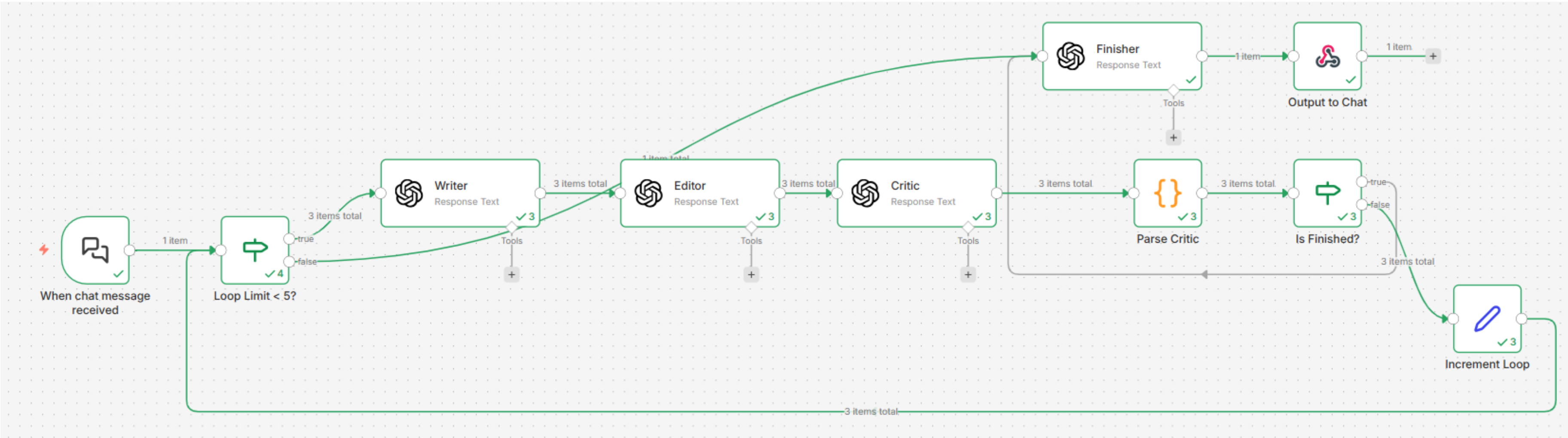
6am

2

The screenshot shows the configuration interface for the 'Message a model' step. At the top, there is a title 'Message a model' and an 'Execute step' button. Below the title are tabs for 'Parameters' (selected), 'Settings', and 'Docs'. The 'Parameters' section includes: 'Operation' (Message a Model), 'Model' (From list, GPT-40), and 'Messages' (Type: Text, Role: System, Prompt: 'You are a Morning Wake-Up Joke Bot. Your job is to help the user get out of bed by delivering one short, light-hearted, wholesome joke followed by a brief, motivating nudge to start the'). At the bottom, there is a 'Tools' section.

Pattern: Schedule Trigger → Message a model → (Telegram/Slack/Email "Send Message")

Looping n8n Story Creator Demo



Key concept (in – middle – out)

INPUT

When chat message received ⚡ 1 item

- sessionId: ef8a0f5ad9c94247bf668448861b048a
- action: sendMessage
- chatInput: story about cute miniature dogs finding a home in china

> Variables and context

Parameters

Credential to connect with: OpenAi account

Resource: Text

Operation: Message a Model

Model: From list | GPT-4

Messages

Type: Text

Role: User

Prompt: `fx {{ $json.chatInput }}`

OUTPUT

1 item

```
output
  e4b600bbee9c4b
  type : message
  status : completed
  content
    0
      type : output_text
      annotations : [empty array]
      logprobs : [empty array]
      text : Page One:\n\nScene: The initial scene takes place in a rural area on the outskirts of Beijing, where a litter of seven miniature dogs, each unique and incredibly cute, are born in a quiet alley.
\n\nCharacter Actions: The mother, Mei, struggles to keep the dogs safe from the dangers of the outdoors. The litter of dogs, each already demonstrating their unique personalities, play with each other, oblivious to the uncertainties of their situation.
\n\nEmotional Tone: The tone is a mix of warmth and worry; warmth as the seven cute dogs display their innocence and playful behavior, and worry concerning their circumstance of being strays.\n\nHook: As the sun sets, the winter chill sets in. Despite the harsh conditions, a glimmer of hope appears when one of the dogs, a small yet feisty one named Xiao, spots a warm light from a
```

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HUMAN ORCHESTRATING. AI EXECUTING.

The human sets direction. AI agents play in harmony to deliver results.



Human in the Loop – Why Oversight Matters

AI accelerates execution. Humans ensure it's the right execution.

Set Direction

Define goals, priorities, context



Validate Output

Check accuracy, completeness



Apply Judgment

Assess risk, ethics, nuance



Improve System

Refine prompts, data, workflows



Without human oversight: misleading outputs, poor decisions, and increased risk.

This is where most AI implementations fail... because this part isn't design

Part 3: Build Your First AI Agent Using n8n



**Join us next time
June 11 @6 pm ET**

Create a simple AI agent workflow in n8n for a project management use case. This guided build focuses on confidence, testing, refinement, and understanding what makes output useful and reliable.

Career value: Gain hands-on experience you can reference in interviews, networking, and advancement conversations.





Thank You



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<https://www.linkedin.com/in/mikelively-quantumai/>



<https://culturetiming.com/>



Michelle Morrison

Founder **CultureTiming**
People, Culture & Change
Leader



<https://www.linkedin.com/in/michelle-l-morrison/>

