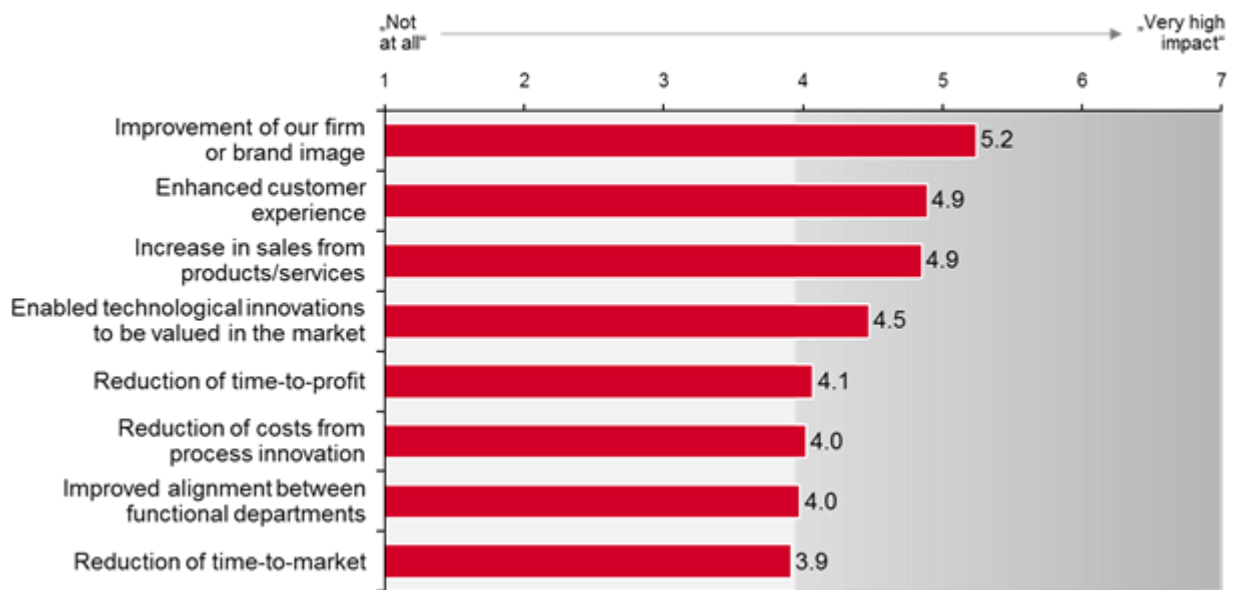


There are many tools and support measures to enhance a company's innovation management *capacity*. However, it is very difficult to gain insights in the contribution that those tools have on the innovation *results*.

In a recent analysis of the global IMP³rove innovation management benchmarking database (www.improve-innovation.eu) with several thousand enterprises, we uncovered that design thinking has a strong impact on both financial and non-financial innovation results.

“Where design is relevant to your firm, what was the impact on the innovation results over the last 3 years?”



N = 2336
Source: IMP³rove – European Innovation Management Academy; Figures as of January 2017

Those high scores underline the impact of design thinking on the innovation results. However, we also see that many companies – and often also their business advisors - lack knowledge on how to utilize design thinking strategically and holistically. As a result, design efforts often remain at a workshop level and are not aligned with the overall innovation strategy, the teams' competencies as well as the processes and tools that are already in place. Hence, if the use of design thinking shall further spread across industries and sectors on a sustainable basis, publicly funded innovation support programmes should take this gap into account.

In particular, to provide the SMEs with the necessary skills in design thinking, their CEOs need to understand what design thinking is, and how it can be effectively integrated in their entire innovation management system. Furthermore, the business advisors rendering innovation support services to SMEs as part of the publicly funded programmes also need to be well trained in this discipline. In turn, the SMEs, supported by their business advisors, have a greater chance to fully exploit the potential of design processes, principles and tools in line with their overall innovation targets and innovation management systems.

In light of this, IMP³rove Academy is looking forward to supporting you in creating effective support programmes for SMEs by developing their design thinking skills for better innovation results. Joint opportunities to foster design thinking in your innovation eco-system could be:

- To **raise awareness** for design thinking among key stakeholders based on an event or workshop
- To receive **more fine-grained analyses** of firms' design-driven innovation capabilities and performances in your region by utilizing the IMP³rove platform and research services
- To benefit from our **training offering on design-driven innovation management**

IMP³rove Academy is looking forward to hearing from you: info@improve-innovation.com