



Blueprint for Seamless Execution in a Complex World

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Preface

In today's fast-paced and complex business environment, organisations face unprecedented challenges in turning strategy into consistent, reliable execution. Despite abundant talent, resources, and ambition, many find themselves trapped in a cycle of misalignment, duplication, and reactive firefighting. The gap between what leaders envision and what teams deliver grows ever wider—and too often, the organisation's true operating system remains invisible.

This guide or blueprint introduces the **Agile Business Execution Canvas® (ABEC)**—a structured framework designed to make that invisible visible. ABEC helps leaders and teams architect their organisation as an integrated system, aligning people, processes, and purpose to deliver real outcomes. It offers a common language, a shared design, and practical tools to break down silos, accelerate decision-making, and build agility at scale.

The principles presented here are the result of many years of applied experience, research, and collaboration with organisations seeking to escape complexity and create execution excellence. Whether you are a senior leader, a functional manager, or part of a transformation team, this guide will help you see execution in a new light—and provide the architecture to make it work seamlessly.

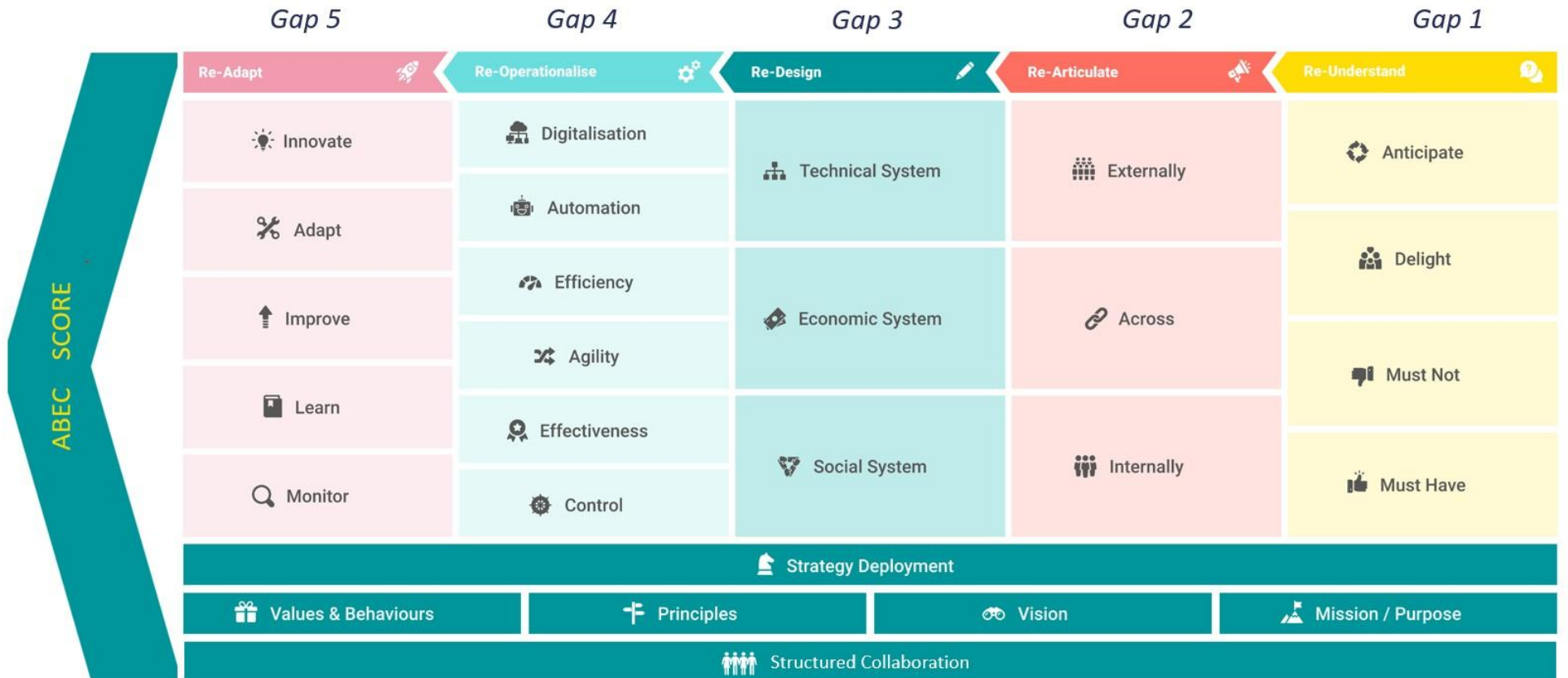
As you explore the chapters ahead, we encourage you to reflect on your own organisation's execution architecture. Use this framework as a mirror and a map—a means to understand where you are, where you need to go, and how to get there together.

Execution is not magic; it is design. And with the Agile Business Execution Canvas®, the design becomes clear.

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Agile Business Execution Canvas®



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Chapter 1: Why Execution Needs an Upgrade

Structured Architecture for Execution in a Complex World

Execution is often described as the hard part of strategy—but in most organisations, it's also the least well structured. People are working hard, yet misalignment persists. Strategies are crafted but fail to take root across the organisation. Priorities shift, but workflows don't. The cause is rarely a lack of ambition or intelligence. It's the absence of structured architecture—a deliberate, shared design for how execution is meant to happen.

The Agile Business Execution Canvas[®] is a framework developed to fill this gap. It provides a structured way to architect the business and to share what that architecture looks like. It offers leaders a practical framework for understanding and shaping how value is created and delivered across teams, systems, and time.

Above all, it's an execution framework that makes visible the assumptions, behaviours, and interdependencies that typically remain hidden. It enables organisations to build and sustain execution capability—not through heroic effort, but through designed collaboration.

Why the Agile Business Execution Canvas[®]?

Most people, regardless of their role, lack a clear understanding of how organisations function as integrated systems. Most importantly, they need to develop a shared understanding of how their own organisation works as an integrated whole, often referred to as “joined-up thinking”. Often, people confuse the organisation with its org chart—a structural snapshot showing departments and reporting lines. While this is one dimension, it is not a true picture of how work flows or value is created across the enterprise. Part of the challenge is that traditional management education reinforces this fragmented view by teaching functional expertise—marketing, sales, finance, legal—as separate silos. This limits the ability to see and manage the organisation as an interconnected system.

This is not a failing of individuals—it's a design omission. Most organisations evolve their structures incrementally, adding teams, systems, and processes in response to growth or constraint. What they rarely do is step back and architect the way execution should work as an integrated whole.

That's what the Agile Business Execution Canvas[®] is for. It helps organisations move from tacit, fragmented working arrangements to an explicit, shared architecture—one that can be used to align effort, reduce friction, and enable autonomy without relying on micromanagement or constant escalation.

It is a structured way to bring consistency to execution without losing adaptability. And it is a way to give teams visibility of the system they work in—not just their part of it.

The Foundational Platform

The **Agile Business Execution Canvas®** is built on a clearly structured, three-layered foundation. This platform is what enables the execution pillars to function—not as isolated initiatives, but as part of a coherent whole.

Layer 1: Structured Collaboration

At the base is Structured Collaboration—the core platform on which the entire framework rests. It provides the organisational equivalent of well-defined interfaces, enabling people, teams, and functions to plug into one another with consistency, predictability, and clarity. This is what allows large organisations to coordinate without relying on micromanagement. It is not just a tool—it is an organisational design principle.

Layer 2: Mission & Purpose | Vision | Principles | Values & Behaviours

The middle layer provides the identity, direction, and norms that guide decision-making and alignment. All four components are equally important and operate on the same level:

- **Mission / Purpose** defines the organisation's unique role and contribution.
- **Vision** describes the long-term direction of travel and aspiration.
- **Principles** are enduring decision guidelines that help resolve ambiguity.
- **Values & Behaviours** establish the standards of conduct and interaction expected across the organisation.

This layer gives people the context they need to act with coherence, even when operating independently. It ensures that collaboration isn't just mechanical but meaningful.

Layer 3: Strategy Deployment

At the top of the platform is Strategy Deployment. This is the mechanism through which the organisation aligns itself to its goals—translating purpose and vision into focused, actionable priorities across every level. It ensures that direction is not just declared but navigated.

Together, these three layers form the execution platform—the foundation on which all other performance and change efforts depend.

The Five Execution Pillars

With the platform in place, the **Agile Business Execution Canvas**[®] turns to the five execution pillars—areas that consistently produce friction, fragmentation, or failure when left unstructured:

1. **Re-Understand** – Renewing our understanding of customer needs and expectations.
2. **Re-Articulate** – Ensuring that understanding is shared clearly across the organisation and with external partners.
3. **Re-Design** – Structuring the organisation—its social, economic, and technical systems—to deliver effectively.
4. **Re-Operationalise** – Embedding those designs into routines, systems, and day-to-day behaviours.
5. **Re-Adapt** – Learning from execution, monitoring weak signals, and adjusting in time.

Each pillar is broken down into observable, assessable components. These make it possible to diagnose gaps, prioritise action, and build maturity in a manageable, modular way.

Although the flow of the canvas is logical, its application is flexible. Organisations can begin with the area of greatest urgency—whether that’s clarity of purpose, internal handoffs, or agility in responding to change—and still benefit from the overall structure. Just as different people have different approaches to assembling a complex jigsaw puzzle, each team or leader may start in a different place. But ultimately, all the pieces must come together to form a coherent picture—the one on the box. The Agile Business Execution Canvas[®] provides that picture, helping organisations align their efforts without prescribing a single path to get there.

ABEC as a Fractal Architecture

One of the most powerful features of the Agile Business Execution Canvas[®] is its fractal design. ABEC applies the same structural logic at multiple layers of the organisation—from the enterprise level down to a single team or process.

This is not just a visual metaphor—at the organisational level, it helps leadership articulate vision, strategy, principles, and structured collaboration. But that same architecture can—and should—be used at the process level to define how value is delivered, how teams coordinate, and how learning happens.

This fractal nature solves a long-standing problem in management: the fragmentation between enterprise-level thinking and operational-level doing. Traditional strategic frameworks tend to stay at the top, while process tools live deep in operations, with little integration between them.

ABEC bridges this divide. It allows a team running a single process, a value stream or indeed the team themselves, to use the same five pillars—Re-Understand, Re-Articulate, Re-Design, Re-Operationalise, Re-Adapt—to structure their own improvement work. The result is not only alignment across levels, but coherence in how problems are framed, understood, and solved.

It also enables scalability without reinvention. Most transformation frameworks fall short because they either overgeneralise (“one-size-fits-all”) or require a bespoke version for every team (“start from scratch”). ABEC avoids both extremes. Because its principles are modular and its logic recursive, it can be applied repeatedly without diluting its integrity. Every application—whether at the CEO’s level or within a frontline delivery team—reinforces the same operating model.

Most importantly, this fractal design empowers distributed leadership. Teams don’t have to wait for instruction from above. With ABEC as their local canvas, they can take ownership of their purpose, understand their role in the broader system, and act with clarity and autonomy. This is how organisations begin to operate not just as structures of authority, but as systems of intent.

A Shared Architecture for Execution

The Agile Business Execution Canvas® gives organisations something they’ve long lacked: a shared architecture for execution. It clarifies how the parts fit together. It makes visible what is often invisible. And it allows every team—not just leadership—to understand how their role contributes to the organisation as a system.

It encourages leaders to move from asking *“Why aren’t people delivering?”* to *“How have we designed the system they’re operating in?”*

By providing a structured foundation and a coherent set of execution levers, the Agile Business Execution Canvas® enables alignment, autonomy, and progress to coexist—without constant escalation or micromanagement.

2. The Foundations of the ABEC

Starting from the Bottom, Not the Top

Most frameworks begin with strategy. ABEC begins with structure. Before asking *what should we do?* it asks *how are we organised to execute anything at all?* This is not a philosophical concern—it's operational. In complex organisations, strategy fails less because it's flawed than because it never reaches the front line in a usable form. Intent dissolves in ambiguity, misinterpretation, and workarounds.

That's why ABEC starts with a foundational platform—six core elements that shape the conditions under which execution takes place. These are not preambles to the “real” work. They are the conditions of possibility for effective execution.

Structured Collaboration: The Core Innovation

At the base of the foundation lies Structured Collaboration, a practical innovation drawn from software architecture, where modularity and clearly defined interfaces allow complex systems to scale and adapt. In organisational terms, Structured Collaboration means designing predictable, stable relationships between teams. It replaces informal handovers and inconsistent assumptions with intentional interfaces—agreed inputs, outputs, behaviours, and expectations.

Too often, digital transformation introduces new tools but fails to change how teams interact. This results in islands of automation—local efficiencies that do not add up to organisational agility. Structured Collaboration prevents this by ensuring that collaboration is not reactive but designed.

It is not an overlay to existing work. It is a rethinking of how work is shared.

Values and Behaviours: Enabling Shared Conduct

While vision provides direction and strategy sets focus, day-to-day conduct is shaped by shared norms. ABEC treats Values and Behaviours not as branding exercises but as operational enablers. They define how people are expected to engage with one another, how decisions are made, and how conflicts are resolved.

In organisations where these are absent or vague, collaboration becomes inconsistent. People default to local norms, which may vary by team, geography, or leader. Over time, this breeds friction and distrust.

Explicit values, translated into observable behaviours, create a common fabric of interaction. They reduce the friction of coordination and allow for decentralised decision-making without loss of coherence.

Principles: The Glue Between Values and Action

Where values are aspirational, Principles are operational. They define how choices are made when situations are novel, urgent, or ambiguous. Principles act as lightweight rules—less rigid than procedures, more grounded than slogans.

They ensure that autonomy does not lead to divergence. They serve as a form of alignment that allows teams to respond differently to local conditions while remaining faithful to shared intent. Without principles, every new situation requires escalation or negotiation. With them, teams can act confidently within agreed guardrails.

This is especially important in complex service and knowledge work, where the variability of customer demand or the pace of change makes over-specification impossible.

Vision and Mission: Anchoring Direction and Purpose

Too many organisations operate without a clearly shared Vision—a compelling view of the future that gives direction to current decisions. Without vision, short-termism dominates. Teams optimise for local success without reference to the whole.

Vision in the ABEC is not a generic aspiration. It is the long-horizon reference point that provides meaning to performance. It asks: where are we going, and why does it matter?

Mission—or Purpose—answers a related question: what unique role do we play in the world, for whom, and to what end? It grounds the organisation in contribution, not just capability. Purpose strengthens identity. It reminds people not only *what* they are doing, but *why*.

Together, vision and mission help organisations avoid drift. They provide a directional anchor that helps reconcile local decisions with global goals.

Strategy Deployment: Making Intent Executable

Even when vision and mission are clear, organisations often fail to execute because they do not connect strategy to daily work. Strategy Deployment solves this by creating a structured cascade of intent—from long-term goals to mid-term priorities to near-term actions.

It differs from traditional planning in one key respect: it is interactive. Strategy Deployment involves conversation, not just communication. Teams are not simply told what to do—they are invited to make strategy their own by identifying how their work connects to broader goals.

This turns strategy into a living system. It allows for adaptation without fragmentation. And it ensures that purpose, principles, and priorities are not lost in translation.

The Foundation as Execution Infrastructure

Taken together, these six components form the execution infrastructure of the ABEC . They are not optional extras. They are the structures that allow for agility without chaos, alignment without micromanagement, and innovation without fragmentation.

Organisations often invest in improvement without attending to this foundation. They launch agile teams, modern technologies, or customer experience initiatives—but without a shared platform, these become disconnected efforts. Improvement occurs in pockets, but execution remains inconsistent.

ABEC insists that the foundation is not soft. It is hard management infrastructure—as essential as financial controls or IT systems. Without it, execution is left to chance or charisma.

3. Re-Understand: The First Execution Gap

Execution Begins with Understanding

No organisation can deliver value it does not understand. The first and most fundamental execution gap appears not in delivery or design, but in perception. As customer needs evolve and markets shift, the greatest risk is not that organisations won't act—it's that they'll act on outdated or incomplete understanding.

This is where execution often fails before it even begins. Decisions are made based on what was true last year, not what matters now. Assumptions go unchallenged. Survey data replaces genuine dialogue. Listening becomes episodic rather than continuous.

In complex environments, understanding must be treated as a core operational capability, not a preliminary research step. ABEC begins here—by making the act of *re-understanding* customer needs a structured, ongoing discipline.

The Four Dimensions of Re-Understanding

Within the ABEC, Re-Understand consists of four distinct components. Each one addresses a unique way organisations interpret customer needs and expectations. Together, they form a more complete and adaptive approach to understanding demand.

- **Must-Haves:** The baseline expectations customers hold for participating in a category. These are not points of differentiation but of qualification. Miss them, and you're out.
- **Must-Nots:** The behaviours, practices, or reputational signals that disqualify a provider—sometimes explicitly, often silently. A poor environmental record, a tone-deaf social message, or an inconsistent support experience can quietly remove a company from consideration.
- **Delight Factors:** These are not required, but they change the emotional tone of a relationship. They turn satisfaction into advocacy and make price a secondary concern. What delights often varies by segment and evolves quickly.
- **Anticipate:** The ability to foresee and meet customer needs before they are voiced. This is not prediction for its own sake; it's about identifying weak signals, understanding shifts in behaviour, and creating readiness for emerging expectations.

Most organisations stop at Must-Haves. A few make space for Delight. Very few institutionalise the capacity to Anticipate. ABEC makes all four visible and deliberate.

Re-Understanding as a Practice, Not a Project

The traditional model of customer insight is episodic: a project is launched, data is collected, findings are shared and then forgotten. In ABEC, Re-Understand is continuous. It is designed into the daily rhythms of the organisation.

Frontline teams are equipped not only to serve customers, but to surface emerging insights. Leadership reviews are not just about performance metrics, but about shifts in relevance. Processes are built to create feedback loops, not just collect complaints.

This continuous learning posture helps organisations avoid the risk of being late to change. The question is not *Are we listening?* but *are we learning quickly enough to act while it still matters?*

Institutionalising Insight

To build this capability, organisations must move from scattered research efforts to integrated listening systems. These systems draw from operations, digital engagement, social media, frontline feedback, customer conversations, and even non-customer signals.

What matters is not just collecting data but synthesising it—turning signals into shared understanding. ABEC encourages organisations to embed this synthesis into their execution structure. Product development, service delivery, marketing, and sales should operate from a common view of the customer, not separate interpretations.

This shared understanding becomes a unifying force. It reduces the friction of decision-making, aligns priorities across functions, and reduces the cost of change. When everyone knows what the customer needs—and why—coordination becomes easier, faster, and less political.

Avoiding Assumption Drift

A common failure mode in strategy execution is assumption drift—the gradual divergence between what teams believe the customer wants and what the customer actually values. It's not malicious or negligent. It happens slowly, through institutional momentum. Teams optimise for what they believe matters. Metrics become proxies for meaning.

Re-Understand is the antidote to assumption drift. By regularly revalidating beliefs, organisations stay anchored to current reality. This doesn't require constant reinvention—just intentional routines for listening, testing, and adjusting.

In the ABEC, these routines are not extra work. They are integral to effective execution. They ensure that teams aren't just performing well—they're performing on the right things.

When Understanding Fails, Execution Follows

It's tempting to think that performance problems originate in poor design, inefficient operations, or underperforming staff. But often, these are symptoms. The root cause lies upstream: acting on a misunderstanding of what the customer actually wants or needs.

When understanding fails, organisations may improve the wrong things, scale ineffective services, or double down on features that nobody asked for. This is not just inefficient—it is strategically dangerous.

That's why Re-Understand is the first pillar of the ABEC . It makes understanding the customer—not just serving them—a shared responsibility. It ensures that all downstream execution is anchored in relevance.

4. Re-Articulate: Aligning the Organisation

Understanding Is Not Enough

It's not enough to understand what customers want. That understanding must travel—across departments, up and down hierarchies, and out to partners and platforms. If it doesn't, even the best insights die at the point of execution.

In many organisations, insight is confined to the teams that gather it. Product knows one thing, operations another. Marketing hears one story, while support hears a different one entirely. The result is misalignment: not just of action, but of assumption.

The second pillar of ABEC, Re-Articulate, addresses this risk. It recognises that in modern organisations, the challenge isn't just generating understanding—it's ensuring that understanding is shared, stable, and useful to those who must act on it.

The Three Components of Re-Articulate

Re-Articulate focuses on how understanding travels through the organisation. It asks whether knowledge of customer needs is being communicated in a way that enables coordination, coherence, and execution. It consists of three core components:

- **Internally:** Are customer needs understood consistently inside the organisation? Can teams—from executive to frontline—articulate what matters to customers, and why?
- **Across:** Are those needs shared clearly across the delivery chain, including suppliers, outsourced partners, and other dependencies?
- **Externally:** Are we telling the outside world—our customers, communities, and markets—not only what we offer, but how our understanding of their needs shapes what we do?

Each of these components represents a transmission point. Failure at any one of them creates drift, duplication, and delay.

Inside the Organisation: Creating a Common Language

Within organisations, clarity is often assumed. Leaders believe their message is understood. Teams believe their intent is obvious. Yet when asked independently to describe what the customer wants or what the strategy is, answers vary—not slightly, but profoundly.

This variation isn't harmless. It fragments decision-making and erodes trust. When two functions act on different assumptions, they often work at cross-purposes—even if both are competent and committed.

Re-Articulate addresses this by encouraging a shared language. It isn't about slogans or messaging—it's about enabling teams to explain why they're doing what they're doing, based on a shared interpretation of customer needs. This requires more than cascading a PowerPoint deck. It means building routines where interpretation is co-created, questioned, and refined.

The goal is not uniformity, but alignment. Teams must retain local judgment, but within a frame that keeps the whole organisation pointed in the same direction.

Across the Value Chain: Coherence Beyond the Org Chart

Few organisations operate in isolation. Whether through outsourced operations, contract manufacturing, third-party logistics, or digital platforms, delivery now involves an extended enterprise.

This makes the across component of Re-Articulate vital. Partners and suppliers must understand what the end-customer values—not just their own scope of work. Otherwise, performance may be technically correct but contextually wrong. A call centre agent may meet their KPIs while frustrating the customer. A logistics partner may hit delivery targets while violating the brand promise.

Re-Articulate encourages organisations to treat alignment across the value chain not as a compliance issue but as a strategic asset. Sharing insight becomes part of the collaboration—not a risk, but a resource.

This doesn't mean overwhelming partners with detail. It means giving them the context they need to make decisions that align with customer expectations and brand values.

To the Market: Promising with Purpose

The final component, externally, asks whether the organisation is telling a coherent story to the market—one that reflects not only what it offers, but how it understands its customers. Too often, marketing campaigns speak one language while operations speak another. Promises are made without mechanisms to deliver. Or worse, value propositions are copied from competitors rather than grounded in authentic insight.

Re-Articulate invites organisations to speak from their understanding—not just about their capabilities, but about their care. This becomes a differentiator. When customers feel understood, they are more likely to trust, return, and advocate.

Externally aligned messaging also reinforces internal focus. When teams see that the organisation is committed to specific customer needs, and communicates those consistently, they take cues about what matters most.

Articulation as a System Capability

Like Re-Understand, the work of Re-Articulate is not episodic. It's not a town hall or an internal newsletter. It's a system capability: the ability to consistently share, refine, and reaffirm understanding across the organisation and its ecosystem.

In high-performing organisations, this capability shows up in how teams brief one another, how feedback loops are closed, how strategic reviews are conducted, and how partners are onboarded. It is embedded in processes, not just messaging.

This capability reduces waste—not just of time, but of attention. When everyone is aligned on what matters, the signal-to-noise ratio improves. Teams can make better decisions, faster, with fewer meetings and less confusion.

From Insight to Alignment

Re-Articulate ensures that insight becomes alignment. It closes the loop between knowing and doing. Without it, even strong understanding fails to influence outcomes. Teams execute well on the wrong things. Customers hear promises the organisation can't fulfil. Leaders act with urgency but not unity.

This execution gap is subtle but damaging. It erodes credibility and consistency, both internally and externally. ABEC places articulation at the centre of execution because the alternative—misalignment—is too costly to ignore.

5. Re-Design: Building Execution-Ready Organisations

Design Determines Performance

Too often, when execution fails, the diagnosis focuses on people: a lack of accountability, discipline, or commitment. But more often, the problem is structural. Organisations are designed in ways that make coordinated execution difficult. Teams operate with overlapping mandates, unclear inputs, or conflicting incentives. Even high performers struggle when the design itself is working against them.

ABEC's third execution pillar—Re-Design—addresses this directly. It focuses on how organisations are configured to act on their understanding of customer needs. Design here is not about branding or layout. It is about how the organisation is put together: its roles, processes, systems, technologies, and rules of engagement.

When the design is right, execution feels seamless. When it's wrong, effort leaks out through confusion, rework, and misalignment.

From Organisation Charts to Organisational Architecture

Traditional organisation charts tell us who reports to whom. But they don't tell us how work flows, how decisions are made, or how customer outcomes are produced. In modern organisations—especially service and knowledge work—these dynamics are complex, fluid, and cross-functional. Execution depends not on hierarchy but on interaction.

Re-Design encourages leaders to think in architectural terms. Like any well-structured system, an organisation needs strong interfaces, clear pathways, and an ability to flex without breaking. This means going beyond functional silos to examine how the pieces connect.

Importantly, Re-Design is not a one-off exercise. As customer needs evolve, so too must the organisation's internal structure. What worked yesterday may constrain performance today.

The Three Components of Re-Design

The ABEC treats organisational design as an integrated system with three interlocking dimensions:

- **Social System:** How people are recruited, retained, developed, and organised. This includes roles, teams, leadership models, and informal norms. If collaboration is difficult or ownership unclear, the social system may be misaligned.
- **Economic System:** The commercial architecture of the organisation—its revenue models, cost structures, incentives, and measures of success. Execution often

falters when economic systems encourage local optimisation rather than shared value creation.

- **Technical System:** The enabling infrastructure—processes, technologies, workflows, and methods that support execution. This is where structured collaboration must be embedded, not bolted on. A poorly designed technical system turns coordination into improvisation.

All three systems interact. A brilliant digital tool cannot overcome a fractured team structure. A well-crafted incentive scheme cannot make up for confusing workflows. Effective design balances all three, ensuring that people, economics, and tools are aligned around delivering customer value.

Avoiding Local Fixes and Global Friction

Many transformation efforts fail because they improve one part of the system without adjusting the others. A team is restructured but still measured on outdated KPIs. A new process is introduced without adjusting roles or incentives. A digital platform is rolled out but poorly integrated into existing workflows.

These efforts produce local fixes—improvements that work in isolation but create friction at the system level. ABEC's Re-Design pillar helps prevent this by encouraging holistic thinking. Changes are evaluated not just for local benefit, but for cross-functional impact. Redesign becomes systemic, not piecemeal.

This is especially important in large or federated organisations, where autonomy can easily produce divergence. A shared design philosophy ensures that various parts of the organisation can evolve independently without becoming incompatible.

Designing for Flow, Not Just Control

Many traditional design models prioritise control—clear reporting lines, defined procedures, strict escalation paths. But in dynamic environments, flow matters more. Work must move between teams fluidly. Information must travel quickly. Decision-making must occur close to the action, not always at the top.

This shift from control to flow requires a fresh design mindset. It means investing in interfaces rather than rules, in alignment rather than oversight. It also means designing with modularity in mind—allowing parts of the organisation to change without requiring the whole to be reconfigured.

Structured Collaboration plays a key role here. It gives teams the clarity they need to interact without constant management. It replaces reliance on meetings with clarity of expectations. And it enables autonomy with accountability.

Redesigning the Role of Leadership

In execution-ready organisations, the role of leadership changes. Leaders become architects of structure, not just drivers of performance. They spend less time chasing alignment and more time building the conditions that make alignment inevitable.

This includes clarifying roles, maintaining cross-functional coherence, stewarding the economic model, and adapting the technical infrastructure as needs evolve. It also includes developing the organisation's capacity to redesign itself—to learn, experiment, and adjust without waiting for a crisis.

Re-Design is not a static blueprint. It is a living architecture, tuned to context, scaled with intention, and always in service of strategy.

Structure as an Enabler

ABEC challenges the view that structure is constraining. In its model, structure is what enables agility, consistency, and improvement. Without a coherent design, execution becomes a matter of luck and personality. With it, performance becomes predictable and repeatable.

Organisations that invest in redesign—not just once, but continually—create the conditions for sustainable execution. They reduce the cost of coordination, the risk of failure, and the fatigue of constant workaround. And they position themselves not just to respond to change, but to thrive within it.

Re-Design is not a cost. It's a capability. One that pays dividends across every pillar that follows.

6. Re-Operationalise: Turning Design into Daily Practice

From Blueprint to Behaviour

Design alone does not deliver. However thoughtful, however aligned, however elegant a design may be, it must be operationalised—turned into behaviours, routines, and systems that teams can actually use. This is where many strategic initiatives stall. Organisations confuse design work with real work. But until the design shows up in people's calendars, workflows, metrics, and conversations, it remains conceptual.

Re-Operationalise is the fourth execution pillar in the ABEC . It answers a straightforward but often neglected question: Are we actually running the organisation we designed? It concerns the gap between organisational architecture and daily execution.

This gap emerges in subtle ways. A redesigned customer journey is mapped but never integrated into frontline systems. A new meeting cadence is agreed upon but not consistently followed. Metrics are introduced but left unreviewed. Good intentions are derailed by habits, time pressures, or a lack of enablement. Operationalisation, in ABEC terms, means turning designs into sustained practice—without losing agility, overloading teams, or reverting to the default.

Six Components of Re-Operationalisation

Re-Operationalise encompasses six components that must be present for execution to move from theory to action:

1. **Control:** Teams must be in control of their work. This means understanding their inputs, outputs, interdependencies, and boundaries. Without this, teams are reactive or dependent on escalation.
2. **Effectiveness:** The right things must be done. Work must be prioritised in alignment with strategy and customer need. Efficiency without effectiveness only accelerates irrelevance.
3. **Agility:** Teams must be able to adjust quickly to latest information or changes in demand. This includes decision-making authority, scenario planning, and responsive routines.
4. **Efficiency:** Work must be performed with optimal use of time, effort, and resources. This is not about doing more with less but doing what matters with precision and economy.
5. **Automation:** Repetitive and rules-based activities should be automated where possible, to reduce friction and free up human capacity for judgment and interaction.
6. **Digitalisation:** Information flows must be digitised, integrated, and accessible—enabling visibility, analysis, and insight at every level of the organisation.

These components work together. Control without agility leads to rigidity. Efficiency without effectiveness leads to the illusion of efficiency and trouble down the road. Automation without clarity leads to confusion. A balance must be struck, and that balance will vary depending on the function, context, and maturity of the organisation.

Operational Discipline Without Bureaucracy

One of the risks in operationalising strategy is that discipline hardens into bureaucracy. Processes become more about compliance than outcomes. Teams optimise for internal checkpoints rather than customer value. Decision rights are ambiguous. Work slows.

ABEC avoids this trap by returning to principles. Operationalisation is not about enforcing uniformity—it's about enabling coherence. It ensures that when teams act, their actions are both informed and coordinated. It avoids constant accidental reinventions. It also avoids overreach.

The goal is to make it easy to do the right thing. That means having clear routines, integrated systems, and defined interfaces. It also means resisting unnecessary complexity. The best operational structures are lightweight, durable, and enabling.

Rehearsal, Not Just Implementation

Bringing a design to life requires practice. Teams need to rehearse how the new structure works. This includes mock walk-throughs, pilot testing, simulation, and coaching. Leaders must model the new behaviours and review the outcomes regularly—not just during implementation, but as part of normal operations.

In the ABEC, operationalisation is not a “go live” moment. It's a process of embedding. That process depends on feedback, refinement, and reinforcement. It also depends on visibility. Teams must be able to see how their work contributes to broader outcomes. Dashboards, retrospectives, team charters, and handover templates all serve to reinforce operational clarity.

Importantly, operationalisation does not stop with the team doing the work. It includes support functions—finance, HR, IT, compliance—all of which must align their services to the new way of working. Otherwise, the new routines grind against old expectations.

Coordinating Across the Organisation

Cross-functional work is where most operational friction arises. Re-Operationalise pays close attention to the interfaces between teams, not just the performance within them. These interfaces must be deliberately managed.

This means clarifying:

- Who starts what?
- Who owns what?
- What does “done” look like?
- What happens when dependencies are missed?

Without this clarity, even well-designed operations falter under stress. Work slows, quality drops, blame spreads. Structured Collaboration offers a way out—by specifying and agreeing on these handoffs ahead of time. This makes execution smoother, faster, and more resilient.

Measuring What You Want to Improve

Operationalisation is ultimately made visible through measurement. But not all metrics are helpful. Some measure activity without relevance. Others incentivise behaviours that work against strategic goals. ABEC encourages measurement aligned to each of the six components above—tracking not only outputs, but the conditions that shape them.

Where possible, these metrics should be reviewed close to the action. Teams that see their own data are more likely to adjust their own performance. Central reporting may be necessary, but it must not become the only feedback loop.

Operational metrics should be *diagnostic*, not just evaluative. They should help teams understand where they’re strong, where they’re struggling, and where to focus next.

The Discipline of Making It Real

In many organisations, strategy is reimaged every year, but execution stays the same. The PowerPoint changes. The behaviour doesn’t. Re-Operationalise exists to close that gap. It reminds us that unless design shows up in operations, it’s not real.

But this isn’t a call for rigidity. It’s a call for disciplined adaptability—an approach where operations are stable enough to support performance, but flexible enough to support change.

Done well, operationalisation turns ambition into action. It gives teams the confidence to act, the clarity to coordinate, and the tools to learn. It builds execution into the organisation’s muscle memory.

7. Re-Adapt: The Feedback and Learning Engine

The Case for Continuous Adaptation

Even the best-designed and well-operationalised systems degrade over time. Customer expectations shift. Competitors innovate. Technology evolves. What worked well yesterday may be insufficient tomorrow. The ability to sense, learn, and adapt is no longer a competitive advantage—it's a requirement for survival.

The fifth and final execution pillar of ABEC, Re-Adapt, ensures that the organisation is not just stable and efficient, but continuously learning. It closes the loop on execution, linking performance to improvement and insight to innovation.

Re-Adapt is where execution meets agility—not in the sense of speed alone, but in the discipline of responsiveness. It's not enough to measure and report. The organisation must be able to respond—to feedback, to failure, to opportunity.

From Lagging to Leading Signals

Many organisations do track performance, but most of them rely heavily on lagging indicators—those measurements that report on outcomes after the fact. Metrics like revenue growth or decline, customer churn, satisfaction scores, and project delivery timelines are all commonly used.

While undeniably important, these indicators only confirm what has already occurred. By the time such data surfaces, the root causes behind performance shifts—whether positive or negative—are often buried, obscured, or no longer accessible in a way that enables timely corrective action.

The Re-Adapt pillar addresses this challenge by shifting attention from backward-looking confirmation to forward-looking insight. It prioritises the identification and monitoring of leading indicators—the patterns, behaviours, and signals that suggest what's about to happen before it becomes visible in results.

Re-Adapt doesn't simply ask *what happened*; it insists on understanding *why it happened*, *what it means*, and most importantly, *what we're doing about it*. This requires a mindset shift: from passive evaluation to active investigation, from isolated insight to collective learning, and from unstructured feedback to disciplined, purposeful change.

This is not a call for simply collecting more data. In fact, organisations are often overwhelmed by the volume of data they already have. The real value lies not in the quantity of information available but in its interpretation—how it is analysed, contextualised, shared, and turned into action.

The aim is not measurement for its own sake, but meaningful learning. That learning must be shared across teams, embedded into decision-making processes, and ultimately used to adjust strategies, refine operations, and improve delivery in real time.

In the most high-performing organisations, this approach becomes second nature. The learning loop is not a separate, periodic activity—it is embedded directly into the operating rhythm of the organisation. Teams continuously reflect, adapt, and improve, guided by timely insights and structured mechanisms for change. This enables not only greater responsiveness, but also greater resilience, ensuring that the organisation remains aligned with reality—and ahead of emerging challenges.

The Five Components of Re-Adapt

Re-Adapt consists of five interconnected components, each addressing a necessary condition for continuous improvement:

1. **Monitoring:** Establishing systems to detect how well functions are working, how effectively the organisation is delivering on its intent, and where breakdowns are emerging.
2. **Learning:** Converting observations and feedback into insight. This involves not only technical analysis but human reflection—making sense of what is happening and why.
3. **Improve:** Taking small, local actions to resolve issues or enhance performance. These are incremental changes within the scope of existing routines or roles.
4. **Adapt:** Making larger, systemic changes in response to insight. This may involve redesigning roles, restructuring teams, or revising governance. Adaptation requires judgement, prioritisation, and cross-functional coordination.
5. **Innovate:** Going beyond adaptation to imagine new ways of creating value. Innovation is not random—it is informed by what the organisation is learning about its customers, context, and capabilities.

Each of these components builds on the last. Together, they form the learning engine of the organisation.

Learning as a Management Discipline

Organisational learning is often treated as an informal process—something that happens when mistakes are made or time allows. But in the ABEC, learning is structured. It is treated as an essential discipline, no less important than budgeting or planning.

This requires time and space. Retrospectives, after-action reviews, feedback loops, and structured reflection become regular practices, not crisis responses. It also requires psychological safety—environments where teams can speak candidly about what's not working, without fear of blame.

In organisations with strong Re-Adapt capabilities, learning is not left to chance. It is built into the calendar, the workflow, and the culture.

Closing the Loop: From Feedback to Action

A common failure in many organisations is the presence of data without follow-through. Surveys are run. Dashboards are reviewed. Reports are written. But action is absent—or disconnected.

Re-Adapt ensures that feedback results in deliberate change. This doesn't mean reacting to every comment or trend. It means interpreting feedback in light of strategy, design, and operations—and acting accordingly.

Some changes will be small and immediate. Others will require broader involvement or leadership decision. The point is not to respond impulsively, but to close the loop intelligently.

Structured Collaboration supports this process by making interfaces visible. When feedback reveals friction between teams or functions, there is a clear place to discuss and resolve it. When processes need redesign, there is a shared frame for doing so.

Building Organisational Clock Speed

Charles Fine's concept of clock speed refers to how frequently an industry or organisation must cycle through learning, innovation, and adaptation. Some sectors move slowly. Others require daily or weekly learning loops. The ABEC helps organisations understand and set their own clock speed.



Faster isn't always better. The goal is to match the pace of change in the environment with the organisation's capacity to respond. Re-Adapt helps leadership teams tune this speed deliberately ensuring they're not overreacting to noise or missing signals of real importance.

The ABEC circular view embodies this idea. Once organisations pass through all five pillars, they begin again—Re-Understanding in light of what they've learned, Re-Articulating to reflect changes, Re-

Designing to adapt structure, Re-Operationalising improvements, and then Re-Adapting again. This cycle becomes a rhythm, not a reaction.

The DNA of a Learning Organisation

Re-Adapt gives substance to the idea of the learning organisation. It ensures that execution is not simply efficient, but intelligent—that performance improves not just through effort, but through insight.

In environments of high complexity or volatility, this becomes critical. The organisation that learns faster—about its customers, its systems, its assumptions—is the one that sustains advantage.

But this learning must be structured, embedded, and shared. Re-Adapt provides the mechanism. It ensures that feedback is not ignored, improvement is not isolated, and innovation is not accidental.

With Re-Adapt, execution becomes more than action. It becomes informed, intentional, and continuously evolving.

8. The ABEC Score: Measuring Execution Readiness

Why Measurement Matters

Execution, by its nature, is dynamic. It happens across teams, over time, and under pressure. Without a clear method for assessing how well execution is working, leaders are left with anecdote, intuition, or lagging indicators. Strategic decisions become reactive. Improvement efforts drift.

That's why the ABEC includes not only frameworks for action but also a structured way to measure execution capability: the ABEC Score.

The ABEC Score is not a benchmarking tool in the traditional sense. It doesn't rank organisations against one another. Instead, it provides a diagnostic lens—a way to understand how well the organisation is currently positioned to execute on its strategy, where the constraints are, and where the next investment in improvement should be made.

It helps leaders focus not on overall performance, but on execution readiness: the ability of the organisation to understand, align, design, operationalise, and adapt in response to real-world demands.

Measuring What Enables Execution

Too often, performance measurement focuses on outcomes alone—revenues, market share, retention, or growth. While these metrics matter, they do not reveal much about the organisation's underlying execution health. They tell us what happened, not why.

The ABEC Score focuses instead on what *enables* execution: the structures, behaviours, and routines that support or constrain delivery. It makes the invisible visible. It provides a shared vocabulary for discussing execution across functions and levels.

By tracking progress across the 27 components of the ABEC, leaders gain insight into which capabilities are strong, which are fragile, and which are missing entirely. This clarity allows for more targeted interventions and better-informed strategic conversations.

The Structure of the ABEC Score

The ABEC includes 27 components across the foundational platform and the five execution pillars. Each component is assessed on a scale of 1 to 10, based on observed practices, supporting evidence, and organisational consistency.

- **Foundation (6 components)**
Structured Collaboration, Values & Behaviours, Principles, Vision, Mission, Strategy Deployment
- **Re-Understand (4 components)**
Must-Haves, Must-Nots, Delight Factors, Anticipate
- **Re-Articulate (3 components)**
Internally, Across, Externally
- **Re-Design (3 components)**
Social System, Economic System, Technical System
- **Re-Operationalise (6 components)**
Control, Effectiveness, Agility, Efficiency, Automation, Digitalisation
- **Re-Adapt (5 components)**
Monitoring, Learning, Improve, Adapt, Innovate

Each component can be assessed through qualitative review, team self-assessments, stakeholder interviews, or evidence-based auditing. The assessment should be both reflective and rigorous grounded in observable patterns, not just opinions.

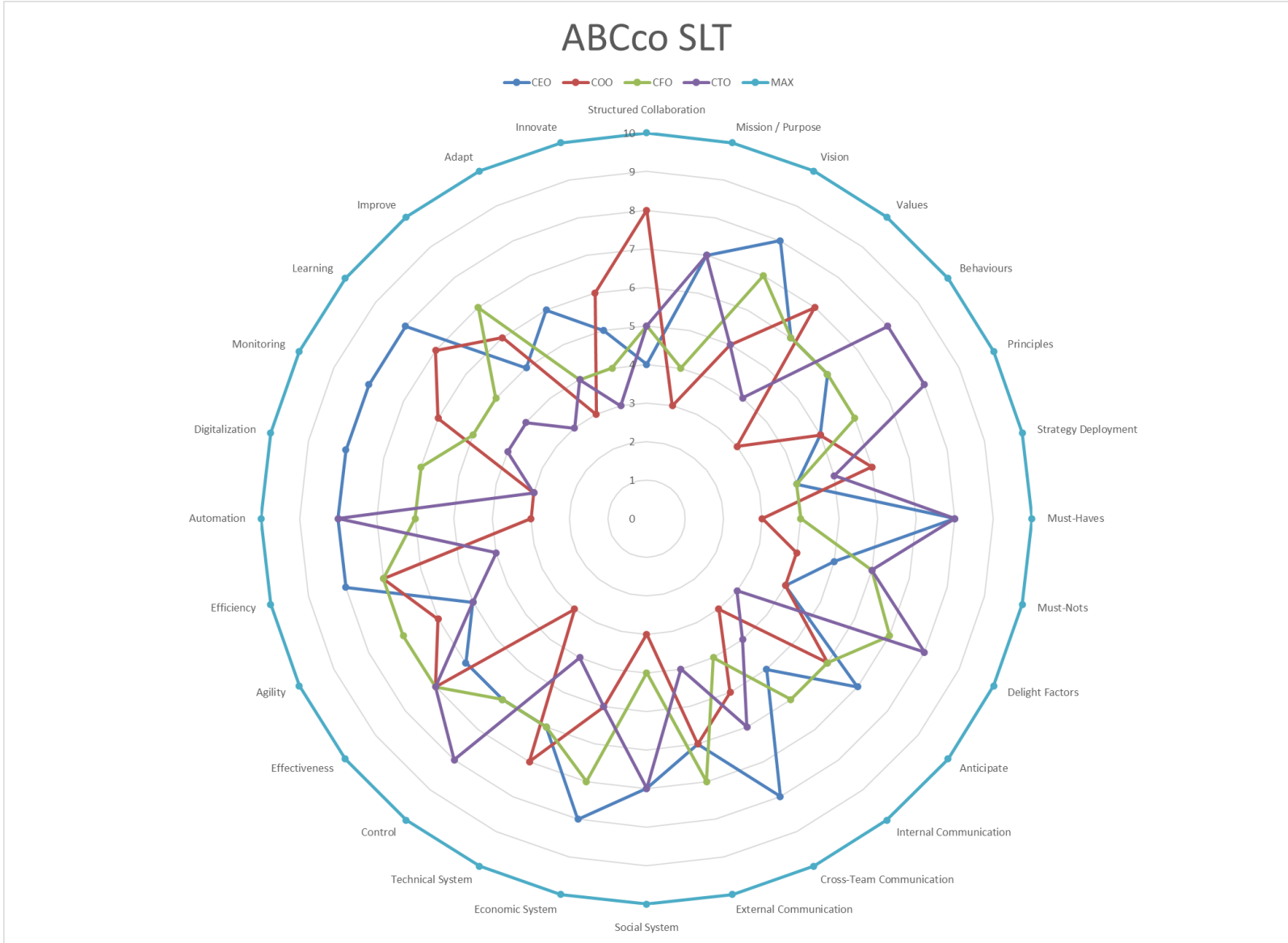
Once scored, the totals can be aggregated for each pillar, revealing strengths and weaknesses across the execution architecture. The sum of all scores produces the overall ABEC Score—a single, holistic indicator of execution capability.

Interpreting the Score

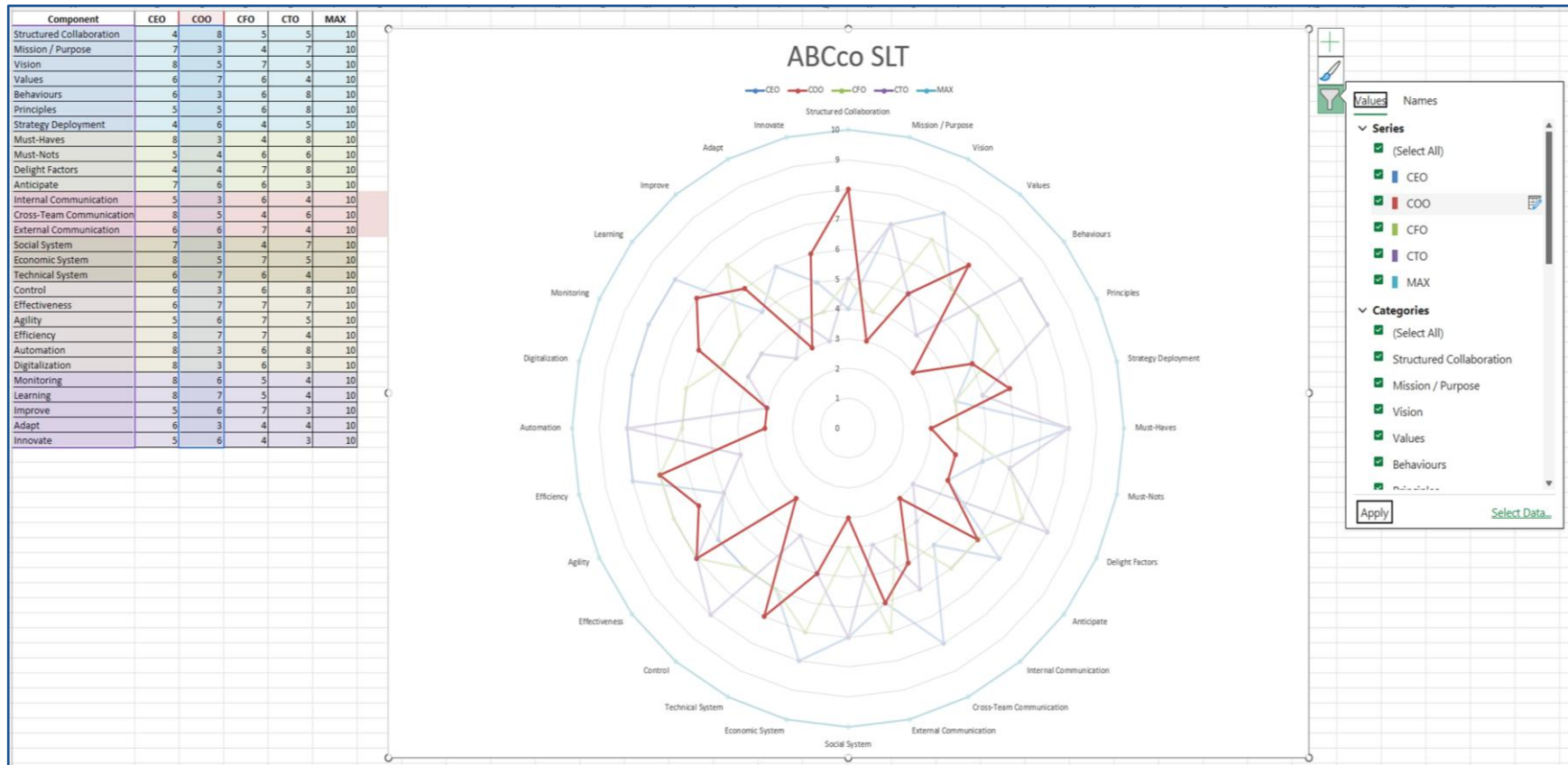
The ABEC Score is not linear. A score of 220 is not necessarily twice as “good” as a score of 110. What matters more is the pattern of scores—where strengths concentrate, where gaps remain, and whether upstream weaknesses are compromising downstream performance.

For example, an organisation may score highly in Re-Operationalise—its processes are efficient and digitalised—but poorly in Re-Understand. In such a case, the organisation is becoming more efficient at doing the wrong things. Or it may have robust design and operational capabilities but weak Strategy Deployment, resulting in scattered execution despite individual team competence.

Because of the right-to-left dependency in the framework, early gaps have compounding effects. If the organisation does not understand customer needs accurately or fails to communicate them internally, even well-executed plans can miss the mark. Measuring these gaps allows leaders to make more effective decisions about where to focus energy, attention, and investment.



Example Scorecard: **CEO**



Using the ABEC Score in Practice

The ABEC Score is not intended as a one-time diagnostic. It becomes most powerful when used as part of a regular performance dialogue—either quarterly, biannually, or annually—depending on the organisation’s clock speed and change cycle.

Leadership teams can use the score to:

- Align on a shared view of execution capability.
- Prioritise improvement initiatives across functions.
- Track the impact of transformation efforts over time.
- Support funding or resourcing decisions with evidence.
- Provide structured feedback to teams about where they’re strong and where support is needed.

The scoring process also strengthens internal collaboration. By involving teams in assessment, organisations promote ownership of both problems and solutions. The process itself becomes a learning opportunity.

Visualising the Score

The ABEC Score can be visualised as both a heat map and a radar chart. The heat map allows leaders to scan for areas of relative strength and weakness. The radar chart, especially when compared across teams and functions, offers a view of execution balance—showing whether capability is evenly developed or heavily skewed toward certain functions or pillars.

These visuals help convert abstract management concerns into concrete, actionable insights. They also support better storytelling. Leaders can explain execution challenges in terms that resonate with teams: not as failure, but as opportunities for system-wide improvement.

From Score to Strategy

Ultimately, the ABEC Score is not an end in itself. It is a tool for decision-making. It helps organisations move beyond generic improvement goals (“be more agile,” “break down silos”) toward specific, structured conversations about what’s needed next.

By diagnosing where execution is struggling—not just in outcomes, but in enabling structures—leaders can intervene more intelligently. They can build capability rather than chase symptoms. And they can design a path to execution excellence that is grounded, measurable, and sustainable. In this way, the ABEC Score becomes more than a metric. It becomes part of the execution system itself.

9. Canvas and Circular Views: From Static Plans to Living Architecture

Making Execution Visible

One of the most powerful aspects of the ABEC is that it doesn't live only in theory or in slide decks. It is visual, practical, and designed to be used. The ABEC turns the complexity of organisational execution into a single-page view that leaders and teams can use to align, diagnose, and design together.

This visualisation is more than a communications tool. It's a thinking tool. It helps teams structure conversations that are often abstract, messy, or siloed—conversations about customer expectations, cross-functional handovers, learning loops, and the invisible assumptions that shape behaviour.

But execution is not static. That's why the ABEC also includes a **Circular View**, which shows how execution flows—not just within a pillar, but across them in an ongoing cycle of understanding, alignment, design, action, and adaptation.

These two views—the Canvas and the Circular—serve different but complementary purposes.

The ABEC : A Structured View of Execution

The ABEC is a flat, structured map of the execution system. It presents all six foundational components and all five execution pillars—each broken down into their respective components—in a single frame.

This format serves several purposes:

- It provides a common reference point for cross-functional teams to discuss execution.
- It supports facilitated workshops where strategy, operations, and improvement efforts are aligned.
- It acts as a design and assessment tool, where teams can populate or score each component using real-world evidence.
- It makes execution structures tangible, turning implicit processes and assumptions into visible building blocks.

Because it's structured as a canvas—not a flowchart—it encourages modular thinking. Teams can zoom in on a particular component (like Re-Articulate: Internally) or zoom out to assess pillar-level health. They can treat it as a living framework—marking weak spots, adding links to tools or routines, and updating it as conditions evolve.

The ABEC is especially useful in strategy deployment and transformation initiatives. It helps translate high-level ambition into operational architecture. It also prevents siloed improvement by framing execution as a whole-system capability, not a series of functional fixes.

The Circular View: Execution as a Continuous Loop

While the Canvas provides structure, the Circular View of ABEC reinforces motion. It depicts execution as a closed loop, not a straight line. Each of the five pillars—Re-Understand, Re-Articulate, Re-Design, Re-Operationalise, Re-Adapt—feeds into the next, creating a dynamic cycle of alignment and learning.

This cyclical framework helps organisations move from a project mindset to a continuous capability mindset. Execution is no longer something that happens “after” strategy. It’s an iterative system that absorbs learning and feeds it back into future planning.

The Circular View also supports a concept critical to organisational agility: clock speed.

Clock Speed: Matching Rhythm to Reality

Inspired by Charles Fine’s work on industry evolution, clock speed refers to the frequency at which an organisation must revisit and refresh its assumptions, operations, and innovations. In fast-moving sectors, this might be daily or weekly. In others, a quarterly or annual rhythm may suffice.

The ABEC Circular View allows leaders to set and adjust their clock speed explicitly. The five-pillar loop becomes a shared planning cadence—a rhythm that guides reviews, retrospectives, check-ins, and strategy adjustments.

Importantly, not all parts of the organisation need to operate at the same speed. A digital team might cycle weekly, while compliance revisits its design annually. What matters is coherence, not uniformity. The Circular View provides the map; clock speed sets the tempo.

Using Both Views Together

The ABEC Canvas and Circular View are not alternatives. They work together.

- The **Canvas** supports clarity. It provides structure, shared language, and component-level visibility. It's especially valuable for diagnostics, onboarding, and structured design.
- The **Circular View** supports rhythm. It embeds the idea that execution is never “done”—it's always moving. It's especially valuable for planning cycles, transformation governance, and agility at scale.

Together, they make execution manageable, visible, and evolvable.

Organisations often struggle because their execution systems are hidden, unspoken, or managed informally. By contrast, ABEC makes the execution system a first-class object—something that can be discussed, improved, and owned collectively.

From Framework to Shared Operating Model

These views are more than diagrams. They represent a shift in how organisations think about management. Instead of relying on roles, structures, and reporting lines alone, ABEC encourages teams to think about interdependencies, rhythms, and design logic.

The Canvas and Circular Views provide a shared operating model—one that cuts across functions, projects, and timeframes. They turn strategy into structure, and structure into execution. They turn ambition into architecture.

By making execution visible, ABEC helps organisations treat performance not just as an outcome, but as a capability. One that can be designed, measured, and improved—together.

10. Applying ABEC in Practice

From Insight to Action

Frameworks are only as useful as the actions they enable. While ABEC provides a clear framework for diagnosing, designing, and managing execution, its true value lies in how it is applied—in the boardroom, across departments, and at the team level. This concluding chapter addresses the practical question: How do we start using ABEC to improve execution today?

The answer is not transformation by decree. It begins with conversation—then structure, experimentation, and iteration. ABEC is not a system imposed on the organisation. It is a way for the organisation to structure its own improvement.

Start Where the Friction Is

For most leadership teams, the entry point to ABEC is a known execution challenge. Strategy is not translating. Functions are misaligned. Customer expectations are being missed despite best efforts. These symptoms signal one or more execution gaps.

The ABEC can be used in a facilitated session to map current pain points onto the five pillars. Are we misunderstanding the customer (Re-Understand)? Are teams unclear about direction (Re-Articulate)? Are structures constraining flow (Re-Design)? Are operations inconsistent or reactive (Re-Operationalise)? Are we too slow to adapt (Re-Adapt)?

This mapping exercise helps shift the conversation from blame to structure. It frames the problem in terms of design, not deficiency. It also clarifies where the next intervention is likely to have the most impact.

Use the Canvas to Frame Strategy Deployment

An effective use of ABEC is in strategy deployment. Rather than cascading goals and hoping for alignment, leaders can use it to translate strategy into operational architecture.

This includes:

- Clarifying the behaviours, principles, and values that underpin execution.
- Defining the customer expectations, we must deliver against
- Ensuring these expectations are clearly articulated internally and externally.
- Reviewing whether the organisation is designed to deliver them.
- Identifying operational routines that need to change.
- Establishing learning loops to track, assess, and adapt.

This creates alignment not through control, but through shared understanding and structure. Strategy becomes executable because it is made structural.

Build Capability, Not Dependency

ABEC is designed to strengthen the organisation's internal capability—not to become heavily dependent on external consultants or central teams. Once understood, it can be used by team leads, function heads, and programme managers to design better collaboration, surface execution risks, and guide change.

ABEC scales well because it is modular. Teams can use parts of the framework (e.g., the Re-Operationalise pillar) without needing to master the entire framework. Over time, familiarity grows. Language becomes shared. Structures align. In organisations that embed ABEC, it becomes part of the management fabric—not as a replacement for existing tools or methods, but as a coordinating framework that ties them together.

Common Pitfalls and How to Avoid Them

As with any framework, the effectiveness of ABEC depends on how it is applied. There are some predictable pitfalls to avoid.

One is treating ABEC as a checklist rather than a design conversation. The goal is not to “complete” all components, but to understand how they support one another and where they are most needed.

Another risk is superficial assessment. Scoring pillars without evidence or broad participation reduces the framework to a formality. The power of ABEC comes from honest reflection, cross-functional dialogue, and visible action.

A third common trap is overreach—trying to fix everything at once. The point of the ABEC Score and Canvas is to focus attention. Start with the areas of highest friction or leverage. Use the framework to sequence change, not to overwhelm the system.

Embedding ABEC in the Organisation

Over time, ABEC can become a central part of how the organisation manages itself. It supports:

- Board-level strategy reviews by showing how strategy is connected to execution reality.
- Leadership team alignment around execution capability, not just financial outcomes
- Transformation initiatives by offering a design language that transcends functions.
- Operating model redesigns by clarifying what structures need to enable.
- Capability-building efforts by identifying where learning and development should focus.

The framework is particularly useful in fast-scaling organisations, federated enterprises, or post-merger integrations—any context where alignment is fragile and execution needs structure.

ABEC also integrates well with other frameworks. It can complement Lean, Agile, service design, or digital transformation programmes by offering a macro-level architecture in which those methods can be deployed coherently.

Leading with Structure

The ABEC redefines what it means to lead execution. Leaders are not just responsible for results, but for the conditions that produce them. ABEC gives them a way to see those conditions clearly, discuss them constructively, and shape them deliberately.

This is not a call for more processes or stricter control. It is a call for better structure—structure that enables autonomy, focuses energy, and aligns diverse efforts toward shared outcomes.

In this light, the leader becomes an architect of execution—not by managing more directly, but by designing the organisation so that it executes seamlessly.

The Work Ahead

With the ABEC in hand, the next steps are practical:

- Use the Canvas to assess current execution capability.
- Score the organisation using the 27 components.
- Identify key gaps and friction points.
- Prioritise one or two pillars for focused improvement.
- Design interventions with the Re-Design and Re-Operationalise pillars in mind.
- Monitor impact, learn fast, and adapt with intention.
- Re-enter the cycle with a clearer understanding and stronger foundation.

Execution is no longer an afterthought. It's a system—one that can be made visible, shared, and strengthened.

The Agile Business Execution Canvas gives leaders the means to do just that.

Conclusion: Building the Future of Execution

Execution is the lifeblood of every organisation. Yet, too often, it is treated as an afterthought—something to be managed through heroic effort or patched together with disconnected initiatives. The reality is that execution is a complex, systemic capability that demands deliberate design and continuous attention.

The Agile Business Execution Canvas® offers a new way forward. It is both a lens and a toolkit—making visible the hidden assumptions, behaviours, and structures that determine whether strategy becomes reality or remains aspiration. By building on a solid foundational platform and strengthening the five execution pillars, organisations can create a resilient, adaptable system that delivers value consistently and sustainably.

This guide has walked you through the core elements of that system. But the journey doesn't end here. The true impact comes when leaders and teams take these insights and translate them into action—using the framework to diagnose, design, and evolve their execution capabilities.

Next Steps for Leaders and Teams:

- **Assess your current execution architecture:** Use the ABEC to identify strengths, gaps, and priorities in your organisation's execution system.
- **Build cross-functional understanding:** Engage teams from across the organisation to develop a shared view of how work flows and where friction occurs.
- **Design targeted interventions:** Start with the pillar or platform component that represents your greatest constraint or opportunity.
- **Embed continuous learning:** Establish routines to monitor performance, capture insights, and adapt rapidly.
- **Leverage the framework as a common language:** Make ABEC the foundation for all execution-related conversations, decisions, and improvements.

Organisations that have embraced this approach report faster alignment, clearer accountability, reduced rework, and an empowered workforce capable of delivering at pace and scale.

We invite you to embrace execution as a designed organisational capability—a shared responsibility, a visible system, and a source of competitive advantage.

The future of execution is within your grasp. Design it well, deploy it wisely, and deliver it seamlessly.

About the Author

Alex McDonnell is CEO and Co-Founder of Expertivity Technologies, and the pioneer of Structured Collaboration and developer of the Agile Business Execution Canvas®, a management upgrade for modern organisations.

Over the past four decades, Alex has founded, scaled, and successfully exited several businesses, including Technodisc, his first business in 1984 and Expertivity Technologies that he co-founded in 2003.

He brings a rare blend of entrepreneurial insight, executive experience, and academic rigour to the challenge of managing complexity in service and knowledge work organisations.

Alex has held senior executive roles at global companies including Dell, Ericsson, and Eircom, and has advised leadership teams across technology, healthcare, government, and financial services.

At Expertivity Alex has led improvement programmes at over 70 organisations across many different sectors and organisation sizes, consistently delivering 30–40% improvements in operational performance.

He holds a BA in Management, an MBA, and an MSc in Strategic Quality Management, and is a certified Lean Six Sigma Master Black Belt.

He also completed postgraduate studies in Business Dynamics and Systems Thinking at MIT, and is recognised as a Master Practitioner in both Lean Operational Excellence and Systems Thinking.

Through Expertivity Technologies, Alex continues to innovate in enterprise execution design—treating management practices as core infrastructure and enabling organisations to adapt to complexity with confidence, discipline, and speed.

This guide is a companion to the book by Alex and is available on Amazon

The book is a continuation of that journey. It is the book Alex long hoped to find during his own experiences of founding and scaling complex organisations.

Finding none that fully addressed the realities of execution in service and knowledge work, he wrote the book he needed: a guide to making complexity manageable, collaboration structured, and execution seamless.

