

Active Twist Guide to the CLIMB AI Readiness Model™

Your Introductory Step-by-Step Guide to Understanding and
Advancing AI Readiness in Your Organization



Version Information

CLIMB AI Readiness Model Model — Version 25.11m

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How to Use This Guide

The **CLIMB AI Readiness Model** helps you understand how your organization thinks about, experiments with, and integrates AI, which is a discipline grounded in clarity, reasoning, and culture. This guide gives you a structured overview of the model so you can interpret your quiz results, understand the five levels of readiness, and see how competence and confidence develop together as your organization progresses.

You'll use this guide in three ways:

- **To understand the model's purpose** — CLIMB describes how organizations grow in their ability to think clearly with AI, not just deploy tools. It shows how psychological safety, shared language, critical reasoning, and technical fluency combine to shape real readiness.
- **To interpret your current level** — The Levels of the Model section includes concise summaries of all five levels, allowing you to understand the defining patterns, strengths, and constraints of where you are today.
- **To identify what to explore next** — The guide points you toward the larger Active Twist ecosystem of models and consulting support.

If you completed the [10-question CLIMB AI Readiness Quiz](#), your score maps directly to one of the five levels in the model. This gives you a starting point, but the most useful insight comes from comparing your result with the adjacent levels above and below, because AI readiness evolves unevenly across cognitive, cultural, and technical dimensions.



The CLIMB AI Readiness Model at a Glance

The **CLIMB AI Readiness Model** explains how organizations develop the capability and confidence to work with AI responsibly and effectively. It centers on two axes:

- **Competence** (how clearly the organization thinks with AI)
- **Confidence** (how safely and consistently people engage with it).

Together, these dimensions describe how AI readiness grows from scattered curiosity to disciplined, adaptive mastery. At its core, the model evaluates three foundational domains:

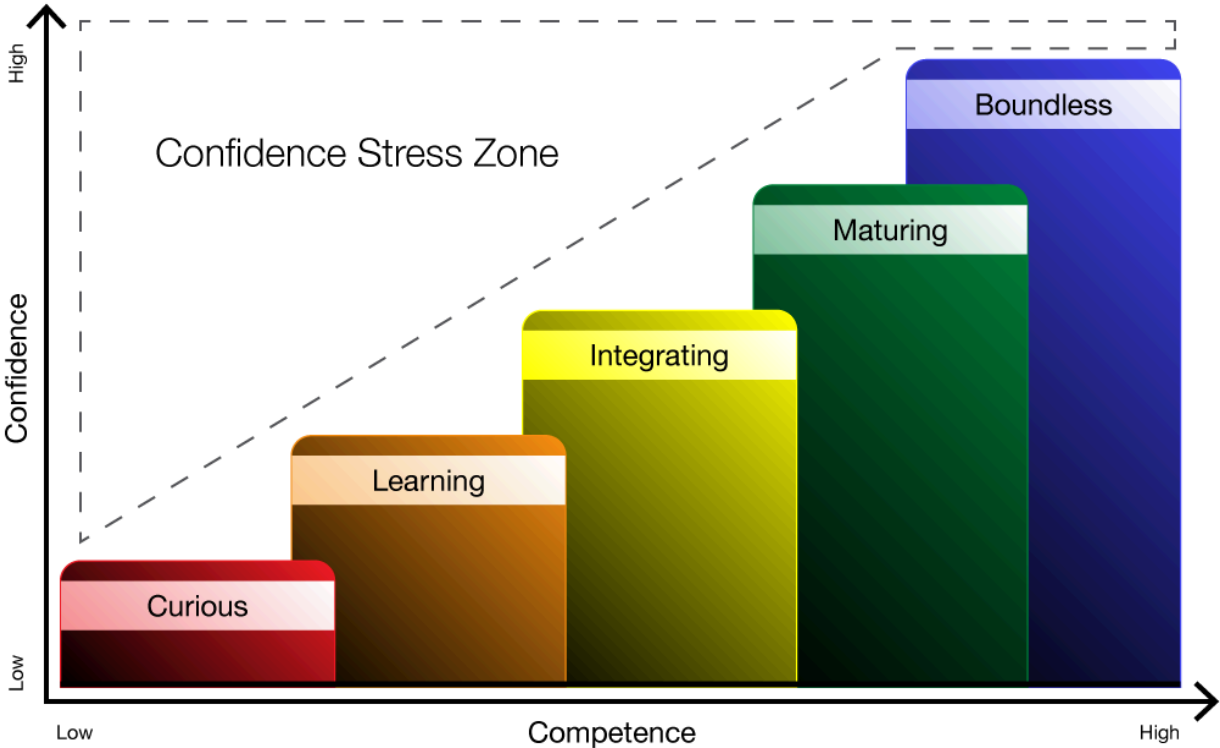
- **Cognitive Readiness** — the organization’s ability to reason with AI, verify outputs, structure context, and develop shared habits of reflection and critical thinking.
- **Cultural Readiness** — the psychological safety, shared language, narrative clarity, and cross-group permeability that shape how openly people explore and adopt AI.
- **Technical Readiness** — the quality and accessibility of data, the maturity of infrastructure, and the fluency required to use AI systems responsibly, securely and at scale.

These domains form the backbone of CLIMB. Early levels show uneven development, such as curiosity without coherence, experimentation without structure, or data foundations that exist but may not support responsible AI use. As maturity increases, competence and confidence strengthen together: reasoning becomes disciplined, language becomes shared, culture becomes more adaptable, and technical foundations begin to stabilize and connect.

The model organizes AI readiness into **five levels**, each reflecting how these domains combine in practice — from early, isolated experimentation to sustained, reflexive mastery. The Levels of the Model section provides concise summaries of

each level, showing how readiness expands and why organizations often progress unevenly across cognitive, cultural, and technical dimensions.

The **model graphic** below highlights the **Confidence Stress Zone**, which reflects the cultural difficulty of applying AI capabilities as competence grows. Confidence requires psychological safety, clear expectations, and permission for responsible risk-taking, which are conditions that are hardest to maintain at the lower levels, where norms, language, and shared understanding are still forming. As organizations mature, the zone narrows but never disappears. People continue to enter and leave, and new participants can reset collective confidence. Even high-maturity organizations can regress if they neglect these cultural pressures. The Confidence Stress Zone helps explain why progress can stall at any stage and why cultural reinforcement is essential throughout the climb.



Use this model as a reference point. Whether you're interpreting your quiz score or aligning teams around a shared understanding of where you stand, CLIMB provides a common language for how AI Readiness grows, stalls, or accelerates in practice.

Using Your Quiz Results to Orient Yourself

If you completed the **10-question CLIMB AI Readiness Quiz**, your score maps directly to one of the model's five levels. The quiz gives you a fast, structured way to understand how your organization currently thinks about AI — how it reasons with it, how safely people engage with it, and how effectively culture and infrastructure support its use. Your result provides a starting point, but interpretation requires looking at the broader patterns around your score.

You can use your quiz result in three practical ways:

1. **Identify your most likely readiness level.** Each score range corresponds to one of the five levels described in the Levels of the Model section. This placement reflects the combined signals of cognitive habits, cultural conditions, and technical foundations visible in your responses. This is an orientation point that helps you see where your organization stands today.
2. **Study the adjacent levels.** Readiness does not grow uniformly. Many organizations exhibit traits from the next level above or below: strong curiosity but limited structure, solid reasoning but weak cultural support, or good data foundations without shared confidence. Review the nearby levels to help you understand where progress exists and where friction may still be.
3. **Clarify what progression requires.** Each level reflects a distinct combination of competence and confidence. Your quiz placement helps you see which elements are stable, which are inconsistent, and which need reinforcement to move upward. Progress often depends on addressing imbalances which strengthens culture to match growing capability.

The Levels of the Model

The **CLIMB AI Readiness Model** outlines five levels that describe how organizations develop the competence and confidence needed to work effectively with AI. Each level reflects recognizable patterns across the three foundational domains. They are cognitive readiness, cultural readiness, and technical readiness.



Level 1 — Curious

Early interest in AI appears, but understanding is shallow and inconsistent. Individuals experiment in isolation without shared language, structure, or safety. Culture is cautious, and technical foundations are present but untested. Curiosity is active, but coherence is not yet forming.

Level 2 — Learning

Experimentation becomes intentional. Teams reflect on how AI performs and begin developing shared vocabulary and early structure. Cultural support increases as leaders signal safety, and technical awareness grows through data discovery and simple pilots. Curiosity evolves into teachable learning.

Level 3 — Integrating

AI becomes part of daily work. Reasoning frameworks guide use, governance emerges to support responsible scaling, and collaboration across groups strengthens. Cultural trust grows as teams share outcomes openly, and technical foundations begin to stabilize. Learning turns operational and becomes repeatable.

Level 4 — Maturing

AI is integrated, trusted, and continuously refined. Reflection becomes habitual, language is shared across functions, and governance is embedded in day-to-day work. Data systems are reliable, and technical fluency is widespread. The organization treats readiness as an ongoing discipline rather than a project.

Level 5 — Boundless

AI becomes an extension of the organization's collective intelligence. Reasoning is rigorous and reflexive, cultural trust is deep, and systems operate with resilience and ethical clarity. Learning, adaptation, and renewal are continuous. The organization uses AI to expand insight, creativity, and strategic perspective.



Consulting & Partnership

Some organizations need deeper support interpreting their results, aligning leaders, or coordinating change across teams. When the work involves multiple perspectives or complex decisions, external guidance makes a meaningful difference in outcomes.

Partnering With Active Twist

A consulting engagement typically includes:

- Deeper organizational diagnostics
- A detailed analysis of cohort results
- A facilitated interpretation session
- Recommendations tailored to your context
- Workshop delivery anchored in model-based methods
- Support for building an organization-wide maturity roadmap

If you'd like to discuss whether consulting is the right fit, or if you want guidance on interpreting your current results, we invite you to start the conversation with us at:

<https://activetwist.com/contact>



Our Extended Ecosystem

The **CLIMB AI Readiness Model**, the **INSPIRE Innovation Maturity Model**, and the **Intergroup Leadership Maturity Model** form a connected ecosystem designed to help leaders understand how capability, communication, and readiness evolve across an organization. Each model stands on its own, but they work best together to offer a clear view of how people think, collaborate, and adapt as conditions change.

A Holistic View of Organizational Maturity and Readiness

Organizations don't stall for a single reason. AI initiatives falter when teams lack shared language. Innovation slows when groups can't collaborate effectively. Leadership efforts struggle when culture or data foundations are weak. The three Active Twist models address these interlocking challenges without forcing leaders into a one-size-fits-all framework.

Together, they offer three complementary perspectives:

- **CLIMB AI Readiness Model** Shows how well your organization thinks with AI, and how competence, confidence, and technical foundations shape responsible adoption.
- [**INSPIRE Innovation Maturity Model**](#) Shows how effectively your teams turn ideas into outcomes through structured capability, application consistency, and cultural reinforcement.
- [**Intergroup Leadership Maturity Model**](#) Shows how leaders communicate across boundaries, reduce friction, and create the conditions for cooperation and shared understanding.

How the Models Reinforce One Another

These models reinforce one another in practical, observable ways:

- **CLIMB** strengthens **INSPIRE** by clarifying whether teams have the reasoning discipline and data foundations to support AI-enabled innovation.

- **INSPIRE** strengthens **CLIMB** by revealing whether innovation practices, learning loops, and cultural scaffolding are mature enough to support AI adoption and acceleration.
- **Intergroup Leadership** enables both by ensuring that communication, alignment, and cross-group permeability are strong enough for new practices, whether it's innovation or AI adoption and acceleration, to spread.

Where one model reveals capability, another explains the cultural or cognitive conditions behind it. Used together, they offer a structured way to see not just *what* is happening, but *why*.

When to Combine Models

Leaders often layer the models when:

- Innovation efforts depend on AI-driven workflows
- AI initiatives stall due to cultural or cross-team friction
- Teams disagree on direction, risk, or governance
- Data foundations limit both innovation and AI adoption
- Leadership wants a unified view of organizational maturity

In these situations, the three models create a fuller picture which shows where to focus effort, how to interpret constraints, and where progression is likely to accelerate with the right support.

The extended ecosystem gives leaders a coherent way to understand capability development across complexity and ensures that AI readiness, innovation maturity, and intergroup leadership evolve together rather than drift apart.

Next Steps & Contact

You now have a clear understanding of the **CLIMB AI Readiness Model** and how it can help you assess and develop your organization's AI Readiness. This free guide gives you a complete overview of the model, a succinct interpretation of each readiness level, and a sense of how AI Readiness connects to innovation maturity and leadership effectiveness.

If you want to continue your work, you can explore the options that best match your goals.

Review the Other Active Twist Models

If you want a broader organizational view, the other two guides are available here:

- [Intergroup Leadership Maturity Model](#)
- [INSPIRE Innovation Maturity Model](#)

Each model includes its own assessment, free overview, and consulting options.

Share This Guide

You can forward this guide to other leaders or teams who would benefit from a shared understanding of how organizations think, build confidence, and develop responsible AI governance. A common vocabulary often helps accelerate alignment.

Start the Conversation

If you'd like help interpreting your current level, making sense of patterns across teams, or determining whether a consulting engagement is the right fit, you can reach out anytime. Even a brief conversation can provide clarity about next steps. You can contact us at: <https://activetwist.com/contact>