



PMO Maturity vs. Impact

Rethinking What Really Matters

02.10.2025

Including Poll results

Dr. Robert Joslin



Dr. Robert Joslin

Researcher and designer of AIPMO's single and multi-PMO Maturity and Impact assessment model



*Founder and President
AIPMO*

Associate Professor, Alma Mater Europa

- 35 years of experience in designing, initiating, and program management delivery of large-scale business transformation, reengineering, infrastructure, and strategy development, including winning prizes for ideas and product innovation.
- Consultant in telecom, banking, insurance, manufacturing, construction, and direct marketing whilst working for McKinsey & Co, Logica and own consulting company.
- Author of books, chapters, and research papers in the field of project, program, and portfolio management.
- Architect of PMO BOK, which comprises seven books.
- Peer reviewer for four academic project management journals.
- Part of the core portfolio team that produced the Project Portfolio Standard V4 and was a key reviewer of the pre-exposure draft of the Program Management Standard V4.
- AIPMO's PMO lifecycle framework and Body of Knowledge.
- AIPMO's Maturity Model Co-Designer.

AIPMO – A Swiss International Organization

Vision

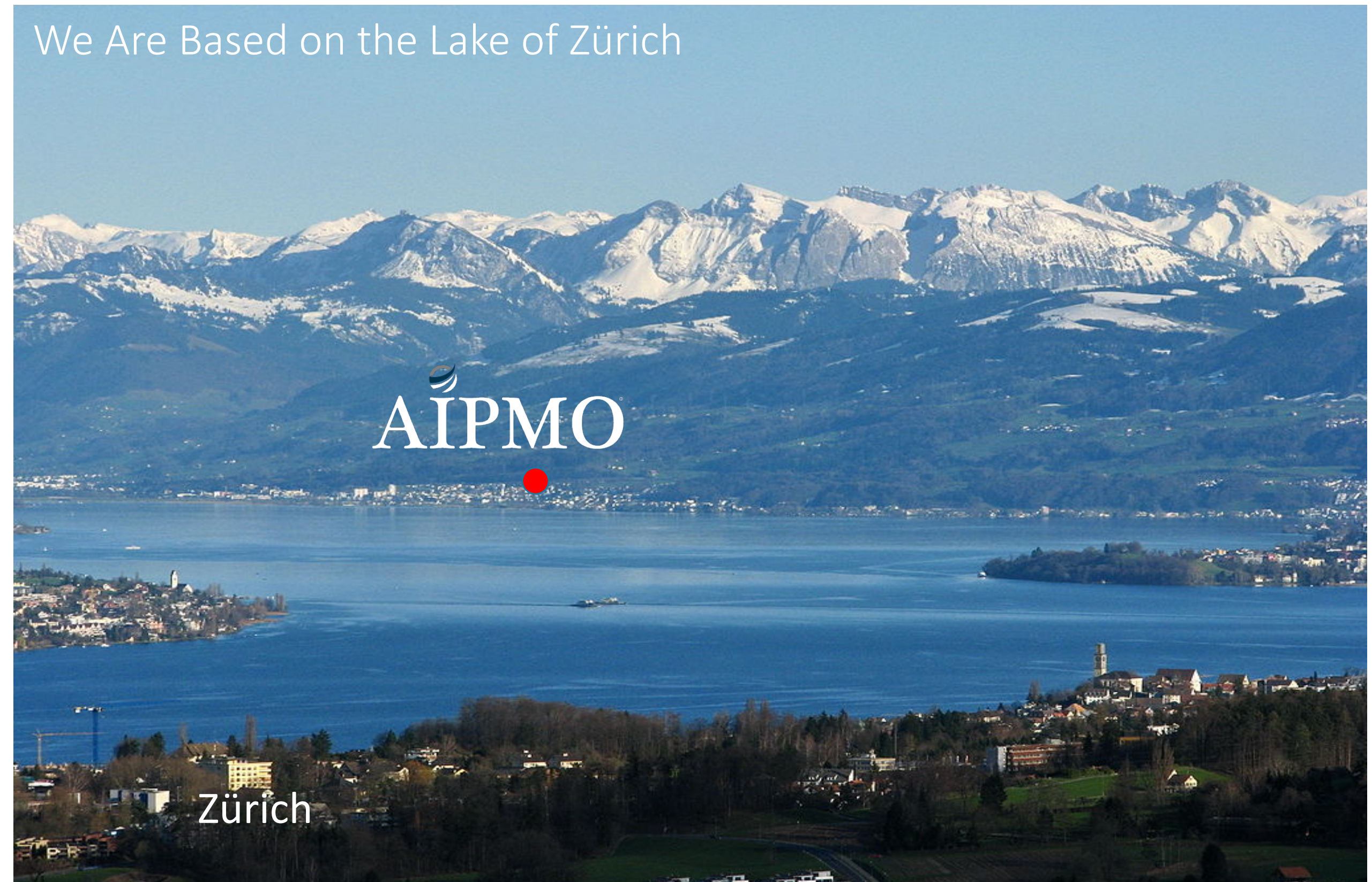
To identify and put into place the building blocks for PMO management to become a recognized international profession.

Mission

To advance the theory, design, and implementation of high-performing collaborative PMOs to empower PMO professionals to create sustainable measurable organizational impact.

Strategy

To build and evolve AIPMO's PMO set of integrated frameworks and models through research, development, and partnering in parallel to determining and establishing the building blocks in creating PMO management as a profession.



We Are Based on the Lake of Zürich

Zürich

View of the Swiss mountains

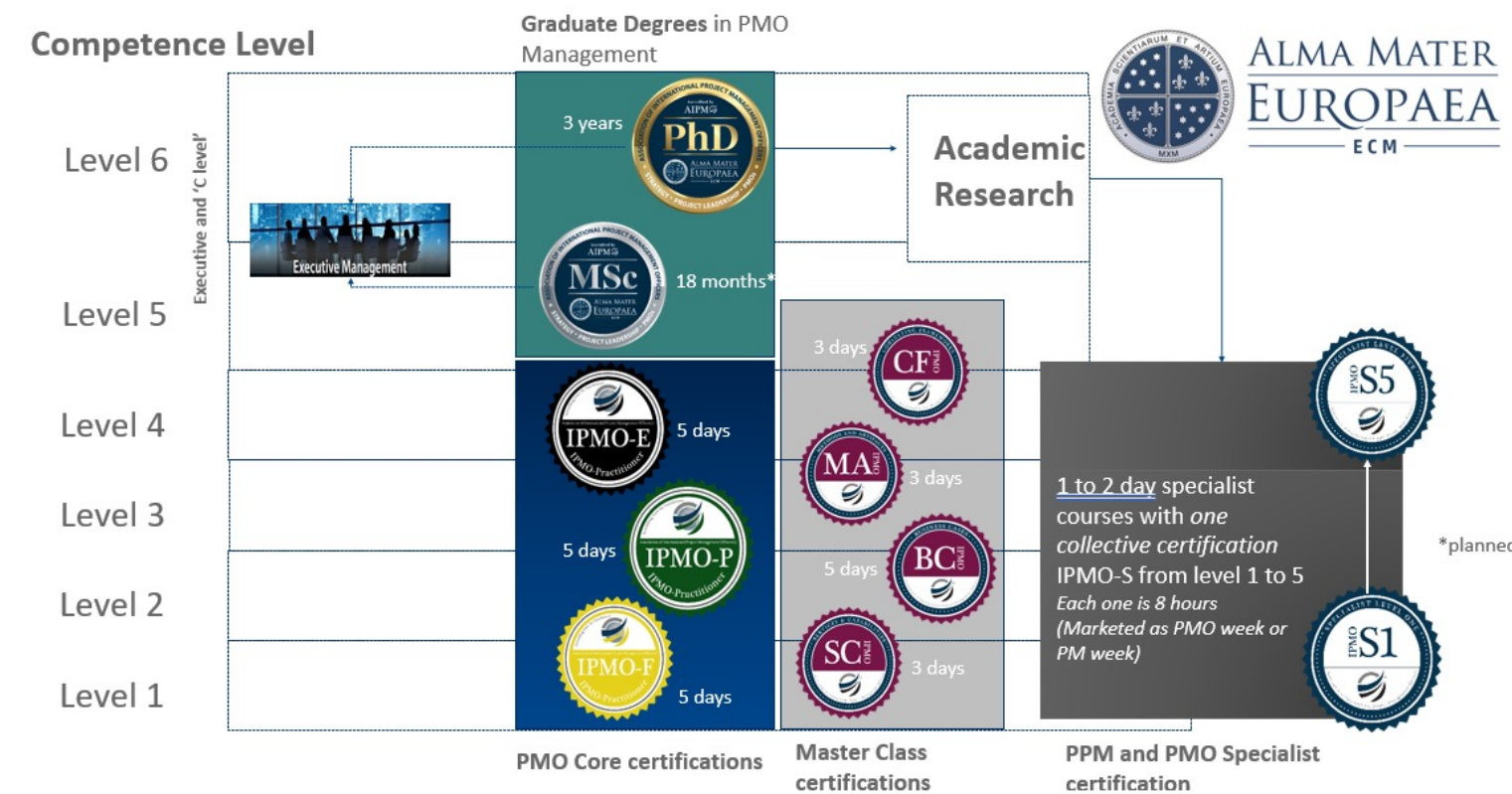
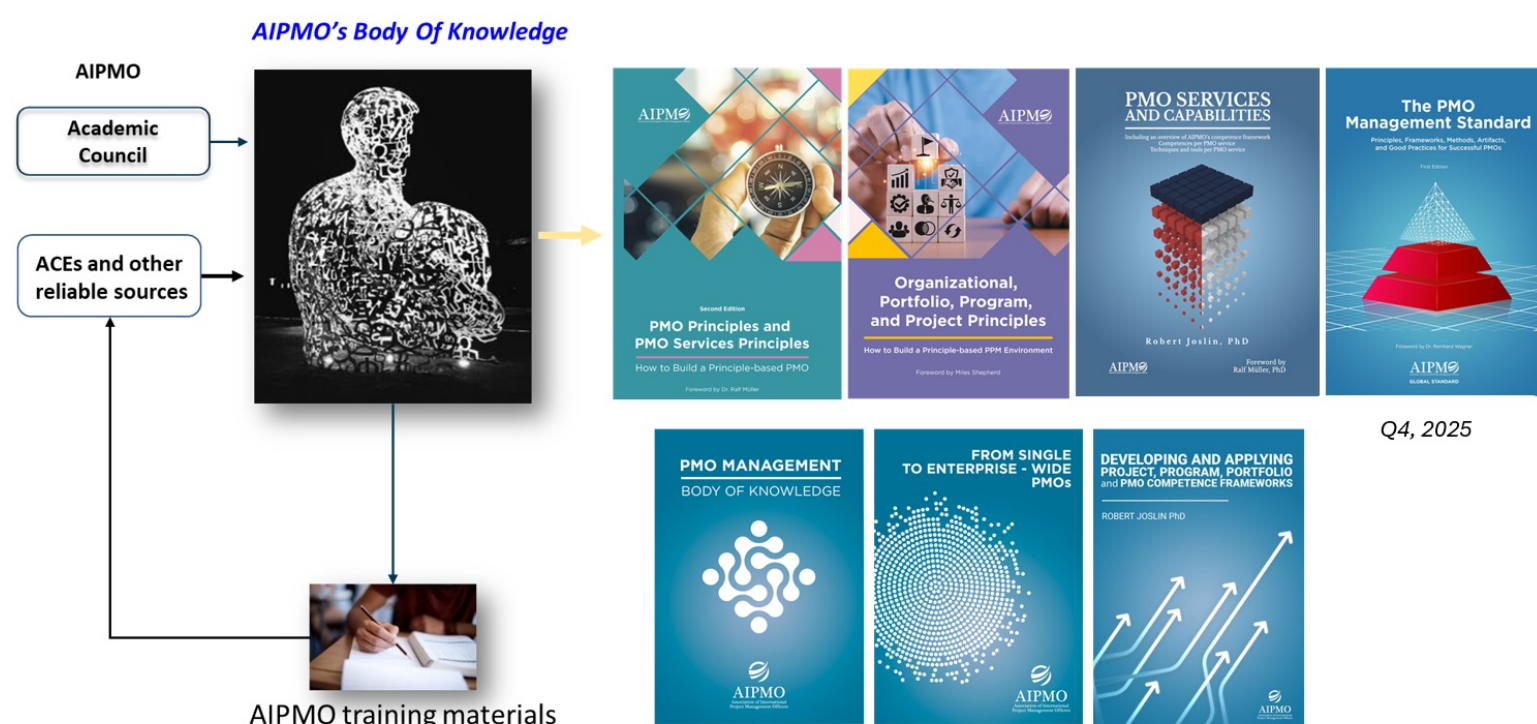
AIPMO - Perspectives

Founded in 2015 by Dr. Robert Joslin, AIPMO is a Swiss-based, research-driven international organization committed to the advancement of PMO management as a profession. Specializing in the establishment of high-performing, collaborative PMOs, AIPMO has developed principle-based frameworks and methodologies. Distinctive contributions by AIPMO include the world's first PMO Service Catalogue book, two authoritative books on Principles for PMOs and PPMs, and the pioneering principle-based maturity and impact model. Notably, the principles from these works have been incorporated into NEOM's POW and PMI's Program Management Standard V5.

The AIPMO Frameworks & Methodologies are recognized and adopted by leading organizations both regionally and Internationally, such as NEOM, Aramco, PIF and Red Sea Global, and globally, including UEFA, ABB and Siemens.

AIPMO's Book assets

The only organization in the world to have published and integrated a set of books on PMO Management using a research-driven approach. AIPMO frameworks & Methodologies are based on the research and publications.



AIPMO Training & certification

AIPMO's Core Expert course tests research findings as well as contributes ideas and research areas for AIPMO's graduate and postgraduate degrees.

Using world-views achieved by objective research findings to populate AIPMO's Strategic Lifecycle frameworks, which are tested, improved and then written into books, including the PMO management standard.

Many international and globally renown AIPMO's certifications are based on frameworks for structure and content. The content is from both research findings in PMO/Project management and expert knowledge from international practitioners. Based on course attendees' real PMO problems. Structured approach to design a PMO, PMO service catalog, or a complex PMO topology, which is then taken back to the office to implement.

Academic Partners



Highlights About AIPMO

- Founded in 2015 and the first association to focus purely on PMOs.
- Based on world-views (research-based) and not local views
- Coined the term PMO Management in 2017
- First to publish books on PMO and PPM Principles which are used by PMI and other organizations including NEOM
- Launched a principle-based PMO Maturity & Impact Assessment Model (PMO-MI) based on 5 years of research
- Use a unique approach to certifications which include both theory and case study practice
- First to offer a DBA and PhD In Strategy Project Leadership and PMO management
- First to offer three levels of integrated certifications (PMO Core certifications, Master certifications and Specialist certifications).

Selected Clients (from 500+)



AIPMO Innovation

Little focus has been given to the role of associations in innovation. AIPMO believes its role in innovation will drive PMO management to be a recognized international profession. Below are some examples of AIPMO's innovation, which are all strongly influenced by research.

Innovation 1

Details

Since 2012, AIPMO has established and run the largest LinkedIn forum for undergraduate, graduate, and postgraduate students in strategy, PPM, and PMO management. It has over 4,200 members and is neutrally branded.

<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/4475361/>



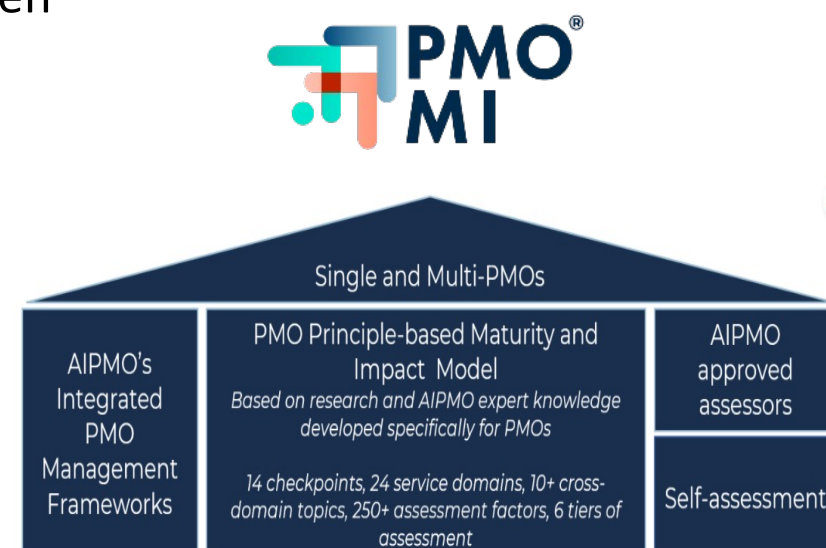
AIPMO has developed two post-doctorate programs in collaboration with SBS Swiss Business School and Alma Mater Europaea University. Eight students are enrolled in these programs, and 11 more are enrolled for next semester.

<https://www.aipmo.org/graduate-programs/>



AIPMO has developed the first principle-based, empirically proven maturity and impact model uniquely designed for assessing one or more PMOs. The PMO-MI® model took five years to develop.

<https://www.pmo-mi.com>



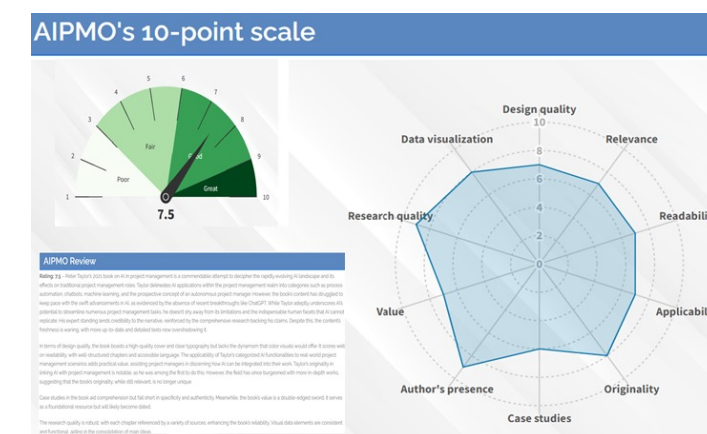
Innovation 2

Details

AIPMO launched a unique 10-point book review system. It aims to critically assess any book and identify the best market offerings in PMO management, PPM, and related fields.

The system underscores our dedication to promoting high-quality literature in the PMO community.

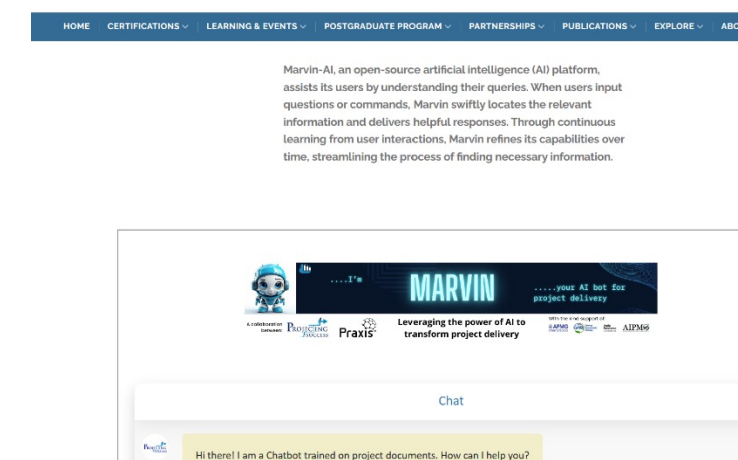
<https://www.aipmo.org/book-library/>



AIPMO co-sponsored the development of Marvin, an AI chatbot explicitly designed for PMO management and PPM.

Two of AIPMO's books have been ingested by Marvin.

<https://www.aipmo.org/marvin-ai/>



AIPMO is about to introduce the world's first PMO management standard, underpinned by sense-making frameworks and methodologies.

This complements the other books AIPMO has already published.

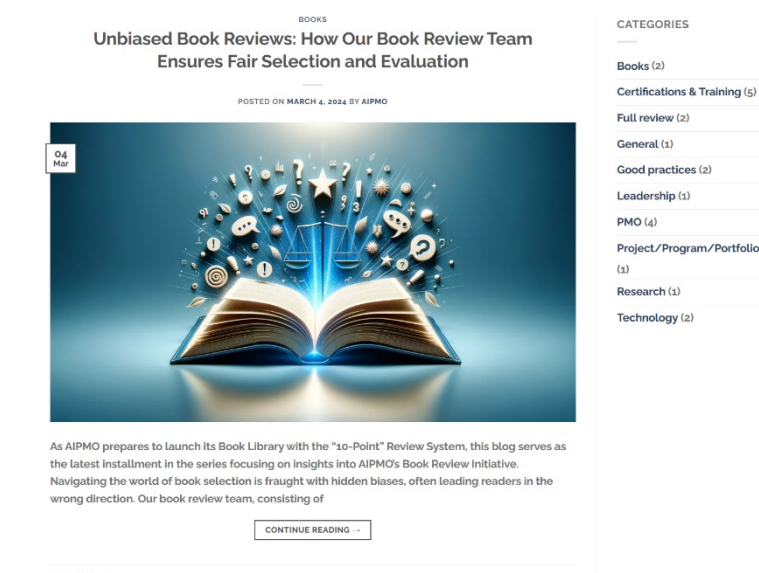


Innovation 3

Details

Through its blog platform, AIPMO translates complex PMO management research into accessible content for practitioners, demonstrating its dedication to educating and informing the PMO community.

<https://www.aipmo.org/blog/>



Harvard-type case studies based on generalized past assignments. AIPMO has written seven 40+ page case studies in different industries.



Global Ambassador Program: There are experts from every country who can help ensure knowledge is gained and shared across the PMO communities worldwide.

<https://www.aipmo.org/aipmo-ambassadors/>



Connecting to AIPMO, Research, and a New LinkedIn Group

AIPMO uses LinkedIn Groups and WhatsApp to communicate to its members



AIPMO's LinkedIn Page



MSc/PhD LinkedIn group for Research into Strategy, Project Leadership, and PMO Management



A new neutral group called "Global Community for Management Offices"

Webinar Series from AIPMO



Webinar 1: We Covered

- Why organizations invest in PMOs
- How to quantify financial and strategic value
- Building the case beyond cost savings



Webinar 2 (today)

- Testing the belief: more maturity → more impact → more value
- Why the link is often broken
- Introducing a new lens: enablement, impact, and value

— 01 The trap of Maturity Models

- The Promise: Maturity = Impact = Value
- The Wrong Model Trap
- The Harsh Reality: Maturity \neq Impact
- The Maturity Mirage
- The Maturity Mirage Cycle

The Promise: Maturity = Impact = Value

The logic sounds convincing, but reality is far more complex.


- **Assumption:** More maturity → more impact → more value
- **Linear Path Assumed:** services → capabilities → impact → value
- **Industry Standard:** Widely embedded in traditional maturity models (CMMI, P3M3, OPM3)
- **The Catch:** Oversimplifies PMOs, ignores adaptation, context, and the non-linear nature of value creation

Reality Check: High maturity doesn't guarantee high impact; low maturity doesn't always mean low value

The Wrong Model Trap

When PMOs are measured with the wrong model, scores are most likely incorrect

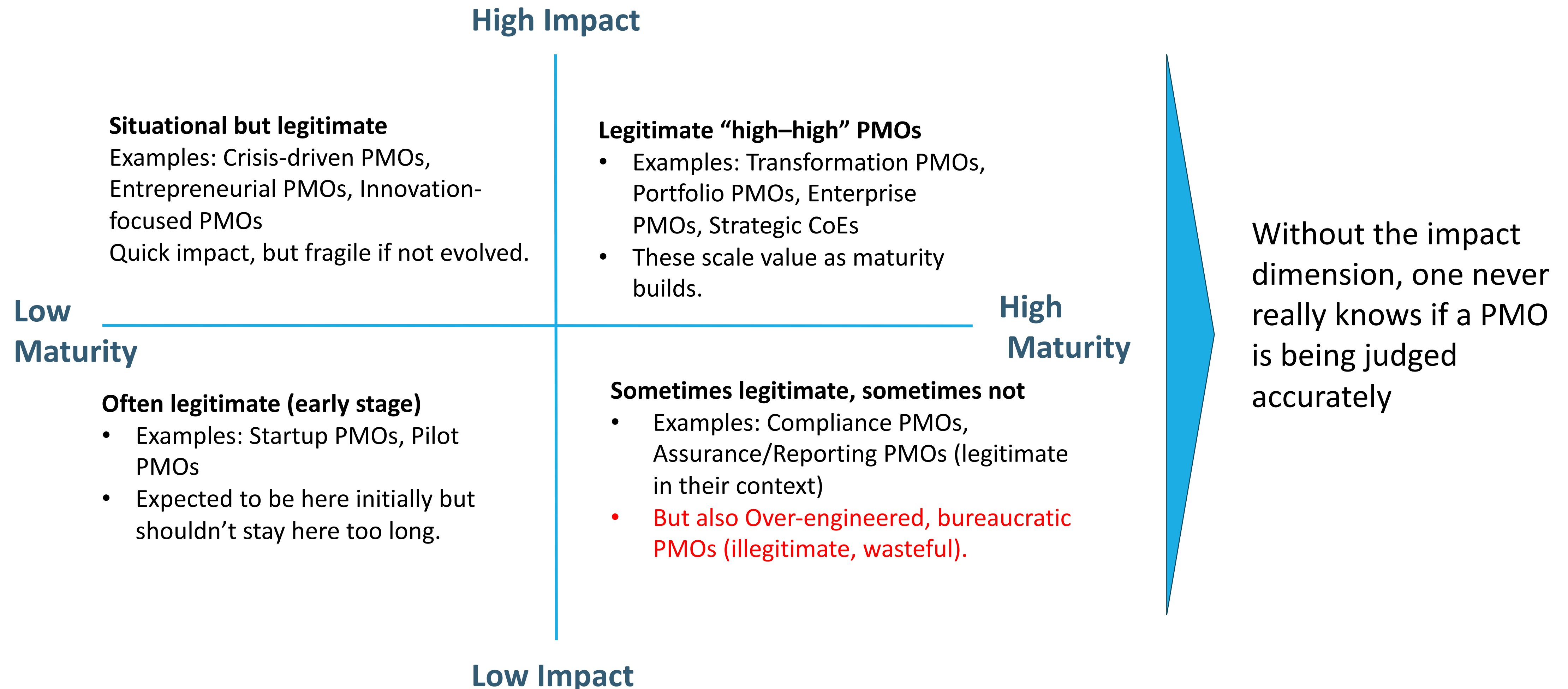
- All traditional and mainstream models (P3M3, OPM3, CMMI) were not designed for PMOs
- Focus almost entirely on process capability
- Ignore services, behaviors, and impact
- Ignore direct and indirect impact
- Ignore Principles
- Don't consider PMOs working together in a PMO operating model



PMOs get measured against the wrong yardstick and models are not suitable for PMO assessments

The Harsh Reality: Maturity ≠ Impact

High maturity doesn't guarantee high impact - context matters



The Maturity Mirage



The illusion that higher PMO maturity automatically leads to greater impact and value

Consequences where a cycle where inflated scores, overcommitment, and certifications create the appearance of progress but not the reality.

The Maturity Mirage Cycle

Motivation to assess their PMO Maturity

Valid / Improvement-Oriented

- Strategic Alignment
- Capability Development
- Benchmarking
- Investment Justification

Problematic / Self-Serving

- Awards & Certificates – chasing recognition, prestige, or “badges of honor.”
- Image Management – projecting competence to executives regardless of reality.
- Shortcut to Legitimacy
- Defensive Justification – masking lack of impact: “If we score high, we must be valuable.”

- **Institutional Isomorphism** – repeating what others in the industry do, regardless of results
- **Addiction to the maturity narrative** – comfort in the illusion of progress
- **Complacency Risk** – high scores discourage genuine improvement

- **Legitimacy Theater** – external certification as a façade of competence
- **Agency Theory** – consultants reinforcing inflated scores to please clients
- **Cycle of dependency** – certifications sought to “prove” value instead of creating it

- **Dunning–Kruger Effect**
- **Confirmation Bias**
- **Halo Effect** one good area = assumed global competence
- **Social Desirability Bias** - inflating scores to look good

- **Optimism Bias** – underestimating effort/costs
- **Planning Fallacy** – believing goals are more achievable than reality
- **Impression Management** – projecting ambition to gain legitimacy
- **Shadow Dynamics (Jung)** – unconscious denial of limits, overcompensation

The Mirage: Illusion of Progress

Repeat the cycle

Seek (re)certification

Under deliver on Impact

Overestimate their maturity

Overcommit on promises

- **Capability Gaps** – lack of real service delivery capacity
- **Resource Constraints** – insufficient funding or skills
- **Misaligned Metrics** – measuring process compliance, not outcomes
- **Shadow Projection** – blaming others (e.g., “the business is immature”)

— 02 Delivery vs. Non-Delivery PMOs

- PMO Types: Delivery vs. Non-Delivery x Formal vs. Informal
- Hybrid PMO (conflicted)
- How Delivery and Non-Delivery PMOs show Impact

Delivery PMO

Driving impact through execution and measurable outcomes



A PMO that directly manages and executes projects and/or programs, ensuring delivery of outputs, outcomes, and benefits. Its impact can be measured directly through project performance and value creation. Delivery PMOs are often the first to be established vs non-delivery PMOs, as they provide visible results, strategic alignment and accountability.

Advantages

- Tangible, measurable impact via project outcomes
- Stronger justification for budget (clear ROI)
- Demonstrates immediate alignment to strategy
- Builds delivery competence in the organization
- Provides accountability & authority clarity

Disadvantages

- Risk of becoming bureaucratic or slow to adapt
- Over-structuring may reduce agility in dynamic environments
- High visibility = high reputational risk if delivery fails
- Tendency to over-focus on outputs instead of long-term value
- May be perceived as “control-heavy” if not balanced with support

Non-Delivery PMO

Enabling impact through influence, services, and legitimacy.



A PMO that does not directly deliver projects but instead focuses on enabling, supporting, and improving delivery across the organization. Examples include centers of excellence, standards and methods offices, or strategic/portfolio-level PMOs. They often emerge after delivery PMOs, evolving to provide governance, capability development, strategic alignment services etc.,

Advantages

- Institutionalizes knowledge, methods, governance
- Builds organizational capability beyond one project
- Offers portfolio-level visibility and decision support
- Enables consistency and scaling across projects/programs
- Seen as neutral, advisory, long-term enablers

Disadvantages

- Harder to demonstrate direct impact (perceived as overhead)
- Success depends on legitimacy and trust, not just authority
- Risk of being dismissed as “administrative”
- Can lose credibility if disconnected from delivery reality
- Vulnerable in budget cuts if impact not made visible



PMO Types: Delivery vs. Non-Delivery x Formal vs. Informal

Impact depends on both what the PMO does (delivery vs. enabling) and how it is structured (formal vs. informal) – See Note below

PMO Types	Formal PMO	Informal PMO
Delivery PMO	<p>Definition: Established with mandate, governance, budget, and authority to <i>directly deliver projects/programs</i>.</p> <p>Example: Centralized Program Management Office for a mega-project.</p> <p>Advantages: Clear ROI, authority, measurable impact. Disadvantages: Bureaucracy risk, reputational exposure if projects fail.</p>	<p>Definition: Emerges ad hoc, often within a project or department, to “fix chaos” or coordinate delivery.</p> <p>Example: A project manager informally running a mini-PMO within a troubled program.</p> <p>Advantages: Agile, quick response, strong local ownership. Disadvantages: Lacks mandate, unstable, depends on personalities.</p>
Non-Delivery PMO	<p>Definition: Formally established as <i>enabler</i>, focusing on governance, methods, portfolio mgmt., or a Center of Excellence.</p> <p>Example: Enterprise PMO or Strategy Management Office.</p> <p>Advantages: Consistency, portfolio visibility, long-term capability building. Disadvantages: Indirect impact, often seen as overhead, legitimacy challenges.</p>	<p>Definition: Starts informally, often driven by enthusiasts or local champions, to standardize practices or share knowledge.</p> <p>Example: An informal CoE created by senior PMs to exchange templates and lessons learned.</p> <p>Advantages: Grassroots innovation, adaptive, builds community. Disadvantages: Fragile, no funding/mandate, easy to dissolve.</p>

Note: The Formal vs Non-formal PMOs are covered in the PRY Business Case Webinar presented in Aug 2025

Hybrid PMO

Hybrid PMOs face inherent conflicts, but these can be resolved with the right PMO Operating Model.



A PMO that combines both delivery (direct management of projects/programs) and non-delivery functions (governance, methods, portfolio mgmt., capability building).

Advantages

- Integrated view → bridge between strategy, governance, and execution.
- Credibility with practitioners → grounded in delivery while also shaping methods and standards.
- Efficiency → shared resources and knowledge across delivery and non-delivery functions.
- Influence → direct delivery experience gives weight to governance/recommendations.
- Adaptability → can flex emphasis depending on organizational needs (execution-heavy vs. enablement-heavy).

Disadvantages

- **Conflict of interest** → “marking their own homework” if they both deliver and govern. Compliance and Assurance issues!
- Role confusion → risk of unclear mandate (are they delivering, governing, or both?).
- Overstretch → broad scope can dilute focus, overwhelm resources.
- Scaling issues → as organizations grow, hybrids often split into separate delivery and non-delivery entities.
- Perception risk → may be seen as too controlling if both delivering and policing.

How Delivery PMOs Show Impact

Impact is visible, measurable, and directly tied to delivery success

Measured through project & program success:

- On time, on budget, on scope (iron triangle) plus 60+ recognized success criteria
- Realization and sustainment of intended benefits

Strategic Contribution:

- Direct link to portfolio objectives and organizational strategy execution

Clear Accountability:

- PMO is directly responsible for delivery outcomes and performance tracking

High Visibility of Impact:

- Impact can be measured, attributed, and communicated clearly to executives

How, Non-Delivery PMOs Show Impact

Impact is measurable, but requires more complex methods to capture

Indirect but real: impact is achieved through enabling and influencing, not direct delivery

Measured via:

- Service quality: governance, reporting, knowledge, methods
- Decision influence: better portfolio choices, prioritization, and risk reduction
- Capability development: people, tools, and practices strengthened

Contribution to Delivery Success:

- Impact can be traced to improved success rates of delivery PMOs (projects/programs they support)
- Requires more sophisticated attribution, but it is measurable

Overcoming the Challenge:

- Non-delivery PMOs (e.g., CoEs, corporate PMOs) are often challenged to “prove” value
- With advanced models, such as those developed by AIPMO; attribution is possible, making impact visible and defensible

— 03 Bias and Shadows

- Bias in Self Assessments
- Jung's shadow PMO

Bias in self-assessments

When bias distorts maturity scores, impact gets misread

Cognitive Biases distort maturity scoring:

- Dunning–Kruger effect → overestimate competence
- Confirmation bias → seek evidence that supports existing belief
- Halo effect → one strong area inflates overall perception

Organizational Pressures:

- Political agendas (inflate scores to please executives)
- Social desirability → “look good” rather than “be good”

- Maturity appears higher than reality
- Impact is misread or overstated, creating false confidence

Jung's Shadow PMO

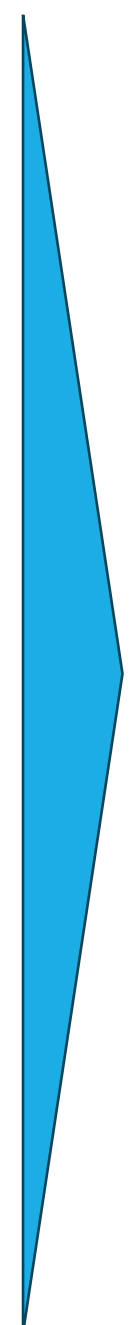
The Shadow → hidden weaknesses, denied or suppressed

What is the Shadow?

- Carl Jung described the *shadow* as the unconscious aspects of personality that are denied or repressed
- It contains traits, impulses, and potentials that the conscious self does not recognize or accept - both negative (e.g., aggression, fear) and sometimes positive (e.g., creativity, strength)
- In organizations, the shadow appears when weaknesses or hidden motives are denied, leading to distorted self-perception

In PMOs, it shows up as:

- Overconfidence masking fragility
- Over-reliance on process as a substitute for value
- Blaming others to avoid self-examination

- 
- Shadow Dynamics fuel the **Mirage Cycle**
 - Recognizing the shadow = pathway to real growth

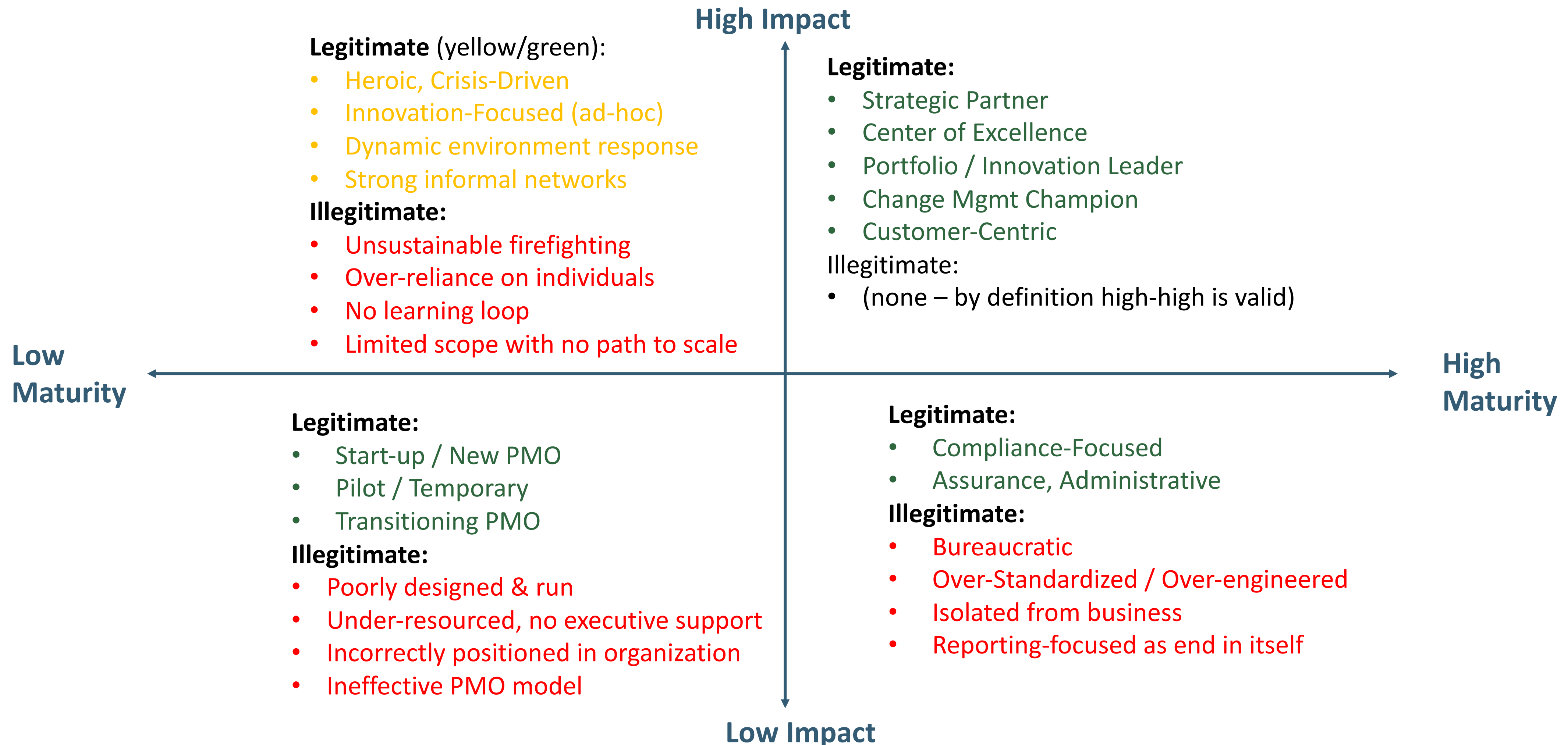
— 04 Maturity Versus Impact Framework

- Characteristics of PMOs
- Poll
- The Myth of Linear PMO Impact
- Non-Linear PMO Impact: The Hidden Patterns

Characteristics of PMOs

All four quadrants are valid hence why the Impact scale is essential to understand the implications of the positioning

What's legitimate (green)
 What's illegitimate (red)
 What's situational (yellow)

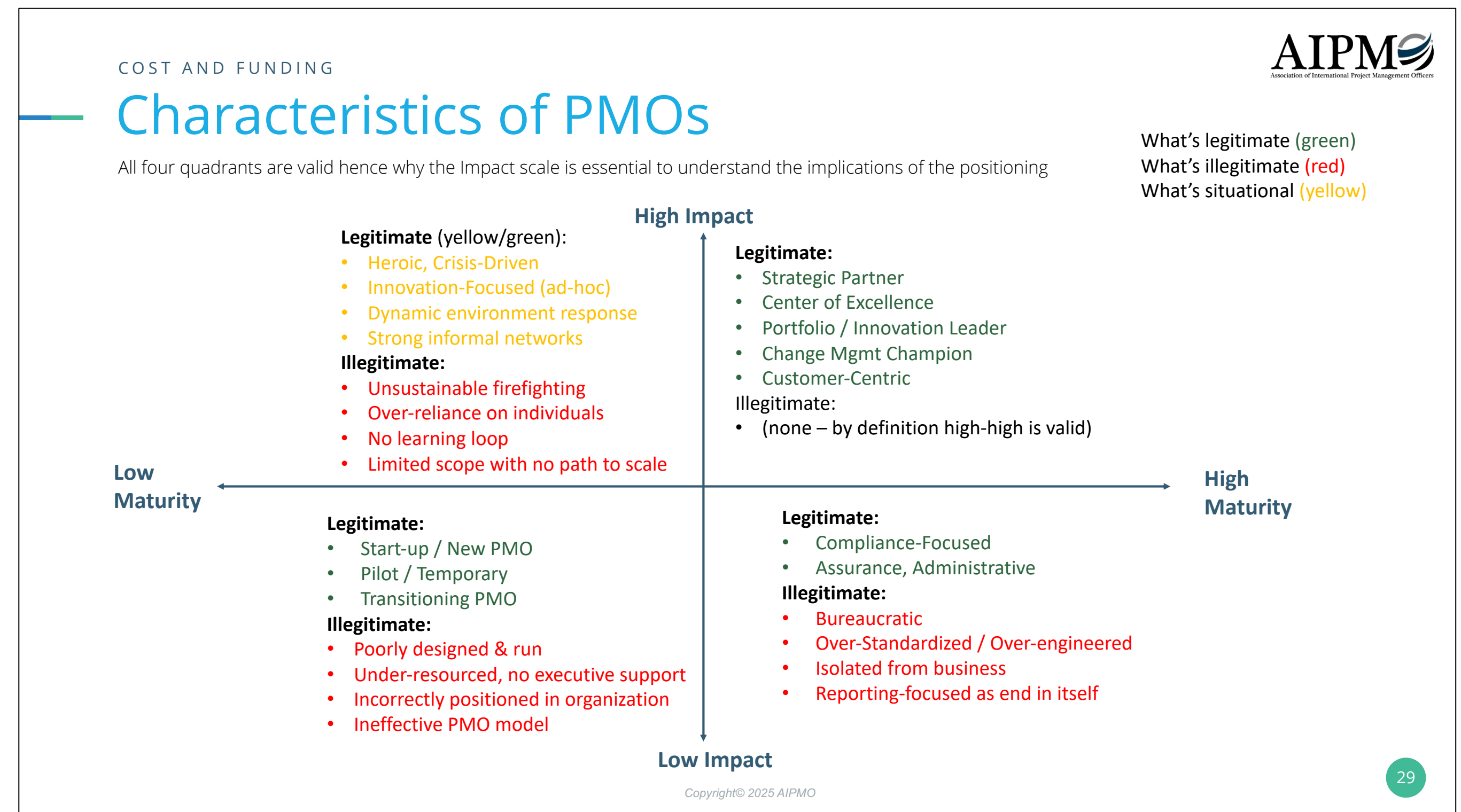


Where Does Your PMO Fit?

First time this poll has even been run – interesting to see the findings



- Thinking about your PMO, which quadrant do you feel it mostly sits in today?”
- Select the quadrant and also whether it is legitimate or illegitimate
- Options
 - High Maturity / High Impact (legit or illegit)*
 - High Maturity / Low Impact (legit or illegit)*
 - Low Maturity / High Impact (legit or illegit)*
 - Low Maturity / Low Impact (legit or illegit)*

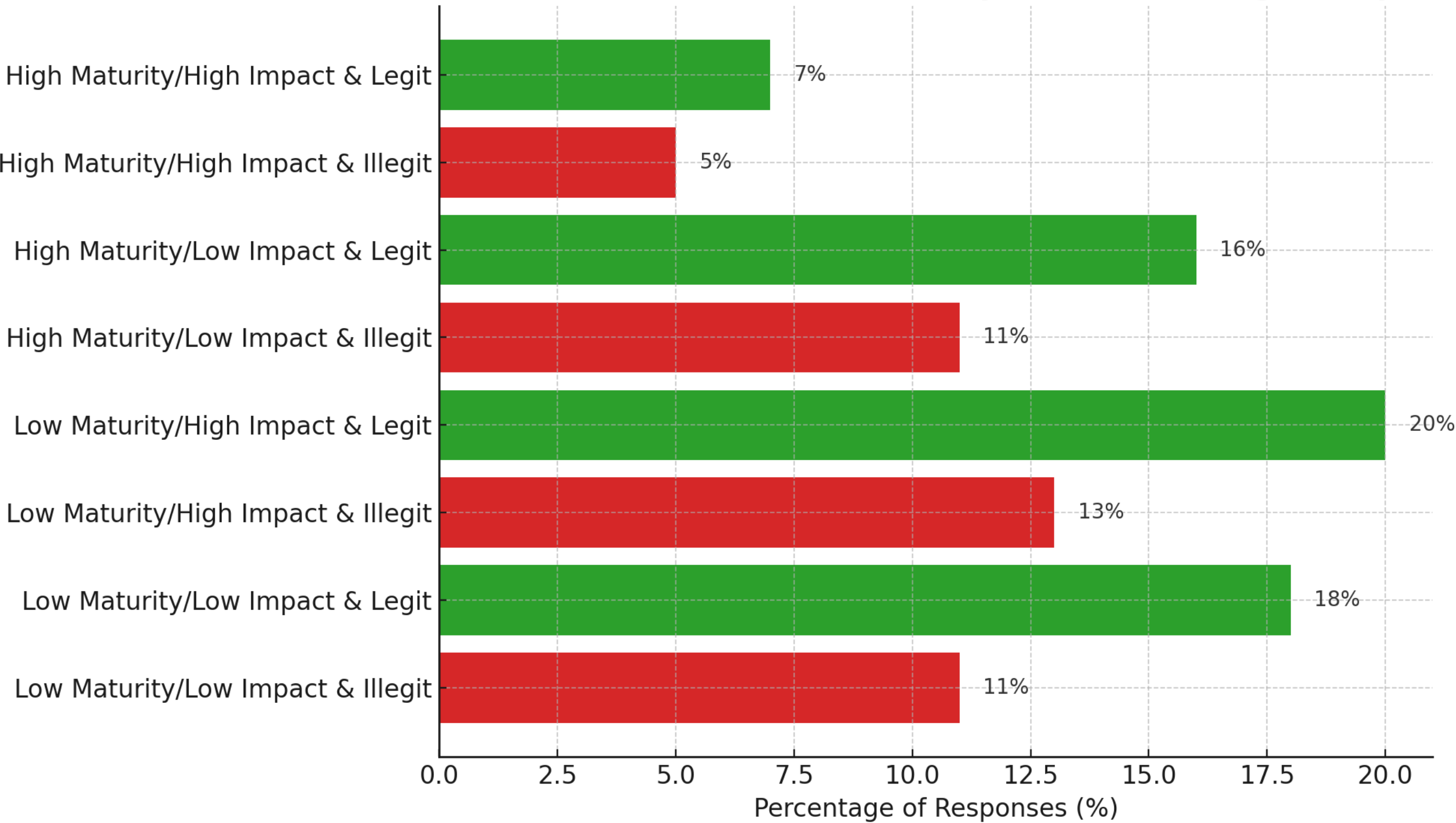


Poll Results: Where Do PMOs Really Sit?"

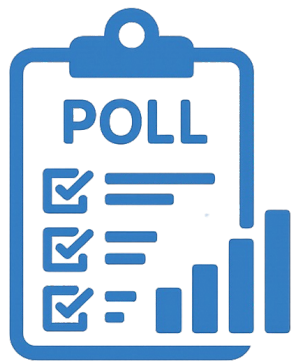
Note: Perceptions of maturity, impact, and legitimacy may not reflect reality due to Bias and Shadow Effect



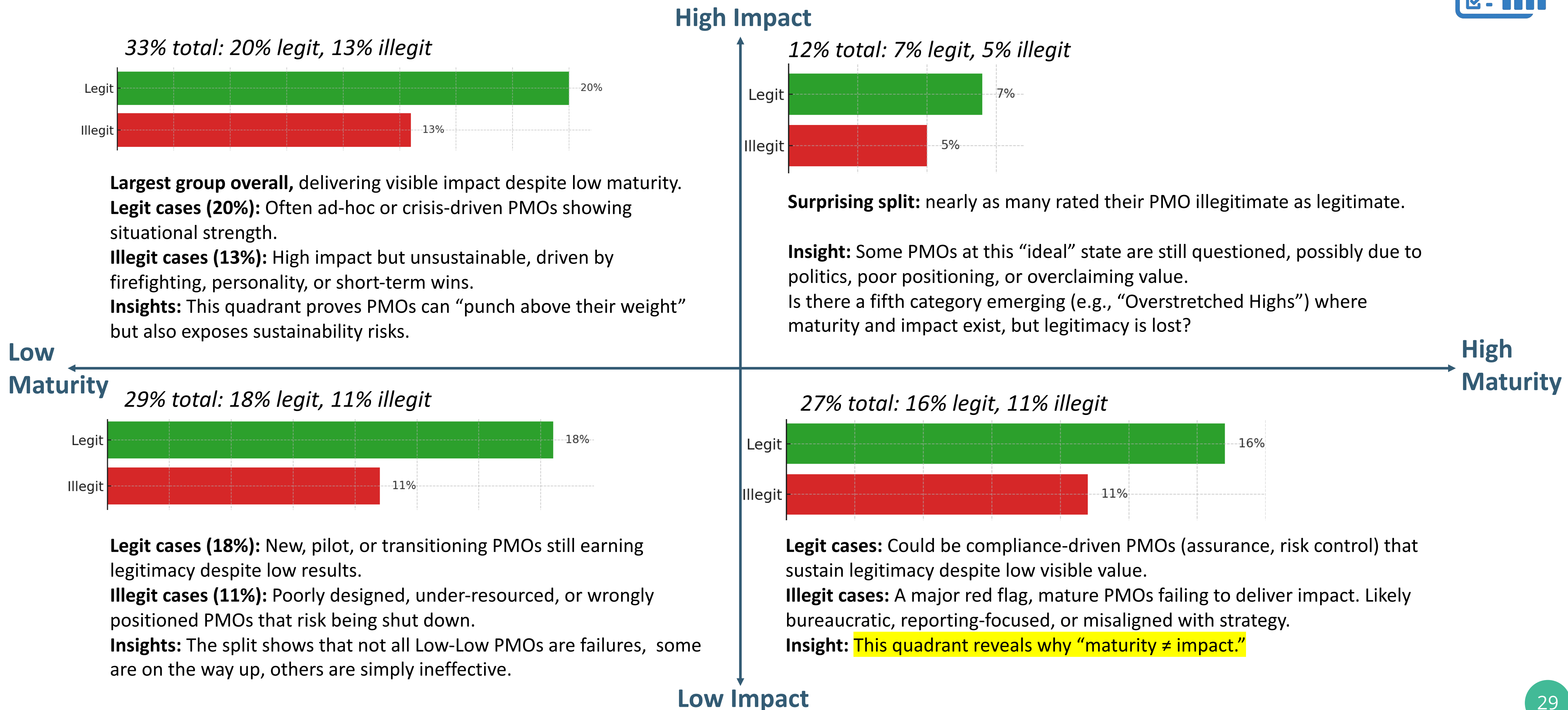
Poll Results: PMO Placement by Quadrant & Legitimacy



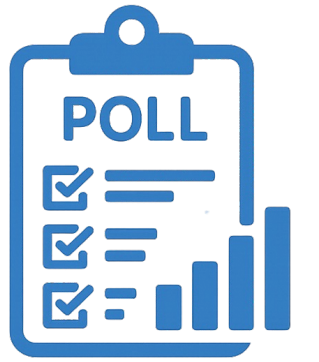
- **High Maturity ≠ High Impact:** Many PMOs reach maturity but still fail to demonstrate impact, confirming the risk of “maturity without value.”
- **Legitimacy matters:** Perception of legitimacy strongly influences how PMOs are positioned regardless of maturity or impact.
- **Situational Quadrants:** The data validates that “situational legitimacy” (e.g., low maturity/high impact) is a common reality, not an exception.
- **Strategic Gap:** Very few PMOs (~7%) occupy the most strategically desirable space (High Maturity/High Impact & Legit), showing the need for better positioning and impact measurement.



Poll Results: PMO Placement by Quadrant



Poll Results: Summary Insights



Key Findings from the Poll

- **High–High Quadrant (12%):** Almost equal split between legitimate and illegitimate → suggests some PMOs may “look” mature but fail to show true impact.
- **High Maturity / Low Impact (27%):** Nearly one-third indicates PMOs that have structure but cannot demonstrate value, a warning sign of “maturity without impact.”
- **Low Maturity / High Impact (33%):** Significant presence. Many PMOs succeed in crisis or innovation mode, but legitimacy and sustainability are often questioned.
- **Low–Low Quadrant (29%):** Nearly one-third see themselves here. Some are legitimate (start-ups, transitioning PMOs), but many risk being perceived as ineffective or poorly designed.

Insights

- **Maturity ≠ Impact** → reinforces need for new frameworks (beyond process-based maturity).
- **Legitimacy is a differentiator** → how PMOs are seen may matter more than what they deliver.
- **Many PMOs may be “trapped”** in compliance or firefighting roles, limiting strategic contribution.

Bias & Shadow Dynamics at Play

- **Overestimation Bias:** Strength in one area (e.g., reporting) inflates overall maturity or impact.
- **Political Pressure:** Scores raised to please executives → “look good” rather than “be good.”
- **Jung’s Shadow Effect:** Weaknesses denied or hidden → distorted self-perception (e.g., claiming High–High legitimacy without evidence, or underestimating hidden strengths in Low–Low).

Reflection Questions for Leaders

- Should Low Maturity/High Impact PMOs be nurtured or restructured to ensure sustainability?
- Why do some High Maturity/High Impact PMOs self-identify as illegitimate?
- Is your PMO’s position reality or shaped by bias, politics, or shadow dynamics?
- Are you equating maturity with impact, rather than proving value?
- What hidden weaknesses or denied strengths could be distorting your assessment?
- How do we move PMOs from “maturity without impact” toward legitimate, sustainable High–High?



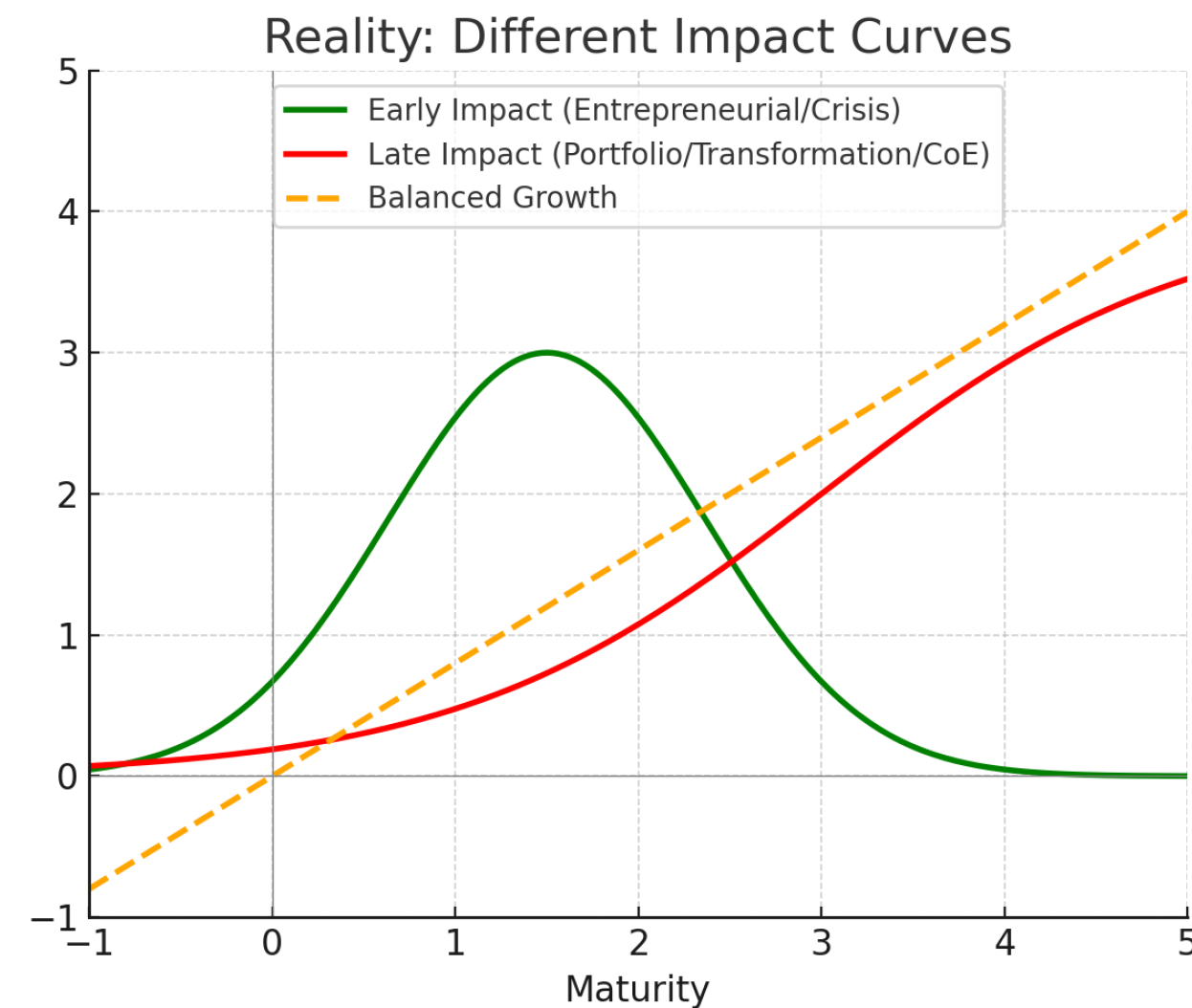
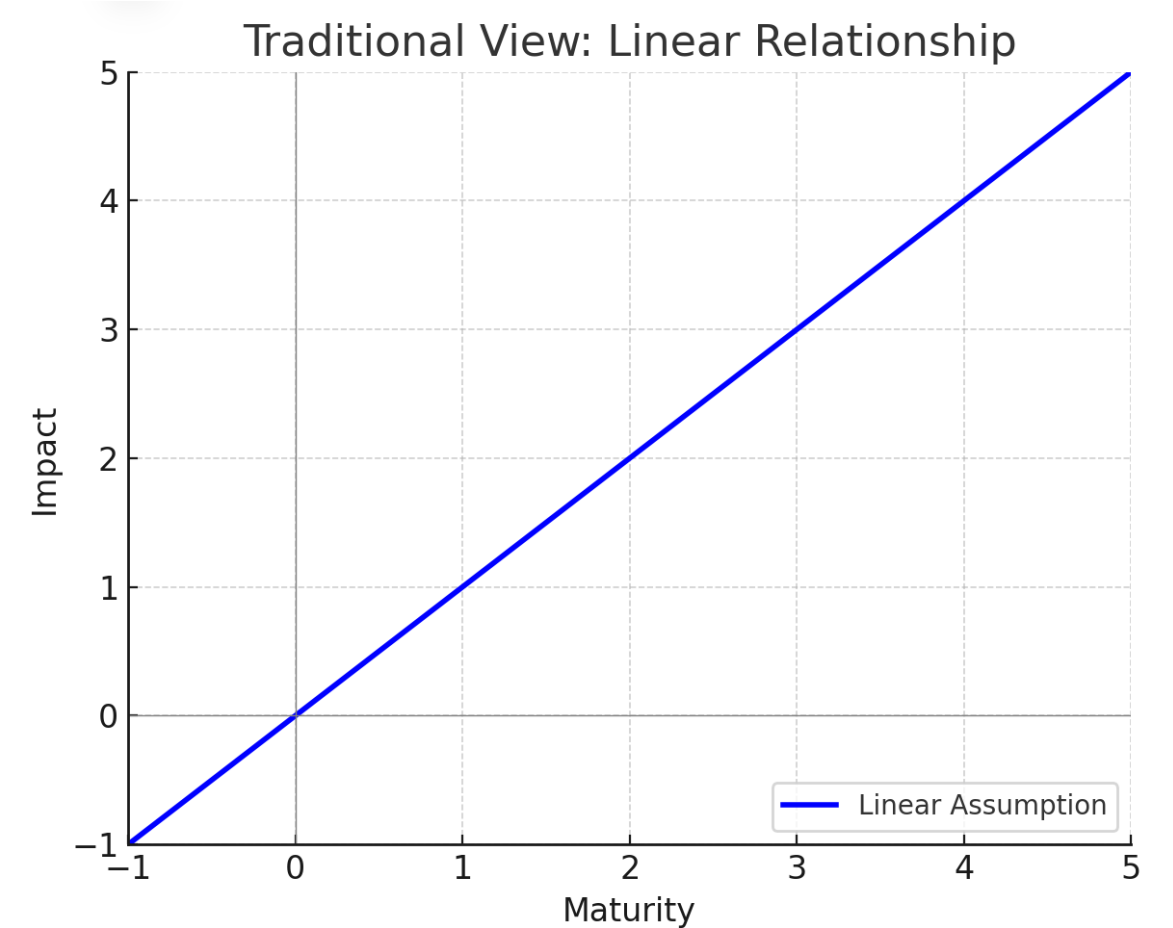
ALMA MATER
EUROPAEA
UNIVERSITY

Further research with AMEU
in partnership with AIPMO to
deepen understanding –
actionable insights for PMO
Leaders

The Myth of Linear PMO Impact

Impact follows different paths depending on PMO type and context.

Traditional view: Maturity steadily increases → Impact steadily increases



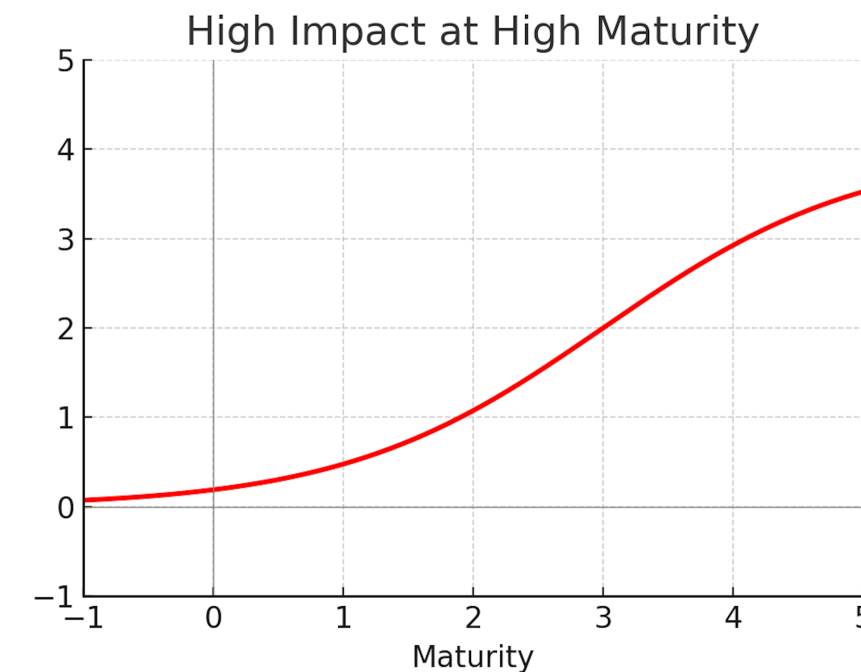
Reality: PMO impact follows different curves depending on type & context

- Some PMOs create early impact at low maturity (entrepreneurial, crisis-driven)
- Others deliver value only at higher maturity (portfolio, transformation, CoEs)
- Movement across quadrants = non-linear, dynamic journey



Non-Linear PMO Impact: The Hidden Patterns

There are at least five curves, possibly more – research is needed



High Impact at High Maturity

(PMOs that only demonstrate full value once they build structure, governance, and integration)

- **Portfolio PMO / Enterprise PMO (EPMO)** – needs organizational maturity to allocate resources strategically.
- **Transformation PMO (TMO)** – requires cross-org buy-in, process alignment, cultural integration.
- **Center of Excellence (CoE) / Methodology PMO** – impact comes once it's embedded and widely adopted.
- **Strategic PMO** – delivers long-term business alignment but only after maturity develops.
- **Sustainability or ESG PMOs** – require broad stakeholder buy-in and metrics before value is recognized.

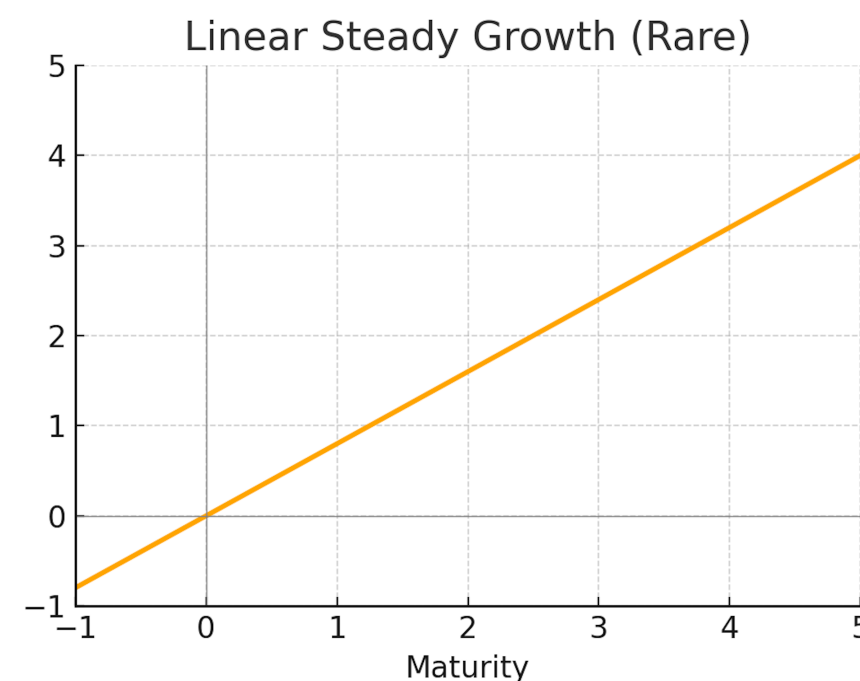
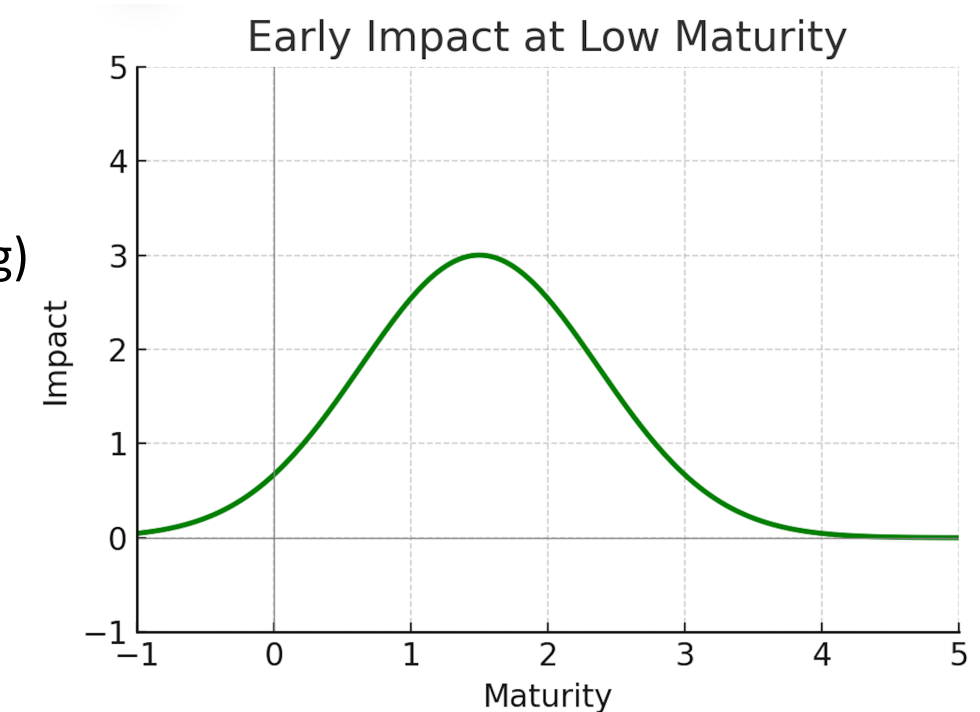
⚠ Risk: Low visible impact early → vulnerable to cuts unless expectations are managed.

Early Impact at Low Maturity

(PMOs that can deliver visible value quickly, even without formal maturity)

- **Crisis-Driven PMO** – created in response to urgent issues; impact is immediate.
- **Entrepreneurial / Start-up PMO** – lightweight, fast-moving, can unlock quick wins.
- **Project Support Office (PSO)** – even with minimal structure, it provides instant relief (templates, scheduling)
- **Innovation-Focused PMO** (ad-hoc style) – generates breakthroughs without much formalization.
- **Single-Project PMOs** – small, tactical setups tied to critical delivery.

⚠ Risk: High fragility. Impact may collapse if not evolved – see PMO Business Case Presentation



Linear (Steady Growth) — Rare Cases

(Few PMOs follow a true linear path; most are non-linear. But some approximate it...)

- **Delivery PMO in stable environments** – maturity (process control, reporting) grows in step with impact (better delivery outcomes).
- **Assurance/Compliance PMO** – each increase in process maturity = proportional increase in control and compliance value.
- **Operational PMOs in routine industries** – where repeatability is valued, and both maturity + impact grow together (e.g., manufacturing PMOs).

⚠ Note: Even these are not perfectly linear. They're more like “near-linear steady growth” than a strict straight line.

— 05 Rethinking Maturity as Enablement

- Why Maturity is Misleading for PMOs
- A Better Framing: Evolution, Adaptation, Enablement
- The Enablement Construct: Foundations of Sustainable Impact
- Enabler Profile examples (EPMO, Innovation PMO etc.,)

Why Maturity is Misleading for PMOs

PMO Maturity is not a good term, its only kept because the term is understood

- Originates in CMMI (1980), OPM3, P3M3 → assumes linear stages of process maturity
- Equates progress with repeatability, standardization, stability

But PMOs ≠ static processes:

- Services are added/removed dynamically
- Scope shifts with strategy
- Value depends on context, not repeatability
- Repeatability ≠ relevance → PMO “maturity” may not equal impact

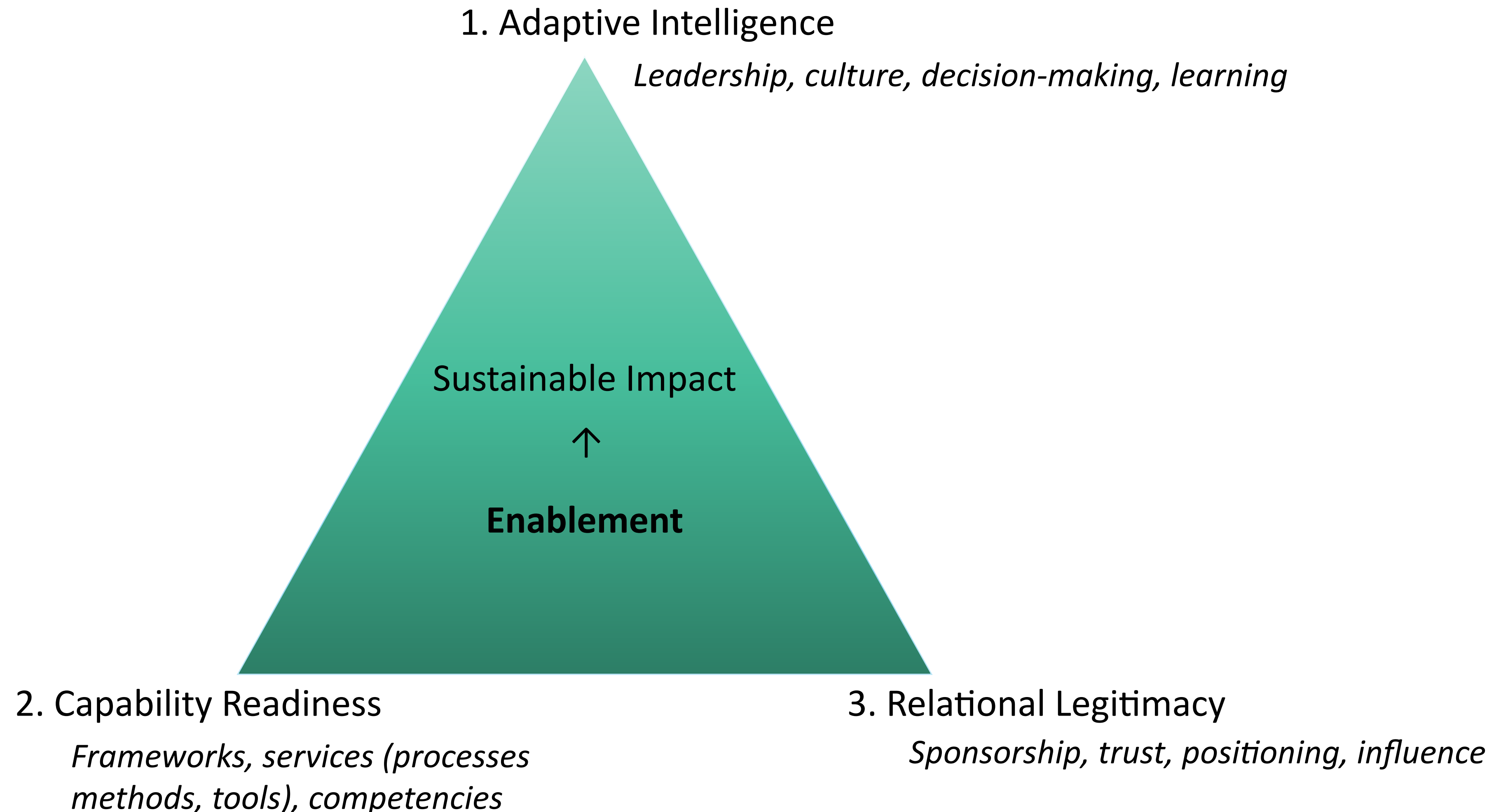
A Better Framing: Evolution, Adaptation, Enablement

PMO Maturity is not a good term, its only kept because the term is understood

- **Evolution:** PMOs change form over time (delivery → transformation → CoE)
- **Adaptation:** PMOs align to shifting business needs & contexts
- **Enablement:** The true construct → ability to sustain and optimize impact through:
 1. Adaptive Intelligence
 2. Capability Readiness
 3. Relational Legitimacy

The Enablement Construct: Foundations of Sustainable Impact

If PMOs don't mature in a linear sense, what do we measure instead? We measure **enablement**



Mapping PMO-MI Factors into the Enablement Construct



PMO-MI is AIPMO assessment and benchmarking model for Single and Multi-PMO assessment – launched in May 2024



1. Adaptive Intelligence	2. Capability Readiness	3. Relational Legitimacy
Leadership behaviors	PMO Service Domains (24+)	Executive sponsorship
Decision-making quality	Tools & methods	Stakeholder trust
Learning orientation	Competency frameworks	Political capital
Cultural adaptability	Governance processes	Organizational positioning
Responsiveness to change	Resource capacity	Advocacy & visibility

Note: PMO-MI has the factors built in as listed above.



One Weak Enabler Can Break the PMO

1. Adaptive Intelligence

Sustainable Impact



Enablement

2. Capability Readiness

Frameworks, services (processes methods, tools), competencies

3. Relational Legitimacy

Sponsorship, trust, positioning, influence

Missing

High capability + adaptive intelligence, but no legitimacy → "invisible PMO"

Imbalance is fatal: all three enablers must reinforce each other

Examples:

- High capability + adaptive intelligence, but no legitimacy → "invisible PMO"
- High capability + legitimacy, but no adaptive intelligence → "rigid PMO"
- High intelligence + legitimacy, but no capability → "All talk no action PMO"

Sustainable impact requires all three in balance!



The Enabled PMO: Sustainable Impact in Action

1. Adaptive Intelligence

Sustainable Impact



Enablement

2. Capability Readiness

Frameworks, services (processes methods, tools), competencies

3. Relational Legitimacy

Sponsorship, trust, positioning, influence

Balanced enablement creates resilience and relevance

PMO can:

- Deliver services effectively (capability)
- Adapt to changing business needs (intelligence)
- Operate with authority and trust (legitimacy)

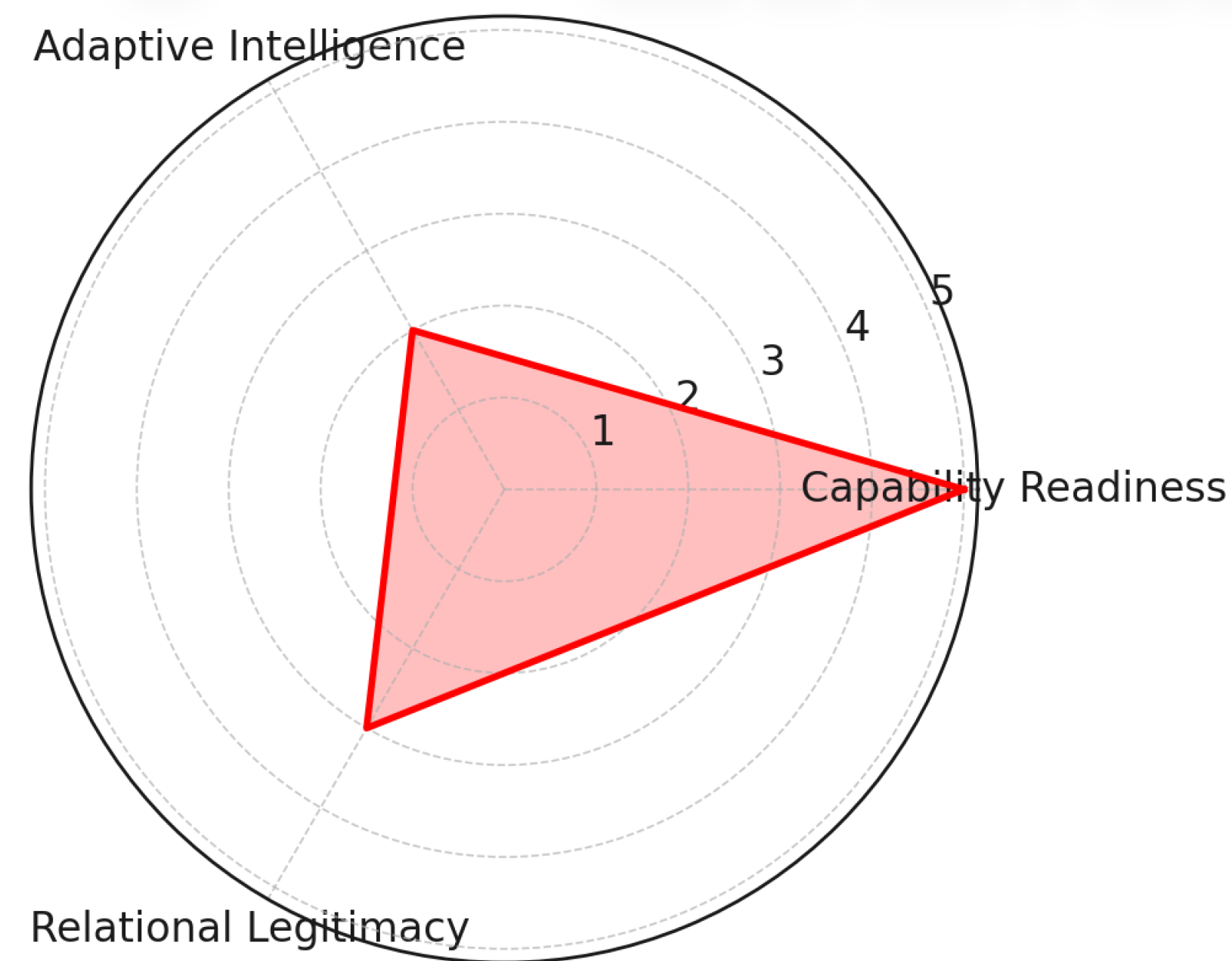
Result = sustainable impact → real, lasting value

PMO Enabler Profile – Compliance / Assurance PMO



Adaptive Intelligence

(Low–Medium): Limited flexibility; they are slow to adapt to new business contexts because their focus is on compliance and stability.

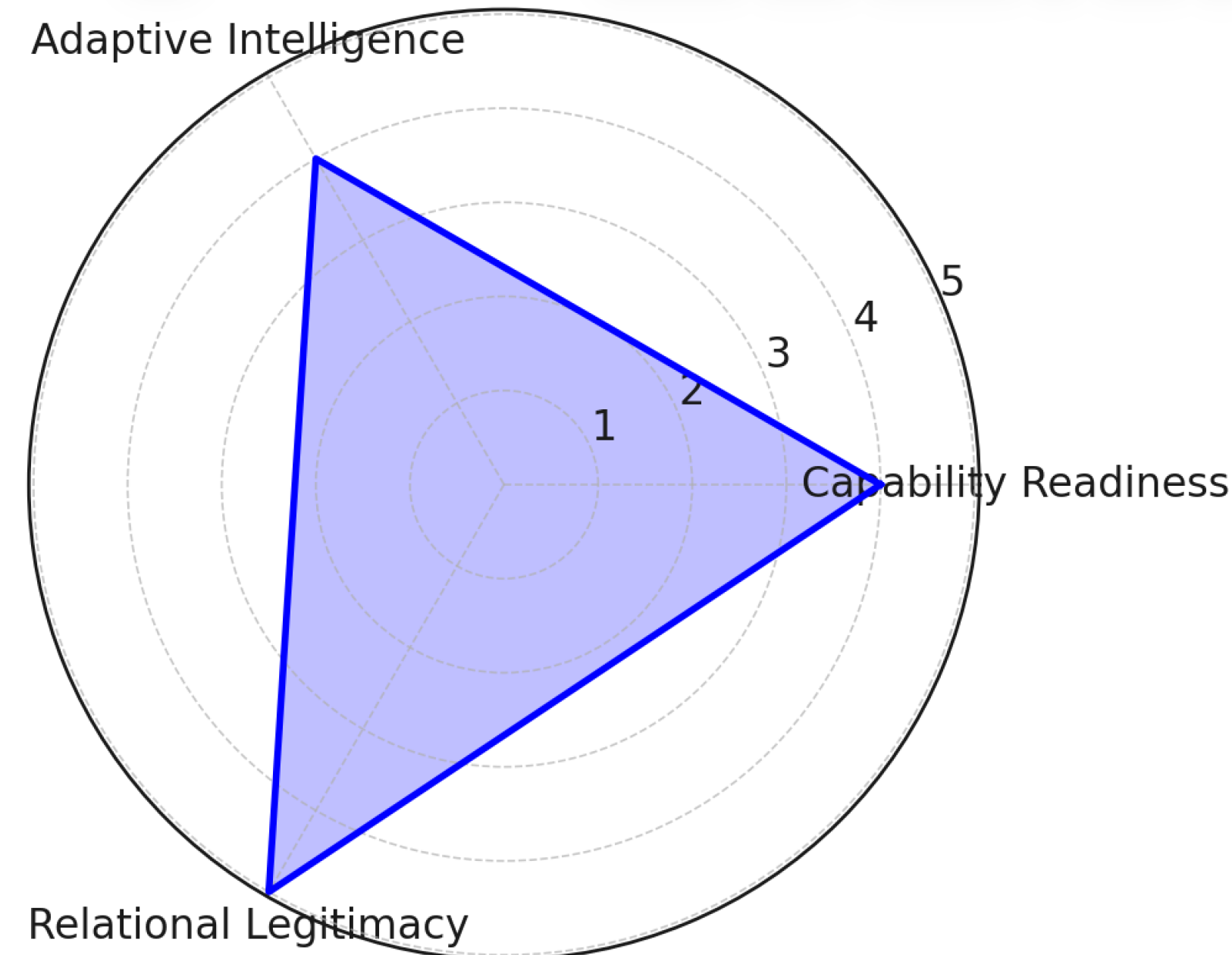


Capability Readiness (High): These PMOs excel in structured processes, audits, standards, and reporting, maturity here is almost always strong.

Relational Legitimacy (Moderate): Seen as necessary but often viewed as overhead, legitimacy is situational and depends on executive sponsorship.

PMO Enabler Profile – Transformation PMO

Adaptive Intelligence (High): They must constantly adapt across organizational silos, cultures, and shifting strategies—agility and intelligence are essential



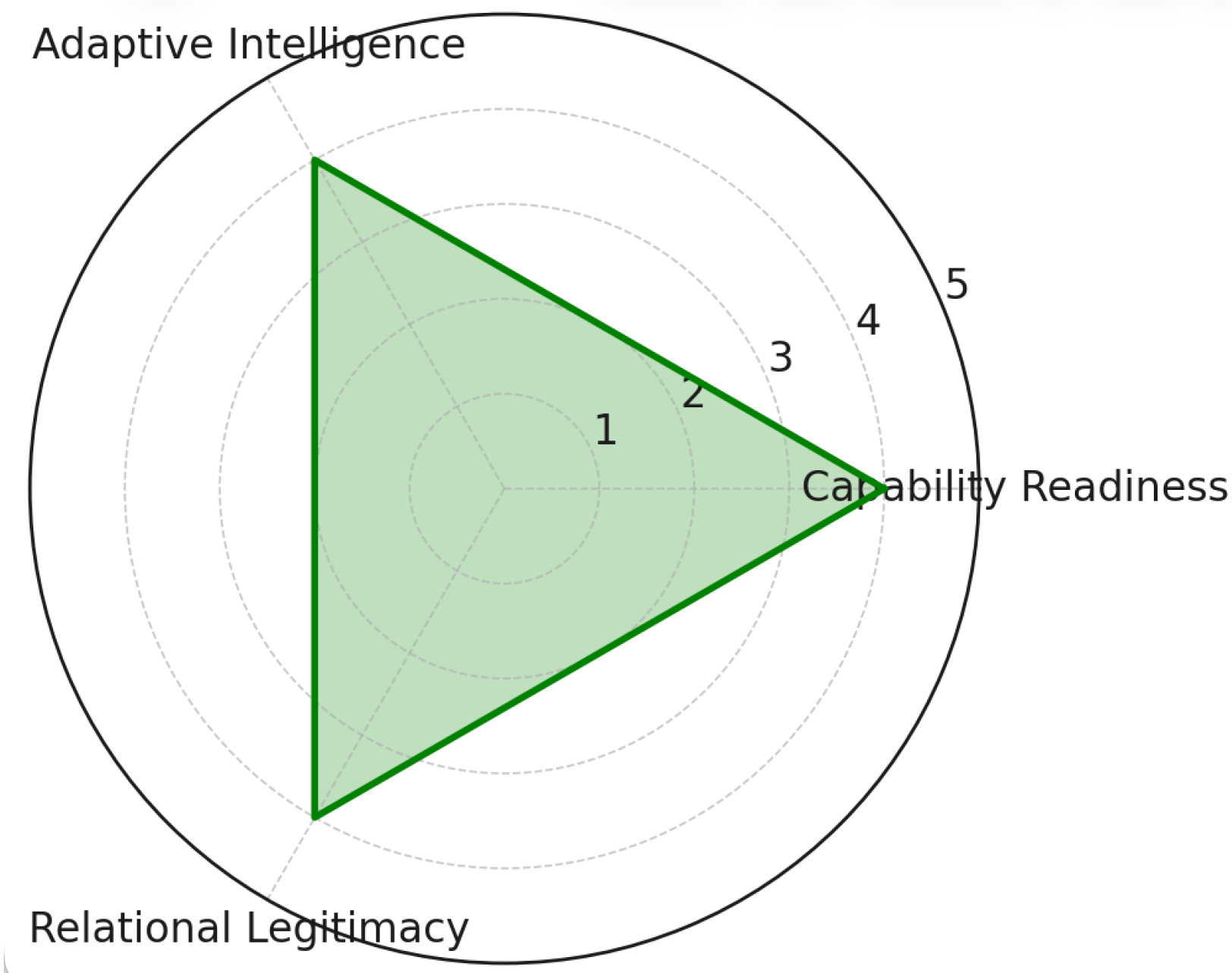
Capability Readiness (High): Strong in managing complex portfolios, programs, and frameworks to support large-scale change

Relational Legitimacy (Very High): Success requires deep trust and sponsorship across multiple executives; legitimacy is the critical enabler.

PMO Enabler Profile – EPMO

Adaptive Intelligence (High):

Needed to continuously align portfolios with changing strategies and external pressures.



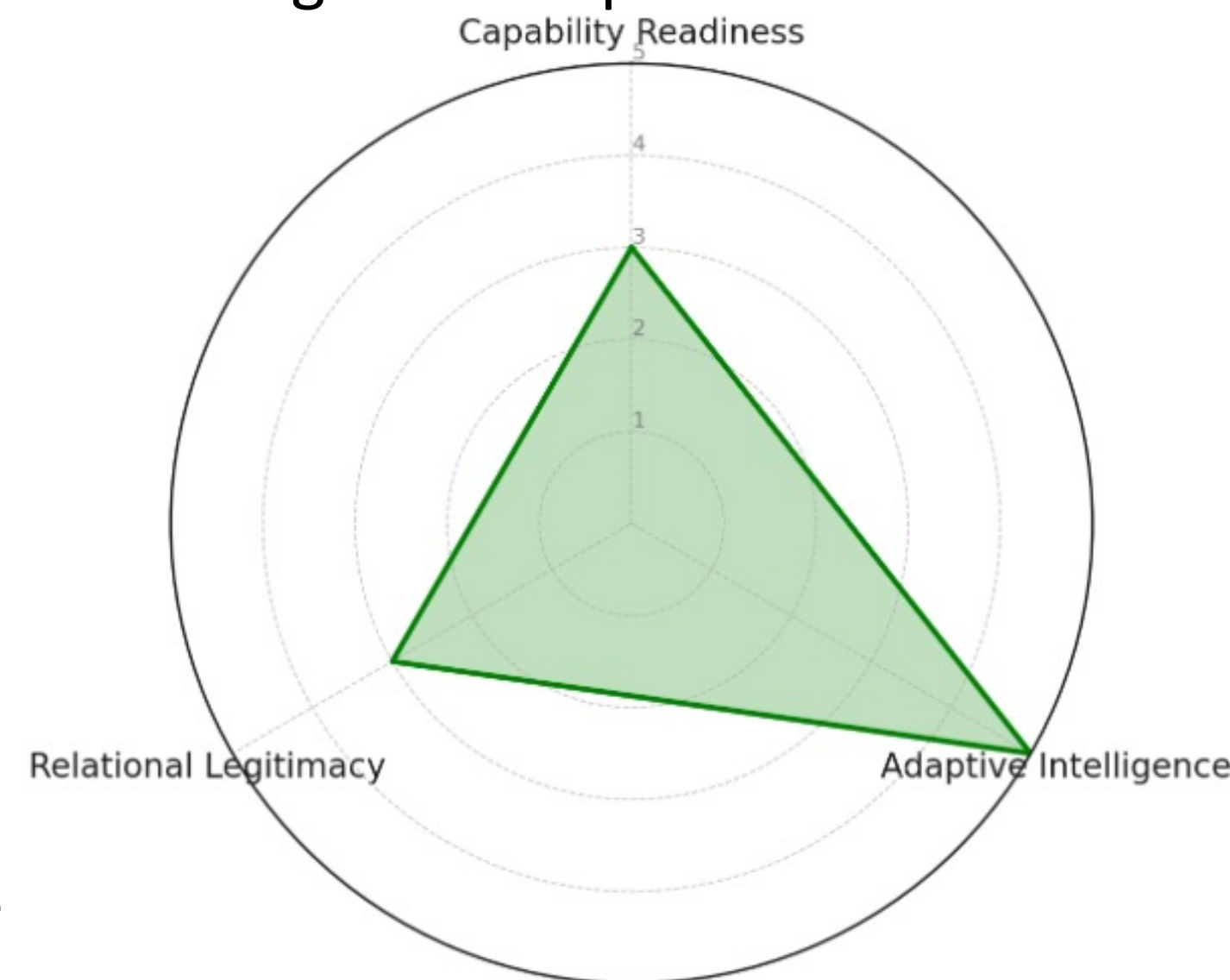
Capability Readiness (High): Solid capabilities in governance, portfolio alignment, and reporting—seen as a backbone for decision-making.

Relational Legitimacy (High): Operates at the enterprise level; trust and authority from executives are strong but must be constantly reinforced.

PMO Enabler Profile – Innovation PMO

Capability readiness (Medium): Innovation PMOs often operate outside rigid structures. They rely on experimentation, so they don't need fully developed processes or heavy governance at the start. This gives them flexibility but also means their service consistency is weaker compared to strategic or compliance PMOs.

Relational Legitimacy (Medium): They are often trusted by delivery teams and innovators but may face skepticism from senior executives. Until their results are institutionalized, they sit in the “prove it” zone rather than the “trusted advisor” zone.



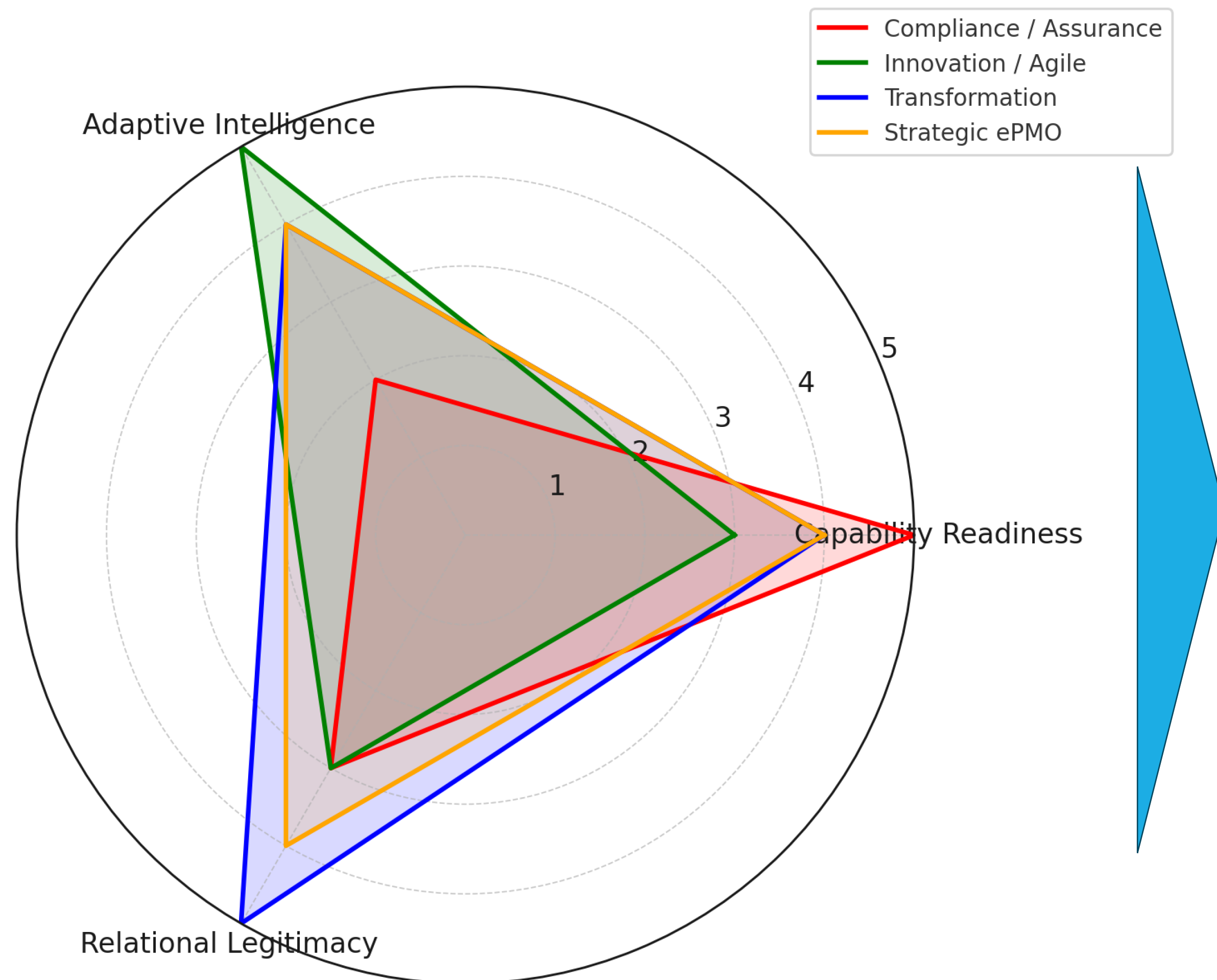
Adaptive intelligence (High) is their defining strength. They constantly adapt, experiment, and pivot. Their value comes from sensing opportunities and rapidly iterating solutions.

Rather than asking how mature a PMO is, ask:

- Does it have the right enabler balance for its mission?
- Is its impact curve aligned with the value the organization actually needs?

Comparison of PMO Enabler profiles

This framework moves PMO assessment beyond maturity scores and shows why PMOs perform differently and how to rebalance enablers to sustain impact.



This comparison reveals that PMOs achieve impact in different ways depending on their enabler balance

- Not all PMOs need the same strengths
- Trade-offs are visible
- Profiles explain performance differences

Strategic application. Leaders can use this lens to design or adjust PMOs deliberately, aligning enablers with organizational needs (e.g., innovation vs. stability).

— 06 Beyond Impact towards Value

- Impact as a bridge toward Value
- From Impact to Value: The Next Horizon

Impact as a bridge toward Value

- Measures enablement → impact (current scope)
- Impact = tangible, measurable outcomes of the PMO
- Value = strategic, longer-term perception of benefit



Impact today creates the conditions
for value tomorrow

From Impact to Value: The Next Horizon

Impact = what we can measure today (projects delivered, services provided, risks reduced)

Value = what organizations experience over time (trust, alignment, competitiveness)

Future direction: extending maturity model to bridge impact → value

For now: Impact is the closest proxy for value we can benchmark – PMO-MI from AIPMO achieves this



— 07 Takeaway and Q&A

Key Takeaways: PMO Maturity vs. Impact

- Maturity \neq impact \rightarrow PMOs don't mature, they adapt and evolve
- Traditional models mislead \rightarrow process-only views miss services, impact, and context
- Quadrants show legitimacy \rightarrow every PMO type can be valid depending on context
- Impact is non-linear \rightarrow PMOs follow different curves (early, late, steady)
- Enablement, not maturity, is the construct \rightarrow capability, adaptive intelligence, relational legitimacy
- Impact is the bridge \rightarrow sustained impact creates the conditions for long-term value

Discussion

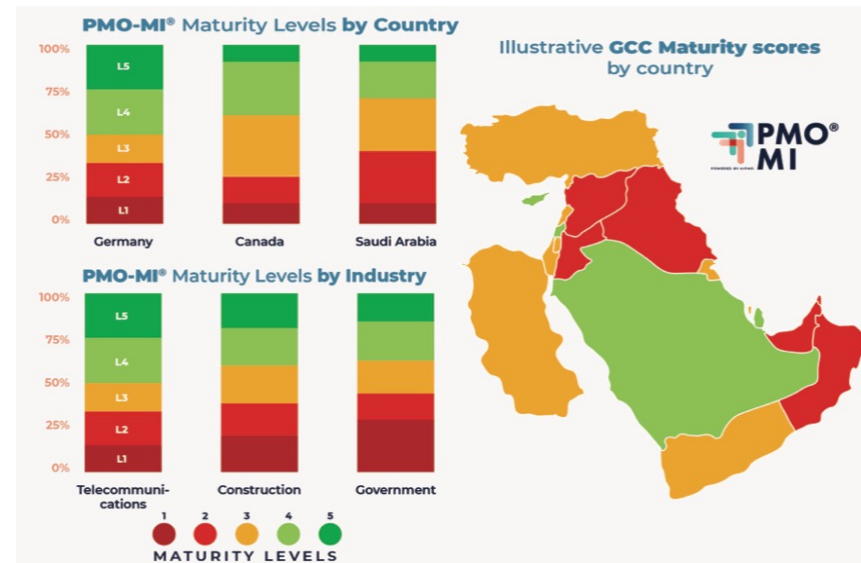


Question and Answers



— 08 Kakola Workshop, Turku

Peek into the 2-day workshop



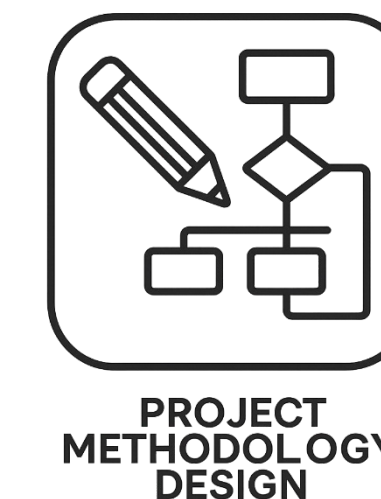
Maturity, Impact, and learn the latest on benchmarking, compare models. Benchmark your PMO against others in Finland. Compare Finland to Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and Iceland. Panel discussion with IPMA presidents and experts



Workshop: Mapping Tensions and Opportunity Areas in your organization using a new framework covering Strategy, PMO Management, Project Management, and Leadership – input morning, resulting in the workshop

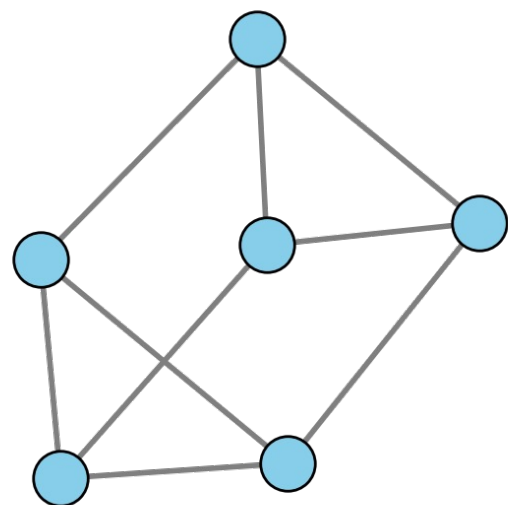


Present findings from each day



Workshop: Design your own project methodology, apply and build it - competition

Masterclass – peek into Poland's Masterclass



Complex projects, why they fail (based on research papers) and a mega project in KSA

Roles of PMOs in mega projects



Panels and EPMO and PMO observation teams

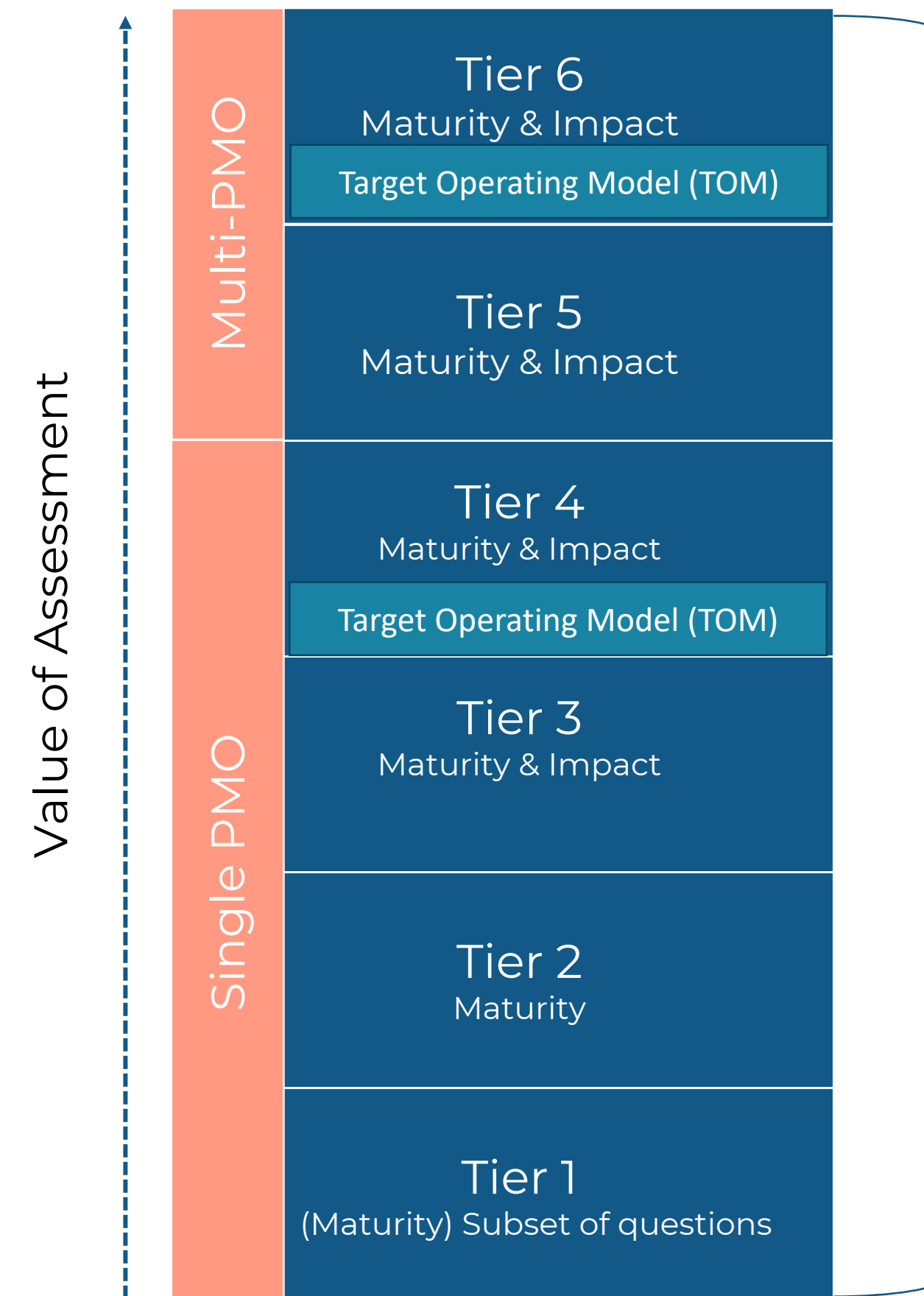
“As part of the workshop, five Nordic countries are participating in a joint PMO assessment to create a comparative snapshot of cross-country maturity.”

The **PMO-MI® Tier 1 Self-Assessment** offers PMO leaders a unique opportunity to evaluate their current performance and maturity level using a globally recognized framework. With over 250+ participants from around the world, this self-assessment is driving meaningful dialogue, peer learning, and strategic reflection in diverse industries.

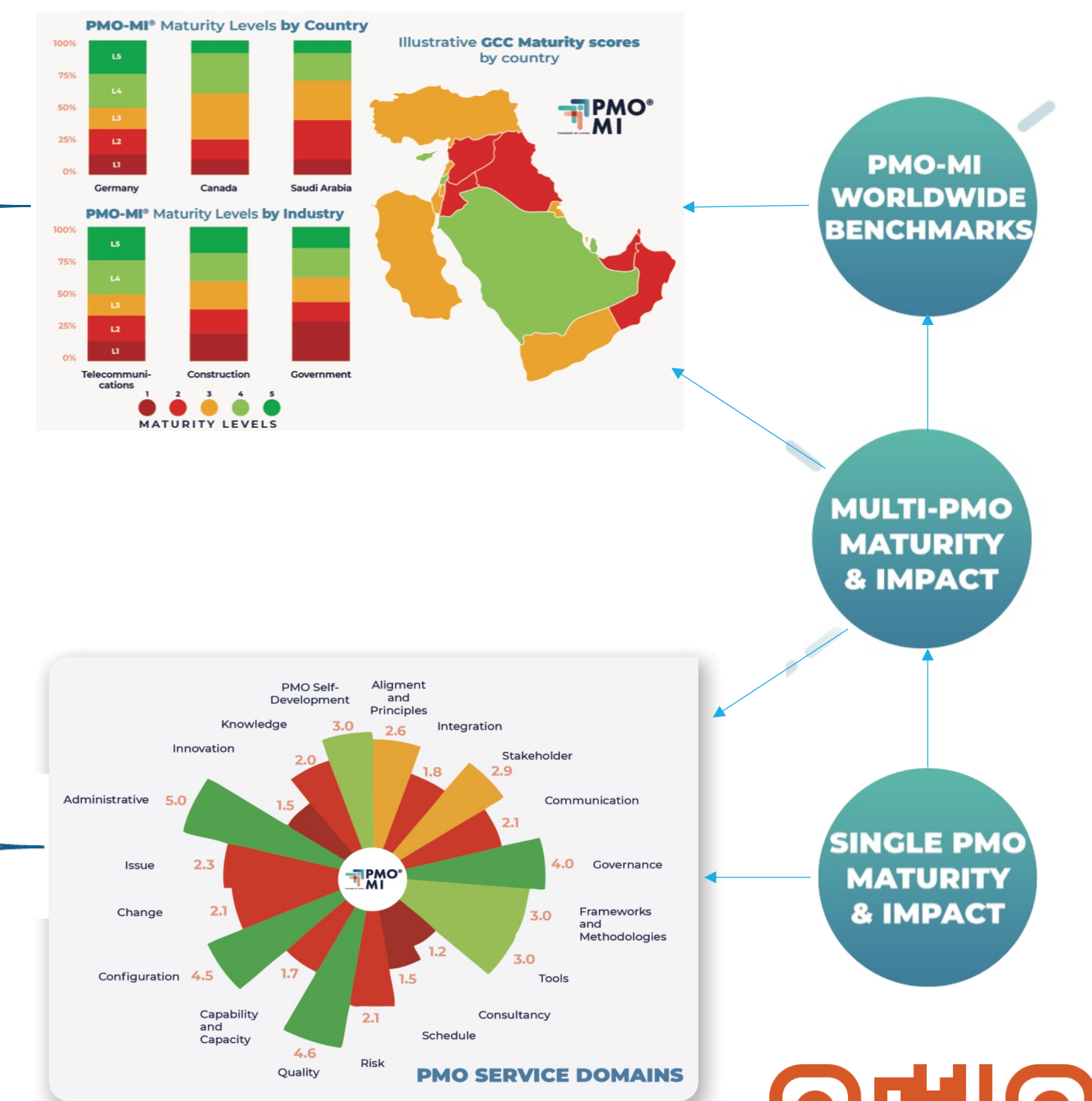
Why take the PMO-MI® Self-Assessment?

- ✅ **View of Your PMO Performance** - Assess your PMO against a structured framework that reflects real-world challenges and performance enablers.
- ✅ **Benchmark with Global Peers** - See how your PMO compares across sectors and regions, identifying strengths and areas for improvement using real data.
- ✅ **Catalyst for Strategic Dialogue** - Utilized by hundreds of PMO professionals worldwide, this tool sparks insightful discussions on purpose, value, and impact.
- ✅ **Foundation for PMO Transformation** - Results help prioritize efforts, align stakeholders, and pave the way for deeper engagement through Tiers 2 to 6 of the PMO-MI® model, including PMO Impact (Value)

PMO-MI® Assessment Tiers



From Self-Assessment to Strategic Insights



Begin Your Maturity & Impact Journey Today!

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