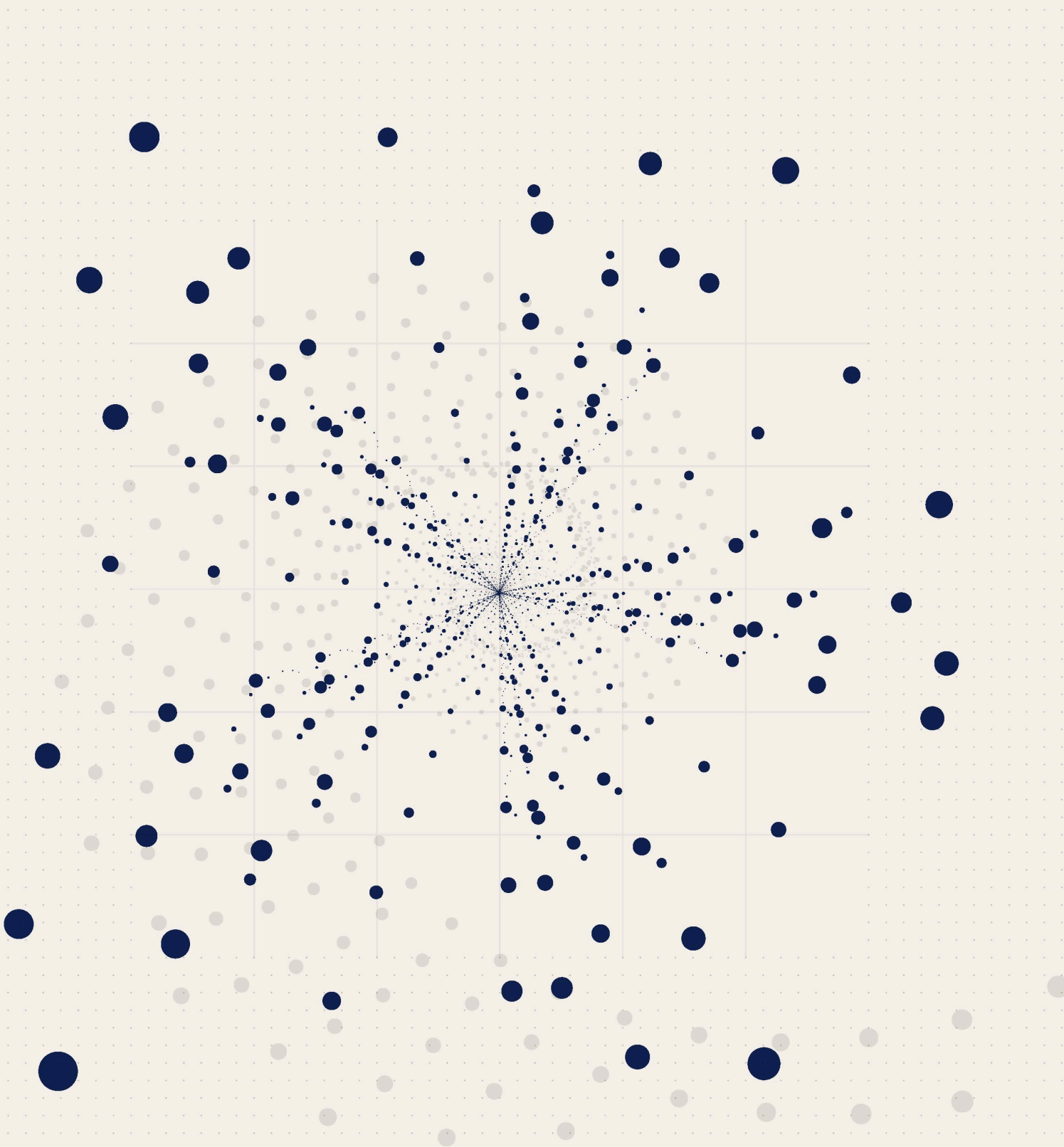


EXECPEEDIA

A Know-how Compendium of Experienced Executives on Managing the Next.





EXECPEdia

A Know-how Compendium of Experienced Executives on Managing the Next.

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This work was developed based on contributions from invited executives, who participated as co-authors in each chapter of the content presented herein.

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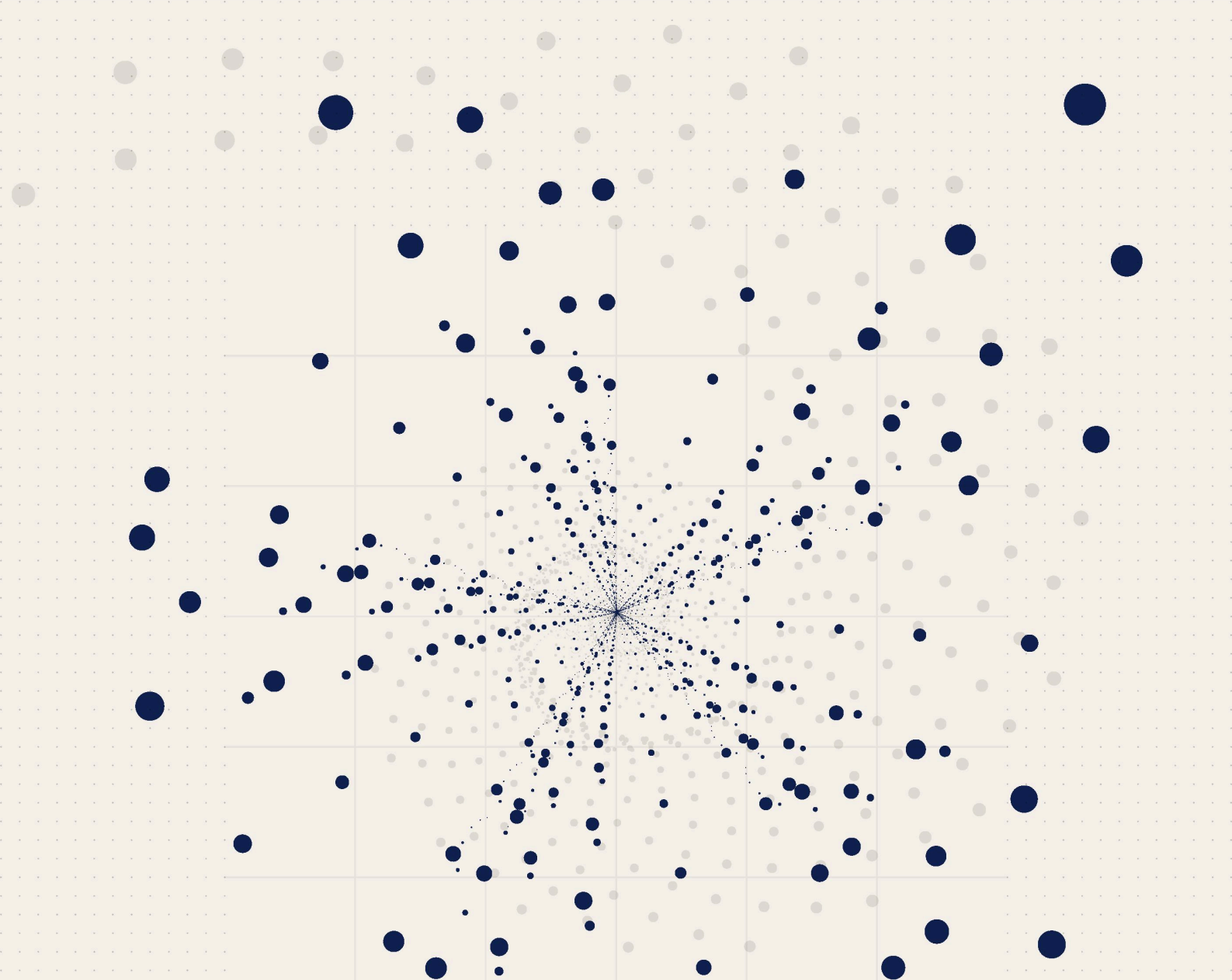


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Introduction

Execpedia is a project that brings together and structures the practical knowledge of Brazilian executives on management and innovation, based on experiences drawn from the real context of their organizations. Developed within A Diretoria, a podcast hosted by Techni Methods, a company based in Minas Gerais that integrates management, education, and consulting into a single ecosystem, the project aims to consolidate these experiences into an organized, accessible, and continuously updatable format.

The initiative is conducted in partnership with Prof. Martin J. Eppler, Full Professor of Communications Management at the University of St. Gallen in Switzerland, Director of the Institute for Media and Communications Management, and recognized among the top 2% of scientists worldwide according to Stanford University.

With research featured in publications such as Harvard Business Review, Inc. Magazine, MIT Technology Review, BusinessWeek, and TED.com, and as the author of 26 books, Martin J. Eppler contributes to Execpedia as the facilitator of the chapter discussions with Brazilian leaders - co-authors of this work - and as the person responsible for translating these discussions into visual representations, leveraging his expertise in knowledge visualization in a logic similar to his work Visipedia.

This book brings together real lessons from selected guests who have participated in the podcast and who experience innovation in practice within their organizations. It is periodically updated with new themes and chapters.

CHAPTER 1



CHAPTER 1.

INNOVATION BLINDSPOTS

Hidden areas with high returns?

Innovation is often associated with breakthrough products, new technologies, or disruptive business models. Yet in many organizations, **the most promising opportunities lie elsewhere.** They hide in everyday processes, overlooked functions, and routine decisions that rarely receive strategic attention. In times of accelerating technological change and increasing complexity, executives can no longer afford to ignore these areas.

The following blindspots emerged from executive discussions about where organizations systematically **underestimate innovation potential.** These domains are often considered operational, bureaucratic, or “non-strategic.” Yet precisely because they receive less attention, they can generate disproportionate returns when reconsidered thoughtfully.

In collaboration with the co-authors of this chapter, we identified nine innovation blindspots based on their lived experiences. **Any examples provided are purely illustrative, intended to demonstrate how these patterns may manifest in practice.**

1. Thinking through First Principles: Question inherited assumptions and rebuild solutions from fundamental truths rather than improving existing practices incrementally.

- *At a manufacturing company, portfolio complexity was eroding margins and slowing innovation despite efficiency efforts. The board commissioned a review of customization logic, separating true customer value from legacy constraints. Many product rules reflected historical decisions, not market needs. Rebuilding the offer architecture reduced structural complexity and accelerated testing of new value propositions. Innovation improved once core assumptions were reset.*

- 2. Training through AI Tutoring:** Reimagine learning by using AI tutors that personalize training, accelerate skill acquisition, and reduce the cost of knowledge transfer.
- 3. Manual Labor through Robotics or Eliminated Steps:** Improve operational productivity by automating repetitive work or redesigning processes to remove unnecessary steps entirely.
- 4. People Engagement through Meaningful Transitions:** Strengthen motivation and commitment by redesigning key moments in the employee journey -onboarding, role changes, and career transitions.
- 5. Management by Relocating Time Spent:** Transform management effectiveness by reallocating time away from administrative routines toward coaching, problem solving, and strategic dialogue.
- 6. Legal through Partnering:** Treat legal structures and contracts as innovation tools by developing partnerships that unlock new collaboration and value creation models.

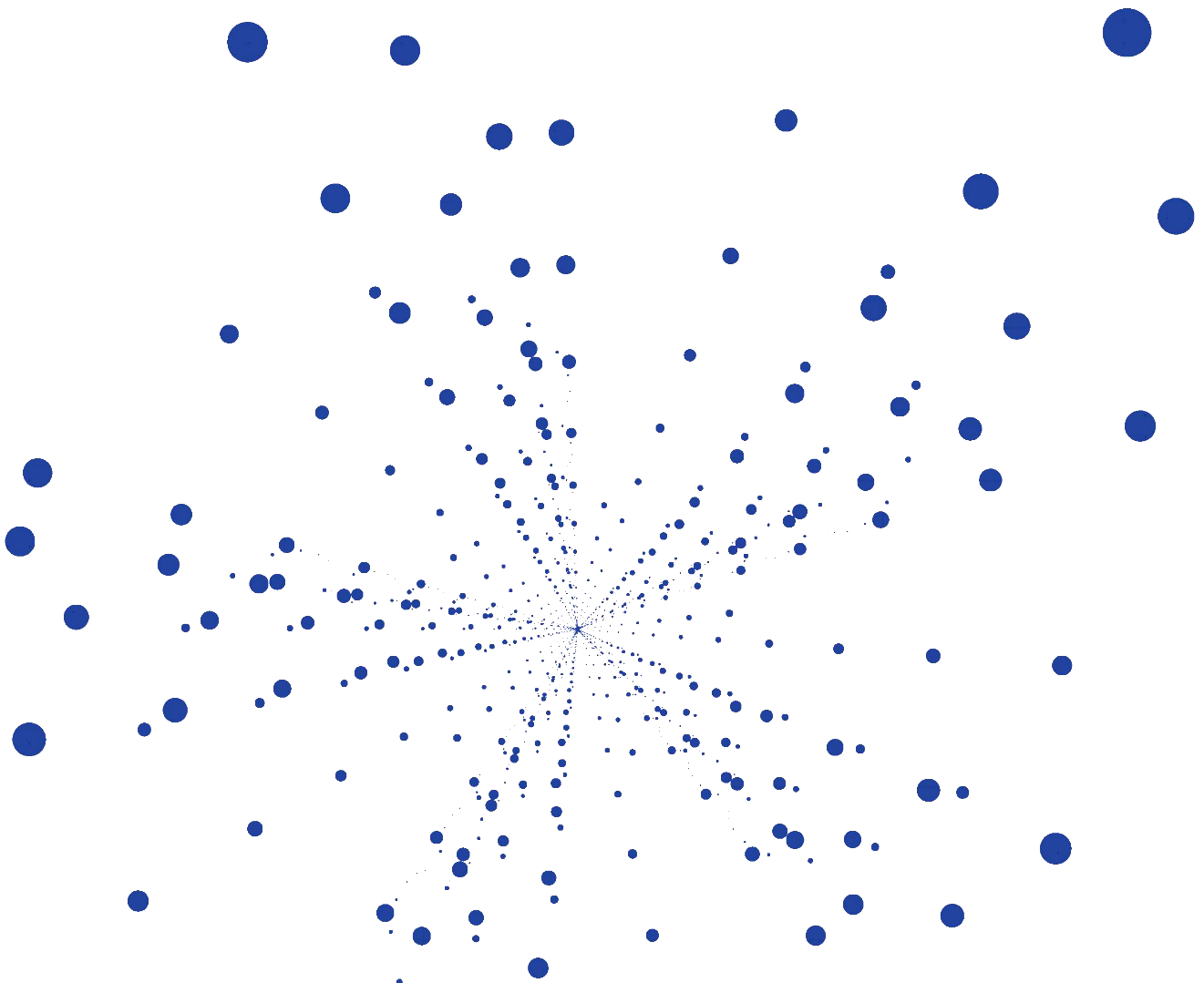
- At a services company, partnerships stalled late in the legal process. Legal was involved upfront to define standard collaboration and risk boundaries. Deal cycles shortened and pilots increased. Innovation moved faster without increasing exposure.*

- 7. Facility Management through Automation:** Increase efficiency and reliability by integrating automation and smart systems into infrastructure and operational environments.

- At a digital services firm, infrastructure instability limited experimentation. Automated monitoring and predictive maintenance improved reliability. Teams gained confidence to run continuous tests. Innovation followed operational stability.*

- 8. Collaboration through Visualization:** Make complex work visible through visual tools that help teams align faster, understand problems collectively, and make better decisions.
- 9. Planning through Benchlearning:** Improve strategic planning by learning systematically from comparable organizations and adapting their successful practices

Taken together, these blindspots offer a diagnostic lens for leaders. Rather than asking where innovation should happen next, **managers can use the model to identify neglected areas** where small conceptual shifts may unlock significant impact.



Which of these blindspots might hide the next breakthrough in your organization?

Innovation Blindspots Hidden Areas with High Returns



Innovate Thinking through First Principles



Innovate Training through AI Tutoring



Innovate Manual Labor through Robotics or Eliminated Steps



Innovate People Engagement through Meaningful Transitions



Innovate Management by relocating Time Spent



Innovate Legal through Partnering



Innovate Facility Management through Automation



Innovate Collaboration through Visualization



Innovate Planning through Benchlearning

CHAPTER 2



CHAPTER 2.

HOW DO MANAGERS KILL INNOVATION (ACCORDING TO THEMSELVES)?

Innovation rarely dies because of market forces alone. More often, it is quietly suffocated inside the organization. In times of technological acceleration, AI-driven disruption, and strategic uncertainty, leaders are expected to transform experience into structured, repeatable innovation capability. Yet many well-intentioned managerial behaviors systematically undermine exactly that goal. This model captures the self-inflicted patterns executives themselves identified — turning daily decisions into innovation blockers.

The following patterns illustrate how innovation is unintentionally constrained within organizations. Any examples provided are purely illustrative.

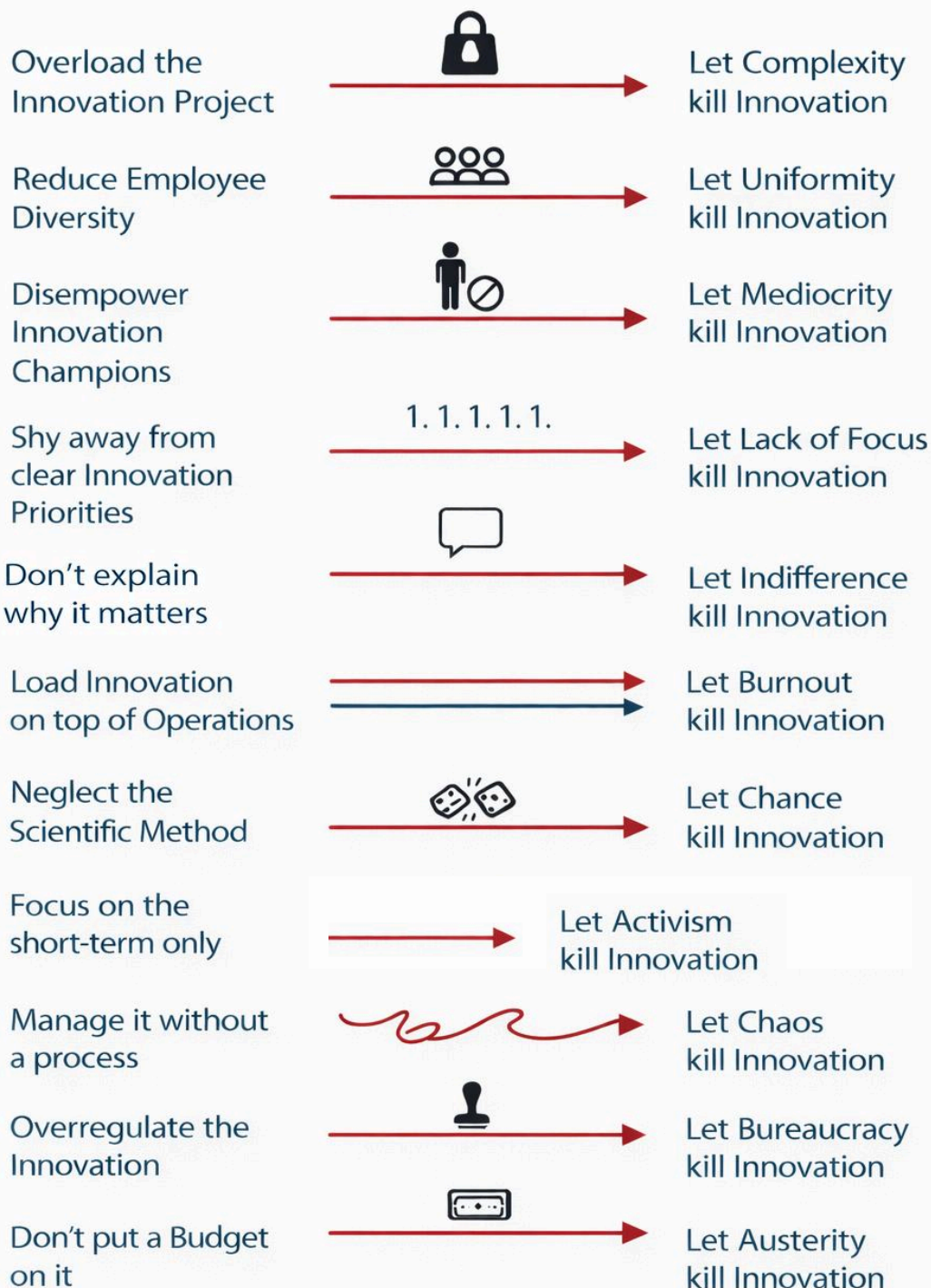
- 1. Overload the Innovation Project:** When initiatives become too large or complex, complexity replaces clarity and momentum stalls.
- 2. Reduce Employee Diversity:** Homogeneous teams produce predictable thinking; uniformity eliminates creative friction.
 - *At a technology firm, innovation teams were composed mainly of engineers with similar backgrounds. Ideas became technically sound but commercially limited. By introducing professionals from operations, marketing, and customer-facing roles, discussions became more diverse and solutions more applicable. Innovation improved as different perspectives reintroduced productive tension.*
- 3. Disempower Innovation Champions:** Without authority and protection, internal change agents lose energy and credibility.
 - *At a healthcare organization, a manager was assigned to lead innovation but had no formal authority or dedicated resources. Initiatives depended on informal support and quickly lost traction. Once the role was formalized with decision rights and executive backing, projects gained momentum. Innovation progressed when internal champions were empowered, not symbolic.*

- 4. Shy Away from Clear Innovation Priorities:** If everything is important, nothing is; lack of focus fragments effort.
- 5. Don't Explain Why It Matters:** When purpose is unclear, indifference quietly replaces engagement.
- 6. Load Innovation on Top of Operations:** Adding innovation to already full agendas leads to burnout instead of breakthroughs.
- 7. Neglect the Scientific Method:** Without hypotheses, experiments, and validation, innovation becomes guesswork.
- 8. Focus on the Short-Term Only:** Short-term activism crowds out long-term strategic innovation.
- 9. Manage It Without a Process:** Absence of structure turns experimentation into chaos rather than learning.
- 10. Overregulate the Innovation:** Excessive controls transform creativity into bureaucracy.
- 11. Don't Put a Budget on It:** Without dedicated resources, innovation remains symbolic rather than real.

Leaders can use this model as a diagnostic mirror. It surfaces hidden organizational behaviors that silently sabotage innovation. It also serves as a strategy conversation starter — helping executive teams distinguish between structural barriers and cultural habits that must be redesigned.

If we intentionally stopped killing innovation tomorrow, what structural change would we make first?

How Managers kill Innovation (according to themselves)



Co-authors

These two chapters bring together contributions from Brazilian executives who actively engage with innovation in practice. The individuals below participated as co-authors, sharing insights and learnings drawn from their professional experiences within their organizations. The chapter was developed in collaboration with Prof. Martin J. Eppler, who contributed as a co-author by facilitating and structuring the discussions, and as part of the Execpedia initiative led by Techni Methods.

- **Flávio Ribeiro** — NetLex
- **J.R. Ferraz** — Pátria, Elfa
- **Márcio Moura** — Invés | Fleury
- **Matheus Pedrosa** — Fralía Cacau Brasil
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Disclaimer

The views and perspectives presented in this chapter reflect the individual experiences of the co-authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the organizations with which they are affiliated.

Discover the co-authors of Chapters 1 and 2 through their episodes:

A DIRETORIA EP #25

ERROS que Você NÃO Pode Cometer em Rodadas de Investimento
with **Flávio Ribeiro — NetLex**

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with **J.R. Ferraz — Pátria, Elfa**

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