



JANUARY 2025

INNOLEAD IMPACT CONFERENCE 2024

CONSTRUCTIVE COLLABORATION WITH BUSINESS UNITS & FUNCTIONS: HOW NOT TO BE VIEWED AS IRRELEVANT, A DISTRACTION, OR A THREAT BY BUSINESS LEADERS

Activity 1, 2, 3 Analysis





InnoLead is focused on helping innovators and change-makers in large organizations deliver real impact.



Impact 2024 Conference
October 23 – 25, 2024
Boston / Cambridge, MA



The event had **6 key focus areas:**

- Generating Business Value with AI
- **Constructive Collaboration with Business Units and Functions**
- Building New Ventures
- Advancing Open Innovation & Startup Engagement
- Optimizing the Innovation Team
- Navigating New Mandates (including Sustainability + DEI).

Bringing together **350 corporate innovation leaders:**

National Brands

like United Airlines, Disney, Target, Comcast, Pepsi, NFL, Lowes, GE, Carmax...

Local Companies

like MIT, Harvard, Fidelity, Boston Dynamics, New England Patriots, Boston Celtics...

Healthcare Companies

like Eli Lilly, Mayo Clinic, Boston Children's, Johns Hopkins, GEHA Health...

Presented/Facilitated
by

David Crean
Sim Kahlon
Shannon Wilz



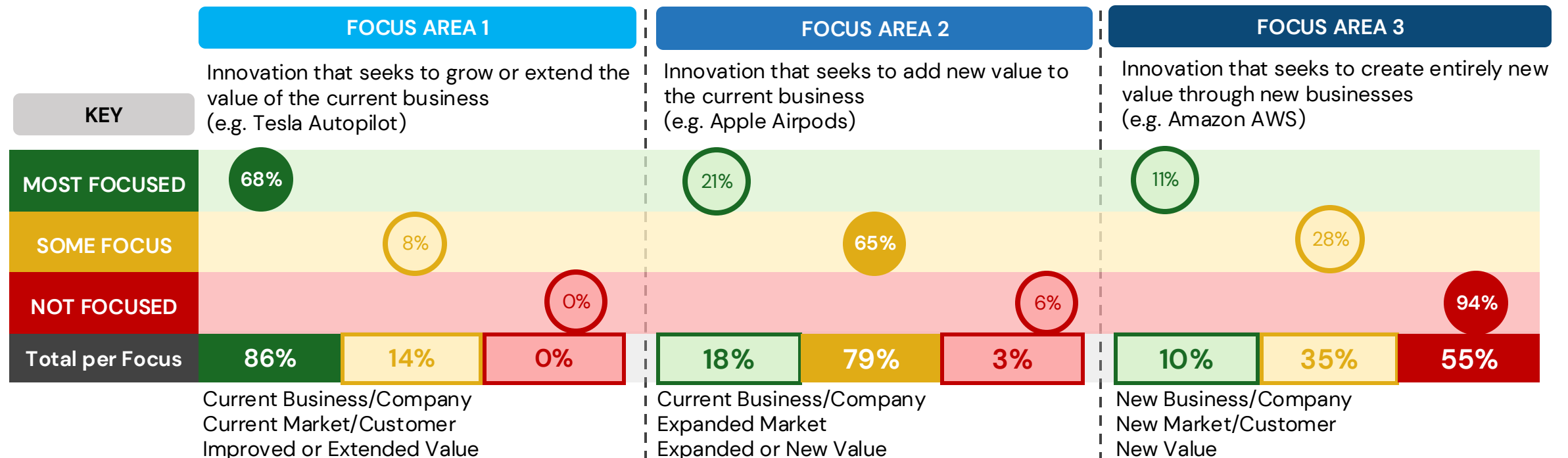
30-40 Attendees
standing room only

ACTIVITY 1A: INNOVATION LEADER'S FOCUS

This activity aimed to help participants understand where their innovation focus lies and where the focus of their business leaders align. In [part A](#), participants placed colored dots on a canvas to indicate their level of focus on three areas of innovation.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Most innovation leaders that attended the session are focused on extending the value of the current business, have moderate focus on expanding their current business, and are less focused on creating entirely new ventures.



ACTIVITY 1B: BUSINESS LEADERS FOCUS

This activity aimed to help participants understand where their innovation focus lies and where the focus of their business leaders align. In [part B](#), participants identified and placed 3–5 business leaders on the canvas to reflect the leaders' perceived focus areas for innovation.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Leadership Alignment:

- Business leaders and innovation leaders demonstrate strong alignment in their focus areas
- Innovation leaders see their business partners as their internal customers

Role Specific Takeaways:

- Business Unit Executives and Product leaders (1,2,3) – Balance operations, refine, and enhance value in existing products. These are often innovation leader's internal customers.
 - They are the most engaged with Innovation compared to other leaders.
- COO, CFO (1,2) – Focus on efficiency and optimizing value in current markets.
- CEO, CIO (3) – Drive innovation and pursue long-term sustainable growth in new markets for the entire business.

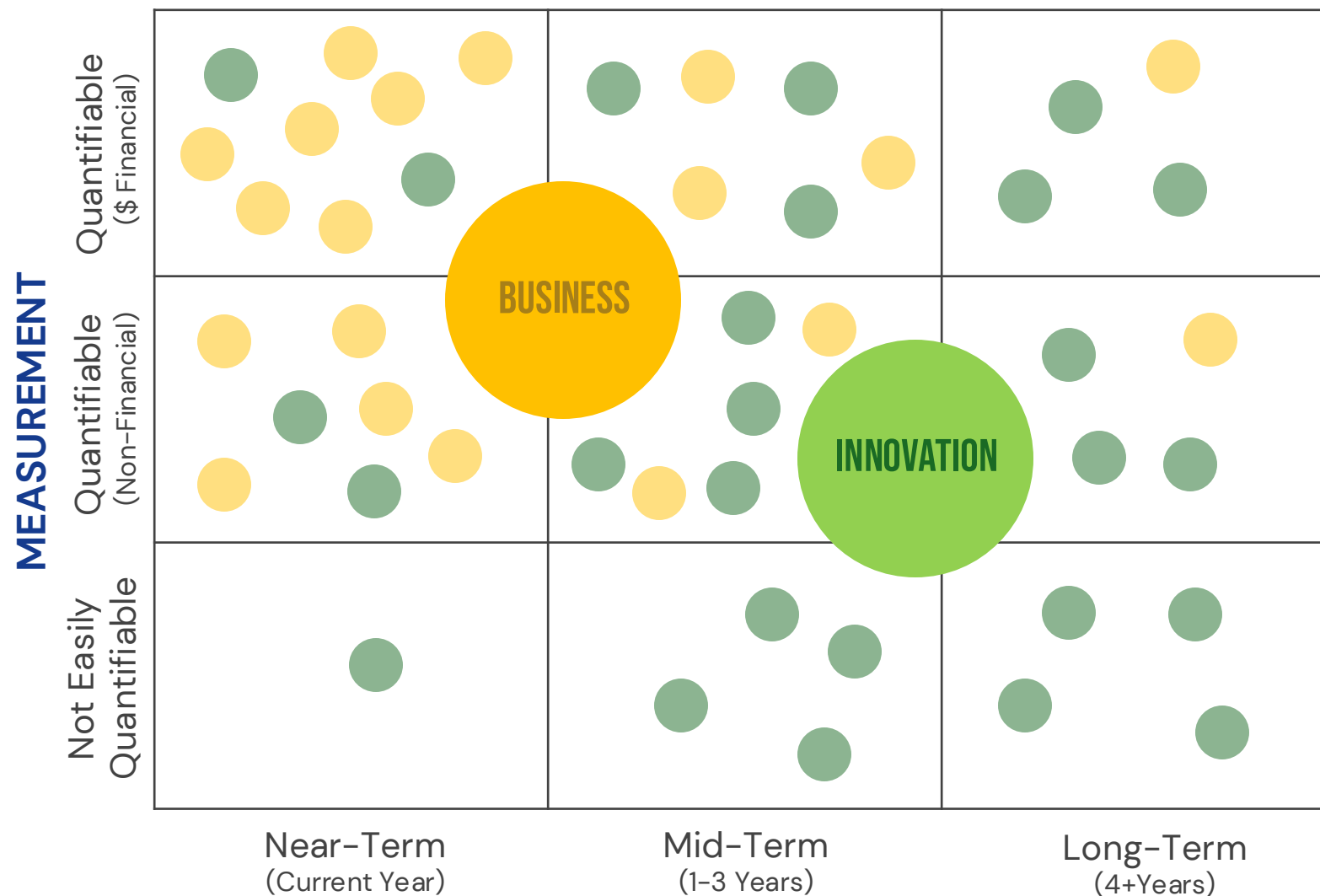
Roles	Focus Area 1	Focus Area 2	Focus Area 3
	Innovation that seeks to grow or extend the value of the current business.	Innovation that seeks to add new value to the current business.	Innovation that seeks to create entirely new value through new businesses.
COO	3 (7.3%)	1 (2.4%)	
CEO		1 (2.4%)	1 (2.4%)
CCO		1 (2.4%)	
CFO	3 (7.3%)		
CIO	1 (2.4%)		1 (2.4%)
CMO	1 (2.4%)		
Business Unit Executive	8 (19.5%)	4 (9.7%)	3 (7.3%)
Product Leader	8 (19.5%)	1 (2.4%)	
Other	3 (7.3%)	1 (2.4%)	
Total Leaders	27 (66%)	9 (22%)	5 (12%)
Key	Most Focus	Moderate Focus	Not Focused

ACTIVITY 2A: OVERALL

This activity focused on understanding how innovators and business leaders measure the success of innovation efforts over time. In [part A](#), participants first identified metrics they use to measure their own innovation success, then in [part B](#), they placed the metrics business leaders use on the grid below.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Business leaders lean towards more quantifiable financial measurements in the near term to measure success.
- Innovation leaders lean towards a more holistic approach to measuring success with both quantifiable and less quantifiable measurements in the longer term.
- It's evident that Business and Innovation leaders measure success differently and there's an opportunity for better alignment.



ACTIVITY 2B: ROLE SPECIFIC FINDINGS

This activity focused on understanding how innovators and business leaders measure the success of innovation efforts over time. In [part A](#), participants first identified metrics they use to measure their own innovation success, then in [part B](#), they placed the metrics business leaders use on the grid.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Both Business and Innovation leaders prioritize financial performance, efficiency, and project management.
- Innovation leaders emphasize early-stage development and customer satisfaction more than Business leaders.
- Business leaders focus heavily on financial metrics, efficiency, and risk management compared to Innovation leaders.
- Opportunity exists to align metrics, especially in customer satisfaction and financial performance areas.

BUSINESS LEADERS SUCCESS METRICS



Financial Performance – 50%

Metrics: Cost Reduction, Revenue Growth, ROI, Cash flow, Profit Margin, etc.



Operational Efficiency & Risk Management – 29%

Metrics: Risk Reduction, # of Safety Incidents, # of IT tickets,



Project & Process Management – 12%

Metrics: Throughput, Resource Utilization, Schedule/Cost Variance



Customer Impact & Satisfaction– 9%

Metrics: Customer Retention, Net Promoter Score, Staff Retention/Satisfaction, Customer Satisfaction.

[Find original activity templates in Appendix](#)

INNOVATION LEADERS SUCCESS METRICS



Idea Generation and Innovation – 30%

Metrics: Number of ideas permitted, Number of projects in pipeline, Number of ideas shaped and evaluated, etc.



Financial Performance & Efficiency – 25%

Metrics: Cost Savings, Low initial Cost, Revenue Generation, etc.



Customer/Stakeholder Impact & Satisfaction – 25%

Metrics: Desirability, New Clients, Customer Satisfaction, etc.



Project Completion & Delivery – 20%

Metrics: Projects completed, POC, New solutions / engagements w/customers, etc.

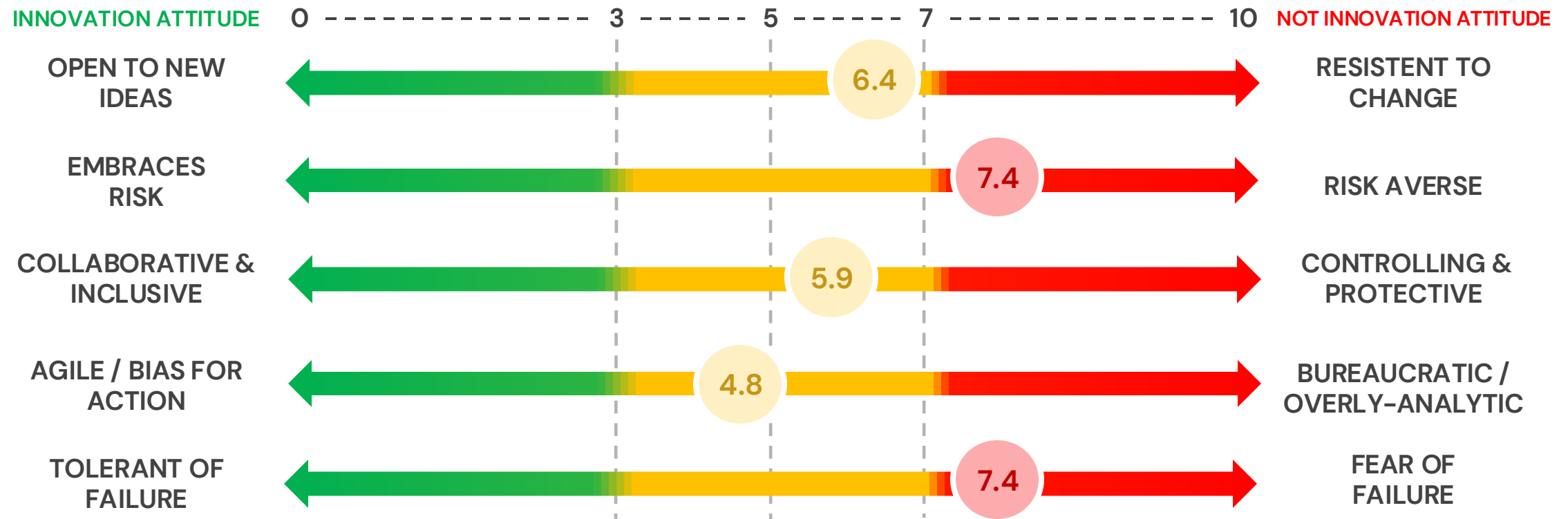
Metrics Source: Responses from participating innovation leaders.

ACTIVITY 3A: OVERALL

This activity focused on exploring the attitudes and behaviors of business leaders toward innovation. Participants assessed where those leaders fall on a spectrum of innovation attitudes below and placed them on the spectrums based on their observed behaviors.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Business leaders have varied attitudes towards innovation, emphasizing not all of them have innovation attitudes/mindsets.
- Business leaders were middle of the road on the attitudes measured, except for risk aversion and fear of failure.



ACTIVITY 3B: ROLE SPECIFIC FINDINGS

This activity focused on exploring the attitudes and behaviors of business leaders toward innovation. Participants assessed where those leaders fall on a spectrum of innovation attitudes below and placed them on the spectrums based on their observed behaviors.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

KEY INNOVATIVE (1) NEUTRAL (5) NOT INNOVATIVE (10) OVERALL AVERAGE (6.4)

- There can be innovation attitude and mindset challenges in working with all leaders.
- Tapping into innovation-minded CEOs and CIOs for support can help drive success.
- Educating and empowering product leaders to think more innovatively can help overcome obstacles.

CFO/COO

NEUTRAL

Open to Ideas – Resistant to Change	5.3
Embrace Risk – Risk Averse	6.5
Collaboration & Inclusive – Controlling & Protective	5.7
Agile / Bias for Action – Bureaucratic / Overly-Analytic	6.0
Tolerant to Failure – Fear of Failure	8.0



BUSINESS UNIT EXECUTIVES

NEUTRAL

Open to Ideas – Resistant to Change	4.8
Embrace Risk – Risk Averse	6.8
Collaboration & Inclusive – Controlling & Protective	3.7
Agile / Bias for Action – Bureaucratic / Overly-Analytic	6.3
Tolerant to Failure – Fear of Failure	9.0



PRODUCT LEADER

LESS INNOVATIVE

Open to Ideas – Resistant to Change	9.0
Embrace Risk – Risk Averse	8.0
Collaboration & Inclusive – Controlling & Protective	8.3
Agile / Bias for Action – Bureaucratic / Overly-Analytic	N/A
Tolerant to Failure – Fear of Failure	8.0



CEO/CIO

LESS INNOVATIVE

Open to Ideas – Resistant to Change	N/A
Embrace Risk – Risk Averse	N/A
Collaboration & Inclusive – Controlling & Protective	1.0
Agile / Bias for Action – Bureaucratic / Overly-Analytic	2.0
Tolerant to Failure – Fear of Failure	4.0



APPENDIX

ACTIVITY TEMPLATES

A. WHERE IS YOUR INNOVATION FOCUS?

B. WHERE ARE YOUR BUSINESS LEADERS FOCUSED?

FOCUS AREA 1

Innovation that seeks to grow or extend the value of the current business
(eg. Tesla Autopilot)

Current Business/Company
Current Market/Customer
Improved or Extended Value

FOCUS AREA 2

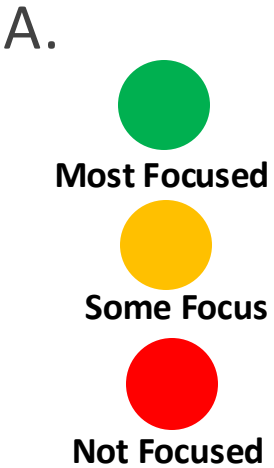
Innovation that seeks to add new value to the current business
(eg. Apple AirPods)

Current Business/Company
Expanded Market
Expanded or New Value

FOCUS AREA 3

Innovation that seeks to create entirely new value through new businesses
(eg. Amazon AWS)

New Business/Company
New Market/Customer
New Value



A. HOW DO YOU MEASURE INNOVATION SUCCESS?

B. HOW DO BUSINESS LEADERS MEASURE THEIR SUCCESS?



MEASUREMENT

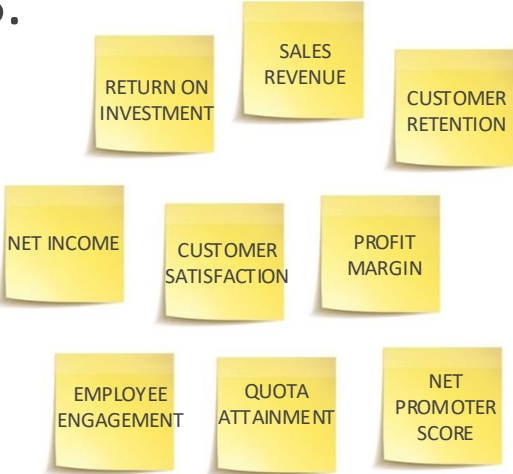
Quantifiable (\$ Financial)			
Quantifiable (Non-Financial)			
Not Easily Quantifiable			
	Near-Term (Current Year)	Mid-Term (1-3 Years)	Long-Term (4+Years)

TIME TO VALUE

A.



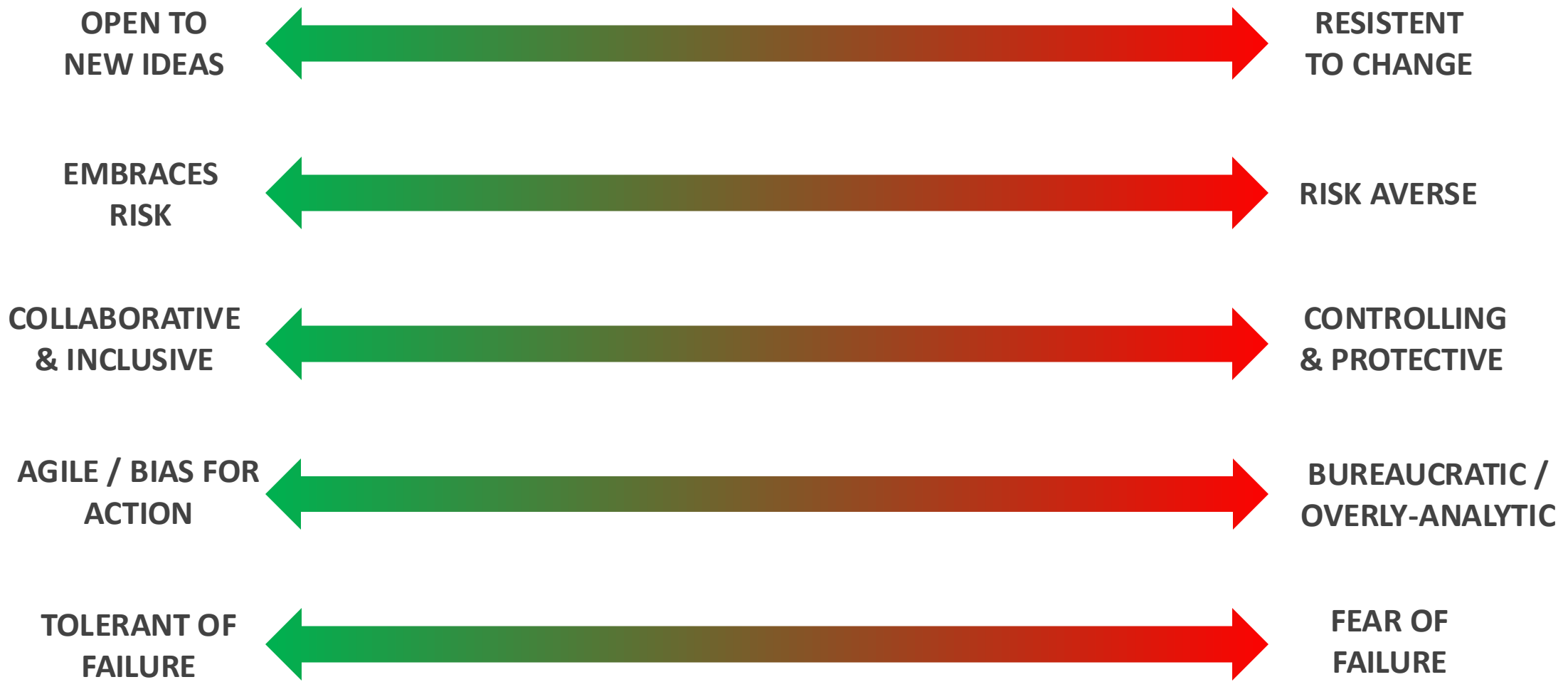
B.



ATTITUDES FOR INNOVATION



INNOVATION ATTITUDE



NOT INNOVATION ATTITUDE