



**HRIHOREANU**

# What is AI, and why does structure matter?

Autonomy is earned through evidence. It is never assumed on day one.

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#### WHAT IS AI

AI is a system that processes information and produces an output. Not magic. Not a person. A tool that needs the right level of trust for the right job.

#### WHY STRUCTURE MATTERS

A new employee is not given every key, every account and unlimited authority on their first day. AI should develop in the same way: begin with visibility, prove reliability, then expand its freedom within boundaries people can understand and govern.

#### THE CORE IDEA

Autonomy is earned through evidence. It is never assumed on day one.

## THE FIVE-STAGE LADDER

Autonomy increases downward; each stage is earned by evidence from the one before.

### 01 **Observe**

HUMAN-LED

Reads only what a person gives it in the moment. It produces output for review; nothing is stored or connected.

Example: An assistant that rewrites a passage a colleague has pasted into the chat box.

To advance: Its answers are consistently accurate, and someone has defined which sources it may read on its own.

### 02 **Assist**

SOURCE-AWARE

Reads from approved sources and summarises. A human reviews everything before any action is taken.

Example: The same assistant reads an approved folder of documents and returns a summary of what changed.

To advance: Its summaries prove reliable, and a clear, repeatable action follows from them.

### 03 **Propose**

APPROVAL-LED

Suggests a specific email, update or change. A human must approve each action before it happens.

Example: It drafts the reply to an incoming request and leaves it waiting; a person presses send.

To advance: A high share of drafts is approved unchanged across real volume, not a handful of tests.

### 04 **Delegate**

BOUNDARY-LED

Acts on its own within a clearly defined boundary, escalating anything that falls outside it.

Example: It sends routine replies below an agreed threshold on its own, and escalates everything else.

To advance: Its escalations are well judged, and the mistakes it does make are rare and recoverable.

### 05 **Trust**

OUTCOME-LED

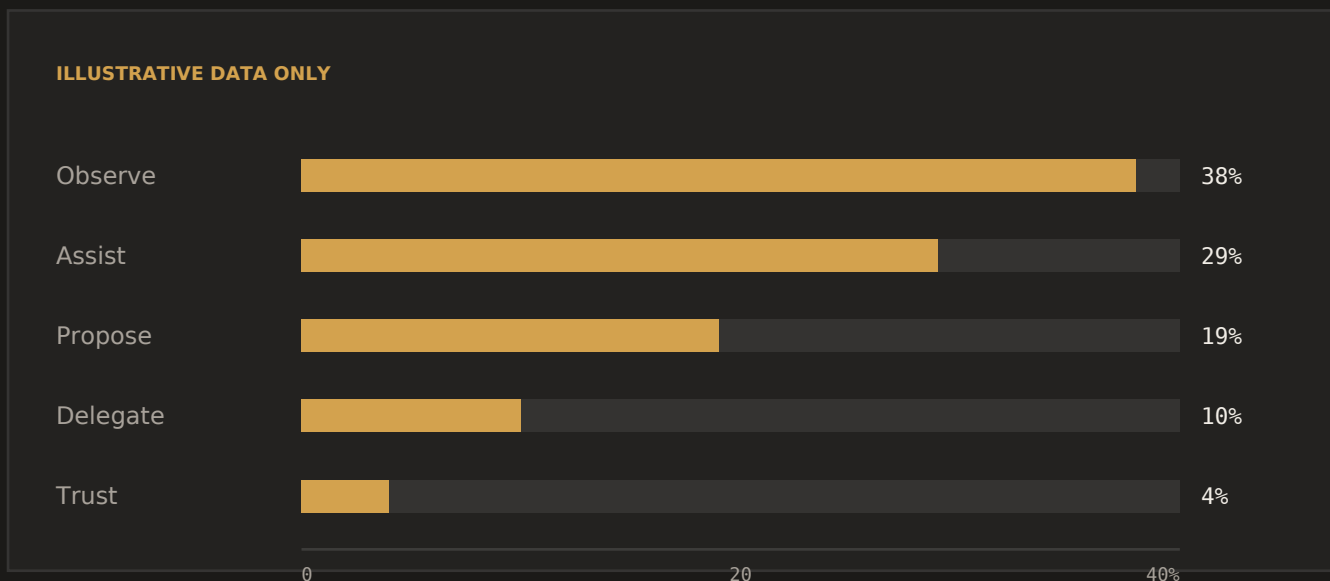
Operates independently across its domain, with human override authority and periodic oversight.

Example: It handles the whole category of requests end to end and adapts its approach as cases change.

Ongoing oversight: People keep override authority and review its outcomes on a regular, scheduled basis.

### AN ORGANISATION IN PRACTICE

Most organisations have many low-risk capabilities learning at the early stages and few operating with broad autonomy. The figures below are illustrative only.



### REACHABLE OVER MCP

This page is also readable by AI agents over the Model Context Protocol, as a small live example of a governed, read-only connection.

<https://hrihoreanu.com/mcp>

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