



Double Helix

A framework for scoping AI Initiatives

Technology without strategy is expensive.
Strategy without technology is impossible.

Why the Double Helix Exists

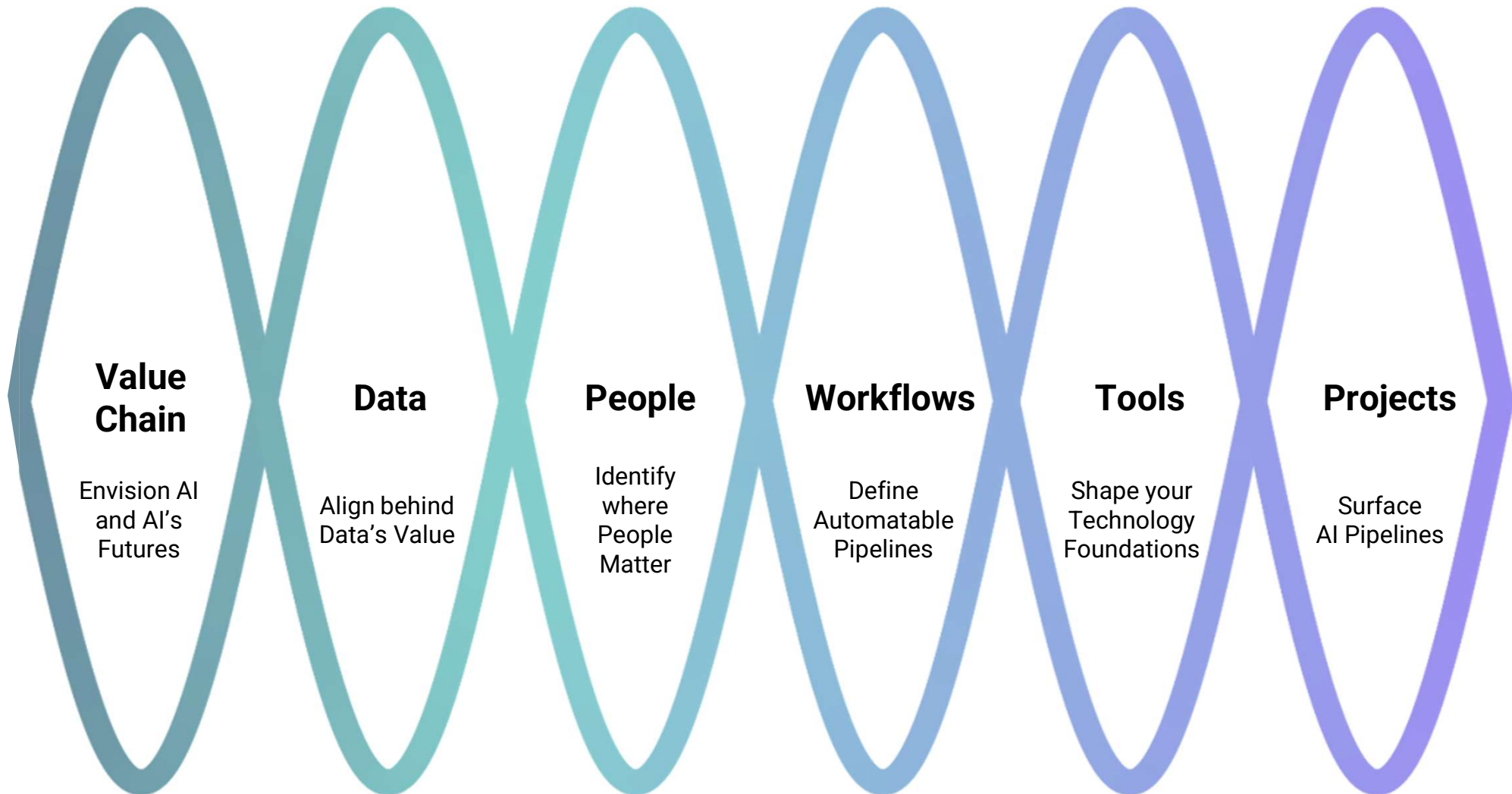
In the AI era, technology and strategy can no longer operate as separate silos. They must be intertwined — each informing and bounding the other. Your organizational vision must be grounded in architectural reality and institutional know-how. Your technology stack must be bounded by strategic goals and human values. When they operate independently, the result is predictable: technical debt, misaligned tools, and AI rollouts that solve the wrong problems.

Most organizations pursuing AI transformation are making this mistake. Inadequate clarity on how AI rolls out, unclear ownership, and lack of shared vision mean that each function is making decisions in isolation — accumulating complexity faster than value.

The AI Double Helix is a scoping framework that ensures every AI initiative is grounded in your organization's unique context before commitment is made. It connects your value chain to the data, people, workflows, and tools that must be aligned for an AI project to succeed — and produces properly scoped projects ready for execution.

Double Helix

Grounding AI initiatives in organizational reality



The Six Elements

Value Chain — Every AI initiative begins with your value chain — the sequence of activities that creates value for your customers and stakeholders. Understanding who interacts with a process, how often, and what they need from it establishes the strategic context that all downstream decisions must serve. An AI project disconnected from value chain reality solves a problem nobody prioritized.

Data — AI is only as good as the data it operates on. This element assesses the quality, accessibility, and governance of the data sources relevant to the initiative. Data quality is scored against ISO 25012 standards — incomplete, inconsistent, or inaccessible data requires remediation before AI deployment can succeed.

People — Role clarity and process adherence determine whether an AI initiative will be adopted or ignored. This element maps who is involved in the process, what their roles are, and whether those roles are consistently followed. Gaps in adherence are a deployment risk, not a post-launch problem.

Workflow — AI applied to an undefined or broken process will accelerate the dysfunction. This element maps the existing workflow and defines the desired future state. The gap between them is what the AI initiative must bridge — and it must be understood before any tool is selected.

Tools — This element assesses the current tool stack, identifies the system of record, and maps candidate AI tools against the gaps identified in the workflow analysis. Tool selection follows workflow definition — not the other way around.

Projects — Every project has an initiation point — an existing pain point surfaced in operations, an opportunity identified through brainstorming or ideation, an external use case that maps to your business, or a capability gap identified during strategic planning. Regardless of origin, every candidate project must be analyzed against the five feeding elements above before commitment is made. A project that enters execution without this grounding will encounter the same data, people, workflow, and tool gaps mid-stream — at significantly higher cost.

The Double Helix Project Canvas is the instrument for completing this analysis. Complete one canvas per candidate project before advancing to vendor selection or resource allocation.

Digital Readiness Assessment — Value Chain · Data · People

ORGANIZATIONAL GROUP	PROCESS NAME	FRICTION POINT
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VALUE CHAIN	Who interacts with this process and how often?	
ELEMENT	STAKEHOLDER	INTERACTION FREQUENCY
Primary		
Secondary		

DATA	Up to 3 data sources · Quality scored per ISO 25012		
SOURCE	SYSTEM / LOCATION	FORMAT	QUALITY (H/M/L)
Source 1			
Source 2			
Source 3			

PEOPLE	Role clarity and process adherence across groups		
ELEMENT	IN-GROUP	OUTSIDE GROUP	GAPS
Roles			
Adherence			

AI Adaptability Assessment — Workflow · Tools

ORGANIZATIONAL GROUP	PROCESS NAME	FRICTION POINT
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WORKFLOW

Map current state to desired state

STATE	DESCRIPTION
Existing workflow	
Desired workflow	

TOOLS

Current stack, candidates, and gaps

CATEGORY	TOOLS / SYSTEMS	NOTES / GAPS
System of Record		
Other tools in use		
Candidate AI tools		
Gaps identified		

Canvas Instructions

Complete one canvas per candidate project. The canvas is designed to be filled out by a cross-functional group — not by a single function in isolation. Gathering input from the people closest to the data, the workflow, and the tools produces a more accurate scoping picture and surfaces gaps that would otherwise remain invisible until deployment.

Organizational Group, Process Name, Friction

Point - Begin by naming the organizational group sponsoring the initiative, the specific process being addressed, and the friction point or opportunity that initiated the project. These three fields establish the scope boundary — if the team cannot agree on these three inputs, the project is not ready to be scoped.

Value Chain — Identify the primary and secondary stakeholders who interact with this process and their interaction frequency. The goal is to establish who depends on this process and how often — this determines the blast radius of both the problem and the solution.

Data — List up to three data sources relevant to the initiative. For each, identify the system or location where the data lives, the format it exists in, and a quality rating of High, Medium, or Low. Low-quality data sources require a remediation decision before the project proceeds — either invest in data quality or descope the initiative accordingly.

People — Map role clarity and process adherence both within the group sponsoring the initiative and across the groups it interfaces with. Identify gaps — places where roles are undefined or adherence is inconsistent. These gaps are adoption risks that must be addressed in the project plan, not assumed away.

Workflow — Describe the existing workflow in enough detail that someone unfamiliar with the process could follow it. Then describe the desired future state. The gap between these two descriptions is the transformation the AI initiative must produce. If the desired state cannot be described clearly, the project is not ready to proceed.

Tools — Identify the current system of record for this process, any other tools currently in use, and the candidate AI tools under consideration. Note gaps — places where no tool currently serves a function the initiative requires. Gaps identified here feed directly into the vendor shortlisting process using the AI Decision Architecture Three Filters.

Digital Readiness × AI Adaptability — Composite Score

DIGITAL READINESS

Data will support getting quality data into and out of AI, and people are ready to receive new instructions.

AI ADAPTABILITY

Process definition is understood for AI transformation, and tools path risk is manageable.

DATA — DATA QUALITY (ISO 25012)

- 1 Data is incomplete, inconsistent, or inaccessible
- 3 Data exists and is partially conformant; gaps present
- 5 Full ISO 25012 conformance; reliable and accessible

Data score:



WORKFLOW — PROCESS DEFINITION

- 1 Ad hoc; no defined steps or consistent execution
- 3 Partially structured; some steps defined, inconsistently run
- 5 Well-defined, consistent process; needs language automation only

Workflow score:



PEOPLE — ROLE CLARITY & ADHERENCE

- 1 Roles undefined; process adherence is inconsistent
- 3 Roles are partially clear; adherence varies by individual
- 5 Roles clearly defined and consistently followed by all

People score:



TOOLS — STACK & UPGRADE PATH

- 1 No clear system of record; tooling fragmented or absent
- 3 Tool is adopted but AI upgrade path is unclear
- 5 Tool is well-adopted and an AI upgrade is identified

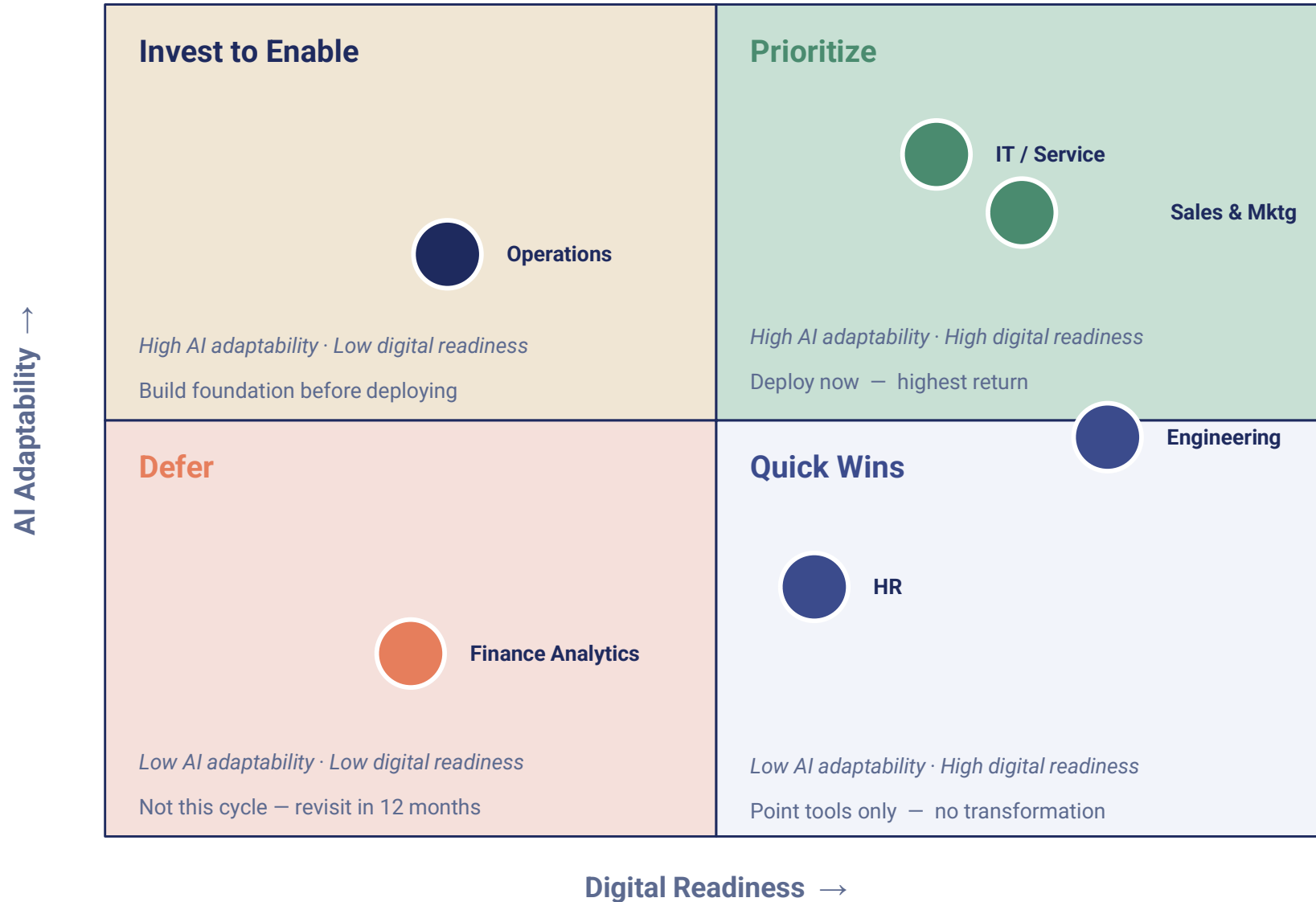
Tools score:



DIGITAL READINESS (Data + People): ____

AI ADAPTABILITY (Workflow + Tools): ____

Project Priority Matrix



Priority Matrix Interpretation

Once scoring is complete, plot each functional group or candidate project on the matrix using its Digital Readiness score (horizontal axis) and AI Adaptability score (vertical axis).

Prioritize — High digital readiness, high AI adaptability. These initiatives have the foundation in place and the process clarity to support deployment. Allocate resources here first for the highest return on AI investment.

Quick Wins — High digital readiness, lower AI adaptability. The data and systems are ready but the process needs definition before AI can be effective. Deploy point tools where appropriate while investing in workflow standardization to unlock fuller transformation.

Invest to Enable — High AI adaptability, lower digital readiness. The process clarity exists but the data foundation is not yet ready. Prioritize data quality and systems remediation before committing to AI deployment — these initiatives will deliver strong returns once the foundation is in place.

Defer — Lower digital readiness, lower AI adaptability. Neither the data foundation nor the process clarity exists to support AI deployment in this cycle. Revisit in twelve months after foundational work is complete. Deploying AI here without remediation will accelerate existing dysfunction, not resolve it.

Next Steps

The AI Double Helix gives your organization a structured approach to scoping AI initiatives — ensuring that every candidate project is grounded in value chain context, supported by quality data, aligned with clear roles and workflows, and matched to the right tools before commitment is made.

The Double Helix Project Canvas and scoring tools are designed to be completed by a cross-functional team. The Function Priority Matrix produces a defensible prioritization of initiatives that leadership can align behind.

The Executive AI Clarity Program evaluates AI projects addressing Employee Productivity, Team Efficiency, and Core Differentiation — producing a signed Strategic Clarity Document with a 12-month roadmap and no more than five priority initiatives with assigned ownership.

**To learn more, book a Strategic Briefing
with Silver AI Strategies.**

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