

# Picking your path to strategy

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UCD RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

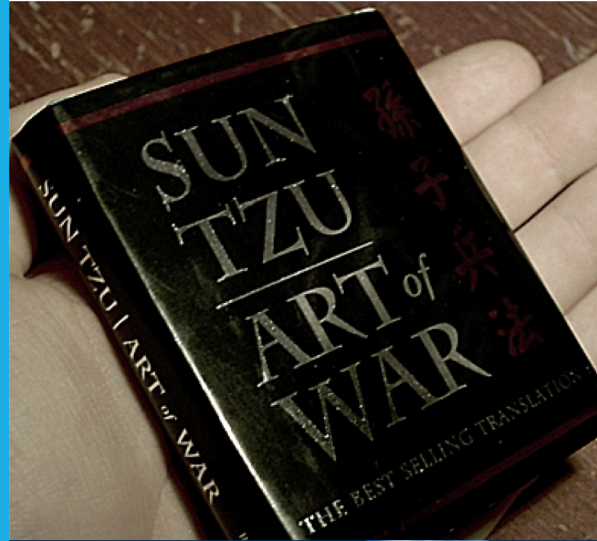


# What do I mean when I say strategy?

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AN INTEGRATED SET OF DECISIONS, MADE AHEAD OF TIME, IN THE FACE OF UNCERTAINTY, TO ACHIEVE A SIGNIFICANT GOAL

# How did we get here?



**Strategy**  
2015-2020



# What's the big idea?

WE CAN TAKE IDEAS FROM BUSINESS STRATEGY AND ADAPT THEM  
TO BE USEFUL AT A UNIVERSITY



# Structure

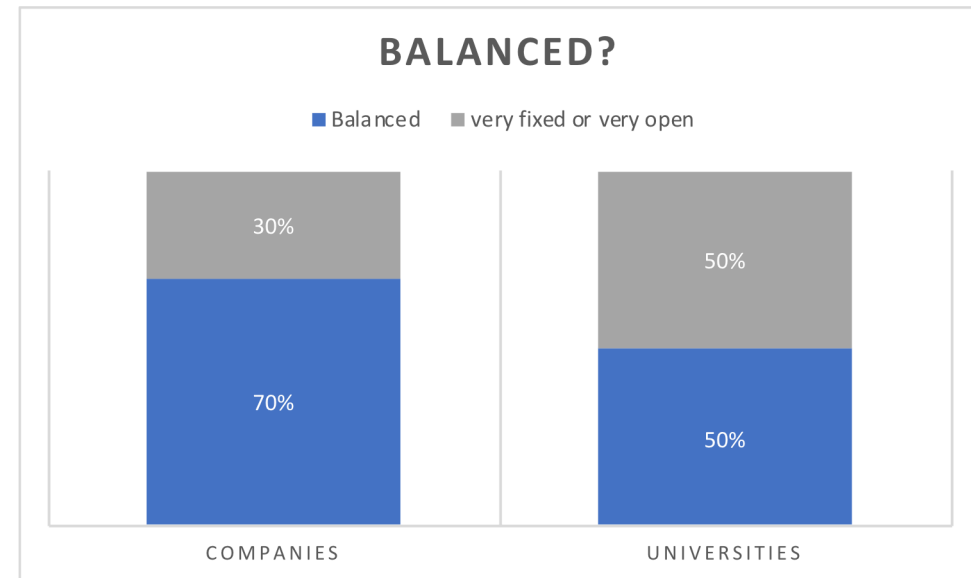
- Ten timeless tests
- Data on company self-evaluation
- Data on university self-evaluation
- Conclusions



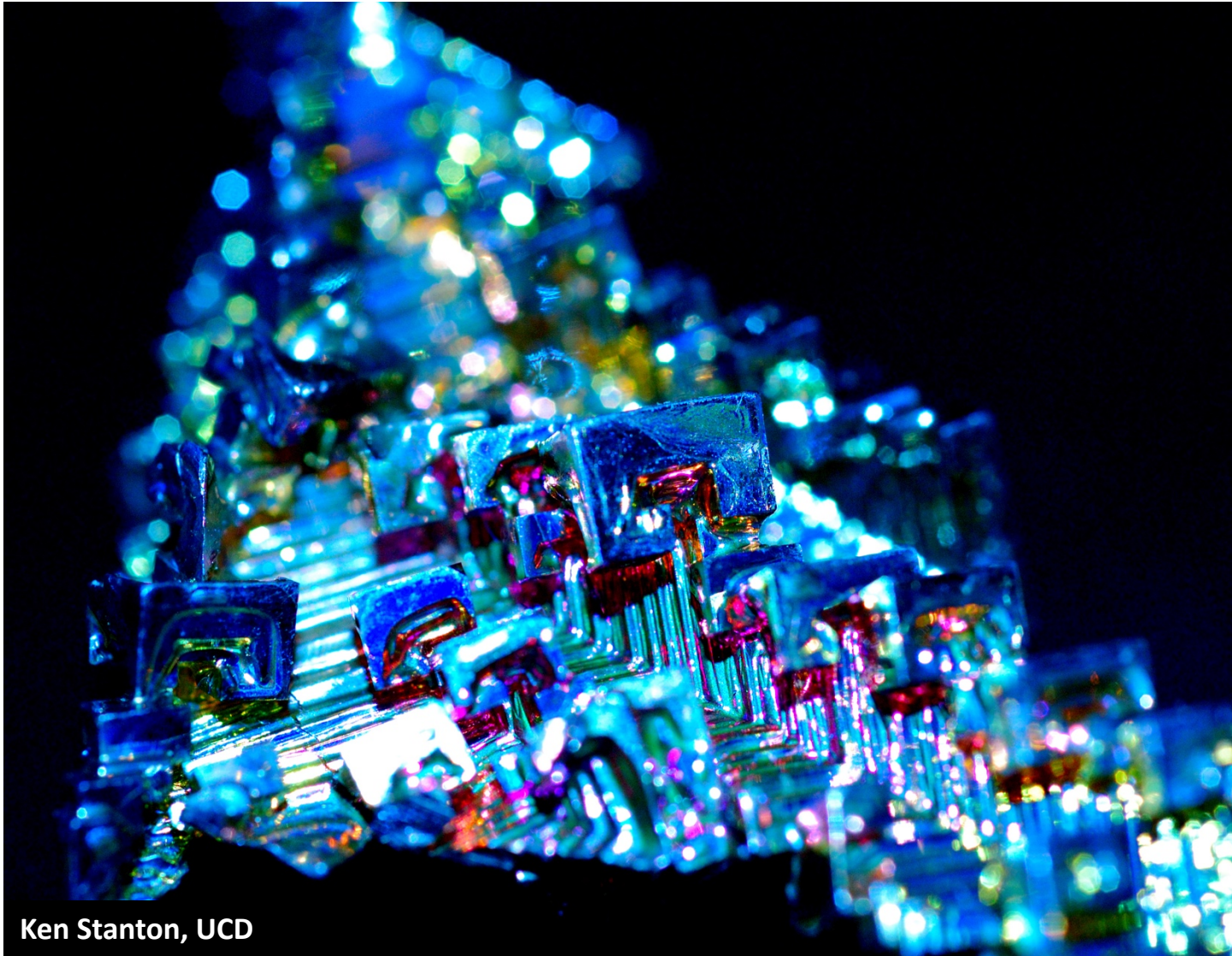


# Fixed or agile?

- completely planned out and locked for the period?
- completely open and subject to change?

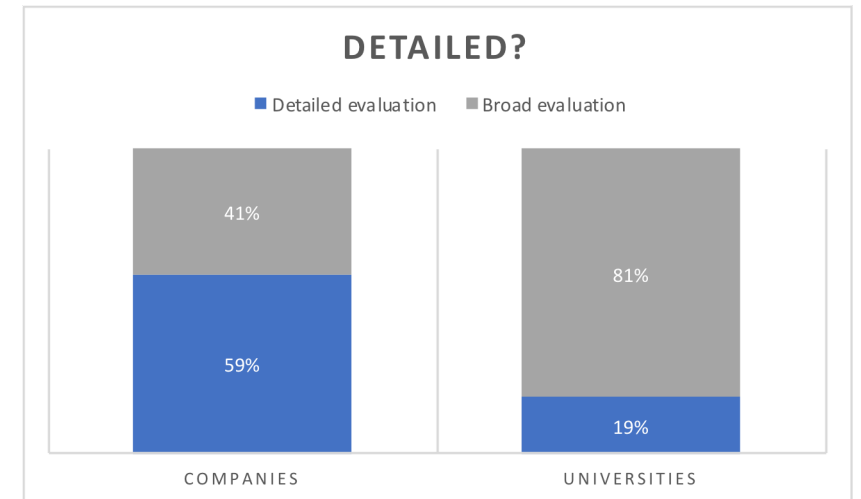




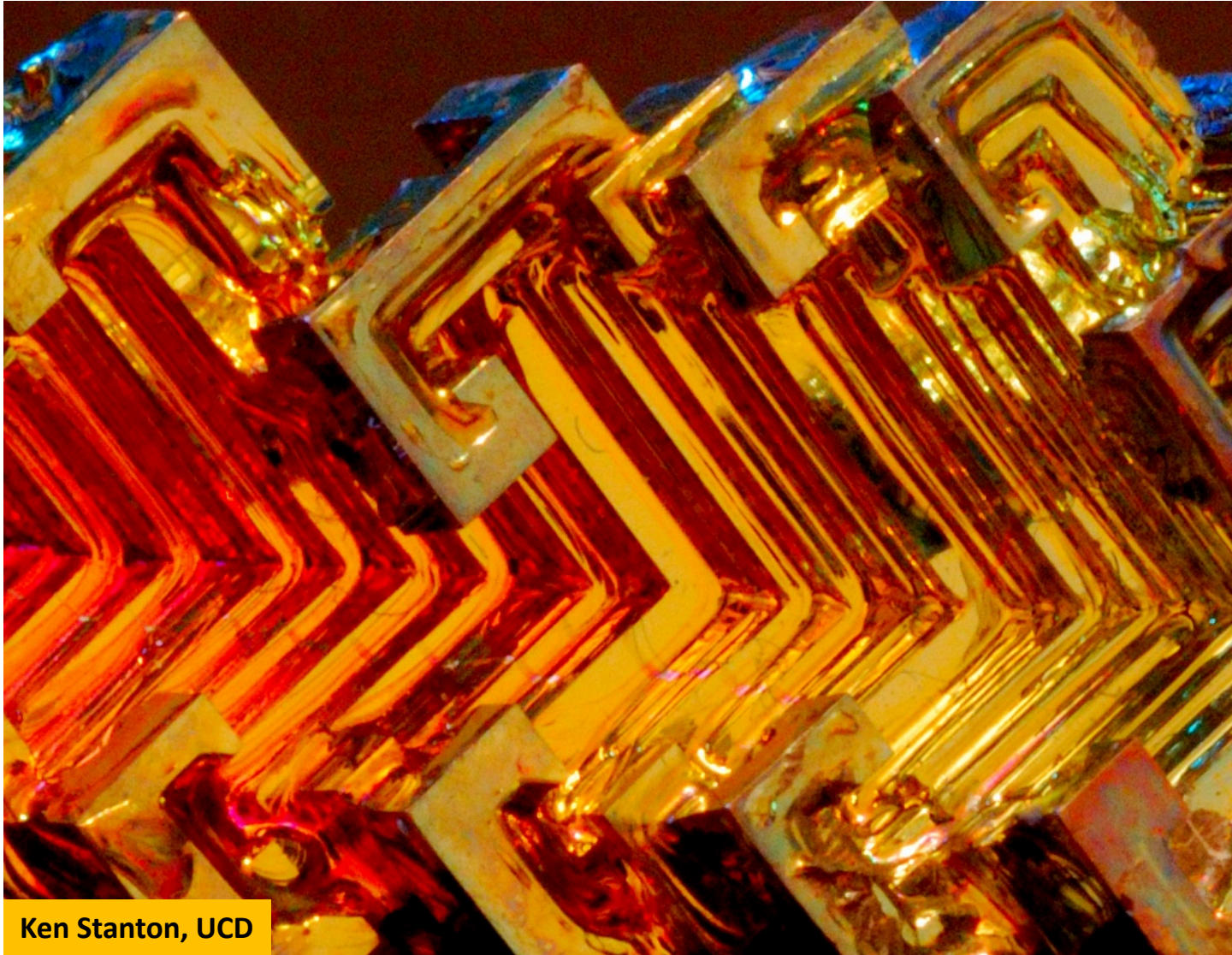


# Broad Understanding or Detailed Evaluation?

- based on a broad understanding of the university's relative strengths?
- based on a detailed evaluation of the university's strengths vs benchmarks?



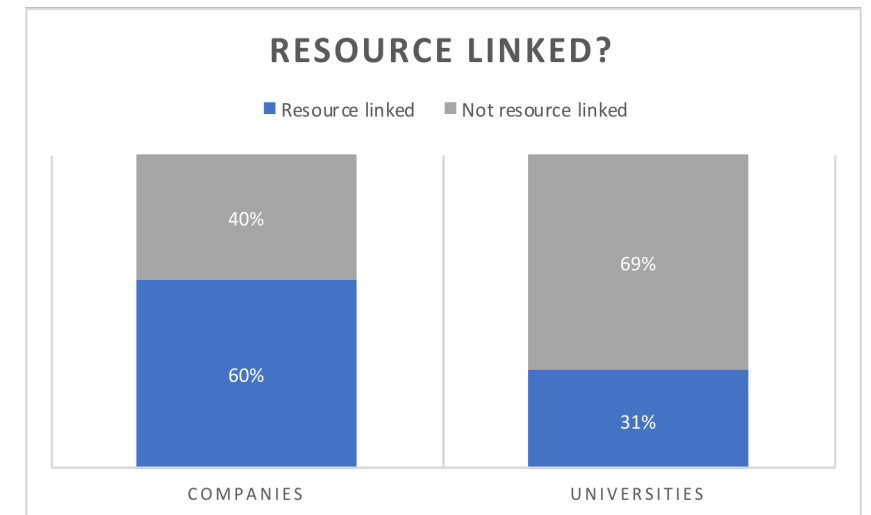




Ken Stanton, UCD

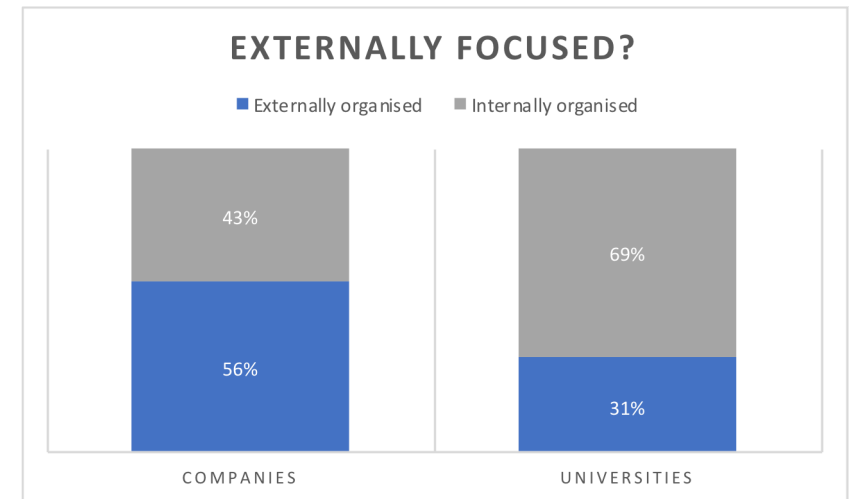
# Linked to resource allocation or not?

- Loosely linked to resource allocation and investment?
- The basis of all resource decisions and investment?

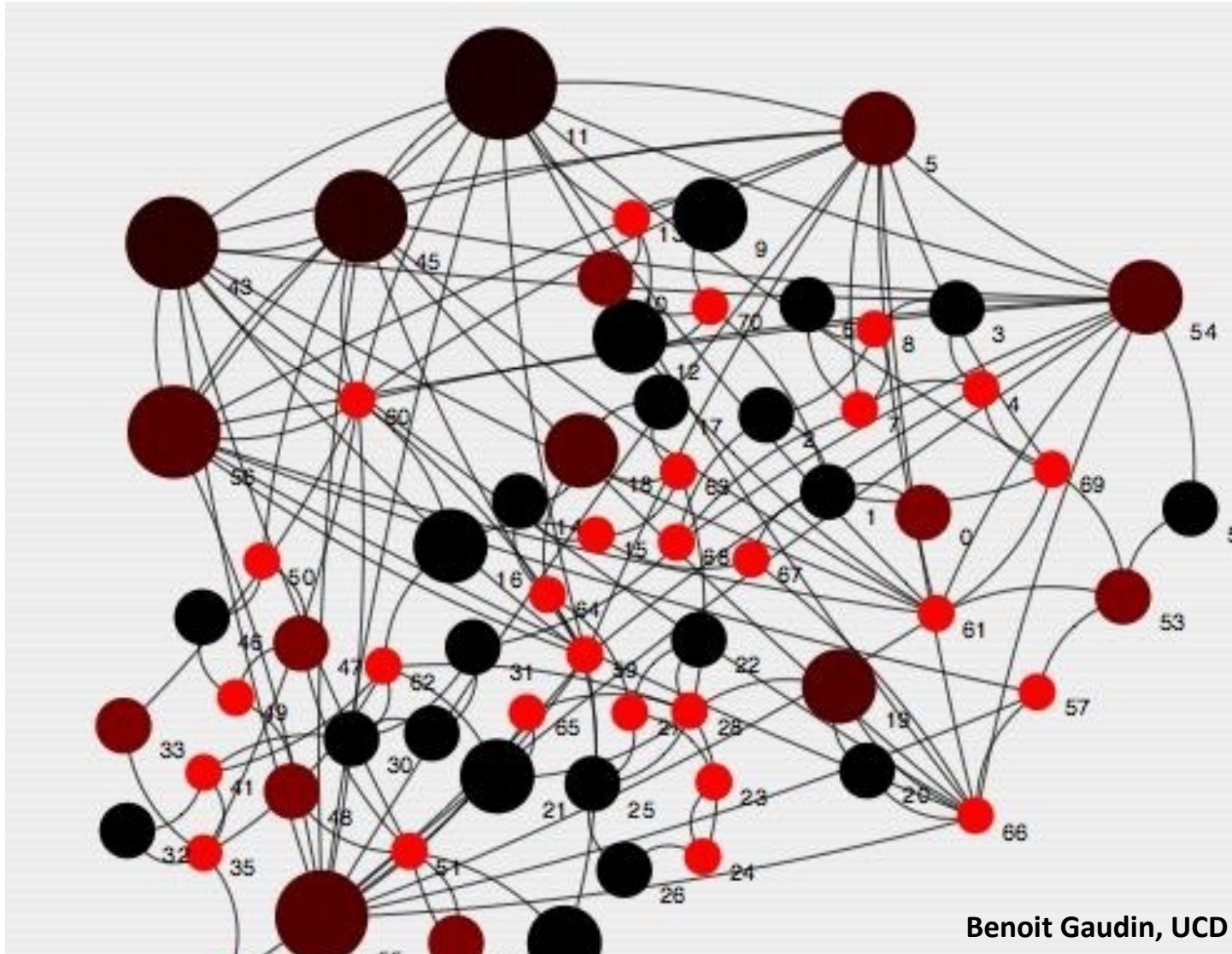


# Internal or external focus?

- Organised in terms of internal academic structures?
- Organised in terms of external factors?

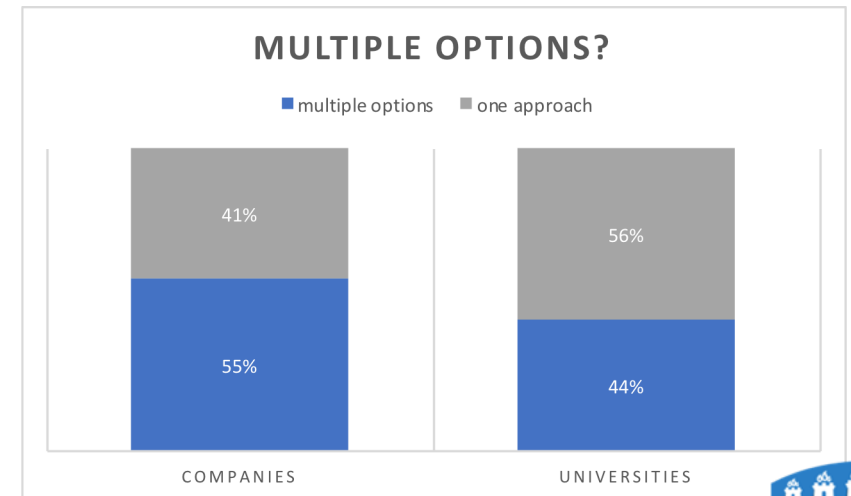




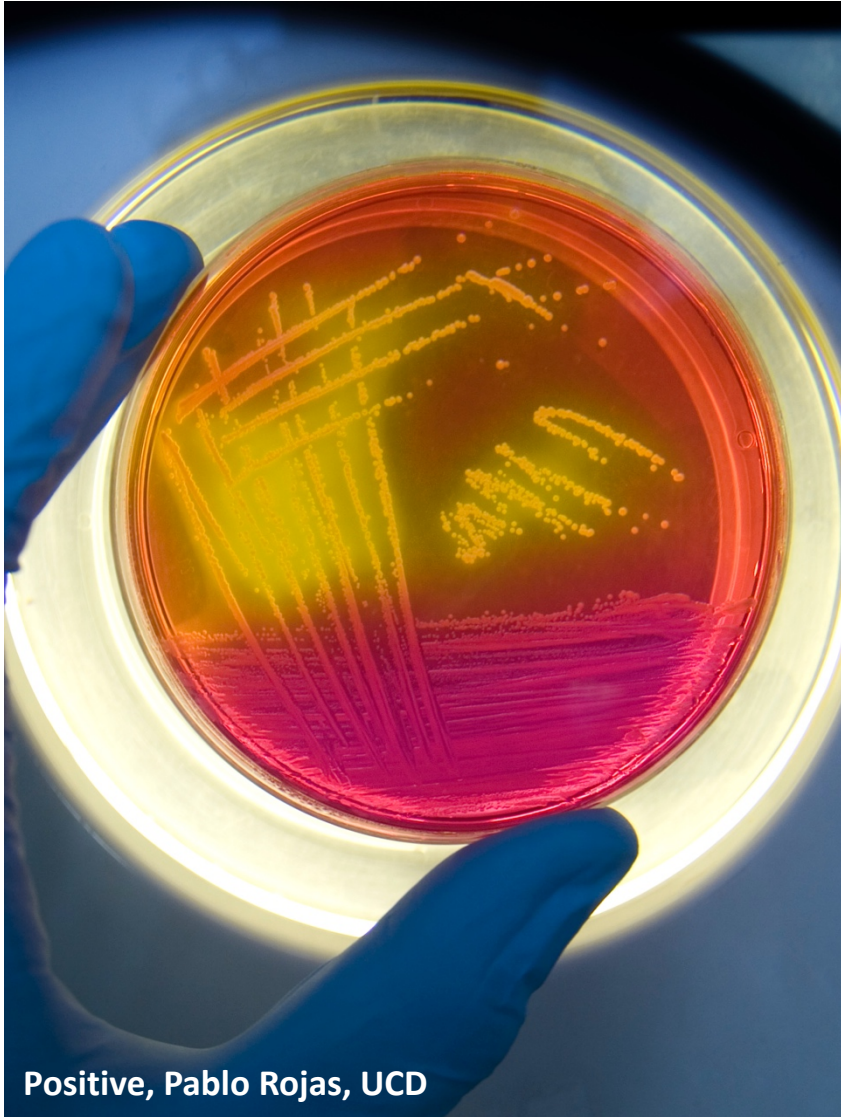


# Building a single case or options?

- Based on building the case for one course of action?
- Based on evaluating different options and then picking a preferred option?

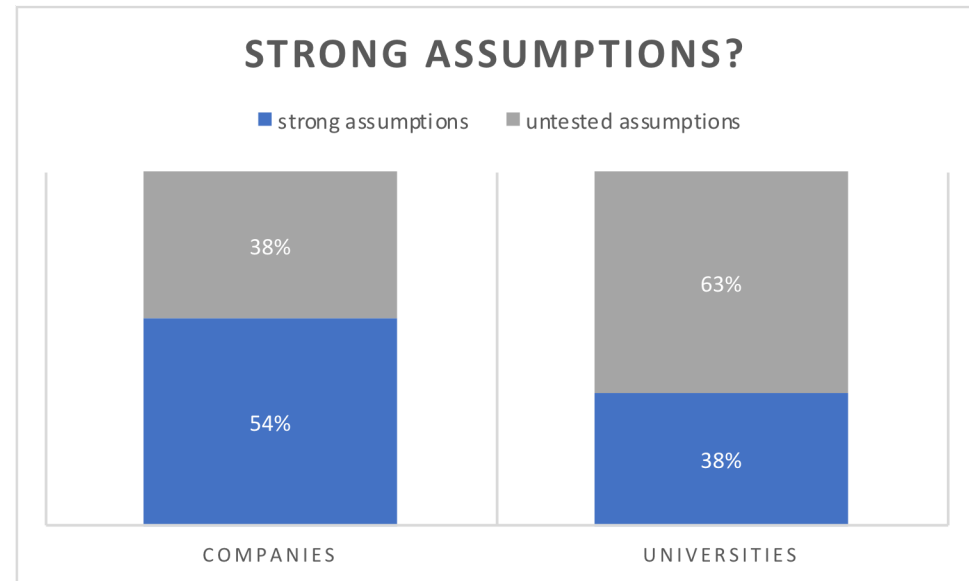






# Based on untested or solid assumptions?

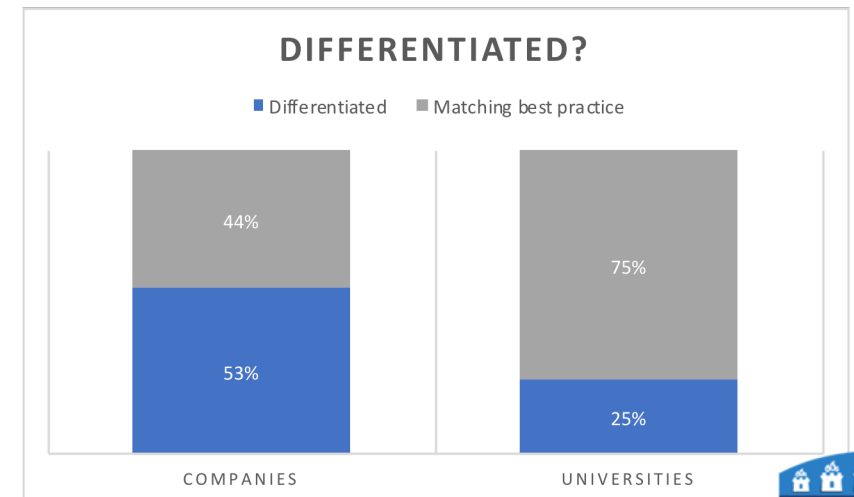
- Based on untested assumptions?
- Based on rigorously tested assumptions?





# Best practice or differentiation?

- Bringing the university in line with best practice of other comparable universities?
- Strongly differentiating from other comparable universities?



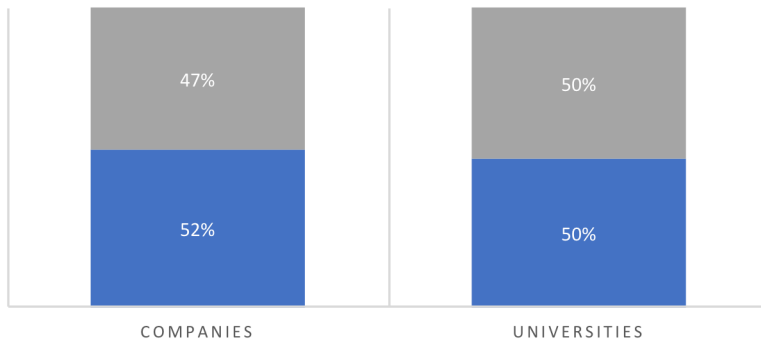


# Built for now or the future?

- Developed to suit current conditions in the sector?
- Developed to suit expected future changes to the sector?

## FUTURE ENVIRONMENT?

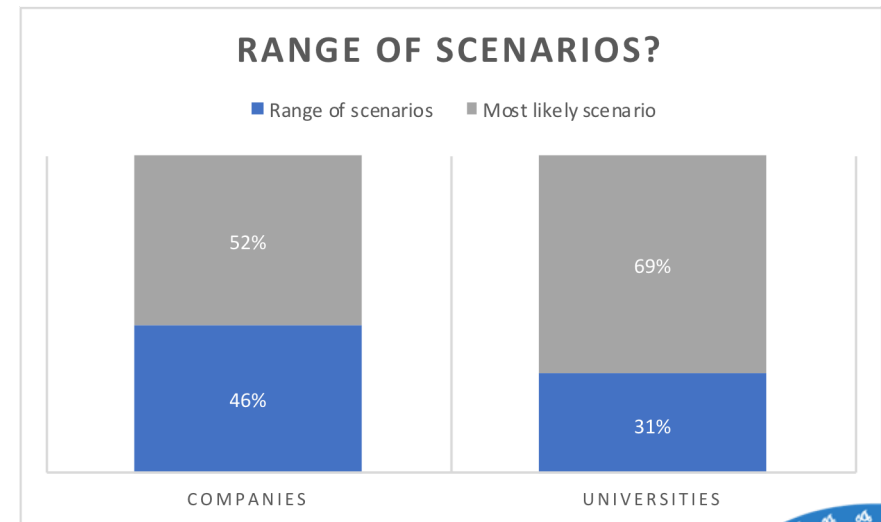
■ future conditions ■ present conditions





# One scenario or multiple?

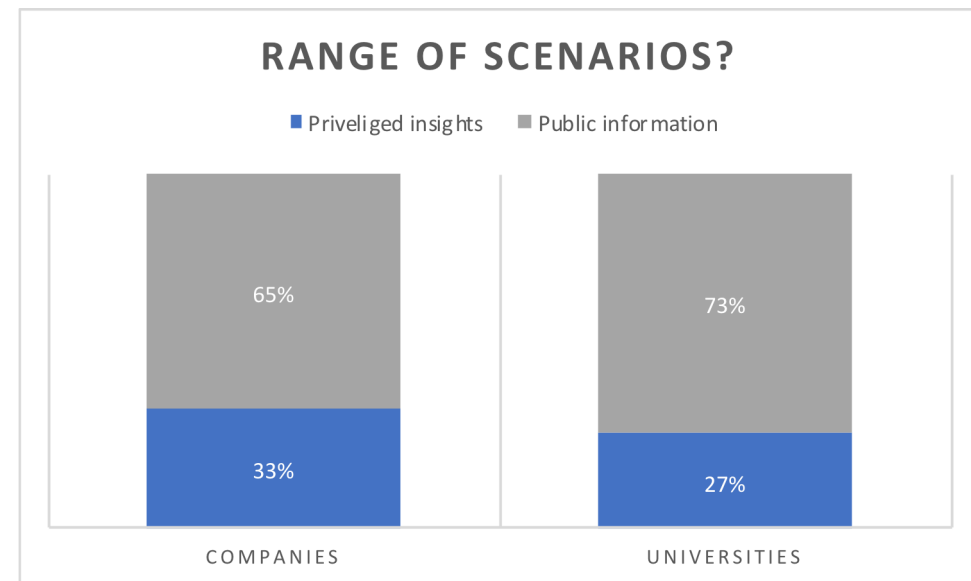
- Focused on one most likely scenario?
- Considering a range of future scenarios?



Gesture Recognition, Brian O'Mullane, UCD

# Public or private information?

- Based mostly on publicly available information?
- Based on privileged or proprietary data and insights?



# Conclusion

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## Top weaknesses for Universities

- Relying on broad rather than detailed evaluations of strengths, weaknesses and where to compete (19%)
- Focusing on achieving established best practice rather than a differentiated strategy (25%)
- Using privileged data and insights is also low (27%) but companies also struggle here (33%)

## Top weaknesses for Universities relative to companies

- Companies twice as likely to allocate resources based on the strategy (60% vs 31%)
- Companies much more likely to structure strategy based on external environment (56% vs 31%)

**Recommendation:** Look at your last strategy, consider the ten tests in that context, then brainstorm a handful of changes you could implement in your next strategy cycle to do better!



# Further reading

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