

# Ideas Into Excellence



*How can we turn our ideas into excellent and tangible outputs?*

**NORTH**  
HIGHLAND

IDEAS INTO EXCELLENCE

## The Speakers



**Will Pitchers**  
*Engagement Lead /  
Lead Business Analyst*



**John Fraser**  
*Expert Practitioner (BA)*



**Shane Lakani**  
*Lead Business Analyst*

# Overview

## SESSION OUTLINE

The talk will cover our experience of the following:

- Why generating ideas and using them is important to our profession;
- The journey we have taken, as North Highland, to foster a close-knit BA community focused on innovation;
- How we have used existing skills to build a structure that works for us;
- Tips and tricks that have helped us succeed;



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# Audience Objectives

What would the audience like to take away from the session?


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# Turning Ideas Into Reality

## Why is this important?

*"Creativity is thinking up new things. Innovation is doing new things."  
Theodore Levitt, Economist (1925 – 2006)*

*"If at first the idea is not absurd, then there is no hope for it."  
Albert Einstein, Mathematician (1879 – 1955)*

*"The value of an idea lies in the using of it."  
Thomas Edison, Inventor (1847 – 1931)*

*"If you look at history, innovation doesn't come just from giving people incentives; it comes from creating environments where their ideas can connect."  
Steven Johnson, Science Author (1968 – present)*

*"What good is an idea if it remains an idea? Try. Experiment. Fail. Try again. Change the world."  
Simon Sinek, Author (1973 to present)*

## Why is this important to the profession?

- It leads to the introduction of new and better solutions to existing problems for both the business and its customers. It is the engine upon which the foundations of our global community rests.

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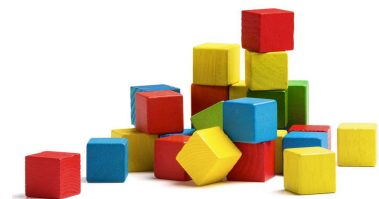
# Generating Ideas and Community

## From our experience, we have found:

- Providing an open and collegiate environment for our community has enabled the generation of a wealth of ideas;
- Generating ideas is simply not enough. Ideas needed to be refined, focused appropriately, and be implementable;
- A structure designed and built with the involvement of the community can improve the focus of ideas generated and the ability to deliver these;

**Further reading:** <https://hbr.org/2012/07/ten-ways-to-inhibit-innovation.html>

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# Leveraging Analysis Skills

## Understanding the current state and existing issues:

- Ideas were continuously generated, but implementing them could be slow;
- Too many ideas, lack of focus, and minimal prioritisation;
- Individuals were not empowered to own and deliver ideas;
- People received top class training, however, practical experience to learn was not always available;

## Moving forward through analysis:

- Understanding the lifecycle and activities of a BA within your organisation;
- Grouping the lifecycle stages into clusters;
- Ensuring all the community are involved and able to freely contribute;



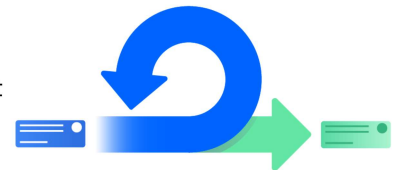
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# Implementing a New Structure

## Creating a structure to improve the implementation of ideas:

- Creation of small agile teams based on the clusters;
- Use of a suitable methodology to drive discrete packages of work each month;
- Creating forums in which ideas can be generated and added to respective backlogs;
- Ensuring all the community can participate and no one voice is more important than another;
- Aligning to the strategic goals of the organisation to ensure ideas and initiatives are focused on heading in the correct direction (e.g. use of innovation framework);



**Further reading:** <https://www.atlassian.com/agile/agile-at-scale/spotify>

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# Value Streams

**Focus and Evolution:**

- Value streams focused on primary disciplines and supplementary areas;
- Initial implementation was limited to our Process & Business capability;
- Similar ways of working have been rolled-out across the entire organisation;
- All activities are now better focused and aligned across the company;

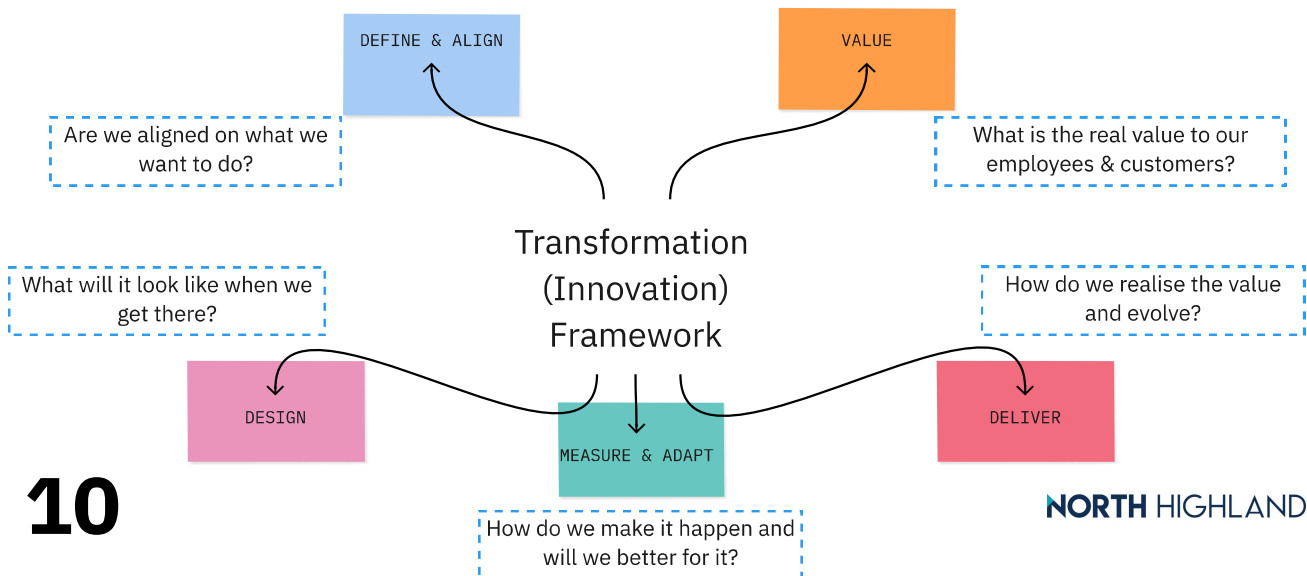
**Further reading:**

<https://www.northhighland.com/services/capabilities/process-and-business-analysis>

	Our P&BA Value Streams		
<b>Offerings</b>	Intelligent Automation	Process & Operations	Business Analysis
<b>Tools &amp; Techniques</b>	Toolkits		Learning & Skills Development
<b>Market Eminence</b>		Thought Leadership	
<b>Community Aspect</b>	Internal Community & Capability		Coaching
<b>Strategy</b>	Business Development		Run & Grow

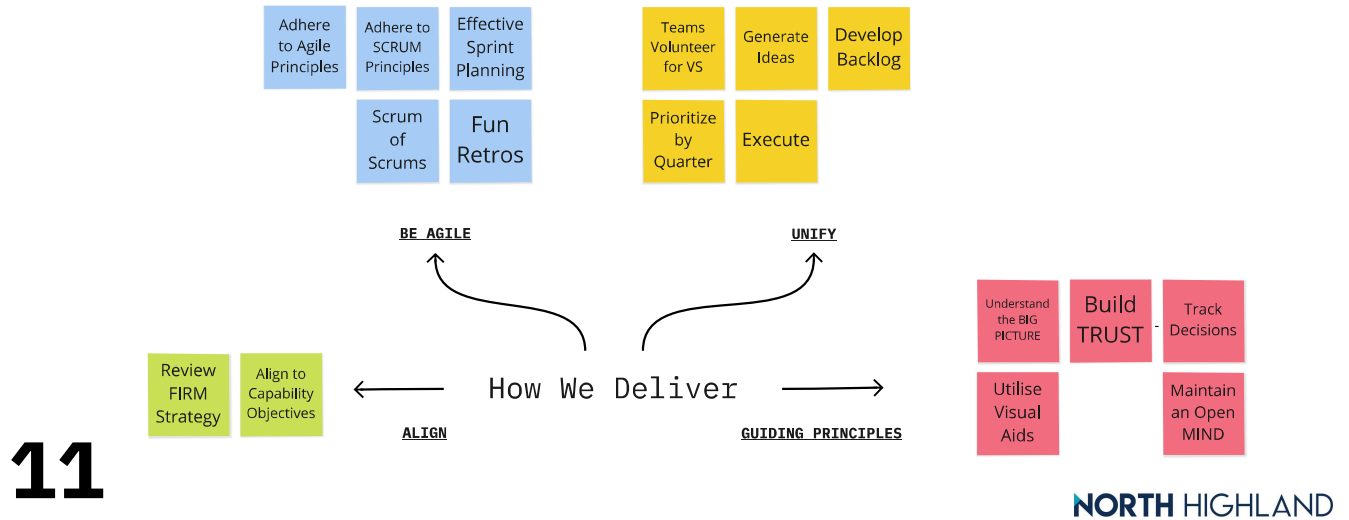
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# Alignment to Strategic Goals



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# Delivering Ideas



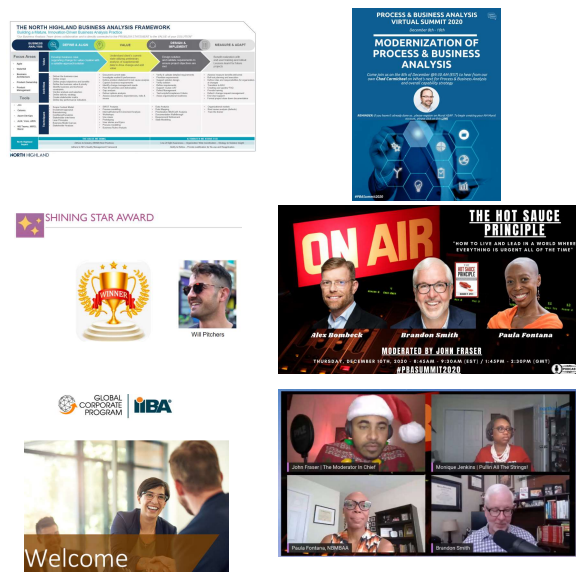
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# Outputs & Benefits

- Implementation of ideas and initiatives measurably increased;
- A BA framework that is continually enhanced;
- Greater empowerment within our communities and organisations;
- People are able to test ideas and skills in a safe environment where failure is accepted;
- Greater alignment across the entire organisation - all pulling in one direction;

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# Encouraging Innovation

## Steps for embedding innovation:

- Set aside time to think and generate ideas;
- Encourage conversation and collaboration;
- Embrace failure and encourage risk;
- Start with small, incremental changes;
- Focus on building momentum;
- Engage the entirety of the community, business, or user base;

**Further reading:** <https://innovationmanagement.se/2015/07/20/5-steps-to-embed-innovation-in-your-daily-working-life/>



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# Feedback and Openness

**Nurturing a culture of feedback and transparency has helped us improve the generation of ideas. We have achieved this through some of the following:**

- Ensured feedback can be provided in an ad-hoc and continuous basis;
- Used formalised events such as retrospectives to embed behaviours and act as checkpoints;
- Being honest with each other regarding expectations, priorities, and capacity;
- Making sure that all feedback is constructive;
- We have a dedicated team focused purely on *feedback and recognition*;



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THANK YOU!

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