



The Intelligent Organization

Capability Guide: Factory Discovery

Find the Work Worth Changing.

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How to use this guide

Read Sections 1 through 3 for the executive view. Use Sections 4 through 7 to build and mature the capability. Use Section 8 to decide what to do next Monday morning.

01 Executive Brief

Discovery is the organization's ability to find, assess, and prioritize real opportunities for improvement, AI Use Cases, automation, and work redesign.

Discovery is the first Factory capability. Discovery finds. Design shapes. Delivery launches. Measurement proves. Scaling compounds. Discovery makes sure the Factory starts with work that matters, not with noise, enthusiasm, or tools looking for a problem.

Capability ID	F1 - Discovery
Domain	Factory
Plain-English test	Can leaders and teams see which work is worth improving first, why it matters, who owns it, whether it is ready, and what value could be proven?
Five behaviors	Listen. Frame. Screen. Prioritize. Decide.
Three outputs	Opportunity Intake. Factory Backlog. Discovery Brief.
Accountable owner	Factory Lead, Transformation Lead, business sponsor, process owner, or assigned improvement lead, working with Data, Technology, Risk, Governance, and People as needed.
First move	Start a simple intake and backlog for improvement ideas, AI Use Cases, automation opportunities, and work redesign candidates. Do not start with tools.

Core idea

Discovery is the organization's ability to find, assess, and prioritize real opportunities for improvement, AI Use Cases, automation, and work redesign. It turns scattered ideas into a practical backlog of work that is worth designing, testing, and proving.

2026.08 ALIGNMENT | Discovery in the refreshed TIO system

Primary outcome contribution: All three outcomes

- Find bounded outcomes and end-to-end work worth improving, not only attractive tools or isolated tasks.
- Assess intelligence value, automation potential, Enterprise Autonomy implications, stakeholder impact, readiness, owner, baseline, and evidence.
- Identify whether the current operation should evolve or the new operation should be established beside it.

Evidence at managed maturity: Discovery is defined, owned, applied consistently, measured in operation, reviewed through evidence, and improved without weakening trust, accountability, or Enterprise Autonomy.

First refresh move: Choose one end-to-end outcome with a visible owner, baseline, value hypothesis, and manageable transition boundary.

02**The Problem This Capability Solves**

Most organizations do not lack ideas. They lack a simple way to separate useful opportunities from noise.

AI and automation make this problem worse. Every leader, vendor, function, and frontline team can point to something that might be automated, summarized, predicted, or improved. Some ideas are valuable. Some are distractions. Some are attractive but not ready. Some would create risk, rework, or frustration if the organization moved too quickly.

Discovery solves this problem by giving the organization a disciplined first filter. It turns scattered ideas into a visible, prioritized backlog of candidates that are worth designing.

When Discovery is weak

- AI and automation ideas arrive randomly and compete for attention based on enthusiasm, seniority, vendor pressure, or noise.
- The organization starts with tools before it understands the work.
- Frontline pain is heard informally, but not translated into usable improvement candidates.
- Good ideas stall because no one owns intake, triage, prioritization, or next steps.
- Weak ideas consume scarce capacity because no one says no early enough.
- Leaders cannot explain why some opportunities are moving forward and others are waiting.
- Factory work begins without clear ownership, baseline, readiness, or value hypothesis.

03 What this Capability Is

Discovery is the practical ability to find the work worth changing. It looks for real operating pain, customer friction, risk exposure, wasted effort, slow decisions, rework, manual handoffs, and expert time being consumed by low-value tasks.

A mature Discovery capability is not a suggestion box. It uses strategy, frontline input, process evidence, data signals, customer feedback, risk insight, and leadership priorities to decide what should enter the Factory.

What Discovery owns

- Opportunity intake and triage.
- Initial AI Use Case and improvement candidate definition.
- Readiness screening for value, process, data, technology, risk, people, and sponsorship.
- A prioritized Factory backlog.
- Recommendation on which candidates move to Design, wait, get rejected, or need more evidence.

What Discovery does not own

- Enterprise strategy or investment posture. Strategy sets direction and priorities.
- Detailed solution design. Design owns the future-state workflow and use case brief.
- Technical architecture, platform selection, or integration design. Technology owns those capabilities.
- Data remediation work. Data owns ownership, quality, access, flow, and insight.
- Final funding decisions above agreed thresholds. Governance and Leadership own those decision rights.
- Change adoption and workforce planning. People owns adoption, skills, roles, and culture.

Five core behaviors

Behavior	What it means in practice
Listen	Collect signals from strategy, leaders, frontline teams, customers, risk, data, technology, and operating pain.
Frame	Turn a loose idea into a clear candidate with a problem, owner, affected work, expected value, and reason to care.
Screen	Check value, readiness, risk, data, technology, process, people impact, and sponsor strength before work moves forward.
Prioritize	Compare candidates against enterprise priorities, value potential, capacity, risk, readiness, and timing.
Decide	Move candidates to Design, defer them, reject them, or ask for more evidence. Record the decision and next step.

04 How the Capability Works

Discovery should be simple enough that people use it and disciplined enough that leaders can trust it. The goal is not to capture every possible idea. The goal is to find the work that is important enough and ready enough to design.

Simple operating model

Step	Plain-English question
1. Collect candidates	Where are people seeing pain, waste, risk, slow decisions, customer friction, manual effort, or work that could be improved?
2. Clarify the work	What work is affected, who does it, who owns it, what breaks today, and what would better look like?
3. State the value hypothesis	What value could be proven if this work improved, such as time saved, cost avoided, risk reduced, revenue protected, service improved, or capacity released?
4. Screen readiness	Is the process understood, is data available, is technology feasible, is risk manageable, and is there a sponsor?
5. Prioritize the backlog	Which candidates best fit strategy, value, readiness, risk, and capacity?
6. Decide next step	Should this move to Design, wait, be rejected, or return for more evidence?
7. Record the decision	Is the decision visible, owned, and connected to the Factory backlog?

Discovery rule

Start with work, not tools. A good Discovery process does not ask, "Where can we use AI?" first. It asks, "Which work is painful, valuable, risky, slow, wasteful, or important enough to improve?"

Boundary with Design

Discovery decides whether a candidate is worth designing. Design decides how the work should change. Discovery should not over-design the solution. It should give Design enough clarity to start well.

05 Outputs, Evidence, and Measures

Discovery should produce a small number of useful outputs. The goal is to make improvement candidates visible, comparable, and ready for decision.

Output	Purpose	Owner	Good enough standard
Opportunity Intake	A simple way to capture candidates from strategy, operations, customers, risk, data, technology, and frontline work.	Factory Lead or improvement lead	Short, easy to use, includes problem, owner, affected work, value hypothesis, readiness, and next step.
Factory Backlog	A visible list of accepted, deferred, rejected, and waiting candidates.	Factory Lead	Prioritized, current, reviewed regularly, and connected to strategy, capacity, value, risk, and ownership.
Discovery Brief	A concise brief for candidates that should move to Design.	Candidate owner with Factory support	Explains the pain, work affected, sponsor, expected value, readiness, risks, data needs, and reason to proceed.

Evidence that the capability exists

- There is a documented intake method for improvement, AI Use Case, automation, and work redesign candidates.
- The organization maintains a current Factory backlog.
- Candidates have named owners, sponsors, value hypotheses, and readiness notes.
- Prioritization criteria are visible and used.
- Accepted, deferred, rejected, and waiting candidates are recorded.
- Candidates entering Design have a short Discovery Brief.

Useful measures

- Number of candidates captured by source, function, and priority.
- Percentage of candidates with named owner, sponsor, value hypothesis, and readiness screen.
- Percentage of candidates accepted, deferred, rejected, or moved to Design.
- Average time from intake to triage decision.
- Share of backlog linked to strategic priorities, customer pain, risk reduction, productivity, or growth.
- Capacity demand created by the backlog compared with available Factory capacity.
- Percentage of candidates entering Design with sufficient data, process, technology, risk, and people readiness.

06

Maturity: 0 to 5

Level	What it looks like	Evidence	Next move
0 - Absent	Ideas appear randomly or not at all. There is no visible intake, backlog, triage, or prioritization.	No backlog, no intake, no ownership, no decision record.	Start a simple intake and list the most obvious pain points and candidates.
1 - Initial	Some leaders or teams collect ideas, but the process depends on individuals and informal judgment.	Local lists, informal discussions, ad hoc pilots, unclear criteria.	Create common intake fields and a basic triage rhythm.
2 - Repeatable	There is a basic intake method, backlog, and first-pass screen for value, readiness, risk, and ownership.	Backlog, simple prioritization criteria, named sponsors for active candidates.	Connect backlog review to strategy, capacity, Governance, Risk, Data, Technology, and People input.
3 - Defined	Discovery is documented, owned, communicated, and used consistently across priority areas.	Standard intake, Discovery Briefs, triage records, accepted/deferred/rejected decisions.	Measure flow, quality, conversion to Design, and reasons candidates stop or wait.
4 - Managed	Discovery is measured and actively managed as part of the enterprise transformation system.	Backlog metrics, value categories, decision cycle times, readiness trends, capacity signals.	Use evidence to improve criteria, capacity planning, and portfolio choices.
5 - Optimized	Discovery continuously improves and helps the organization find better work faster.	High-quality candidates, clear stop decisions, reusable patterns, better value realization.	Use learning from Measurement and Scaling to improve how future candidates are found and screened.

07**How to Build and Mature the Capability**

Start small. Discovery does not need a large process or complex tool. It needs a clear owner, a simple intake, a visible backlog, practical screening criteria, and a regular decision rhythm.

Minimum viable Discovery capability

- A named Factory Lead or improvement lead.
- A simple intake form for AI Use Cases, automation ideas, and work redesign opportunities.
- A Factory backlog that shows accepted, deferred, rejected, and waiting candidates.
- Basic prioritization criteria for strategic fit, value, readiness, risk, capacity, and sponsorship.
- A short Discovery Brief for candidates moving to Design.
- A regular backlog review with the right business, technology, data, risk, people, and governance input.

First 30 days

- Name the owner of Discovery.
- Create a simple intake and backlog.
- Collect the first 10 to 20 candidates from leaders, frontline teams, customer pain, risk, data, technology, and current manual work.
- Screen each candidate for problem clarity, owner, value hypothesis, readiness, risk, and sponsorship.
- Choose a small number of candidates to move to Design.

First 90 days

- Run Discovery in two or three priority areas connected to strategy.
- Standardize the Discovery Brief.
- Create a regular backlog review cadence.
- Track reasons candidates are accepted, deferred, rejected, or waiting.
- Connect Discovery to Governance decision rights, Risk screening, Data readiness, Technology feasibility, and People impacts.

What not to build too early

- A large innovation portal before the organization has a real decision rhythm.
- A complicated scoring model that hides judgment instead of improving it.
- AI pilot selection based only on excitement or vendor demos.
- A backlog full of ideas without owners, value hypotheses, or readiness notes.
- Discovery that becomes a suggestion box with no decisions.

08 TSLA Support and First Moves

The organization must own Discovery. TSLA can help design the method, facilitate early scans, build the backlog, teach the screening logic, and support leaders as they decide what should enter the Factory.

Where TSLA can help

- AI Use Case Opportunity Scan.
- Factory Backlog Design Workshop.
- Opportunity Prioritization Scorecard.
- Discovery Brief template.
- Executive Thought-Partnership for AI Use Case and improvement selection.
- Sector-specific candidate library where useful.
- Backlog review facilitation and decision support.

Monday morning moves

- Name the Discovery owner.
- Create a simple intake and backlog.
- Ask leaders and frontline teams where work is slow, manual, risky, frustrating, or important.
- Capture the first set of candidates without debating tools.
- Screen for value, readiness, ownership, risk, and sponsorship.
- Select the first candidates to move into Design.
- Record what was accepted, deferred, rejected, and why.

Closing thought

Discovery protects the Factory from random work. It helps the organization spend scarce time, money, attention, and trust on the work most worth changing.

A**Source Note**

This guide is part of the TIO Library. It is aligned to the TIO Framework, the TIO Factory Capability Domain Master, the TIO Capability Model and Maturity Assessment Tool, and the approved 8-section Capability Guide structure used across the TIO Library. It translates the Factory Discovery capability into practical guidance for leaders and practitioners.

It is written as a practical executive guide. It is not a technical implementation standard, legal opinion, privacy assessment, cybersecurity review, or professional assurance report. Organizations should apply their own policies, obligations, accountabilities, and professional review where required.