Step 1:
Identify “positive deviants”, i.e., organizations that consistently demonstrate exceptionally high performance in an area of interest.

Step 2:
Study organizations in-depth using qualitative methods to generate hypotheses about practices that allow organizations to achieve top performance.

Step 3:
Test hypotheses statistically in larger, representative samples of organizations.

Step 4:
Work in partnership with key stakeholders, including potential adopters, to disseminate the evidence about newly characterized best practices.