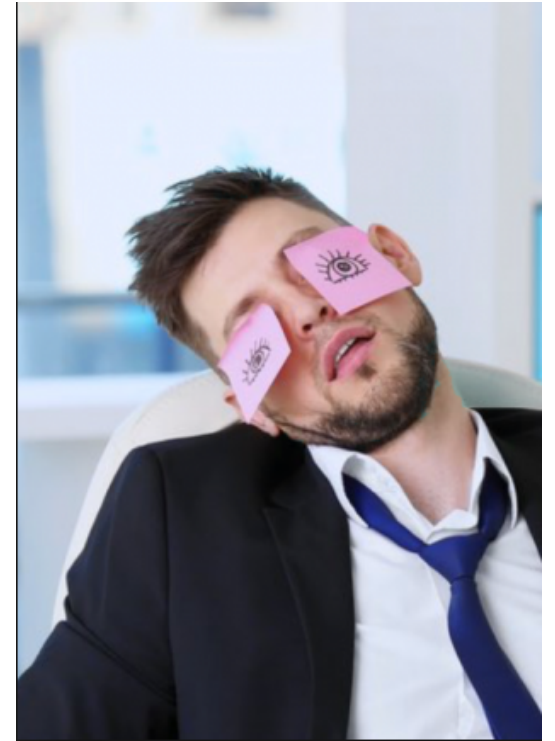
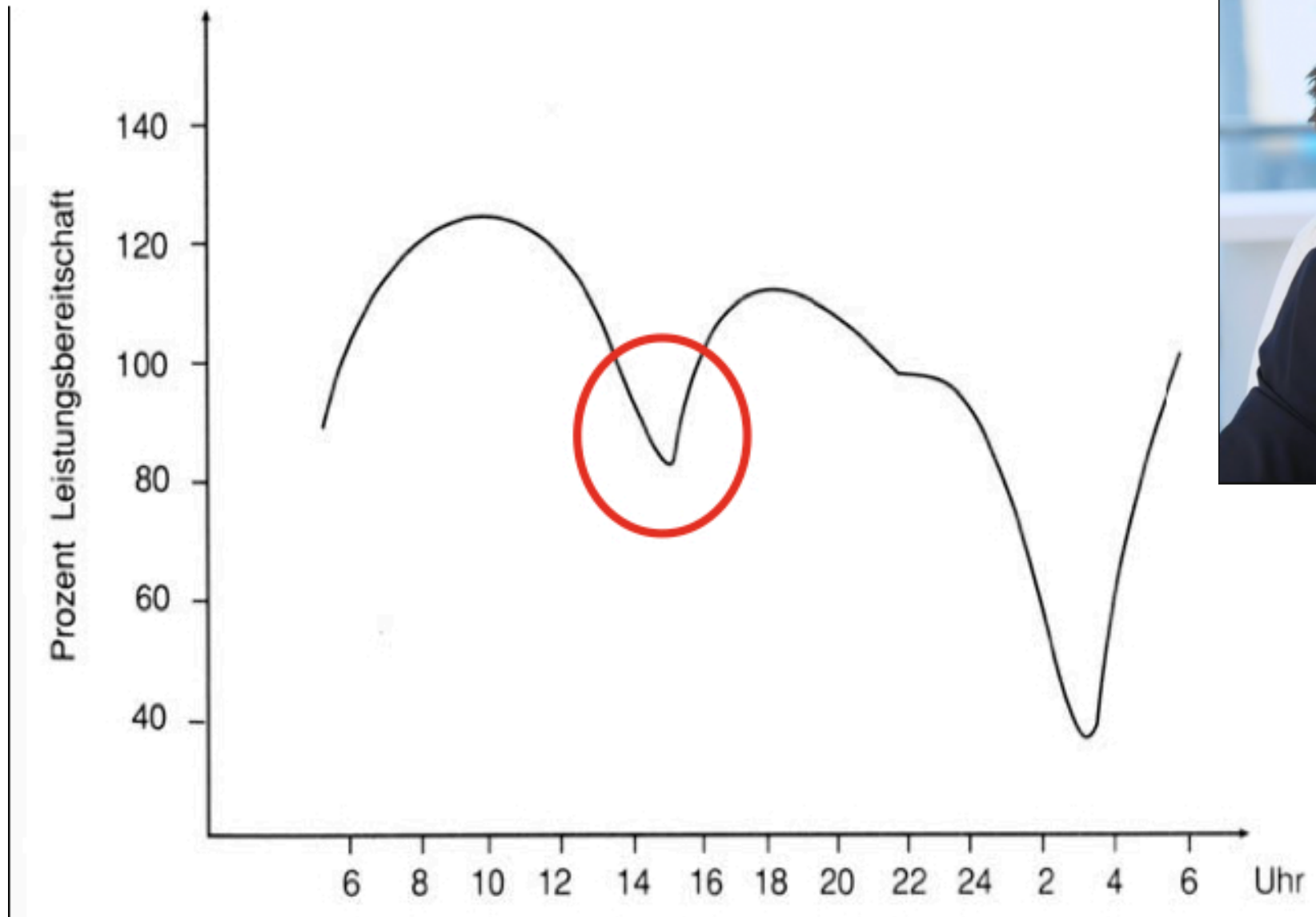




# Secret Management with Hashicorp's Vault

Daniel Bornkessel

**INNOQ**





FUN

I LEARNED A LOT

GREAT SPEAKER



TOO TECHNICAL

VERY INTERESTING

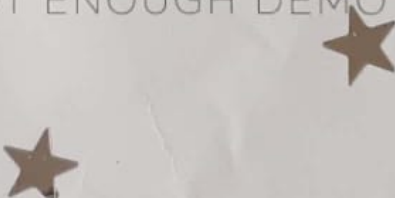
TOO THEORETICAL



NEED MORE DEMO

NOT ENOUGH DEMO

TOO COMPLEX





# Secret Management with Hashicorp's Vault

Daniel Bornkessel

**INNOQ**

# Focus of this talk

- **what is secret management**
- **why do you need it**
- **what is Vault and how can it help you with secret management**
- **some Vault internals**

# Goal of this talk

- think about best practices with secrets that your company could improve on
- go and play with Vault

# Why focus on Vault

- unmatched (afaik) feature set
- not vendor or framework specific
- open source (mostly ... some closed sourced enterprise features)

## Other solutions\*

- **KeyWiz from Square:** not as many features, no dynamic secrets, HSM in open source version
- **Cloud Foundry CredHub:** tailored and specific to Cloud Foundry
- **AWS Secrets Manager:** AWS specific, promising, dynamic'esque secrets for certain AWS services, automatic rotation (for supported services + extendable via Lambda functions)
- **self made:** a lot of complexity and work

\* I have not personally used those solutions



# Secret Management

# Secrets

- sensitive data != secrets ... but: secrets == sensitive data
- tokens
- passwords
- certificates
- API keys
- etc.

# Secret Management

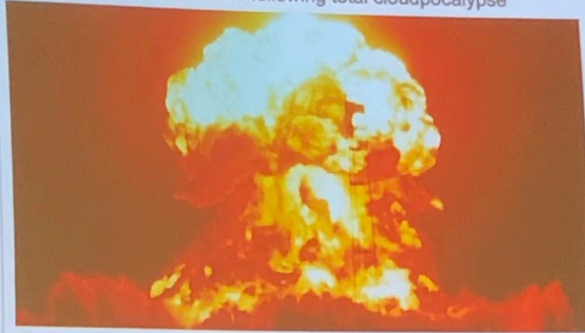
- **part of your security concept**
- **one focus: on internal threads like**
  - **rogue employees**
  - **unauthorized access to secrets**
  - **long living secrets**
- **audit log: who requested credentials for which system at what point of time**
- **high automation for changing / revoking / rolling secrets**
- **high entropy passwords**

# todo: extreme example

Data Center > Cloud

### Code Spaces goes titsup FOREVER after attacker NUKES its Amazon-hosted data

Source-sharing site to close following total cloudpocalypse



18 Jun 2014 at 20:54, Neil McAllister



547

[http://www.theregister.co.uk/2014/06/18/code\\_spaces\\_destroyed/](http://www.theregister.co.uk/2014/06/18/code_spaces_destroyed/)

@gotober

@samnewman

Follow us on Twitter @GOTOber



# Secret Management: current situation

- best practices are widely known
- is usually seen as (very) important
- implementation is hard
- solutions are rare
- apps and frameworks not ready for modern secret management
- high automation still an exception (as opposed to external thread mitigation measures)
- often neglected in favour of business critical features

# Question

**Who here has production credentials on their laptop at this very moment (e.g. AWS credentials file, DB credentials, passwordless ssh private keys to access machines or git repos, API-keys, etc.)?**

**Who thinks this is a good idea?**

# Why am I talking about secret management



# About me

**Daniel Bornkessel / @kesselborn**

- **Senior Consultant at INNOQ (part time)**
- **Focus on DevOps & Continuous Delivery**

## INNOQ

- **Consulting, reviews and development**
- **<https://www.innoq.com/de/culture/working-at-innoq/>**

# Typical project

- **Monolith -> Micro Services / Self Contained Systems**
- **Language: set (mostly Java)**
- **Framework: set (often Spring Boot)**
- **Data center: set (mostly AWS or on premise)**
- **Container Management: set (mostly Kubernetes)**
- **CI: set (whatever they used before ...please for god's sake: use Gitlab CI)**
- **Logging / Monitoring: set (ELK & prometheus)**
- **Secret Management: sure ... eh ... wat?**

# Typical project: Secret Management

- we pass secrets in via env vars
- we read the values from Kubernetes secrets
- we have role based access control all figured out
- changing and updating passwords is a manual process for now
- yeah: audit log is something we are looking into
- no, we can not confidently say who has the password for DB xy
- no, we do not change all passwords if an employee leaves the company
- revoking credentials is not something we currently support

# Introducing Vault



# Vault — executive summary

# **Vault – executive summary**

**"A Tool for Managing Secrets"**

# Vault – executive summary

- not comparable to password managers like 1Password, LastPass, etc.
  - Vault is designed for the system side of things – password managers “just” encrypt your static secrets and provide a nice way use them

# Vault – executive summary

- **secures, stores and tightly controls**
  - **tokens**
  - **passwords**
  - **certificates**
  - **API keys**
  - **and other secrets**

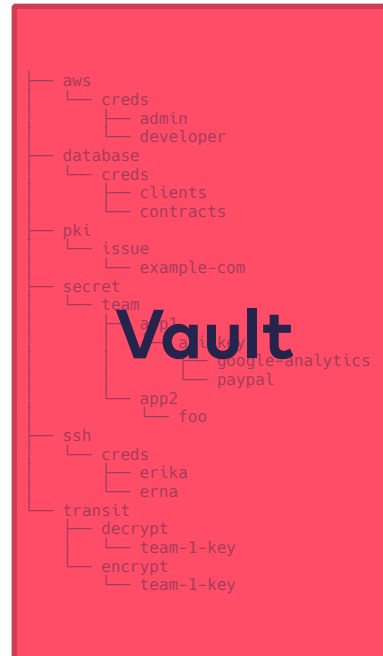


# Vault – executive summary

- **handles**
  - **leasing**
  - **key revocation**
  - **key rolling**
  - **auditing**
- **provides an API for all operations**
- **is not meant as a service or token provider which gets embedded in your request / response cycle**

# Vault

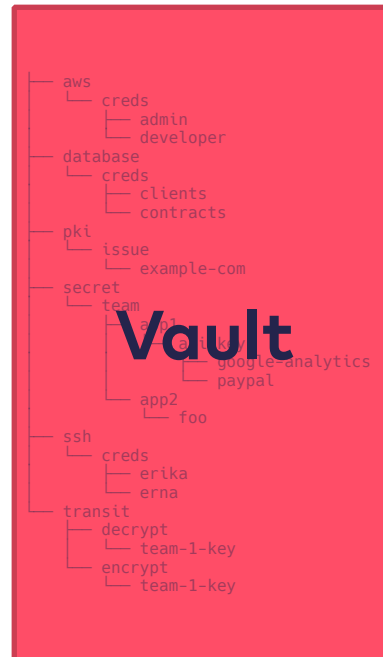
auth-n + auth-z



secrets

# Vault auth backends

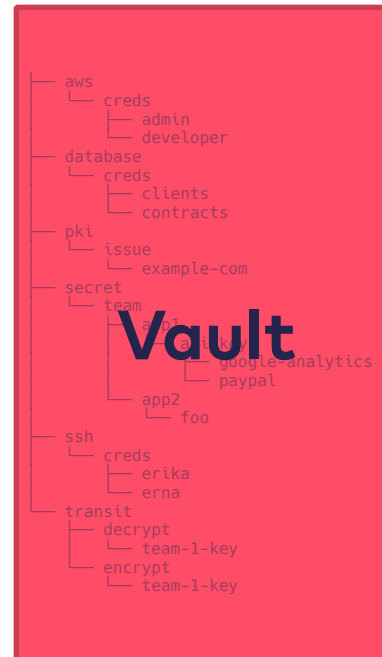
- Tokens
- LDAP
- AWS
- Kubernetes
- Google Cloud
- Username & Password
- AppRole
- GitHub
- MFA
- Okta
- RADIUS
- TLS Certificates



- AWS
- Consul
- Cubbyhole
- Databases
- Identity
- Static secrets (Key /Value)
- Nomad
- PKI (Certificates)
- RabbitMQ
- SSH
- TOTP
- Transit

# Vault secret backends

- Tokens
- LDAP
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- TLS Certificates

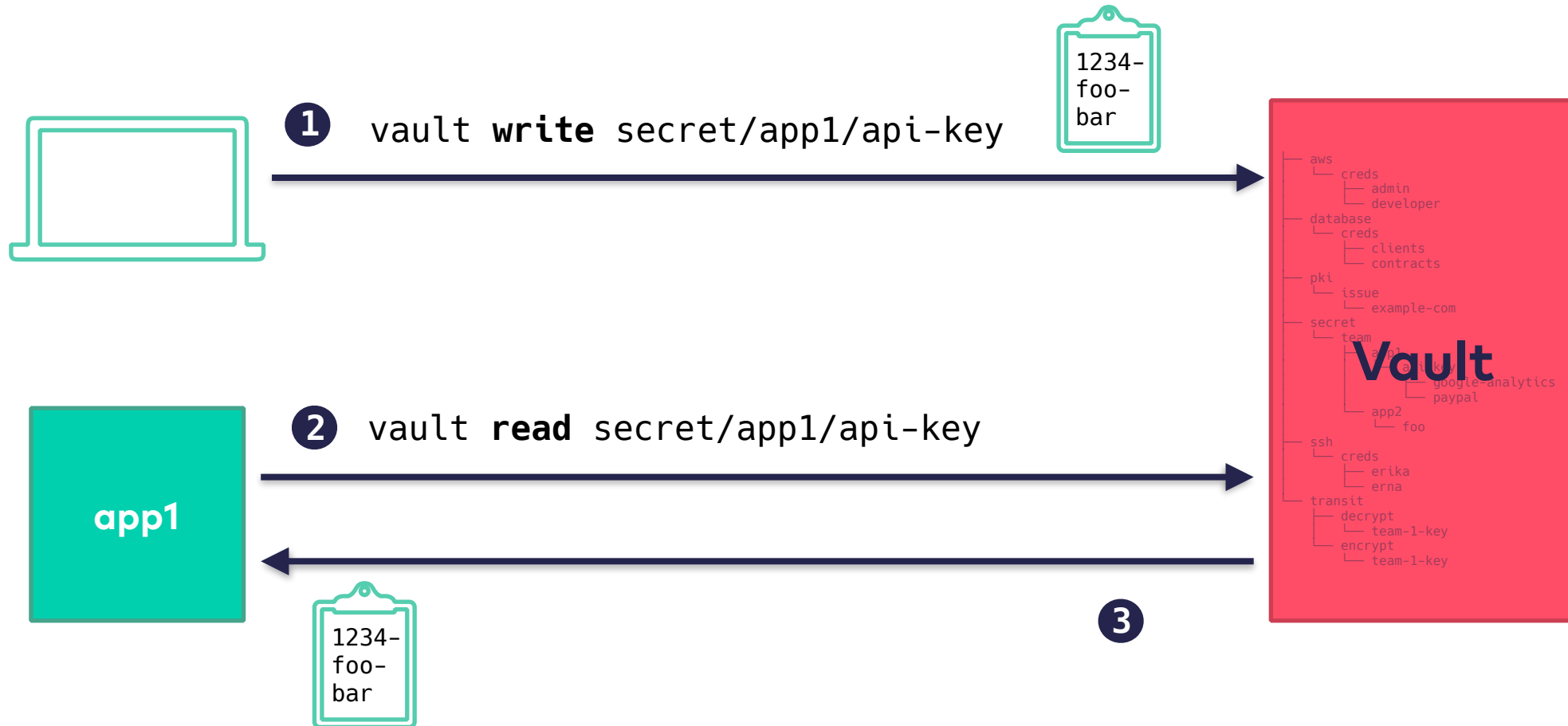


- **AWS**
- **Consul**
- **Cubbyhole**
- **Databases**
- **Identity**
- **Static secrets (Key /Value)**
- **Nomad**
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- **Transit**

# Vault — secret backends

# Vault secret backends — static secrets

# Vault secret backends – static secrets



# Vault secret backends — dynamic secrets



# Vault secret backends – dynamic secrets

## What they are

- **on-the-fly created credentials (hence dynamic) for each instance of an app / user who wants a secret**
- **usually short to medium long ttl**
- **fully audited**

# **Vault secret backends – dynamic secrets**

## **How they work (in a Nutshell)**

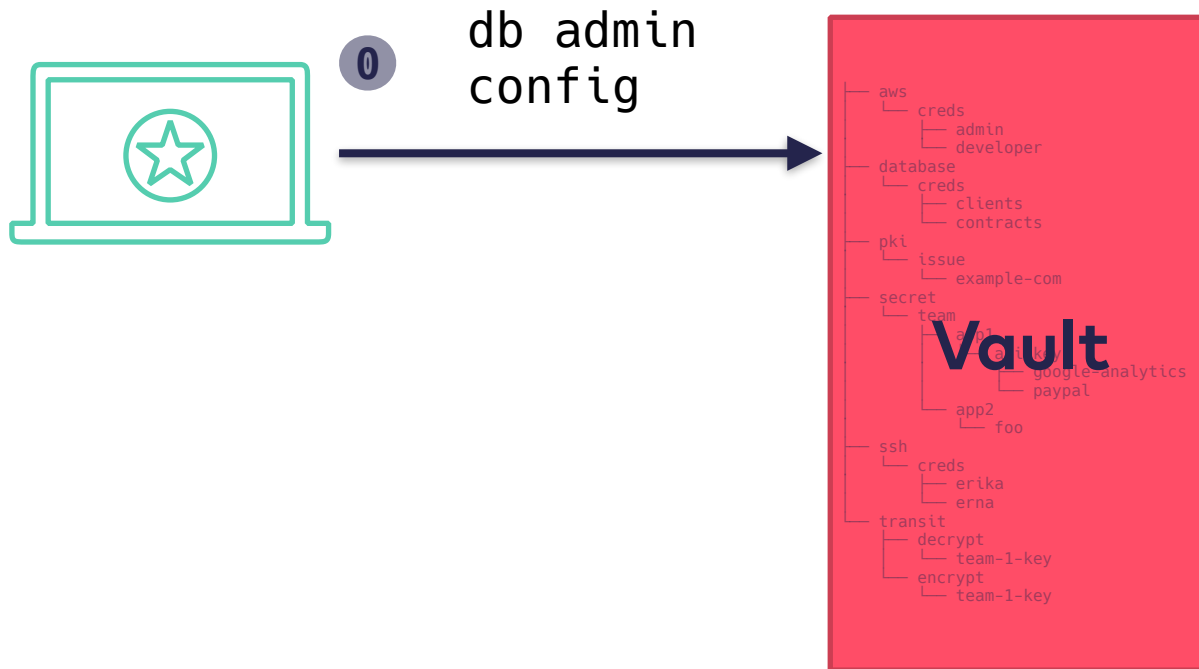
- 1. provide Vault credentials for a user that has rights to create users or tokens in a remote system (e.g. db)**
- 2. configure Vault with settings on how to create credentials**
- 3. configure Vault with settings on how to invalidate credentials in the remote system**

# Vault secret backends — Databases

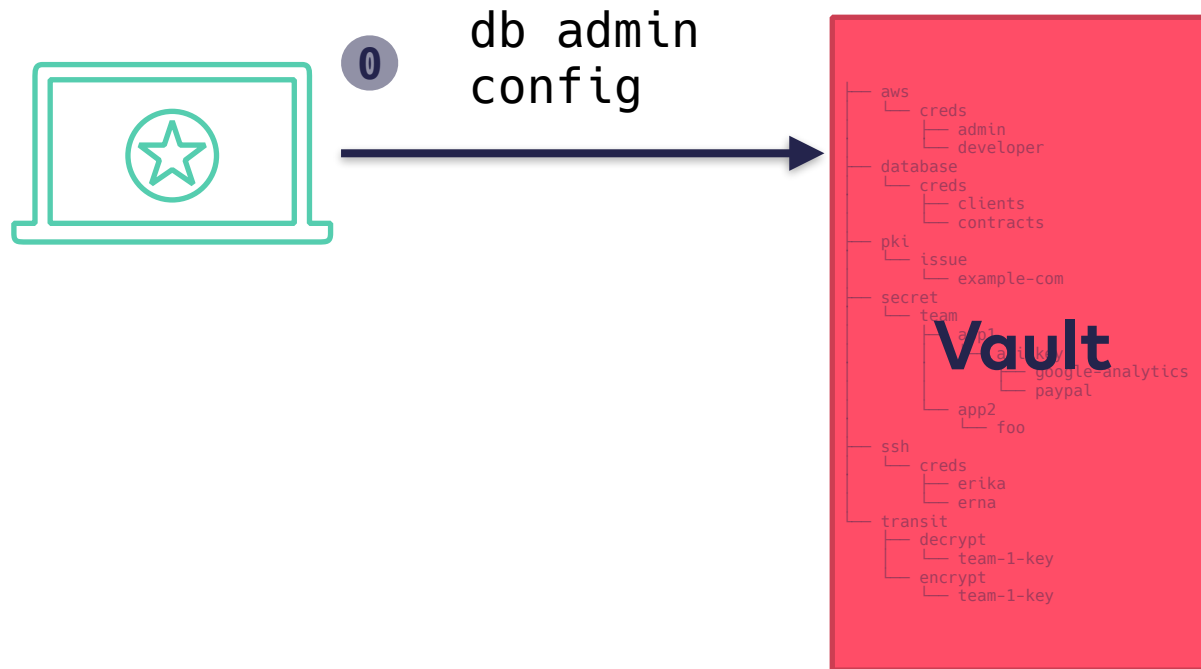
# Vault secret backends — Databases

- **Idea: get access to databases**
- **Vault gets configured with credentials for a database user that has necessary permissions on the database**
- **Vault gets a policy that maps users and roles to users with configured permissions in the database**
- **when user requests credentials, Vault creates a new database user on the fly**
- **when configured (usually the case), all created users have a ttl assigned — when the ttl is reached, Vault deletes the user from the database**

# Vault secret backends – Databases



# Vault secret backends – Databases

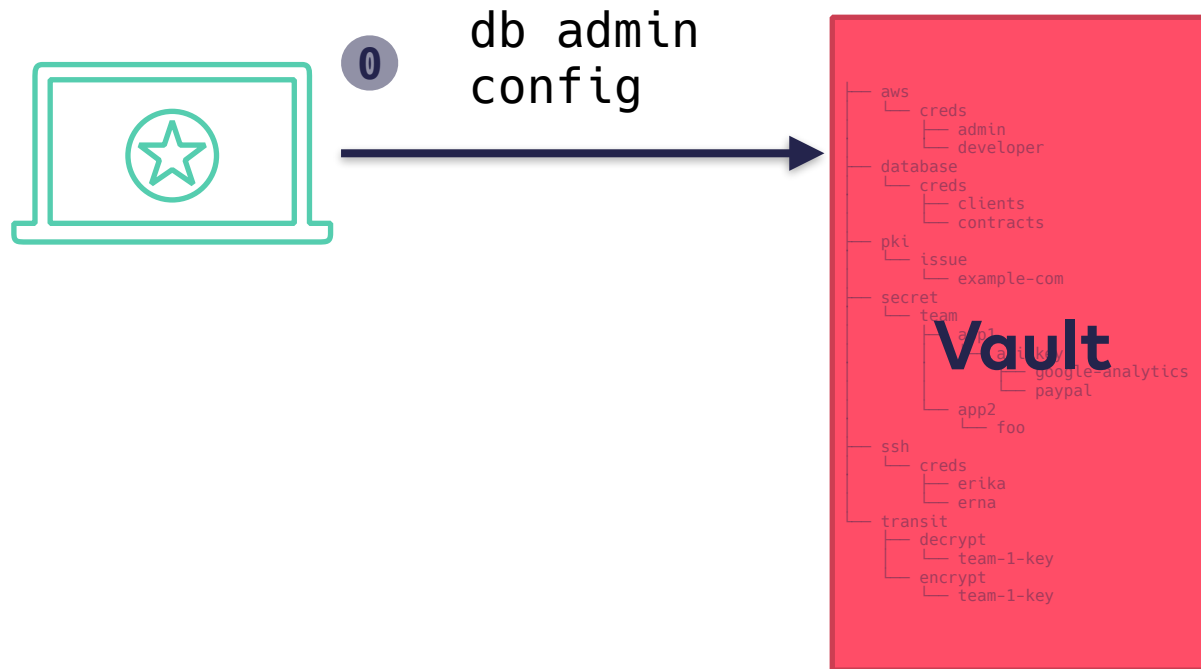


```
vault secrets enable -path=db database
```

```
vault write db/config/clients \  
  plugin_name=mysql-database-plugin \  
  connection_url="admin:pw@tcp(db.example.com)/" \  
  allowed_roles="clients-ro,clients-rw"
```

```
vault write database/roles/clients-ro \  
  db_name=clients \  
  creation_statements="\  
    CREATE USER '{{name}}'@'%' IDENTIFIED BY \  
    '{{password}}'; \  
    GRANT SELECT ON clients.* TO '{{name}}'@'%;" \  
  default_ttl="1h" \  
  max_ttl="240h"
```

# Vault secret backends – Databases

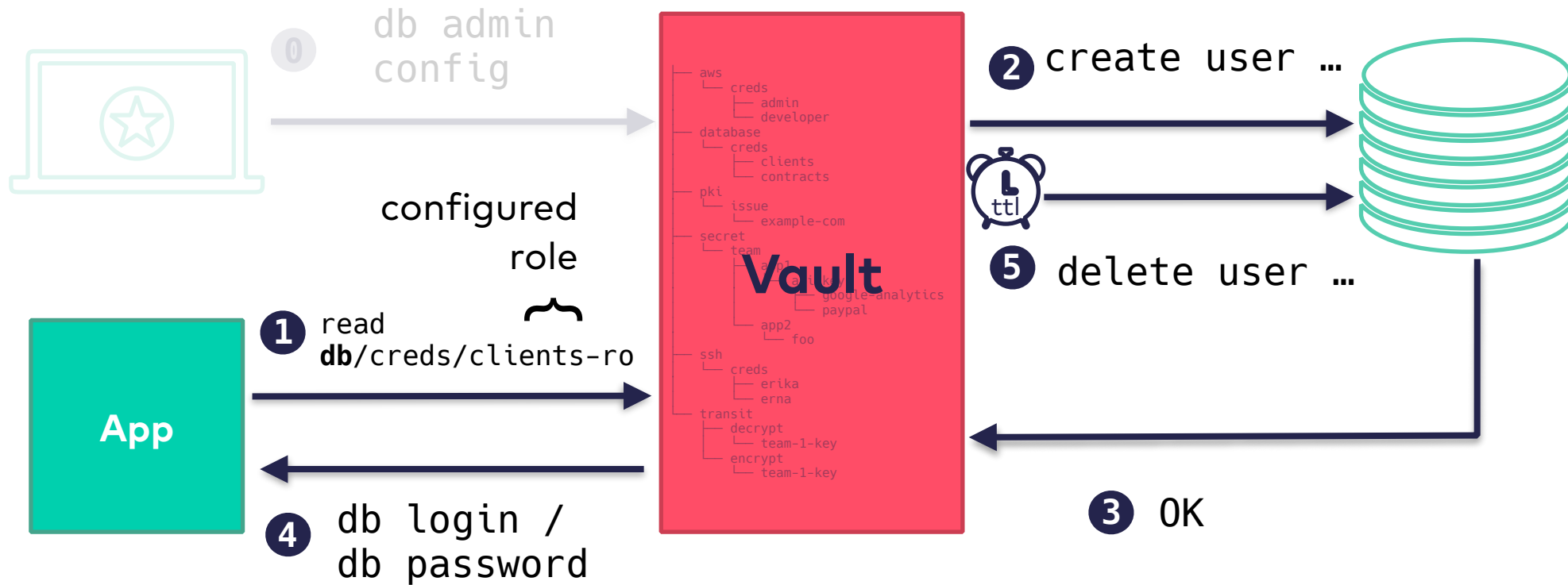


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vault write database/roles/clients-ro \  
  db_name=clients \  
  creation_statements="\  
    CREATE USER '{{name}}'@'%' IDENTIFIED BY \  
    '{{password}}'; \  
    GRANT SELECT ON clients.* TO '{{name}}'@'%;" \  
  default_ttl="1h" \  
  max_ttl="240h"
```

# Vault secret backends – Databases





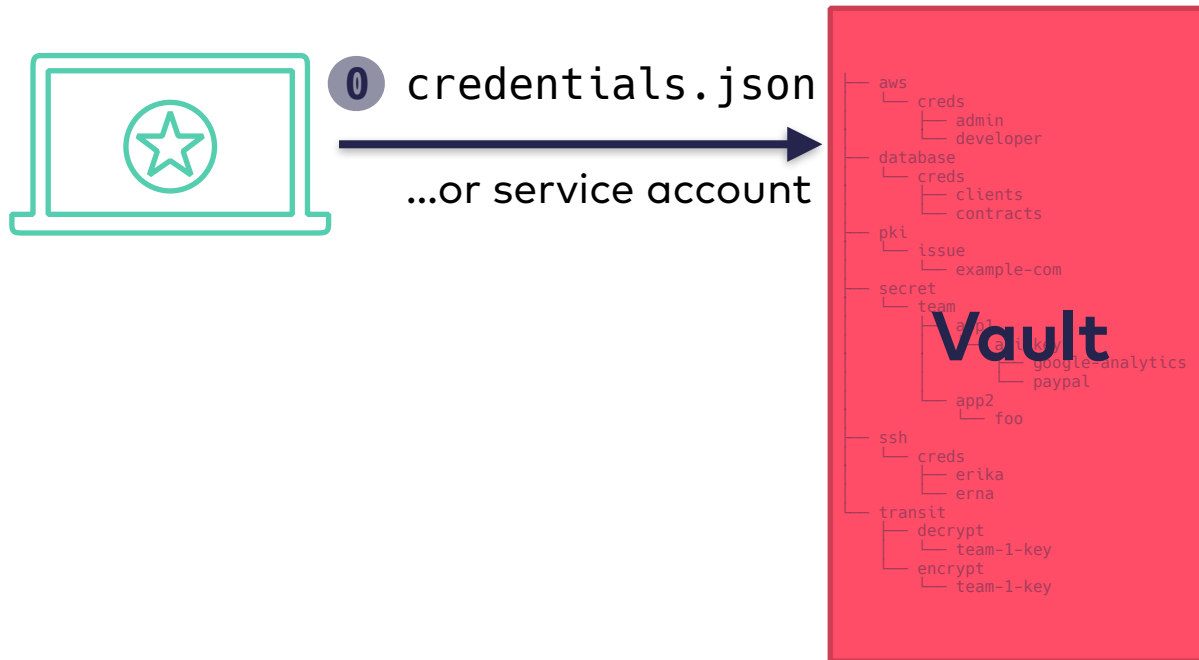
# Vault secret backends – Databases

## Available Plugins:

- **Cassandra**
- **HanaDB**
- **MongoDB**
- **MSSQL**
- **MySQL/MariaDB**
- **PostgreSQL**
- **Oracle**

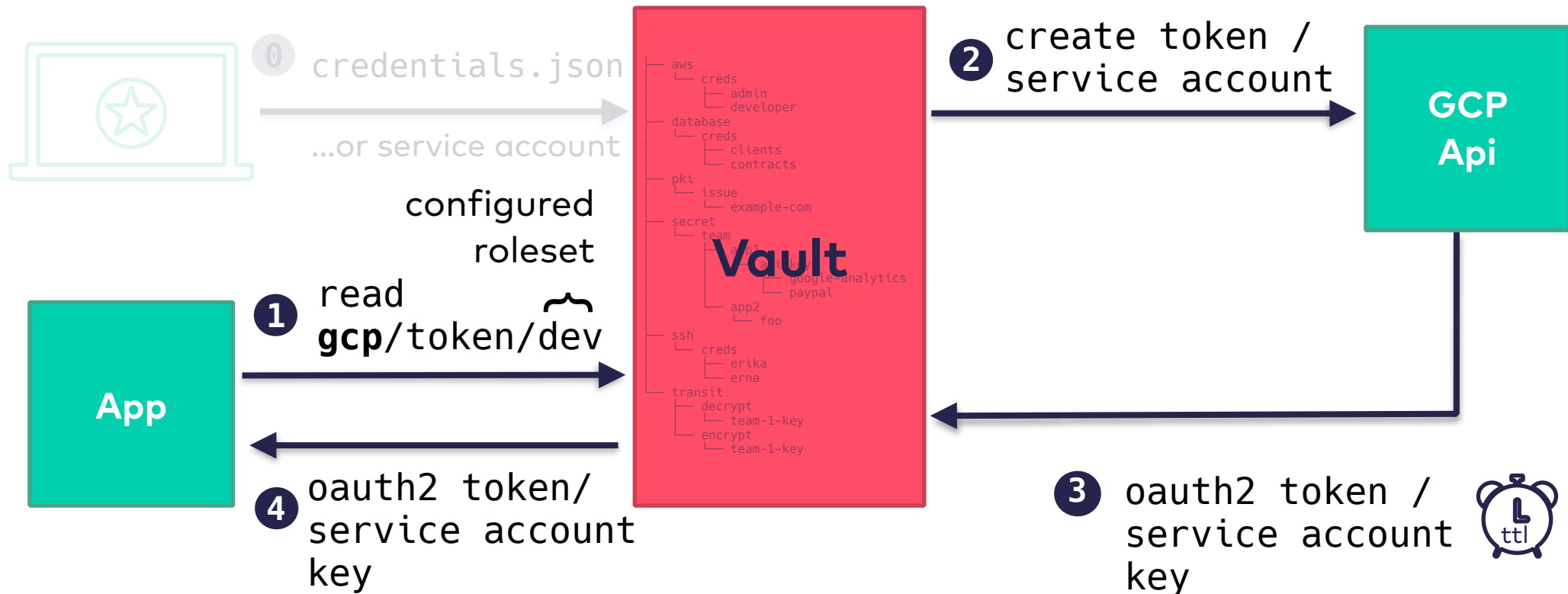
# Vault secret backends — Google Cloud

# Vault secret backends — Google Cloud



define rolesets to generate  
oauth2 access tokens (preferred)  
or Service Accounts

# Vault secret backends – Google Cloud

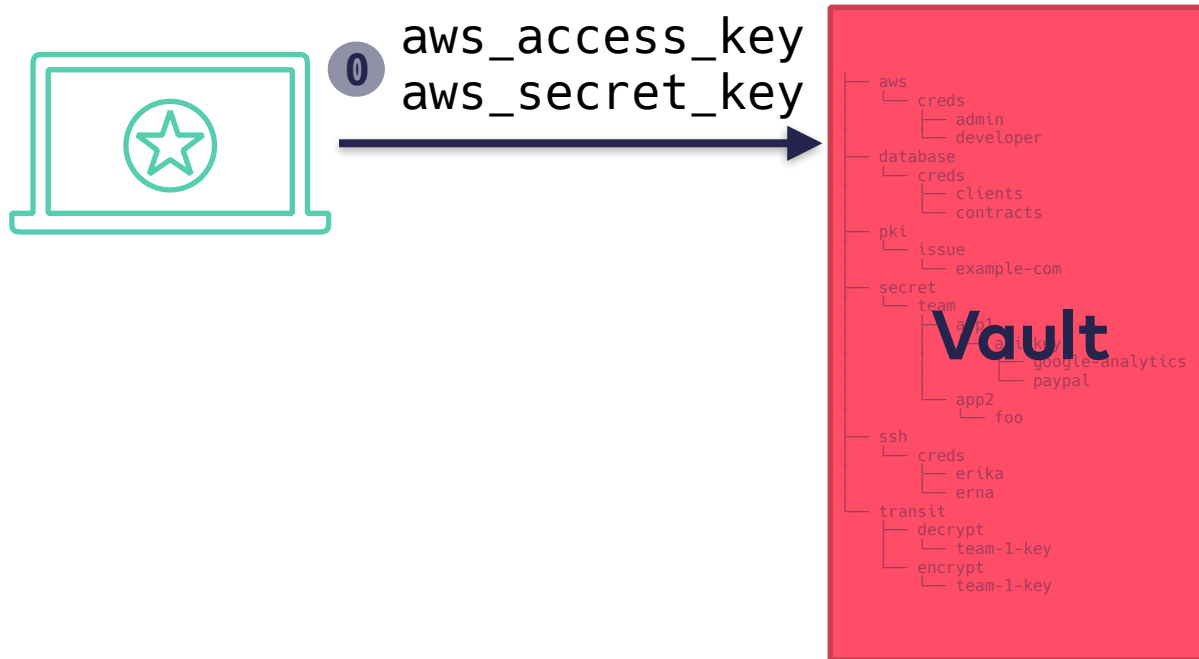


# Vault secret backends — AWS

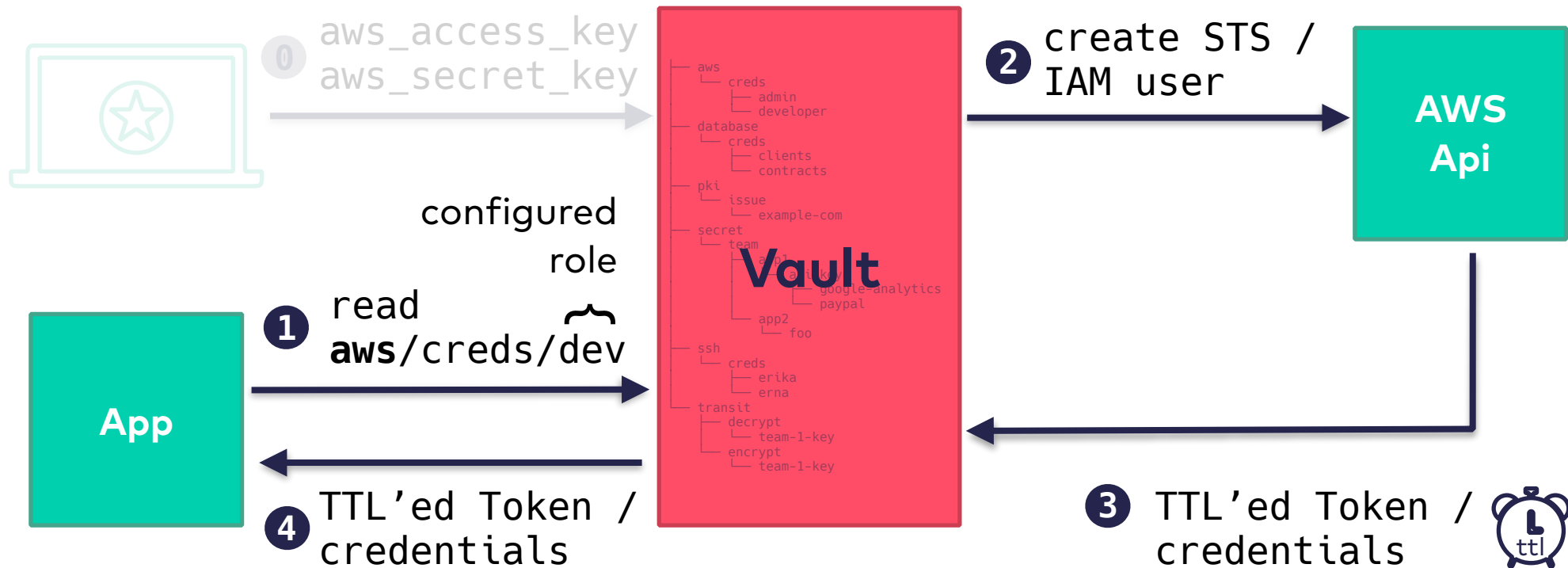
# Vault secret backends – AWS

- **Idea: get access to AWS resources**
- **Vault gets configured with an AWS user that has necessary permissions**
- **Vault gets a policy that maps users or roles to AWS roles**
- **when user requests credentials, Vault creates STS tokens, assume role tokens or dynamic IAM users**
- **when configured (usually the case), all created secrets have a ttl assigned**

# Vault secret backends – AWS



# Vault secret backends – AWS



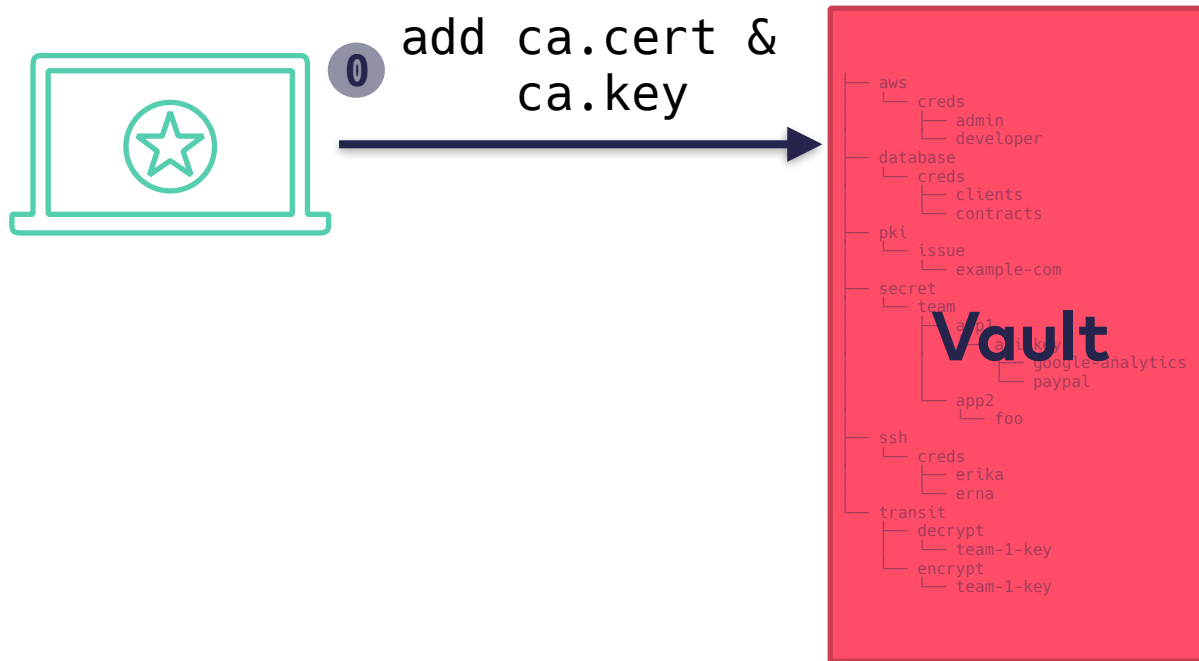


# Vault secret backends — PKI

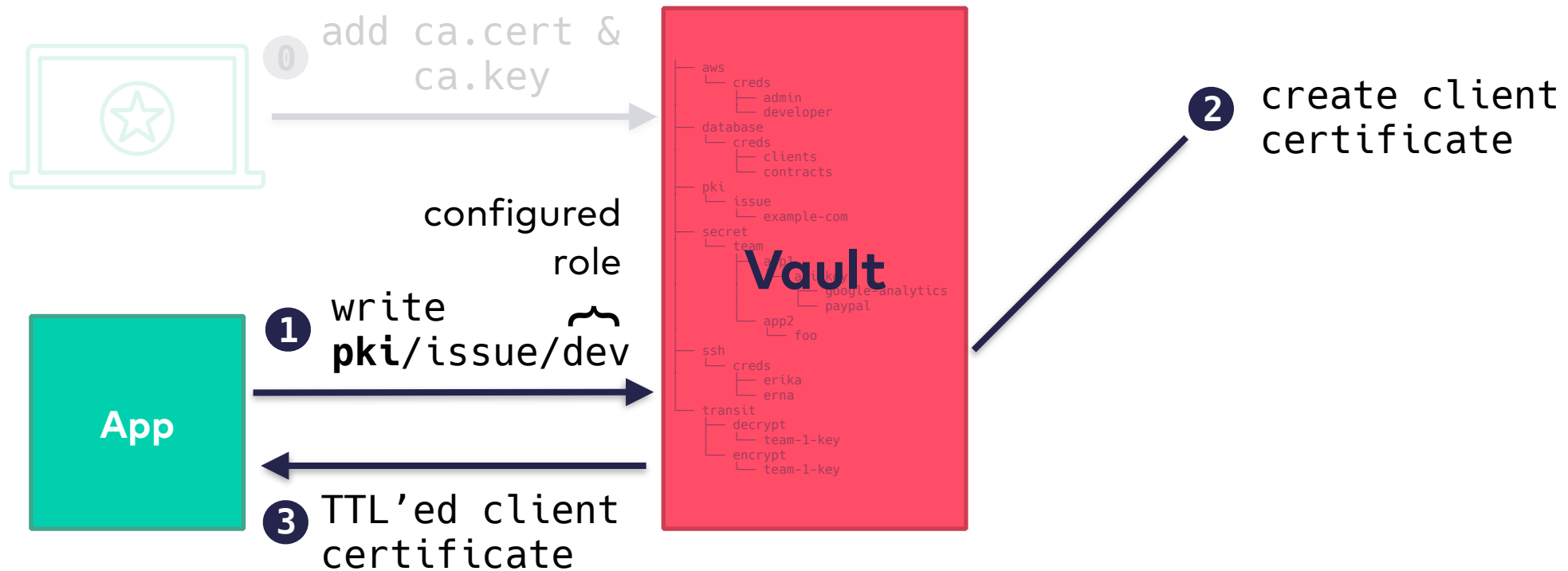
# Vault secret backends — PKI

- **Idea: issue client certificates on the fly**
- **Vault gets configured a CA Certificate and a private key**
- **Vault gets a configuration about how certificates for this CA should be issues (ttl, subject, etc.)**
- **when user requests credentials, Vault issues a certificate on the fly**
- **when configured (usually the case), all created certificates have a ttl assigned**

# Vault secret backends — PKI



# Vault secret backends – PKI



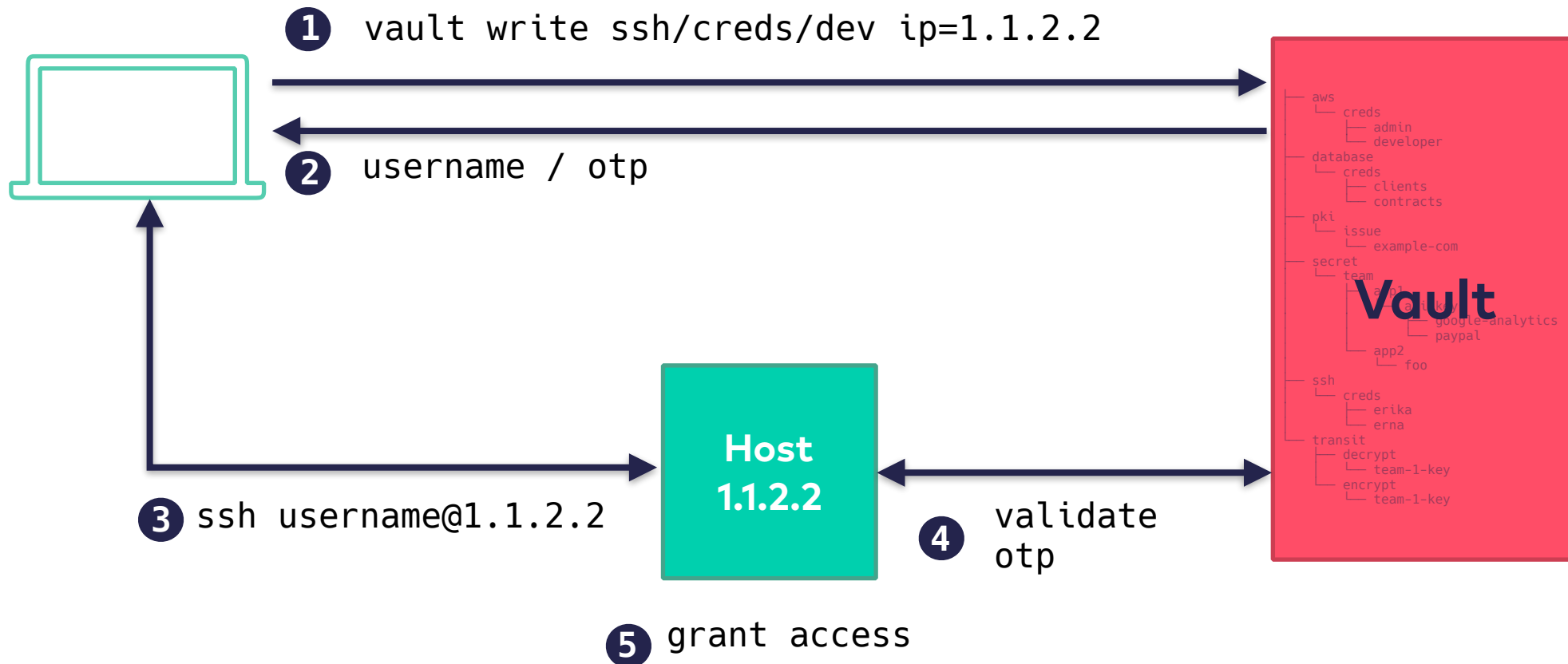
# Vault secret backends — SSH

# Vault dynamic secret backends — ssh

## One-Time SSH Passwords

- **Idea: get ssh access to machines**
- **every host in the system has a small Vault-helper process running**
- **user fetches a one time password from Vault**
- **when authenticating via ssh, the Vault-helper checks, whether the one time password is valid and deletes it**

# Vault secret backends – SSH



# **Vault dynamic secret backends — ssh**

## **Signed SSH Certificates**

- **Idea: get ssh access to machines**
- **user configures Vault-ssh with a CA, a private and a public key**
- **the public key gets distributed to all system hosts**
- **the user asks Vault to sign one of his public ssh keys with the provided CA and gets a new, signed public key as a response**
- **the user can use this new, signed key to login to machines**

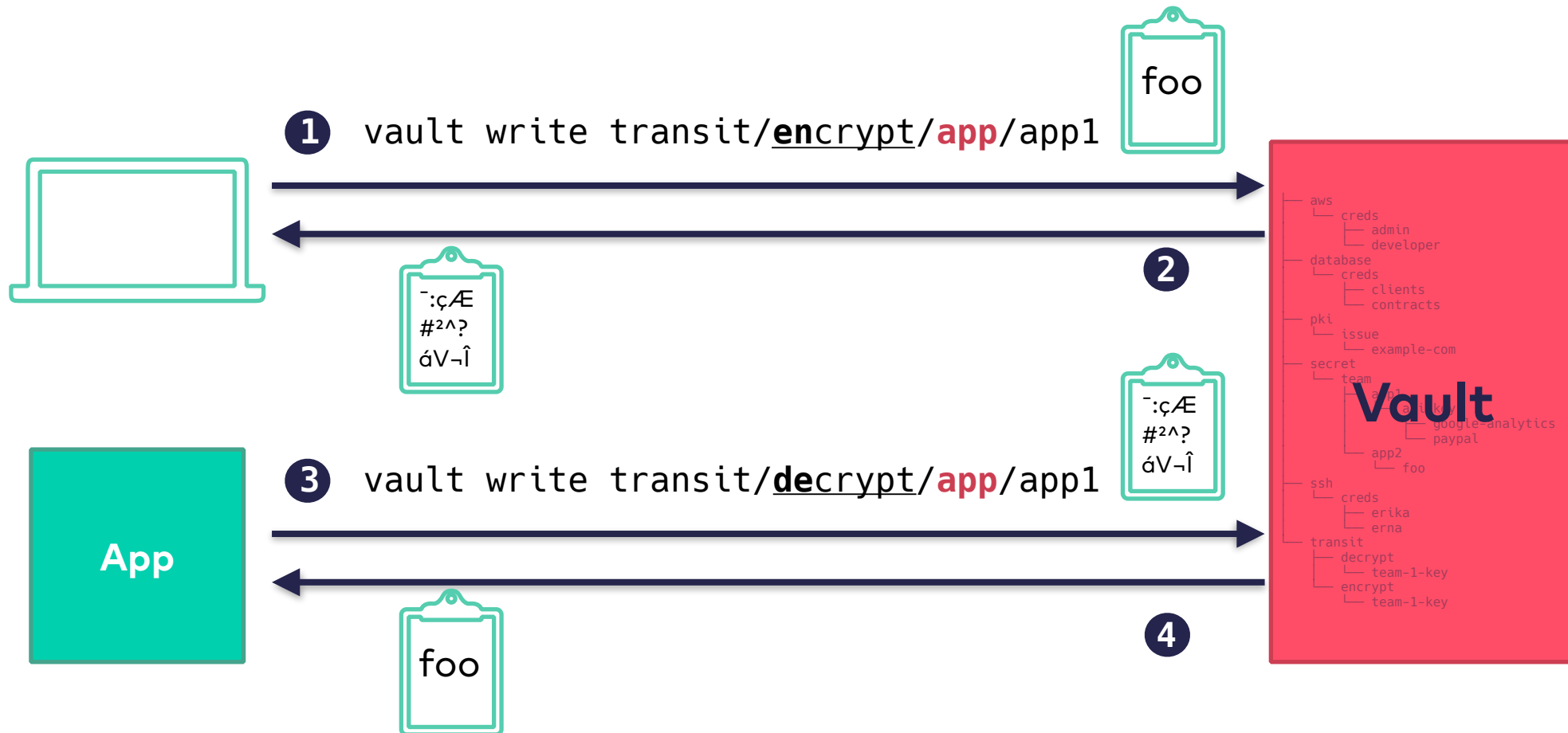


# Vault dynamic secret backends — Transit

# Vault dynamic secret backends — Transit

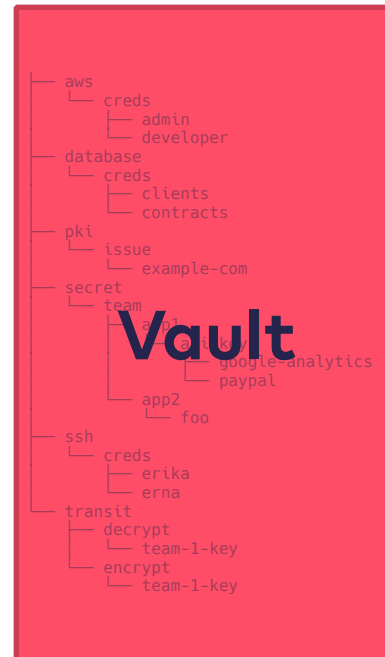
- **Idea: de- and encrypt data without handling private keys**
- **User creates a new transit path in Vault**
- **Users can encrypt data by writing the data to this transit path (e.g. `transit/encrypt/my-keys/foo`)**
- **Users with sufficient permissions can decrypt data by writing to the respective transit path (e.g. `transit/decrypt/my-keys/foo`)**
- **the private key never leaves Vault**
- **the data is not stored on Vault (hence the name transit)**

# Vault secret backends – Transit



# Vault secret backends

- Tokens
- LDAP
- AWS
- Kubernetes
- Google Cloud
- Username & Password
- AppRole
- GitHub
- MFA
- Okta
- RADIUS
- TLS Certificates

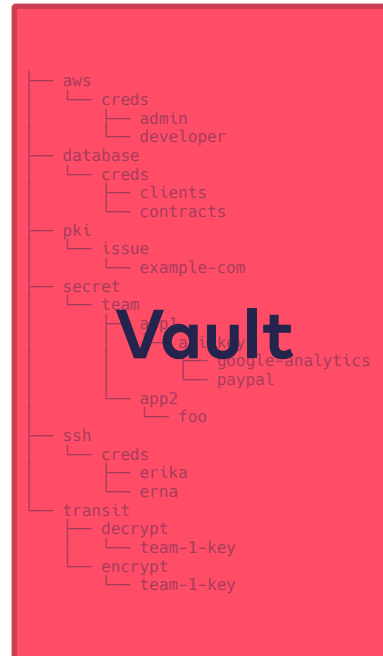


- **AWS**
- **Consul**
- **Cubbyhole**
- **Databases**
- **Identity**
- **Static secrets (Key /Value)**
- **Nomad**
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# Vault — auth backends

# Vault auth backends

- Tokens
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# Vault auth backends — tokens

# token auth

- **created by Vault**
- **only way to authorize (auth-z) against Vault**
- **returned when authenticated (auth-n) successfully**
- **comparable to a session-id on a website**
- **has permissions / policies assigned to it**



# token auth

```
$ vault token create -ttl=5m -policy=admin
```

Key	Value
---	-----
token	d9640590-63c8-b3a6-50ac-1403c8180948
token_accessor	5a362982-f34c-3706-143a-26ada278b6cf
token_duration	5m
token_renewable	true
token_policies	[admin default]

# Vault auth backends — userpass

# userpass auth

- **statically created by users and stored in Vault**

```
$ vault auth enable userpass
```

```
$ vault write auth/userpass/users/kesselborn \  
password=foo policies=admin
```

```
$ vault login -method=userpass username=kesselborn
```

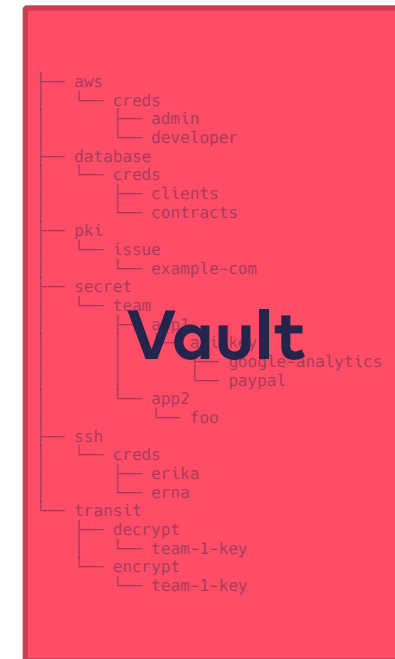
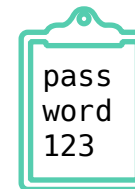
Key	Value
---	-----
token	d9640590-63c8-b3a6-50ac-1403c8180948
. . .	
token_duration	5m
token_policies	[admin default]

# Vault auth backends – userpass

- setup username / password

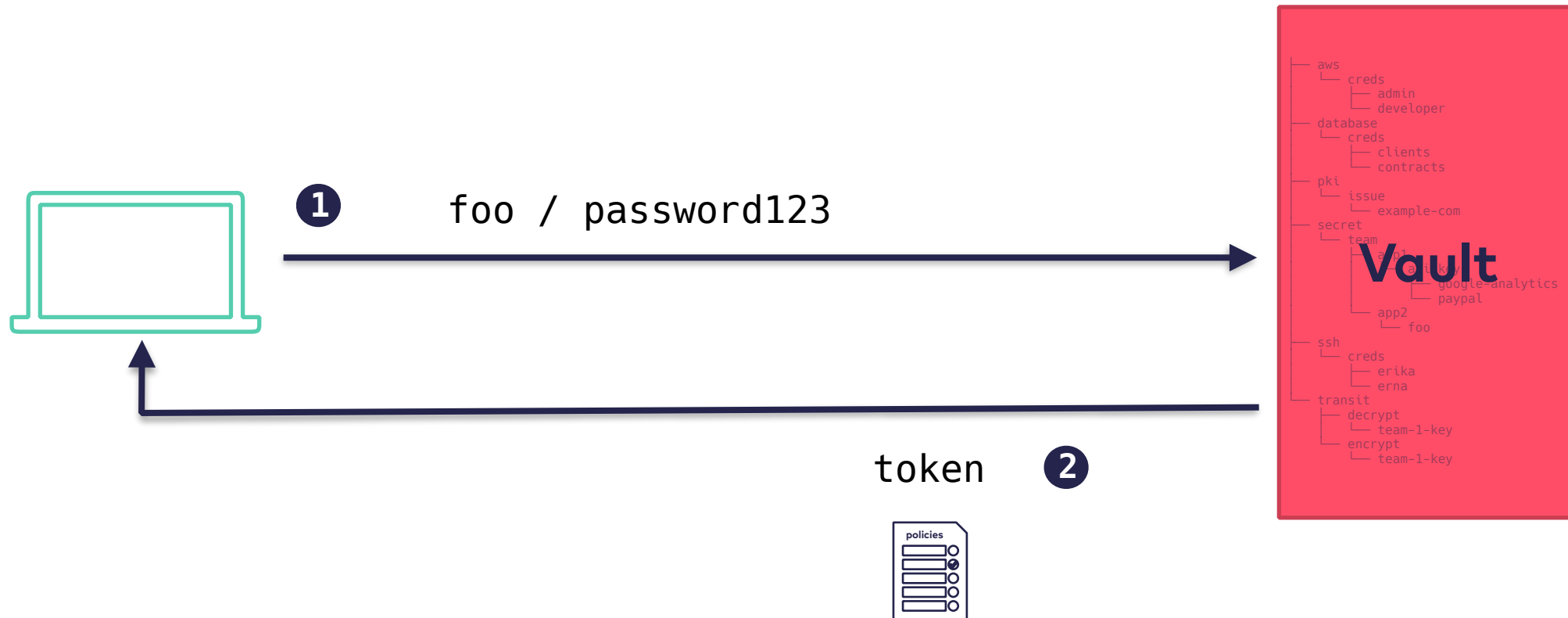


1 vault write /auth/userpass/users/foo



# Vault auth backends – userpass

- authenticate with a username & password



# Vault auth backends — TLS certificates

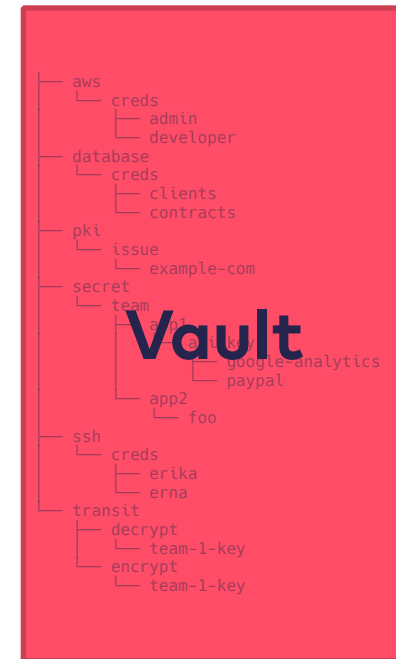
# Vault auth backends – TLS certificates

- setup TLS certificate authentication



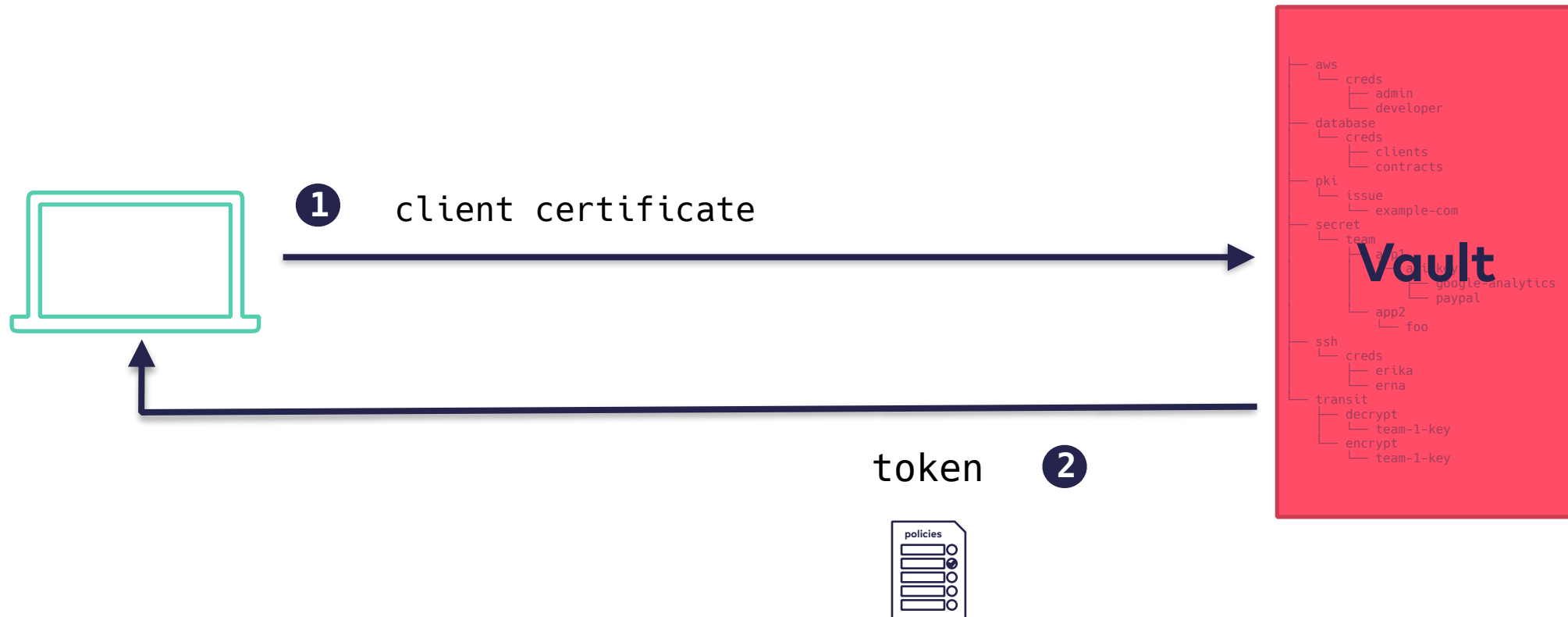
1

```
vault write auth/cert/certs/web \  
...  
certificate=@web-cert.pem
```



# Vault auth backends – TLS certificates

- authenticate with a TLS client certificate

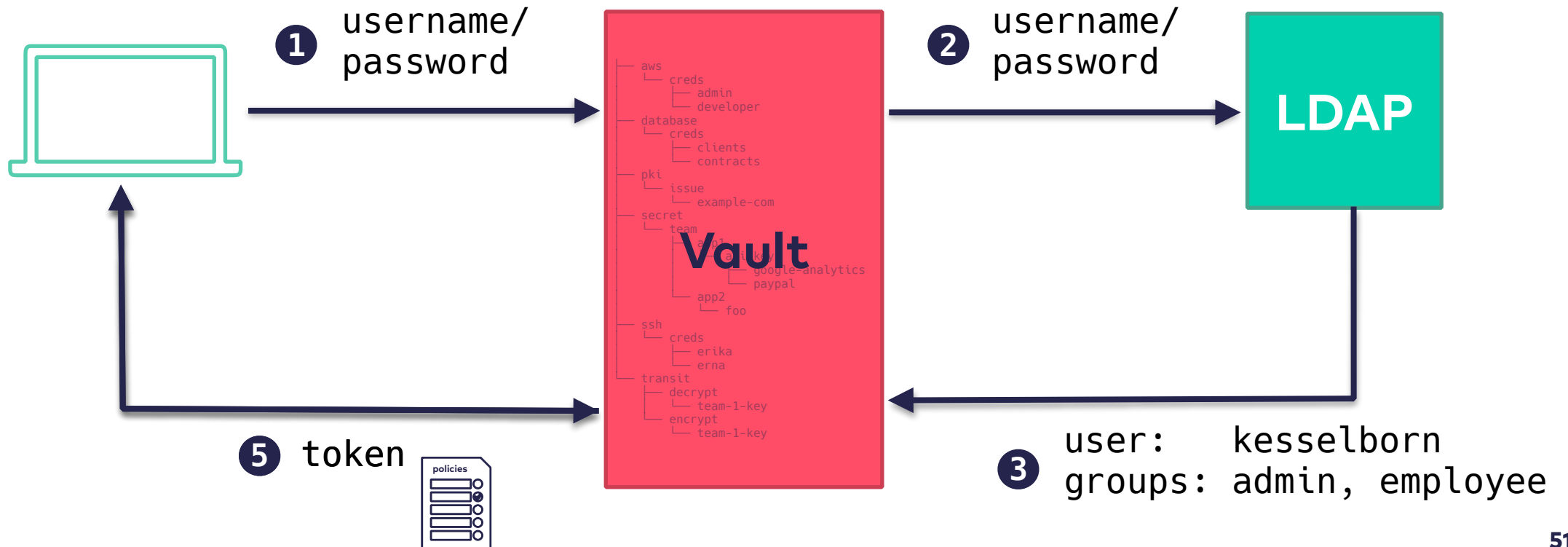




# Vault auth backends — external identity providers

# Vault auth backends – LDAP / Radius / Okta auth

- `$SERVICE` is used as an identity provider (using LDAP here)



# LDAP auth

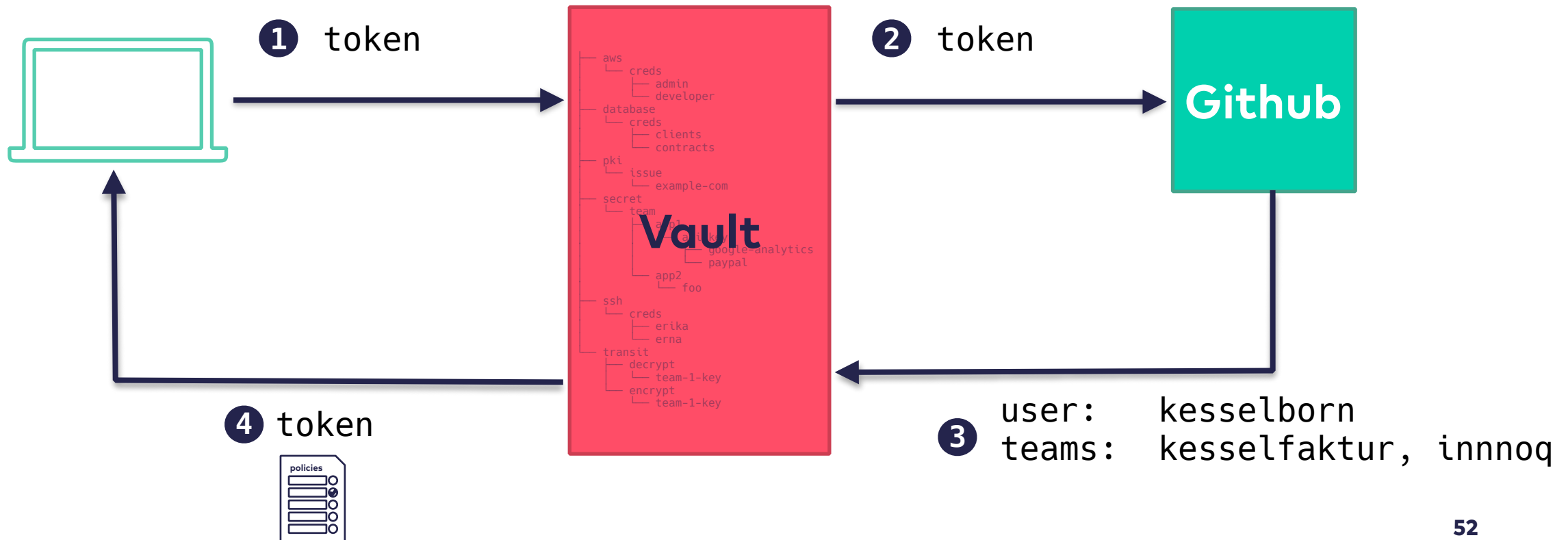
```
$ vault write auth/ldap/config \  
  url="ldaps://ldap.example.com" \  
  userattr="uid" \  
  userdn="ou=People,dc=innoq,dc=com" \  
  binddn="cn=vaultuser,dc=example,dc=com" \  
  bindpass="3cK{hrh7hi/Hj" \  
  groupdn="ou=Group,dc=example,dc=com" \  
  starttls=true
```

```
$ vault write auth/ldap/groups/employee policies=employee
```

```
$ vault write auth/ldap/users/kesselborn policies=admin
```

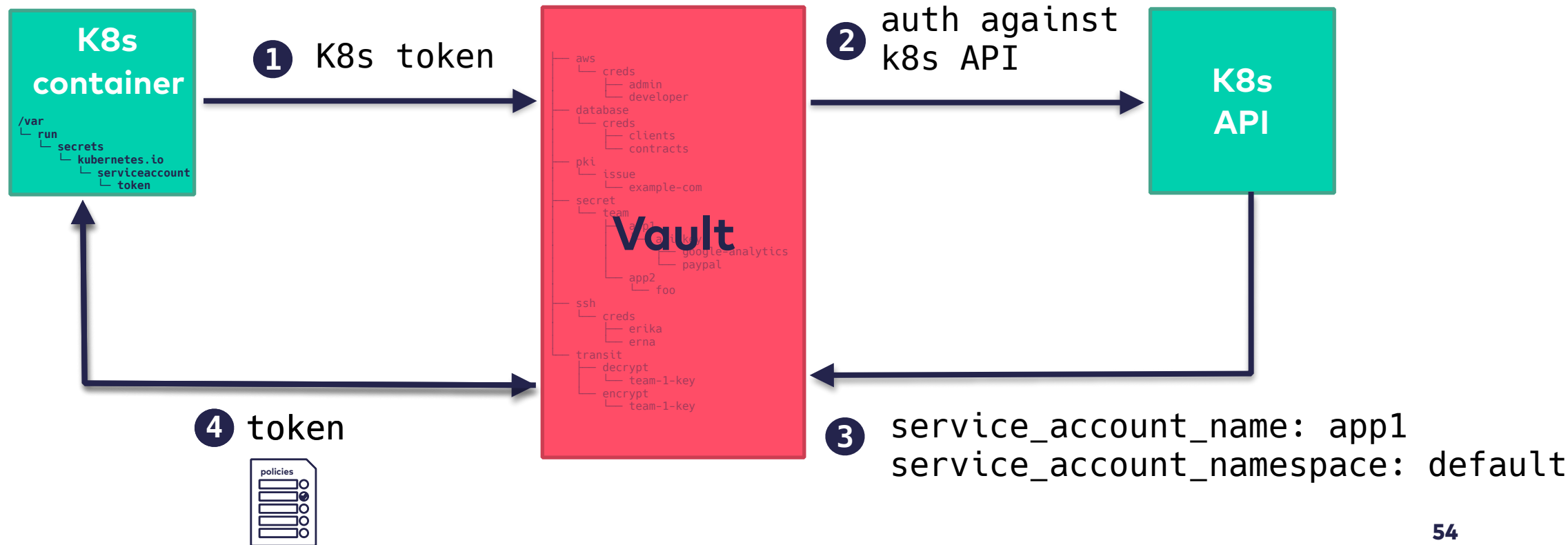
# Github auth

- Github is used as an identity provider

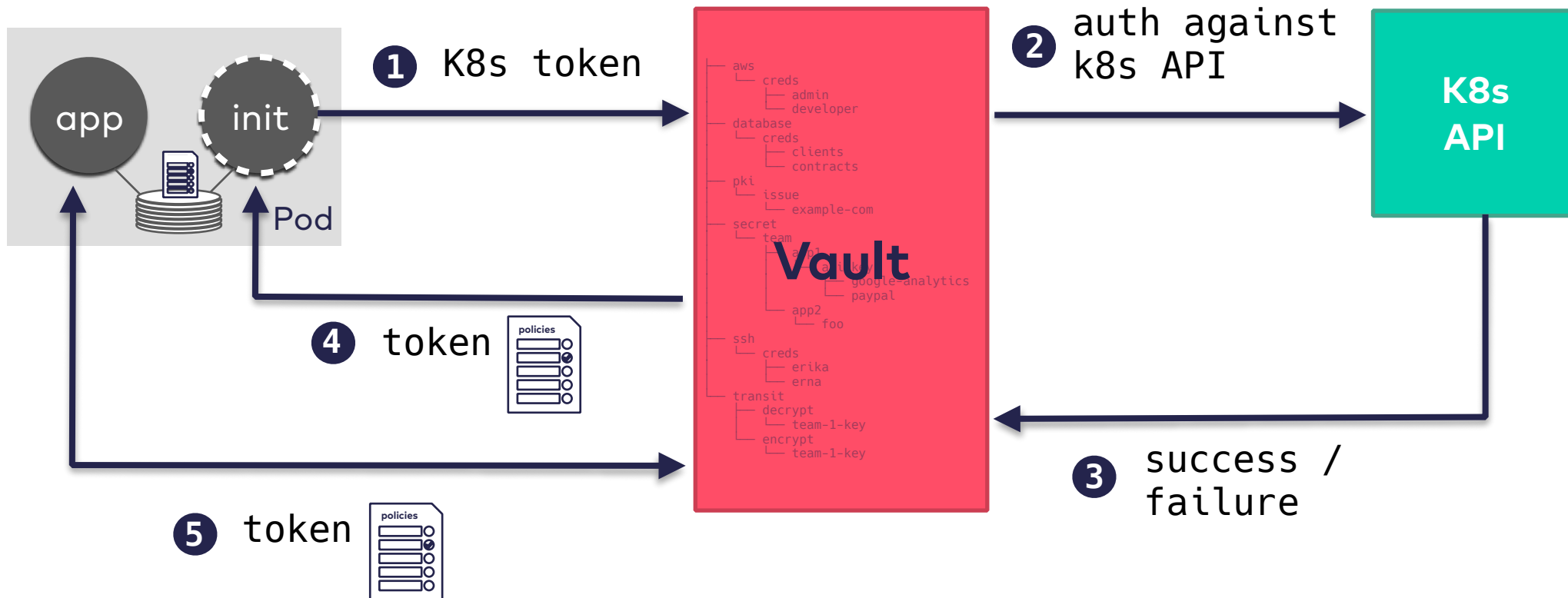


# Vault auth backends — Kubernetes auth

# Vault auth backends – Kubernetes auth



# Vault auth backends – Kubernetes auth



# Vault auth backends — Kubernetes auth

```
$ vault auth enable kubernetes
```

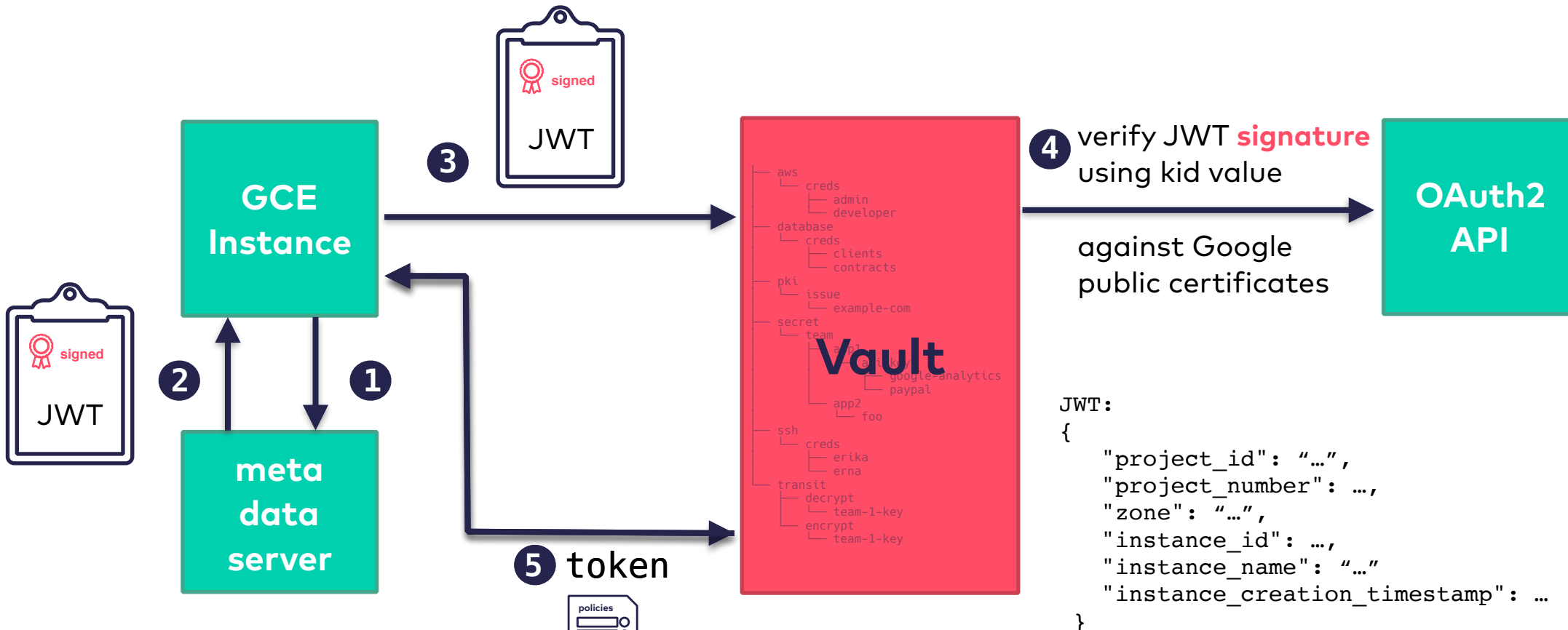
```
$ vault write auth/kubernetes/config \  
  kubernetes_host="https://api.k8s.example.com" \  
  kubernetes_ca_cert="@ca.crt"
```

```
$ vault write auth/kubernetes/role/demo \  
  bound_service_account_names=vault-auth \  
  bound_service_account_namespaces=default \  
  policies=default \  
  ttl=1h
```



# Vault auth backends — GCE auth

# Vault auth backends – GCE auth



```
JWT:
{
  "project_id": "...",
  "project_number": ...,
  "zone": "...",
  "instance_id": ...,
  "instance_name": "...",
  "instance_creation_timestamp": ...
}
```

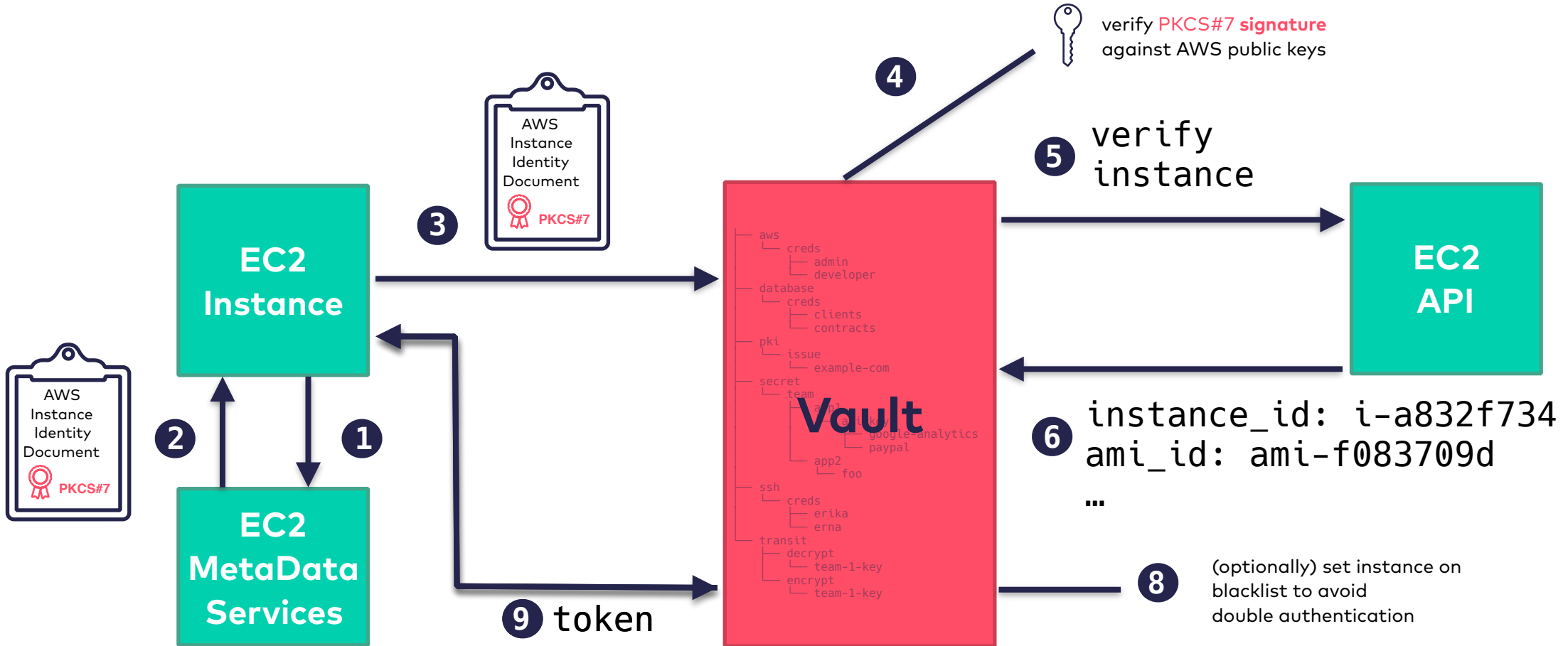
```
curl -H "Metadata-Flavor: Google" \
'http://metadata/computeMetadata/v1/instance/service-accounts/default/identity?audience=[AUDIENCE]&format=[FORMAT]'
```

# Vault auth backends — AWS auth

# Vault auth backends – AWS auth

- Vault checks passed in data was encrypted with a AWS private key
- can be limited to instances which have a specific instance role applied
- can be limited (and usually is) to allow one authentication per ec2 instance only
- after authentication, roles and policies are mapped as usual

# Vault auth backends – AWS auth



```
curl -s http://169.254.169.254/latest/dynamic/instance-identity/pkcs7
```

# Vault auth backends – AWS auth

```
$ vault write auth/aws/role/dev-role \  
  auth_type=ec2 \  
  bound_ami_id=ami-fce3c696 \  
  policies=prod,dev max_ttl=500h
```

```
$ vault write auth/aws/role/dev-role-iam \  
  auth_type=iam \  
  bound_iam_instance_profile_arn=... \  
  policies=prod,dev max_ttl=500h
```

# Vault auth backends – AWS auth

- alternatively: IAM auth method
- client signs a `GetCallerIdentity` query using the AWS Signature v4 algorithm and submits 4 pieces of information to the Vault server to recreate a valid signed request
- <https://www.vaultproject.io/docs/auth/aws.html#iam-auth-method>

# Vault auth backends — AppRole

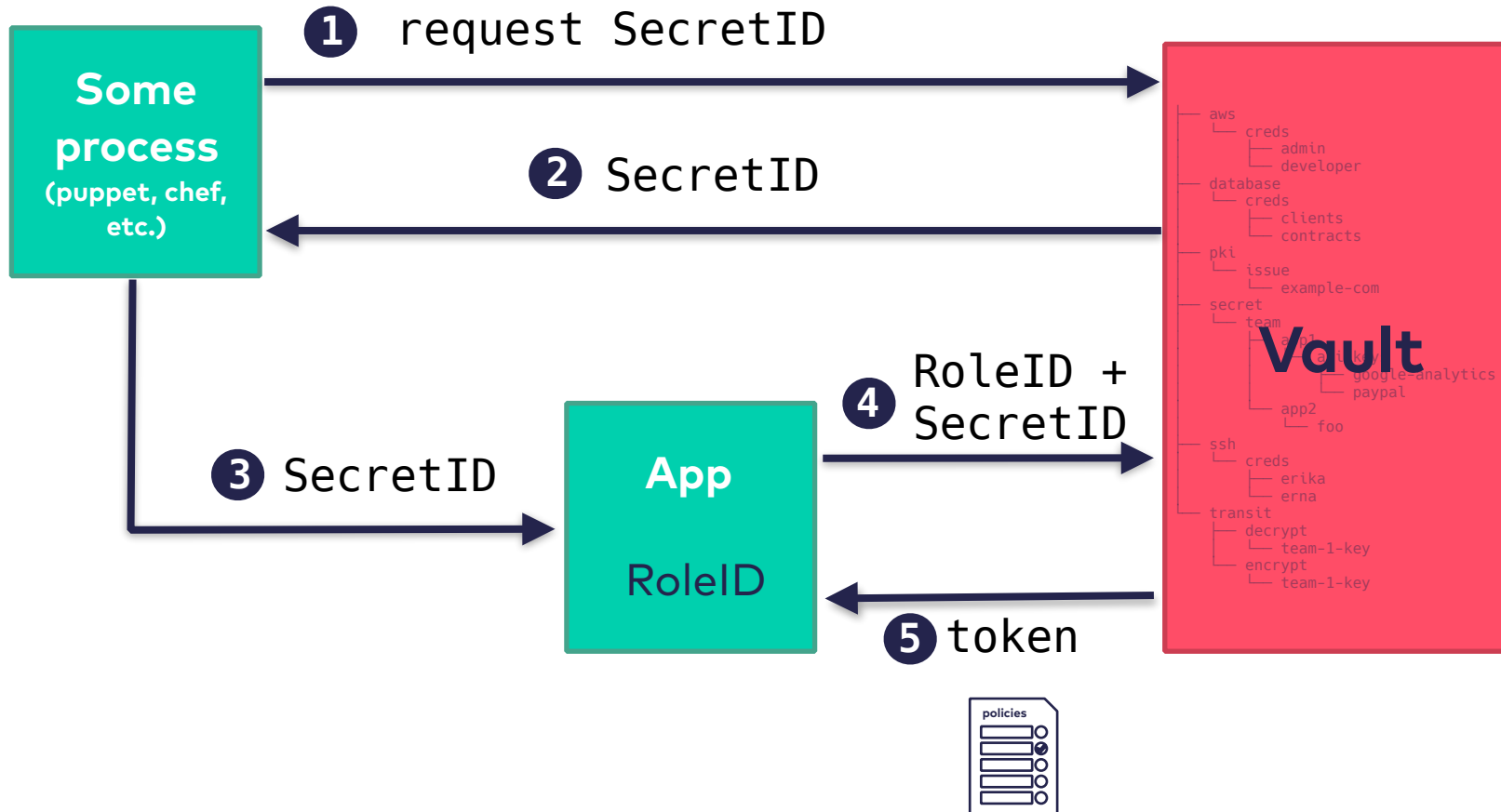


# Vault auth backends – AppRole

- a generic approach to authenticate machines or applications
- an AppRole can be created for a particular machine, a particular user on that machine, or a service spread across machines
- for authenticating, two values are needed
  - RoleID: static, can live with an app or on a machine)
  - SecretID: gets created on the fly before authenticating

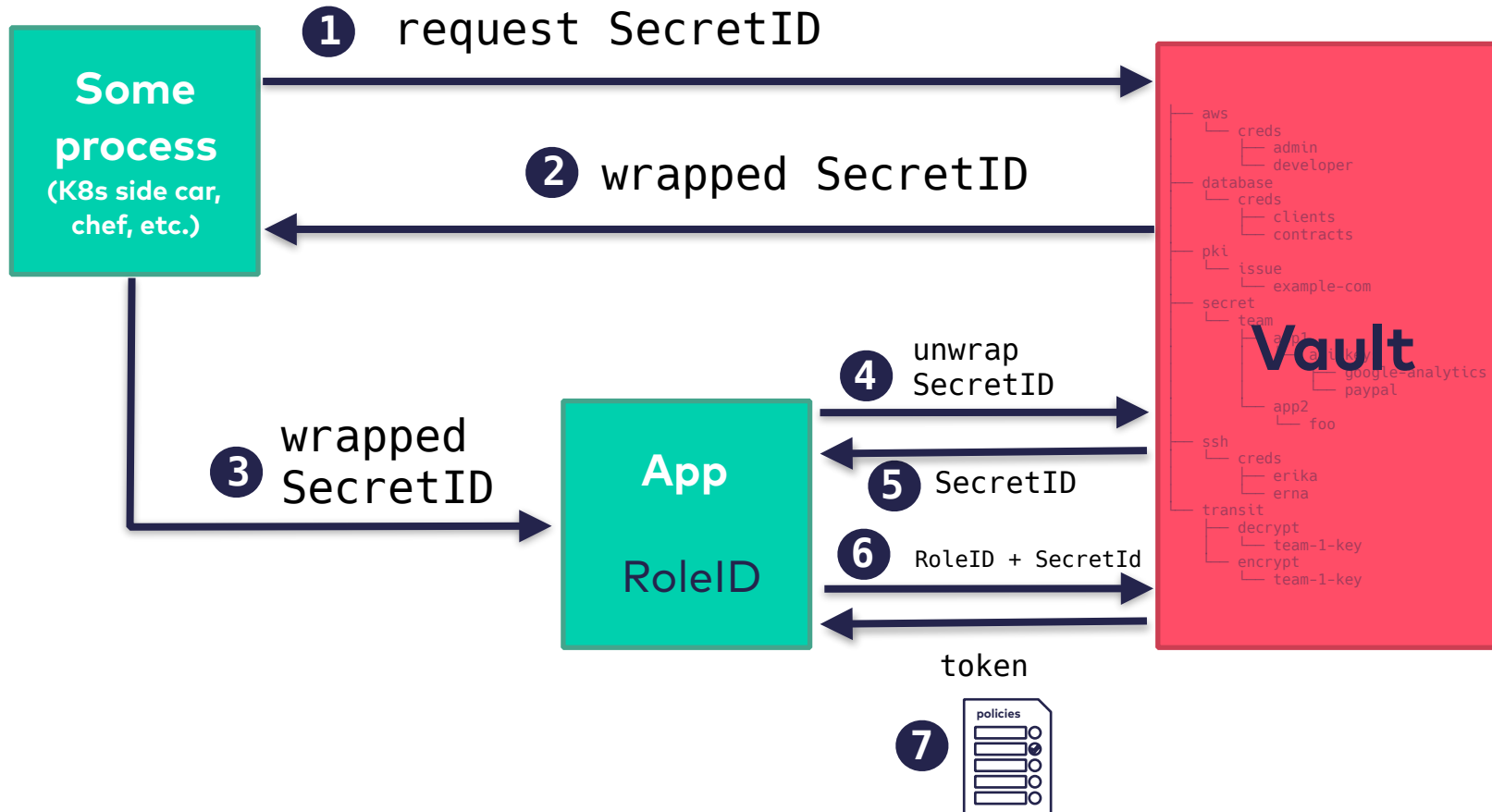
# Vault auth backends – AppRole

- mainly used for machines or apps to authenticate against Vault



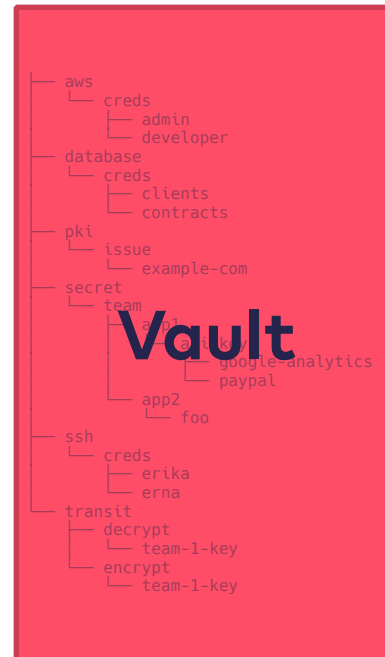
# Vault auth backends – AppRole

- mainly used for machines or apps to authenticate against Vault



# Vault auth backends

- Tokens
- LDAP
- AWS
- Kubernetes
- Google Cloud
- Username & Password
- AppRole
- GitHub
- MFA
- Okta
- RADIUS
- TLS Certificates

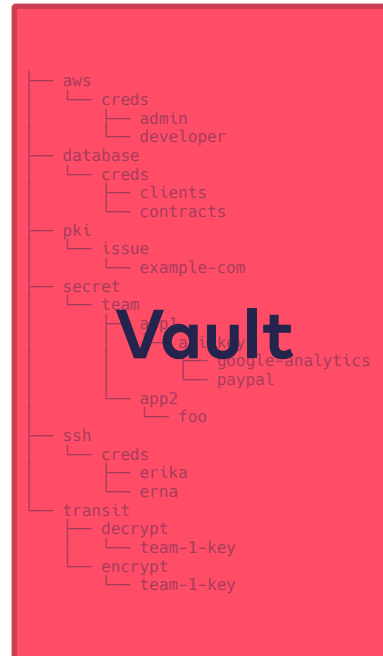


- AWS
- Consul
- Cubbyhole
- Databases
- Identity
- Static secrets (Key /Value)
- Nomad
- PKI (Certificates)
- RabbitMQ
- SSH
- TOTP
- Transit

# Use whatever the auth you want

# Vault

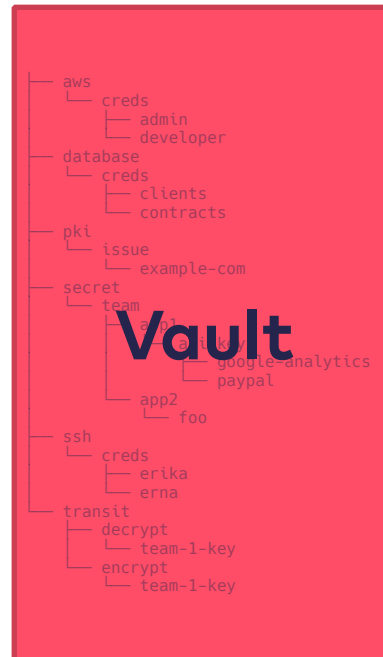
- Tokens
- **LDAP**
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- **AWS**
- Consul
- Cubbyhole
- **Databases**
- Identity
- Static secrets (Key /Value)
- Nomad
- **PKI -> Kubernetes access**
- RabbitMQ
- **SSH**
- TOTP
- Transit

# Vault

- Tokens
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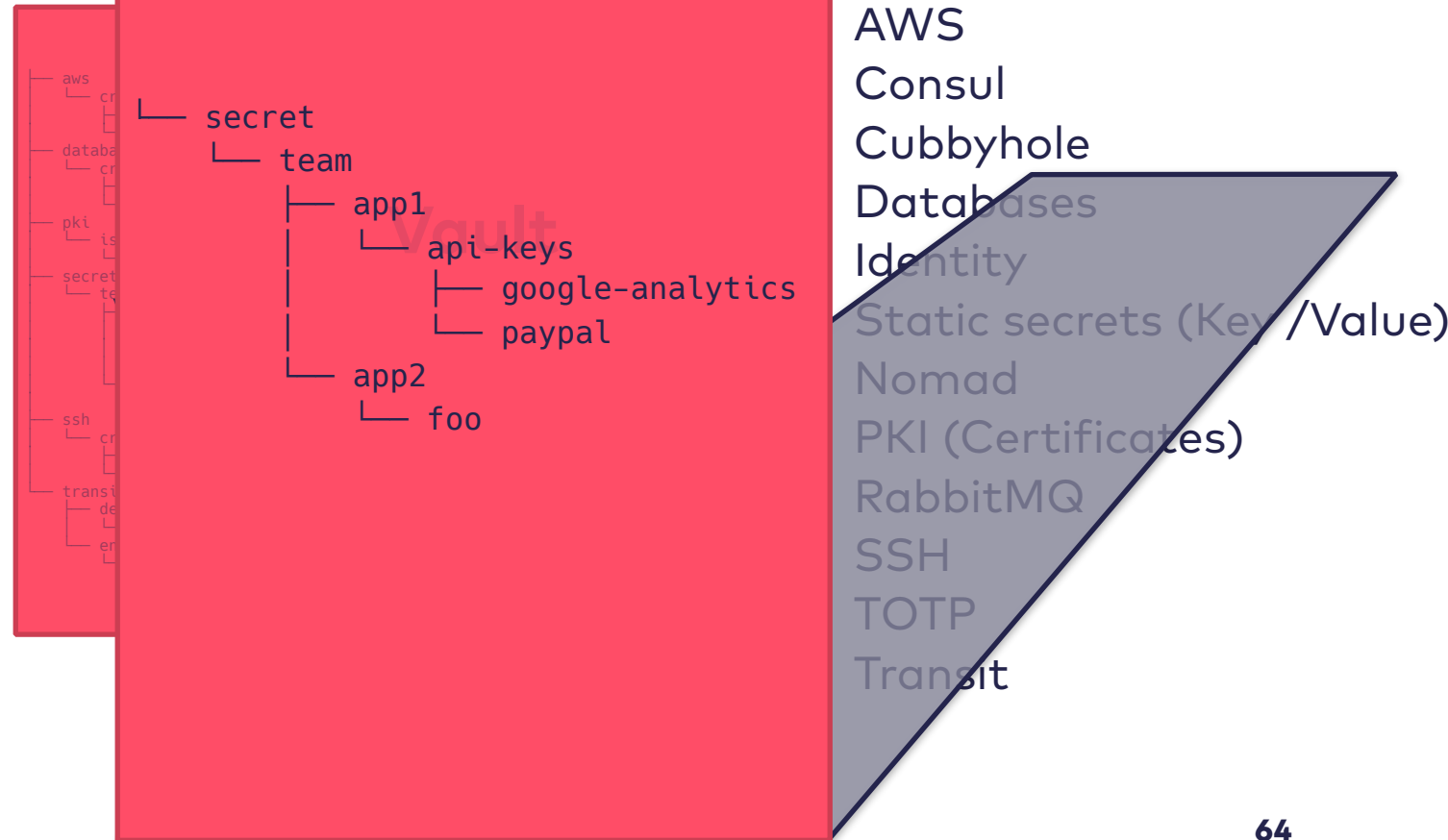
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- **Databases**
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# Vault — policies

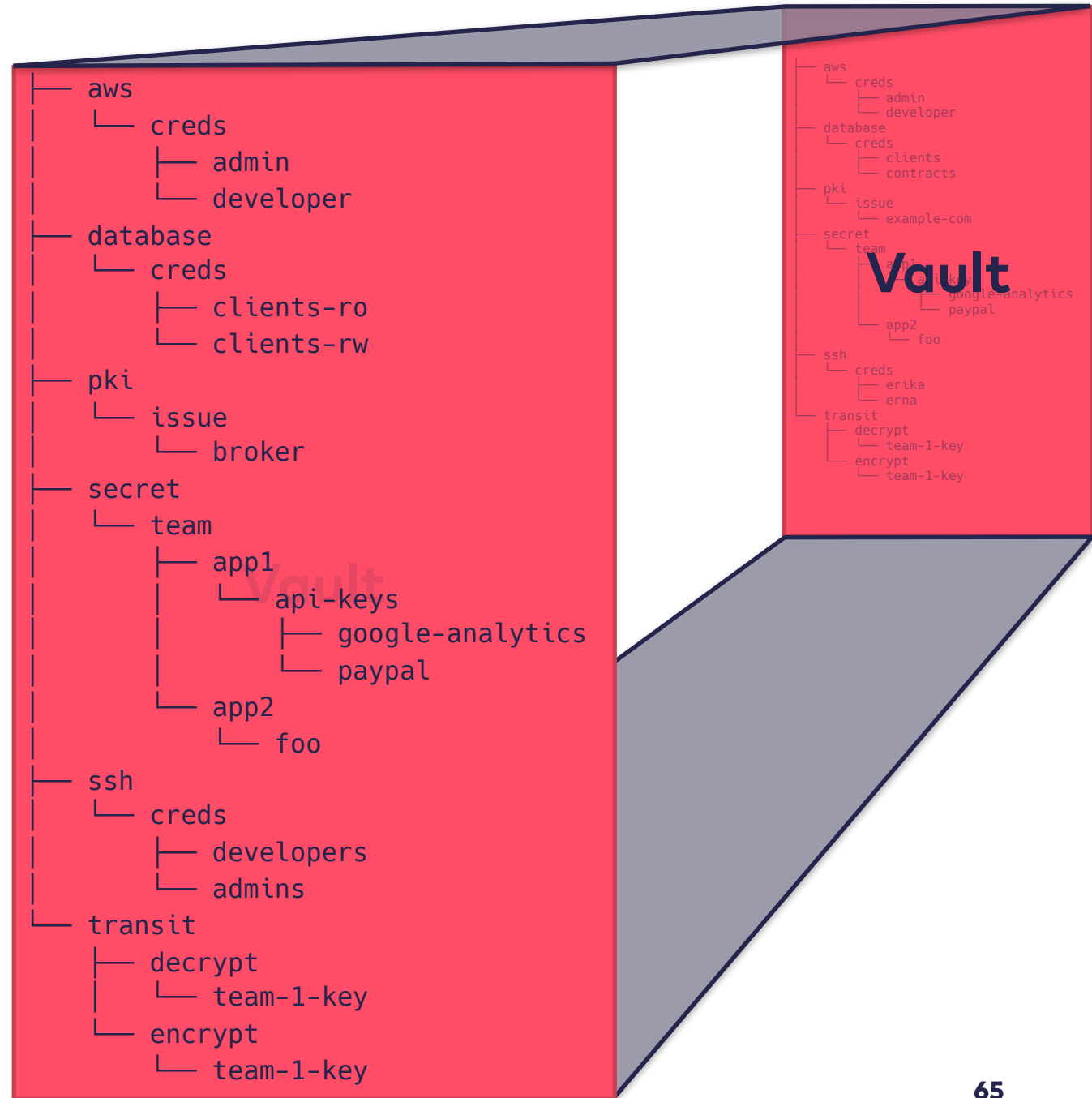


# Vault – secret representation

- Tokens
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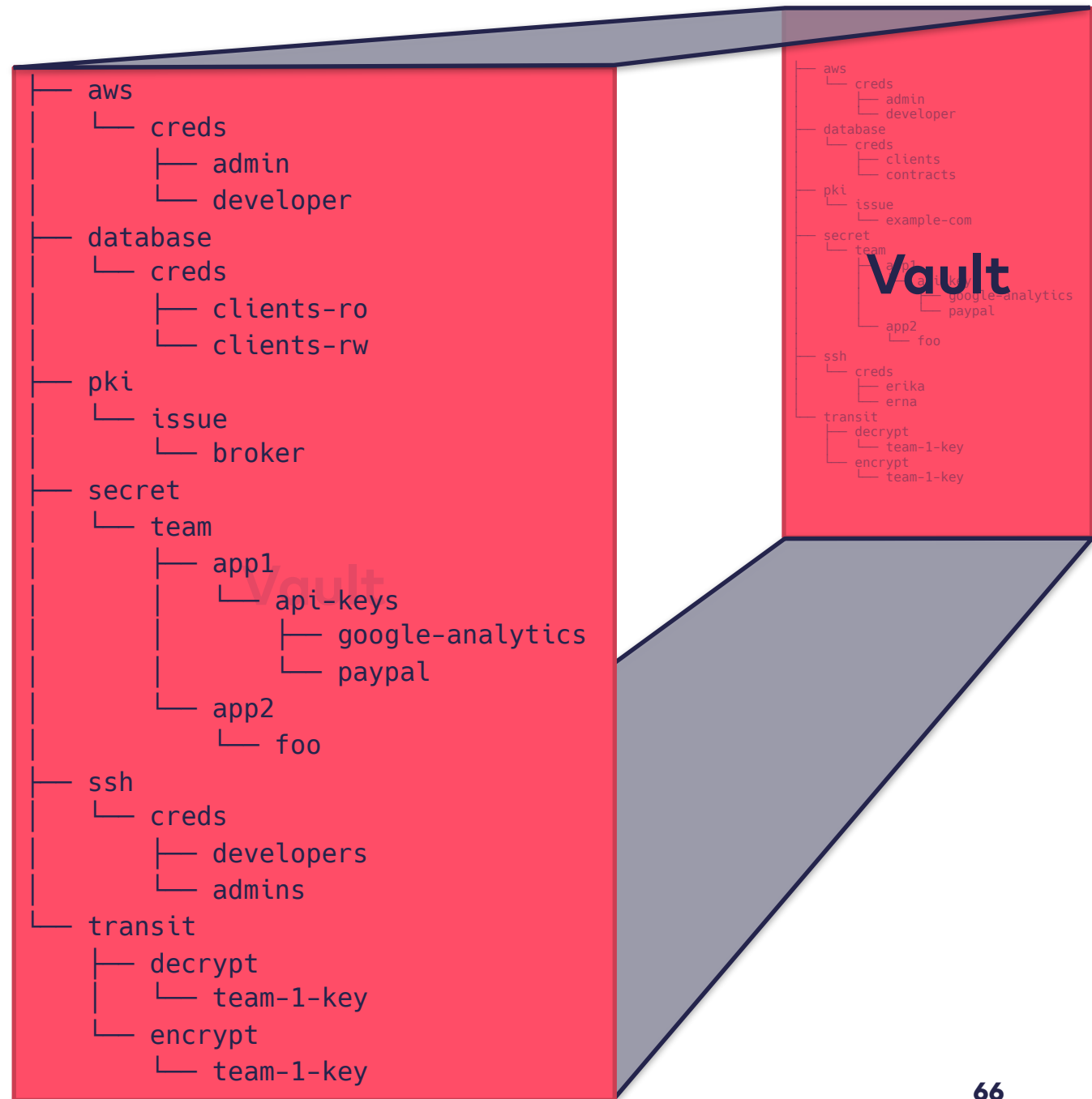


# Vault – secret representation



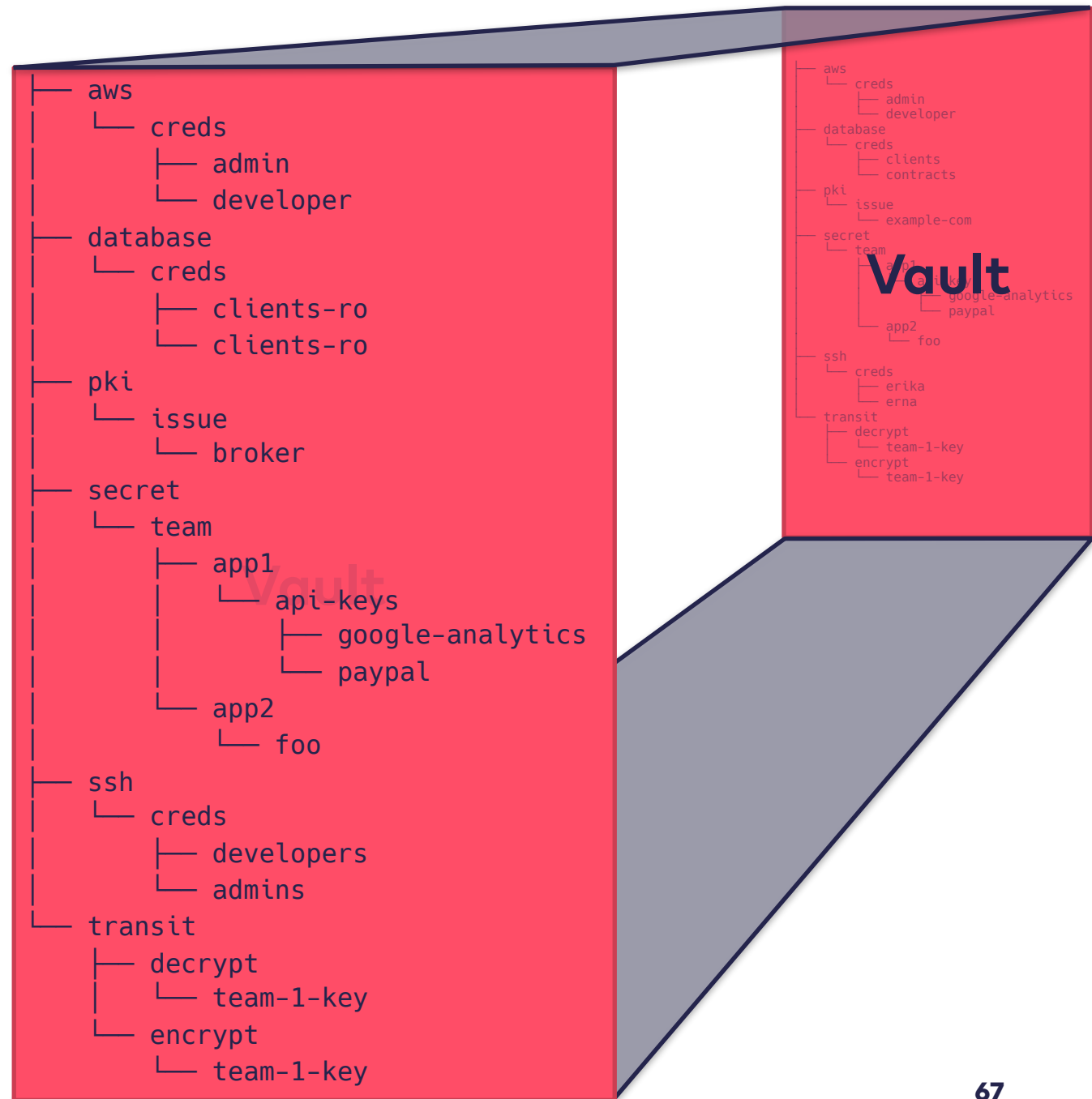
# Vault – policies

- applied to “files” or “directories”
- support filesystem wildcards
- control what a user can access
- get assigned after authentication
- policies of a token can't be changed



# Vault – policies

- create **c**
- read **r**
- update **u**
- delete **d**
- list **l**
- deny **d**
- sudo **s**



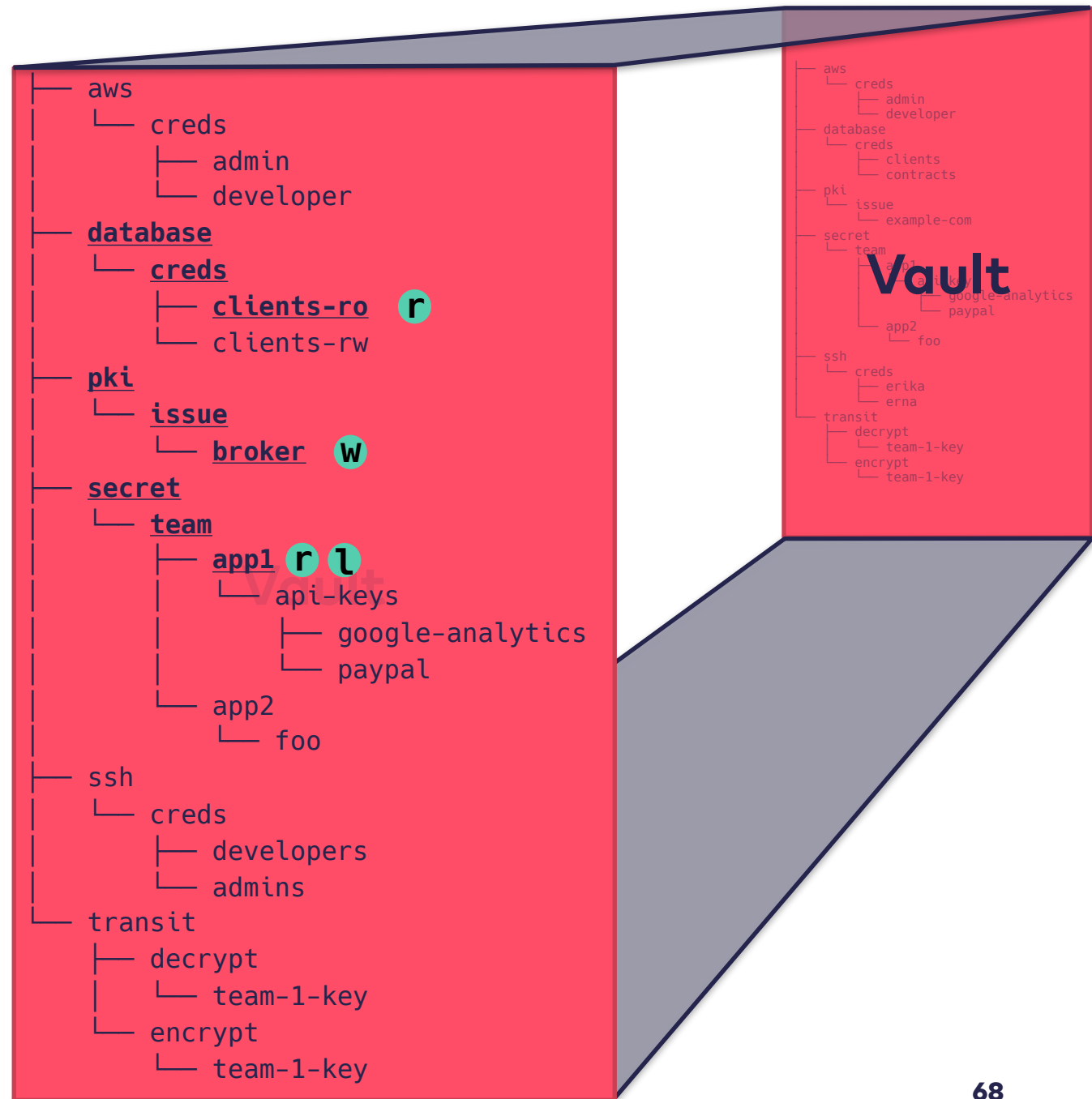
# Vault – policies

```
$ cat app1-policy.hcl
```

```
path "secret/team/app1/*" {
  capabilities = ["read", "list"]
}
```

```
path "pki/issue/broker" {
  capabilities = ["write"]
}
```

```
path "database/creds/clients-ro" {
  capabilities = ["read"]
}
```



# Vault – policies

```
$ cat app1-erna-policy.hcl
```

```
path "secret/team/app1/*" {
  capabilities = ["read", "list", "create",
                 "update", "delete"]
}

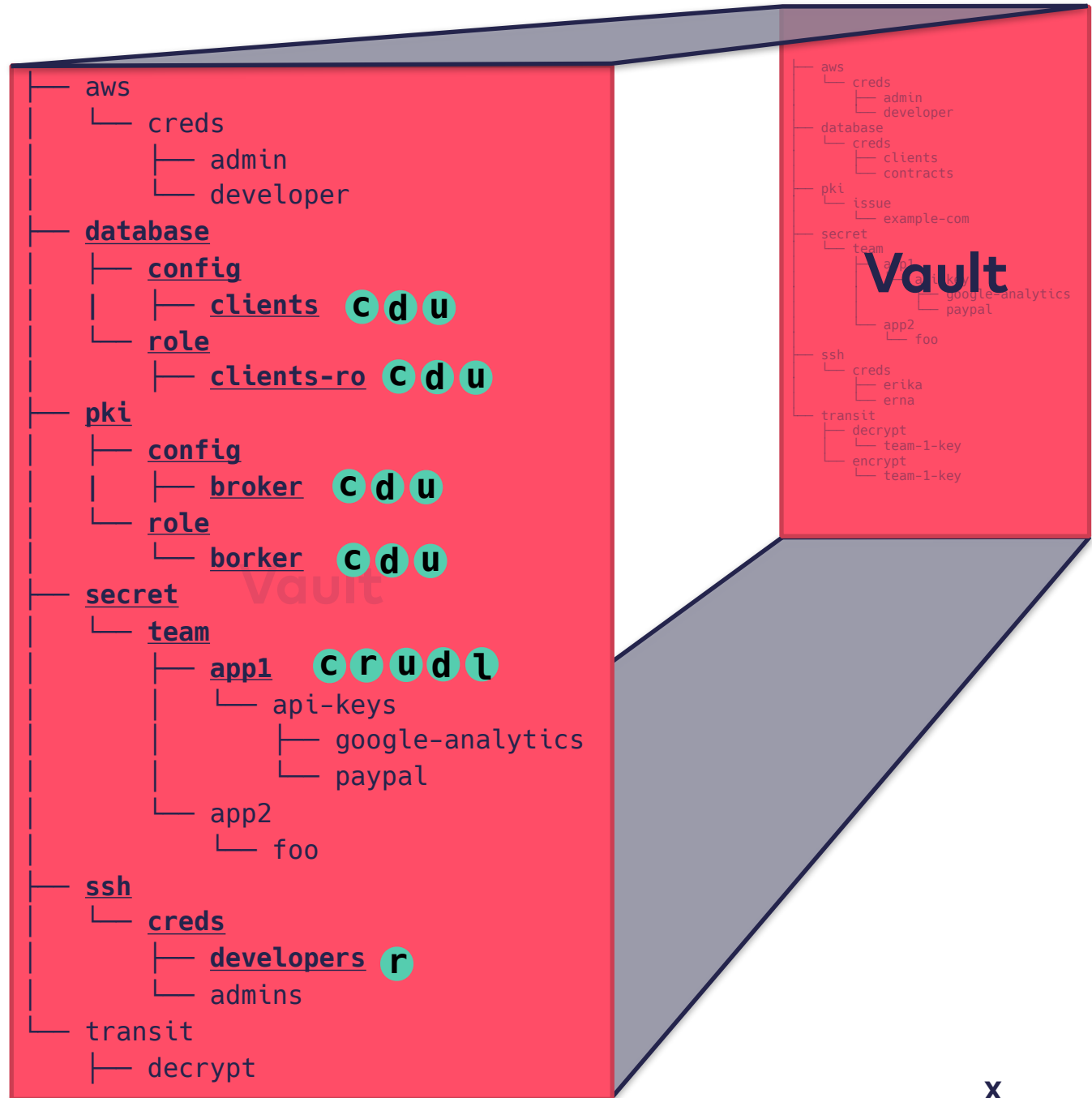
path "pki/role/*" {
  capabilities = ["create", "update", "delete"]
}

path "pki/config/*" {
  capabilities = ["create", "update", "delete"]
}

path "database/config/clients" {
  capabilities = ["create", "update", "delete"]
}

path "database/role/clients-ro" {
  capabilities = ["create", "update", "delete"]
}

path "ssh/creds/developers" {
  capabilities = ["read"]
}
```



# Vault — Audit log

# Vault internals — Audit log

- **off by default**
- **supported backend**
  - **file**
  - **syslog**
  - **socket**
- **if audit log can not be written, Vault does not reply to requests**



# Vault internals — Audit log

- every operation creates a log entry with
  - what was done
  - when was it executed
  - by who was it requested
  - request payload
  - response payload
- sensitive data is hashed with a salt using HMAC-SHA256

# Vault internals — Audit log

- ```

{"time":"2018-10-10T10:59:53.557231528Z","type":"response","auth":
{"client_token":"hmac-
sha256:41f2474f04f6277eb43cc8eae700dbc8534c5369d9185991eed4c4f70b1a5840","accessor":
"hmac-
sha256:27e400da69c94fce2378f5738cbf950531d7a9513215274abfbbdaa4927e00ba","display_na
me":"ldap-daniel.bornkessel@innoq.com","policies":["default"],"token_policies":
["default"],"metadata":
{"username":"daniel.bornkessel@innoq.com"},"entity_id":"8950f5f7-fad8-3ecb-4e62-
e5841815df60"},"request":{"id":"9f2b6dfa-5c18-
af6a-1f66-2c78b25a875f","operation":"list","client_token":"hmac-
sha256:41f2474f04f6277eb43cc8eae700dbc8534c5369d9185991eed4c4f70b1a5840","client_tok
en_accessor":"hmac-
sha256:27e400da69c94fce2378f5738cbf950531d7a9513215274abfbbdaa4927e00ba","path":"sec
ret/","data":null,"policy_override":false,"remote_address":"100.96.0.76","wrap_ttl":
0,"headers":{},"response":{"data":{"error":"hmac-
sha256:d9d7a78363fd091f1b4c12629b7c9b5d7a7ffbf904ef5d29d002d5265d5bbf33"}}},"error":
"1 error occurred:\n\n* permission denied"}

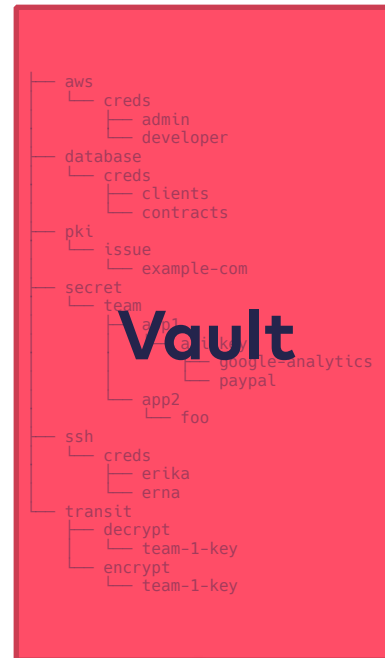
```

# Vault



policies

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audit logs

# Vault internals

# Vault internals — storage

# Vault internals – storage

- **several storage backends available: Consul, Etcd, Azure, Cassandra, CockroachDB, CouchDB, DynamoDB, Filesystem, FoundationDB, Google Cloud Spanner, Google Cloud Storage, In-Memory, Manta, MySQL, PostgreSQL, S3, Swift, Zookeeper**
- **data encrypted at rest with a symmetric key**
- **symmetric key is encrypted by "master key" and stored on storage backend**
- **master key is encrypted with "Shamir's Secret Sharing"**

# Vault internals — storage

## Shamir's Secret Sharing

- 1 ... N keys are needed in order to decrypt the data
- you can provide the decryption keys in any order
- N ... N+M keys can be created and distributed to different parties

# Vault internals — storage

## Shamir's Secret Sharing

- by default, Vault creates 5 keys on initialization (which is a once per storage backend operation)
- 3 of the 5 keys are needed in order to unseal a Vault instance
- this is configurable (e.g. 10/8, 15/5, etc.)



# Vault internals — storage

## Shamir's Secret Sharing

- HA of key holders
- one key alone is worthless
- key holder != admins: designers, ops, devs, etc.
- new unsealing keys can be created when provided enough unsealing keys (e.g. when employees leave the company)
- every time a Vault instance is started, the master key has to be decrypted

# Vault internals — HA

# Vault internals – HA

- **some backends support Vault HA mode (currently: Consul, Etcd, DynamoDB, Foundation DB, Google Cloud Spanner, Google Cloud Storage, MySQL, Zookeeper)**
- **Active-Passive mode:**
  - **only the active Vault instance replies to requests**
  - **all other Vault instances reply with a HTTP 302 to the active Vault instance (i.e. LB in front of HA Vaults does not make sense)**
  - **leader election done in storage backend**

# Vault usage

# Vault usage — integration

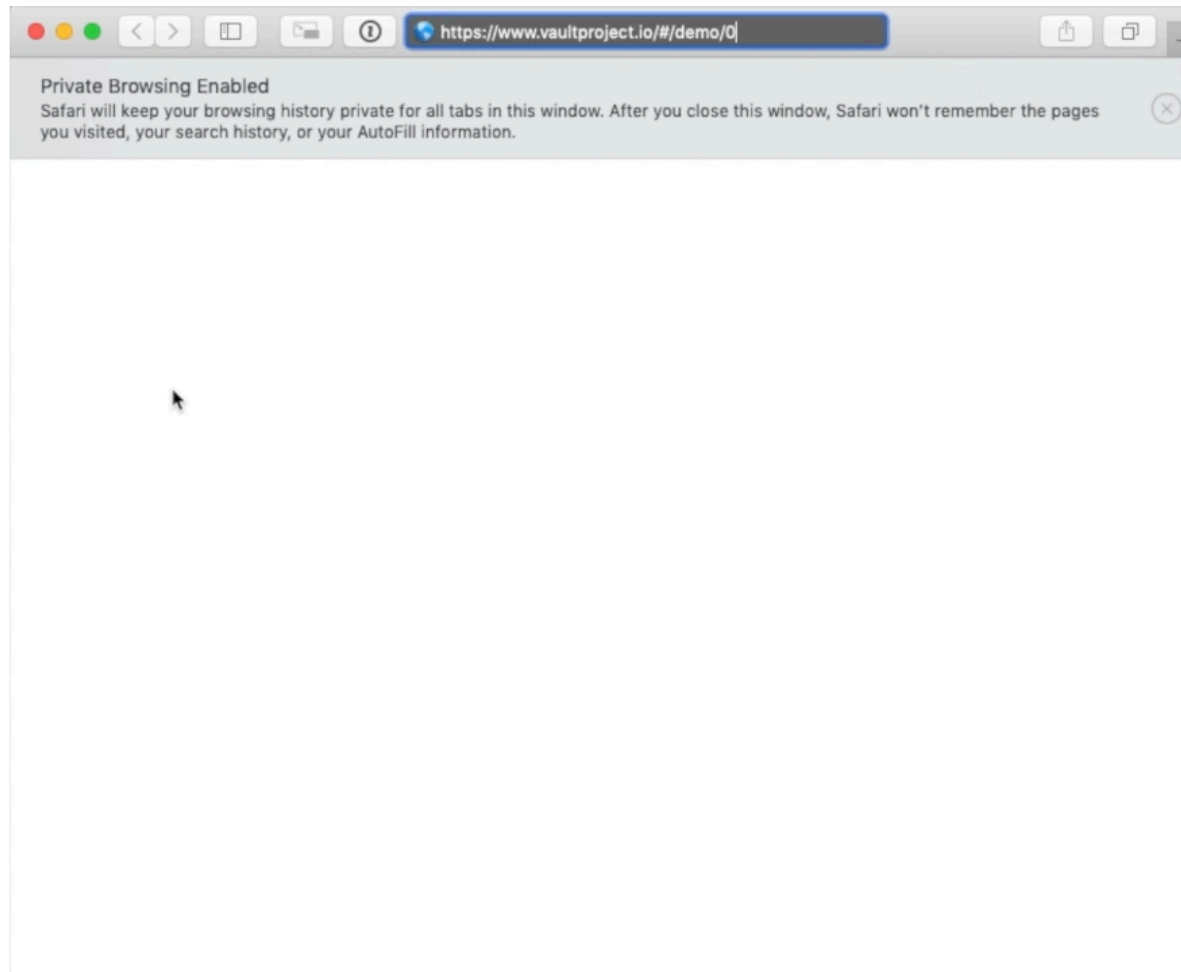
# Vault usage — integration

- **some frameworks have integration for Vault**
- **when home made solution**
  - **create config files with a helper app to avoid development pain**
  - **prepare your app for ttl'ed credentials: react accordingly if the (e.g.) DB password is not valid anymore:**
    - **re-read config file with new credentials**
    - **make sure, helper app gets new credentials in time**
    - **re-try DB request**
    - **when in a container managed system, exit if appropriate**

# Vault usage — getting started

# Vault – getting started (1 minute invest)

<https://www.vaultproject.io/#/demo/0>



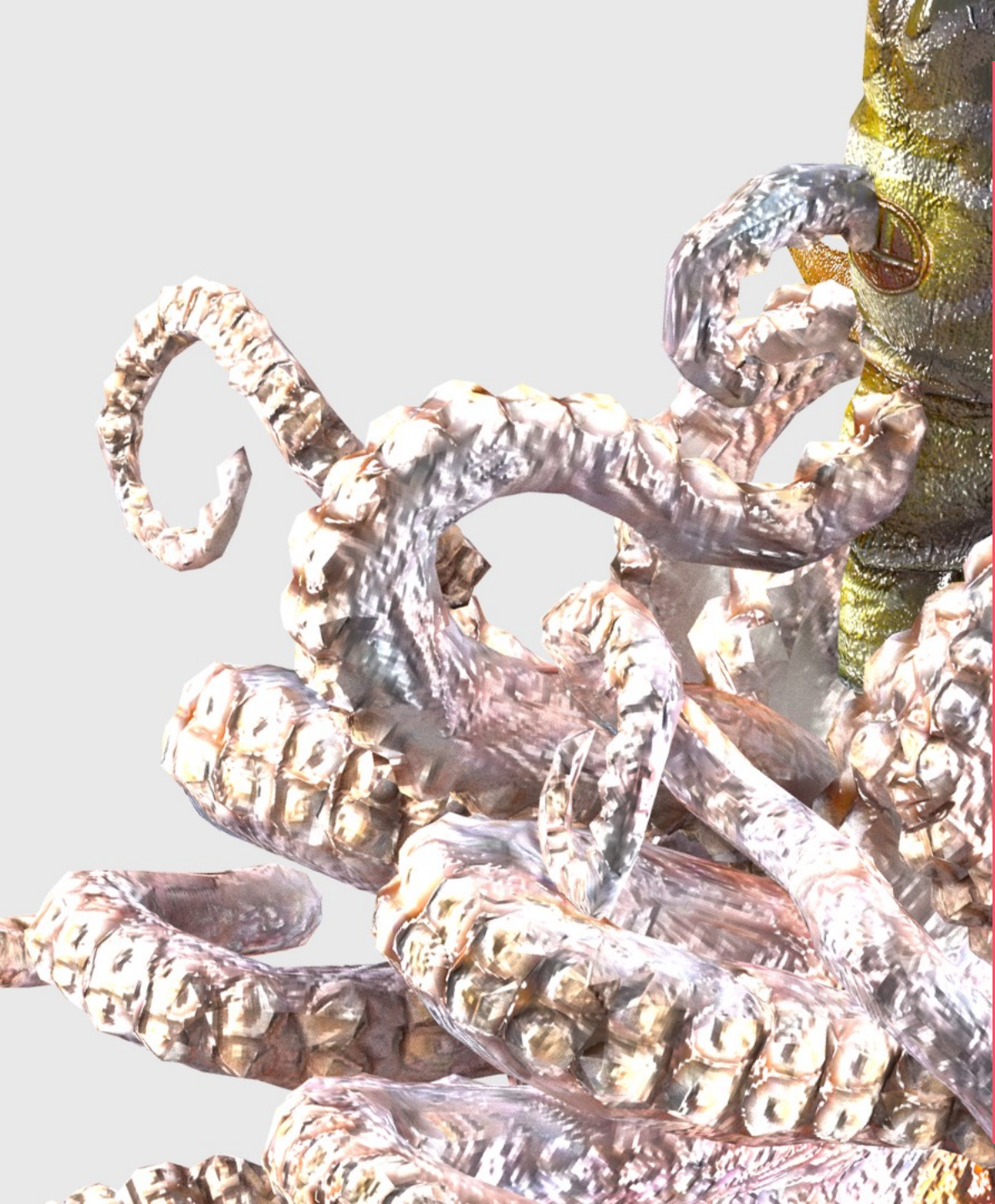


# Vault – getting started

- **interactive tutorial**
- **download it locally and start it with '--dev' parameter (investment: 20 min - a few hours)**
- **there is a steep learning curve**
  - **different backends use the same words with different meanings (ttl, tokens, etc.)**
  - **hard to quickly test something as you need the backend systems in place: AWS auth to get MySQL passwords?**
  - **most tutorials only run in dev mode**

# Vault — recap

**You authenticate somehow, get a token with some policy attached to it, which again allows you to read some secrets.**



# Thank you and auf Wiedersehen

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