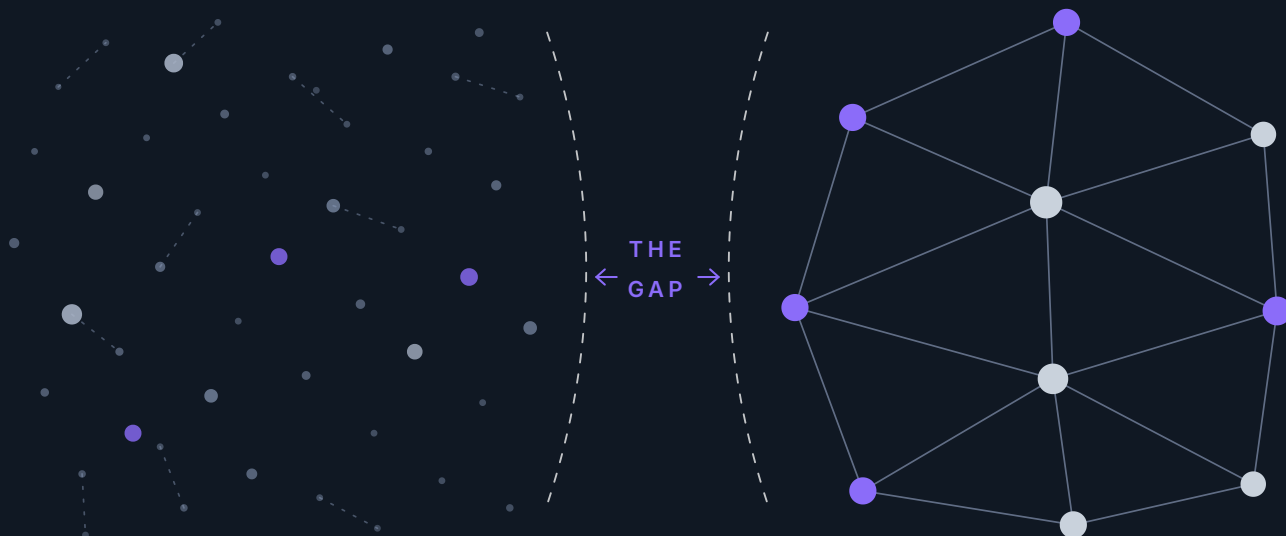


The Information **Gap** in Capture

Why better evidence creates better win strategies.



FOR

Capture, Business Development and
Growth Leadership



READING TIME

12 minutes



WRITTEN BY

Ann Cronin, VisibleThread

Four shifts reshaping modern capture

Proposal excellence remains important. It is no longer sufficient.

01	Capture has matured. Execution hasn't.	06
	Methodology is settled. Consistency is not.	
02	The constraint is fragmented information.	08
	Not process. Not effort. Not talent.	
03	Better evidence creates better decisions.	11
	Judgment, supported rather than replaced.	
04	Capture is becoming a business capability.	16
	A leadership discipline, not a specialist function.	
	Executive self-assessment	18
	Eight questions and a maturity read-out.	

Competitive advantage is rarely created when the proposal is written. It is created much earlier, when organizations decide where to compete.

Better proposals rarely rescue poor capture.

Organizations have invested heavily in proposal excellence. Teams are more capable, reviews more disciplined, technology more able. Yet none of it solves the harder problem: deciding where to compete, and how to win, before the proposal is written.



37%

of organizational
revenue is influenced by
competitive RFPs.

APMP BENCHMARKS REPORT

WHAT IT MEANS

When more than a third of revenue depends on competitive pursuits, decision quality stops being an operational concern. It becomes a strategic one.

Customer intelligence, procurement insight, competitive analysis and institutional knowledge are no longer inputs into capture. They are the foundation of better decisions.

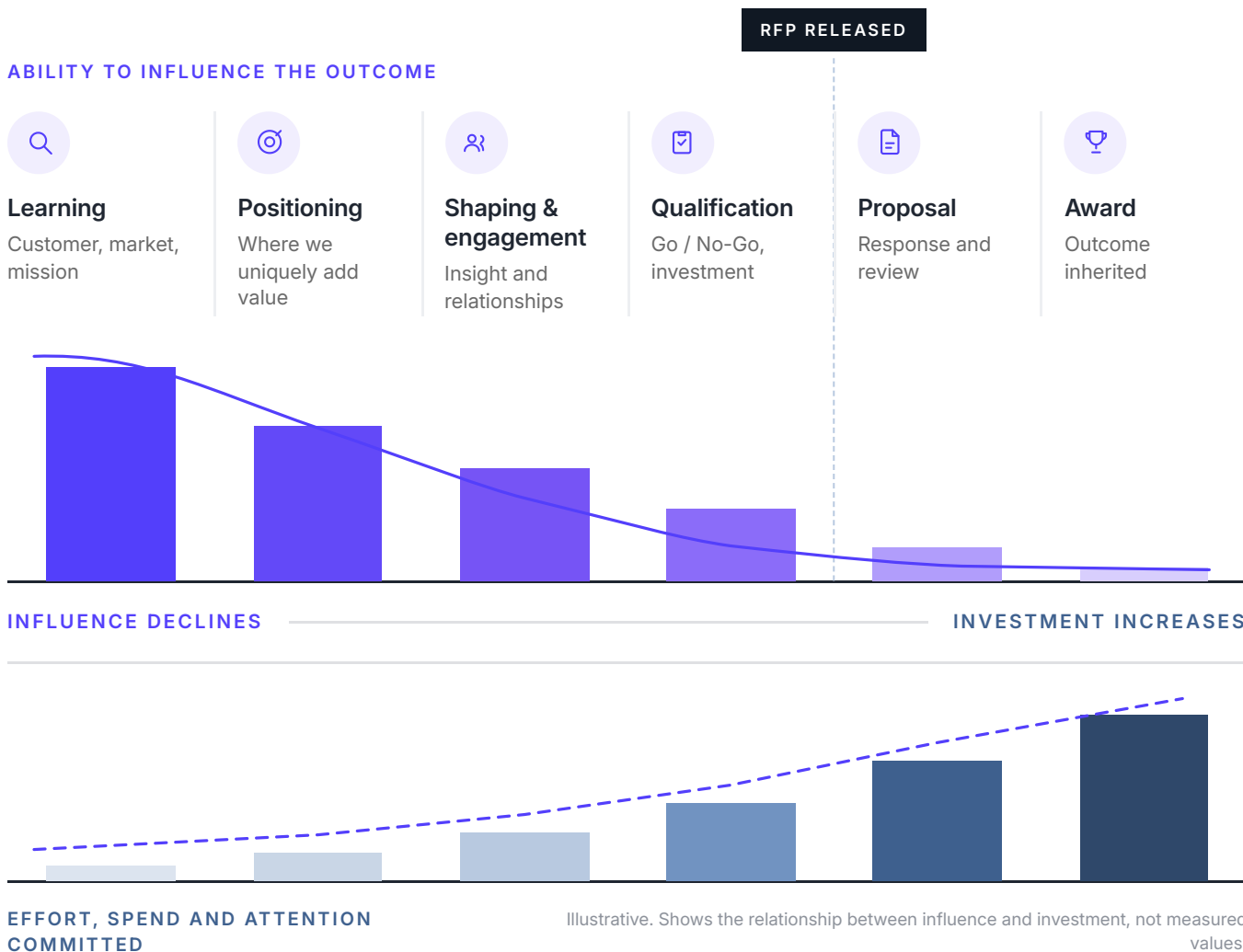
Reduce uncertainty earlier

Qualify with greater confidence

Focus resources where they win

Influence is highest long before the work becomes visible.

By the time an RFP reaches the proposal team, the decisions that shape the outcome have already been made.



MOST ORGANIZATIONS

invest where the work is most visible.



STRONG CAPTURE ORGANIZATIONS

invest where the influence is greatest.

If your organization doubled the quality of every proposal tomorrow, would your win rate improve?

Or would the biggest gains come from making better decisions before the proposal exists?

Capture is the difference between pursuing opportunities and positioning for opportunities.

Georgina Wilson Ayilara

Capture Practitioner and Author, The Current State of UK Capture (APMP UK)

01

Capture has matured. Execution hasn't.

Few organizations still question the value of capture. Most have defined methodologies, governance and review gates. Consistent execution remains uncommon.

The obstacle is rarely the process. It is the way information moves through the organization.

83%

of teams now use a formal Go/No-Go process, up from 77% the previous year.

APMP 2025 BENCHMARKS

So the issue isn't process. The question is whether those qualification decisions are informed by complete, trusted evidence.

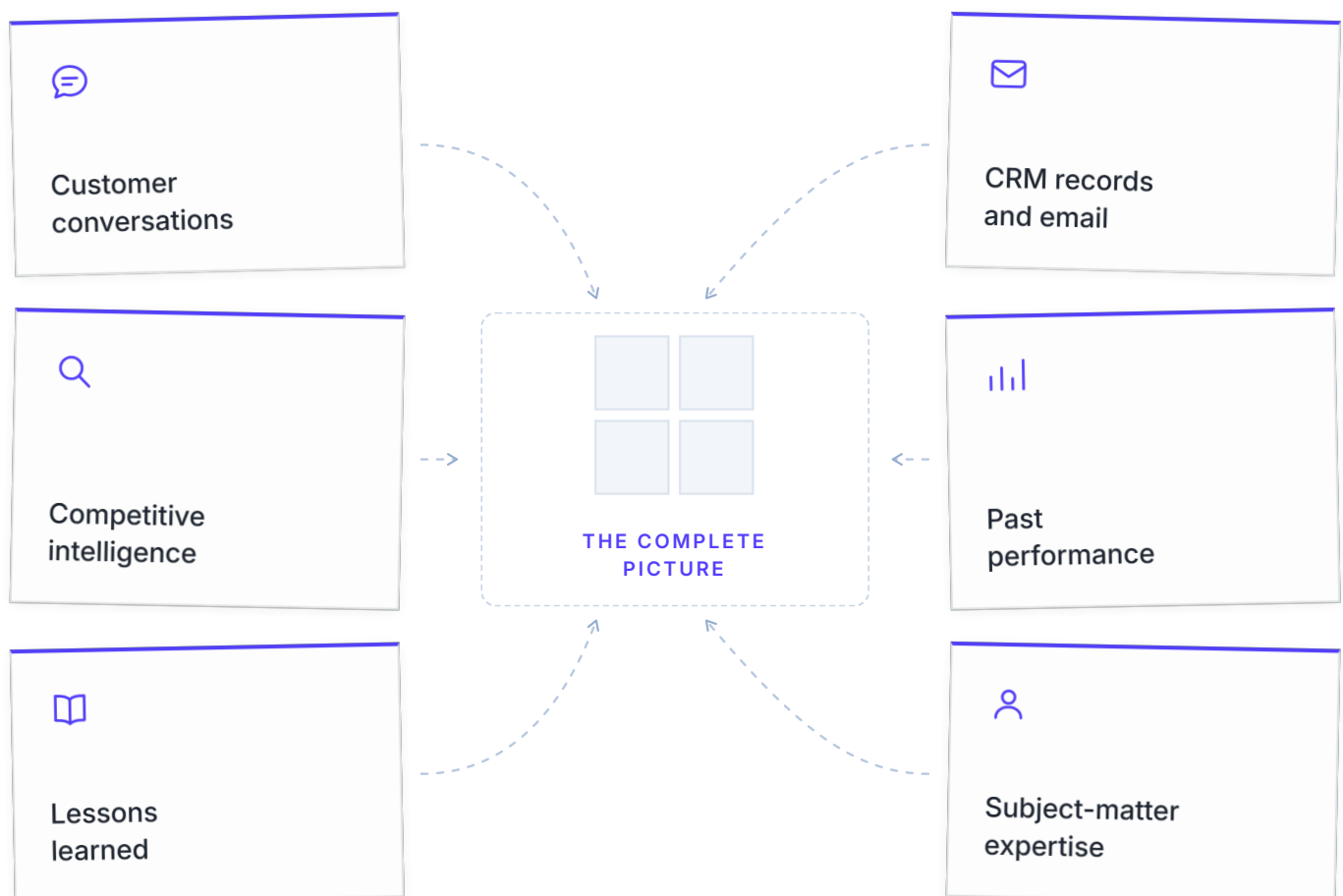
WHERE EXECUTION BREAKS DOWN

Knowledge sits with people Customer understanding is held by individuals, not the organization.	Insight expires Competitive intelligence is gathered for one pursuit, then forgotten.	Versions diverge Decisions get made from different copies of the same information.
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Adding another review gate or template rarely changes this. Execution improves when evidence is shared **before** work begins, not when process is added after it.

The organization possesses the pieces. It struggles to assemble the picture.

Business development, capture and proposal teams revisit conversations, rebuild context and revalidate assumptions the organization already understood. Time is consumed recovering what it already knows.

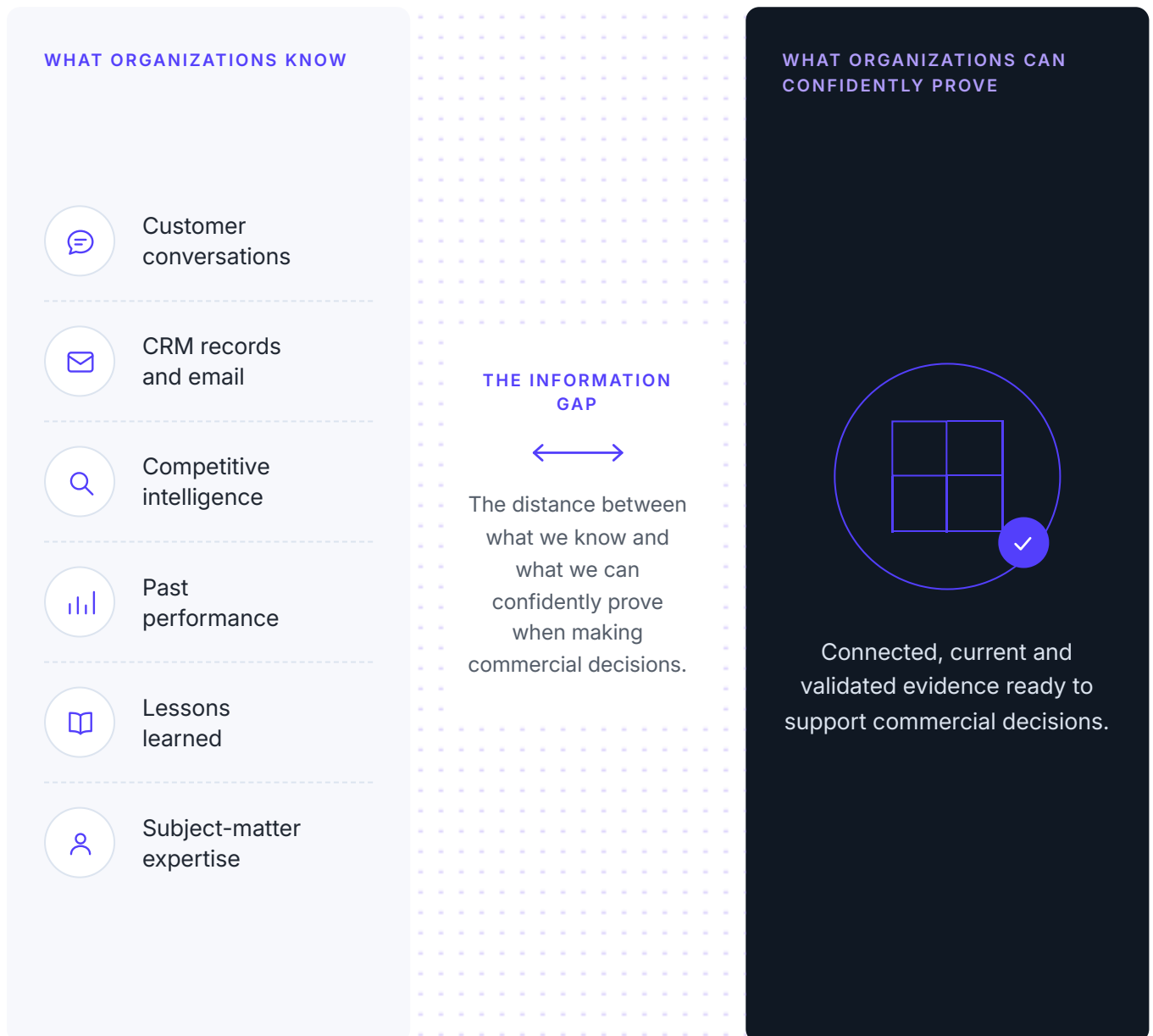


DIFFICULT TO ASSEMBLE. HARD TO SEE. EASY TO OVERLOOK.

02

The Information Gap

The greatest constraint on capture is fragmented information, not methodology.



Until the gap is closed, teams reach different conclusions, qualify with less confidence and invest with greater risk.



Close the gap. Improve the decisions. Increase the likelihood of winning.

The strongest organizations don't collect more.

They reduce uncertainty by turning information into evidence that is shared, current and trusted.

01 **Shared across functions**

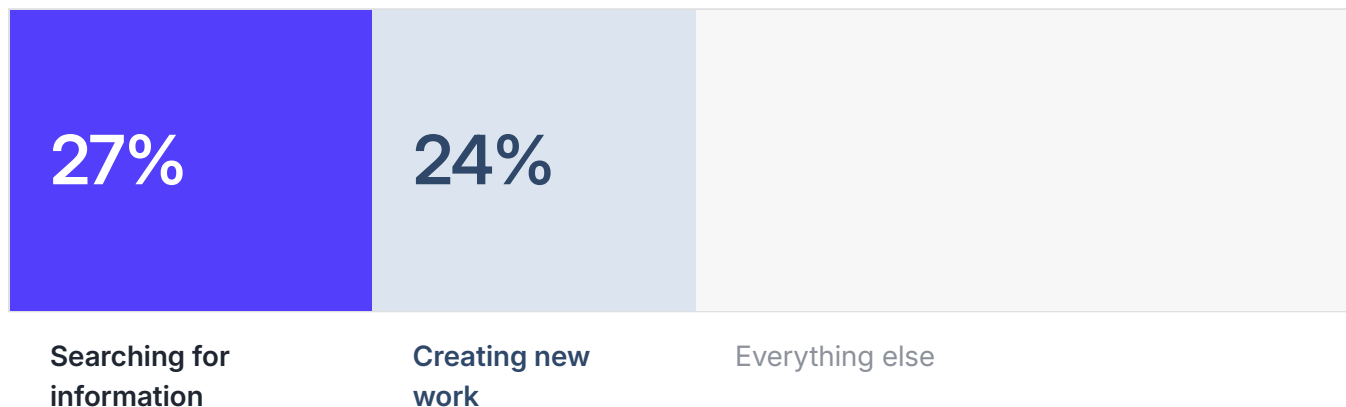
02 **Current, not remembered**

03 **Traceable to a source**

04 **Tested against alternatives**

05 **Reusable next pursuit**

More of the workday is spent searching than creating.



MICROSOFT WORK TREND INDEX · SHARE OF THE AVERAGE WORKDAY

Capture organizations feel this acutely. Critical knowledge is distributed across CRM systems, SharePoint sites, proposal repositories, email and the memory of individual experts. Before a team can decide, it has to reconstruct the context from disconnected sources.

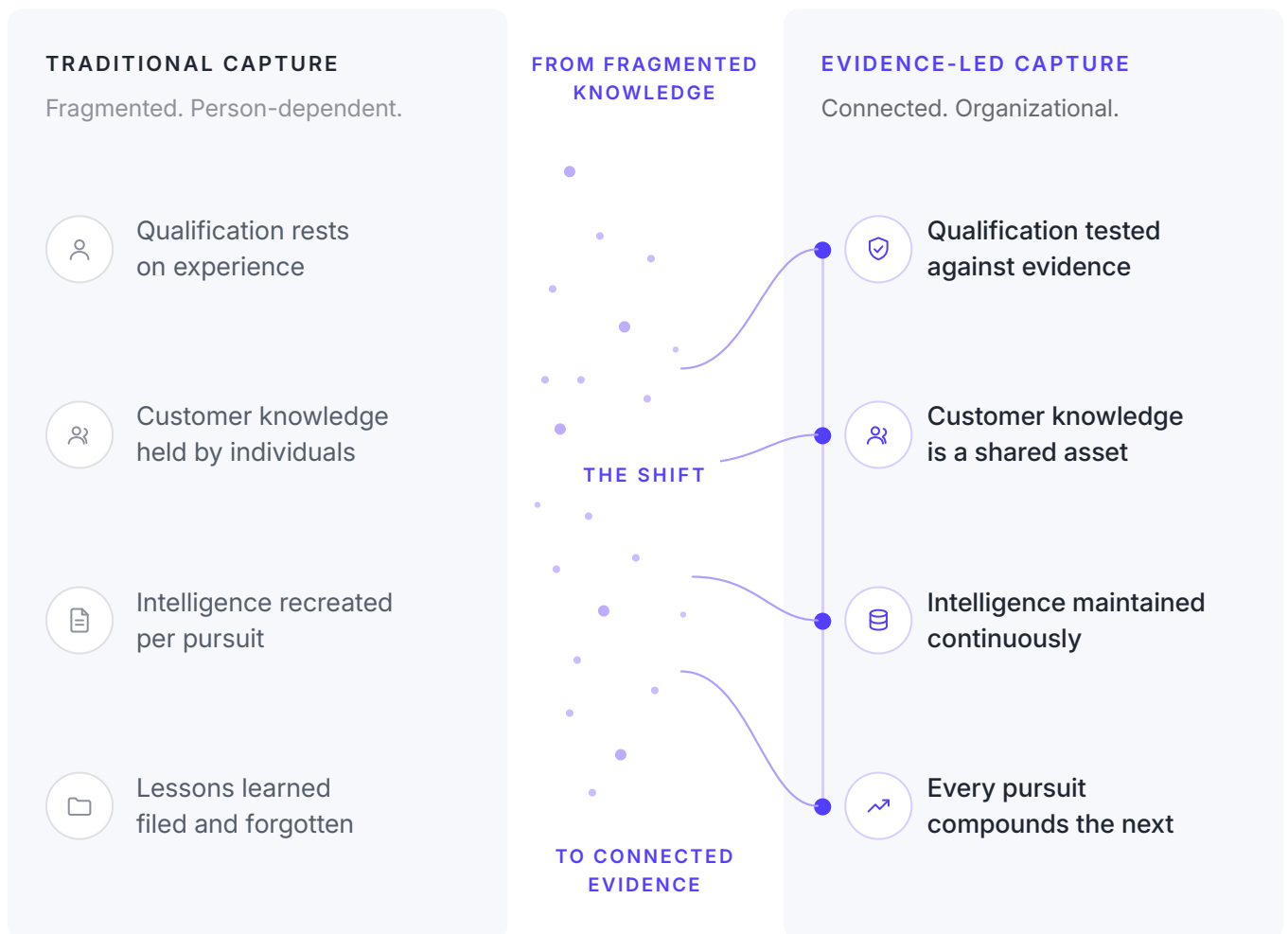
When evidence is hard to find, organizations lean harder on assumption. Expertise stays essential, but decisions are stronger when judgment is supported.

This is where the Information Gap stops being an inconvenience and becomes a commercial risk.

03

Evidence-led capture

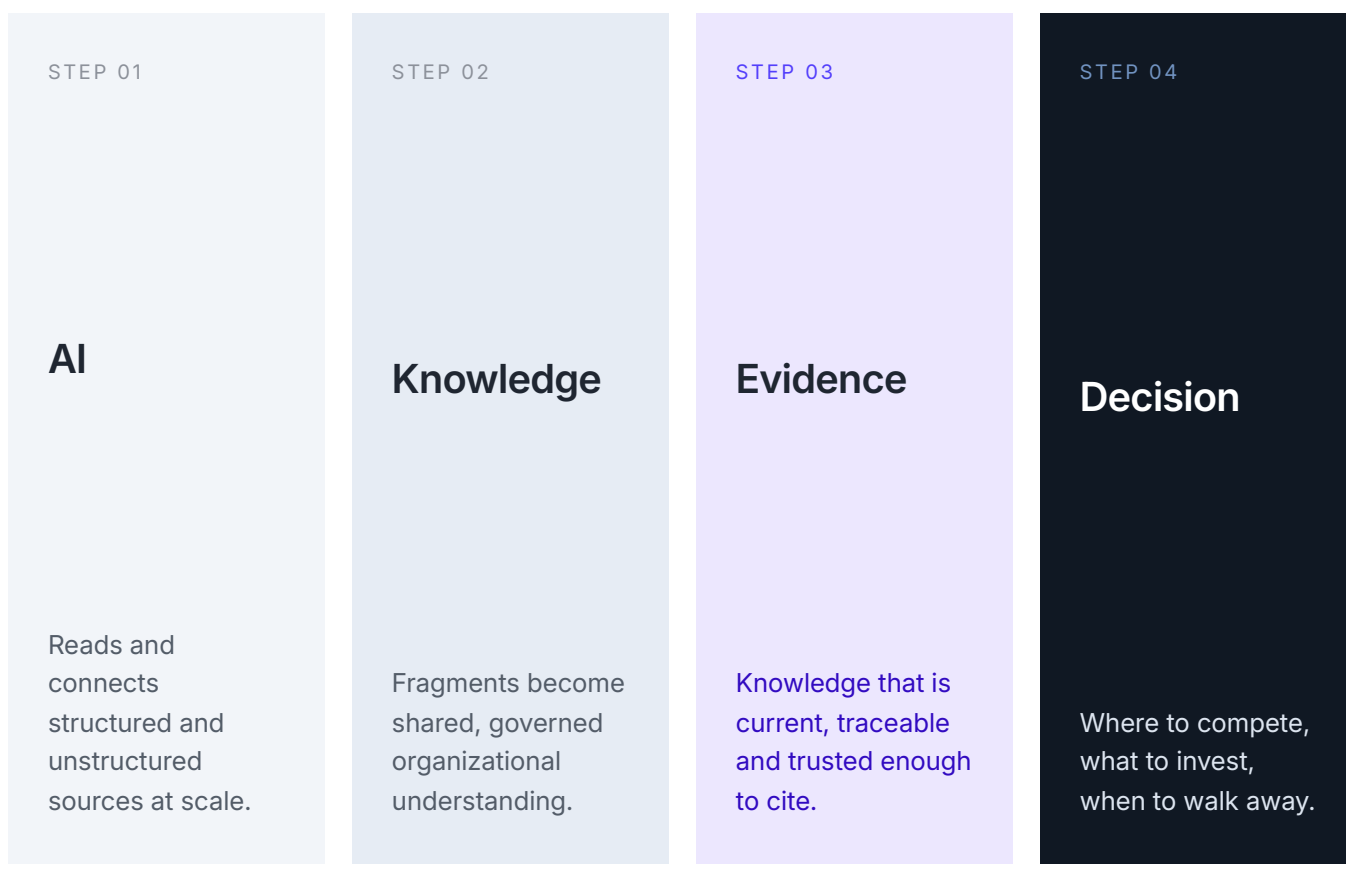
Capture has always relied on judgment. Evidence doesn't replace it. It makes it consistent, transparent and repeatable.



Evidence-led capture strengthens judgment by making it more consistent, transparent and repeatable.

The objective is not to automate capture. It is to augment it.

AI earns its place in capture when it shortens the distance between what the organization holds and what a leader can act on.



68%

of proposal teams now use generative AI, double the previous year.

APMP BENCHMARKS

Adoption is no longer the differentiator. What separates organizations is whether AI is pointed at producing content, or at producing evidence.

Progress comes from combining experienced people, disciplined process and intelligent technology, so evidence is available when the decision is made.

Five traits of organizations that close the gap.

01

Information becomes organizational knowledge

Customer insight, competitive intelligence and lessons learned are captured, governed and shared across the business rather than held by individuals.

02

Evidence replaces assumption

Qualification, investment and pursuit decisions are supported by verifiable evidence, improving consistency and reducing reliance on partial information.

03

Evidence becomes accessible

AI, enterprise search and document intelligence connect information across the organization, making trusted evidence easier to find, validate and apply to commercial decisions.

04

Decisions become repeatable

Critical commercial decisions follow consistent, evidence-led practices that hold across programs, business units and pursuits.

05

Every pursuit strengthens the next

Knowledge generated in one pursuit becomes an asset for the next, compounding organizational capability over time.

The goal is not more information. It is evidence people can use.

Put evidence behind every Go/No-Go.

Before a pursuit is approved, require a short set of critical claims to be evidenced, sourced and confidence-rated.

Most organizations already have a qualification process. The gap is often what sits behind the decision. An evidence standard makes the basis for the decision visible before resources are committed.

THE EVIDENCE STANDARD			SOURCE	DATE	CONF.
Every claim needs a source, a date and a confidence level.					
01	Customer priority is real	Recent customer or procurement evidence confirming the priority.			
02	Incumbent is vulnerable	Current evidence showing an exploitable weakness.			
03	Our differentiation matters	Evidence that the customer values our differentiator.			
04	Past performance is relevant	Comparable, evaluator-recognizable experience.			
05	Price-to-win is credible	Defensible market, contract, competitor or customer basis.			
06	We have enough customer access	Evidence of meaningful engagement and influence.			

THE RULE

No evidence means the claim is unresolved. An unresolved critical claim should change the Go/No-Go conversation.

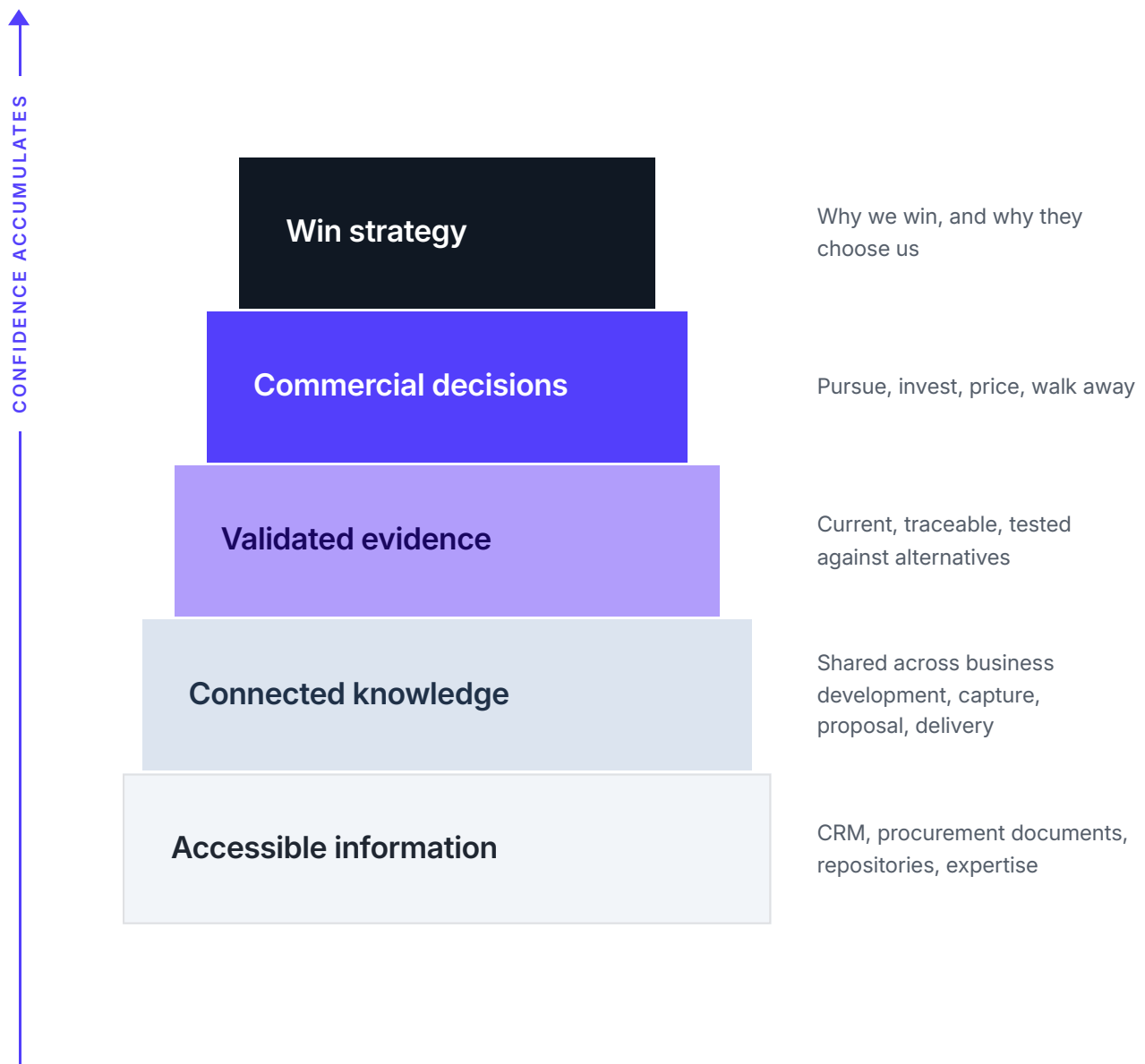
THE FAILURE MODE

The standard becomes another checklist when teams record "high confidence" without challenging the source, age or quality of the evidence.

A Go/No-Go decision should show not only what you believe, but what you can prove.

Confidence is cumulative. It cannot be added late.

Weak evidence at the foundation cannot be compensated for by stronger strategy later in the pursuit.



Read it upward

Each layer can only be as strong as the one beneath it.

Diagnose downward

A weak win strategy is usually an evidence problem two layers below.

The takeaway

A win strategy can never exceed the quality of the evidence beneath it.

04

Capture is becoming a business capability.

The most important capture decisions are no longer operational. They are commercial, and they belong in executive conversations.

HOW SUCCESS WAS MEASURED

Pursuits entered.
Capture plans
completed.



HOW IT IS MEASURED NOW

**The quality of
investment decisions
made before resources
are committed.**

EVERY PURSUIT COMMITS FIVE SCARCE RESOURCES

Scarce budget

Proposal
capacity

Technical
expertise

Executive
attention

Customer access

Pursuing the wrong bid doesn't simply reduce the chance of winning. It prevents the organization from investing where its competitive position is stronger.

**The most valuable capture decision is often
deciding not to pursue an opportunity.**

Three stages of capture maturity.

Most organizations have a defined capture process. Fewer have a repeatable way of making commercial decisions.

STAGE 01

Reactive



Capture is driven by individual experience and pursuit deadlines. Information is fragmented and qualification depends heavily on judgment.

Signature: the answer depends on who is in the room.

STAGE 02

Developing



Processes are established, but evidence is not shared consistently. Decisions are improving; execution still varies between pursuits.

Signature: good practice exists, unevenly.

STAGE 03

Evidence-led



Decisions are supported by shared evidence, cross-functional collaboration and consistent qualification. Capture is an organizational capability.

Signature: the answer is the same whoever asks.



KNOWLEDGE HELD BY PEOPLE

KNOWLEDGE HELD BY THE ORGANIZATION

Maturity is not measured by how much process exists. It is measured by how consistently evidence informs the decision.

How mature is your capture capability?

HOW TO USE THIS ASSESSMENT

- 1 Answer each question
- 2 Score 1-3
- 3 Add your total

- 1 Rarely
- 2 Sometimes
- 3 Consistently

	QUESTION	SCORE		
01	Can you find critical customer and competitive intelligence without asking who owns it?	1	2	3
02	Can your team explain why a pursuit is qualified using the same evidence?	1	2	3
03	Can you trace a major capture assumption back to its source?	1	2	3
04	Can someone new to the pursuit understand the opportunity without a lengthy handover?	1	2	3
05	Can you tell which intelligence is current and which is stale?	1	2	3
06	Do lessons from previous pursuits change how you qualify the next one?	1	2	3
07	Can you explain why you are pursuing an opportunity without relying on individual memory?	1	2	3
08	Would the answer to these questions remain the same if your most experienced Capture Director left tomorrow?	1	2	3

YOUR SCORE

/ 24

WHAT YOUR SCORE MEANS

8-13

Reactive

Information is fragmented and decisions depend heavily on individuals.

14-19

Developing

Some knowledge is shared and repeatable, but evidence is inconsistent.

20-24

Evidence-led

Critical knowledge is accessible, traceable and used consistently in decisions.

Your score is a starting point. The gaps between your answers show where to focus first.

If your most experienced Capture Director left tomorrow, would your organization lose expertise, or retain the evidence that expertise was built on?

The answer tells you where your capture capability actually lives.

Confidence is earned upstream, not assumed downstream.

By the time a proposal reaches final review, the decisions that matter have been made. The opportunity has been qualified, or not. The customer has been understood, or misunderstood. Assumptions have been tested, or left alone.

The proposal is simply the visible outcome of those earlier decisions.

Organizations that outperform are not pursuing more opportunities or writing longer proposals. They are reducing uncertainty earlier.

They know which opportunities deserve investment, where they can genuinely differentiate, and what evidence supports their strategy.

SHIFT 01 Capture has matured. Execution hasn't.	SHIFT 02 The constraint is fragmented information.	SHIFT 03 Better evidence creates better decisions.	SHIFT 04 Capture is becoming a business capability.
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THE TAKEAWAY

Closing the Information Gap is not about finding more information. It is about making the information you already have usable, trusted and actionable.



CLOSING THE INFORMATION GAP ACROSS THE RFP LIFECYCLE

Winning organizations make better commercial decisions because they begin with better evidence.

VisibleThread helps organizations close the Information Gap across the RFP lifecycle, from opportunity identification and capture through proposal development and review. By connecting customer insight, procurement documents, proposal content and organizational knowledge, teams can make more confident commercial decisions based on evidence they can trust.

Connect information

Bring together customer knowledge, procurement documents, proposal content and past performance from across the systems your teams already use.

Surface trusted evidence

Analyze opportunities, connect related information and give teams evidence that is current, traceable and easy to validate before making commercial decisions.

Improve decisions across the RFP lifecycle

Support stronger Go/No-Go decisions, better capture strategies and higher-quality proposals by giving business development, capture and proposal teams access to the same trusted evidence.

CONTINUE THE CONVERSATION

Where is your Information Gap widest?

A 30-minute conversation with our team can help identify where fragmented information is creating uncertainty across your RFP lifecycle, and where better evidence can improve qualification, collaboration and decision-making.

[Talk to VisibleThread](#)

visiblethread.com