

Experimental excellence

# THE BLUEPRINT FOR BUILDING EXPERIMENTAL EXCELLENCE

To emerge as an experimentation leader, organisations can rely on the following blueprint and build it into the business architecture for faster learning and improved decision-making.

## The blueprint contains a set of main actions:

1. **Build experimental excellence across core functions** – a cross-functional decision-validating unit, consisting of world-class experimenters equipped with an extensive repertoire of fast-paced, low-cost experiments.
2. **Adjust the decision-making process and governance**, allowing to kill decisions fast and accelerate choices and initiatives that are validated.
3. **Set up a structured intake process and clear criteria** for what deserves an experiment. Make it as short as possible – preferably two weeks from input to outcome – and design clear metrics and thresholds for validation/invalidation of the choice at hand.
4. **Align the financial planning process** with a persevere/pivot/kill mindset, aiming for a metered approach where funding of ideas, initiatives and projects are chopped up so tranches can be unlocked as choices are being validated.
5. **Design strategies to account for uncertainty** and base them on validated assumptions monitored and tested.

This blueprint for building experimental excellence needs backing from new behavioural principles, institutionalised across the organisation and especially among top management. To make a difference, the behavioural principles need to materialise in established anchor points, e.g. meetings.

Therefore, the principles should be considered in the context of the management model and designed around a new set of conversations taking place in either existing or new interactions.

## The principles supporting the new behaviour are:

- **Habituate experimental behaviour** to build a system that fosters experimentalists and corporate entrepreneurs rather than demotivates them since these people are excellent at experimenting and creating learning at speed.
- **Expand the management model** to cater for and value experimentation, stating learnings and earnings as equally important in the organisation.
- **Celebrate learnings and reward kills** since it is a natural part of any de-risking process.
- **Embed experiments in critical decision-making** processes and make sure that choices, especially those that come with high uncertainty, are subjected to experimentation.

In total, the principles and actions described here are the road map towards an experiment-oriented organisation and an embedded de-risking system that learns faster than competition and enables leaders to focus on the few bets worth the investment.

