SIMA360™

Structured AI Maturity Accelerator

Framework Guide

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Purpose of the SIMA360™ Guide

Many organizations mistake AI activity for AI maturity. They deploy copilots, automate workflows, and expand AI usage across the enterprise while operational inconsistency, governance ambiguity, and unreliable outcomes persist underneath. Dashboards improve. Usage increases. The organization itself often does not.

The problem is not a lack of AI capability. The problem is that organizational maturity determines whether AI improves decisions or amplifies inconsistency. SIMA360™ exists to close that gap.

SIMA360™ is an operational maturity framework designed to help organizations integrate AI in ways that are reliable, measurable, governable, and strategically aligned. It evaluates how well an organization can operate under AI-assisted conditions while maintaining decision quality, interpretive consistency, governance clarity, and organizational learning.

AI implementation is not fundamentally a technology problem. It is an organizational systems problem. AI introduces probabilistic outputs, accelerated decision cycles, and dynamic operational behavior that expose hidden weaknesses traditional operating models often fail to detect. Organizations that lack shared interpretation, escalation clarity, or disciplined learning loops frequently scale ambiguity faster than they scale capability.

SIMA360™ is grounded in the diagnostic and improvement methodology introduced in the book that identifies the maturity gap as the primary barrier to reliable AI outcomes. This Guide defines the models, operational flows, tooling, and capability-development systems that operationalize that framework for practitioners, team leaders, and organizational leaders alike.

For more information, visit sima360.org or contact info@sima360.org.

SIMA360™ Framework Overview

Core Principle

AI capability does not equal organizational maturity. Organizations become reliable when the conditions for governing, interpreting, and improving AI-supported work are built and maintained — not when tools are deployed.

SIMA360™ addresses organizational AI maturity through five integrated components. Each performs a distinct role; together they form a continuous operational learning system.

Component	Role

SIMA-Core™	Static structural foundation: the Domains model, Capability Levels model, and AI Tool Categories model
SIMA-Probe™	Diagnostic assessment tool that measures AI maturity across the five Domains and establishes baseline capability levels
SIMA-Flow™	Execution engine: the Core Cycle for Domain development and the FLAI Cycle for project-level execution
SIMA-Kit™	Operational heart: the artifacts, templates, playbooks, and role-specific guidance that bridge strategy and execution
SIMA-Ascend™	Capability development: structured training programs and practitioner certification pathways

SIMA-Core™ provides the structural models against which organizational behavior is measured. SIMA-Probe™ applies those models diagnostically to produce a capability-level baseline. SIMA-Flow™ governs how organizations move through maturity cycles. SIMA-Kit™ provides the working tools for each step. SIMA-Ascend™ builds the practitioner capability needed to apply all of it consistently.

Every initiative executed within SIMA360™ contributes operational insight back into the organization's maturity system. Over time, the framework compounds — governance becomes more reliable, decisions become more consistent, and organizational learning accelerates.

SIMA-Core™ — Structural Foundation

SIMA-Core™ is the static structural foundation of the SIMA360™ framework. It defines three interconnected models that provide the organizing principles for assessing maturity, interpreting capability, and selecting AI tools appropriate to the organization's current state.

Design Principle
SIMA-Core™ is intentionally static. It provides the reference architecture against which organizational behavior is measured. SIMA-Flow™ provides dynamic application; SIMA-Kit™ provides the working artifacts. Neither replaces the structural foundation that SIMA-Core™ defines.

Model 1: Domains

SIMA360™ evaluates operational maturity across five Domains that represent the primary organizational systems determining whether AI can be integrated reliably, governed responsibly, and scaled sustainably. Weakness in any single domain constrains the reliability of the whole. Organizations frequently overestimate maturity by measuring Technology sophistication while underdeveloping Governance, Data, People, or Strategy.

Domain	Focus	Maturity Signal

Strategy	AI-supported decision architecture aligned to measurable business outcomes	AI initiatives are prioritized, bounded, and traceable to operational results
Governance	Operational accountability and responsible oversight under AI-assisted conditions	Escalation paths are followed; governance behavior is consistent across teams, not just documented
Data	Reliable operational signals supporting trustworthy AI-assisted decisions	Data definitions are consistent; feedback loops support learning; drift is monitored actively
People	Judgment calibration, trust formation, and effective operation within AI-assisted environments	Teams can challenge and override AI outputs; human expertise strengthens rather than erodes
Technology	Infrastructure and operational architectures supporting reliable AI execution at scale	AI systems integrate consistently; exception handling is defined; lifecycle governance is active

Governance theater — visible compliance activity without operational accountability — is one of the most consequential immaturity signatures in the Governance domain. Organizations can possess policies, committees, and audit trails while accountability at the operational level remains fragmented or unclear. SIMA360™ evaluates governance behaviorally, not documentarily.

Model 2: AI Capability Levels

The Capability Levels Model defines six progressive stages of operational maturity. The levels do not measure AI sophistication alone — they evaluate whether organizations can govern AI-supported operations reliably, interpret outputs consistently, maintain accountability under uncertainty, and improve organizational learning over time. Organizations frequently mature unevenly. The weakest domain determines what AI capabilities the organization can support reliably.

Level	Name	Organizational Characteristics
1	Initial	AI interest exists but operational maturity is fragmented. Initiatives are exploratory or reactive. Governance awareness is limited and leadership lacks visibility into readiness.
2	Exploring	Structured experimentation begins. Teams conduct pilots but interpretive consistency, governance reliability, and organizational learning remain uneven and largely siloed.
3	Applying	Repeatable operational patterns emerge. Governance becomes more visible. Escalation behavior standardizes and organizations begin measuring outcomes more consistently.
4	Formalizing	Governance standards institutionalize across teams and functions. Accountability is clearly assigned. Data definitions stabilize and maturity improvement becomes a managed discipline.

5	Optimizing	Compounding institutional learning. Organizations monitor operational drift actively. Governance evolves dynamically. AI maturity is treated as a continuous discipline, not a project.
6	Leading	Enterprise-wide reliability under AI-assisted conditions. Interpretive consistency, mature governance ecosystems, and institutionalized learning characterize all five domains.

The purpose of the Capability Levels Model is not to pressure organizations toward maximum automation or Leading status. The point is to use capability assessment to lay the groundwork for projects and identify the specific areas requiring improvement before advancing. Misalignment between capability level and AI tool sophistication is a primary driver of unreliable outcomes.

Model 3: AI Tool Categories

The AI Tool Categories Model organizes AI tools into five categories based on autonomy and functional capability. The purpose of this model is not to encourage the use of all tool categories — it is to establish which categories can be deployed responsibly at each capability level. Using complex, high-autonomy tools at low capability levels is not simply inadvisable; it actively amplifies the organizational weaknesses those tools expose.

Category	Purpose	Safe Starting Level
Baseline	Learn fundamentals, gather usage data. Low autonomy, high guidance, static knowledge bases. Examples: FAQs, internal wikis, basic chatbots.	Initial / Exploring
Business Assistance	Boost human productivity and decision support. Dynamic task-specific support with defined boundaries. Examples: writing assistants, coding copilots, research summarizers.	Exploring / Applying
Process Automation	Handle predefined, rule-based tasks and structured workflows. Deterministic outcomes with rule-based logic. Examples: RPA bots, automated schedulers, workflow orchestrators.	Applying / Formalizing
Decision Optimization	AI-enhanced foresight for complex decisions. Predictive modeling and evidence-based recommendations. Examples: dynamic pricing, route optimization, scenario planners.	Formalizing / Optimizing
Autonomous Execution	Independent operation across domains with continuous self-regulation. Examples: self-managing infrastructure, autonomous agents, AI command centers.	Optimizing / Leading

SIMA-Probe™ — Diagnostic Assessment Tool

SIMA-Probe™ is the diagnostic assessment tool of the SIMA360™ framework. It measures an organization's AI maturity across the five Domains — Strategy, Governance, Data, People, and Technology — and produces the capability-level baseline that informs all subsequent SIMA360™ activity: roadmap development, groundwork planning, tool category selection, and SIMA-Kit™ guidance activation.

SIMA-Probe™ is not a static checklist. It supports the Assess Domains phase of the SIMA-Flow™ Core Cycle and delivers five specific outputs:

Output	What It Produces
Maturity Level Identification	Current capability level across all five Domains
Guidance Activation	Triggers the appropriate SIMA-Kit™ recommendations matched to organizational readiness
AI Tool Category Selection	Identifies safe starting points from Baseline through Autonomous Execution
Project Planning Prerequisites	Surfaces entrance criteria and readiness indicators for AI initiatives
Gap Analysis	Highlights specific areas requiring attention before advancing to higher capability levels

Adaptive Assessment Capabilities

SIMA-Probe™ incorporates adaptive AI capabilities that improve the accuracy and relevance of evaluations beyond static question sets.

- **Contextual Tailoring:** The assessment dynamically adjusts question sets and examples based on organizational context — industry, size, and operational maturity — so that evaluation is calibrated to the organization being assessed, not a generic reference.

- **Automated Document Intelligence:** SIMA-Probe™ can analyze uploaded organizational materials to pre-populate or validate assessment answers, transforming the evaluation into a hybrid evidence-based process. This reduces assessment time significantly and grounds findings in documented evidence rather than self-report alone. Critically, it surfaces policy-versus-practice gaps — where documented standards and operational behavior diverge.

Subscription Levels

SIMA-Probe™ is available at four subscription levels, each providing increasing assessment depth and organizational coverage.

Level	Designed For
Foundation (Free)	Individuals and small organizations at the Initial or early Exploring stage conducting an initial feasibility snapshot. Includes 15–25 basic questions, a single maturity level rating per Domain, and basic improvement guidance.
Insight	Organizations seeking structured maturity analysis with more detailed question sets and domain-specific guidance.
Advisory	Organizations requiring deeper evaluation with contextual tailoring and document intelligence features.
Consulting	Enterprise-level engagements with full adaptive evaluation, cross-functional assessment coverage, and facilitated analysis.

Access SIMA-Probe™ at sima360.org.

SIMA-Flow™ — Execution Engine

SIMA-Flow™ is the execution engine of SIMA360™. It ties the structural models of SIMA-Core™ to the practical tools of SIMA-Kit™ through two complementary cycles: the Core Cycle, which governs Domain development at the enterprise level, and the FLAI Cycle, which governs individual project execution. One operates at the macro level; the other at the micro level. Both are necessary.

The Core Cycle (Macro)

The Core Cycle governs enterprise-level Domain development. It ensures that AI initiatives are grounded in a current understanding of organizational maturity and that groundwork is adequately established before execution begins. The cycle has three phases:

Phase	What Happens
1. Assess Domains	SIMA-Probe™ evaluates current maturity across all five Domains. This phase produces capability level identification, domain-specific readiness scores, risk and opportunity mapping, and the prerequisites that govern what comes next.
2. Set Groundwork	The organization prepares for execution using SIMA-Kit™ tools and templates aligned to current capability levels. Each Domain has specific preparation activities: defining strategic objectives, establishing governance policies, validating data quality and access, assigning roles and assessing skills, confirming infrastructure readiness.
3. Execute	AI initiatives are operationalized through iterative FLAI Cycles, with project complexity matched to current organizational capability. Execution at this

	phase is not open-ended — it is capability-constrained, learning-oriented, and designed to compound organizational knowledge with each iteration.

The Core Cycle repeats. Each completed execution phase feeds new maturity evidence back into the assessment phase, enabling the organization to re-evaluate domains, update groundwork, and calibrate the next wave of execution accordingly. This is how organizations progress through capability levels rather than stalling at them.

The FLAI Cycle (Micro)

The FLAI Cycle — Frame, Learn, Assess, Improve — is the project-level execution engine within SIMA360™. It was designed specifically for strategy, innovation, and hypothesis-driven work where learning is a primary deliverable, not a byproduct. The language of the cycle is deliberate: it shapes how teams approach uncertainty, interpret outcomes, and make intentional decisions about next steps.

F Frame	L Learn	A Assess	I Improve
Establish project boundaries, define the problem space, articulate working hypotheses, and surface key unknowns. Structure ambiguity without resolving it prematurely.	Deploy tools, conduct exploration, prototype and test assumptions, gather operational data. Prioritize insight over output. Treat failure as evidence.	Analyze patterns and implications from the Learn phase. Evaluate system dynamics, validate or challenge original hypotheses, and understand the broader organizational context of findings.	Apply learnings to refine strategy, update guiding assumptions, plan the next iteration, and integrate findings into the organization's growing knowledge base.

FLAI is intentionally different from Plan-Do-Inspect-Adapt cycles. PDIA is optimized for agile delivery of defined scope. FLAI is optimized for environments where the right question is not yet fully formed. This distinction matters: AI initiatives at lower capability levels frequently fail not because execution is poor but because framing is premature. FLAI surfaces that problem before it becomes a project failure.

SIMA-Kit™ — Operational Heart

SIMA-Kit™ is the operational heart of the SIMA360™ execution model. It provides the practical tools, templates, and guidance structures that bridge strategic intent and real-world AI maturity gains. Where SIMA-Core™ defines what maturity looks like and SIMA-Flow™ defines how to move through it, SIMA-Kit™ provides what practitioners actually use to do the work.

SIMA-Kit™ consists of two complementary components, both mapped to the five Domains and aligned to SIMA Capability Levels.

Component 1: Capabilities Toolkit (Macro)

The Capabilities Toolkit supports enterprise-level assessment, planning, and capability growth across departments, portfolios, and enterprise functions. It is the primary resource for the Set Groundwork phase of the SIMA-Flow™ Core Cycle.

Tool	Purpose
Capability Evaluation Checklist	Based on 15+ AI maturity models, provides structured AI Capability Level ratings from Exploring through Leading across all five Domains
Entrance Criteria Guidance	Specifies the readiness indicators an organization or domain must meet before advancing to the next capability level
Goals and Strategies Framework	Defines strategic objectives and targeted improvement approaches specific to each capability level and Domain
Exit Criteria Benchmarks	Establishes advancement benchmarks that signal when an organization has genuinely moved to the next level, not merely completed activity
Domain-Specific Maturity Characteristics	Describes the observable behaviors, structures, and practices that characterize mature operation in each Domain at each level
AI Tool Category Selection Guidance	Maps capability levels to appropriate tool categories, ensuring organizations do not deploy tools at levels their maturity cannot support
Role Involvement Recommendations	Specifies which organizational roles should be active at each capability level and maturity stage
Milestone Plans and Checkpoints	Provides structured checkpoints for tracking genuine maturity progression rather than activity completion

Component 2: Project-Level Toolbox (Micro)

The Project-Level Toolbox supports initiative-level delivery, experimentation, and iteration using the FLAI Cycle. It provides the working tools for pilots, proofs of concept, and scaled AI deployments.

Core execution tools:

- **Use Case Canvas:** Defines and prioritizes AI opportunities with structured criteria, preventing teams from building initiatives that cannot be governed or measured at their current capability level.
- **Vision and Value Templates:** Articulates project purpose and anticipated benefits in terms that connect to organizational priorities rather than technology capability alone.
- **Project Planning Patterns:** Capability-tailored playbooks that adjust the depth and structure of project planning to what the organization can realistically execute and learn from.

Risk and learning tools:

- **AI Risk Checklists:** Ethical and compliance safeguards structured to the Domain and capability level of the initiative, not generic risk libraries.
- **Test and Learning Cards:** Captures experiments and results in a structured format that supports the Assess phase of the FLAI Cycle and builds organizational learning assets.
- **Analysis Templates:** Supports post-iteration reflection with structured prompts for evaluating outcomes against original hypotheses and updating organizational understanding.

Change management tools:

- **Persona and Stakeholder Maps:** Identifies the human dimensions of each AI initiative and the relationships that need to be managed for adoption to succeed.
- **Change Management Strategies:** Provides structured approaches for managing the People Domain impacts of each initiative.
- **Adoption Guidance Frameworks:** Supports the transition from project completion to sustained operational behavior change.

SIMA-Kit™ resources are available under license. Contact info@sima360.org for access details.

SIMA-Ascend™ — Capability Development

SIMA-Ascend™ is the structured training and certification component of SIMA360™. It equips individuals and organizations with the knowledge, skills, and credentials needed to implement AI responsibly, effectively, and at scale. SIMA-Ascend™ is not a supplementary add-on — it is the mechanism by which organizations build the internal capacity to apply SIMA360™ without external dependency.

All SIMA-Ascend™ courses are designed to bridge theory and application. Participants do not simply learn concepts — they develop the ability to implement them in real-world organizational settings. Courses are led by certified trainers or available asynchronously online.

Certification Pathways

SIMA-Ascend™ offers three progressive certification levels that validate an individual's ability to apply the SIMA360™ framework with increasing complexity and organizational scope.

Level 1 **AI Solutions Agent**	Level 2 **AI Solutions Orchestrator**	Level 3 **AI Solutions Strategist**
Foundational framework application and independent practice. Agents understand the goals, principles, and application	Team-level leadership and cross-functional collaboration. Orchestrators coach individuals, ensure consistent SIMA360™ application across projects, and	Enterprise leadership and organizational transformation. Strategists drive adoption and evolution of the framework, design AI enablement strategies,

of AI within their operational domain. No prerequisite.	act as liaison between teams and leadership. Prerequisite: AI Solutions Agent.	and create internal training ecosystems. Prerequisite: AI Solutions Orchestrator.

Certifications are achieved through online assessments. Individuals seeking to become SIMA360™ instructors must complete the respective courses and achieve AI Solutions Agent certification before delivering instructor-led training.

Courses

SIMA-Ascend™ offers five courses, each targeting a distinct organizational role and maturity application context.

Course	Audience	Key Focus
Preparing for AI Solutions	Practitioners entering structured AI implementation	Evaluating organizational readiness, identifying foundational gaps, introducing structured AI practices with minimal risk
Applying AI Solutions	Practitioners executing AI projects	FLAI Cycle execution with real-world data and iterative assessments; creating project charters, identifying KPIs, driving continuous improvement
Leading AI Teams	Team-level leaders	Coaching, aligning, and supporting SIMA360™ adoption across teams; evaluating impact and refining organizational practices
Developing Organizational AI Strategies	Senior leaders	Customizing the SIMA360™ framework at enterprise scale; embedding within funding, policy, and governance models; FLAI at the macro level
Business Support for AI Implementation	Non-technical leaders	Selling, staffing, teaching, and coaching responsible AI adoption; building enabling organizational structures and business cases

Training programs can be explored and registered for at:

SIMA360Classes.eventbee.com/boxoffice

End Note

AI maturity is not achieved through tool accumulation or initiative volume. Organizations become mature when they can operate reliably under uncertainty, govern AI-supported systems consistently, maintain accountability at scale, and continuously improve organizational learning.

SIMA360™ provides the structured system for that progression. SIMA-Probe™ establishes where the organization stands. SIMA-Core™ defines the structural models it is navigating. SIMA-Flow™ governs how it moves through them. SIMA-Kit™ provides the tools to do the work. SIMA-Ascend™ builds the people who apply it reliably over time.

The framework is intentionally adaptable across organizations of varying size, industry, and technical sophistication. Its purpose is not to accelerate AI expansion. Its purpose is to ensure that expansion is matched by the organizational maturity required to sustain it.

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