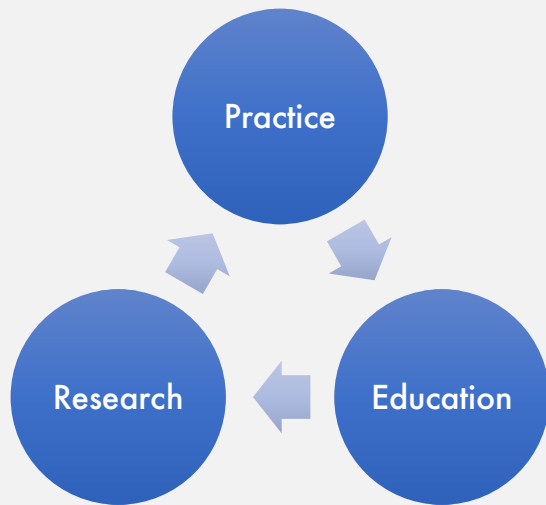# *Breaking the Stagnation Standoff:*
The case for process innovation in higher education

Joseph Drasin, D.M. – University of Maryland, College Park

Joseph Drasin, D.M.

Practice

Research

Education

LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/in/jdrasin

Twitter: @jdrasin

Email: jdrasin@gmail.com

Learning outcomes

- An overview of the value of process innovation
- An understanding of some of the systemic challenges that exist in higher education
- The argument for why institutions should develop a process innovation capability
- The mechanics and skills needed to develop a process innovation group

The Challenge

Institutions of higher education have generally struggled to make effective and long-lasting change to key business processes

IT Projects can go very wrong

Project management

Overdue and over budget, over and over again

"One in six of the projects we studied was a black swan, with a cost overrun of 200%, on average, and a schedule overrun of almost 70%"

– September 2011

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL. ≡ THE CIO REPORT

Pennsylvania Nixing IBM Tech Contract Running $60M Over Budget

The Seattle Times

## New UW payroll system behind schedule, more costly than expected

TEXAS — The University of Texas at Austin

The WorkDay project is one of several challenges involving technology at the university. We are also carefully evaluating our central IT service offerings, as our current service costs far outstrip our budgeted revenue resulting in an estimated budgetary shortfall at the end of the last fiscal year of approximately $15 million. That number will continue to grow while we work toward a sustainable solution.

Ed Tech

University of California's $220 million payroll project reboot

But they don't always

On Budget   In the Newspaper

Number

Cost of IT Projects
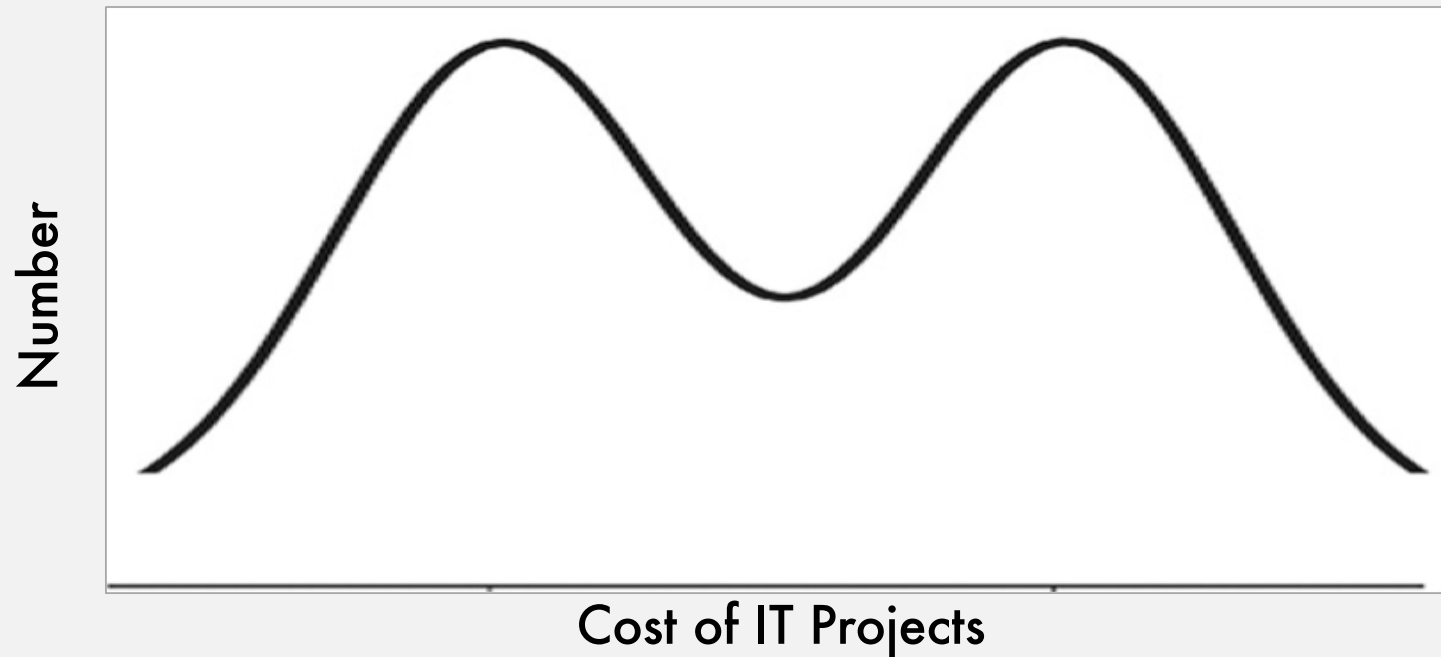
*Not Statistically Accurate – But you get the idea

*The design of **Business Processes** is a key factor in determining system implementation* **success** *or* **failure**

What is a business process?

Create knowledge (grants acquisition and management)

Acquiring new capabilities (hiring)

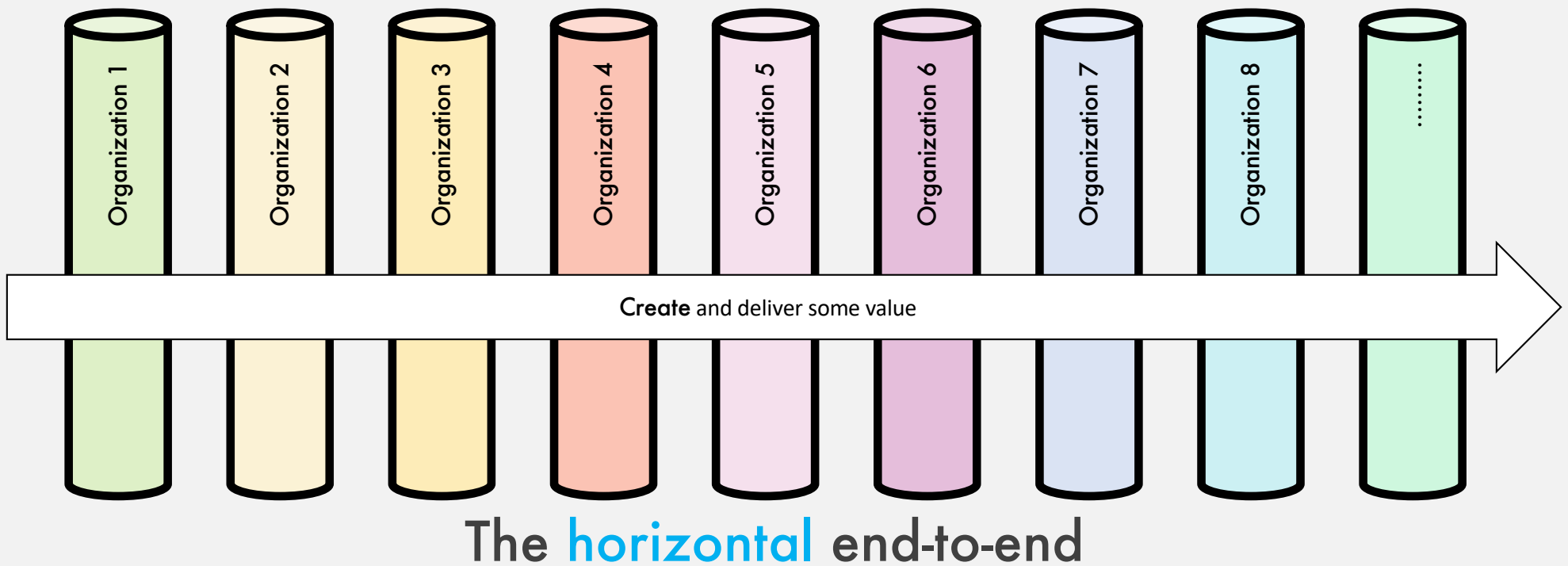Acquire goods and services (procurement)

How value is created and delivered
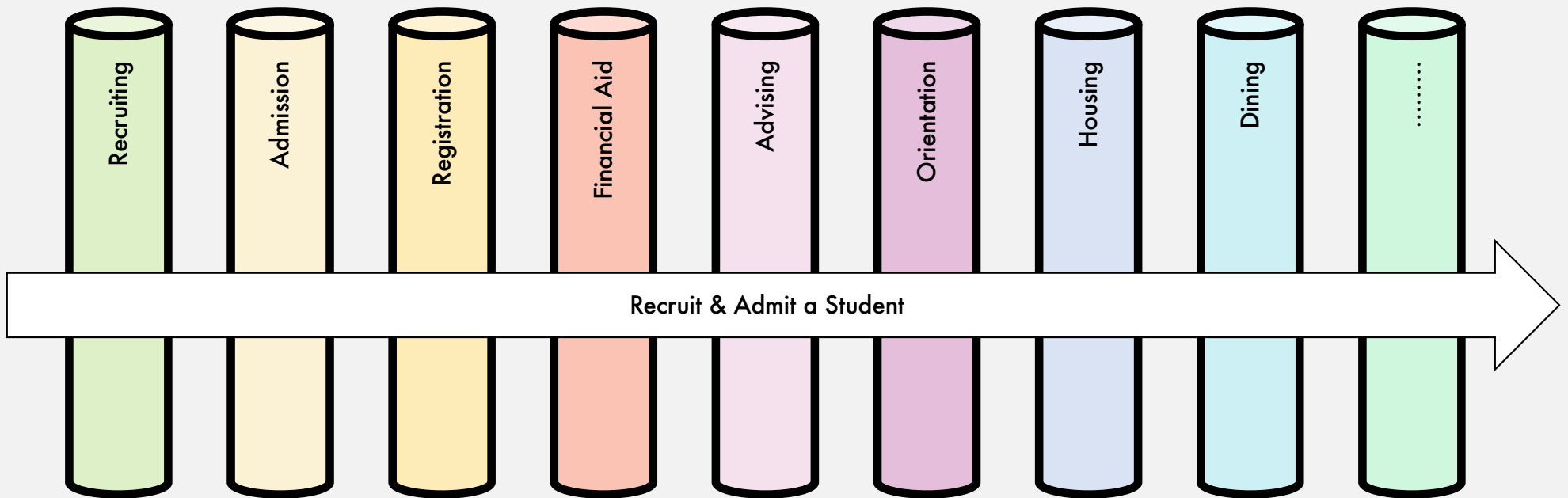
Obtain a new student (admissions)

Educate a student (teaching and assessment process)

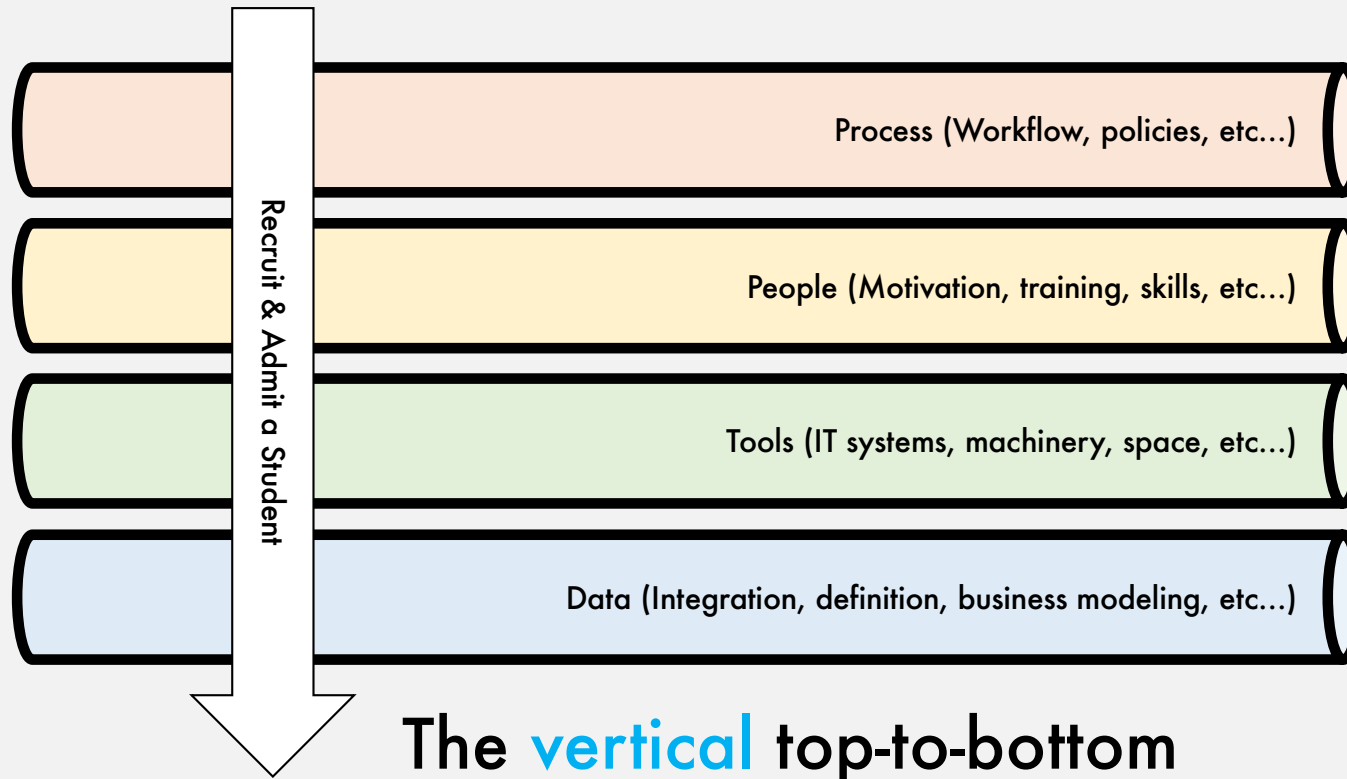Facilitate communications (WiFi deployment)
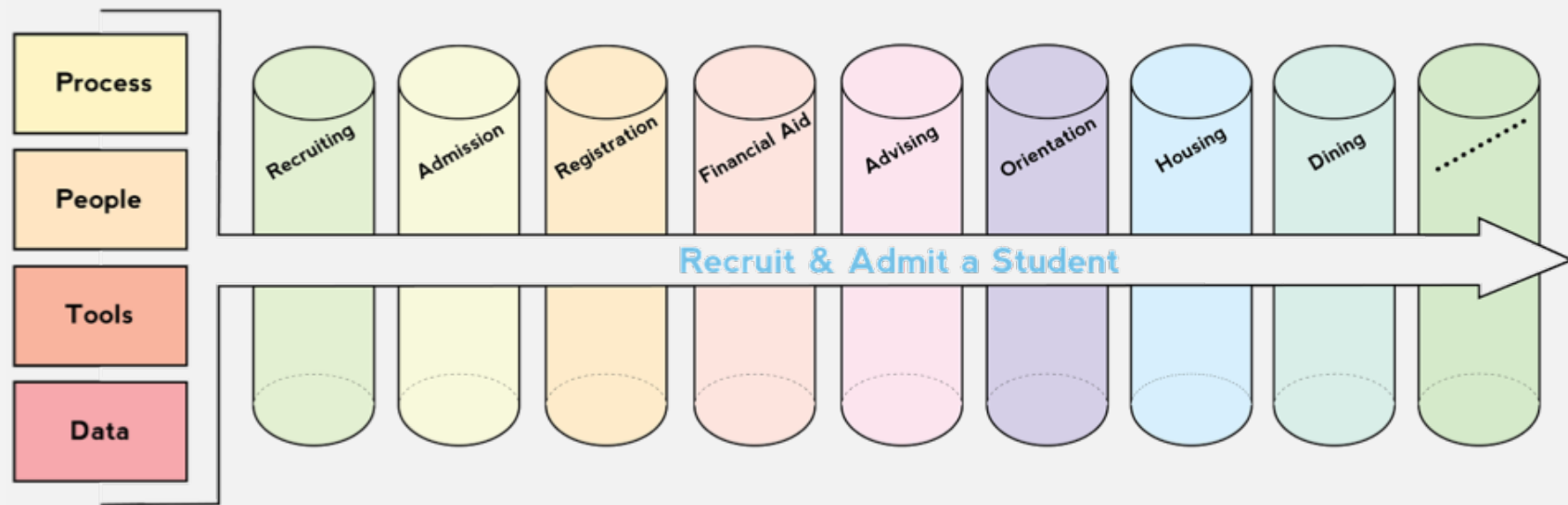
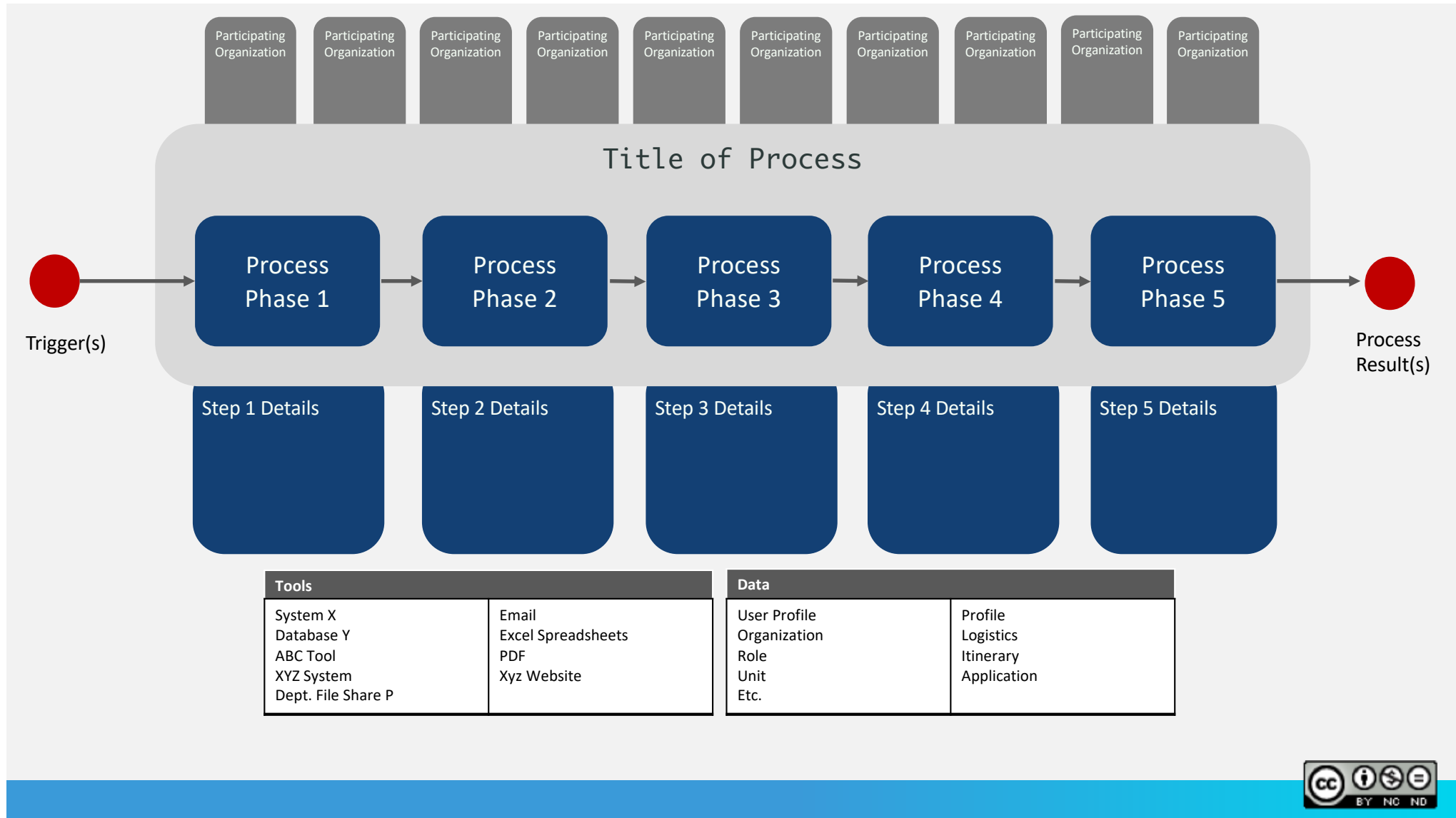# Processes exists along two dimensions

Organization 1

Organization 2

Organization 3

Organization 4

Organization 5

Organization 6

Organization 7

Organization 8

Create and deliver some value

The horizontal end-to-end

For example

And the second dimension

Process (Workflow, policies, etc…)

People (Motivation, training, skills, etc…)

Tools (IT systems, machinery, space, etc…)

Data (Integration, definition, business modeling, etc…)

Recruit & Admit a Student

The vertical top-to-bottom

This is the holistic view of process

Participating Organization (×10)

Title of Process

Trigger(s) → Process Phase 1 → Process Phase 2 → Process Phase 3 → Process Phase 4 → Process Phase 5 → Process Result(s)

Step 1 Details

Step 2 Details

Step 3 Details

Step 4 Details

Step 5 Details

Tools	
System X	Email
Database Y	Excel Spreadsheets
ABC Tool	PDF
XYZ System	Xyz Website
Dept. File Share P	

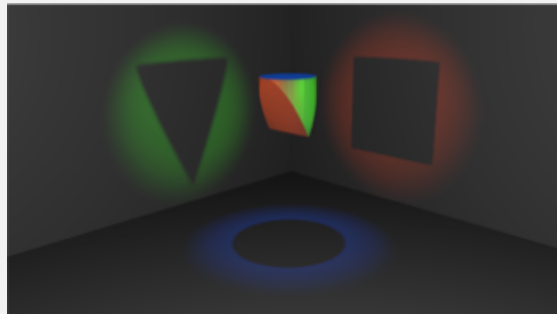| Data	
User Profile	Profile
Organization	Logistics
Role	Itinerary
Unit	Application
Etc.	

Good process are hard to design
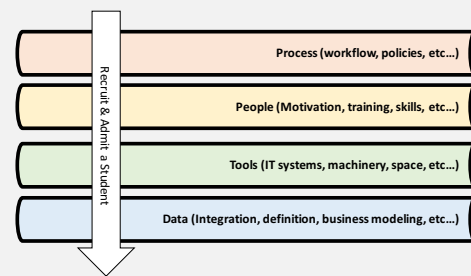
Know all stakeholders
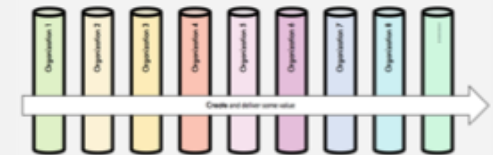
Balance diverse stakeholders

Operate in an ever-changing environment

See beyond your own perspective

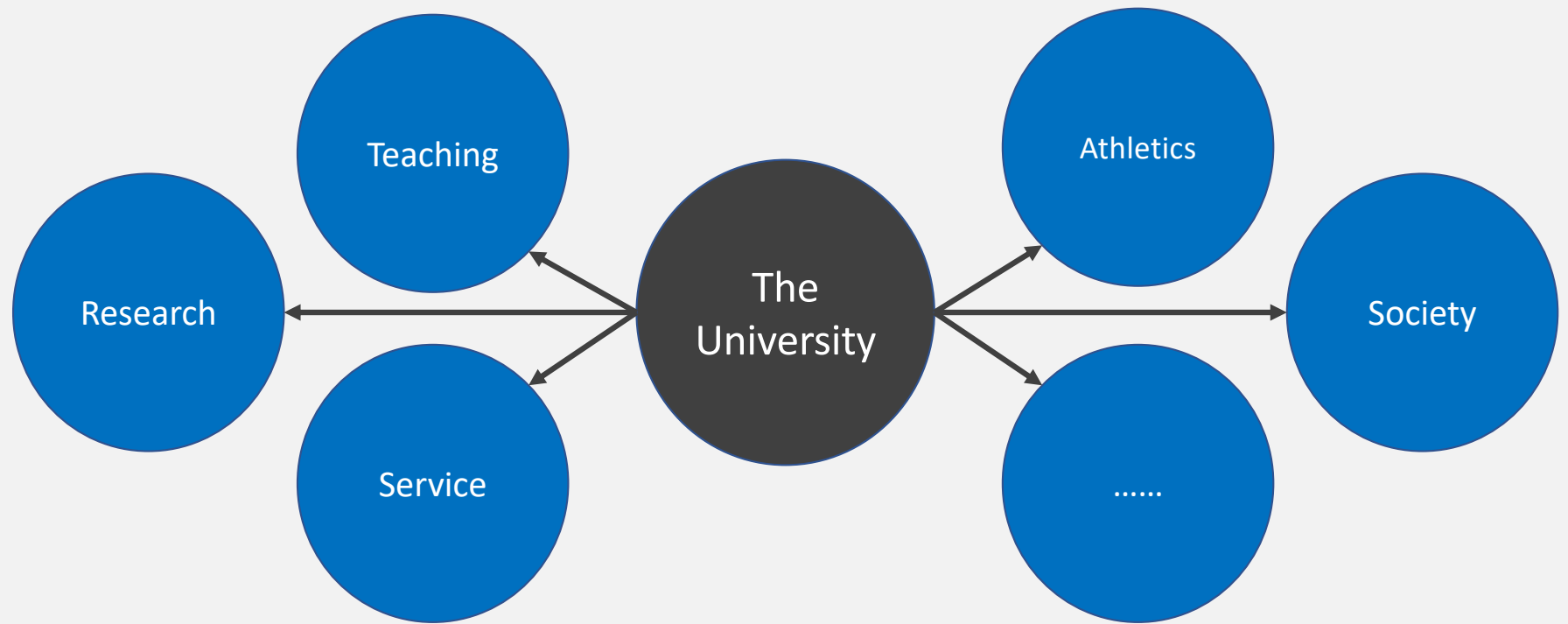Integrate process, people, tools, and data across a value chain

But without this, processes are driven by inertia

Higher Ed has struggled with implementing PI
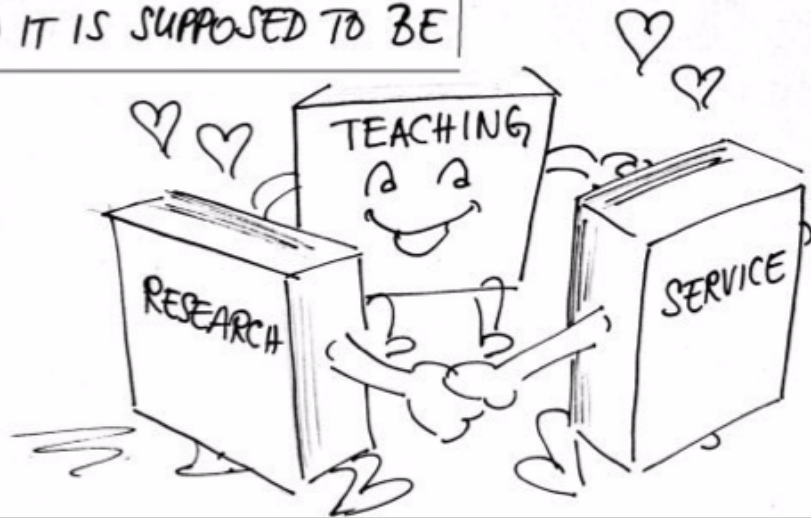
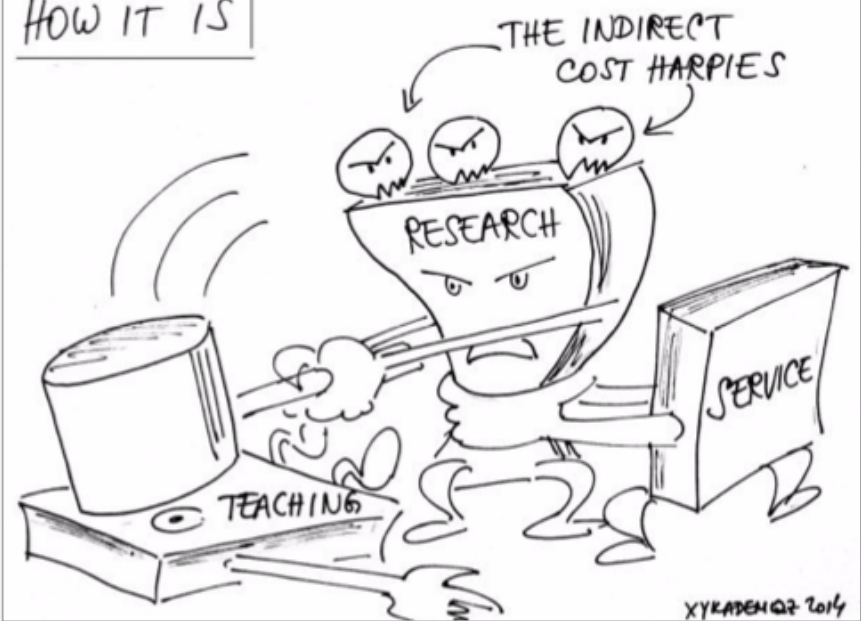We need to stop borrowing from industry

We have a complex mission

Which is a challenge

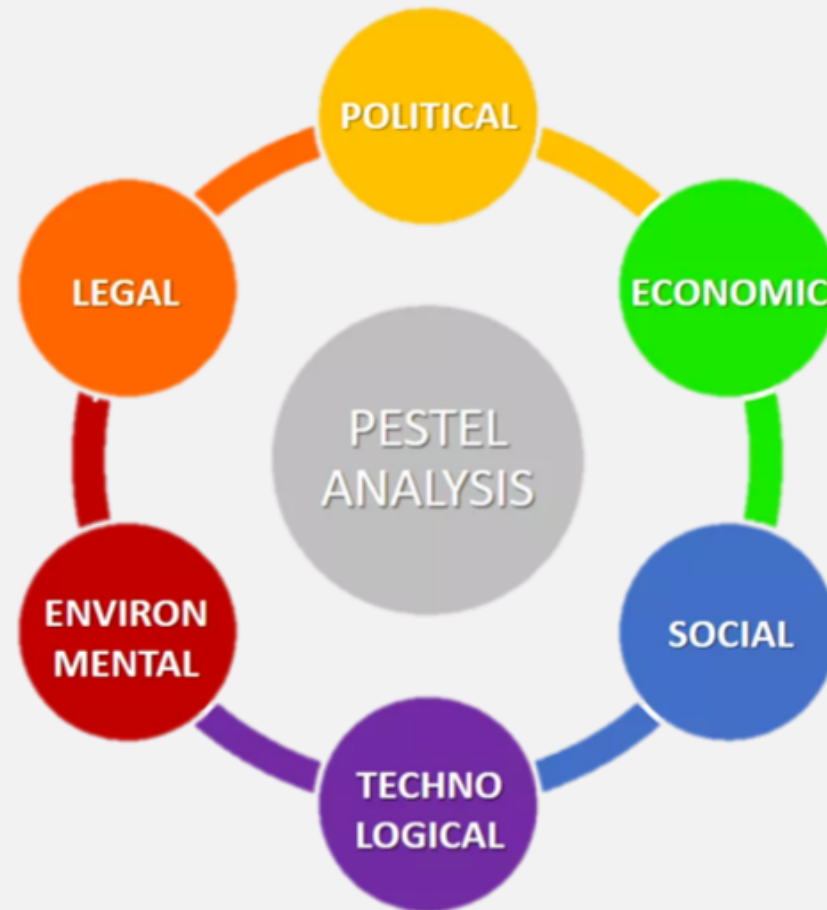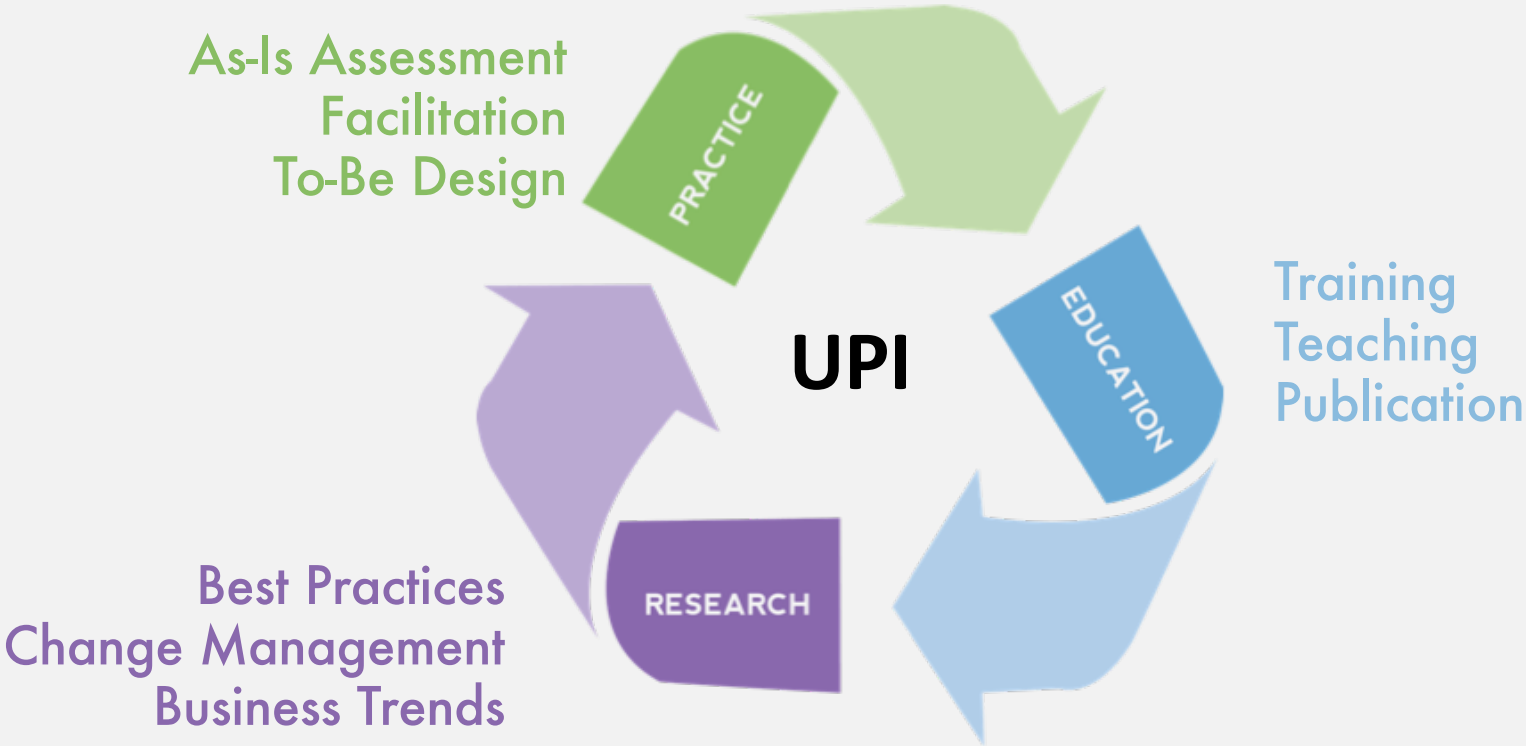# We have a complex strategy

The challenge of this complexity is…

Process improvement has never been more needed

The Approach

Our model of work
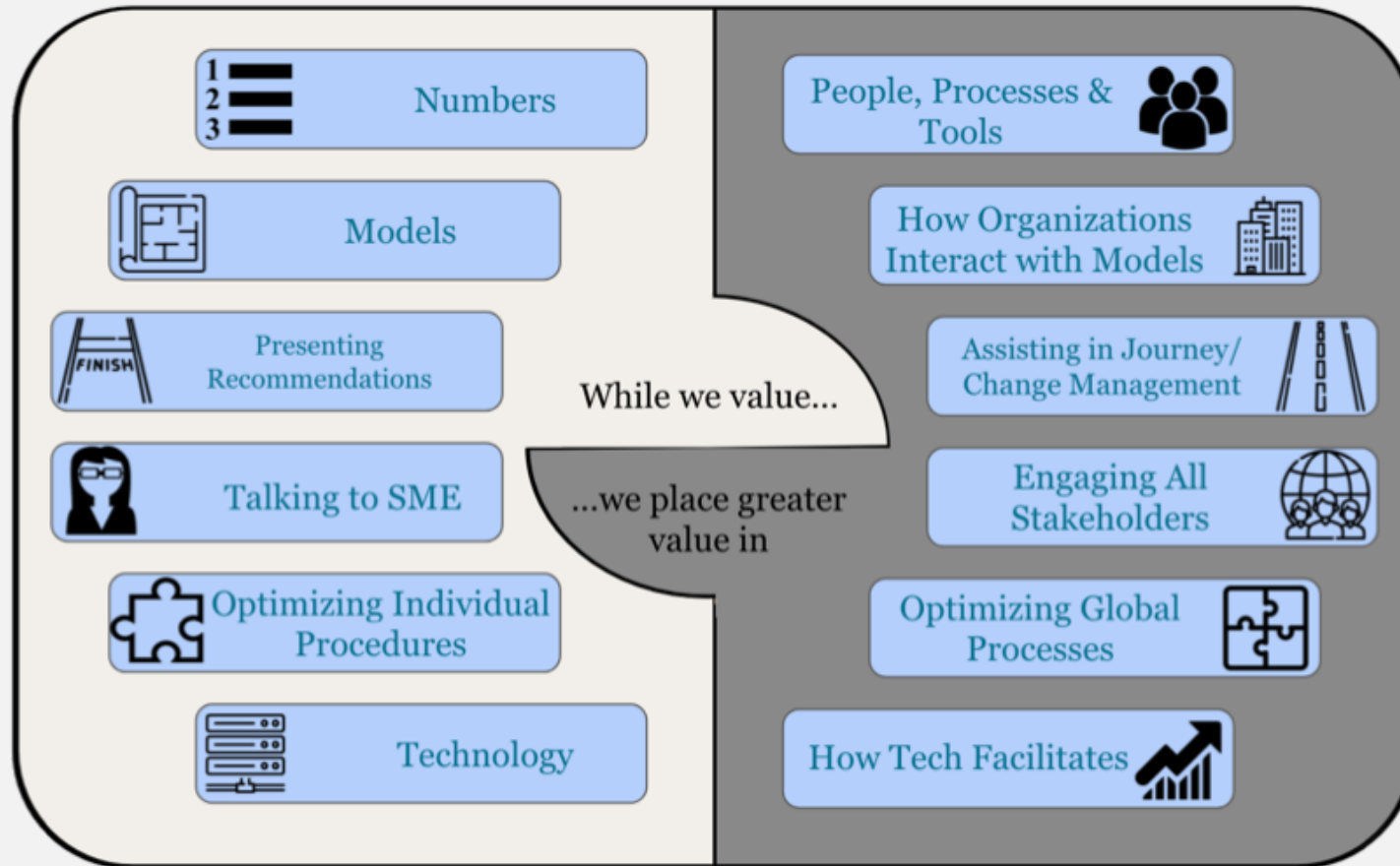

As-Is Assessment
Facilitation
To-Be Design

PRACTICE

EDUCATION

Training
Teaching
Publication

UPI

RESEARCH

Best Practices
Change Management
Business Trends

Our value proposition
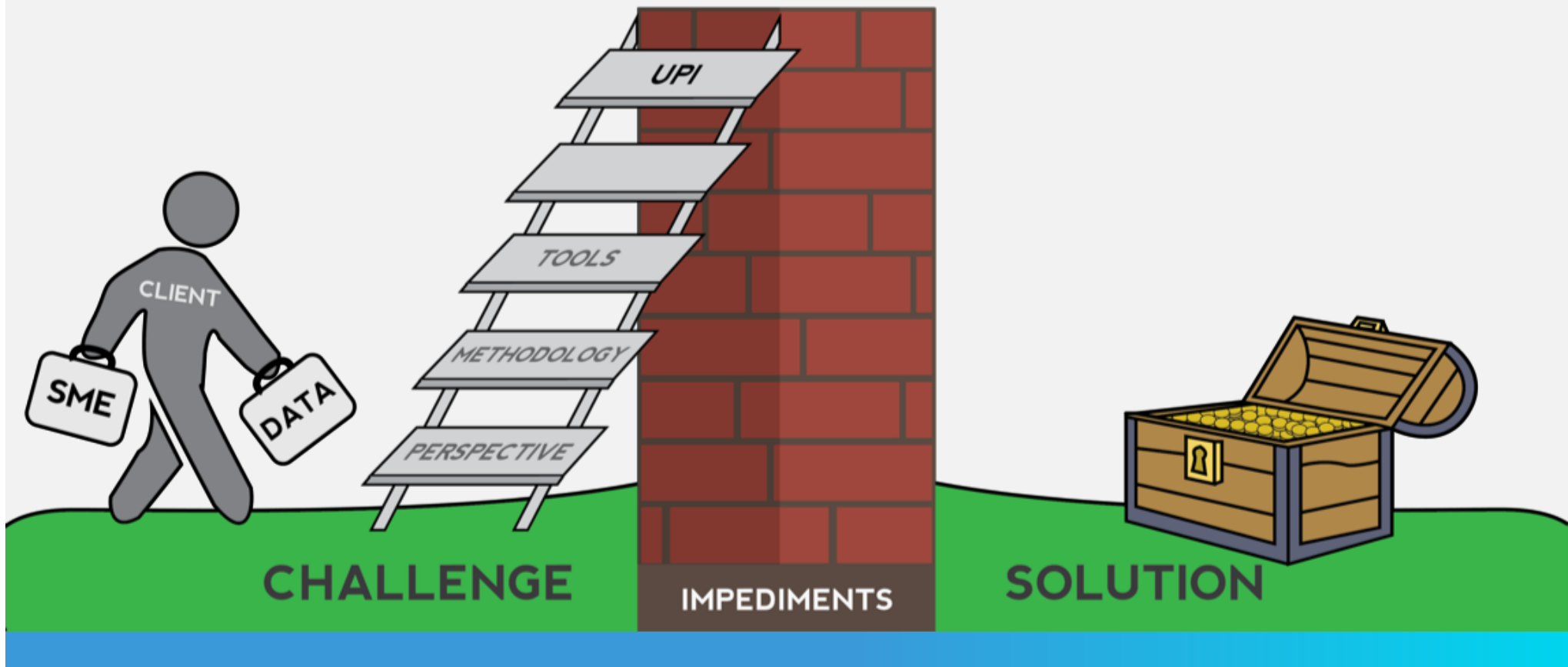
Our principles

Our methodology

Scope & Define Process
- Scope Process
- Establish Project Goals & Success Measures
- Obtain Client Commitment
- Conduct Background Research
- Develop High-Level Scoping Model

Discover Process
- Gather Process Data
- Conduct Interviews
- Review Existing Documentation
- Review Policies
- Draft As-Is Document

Assess Process
- Create Augmented Process Summary
- Synthesize Data
- Build and Validate Models
- Identify Data Gaps
- Identify Follow-Up Areas

Validate Process
- Conduct Mid-Point Briefing
- Pragmatically and Semantically Validate
- Validate Models Externally

Deliver & Close-Out Project
- Conduct Final Briefing
- Deliver Finalized Assets & Recommendations
- Identify Next Steps
- Sign-Off By Client
- Perform Internal Close-Out

Project Closed

Change is about relationships

Scope & Define Process

Scope Process

Establish Project Goals & Success Measures

Obtain Client Commitment

Conduct Background Research

Develop High-Level Scoping Model
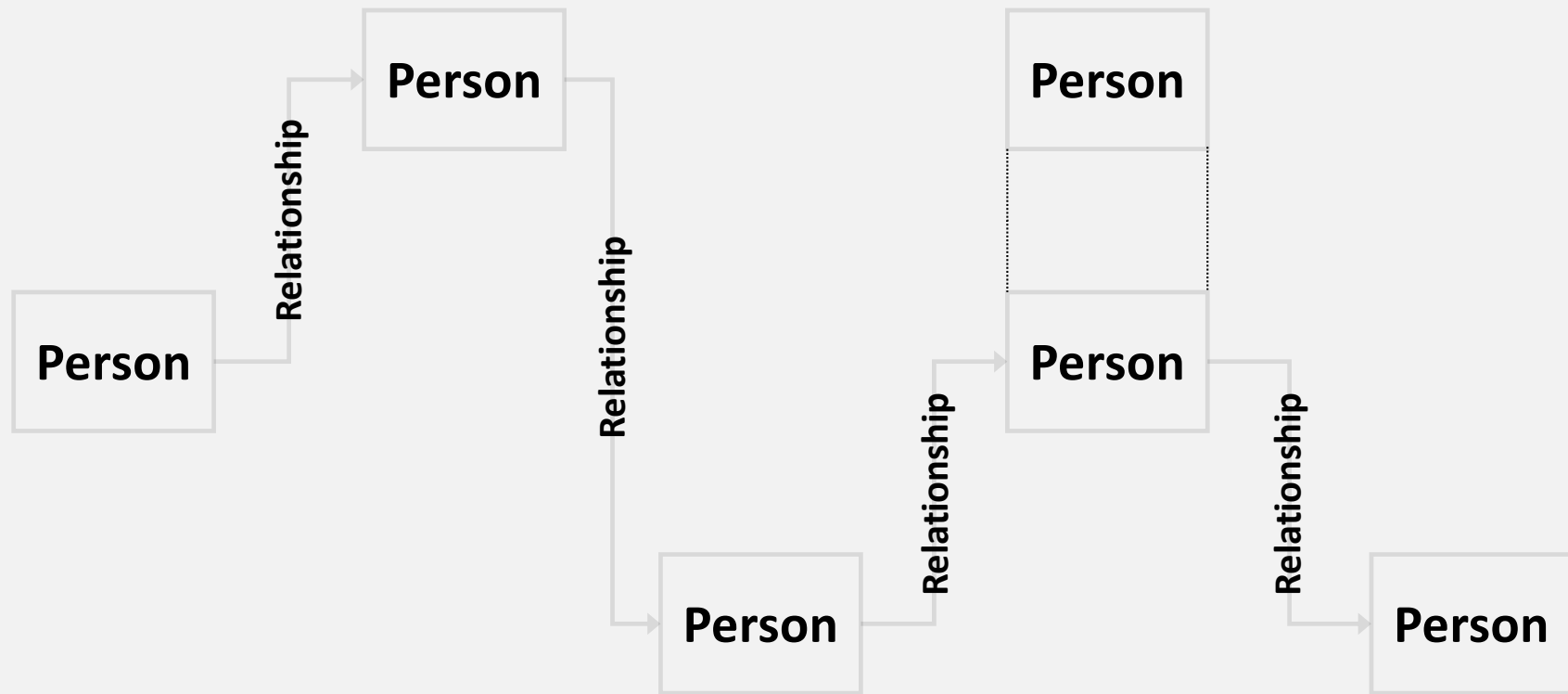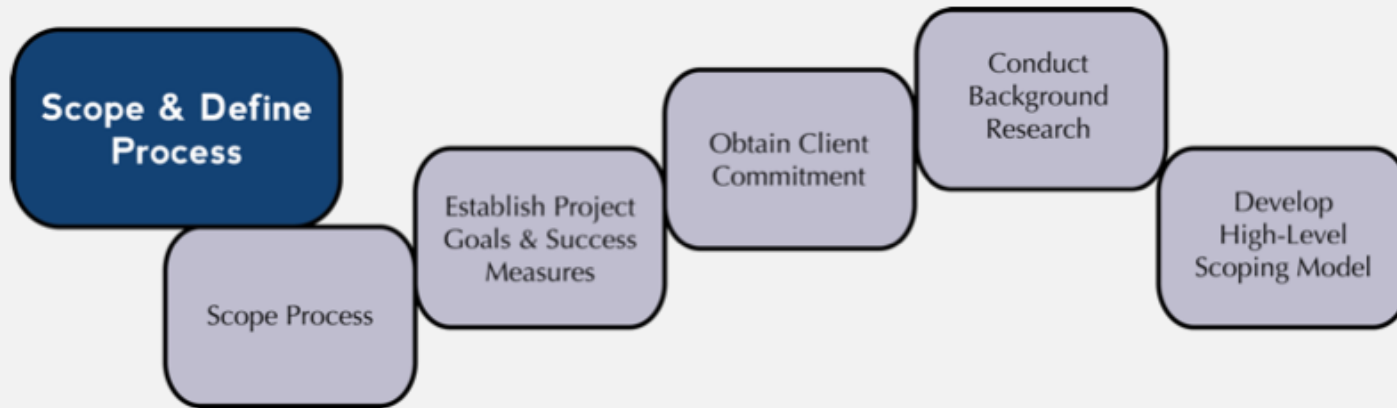
Define Terminology

Create/Bound Context

Discover Process

Gather Process Data

Create Augmented Process Summary

Draft As-Is Document

Review Policies

Review Existing Documentation

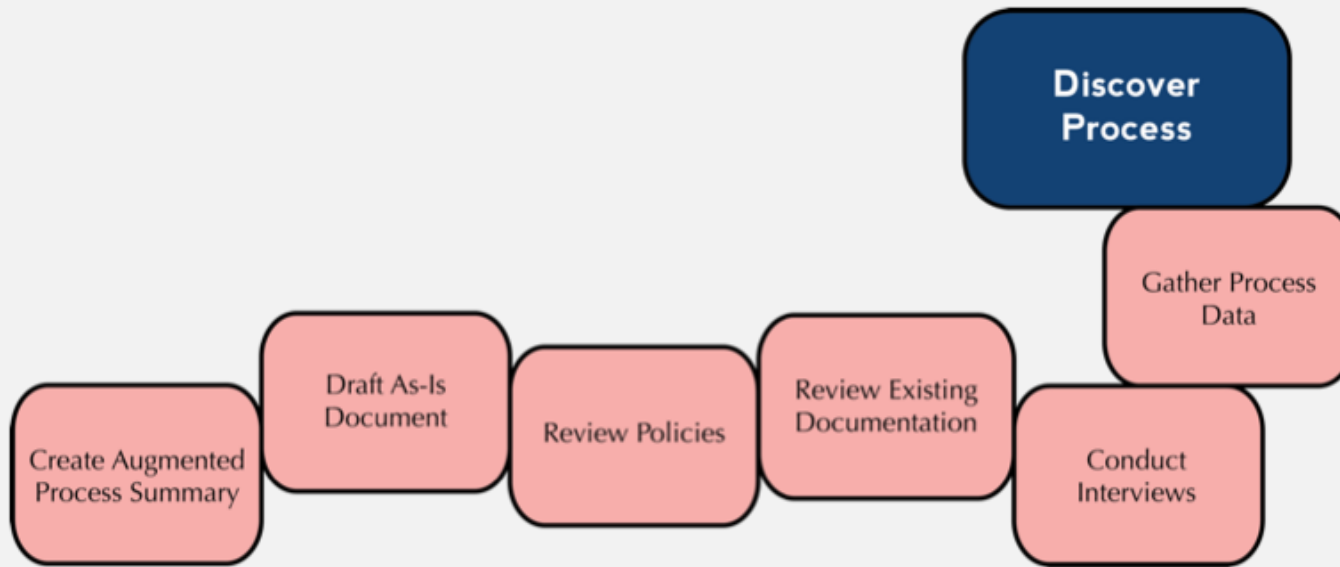Conduct Interviews

Involve All Stakeholders

Understand Their Differing Needs

Assess Process

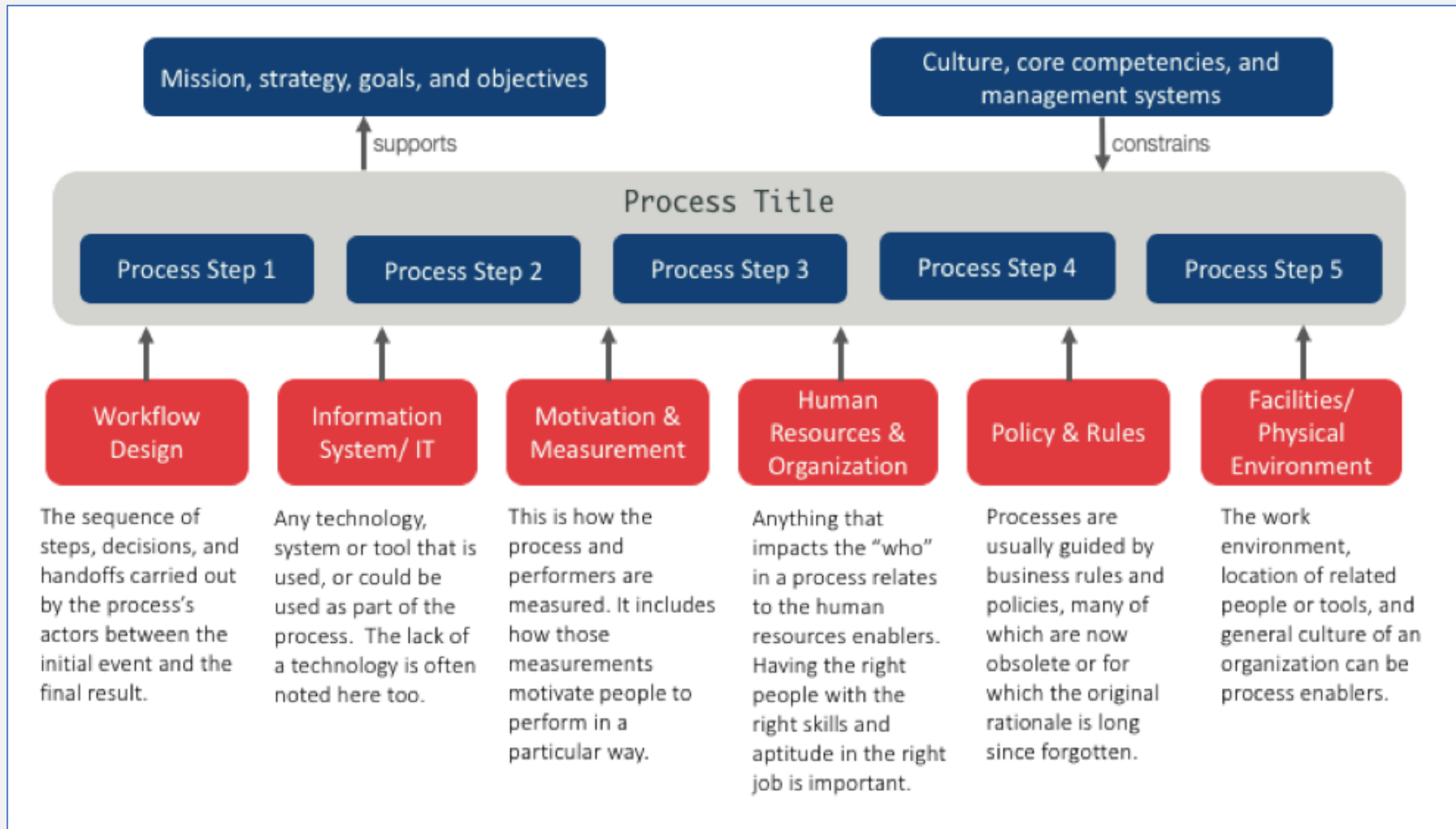Synthesize Data

Build and Validate Models

Identify Data Gaps

Identify Follow-Up Areas

Ensure Proper Level of Detail

Build Accurate Models

Validate
Process

Conduct
Mid-Point
Briefing

Pragmatically
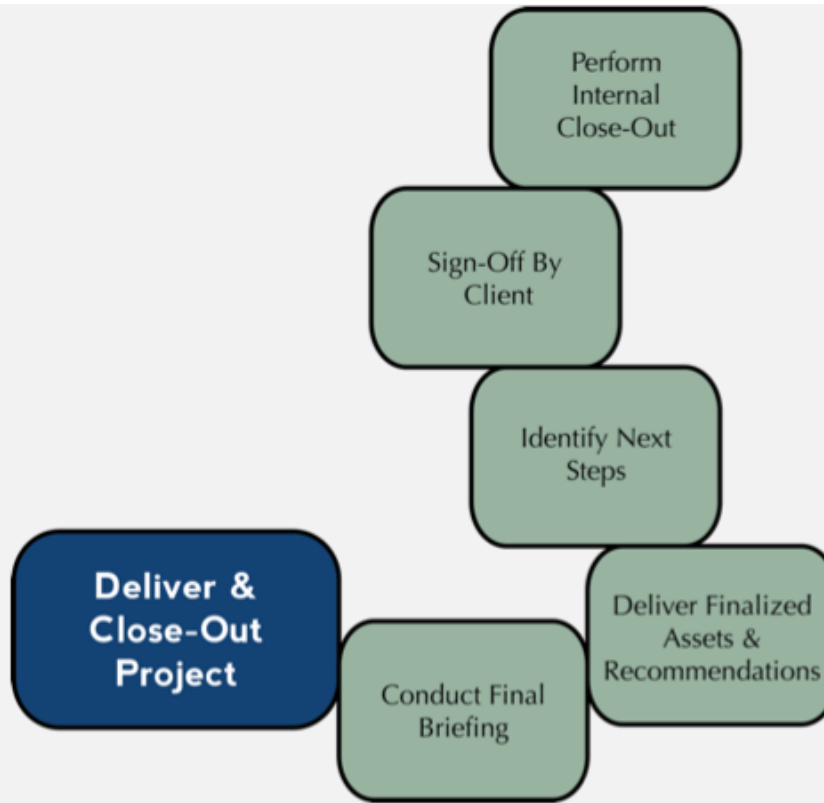and
Semantically
Validate

Validate
Models
Externally

Client in the
Loop

Stakeholders
Validate Models

Provide a Case
for Action

Deliver & Close-Out Project

- Conduct Final Briefing
- Deliver Finalized Assets & Recommendations
- Identify Next Steps
- Sign-Off By Client
- Perform Internal Close-Out

Not Focused
on Technology

The Results

Faculty Reporting

Student Transfer

Tuition Remission

Tech Transfer

Grants Accounting

....

Decommissioning

Change Major

Orientation

Hiring

Credit Card Processing

Some numbers

PRACTICE

EDUCATION

RESEARCH

- 24 Large projects
- 233 Staff directly involved
- 84% of Clients return
- 80% of Clients implemented change
- $100,000s in identified savings

- 7 Published papers
- White papers, best practices, and guides

- 11 Conference talks
- 154 Employees trained
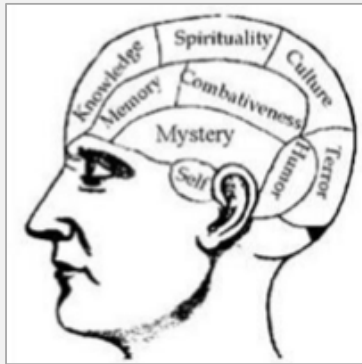- 186 Students taught

A whole lot of good will

Build it

How to make the business case

The first project has to fit

The right staff

Governance approach

Give it time

We have learned a lot (in 2017)

1. Don't be scared of the elephant in the room
2. It is the journey, not the destination
3. You can never talk to enough people
4. There are bad clients
5. Leverage your position at a university
6. Build and define a concept model
7. This practice takes time to develop

To learn more

UPI Website: http://it.umd.edu/processinnovation

Email: jdrasin@umd.edu

Drasin, J. (May, 2016). 10 Common process improvement mistakes and how to avoid them. *Educause*. Retrieved from https://er.educause.edu/articles/2016/5/10-common-process-improvement-mistakes-and-how-to-avoid-them

Drasin, J. (May, 2017). Building an office of process innovation. *Educause*. Retrieved from https://er.educause.edu/articles/2017/5/building-an-office-of-process-innovation

Sharp, A., & McDermott, P. (2008). *Workflow modeling: Tools for process improvement and application development*. Norwood, MA: Artech House.

Tregear, R. (2016) *Reimagining management: Putting process at the center of business management*. Canberra, Australia: Author.

Tregear, R., et. al. (2017) *Process precepts: Conversations about the process of management*. Canberra, Australia: Author.