

A green zigzag line graphic in the top left corner.

# Co-Creation

# The Key to Creativity, Engagement, and Impact

A graphic consisting of three green circles of different sizes in the bottom left corner.

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Chief Product Officer  
Don't Panic Labs

**Today's Goals**



**Understanding of engagement,  
decision making and commitment**





**How to leverage co-creation  
within your team and process**





**Unlocking creativity with  
divergent and convergent  
thought**

# **When to explore with code and when to learn through models**



A low-angle photograph of a modern building's facade, featuring white and brown geometric panels and glass windows. The building is set against a clear blue sky with a few wispy white clouds. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

**Create open discussion and  
perspective sharing**



# What's my perspective?

Software Developer

Faculty

Product Management

Innovation Consulting

Entrepreneur

Investment Diligence

IT Consultant

Project Management

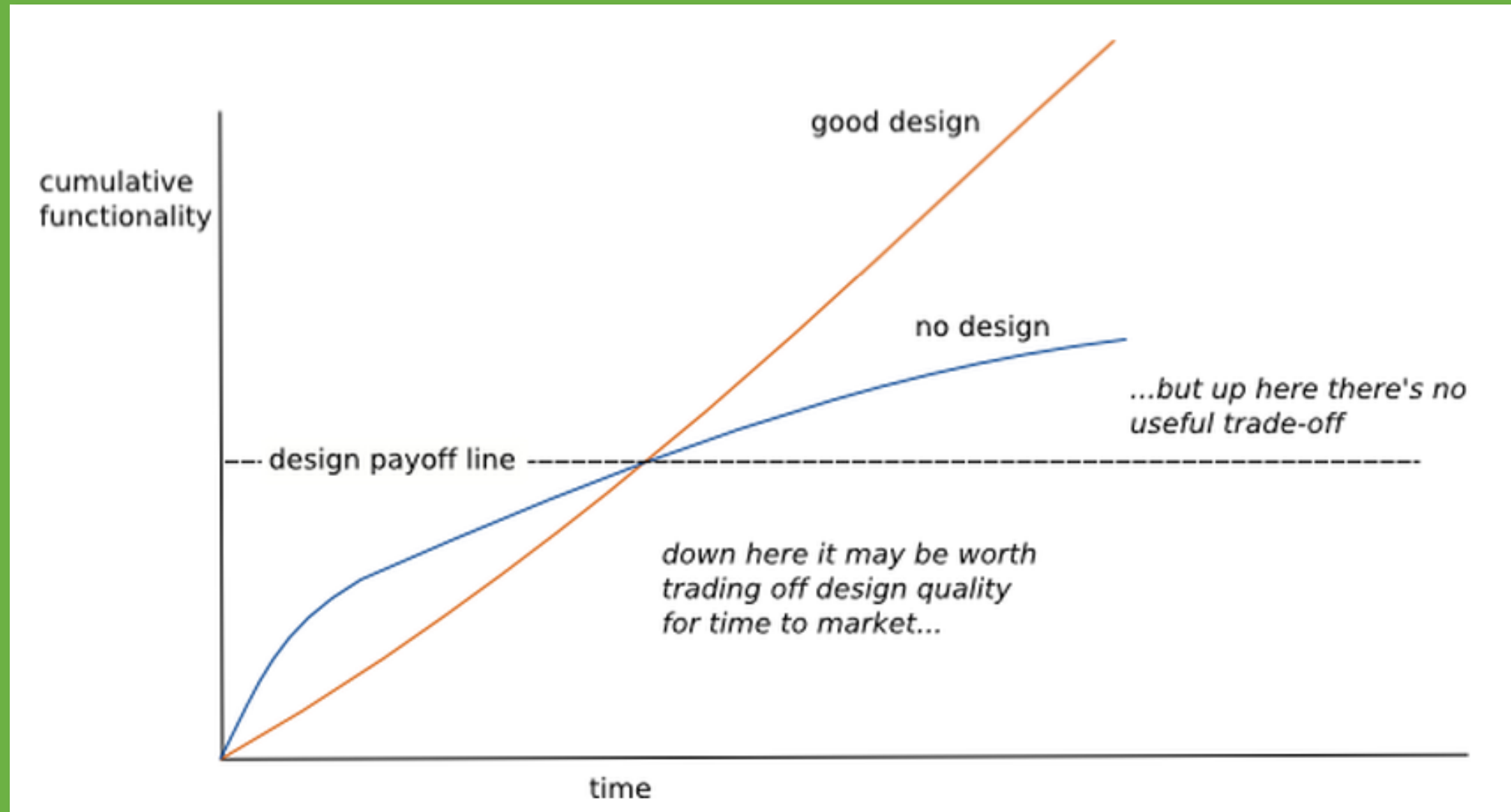
Business Development, Sales, Marketing





# Motivation

# Design Stamina Hypothesis (Impact)



# Creating A New Product

- Executive Fills out a Project Summary with Business Objectives
- Marketing Builds a Persona and Journey Map
- Product Manager Builds a User Story Backlog Complete with Epics & Stories
- Architect/Lead Engineer Estimates
- Product Manager Prioritize
- Team Roadmap/Release Plan
- Developer Starts Building Foundation
- Start on Login Module....



A meme featuring a close-up of a Klingon warrior's face from the Star Trek franchise, showing a menacing expression. Overlaid on the right side of the image is the text "IT'S A TRAP" in large, white, bold, sans-serif capital letters. The entire image is tilted diagonally. On the left side, there is a vertical list of green square bullet points, with the last one partially cut off. In the bottom right corner, there is a small grey speech bubble containing the text "DON'T P".

- A meme featuring a close-up of a Klingon warrior's face from the Star Trek franchise, showing a menacing expression with furrowed brows and a slight smirk. The image is tilted diagonally. Overlaid on the right side of the image is the text "IT'S A TRAP" in large, white, bold, sans-serif capital letters. On the left side, there is a vertical list of green square bullet points, with the text "Creating A" visible at the top. In the bottom right corner, there is a small grey speech bubble containing the text "DON'T P".

# Why is this “A Trap”?

- We know who the customer is
- We know who the users are
- We know what the users care about
- We know that they care about having this problem solved
- We know that they will pay money to have this solved
- We know our solution solves the problem
- We can solve this problem better than anyone else
- ..... (a whole lot more innovation specific statements)

# Why is this “A Trap”?

- We think we know who the customer is
- We think we know who the users are
- We think we know what the users care about
- We think we know that they care about having this problem solved
- We think we know that they will pay money to have this solved
- We think we know our solution solves the problem
- We think we can solve this problem better than anyone else
- We think ..... (a whole lot more innovation specific statements)
- Especially a trap when some variables are more known.



# We're Tackling "Wicked Problems"

- A problem that is difficult or impossible to solve because of incomplete, contradictory, and changing requirements that are often difficult to recognize
- Moreover, because of complex interdependencies, the effort to solve one aspect of a wicked problem may reveal or create other problems

Source: Wikipedia

# Engagement is Key to Success

- Defined as involvement and enthusiasm of employees in their work and workplace.
- Engagement is strongly connected with positive changes in customer loyalty, profitability, productivity, turnover, safety incidents, theft, absenteeism, quality, wellbeing, and organizational citizenship
- Only 23% of employees worldwide and 33% in the U.S. fall in the "engaged" category.

Source: Gallup

# **Foundations** **of Co-Creation**

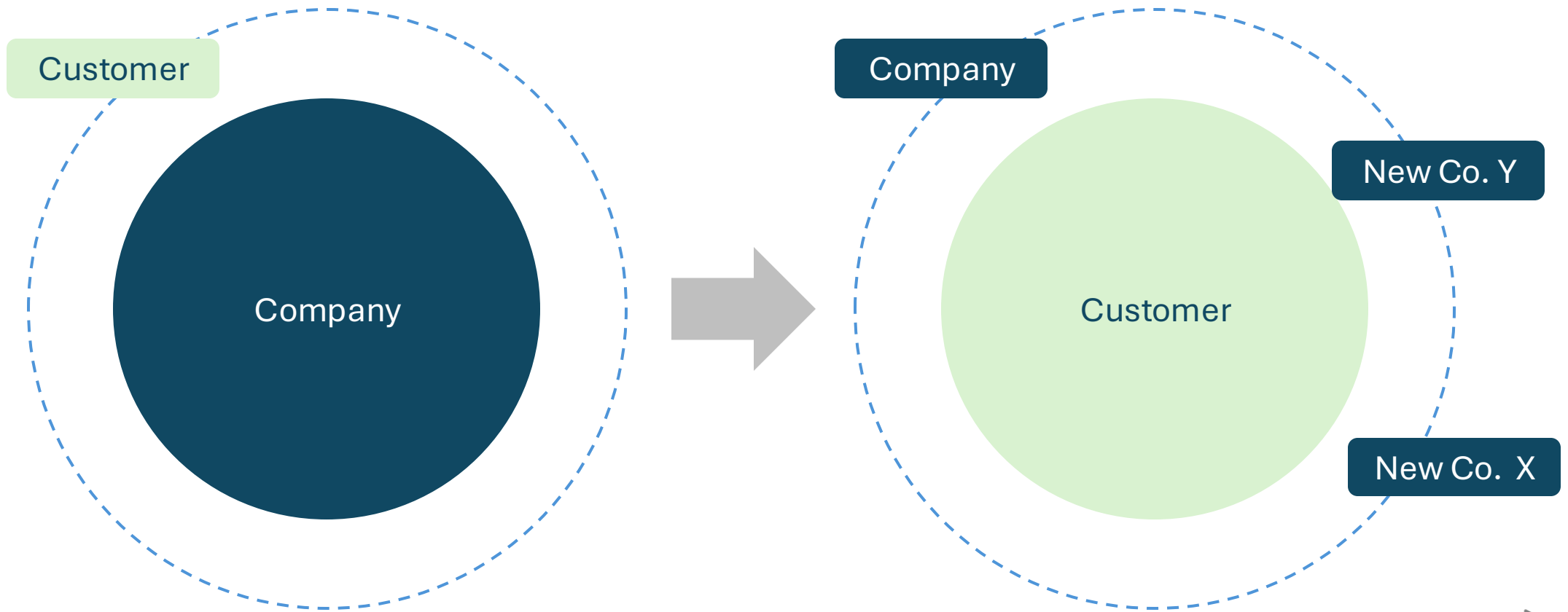


# Co-Creation Defined

- **Co-creation**, in the context of a business, refers to a product or service design process in which input from consumers plays a central role from beginning to end

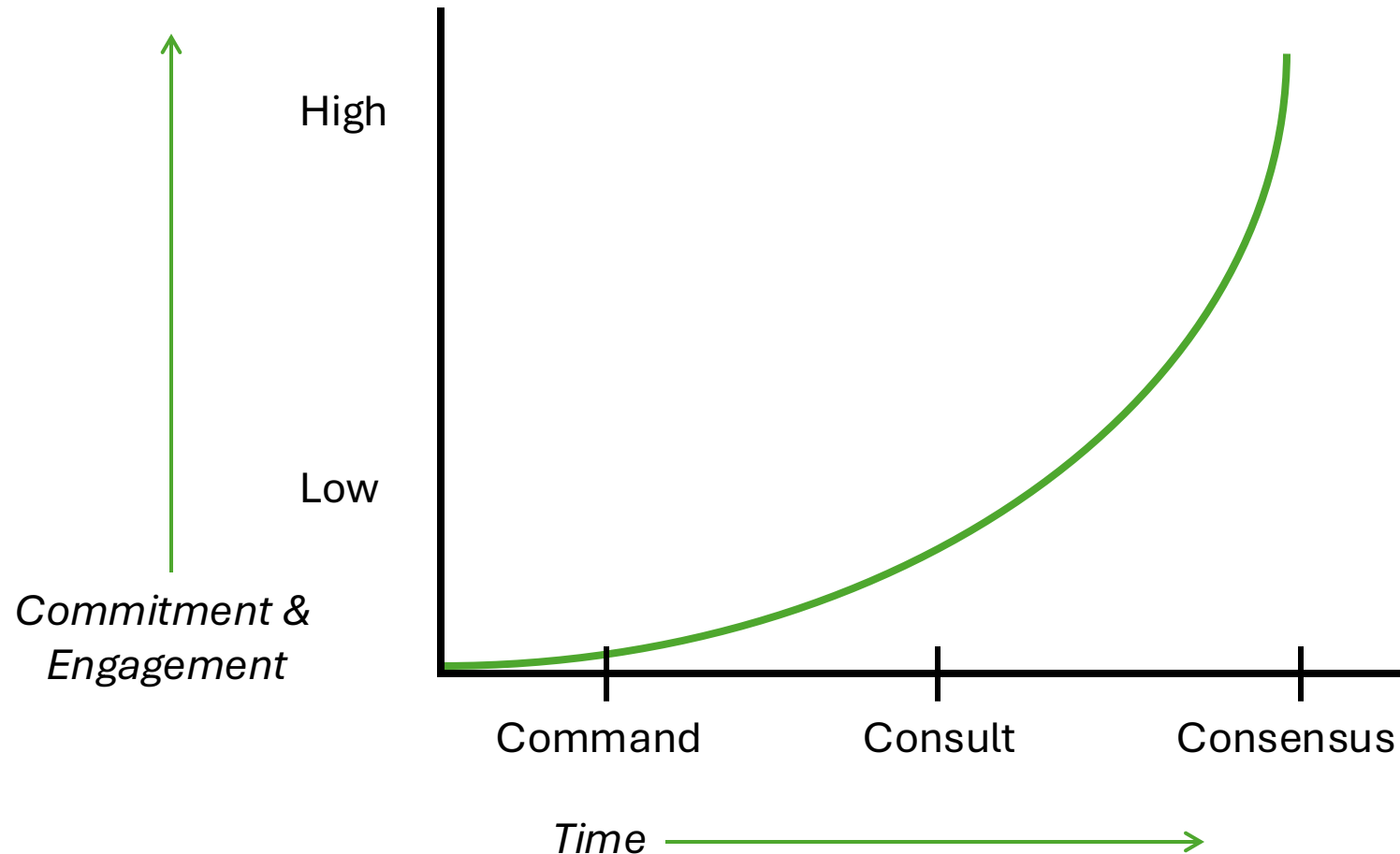
Source: Wikipedia

# Customer Centricity Mindset



Source: Ahmed Sidkey

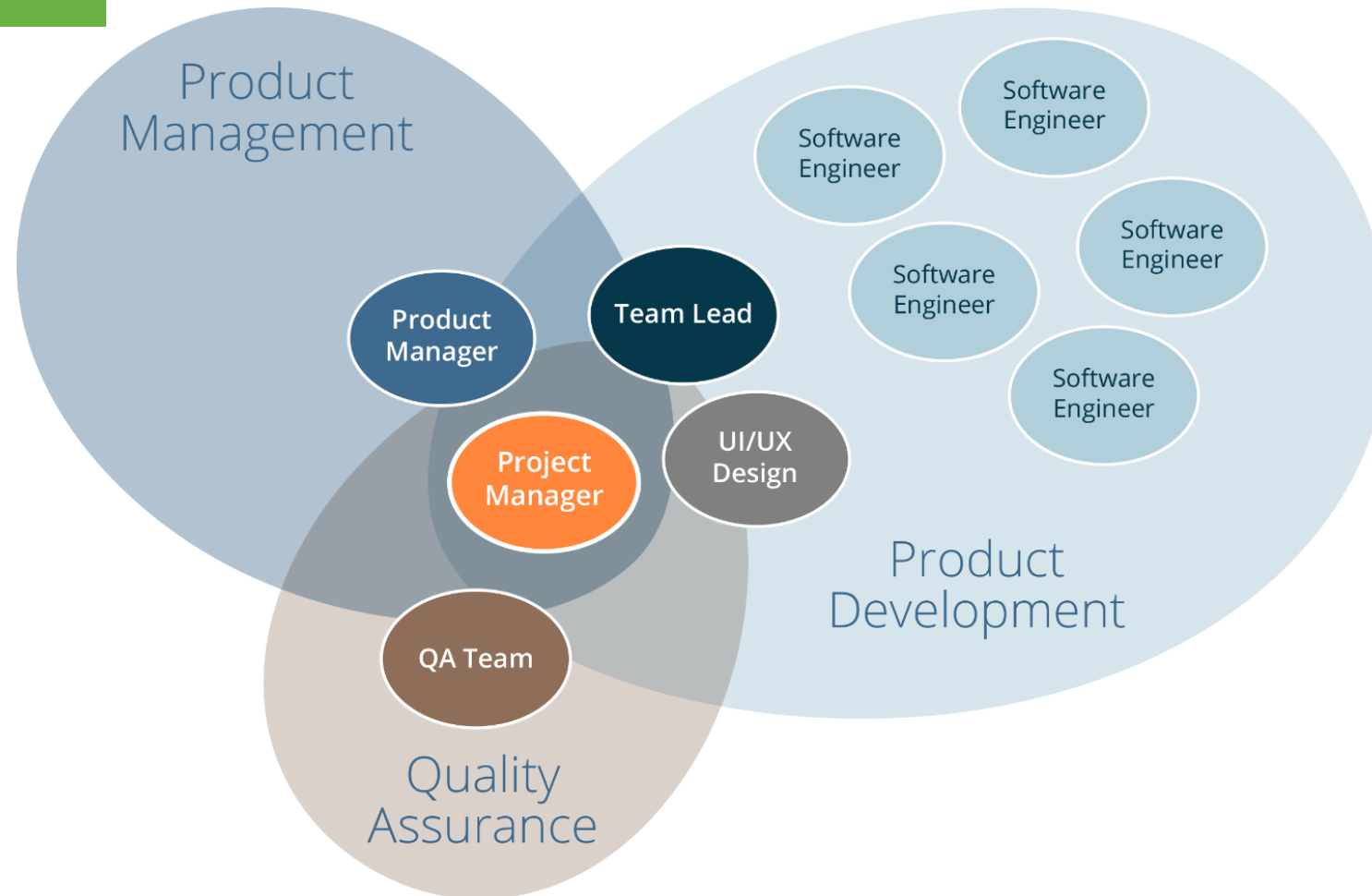
# Approaches for Team Decision Making



# Co-Creation Clarified

- **Co-creation**, in the context of a business, refers to a product or service design process in which
  - customers are actively involved and
  - all team members engage directly with customers and/or through critical thought to build empathy and shared understanding.
- Startups strive for this level of involvement
- Corporations often fear this level of involvement

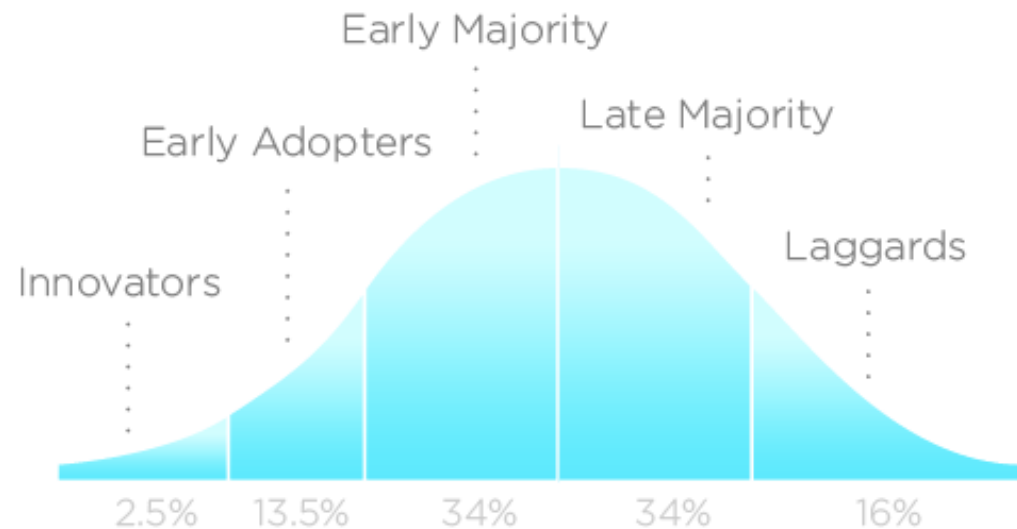
# Selecting Team Members to be Involved





# Selecting Customers to be Involved

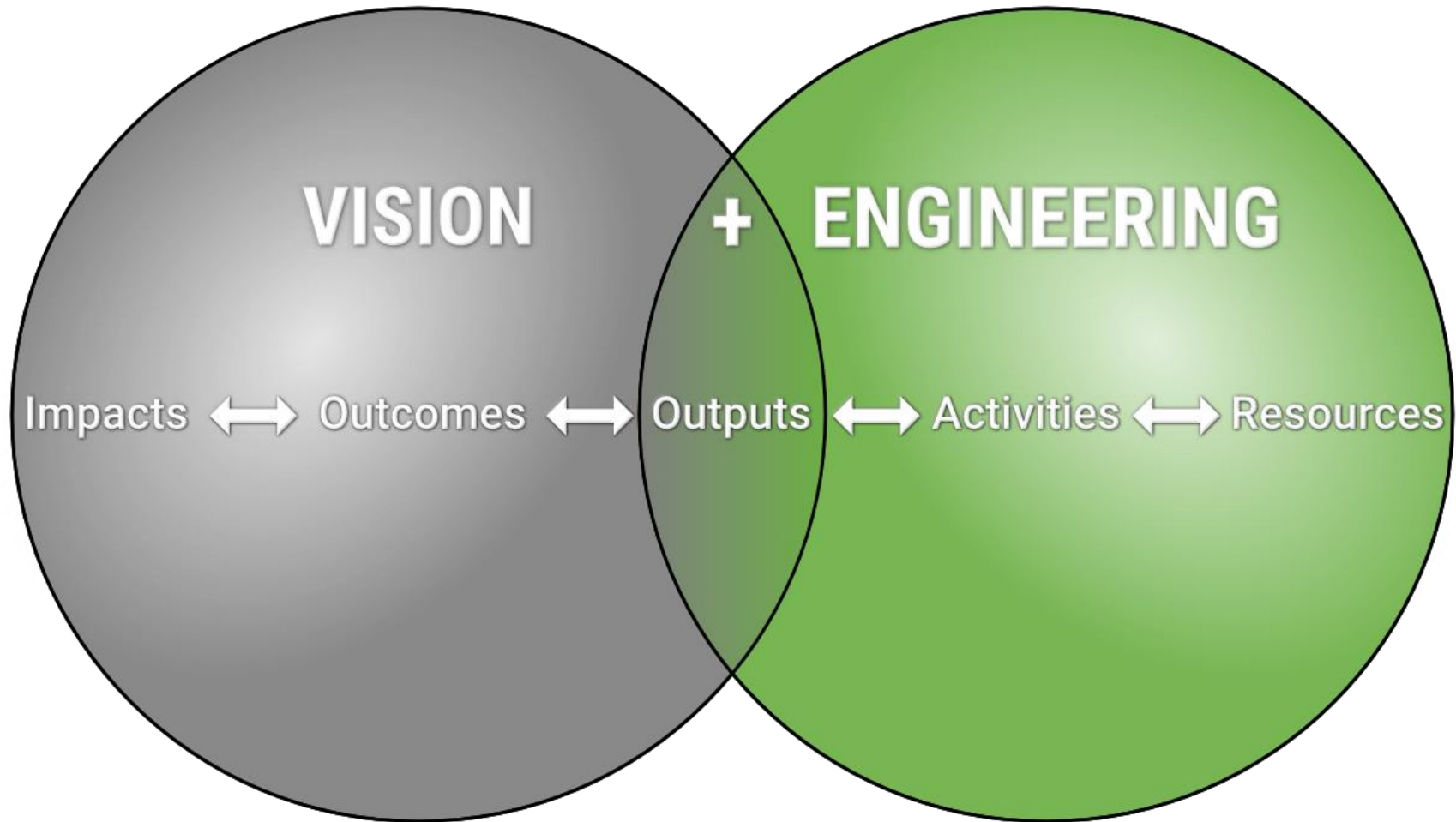
- Representative of Product Lifecycle States
- Empowered
- Domain Expert
- Capacity to participate
- Willing to challenge



INNOVATION ADOPTION LIFECYCLE

# **Models to Align** **in Co-Creation**

# Expand Field of View with Context



# Lean Canvas (Product-Centric)

## Lean Canvas

Designed for:		Designed by:		Date:	Version:
Problem	Solution	Unique Value Proposition	Unfair Advantage	Customer Segments	
	Key Metrics		Channels		
Cost Structure			Revenue Streams		

# Strategyzer Innovation Scorecard

## Opportunity

The team has shown the...

Value



Expected  
return

Financial potential of the idea.

None

Little

Limited

Some

Strong

Very  
strong

0

1

2

3

4

5

## Risk Reduction

The team has evidence that shows...

Evidence & confidence

## Desirability



Customer segment

Our critical customer segments have the jobs, pains, and gains relevant for selling our value proposition.

No  
evidence

First light  
evidence  
(Say)

Light  
evidence  
with real  
artefacts  
(Say)

Light  
call-to-action  
evidence  
(Do)

Strong  
call-to-action  
evidence  
(Do)

Irrefutable  
evidence  
from markets

0

1

2

3

4

5



Value proposition

Our value proposition resonates with our critical customer segments.

0

1

2

3

4

5



Channels

We have found the best channel(s) to reach and acquire our critical customer segments.

0

1

2

3

4

5



Customer  
relationship

We have developed the right relationships to retain customers and repeatedly earn from them.

0

1

2

3

4

5

## Feasibility

Evidence & confidence



Key resources

We have the right technologies and resources to create our value proposition.

0

1

2

3

4

5



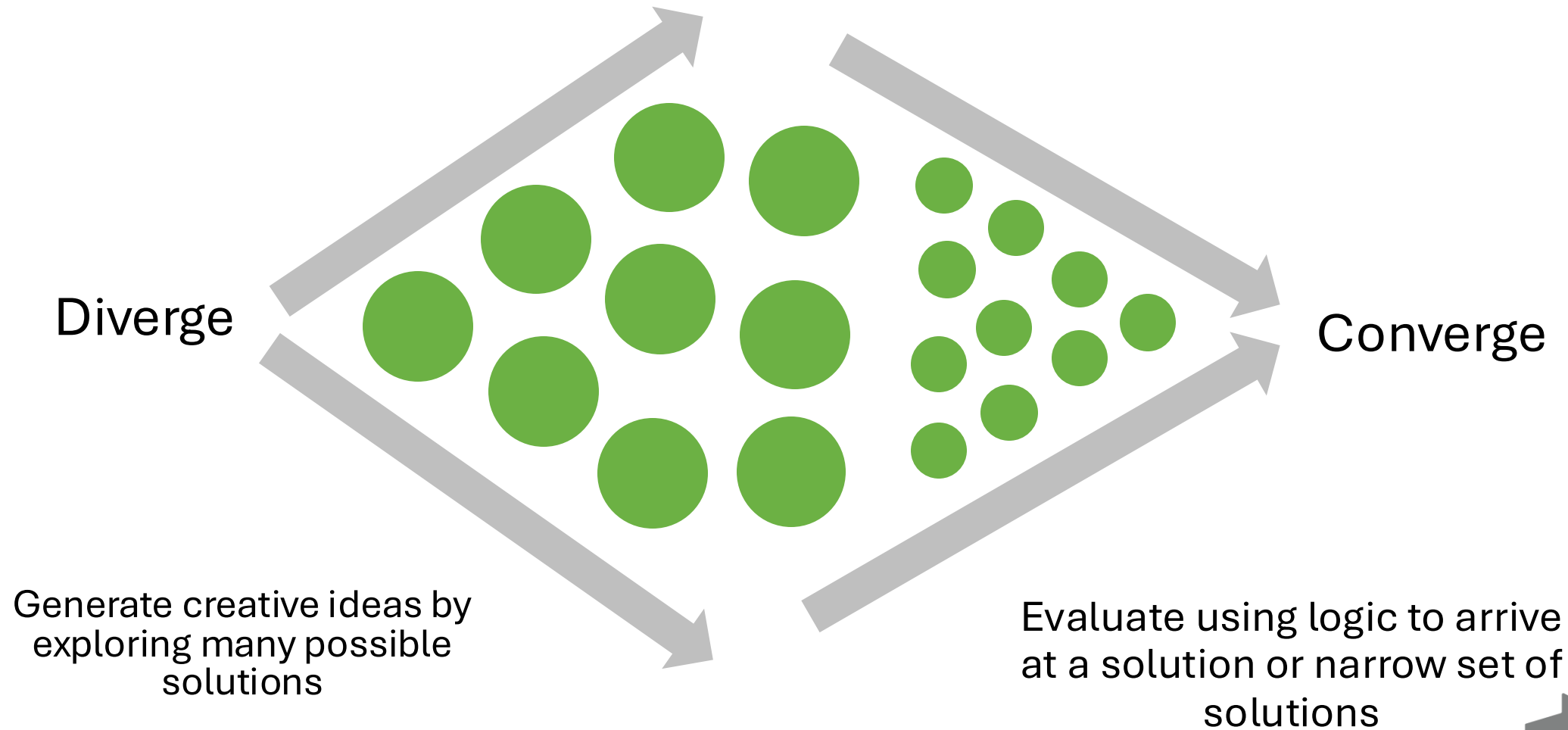
# **Ideation Tools** **to Co-Create**

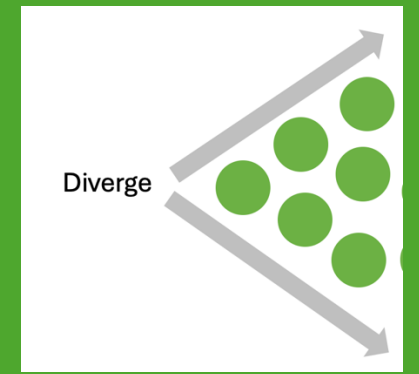
# Today's Example: EliteForm

- Strength & Conditioning Performance Management Platform
- Leverages Computer Vision
- R&D Effort
- Developed with Huskers
- First Customer & Validation Kansas Men's Basketball
- Launched December 2011
- International Adoption



# Divergent vs. Convergent Thinking





# **Diverge with** **Structured Activities**

# Creativity

- Innovation and solving complex problems requires creativity as a core component.
- Creativity is not just an inherent personal trait, it is a skill that can be learned by individuals and teams.



# Mash Up

- Pick two broad categories of things.
  - *1<sup>st</sup> Category – Related to your idea/product or challenge*
  - *2<sup>nd</sup> Category - Something desirable/novel that's relatable to all involved*
- *List characteristics of both categories*
- *Combine together to see what ideas are generated*

# Mash Up Example

- Strength Training
  - Changing weights on bars
  - Great feeling of successfully finishing a set
  - Timer on the wall
- *Hotel Stay*
  - *Greeted by name*
  - *Luggage carried in*
  - *Fully stocked mini-bar*
  - *Concierge*
- *Mashup*
  - Great feeling of successfully finishing a set x *Fully stocked mini-bar*
    - *Idea: Finishing a set gives you a free new recovery drink to try*
  - *Changing weights on bars x Concierge*
    - *Idea: Someone available that removes really heavy weights from the bars*

# Newspaper Articles

- Write a feature article from a perspective of a successful launch/company 5-10 years in the future
- Write an investigative article from the perspective of a failed launch/company explaining what went wrong and why they missed the opportunity
- *Alternative idea: App store review format*

# Newspaper Article Example

- Example quotes
  - EliteForm's success stemmed from their realization leveraging recruiting pressures could help their product be noticed in a market full of snake oil and failed promises. By selling a single unit for recruiting purposes, it could provide immediate benefits and a trial that built confidence for adoption.
  - EliteForm's failure stemmed from their inability to seamlessly integrate technology into the weight lifting experience. Weight rooms had poor wireless coverage, touchscreens frequently did not respond from sweat and chalk, and athletes bent the mounting brackets. The only silver lining was that multiple athletes set new personal record because they were so mad at the machines.
- What do we learn from these articles?
  - Business objectives
  - Keys to success (priorities)
  - Non-functional requirements
  - Risks / Challenges

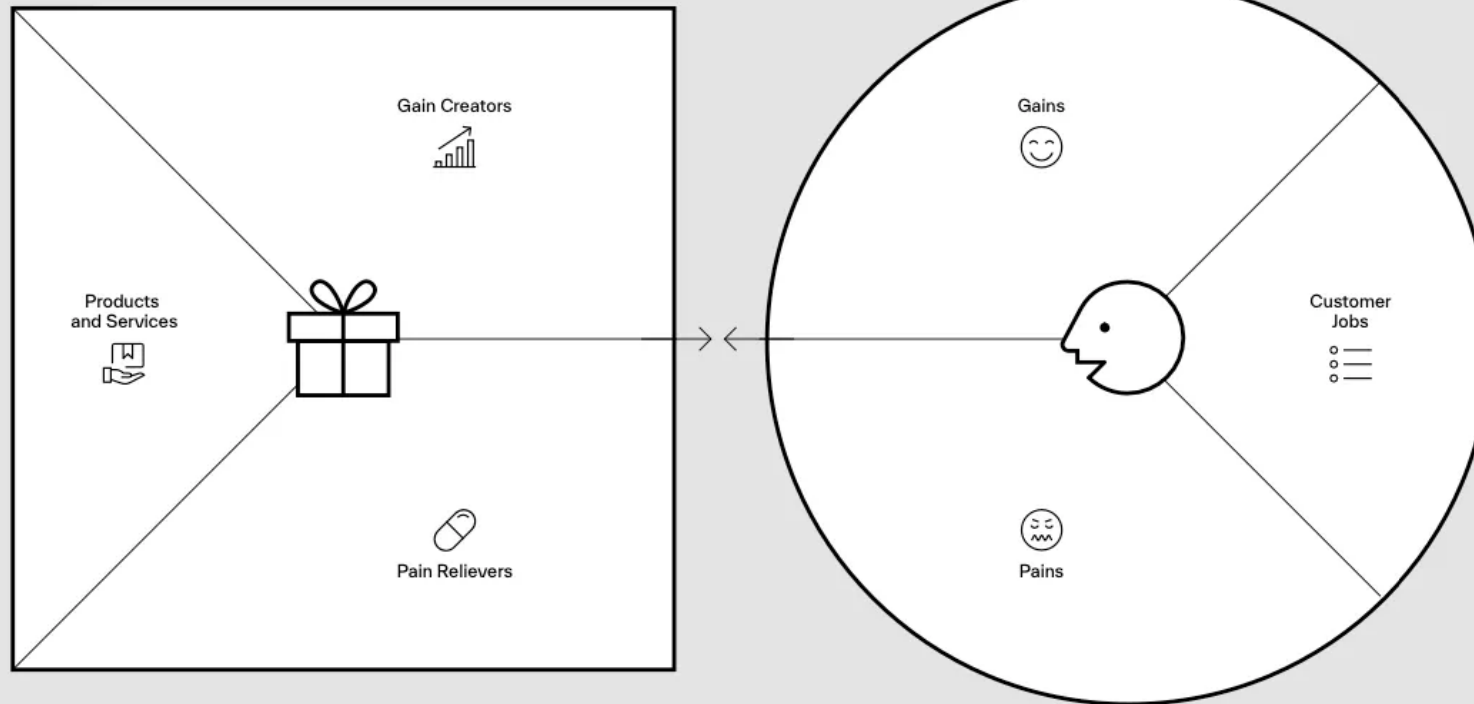
# Strategyzer Value Proposition Canvas

## The Value Proposition Canvas

Value Proposition:

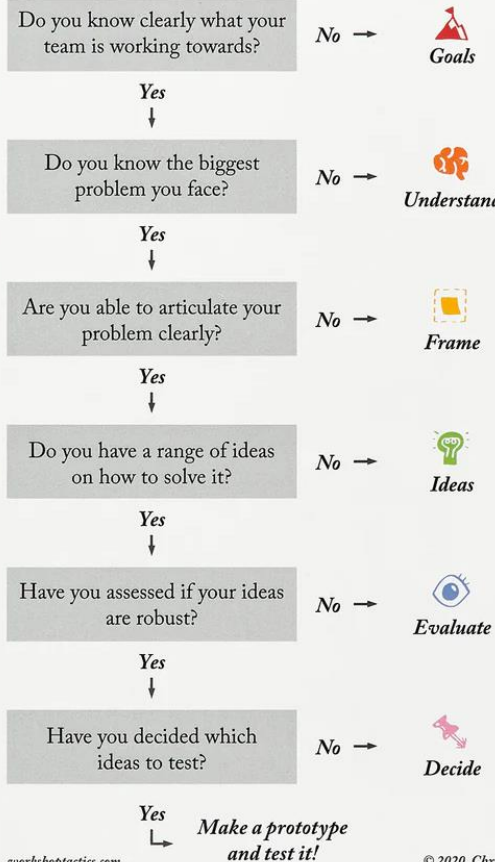


Customer Segment:



# Expanding your Toolbox

## Workshop Strategy System

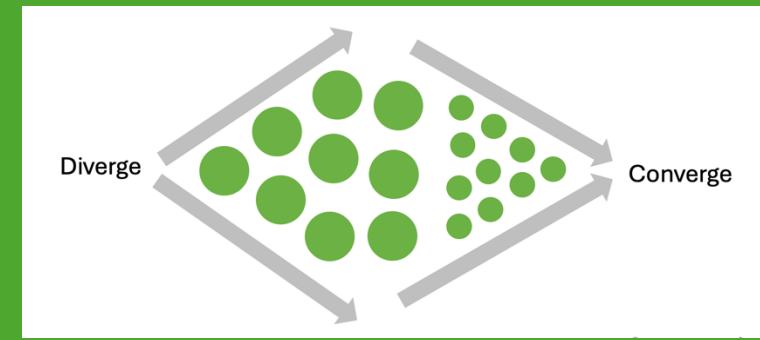


## Objectives and Key Results

1. Before the meeting, invite everyone to submit their top objective for the team to achieve in the next quarter. An objective is a qualitative and aspirational “end-state”. For example, *launch the best possible version of Workshop Tactics beta*.
  2. Put each objective on a sticky note, put them up on a wall and then 🖐️ **Theme Sort**.
  3. Debate and use 🌸 **Blind Vote** to determine your primary objective. Having two objectives defeats the purpose of “radical focus”.
  4. List as many metrics as you can in 10 minutes. They should show you’re closer to achieving the objective. For example: *Number of pre-orders, proof-reading rounds, positive feedback received*.
  5. Use 🖐️ **Theme Sort** and 🌸 **Blind Vote** to group and decide on three metrics.
  6. Turn your three metrics into Key Results by setting specific, quantitative targets. For example: *Get x pre-orders a month, proof-read by x different people*.
  7. Agree on specific numbers for each Key Result. You should feel like you have a fifty-fifty chance of achieving each one in the next quarter. For example, *Get 40 pre-orders a month (5/10)*.
- workshoptactics.com Origin: Andy Grove, 1983 © 2020, Chxrles Ltd

Ask  
ChatGPT

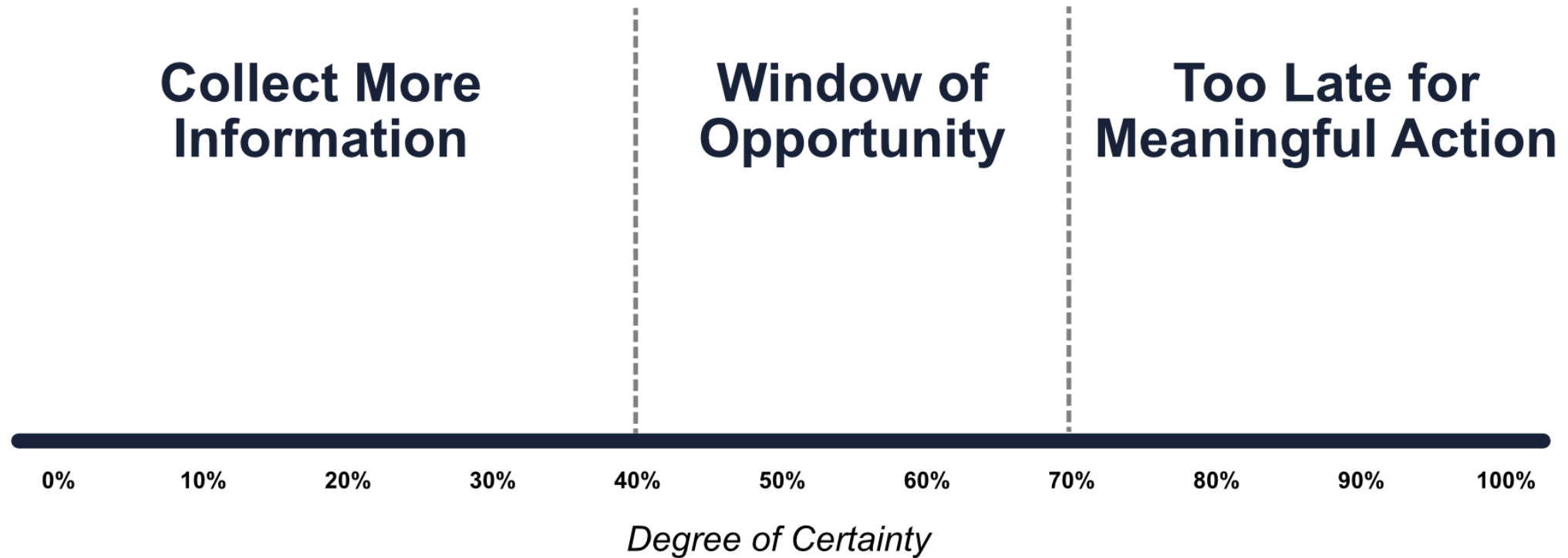




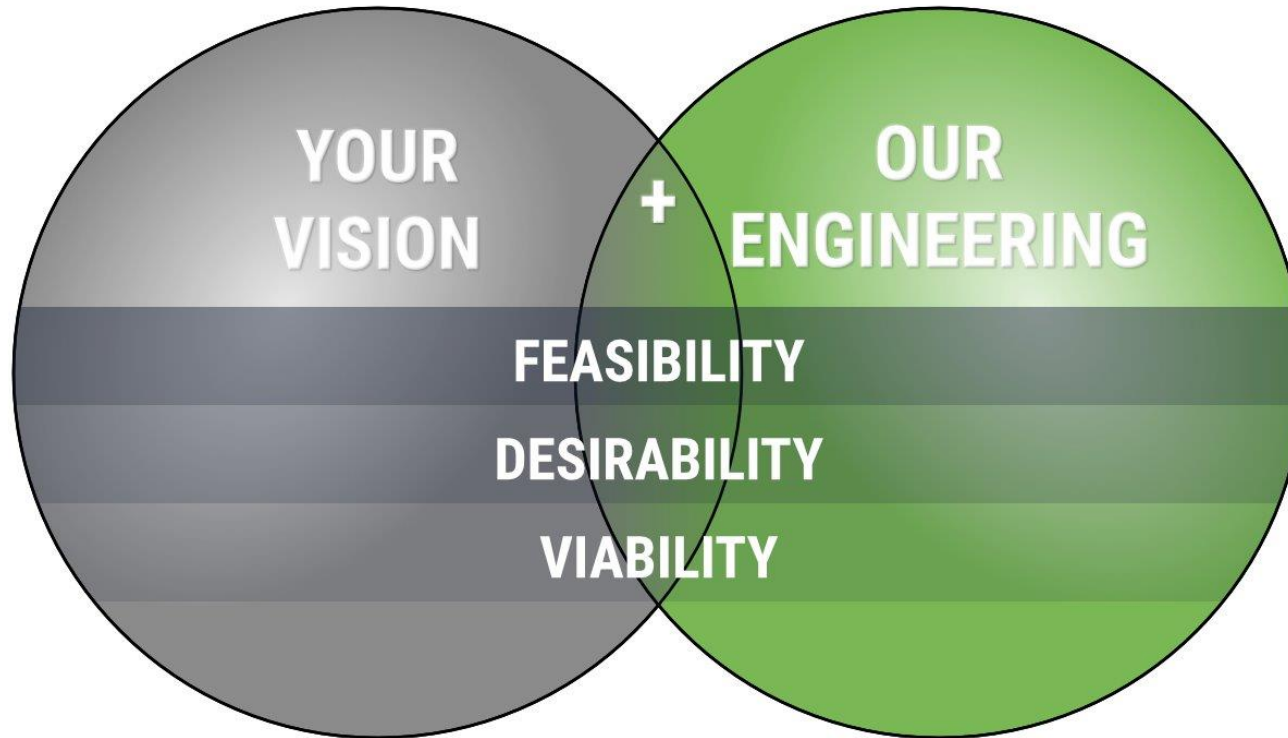
# Converge with Critical Thought



# The “Powell Rule”



# Sustainable Innovations



**Feasibility** = Can we build it? Is it legal/ethical? Is it practical?

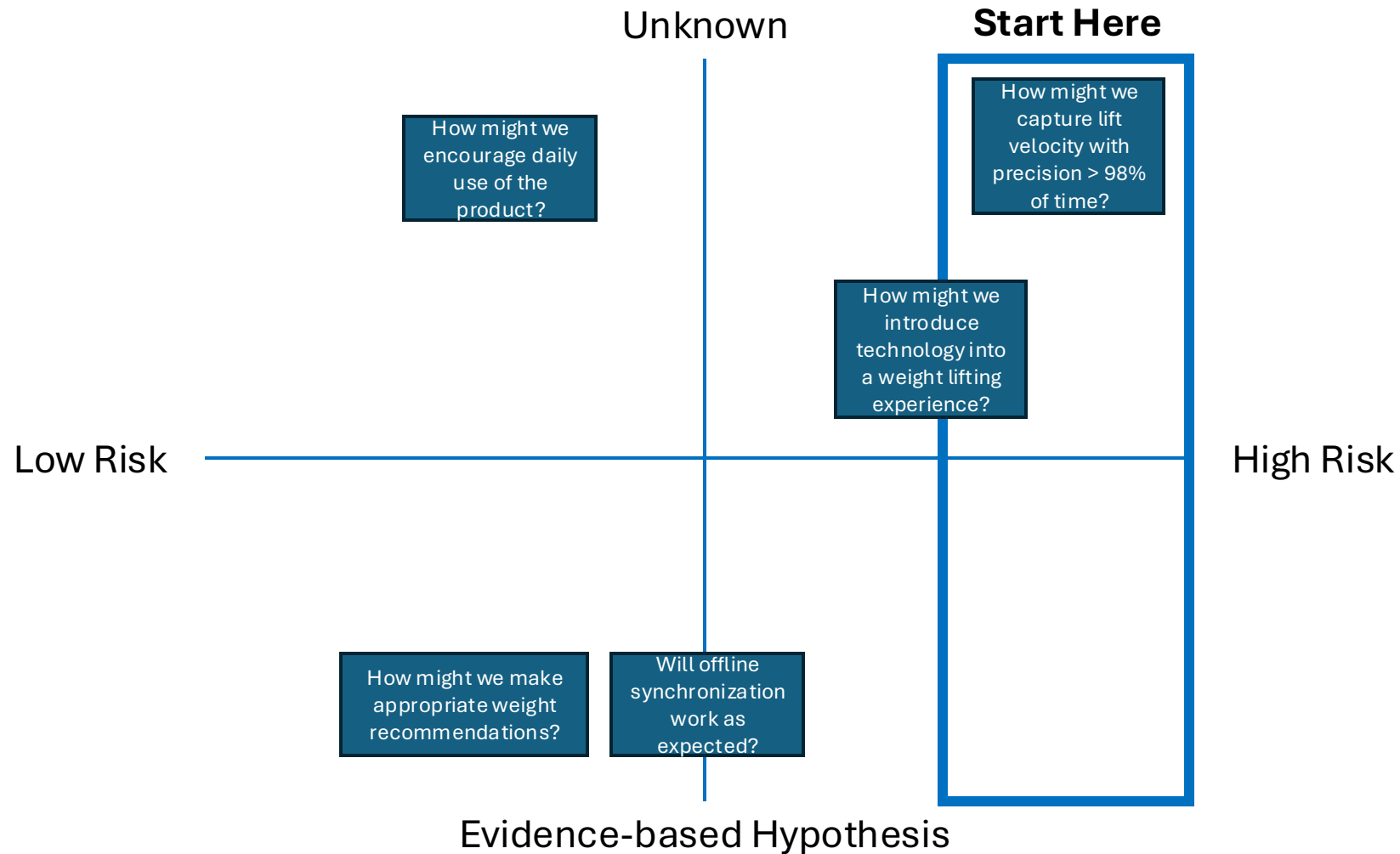
**Desirability** = Do customer want it? Does it actually create value?

**Viability** = Is there a balance between fundraising, costs, and revenue?

# Identifying Key Questions

- Learnings by answering may materially change:
  - Our understanding of the customer problem
  - Our vision of the proposed solution
  - Figure out if it's possible to accomplish something
  - Determine the degree of difficulty
- Phrase them as: How might we...?
  - Questions are very non-threatening
  - Invite ideation on solution and process to test a hypothesis
  - Invite participation and alignment

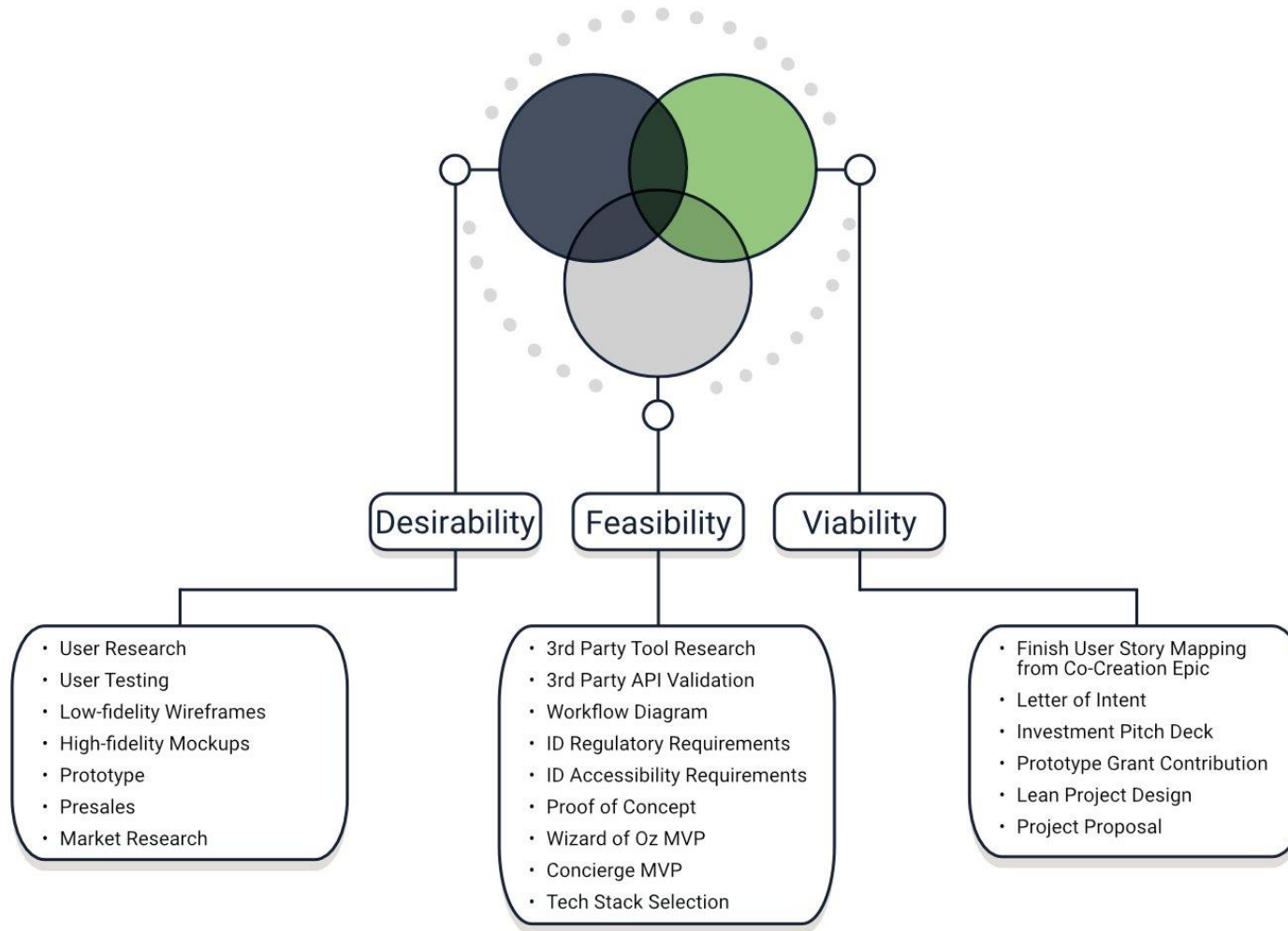
# Prioritization of Key Questions



# Developing Testable Hypotheses

- Question
  - How might we detect the bar so that we might track it?
- Hypothesis
  - We can isolate and track the hands of an athlete on the bar through a CV algorithm.
- Experiment to Run
  - Evidence if True
    - We are able to detect the hands on  $> 90\%$  of frames
  - Evidence if False
    - We experience groups of frames without hands being detected

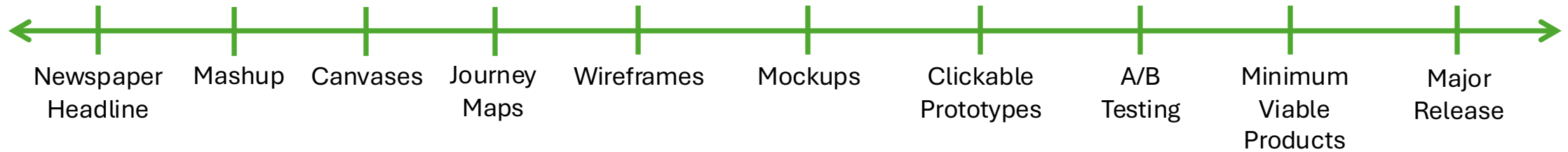
# Utilizing the Right Tools



# Iterating in Models vs. Code

Models

Code



<b>Fidelity</b>	<i>Low</i>	-----	<i>High</i>
<b>Feedback</b>	<i>Directional</i>	-----	<i>Detailed</i>
<b>Behavioral Evidence</b>	<i>Low</i>	-----	<i>High</i>
<b>Effort to Change</b>	<i>Low</i>	-----	<i>High</i>
<b>Rework Potential</b>	<i>Low</i>	-----	<i>High</i>



Contact me for my slides

Feedback is a gift

# Open Discussion



Blog: <https://dontpaniclabs.com/bzimmer>

Email: [bzimmer@dontpaniclabs.com](mailto:bzimmer@dontpaniclabs.com)

# Thinking/Talking Mindsets

- **Preacher**

- Unwavering conviction to beliefs and seeks out validation. While passionate, door is closed to alternatives.

- **Prosecutor**

- Proving one's point and winning arguments by seeking flaws and weaknesses in others arguments.

- **Politician**

- Desires to win approval and win popularity. Crafts message to appeal to audience. Prioritize popularity over pursuit of truth.

- **Scientist**

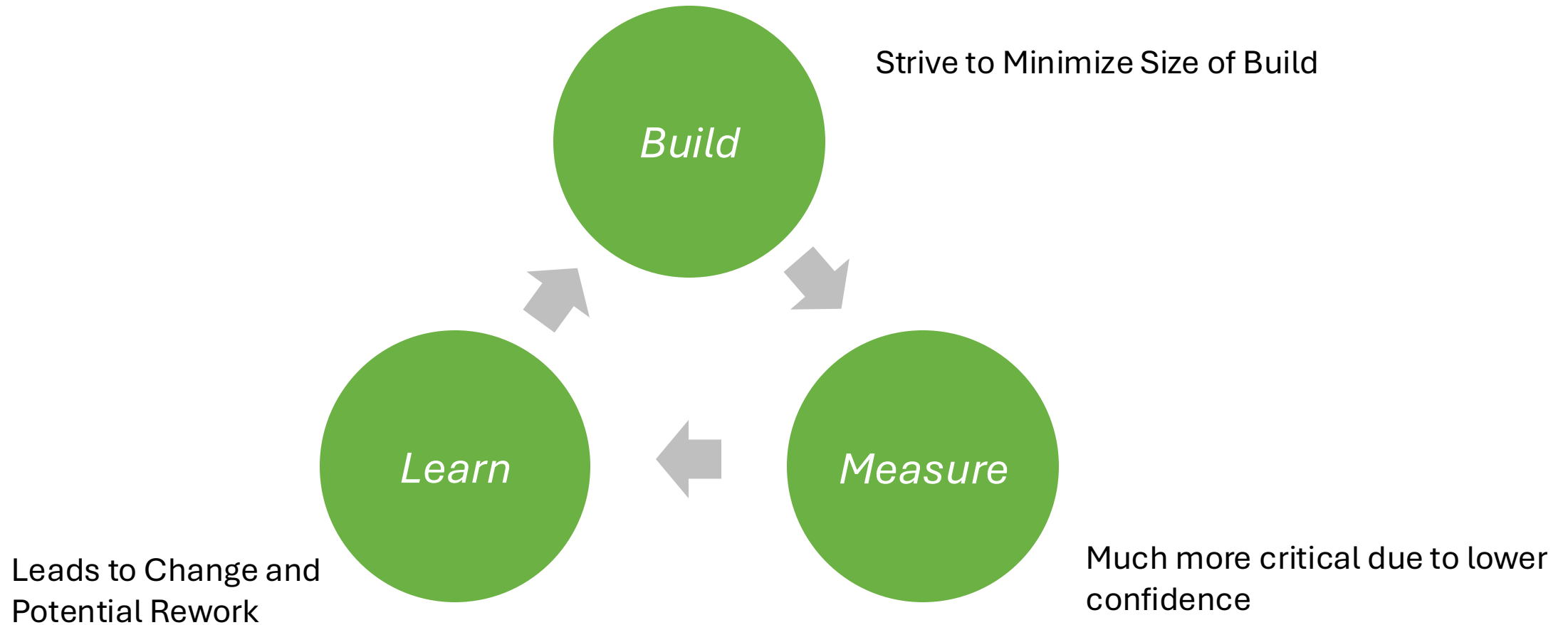
- Intellectually curious, willingness to question assumptions, and openness to new evidence.

# Key to Engagement

- **Autonomy:** The desire to direct our own lives
- **Mastery:** The urge to get better and better at something that matters
- **Purpose:** The yearning to do what we do in the service of something larger than ourselves

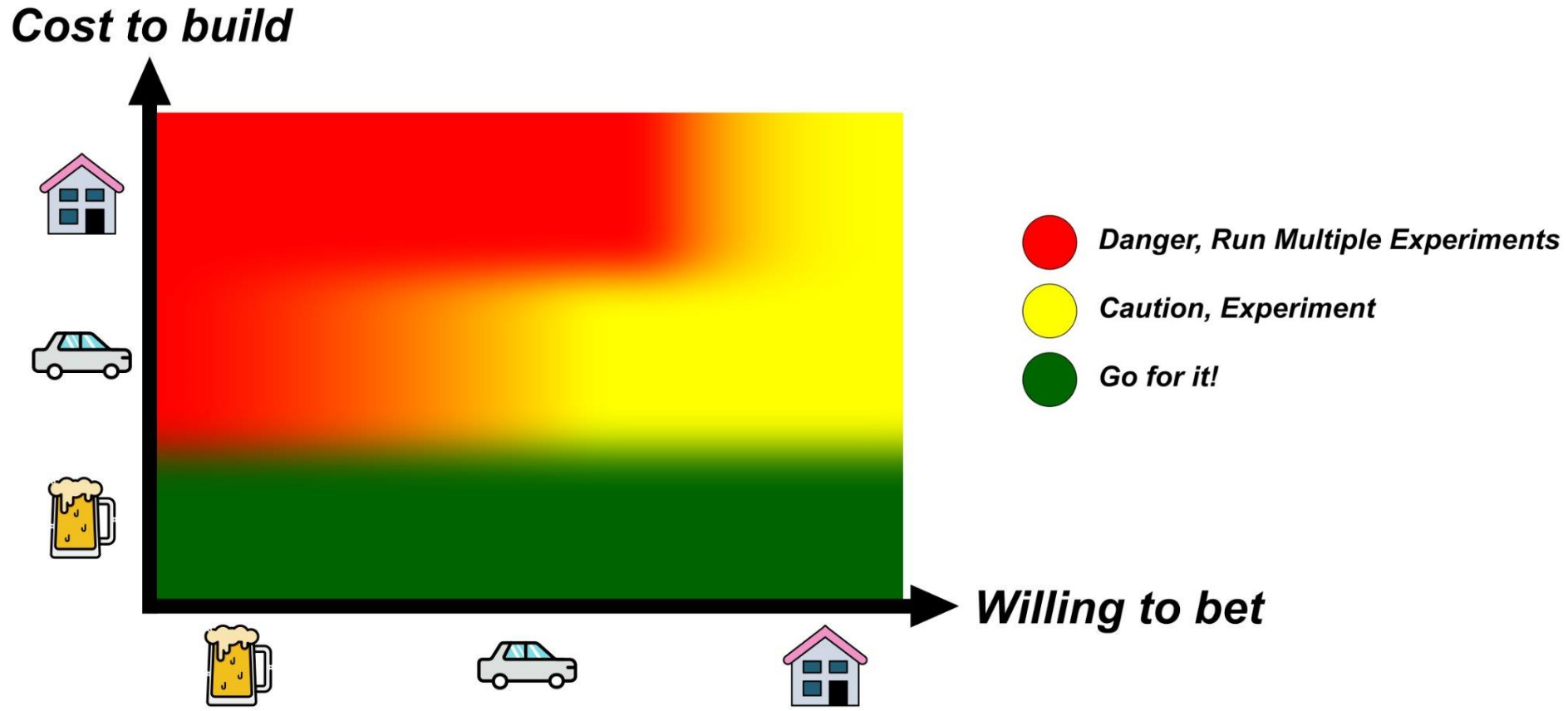
Source: Daniel Pink, Drive

# Build, Measure, Learn Cycle



Lean Startup by Eric Ries

# How much validation do you need?



Unknown

# Quick Recap on Concepts

- Wicked Problem Definition
- Design Stamina Hypothesis
- Build Measure Learn
- Methods of Decision Making
- Outcomes over Outputs
- Canvases
- Divergent & Convergent Thinking
- Newspaper Headlines & Mashups
- Design Thinking
- Key Questions
- Iteration in Models & Code

# How is Innovation Different?

- Hypotheses vs. Knowns
- Learning, Discovery, Validation vs. Predictable, Scalable, Repeatable
- Experimentation & Evidence-Based Mindset
- More Difficult Access to Potential Customers
- Everyone on the team needs plenty of context and the opportunity to engage in problem-solving.



# A Design Thinking Process

- What is?
  - Baseline understanding
- What if?
  - Divergent thinking
- What wows?
  - Another round of divergent thinking
- What works?
  - Convergent thinking