



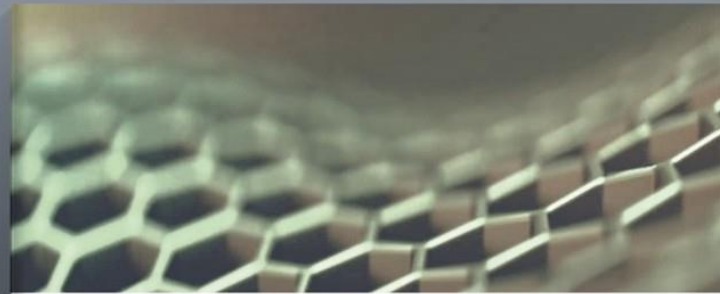
The Organization Designer

Conversations with
Greg Kesler and Amy Kates

Part 1:

The profession and the practitioner

25 June 2026



The Organization Design Practitioner

BUILDING OPERATING
MODELS THAT DELIVER

Gregory Kesler
Amy Kates

Why we wrote this book



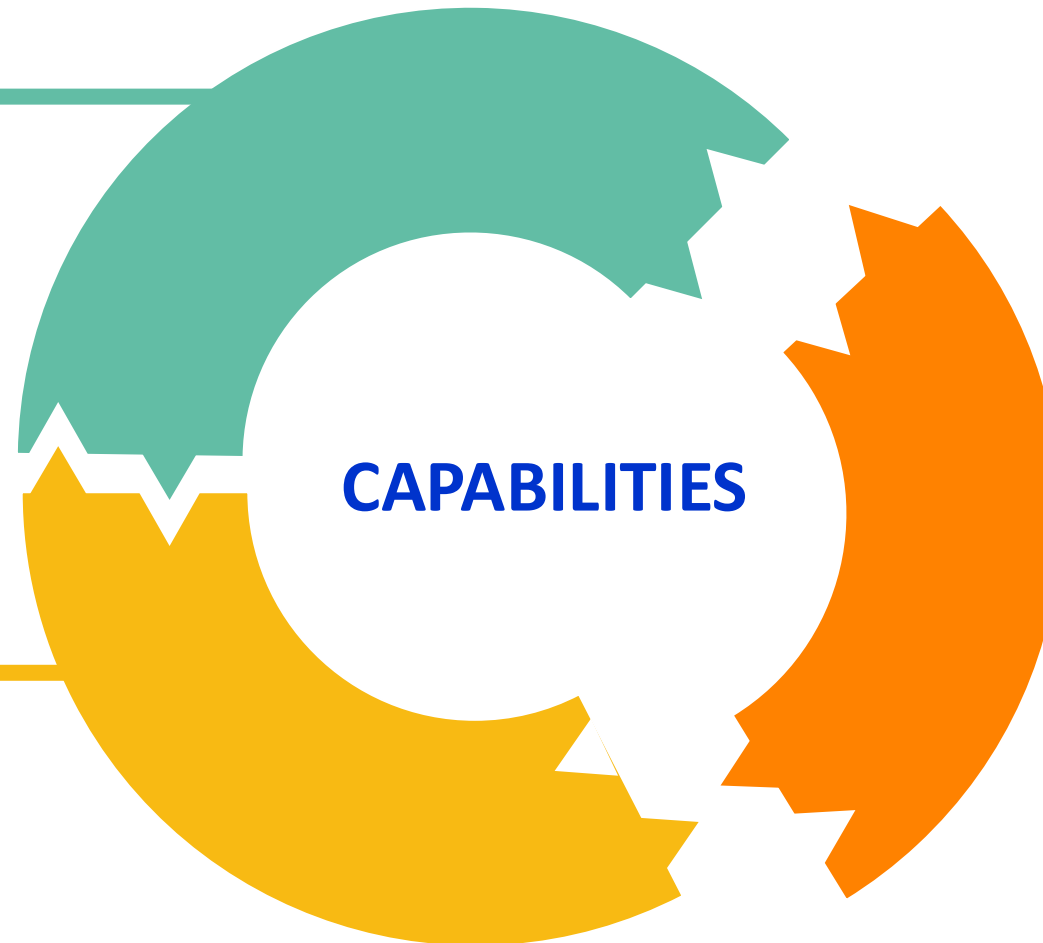
Tech and data have created disruptive **opportunities for growth** – there is an operating model gap

TECH + DATA

- Ubiquity of data
- AI-powered work and radical automation
- Interconnection of everything
- Tech and data-powered customer engagement

NEW BUSINESS MODELS

- Solutions and platforms vs. single products and services
- Digital and data-focused business models
- Partnerships and vertical integration



INNOVATIVE ORGS + OPERATING MODELS?

- Boundaryless, collaborative
- Design for paradox: Scaled *and* agile, center led *and* distributed, human *and* machine
- Empowered, radical new ways of working

Today entire operating models must change

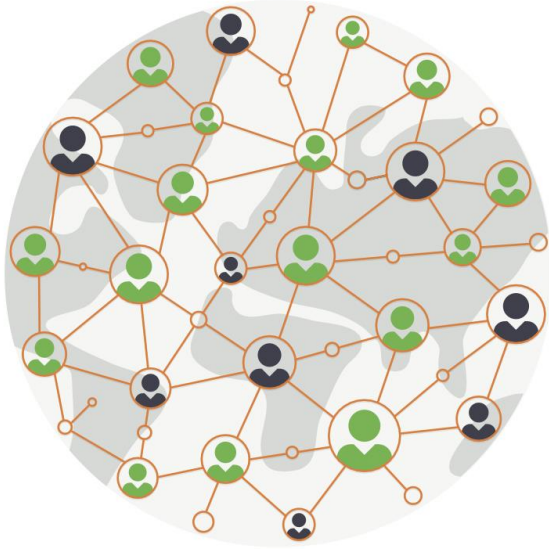
**Eliminating
unnecessary
boundaries**

**Simplifying
vertical org to
make horizontal
ways of working
easier**

**Designing
more
integrated
models**

**New work
and data
empowered
roles at the
edge**

Connectivity is the foundation of tech and data-powered business.



Organization Design
Practitioner Survey

.....
ODF ORGANIZATION
DESIGN FORUM

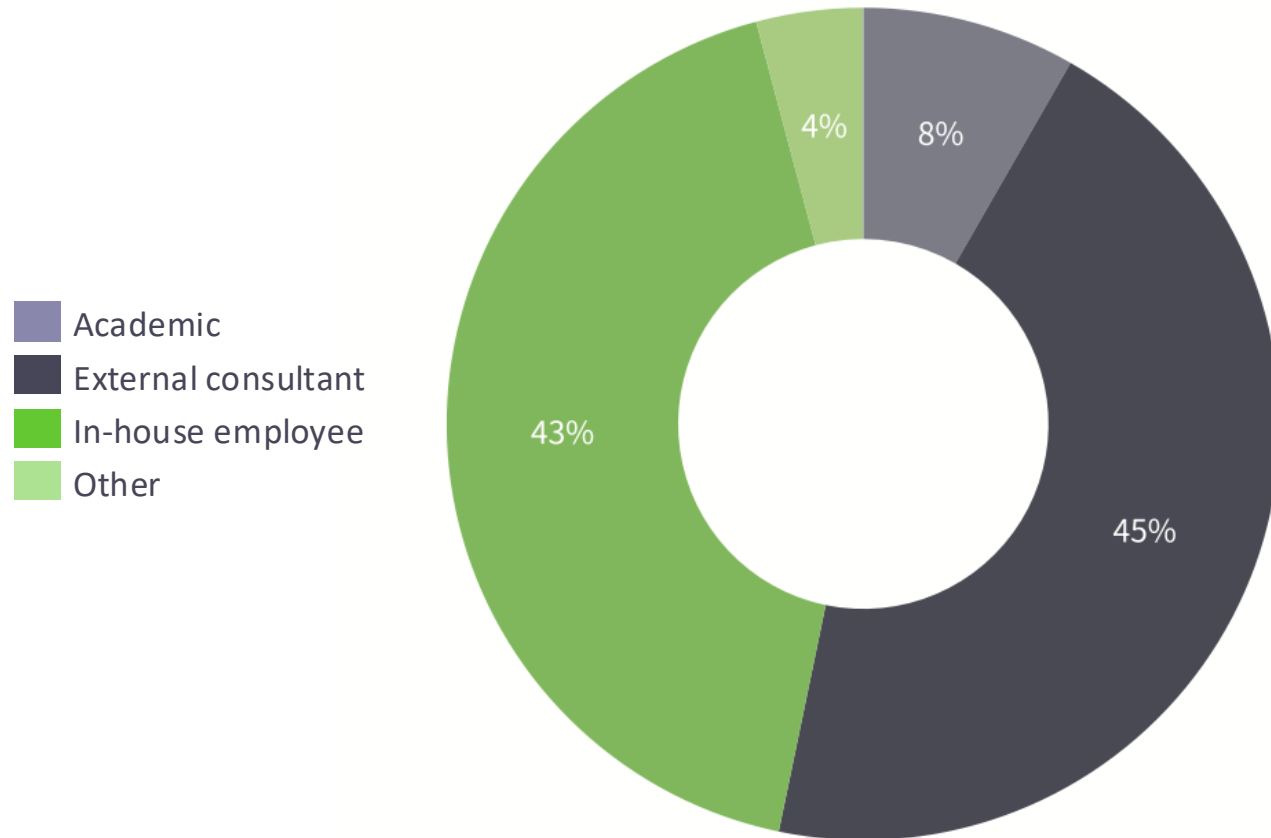
Making organizations more effective, successful, and inspiring for all

ODF Practitioner Survey 2025

Selected findings

<https://organizationdesignforum.org/odf-research/>

Respondent profile



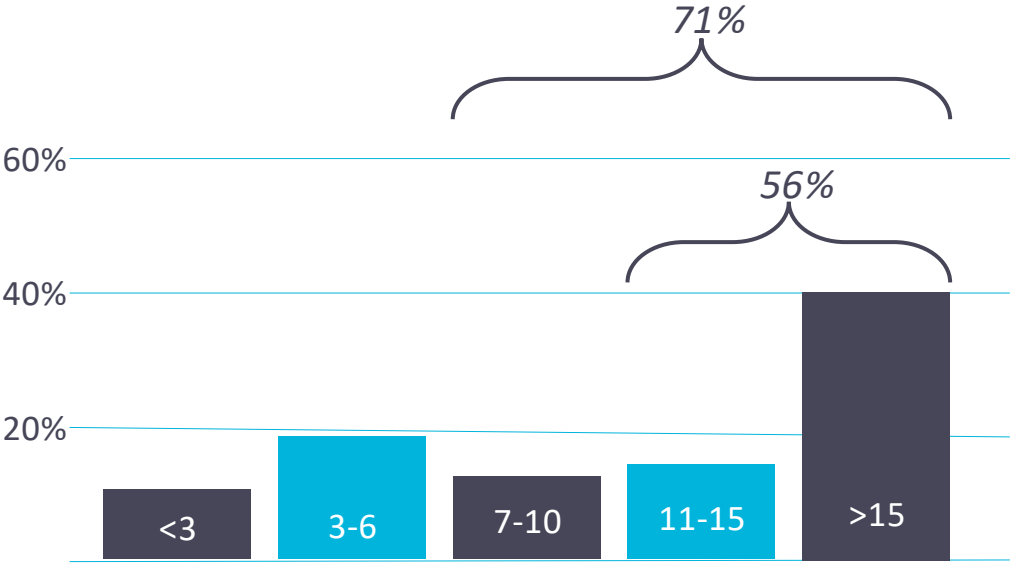
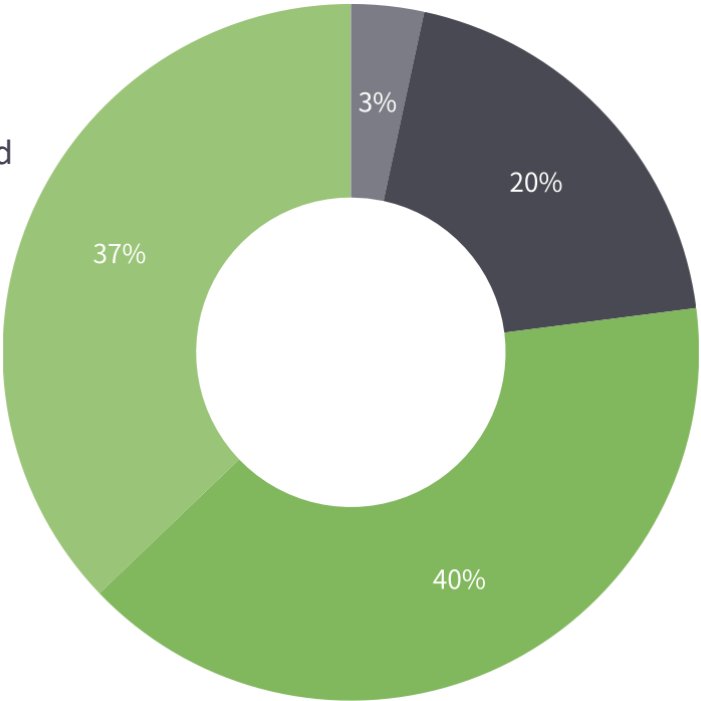
Where they came from:

51% USA
24% Europe & UK
8% Asia
7% Canada
5% Middle East
4% Oceania
1% Rest of World

An experienced group

My level of experience is...

- Entry level
- Developing
- Experienced
- Highly advanced

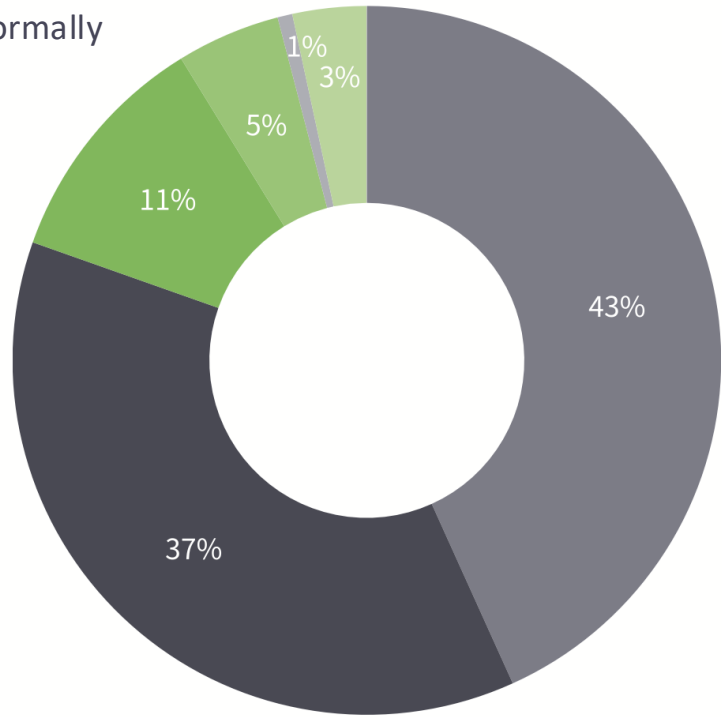


Years practicing Organization Design

The 'hyphenate' practitioner

Organization Design is...

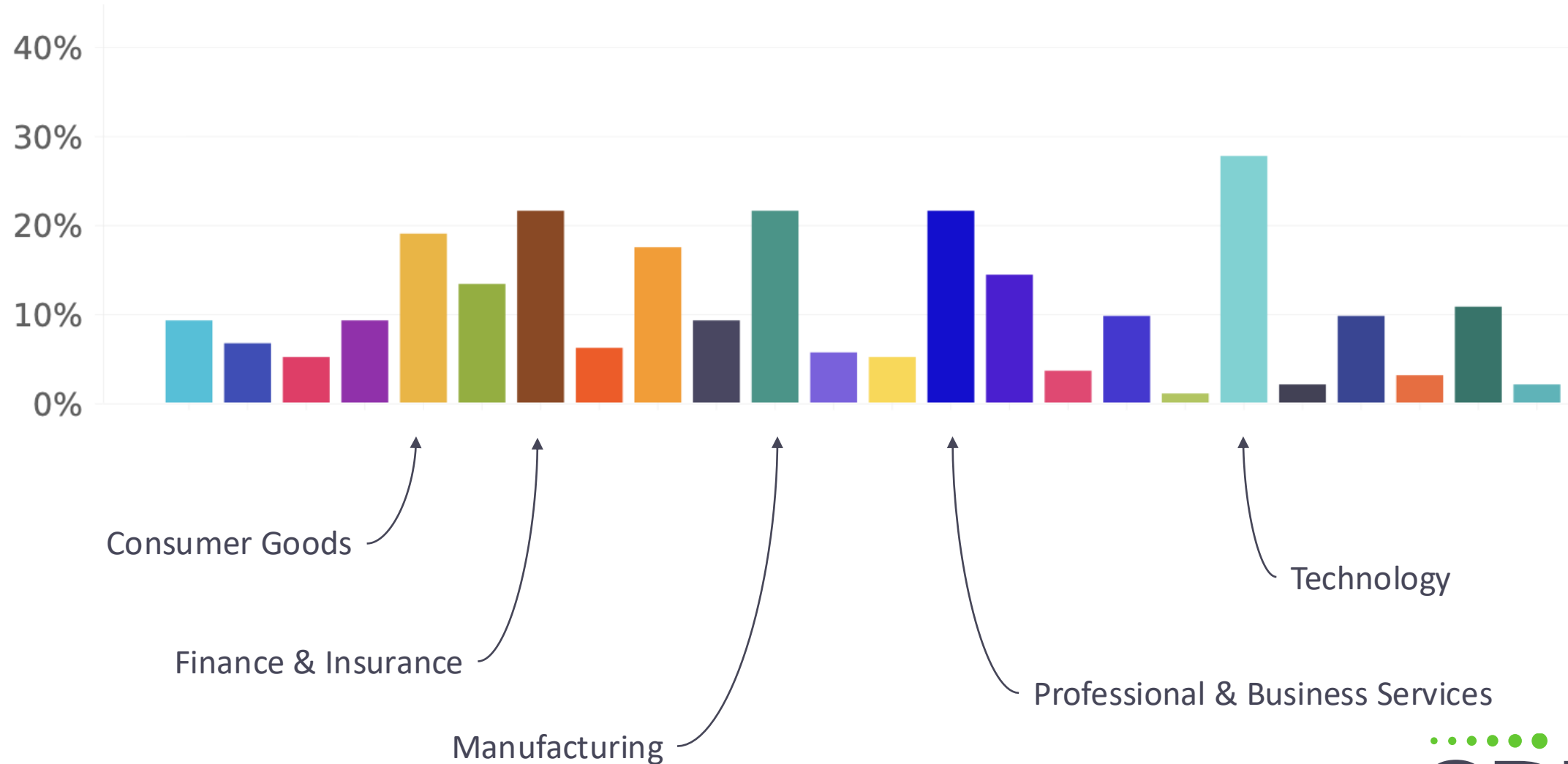
- My primary expertise
- One of several core skills
- Supporting skill to main discipline
- New or emerging skill
- Part of my role informally
- Other



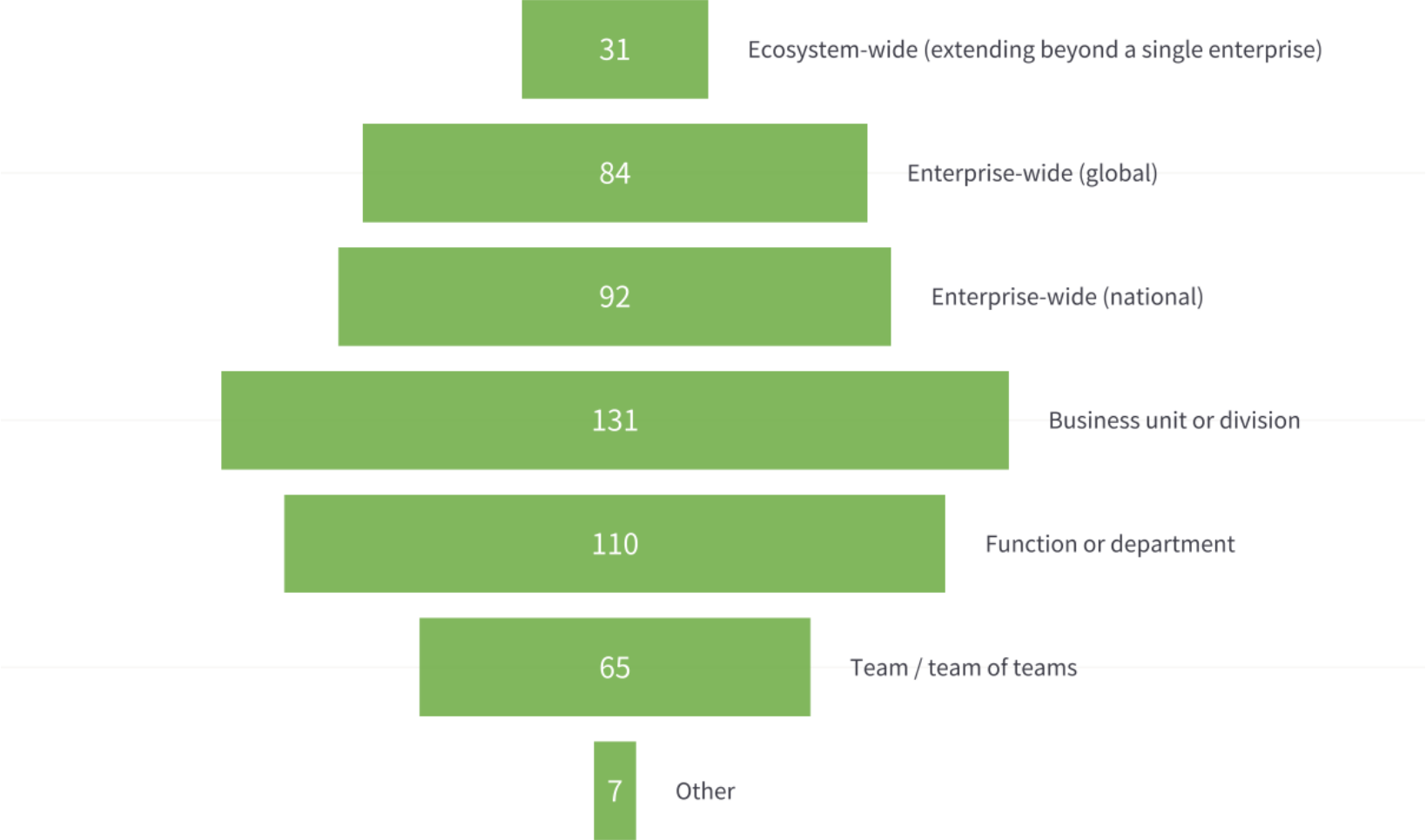
Most frequently cited role titles:

- Executives & founders
- Organization designers
- Organization development & effectiveness
- Consulting & advisory
- Transformation & change
- HR Leadership & business partnering
- Product devt, operations & enablement
- Talent, learning & capability
- Academic & research
- Workforce planning, analytics & reward

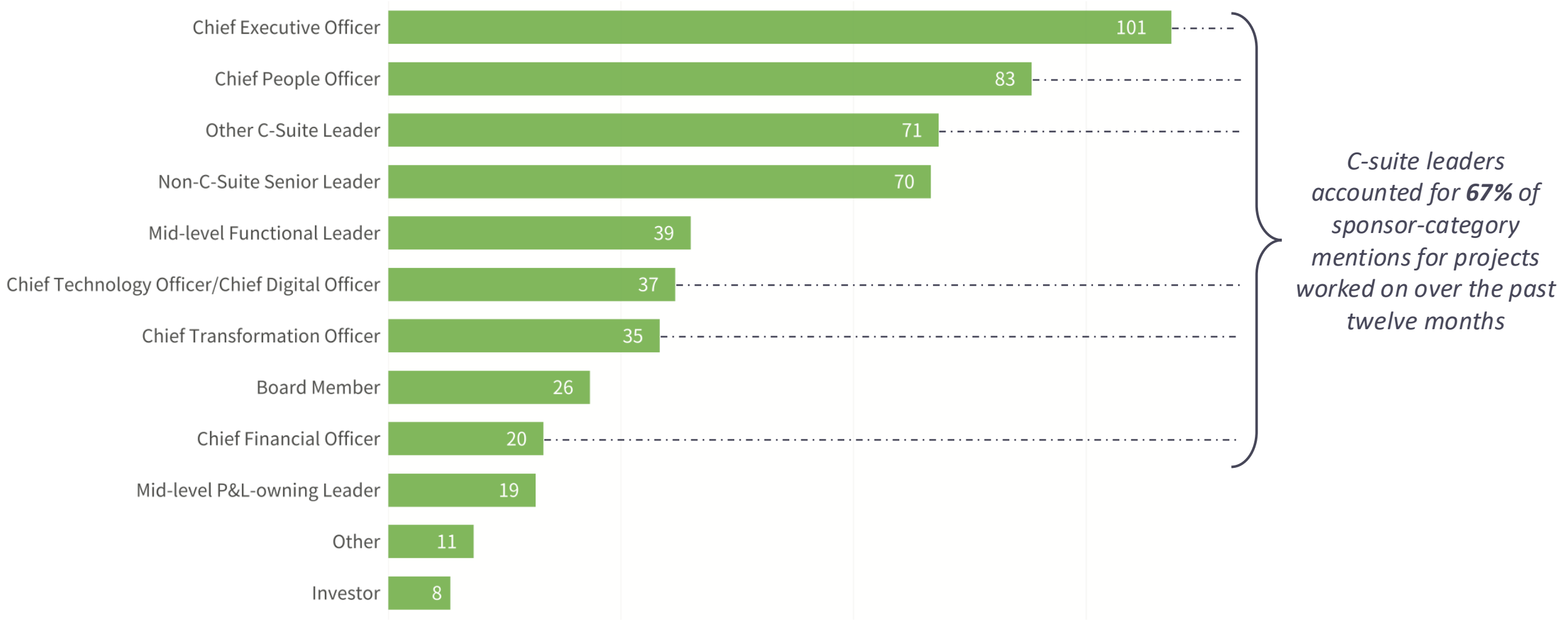
Breadth of industries



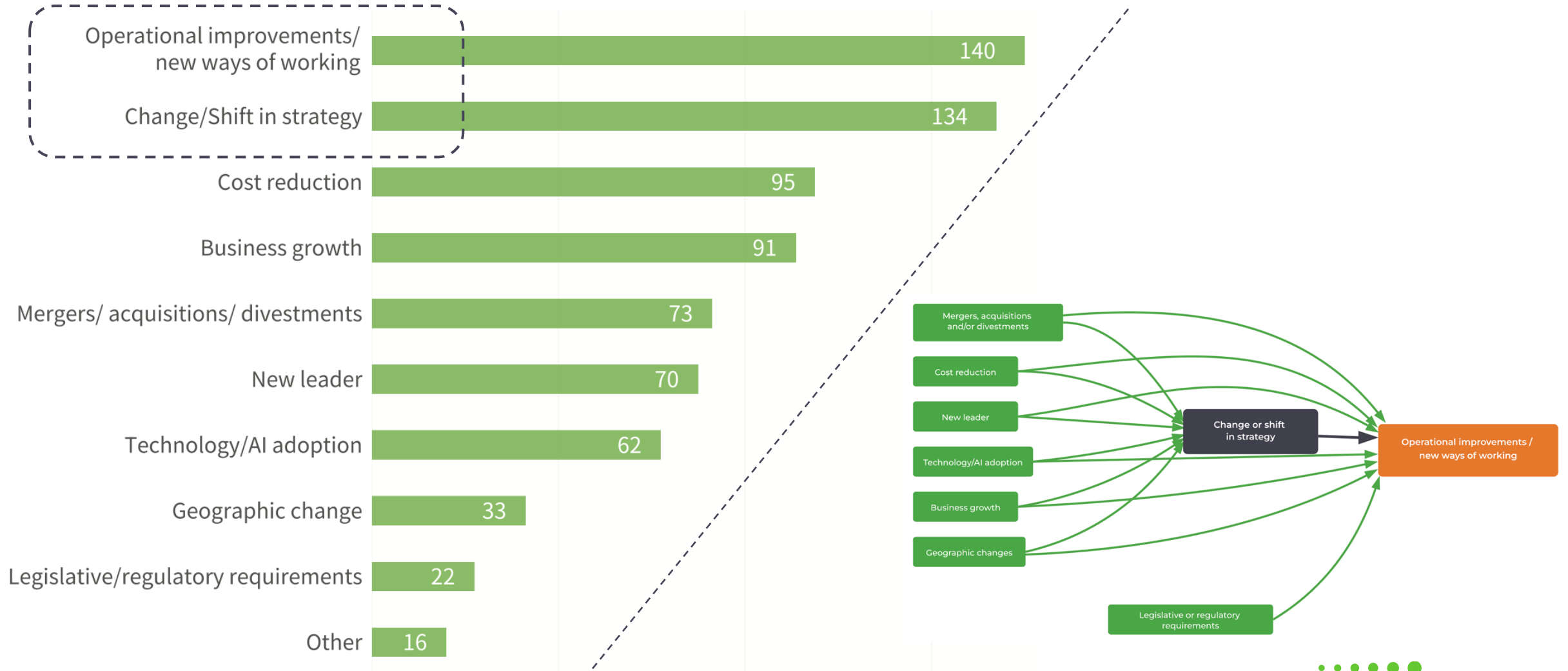
Scope of work



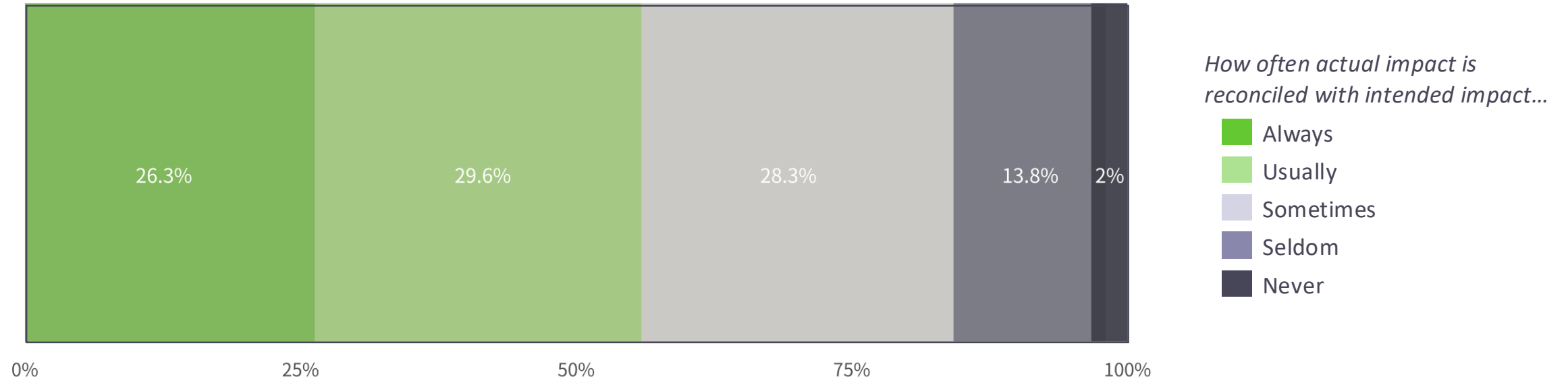
Sponsorship



Drivers of the work



Reconciling impact



Most significant challenges

- Client buy-in & leadership mindset
- Implementation & adoption
- Time, budget & capacity constraints
- Strategic & systems alignment
- Tools, technology & AI
- Practitioner development & community
- Evidence, data & metrics
- Scope clarity

Future skill requirements

- Technology & tools
- Org Design methods & frameworks
- Data & analytics
- Strategy, finance, business modelling & governance
- Facilitation & consulting skills
- Evidence & community learning
- Executive coaching, & leadership psychology
- Workforce architecture & planning
- Agile ways of working & continuous improvement
- Change & implementation



The Organization Design Practitioner

BUILDING OPERATING
MODELS THAT DELIVER

Gregory Kesler
Amy Kates

**What makes for a great
organization design
practitioner**

The organization design practitioner

Attributes *(hard-wired)*

1. **Deep curiosity about how complex systems work**, not just about people or teams in isolation.
2. **Comfort with ambiguity and abstraction**, coupled with a desire to make the abstract tangible through models, language, and visuals.
3. **A diagnostic orientation**, and an instinctive search for patterns, root causes, and interdependencies rather than application of existing solutions.
4. **Passion to make better work environments**, with true empathy for employees coupled with appreciation of the unique stresses faced by leaders.

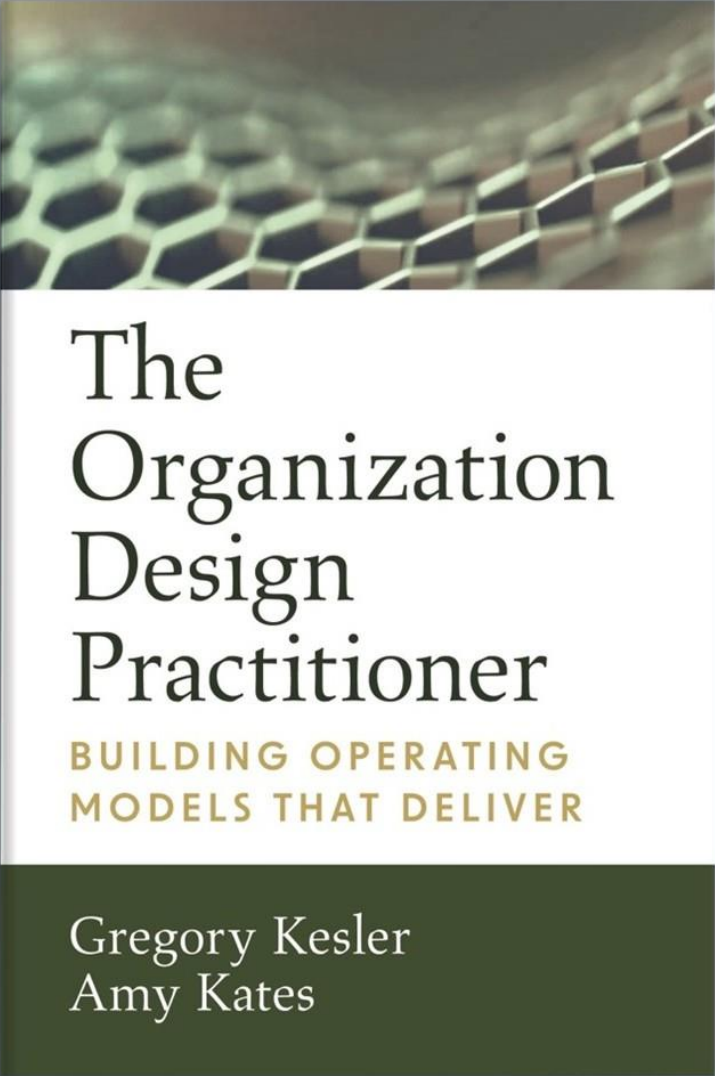
Skills *(can be learned)*

1. **Systems thinking**
2. **Translate the abstract**
3. **Curiosity and creativity**
4. **Poise**
5. **Business fluency**
6. **Executive facilitation**
7. **Project planning and teamwork**

Competencies *(intention, practice, reflection)*

Diagnostic excellence

Seen as a trusted advisor



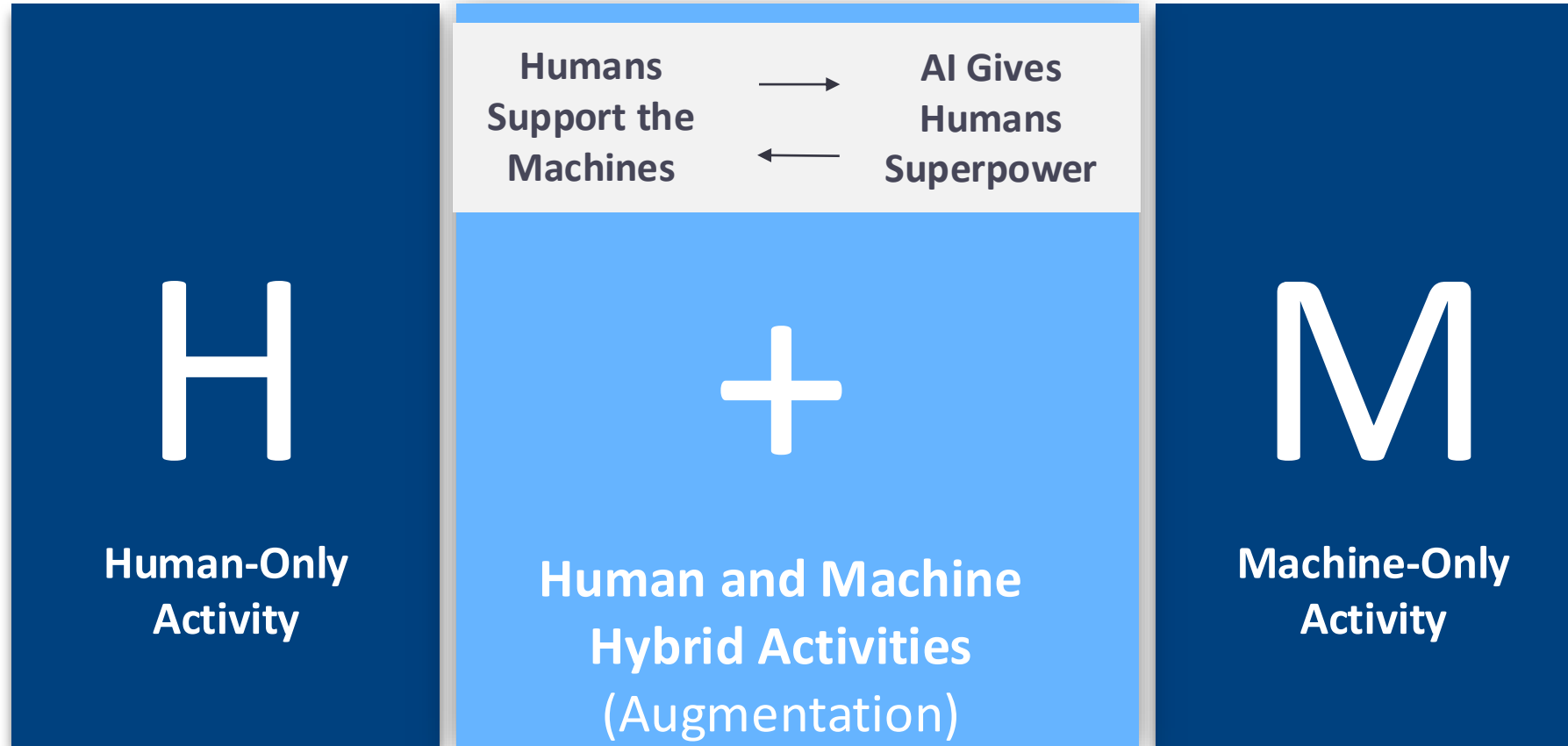
The Organization Design Practitioner

BUILDING OPERATING
MODELS THAT DELIVER

Gregory Kesler
Amy Kates

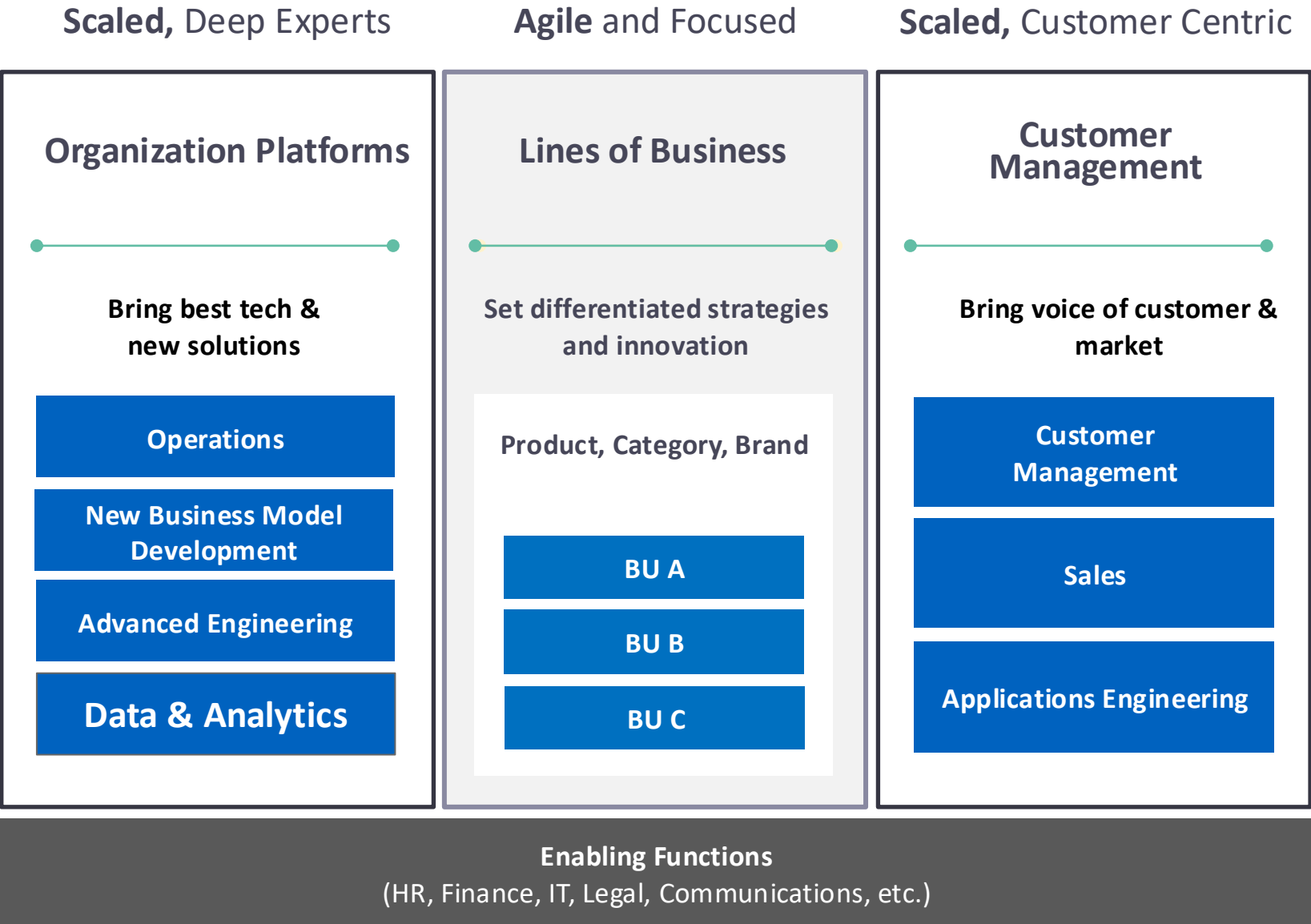
Discussion

“Missing middle” learn where and how human + machine can fuse – an opportunity to create the most value



Design cultures to experiment and learn how the “middle” works.

**Modular
designs can
adapt quickly
and still
deliver scale**



Star defines the logic for focusing and sustaining behavior and action against a strategy . . .



The Organization Designer

Conversations with Greg Kesler and Amy Kates

Part 1: The profession and the practitioner

Part 2: Organization design, AI, and today's
changing business context (September)

Part 3: Organization design tools and methods
(November)