

INSTITUTE WHITE PAPER – SEPTEMBER 2025

Measuring transformation: a verification standard

Most transformation value is declared, not delivered. Verification is the difference.

The audit standard Markham applies before an outcome is allowed to be called delivered.

SAMPLE

n = 312 outcomes

OBSERVATION PERIOD

2022–2025

EXTENT

16 pages · full edition

REFERENCE

MKM-R-2025-006

PUBLISHER

Markham Institute

RECORD · WHITE PAPER

Outcomes verified under the Markham Verification Standard (MKM-F-003)

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ABOUT THE MARKHAM INSTITUTE

The Institute is the research arm of Markham Consulting. It maintains the outcome dataset, stewards the framework library, and publishes its methods in full – so the thinking can be audited before it is paid for. Positions are argued, priced, and open to challenge.

IN THE FULL EDITION

16 pages · v1.0 · Current

01	The declaration problem	4 pages	p . 04
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Pagination refers to the full edition. The excerpt reproduces the executive summary, headline exhibit and method notes only.

Most transformation value is declared, not delivered. Verification is the difference.

When we audited 312 outcomes that programmes had reported as delivered, 44% failed at least one of three tests: the baseline had moved, the benefit was double-counted, or the result did not survive twelve months. The industry's delivery statistics are built on declarations.

The standard is deliberately simple: a frozen month-0 baseline, a single attribution line per benefit, an independent reader of the evidence, and a twelve-month survival check. It is published in full so that clients, and competitors, can apply it without us. Every figure in the annual cohort study passes it.

“An outcome that did not survive a year was a project artefact, not a delivered result.”

Why declared outcomes fail

n = 312 outcomes · 2022-2025



Failure mode of the 138 outcomes (44% of 312) that did not pass verification. Full method and cohort definitions in the closing chapter of the report.

VERIFIED · MKM-F-003

01

44%

Share of outcomes reported as delivered that failed verification.

02

3

Tests in the core standard: baseline, attribution, survival.

03

19%

Median overstatement in self-reported figures vs verified figures.

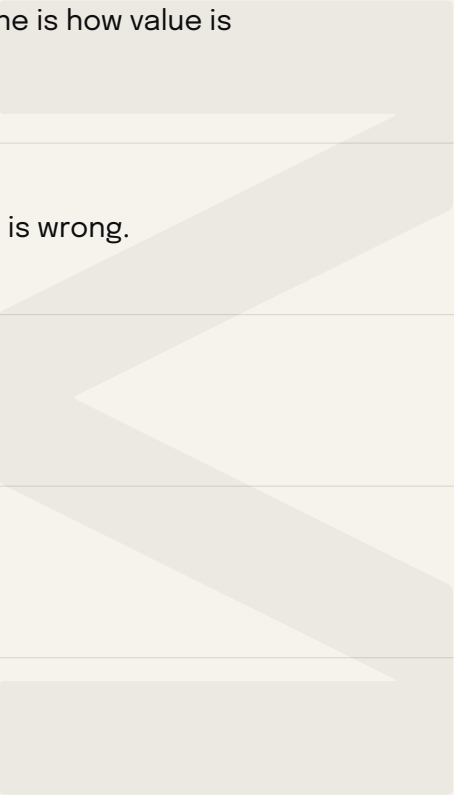
04

100%

Share of figures in the annual cohort study that pass the standard.

Every figure is measured against a frozen month-0 baseline and re-tested at month 12 before publication. No figure on this page is self-reported.

The findings, as Monday-morning decisions.

- 
- a** Freeze the baseline before the programme starts and put it under change control. A moved baseline is how value is invented.
 - b** Give every claimed benefit exactly one attribution line. If two initiatives claim the same saving, one is wrong.
 - c** Have the evidence read by someone who does not benefit from the answer.
 - d** Re-test at month 12. An outcome that did not survive a year was a project artefact.

HOW THE NUMBERS ARE MADE

SAMPLE	312 reported outcomes across 61 programmes, re-audited against original baselines.
STANDARD	Maintained as MKM-F-003 and revised annually. This paper documents v2.0.
INDEPENDENCE	Verification performed outside the delivering team; findings reported to the client directly.
PUBLICATION	Tests, templates and pass criteria published in full; may be applied without licence.

CITATION

Markham Institute, Measuring transformation: a verification standard, MKM-R-2025-006, v1.0 (September 2025). Citation permitted with attribution.

STANDARDS APPLIED

Baselines frozen under change control · one attribution line per benefit · independent evidence review · twelve-month survival re-test. The full standard is published as MKM-F-003 and may be applied without licence.

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