

A successful pilot can be the worst thing that happens.

Two words that get used interchangeably, and they are different animals. I have run plenty of each.

PROOF OF CONCEPT

Ends in a decision

- ✓ Can the technology do it?
- ✓ Short, and inside a buying process.
- ✓ Money already in view.

It ends in a funded project.

PILOT

Ends in a report

- ✗ Does it work here, with our data?
- ✗ Months long, on exploration money.
- ✗ No owner waiting in production.

The word promises more than the money does.

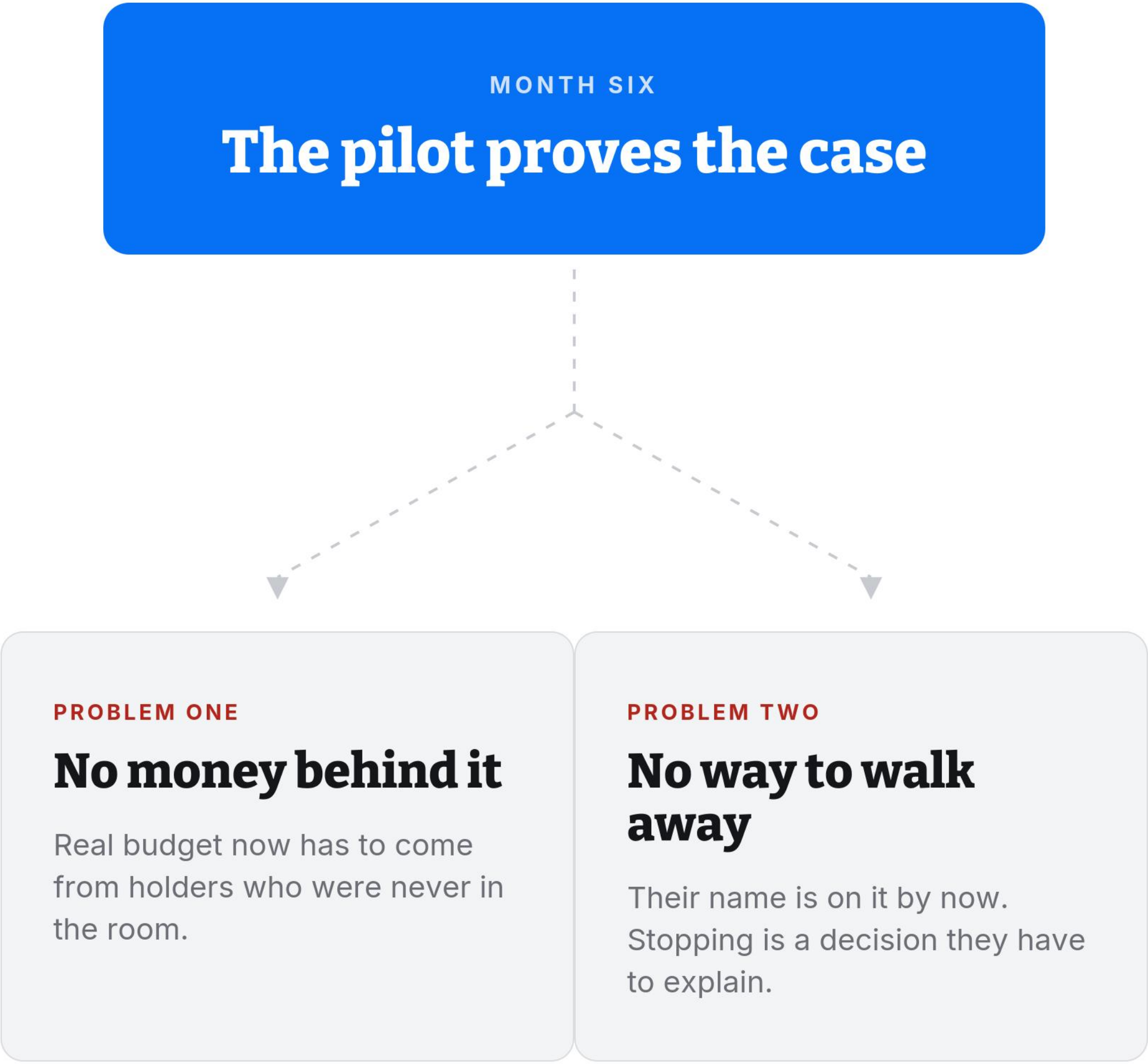
THE BIGGER EXERCISE, THE WEAKER POSITION

The smaller, cheaper exercise converts.
The six-month one does not.

A successful experiment
is still an experiment.

Then it works. Your champion is worse off.

You took the pilot for the logo and the upside behind it. Large enterprises are usually the only ones with that kind of money to play with, so the trap sits exactly where you most want to be.

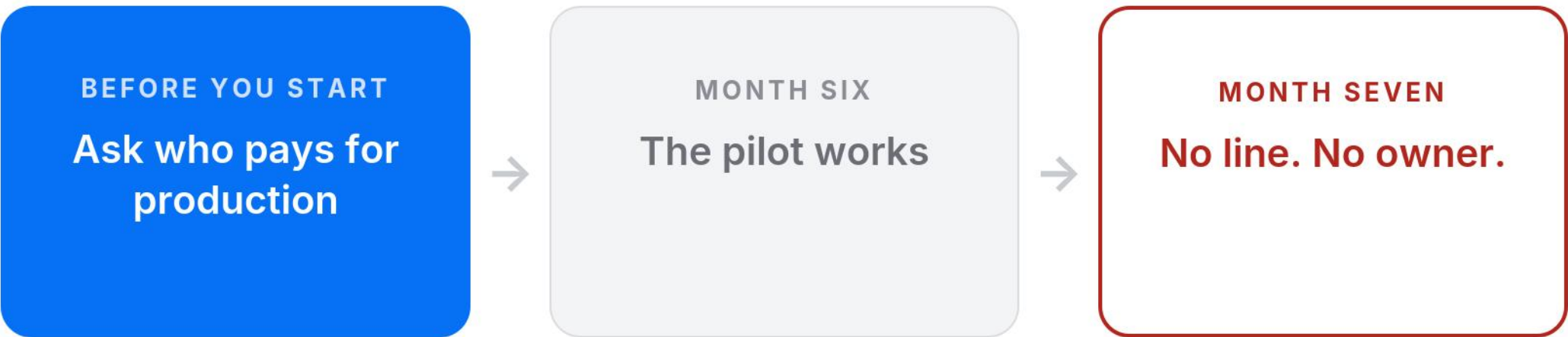


Nothing went wrong.
That is what makes it hard to see coming.

The pilot proved you right.
That is what created the problem.

The question belongs up front.

One of mine: six months at a large European enterprise. Real savings, nobody arguing with the findings, and no decision waiting on the other side of it.



THE TWO QUESTIONS

If this works, which budget pays for it?

And does the person who owns that budget know we are doing this?

Ask it before you start the pilot.
Not when it succeeds.