



Data Maturity - from heat map to roadmap



Session summary & agenda

From data maturity assessment to a dependency-driven roadmap

Session summary

Turn a maturity heat map into a roadmap leaders can defend.

The session connects assessment evidence, scoring judgement and organisational dependencies so the output becomes a route to action, not just a diagnostic artefact.

What you'll leave with

A practical way to explain what changed, why it matters, and what must happen first.

Key agenda points

- 01 **Establish the premise**
A heat map diagnoses; it does not yet provide a route to action.
- 02 **Explain the assessment**
Purpose, scope, evidence, scoring levels and outputs.
- 03 **Choose how to run it**
Self-assessment, workshops, evidence-led or hybrid.
- 04 **See why assessments fail**
Scope, evidence, calibration and framing traps that stall action.
- 05 **Translate, sequence, sustain**
Build a dependency-led roadmap and maintain visible progress.

Through-line: translation is the capability between diagnosis and action.

Quick poll: where does the conversation go after an assessment?

Choose A or B in the poll, or reflect on the last assessment you saw.

A**“What do we do about this?”***Action conversation*

VS

B**“Whose fault is this?”***Blame conversation*

The talk is about keeping the assessment conversation on the left-hand side.

A robust assessment is necessary, but not sufficient

THE GAP

The webinar addresses two distinct challenges.

01 Conduct it well

Run a robust, evidence-based maturity assessment: clear scope, credible evidence, disciplined scoring and fair facilitation.

02 Translate the result

Turn the findings into meaningful, prioritised improvements, with a sequence the organisation can defend.

TODAY'S ROUTE

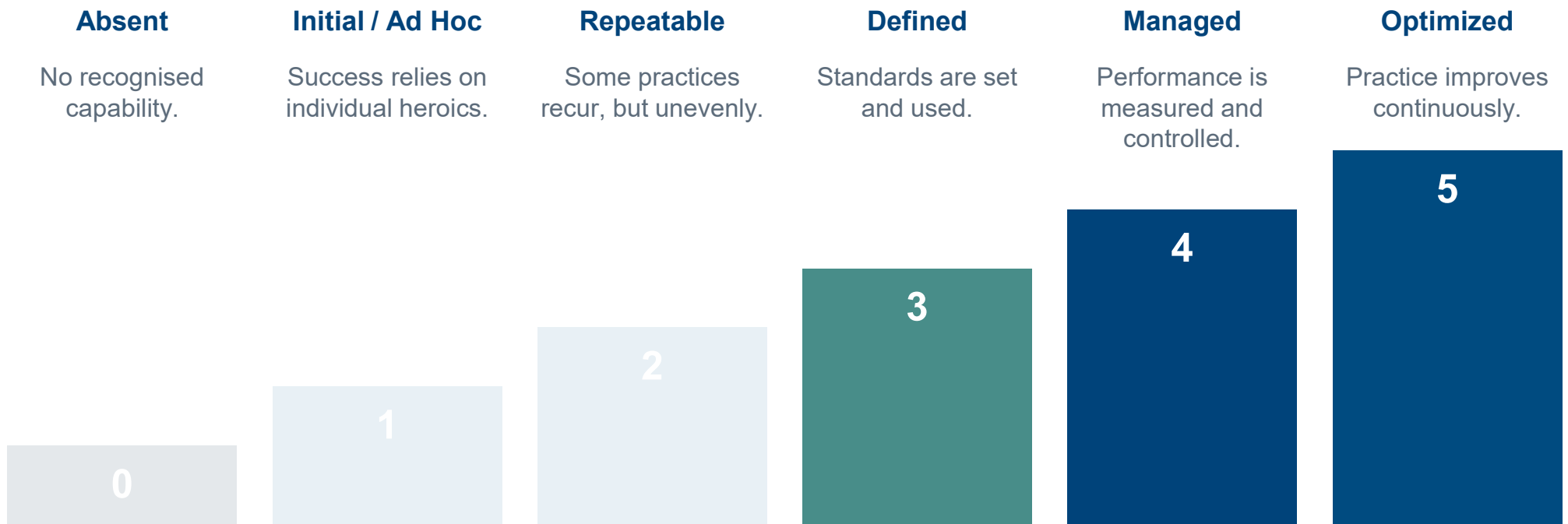
What a DMA is → how to run one well → what to do with the result

What is a Data Maturity Assessment?



Maturity progresses in order; no level is skipped

THE SIX LEVELS



Each level is judged against evidence of activities, tools, standards and people / resources.

Source: DMBOK2, Chapter 15: Data Management Maturity Assessment

The heat map shows the gap, not the route

ILLUSTRATIVE OUTPUT

Current state and desired state are compared capability by capability.

CAPABILITY	0	1	2	3	4	5
Capability A		NOW		AIM		
Capability B			NOW		AIM	
Capability C				NOW	AIM	

HOW TO READ IT

The wider the gap, the greater the exposure, but the heat map does not determine the improvement sequence.

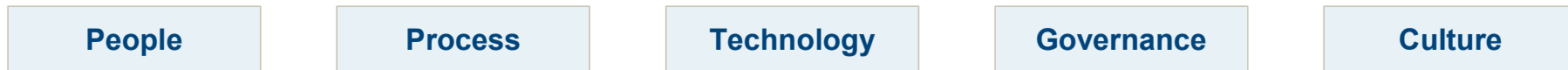
Adapted from DMBOK2 Chapter 15, Figure 105

WHAT IS A DATA MATURITY ASSESSMENT?

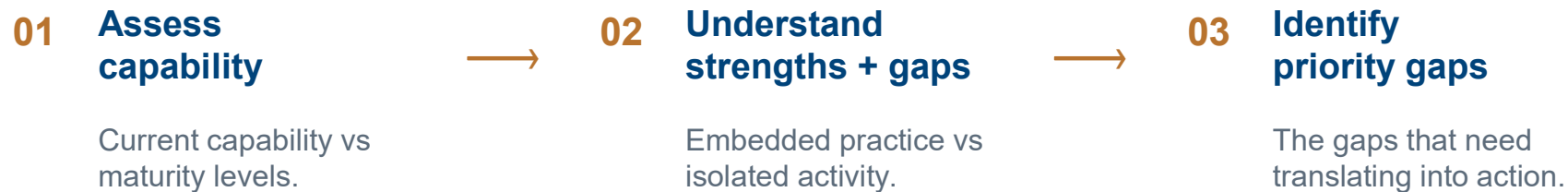
A structured diagnostic of how consistently an organisation manages and uses data.

It looks beyond individual teams or tools to test whether data capability is embedded across the organisation, and where improvement should start.

It looks across



It turns evidence into diagnosis



The output is not just a score. It is a defensible diagnosis for deciding what to do next.

WHAT IS A DATA MATURITY ASSESSMENT?

A maturity assessment tests whether capability is embedded

It asks whether six interdependent facets work together reliably - across the organisation, not only within one team.

It reveals

01 Capability composition

What maturity is made of

02 The weakest link

Where embedding breaks down

03 Improvement focus

What must improve first

Maturity is systemic: one weak facet constrains the whole.



Original synthesis, informed by DMBOK2 Figure 6.

What an assessment actually includes

A maturity assessment is more than a survey score: it is a scoped, evidenced diagnostic.

Scope

Enterprise, domain, or function; clear boundary of what is being assessed.

Capability model

DMBOK, DMA, DCAM, CMMI-DMM: the lens used to organise questions.

Evidence

Documents, artefacts, interviews, workshops, and examples of use in practice.

Scoring rubric

Levels, thresholds, and calibration rules that make scores comparable.

Participants

Data leaders, business owners, technology, risk, compliance, and operations.

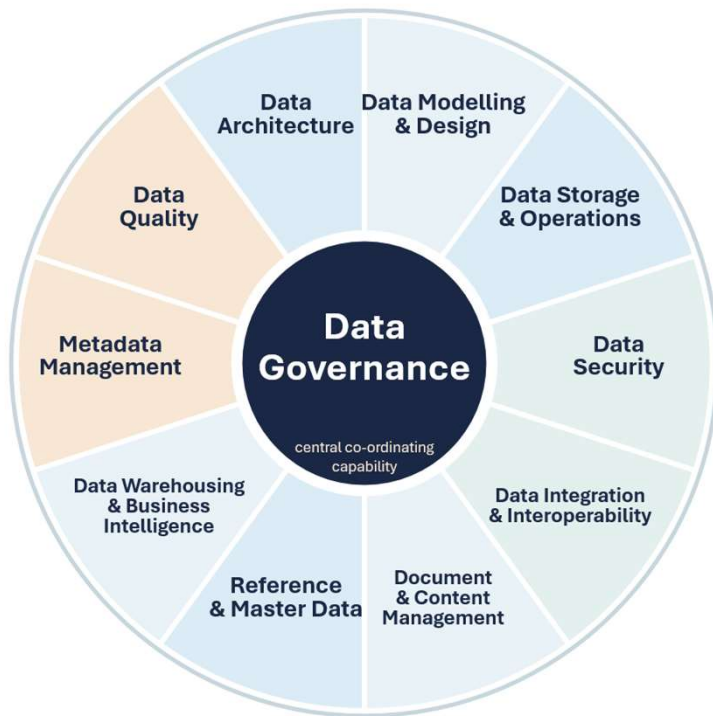
Outputs

Heat map, findings, priority themes, evidence pack, and candidate improvements.

The output is not “a score”. The output is a defensible organisational diagnosis.

DAMA-based Data Maturity Assessment scope

A clean map of the data management knowledge areas that would be assessed



The wheel defines the scope of a DAMA-based assessment.

It is not an organisation chart and it does not assign ownership.

It shows what would be assessed before explaining how the results are translated into action.

Takeaway: a DAMA-based assessment asks whether data management capability is embedded across these knowledge areas.

EXAMPLES OF AVAILABLE DMA FRAMEWORKS

Different frameworks give you different lenses on maturity.

The choice matters, but the bigger design decision is how you run the assessment and translate the result.

01 **DMBOK Data Maturity Assessment**

Broad data management

General-purpose lens across DAMA knowledge areas.

02 **UK Gov Data Maturity Assessment**

Public sector

Useful where government standards, assurance, and public-service context matter.

03 **DCAM**

Financial services / control

Strong fit for control, risk, accountability, and regulated data environments.

04 **CMMI-DMM**

Enterprise capability

Capability-maturity view for structured enterprise improvement.

Use the framework as the lens for diagnosis, not as a substitute for judgement about what to do next.

Running the assessment



Slide 13

SD1

PART 2 GAP — Add explicit facilitation countermeasures: evidence-first questioning, private scoring followed by reconciliation, and an independent facilitator. Scoping, evidence, scoring discipline and enterprise-altitude heat-map reading should all be completed before the translation layer is introduced.

Simon Downes, 2026-07-31T10:26:30.002

Credibility is designed before the first question

SCOPE + EVIDENCE

Scope the decision

BOUNDARY

Enterprise, domain or function: state clearly what is and is not being assessed.

PARTICIPANTS

Cross-functional voices: business owners, data, technology, risk, compliance and operations.

Test the reality

1 DOCUMENTS

Policies, standards, operating artefacts.

2 INTERVIEWS

How work is understood and performed.

3 OBSERVED PRACTICE

What happens consistently, not what is intended.

Framework choice: DMBOK2-aligned model · UK Government DMA · CMMI-DMM · EDM Council DCAM

Three rules protect the score from wishful thinking

SCORING DISCIPLINE

01

No half marks

Land at a defined level, or below it.

02

Default lower

When evidence is uncertain, use the lower defensible level.

03

Visibility is evidence

If roles and practices cannot be seen, they are not embedded.

Aspirational scoring feels generous in the room, and destroys credibility when the evidence is challenged.

The score is a conclusion from evidence, not a negotiation about ambition.

Good facilitation separates evidence from influence

PITFALL → COUNTERMEASURE

WHAT DISTORTS THE SCORE

Gaming and inflation



Scoring ambition, not reality



The loudest voice decides



WHAT PROTECTS IT

Ask evidence-first questions.

Score current practice before discussing target state.

Score privately, reconcile openly, use an independent facilitator.

Facilitation is part of the assessment method, not meeting administration.

A red score describes the organisation, not a team

READ AT ENTERPRISE ALTITUDE

THE SCORECARD DEAD END

“The metadata team scored red.”

Red lands as team performance. Leads defend themselves. The conversation turns to blame, and the assessment dies in the room.

THE ENTERPRISE READING

“Metadata management is not yet embedded.”

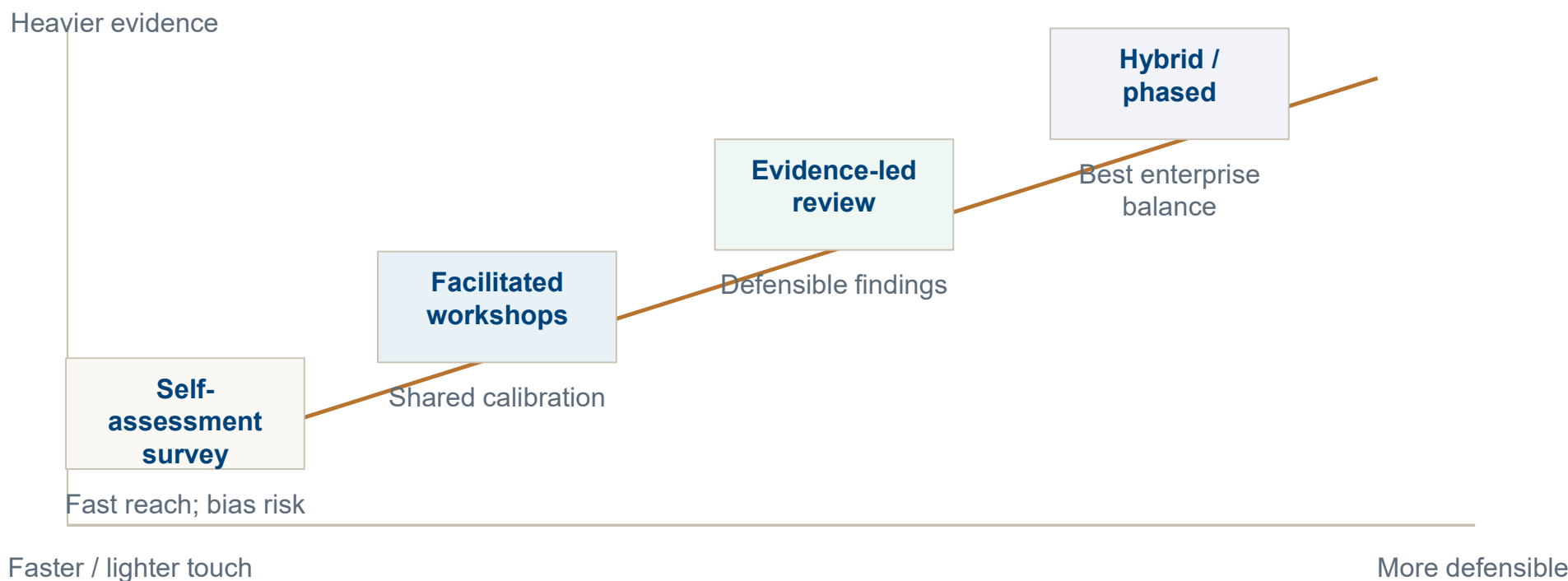
Rows name capabilities, not teams. Red means absent embedding, not failed delivery. Executives own the organisational gap.

Order matters

Present the enterprise readout first. Team-level detail comes only after the organisational framing has landed.

Four ways to run a maturity assessment

Pick the operating model for the decision the assessment must support.



The operating model should match how much confidence the roadmap will need.

The Challenge: why data maturity assessments under-deliver

Assessment results often describe current state, but leave leaders without a defensible route to action.

01	02	03	04
A score without a story	A heat map without priorities	Actions without dependencies	Ownership without enterprise view
Leaders see a level or colour, but not the capability gap, consequence or evidence behind it.	Everything red looks equally urgent, so debate moves to severity instead of value, risk and timing.	Recommendations become a flat list of initiatives, not a sequence of what must be built first.	Findings are handed to functions, while improvement requires cross-domain capability change.

Under-delivery starts when assessment stops at diagnosis; the work is translation into decisions.

Pitfalls before the scoring even starts

Bad assessment design produces a heat map that cannot be translated.

Unclear scope

No one knows whether the score describes an enterprise, a domain, or a team.

Survey-only evidence

Confidence looks broad, but findings are not defensible under challenge.

Wrong people in the room

The assessment reflects who was available, not where capability is embedded.

Framework shopping

The method is changed until it produces a comfortable answer.

Mixed altitude questions

Team delivery problems get confused with enterprise capability gaps.

No calibration session

The same level means different things in different knowledge areas.

If the assessment design is weak, the roadmap starts with false terrain.

Translation



Slide 21

SD1

PART 3 GAP — On first use, clarify that the translation layer means translation in the diplomat's sense, not ETL. The briefing budgets this section at nine minutes and three slides, so the remaining material needs consolidating around naming the layer, one compose-don't-carve example, and dependency sequencing.

Simon Downes, 2026-07-31T10:26:30.007

The translation layer turns diagnosis into a route

TRANSLATION IN THE DIPLOMAT'S SENSE

HEAT MAP

ROADMAP



The gap is not ETL. It is the leadership work of explaining what the findings mean, what must change, and what must happen first.

Public-webinar frame: three moves, one worked example, one dependency chain.

The claim

***The translation layer** between a maturity assessment and an enterprise roadmap is itself a strategic capability.*

*Under-developed in the profession. Non-delegable by the data leader. One of the **highest-value acts of the role**.*

Evidence to follow: three moves that build the route, and the instrument that keeps you on it.

Why translation is the work

Three properties that make this a strategic capability, not a tactical handover.

01

Diagnostics are not strategy

An assessment tells you where you stand. It does not tell you what to do, in what order, or why it will matter. Converting one to the other is craft, not procedure.

02

It cannot be delegated downward

Hand the output to a single function and you inherit that function's worldview as the roadmap. The translation has to be held at enterprise altitude, which means at the data leader's altitude.

03

It has identifiable components

Framing at enterprise altitude. Composing capabilities across knowledge areas. Sequencing by dependency. Three moves. Each teachable. Each defensible.

A maturity assessment surveys your altitude. The roadmap is the route up. This talk is about the climb.

Three moves

The components of translation, in the order I apply them. Together they produce a route.

I. Frame at enterprise altitude

Maturity is an organisational property, not a team property, and that distinction must be visible in the artefact.

II. Compose, don't carve

Strategic capabilities draw on multiple DMBOK knowledge areas. Composition dissolves boundary disputes structurally.

III. Sequence by dependency

Improvement order is determined by what depends on what, not by what scored worst.

*Each move rescues a stalled journey: a **dead end** stops the climb; a **detour** wastes it. Named as we go.*

I. Frame at enterprise altitude

Maturity is an organisational property, not a team property.

The work: scoring discipline that prevents gaming, framing that prevents defensive responses, and a heat map that an executive committee can act on without making team leads feel the camera is pointed at them.

DEAD END **The scorecard.** Red scores land as team performance; the leads get defensive; the meeting becomes about blame and the assessment dies in the room.

CORRECTION Label rows as enterprise capabilities, say “red means absent embedding” out loud before the slide, and present at executive altitude first.

The craft

What separates an enterprise-altitude readout from a team-level scorecard.

Scoring discipline

Practices that prevent the assessment being gamed or inflated.

No half marks. Scores land at a defined level or below it.

Default to the lower level under uncertainty. Aspirational scoring kills credibility.

Invisible roles do not constitute evidence. If the organisation can't see the role exists, the capability isn't embedded.

Framing & language

Specific choices that keep the heat map from reading as a team scorecard.

Label rows as enterprise capabilities, not team functions.
“Data governance”, not “the governance team.”

Red means absent embedding, not failed delivery. Say so out loud, in the room, before the discussion starts.

Present at the executive layer first. Team-level readouts come after the enterprise framing has landed; never before.

Worked artefact: enterprise capability heat map

Anonymised. The framing choices, not the scores, are the point.

Enterprise capability	Level	What the score reflects (organisational, not team)
Data Governance	1	No operating framework. Roles unpublished.
Data Architecture	2	Architecture function present; data-specific patterns absent.
Data Quality	1	Issue tracking exists in pockets. No enterprise method.
Metadata Management	1	Tooling present; standards not adopted enterprise-wide.
Master & Reference Data	2	Domain stewards informally identified. No authority model.
Data Security	3	Embedded via information security. Defined and used.
Storage & Operations	3	Mature platform operations. Standards documented.
Business Intelligence	2	Capability exists; trust in outputs uneven.

Levels per DMBOK2 Ch. 15: 0 No capability · 1 Initial · 2 Repeatable · 3 Defined · 4 Managed · 5 Optimized

II. Compose, don't carve

*Strategic capabilities draw on multiple knowledge areas at once.
Composition dissolves boundary disputes structurally.*

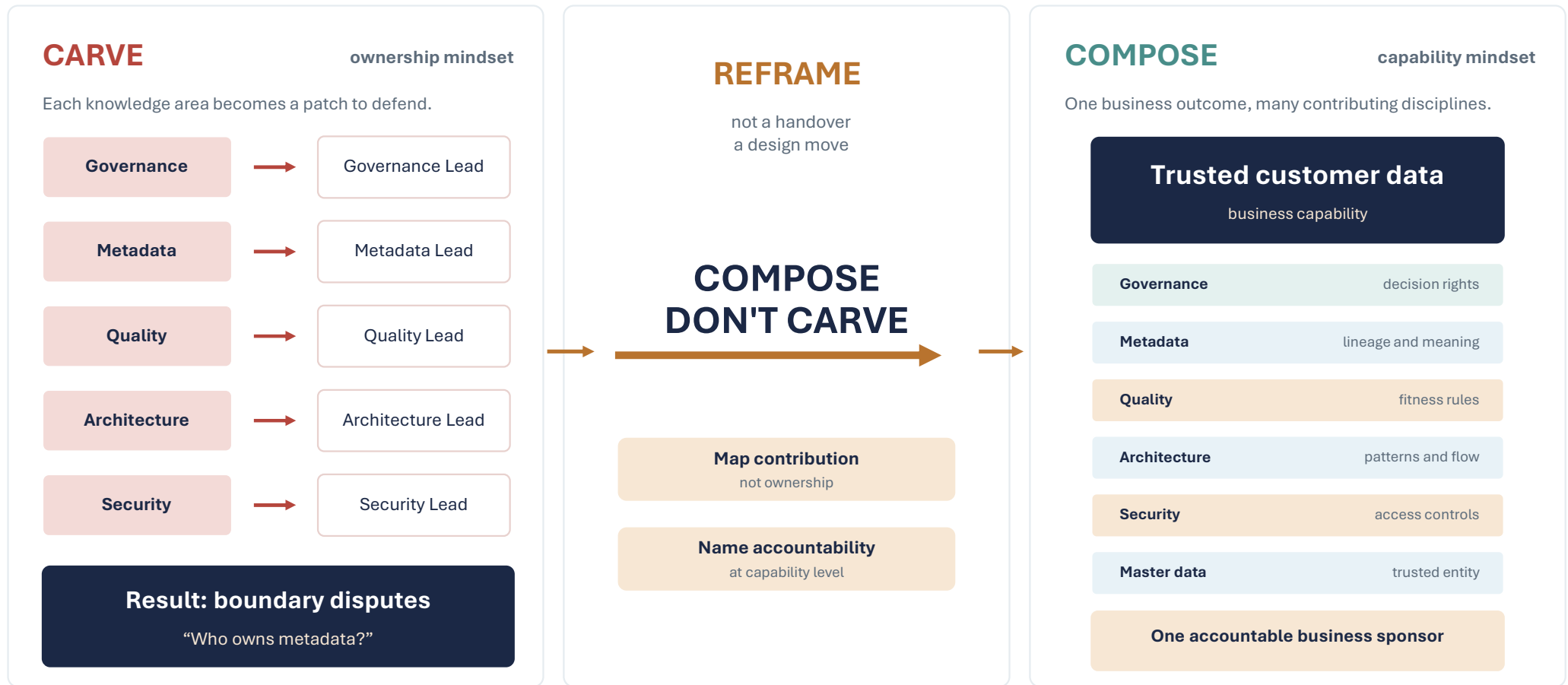
Carving DMBOK knowledge areas into ownership produces territorial disputes. Composing capabilities across them reframes the dispute as a structural question, making it easier to resolve than a political one.

DEAD END **The ownership carve-up.** Assign each knowledge area an owner and everyone defends their patch; the boundary fight burns the capital you needed for the actual work.

CORRECTION Map contribution, not ownership. Build the composition matrix with your counterpart; resolve accountability by naming a business sponsor per capability.

Compose, don't carve

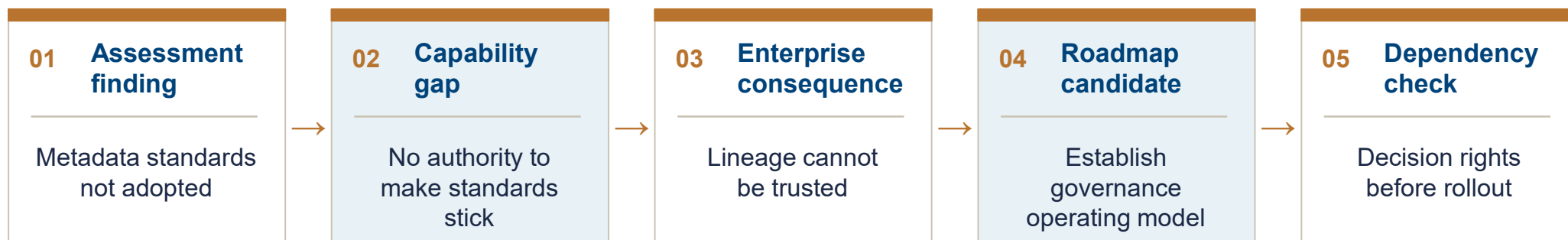
Move from knowledge-area ownership to business-capability contribution



Takeaway: change the question from "who owns it?" to "what must each discipline contribute?"

From finding to roadmap candidate

A red cell only becomes useful after it is translated into consequence, intervention, and dependency.



The translation layer is the work between the heat map and the first credible roadmap item.

A red cell is evidence; it is not yet an action.

Building the roadmap



III. Sequence by dependency

Improvement order is determined by what depends on what, not by what scored worst.

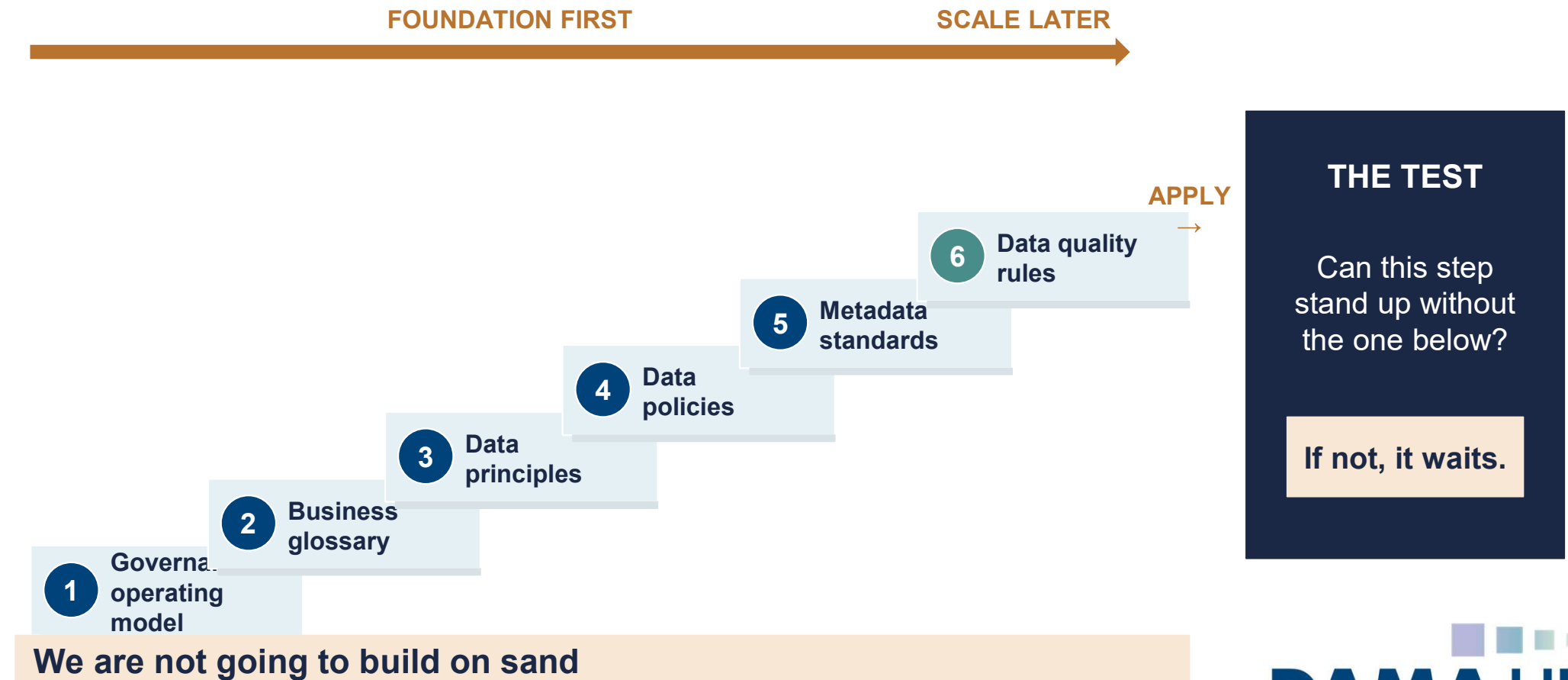
Two references do the work: Aiken's Pyramid (DMBOK2 §3.4) for the order of strata, and the Geuens framework (DMBOK2 §3.5, Figure 9) for within-stratum dependencies. The pair gives you a defensible “not building on sand” argument an executive committee can follow.

DETOUR **Fix the reddest thing first.** You build metadata standards before the governance to authorise them; they don't stick; you loop back to lay the foundation you skipped. Wasted altitude.

CORRECTION Sequence by dependency, not severity. Lay the foundations the reddest capability rests on first. “We are not going to build on sand.”

Dependency staircase

Build the foundations before scaling the visible work



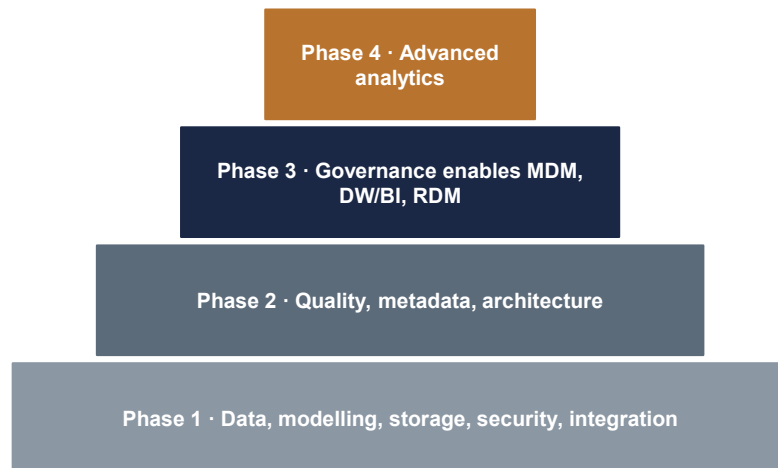
Author synthesis; informed by DMBOK2 §3.4 Figure 8 and §3.5 Figure 9.

Two references, one argument

Aiken gives you the strata. Geuens gives you the dependencies within them.

Aiken's Pyramid

DMBOK2 §3.4, Figure 8: Purchased or Built Database Capability



“Don't skip strata. Each rests on the one below.”

Geuens framework

DMBOK2 §3.5, Figure 9: dependencies between knowledge areas

BI & Analytics

depend on Master Data and Warehouse solutions

Master Data & Warehouses

depend on Feeding systems and applications

Systems & Applications

depend on Data Quality, Modelling, Integration

All of the above

require Data Governance & Metadata across

Pair Figure 8 with Figure 9 to move from strata to a defensible dependency order.

Worked artefact: governance artefact dependency chain

Why the order is structurally required, not preferred.



Without Operating model,

the next step establishes who can decide and on what basis.

Without Glossary,

the next step fixes shared meaning before principles can be expressed.

Without Principles,

the next step frames the why before policies set the must.

Without Policies,

the next step sets obligations that standards must be drafted to meet.

Without Metadata standards,

the next step gives DQ rules something to attach to and reference.

“We are not going to build on sand.”

Dependency-driven roadmap

Build the route by funding foundations before scale.



Illustrative horizons. If B relies on A, A must be funded, governed, or accepted before B scales.

One diagnostic to take away

After your next assessment, does the conversation move to “what do we do about this?” or to “whose fault is this?”

Watch the gradient, and the answer stays the first one.

Questions, challenges, disagreements

Q&A

Where would you like to start?

What would make the translation layer hardest to operate in your organisation?

Simon Downes · DAMA UK Committee · CDMP

Follow-up resources will be signposted through DAMA UK webinar communications.