

The Value of Innovation

**Translating from the Language of Innovation
to the Language of the Business**

Where I'm coming from...

Strategy



Insights



Innovation Methodologies



**Breakthrough
Innovation**



**Open
Innovation**



**Portfolio
Transformation**



**New & Core
Brand
Innovation**



**Pharma &
Biotech**



**Food Tech,
CPG &
Packaging**

FERRERO



PEPSICO




themindco

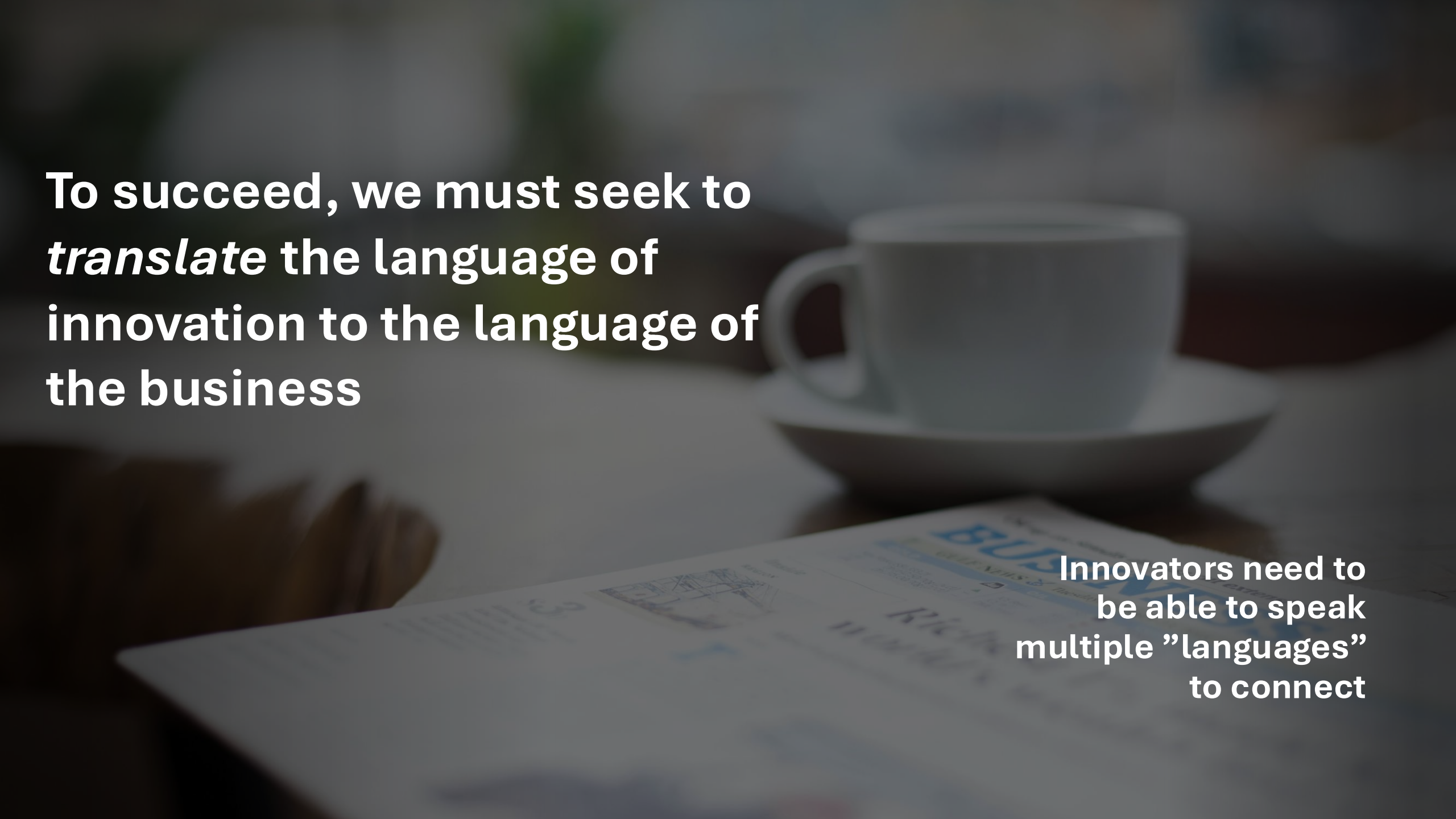
the innovators... paradox?

**Innovation is at a
crossroads: The push to
do more with less meets
an increasingly complex
market landscape**

**Innovation isn't
dead—but it needs
to speak a different
language**

A hand holding a magnifying glass over a globe, focusing on a small, rugged landmass.

**Room to explore has
shrunk, while the
pressure to prove value
is greater than ever**



To succeed, we must seek to
translate the language of
innovation to the language of
the business

Innovators need to
be able to speak
multiple "languages"
to connect

Speaking the Languages of Business Value

The Language of Strategy

Aligning innovation with long-term business priorities and sources of competitive advantage.

The Language of Finance

Using the right metrics and business cases to make innovation investable.

The Language of Execution

Ensuring innovations are operationally and commercially viable.

The Language of Strategy:

If innovation isn't aligned to business priorities, it won't get prioritized

Clear Alignment to Strategic Priorities

Where to Play /
How to Win

Prioritization &
Portfolio Strategy

Clear Alignment to Strategic Priorities

Clearly demonstrate alignment to strategic priorities and show how this innovation helps get there

- ✓ Map innovation focus and priorities to corporate objectives & strategic focus areas
- ✓ Articulate direct link to business objectives—market share, differentiation, revenue growth, risk mitigation, etc.
- ✓ Make clear how innovation supports strategic direction

Where to Play / How to Win

Actionable frameworks that map the existing landscape, identify growth / whitespace opportunities, and show how the innovation helps capture them

- ✓ Leverage a structured framework (needs-based, occasion-based, category-based) to map opportunities and whitespace
- ✓ Map innovation opportunities directly to market / landscape opportunities and unmet needs
- ✓ Articulate a clear POV on competitive advantage and how to win in the space

Prioritization & Portfolio Strategy

Robust consideration of the role of an innovation within the portfolio, and its relative importance within the innovation pipeline

- ✓ Define structure & criteria for prioritizing innovation within the pipeline
- ✓ Map innovation against existing portfolio to avoid overlap
- ✓ Align on appropriate balance of incremental and transformational bets

The Problem:

The innovation team was pulled in dozens of different directions, chasing problems-to-solve without a clear strategic direction

The Approach:

A Where to Play / How to Win framework that **translated** between **consumer needs** and **business priorities**

The Breakthrough: A data-driven, strategically prioritized roadmap
that secured leadership alignment and reduced ‘swirl’ and burnout

The Language of Finance:

Successful innovation needs a financial story that leadership can buy into

Key Assumptions &
“What You Have to
Believe”

Scenario Modeling and
Risk Profile

Opportunity Cost & Risks
of Inaction

Key Assumptions & “What You Have to Believe”

Identify the key financial drivers and assumptions that determine success. Make it clear what needs to be true for the innovation to work.

- ✓ Define key financial assumptions (growth rates, adoption curves, cost structure)
- ✓ Keep focus on the underlying assumptions behind the modeled scenarios – not just the outcomes
- ✓ Align on key “beliefs” and the milestones along the way that will validate them

Scenario Modeling and Risk Profile

Show the range of possible outcomes—best case, base case, worst case. Highlight financial risks and opportunity costs.

- ✓ Map out best-case, base-case, and downside scenarios
- ✓ Sensitivity analysis—understand what moves the needle the most
- ✓ Dimensionalize market- and technical-risk factors, and possible pathways / mitigation levers

Opportunity Cost & Risks of Inaction

Frame the decision not just in terms of potential returns, but also the cost of inaction. What happens if we don’t do this?

- ✓ Quantification doesn’t stop at size of the prize: what is the cost of doing nothing?
- ✓ “Why this, why now?” Articulate decision points and milestones that impact future outcomes
- ✓ Build a clear financial story to support decision-making



The Problem:

The innovation team saw potential in an emerging category that wasn't yet on leadership's radar. Today's revenue potential was small, but tomorrow's could be enormous.

The Approach:

A scenario-driven financial model that quantified the potential upside alongside the **costs of inaction** and scenarios of disruption to the existing business

The Breakthrough: Leadership support for an R&D roadmap that included clear milestones, decision-points, and risk mitigation strategies based on financial outcomes

The Language of Execution:

An innovation that isn't built to execute is just an idea

Metrics That Matter

Market Readiness & Go-to-Market Milestones

Sustained Involvement

Metrics That Matter

Define the right KPIs, which may differ from the traditional metrics the business is used to. Focus on those that prove early traction and viability.

- ✓ Define KPIs specific to innovation success (not just traditional metrics)
- ✓ Identify early indicators that will signal market traction or pivots needed
- ✓ Establish flexible tracking and reporting process appropriate to innovation needs

Market Readiness & Go-to-Market Milestones

Break execution into key phases—when is the right time to scale, pivot, or pull back? Ensure the right signals guide decision-making

- ✓ Define phased execution plan with key decision points
- ✓ Identify triggers for scaling, pausing, or adjusting the approach
- ✓ Ensure an actionable “feedback loop” is in place to allow team to collect learnings

Sustained Involvement

Don't step all the way back if other teams take over; focus on solving problems, coordinating across the organization, and collecting learnings.

- ✓ Establish clear accountability—who owns what?
- ✓ Identify cross-functional “champions” to drive alignment and respond rapidly
- ✓ Understand various stakeholder priorities and address throughout process



The Problem:

Launching an innovation into an emerging category where performance couldn't be expected to rival the established business, but learnings were key

The Approach:

Identify appropriate metrics that would maximize learnings and appropriately manage expectations to set the initiative up for success

The Breakthrough:

A customized KPI scorecard with clear strategic rationale behind each metric to enable strategic and well-contextualized decision-making around the launch

Translation in practice

1

**Start with
strategic
alignment**

2

**Quantify with the
right metrics and
mindset**

3

**Build execution
into the process**



**“Innovation is the
ability to see change
as an opportunity—not
a threat.”**

— Steve Jobs

**Innovation isn’t dead—
but the way we justify
and communicate it has
changed.**

The most successful innovation leaders are also **translators**—connecting ideas to business priorities.

The faster we learn to **speak the language of strategy, finance, and execution**, the more impact we can have.

THANK YOU!

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