Fast Is Not a Direction

AI's scariest feature isn't that it's wrong. It's that it's fast when it's wrong.

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The whole AI pitch is speed: ship faster, write faster, decide faster. And it's real — the acceleration is not hype. But speed is a scalar. It has a magnitude and no direction. The thing that decides whether all that velocity helps you or hurts you is the one thing AI doesn't supply: where you're pointed.

AI is an amplifier, and amplifiers don't care

Put a good process under AI and you get a great one. Put a broken process under AI and you get an *industrialized* broken one. The tool multiplies whatever you feed it; it has no opinion about whether the thing is worth doing. That judgment is your job, and it always was — AI just raised the stakes on getting it right.

This stays abstract unless you make it concrete, so: fast in the wrong direction looks like —

- Shipping features nobody asked for, now at twice the rate.
- Automating a broken onboarding flow, so you disappoint customers at scale and with great efficiency.
- Generating fifty variations of a landing page for an offer that doesn't land.
- Writing mountains of code on the wrong architecture — tech debt accruing at machine speed.
- Scaling a sales motion that doesn't convert, and calling the bigger pipeline "progress."

In every one of these, the AI did its job perfectly. That's the point. It will take you exactly where you aimed it, faster than you can react if you aimed it wrong.

The friction you removed was also a check

Here's what people miss. When you did things by hand, the effort was annoying — but it was also a brake. The slowness forced a pause, and in that pause you sometimes noticed you were about to do something dumb. Remove the friction and you remove the pause. The reflection that used to come free, because the work was slow, now has to be deliberate. If you don't add it back on purpose, you don't get it at all.

Slow down the decision, speed up the execution

The discipline that actually works is counterintuitive: put *more* human time into "are we pointed the right way," then let AI run flat-out once you're sure. Most people do the opposite — they rush the decision because deciding is uncomfortable, and try to make up for it with execution speed. You cannot out-execute a wrong direction. You just arrive at the wrong place sooner.

Three questions before you hit the accelerator:

1. **Are we solving the right problem?** Not "can we build this" — *should* we.
2. **How will we know if it's working, and how fast will we find out?** Build the feedback loop *before* you build at speed.
3. **What does being wrong cost at this speed?** Fast and reversible is cheap to get wrong — go. Fast and irreversible is how companies hurt themselves.

Measure outcomes, not motion

AI makes every output metric go up — more commits, more drafts, more tickets closed. Those are easy to count, which is exactly why they're dangerous: they *look* like progress and may just be motion. The only number that matters is whether you got closer to the outcome you actually wanted. Count that one, even though it's harder to count.

A rocket aimed at the wrong planet is still a rocket — more fuel just gets you to the wrong place faster. Get the direction right first. Then, by all means, go fast.

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