

Matt Kelly

Leslie Wainwright, PhD

Strategy Under Pressure:
How State Hospital Associations
Can Set Direction in an Era of
Constant Change

March 10th, 11 am CST



do tank

Presenters for Today



Matthew Kelly
Partner & Business Designer



Leslie Wainwright, Ph.D.
Partner & Senior Strategist





do tank

Business design, redesigned.

Founded in 2014, Do Tank is an interesting collection of entrepreneurs, human-centered designers, developers, artists and seasoned strategy consultants. We have offices in Chicago (USA) and Glasgow (UK), and we help simplify complexity, align thinking, and move teams to real action. We provide tailored blend of high value consulting enabled by our market leading digital engagement technology.



“If any field should be human-centered, it’s healthcare.”

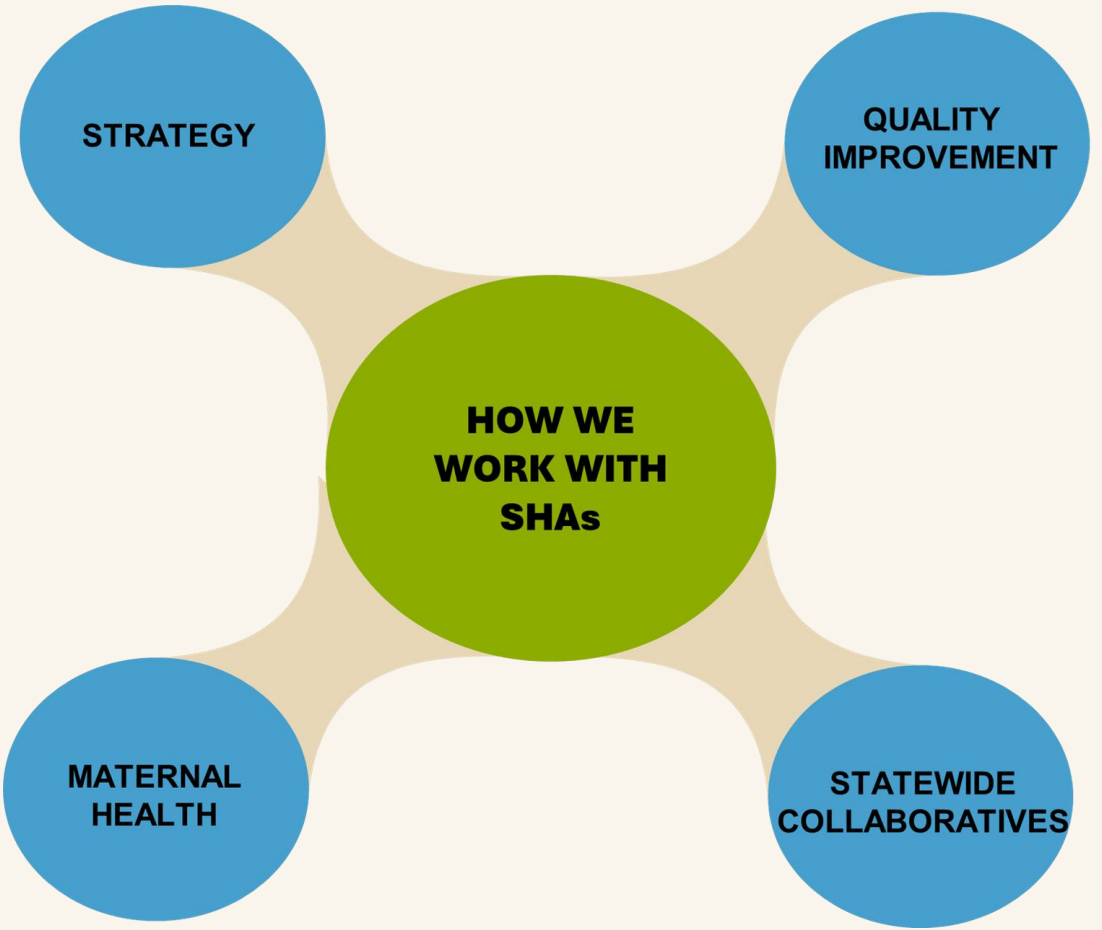
We help teams at the intersection of quality, equity, and innovation design a safer, healthier future.”

do tank

Business design, redesigned.



We Love Working with State Hospital Associations



Today's Focus Is Strategy

1

Why This, Why Now

2

Real World Applications

3

Parting Thoughts



01.

Why this, Why now?



Pressure on Hospitals Is Unprecedented

1

Rising Operating Costs

2

Reimbursement Challenges

3

Workforce Shortages

4

Workforce Burnout

5

**Access Challenges
(especially rural)**

6

Digital Disruption

7

Policy Volatility

8

Community Trust Gaps

Challenges for SHAs Are Increasing

1

**Rising Scrutiny
on Membership
ROI**

2

**Pricing and
Revenue Model
Challenges**

3

**Communicating
and Quantifying
Overall Value**

4

**Difficulty
Demonstrating
Advocacy Value**

5

**Shifting Priorities
and Changing
Healthcare
Landscape**

6

**Misalignment
Between Member
Segments**

7

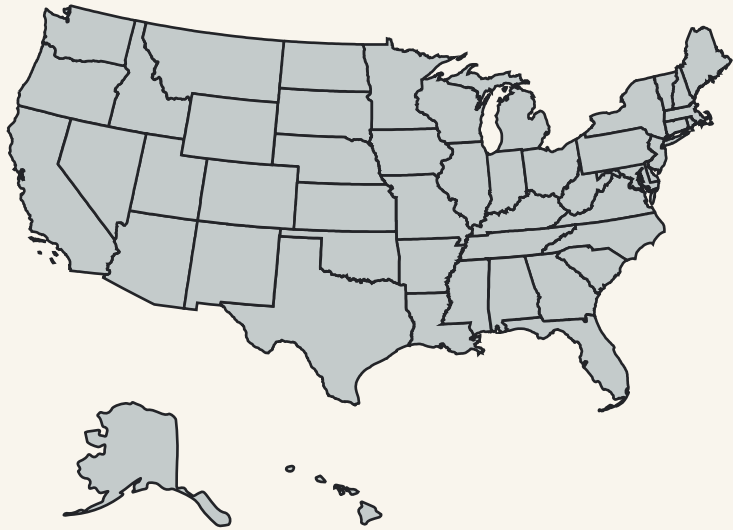
**Generational
Shifts in
Professional
Identities**

8

**Underutilization
of Data and
Benchmarking**

The Role of State Hospital Associations Is Expanding

INCREASING COMPLEXITY OF JOBS TO BE DONE



Traditional Role

- Advocate for hospitals
- Provide education
- Offer member services
- Share information

Expanded Role

- Translate policy into operational change
- Facilitate statewide learning
- Support statewide improvement initiatives
- Provide access to data and performance benchmarks

The Strategic Question

How can SHAs help their members address challenges that no single organization can solve alone?

Design Thinking Is Well Suited for Complex, Multi-Stakeholder Challenges

What is design thinking? It is a human-centered, iterative problem-solving approach that emphasizes empathy, creativity, and experimentation to develop innovative solutions.



USER-CENTERED INNOVATION

Empathy-driven, improved relevance



ENCOURAGES CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION

Promotes out-of-the-box thinking



CUSTOMER LOYALTY AND ENGAGEMENT

Increases user satisfaction



REDUCES RISK OF FAILURE

Fast feedback and iteration



FASTER PROBLEM SOLVING

Rapid experimentation and learning



CROSS-FUNCTIONAL COLLABORATION

Brings together diverse teams

Distinct Differences Exist Between Business Thinking and Design Thinking

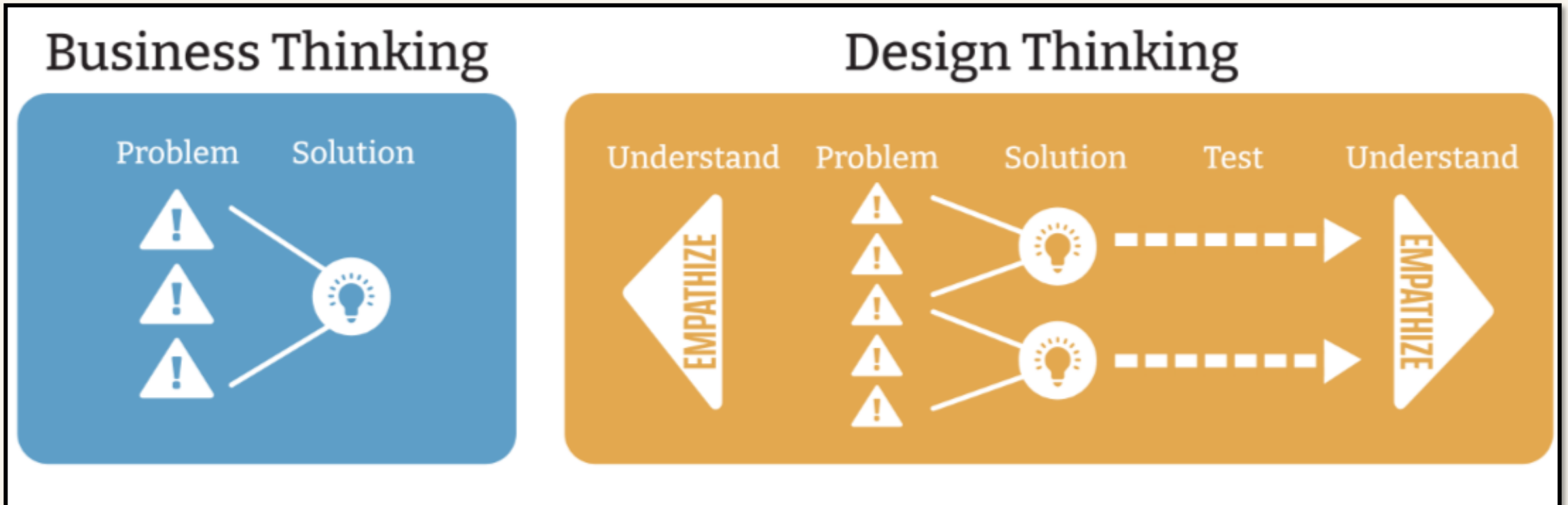


Image source: <https://www.optimahg.com.au/news/using-design-thinking-to-improve-patient-care>, 2024.

Quantified Impact of Design Thinking



+32% Revenue Growth, **+56%** Shareholder Returns



Up to **+75%** Faster Time-to-Market, **+85%** Higher ROI



2.6x More likely to have a defined innovation strategy



+75% Increase in team alignment

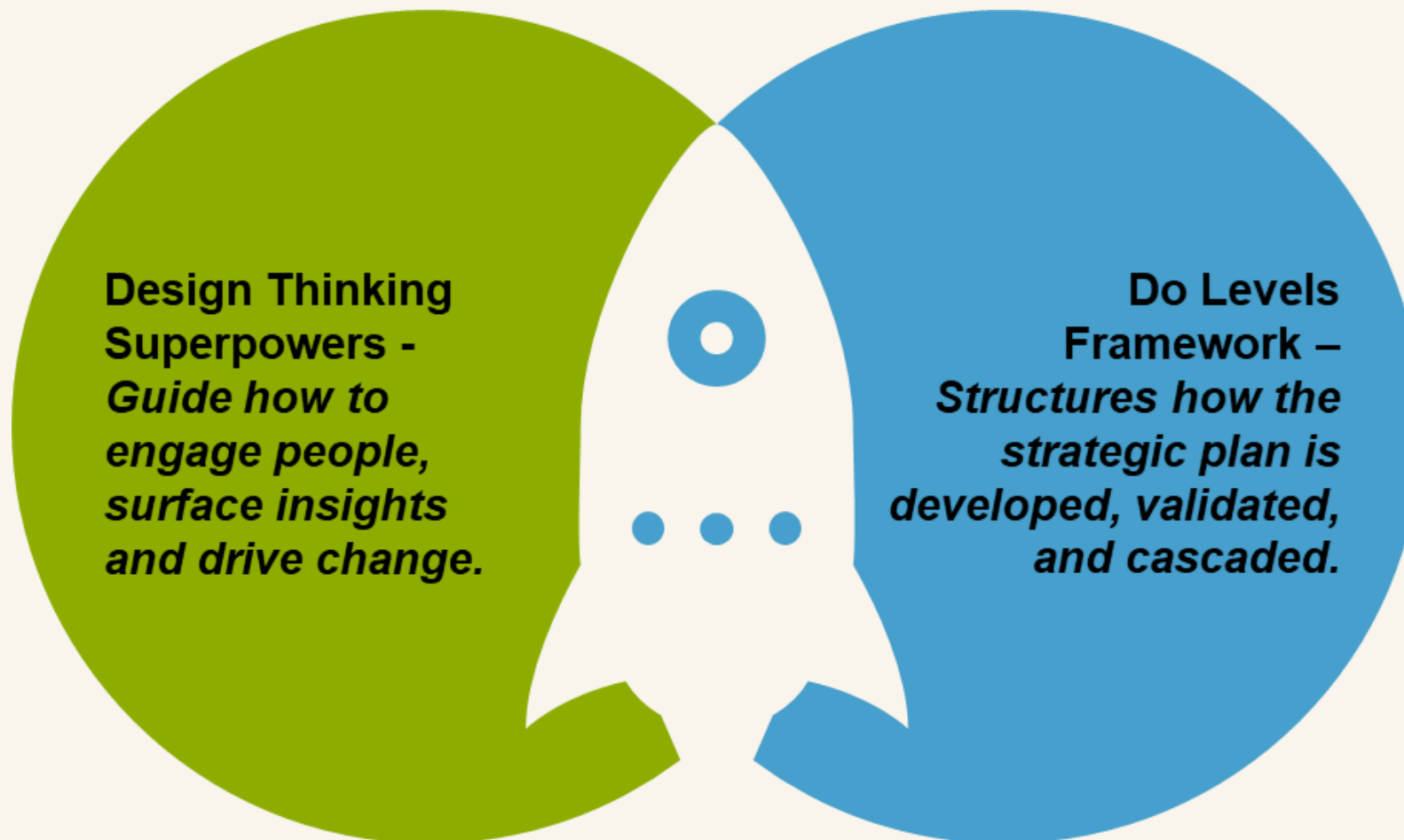


Why It Works?

- **Empathy-driven insights** – better fit with user needs
- **Rapid prototyping** – agile, testable solutions
- **Cross-functional input** – broader buy-in and creativity
- **Iterative process** – resilient and adaptive plans

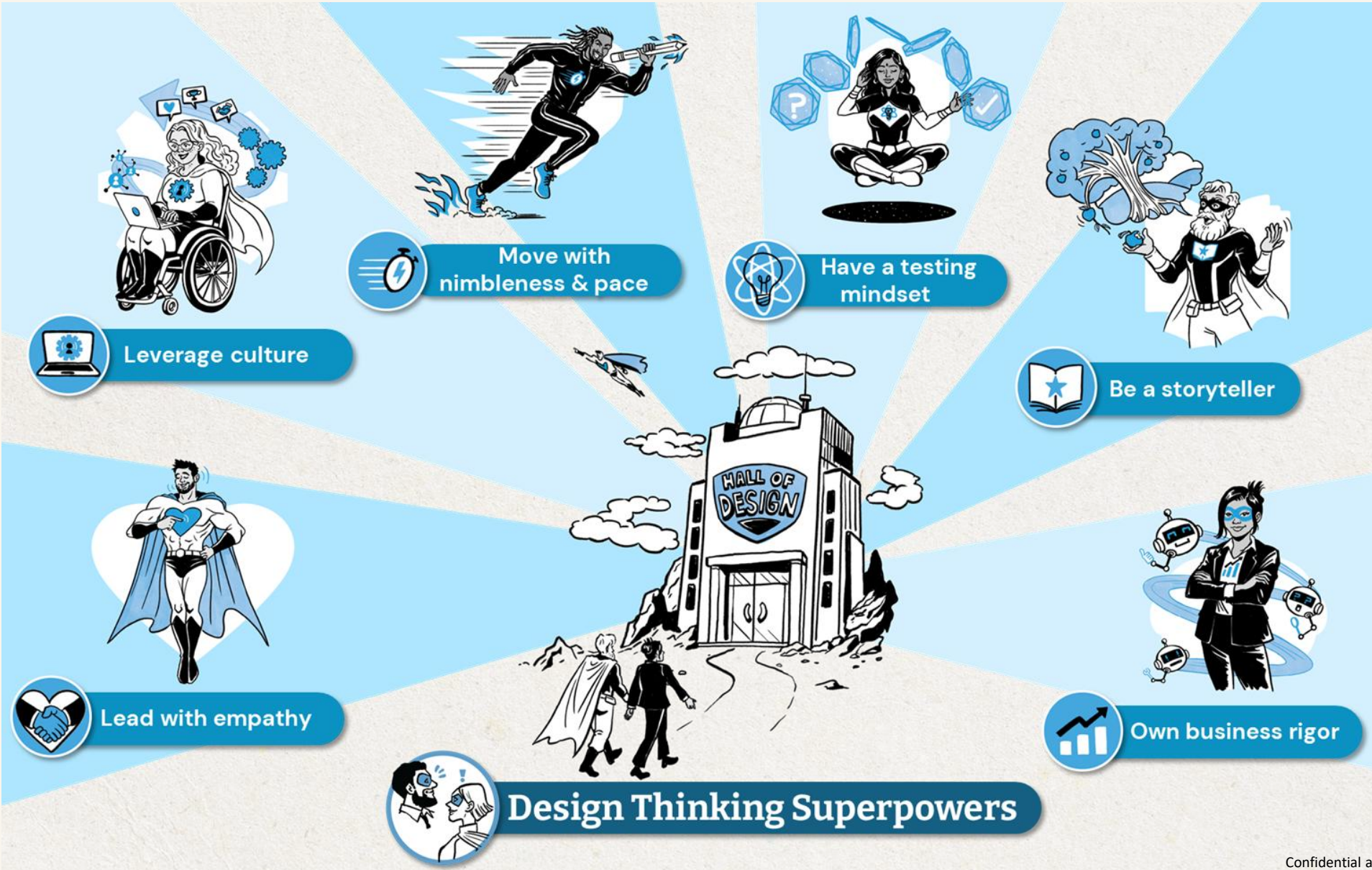
Sources: McKinsey & Company. *The Business Value of Design*. McKinsey & Company, 2018, <https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/mckinsey-design/our-insights/the-business-value-of-design>; IBM and Forrester. *The Total Economic Impact™ of IBM's Design Thinking Practice*. IBM, 2018; Capgemini. *The Innovation Game: Why and How Businesses Are Investing in Innovation Centers*. Capgemini Digital Transformation Institute, 2020; IBM. *Enterprise Design Thinking Impact Report*. IBM Design, 2016; Rotman School of Management. *Design Thinking in Leadership and Strategy*. University of Toronto, n.d.

Our Approach to Strategy

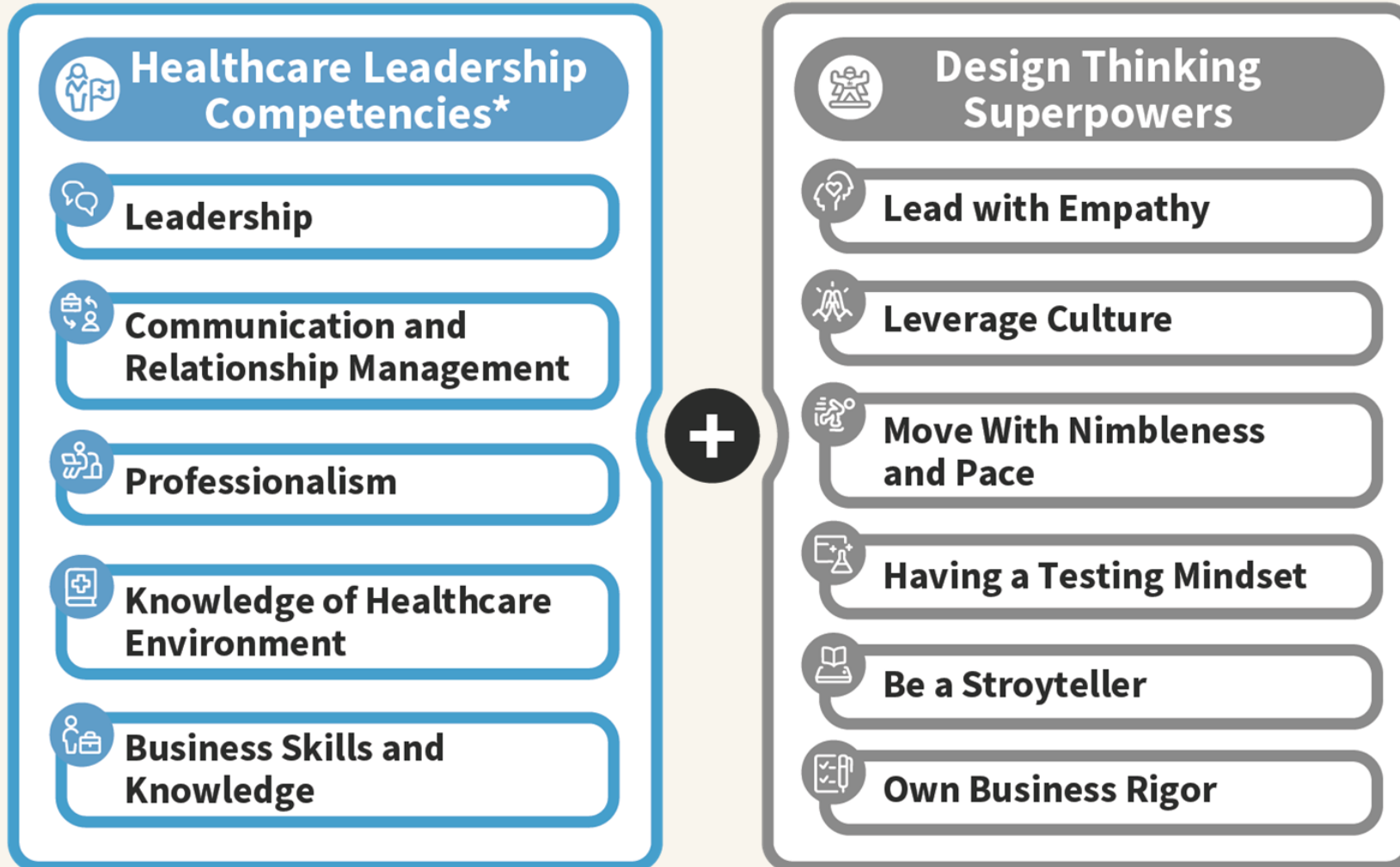


We combine human-centered design with an integrated readiness discipline so that strategy development and execution are treated as a single, continuous effort.

We've Identified 6 Essential Superpowers



These are Complements to Existing Leadership Competencies



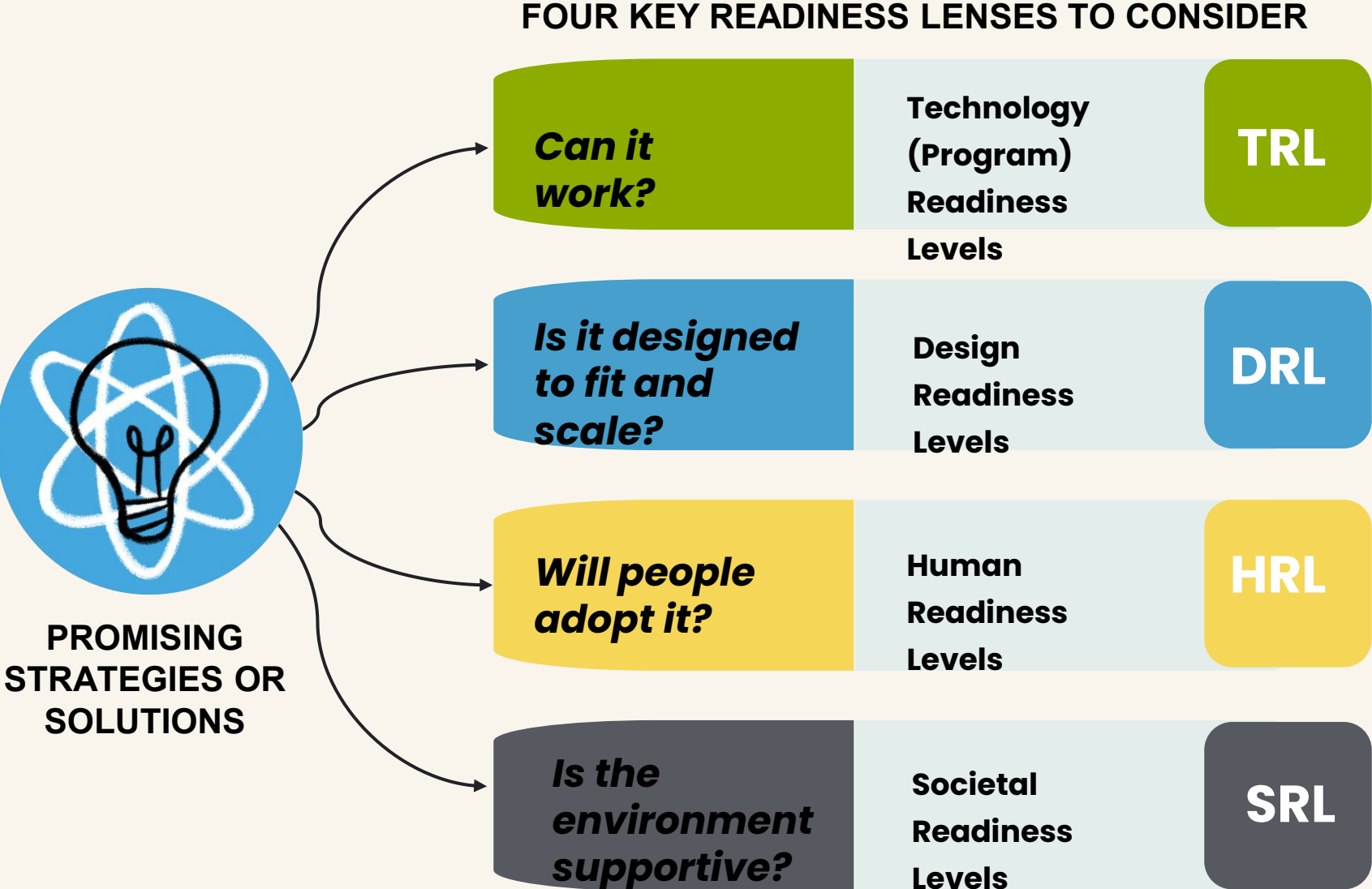
*HLA Competency Model (Supported by ACHE)

Using Superpowers in Strategic Planning

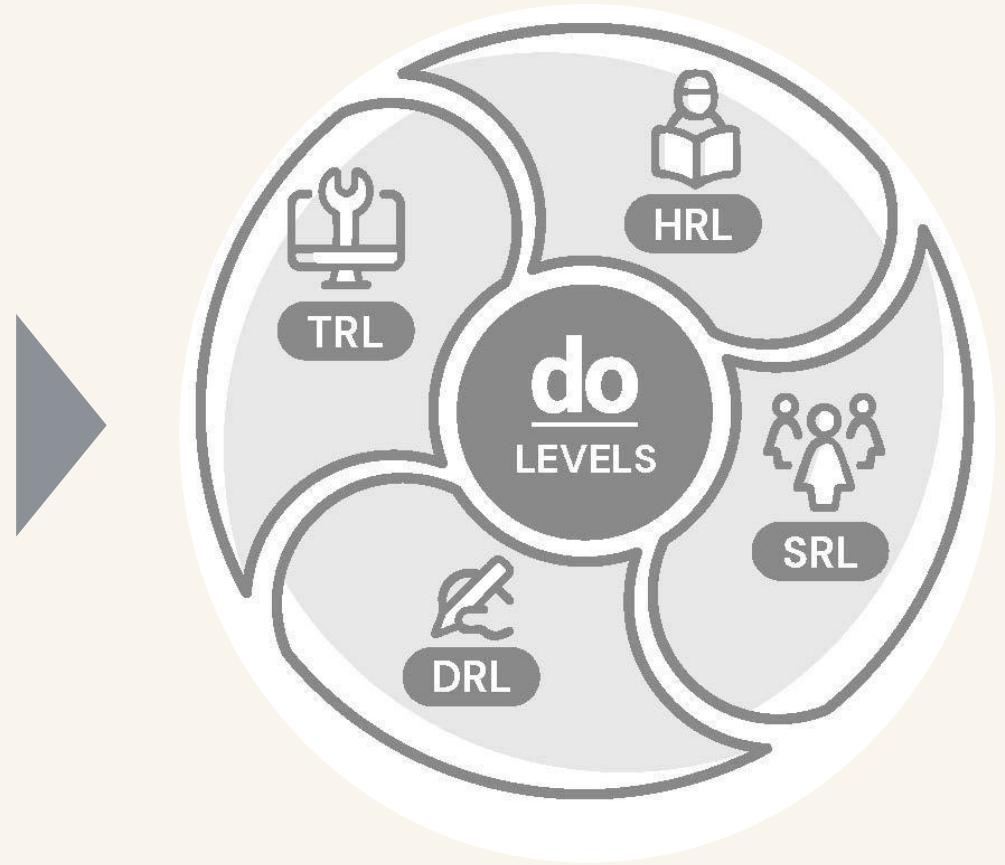
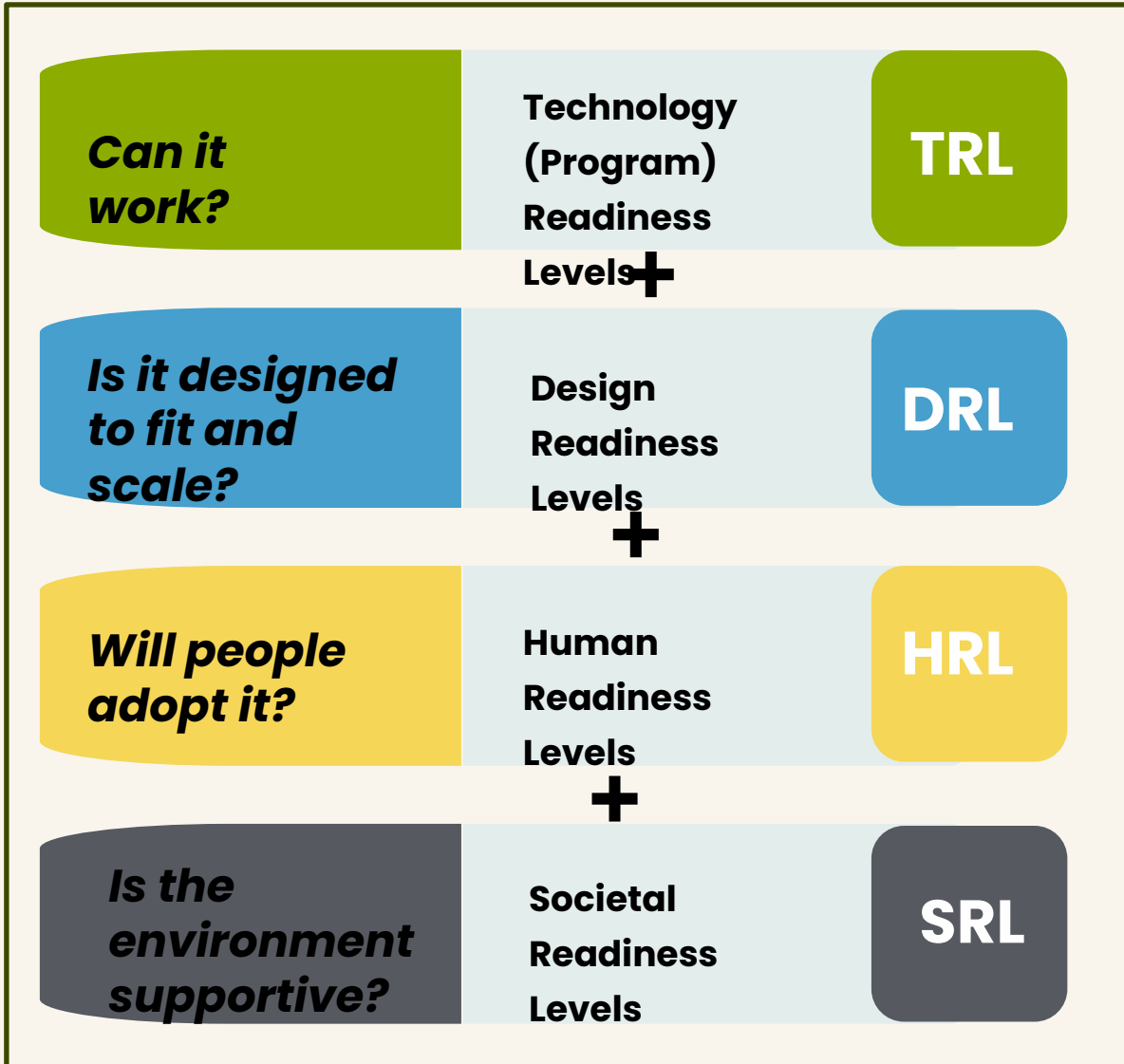


Superpowers	How They Strengthens Strategy Creation
Lead with Empathy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grounds strategy in the lived experience of stakeholders, ensuring leaders define the right problems before designing solutions. • Direct engagement reveals operational realities and unmet needs that traditional analysis often misses.
Leverage Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aligns strategy with how organizations actually behave. • Understanding cultural dynamics helps leaders anticipate resistance, build trust, and create environments where new initiatives can take hold.
Move with Nimbleness & Pace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeps strategy responsive to uncertainty. • Leaders maintain momentum while remaining flexible enough to adapt as new insights, technologies, or policy changes reshape the landscape.
Adopt a Testing Mindset	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treats strategy as a set of hypotheses to be tested. • Pilots, prototypes, and feedback loops reduce risk and allow ideas to improve before committing large resources.
Practice Storytelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turns strategy into a narrative that stakeholders can see themselves in. • Blending data with human experience helps build alignment, motivation, and shared ownership of the direction.
Apply Business Rigor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures strategic ideas are viable and sustainable. • Clear assumptions, metrics, and financial discipline translate creative insights into executable initiatives with measurable impact.

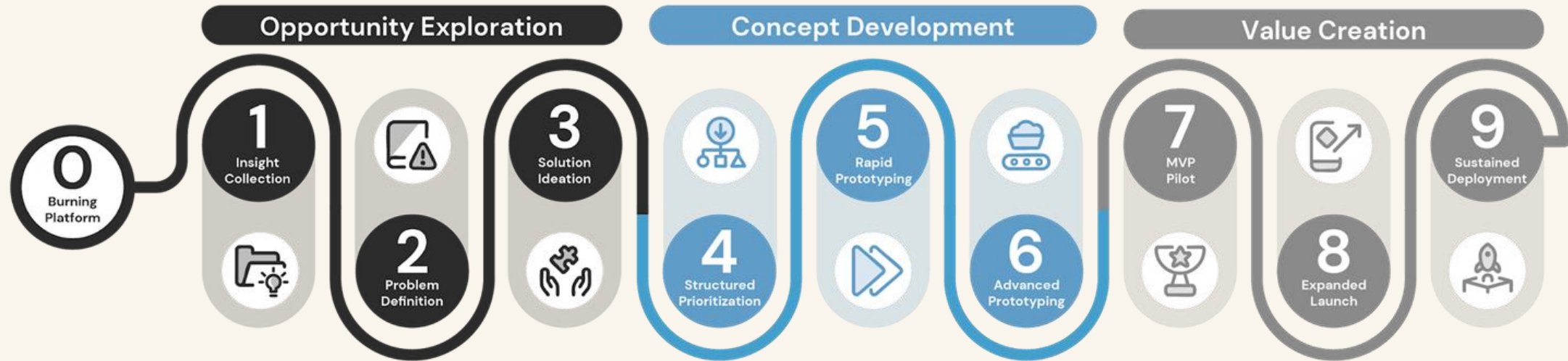
Readiness: The Hidden Success Variable



We Have Built an Integrated Readiness Framework – Do Levels



Do Levels Connect Thinking and Doing by Connecting Strategy and Change Management



What Do Levels Can Do	What Do Levels Can't Do
Clarify the real problem to solve	Replace expertise
Align diverse stakeholders	Compensate for weak leadership
De-risk change	Resolve cultural resistance without leadership support
Bridge Strategy, Change and Innovation	Fix structural funding, staffing or policy constraints on its own
Improve adoption and sustainability	Deliver results without a committed and accountable team
Humanize the transformation efforts	Remove external uncertainties

Applications to Strategic Planning



Applying Do Levels to Strategic Planning	
Start strategy with discovery, not assumptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strategic priorities emerge from understanding lived experiences across the system—surfacing insights that traditional analysis alone often misses.
Define/validate problems before selecting areas of focus or solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clear, human-centered problem definitions prevent organizations from investing resources in solving symptoms rather than root causes.
Test strategy in the real world to before cascading/scaling it	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Treat strategy as a set of hypotheses to further strengthen the ideas and gain support/buy in.
Assess change readiness throughout the entire planning process	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evaluate capacity, stakeholder alignment, and environmental conditions to determine how strategy get operationalized.
Revise strategy through on-going learning and iteration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strategy evolves as insights accumulate, allowing organizations to refine direction continuously rather than waiting for the next planning cycle.

DO LEVELS GIVE STRATEGY A PATHWAY TO MOVE FROM THINKING TO DOING

02.

Real World Applications

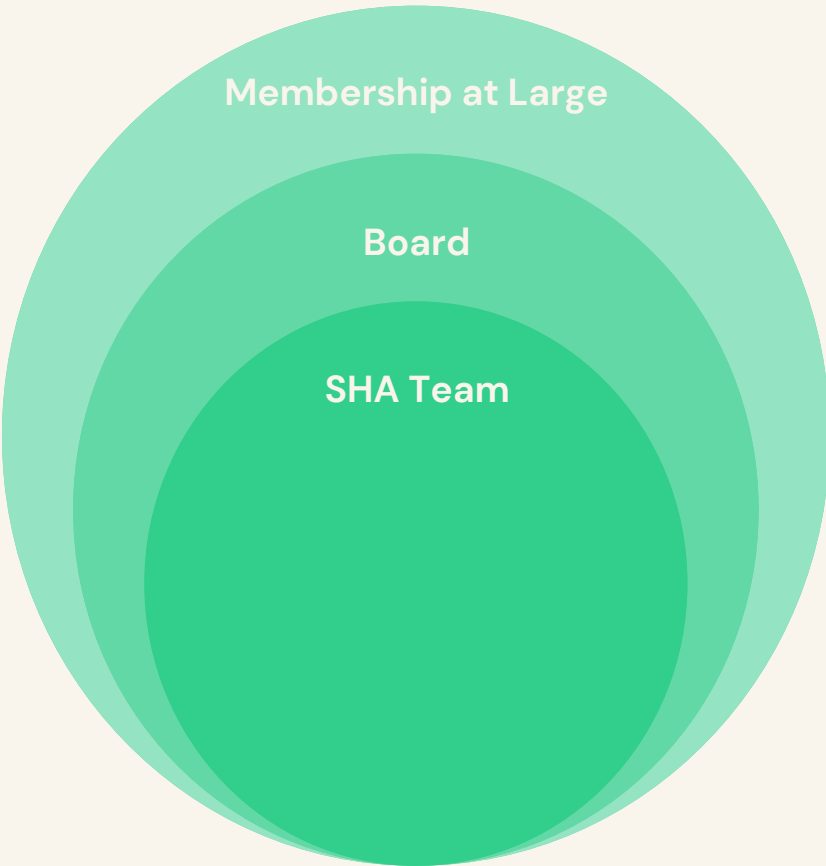


Opportunity Exploration

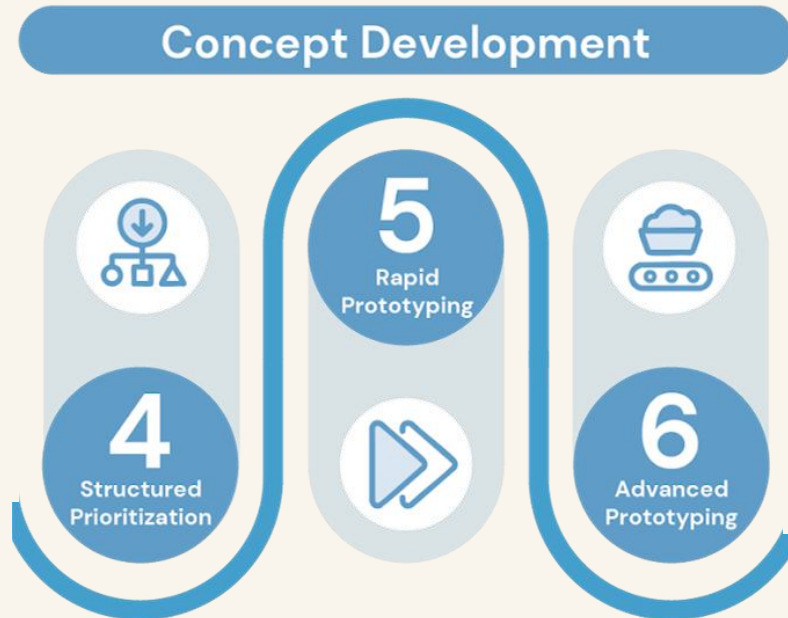


“Too often, we chase what’s urgent instead of what’s important. Opportunity validation slows us down just enough to make sure our energy is directed at the right problems — the ones that will actually move the needle for patients and staff.”
— *ACHE Course Participant, December 2025*

Opportunity Exploration Benefits from Extreme Engagement and Field Discovery



Concept Development



“Concept development lets us fail safely and learn quickly. We can test, visualize, and debate ideas before investing in large-scale change — and that saves time, money, and morale.”
— *ACHE Course Participant, December 2025*

Concept Development Benefits from Rapid Testing of Strategy Prototypes



DoTank's Grapevine Aids in Crafting Strategy Prototypes

Create a single source of truth for the strategy

Grapevine hosts strategy prototypes, supporting research, and working documents in one place so stakeholders engage with the same materials and updates.

Share early strategy prototypes with stakeholders

Leaders can post draft strategy frameworks, visuals, and initiatives to gather feedback before decisions are finalized.

Enable structured feedback from across the organization

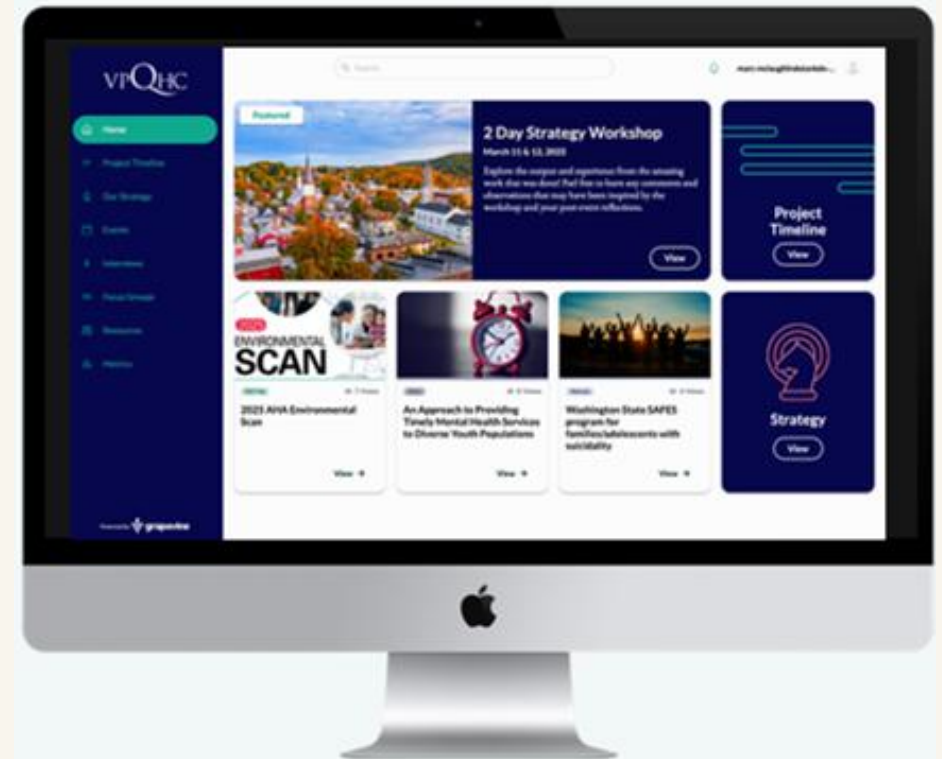
Teams, partners, and advisors can comment on emerging ideas, surfacing insights that leadership teams might otherwise miss.

Test strategy narratives and messaging

Grapevine allows organizations to see how different audiences respond to the strategic story before broad rollout.

Track engagement and insight signals

Platform analytics reveal which ideas, resources, and concepts resonate most, helping leaders refine priorities.



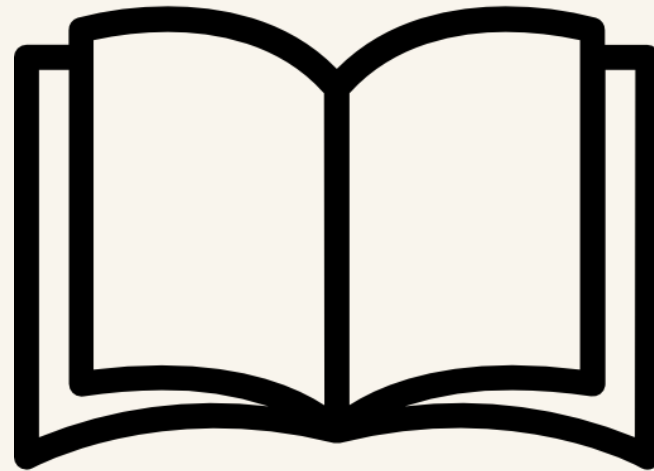
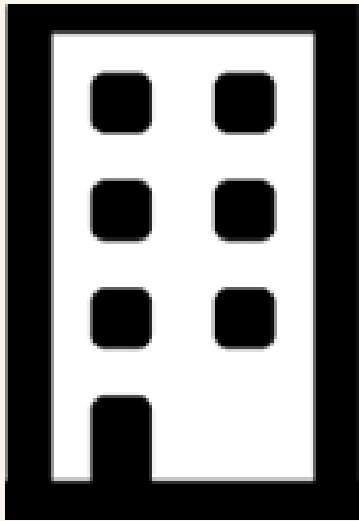
Value Creation



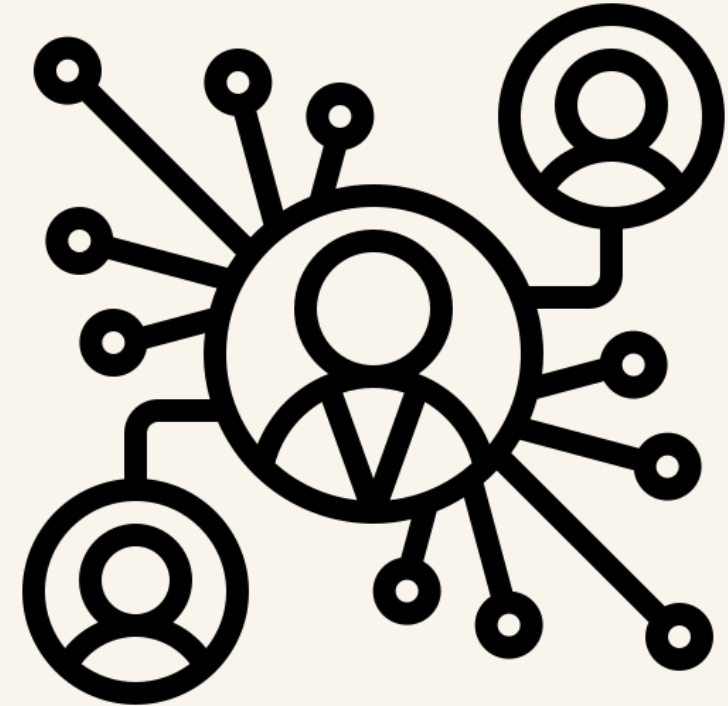
“The hardest question isn’t ‘does it work?’ but ‘can it work everywhere?’ Scaling forces us to face that head-on — it exposes weak spots and makes us stronger.”

— *ACHE Course Participant, December 2025*

Value Creation Benefits Storytelling to Cascading and Drive Adoption



SHA STRATEGIC PLAN



Communicate and execute the plan within the SHA

Communicate value diverse Member stakeholders

Both benefit when powered by Grapevine.

How We Can Help

Rapid Discovery Workshops

- Facilitate design workshops and focus groups to surface frontline insight
- Map key experiences and workflows to identify friction points
- Analyze internal data, external trends, and strategic pressures
- Synthesize findings into clear themes and opportunity areas

Board Engagement

- Facilitate board sessions focused on the organization's most critical challenges
- Clarify the burning platform and ambition
- Structure conversations around future scenarios, priorities, and risk tolerance
- Capture key decisions and areas requiring further exploration

Strategy Design Sprints

- Facilitate multi-day design workshops with executive and leadership teams
- Translate discovery insights into strategic priorities and initiatives
- Map the current operating model and identify structural barriers to progress
- Explore multiple strategic options before narrowing focus
- Define strategic pillars, priorities, and goals
- Test ideas against operational, financial, and cultural realities
- Leverage Grapevine to prototype the plan and gain cross-disciplinary feedback
- Clarify what the organization will and will not pursue
- Align leadership around success metrics and strategic outcomes
- Develop clear visuals and frameworks that simplify complex ideas
- Build the strategic playbook/plan

Strategy Activation Sprints

- Translate enterprise priorities into departmental direction and goals
- Facilitate leadership cascade sessions with service lines and operational teams
- Leverage Grapevine and its AI's brain to design messaging campaigns
- Create audience-specific messaging toolkits for specific stakeholders
- Design visual assets and messaging frameworks that simplify the strategy
- Prepare leaders for town halls, department meetings, and strategy briefings
- Facilitate strategy rollout sessions
- Align departmental initiatives and performance metrics with priorities
- Identify areas of resistance, confusion, or adoption risk
- Support leaders in addressing change barriers

03.

Parting Thoughts



A person with tattoos, wearing a red tank top with a circular logo that says "FUN" and "GOLD OF FUN FESTIVAL", and a white tutu, is performing with two fire sticks. They are standing on a stage with their arms raised. The background is filled with colorful smoke and lights. In the foreground, there are metal barriers and a crowd of people. One person in the crowd is wearing a blue cap with "HOMAY" written on it. The overall atmosphere is festive and energetic.

DESIGN THINKING WORKS

STRATEGY, INNOVATION AND CHANGE ARE INSEPARABLE

Strategy

Strategy without Innovation means the same old thinking

Change

Change without Strategy is wasted of time & effort

Innovation

Innovation without Change is just ideas that go nowhere

SLOW DOWN...



...TO SPEED UP

PEOPLE ARE YOUR POWER..



LEVERAGE THEM

Matt Kelly

Leslie Wainwright, PhD

Strategy Under Pressure:
How State Hospital Associations
Can Set Direction in an Era of
Constant Change

March 10th, 11 am CST



do tank

