

WHERE ARE YOU IN YOUR AI ADOPTION JOURNEY?



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YOUR PATH TO AI MATURITY

Explore each phase of our adoption journey to understand your company's AI maturity and how to plan for future stages.

Gain clarity on each phase, from early tool consideration and unclear goals to governed, integrated artificial intelligence (AI) that delivers measurable business outcomes.

Designed for HR and business leaders who want to assess their current state and understand key considerations for their roadmap, this resource provides a shared framework for evaluating progress and identifying areas that must evolve for organizations to differentiate themselves and compete.

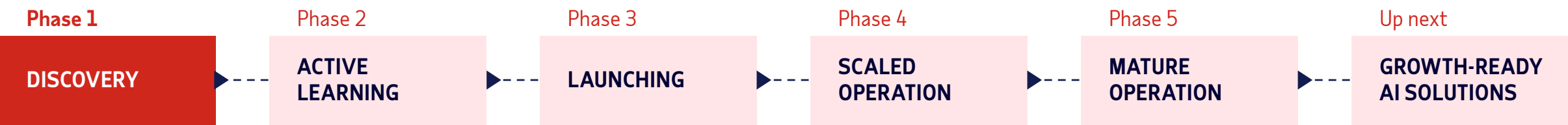
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Phase 1

DISCOVERY

Your company may be in the **Discovery phase** if:

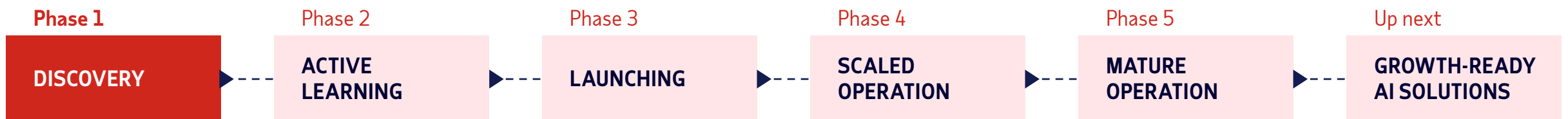
- AI tools and solutions are being explored.
- The business is discovering the benefits of partnering with a trusted vendor, or learning that capabilities can be built internally.
- No AI- or data-related strategies are in place.
- Business goals are unclear (“We’re not sure how AI can benefit the business”), with no clear company or product use cases, no success definition and no measurement of value.
- There’s little understanding of whether, or how, employees are using AI for work.
- Data exists in disconnected systems, increasing compliance risk and preventing AI technologies from delivering high-quality results.





HOW PHASE 1 SHOWS UP IN PRACTICE

- This phase is about exploring AI's potential to support the business and understanding how employees use it or would like to use it.
- There are informal discussions and possible small-scale experiments driven by individuals and early adopters.
- Some initial experiments may include basic automation, such as chatbots.
- The focus is on understanding use cases, exploring the state and availability of internal data and building managerial or executive awareness.
- There's little to no investment in AI and no clear path to defining or measuring success.

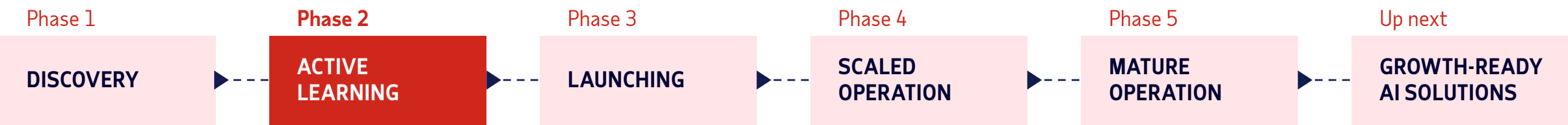


Phase 2

ACTIVE LEARNING

Your company may be in the **Active Learning phase** if:

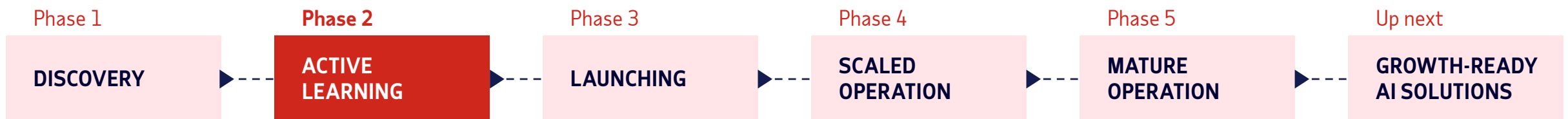
- AI tools and solutions are being intentionally piloted or experimented with.
- AI management strategies, data governance practices and safety measures are emerging. Compliance and ethical considerations may also be under discussion during this phase.
- Business goals are clearer ("We think AI could help us increase productivity"), with a stronger definition of success and an enhanced plan for measuring value.
- Employees experimenting with AI are noting its performance and potential risks. Any gaps in AI skills are also being identified, with a focus on maintaining human oversight and building and acquiring technology expertise.
- Data preparation and integration may exist in a limited manner or are being discussed.





HOW PHASE 2 SHOWS UP IN PRACTICE

- > This phase involves intentional learning through AI experimentation and pilots, usually in one or two departments.
- > Early processes for evaluating business success are starting to emerge.
- > Some early applications may involve HR testing predictive analytics for turnover risk; finance and operations piloting demand forecasting and invoice automation tools; and leaders addressing AI skills gaps, AI management and human oversight, data governance, data integration, compliance needs and ethical considerations.

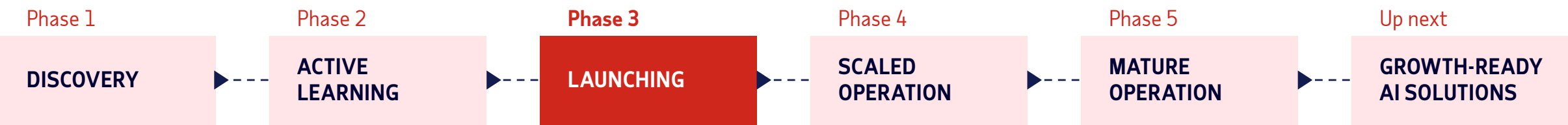
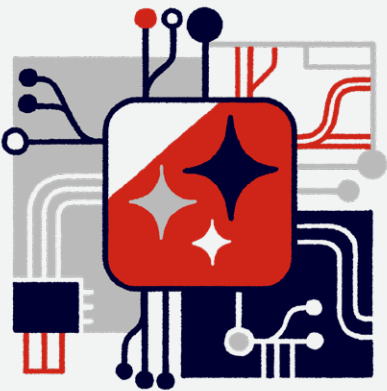


Phase 3

LAUNCHING

Your company may be in the **Launching phase** if:

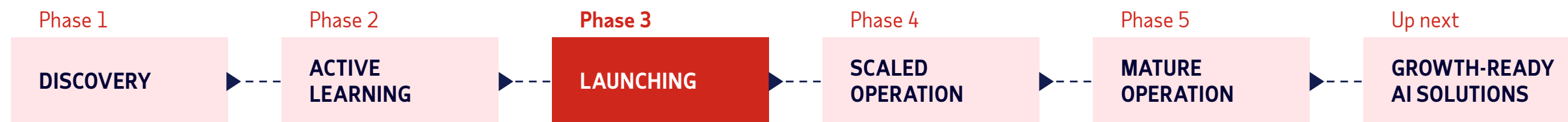
- AI tools and solutions are being adopted across the company, with more clearly defined business cases and measurements of value. Departments are collaborating on AI initiatives through one or multiple points of contact.
- AI management and data governance strategies are in place. Compliance and ethics strategies may also be active or in progress during this phase. Explainability, transparency, safety, privacy and human oversight are increasingly a reality for the business.
- Monitoring of AI performance and risk is dynamic and responsive.
- Data management and integration are improving, helping teams measure results, access insights, learn what works and reuse successful approaches.
- Business goals are clearer than ever ("AI can help us increase productivity by 25%"), with early wins being observed. Gaps in AI skills are closing.





HOW PHASE 3 SHOWS UP IN PRACTICE

- This phase is about formalizing and executing strategies, best practices and human oversight.
- AI skills gaps, if any, are closing through upskilling, reskilling and hiring; pilots are running smoothly; and metrics for performance, return on investment (ROI) and compliance are emerging.
- Cross-functional collaboration is robust, with governance teams continually strengthening privacy, safety, ethics and data management practices.
- HR is using AI in areas that benefit the business, such as people analytics, engagement surveys and the employee experience.
- IT is integrating data across platforms, reducing and eliminating silos that keep AI technologies from delivering high-quality results.

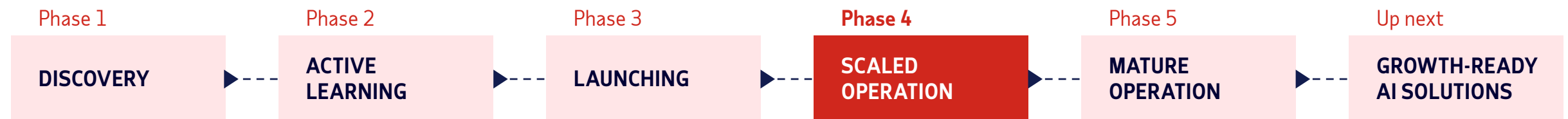


Phase 4

SCALED OPERATION

Your company may be in the **Scaled Operation phase** if:

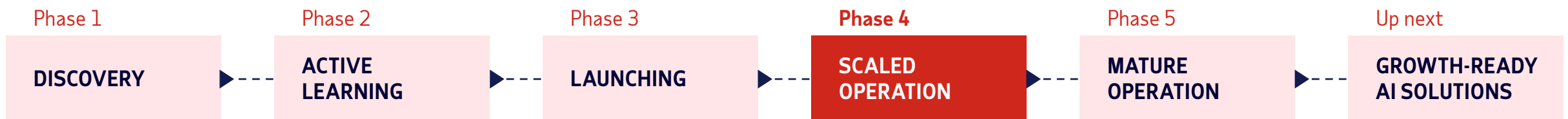
- Adoption of AI tools and solutions continues to grow, with growth tightly connected to business objectives and advanced measurements of value.
- AI management, compliance, ethics, safety, privacy, data governance and data integration practices are widespread and advanced.
- AI is culturally ingrained, with employees using AI safely and successfully.
- AI is helping the company achieve its goals ("AI has increased productivity by 25%").
- Monitoring of AI performance and risk is robust, driving constant improvement.
- Cross-functional ownership and adoption of best practices are far less challenging to implement.





HOW PHASE 4 SHOWS UP IN PRACTICE

- In this phase, AI becomes deeply embedded into a company's culture and workflows, supported by measurable performance improvements.
- Cross-functional teams are frequently collaborating to ensure initiatives remain aligned with business goals, governance strategies and guardrails.
- HR is integrating AI into various subdisciplines (such as recruitment, performance management and learning and development) and informing staffing, productivity and employee retention strategies with predictive analytics.
- AI is becoming an integral part of operational dashboards for decision making and forecasting, with efficiency and productivity gains being measured and reported in business reviews.

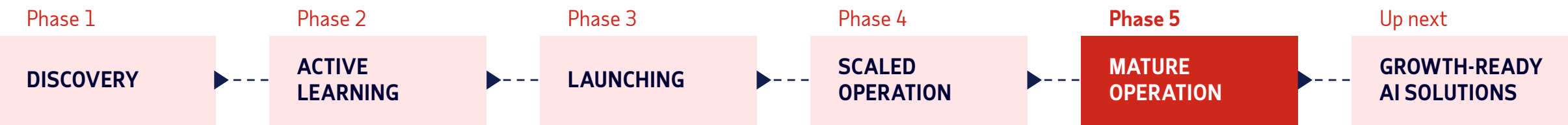
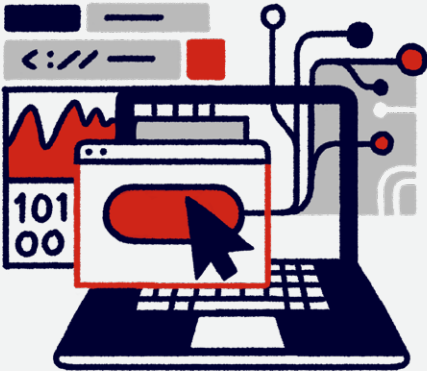


Phase 5

MATURE OPERATION

Your company may be in the **Mature Operation phase** if:

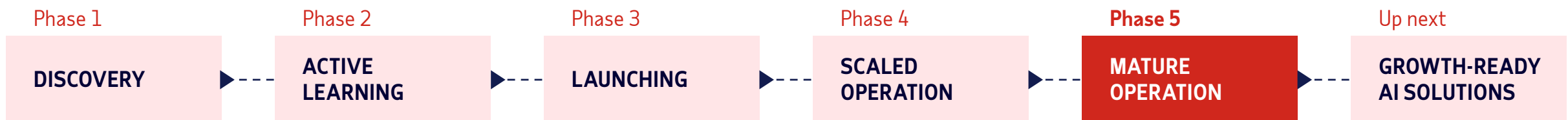
- AI is fully embedded throughout the company across various functions and teams.
- AI is informing decisions in real time and continually achieving business goals in a thoughtful, measured way, helping the company differentiate itself and compete.
- AI operates with significant autonomy, with agents collaborating successfully under human oversight.
- AI management, compliance, ethics, safety, privacy, data governance and data integration practices are robust and sophisticated.
- Employees are highly skilled AI users and interventionists, providing critical human review.
- Industry benchmarks are being used to compare AI performance and adapt operations accordingly.





HOW PHASE 5 SHOWS UP IN PRACTICE

- In the final phase, the company has evolved from “AI as a tool” to “AI as a strategic differentiator,” using advanced capabilities to spark innovation, agility, customer value, employee satisfaction and more.
- AI insights, benchmarks, governance and guardrails are directly informing business strategy, workforce planning, product development and service models.
- Employees have developed into cautious yet effective AI operators and reviewers.
- Value metrics are closely tied to business growth, and the company is being recognized as an AI-empowered workplace, aiding recruitment and retention.



MATURE RESPONSIBLY WITH AI FOR HR AND PAYROLL

Unlock your company's maturity potential with ADP's responsibly crafted AI capabilities, designed to make HR and payroll moments easier, smarter and more human. Discover **purpose-built AI solutions** that simplify workflows, deliver data-driven insights and empower your team, all built on the industry's most extensive and trusted HR and payroll dataset.

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