

FOR LARGER ORGANISATIONS

# The operating-model **step** **change**, in *six moves*.

Your hierarchy was built for a world in which intelligence was rare. It isn't any more. A practical method for setting the AI-native end-state and steering your organisation toward it — while it keeps trading.

#### A NOTE FROM A DIFFERENT VANTAGE

The disruption is not coming from your largest competitor.  
It is coming from an **AI-native team of three.**

The same pattern keeps surfacing across every sector it touches: a small, software-driven team picks off a high-margin slice of your business, stands up a rival version of it inside two or three months, and prices it for the customer instead of for the head-count that used to deliver it. By the time it lands on a strategy slide, the share has already started moving.

The room for a calm, deliberate transition is open now — measured in **one or two years**, not five or ten.

The encouraging part: this shift has a recognisable shape and a workable order. It has been mapped and refined across several hundred real engagements. The organisations that come through it tend to follow some version of the six moves in this flyer.

The order matters more than the moves. Most organisations attempt them in the wrong order and conclude the transition can't be done. It can. It just has to run in **this sequence.**

# 01 Reverse-Plan *from the AI-native end-state.*

Get your senior team around one table. Picture the business five years out, delivering on its defining purpose in a world where capable intelligence is cheap, plentiful, and able to act on its own. Sketch that business in plain terms: how it is shaped, how lean it runs, how decisions move, how customers reach it, where the margin sits.

Then trace the route from that picture back to today. **That route is your strategy.**

Conventional planning starts from the present and projects outward; flipping it — fixing the destination first and working back — is what turns the transition into something you can actually navigate. The further out and bolder the end-state, the more useful the path back becomes.

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Output: a concrete end-state picture, a spelled-out path back to today, and a short list of board-approvable next moves. The reverse-plan is the spine every later move refers back to.

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## 02 Diagnose the *friction*.

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A one-to-seven rating across the dimensions that predict where a transition snags: **how long approvals take, how far decisions travel, how rigidly work is proceduralised, how reachable the data is, how scattered the tooling is, how the talent is shaped.** Rated per function, per layer.

What comes out is a heat-map. You won't like all of it. Some of it will surprise you. Teams you assumed were modern often rate the heaviest; teams you'd quietly written off as legacy often rate the cleanest.

Both reactions are useful — together they tell you where to start, and where not to.

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The heat-map becomes the priority queue. It also becomes the baseline you measure progress against, quarter on quarter, as the transition lands.

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## 03 Capture the *working knowledge*.

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The single most important move, and the one most organisations skip. Every organisation runs on know-how that lives in people's heads — the "this is how it's done here" understanding that never reached a document. As work shifts to AI-native equivalents, that understanding becomes **the single most valuable asset in the building**.

The third move is to surface it, write it down, and shape it so software can act on it. Done properly, the same record serves twice: as the audit trail a regulator will eventually request, and as training material for the people whose roles shift from doing the work to overseeing the work being done.

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Skipping this move is the most common reason organisational AI transitions stall in year two. Done early, it is the asset everything else compounds on.

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## 04 Trim the *operational friction*.

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Most organisations collect sign-off layers the way old buildings collect wiring — added one at a time, never taken out. Pare them back. **Keep paring until something gives.** That is how you locate the floor.

This isn't minimalism for its own sake. It's that an AI-native workflow can't breathe in a place that needs five human approvals to send a customer a quote. The structure has to be lightened before the new system can carry the load.

Done section by section: take one workflow with a known approval stack, remove three layers, watch what happens, repeat. The trims compound.

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Side-effect: morale lifts. People discover they were carrying weight they didn't know was avoidable. Quick wins surface here that fund the longer build in move five.

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## 05 Stand up the *parallel model* — move workflows across one at a time.

A second, AI-native version of how the business runs, sitting beside the live organisation. You don't flip a switch. You move across one workflow at a time, watching each one run, watching what breaks, watching the cost per result fall.

The legal and data groundwork goes in before the first workflow moves: **a liability framework for what the software does on its own, data-classification labelling, audit logging, board oversight.** The least glamorous part of the whole programme. Non-skippable. The thing that decides whether you reach move six.

## 06 Reroute — the organisation's *operating core*, through the mirror.

The destination isn't the parallel model swallowing the organisation. It's the organisation's day-to-day increasingly flowing through that model by default, with people moving into the seats that carry the most leverage — **strategy, the customer relationship, taste, judgement.**

This is the point where the gains stop being incremental and turn structural: a mid-sized business carrying the cost base of a small one, the reach of a large one, and the reflexes of a start-up.



BEGIN WITH THE REVERSE-PLAN

Half a day. Your senior team.  
The first **deliberate move**.

[paige@hiddenhome.tech](mailto:paige@hiddenhome.tech)

[thinkquantum.io](https://thinkquantum.io)