LEVERAGING YOUR ORGANIZATION'S THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

Your Organization

Desired Outcome
State the **one** outcome you want thought leadership to achieve, and frame it in measurable language.

Core Idea
In a sentence or two, state the core idea you need your avatars to understand.

Content Library
What existing assets can be repurposed?

What new assets must be created?

Business Drivers
Explain the activity in language that will make leaders lean in.

Talent
Who understands our core idea best?

Who needs to understand it better?

Teamwork
Who will support these initiatives?

And how are they aligned to help?

The Bridge

The Platform
Why should your target avatars pay attention to you/your idea?

Campaigns & Offerings
How will you put this idea in front of your target avatar(s)?

Relationships
Who, internally, has a strong relationship with your key avatars?

List external people & groups the avatar listens to / respects.

Targeted Audience

Current Pain
Describe the challenges each avatar will likely focus on this year.

Target Avatars(s)
Define the target avatars you must impact in order to achieve your desired outcome.

Future Challenges
List any **relevant** issues that each avatar needs to start preparing for (1-5 years).

Next Steps
What specific action do you want your avatars to take?

Allies and Ambassadors
Alliess and ambassadors carry your content further – even if they aren't current buyers.

Gain
If they follow your advice and take the action you suggest, what do they gain?

thought leadership leverage

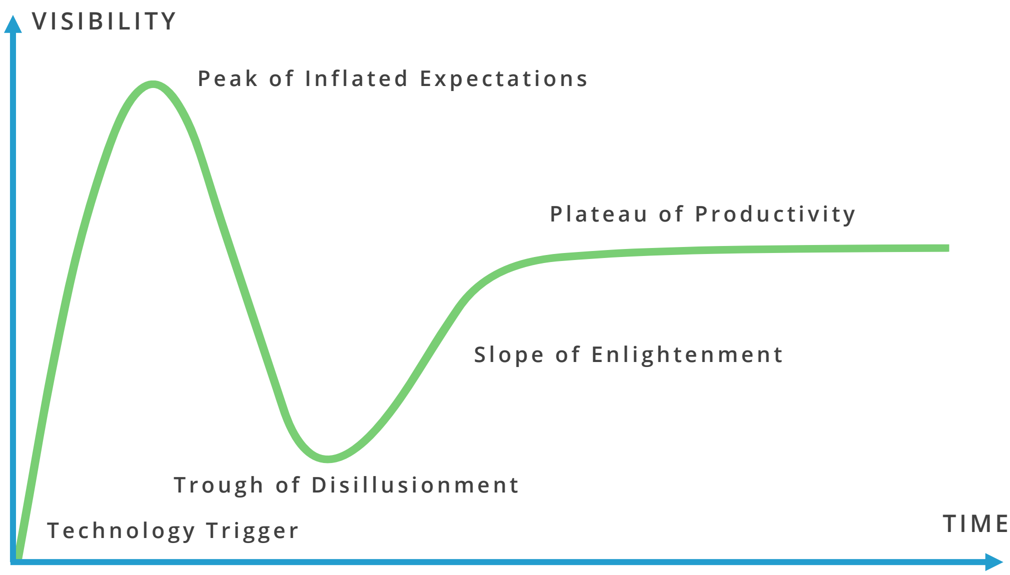
Executive Summary

> *"The old ways of selling aren't working anymore. Buyers are increasingly educated before they ever speak with a salesperson. They'll walk into a conversation 95% sure of what they want to buy. And they'll only have a few laser-focused remaining questions. If we're not part of the upstream conversation, we won't get invited to submit a proposal or have a chance to make a sale."*
>
> — Synthesized from multiple heads of revenue talking about thought leadership

Many senior executives have brought thought leadership into their organization to address the changing behaviors of prospects, customers and clients, and investors. In some cases, thought leadership is now the foundation of an organization's whole go-to-market strategy. Yet, in other organizations, it's a new "high potential" business function that still needs to prove that it can justify the investment needed to do it well.
Quite simply, it's time for thought leadership as a business function to grow up. Any organization that implements thought leadership *ad hoc*—without a clear strategy—is destined to struggle and possibly fail spectacularly in its attempts.

- Your exec sponsor's intentions may be good;
- The team may be busy developing brilliant insights;
- The insights may be breathtakingly useful;
- The assets you create may be gorgeous; and yet,
- Results remain elusive: both hard to measure and explain.

This pattern is unfortunately, all too common. Thought leadership can easily fall into the “Trough of Disillusionment” in the Gartner Hype Cycle by overpromising outcomes and speed to impact.



Source: [Gartner hype cycle - Wikipedia]

It isn’t a magic wand that fills a sales pipeline in 30 days. Original insights can’t be phoned-in by asking an intern to “play around with ChatGPT” for an afternoon. And thought leadership certainly won’t give you brighter, whiter teeth.

So, how do organizations create a strategy for thought leadership?
And more importantly, what are the common pitfalls that must be avoided?

Organizational thought leadership requires you to create a bridge between your organization’s goals and your target audience’s—through your insights.

This document introduces the Organizational Thought Leadership Canvas—a document designed to create buy-in and momentum for thought leadership within the organization. And once those things are achieved, it’s possible to produce effort that yields impact—for your organization, your target audience, and your thought leadership practitioners.

About This Project

Over the past four years, we—Bill Sherman and Peter Winick of Thought Leadership Leverage—have spoken with over 250 heads of thought leadership within organizations. These firms have ranged from Fortune 50 to SMBs and VC funded startups to non-profits. Many of our conversations are documented and publicly available in the *Leveraging Thought Leadership* podcast, or available in many of our LinkedIn posts and videos. This whitepaper synthesizes that information.

OrgTL Strategy Health Checklist

Let's start with a simple checklist to see how effectively your organization uses thought leadership.

✓	Baseline Criteria	Sample Warning Signals	✓
☐	Can you easily link your org's thought leadership goals with key business objectives?	"My exec sponsor can't explain to the board how thought leadership fits into the core strategy."	☐
☐	Do you know your target audiences clearly?	"Our ideas can apply to anyone." "We don't know who's using our ideas."	☐
☐	Have you fully recruited internal resources and expertise?	"We have experts who can't get time to write or speak. It's not in their annual plan and comp." "Marketing doesn't understand how to deploy thought leadership."	☐
☐	Have you solved the "last mile" problem within your sales organization?	"Our sales team doesn't share our thought leadership with our clients and customers. They're focused on selling today's solutions."	☐
☐	Do you measure results instead of activity?	"This year, we ran our annual conference, monthly webinars, and produced a journal."	☐
☐	Your audience is tuned in to you, even though it's an increasingly noisy world.	"We put ideas out there, but we don't know who is engaging with them." "We need more content!"	☐
☐	Your org uses thought leadership to create upstream influence – whether for buying decisions, policy, or behaviors.	"Thought leadership is just another term for content marketing. It's all about product."	☐
☐	You actively build internal thought leaders who have a brand and reputation with your target audience(s).	"We only put out unsigned whitepapers." "We don't associate ideas with individuals—what if they leave our organization"	☐
☐	You narrowcast to your target audience. You sacrifice big numbers for relevance.	"We want to reach as many people as possible." "How many downloads did we get?"	☐
☐	The budget treats thought leadership as a business function and not a fad.	"We've got funding for this year." "I'm a team of one, to begin with."	☐
☐	Executive sponsor has gravitas—a reputation for being forward-looking and getting things done.	"Our sponsor is close to retirement." "We're still finding our place in the org."	☐
☐	Head of thought leadership has a strong network within and beyond the organization.	"I'm still trying to find my way around here." "I don't have many strong connections."	☐
☐	Thought leadership campaigns are thoughtful experiments. Success is measured and rewarded with more effort.	"We just try things—especially when a leader has a new idea for a campaign." "We have a lot of "legacy" thought leadership projects."	☐

Scoring

+ Give yourself a point for each item in the baseline criteria you can say yes to.

- Subtract a point for each warning signal you say "yes" to.

10-13 – Strategy guides TL activity and outcomes.

5-9 – Strategy influences TL activity and outcomes.

0-4 – Strategy occasionally intersects with TL activity and outcomes.

Below 0 – Strategy is likely absent. TL efforts are likely high risk and ad-hoc.

The Three-Legged Stool of Thought Leadership

Many individuals and organizations stumble into thought leadership. Often, it's not a planned effort. Maybe an employee is asked to speak at a conference or write an article; they decide to post on LinkedIn or create a video; or they become a podcast guest (or host). And things snowball from there - suddenly, they're creating more and more thought leadership—either on their own, or on behalf of the organization.

These individuals may be given time at work to create thought leadership, or they may be creating thought leadership in their off time (evenings and weekends). But making thought leadership a "sometimes thing" isn't enough to really get the engine going.

Individuals and organizations must be intentional about the practice of thought leadership if they truly want to create impact.

Think about these questions:

- What's the "big idea" we want to implement?
- Who are we trying to reach?
- What does success look like?
- How will we know if it's working?
- Do we have buy-in from key stakeholders across the org?
- Do we have the budget to do this well?

It's easy to assume the answers to these questions and just run forward, developing ideas and creating thought leadership assets. But at some point, a leader in the organization (perhaps a CFO or CMO) will need concrete strategy. After putting out an annual research survey and whitepaper for several years, the CFO or CMO may say, "Hang on, we keep spending money on this project. *Are we getting value from it? And can you prove it?"*

At its heart, an effective thought leadership strategy begins with alignment around three key stakeholders:

At TLL, we often use the metaphor of a three-legged stool, emphasizing that it's essential to keep all three "legs" balanced. If you over-index on any one of them—your organization, your TL practitioners, or your target audience, then the thought leadership project will quickly become unstable and likely unsustainable.

- If the organization's needs are underserved, then resources—budget and personnel—will become scarce.
- If the TL practitioner's needs are underserved, they won't be motivated to do the work.
- If the Target Audience doesn't notice the insights or doesn't see value, then they won't be able to put them to use.

The goal for any organization's thought leadership function must be tri-fold impact. You have to ask, "What's the benefit of thought leadership:

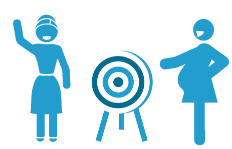
- For my organization?
- For our thought leadership practitioners?
- For our target audiences?

If this sounds like leading with generosity and acting with win-win-win mindset, then you're thinking the right way!

Equilibrium is the goal, but it's often like trying to ride a unicycle or balance on top of a Pilates ball. You'll constantly be making small corrections. You can't simply set autopilot and assume that last quarter's approach will remain relevant. That's why it's essential to have someone responsible, full-time, for overseeing the thought leadership function. They don't need to be the "ideas" person. Their focus is to make sure that the function operates smoothly and remains balanced.

There's a deep functional difference between saying "let's create a podcast" and "let's create a thought leadership engine for our organization." The second question requires a much more strategic focus:





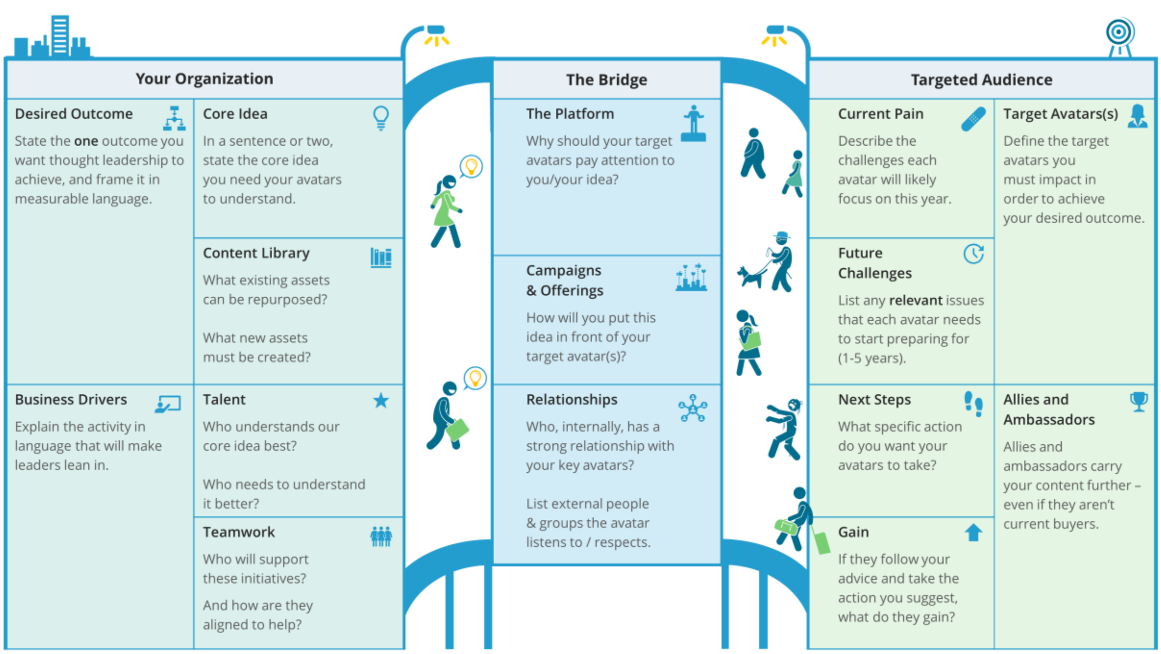
Organization	TL Practitioner	Target Audience
What insights do we have? What resources will we allocate? Who will create, curate, and deploy? How will we identify success?	Who can speak on this topic? Are they willing to talk about it day after day? Do we have a talent pipeline? (What if the person goes on leave, retires, or quits?)	Why does this topic matter to them? Are we getting these ideas to the right people? Or are we just hoping they'll see it? How are our insights different from what others are saying?

So, let's dive more deeply into what it takes to build a thought leadership strategy.

The OrgTL Canvas

The **OrgTL Canvas** was created by our team at Thought Leadership Leverage while working with heads of thought leadership within organizations. If you want your ideas to spread beyond the walls of your organization and create impact, then you need to build a bridge to deliver them to specific target audiences. The **OrgTL Canvas** bridges that gap.
It can be used as a framework to:

- Establish and manage a sustainable thought leadership function;
- Guide discussion about goals, resources, and effort;
- Set boundaries for where the organization will and **will not** devote effort;
- Create buy-in and consensus among key internal stakeholders; or
- Report to senior leadership



This framework is divided into three key sections:

- The Organization
- The Targeted Audience
- The Bridge

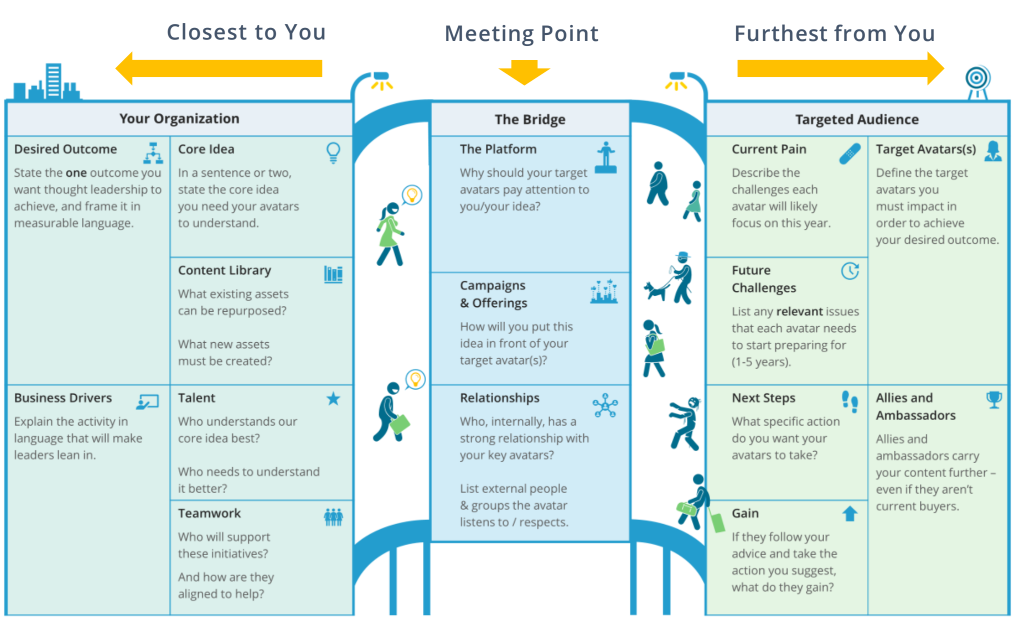
The items in the *"Your Organization"* column are most familiar and most accessible to you.

The items in the *"Targeted Audience"* column are furthest from you and your organization. That's where you need to listen and learn.

Items in the center are on *"The Bridge."* These items share your insights and understanding with your targeted audiences.

Remember that your internal talent may understand a topic at a world-class level, with all sorts of rich complexity and nuance. They're expert, and they have the luxury of thinking deeply about these topics. However, your target audience may not be ready for a graduate student lecture on your insights. They may only have 5 minutes and want a quick "insight snack."

Typically, when we use the **OrgTL Canvas,** we start with the section focused on "Your Organization." Then, we work through the other side, the "Targeted Audience" columns. Finally, once both supports have been created, we build "The Bridge." That's how we recommend using this tool, and it's how we'll explain it here.

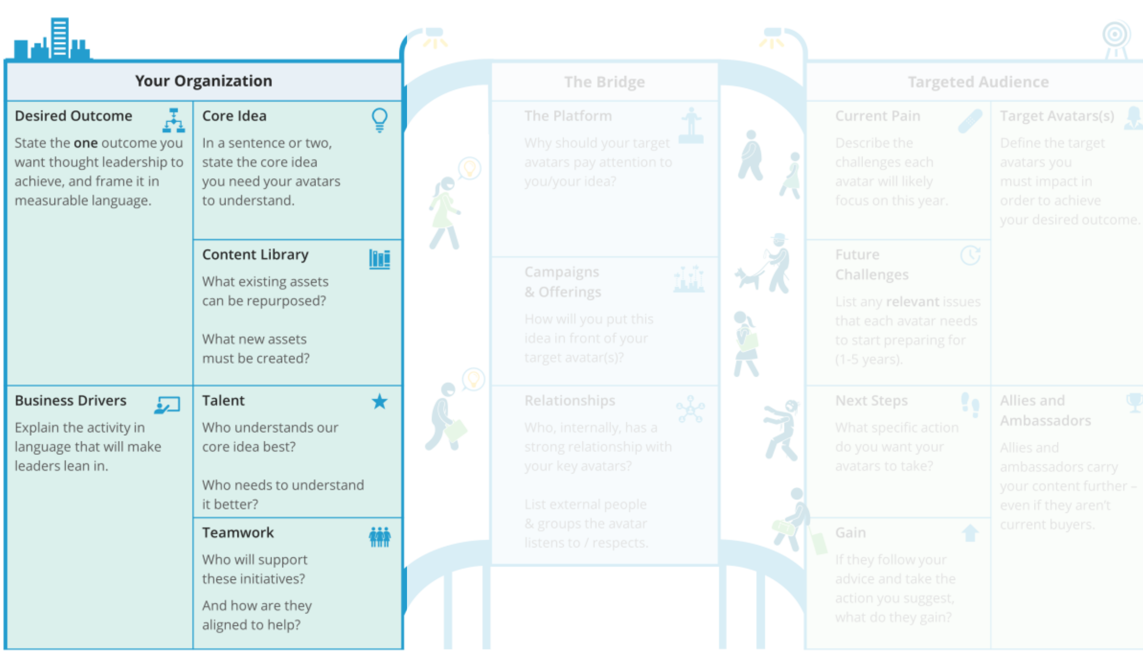


Your Organization

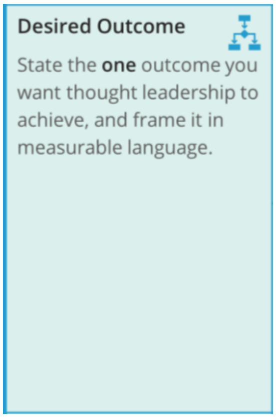
There are six factors underneath “Your Organization” on the canvas. In simple terms, the first column is about your goals; the second column is about the resources available within your organization.
Based on what we have seen and observed, organizations make several strategic missteps in this area.

In relation to outcomes and business drivers, the trend is for organizations to try to do too many things through thought leadership. “We’ll build our brand, we’ll generate new leads, we’ll improve our talent recruiting, AND we’ll get greater wallet-share from current clients.” All those goals are possible through thought leadership, but they require different campaigns in order to reach their different audiences. It’s best to narrow the focus of outcomes.

When we look at an organization’s capacity to execute these thought leadership strategies, many underleverage the resources they have available to them. We’ve seen small organizations (of 10-20 people) outexecute large organizations because they have better leveraged their resources and created sustainable processes.



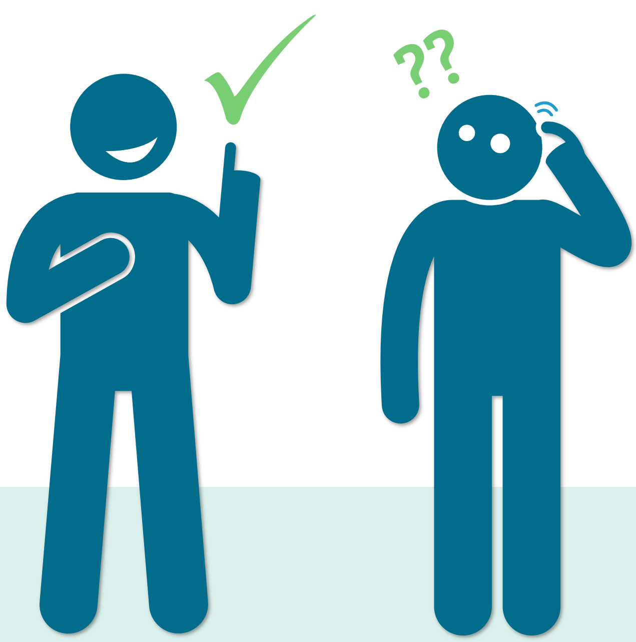
Desired Outcome



This category of the canvas focuses on the business outcomes achieved through thought leadership. We've listed a few samples above, but the list of metrics you can impact is relatively broad, and includes:

- Marketing (brand recognition, % of total addressable market reached, customer acquisition cost)
- Sales (# inbound leads, # of qualified leads, days in sales cycle, objections overcome, repeat business)
- **Talent** (key talent attraction, key talent retention, talent ready for promotion)

Yes, thought leadership can have the utility of a Swiss Army knife, but don't try to take on the world with just one strategy. It's better to pick one **Desired Outcome** and execute it well before you add a second. Don't try to create impact everywhere at once.



Business Drivers

Your senior leadership and board are paying attention to certain key metrics. Be prepared to explain briefly—and concretely—how thought leadership aligns with one (or more) of these **Business Drivers.**

- A for-profit organization may be concerned with revenue, profitability, cost of sale, or customer retention.
- A not-for-profit organization may be concerned with policy initiatives and impact at the local, regional, national, or global level.

Business Drivers

Explain the activity in language that will make leaders lean in.

The head of thought leadership needs to be able to make a strong, clear connection between insights and impact—using the language of business in order to drive the initiative forward. Vague hand-waving and feel-good initiatives rarely get sustained funding.

The Core Idea

An idea isn't a book.
It isn't a whitepaper.
And it's not a research study.

Core Idea

In a sentence or two, state the core idea you need your avatars to understand.

It's an insight that's been distilled down into a simple statement—often just a sentence or two. But it's been carefully crafted to capture the attention of your target audience. A successful **Core Idea** will cause someone to say, *"I haven't thought about it that way before. I'm not even sure I agree with you. But, please, tell me more. I'm curious ."*

Most organizations need 3-5 evergreen **Core Ideas** to sustain a thought leadership function. By evergreen, we mean that the idea will remain true and relevant—for a select target audience—for at least the next three years. (Many of the best thought leadership insights remain evergreen much longer than that!)

Organizations often think in annual cycles, such as yearly "key initiatives" or themes. What we have observed is that a yearly time frame is typically too short when it comes to thought leadership. It takes time to generate a good idea, and it takes more time than you'd expect to get that insight established in the world on its own.

Over the last twenty years, we've seen organizations stumble because they get uncomfortable repeating the **Core Idea** in many formats for a long period of time. When we practice thought leadership, it's easy to assume everyone is familiar with our insights—because we have been thinking about it and talking about it for so long. Sometimes a thought leader can get bored with the "101" introductory version of their best ideas. We want to talk about the detail and nuance. But your target audiences will need the "101" version longer than you'd expect. Some insights take decades of active promotion before they became part of the general business lexicon.

The Content Library

The **Content Library** supports the **Core Idea** and expands on it. When someone says, *"That's interesting, tell me more,"* you dip into the **Content Library** and choose stories, data, examples, case studies, 3rd party research, etc. that really bring your **Core Idea** to life.

Content Library

What existing assets can be repurposed?

What new assets must be created?

Many people get confused and think that a thought leadership **Content Library** needs to be a catalog of all your produced assets—webinars, podcasts, posts, whitepapers, speeches, etc. That's skipping a critical step. The **Content Library** is the detail that brings a **Core Idea** to life and helps persuade others to listen, consider, and embrace it.

- The **Core Idea** is the provocative insight that evokes curiosity.
- The **Content Library** contains supporting arguments, data, and examples.
- The **Offerings** are the modalities—articles, blogs, books, short-form videos, podcasts.

We use the term **Content Library** because you never want to use all these materials when talking with any single audience. Why? Because one-size-does-not-fit-all. If you are speaking with a roomful of CFOs at a conference, you'll need different stories and examples than if one of your salespeople is speaking to a mid-level manager tasked with a buying decision or if you're delivering your **Core Idea** to a newly minted front-line manager.

You'll note that we talk about content differently here than someone in marketing might talk about content. A **Content Library** isn't a library of your thought leadership assets (webinars, speeches, whitepapers, social media posts, etc.). Instead, it's an internal-facing collection of stories, data, and examples that can be put into any of those delivery formats.

Many organizations have weak processes, or don't make an effort to collect the best ways of explaining the insights to target audiences. The head of thought leadership should be curating the **Content Library** and ensuring that key team members who need these tools have them available to use.

The Talent

Usually, there's some people in your organization who are most closely associated with each **Core Idea.** It may be a single technical expert who has devoted their career to a topic and has built a reputation for advancing the conversation in their field. Or it may be a team that has worked together to nurture and develop a **Core Idea.**

Talent

Who understands our core idea best?

Who needs to understand it better?

If you want thought leadership to reach scale, then you need to start by identifying key **Talent,** those people who know the idea best. They are the ones who have the expert mental frameworks, and likely a good percentage of the undocumented **Content Library** materials. They know their material deeply and instinctively, and they can speak with authority in many different situations.

Talent is essential and must be identified and developed. But what happens if one of these key individuals retires, takes a leave of absence, or joins a different company? The answer can't be that you will never develop thought leadership practitioners. Your customers and clients are actively searching for people with a mastery of complex ideas. You need someone to gain their trust and synthesize your insights into approachable **Next Steps,** so that your audience can climb aboard.

Think of your key thought leadership **Talent** like a pipeline, rather than like crown jewels.

Your **Talent** can post personally on social media (and leave insightful comments). They can present in-person at conferences. And they can join key sales and client meetings for deep discussions.

In a world where generative AI allows organizations to create vast amounts of text-based content marketing assets, the authentic, authoritative, and personal voice of a thought leadership practitioner has increased value and relevance.

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Teamwork

No thought leadership practitioner can create, curate, and deploy thought leadership on their own at an enterprise scale. Even if they're devoted to the task full time and leverage their evenings and weekends. So, by necessity, if an organization wants a **Core Idea** to reach scale, then it needs to allocate additional resources.

Teamwork

Who will support these initiatives?

And how are they aligned to help?

That requires **Teamwork.**

The person or team that develops the **Core Idea** will need support from other organizational functions—such as marketing and sales teams—visual creatives, social media experts, front-line salespeople, sales engineers, and evangelists all have a role to play when it comes to getting good insights to an organization's target audience.

We have seen many organizations struggle with this facet of thought leadership. In some cases, the supporting teams don't understand what they're being asked to achieve. In other cases, it's because the deployment of thought leadership is an "add-on" to a team's burden, without a lessening of their usual responsibilities and goals.

Sales teams especially struggle with this challenge, and it creates a "last mile" delivery problem. The organization wants the sales team to share insights, but the team is laser-focused on closing today's deal. In our experience, it cannot be just one or the other. A skillful sales team must be able to share thought leadership to support today's deals as well as grow tomorrow's pipeline.

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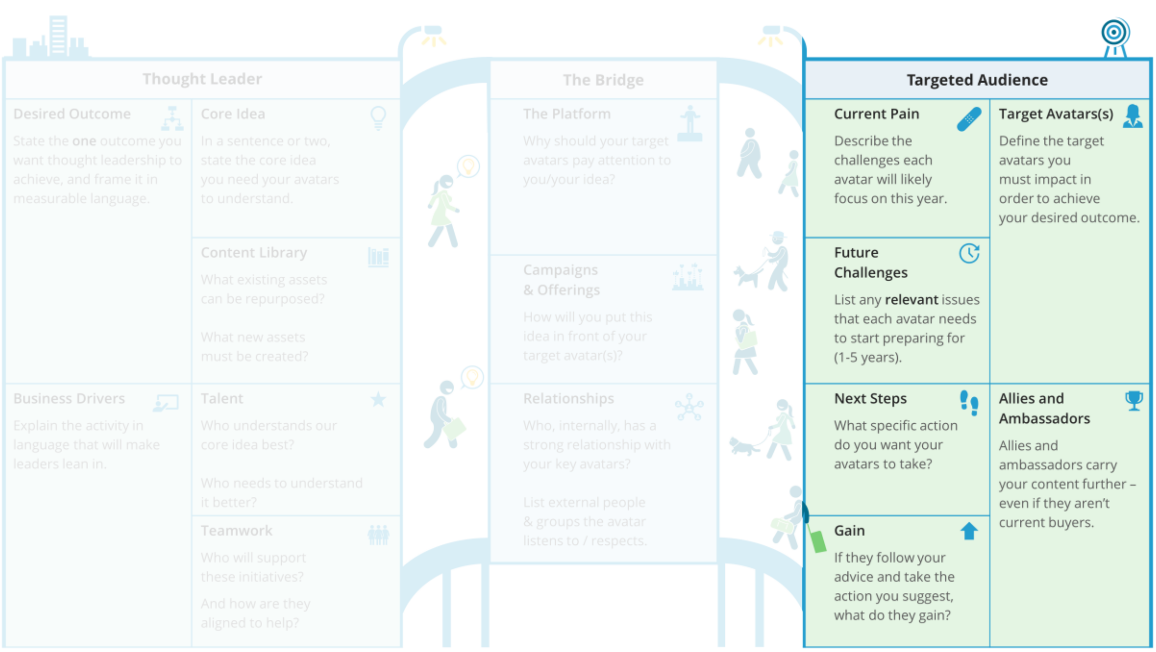
Your Target Audience

The fourth and fifth columns of the **OrgTL Canvas** focus on the needs of your target audience(s).

In the rightmost column, you identify "who" needs to hear your message. In the adjacent column, you identify their needs, concerns, focus, and outcomes.

We've often said that thought leadership is the art and practice of becoming deeply irrelevant to 99.9% of the world's population. Once you accept that most people aren't interested in your topic or relevant to your organization, then it becomes much easier to let go. Instead of saying, "Our insight could be for anyone!" you scale down. You find a comfortable zone where you can speak directly and candidly to an eager audience without having to water your concepts down for the masses.
The key question to ask is *"What is the total addressable market for your thought leadership?"*

Marketers refer to this as TAM. And in most cases for B2B thought leadership, the TAM for decision makers and influencers is shockingly small. It's often possible to generate a list of people who need your insights by name and organization. Or, if you don't know their names, you can create a clear description of them by title, role, and psychographics.



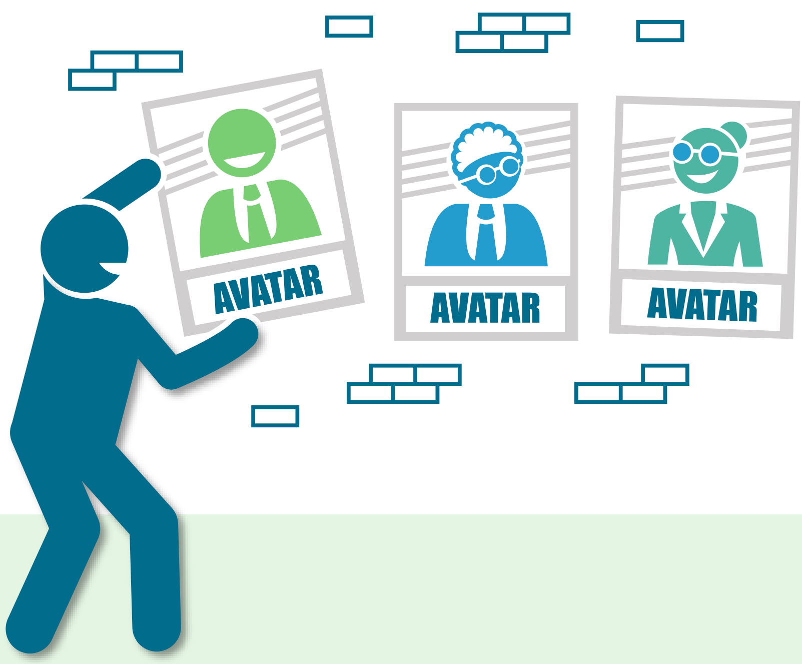
Target Avatars

Thought leadership **Target Avatars** are built on the hard and soft characteristics of the audiences that you are trying to reach. Often organizations reduce their thought leadership **Target Avatars** to a list of buyers and prospects. We believe this approach is a major oversimplification. When we prompt clients to think expansively, they often produce more thoughtful lists of who they need to influence with their ideas—key analysts, influencers within the buyer's organization, regulators, policy makers, etc.

Target Avatars(s)

Define the target avatars you must impact in order to achieve your desired outcome.

But it's not sufficient to make a list of **Target Avatars.** You must also look at these potential **Target Avatars** in light of the **Desired Outcomes** and **Business Drivers.**



Allies and Ambassadors

If you want to take thought leadership to scale, you're going to need help beyond the walls of your organization. We encourage the conscious recruitment, support, and nurturing of non-internal individuals who will help spread your ideas—**Allies and Ambassadors.** Both groups are deeply familiar with your insights. They've heard the message from you. They've embraced it, and they want to share it. They probably even want you and your organization to succeed.
So, what's the difference between an **Ally** and an **Ambassador?**

Allies and Ambassadors

Alliess and ambassadors carry your content further – even if they aren't current buyers.

Allies open doors for you through introductions to their network. They make warm introductions both in the places they work and across through their broader network.

Ambassadors have a deeper understanding of your insights. They are also comfortable speaking about the insights themselves. **Ambassadors** are some of your most valuable followers and advocates.

Good ideas may attract an occasional **Ally** or **Ambassador** by chance. We all know people who fall in love with an idea and advocate it. But a thought leadership function needs to develop, track, and support these individuals, especially if they are VIPs or key influencers.

Current Pain

If you're going to reach your **Target Avatars,** you need to know what topics they're currently focused on. It doesn't matter if your insight addresses them or not. That might sound strange, most marketing and sales advisors will tell you to focus on the current needs and pain points of your prospect or buyer.

> **Current Pain**
>
> Describe the challenges each avatar will likely focus on this year.

Thought leadership often asks people to look ahead—whether for a few months or a few years—into a future to see risks and opportunities. It asks people to lift their attention from their day-to-day priorities and view the road ahead.

If your thought leadership addresses their **Current Pain,** you're incredibly lucky. More likely, you're presenting one good insight in a world with lots of ideas. To design a campaign that captures their attention, you need to understand your audience's **Current Pain,** whether you can solve it or not.

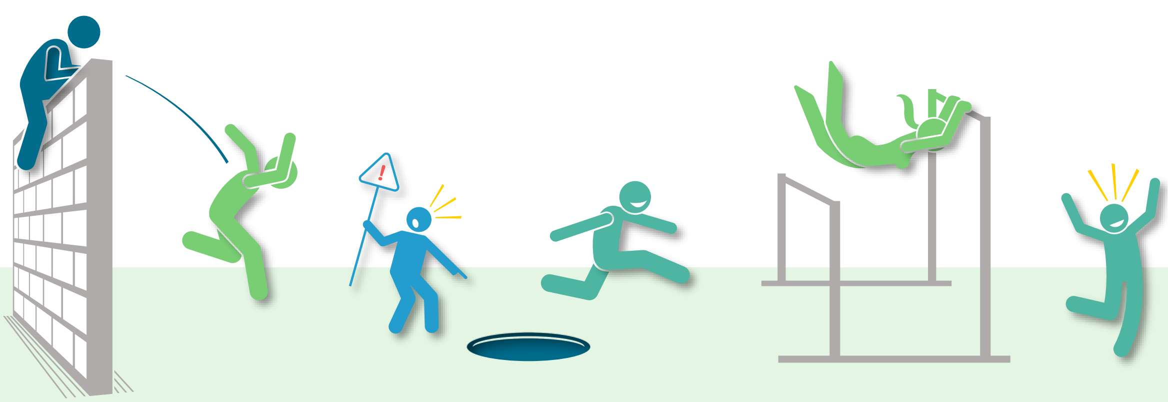
Future Challenges

What issues do your **Target Avatars** need to start preparing for? These **Future Challenges** should connect to your thought leadership insight. But there may be other issues on the horizon that your **Target Avatar** will need to address. In a B2B environment, **Future Challenges** may be 3-5 years out. But as we all know, the pace of business usually means these issues come to the forefront sooner than any of us would like.

Future Challenges

List any **relevant** issues that each avatar needs to start preparing for (1-5 years).

This cell in the **OrgTL Canvas** can be built through marketing intelligence, from salespeople listening to their clients, and by developing a deep knowledge of the industry.



Next Steps

Once your organization captures the attention of your **Targeted Audience,** then you need to be clear around what you'd like them to do. This next step must be actionable and relatively small. In many cases, thought leadership uses a call to action that focuses around education. "Learn more!" It's designed to reach a potential buyer early in the buying cycle. However, a call to action can also be an invitation to a deeper conversation.

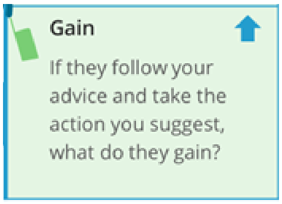
Next Steps

What specific action do you want your avatars to take?

Next Steps can also be tied to a standard sales call to action; however, this needs to be handled especially carefully. Thought leadership should be presented as a gift with no strings attached. Many organizations favor gated downloads where prospects exchange their email address for "free" information. They're paying with their identity.

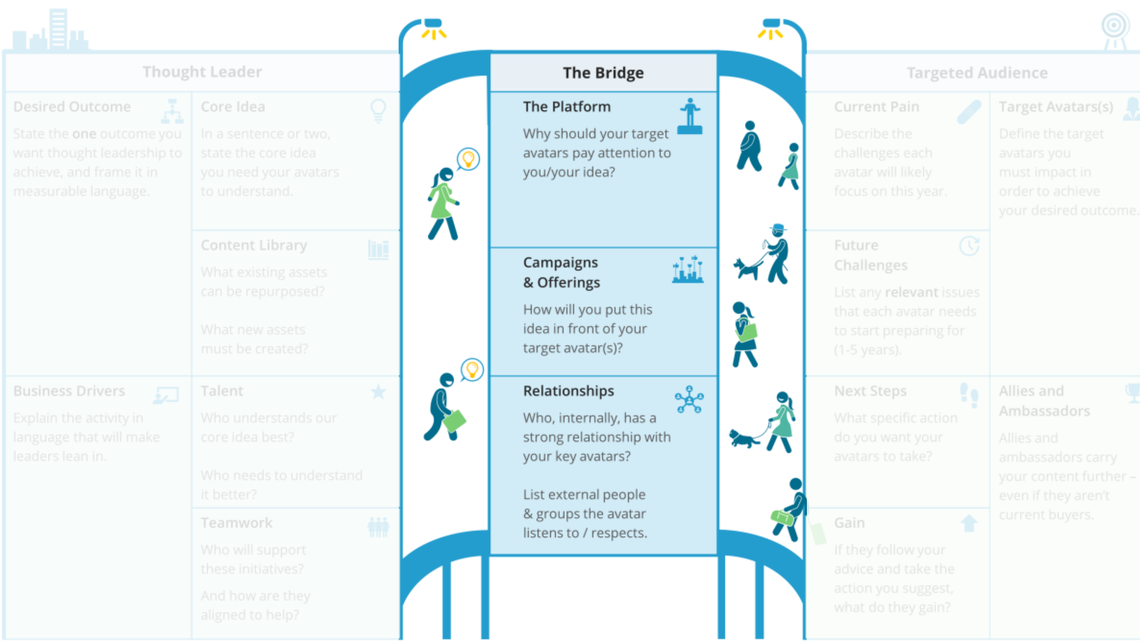
Gain

We have seen many organizations gloss over the **Gain** for the Targeted Audience. If your audience embraces your idea and puts it to use, what's the benefit for them? We believe that thought leadership is most effective when it originates from a place of purposeful, targeted generosity. You need to be able to clearly articulate to your Targeted Audience what they will gain from giving your idea consideration—let alone putting it to use.



The Bridge

Now that we've talked about both the organization and the **Target Avatars,** it's time to build a bridge between them. This work is accomplished through three areas. **The Platform,** the **Campaign,** and **Relationships.** We will discuss each of these items on the strategic level. It's important to know where you're headed and dial in the concepts. Then, you're able to create and deploy thought leadership **Campaigns.**



The Platform

Most people are familiar with the concepts of Corporate Brands and Personal Brands. However, if you practice thought leadership, you need to create a brand for your ideas. We call this a **Platform.**

> **The Platform**
>
> Why should your target avatars pay attention to you/your idea?

- How well can your **Allies and Ambassadors** explain your ideas—when you're not in the room?
- How quickly do your **Target Avatars** see the relevance in your insight?
- Is the insight easy to remember?

Most organizational thought leadership struggles to reach scale because it lacks a clear **Platform.** It's just another good idea among many. And in that case, thought leadership practitioners will see one of two things, the idea attaches itself to the strongest nearby brand—either your organization's corporate brand or your personal brand. However, this attachment becomes a barrier to the idea reaching scale.

Three Types of Brands

Corporate Brand

Our Reach

Our Reputation

Our Accomplishments

Thought Leadership Brand (Platform)

The Insight's Relevance

The Insight's Level of Recognition

The Insight's # of Advocates

Personal Brand

My Passion

My Authenticity

My Credibility

Campaigns & Offerings

Thought leadership **Campaigns** are designed to reach specific **Target Avatars** and get an idea in front of them. Preferably, those insights are shared through multiple formats and multiple modalities. Just remember, one sunny day does not make a summer, and one LinkedIn post does not make a campaign.

Typically, you'll want at least one long form modality, and one more frequent shorter modality. You don't need to be omnichannel with your thought leadership, you just need to be consistent.

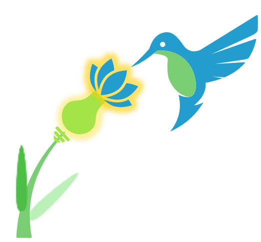
For example, Peter and Bill (authors of this whitepaper) use different long and short forms. We each play to our strengths:

- **Peter** prefers short-form videos and long-form podcasts because he is more comfortable as a speaker.
- **Bill** writes frequent LinkedIn posts and occasional longer whitepapers.

The more impersonal the campaign, the less likely your target audience will see it. This is why we apply the concepts of Broadcasting, Narrowcasting and Pointcasting to thought leadership **Campaigns.**

Broadcasting—uses mass-media to try to reach the widest audience possible (The Today Show)

Narrowcasting—puts **Campaigns** in places where members of your targeted audience seek specialized information (e.g., a trade publication or conference)



Pointcasting—asks your **Talent** and **Teams** to deliver insights personally to VIPs and high value individuals (e.g., a one-to-one conversation during a dinner)

In our experience working with organizations, most organizations rely more on broadcasting thought leadership than they should and that's one of the core reasons why ROI is sub-standard.

Campaigns & Offerings (Continued)

Many people often confuse **Core Ideas, Content Library,** and **Offerings.**

> **Campaigns & Offerings**
>
> How will you put this idea in front of your target avatar(s)?

- The **Core Idea** is the provocative insight that evokes curiosity.
- The **Content Library** contains supporting arguments, data, and examples.
- The **Offerings** are the modalities—articles, blogs, books, short-form videos, podcasts.

We've seen many organizations start a campaign by talking about an Offering: "We need a keynote," "We need to write an article," or "We need to put out a podcast series." This approach mistakenly prioritizes the container (the **Offering's** modality).

Start with the **Core Idea** and **Target Avatar.** Then, choose what persuasive elements you need from the **Content Library.** Then, you can choose the delivery format—the **Offering's** modality.

Relationships

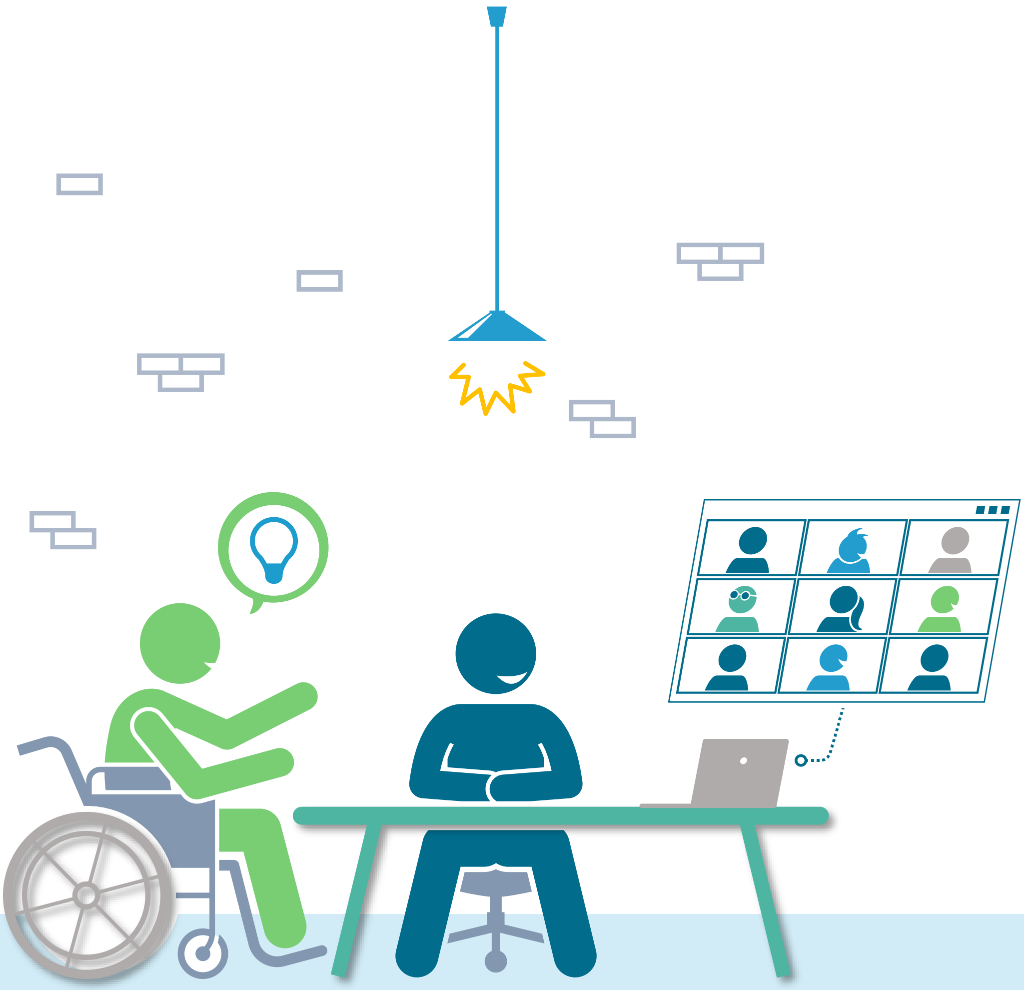
You've identified high-value individuals in your **Target Avatars.** And now, it's time to establish the individuals who are going to deliver those insights to those avatars.

As we discussed earlier, the "last mile" problem occurs when organizations assume that their key audiences will be paying attention. It's wise to be proactive and identify individuals within your organization that can share these insights with the key individuals that you want to influence, and that means building **Relationships** that elevate both the contributor and the organization.

Relationships

Who, internally, has a strong relationship with your key avatars?

List external people & groups the avatar listens to / respects.



Conclusion

Organizations that practice thought leadership need it to be a scalable, sustainable function that aligns with the organization's strategy and the target audience's needs.

Our firm, Thought Leadership Leverage, created the **OrgTL Canvas** over the past five years in response to the gaps we saw when firms tried to stand up a thought leadership function and create measurable impact.

If you'd like to learn more about the **OrgTL Canvas,** or you'd like help building a thought leadership strategy for your organization, we'd love to hear from you.

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