



MANAGEMENT BRIEFING

Common Mistakes in AI Projects

Why AI initiatives rarely fail because of technology — and which decisions leaders should make before they start.

STARTING POINT

AI rarely fails because of technology — but because of the decisions made beforehand

Many AI projects start too quickly and too vaguely.

- AI is launched as a **tool project**, when it is really a **business-process project**.
- Typical reasons for abandonment: unclear business case, poor data, missing risk management, rising costs.

Abandoned after PoC

Gartner expects a significant share of GenAI projects to be abandoned after the proof of concept.

SOURCE: GARTNER

THE DECISION PATH BEFORE EVERY AI PROJECT

Use Case



Data



Risk



Operations



Scaling

MISTAKE

01 / 08

Starting with technology instead of business value

“We need AI” is not a business case.

- Define a concrete bottleneck: inquiries, quotes, callbacks, documentation, knowledge, support.
- Every use case needs a target: time saved, fewer errors, faster response, better capacity utilization.

✗ Poor use case

“We need AI” — a wish without a goal

Model, tool or vendor chosen first

No measurable outcome, no owner

✓ Decision-ready use case

A concrete process bottleneck is named

Goal first, tool second

Measurable target, business unit accountable



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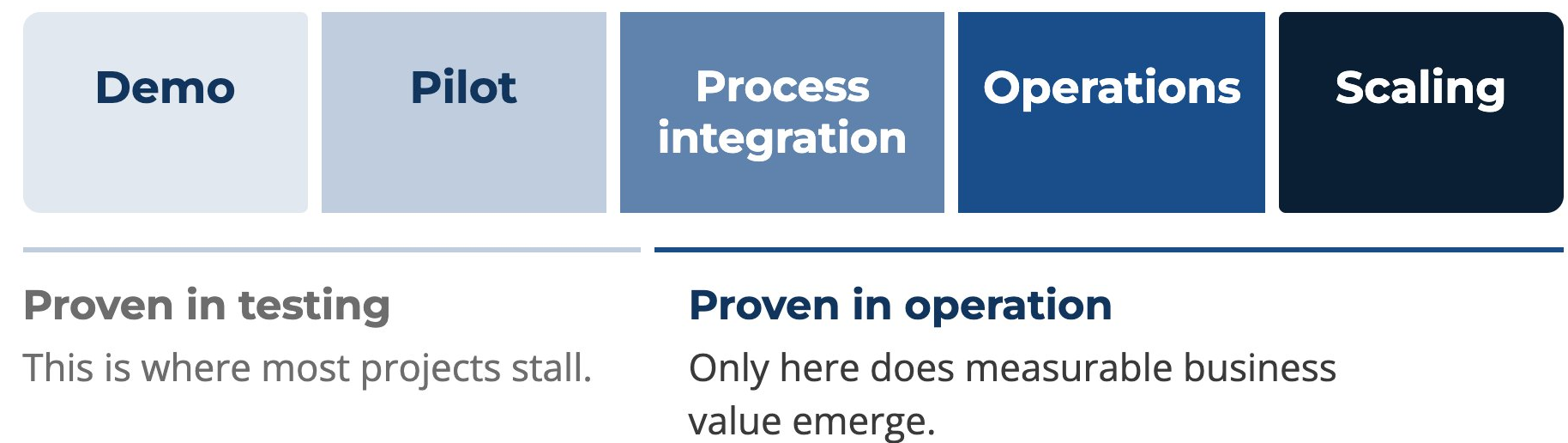
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Mistaking a proof of concept for success

A successful demo is not yet operational value.

- Many pilots work in testing but fail in everyday use.
- What matters is integration, roles, permissions, quality assurance and the handover into operations.
- McKinsey: value comes mainly from workflow redesign and leadership ownership.

MATURITY — FROM TEST TO VALUE



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03 / 08

Underestimating data quality

Without usable data, AI becomes expensive, slow and unreliable.

- Typical problems: scattered files, outdated templates, unclear master data, no clear owners.
- Gartner forecasts that by 2026 many AI projects will be abandoned for lack of AI-ready data.

Data check before AI rollout

- ☒ Is the data available?
- ☒ Is it up to date?
- ☒ Is access properly authorized?
- ☒ Is it structured?
- ☒ Approved by the business?



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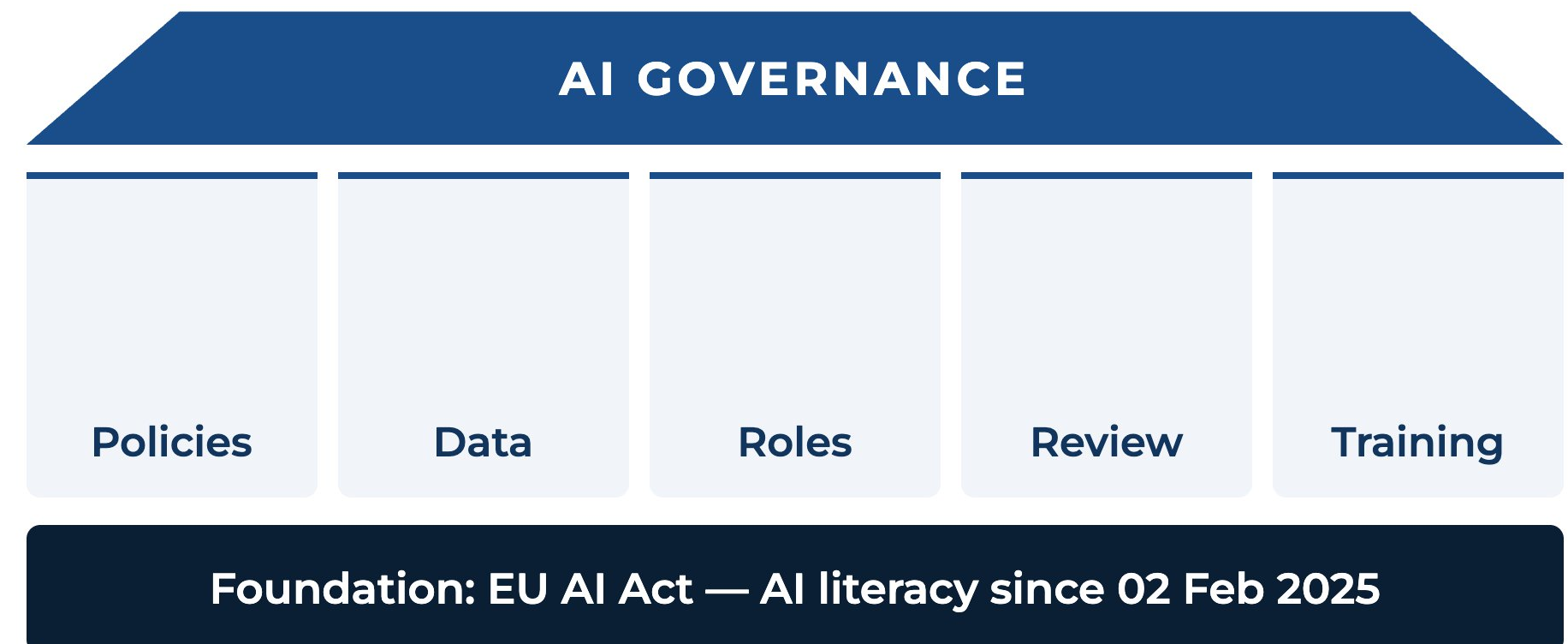
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Introducing governance only after the start

Governance is not a brake — it is a prerequisite for scaling.

- Without rules, shadow AI, data-protection risks and inconsistent results emerge.
- Since 2 February 2025, the EU AI Act has required AI-literacy measures for users and operators.

THE GOVERNANCE HOUSE



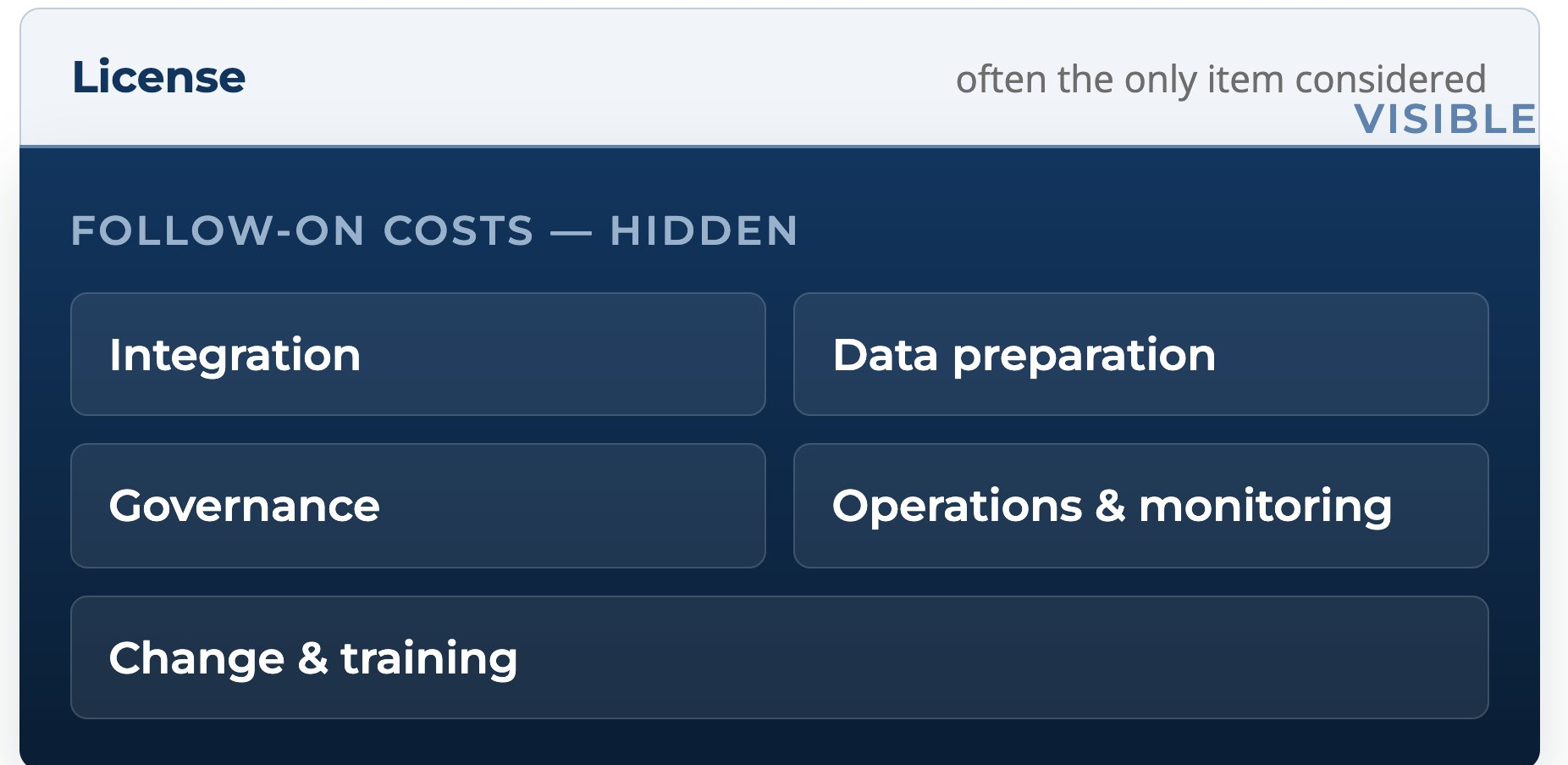
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Seeing costs as license costs only

Follow-on costs determine the ROI.

- Gartner cites rising costs and unclear business value as central reasons for abandonment.
- The business case must include operating costs and scaling — not just the pilot.



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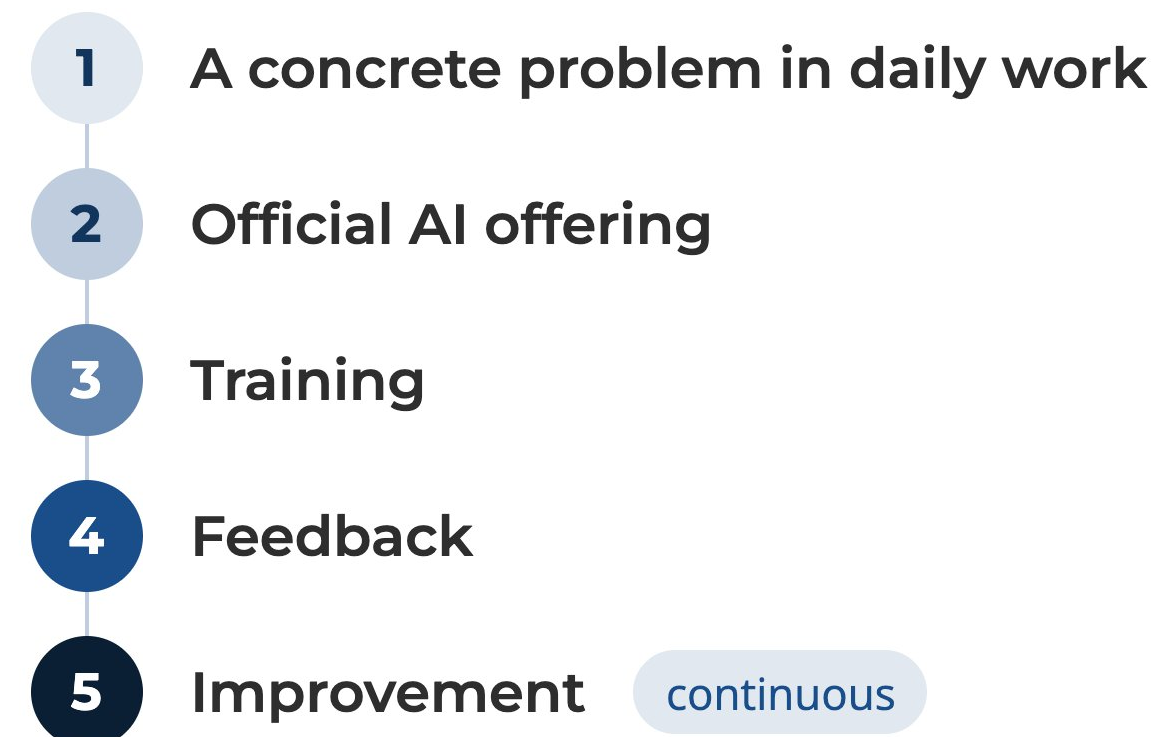
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Not involving employees

AI is only used when it genuinely makes work easier.

- Resistance stems from poor rollout, fear of surveillance or unclear responsibilities.
- Shadow AI emerges when official solutions are missing or impractical. IBM warns of higher risks and costs from uncontrolled use.

THE USER PATH TO ADOPTION



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07 / 08

Treating privacy and security as an afterthought

Sensitive data must not first surface in operation.

The critical cases are:

Customer data

HR data

Contracts

Technical documents

Internal costings

NIST recommends a risk-based approach: govern, map, measure and manage.

Review questions before going live

- ☒ Is personal data involved?
- ☒ Does it contain trade secrets?
- ☒ Are access rights clarified?
- ☒ Is logging in place?
- ☒ Has approval been granted?



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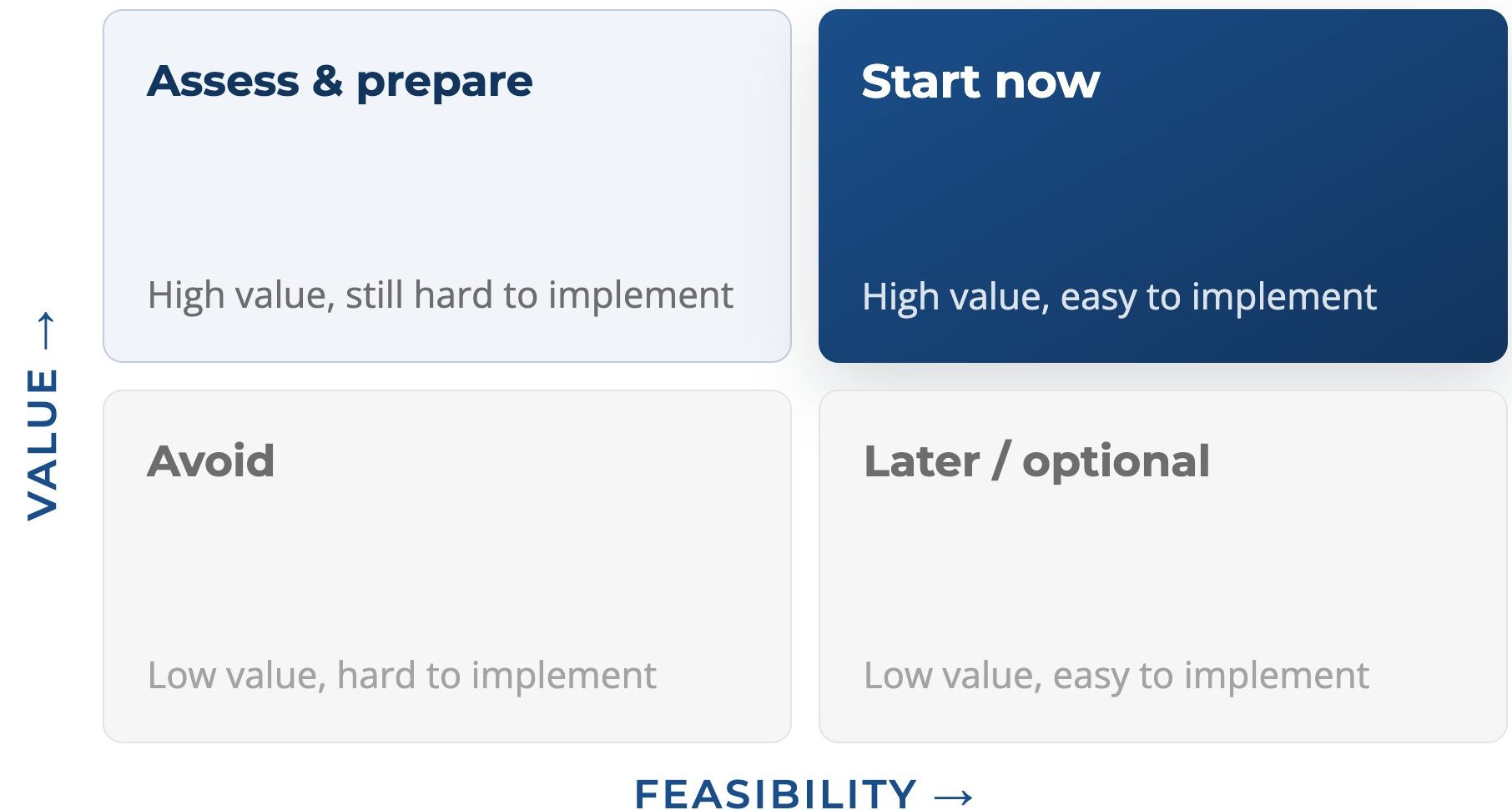
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Starting too many use cases at once

Breadth without focus creates activity, but no measurable progress.

- Mid-sized companies should not launch ten AI initiatives in parallel.
- Better: 1–2 use cases with high value, manageable risk and clear data sources.
- Scale only after measurable value, clean operations and adoption.

PRIORITIZATION MATRIX



What leaders should require before the start

90-Day Decision Sheet — mandatory before approval

1 Use case

2 Value target

3 Data situation

4 Risk

5 Effort

6 Owners

7 Operations after the pilot

APPROVAL ONLY WITH ALL FOUR STAKEHOLDERS

Business unit

IT

Data protection

Management

THE MINIMUM QUESTION

**“What will be
measurably better after
90 days?”**

No AI project without a decision document. No
clear answer, no approval.

NEXT STEP

Assess AI projects first, then start

The next step is not buying a tool, but a structured assessment.

KrambergAI AI Initial Check

Structured assessment of suitable use cases, risks and priorities.

The outcome

A compact basis for decisions by management and the business.

Have your AI project assessed before you start

Request an AI potential report



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