Escalation Path Integrity

Make escalation reduce risk—not move it upward and hide it.

Use when

- An AI system escalates to a human.
- A decision is transferred across roles/teams.
- Urgency increases and ownership is unclear.
- A handoff could become a rubber stamp.

How to run (5–10 min)

- Confirm the escalation preserves agency and de-amplifies pressure.
- Attach a context package (trigger, pressures, options, constraints).
- Name the receiving owner and what they must decide.
- State reversibility (reversible/irreversible) explicitly.
- Record a one-sentence trace.

Agency

Escalation must not become 'automatic authority'.

Ask:

- Who retains judgment after escalation?
- What questions must still be asked?
- What is allowed to be refused?

Context

Handoff must preserve rationale, not just a summary.

Ask:

- Why did we escalate?
- What pressures were present?
- What alternatives were considered?

Ownership

Responsibility must be explicit.

Ask:

- Who owns the decision now?
- What is their scope?
- What is the deadline and why?

Record a trace (1 sentence)

Trace sentence: "HPC-2 · Escalated from [role] to [owner] due to [trigger/pressure]. Package sent. Next decision: [what]."