

RESEARCH WEBINAR

The Impact Gap: Enterprise Innovation in 2026

A data-led look at the structural distance between what enterprises invest in innovation — and what they can prove.

CAPABILITY AREAS

4 dimensions

MATURITY TIERS

3 levels

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Driving **Innovation Results** at Scale

For nearly 20 years, we've been helping enterprises turn innovation into measurable impact – from launching new products and revenue streams to accelerating tech adoption, boosting customer experience, advancing sustainability, streamlining operations, building organizational resilience, and more...



500+

Enterprise Clients



10M+

End Users



100,000+

Innovations
Implemented



\$1B+

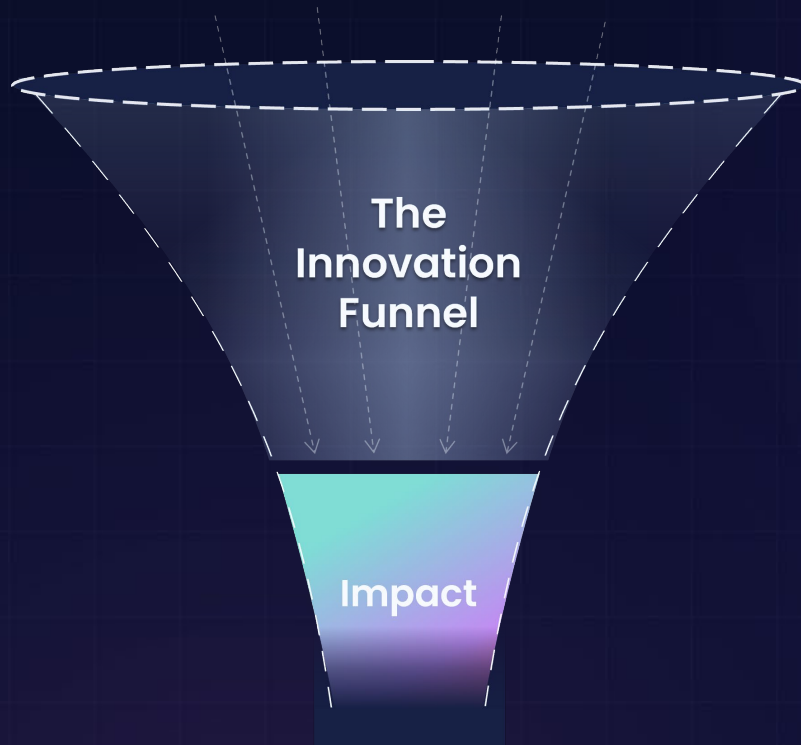
Total Customer ROI

Our World Class Clients



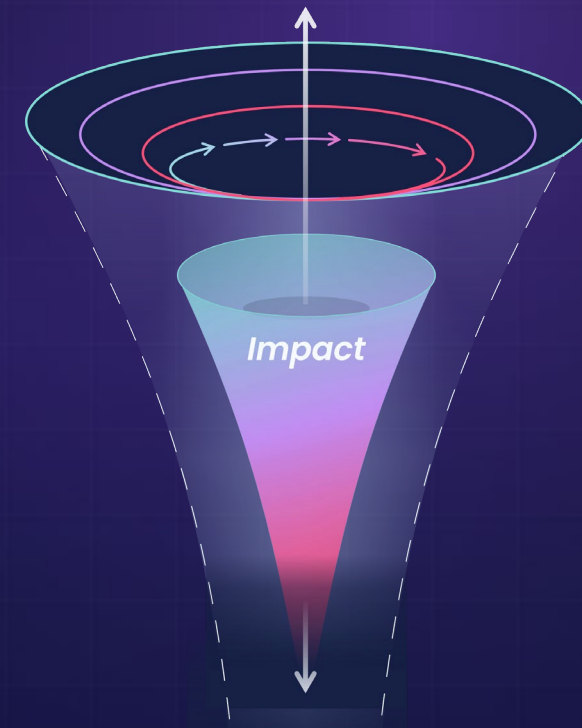
From the **Old** Innovation Funnel to the **New**

Impact measured **at the end**



Most programs filter ideas through a long process, hoping for value at the end. Without impact as a compass, they underdeliver.

Impact **embedded throughout**



Sustainable ROI requires impact embedded across the entire process — not just measured at the end. We call this Impact-Driven Innovation.

The 4 Pillars of Impact-Driven Innovation

1

Align Your Impact with Objectives

You need to prioritize the outcomes that reflect your strategic goals, and then align your whole innovation funnel around those.



2

Engage Your Innovation Alliance

There are many stakeholders both inside and outside your organization, and you need to involve the right people at the right time.



3

Harness Your Innovation Assets

You need to effectively gather and manage all relevant assets through a unified process to maximize your potential impact.



4

Configure Your Innovation Process

Finally, you need to connect everything together with a process that is tailored to engage your allies, manage your assets, and deliver impact.



THE PROBLEM

Why do innovation programs feel so **busy** yet struggle to produce **compounding impact**?

Boards expect innovation. Strategy decks demand it. Employee surveys confirm the appetite is real. And yet, the **output rarely matches the input**. We ran a diagnostic across enterprise innovation programmes to find out why.

The will to innovate has outpaced **the way.**

THE INTENT

Cultural and strategic readiness.

The conditions for innovation are mostly in place. Strategic intent, cultural ambition, executive sponsorship — the upstream layer scores consistently well in the data.

- Strategy alignment
- Executive sponsorship
- Customer focus
- Cross-functional engagement

THE EXECUTION

The operational layer that turns intent into proof.

The infrastructure, integration, and measurement systems that convert activity into demonstrable outcomes. This is where the gap consistently shows up in the data.

- Connected platforms
- Portfolio-level visibility
- Data and integrations
- Scalable governance

THE METHODOLOGY

A structured diagnostic across **four capability areas** of enterprise innovation.

DIAGNOSTIC QUESTIONS

25

Structured diagnostic questions spanning the full innovation operating model, aggregated into a composite maturity score.

CAPABILITY AREAS

4

Strategy, Program, Infrastructure, Foundations — each scored 0–100% on the diagnostic.

MATURITY TIERS

3

Composite scores map to Emerging Innovator, Innovation Explorer, or Innovation Trendsetter.

01

Emerging Innovator

Foundational gaps in process, tooling, or governance limit scalable impact.

02

Innovation Explorer

Real momentum, but uneven. Strong on strategy and culture, weaker on infrastructure.

03

Innovation Trendsetter

Strong, well-aligned capabilities — yet most still have at least one capability in the developing band.

THE LANDSCAPE

Most organisations sit in the middle: **competent but not cohesive.**

Distribution across the three maturity tiers reveals a market clustered around the middle, with a thinly populated frontier.

15% OF ORGANISATIONS

15%

Emerging Innovator

Foundational gaps in process, tooling, or governance limit scalable impact.

69% OF ORGANISATIONS

69%

Innovation Explorer

Real momentum has been built. Strong on strategy and culture, weaker on the operational layer that proves it.

16% OF ORGANISATIONS

16%

Innovation Trendsetter

Strong, well-aligned capabilities — yet most still have at least one area in the developing band.

WHAT THIS MEANS

The dominant story isn't **failure**. It's incompleteness.

Most organizations have started building. Few have finished. The opportunity to differentiate isn't to do innovation — it's to scale it operationally.

THE DIAGNOSIS

Strong intent, weak infrastructure.

The cultural foundation is there. Leadership backing, methodology, engaged workforce — these are built or being built across most enterprise programs.



THE OPPORTUNITY

The benchmark to beat is lower than you think.

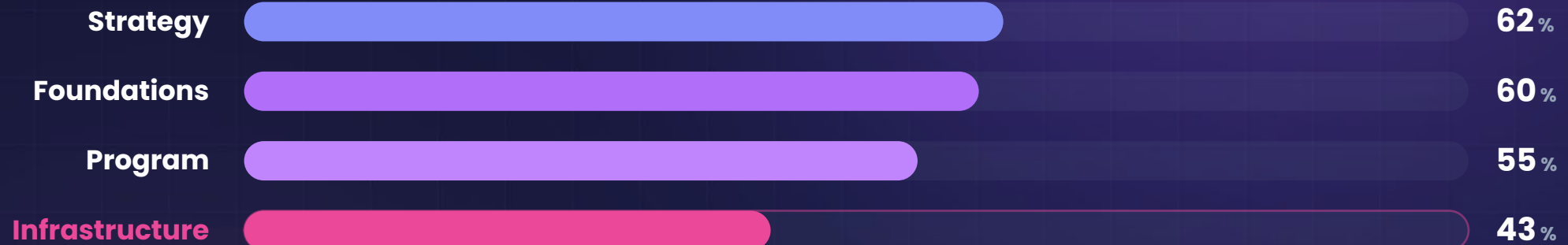
Even the leaders haven't fully closed the gap. Most Innovation Trendsetters still show at least one capability in the developing band.

FINDING 01 · THE STRATEGY-EXECUTION SPLIT

Strategy and culture are running ahead of execution.

On average, organisations score highest on **Strategy** — vision, sponsorship, alignment. And lowest on **Infrastructure** — the operational layer that turns ambition into measurable output.

AVERAGE MATURITY SCORE, BY CAPABILITY AREA % of full diagnostic score per area



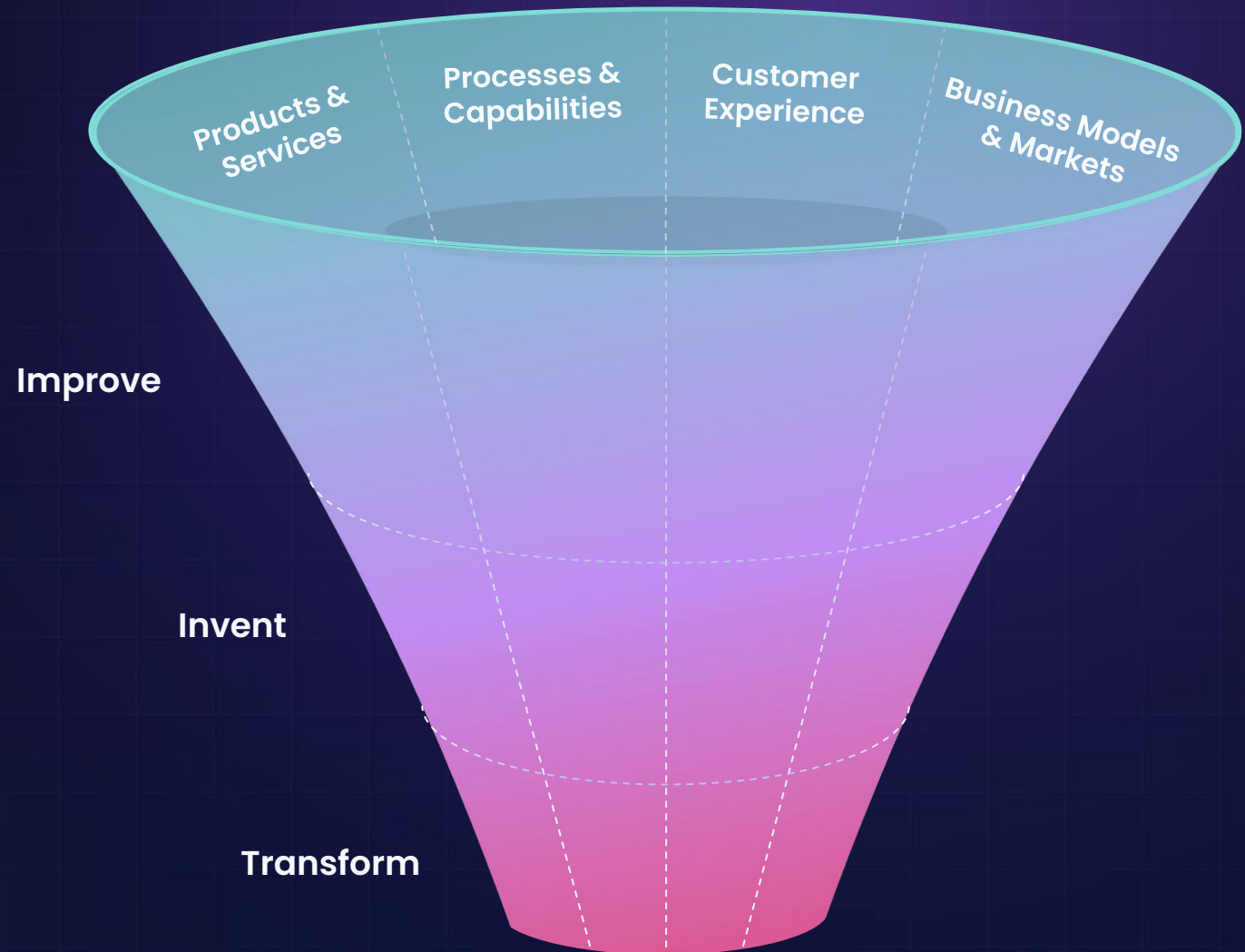
THE PATTERN

5 of 5 lowest-scoring questions in the diagnostic are about infrastructure. The cultural-operational gap is structural.

Align Innovation Outcomes With Your Strategic Goals

Innovation outcomes fall into four main categories, and each of these can be delivered across three distinct levels.

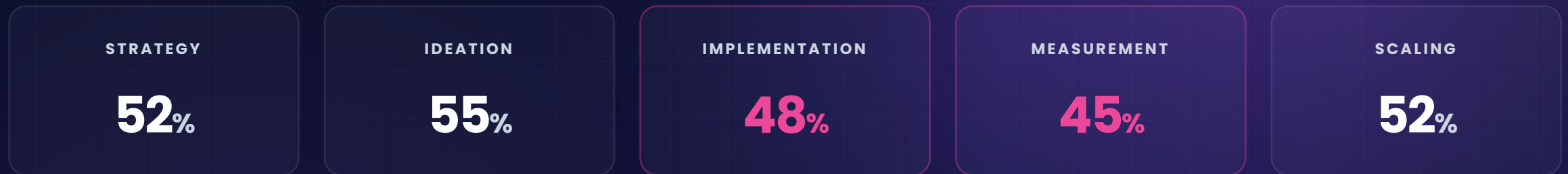
You need to prioritize the outcomes that reflect your strategic goals, and then align your whole innovation program to fit.



Three in four programmes **leak value** between intent and outcome.

Innovation needs five linked stages to deliver impact end-to-end. Each stage scores reasonably on its own. Almost none score well across all five.

% OF ORGANISATIONS STRONG ON EACH FUNNEL STAGE



76%

have a broken impact chain — leaking value at one or more stages between strategic intent and proven outcome.

24%

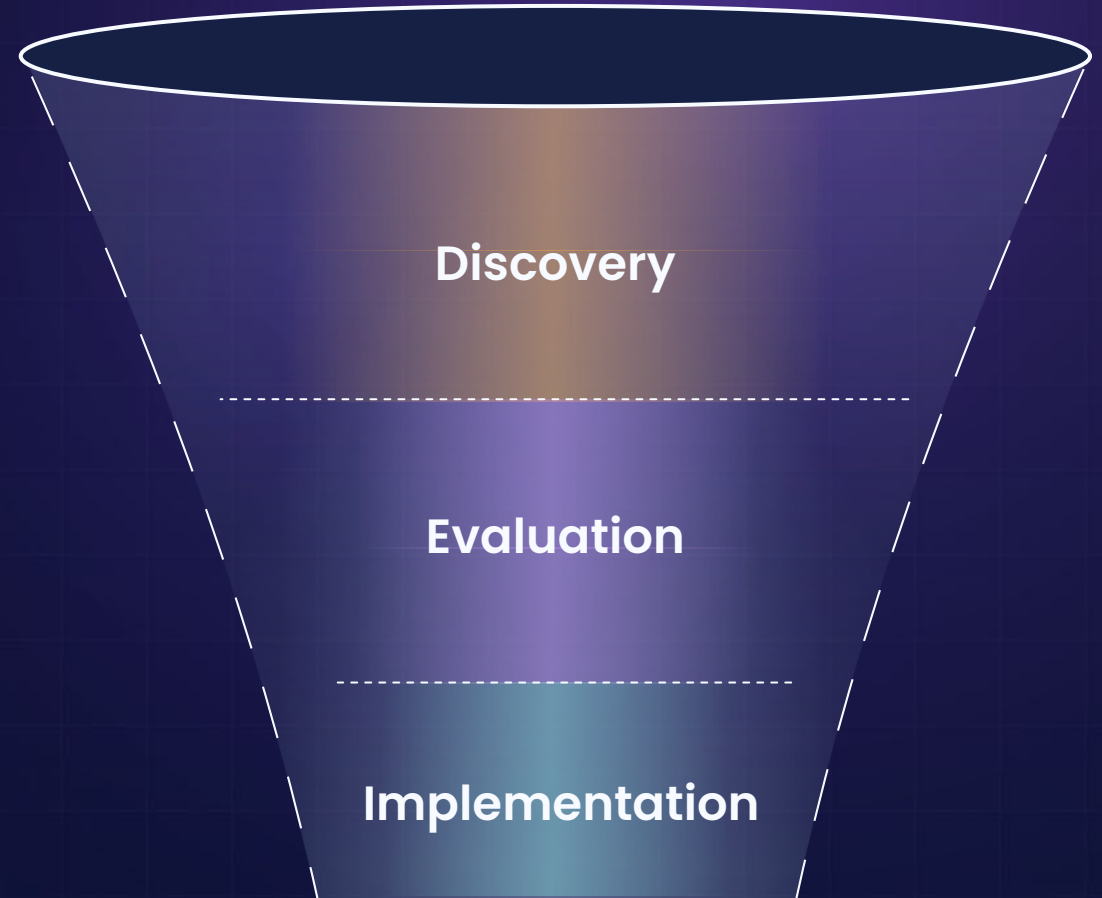
are strong on all five stages — the cohort that compounds activity into demonstrable impact.

45%

of executive-sponsored programmes cannot measure their own impact in real time.

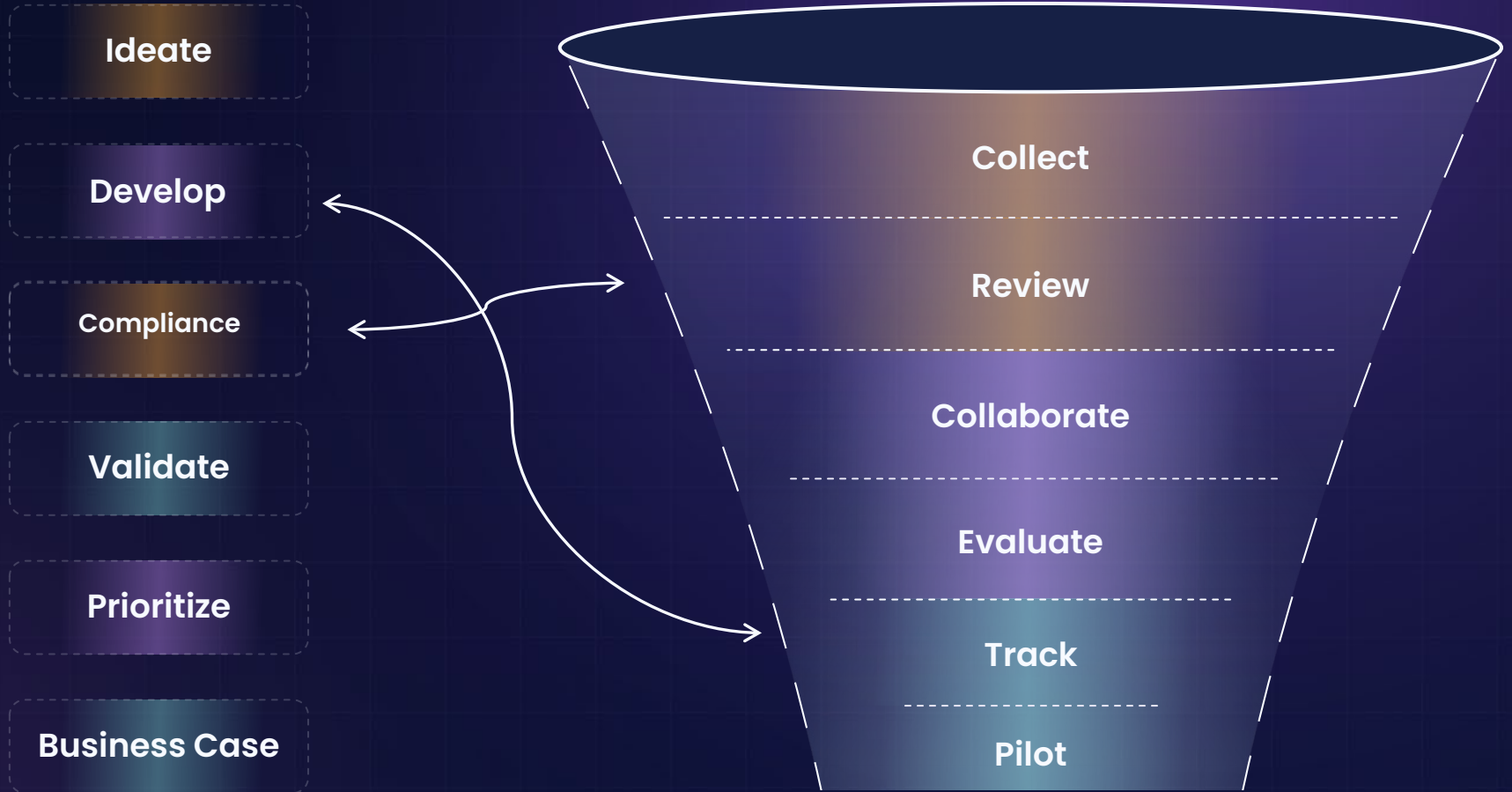
Configure Your Innovation Process

Finally, you need to connect everything together with a process that is tailored to engage your **allies**, manage your **assets**, and deliver your chosen **outcomes**.



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FINDING 03 • THE INFRASTRUCTURE DEFICIT

Running today's strategy on **yesterday's tooling.**

Programmes have evolved. The systems they run on, in most cases, haven't. Across the diagnostic's infrastructure capabilities, the deficit is consistent.

% OF ORGANISATIONS LACKING EACH INFRASTRUCTURE CAPABILITY



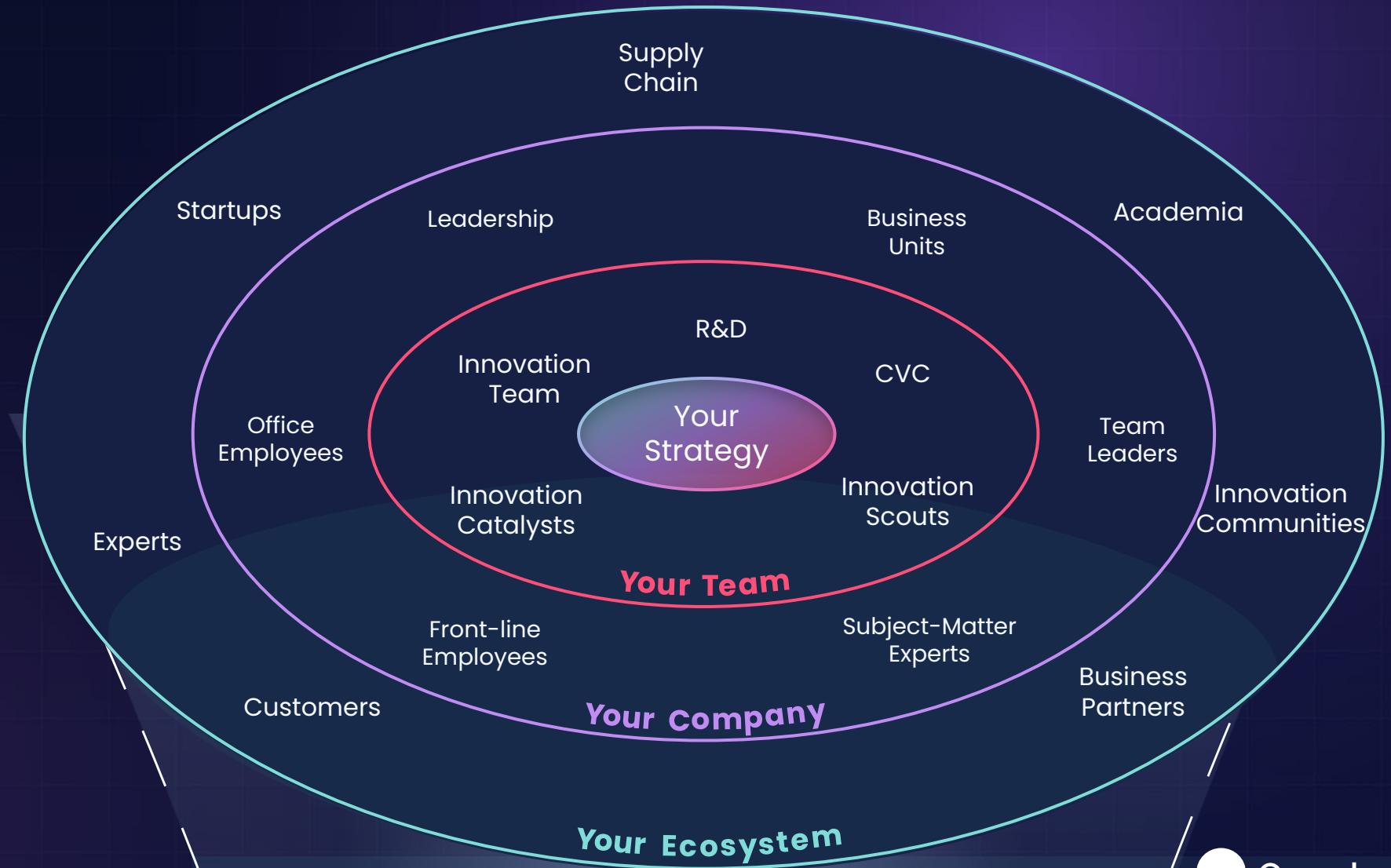
WHAT THIS MEANS

52% of organisations lack all four core infrastructure capabilities at once. The deficit isn't a tweak problem — it's a build problem.

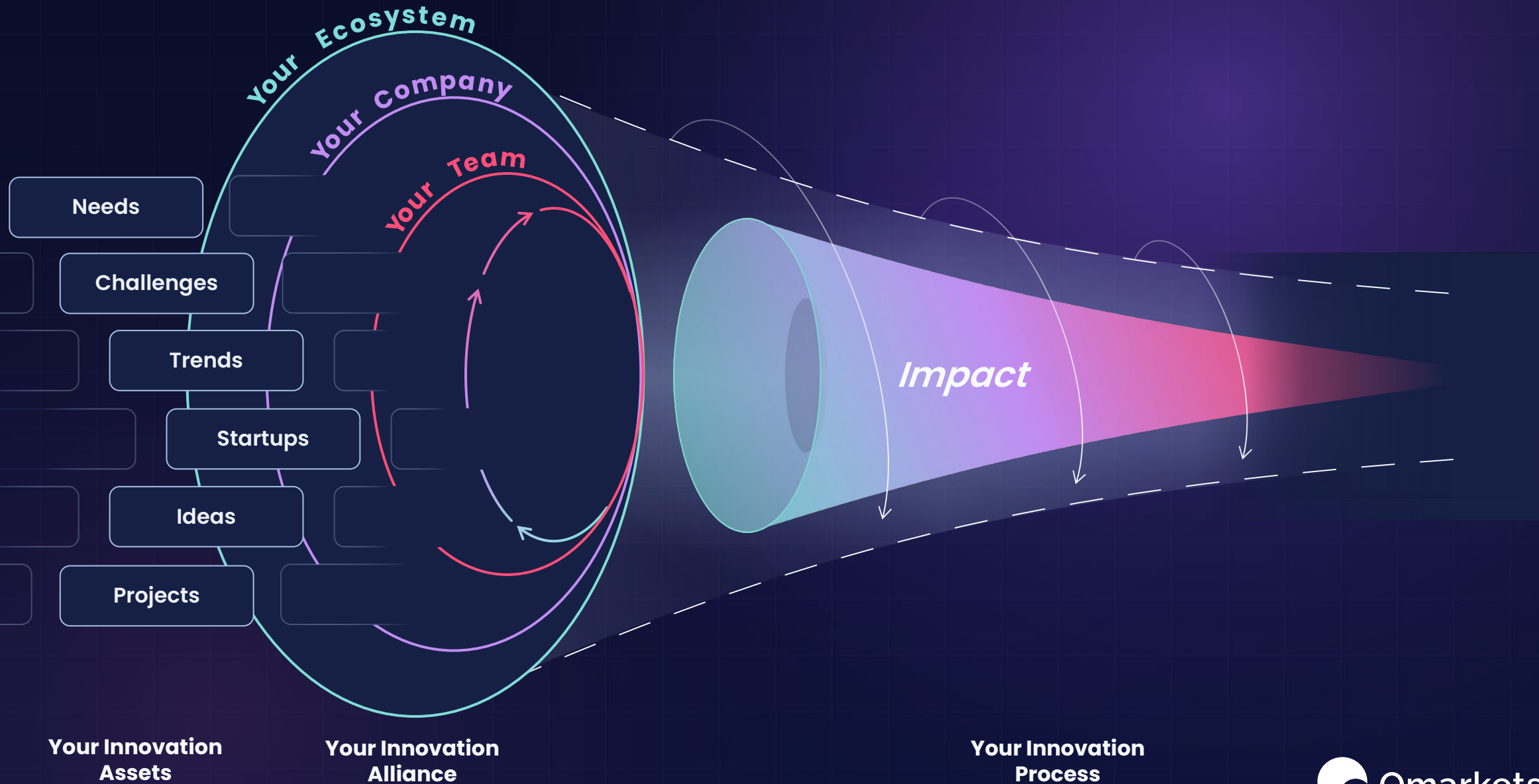
Engage Your Innovation Alliance

There are many stakeholders both inside and outside your organization who can contribute across your innovation funnel.

You need to engage the right people at the right time across your entire process.



Impact-Driven Innovation Management



THREE CAPABILITY PROFILES

Most programs fall into one of **three patterns**.

PROFILE 01

~15% OF ORGS

Strong platform, weak process.

Invested in tooling but lack the structured methodology and organisational alignment to drive consistent results.

DEFINING SHAPE

- Low Process maturity
- High Platform maturity
- Mid People maturity

PROFILE 02

~20% OF ORGS

Engaged workforce, unstable program

Enthusiastic culture but lack the structured programme, resources, and stability to turn engagement into sustained results.

DEFINING SHAPE

- High People maturity
- Low Programme maturity
- Low-mid Planning maturity

PROFILE 03

~20% OF ORGS

Methodical **but** **narrow**.

Strong internal alignment and methodology, but apply innovation narrowly — usually a single use-case run well.

DEFINING SHAPE

- High Process maturity
- Low Programme maturity
- Mid Platform & People

Best practices for closing the gap.

Three priorities the research points to, in the order they need to be tackled.

THREE KEY TAKEAWAYS

01

Build the operational layer first.

Activity without infrastructure fragments instead of compounding.

Recommendation: Pause new programs until the foundation can carry them.

02

Treat measurement as architecture, not reporting.

Measurement bolted on after launch loses the data path.

Recommendation: Define impact metrics before launch, not after.

03

Use AI to scale, not to substitute.

AI compounds whatever's underneath.

Recommendation: Sequence integrations and measurement first, intelligence on top.

Your Innovation Impact Superpowers

Rooted in our core company values, our impact-driven approach equips you with five superpowers designed to maximize your innovation results:



Rapid Growth

Prove value early, deliver quick wins, and scale your ecosystem with tools built for enterprise growth.



Super Agility

Anticipate change and reconfigure your innovation process in real time with a flexible, modular platform.



Unlimited Insights

Make tough decisions with confidence using data-driven analytics and reporting to cut through the noise.



High-Tech Utility Belt

Best-in-class tools that evolve alongside your challenges — including AI, smart automations, integrations, and more.



Elite Alliance

Leverage the expertise, frameworks, and best practices of our innovation experts and customer community.

Dedicated Impact Support

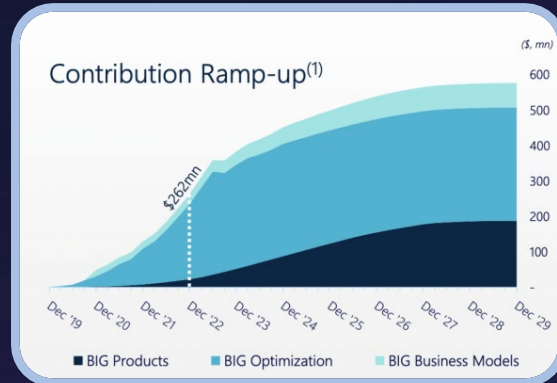
At Qmarkets we know how important it is to deliver, track, and multiply your bottom-line innovation impact. That's why we offer all clients a combination of **customer success services** and **product features** that focus on continuously boosting the ROI of your program.



Cross-Industry Success Stories



“\$1BN
Innovation
Portfolio”

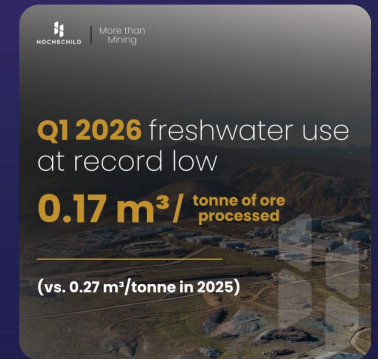


“\$400M RD&I
Portfolio
Management”

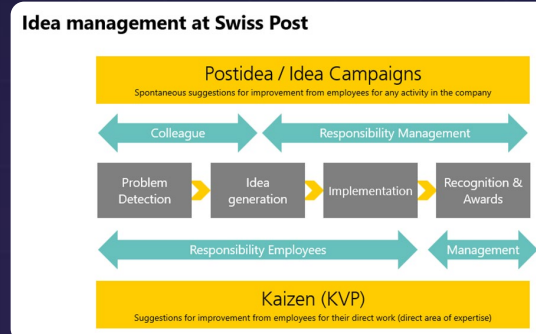


Shift from innovation “momentum”
to measurable delivery velocity

“\$40M+ ROI
from a single
improvement”



“\$2.4m Saved By
Fast-Track Kaizen”



“1000+ employees coached in 12 months”

TAKE THE NEXT STEP

Where does **your programme** stand?

THE 2026 INNOVATION MATURITY ASSESSMENT

A diagnostic built to **find your gap.**

The assessment uses the same diagnostic as this research. You'll get a personalised maturity score across all four capability areas – plus tailored recommendations for closing the specific gap in your programme.

15 min

Average time to complete the full diagnostic across all capability areas.

4

Capability dimensions measured, Strategy, Foundations, Program, Infrastructure.

3

Tailored recommendations delivered with every report, calibrated to your specific profile.

[Qmarkets.net/maturity-assessment](https://qmarkets.net/maturity-assessment)

THE Q&A

Your questions.

We'll batch and answer for the next 5–10 minutes. Thanks for joining – and for helping us pressure-test this research.

★ YOUR ONE NEXT STEP

Take the 2026 Maturity Assessment

qmarkets.net/maturity-assessment