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Practical SOAR Examples from the Field: Part 2

SEC1372

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Overview

Session Breakdown and Goals

Breakdown

- Introductions
- SOAR Intro and Refresher
- Cases Studies
- Additional Tips
- Wrap Up / Questions

Goals

- Inspire you to confidently handle automation
- Show you more real-world playbooks from the field
- Leave you with more ideas, tips and tricks on creating your own playbooks

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Introductions

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SOAR Intro / Refresher

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Recap

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Last year we covered:

- Best practice SOAR playbook implementation
- Playbook case studies from the field
- Bonus tips
- … and more

https://tinyurl.com/4r7afb9r

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Recap

SOAR Implementation Methodology

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https://tinyurl.com/4r7afb9r

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Recap

SOAR Integration - Where do the analysts work?

Many options, with no right or wrong way

Splunk SOAR

Splunk ES

3rd Party

Mission Control

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https://tinyurl.com/4r7afb9r

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Playbook Design Principles

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Design Principles

What we've discovered

- Detailed / Low Level Designs used for traditional Splunk deployments do no work for SOAR
  - Automation is complex area and legacy design principals do not translate across
- Effort is better spent prototyping the solution and iterating / adjusting on the fly
  - Automation aligns better with a DevOps / CICD approach
- A high level design can still be used to set goals and establish guardrails
  - Provides the 'commander's intent'
- It's impossible to gather all requirements and permutations of the automation flow up front
  - Often the customer cannot provide this until they've seen the solution in action

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Typical Legacy Approach

What's supposed to happen:

- Requirements are gathered and a design is created
- Customer reviews and if satisfied the design is approved and all playbook components are 'locked in'
- Playbook is developed in-line with the design
- Solution presented to customer, is tested, and signed off

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Typical Legacy Approach

What usually actually happens..

- Process proceeds up until playbook development stats, during which:
  - Environment specifics are discovered that conflict with the design
  - New questions are raised that could not have been predicted previously
  - Additional requirements are raised from the customer

- Re-design is required, more time is needed, and often deadlock occurs

- And most importantly, more time is spent on the design than developing the playbook itself.

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Best Practice Approach

How we've changed the approach

- Enhanced focus on discovery to draw out requirements, assumptions, and potential blockers
- High level design captures the general flow and overall intent - not every individual block / function
- Playbook developer then has freedom to innovate and develop the solution as long as it still reasonably meets the intent from the high level design.
- True up activity at the end uplifts documentation to reflect what was actually built

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Case Study: Agent Management Playbook Design

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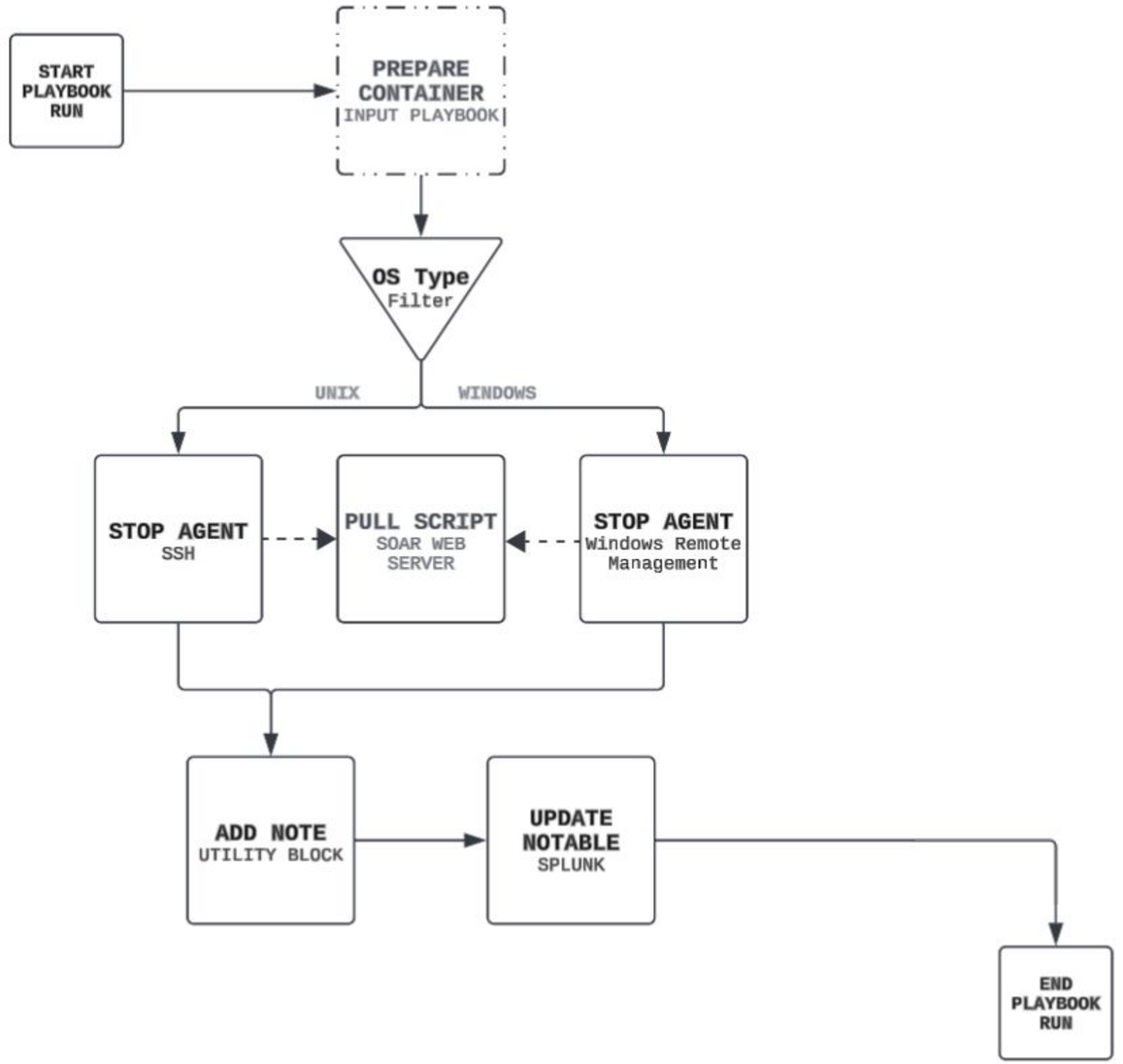
Initial Design

Simple high level flow to determine the OS, stop the agent, add a note, and update the notable.

What more could you possibly need?

Required Apps:
SSH
Windows Remote Management
Splunk



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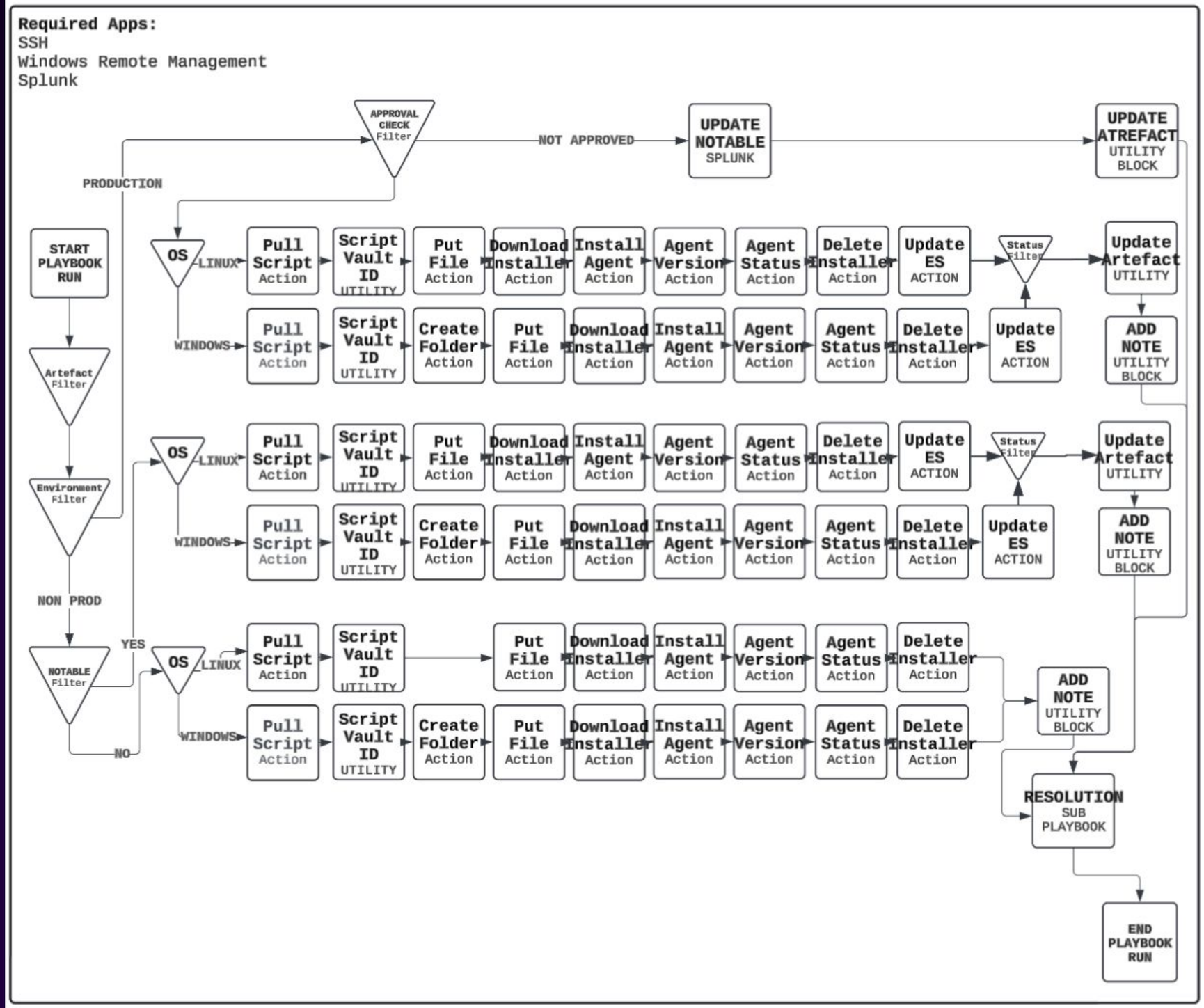
Final Design

Well…

Same playbook,
Same requirements,
Just a higher level of detail unearthed once development commenced.



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Design Principles

Key Takeaways

- Legacy approach had been underway for over 24 months and completely stalled
  - Our new approach had customer design sign-off in < 1 week
- Employ high level design to capture the intent and establish automation goals / guardrails
- Low level / detailed designs are not practical to create in advance
  - Especially for complex automation - more time will be spent on design than build
- Perform a ‘true-up’ once the solution has been completed
  - Documentation as code will save time here

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Playbook Case Studies

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Custom ES Automation Workflow

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Custom ES Automation Workflow

Using ES notable status changes to trigger automation

What and why?

- Requirement to selectively initiate automation under heavy constraints
  - Automation must be triggered by a user
  - User must be able to select some container and omit others
  - Automation ‘requests’ must be reviewed and approved before execution
  - Solution must provide different workflows for PROD and NON-PROD systems
    - PROD runs as per the above
    - NON-PROD hosts follow a different flow

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Custom ES Automation Workflow

Using ES notable status changes to trigger automation

How?

- Correlation search creating notable events
- Custom notable statuses configured in ES
- Additional scheduled search monitoring for status change
- Send to SOAR adaptive response action

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Analyst queue Search findings & investigations All time

Time Range: All time | Clear All | Save | Apply

Zoom To Selection | Zoom Out | Deselect

4 selected | Edit | Assign to Me | Add to Investigation

	Title	Type	Status	Owner	Risk Object	Risk Score	Time	Disposition
☑	Compliance Event	FINDING	New	unassigned	HYP3SVR655	1	Tue, 18 Mar 2025 10:50	Undetermined
☑	Compliance Event	FINDING	New	unassigned	HYP3SVR542	1	Tue, 18 Mar 2025 10:50	Undetermined
☑	Compliance Event	FINDING	New	unassigned	HYP3SVR204	1	Tue, 18 Mar 2025 10:45	Undetermined
☑	Compliance Event	FINDING	New	unassigned	HYP3SVR193	1	Tue, 18 Mar 2025 10:45	Undetermined
☐	Compliance Event	FINDING	New	unassigned	HYP3SVR687	1	Tue, 18 Mar 2025 10:40	Undetermined
☐	Compliance Event	FINDING	New	unassigned	HYP3SVR609	1	Tue, 18 Mar 2025 10:40	Undetermined
☐	Compliance Event	FINDING	New	unassigned	HYP3SVR400	1	Tue, 18 Mar 2025 10:35	Undetermined
☐	Compliance Event	FINDING	New	unassigned	HYP3SVR627	1	Tue, 18 Mar 2025 10:30	Undetermined
☐	Compliance Event	FINDING	New	unassigned	HYP3SVR16	1	Tue, 18 Mar 2025 10:30	Undetermined
☐	Compliance Event	FINDING	New	unassigned	HYP3SVR17	1	Tue, 18 Mar 2025 10:25	Undetermined
☐	Compliance Event	FINDING	New	unassigned	HYP3SVR638	1	Tue, 18 Mar 2025 10:25	Undetermined
☐	Compliance Event	FINDING	New	unassigned	HYP3SVR727	1	Tue, 18 Mar 2025 10:25	Undetermined
☐	Compliance Event	FINDING	New	unassigned	HYP3SVR161	1	Tue, 18 Mar 2025 10:20	Undetermined
☐	Compliance Event	FINDING	New	unassigned	HYP3SVR171	1	Tue, 18 Mar 2025 10:20	Undetermined
☐	Compliance Event	FINDING	New	unassigned	HYP3SVR602	1	Tue, 18 Mar 2025 10:20	Undetermined
☐	Compliance Event	FINDING	New	unassigned	HYP3SVR979	1	Tue, 18 Mar 2025 10:10	Undetermined
☐	Compliance Event	FINDING	New	unassigned	HYP3SVR445	1	Tue, 18 Mar 2025 10:10	Undetermined
☐	Compliance Event	FINDING	New	unassigned	HYP3SVR592	1	Tue, 18 Mar 2025 10:10	Undetermined
☐	Compliance Event	FINDING	New	unassigned	HYP3SVR91	1	Tue, 18 Mar 2025 10:05	Undetermined

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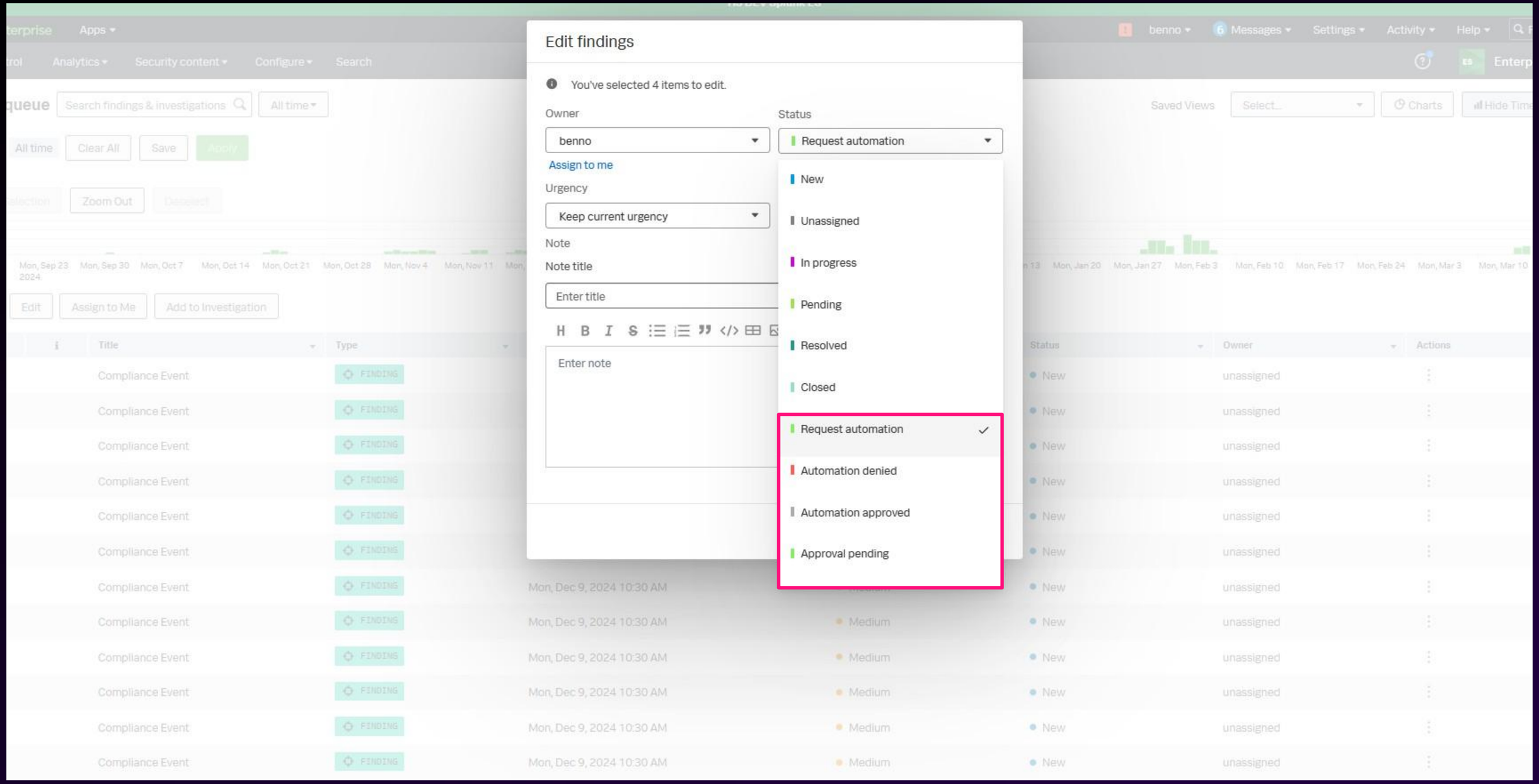

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Automatically detecting the status change

Required SPL

```
`notable`
| search status_label="Request Automation"
| eval rule_name=if(isnull(rule_name),source,rule_name)
| eval rule_title=if(isnull(rule_title),rule_name,rule_title)
| eval rule_description=if(isnull(rule_description),source,rule_description)
| eval security_domain=if(isnull(security_domain),source,security_domain)
| stats values(urgency) as urgency, values(status_label) as status_label,
values(status_description) as status_description, values(event_hash) as event_hash,
values(event_id) as event_id, values(orig_raw) as orig_raw, values(rule_name) as rule_name,
values(rule_id) as rule_id, values(status_logger) as status_logger count by owner
| table *
```

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Automatically detecting the status change

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| search status_label="Request Automation"
| eval rule_name=if(isnull(rule_name),source,rule_name)
| eval rule_title=if(isnull(rule_title),rule_name,rule_title)
| eval rule_description=if(isnull(rule_description),source,rule_description)
| eval security_domain=if(isnull(security_domain),source,security_domain)
| stats values(urgency) as urgency, values(status_label) as status_label,
values(status_description) as status_description, values(event_hash) as event_hash,
values(event_id) as event_id, values(orig_raw) as orig_raw, values(rule_name) as rule_name,
values(rule_id) as rule_id, values(status_logger) as status_logger count by owner
| table *
```

Native macro to return all notable events within the time window searched

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Automatically detecting the status change

Required SPL

```
`notable`
| search status_label="Request Automation"
| eval rule_name=if(isnull(rule_name),source,rule_name)
| eval rule_title=if(isnull(rule_title),rule_name,rule_title)
| eval rule_description=if(isnull(rule_description),source,rule_description)
| eval security_domain=if(isnull(security_domain),source,security_domain)
| stats values(urgency) as urgency, values(status_label) as status_label,
values(status_description) as status_description, values(event_hash) as event_hash,
values(event_id) as event_id, values(orig_raw) as orig_raw, values(rule_name) as rule_name,
values(rule_id) as rule_id, values(status_logger) as status_logger count by owner
| table *
```

Filtering on the custom status created to return all notables pending approval

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Automatically detecting the status change

Required SPL

```
`notable`
| search status_label="Request Automation"
| eval rule_name=if(isnull(rule_name),source,rule_name)
| eval rule_title=if(isnull(rule_title),rule_name,rule_title)
| eval rule_description=if(isnull(rule_description),source,rule_description)
| eval security_domain=if(isnull(security_domain),source,security_domain)
| stats values(urgency) as urgency, values(status_label) as status_label,
values(status_description) as status_description, values(event_hash) as event_hash,
values(event_id) as event_id, values(orig_raw) as orig_raw, values(rule_name) as rule_name,
values(rule_id) as rule_id, values(status_logger) as status_logger count by owner
| table *
```

Eval functions to set required fields for downstream automation

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Automatically detecting the status change

Required SPL

```
`notable`
| search status_label="Request Automation"
| eval rule_name=if(isnull(rule_name),source,rule_name)
| eval rule_title=if(isnull(rule_title),rule_name,rule_title)
| eval rule_description=if(isnull(rule_description),source,rule_description)
| eval security_domain=if(isnull(security_domain),source,security_domain)
| stats values(urgency) as urgency, values(status_label) as status_label,
values(status_description) as status_description, values(event_hash) as event_hash,
values(event_id) as event_id, values(orig_raw) as orig_raw, values(rule_name) as rule_name,
values(rule_id) as rule_id, values(status_logger) as status_logger count by owner
| table *
```

Stats command to group notables by owner to support bulk approval request

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Automatically detecting the status change
Implementing the SPL

- Correlation Search scheduled to run every 5 minutes (`*/5 * * * *`)

- Employ throttling on key fields
  - For this environment we used the ‘`host`’ field

- Run adaptive response ‘Send to SOAR’ with specific playbook and label selected
  - We used a specific label in SOAR named ‘`Approval`’ to store all approval containers

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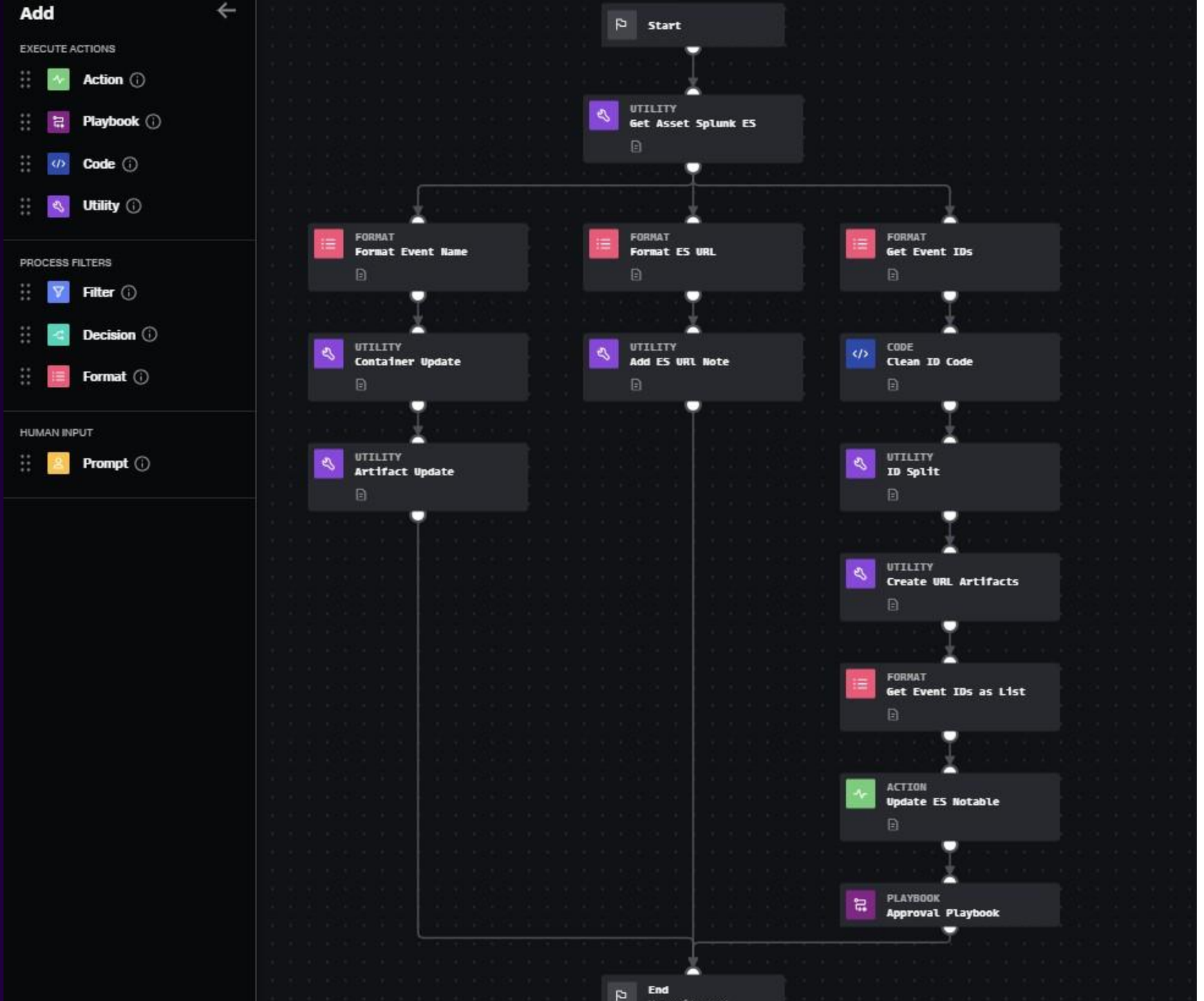
Notable Onboarding Playbook

Shown in part 1, Previously developed playbook used again for a new customer to solve a problem!



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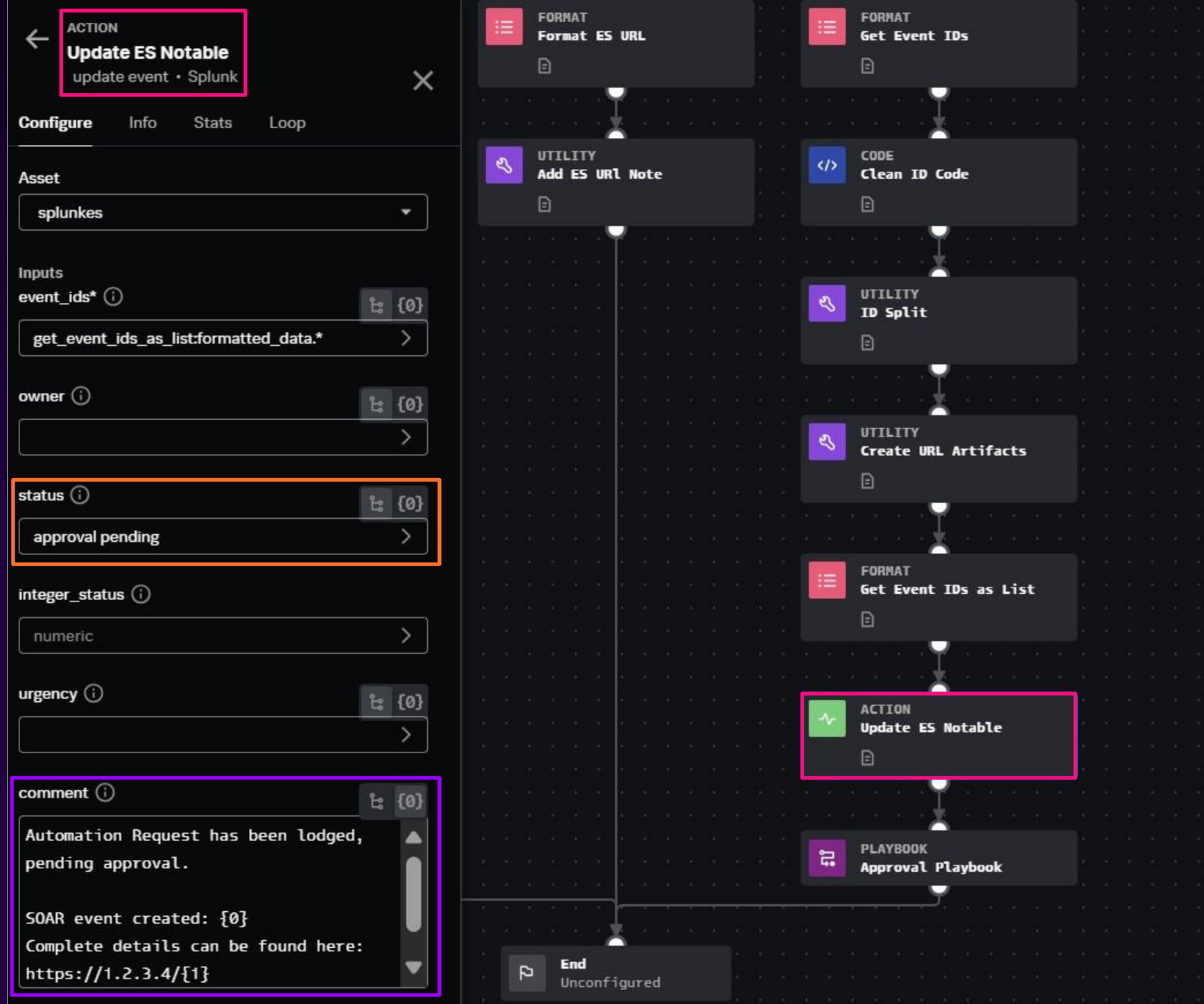
Notable Onboarding Playbook

Action Block:
Splunk Update Event

Update status to approval pending and add comment



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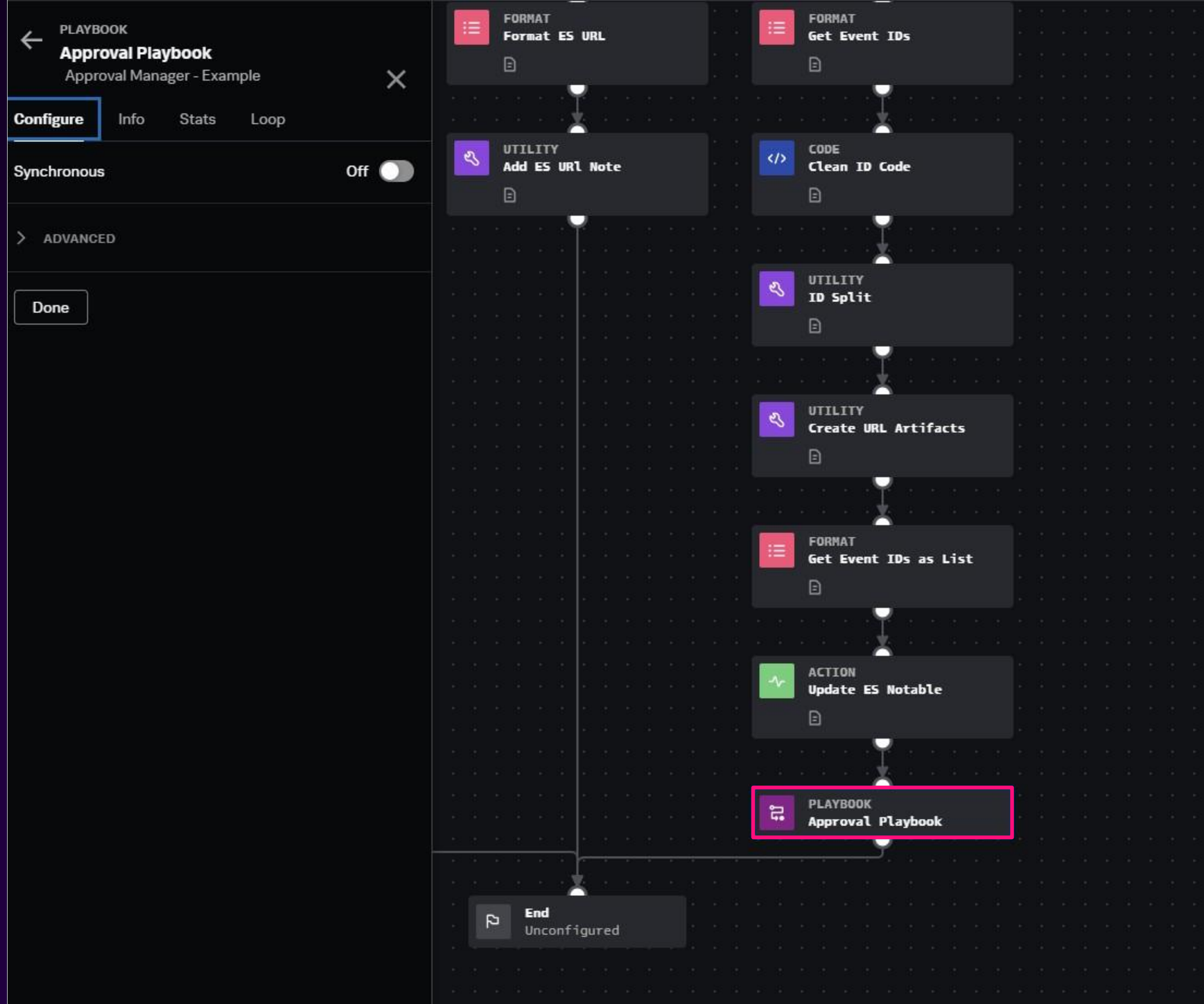
Notable Onboarding Playbook

Playbook Block:

Run Approval Playbook as a sub playbook.



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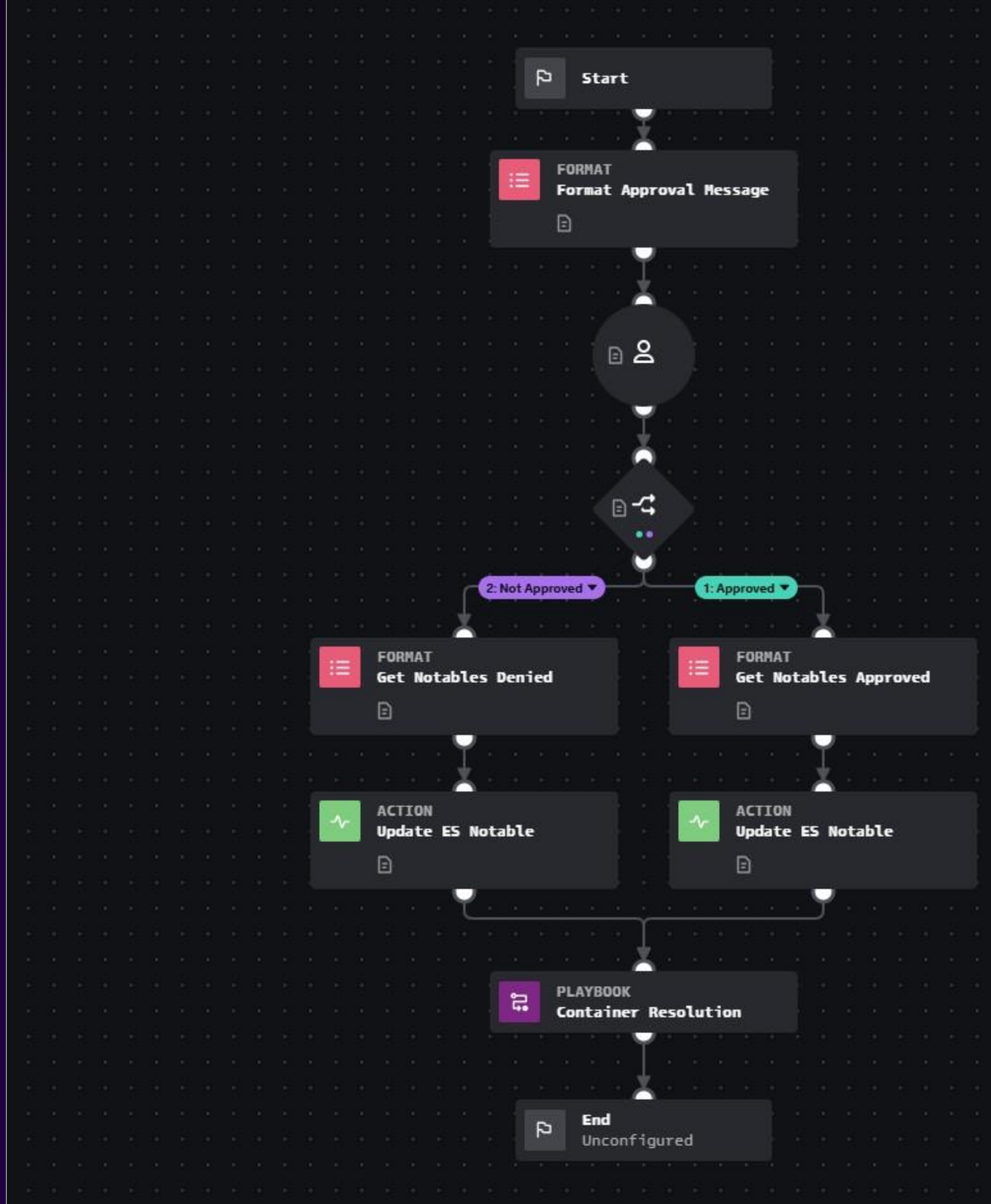
Approval Playbook

New playbook created for the customer

Simple example of using prompts to capture an approval for automation and linking it back to ES!



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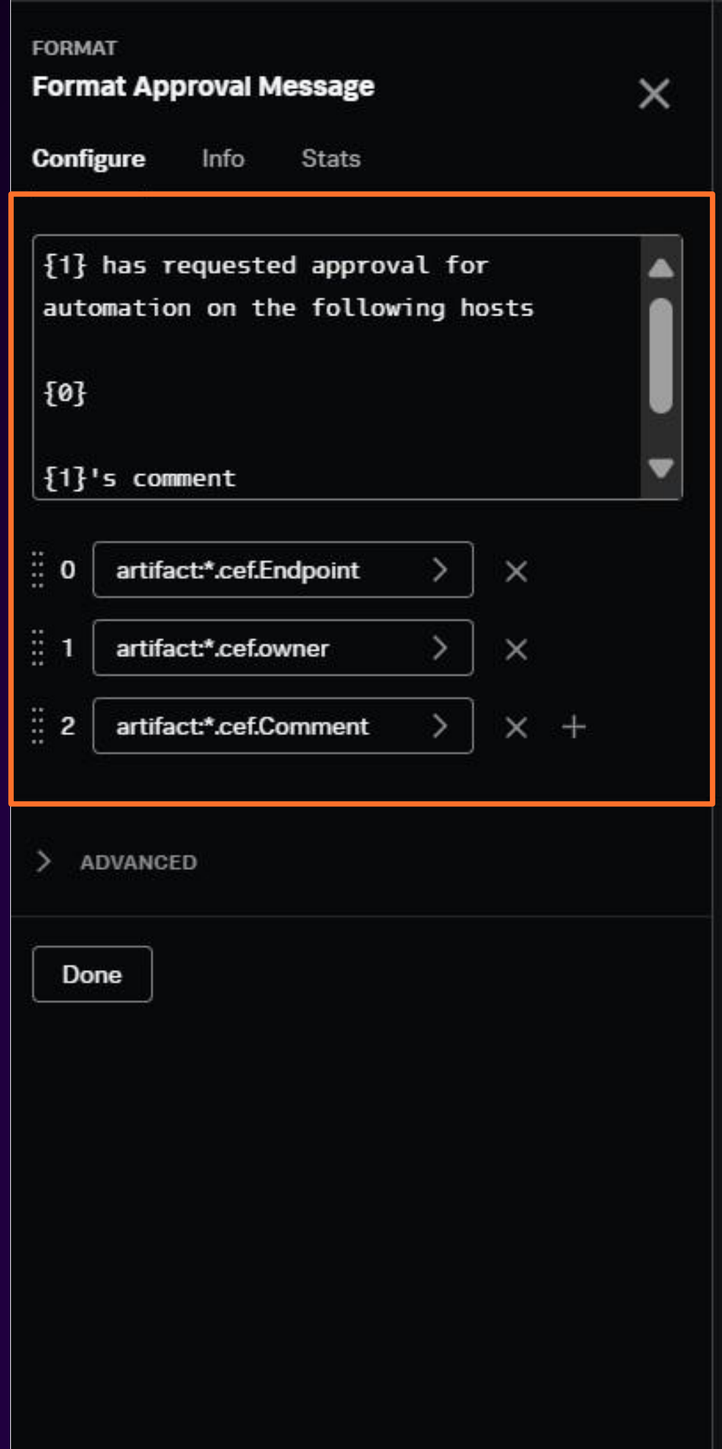
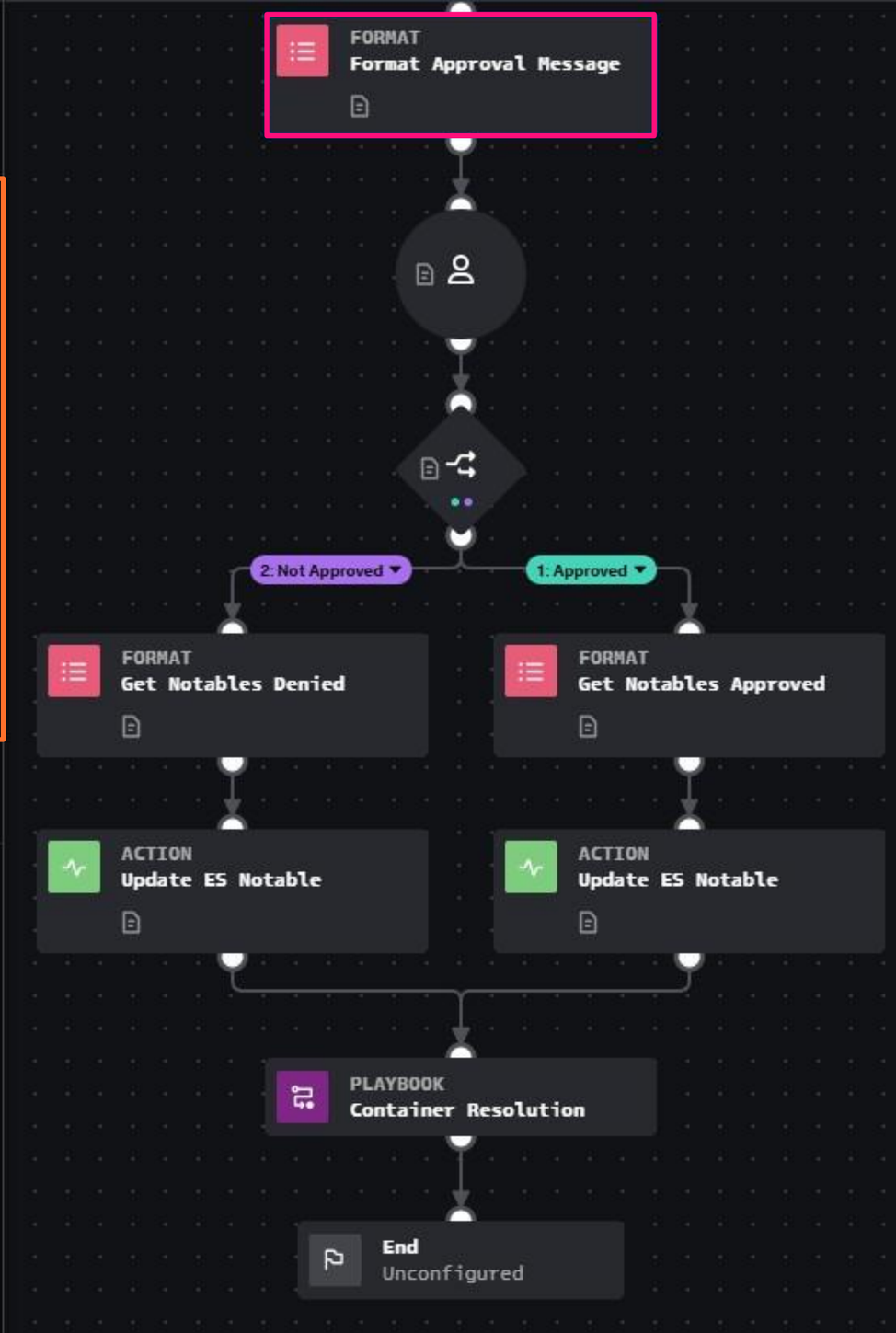
Approval Playbook

Format Block:

Format custom message for the approver





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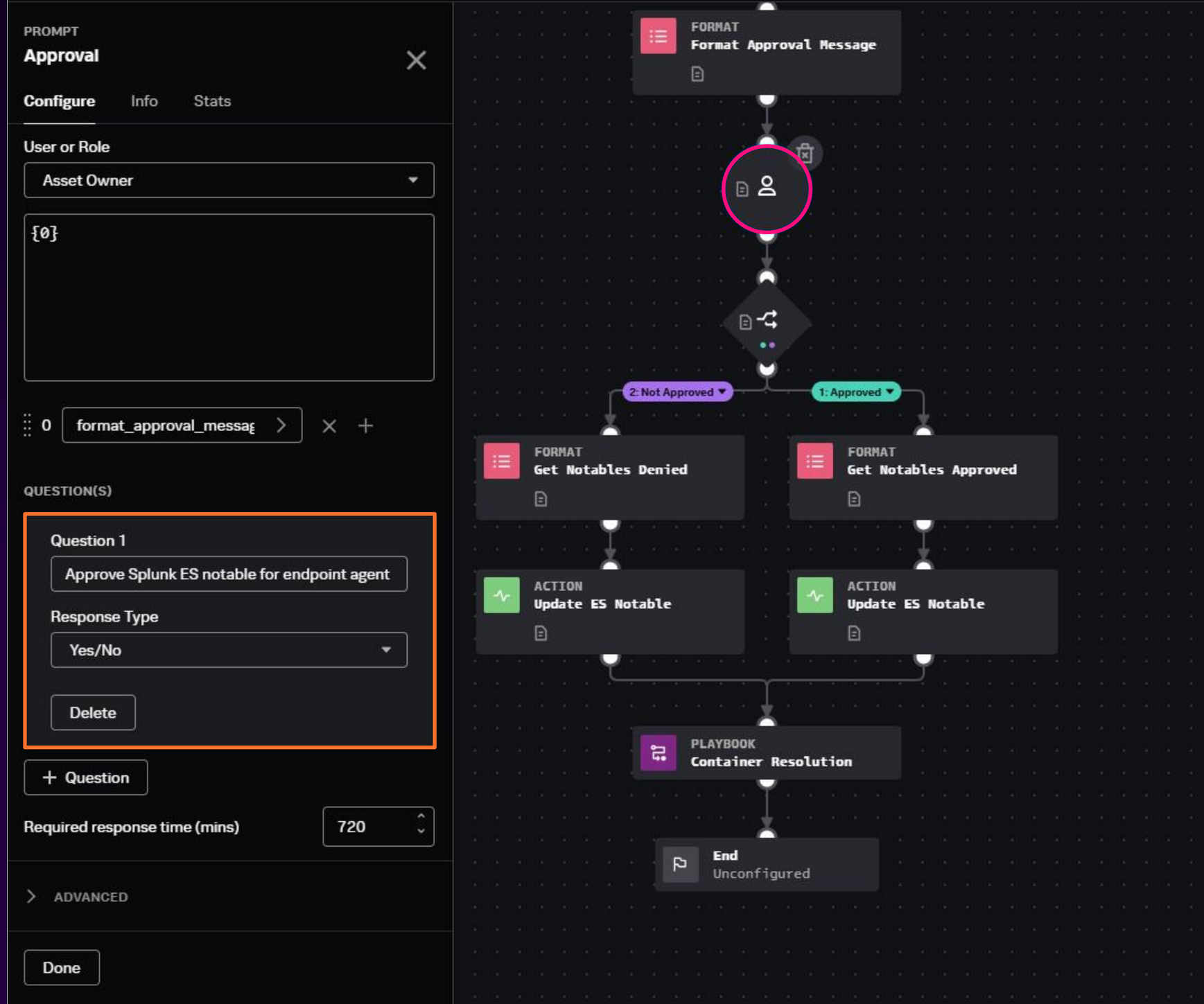
Approval Playbook

Prompt Block:

Display formatted message and request Yes/No input from approver



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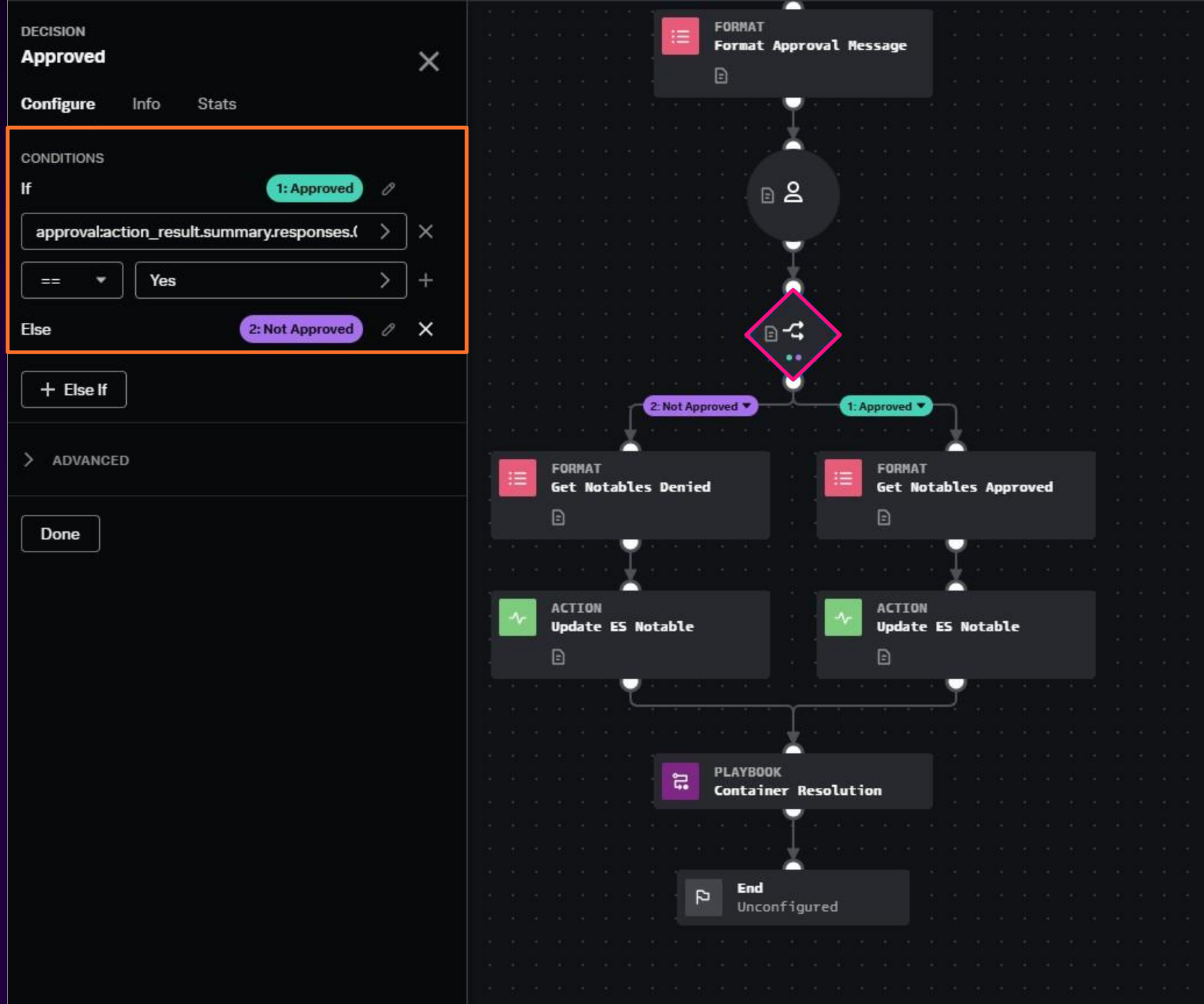
Approval Playbook

Decision Block:

Based off approval prompt, perform required actions



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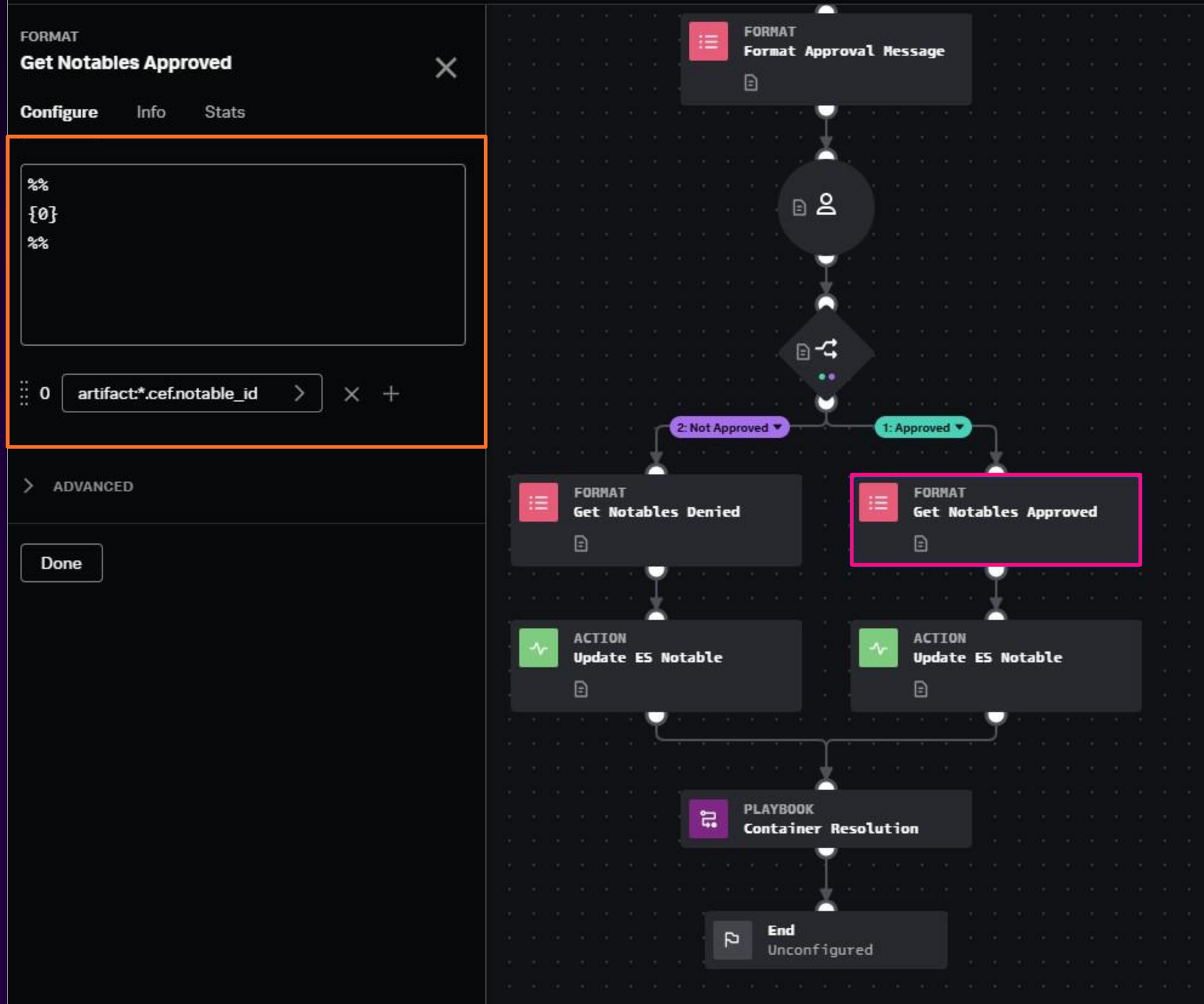
Approval Playbook

Format Block:

List each Notable ID as a list

(See Part 1 on this)



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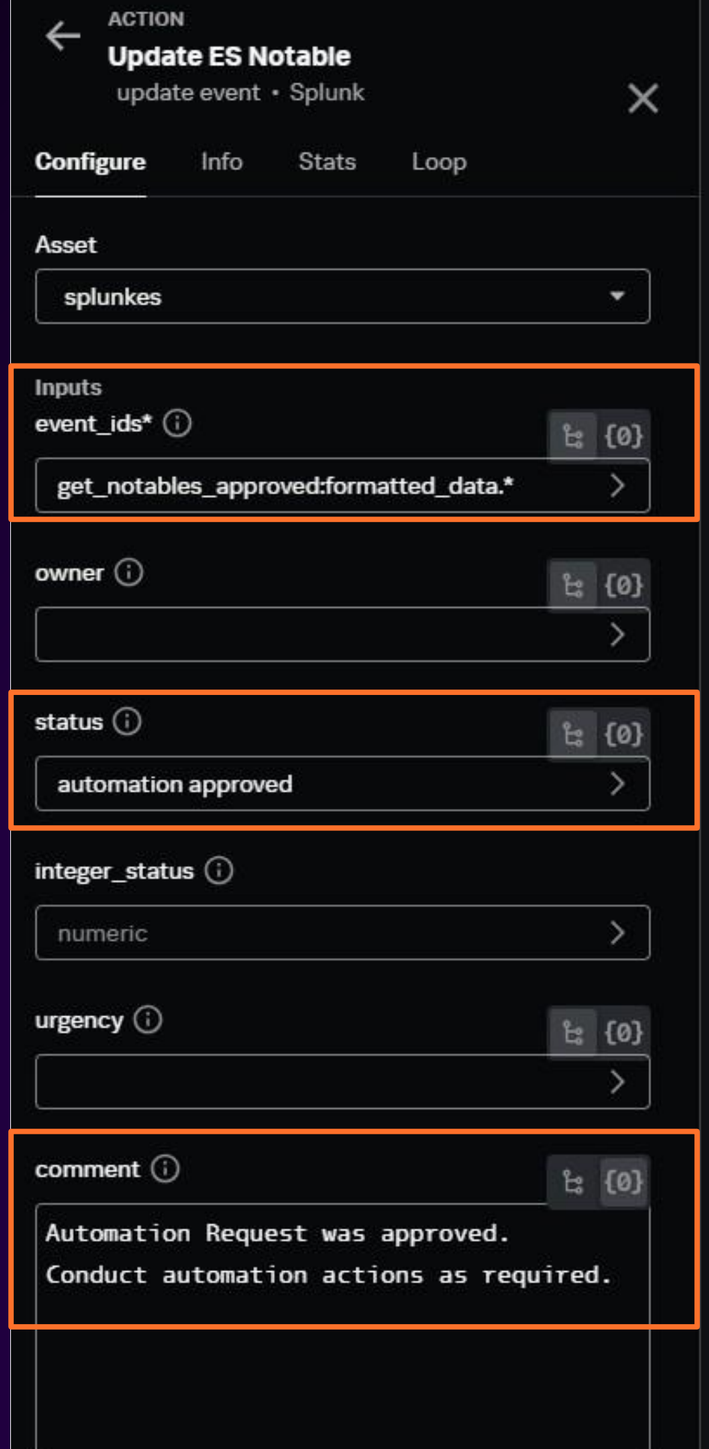
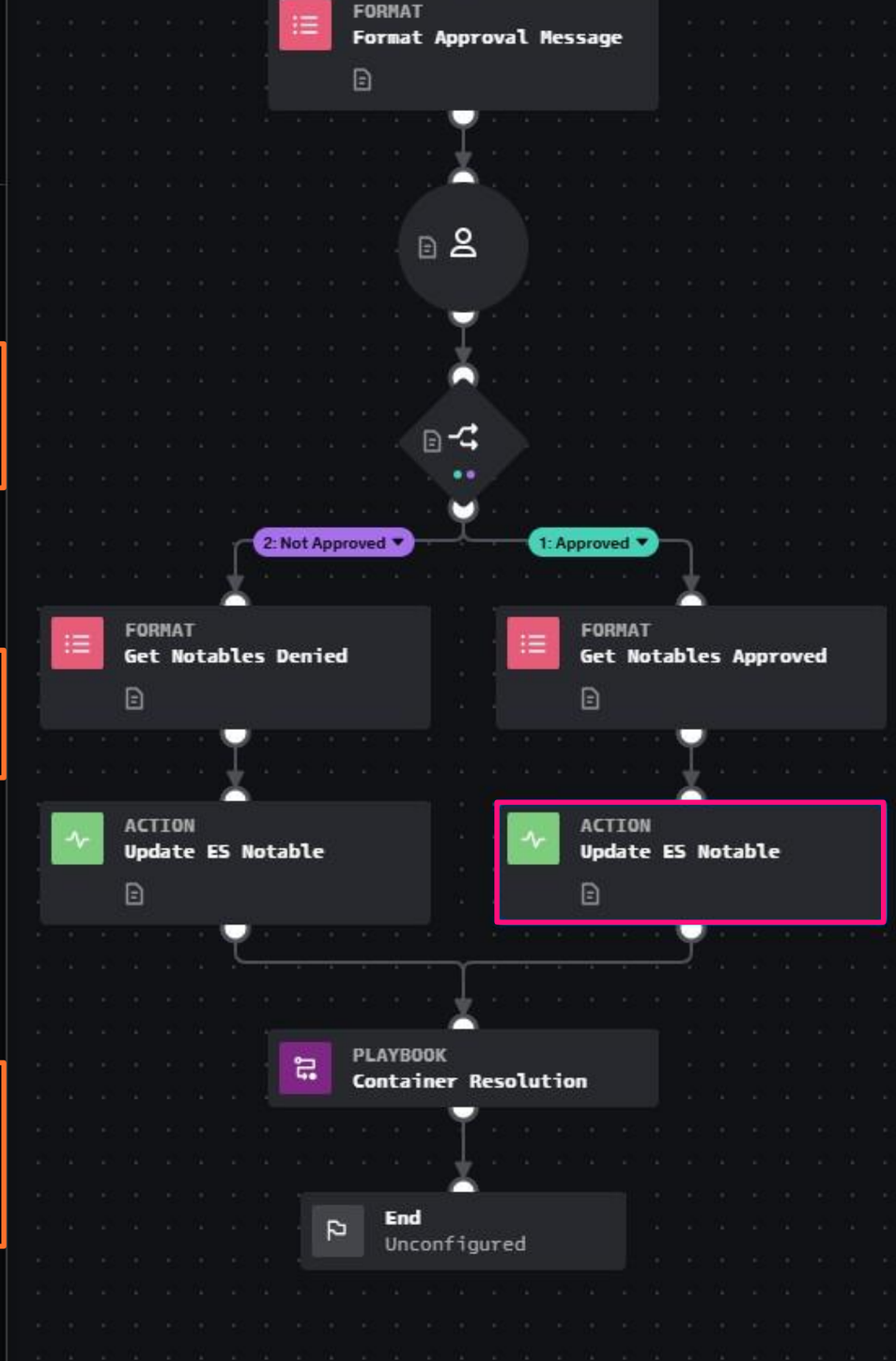
Approval Playbook

Action Block:
Splunk Update Event

Change status to desired state and provide message to end user





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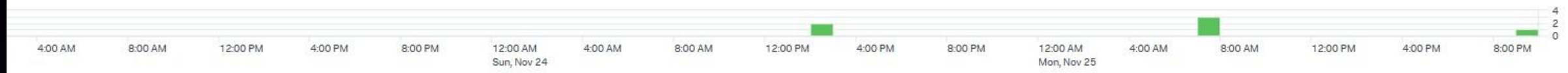

Last refresh at 02:20 PM | Auto-refresh off | 20 per page

	Type	Time	Urgency	Status	Owner	Actions
	FINDING	Mon, Nov 25, 2024 9:05 PM	Medium	Automation Approved	rich	
	FINDING	Mon, Nov 25, 2024 7:40 AM	Medium	Automation Approved	benno	
	FINDING	Mon, Nov 25, 2024 7:40 AM	Medium	Automation Approved	benno	
	FINDING	Mon, Nov 25, 2024 7:40 AM	Medium	Automation Approved	benno	
	FINDING	Sun, Nov 24, 2024 2:33 PM	Informational	Automation Approved	benno	
	FINDING	Sun, Nov 24, 2024 2:33 PM	Informational	Automation Approved	benno	
	FINDING	Fri, Nov 22, 2024 3:52 PM	High	Automation Denied	benno	
	FINDING	Fri, Nov 22, 2024 3:26 PM	Critical	Automation Approved	benno	
	FINDING	Fri, Nov 22, 2024 2:42 PM	High	Automation Approved	benno	
	FINDING	Fri, Nov 22, 2024 1:43 PM	Informational	Automation Approved	benno	
	FINDING	Fri, Nov 22, 2024 1:28 PM	Informational	Automation Approved	benno	
	FINDING	Fri, Nov 22, 2024 1:27 PM	Informational	Automation Approved	benno	
	FINDING			Automation		

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Automation Approval Playbook

Key Takeaways

- Thinking outside the box to create a custom solution to a complex set of requirements
- Leveraged the strengths of both ES and SOAR where each is more appropriate
  - Steered the solution away from a fixation on SOAR doing everything
- Final implementation allowed for bulk automation runs while still meeting customer approval process requirements

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Remote Script / Command Execution

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Remote Script and Command Execution

Using SOAR to invoke native OS level commands

What and why?

- Requirement to remediate various agents across the environment from SOAR
  - Logging, AV, EDR, VM, etc
  - Extant approach completely manual and no longer viable
- Solution needed to be able to:
  - Start/stop agents
  - Install/remove agents
  - Perform automated troubleshooting remotely, and capture results

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Remote Script and Command Execution

Using SOAR to invoke native OS level commands

How?

- Custom scripts to do heavy lifting on OS side
  - WinRM App in SOAR using the Run Script function
  - SSH App in SOAR using the Execute Program function

- Leverage Native SOAR functions

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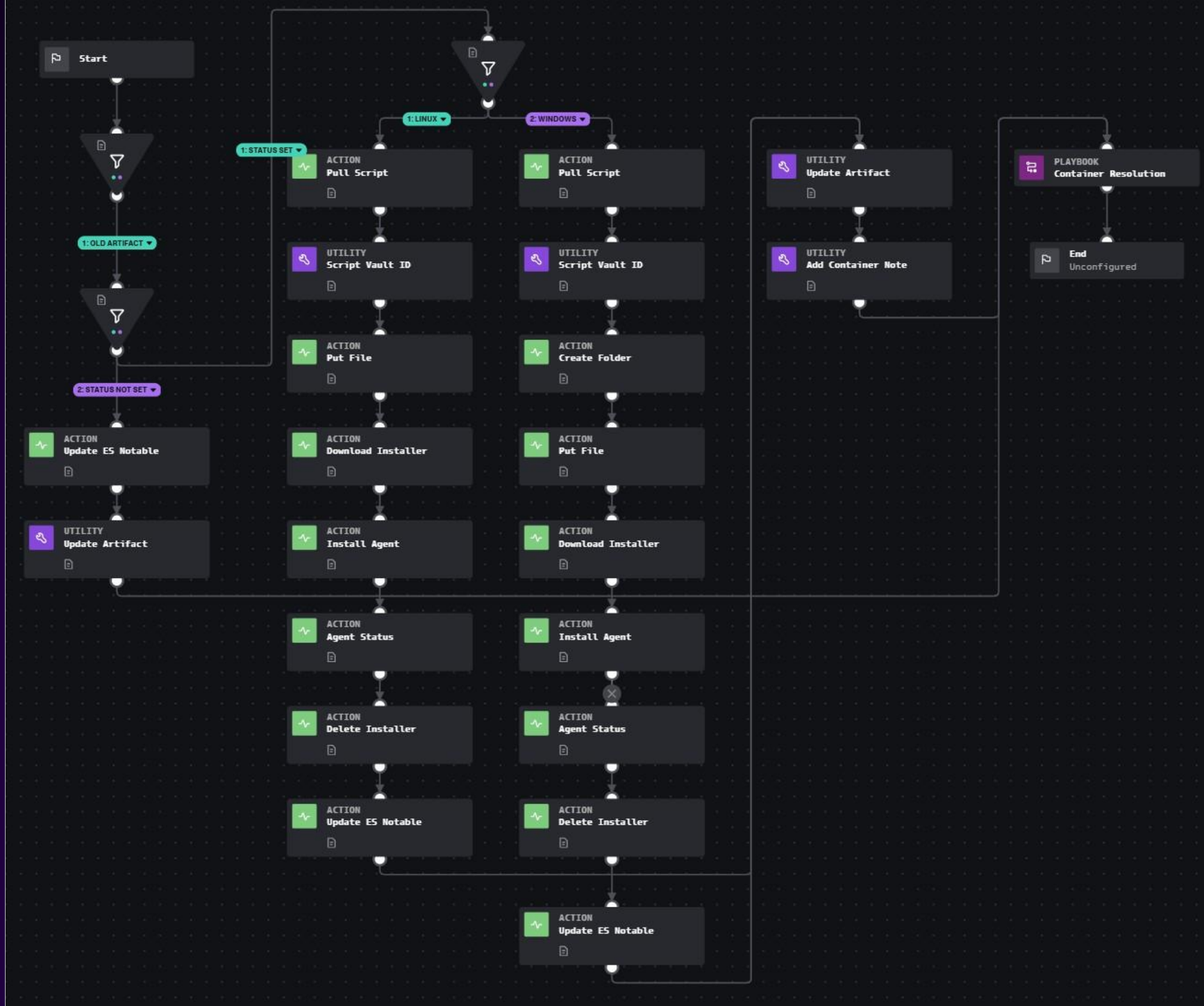
Remote Script Example

Pushes a script to the remote endpoint and executes various scripted actions



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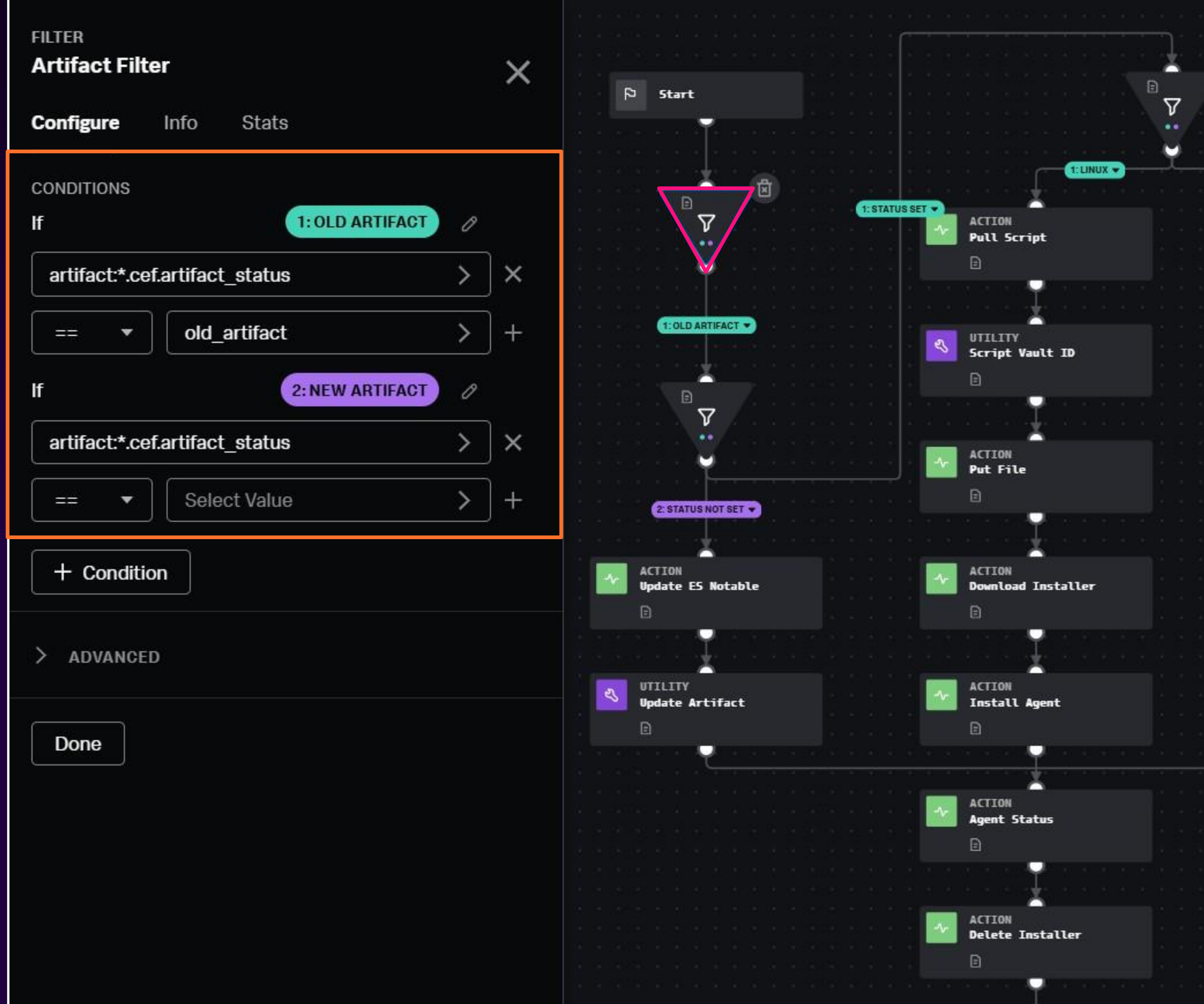
Remote Script Example

Filter Block:

Checking if artifact is marked as old_artifact

Executing an adaptive response on an ES Notable re-opens the same container it originally created



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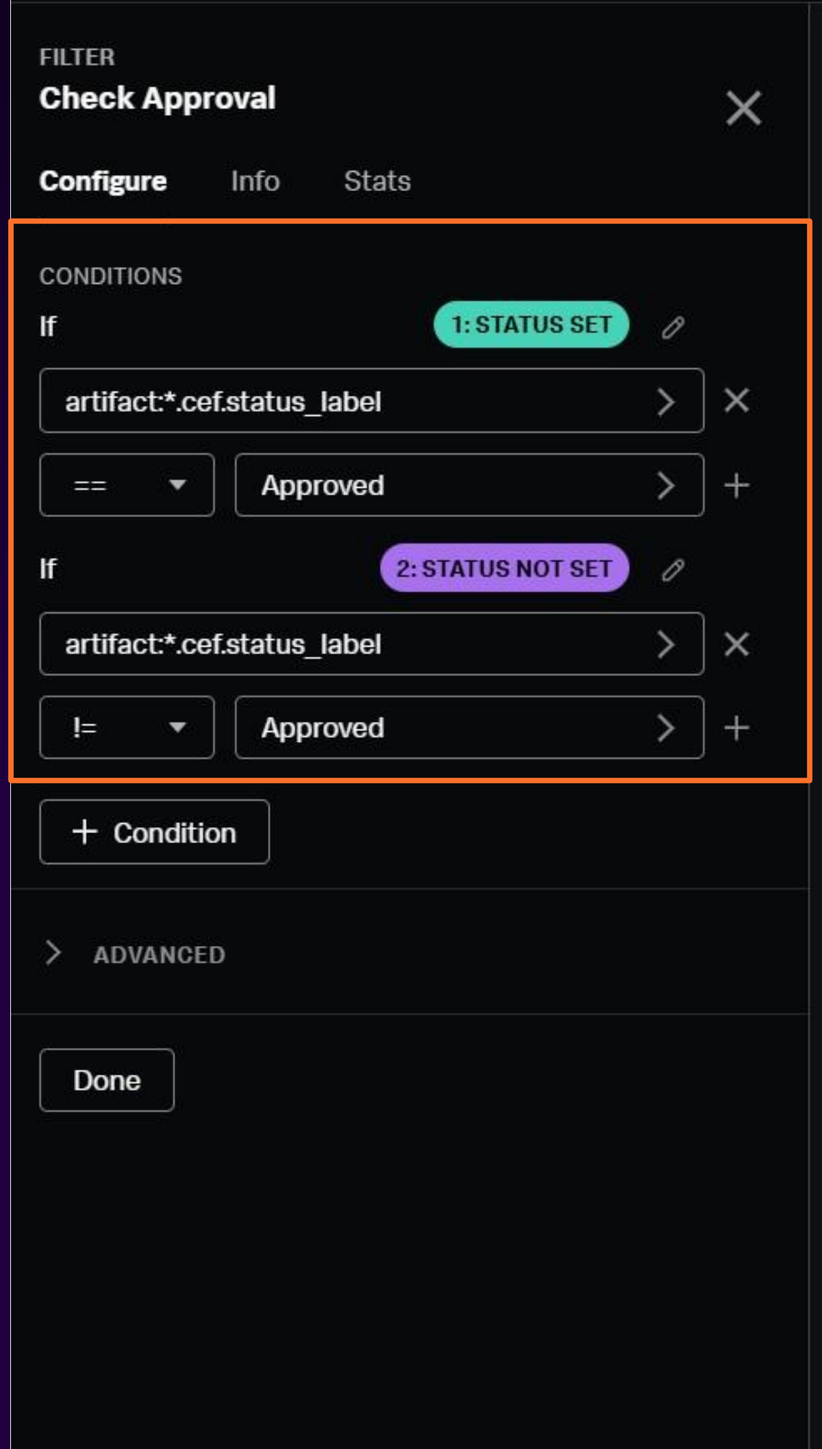
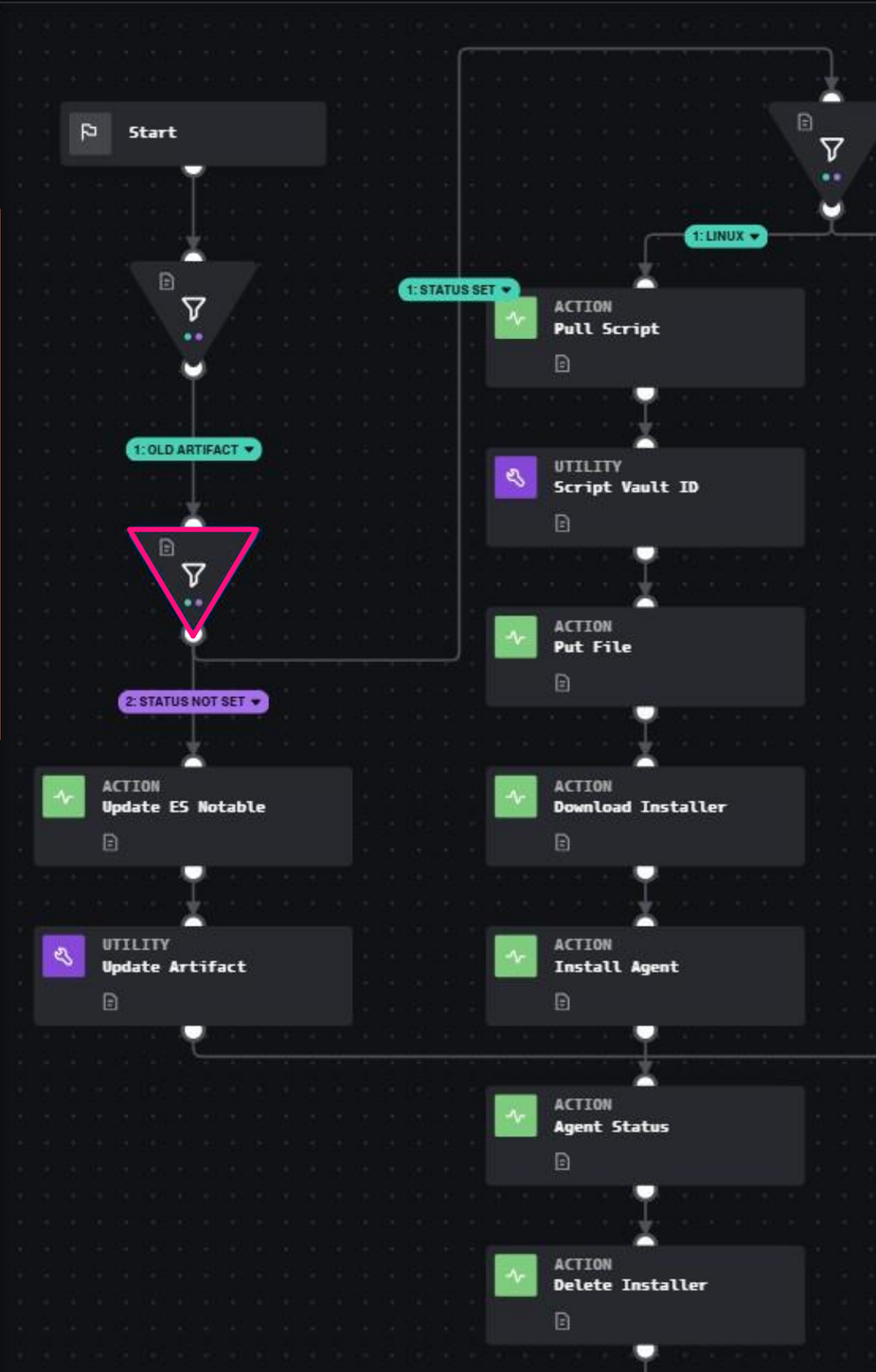
Remote Script Example

Filter Block:

Check if artifact contains Approved field under status_label





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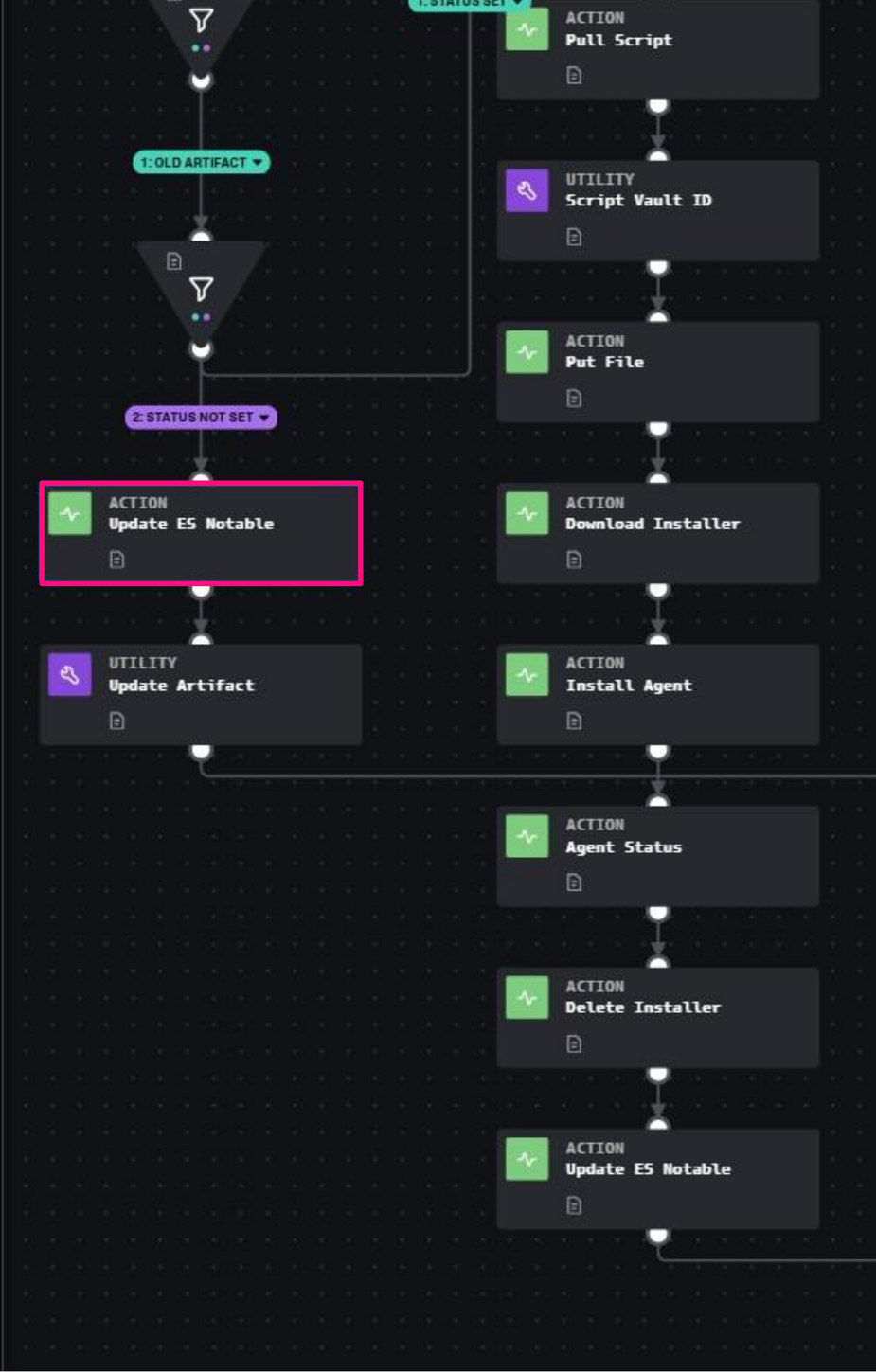
Remote Script Example

Action Block:
Update Splunk

Send comment to Notable event stating automation not run due to approval state



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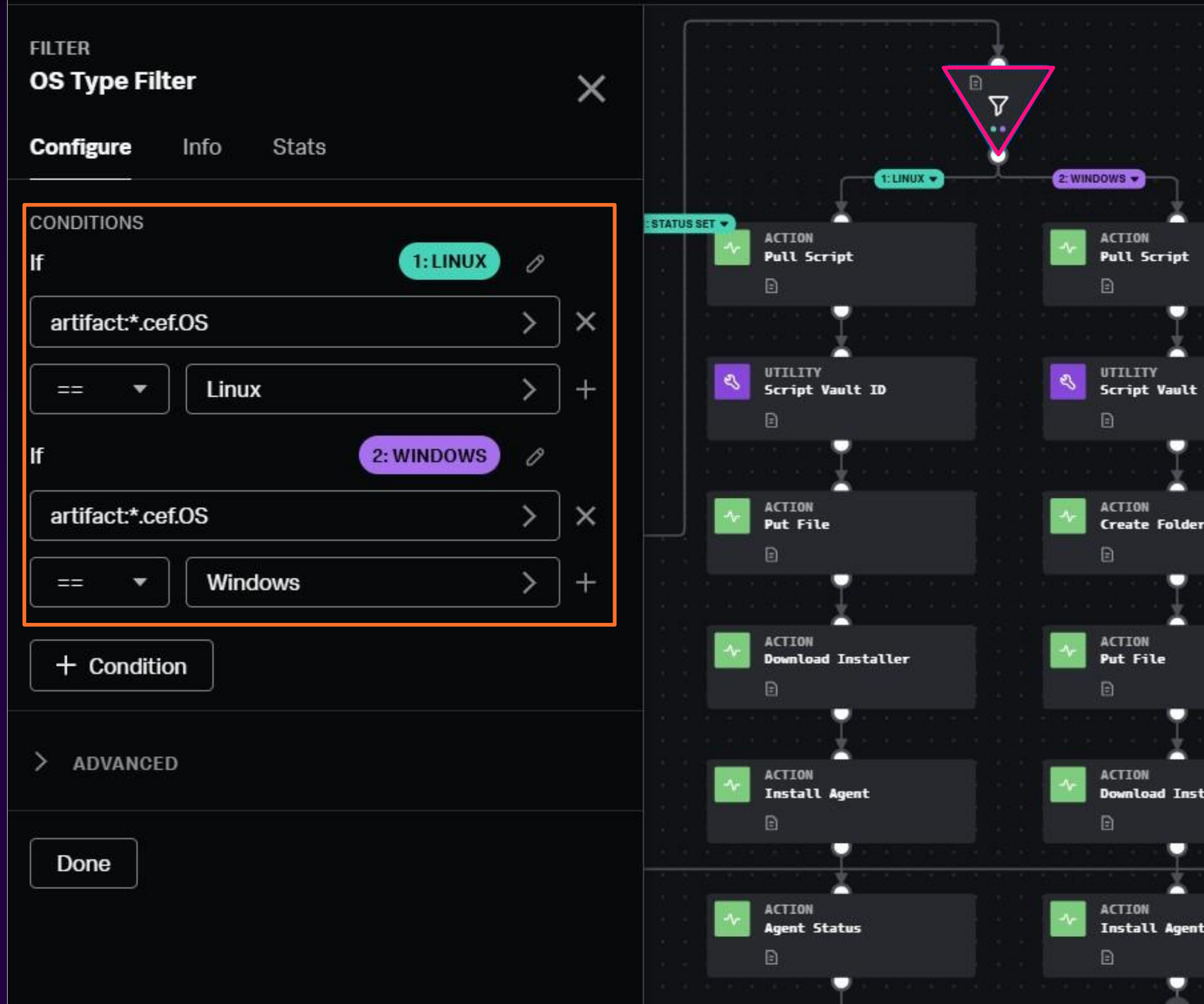
Remote Script Example

Filter Block:

Check for OS to determine correct path



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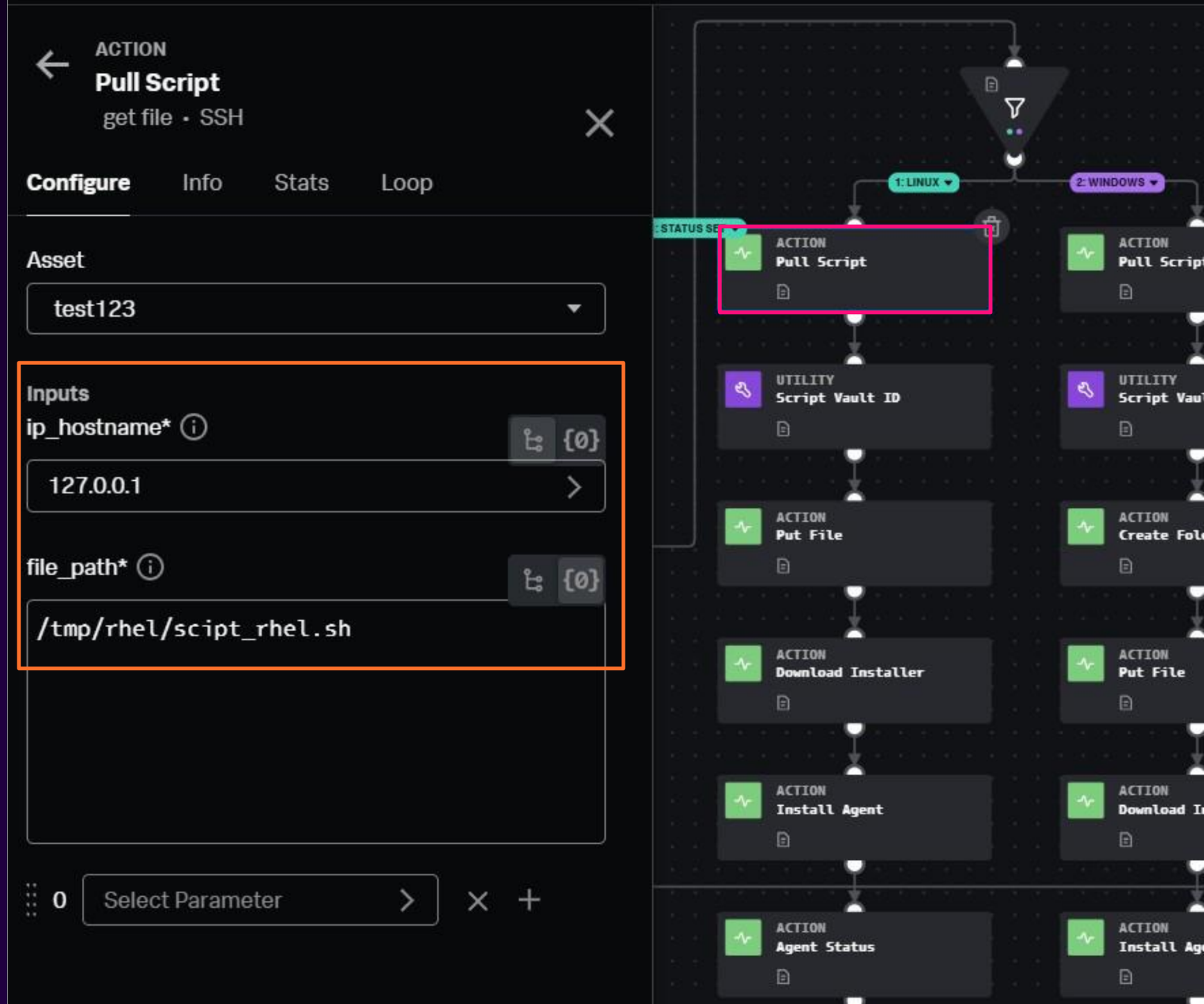
Remote Script Example

Action Block:
SSH Get File

Use the SSH App and the get file action to connect SOAR itself using 127.0.0.1 to get the script



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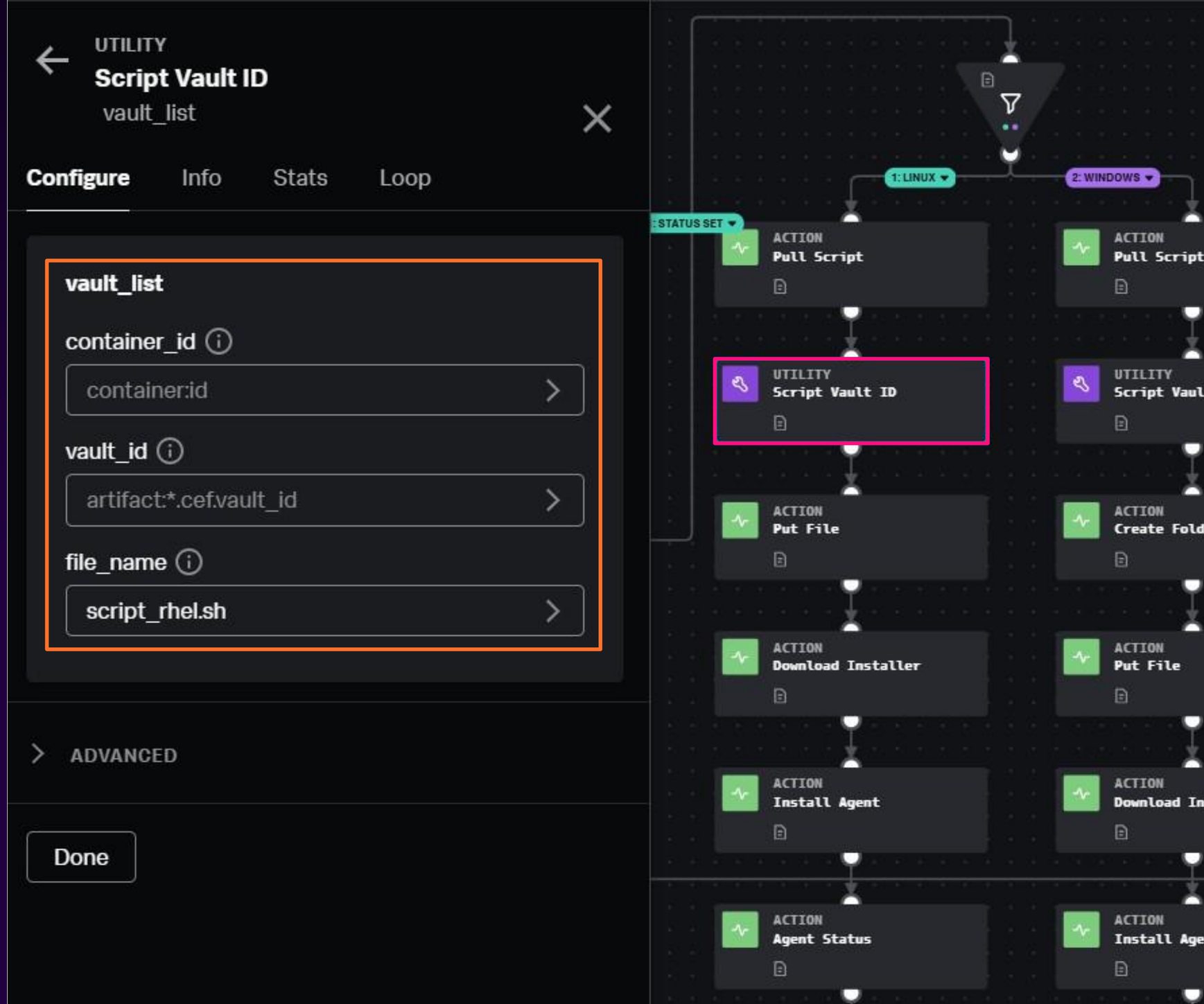
Remote Script Example

Utility Block:
Vault List

Add the previously pulled script into the containers file vault



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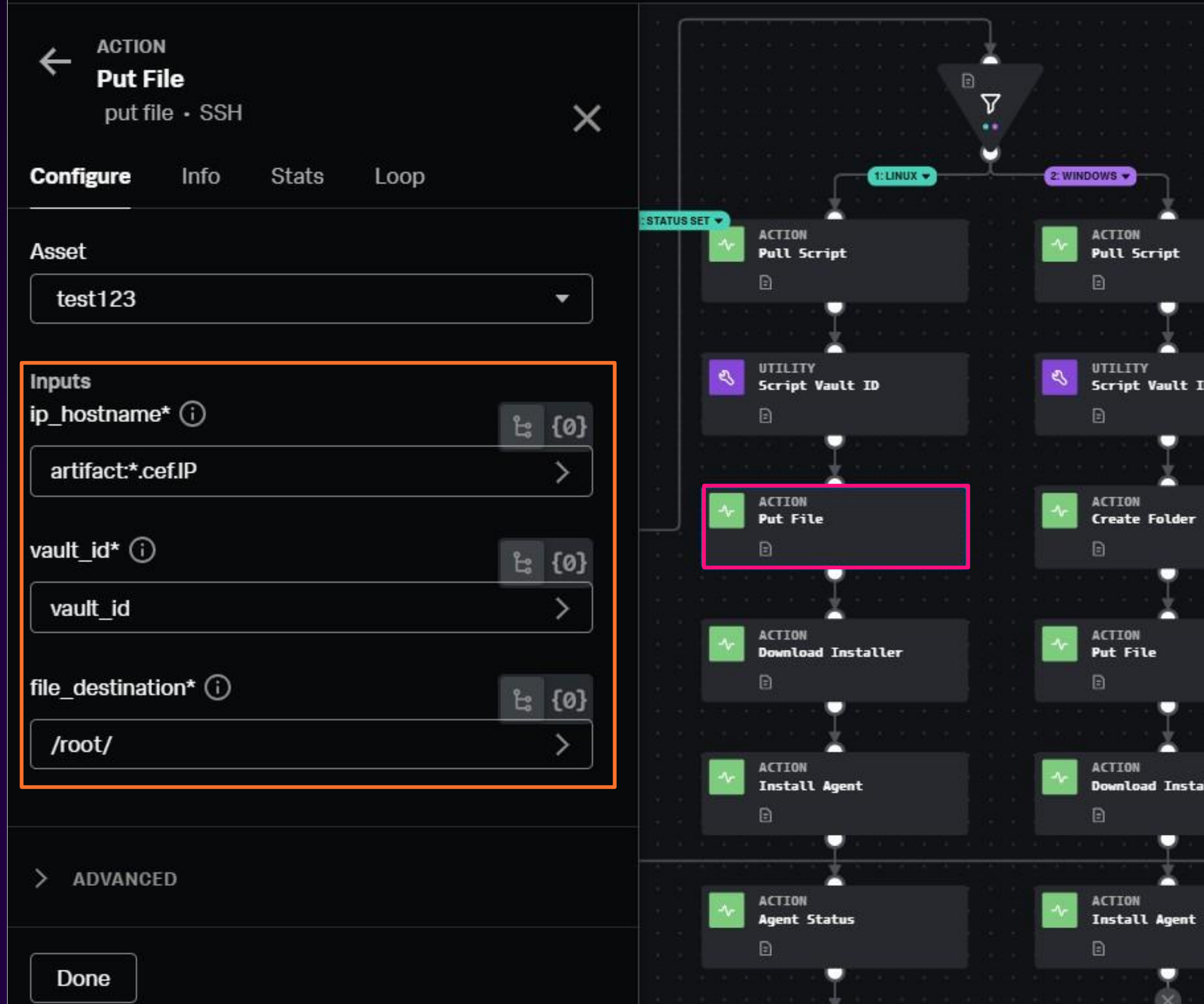
Remote Script Example

Action Block:
SSH Put File

Now use SSH Put File action again to place the script on the target endpoint using the vault file.



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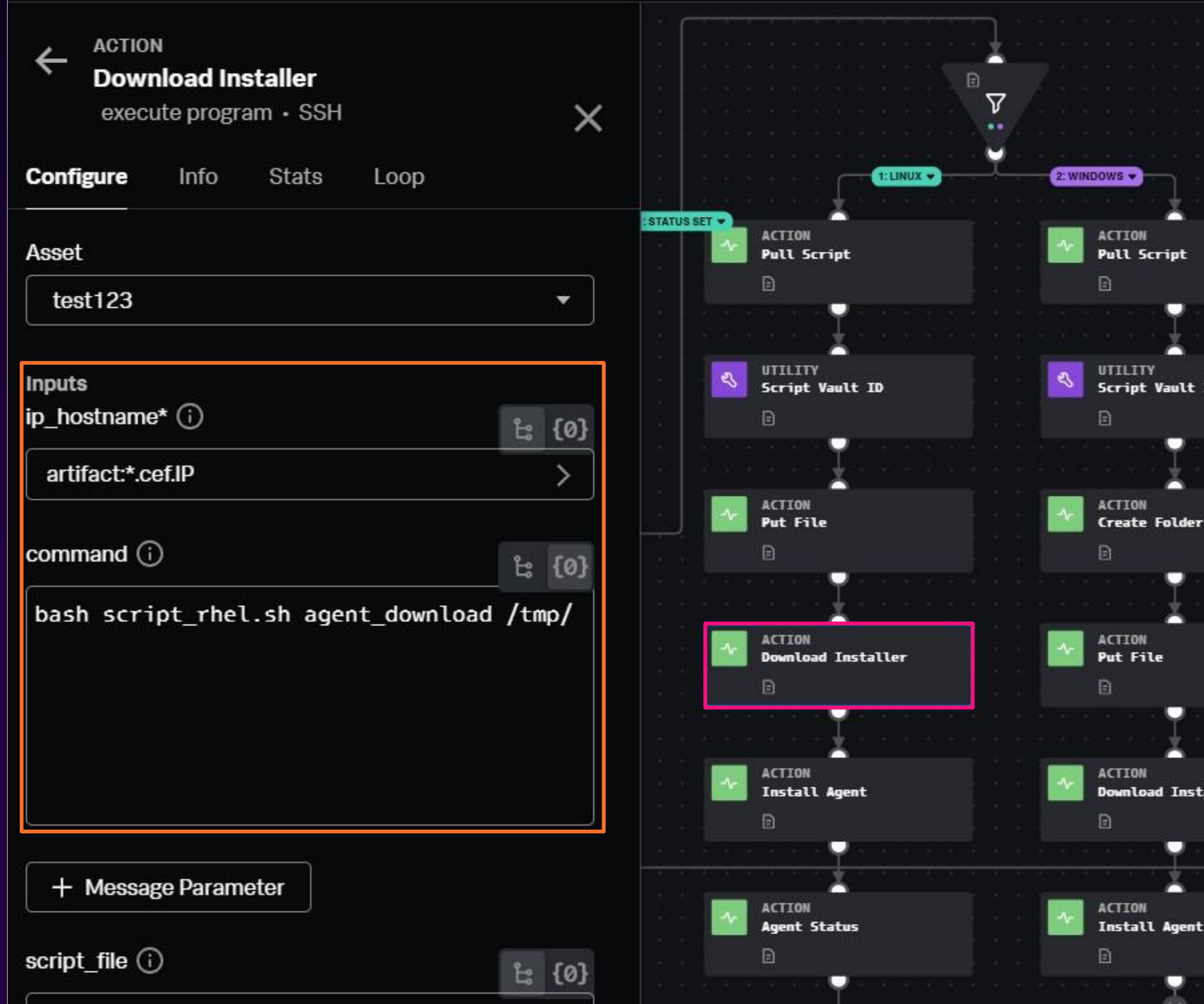
Remote Script Example

Action Block:
SSH Execute Program

Using bash execute the script file placed on target host.

Note in this instance its called a specific function within the script.



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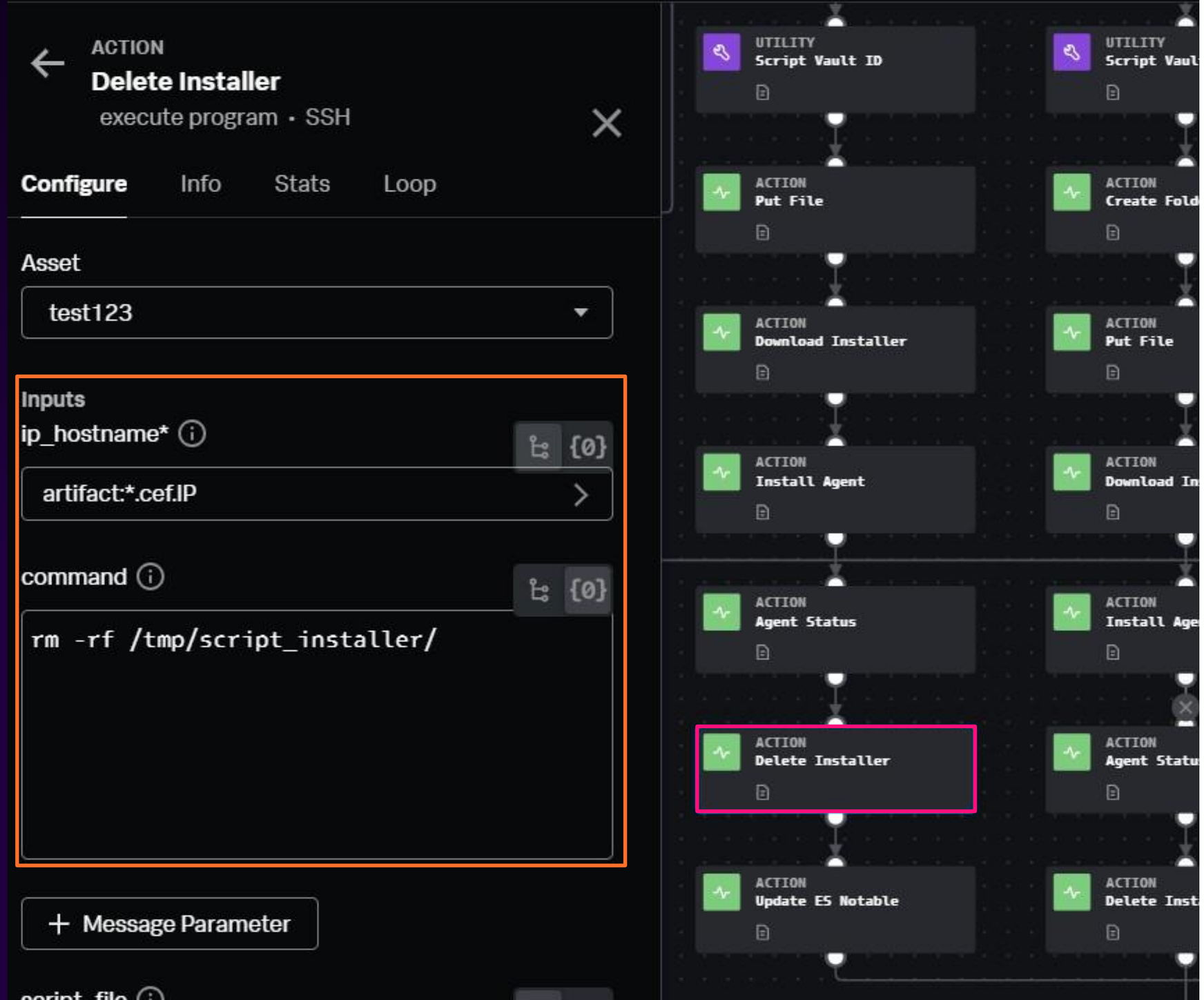
Remote Script Example

Action Block:
SSH Execute Program

Remove the script from the end host



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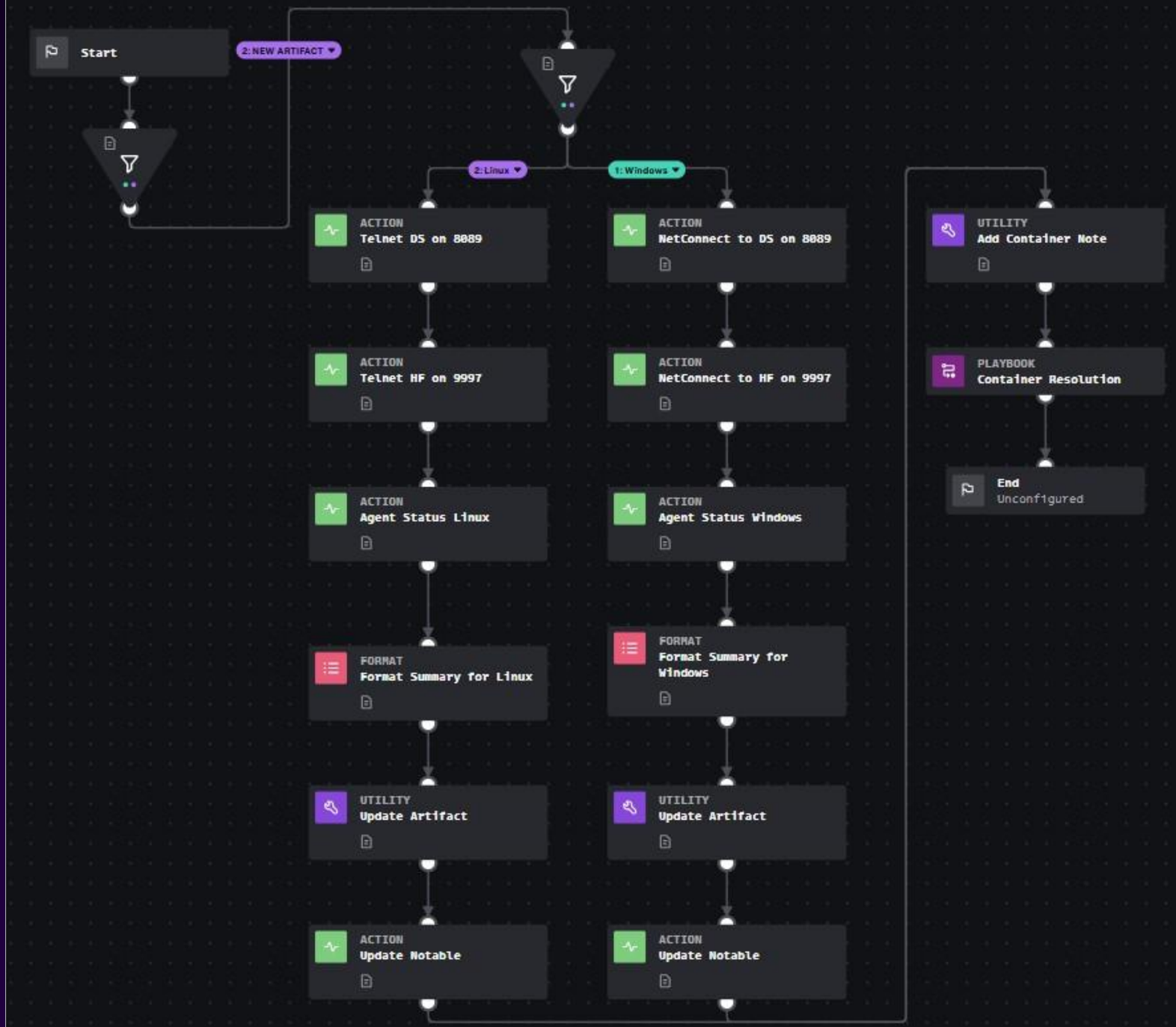
Remote Command Example

Runs commands based off determined host OS

Command results are returned to SOAR

Results formatted



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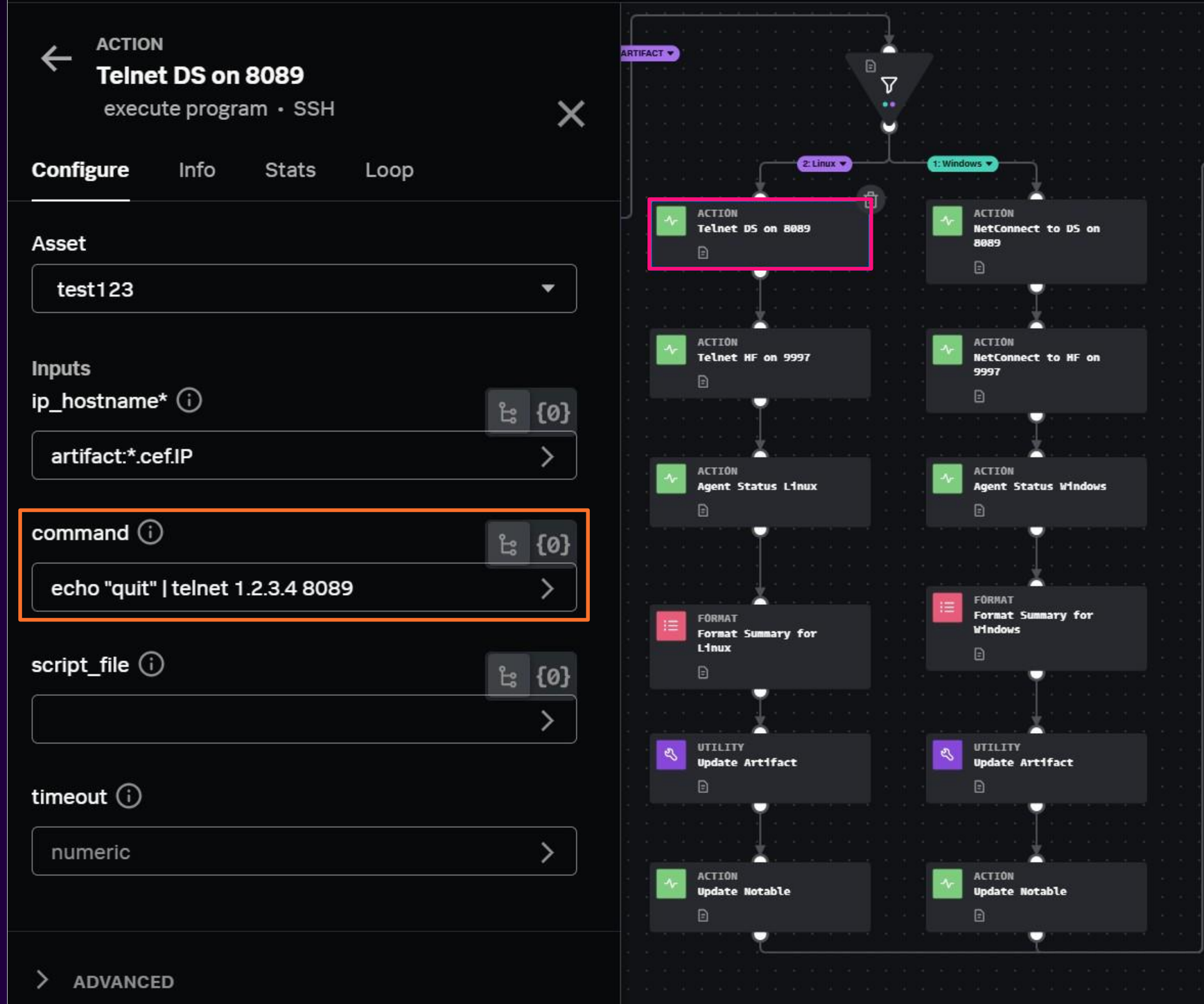
Remote Command Example

Action Block:
SSH Execute Program

Run telnet command against IP and Port 8089 to test Splunk to Splunk

Results are automatically returned



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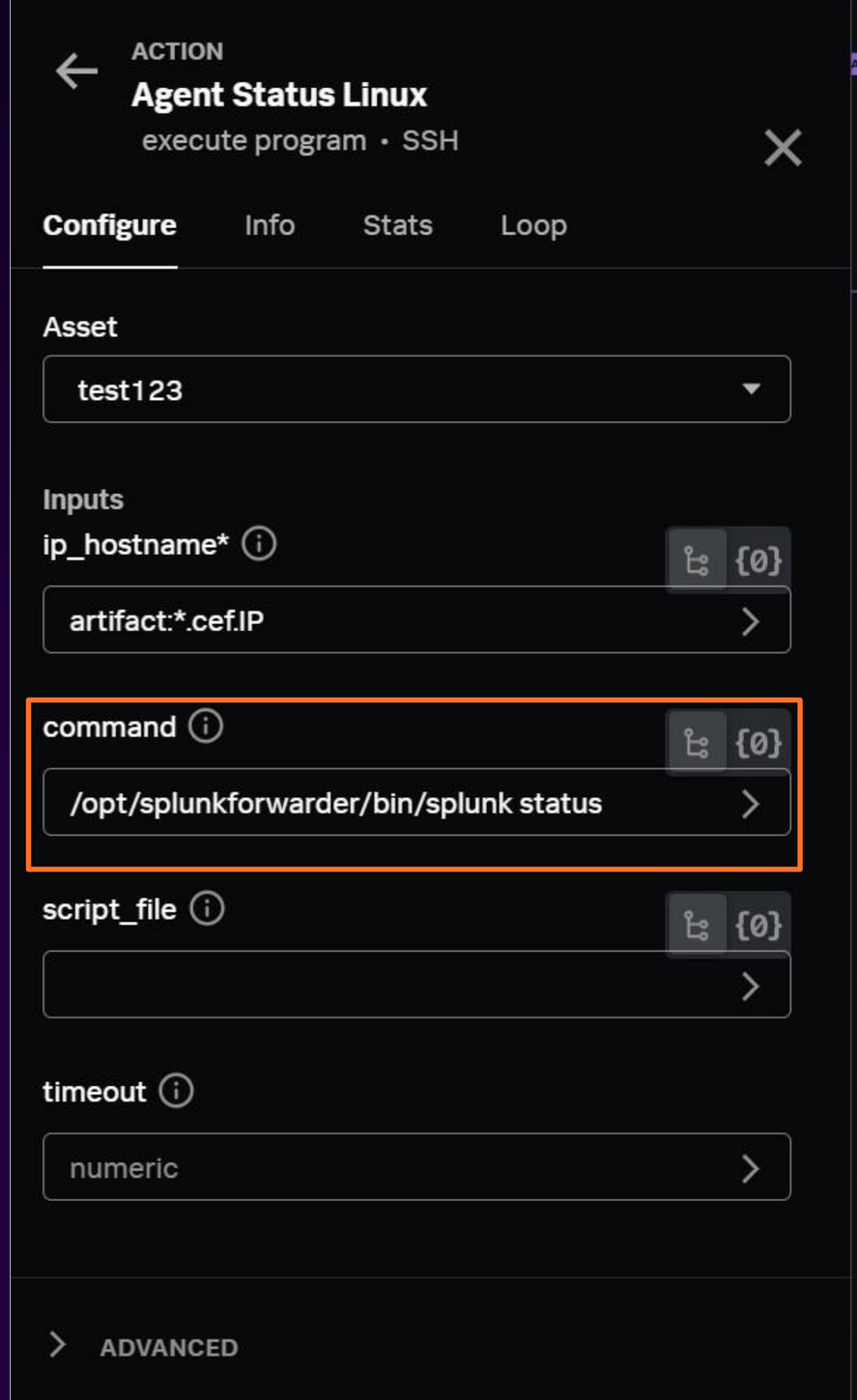
Remote Command Example

Action Block:
SSH Execute Program

Run splunk status command



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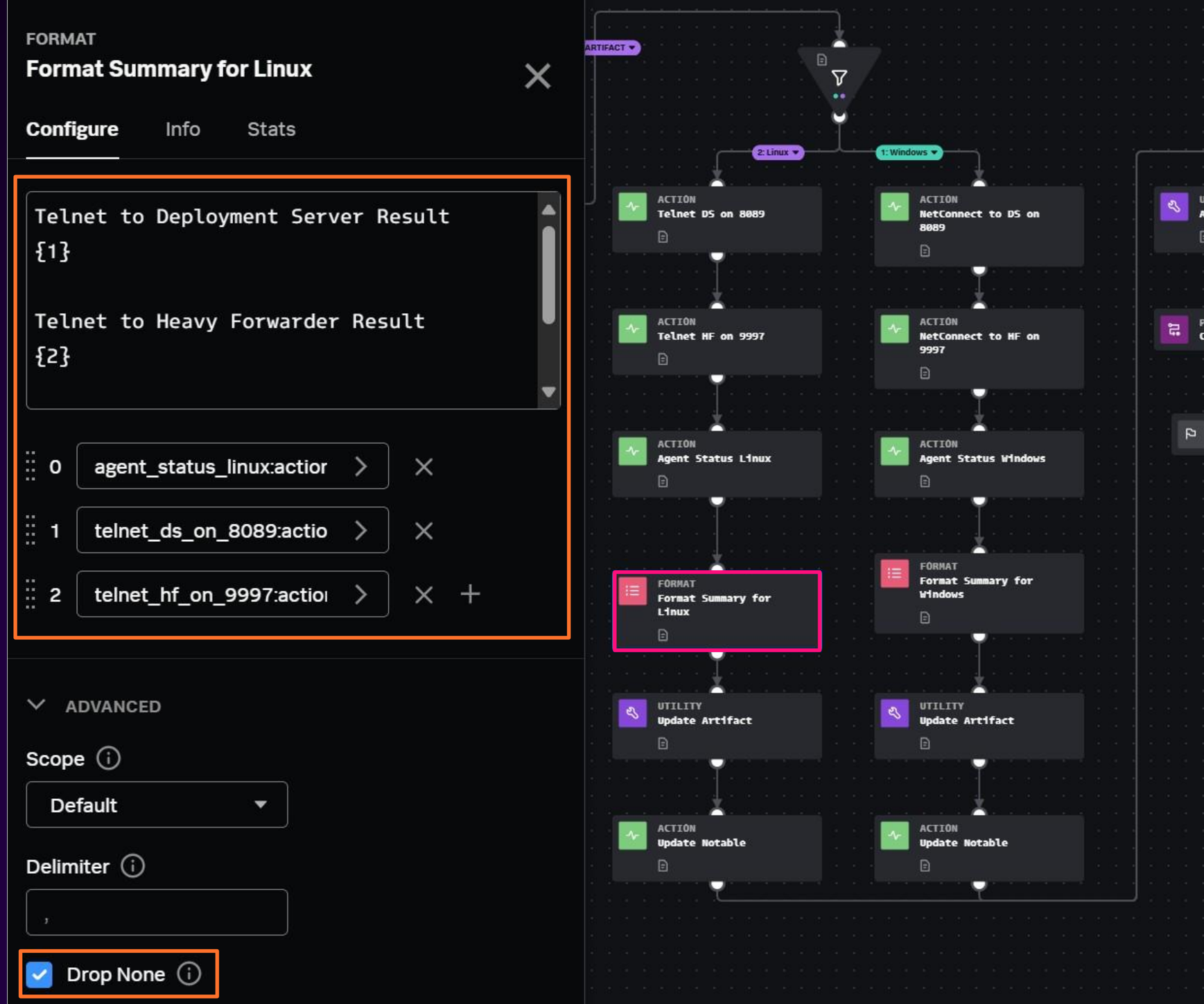
Remote Command Example

Format Block:

Format a message using all the returned results from the previous action blocks

Note the drop none is selected



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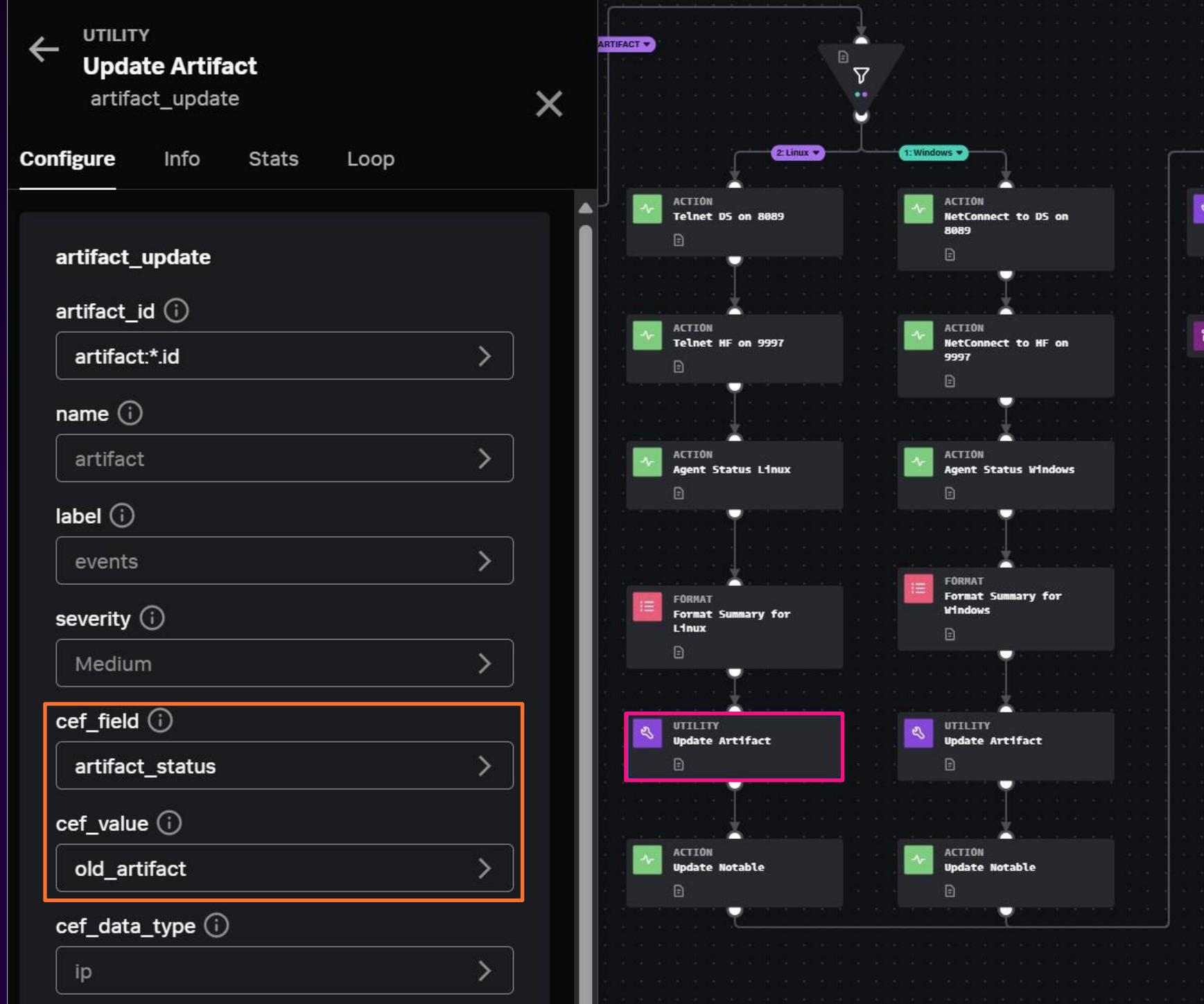
Remote Command Example

Utility Block:
Artifact Update

Add custom field to artifact for future use/ filtering



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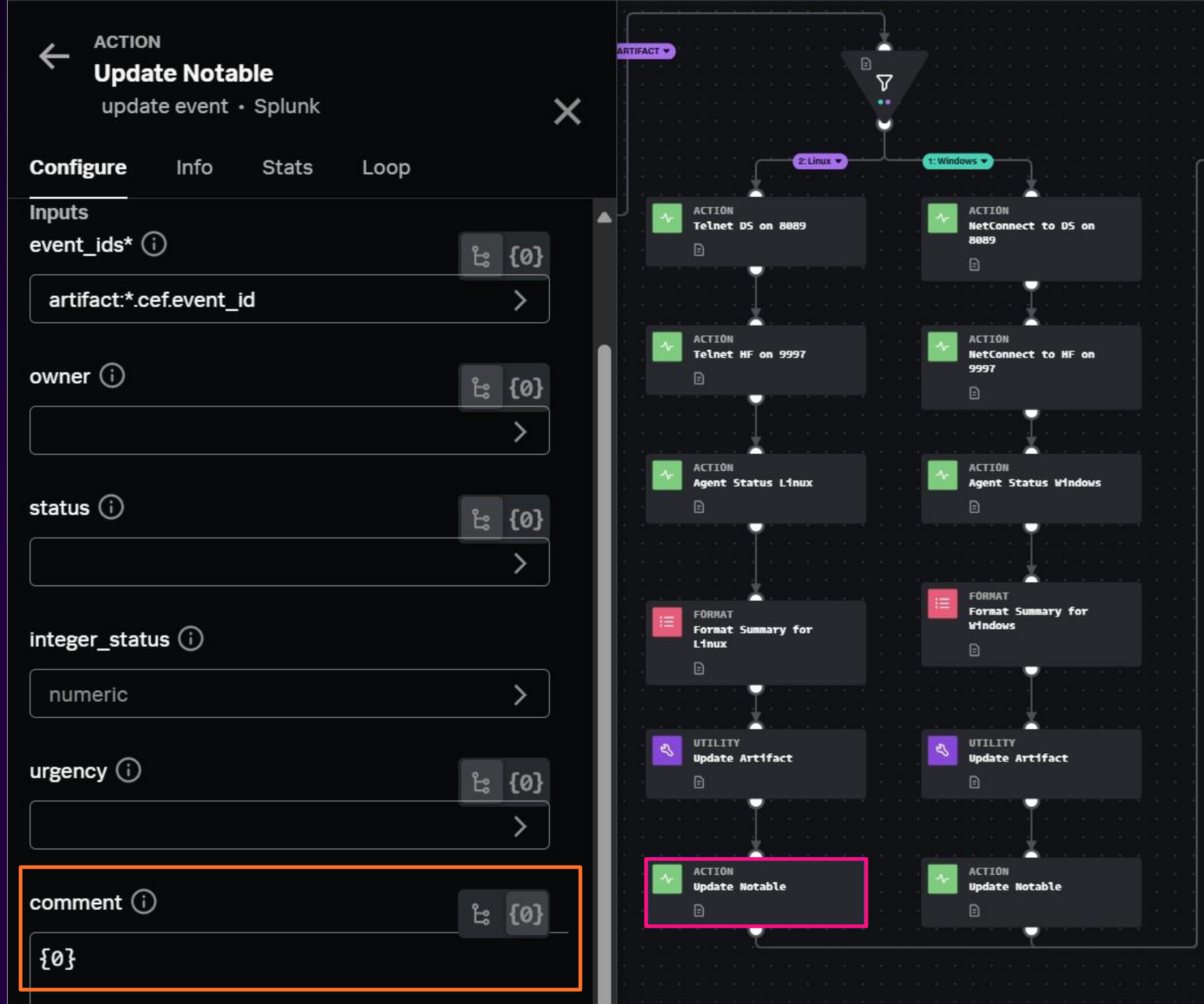
Remote Command Example

Action Block:
Splunk Update Event

Send formatted results to ES as a comment for the analyst to review



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Remote Script / Command Execution

Key Takeaways

- Use the underlying Operating System to do the heavy lifting and return results to SOAR
- This initial phase was focused on compliance monitoring and troubleshooting agents
  - However the next phase will reuse this functionality to support automated investigations and incident response
- Consider how you might use these techniques with that in mind
  - Running native OS commands to gather evidence (ps, netstat, etc)
  - Running additional scripts to perform containment functions

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Bonus Tips

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Bonus Tip

Splunk Lookup Tables within* SOAR!

- *“SPL EVAL Functions within* SOAR”* was a fan favorite from our previous talk
  - See slide 40 of our previous talk
  - Lets extend on this, and use it to leverage lookup tables…
- “*This would be so much easier if I could could just use a Splunk Lookup table instead*”
  - Anyone who’s ever had to write python code in SOAR for to manage a custom list…
- SOAR Custom Lists are very powerful, but have limited out of the box functionality
  - Assumes playbook developer will write a custom function in python to handle their data
- What if we cheat and get Splunk to do the heavy lifting for us?

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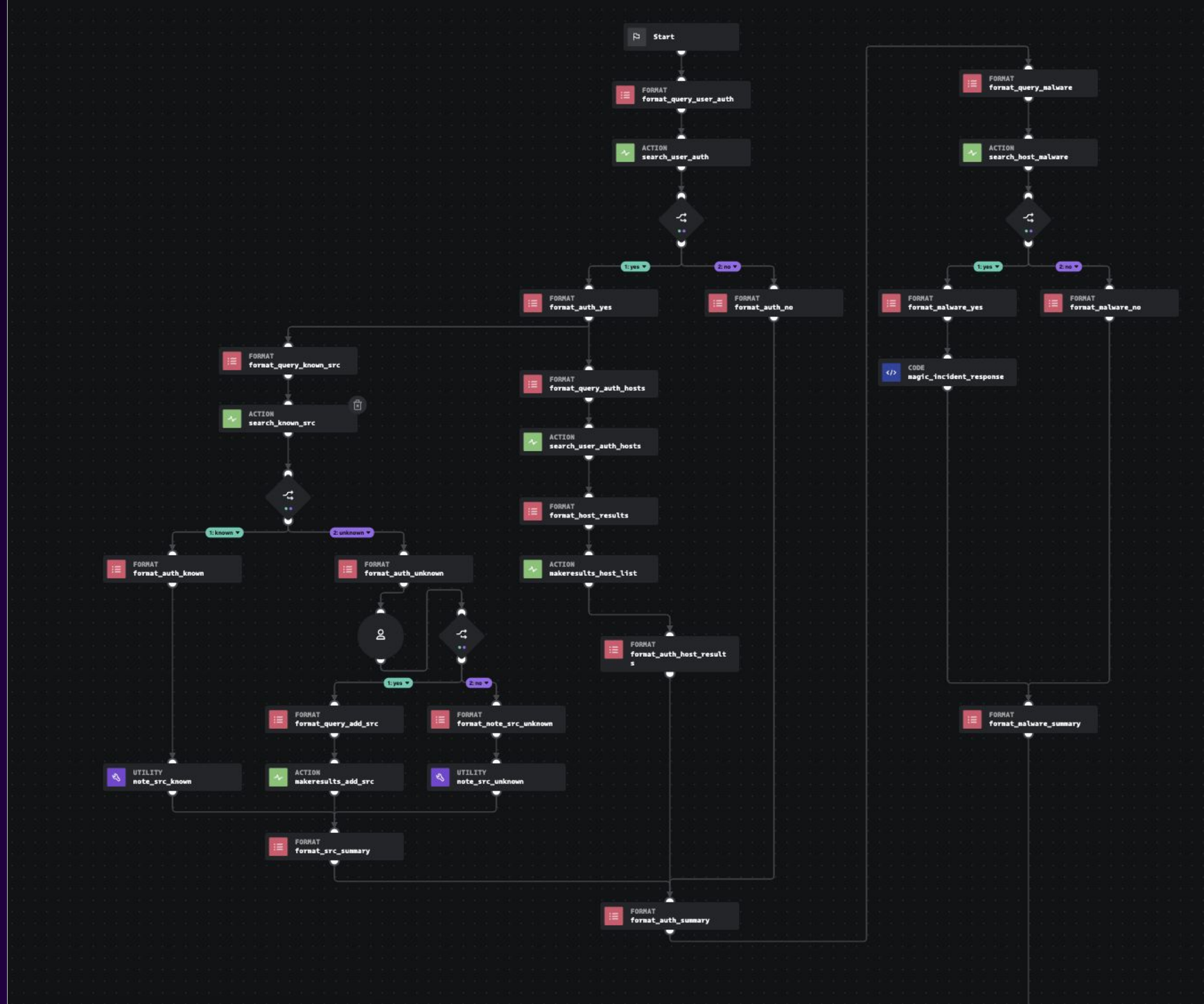
Bonus Tip

Leverage Splunk Lookup Tables via SOAR

Additional branch for our user investigative playbook to check if their source IP(s) are known / trusted…



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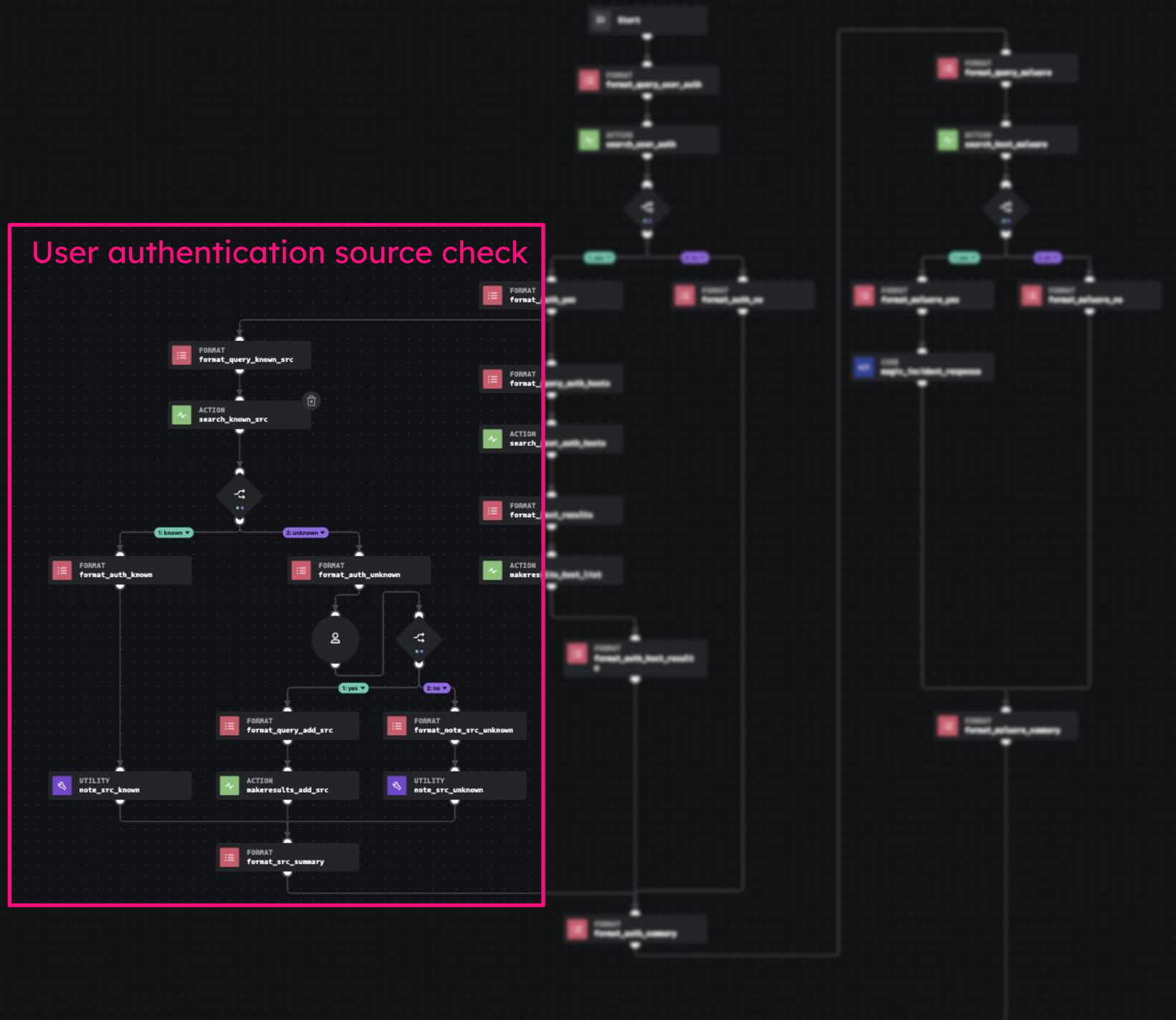
Bonus Tip

Leverage Splunk Lookup Tables via SOAR

Additional branch for our user investigative playbook to check if their source IP(s) are known / trusted…



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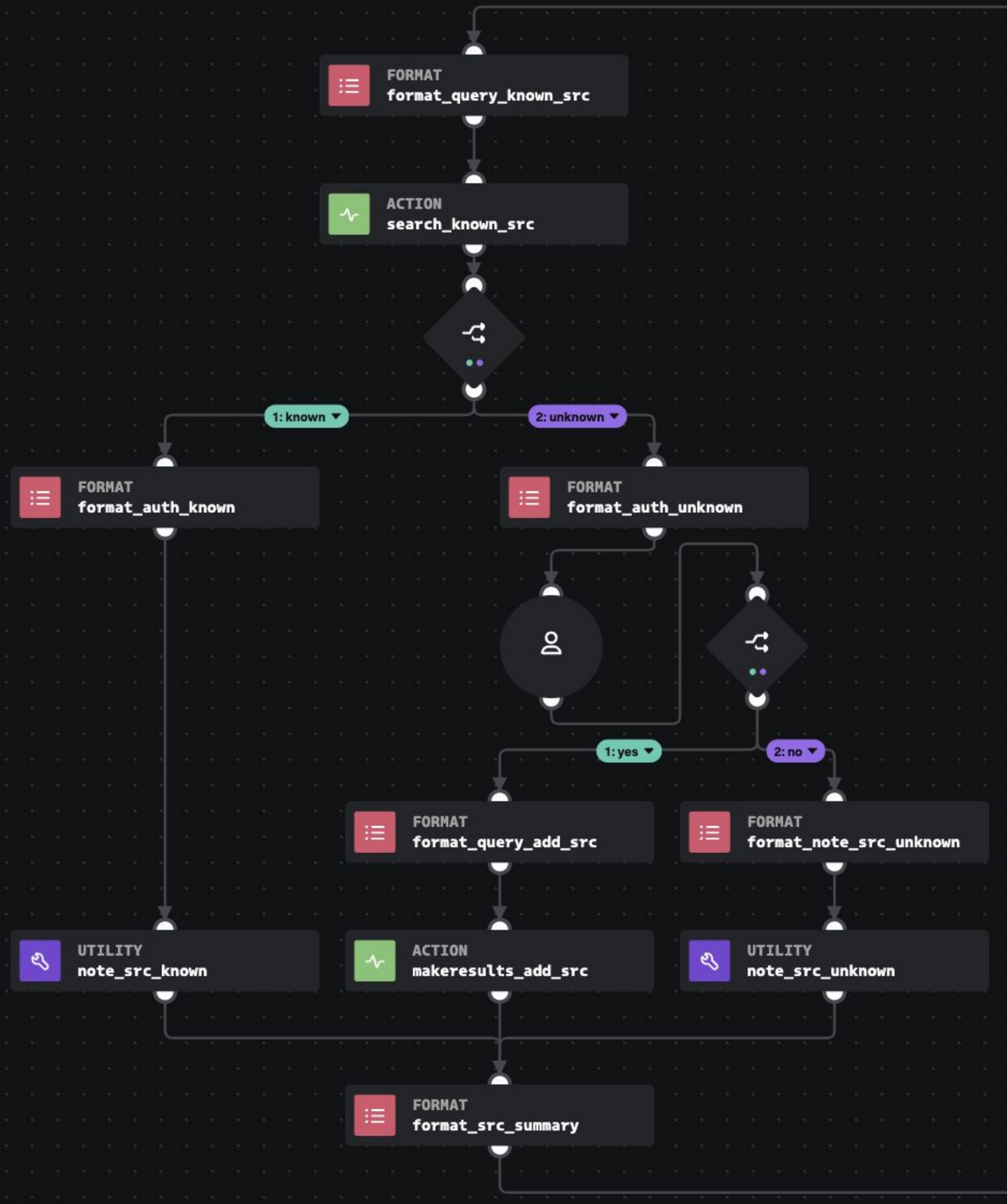
Bonus Tip

Leverage Splunk Lookup Tables via SOAR

Additional branch for our user investigative playbook to check if their source IP(s) are known / trusted…



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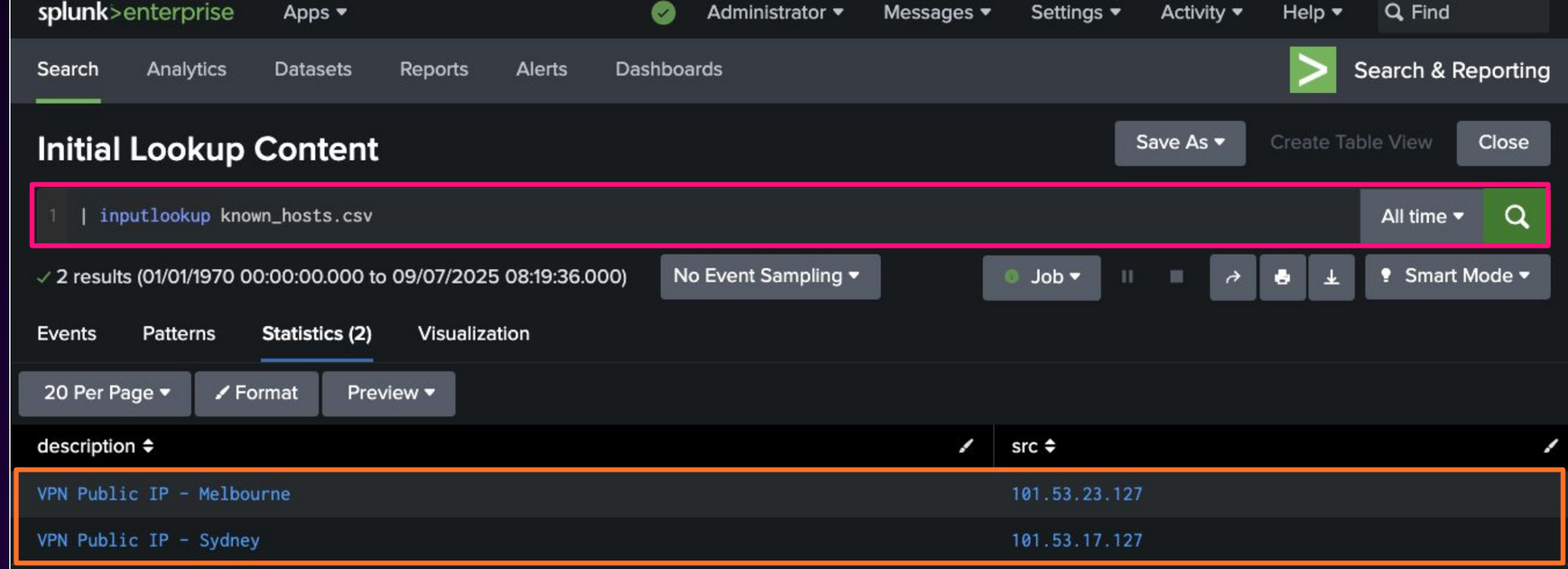
Bonus Tip

Leverage Splunk Lookup Tables via SOAR

… with ‘trust’ based on a lookup table within Splunk, containing an IP address and a description.



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Bonus Tip

Leverage Splunk Lookup Tables via SOAR

For this talk we'll use two demo containers to step through the example.

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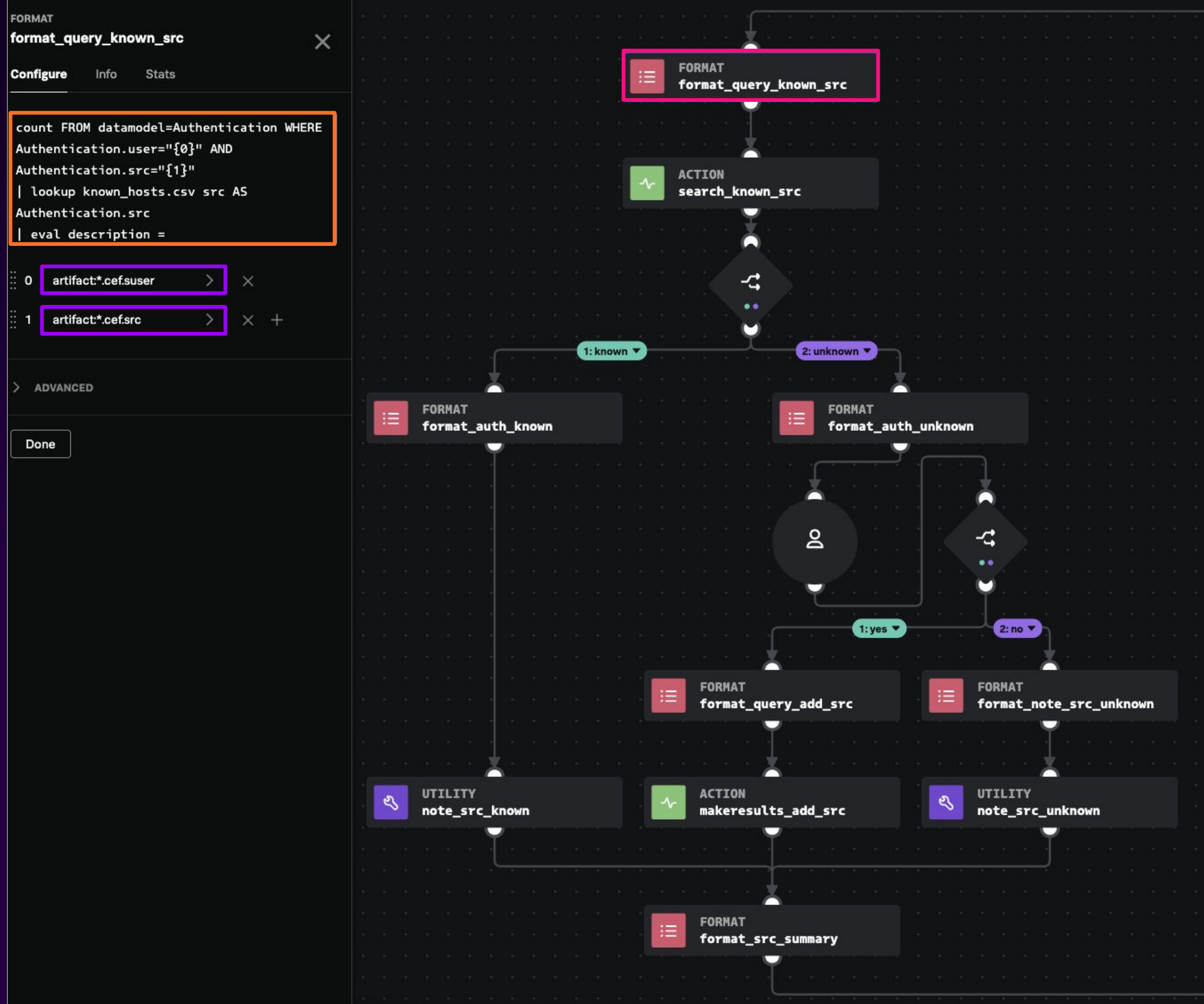
Bonus Tip

Leverage Splunk Lookup Tables via SOAR

Format Block:
Write your SPL to search for the users activity, and cross-check against the lookup table.



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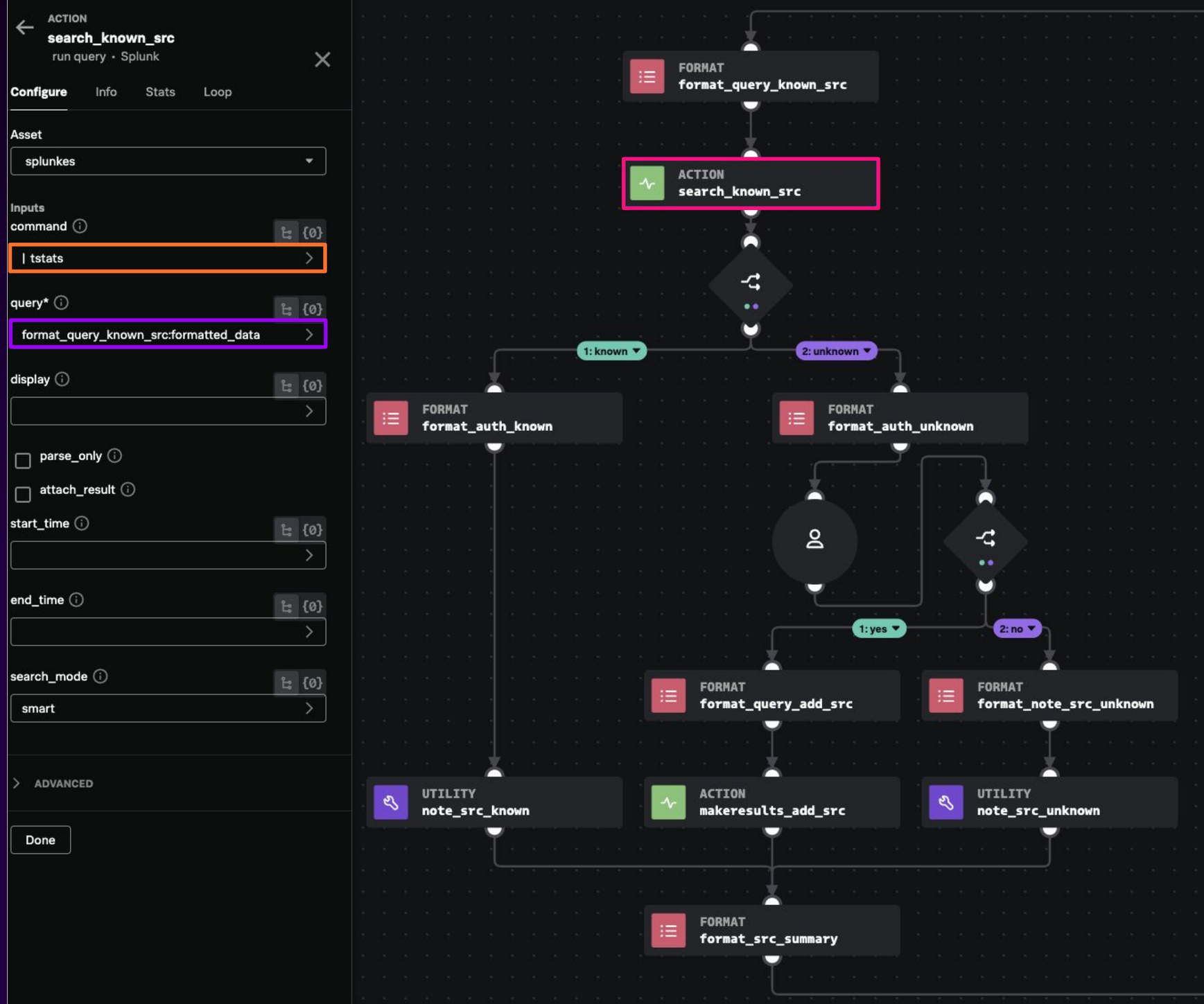
Bonus Tip

Leverage Splunk Lookup Tables via SOAR

Action Block:
Pass this SPL into an action block with a leading | tstats



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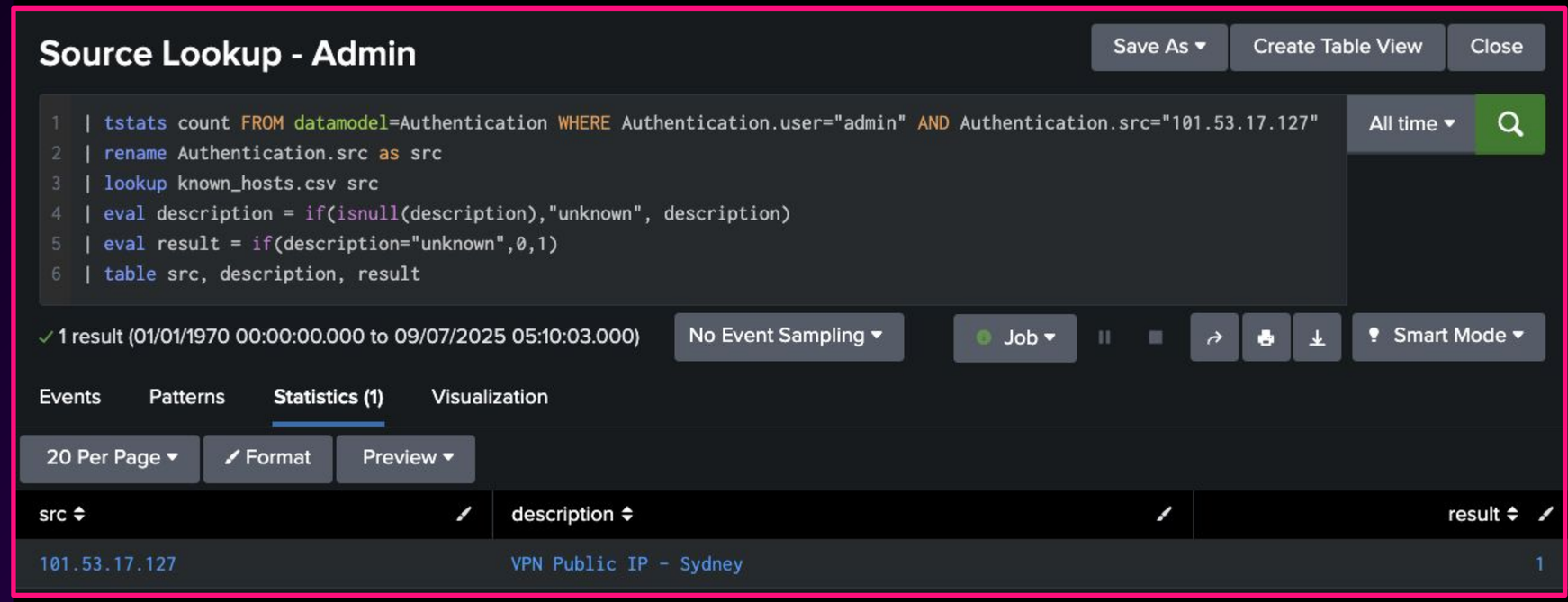
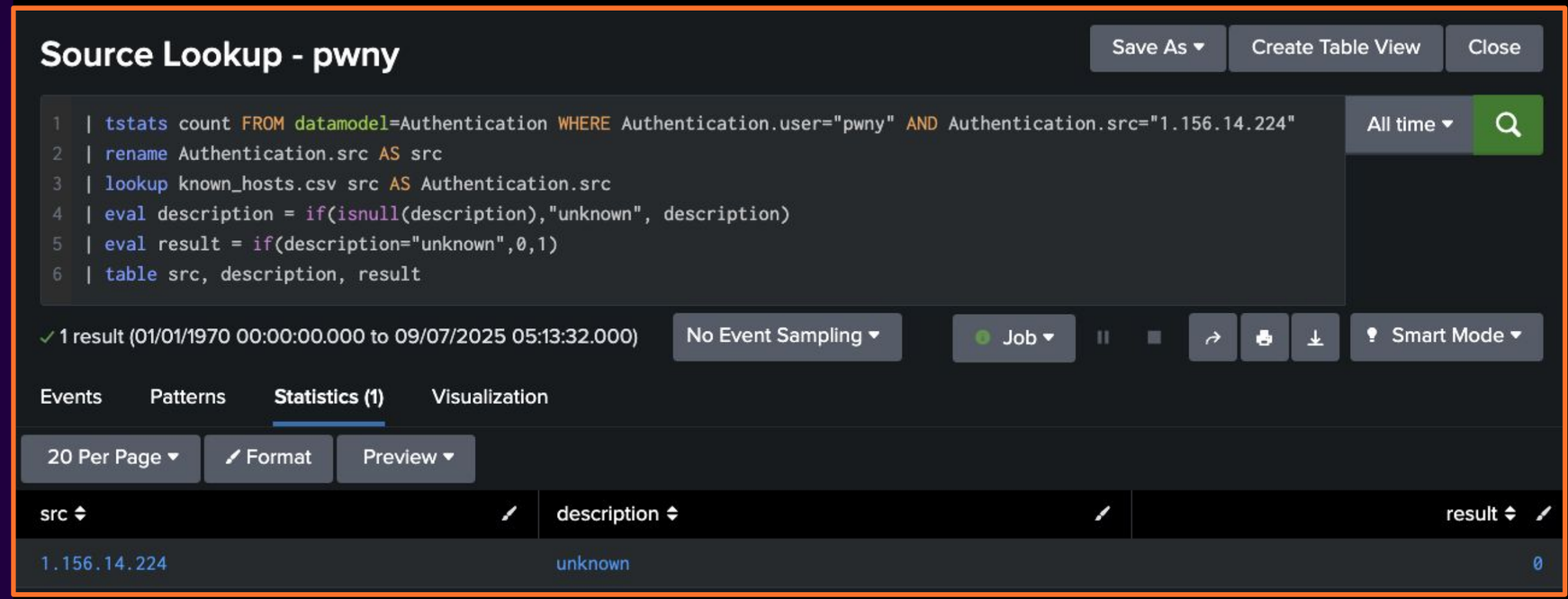
Bonus Tip

Leverage Splunk Lookup Tables via SOAR

Searches for the two users from Splunk's perspective.

Note the result field - this creates a binary condition used by the upcoming decision block.





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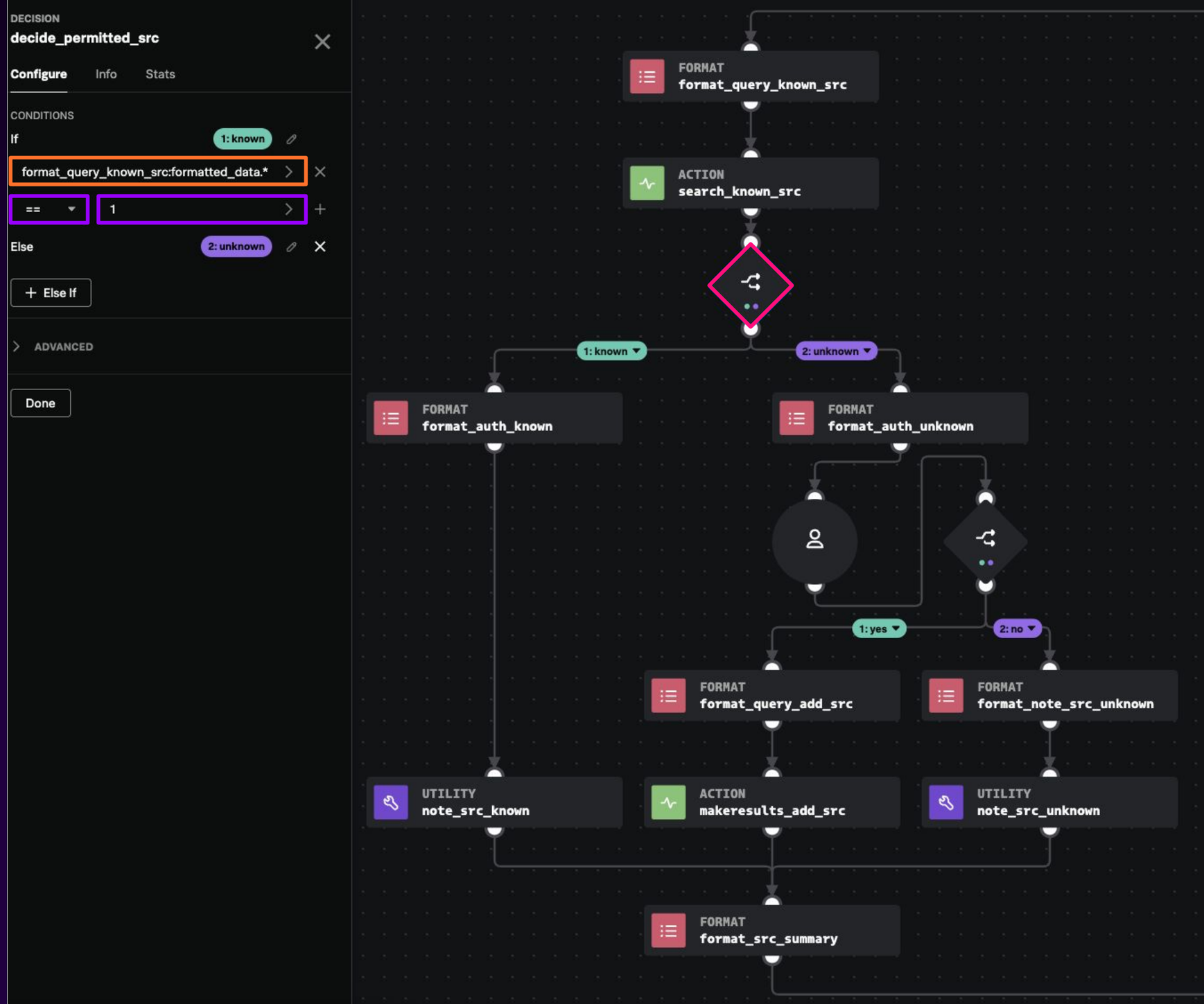
Bonus Tip

Leverage Splunk Lookup Tables via SOAR

Decision Block:
Choose a path based on the result returned



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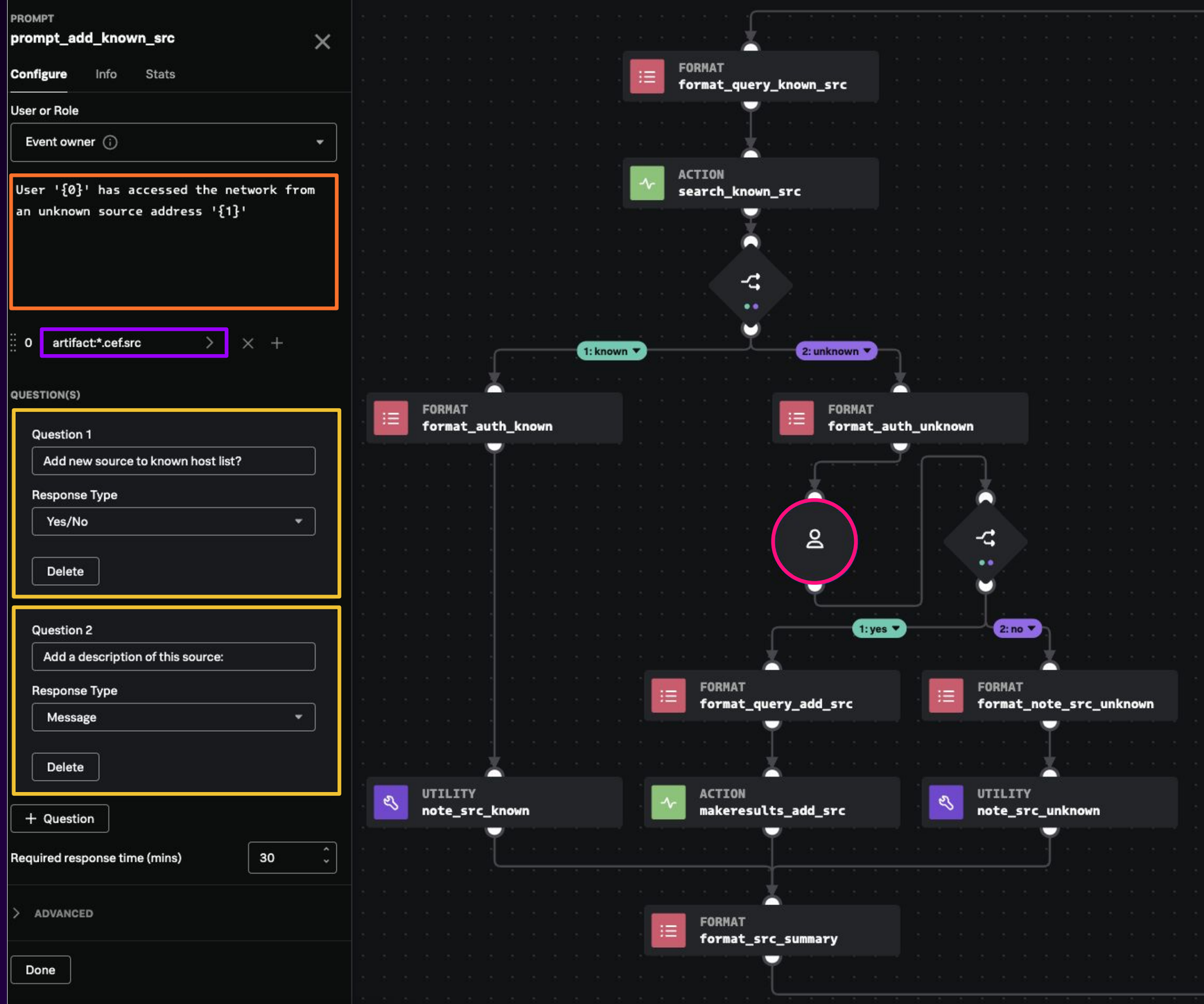
Bonus Tip

Leverage Splunk Lookup Tables via SOAR

Prompt Block:
For unknown sources, have a user review and determine if the source is trusted.



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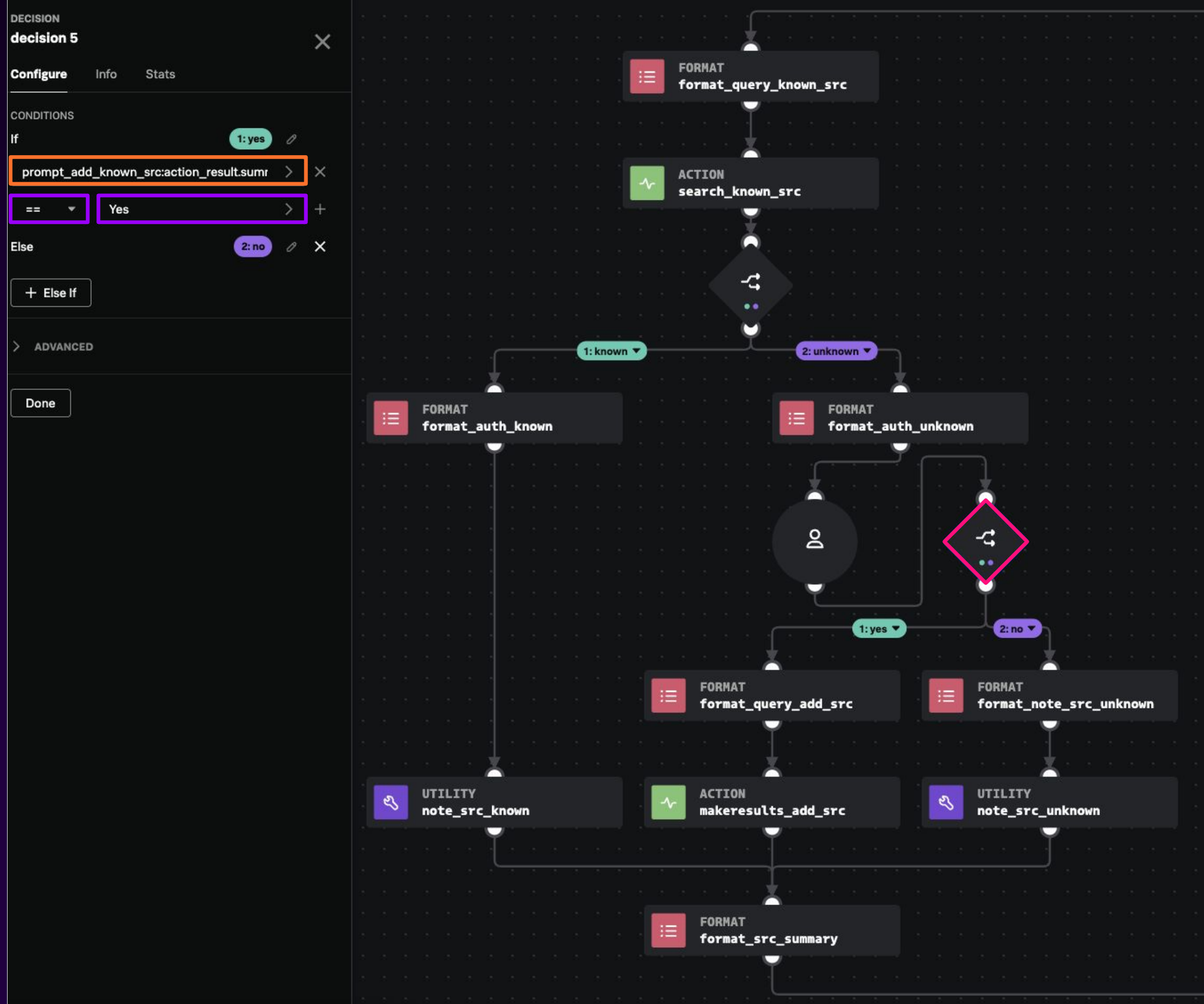
Bonus Tip

Leverage Splunk Lookup Tables via SOAR

Decision Block:
Choose a path based on the prompt response



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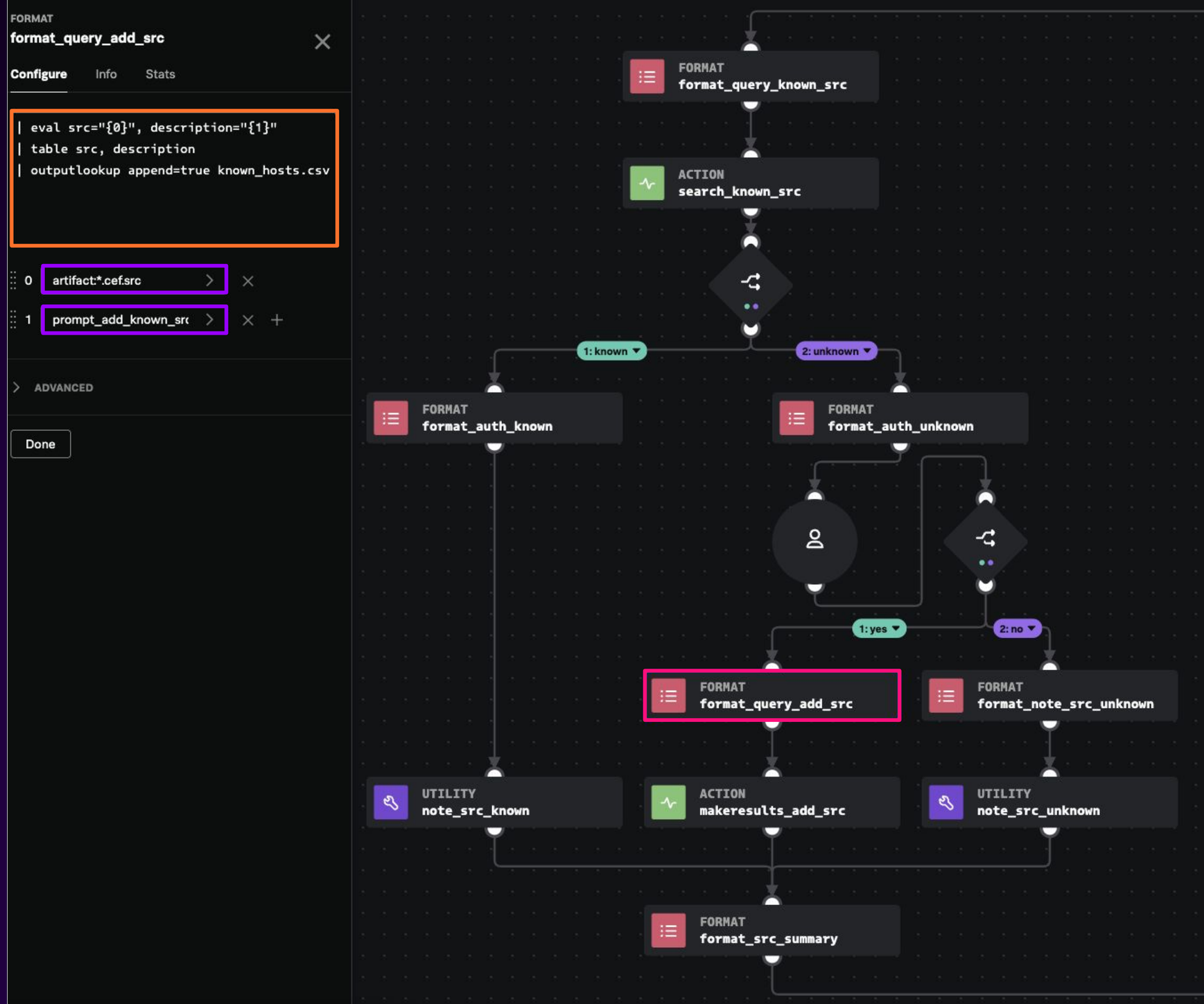
Bonus Tip

Leverage Splunk Lookup Tables via SOAR

Format Block:
Write your SPL to create a search that will output into the lookup table.



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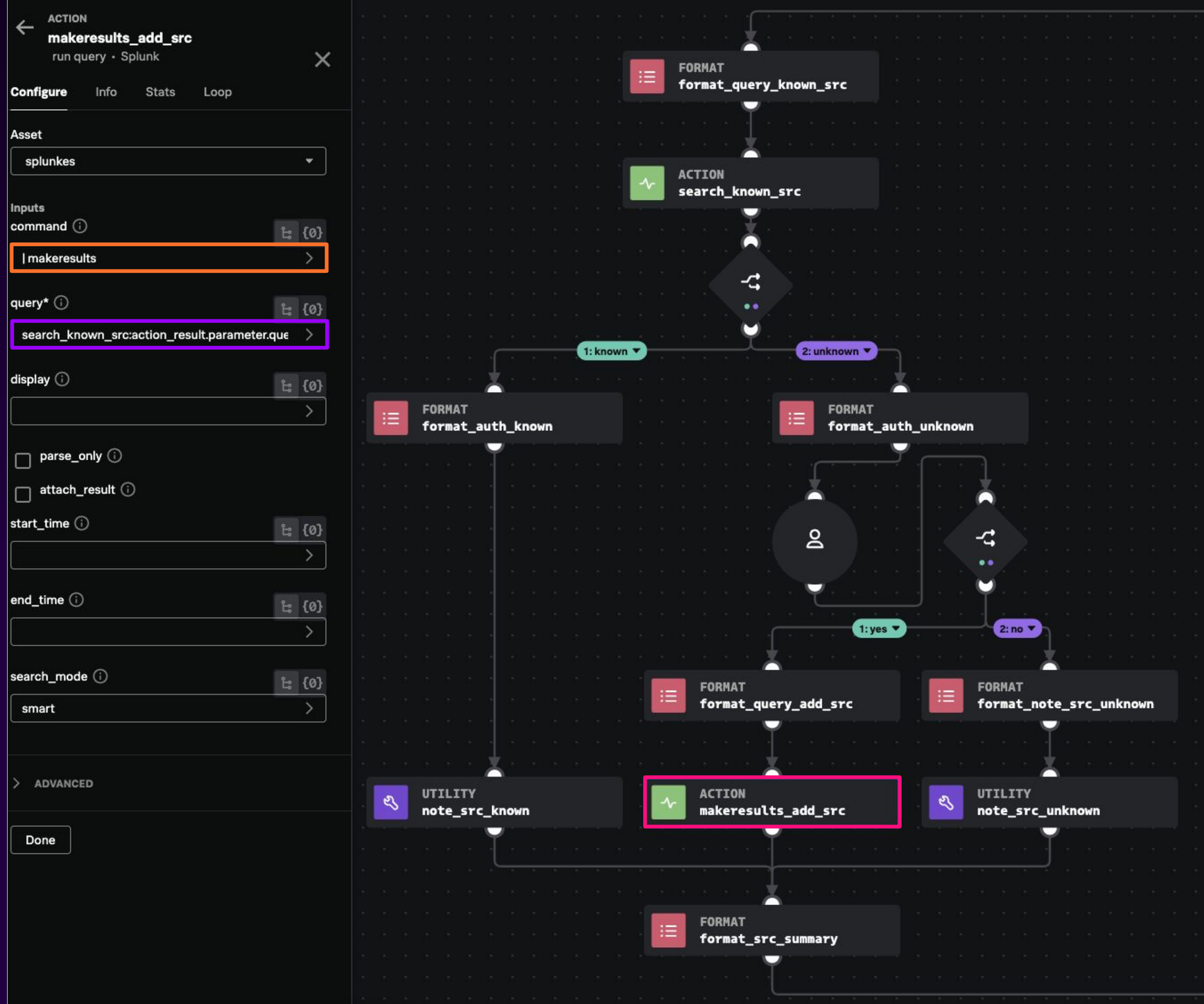
Bonus Tip

Leverage Splunk Lookup Tables via SOAR

Action Block:
Pass this SPL into an action block with a leading | makeresults



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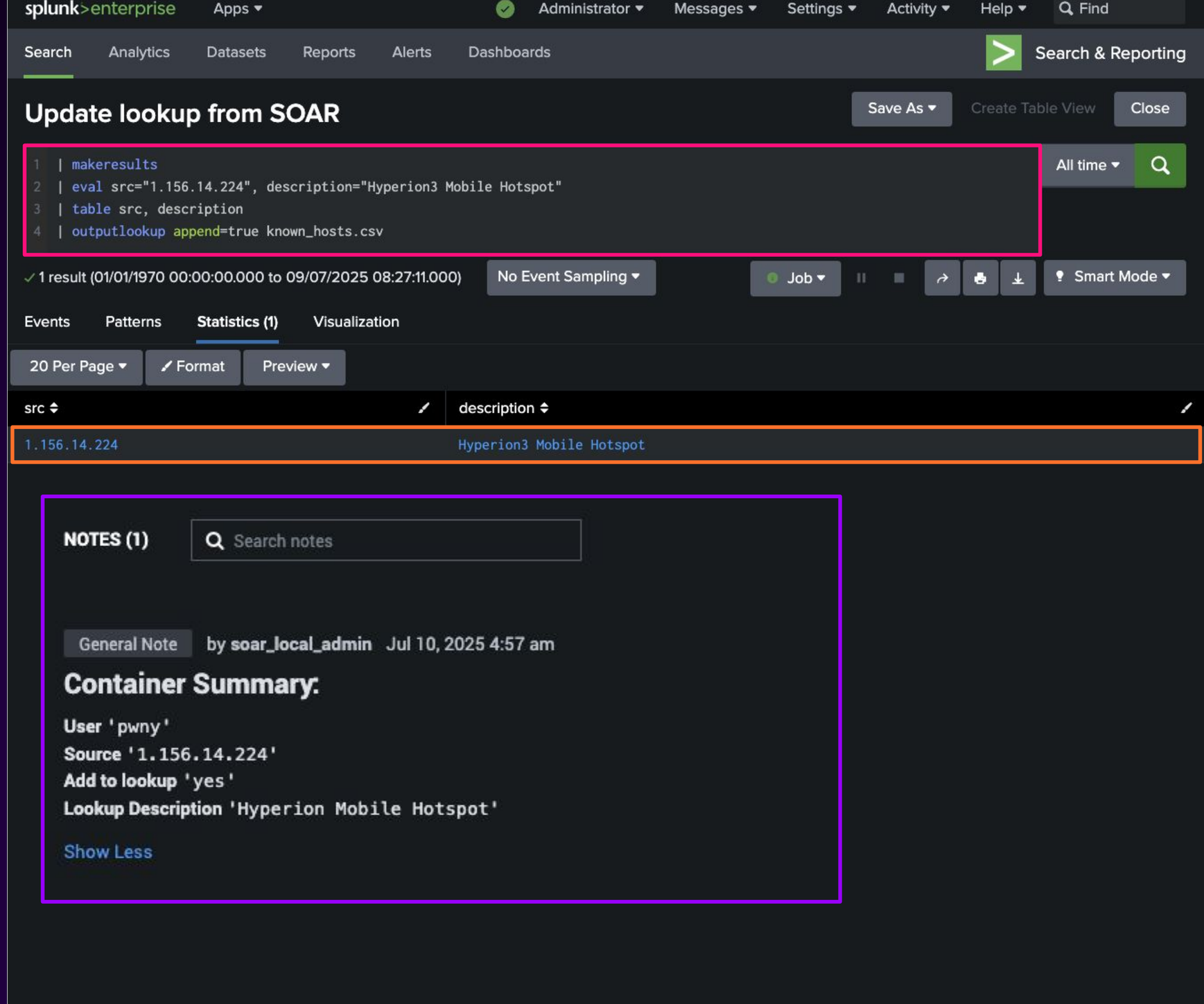
Bonus Tip

Leverage Splunk Lookup Tables via SOAR

Equivalent SPL within Splunk, plus SOAR output via a note:

Data has now been written in a Splunk lookup table from SOAR with zero custom code!



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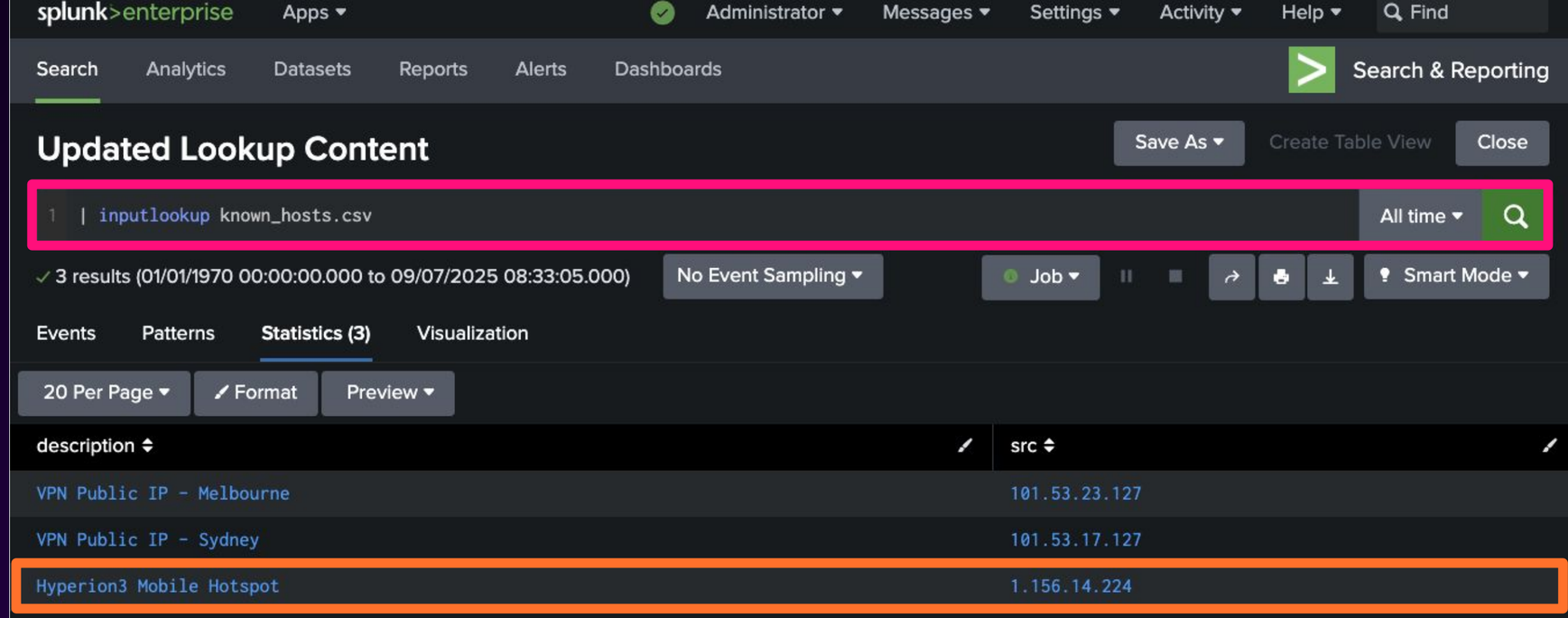
Bonus Tip

Leverage Splunk Lookup Tables via SOAR

Contents of the updated lookup table, showing the new entry from SOAR.



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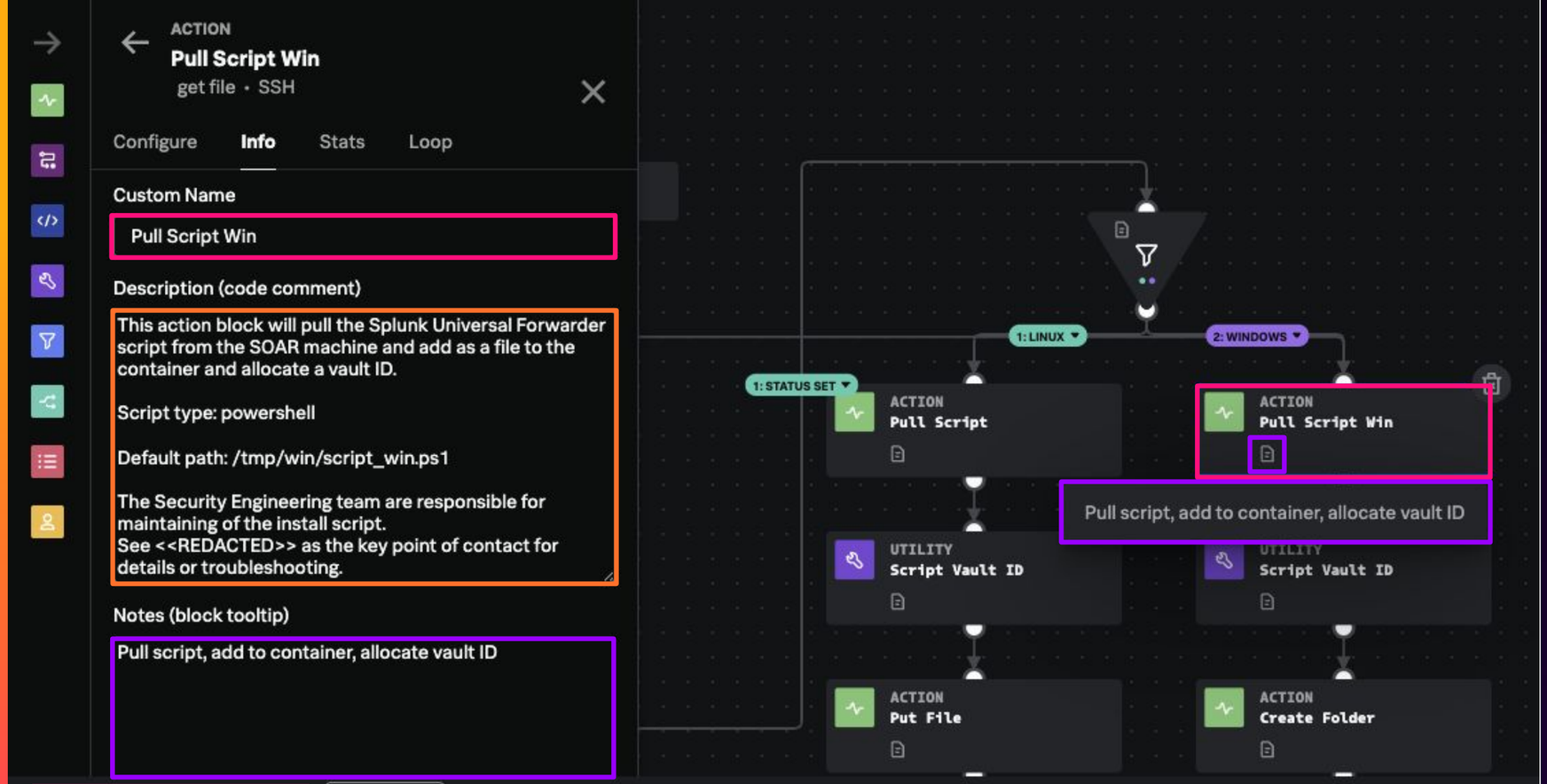

pull_script_win Function Copy

```python
@phantom.playbook_block()
def pull_script_win(action=None, success=None, container=None, results=None, handle=None, filtered_artifacts=None, filtered_results=None
    phantom.debug("pull_script_win() called")

    # phantom.debug('Action: {0} {1}'.format(action['name'], ('SUCCEEDED' if success else 'FAILED')))

    ################################################################################
    # This action block will pull the Splunk Universal Forwarder script from the SOAR
    # machine and add as a file to the container and allocate a vault ID.
    #
    # Script type: powershell
    #
    # Default path: /tmp/win/script_win.ps1
    #
    # The Security Engineering team are responsible for maintaining of the install
    # script.
    # See <<REDACTED>> as the key point of contact for details or troubleshooting.
    #
    ################################################################################

    parameters = []
```

Bonus Tip

Documentation as Code

Save time by documenting automation as you build!

- Set a custom name to each block, this defines the function name
- Add a detailed description to each block, this becomes living documentation within the code
- Configure a note, this provides a tooltip to assist development / code reuse / debugging

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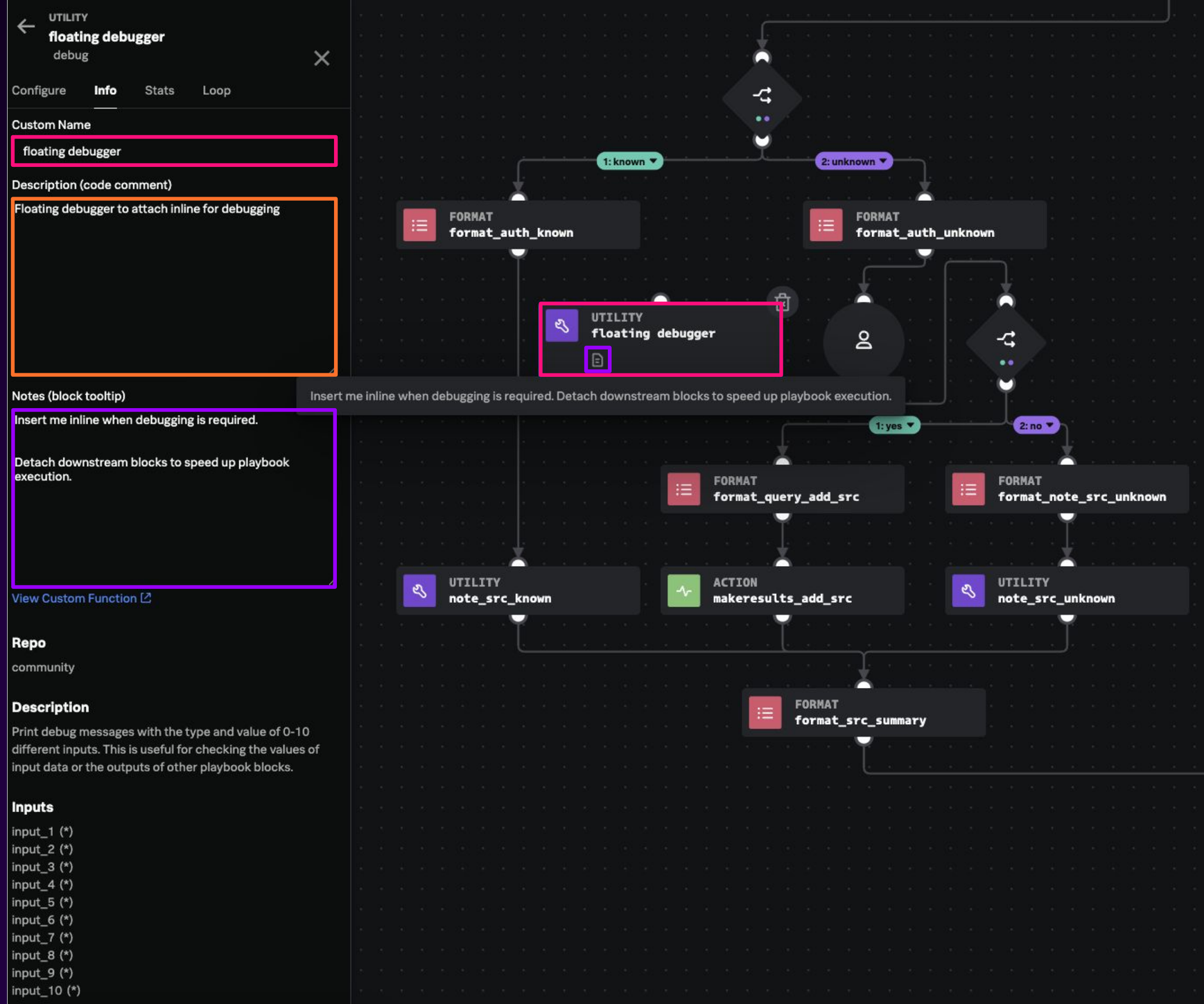
Bonus Tip

Floating Debugger

Keep a ‘floating debugger’ close to wherever you are actively developing a playbook.

Name, description, and notes as per good coding practices.



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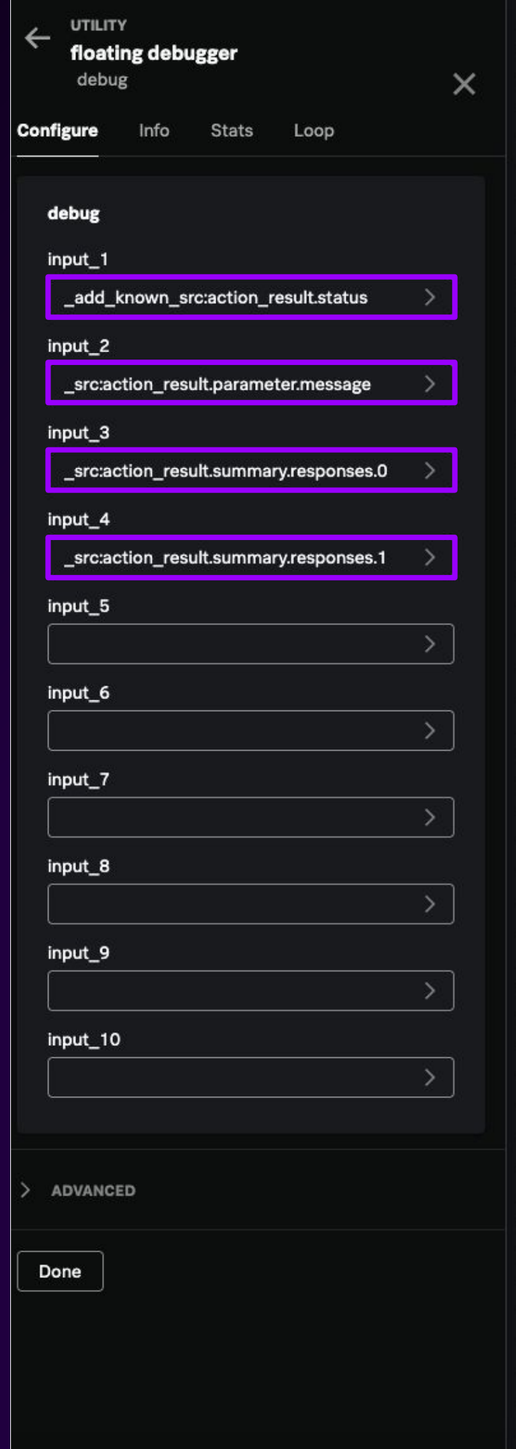
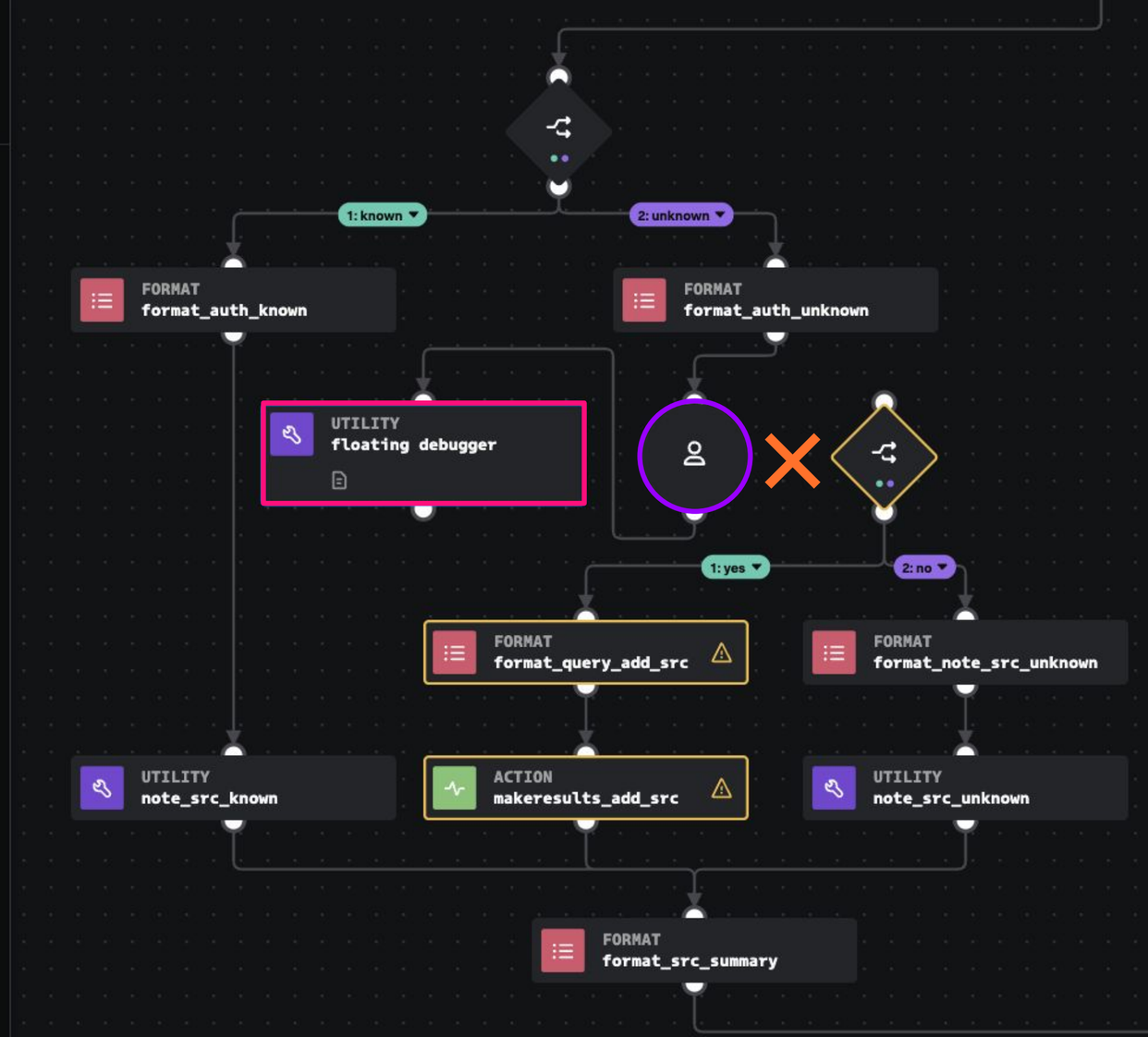
Bonus Tip

Floating Debugger

- Connect in-line when running the playbook debugger
- Disconnect downstream blocks to speedup execution
- Add up inputs in bulk in order to locate the fields relevant to your playbook





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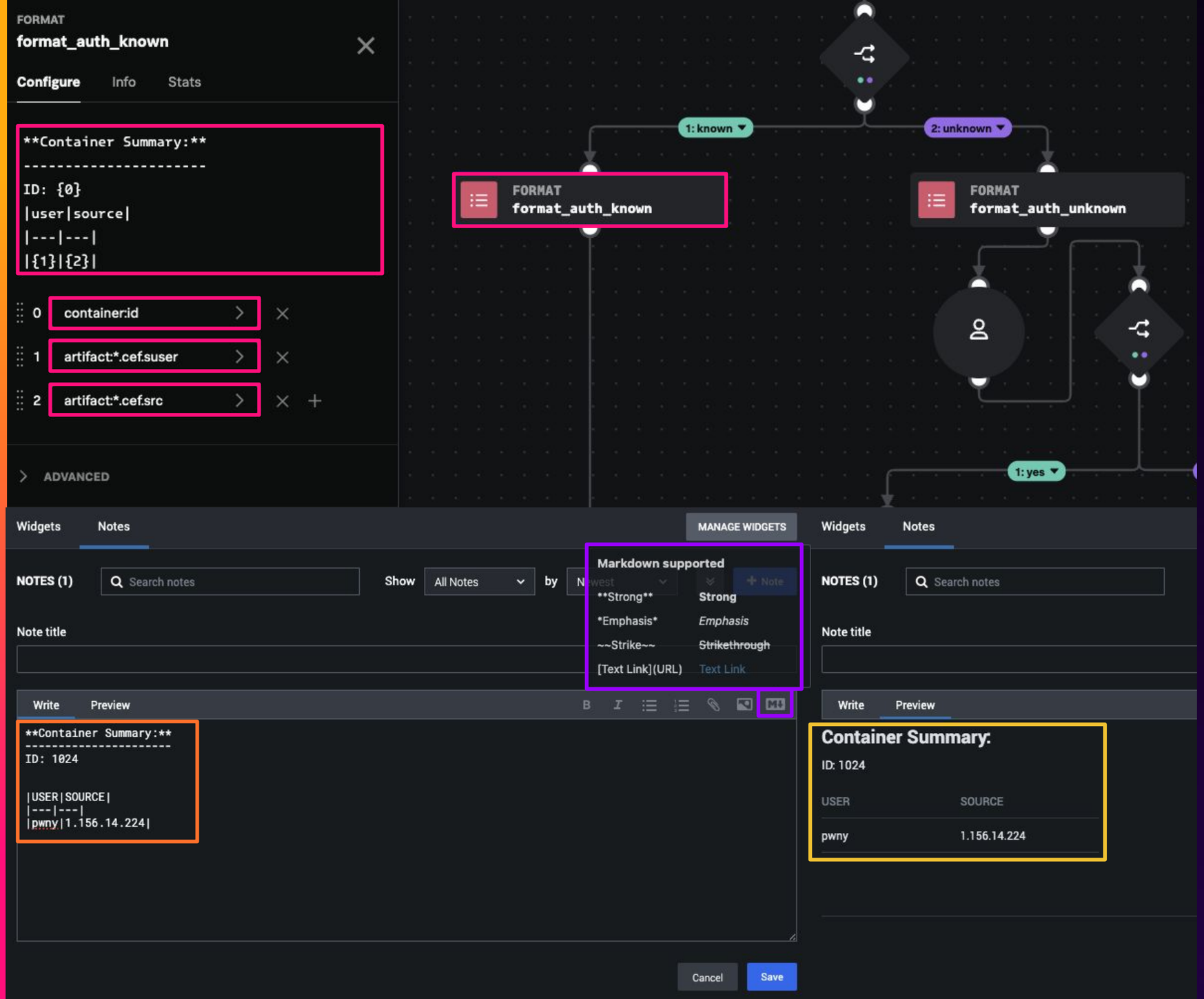

Bonus Tip

Markdown Formatting

- Format blocks support markdown input, allowing for text formatting / tables
- The same applies for notes, where you can even insert images!
- Use the inbuilt markdown cheatsheet to get started
- Use note preview to test and adjust

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Wrap Up

Today we covered

- Refresher of some Part 1 content
- Example of out of the box thinking
- Example of remote code/script execution
- Tips and good practice

Watch Part 1 if you missed it!

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Hyperion3 SOAR
Git Repo

https://github.com/MattHyp3/Hyperion3_SOAR

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Questions?

Mic is open!

Or, come and see us afterwards / reach out to us at:

rich@splunk.com
matt@hyperion3.com.au

Thank you

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