

The OTA Advantage



Turning Flexibility into a Competitive Edge

Community Guidance

Please remove potential distractions

(Close unnecessary browser windows, silence your phone, use headphones....)

Please type your questions into the Q&A box



Today's Panel



MODERATOR

Meg O'Hara | gov**mates**
Director of Engagement

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SPEAKER

Josh Marion | 
Program Manager,



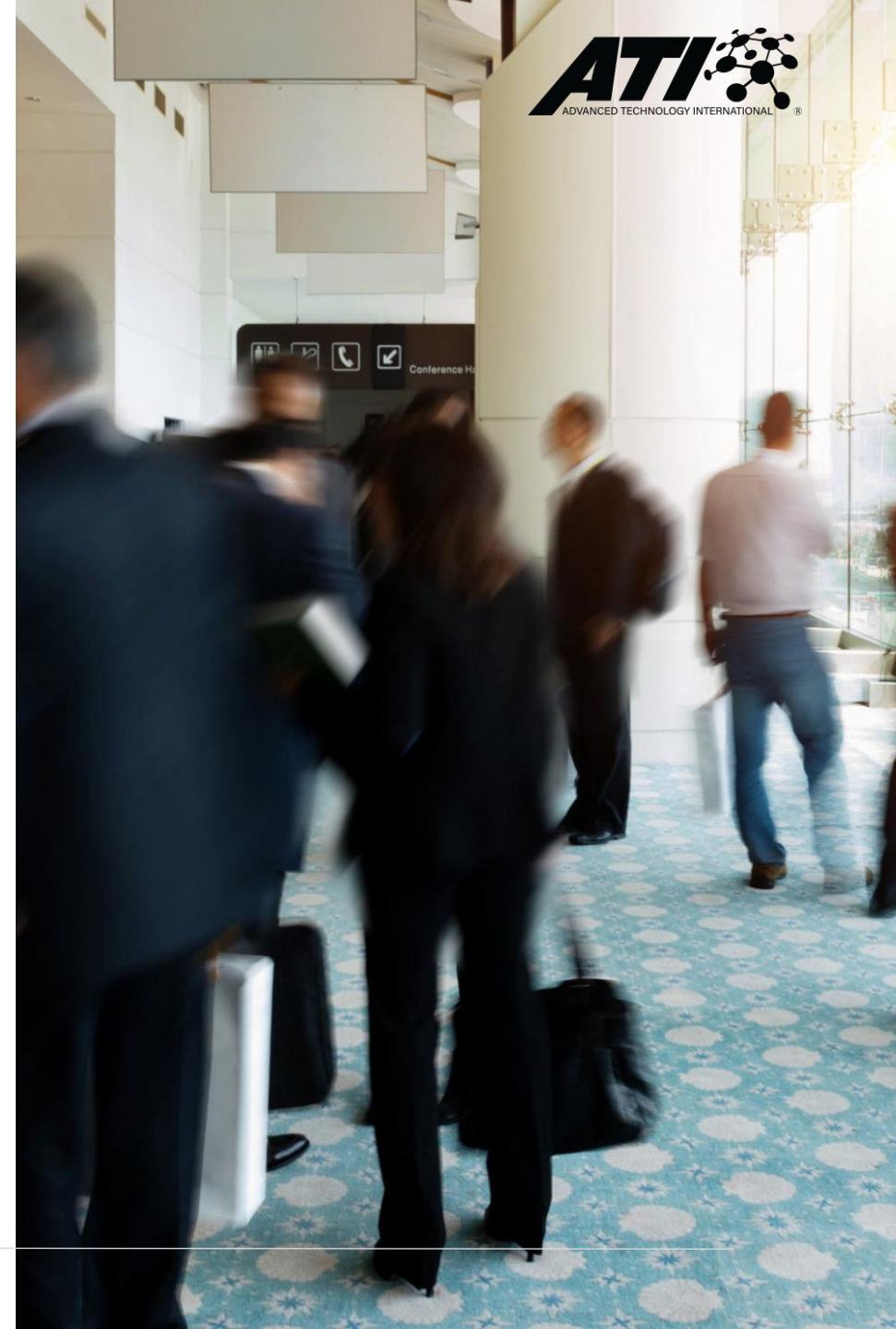
SPEAKER

Rebecca Harmon | 
Contracts,



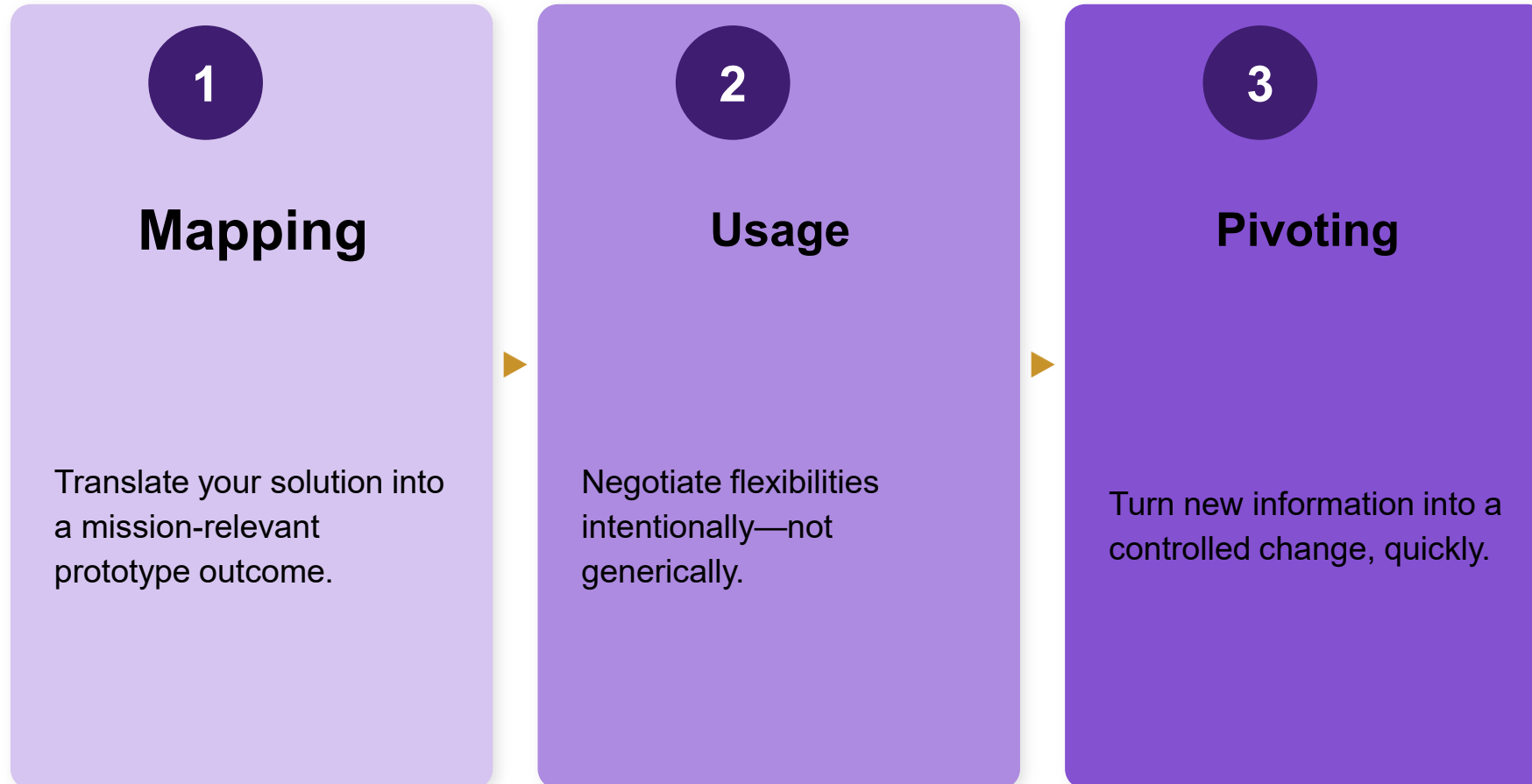
Agenda

- The OTA Competitive Advantage
- Mapping Solutions to Prototype Needs
- Using OTA Contracting Flexibilities
- Building OTA Readiness
- Q&A



The OTA Competitive Advantage

The OTA Advantage



Flexibility

Flexibility is a design space, not a waiver of discipline.

The Operating Model:

Prototype Ots are Non-FAR instruments used for qualifying prototype projects. Their terms can be tailored to the project, participants, risk, and desired outcomes.

The Tradeoff:

Fewer default rules means more choices must be made explicitly.



Flexible

- Terms & Conditions
- Payment Structure
- IP & Data Arrangements



Still Accountable:

- Statutory Conditions
- Competition to Maximum Extent Practicable
- Performance & Documentation

Fit

Start with the statutory fit before pursuing the opportunity.



MISSION RELEVANCE

Tie the project to mission effectiveness or improvement of a system, component, material, or process.



PROTOTYPE SCOPE

Think proof of concept, pilot, agile development, novel application, or demonstrated utility.



PARTICIPATION PATH

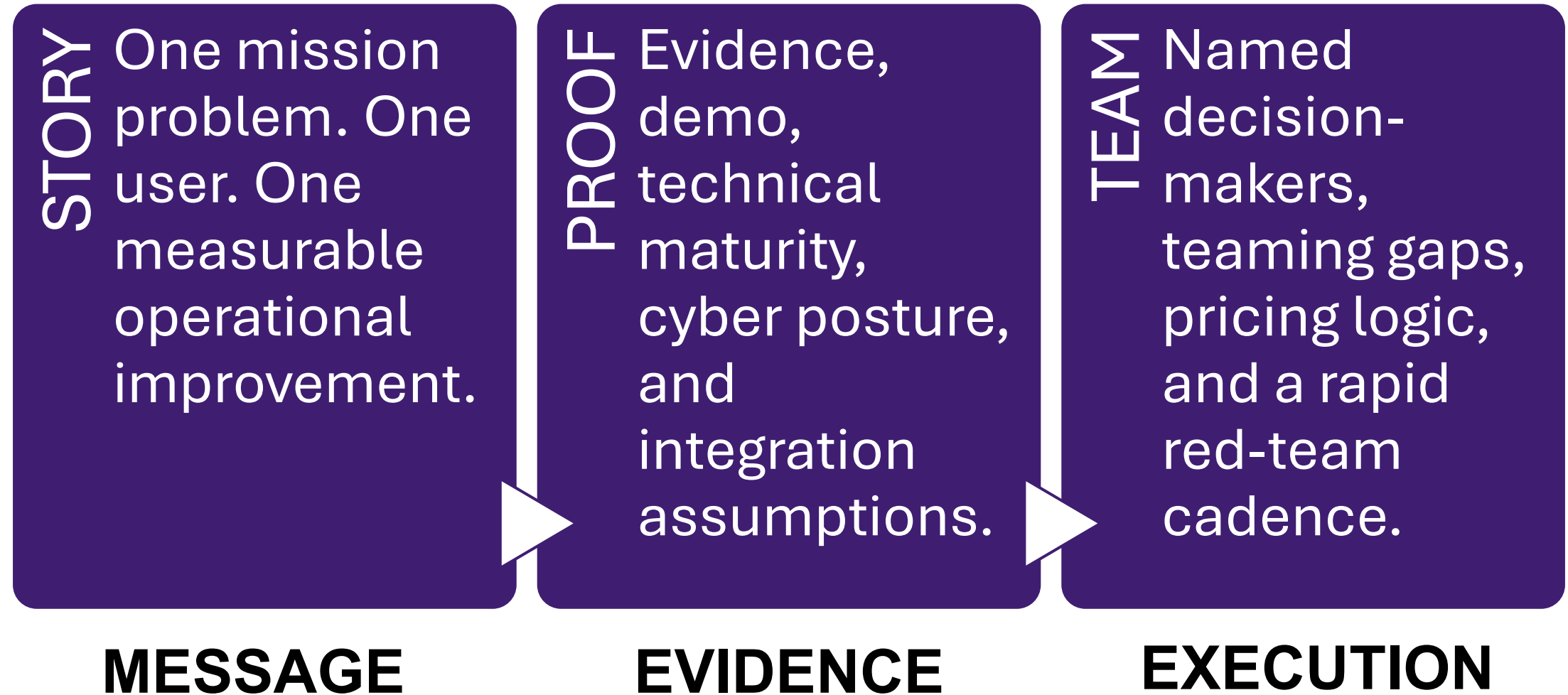
Know how nontraditional participation, small business, or cost share supports eligibility.



FOLLOW ON LOGIC

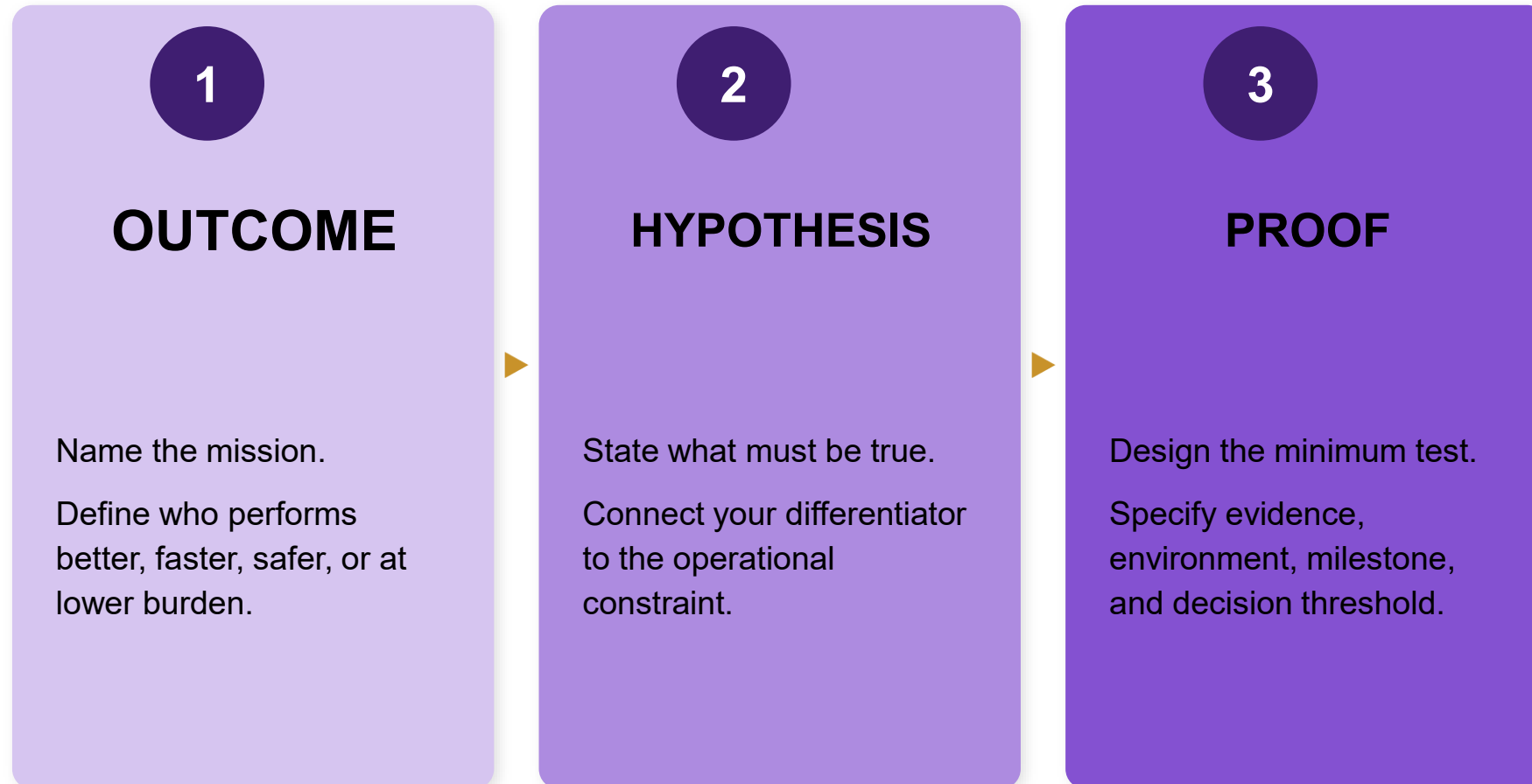
Trace competition and successful completion requirements from day one.

Speed is Won Before the Request is Released



Mapping Solutions to Prototype Needs

MAPPING



“For [customer], our [capability] improves [mission outcome] under [constraint].
We will prove it by [test] and measure [threshold].”

Strong Pitch: Convert Features to Decisions

A company offers edge analytics for contested environments.

The weak pitch describes the model, architecture, and dashboard.

The stronger pitch defines the field decision the prototype will improve, and the evidence needed to proceed.

WEAK PITCH: CAPABILITY-LED

- “AI-enabled edge platform”
- Lists technical features
- Leaves success undefined

STRONG PITCH: DECISION-LED

Reduces alert-to-action time
Tests on representative hardware
Sets latency + accuracy
thresholds

Using OTA Contracting Flexibilities

FLEXIBILITY

Start with the statutory fit before pursuing the opportunity.



SCOPE & MILESTONES

Organize work around learning events and demonstrations, with clear acceptance evidence.



PAYMENTS

Align payment events to cash needs, observable progress, and risk retirement.



IP & DATA

Protect commercial value while defining the government access needed for evaluation and transition.



TEAM & CHANGES

Create workable rules for adding expertise, revising tasks, and responding to new information.

PREPARE NEGOTIATIONS

MUST HAVE

Terms required to protect the business or make performance feasible.

TRADEABLE

Positions you can exchange for schedule, funding, scope, or access.

RED LINE

Conditions that create unacceptable legal, financial, or technical exposure.

To-Do: Create a one-page negotiation matrix owned jointly by the capture lead, technical lead, contracts, finance, and counsel.

Consortium Participation & The Path to Readiness

Your Next 30 Days

Build Your Advantage Before You Need It

Choose one mission problem, package the proof, and then practice the team's ability to respond quickly.

WEEK 1

Choose one mission problem

Write the outcome, user, constraint, and transition destination.

WEEK 2

Package the proof

Create a demo brief, evidence inventory, milestone plan, and risk list.

WEEKS 3-4

Practice readiness

Run a mock rapid response and resolve one teaming or terms gap.

Summary

Four habits turn flexibility into repeatable advantage

1. MISSION-FIRST

- Lead with the operational outcome and user—not the product category.

2. TERMS-AWARE

- Know your positions on IP, data, payments, cost share, and changes.

3. EVIDENCE-READY

- Maintain reusable proof, test plans, pricing logic, and transition assumptions.

4. DECISION-FAST

- Empower a small team to assess signals, approve pivots, and update the baseline.

Questions

Flexibility
becomes an
edge when
readiness turns
it into action.



