



# The reverse pyramid

A METHOD FOR INNOVATION  
DEVELOPMENT

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## Everything began with a monk and his razor

The world is full of different models and concepts for innovation and development. Many of these models are rather complicated and difficult and therefore not very user-friendly.

We have strived to develop an innovation model that is simple, uncomplicated and easy to use and implement.

Everything began with an English monk.

William of Ockham (circa 1287–1347) was a Franciscan friar and theologian and an influential medieval philosopher and a nominalist. His popular fame as a great logician rests chiefly on the maxim attributed to him and known as Ockham's razor. The term razor refers to distinguishing between two hypotheses either by "shaving away" unnecessary assumptions or cutting apart two similar conclusions.

His principle states that among competing hypotheses, the one with the fewest assumptions should be selected.

In science, Ockham's razor is used as a heuristic guide in the development of theoretical models, rather than as a rigorous arbiter between candidate models.[1][2] In the scientific method, Ockham's razor is not considered an irrefutable principle of logic or a scientific result; the preference for simplicity in the scientific method is based on the falsifiability criterion.

For each accepted explanation of a phenomenon, there may be an extremely large, perhaps even incomprehensible, number of possible and more complex alternatives, because one can always burden failing explanations with ad hoc hypotheses to prevent them from being falsified; therefore, simpler theories are preferable to more complex ones because they are more testable.

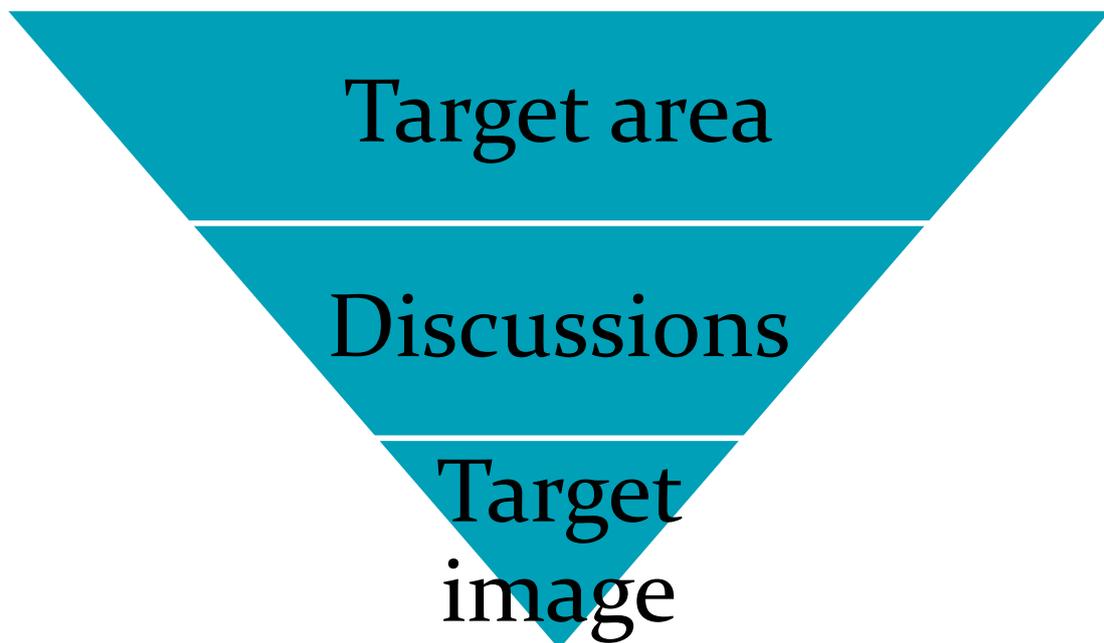
*The principle of Ockham's razor is a very good starting point when it comes to creating innovation; **keep it simple.***

## The Reverse Pyramid – how it works

Traditionally, a pyramid rests on its broad base and ends with its pointed peak. In the innovation model "The Reversed Pyramid" we turn the pyramid upside down.

*The Reversed Pyramid has three different steps in its innovation model:*

- 1. Definition of target area*
- 2. Developing discussions*
- 3. Target image*



The development process begins by defining a target area we wish to discuss, we begin our discussions in general terms and become more and more concrete to end in a common target image; *We want to achieve this.*

## The benefits of The Reverse Pyramid

The reverse pyramid can be summarized as follows:

1. It is simple and straightforward
2. It is completely democratic - all participants are equally important in the discussions
3. It is based on a target area defined by the person who invites the participants to the meeting - this we want to achieve with the discussion
4. The discussion starts in general terms, but becomes more and more concrete
5. It can be used for short and fast processes as well as for longer and more complicated ones
6. The discussions are led by a call leader who ensures that the process is pushed forward; that is to say, successively further down the pyramid

## The Reverse Pyramid and the chaos theory

*Discussions in The Reverse Pyramid will be the best without an overly detailed agenda. It is a clear advantage to follow the chaos theory instead; let the discussion develop in the direction that the meeting participants really want.*

## The Reverse Pyramid and URBACT

*It is our firm belief that The Reverse Pyramid model is very well suited for the work of our Urbact Local Group (ULG). We get an open and creative discussion where thoughts and ideas are given the opportunity to flow more freely than if we have chosen a traditional model for innovation development.*

## For more information

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