

Fail to Plan, Plan to Fail

A webinar | Innovation Advisors

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Adrienne Brown and Brandy Salmon

welcome.

The symptoms [examples]

Challenges and/or technical needs are passed from one division to another, with limited awareness of “the possible”.

Problems
with problem
statements

Not open
to open
innovation


Key stakeholders see solutions as “not invented here”.

Specific requirements are set in spaces with few solutions, while the broader landscape has yet to be considered.

Not yet
ready for
requirements

Got no
reason to
believe

The broader story around an opportunity is missing, leading to lack of conviction and commitment.



“
**I haven't failed, I have just
found 10,000 ways that
haven't worked.**

The problems

More data has been created in the past two years than in the entire previous history of the human race.

Disruptions can come from anywhere and out of nowhere.

Development paths are uncertain; marketplaces shifty.

Wading through data, opportunities, and options is time consuming.

Innovating is hard.

The [real] problems

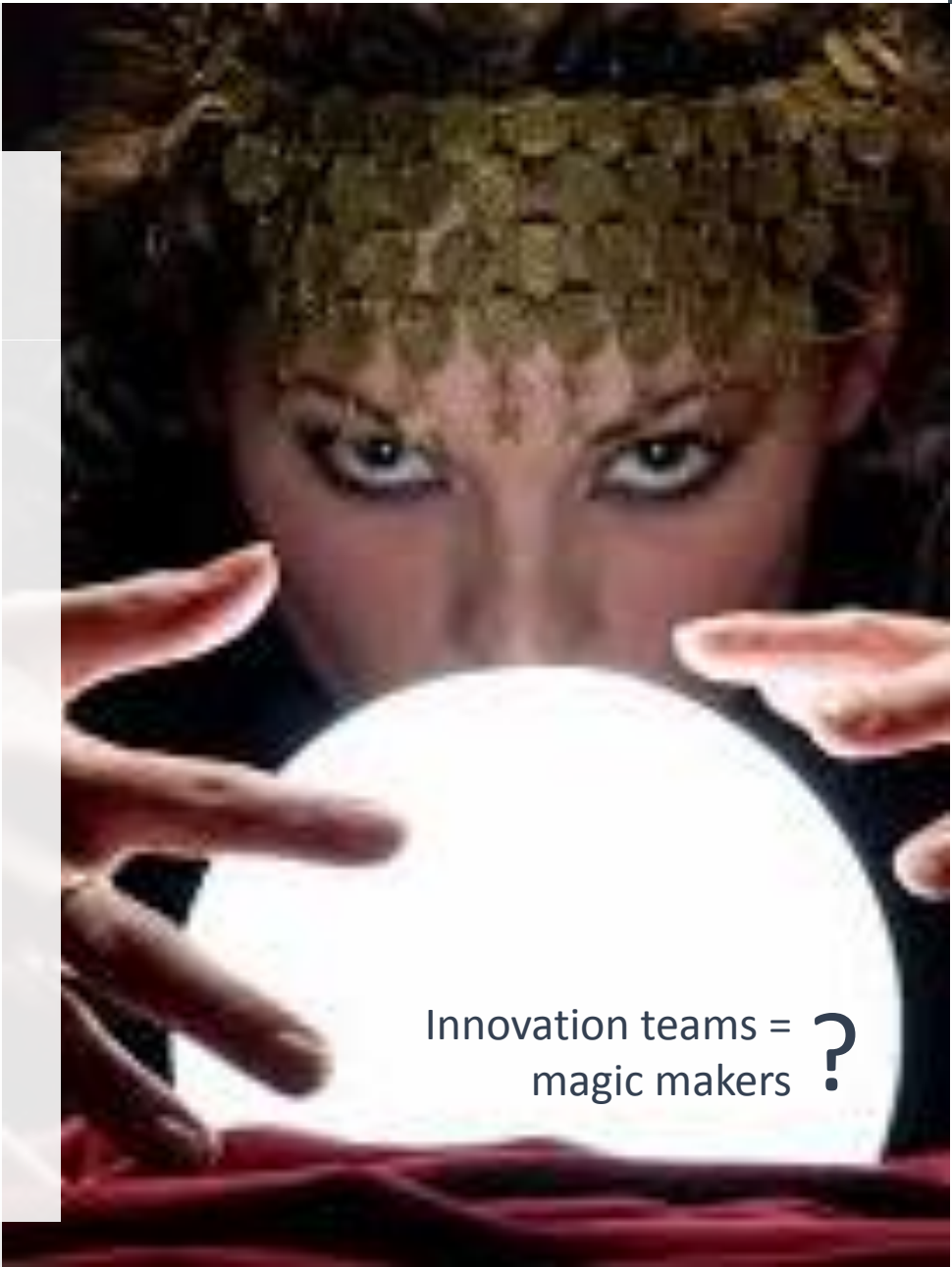
Near term pressures to make progress
on long term challenges

Shifting priorities

Vertical and cross-functional silos

Need for context beyond the technical

Innovation takes part perspiration, part
inspiration



Innovation teams =
magic makers ?

Our beliefs

Don't rely on masterplans and processes as THE solve.

Think bottom up – focus on people + projects first.

Bring clarity and resolution to the right mix projects, each with a beginning, middle, and end.

Success is made or broken out the outset.

Today's topic





Why focus on projects?

Projects are the building blocks of innovating.

They can be codified, learned, repeated, and mastered.

Mini-victories can drive confidence and conviction in a path.

Projects can be assembled into your portfolio.

“

*We are what we repeatedly do,
excellence then, is not an act,
but a habit.*

-Aristotle [~350 BC]

A photograph of an astronaut in a white space suit floating in space. The Earth is visible in the background. The astronaut's helmet is prominent, and the suit has various patches and equipment. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue rectangle.

Who are we?



RTI today includes 5000 employees operating in 70 countries.

Now, a diversified global research institution, RTI delivers nearly \$1 billion in research services and support to governments, foundations, and companies through a full range of technical services, implementation support, and global development.



Innovation Advisors offers projects in three service areas.

RTI Innovation Advisors delivers a full spectrum of innovation projects within four principle service areas to help clients build capacity within their organizations, incorporate a full range of technical, market, and user insight, and streamline the path to market.



Developing innovation capacity, processes, and strategies to improve and sustain the discipline of innovation management.



Bringing the world of the possible to support portfolio development, forge partnerships, identify and prioritize opportunities.



Streamlining the path to market for technologies by defining value propositions, assessing markets, and engaging partners.

Innovation Advisors supports best-in-class clients.

Our clients include federal agencies, universities, foundations, and firms, large and small. Clients engage Innovation Advisors for multi-year efforts or smaller tasks to meet specific needs.



Your presenters



Adrienne Brown

As an Innovation Advisor, Adrienne helps companies, federal agencies, and regions realize their innovation goals. She believes innovation is the work of teams rather than of the lone genius, so her focus is often on building relationships, shared language, and an appreciation of the power of a collective. She specializes in the alchemy that is getting the right people in the room and helping them create a shared vision and the will to take the next step. Adrienne has 20 years of experience in strategy- and innovation-centered roles in commercial R&D, economic development, and non-profits.



Brandy Salmon

Brandy helps companies explore best practices in innovation, assess and integrate current processes and activities, work collaboratively across organizations, and through a disciplined approach, identify and evaluate new sources of innovation. Brandy also serves as Program Lead of the Sanitation Technology Platform, STeP, for the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, providing program leadership and oversight to integrate and accelerate innovations in sanitation through in field testing, market intelligence and business planning, commercialization in strategic locations globally.

Your team





Problems with problem statements

Requests for innovation support were handed down to our client from marketing, originating from ideation sessions, competitive surveillance, consumer needs.

Solution areas were divorced from technical and manufacturing realities.

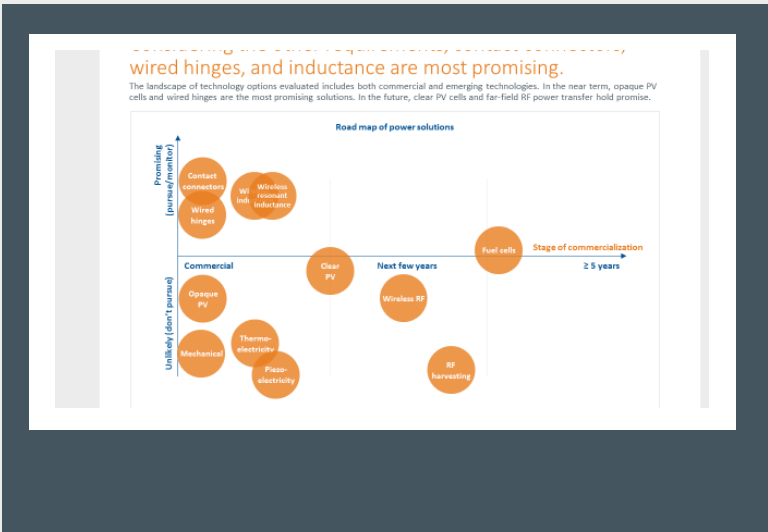
Solution: Our client chose to turn the tables and execute an INFORM & INSPIRE project fusing market, user, and technology insights and included a cross-disciplinary team from outset.



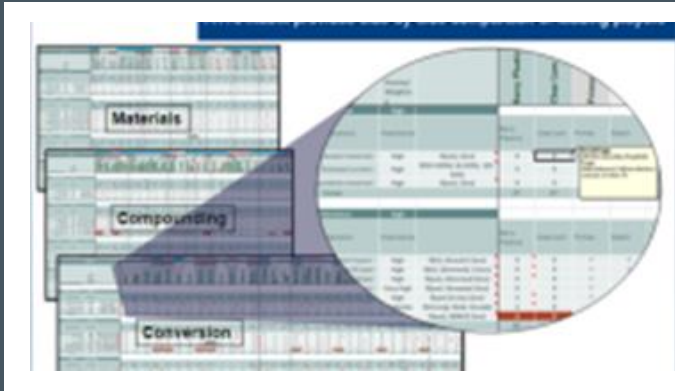


Not yet ready for requirements

Management had attached specific requirements to a search for an alternative to batteries and, yet, different versions of batteries were unlikely to meet the teams' needs.



Solution: Instead, our client backed up and executed a landscaping search to consider the “world of the possible” and identify fundamental ways energy may be delivered and stored, and in so doing, brought a range of options to consider.



Got no reason to believe

Our client came to us frustrated by lack of uptake of ideas and insight delivered by his innovation team. Working off of detailed technology evaluation spreadsheets, the team had valuable technology insight to bring, but others within the organization failed to act on the teams' recommendation.

Solution: To build conviction and buy-in with others, the team took the time up-front to more clearly define the decisions and people they hoped to influence and built a project that included additional market and user context.



The “fix” – better project scoping



Scope Project

- Select project
- Scope effort
- Define requirements
- Get going

The “fix” – better project scoping

2

Scope Project

- Select project
- Scope effort
- Define requirements
- Get going

But, also: steps 1 & 3

1

Stop, Think

- Know where you are
- Consider insight
- Clarify your intentions

2

Scope Project

- Select project
- Scope effort
- Define requirements
- Get going

3

Document, Plan

- Create charter to serve as guideposts + posterity
- Set goals, codify intentions, assign roles and responsibilities, etc.

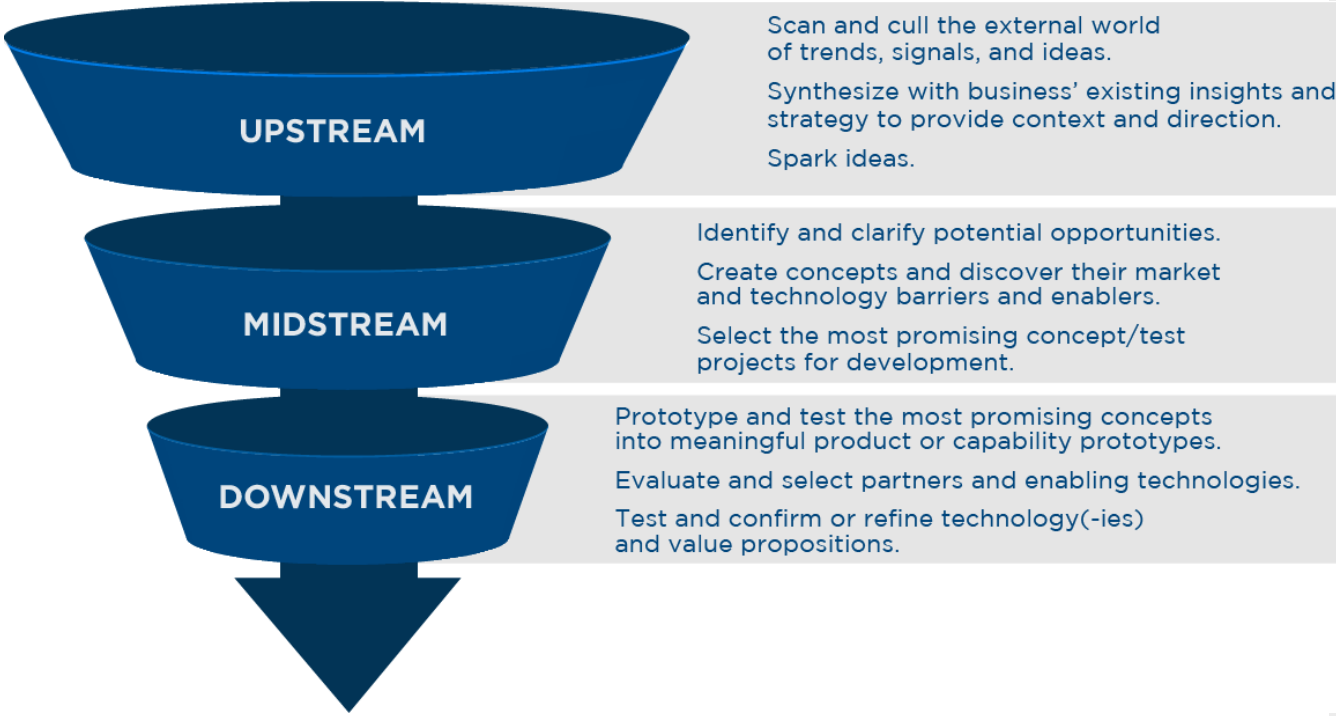


MAKING INNOVATION WORK
REQUIRES PEOPLE WITH THE RIGHT INSIGHTS,
AT THE RIGHT TIME, WITH THE RIGHT INTENTIONS.

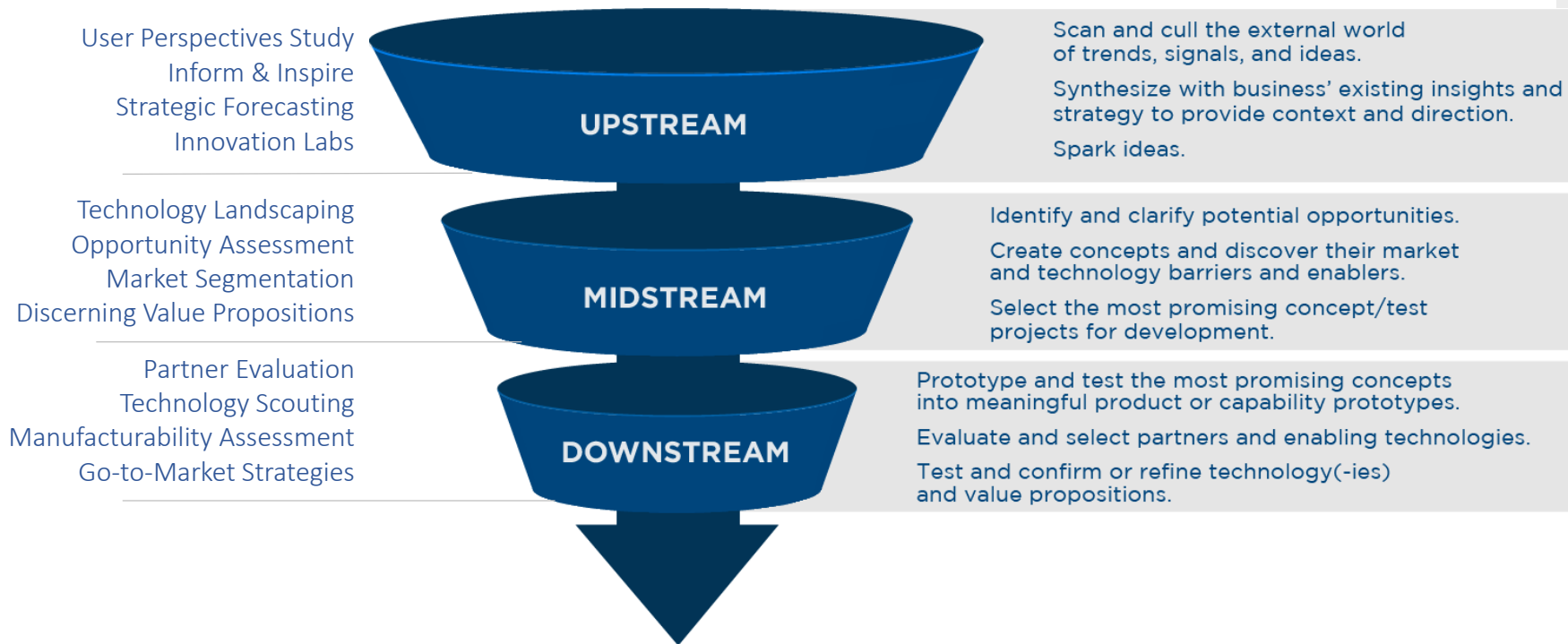
Right insights



Right time



Right time



Right intentions



LEARN

Expose the organization to the world of the possible: look outside and ahead
Translate data and information into insights and understanding
Bring the researcher mindset to explore beyond core capabilities
Create institutional knowledge



TEAM

Bring the power of multiple perspectives to complex problems
Move from insights to opportunities, functionalities, and concepts, together
Develop a shared understanding and basis for action
Systematically build conviction and buy-in to accelerate planning and action



DECIDE

Build confidence in decisions based on structured, rigorous analysis
Enable risk taking
Bring the analyst mindset to foster critical thinking
Make connections to discern implications for the business and over time

We make innovation WORKsheet

1

Stop, Think

- Use *We make innovation WORKsheet*

WE MAKE INNOVATION WORKsheet

This form is designed to help you select and plan an innovation project to meet your goals. Work through insights, coordinates, and intentions to ensure that your project meets your learning objectives, drives actionable decisions, and supports communication and alignment within your organization.

Project ID	
Project Name	
Lead	
Date	

YES NOT YET

1. Does the project inform/align with company strategy?
2. Can you clearly define a successful outcome?
3. Do you have the internal resources sufficient to proceed?
4. Have you gained needed management support?
5. Does it align with business needs and your organization's ability to act?

First, spend a moment to make sure you are set up for success. If you answer "Not Yet" to any of these questions, consider how to clarify your goals and objectives, gain the buy-in that you need, and/or better prepare and sequence the project. Otherwise, proceed.

Which best captures your needs, level of confidence and clarity sought, and/or mindset? Choose one.

- Upstream - Vision and Strategy**
Scan and cut the external world of trends, signs, and clues. Build early awareness about emerging technologies. Synthesize with business strategy to provide context and direction. Spark ideas.
- Midstream - Options and Planning**
Identify and clarify potential opportunities. Get oriented to fundamental technical approaches. Check concepts and discover market and technology barriers and enablers.
- Downstream - Solutions and Partners**
Solve for options that address a well-defined problem. Create prototypes and select. Create proof of concept and select. Create proof of concept and select. Test and confirm value propositions.

Which categories best represent the insight you seek? Choose as many as apply.

- User**
What are the characteristics of your target customer?
What are their perceived and actual needs?
How will the product address that need?
What factors drive purchase and adoption?
- Market**
Where is the world to focus?
What is the size of the opportunity?
Which business model is the best fit?
What are the paths to scale?
- Technical**
How might you achieve innovation?
What are the technical requirements?
What similar or complementary technologies exist?

Learn

A failure to innovate is often a failure to learn. Start strong by considering carefully what you need to learn, from where, at what level of fidelity. To write your learning objective(-s), answer these questions:
 What are you looking for (e.g., insights, opportunities, inspiration from products on the market, competitive intelligence, partners, technology enablers, market characteristics/segments)?
 What do you know already (and/or what is out of scope)?
 What level of fidelity is appropriate (e.g., illustrative concepts or comprehensive inventory)?
 How expensive should the inquiry be?

**MAKING INNOVATION WORK
REQUIRES PEOPLE WITH THE RIGHT INSIGHTS,
AT THE RIGHT TIME, WITH THE RIGHT INTENTIONS.**

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**RTI
INTERNATIONAL**

First, a check list

WE MAKE INNOVATION WORKsheet

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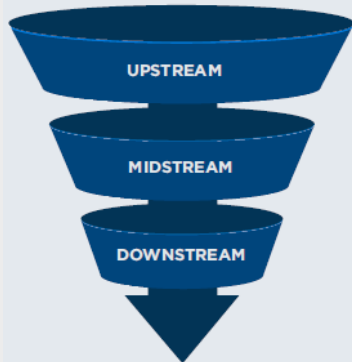
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YES	NOT YET	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1. Does the project inform/align with company strategy?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Can you clearly define a successful outcome?
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<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	5. Does it align with business needs and your organization's ability to act?

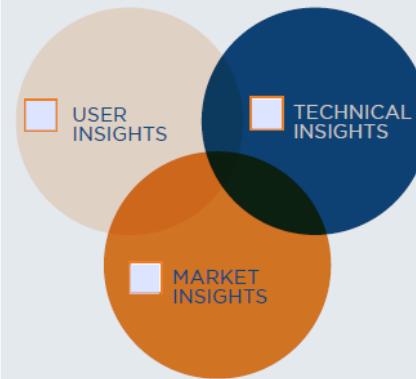
Coordinates and insights

Which best captures your needs, level of confidence and clarity sought, and/or mindset? Choose one.



- Upstream - Vision and Strategy**
Scan and cull the external world of trends, signals, and ideas. Build early awareness about emerging technologies. Synthesize with business' strategy to provide context and direction. Spark ideas.
- Midstream - Options and Planning**
Identify and clarify potential opportunities. Get oriented to fundamental technical approaches. Create concepts and discover market and technology barriers and enablers.
- Downstream - Solutions and Partners**
Scout for options that address a well-defined, unmet technology need. Evaluate and select. Create profiles or prototypes of an ideal solution, provider, partner. Test and confirm value propositions.

Which categories best represent the insight you seek? Choose as many as apply.



- User**
What are the characteristics of your target customer?
What are their perceived and actual needs?
How will the product address their needs?
What factors drive purchase and adoption?
- Market**
Where in the world to focus?
What is the size of the opportunity?
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Learn



Learn

A failure to innovate is often a failure to learn.

Start strong by considering carefully what you need to learn, from where, at what level of fidelity. To write your learning objective(-s), answer these questions:

What are you looking for (e.g., insights, opportunities, inspiration from products on the market, competitive intelligence, partners, technology enablers, market characteristics/segments)?

What do you know already (and/or what is out of scope)?

What level of fidelity is appropriate (e.g., illustrative concepts or comprehensive inventory)?

How expansive should the inquiry be?



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Team



Team

Be intentional about who you are engaging, how.

Start strong by considering the business, R&D, manufacturing, and other perspectives that can inform this effort, and/or constituents whose support you will need. Who are the audiences for this work?

To set your collaboration-related intentions, answer these questions:

From where did the request come?

Who is on the core team? Who will be the audience for deliverables? Who are other constituents?

How and when will each group be engaged?

Who can inform your effort? Whose work might this effort inform?



A large, empty light blue rectangular area intended for notes or answers to the questions listed above.

Decide



Decide

Think critically and act strategically

Start strong by setting forth decision factors and next steps from the get-go. What will happen next? To formulate decision factors, answer these questions:

To what business goal does the work correspond?

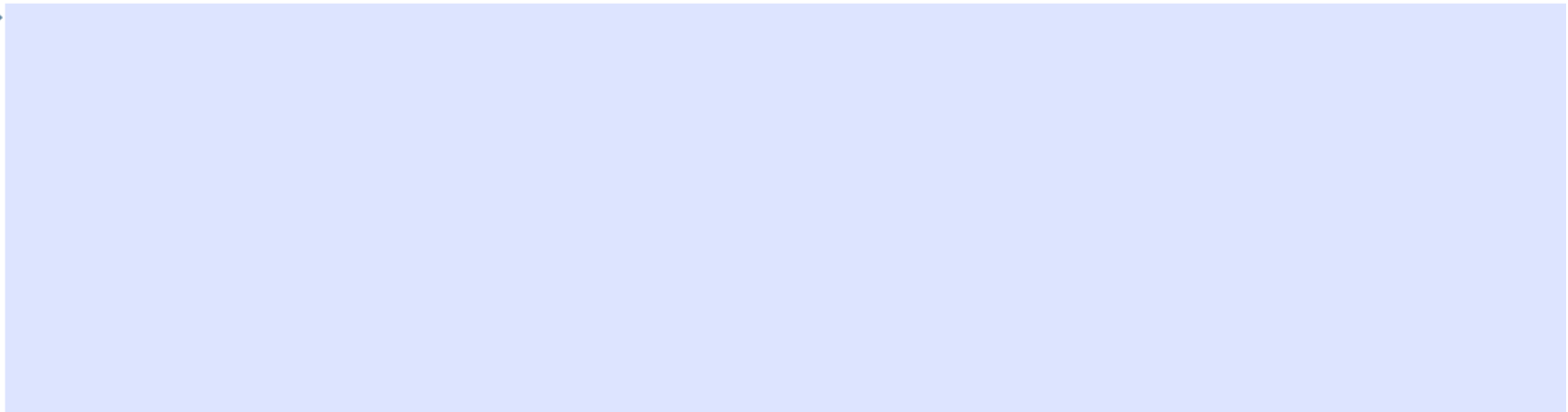
How will this information be used? What decision will it help you make?

Review your audience and constituents; what decision will it help them make?

On what types of information/factors do they tend to base decisions?

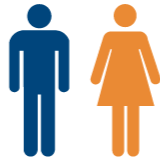
What predetermined criteria exist (e.g., attributes, qualities, technology readiness)?

What other constraints should you consider (e.g., cost, time, volume)?



MAKING INNOVATION WORK REQUIRES

PEOPLE



WITH THE RIGHT INTENTIONS

	LEARN	Expose the organization to the world of the possible: look outside and ahead Translate data and information into insights and understanding Bring the researcher mindset to explore beyond core capabilities Create institutional knowledge
	TEAM	Bring the power of multiple perspectives to complex problems Move from insights to opportunities, functionalities, and concepts, together Develop a shared understanding and basis for action Systematically build conviction and buy-in to accelerate planning and action
	DECIDE	Build confidence in decisions based on structured, rigorous analysis Enable risk taking Bring the analyst mindset to foster critical thinking Make connections to discern implications for the business and over time

THE RIGHT INSIGHTS

USER INSIGHTS

What are the characteristics of your target customer?
What are their perceived and actual needs?
How will the product address their needs?
What factors drive purchase and adoption?

TECHNICAL INSIGHTS

How might you achieve innovation?
What are the technical requirements?
What similar or complementary technologies exist?
What development collaboration models to explore?

MARKET INSIGHTS

Where in the world to focus?
What is the size of the opportunity?
Which business model is the best fit?
What are the paths to scale?

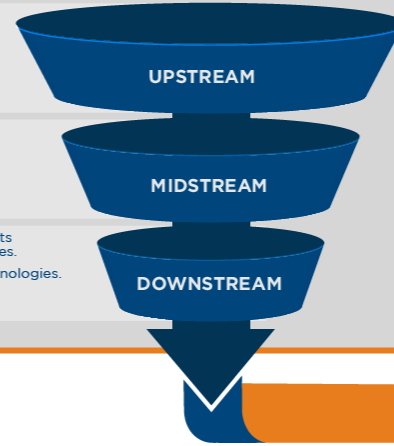
AT THE RIGHT TIME.

Focus, clarity, certainty increase as you progress down the funnel.

Scan and cull the external world of trends, signals, and ideas
Synthesize with business' existing insights and strategy to provide context and direction
Spark ideas

Identify and clarify potential opportunities.
Create concepts and discover their market and technology barriers and enablers.
Select the most promising concept/test projects for development.

Prototype and test the most promising concepts into meaningful product or capability prototypes.
Evaluate and select partners and enabling technologies.
Test and confirm or refine technology(-ies) and value propositions.



WHAT'S YOUR BLUEPRINT?

Technology Landscape



Questions? Thoughts? Musings?

To continue the conversation or start a new one, contact us!

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