INNOVATION CANVAS©
Instructions and template

DataHouse

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INTRODUCTION

The Innovation Canvas© provides a visual playbook of steps in the innovation process based on Strategic Doing, a collaboration method developed by Ed Morrison at Purdue University's Agile Strategy Lab.

The intent is to provide a flexible framework that can be applied to a variety of innovation opportunities. Many of the steps are intuitive and may be second nature to many; however, having a guide to follow makes the innovative process more intentional, repeatable, and scalable.

Use the Innovation Canvas© template provided on page 9 to transform your ideas into impact!

Let's Go!

Innovation Canvas ©

1 BEFORE WE BEGIN
- Understand the problem and define the opportunity.
- Start with **WHY?**
- Create and maintain a safe space for deep, focused conversation
- Frame the conversation with the right question

Connect the dots

2 WHAT COULD WE DO?
- Identify, link, and leverage assets.
- Share experiences, empathize, understand the problems, and think of new ideas.

Who, not how

3 WHAT SHOULD WE DO?
- Decide what to do. Develop a fair process to decide what will be done

Cupcake, birthday cake, wedding cake

4 REMINISCE FORWARD, WORKING BACKWARD
- Convert your ideas to outcomes with measurable characteristics

Visualize success

5 WHAT WILL WE DO?
- Start **slowly** to go fast – but **START**
- Draft short-term action plans that include **everyone**

Show, don't tell

6 REVIEW, LEARN, ADJUST
- Set 30/30 meetings to review, learn, and adjust
- Nudge, connect, and promote to reinforce new habits.

Recap your conversation journey

7 OPERATIONALIZE
- Implement your innovation to derive value

Measure your success

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STEP 1 - BEFORE WE BEGIN
We set the stage for fostering an innovative environment and exploring innovation opportunities.

Connect the dots
"Align innovation with business goals and strategy!"

Establish Safe Spaces
Freely sharing assets and ideas and having deep, focused conversations are more likely to happen in an environment where the participants feel emotionally secure and respected. These safe spaces provide a forum to reach out, toss around ideas, and have meaningful discussions without fear of judgment and rejection.

Define the Opportunity
Defining an innovation opportunity helps to understand the use case and validate the merits of investing resources to pursue new methods and ideas. It also helps to focus on the problem and share it with others to get feedback and access to other assets.

Start with Why
When considering an innovation opportunity, it's good to ask yourself "why?" since others will ask the same question. Consider how the opportunity aligns to your purpose, vision, strategic goals, and business practices. Connecting these dots helps to validate the opportunity and build support.
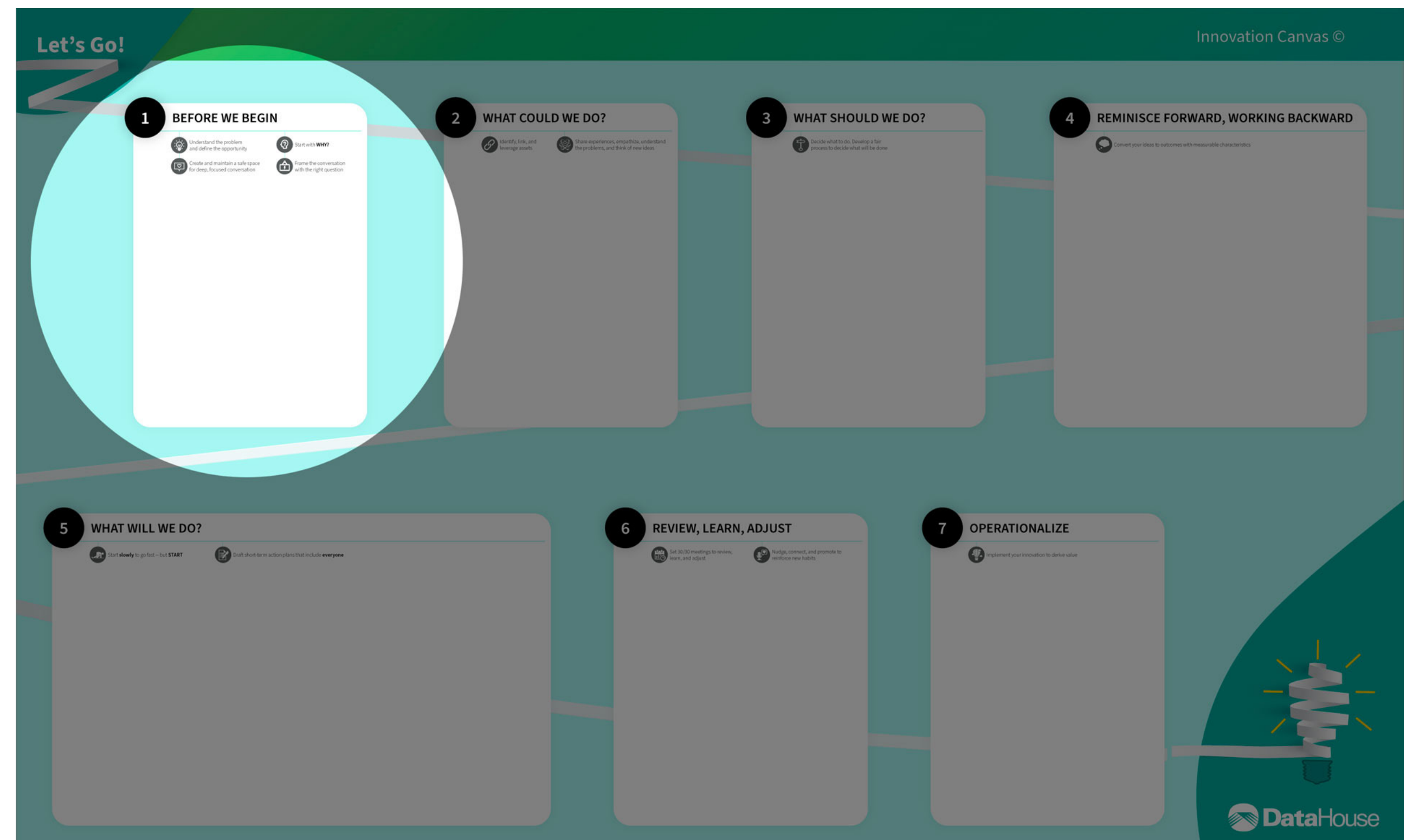
STEP 2 – WHAT COULD WE DO?

We grow a community around the innovation opportunity through linking and leveraging assets. We also start to understand the problem and come up with ideas on what we could do.

Link and Leverage Assets
Think of who can contribute to the conversation about the innovation topic based on their assets, which could include knowledge, skills, relationships, experience, capital, etc.

Empathize to Understand the Problem
Understanding the problem is the key to innovation. You can better understand the problem or become aware of issues by forming a community and connecting assets that are vested in the innovation opportunity.

Ideation
Ideation is simply the formation of ideas or concepts. Everyone contributes their ideas based on their understanding of problems.
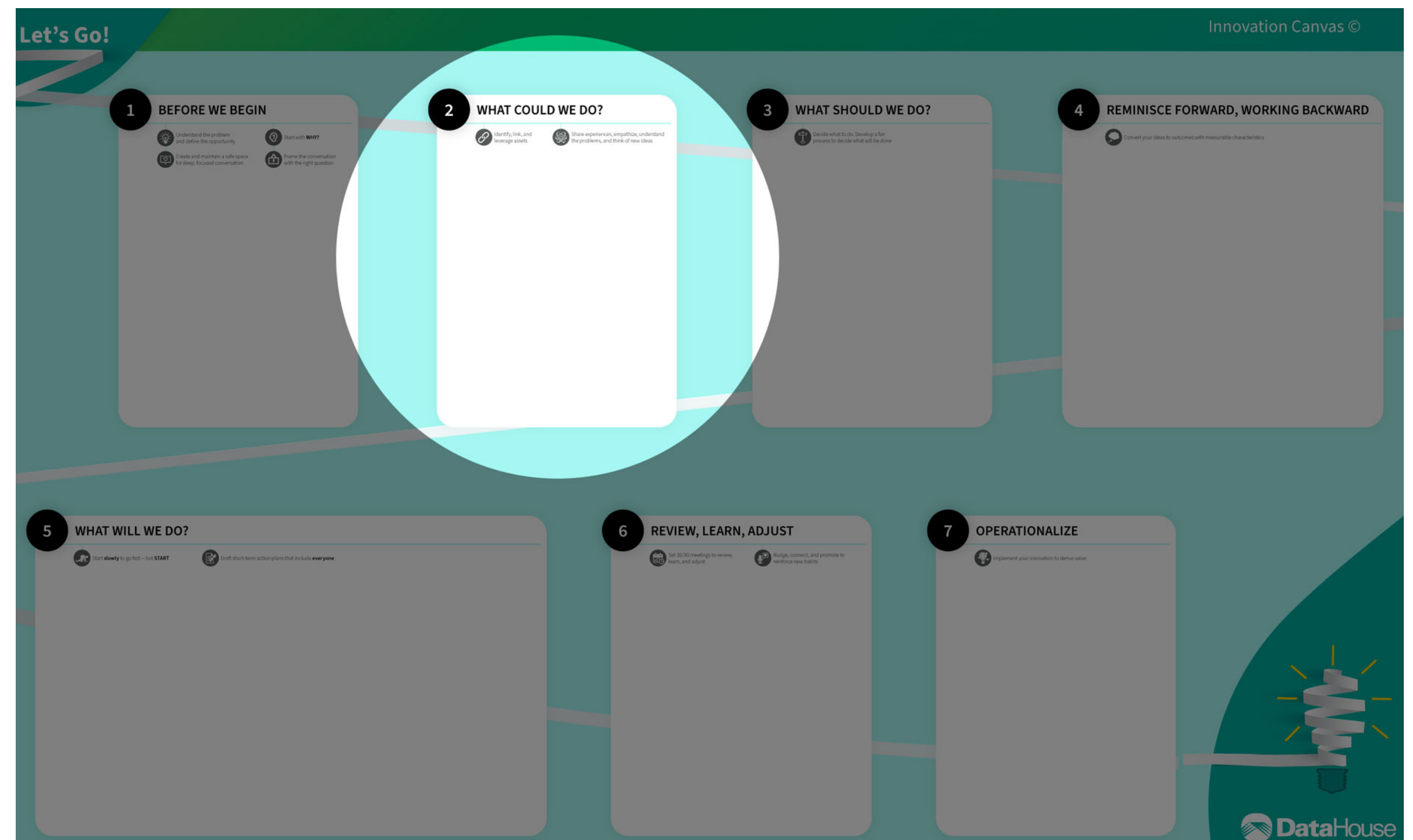
STEP 3 - WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

We consider our "What could we do?" ideas and decide "What should we do?"

The goal is not to become overwhelmed with the myriad great ideas from Step 2. Just get started so you can incrementally move forward in the innovation process.

Think of ideas that are high impact and low effort, what Ed Morrison refers to in Strategic Doing as "the big easy."

Or think:
Cupcake → Birthday Cake → Wedding Cake

CUPCAKE → BIRTHDAY CAKE → WEDDING CAKE

Cupcake, birthday cake, wedding cake
"Take an iterative, agile approach!"
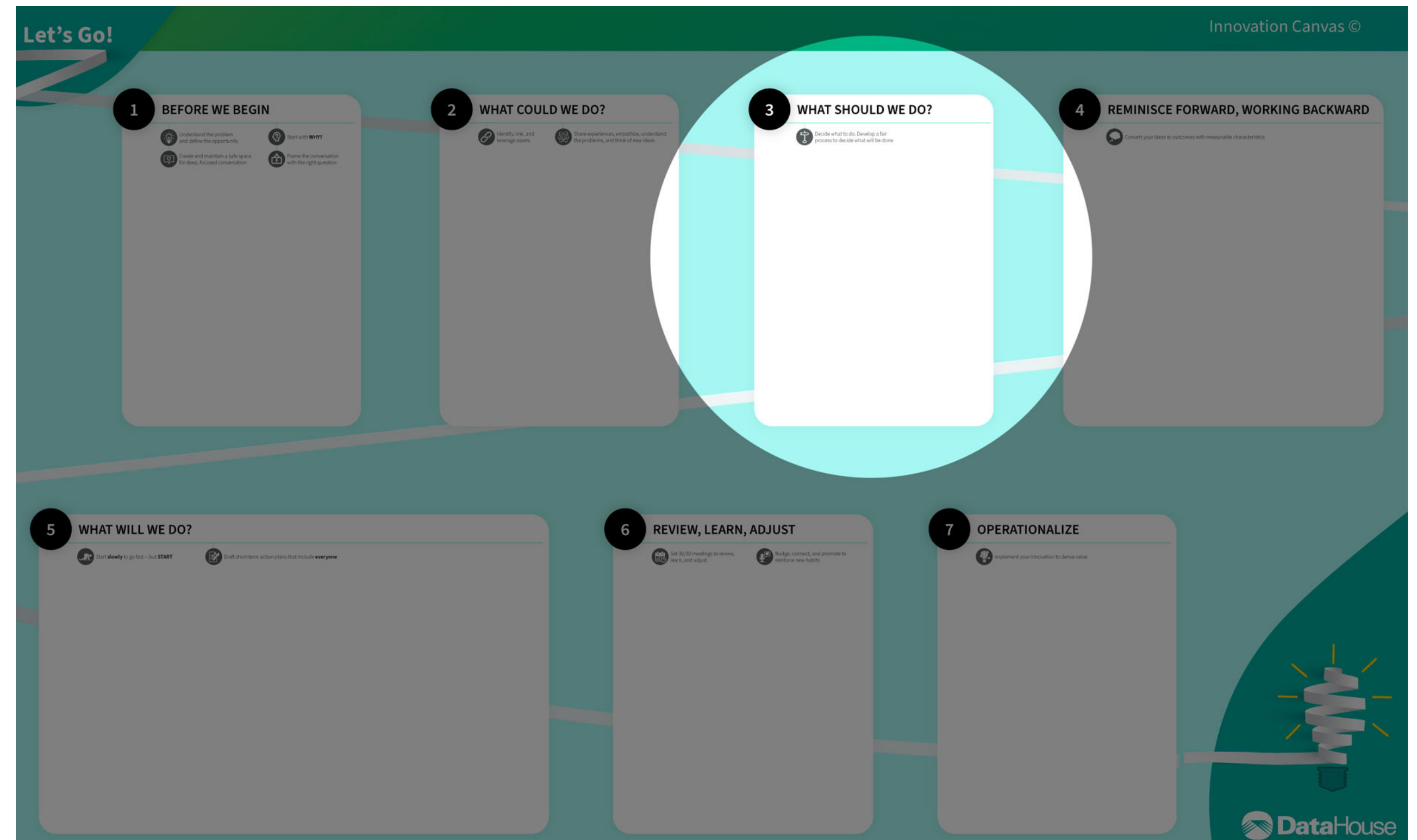
STEP 4 – REMINISCE FORWARD, WORK BACKWARD

We try to anticipate the outcomes we will achieve with our ideas.

Visualize success
"Create emotional attachment by visualizing success!"

We do this for several reasons. First, starting with an outcome helps us focus on the goal and serves to measure success.
The second reason for anticipating our outcomes is emotional. Prospection and reminiscing forward conjure feelings and create emotional attachment.

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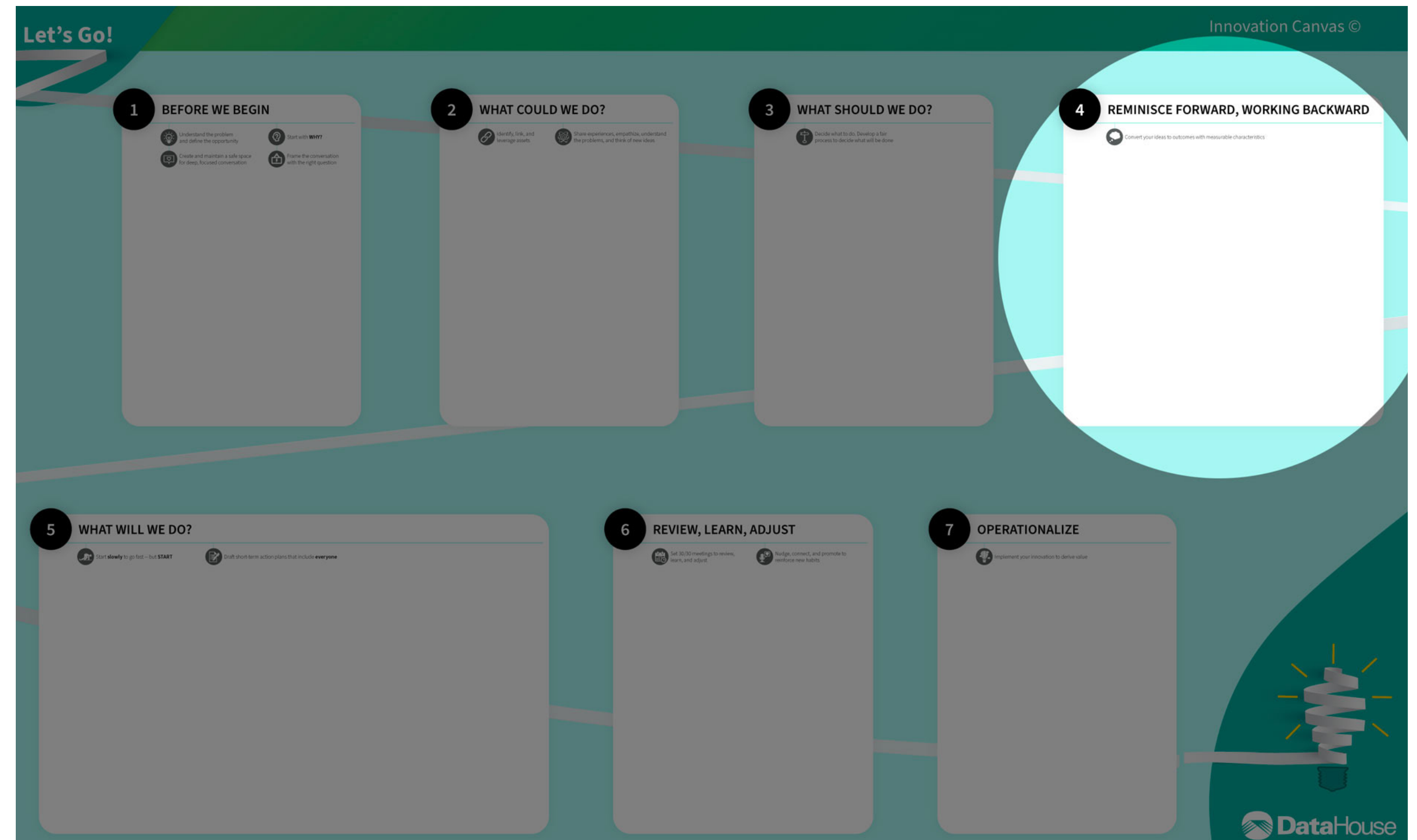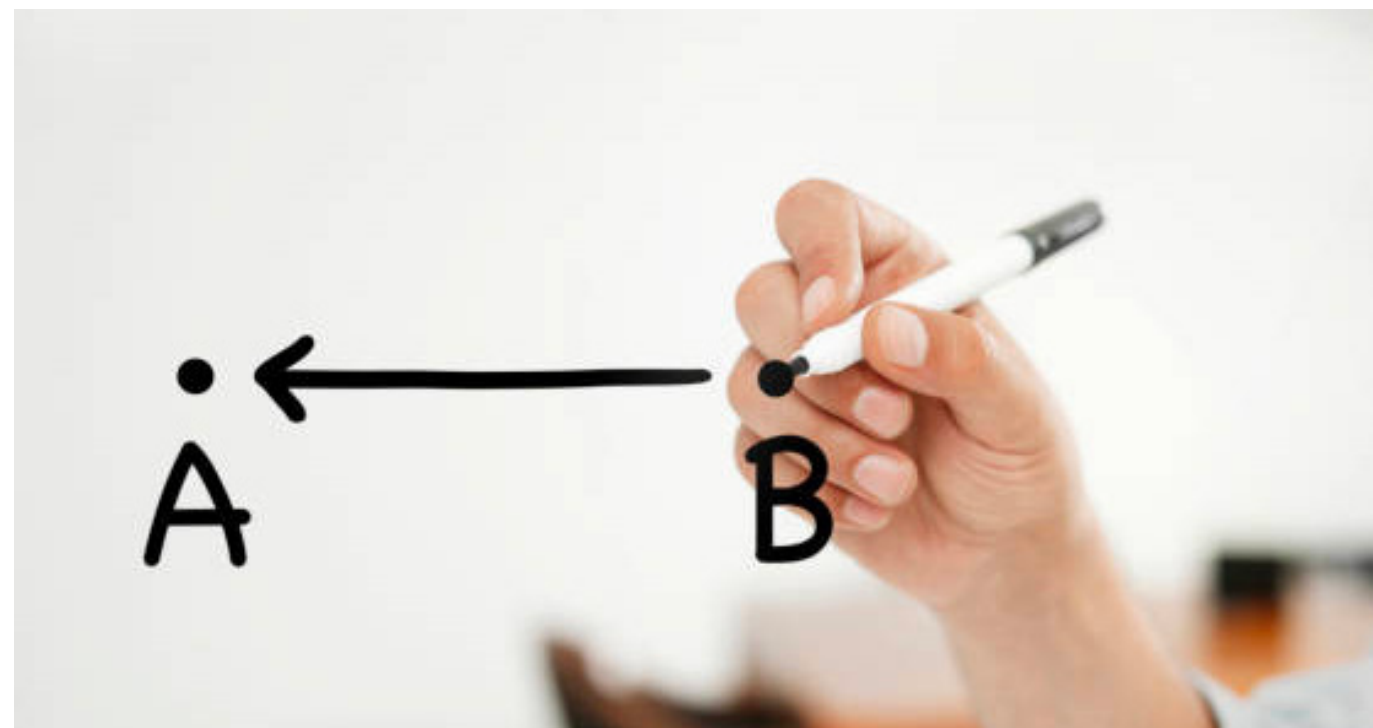
STEP 5 - WHAT WILL WE DO?

We get down to business and start turning our ideas into working solutions.

Using an Agile development process, plan and work in sprints to incrementally design, build, test, and refine your solution.

Start with a proof of concept or prototype to design your ideas and share with others to validate their efficacy.

Share your progress and get feedback from the community throughout the process.

Show, don't tell
"Leverage technology enablers and create prototypes! Enlist early adopters to help lead the way."

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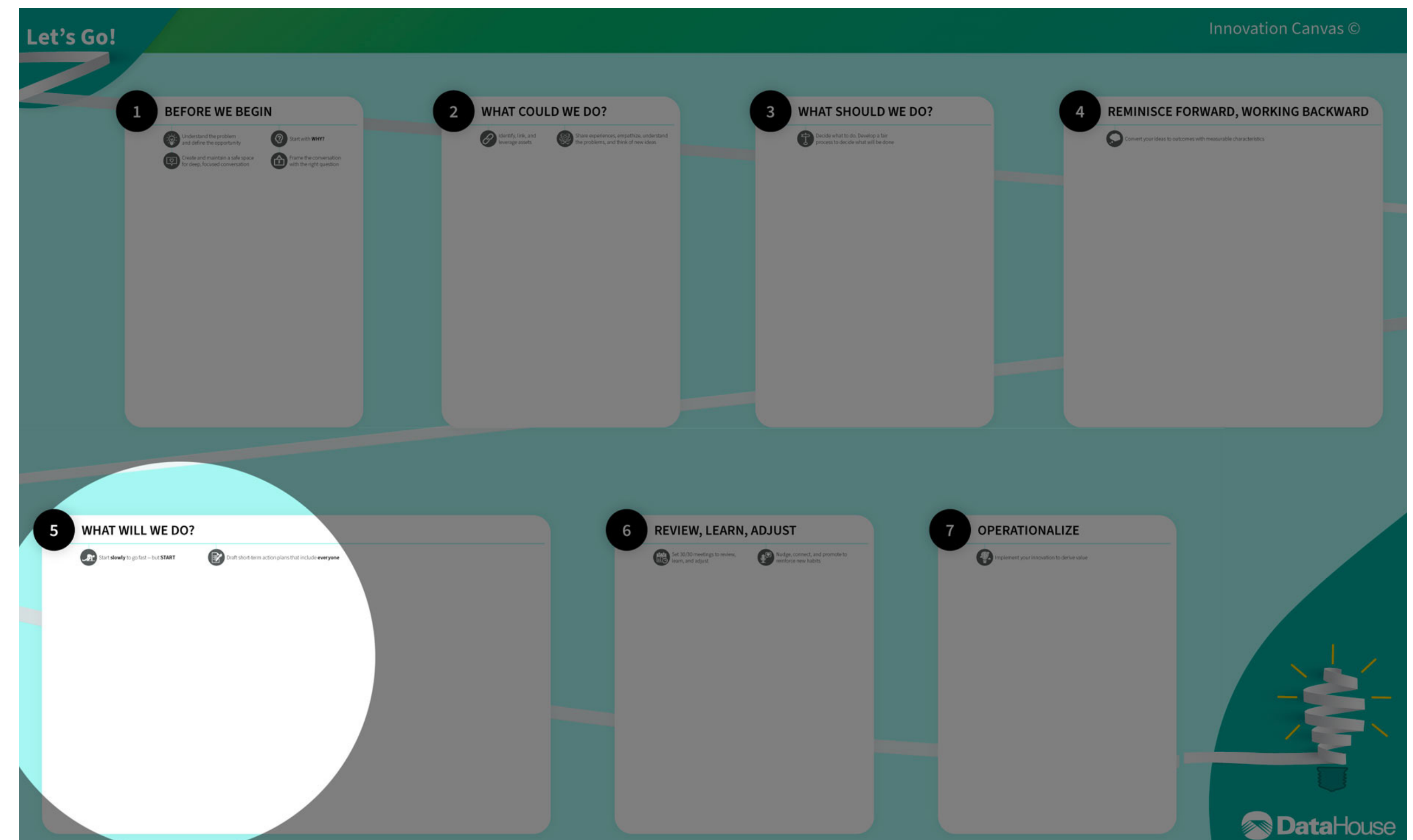
STEP 6 – REVIEW, LEARN, ADJUST

As we continue the cycle of design, building, and testing, we eventually arrive at retrospection.

Review what you produced and determine how it stacks up against the outcome you defined, what worked, what didn't work, and what adjustments are needed.

Keep the team moving forward by reviewing the past 30 days' accomplishments and planning what will be done in the next 30 days.
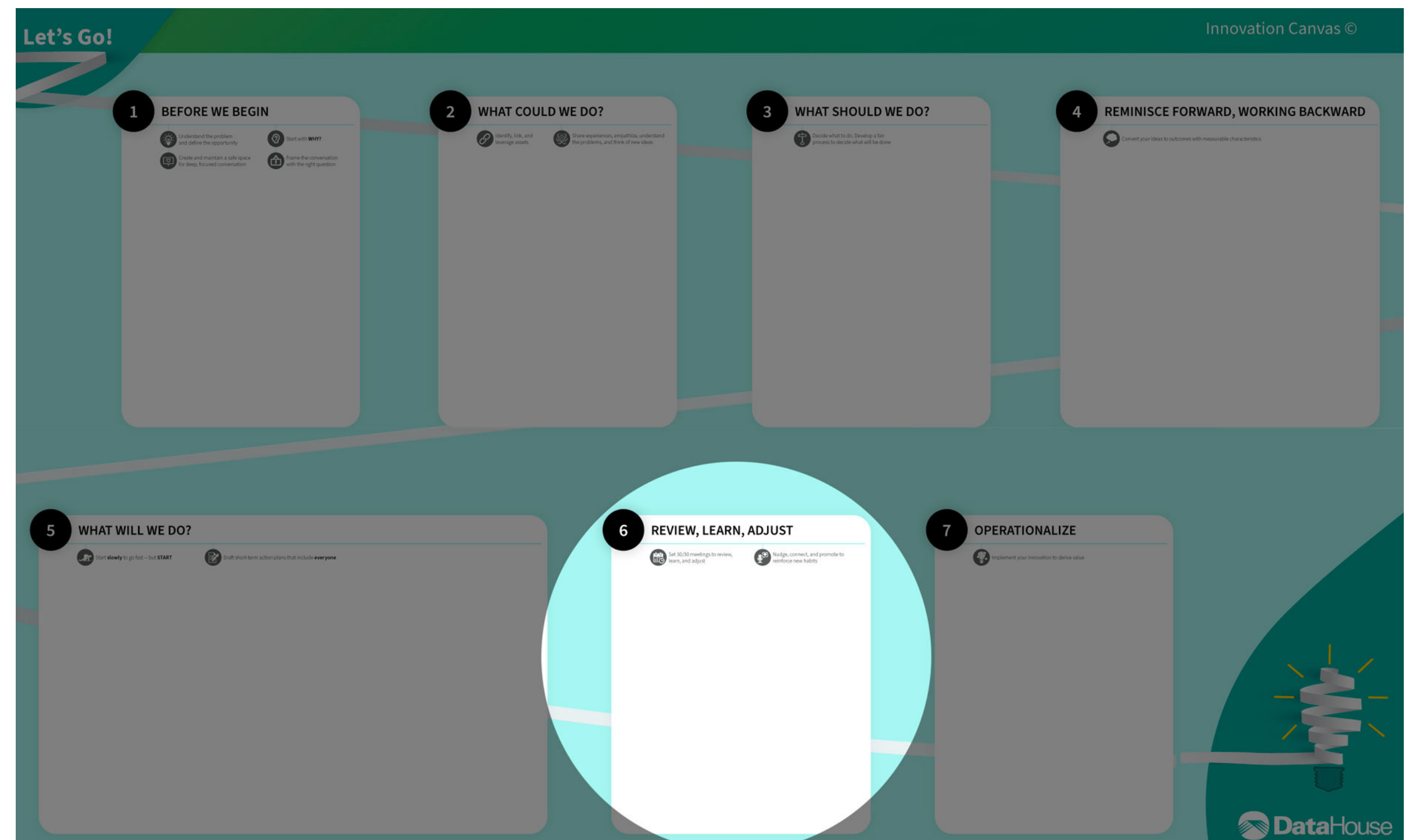
STEP 7 - OPERATIONALIZE OUR IDEA

Our final step is to put our idea into action.

Operationalizing an idea an essential step to realizing its value, which is the ultimate goal of any innovation.

Since innovations come in all shapes and sizes, operationalizing them may take various forms, such as developing a product or new business, improving existing products and services, or simply presenting and sharing your innovations with others.
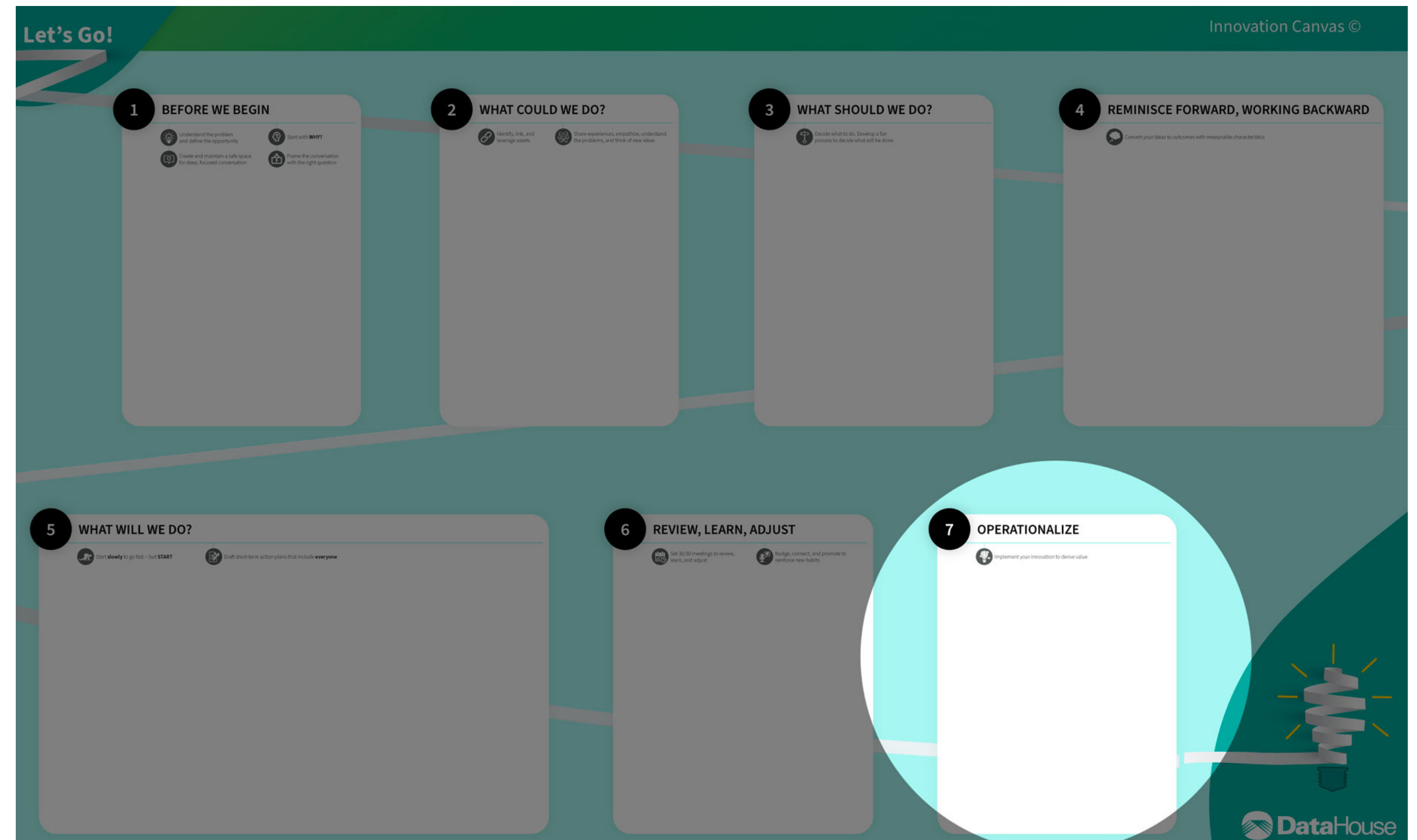
Measure your success
"If you are not keeping score, you are only practicing!"

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- Share experiences, empathize, understand the problems, and think of new ideas

Who, not how
"Connect and discover assets, create networks, not hierarchies!"

3 WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

- Decide what to do. Develop a fair process to decide what will be done

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"Take an iterative, agile approach!"

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- Set 30/30 meetings to review, learn, and adjust
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Recap your innovation journey
"Celebrate successes, learn from failures! The journey may be more important than the innovation itself."

7 OPERATIONALIZE

- Implement your innovation to derive value

Measure your success
"If you are not keeping score, you are only practicing!"

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REFERENCES

[1] Morrison, E., Hutcheson, S., Nilsen, E., Fadden, J., & Franklin, N. (2019). *Strategic Doing: Ten Skills for Agile Leadership*. Wiley.

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[4] Moore, Geoffrey A. (2014, January 28). *Crossing the Chasm.* HarperCollins.

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