

Rapid PMO Experiments to Turbo-Charge Delivery

John McIntyre, HotPMO



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Business demands always outstrip supply. How do you decide which projects and features to focus on?

Your product managers may talk about building small 'MVPs' but what does that really mean?

In this interactive session, John McIntyre from HotPMO will introduce the concept of Rapid Delivery Experiments which will change the way your portfolio approves projects, whilst massively reducing uncertainty and risk.





“THE MVP HAS JUST THOSE FEATURES CONSIDERED SUFFICIENT FOR IT TO BE OF VALUE TO CUSTOMERS AND ALLOW FOR IT TO BE SHIPPED OR SOLD TO EARLY ADOPTERS. CUSTOMER FEEDBACK WILL INFORM FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PRODUCT.”

— SCOTT M. GRAFFIUS

GRAFFIUS, SCOTT M. (2016). *AGILE SCRUM: YOUR QUICK START GUIDE WITH STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS*. NORTH CHARLESTON, SC: CREATSPACE.

The most important piece of the MVP is the learning, which is why my definition has always been “the minimum amount of effort to learn”. This keeps us anchored on outcomes rather than outputs. - *Escaping the Build Trap, Melissa Perri*



Aditya Gaur  @adltyagaur · Apr 9

6/ Here, [@gaganbiyani](#) details Minimum Viable Testing (MVT), an alternative to MVP.

MVT is an inductive adaptation of MVP.



GREG ISENBERG ✓

@gregisenberg



90% of minimum viable products can start as a landing page and a group chat

4:02 PM · May 31, 2022 · Twitter Web App

111 Retweets **15** Quote Tweets **871** Likes

PROJECT ASSUMPTIONS LOG

Project Number:	<Please complete>
Project Name:	<Please complete>
Project Manager:	<Please complete>
Project Sponsor:	<Please complete>

GUIDANCE NOTES:

"It ain't what you don't know that gets you into trouble. It's what you know for sure that just ain't so " (Mark Twain). To avoid the project getting into avoidable trouble, all assumptions should be recorded in the Assumptions Log, identifying their impact and, as importantly, how will it be

ID	Date Identified	Identified by (author)	Assumption Description (it is assumed that...)	Impact if Assumption is proven Invalid	Impact Level	Assumption Owner (who)	Action (how the assumption will be tested)	Assumption Status	Last Update / Comment	Date of Last Update
A1										
A2										
A3										
A4										
A5										
A6										
A7										
A8										
A9										
A10										





@rikhigham
Rik Higham

Why you should focus on *Riskiest Assumption Tests* and forget about MVPs.



There is a flaw at the heart of the term Minimum Viable Product: it's not a product. It's a way of testing whether you've found a problem worth solving. A way to reduce risk and quickly test your biggest assumption. Instead of building an MVP identify your *Riskiest Assumption* and *Test* it. Replacing your MVP with a RAT will save you a lot of pain.

MVP is used so much it's lost its original meaning. It's often mistakenly applied to the first release of a rudimentary product. As a result, the "MVP" ends up much more complex than the quick test it was supposed to be and far too shoddy for a released product.

What is a Business Experiment?



**A WAY TO REDUCE THE RISK IN YOUR
BUSINESS QUICKLY
BY REMOVING UNCERTAINTY**

**A WAY TO REDUCE THE RISK IN YOUR
BUSINESS QUICKLY
SO THAT YOU CAN VALIDATE WHETHER
YOUR GENERAL DIRECTION IS RIGHT**

**A WAY TO REDUCE THE RISK IN YOUR
BUSINESS QUICKLY
SO THAT YOU CAN CONFIRM WITH DATA
THAT YOUR IDEA IS LIKELY TO WORK**

**A WAY TO REDUCE THE RISK IN YOUR
BUSINESS QUICKLY**

**SO THAT YOU CAN AVOID WASTING TIME
AND ENERGY ON IDEAS THAT WON'T
WORK.**

WHY EXPERIMENT?

**TO VALIDATE OUR ASSUMPTIONS IN AN
AGILE, COST EFFECTIVE AND EVIDENCE-
BASED MANNER**

**WHY EXPERIMENT?
TO VALIDATE OUR
ASSUMPTIONS IN AN
AGILE, COST
EFFECTIVE AND
EVIDENCE-BASED
MANNER**

“Iterative phases of work with frequent reassessment and adaption of plans”

WHY EXPERIMENT? TO VALIDATE OUR ASSUMPTIONS IN AN AGILE, **COST** **EFFECTIVE** AND EVIDENCE-BASED MANNER

“methods that bring the greatest advantage when the amount spent is considered”

**WHY EXPERIMENT?
TO VALIDATE OUR
ASSUMPTIONS IN AN
AGILE, COST
EFFECTIVE AND
EVIDENCE-BASED
MANNER**

“requires us to make decisions based on the best available, current, valid and relevant data”

WRITE DOWN 6 THINGS THAT YOU ARE NOT SURE ABOUT, I.E. THAT YOU DO NOT HAVE EVIDENCE ABOUT

These uncertainties could be about something new; your stakeholders; your projects; your value proposition; how you communicate; what you communicate; your team structure; your project framework ...

DECIDE WHICH IS YOUR BIGGEST ASSUMPTION

Share it with the person next to you | Ask the person next to you WHY they believe it is their biggest assumption

Business Experiments

1. Design

- Identify your Assumptions
- Write the Hypothesis
- Select the right experiment
- Define the Variables and the Metrics of your Hypothesis
- Define the Population you are Targeting

2. Run

- Perform the Experiment
- Analyze the Results
- Data Driven Decision

3. Next Steps

What makes a good hypothesis?

Your business hypothesis is

- An assumption which your future operating model, or project relies on
- What you need to learn about to understand if your vision might succeed.

What makes a good hypothesis?

The best hypotheses are:

- Testable – can you validate it as being true or false?
- Precise – have you clearly defined what success looks like?
- Discrete – does it have one thing you want to test?

What makes a good hypothesis?

We (I) believe that PMO Managers will want to outsource rollup reporting for a fixed weekly cost of \$120

CONVERT YOUR ASSUMPTION INTO A HYPOTHESIS

What makes a good experiment?

- Alignment
- Cost
- Evidence Strength
- Setup time
- Run time

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Key Questions:

- Level of uncertainty for the hypothesis
- Urgency: How long do you have until the next major decision point?

Rules of thumb:

- Go cheap and fast
- Design experiments that produce the strongest evidence, given your constraints
- Reduce uncertainty as much as you can before you build anything (Discovery then Validation)

Testing Business Ideas

You're holding a field guide for rapid experimentation.
Use the 44 experiments inside to find your path to scale.
Systematically win big with small bets by...

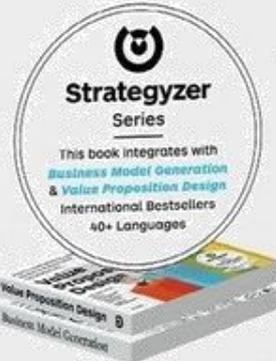
Testing Business Ideas

strategyzer.com/test

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WILEY



What type of experiments should we run?

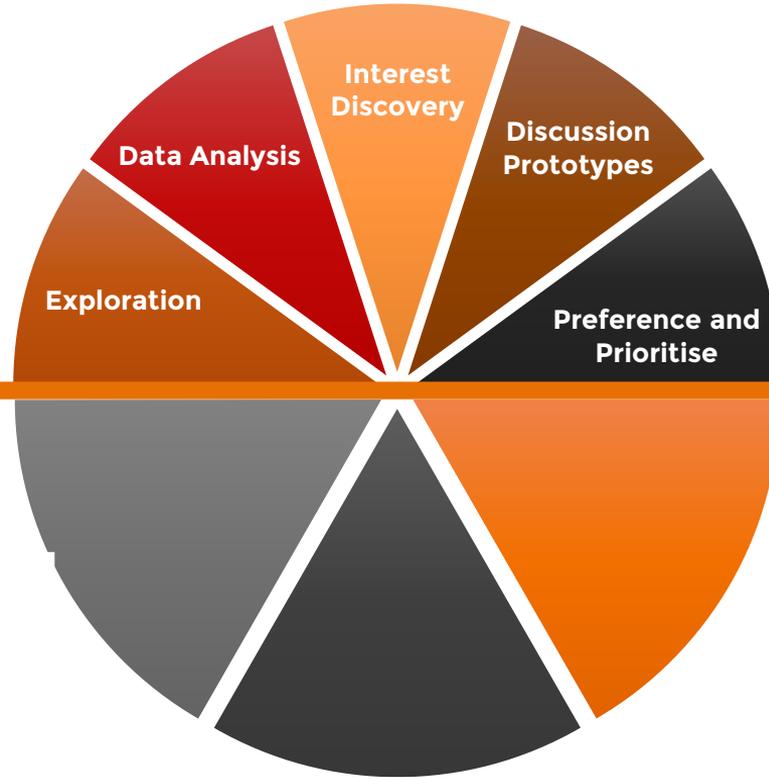


Discovery



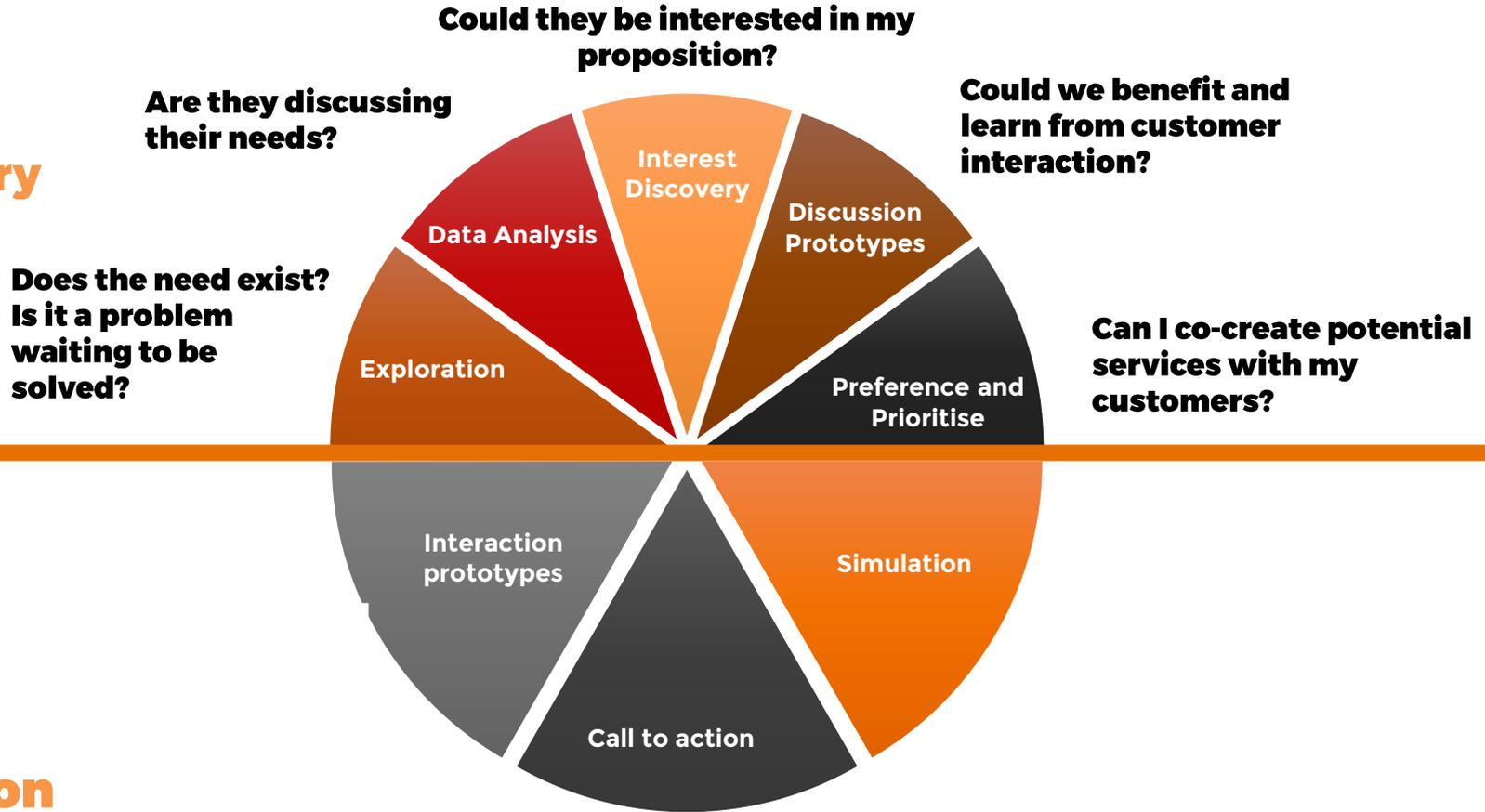
Validation

Discovery

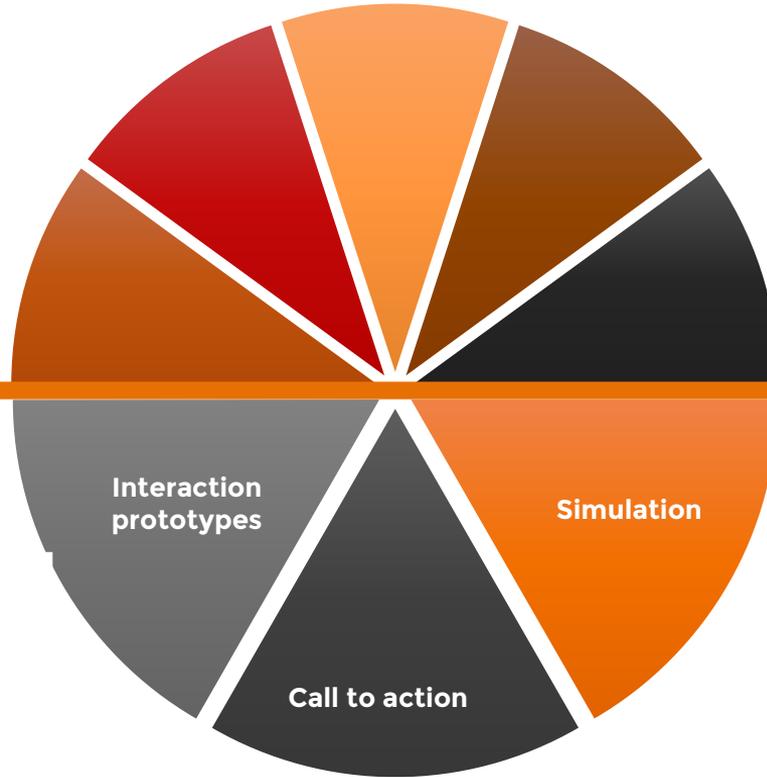


Validation

Discovery

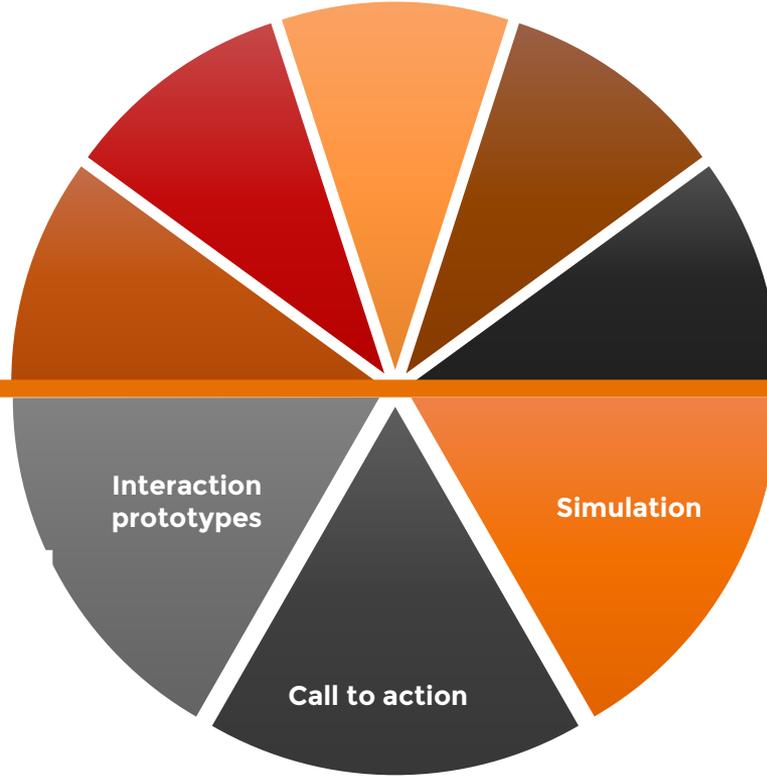


Discovery



Validation

Discovery



Can they experience it and derive value?

Will they commit to using it?

Validation

Will they agree to use it?

**WHICH EXPERIMENT WORKS BEST
FOR YOUR FIRST HYPOTHESIS?**

Remember - is the desired outcome of your test well defined?
it is clear? Testable? Measurable? And it contains a cause and an outcome
From which there are only two possible results.

Hypothesis:
"We believe that..."

Test:
"to verify, we will..."

Metric:
"and measure ..."

Result validation :
"We were right if ..."

Action:
"If we were right, we will ..."
"If we were wrong, we will ..."

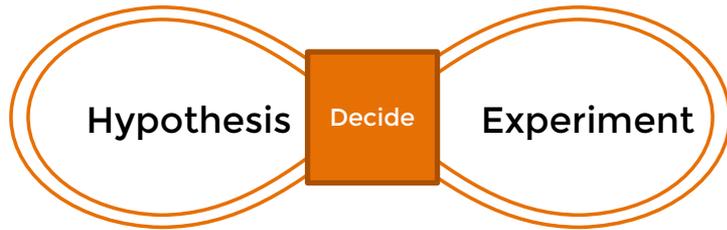
**IT DOESN'T MATTER HOW
BEAUTIFUL YOUR THEORY IS, IT
DOESN'T MATTER HOW SMART
YOU ARE. IF IT DOESN'T AGREE
WITH THE EXPERIMENT, IT'S
WRONG.**

Richard Feynman - American theoretical physicist

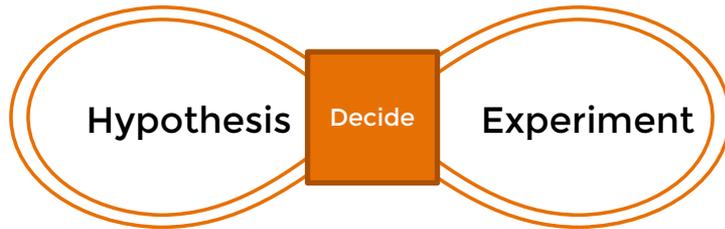
Deciding



Deciding



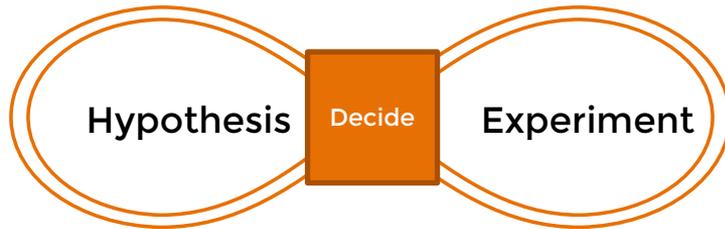
Deciding



Evidence supports hypothesis?
Persevere.

- Test next hypothesis
- Same hypothesis, next experiment, higher fidelity.

Deciding

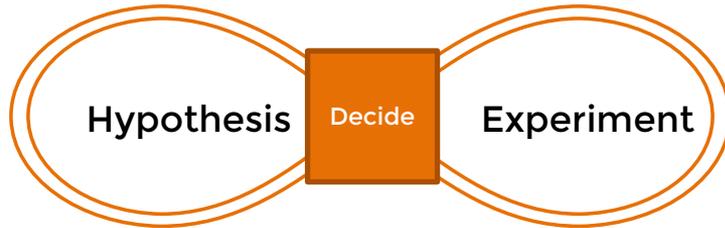


Evidence refutes hypothesis?

Pivot

- Reflect on learning
- Apply learning to canvas
- New hypothesis
- New experiment

Deciding



Evidence refutes hypothesis?

Pivot

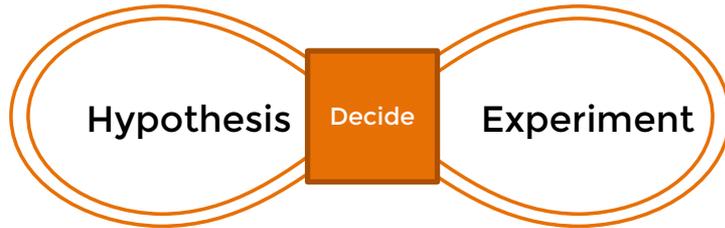
- Reflect on learning
- Apply learning to plan
- New hypothesis
- New experiment

Deciding

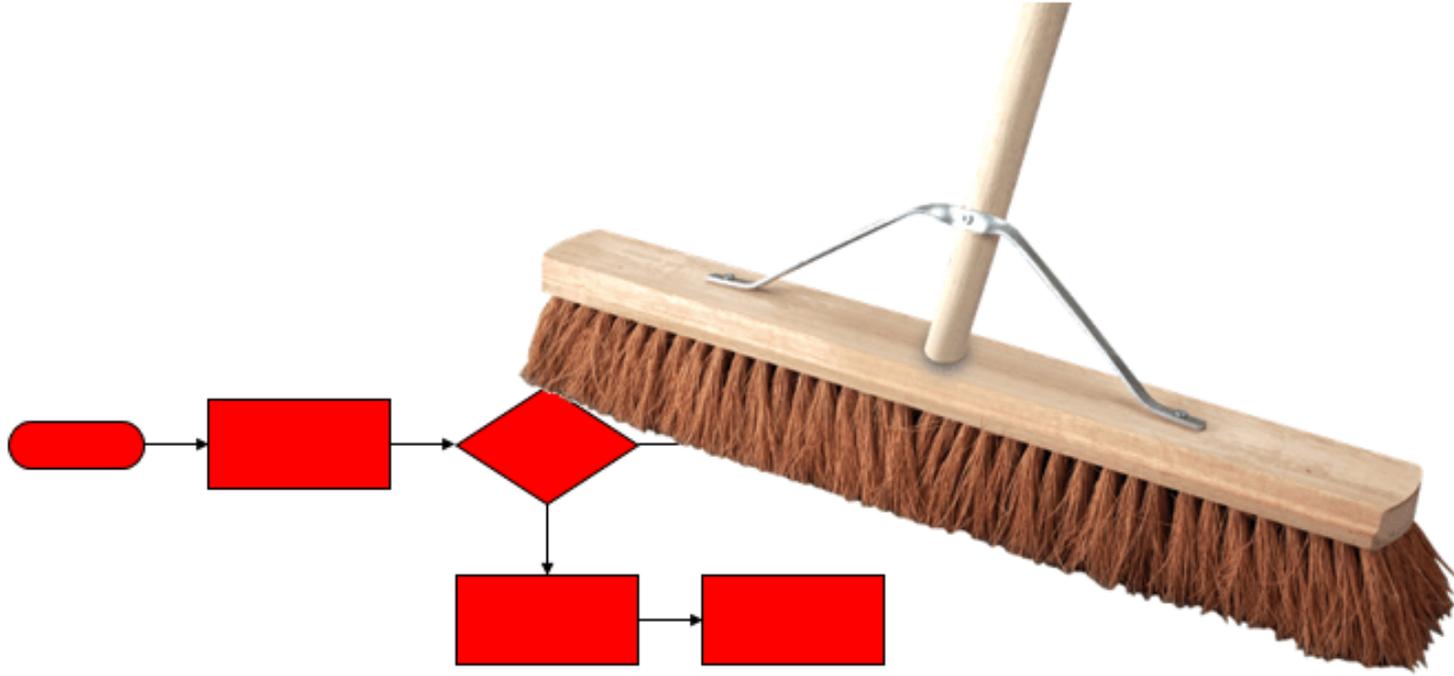
Evidence unclear?

Experiment

- Adjust experiment
- Continue testing



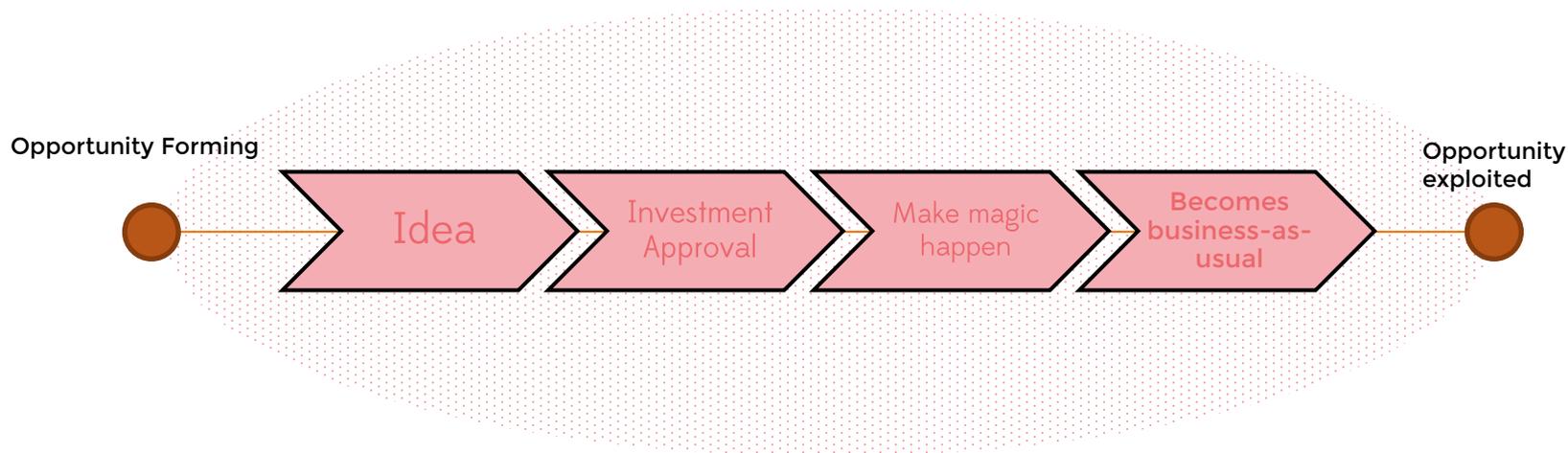
Not just for the new things!



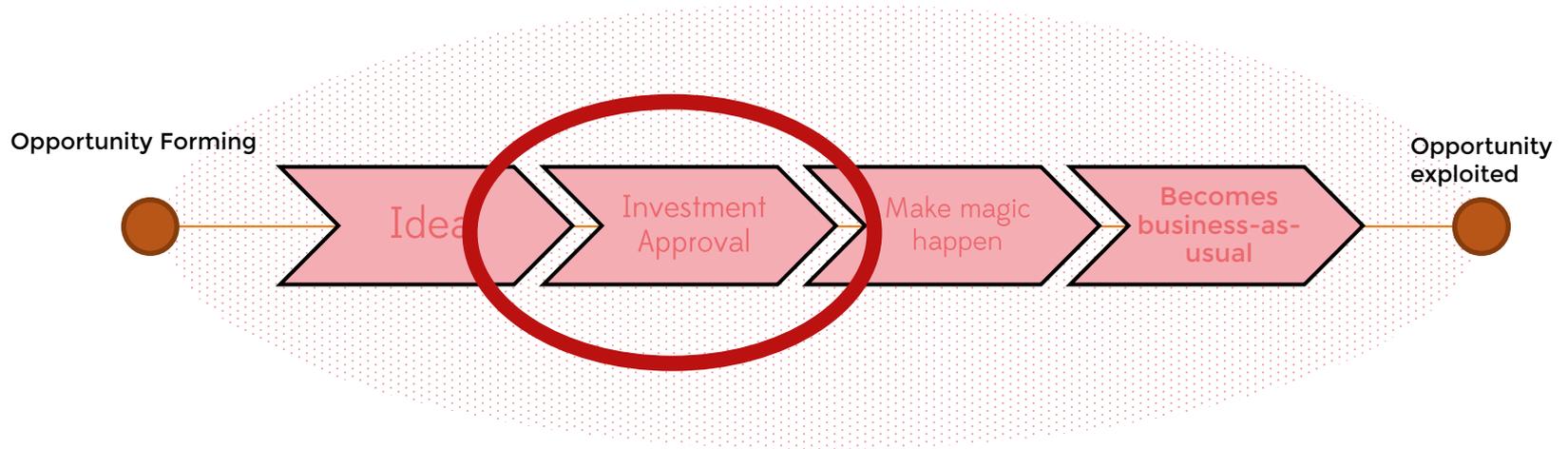
What goes wrong?

1. Not committing enough time
2. Gold Plating
3. Overthinking
4. Incomparable or weak data
5. Not making decisions

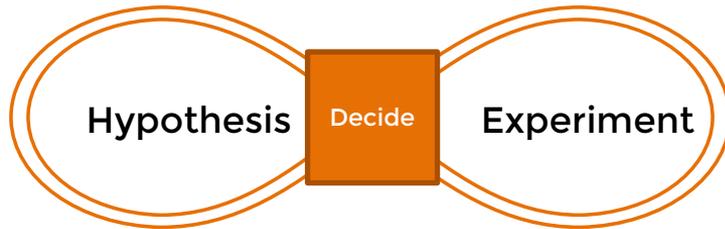
From PMO... to Portfolio



From PMO... to Portfolio



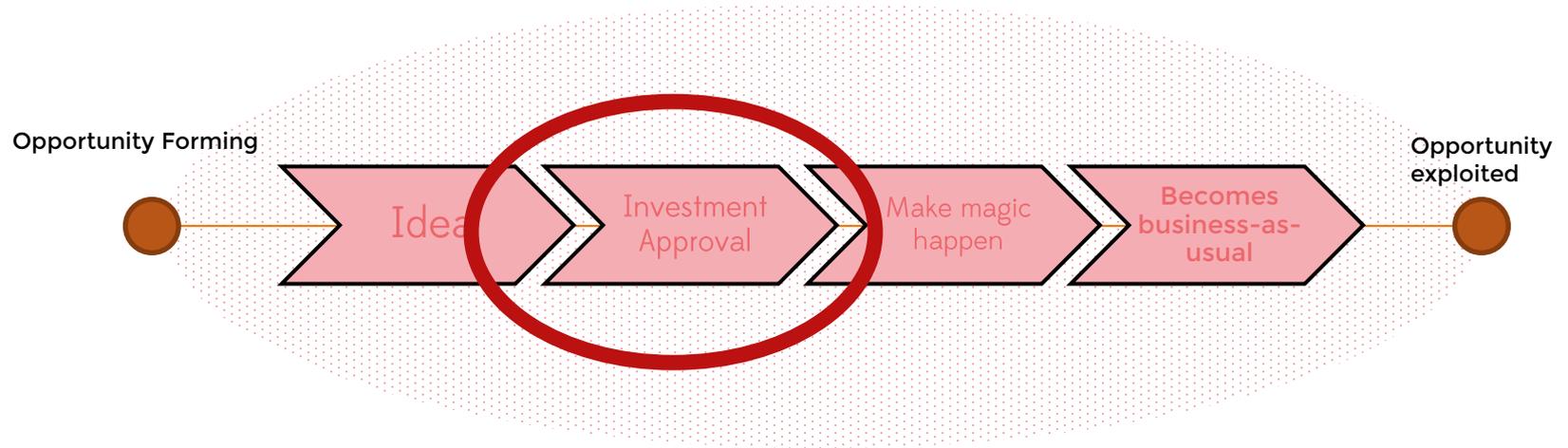
Deciding



Treat projects as if you are **Venture Capitalists** - is there enough evidence to invest?

- Invest in an experiment not the whole project
- Iterate until risk is low enough to invest
- Replace big projects with small bets
- PMO: Coach through the experimentation process.

From PMO... to Portfolio





**The problem happens when you don't put that first note down.
Just Start!**

Herbie Hancock, Jazz musician, composer, and actor

WHAT IS YOUR 'FIRST NOTE'?