

HR Value Mapping

How to assess as-is HR value chains and identify potential improvements

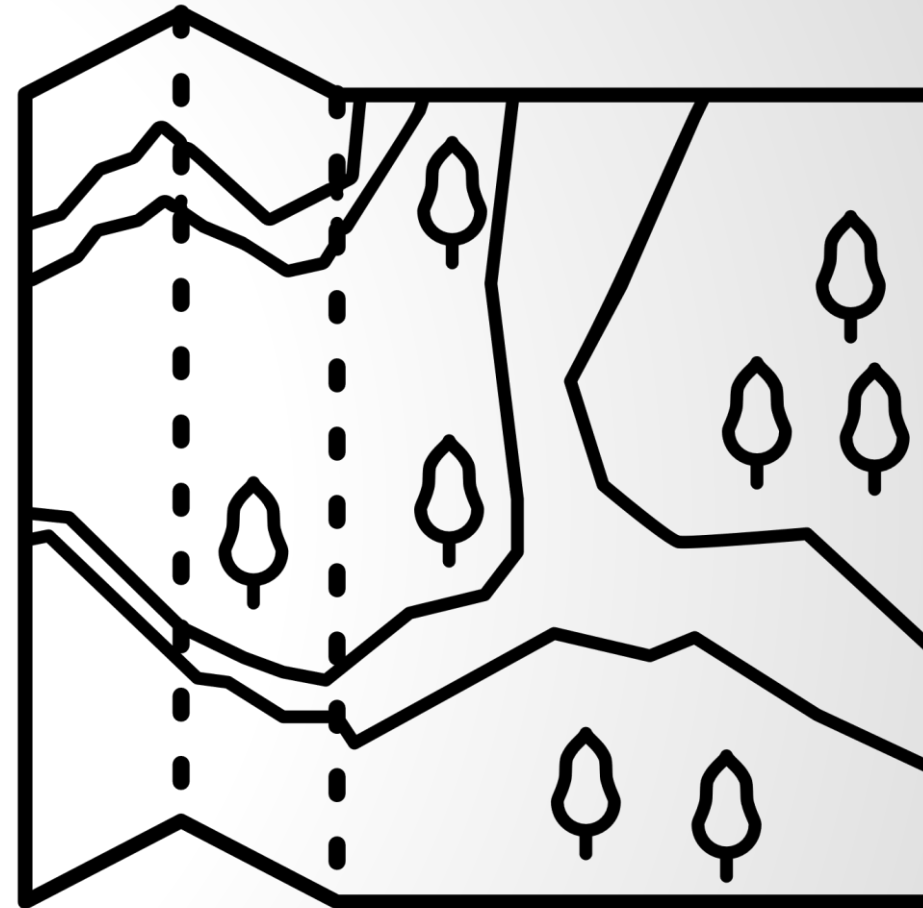


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Executive Summary

? What

HR Value Mapping (HRVM) is a way of identifying and diagramming services and activities of HR organisation aligned to its users.

HRVM is based on Wardley mapping framework by Simon Wardley (licensed under [CC BY-SA 4.0](#)) – business model technique. It was further customized for the HR value chains.

The goal of this document is to introduce the mapping approach and equip the readers for drawing their own HR value chains.

? Who

HRVM can be beneficial for the following stakeholders:

- Strategic decision makers in HR
- HR and HR IT practitioners
- Enterprise architects

? Why

Mapping increases the success rate of your HR decisions by:

- Increasing situational awareness about your HR organisation and competitive landscape
- Establishing common understanding about the current capabilities of HR organisation
- Identifying “possible moves” and changes

“A map does not just chart, it unlocks and formulates meaning; it forms bridges between here and there, between disparate ideas that we did not know were previously connected”

Reif Larsen

1

Why Mapping Matters for HR

1.1 Why Does Mapping Matter for HR?



„Maps are fundamentally about communication. It’s also important to note, that every choice you make (if you have a map) can be reviewed in the future and learnt from. Mapping itself isn’t about giving you an answer, it’s about helping you think about a space and learn from what you did”

Simon Wardley



„Value is defined by the receivers of HR work – the investors, customers, line managers and employees – more than by the givers. HR is successful if and when its stakeholders perceive that it produces value”

Dave Ulrich



„A map is not the territory it represents, but, if correct, it has a similar structure to the territory, which accounts for its usefulness”

Alfred Korzybski

What Are Maps?

Maps are symbolic, most often two-dimensional diagrams representing some space, objects and relationships between those objects.

Why Maps Exist?

Because they help people capture and share knowledge about the landscape/territory maps are representing. Maps are invaluable for making informed decisions.

Why Should We Map HR Value Chains?

Short answer: Because it is very hard to understand where we are and where to go without maps.

Many business functions, including HR, undergo constant significant changes. Every part of the HR job constantly evolves:

- Administrative and compliance tasks are being automated and outsourced
- New HR practices in talent acquisition, rewards, learning and communication emerge
- HR practitioners improve their ability to better contribute to overall success of the business.

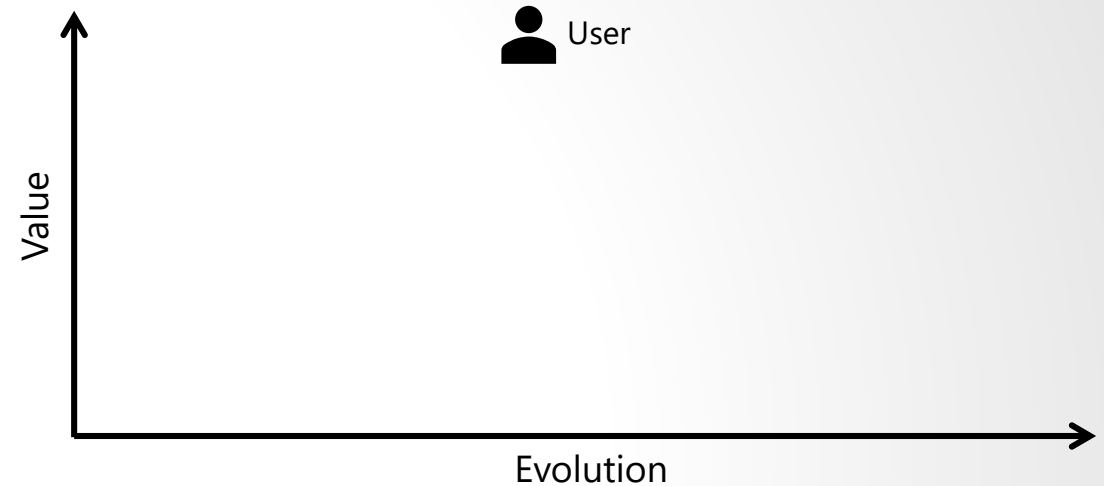
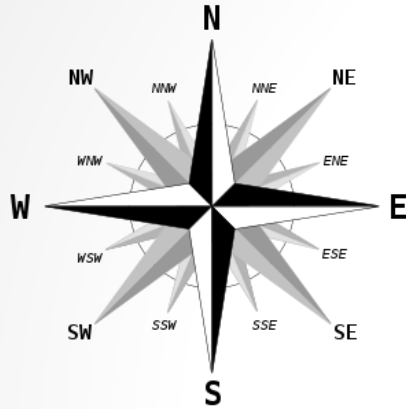
Constant evolution of capabilities can be captured in HR value maps and structured around the users and their needs.

As observed by various mapping enthusiasts, the process of mapping helps the teams establish the common understanding about the current situation. The knowledge distributed among different team members gets captured on the external medium. It can be reviewed, updated and used for strategic discussions about evolution and maturity of HR organisation.

It is very hard
to understand
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maps

2 Basic Concepts of Mapping

2.1 Every Map Needs Coordinates



Learn From Geographical Maps

Most of geographical maps have system of coordinates – usually, top of the map is magnetic north.

Cardinal directions (north, east, south and west) are very important for anyone using maps, because they allow us to explain the position of objects relative to each other.

Start with User as an Anchor

For HR value maps we should have “User” as the point of “magnetic north”. Value can only be delivered to the user, and it should not be omitted from the map. We will discuss different types of users further.

Use Two Axes of Value and Maturity

We will use two axes:

- Y-axis is the value and its visibility for the user
- X-axis is the evolution/maturity of a component.

Those concepts are difficult, so we’ll spend some time on them.

2.2 Definition of User

Let's Define the User

User is very important for mapping, because it's the starting point of our value discovery.

“User is a person who ultimately uses or is intended to ultimately use a product” (from “End user” Wikipedia definition).

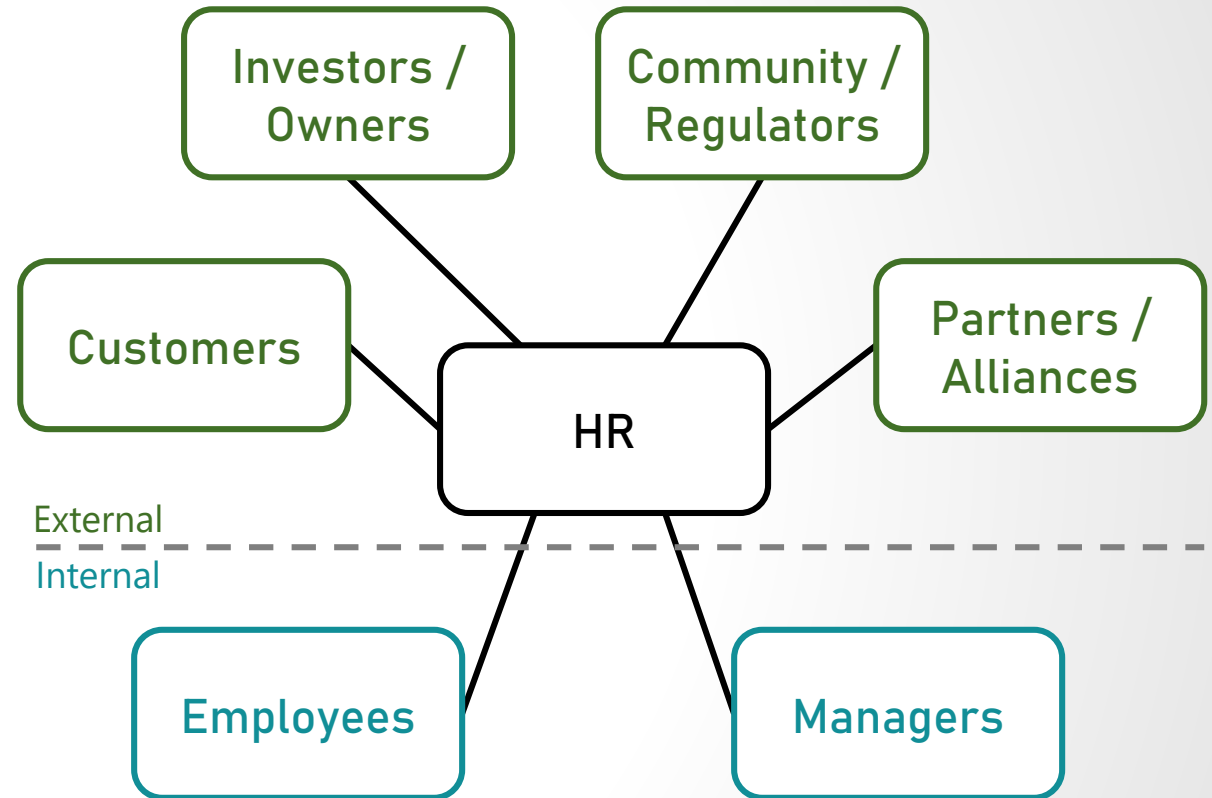
We can also use some definitions from Value Delivery Modelling Language (OMG 2020):

“User is the ultimate customer or an internal end user of the value stream”.

Who Are Users of HR?

Recipients of HR's value can be both internal and external. We can use the key stakeholders list defined by Ulrich as a list of possible users:

- Employees
- Managers
- Partners and alliances
- Community and regulators
- Investors and owners
- Customers



Key stakeholders to HR (Ulrich 2017)

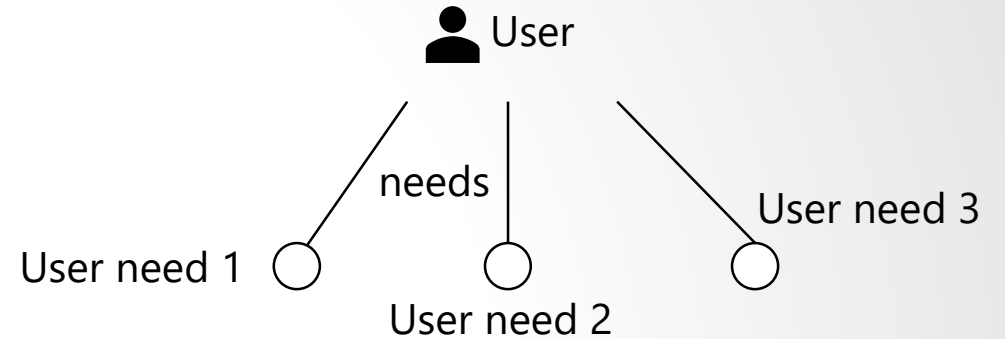
2.3 User Needs

Ways to Analyse User Needs

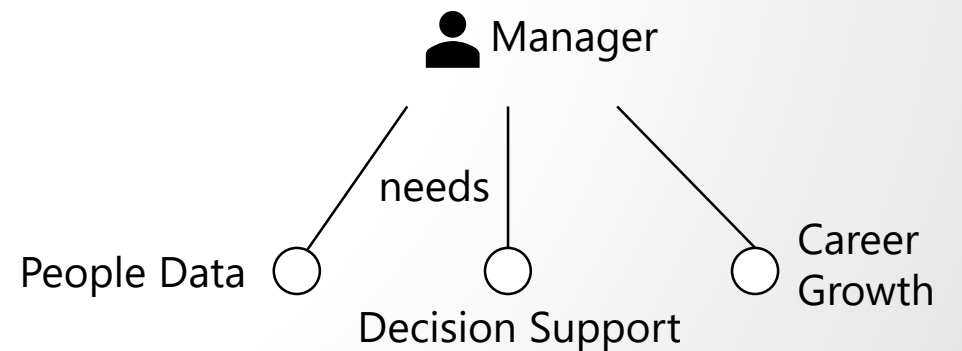
There are numerous ways to analyse user needs:

- **Needs assessment process** (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Needs_assessment). It's a systematic process for determining gaps between current and desired conditions.
- **“Jobs to be Done” (JTBD) theory** (<https://jtbd.info/>). JTBD is the process a consumer goes through whenever she aims to change her existing life-situation into preferred one, but cannot because there are constraints that stop her. Products enable customers to get job done
- **Customer Journey Mapping** (Nenonen et al. 2016). It is a method to identify key interactions customer has with organisation, and takes into consideration mental models, flow of interactions and possible touch points.
- **Interviews and surveys**

Users may have different and competing needs and mapping practitioners should be prepared to balance possible conflicts.



Example of Manager's Needs



2.4 Y-axis: Value and Its Visibility

visible
↑
Value
↓
invisible

Valuable things visible to your users, think of it as “front end”.

Examples:

- self-service for time planning
- Leadership development program

Valuable things hidden from your users, think of it as “back end”.

Example:

- Servers and infrastructure
- Internal process guidelines

What is Value?

Value can be defined as:

“Measurable benefit delivered to a recipient in association with a business item” (OMG 2020).

Value should be identifiable and measurable, both tangible and intangible. And since we are mapping value chains, we should focus on the values which are being delivered to the users as the results of exchange or transaction.

Meaning of Position on Y-axis

Components of the map, which are closer and more visible to the user, should be put in the top part of the map.

Components of the map, which are further from user and are not visible, should be put in the bottom part of the map.

2.5 X-axis: Evolution

Meaning of Evolution Axis

Evolution means the maturity of a component within the market. Every component (activity, data, practice or knowledge) should be assigned to one of the evolution stages. Below we share some evolution characteristics.

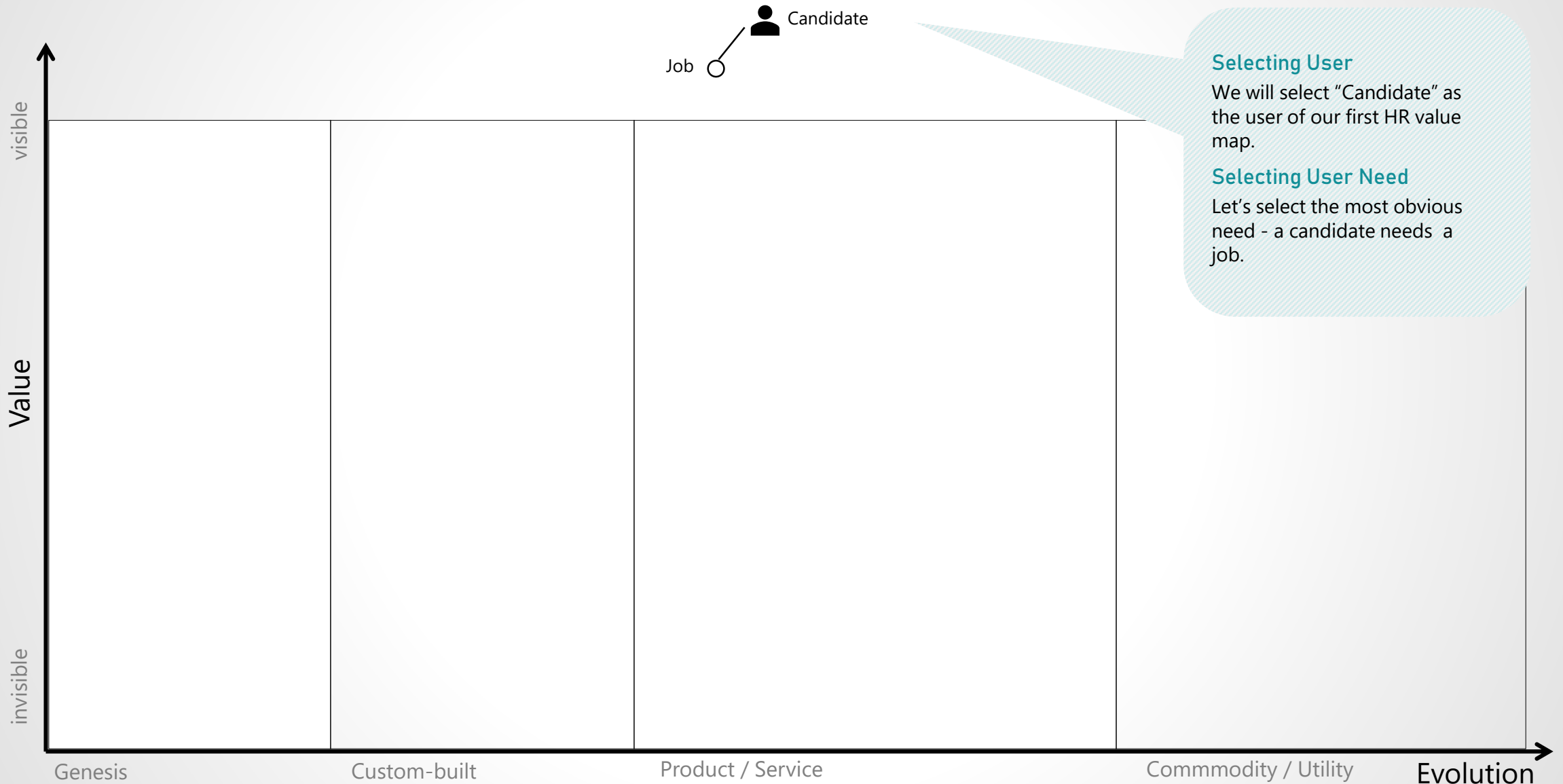
Data: unmodelled	divergent	convergent	modelled
Practice: novel	emerging	good	best
Knowledge: concept	hypothesis	theory	universally accepted
Focus of value: high future worth, but immediate investment	seeking ways to a ROI	A valuable model, focus on exploitation	High volume / reducing margin / important but invisible

Genesis Custom-built Product / Service Commodity / Utility Evolution →

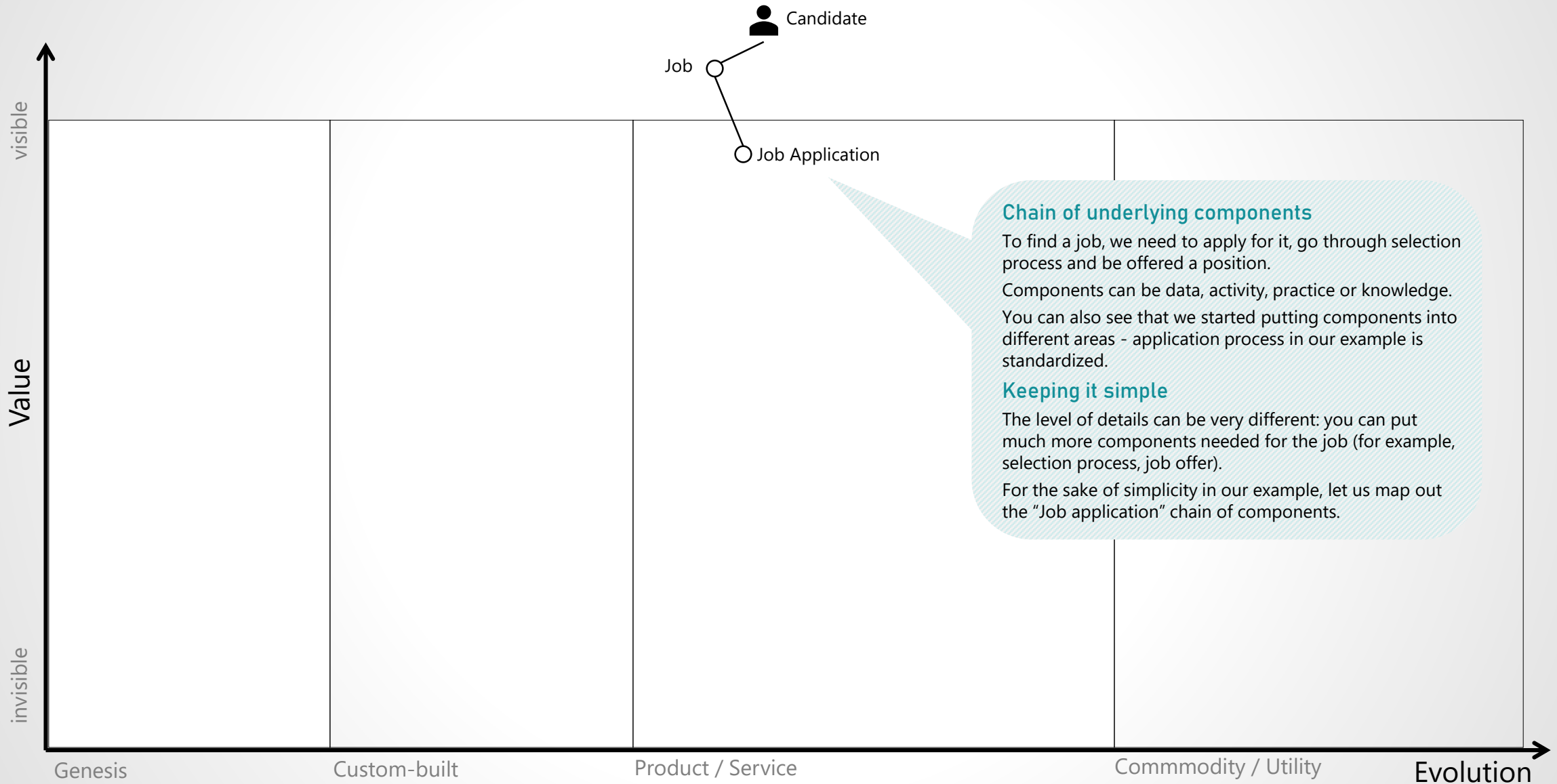
3

Example Map Step by Step

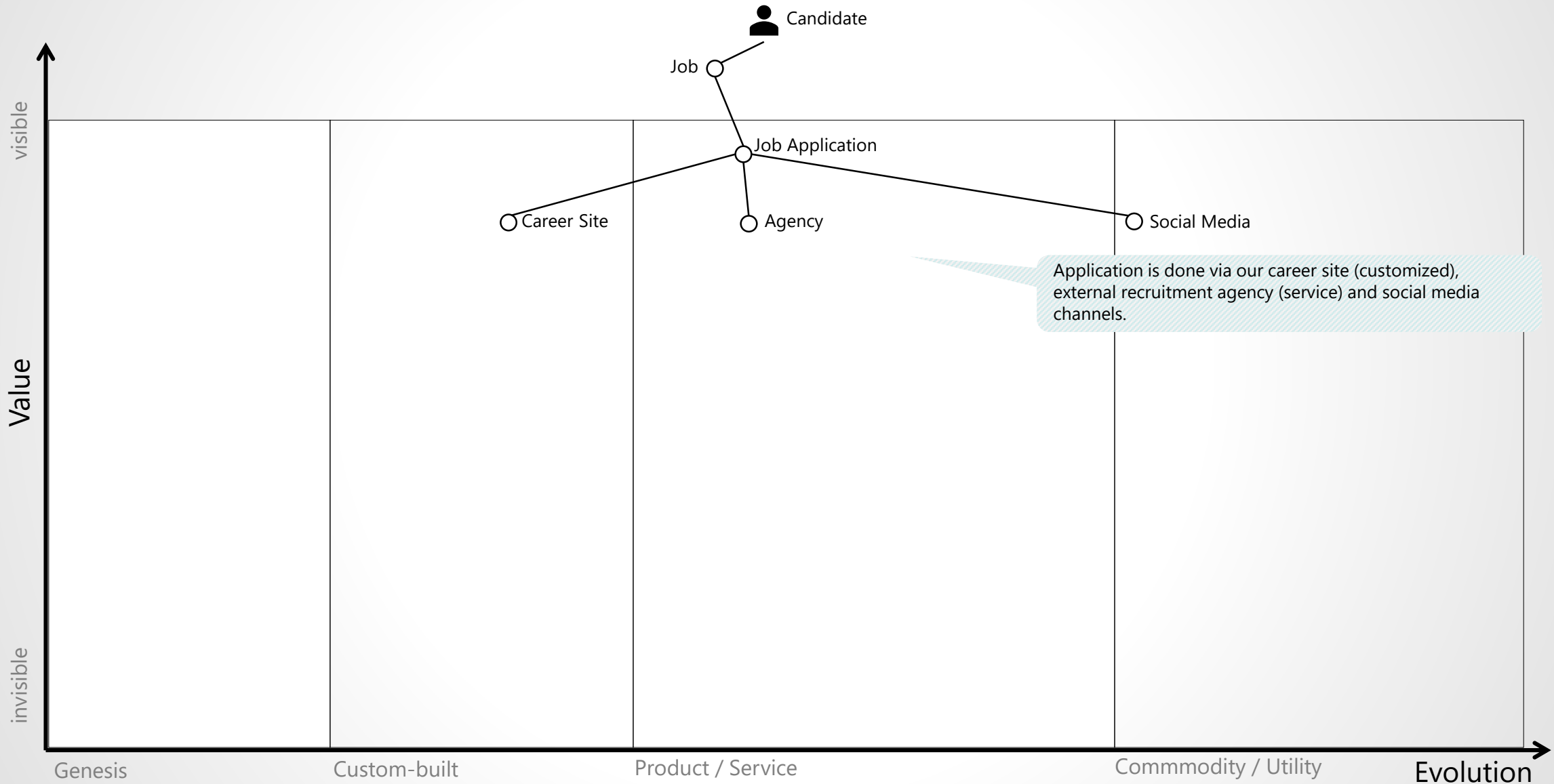
3.1 Start with the User and Need



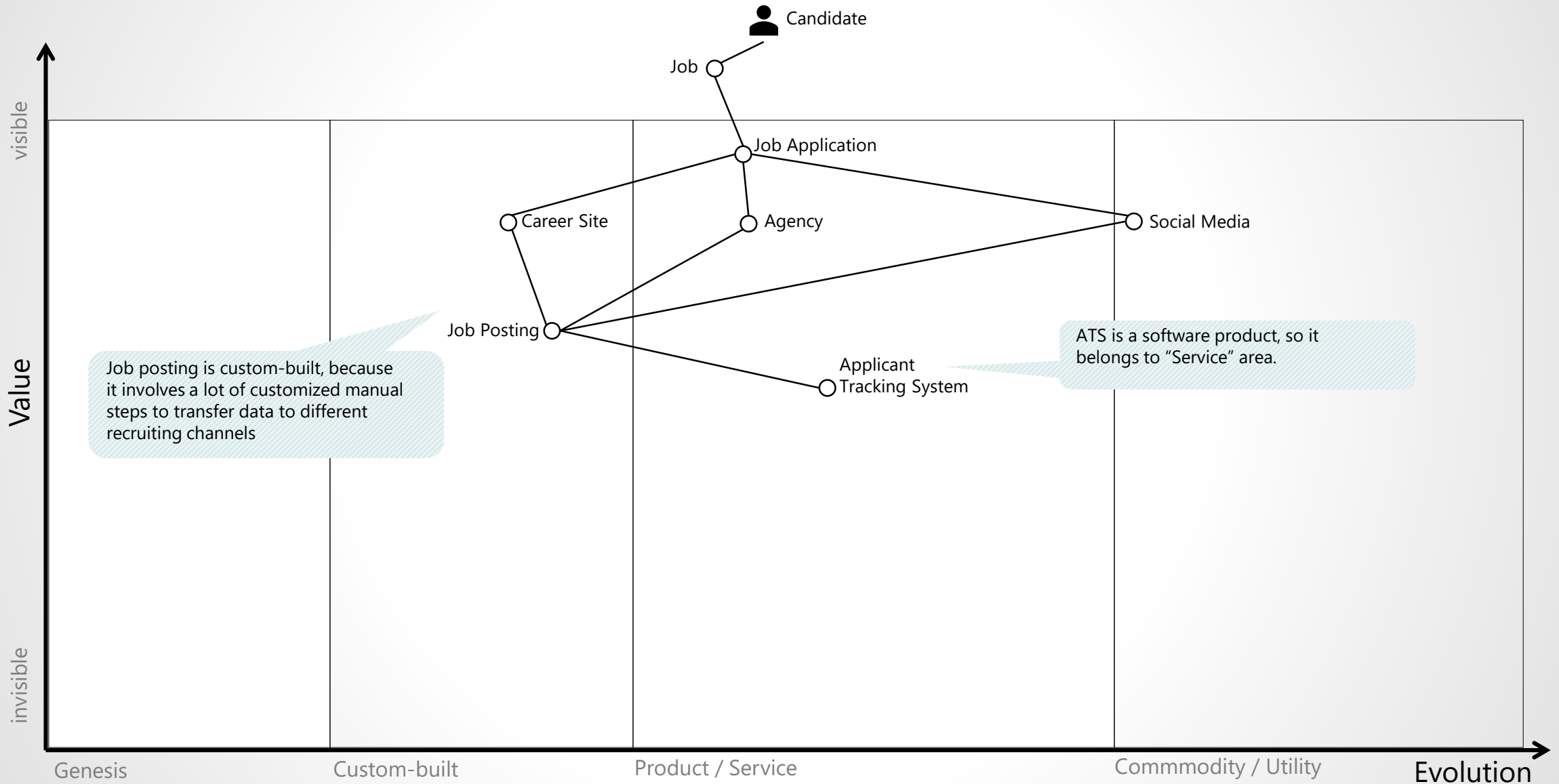
3.2 Map Components One by One



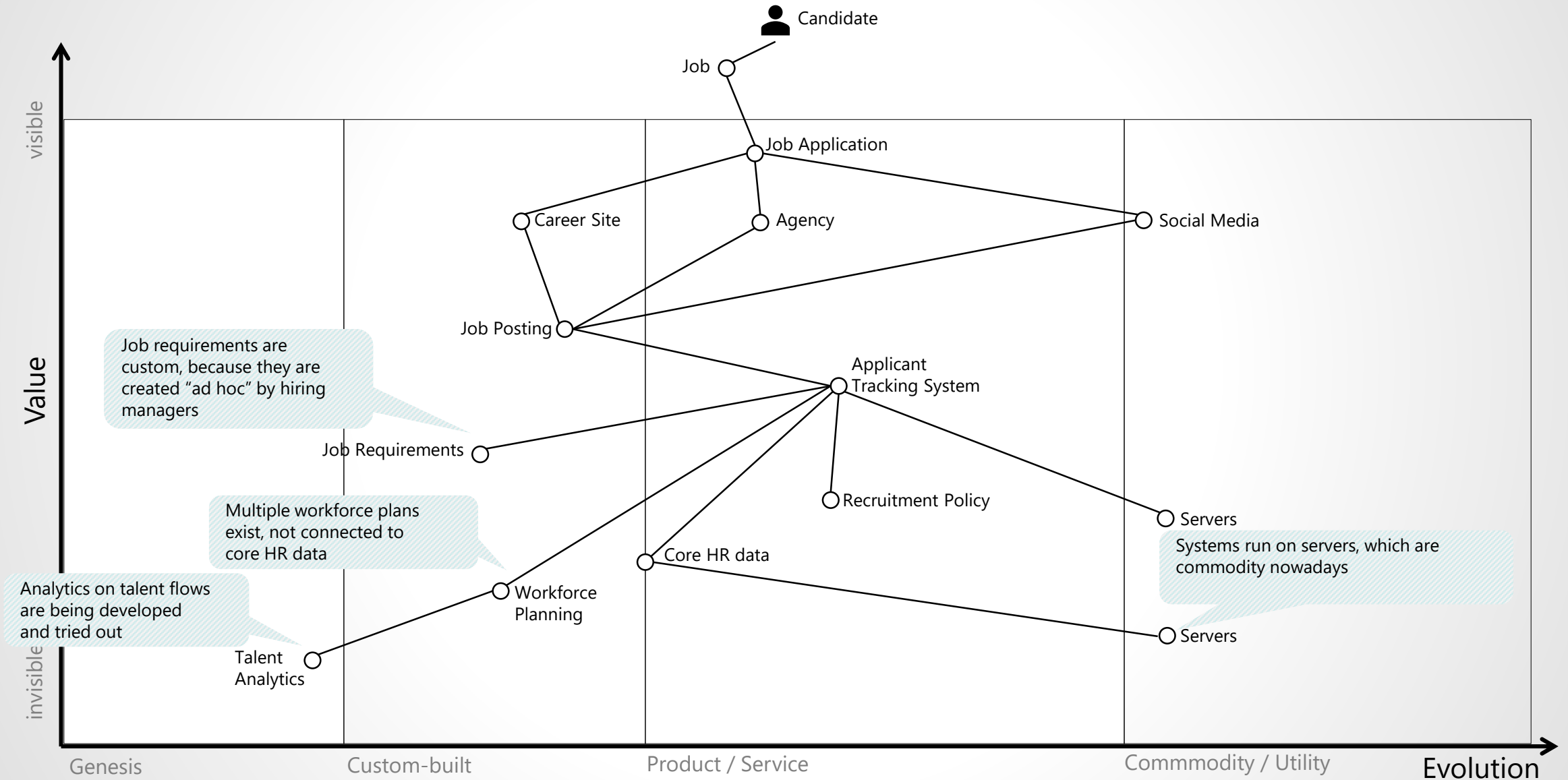
3.2 Map Components One by One (Continued)



3.2 Map Components One by One (Continued)



3.2 Map Components One by One (Continued)



4 Next Steps with Maps

4.1 Reviewing Maps

1. Review Scope

Check if the created map is still meeting the defined scope, and consider removing or adding components to better fit the purpose of a map.

2. Review User Needs

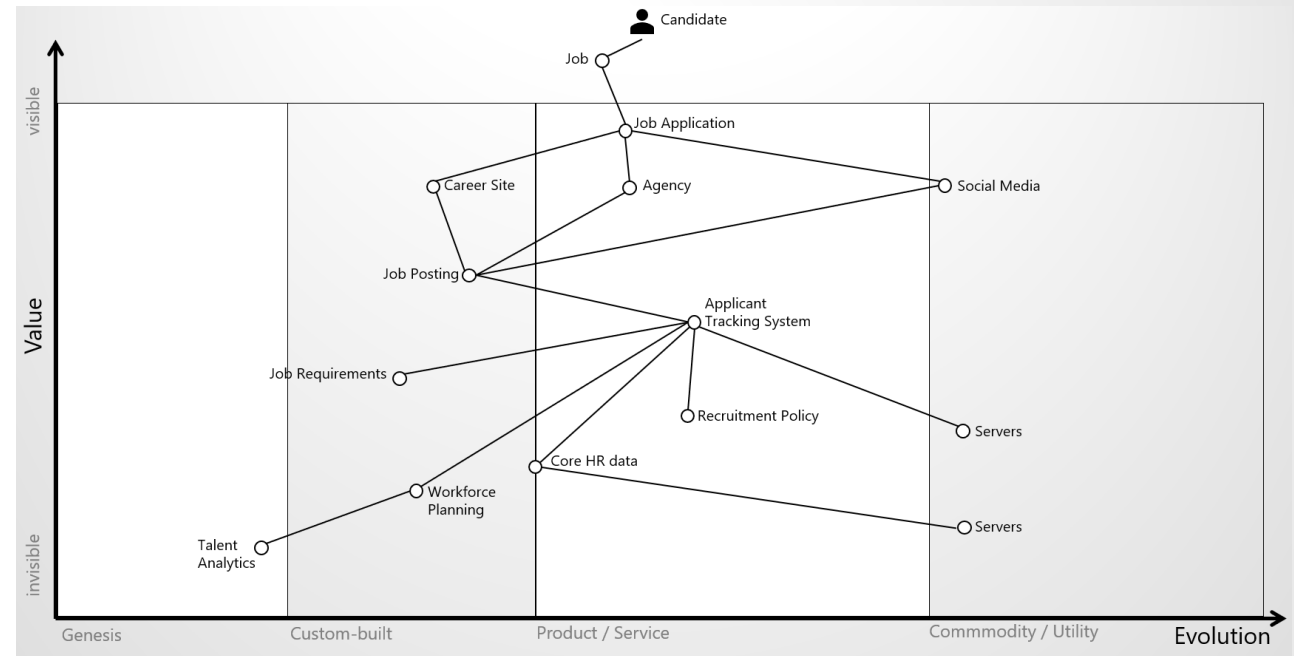
Check if all user needs are covered. If a map has too much going on, consider moving some of the value chains to separate maps.

3. Check level of details

If there are too many components or too many connections, you can group or remove some of them to declutter the map.

4. Share Map with Broader Audience

It gives you “outside-in” perspective and forces you to prepare and explain the value chain you’ve drawn.



In our example, we can consider moving “workforce planning” bit to a separate map with different users. We also miss some important candidate's needs, like “selection for a job” or “job offer” – it can be mapped separately.

4.2 Mapping Future Moves

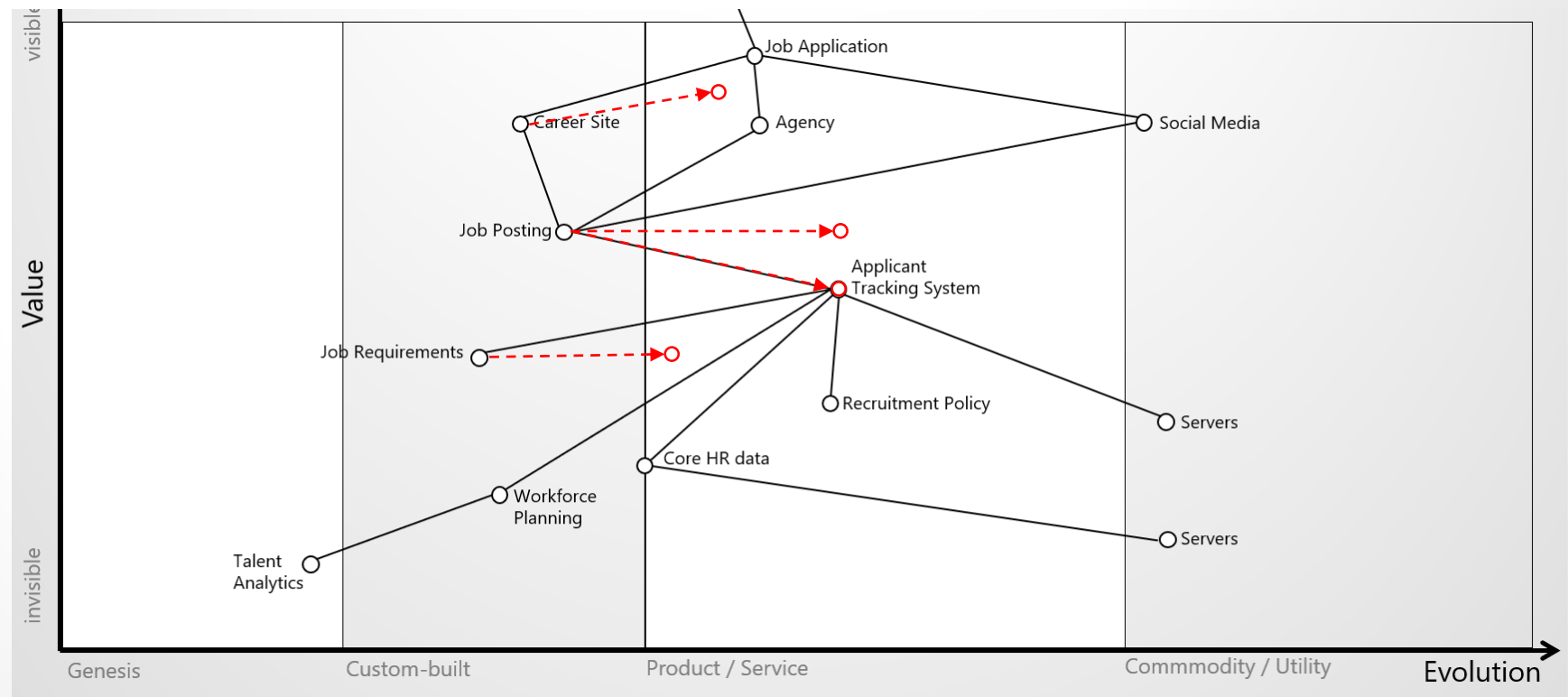
Let's focus for a moment on one component of our example map – "Job posting".

It's in the custom-built area, because it's not automated, complicated and takes several steps due to limitation of our current applicant tracking system (ATS).

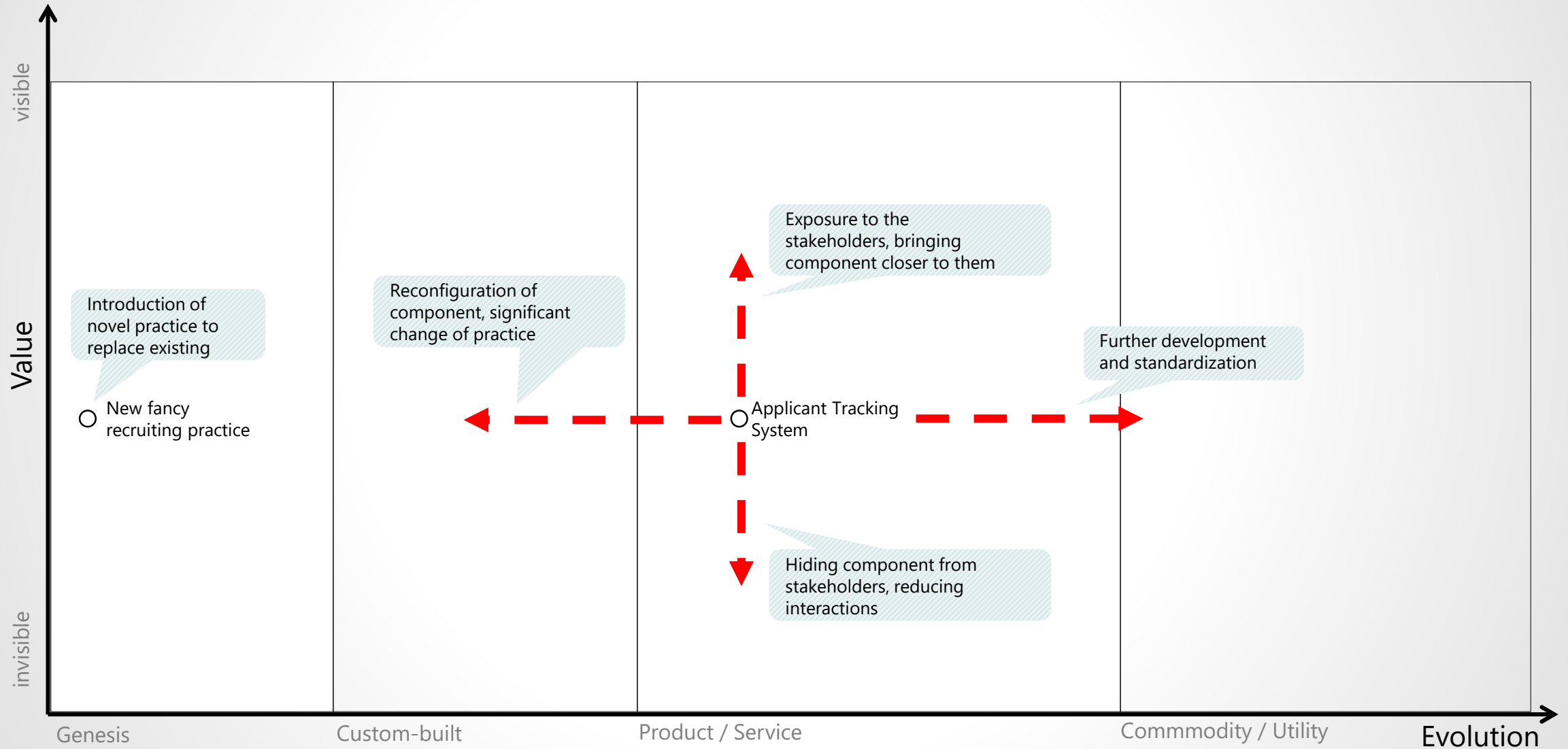
It is natural for us to try to make our HR service more efficient by removing or simplifying this component.

Can it be standardized or even moved completely to ATS?

Evolution implies that it's natural for components to move to the right part of the map over time



4.3 Types of Moves



4.4 Checklist for Next Steps

- 1 Create maps during group discussions
- 2 Review maps. Watch out for duplication, scope drift, etc.
- 3 Identify possible moves
- 4 Use maps for decision-making
- 5 Review maps after changes happened

5 HR Value Mapping Toolkit

5.1 Mapping Tools

Choice of mapping tools can depend on many factors: size of the team, offline or online presence, real-time or decentralized collaboration, etc. On this slide we've listed possible tools for mapping. I also recommend to study tools list at <https://learnwardleymapping.com/tools/> and read a great article by Ben Mosior about mapping tools at <https://hiredthought.com/2017/10/11/wardley-mapping-tools-and-techniques/>

Pen and Paper

Anybody can draw small circles and lines.

Very easy method to start drafting maps, but it is not very easy to move components around during the discussion.

It is also not easy to review and update paper-based maps.

Some mapping practitioners recommend having a mix of paper, post-it notes for components. Stickies can be easily moved around, and you can draw connections afterwards.

You can print the [canvas](#) to make things faster.

Slides

Simply download a template and copy-paste different elements of the map.

Powerpoint allows you to have full control over the visualization, and you can use animations to highlight specific value chains on the map.

The disadvantage is that it takes more time to add and arrange components on the map.

There's also a great [Google Slide template](#) made by Tristan Slominski.

Online Boards

Most of the online collaboration tools allow you to draw on some canvas. The easiest way to collaborate online with a bigger team.

Tools to consider:

- [Miro](#) (template is available)
- [Mural](#) (you can paste the [canvas](#))
- [Diagrams.net](#) ([template](#) from Julius Gamanyi)
- [Figma](#)

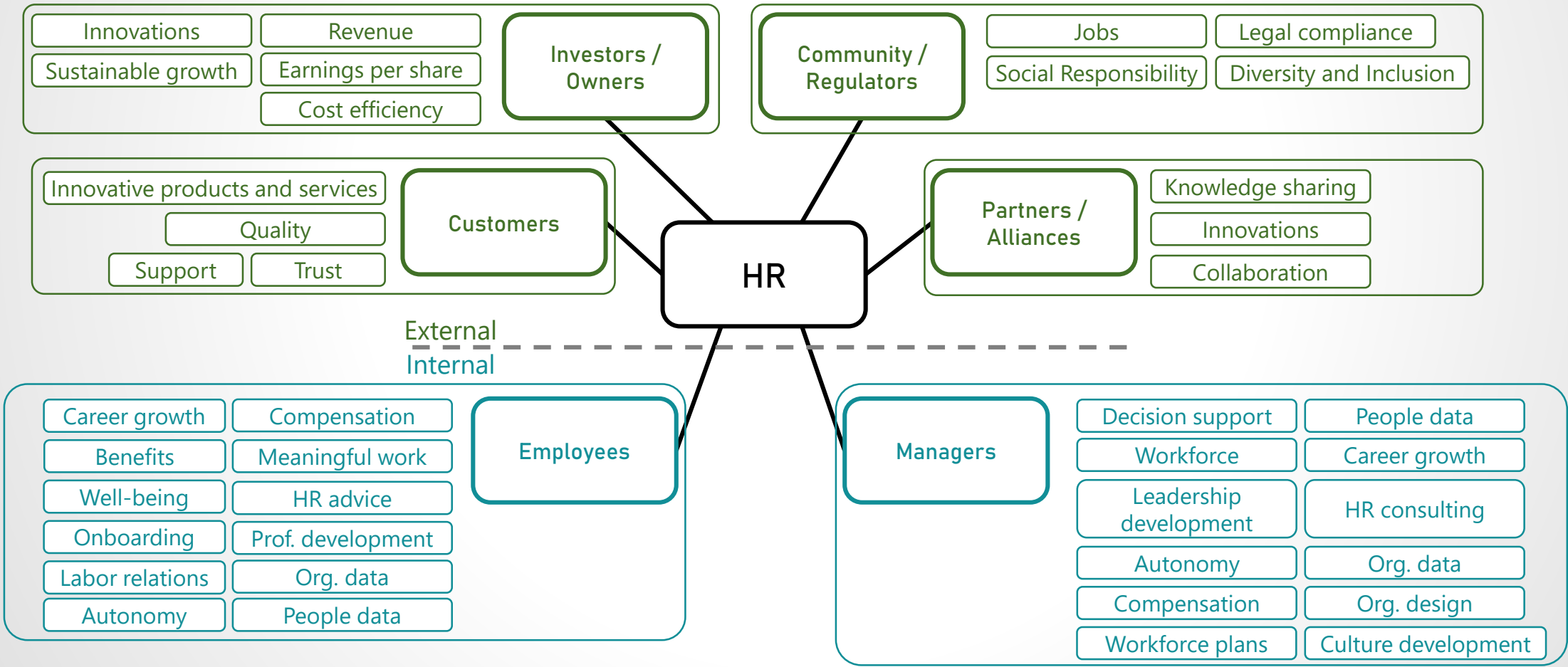
Modellers

Modelling software which can be used to draw maps:

- [Archi](#)
- Omnigraffle (with [Harry Love's gstencil file](#))
- Visual Studio Code (with [extension](#) from Damon Skelhorn)
- [OnlineWardleyMaps.com](#)

5.2 HR Users and their Specific Needs

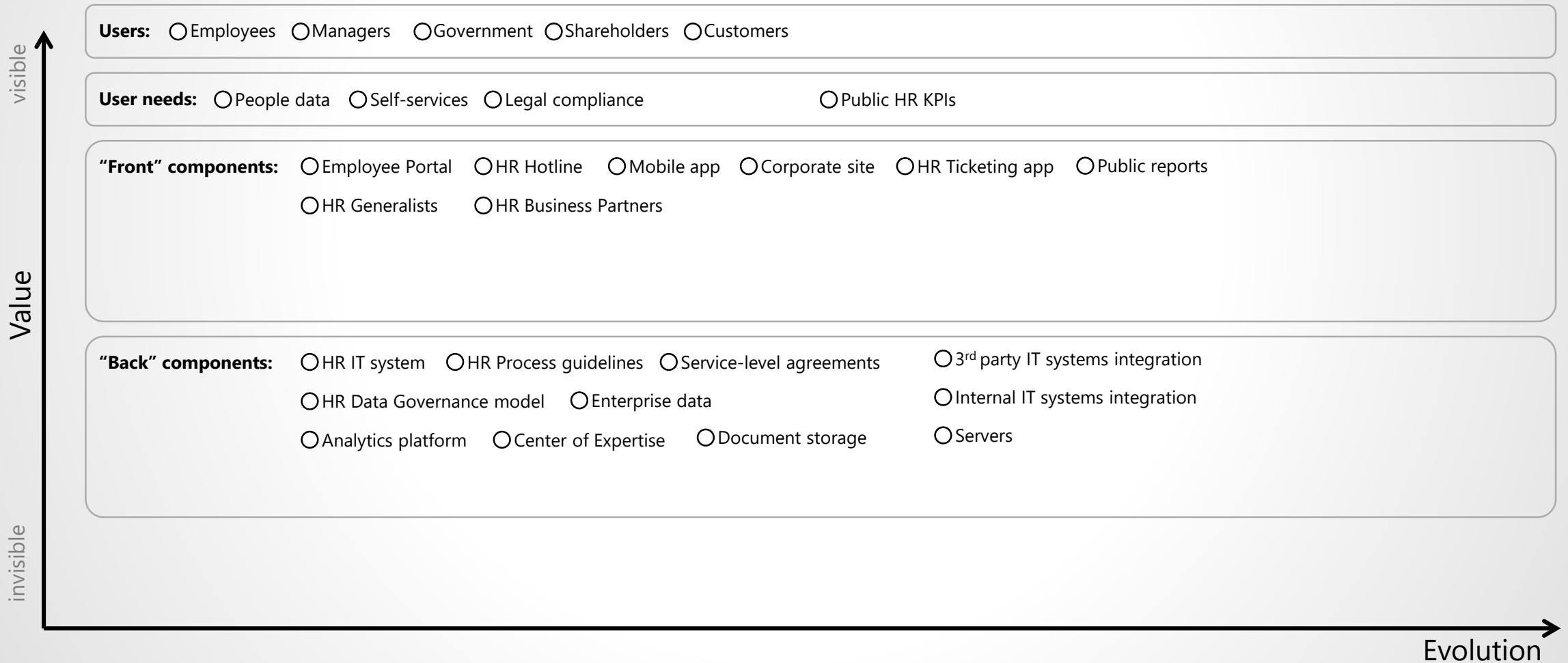
This slide has examples of different needs of possible HR users. It is provided only as an inspiration and can serve you as a starting point. User needs analysis (including analysis of users' feedback, requests, interviewing, journey mapping, see paragraph 2.3) can help you identify the most important needs.



5.3 Examples of HR Components and Values

Next slides include the list of possible building blocks for your HR value maps. This list is not complete, and the process groupings might be overlapping, but the goal of the list is to help you start thinking about the components, their value, possible connections and the ways it all can be depicted on your maps.

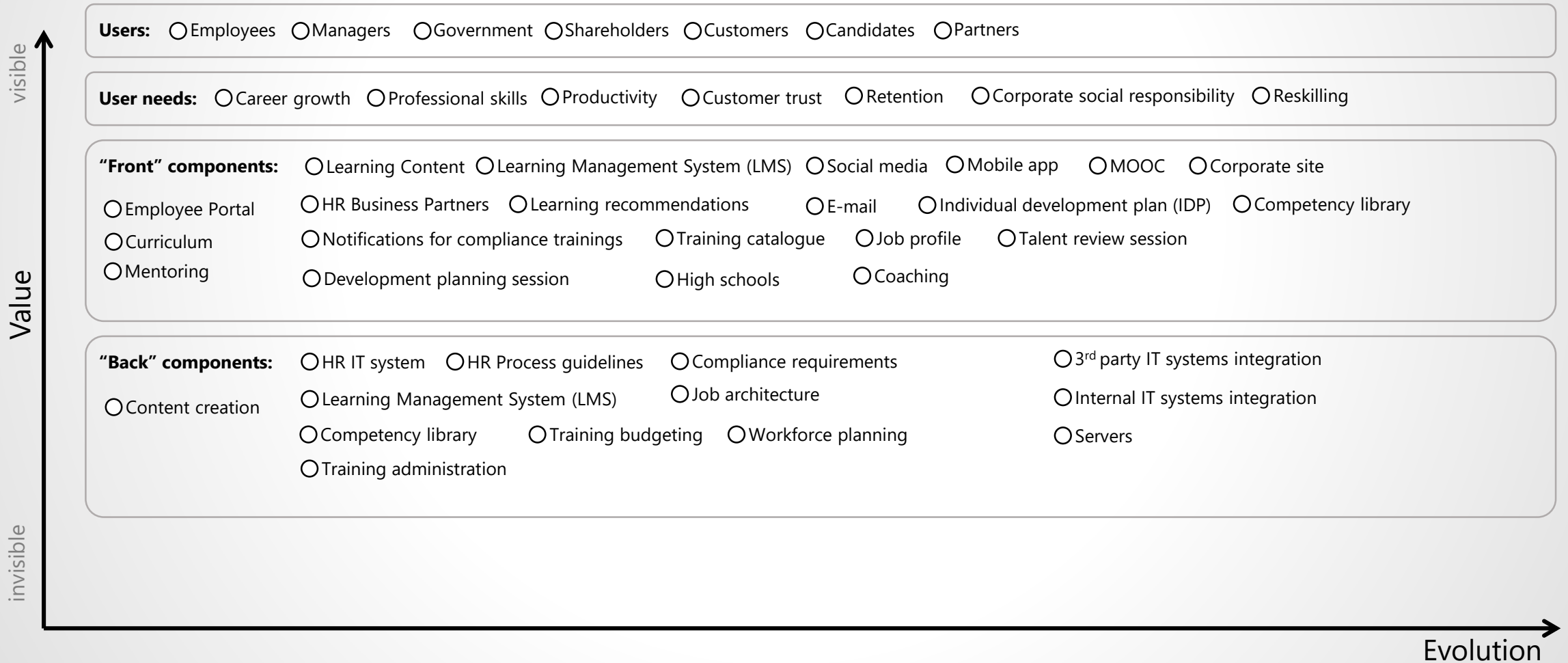
Core HR Process Area



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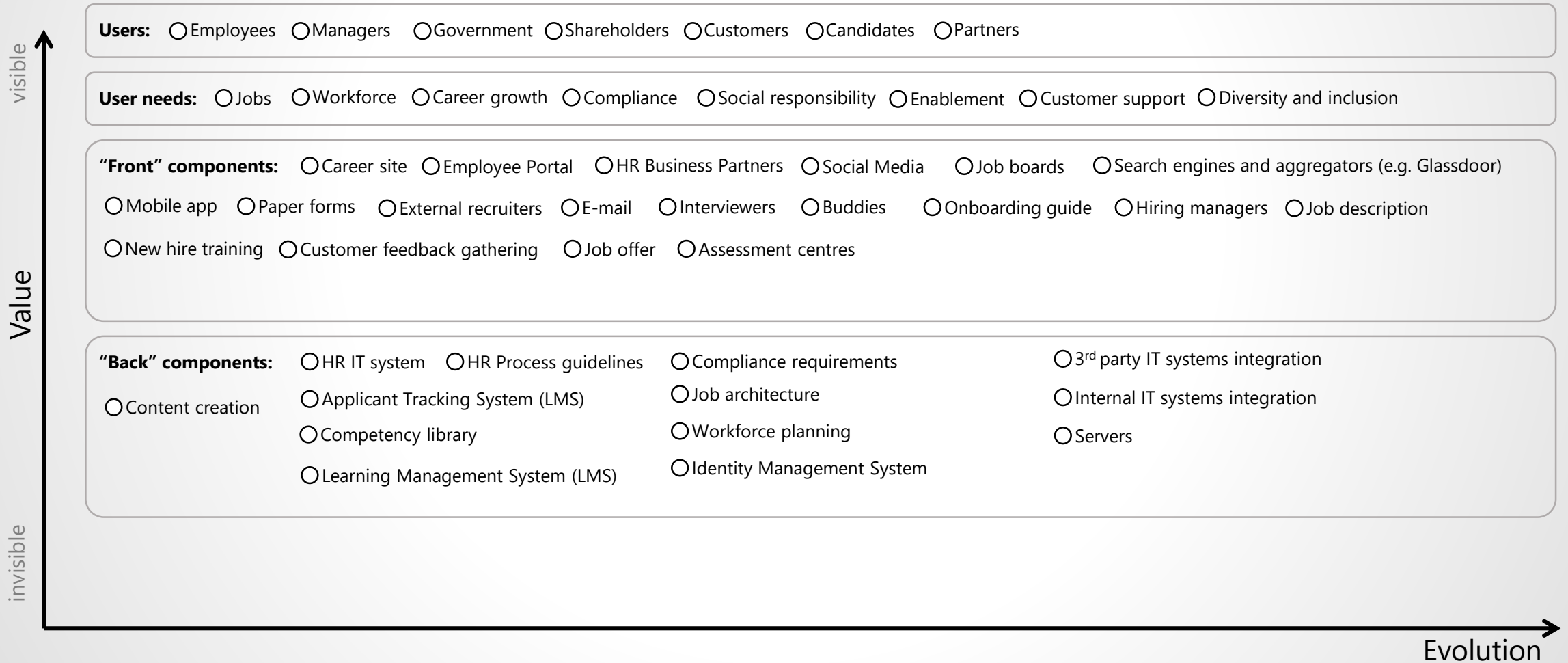
Learning and Development



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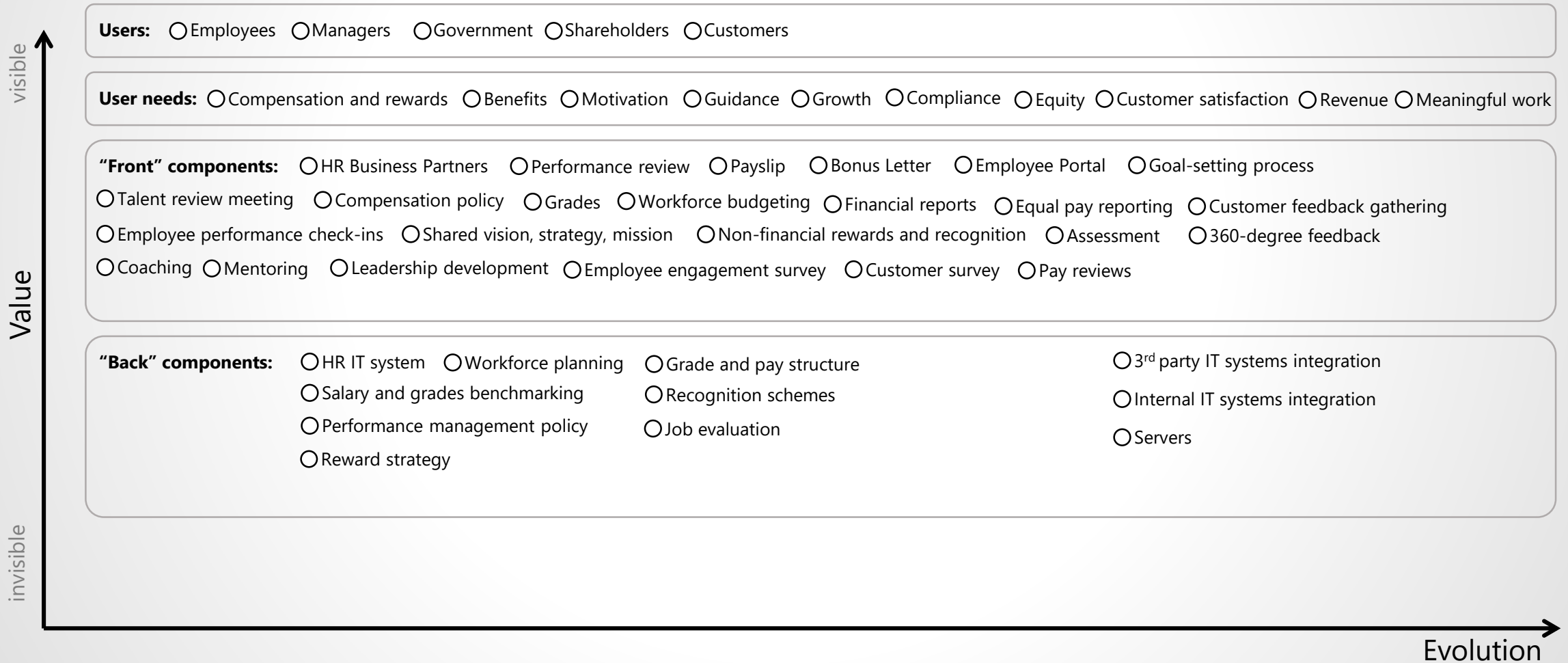
Recruiting and Onboarding



5.3 Examples of HR Components and Values

Next slides include the list of possible building blocks for your HR value maps. This list is not complete, and the process groupings might be overlapping, but the goal of the list is to help you start thinking about the components, their value, possible connections and the ways it all can be depicted on your maps.

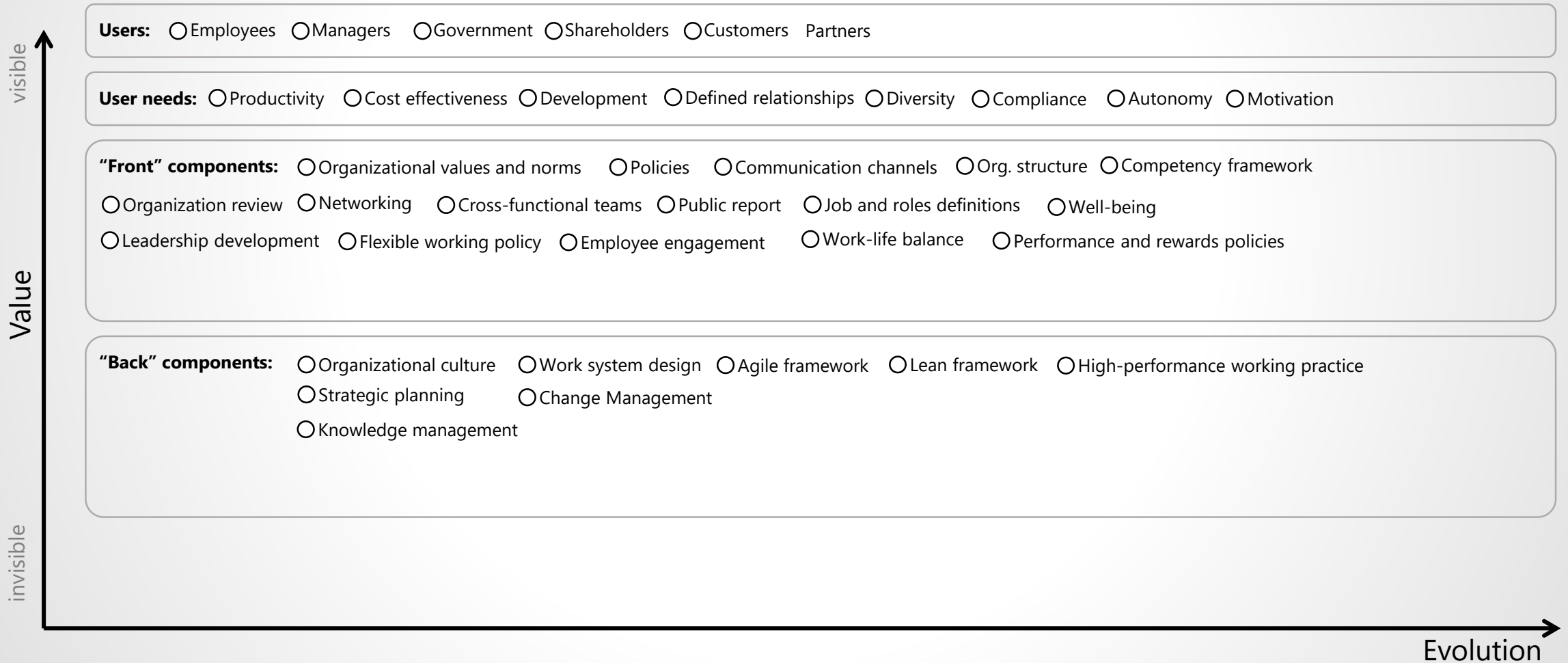
Performance Management and Compensation



5.3 Examples of HR Components and Values

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Organizational design and development



5.4 Cheatsheet for Evolution (X-axis) Placement

Stage of Evolution		I	II	III	IV
x-axis labels (types of capital)	Activity (used)	Genesis	Custom	Product (+rental)	Commodity (+utility)
	Data (implied)	Unmodelled	Divergent	Convergent	Modelled
	Practice (implied)	Novel	Emerging	Good	Best
	Knowledge (implied)	Concept	Hypothesis	Theory	Universally Accepted
Characteristics					
	Ubiquity	Rare	Slowly increasing	Rapidly increasing	Widespread in the applicable market / ecosystem
	Certainty	Poorly understood / exploring the unknown	Rapid increases in learning / discovery becomes refining	Rapid increases in use / increasing fit for purpose	Commonly understood (in terms of use)
	Publication Types	Describe the wonder of the thing / the discovery of some marvel / a new land / an unknown frontier	Focused on build / construct / awareness and learning / many models of explanation / no accepted forms / a wild west.	Maintenance / operations / installation / comparison between competing forms / feature analysis e.g. merits of one model over another	Focused on use / increasingly an accepted, almost invisible component
General Properties					
	Market	Undefined market	Forming market / an array of competing forms and different models of understanding	Growing market / consolidation to a few competing but more accepted forms.	Mature market / stabilised to an accepted form
	Knowledge management	Uncertain	Learning on use / focused on testing prediction	Learning on operation / using prediction / verification	known / accepted
	Market (Ecosystem) Perception	Chaotic (non linear) / Domain of the "crazy"	Domain of "experts"	Increasing expectation of use / Domain of "professionals"	Ordered (appearance of being linear) / trivial / formula to be applied
	User perception	Different / confusing / exciting / surprising / dangerous	Leading edge / emerging / uncertainty over results	Increasingly common / disappointed if not used or available / feeling left behind	Standard / expected / feeling of shock if not used
	Perception in Industry	Future source of competitive advantage / unpredictable / unknown	Seen as a competitive advantage / a differential / looking for ROI and case examples	Advantage through implementation / features / this model is better than that	Cost of doing business / accepted / specific defined models
	Focus of value	High future worth but immediate investment	Seeking ways to profit and a ROI / seeking confirmation of value	High profitability per unit / a valuable model / a feeling of understanding / focus on exploitation	High volume / reducing margin / important but invisible / an essential component of something more complex
	Understanding	Poorly understood / unpredictable	Increasing understanding / development of measures	Increasing education / constant refinement of needs / measures	Believed to be well defined / stable / measurable
	Comparison	Constantly changing / a differential / unstable	Learning from others / testing the water / some evidential support	Competing models / feature difference / evidential support	Essential / any advantage is operational / accepted norm
	Failure	High / tolerated / assumed to be wrong	Moderate / unsurprising if wrong but disappointed	Not tolerated / focus on constant improvement / assumed to be in the right direction / resistance to changing the model	Surprised by failure / focus on operational efficiency
	Market action	Gambling / driven by gut	Exploring a "found" value	Market analysis / listening to customers	Metric driven / build what is
	Efficiency	Reducing the cost of change (experimentation)	Reducing cost of waste (Learning)	Reducing cost of waste (Learning)	Reducing cost of deviation (Volume)
	Decision Drivers	Heritage / culture	Analysis & synthesis	Analysis & synthesis	Previous experience

6 Call to Action

6.1 Call to Action

What to Do Next?

Start mapping your HR organization and the value it delivers.

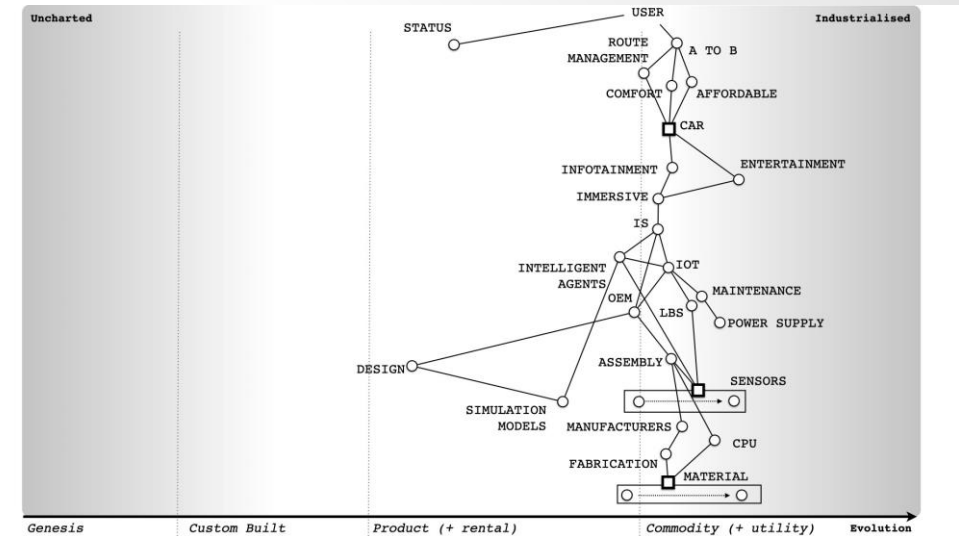
You will never have ideal maps, but it never was a purpose – during the process your team and you will establish common ground, agree about the current state and identify improvement potentials.

Get Some Inspiration and Training

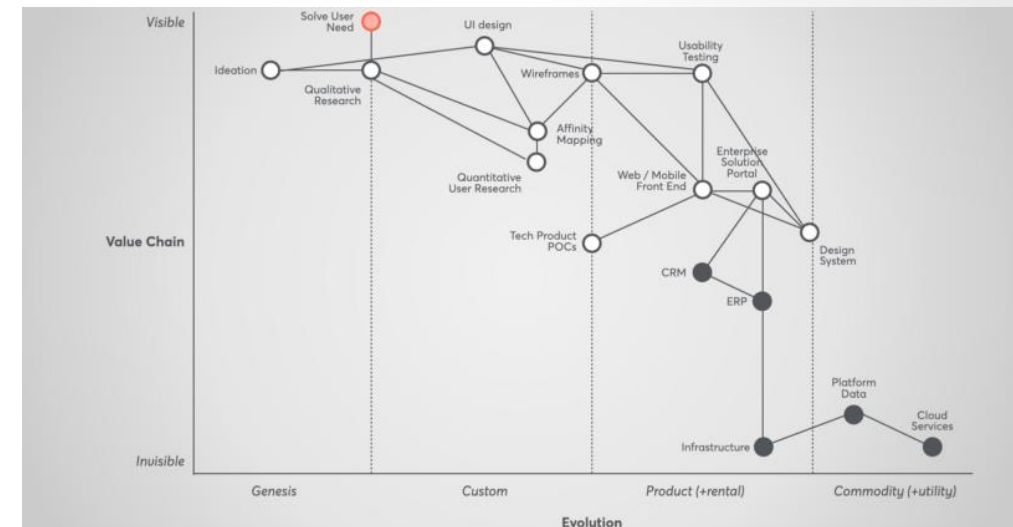
A lot of mapping practitioners share their maps and thoughts about it:

- <https://github.com/wardley-maps-community/awesome-wardley-maps#maps-in-the-wild>
- <https://learnwardleymapping.com/>
- [Map Camp 2020 Youtube playlist](#)
- [Wardley Maps BarCamp 2020 Youtube playlist](#)

Make your first
HR map



A map of automotive industry by [Simon Wardley](#)



Map of technologies contributing to user needs by [Stephan Willemse](#)

About

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I'm Andrey Kulikov, HR advisor with 17 years of experience in HR software consulting, design and delivery of HR projects.

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Closing Quote

He had bought a large map representing the sea,
Without the least vestige of land:
And the crew were much pleased when they found it to be
A map they could all understand.

'What's the good of Mercator's North Poles and Equators,
Tropics, Zones, and Meridian Lines?"
So the Bellman would cry: and the crew would reply
"They are merely conventional signs!

"Other maps are such shapes, with their islands and capes!
But we've got our brave Captain to thank"
(So the crew would protest) "that he's bought us the best –
A perfect and absolute blank!"

Lewis Carroll

Literature

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