

Academic excellence for
business and the professions



Enhancing Consulting Outcomes: Business Sparks' AI- Powered Approach to Generating Innovative SME Strategies

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A dynamic, high-contrast image of an explosion or fire. The center is a bright, glowing yellow and orange core, surrounded by a thick, billowing cloud of white and grey smoke. Numerous small, dark particles and larger, golden-yellow sparks are scattered throughout the scene, creating a sense of intense energy and movement. The overall effect is one of a powerful, transformative event.










Generative AI

More nuanced hybrid business solutions

Businesses now seeking **more** creative thinking



Top 10 skills on the rise

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1.  Creative thinking | 6.  Systems thinking |
| 2.  Analytical thinking | 7.  AI and big data |
| 3.  Technological literacy | 8.  Motivation and self-awareness |
| 4.  Curiosity and lifelong learning | 9.  Talent management |
| 5.  Resilience, flexibility and agility | 10.  Service orientation and customer service |

Type of skill

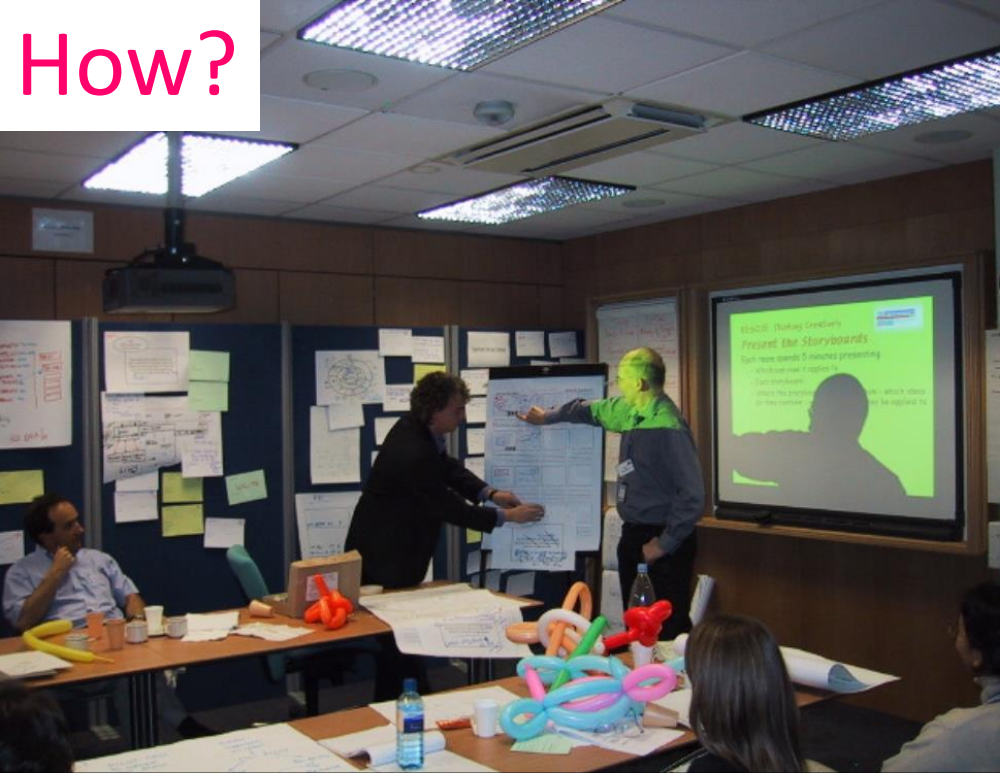
 Cognitive skills  Self-efficacy  Management skills  Technology skills  Working with others  Engagement skills

Source
World Economic Forum, Future of Jobs Report 2023.

Note
The skills judged to be increasing in importance most rapidly
between 2023 and 2027

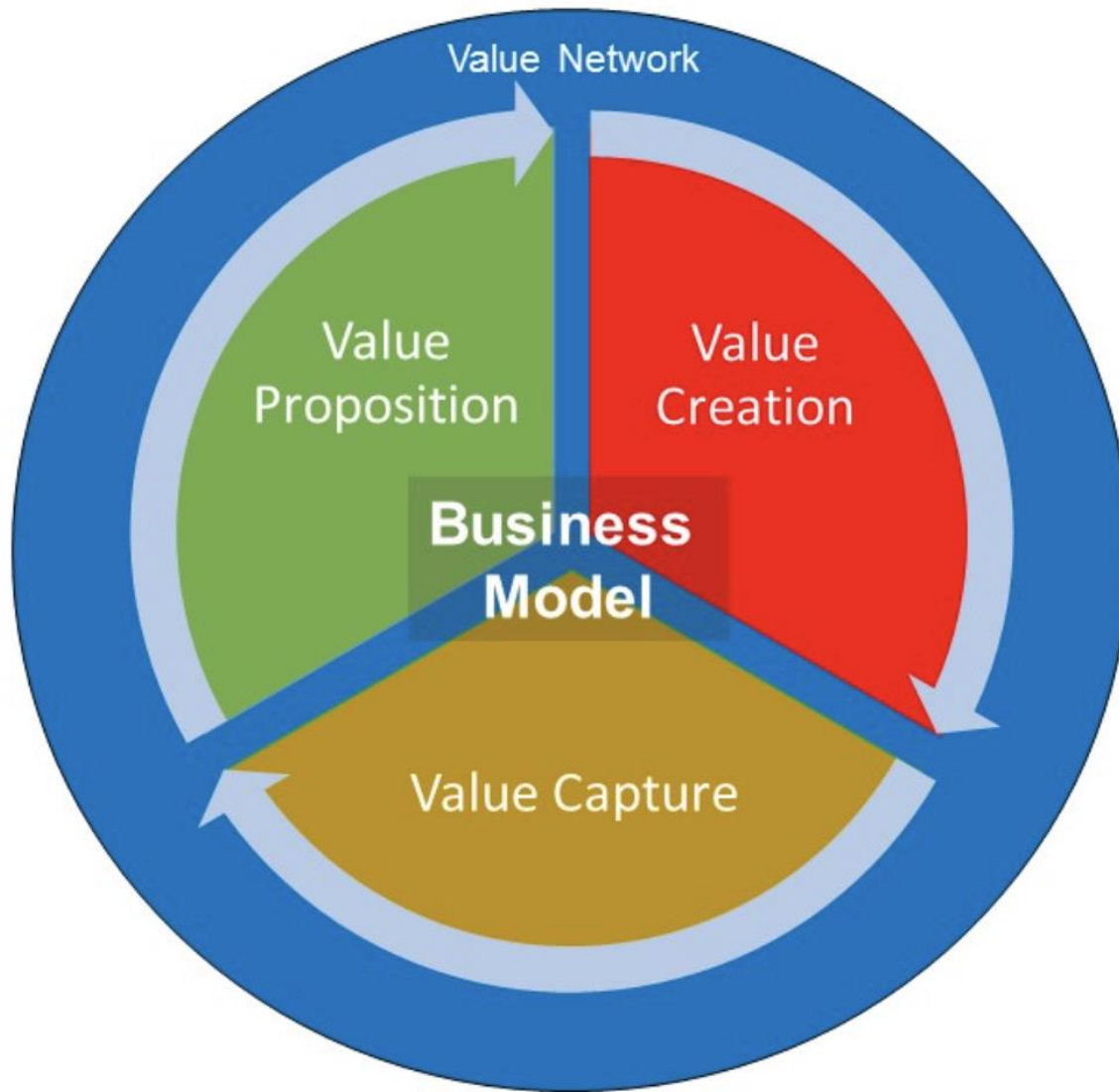
A 73% increase in demand over analytic thinking
- Fed by generative AI technologies?

How?



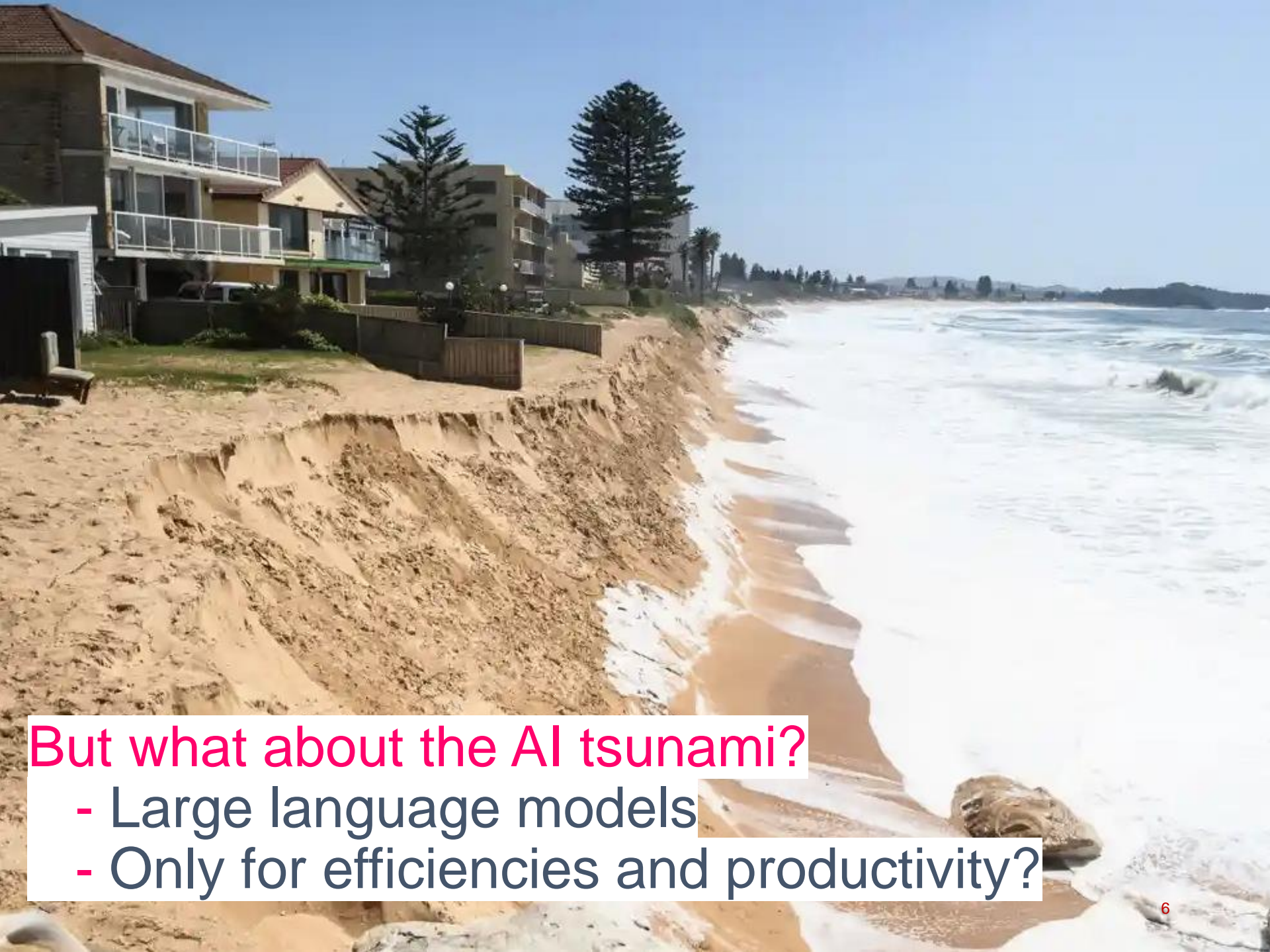
But about what?

Business models and strategies



But many businesses, encounter barriers thinking creatively their business model(s)

And challenge growing with more regular digital revolution rethinks



But what about the AI tsunami?

- Large language models
- Only for efficiencies and productivity?

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Bestseller

BLUE OCEAN STRATEGY

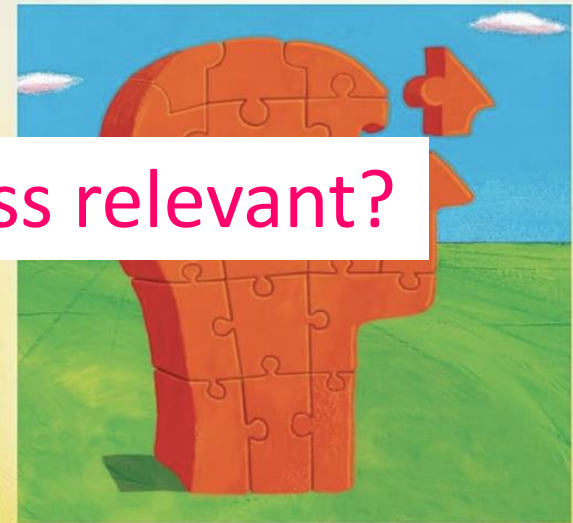
How to Create
Uncontested Market Space
and Make the Competition Irrelevant

W. Chan Kim • Renée Mauborgne

HARVARD BUSINESS SCHOOL PRESS

CREATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING

An Introduction
4th Edition



Documented knowledge less relevant?

Donald J. Treffinger, Ph.D., Scott G. Isaksen, Ph.D., & K. Brian Stead-Dorval,

A Prufrock Pre

If you ask GPT ...

- ⊗ No explicit representation of knowledge
- ⊗ Black-box LLMs limit transparency
- ⊗ Quality control of public models is difficult
- ⊗ Environmental impact



Three things needed to create

[Amabile & Pratt 2016]

- ✓ Intrinsic task motivation
- ✓ Domain expertise
- ✗ Creative thinking skills

Solutions need to support creative thinking, not automate it

A UK Centre

Research England

- Total value £7.6m
- To Feb 2025
- Impact focus

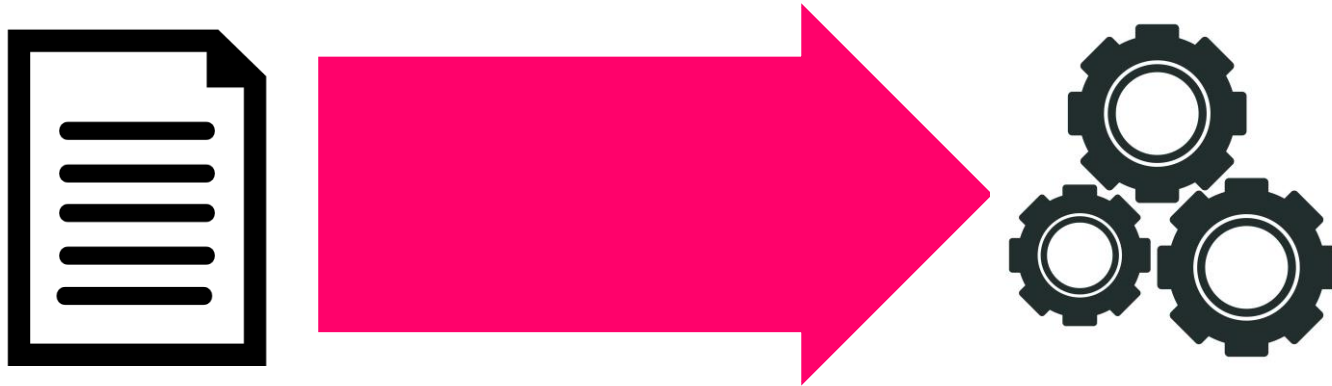
New products

- Journalism
- Sports coaching
- Service design
- Manufacturing
- Social care

Our team



Business Sparks



 **BUSINESS SPARKS**

business-sparks.io





BUSINESS SPARKS

For SME leaders, and consultants working for SMEs

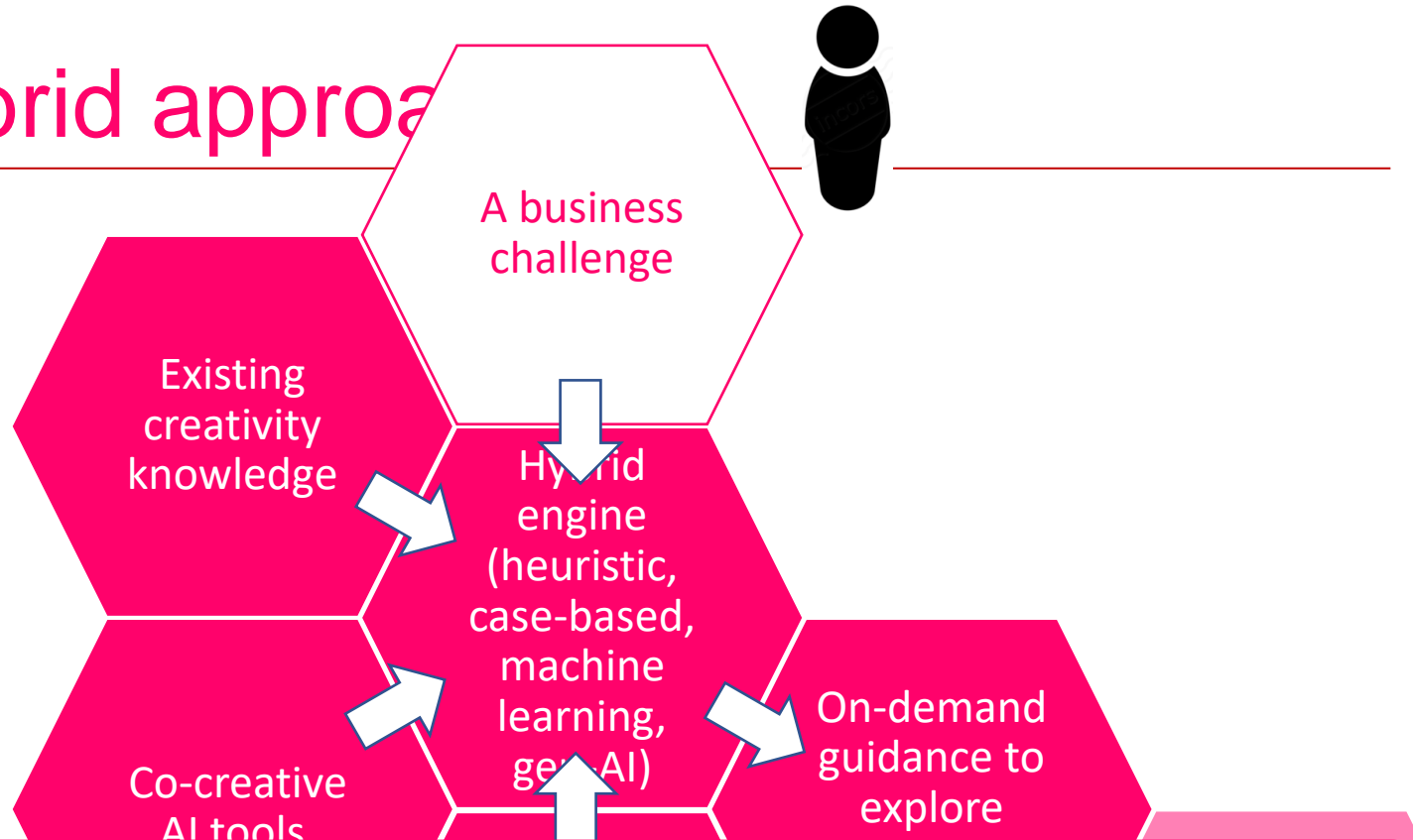
Machine reasoning
with codified
business and
creative thinking
knowledge

Creativity is intentional
Spaces of possibilities
Simpler to adopt

Machine
reasoning with
large language
models

Novelty is accidental
Concrete ideas
Harder to adopt

A hybrid approach



Delivering human-Centred AI

Seek to maximise automation, frictionless creative thinking and user control [Shneiderman 2020]

strategies and models to challenges





Codesigned with
SME managers and
consultants ...

... codesign that is
still ongoing

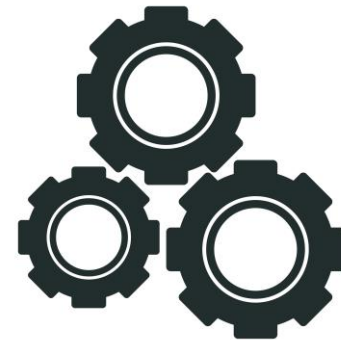
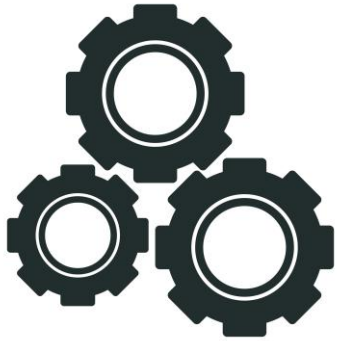
Coming soon

- Uploading diagrams
- Download capabilities to Google Docs
- Scenario planning techniques
- Integration with local LLMs

Photo: IMAGO , Steinach

Two business-facing products

 **INSIGHTS**

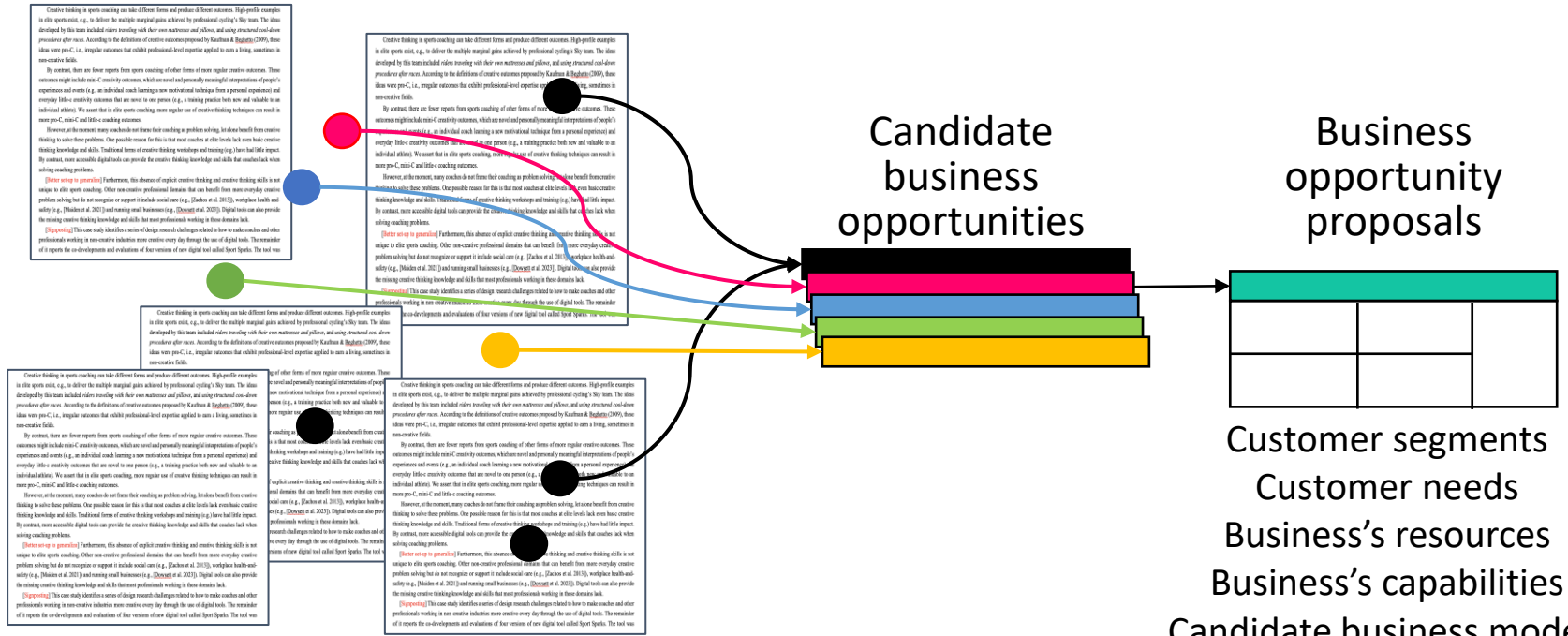


BUSINESS SPARKS



Exploring Business Insights

From collections of information assets



Current use cases

- Supporting consulting business Oxentia
- Discovering new consumer product innovations

Creative thinking for business

About business models and strategies

Codified creativity-business knowledge

Try it out, share with colleagues

Explore possible collaborations



BUSINESS SPARKS



INSIGHTS

Information assets



INSIGHTS

