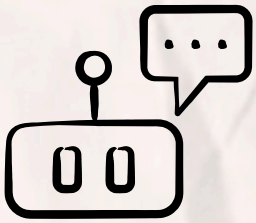
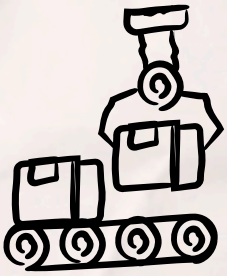
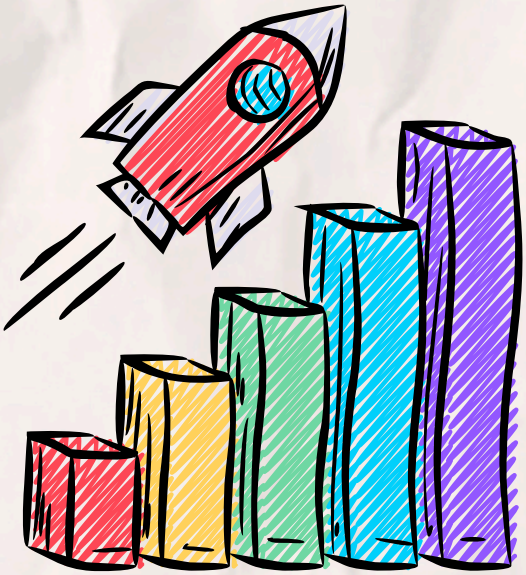


AGENTIC AI

CONCEPT TO PRODUCTION

A GUIDE





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INTRO

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

BECAUSE AGENTIC AI PROMISES SO MUCH YET SO FAR HAS DELIVERED LITTLE IN TANGIBLE VALUE.

There are many challenges confronting companies. Some have to do with identifying relevant use cases. In other cases, companies are being confronted by too many and have difficulty prioritising them. Yet more are challenged with successfully taking Agent ideas into production as many languish in early devleopment stages. All the while, technology adoption is hard.

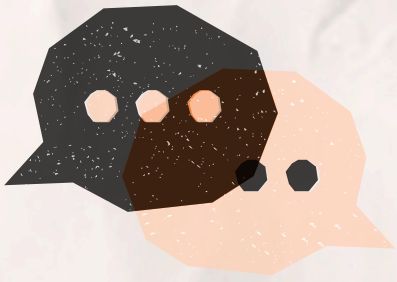
What you will get in this guide is unadulterated, no nonsense, hype free and practical advice based on real world experience.

SOME OF THE QUESTIONS ANSWERED

What is the promise of Agentic AI?

What are some of the challenges being faced?

How do you take a concept through to production?

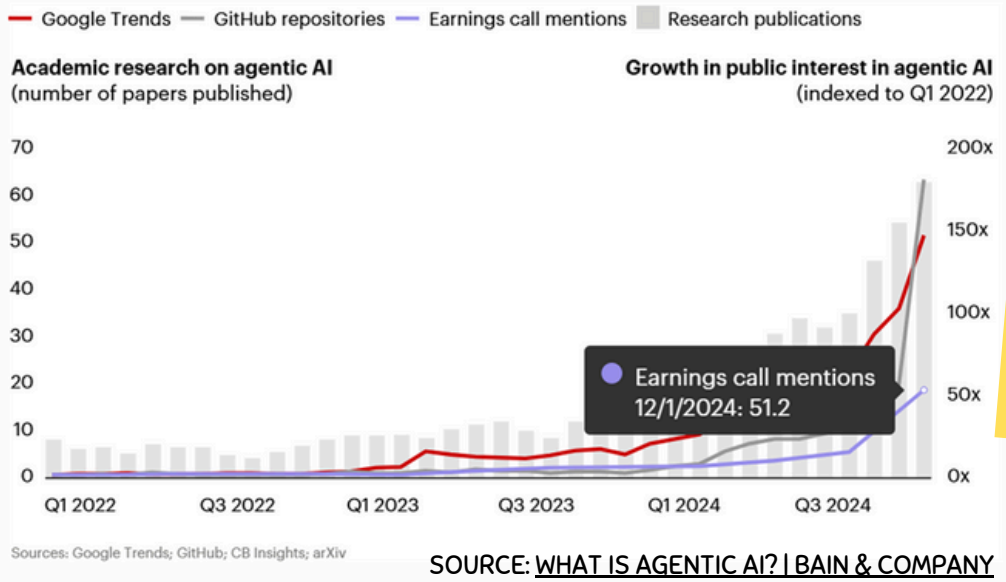


On what basis do you prioritise your efforts?

Why put user and agent flows at the heart of your designs?

What mental models and resources are useful for execution?

THE PROMISE OF AGENTIC AI



SOURCE: WHAT IS AGENTIC AI? | BAIN & COMPANY

1.3 Billion AI Agents by 2028, IDC, Microsoft

A new class of AI is now emerging – less assistant, more service provider. What began as basic conversational interfaces may now be evolving into something far more capable. Traditional chatbots were designed to respond to user prompts, often within rigid scripts or narrow flows. They could fetch answers, summarize text, or mimic conversation – but always in a reactive, limited frame. AI agents represent a step-change forward. These are intelligent long-running processes that can reason, act, and complete multi-step tasks on a user's behalf. They don't just answer questions they execute: booking meetings, submitting reports, logging into tools, or orchestrating workflows across platforms, often using natural language as their command layer.

Whereas early assistants needed clear inputs and produced narrow outputs, agents promise to operate with goals, autonomy and certain guardrails. They promise to interpret intent, manage memory, and coordinate across apps to get real work done. It's less about responding and more about accomplishing. While we are early in the development of these agents, the implications are just starting to emerge. AI agents could reshape how users interact with digital systems from customer support and onboarding to research, scheduling, and internal operations. Enterprises are leading the charge; they're not just experimenting with agents, but deploying them, investing in frameworks and building ecosystems around autonomous execution. What was once a messaging interface is becoming an action layer.

SOURCE: TRENDS IN ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE | BOND

CHALLENGES ABOUND

How PepsiCo moves past AI pilot purgatory | CIO Dive

GenAI paradox: exploring AI use cases | McKinsey

Power of the possible: Moving from genAI experimentation to production – Tech Monitor

AI Adoption: Why Businesses Struggle to Move from Development to Production – The New Stack

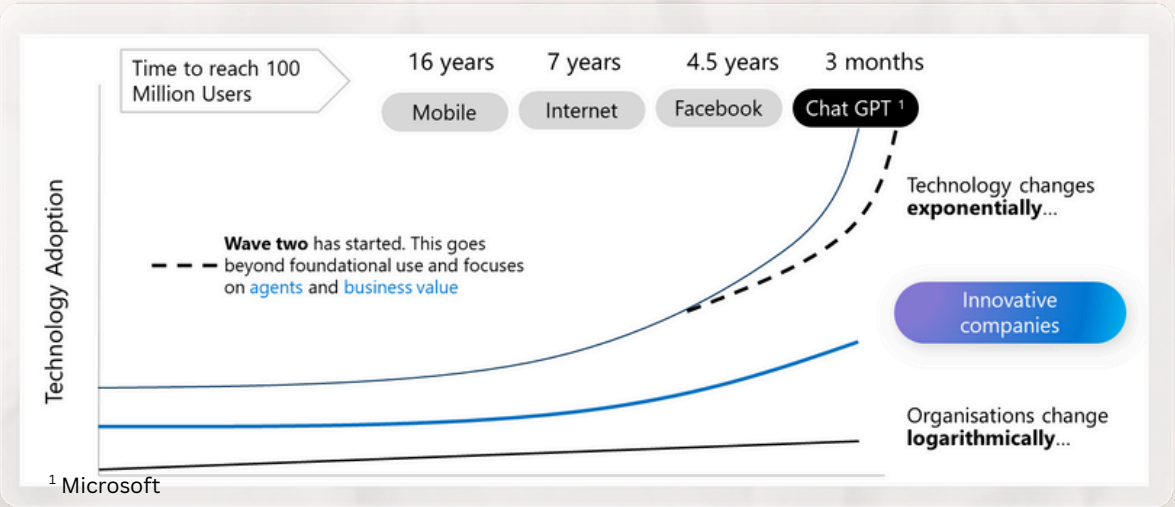
Businesses struggle to pick the right AI use case: report | CIO Dive

Businesses must reinvent themselves in the age of agentic AI | ZDNET

As you can tell from the headlines (all hyperlinked), a lot of the focus has now moved beyond experimental use of AI. Yet challenges abound.

Amongst them, a lack of trust in AI; poor business alignment and unclear use cases; data quality issues; skills shortages and difficulty demonstrating ROI. Moving to enterprise-wide adoption and transformation with cross-functional teams and scalable delivery is now key.

TECHNOLOGY ADOPTION IS HARD



[1] Microsoft

One of the biggest challenges organisations face is managing technology adoption in the face of accelerating technology change. Organisations are just not geared to changing as fast as the technology does. But innovative companies try and keep up. The magic ingredients: adoption and measurement activities focused on your people and their employee experience.

COMMS & COMMUNITY

Communicating across channels to drive strategic clarity and aid understanding and communities to scale knowledge sharing.

SKILLING

Identifying knowledge gaps and opportunities for upskilling through targeted learning experiences that are agile (constantly kept up to date).

VALUE

Understanding readiness, usage and adoption trends. Quantify productivity gains and business impact through performance metric improvements.

ADOPTION

MEASUREMENT

CONCEPT TO PRODUCTION FLOW

ENVISION
EXECUTE
EVALUATE

START

1 USE CASE DISCOVERY

This requires an understanding of the business processes and use cases where Agentic AI could be embedded

2 SOLUTION ENVISIONING

This requires a deeper dive on a prioritised set of use cases to validate them further in relation to key criteria

GO/NO GO DECISION

3 BUILD

This means building the connections and integrations to third party systems, fine tuning the models, building any UI needed, etc.

4 TEST & MEASURE

This means deploying to a test environment and should include a sufficient number of test uers and measures

GO/NO GO DECISION

5 DEPLOY & MEASURE

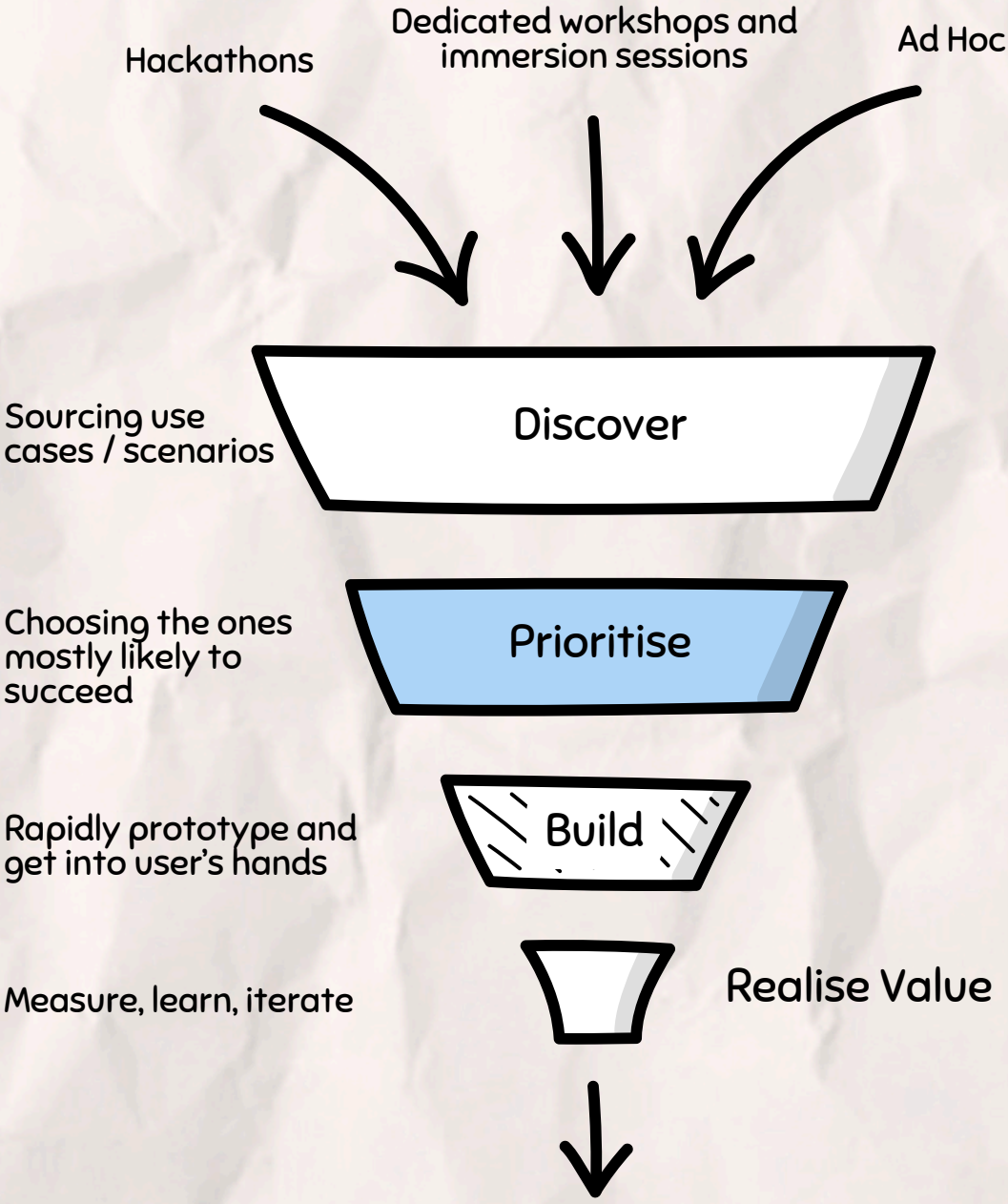
This means deploying to production and should include proper lifecycle management and end user support

A WORD ON GO / NO GO DECISIONS
These points are in the flow as a stage gate. It's important to get to them quickly and more than once in the process. You want to decide early whether its worth pursuing a concept or not.

A WORD ON TIMING
Speed matters. Not just for the market makers developing AI but in the experimenting too. 6 weeks, that's your goal.

UE CASE PIPELINE

MANAGING A FUNNEL OF POTENTIAL



You have to be intentional about use cases. That starts with discovery and having various sources that can be used as input for them. But equally, you have to prioritise ruthlessly so that only those that are worth pursuing, are pursued. Then the critical thing is to ruthlessly manage those use cases selected for implementation to a successful conclusion.

Ideally that conclusion means you have an Agent that is used by as many in the organisation as possible and it is driving measurable value. However, getting to a conclusion where you decide the Agent is of no use is also an option – just get to this point as soon as possible.

MORE ON PRIORITISATION

You have to be discerning when it comes to identifying use cases that are worth putting time and effort into. You want to try and do the evaluation up front but that's not always going to be possible. For example, on the basis of whether it is going to be deliverable, that may require some effort to discover technical barriers that may not make it worthwhile in the long run.

So decide on a set of key criteria that you will use and score collected use case ideas against them. You could even use an Agent to do the work but have them in a spreadsheet or list at least. Do it at the beginning and throughout and especially at GO / NO GO decision points. Here are three to get you started:

RELEVANT

How important is this for the business. Use cases that touch core business operations carry more value.

- Financial: How does it impact the bottom line by driving revenue and/or saving costs
- Customer: How does it impact on how your customers perceive you
- Internal Process: How does it improve productivity or a key business process

MEASURABLE

Key KPI's / metrics can be identified and impact of the Agent on the process/es can be established

- These can be measured through survey's and/or analytics like product telemetry and tied to business performance metrics and attributed to the use cases and agents used for them
- Ideally you can correlate inputs with outputs and there is a direct, causal link.

DELIVERABLE

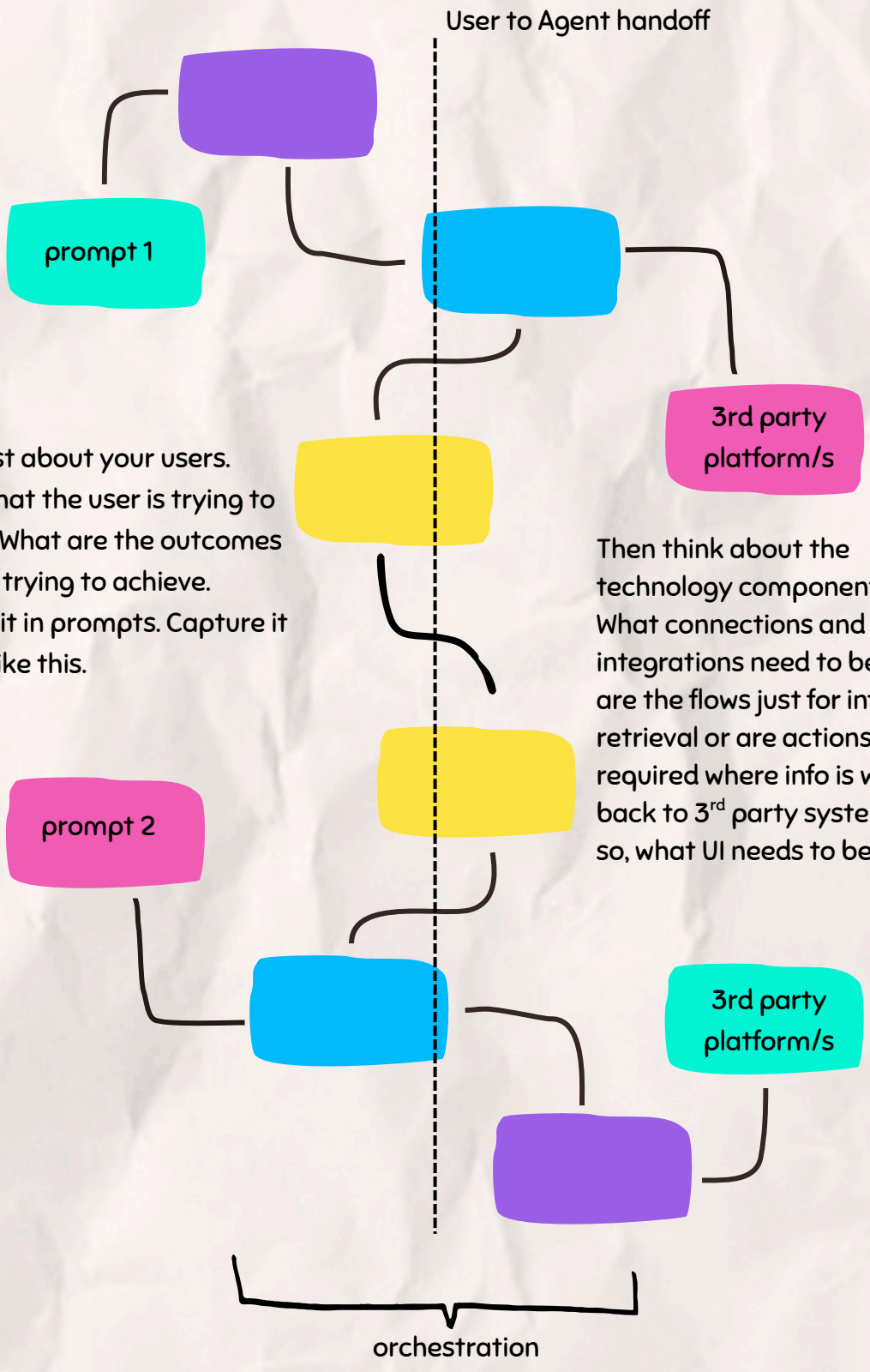
Delivery is possible and feasible.

- The technical solution you have envisaged is possible
- Resources to manage are available (people, budget, time)
- Key stakeholders are identified, involved and bought in

A WORD ON SCORING
Each of the criteria should have a score and can be weighted. Get AI to help with scoring but also get key stakeholder humans in the loop.

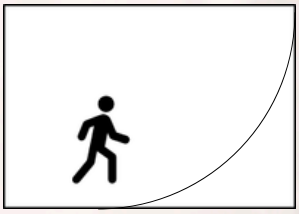
THE IMPORTANCE OF

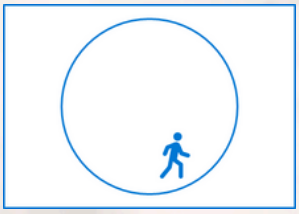
MAPPING USER / AGENT FLOW



MENTAL MODELS

THINK LIKE A PRODUCT MANAGER NOT PROJECT MANAGER





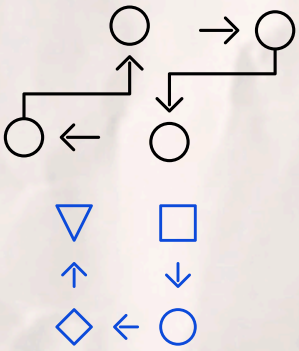
Like a project manager

- There's a beginning and an end
- The plan is to manage the project
- Supported by tools: project plan

.Like a product manager

- There's a continuous learning curve and evolution
- The strategy is to build a capability
- Supported by systems: people, technology and process

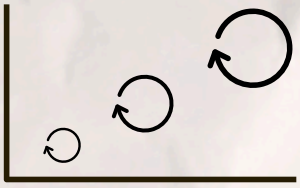
THINK LIKE A BUSINESS ANALYST



There's a good reason why process optimisation is one of the 15 fastest-growing skills for 2025 (LinkedIn skills on the rise 2025).

Always start with the business process as it currently stands. Then try and understand how AI and in particular an Agent can be embedded into the process and improve it. NOTE: Reinvent your process if needed, don't just overlay AI onto a bad process.

THINK SCALABLE ITERATION

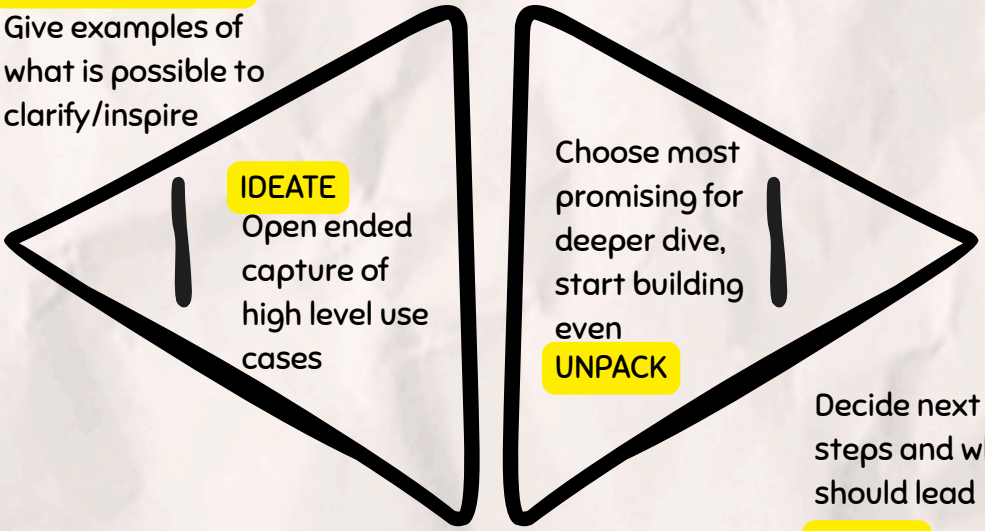


Each cycle should incorporate a set of use cases that you have chosen to implement through the Envision, Execute, Evaluate flow. Time between cycles can vary but let's say 2-3 months per cycle with 6 weeks per use case and an average of 5 use cases per cycle as a benchmark

You can carry over use cases between cycles if still valid and not complete or drop if invalidated. Of course you can add use cases ad hoc if you have the resources and they warrant it. Start with simple Agents or simple part of a bigger Agent and scale from there.

OTHER RESOURCES

IDEATION WORKSHOPS – FORMAT (1/2 TO FULL DAY)



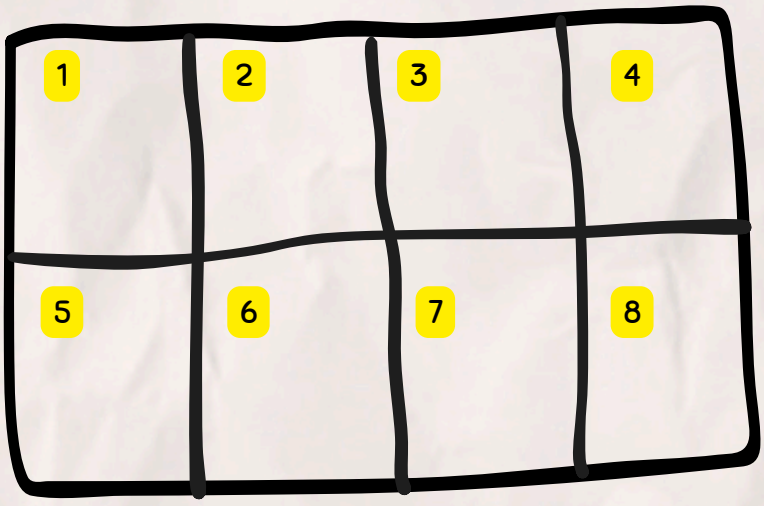
There are times when you want to be intentional about discovering use cases. Workshops dedicated to them can help. Be simple yet focused in the approach.

USE CASE TEMPLATE

The sections in this template are not exhaustive and you may want to add to, remove from or change them according to the needs of your own specific operational setup.

One key aspect you should keep is to contrast between current processes and ways of doing things versus the new, with Agents. And you should include the projected impact in the relvant areas of the business.

1. USER'S ROLE/FUNCTION
2. BUSINESS OUTCOME GOALS
3. CURRENT PROCESS
4. REVISED PROCESS WITH AI
5. DATA SOURCES
6. TECHNOLOGIES INVOLVED
7. MEASURES OF SUCCESS / KPI'S IMPACTED AND ESTIMATED IMPACT
8. OTHER DEPENDENCIES



BROUGHT TO YOU BY

STEPHEN DANELUTTI

* I work at Microsoft (disclosure) and am heavily focused on supporting customers with AI Transformation efforts and in particular with the implementation of Agentic AI solutions. However, this report, although informed by my experience, does not divulge any proprietary information and is not solely based on my work at Microsoft. I work with other technologies in my spare time to educate myself on as wide a range as possible.

REPORTS & GUIDES

NEWSLETTER

BLOG

WORK*

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