

THE SOMATIC QUOTIENT (SQ)

Bridging Autonomic Neuroception and Executive Governance to Address the Organizational Performance Gap Driven by Workplace Disengagement

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Non-Clinical & Organizational Scope Disclaimer

This material presents the author's original operational frameworks, applied neuroception insights, and executive performance metrics. Xayla Trinity Empowerment Services (XTES) does not act as a clinical neuroscientific institute, psychological clinic, or licensed healthcare facility. The concepts detailed herein — including The E.L.I.T.E. Empowerment Framework™, The Emerald Journey Framework™, IN POSSE, Manifestation Codex, Tough Team Talks™, Free Your Mind™, and the UPROOT Software Engine — are non-clinical executive governance, state command, and organizational performance methodologies designed strictly for professional self-regulation and leadership optimization. They are not a substitute for medical, psychological, or psychiatric care, and organizations should direct participants exhibiting clinical distress to licensed providers.

Methodology & Validation Status — added for this edition: The SQ Index and its component measures (SRI, HAS, FI, RCS) are a proprietary, self-report-based operational framework developed by XTES. As of this edition, SQ has not been subjected to independent third-party psychometric validation (e.g., published reliability coefficients, test-retest stability, or a normative sample establishing the score tiers below). Organizations piloting SQ should treat the numeric bands in Section III as a working operational heuristic — useful for tracking an individual's or team's change over time — rather than as a clinically or statistically validated instrument comparable to established assessments. This is the specific gap XTES's planned validation studies are designed to close, moving SQ's evidence base closer to the independently replicated, sensor-based standard set by organizations such as HeartMath Institute (see Section I.4, Market Landscape). Results will be published as they become available.

Author's Preface: Beyond the Neck-Up Illusion

For decades, enterprise leadership development has operated under a quiet, unspoken assumption: that human execution happens exclusively "from the neck up."

We have trained executives to process data, map strategies, and practice emotional intelligence scripts. Yet, inside boardrooms and high-stakes operations, the same breakdown occurs. When acute pressure hits, strategic vision dissolves into defensive posturing, micro-management, analysis paralysis, and organizational drag.

This white paper's central premise is that human beings do not execute strategy with logic alone; execution is also shaped by physical physiology. When the autonomic nervous system perceives high-stakes friction, it braces — the jaw tightens, respiration shallows, and the body defaults toward a survival posture. Applied neuroscience suggests that in that moment, prefrontal executive function is measurably compromised.

This white paper introduces SQ (Somatic Quotient) as a proposed operational complement to IQ and EQ in executive performance — an emerging framework, not an established clinical standard — and details the operational technology XTES has built to help leaders bridge cognitive clarity with somatic composure.

— *Tina Simone Mowatt Reece (Xayla Trinity), Human Empowerment Framework Architect*
Portmore, Jamaica | 2026

Section I: Executive Summary & The Organizational Performance Gap

1. The Macro-Economic Context

Enterprise investment in corporate learning and leadership development exceeds \$350 billion globally per year (Research and Markets, 2024). Gallup's State of the Global Workplace (2024) reports that low employee engagement and unmanaged workplace stress cost the global economy an estimated \$8.8 trillion annually in lost productivity — approximately 9% of global GDP. Separately, McKinsey & Company research finds that roughly 70% of organizational transformation and leadership change initiatives fail to achieve their stated outcomes.

2. The Applied Hypothesis Linking Disengagement and Autonomic Stress

XTES's framework connects these macro statistics to individual executive physiology through the following applied reasoning chain. This chain draws on separate, independently established bodies of research; the synthesis connecting them into a single causal pathway is XTES's original applied framework and has not itself been independently tested end-to-end.

- The Disengagement Driver: Gallup's longitudinal Q12 meta-analyses find that manager behavior accounts for a substantial share — commonly cited around 70% — of the variance in team engagement levels.
- The Physiological Mechanism: Polyvagal Theory (Porges, 1995/2011) and the Somatic Marker Hypothesis (Damasio, 1994) describe how the autonomic nervous system responds to perceived threat or conflict with rapid, subcortical physical bracing (masseter clenching, thoracic constriction, sympathetic mobilization).
- The Proposed Executive Effect: XTES's applied position is that when leaders operate in sustained physiological bracing, this measurably constrains the flexible, higher-order processing associated with empathy (EQ) and strategic synthesis (IQ).
- The Organizational Consequence (Hypothesized): XTES proposes that leaders operating from chronic bracing are more prone to defensive posturing, role friction, and backchannel communication — behaviors independently associated with disengagement — contributing to the productivity loss Gallup quantifies at \$8.8 trillion. This link is presented as a plausible mechanism supported by the underlying science, not as a proven, independently measured causal effect.

Traditional corporate coaching, XTES argues, addresses this gap incompletely because it relies primarily on "Neck-Up" development models:

- IQ (Intellectual Quotient): analytical logic, data processing, and technical strategy.
- EQ (Emotional Quotient): social awareness, emotional labeling, and relational empathy.

IQ builds the strategic map, and EQ provides relational intent, but both are constrained when operational stress triggers autonomic bodily bracing — the gap SQ is designed to address.

3. Introducing SQ (Somatic Quotient)

SQ (Somatic Quotient) is XTES's operational capacity metric, designed to estimate an individual's or team's autonomic state command under high-stakes friction — specifically, the capacity to recognize physical survival bracing, understand its link to strategic output, and apply somatic down-shifting practices to return to a composed operating baseline.

4. Market Landscape: Where SQ Fits

The application of nervous-system science to leadership performance is an active and growing field, occupied today by two distinct, well-established approaches:

- Coached, embodiment-based practice: Pioneered over four decades by practitioners such as Richard Strozzi-Heckler (Strozzi Institute), this tradition delivers somatic leadership development through in-person or facilitated coaching relationships — building embodied awareness and presence through direct practitioner guidance, without a standardized numeric scoring instrument.
- Sensor-based physiological monitoring: Pioneered by organizations such as the HeartMath Institute, this tradition measures autonomic state objectively via heart-rate-variability (HRV) hardware, supported by a substantial independent, peer-reviewed research base built over more than 30 years. This approach delivers device-measured precision but requires dedicated sensor hardware and does not, on its own, provide a coaching or belief-pattern intervention layer.

XTES designed SQ to occupy the space between these two poles: a self-directed, app-based telemetry and coaching framework that does not require wearable hardware, and is intended to scale across an enterprise workforce faster than one-to-one embodiment coaching typically allows. This is a statement of design intent and market positioning, not a claim that SQ has achieved the evidentiary standing of either established tradition. In particular, XTES draws a clear distinction between its own self-report methodology and the objective, sensor-measured approach that underlies HeartMath's peer-reviewed evidence base — a distinction addressed directly in the Methodology & Validation Status note above, and one that XTES's planned validation studies are designed to narrow over time.

Nothing in this white paper should be read as an endorsement, affiliation, or comparative efficacy claim regarding Strozzi Institute, HeartMath Institute, or any other named organization or methodology; each is referenced solely to describe the existing market landscape.

Section II: Neuro-Autonomic Foundations & the 0–1 Model

1. The Physiological Hierarchy of Executive Performance

Drawing on Polyvagal Theory (Porges, 1995/2011) and the Somatic Marker Hypothesis (Damasio, 1994), XTES's framework holds that physiological state materially influences cognitive capacity, and that the autonomic nervous system continuously monitors the environment through neuroception — a subcortical detection process that operates faster than conscious appraisal. It is worth noting that Polyvagal Theory's specific physiological mechanisms remain a subject of ongoing scientific debate; XTES applies the theory's broadly accepted behavioral framework (regulated vs. defensive nervous-system states) rather than asserting a specific, uncontested neural pathway.

Tri-Phasic Autonomic States in Governance

- Ventral Vagal State (Station 0 Baseline): Diaphragmatic breathing, open thoracic axis, regulated heart-rate variability. Associated cognitive profile: prefrontal engagement, flexible IQ and EQ access, unbraced executive authority.
- Sympathetic Flight/Fight State (Station 0 Disruption): Micro-bracing (clenched masseter, elevated shoulders, shallow respiration). Associated cognitive profile: heightened vigilance, defensive posturing, reactive decision-making, team static.
- Dorsal Vagal Shutdown (Station 0 Collapse): Visceral fatigue, systemic numbness, mental exhaustion. Associated cognitive profile: analysis paralysis, executive apathy, strategic burnout.

2. The 0–1 Cognitive-Somatic Synergy Model

Station 0 (Somatic Baseline / Composure) → Station 1 (Cognitive Intent / Clarity)

- Station 0 (Somatic Baseline): Autonomic composure, vagal regulation, and reduced physical bracing in the masseter, cervical spine, and thoracic basin.
- Station 1 (Cognitive Vector): Targeted strategic focus, clear intent, and decisive executive action.

The Operational Principle: Station 1 execution is, in this framework, understood to be less reliable when Station 0 is disrupted by survival bracing. Securing Station 0 is positioned as supporting sustained prefrontal engagement during acute organizational pressure.

Section III: The SQ Scoring Architecture

SQ is measured in two complementary layers: a periodic Baseline Assessment that establishes an individual's overall standing, and a real-time Event Score that captures composure inside a specific high-stakes moment. The two are designed to connect over time — sustained improvement at the Event level is intended to be reflected in an individual's next Baseline re-assessment — though this link between layers is itself a design hypothesis pending validation, not yet a demonstrated statistical relationship.

1. SQ Baseline Assessment

The Baseline Assessment is a 20-item self-report inventory, intended for administration at onboarding and at regular intervals thereafter (e.g., quarterly), across four subscales, each scored 0–100:

Subscale	What It Measures
SAI	Body Awareness Index — how readily an individual notices physical sensations of stress in real time.
FRI	Stress Load Index — physical fatigue, muscular bracing, and locus-of-control shifts under sustained stress.
LARH	Life, Alignment & Relationship Health — perceived safety, autonomy, and support across home, family, and social spheres.
RRS	Recovery Speed Score — how quickly the body returns to baseline after an acute stressor, plus primary stress-reaction style.

Subscale scores combine into a composite Baseline SQ Index (scaled 0–1000) using a weighted formula, with three weighting profiles keyed to broad age brackets (Under 25, 25–50, 51+) reflecting the premise that stress patterns and recovery capacity vary across life stages. A derived Somatic Tax percentage (100 minus the Recovery Speed score) and a Stress-Reaction Archetype — cross-referencing a Fight/Flight/Fawn/Freeze style with the primary zone where tension is held — are also generated to support individual coaching conversations.

Design Note on Age Weighting: chronological age is used here as a practical proxy for life-stage-related variation in stress and recovery patterns. XTES recognizes this is an imperfect proxy — individuals can present with patterns more typical of a different life stage than their age bracket suggests. The current three-bracket weighting is a working hypothesis, not a validated life-stage measure, and XTES is evaluating more direct self-reported life-stage or context inputs as a refinement in future iterations.

Try the SQ Baseline Assessment — available for early access at somaticquotient.xaylatrinity.com. Consistent with the Methodology & Validation Status note above, this is an early-stage instrument offered for exploratory and directional use, not yet an independently validated psychometric assessment.

2. SQ Event Score

The Event Score is computed in the moment a specific high-stakes trigger is logged inside the UPROOT telemetry workflow (Section IV) — distinct from the periodic Baseline Assessment above. XTES structures the Event Score as a composite operational score, calibrated so that 100 represents baseline composure maintained under standard (low-to-moderate friction) conditions:

$$\text{SQ Event Score} = [\text{SRI} \times (1 + (\text{FI} - 1) / 4) \times \text{HAS}] \times \text{RCS} \times 100$$

Design note: the Friction Index enters the formula as a multiplier (Friction Factor, range 1.00–2.00) rather than a divisor. This is a deliberate design choice: an executive who maintains composure (high SRI) under high-stakes friction (high FI) should score higher than one who is equally composed only in low-stakes conditions — the scoring engine rewards demonstrated composure under real pressure rather than penalizing exposure to it.

Variable	Definition & Scale
SRI	Somatic Regulation Index (0.00–1.00). Quantifies neuromuscular composure across four diagnostic regions (masseter/jaw, cervical spine, thoracic cavity, abdominal core). $\text{SRI} = 1.0 - (\text{active hot zones} \div 4)$. Zero active bracing zones yields $\text{SRI} = 1.00$; four active zones yield $\text{SRI} = 0.00$.
FI	Friction Index (1.0–5.0), an operational stress rating assigned to the logged event: 1.0–1.9 (routine tasks), 2.0–3.4 (interdepartmental friction or tight deadlines), 3.5–5.0 (board-level conflict, major restructuring, or public crisis). Converts to a Friction Factor of 1.00–2.00 via $\text{Friction Factor} = 1 + (\text{FI} - 1) / 4$.
HAS	Happiness Alignment Score (0.00–1.00). Self-reported alignment across ten performance dimensions (D1–D10) captured in the Free Your Mind™ baseline audit — spanning areas such as role clarity, psychological safety, workload sustainability, relational trust, and sense of purpose. $\text{HAS} = (\text{D1} + \text{D2} + \dots + \text{D10}) \div 100$, each dimension scored 1–10. The full operational definitions for D1–D10 are maintained in the Free Your Mind™ technical appendix, available to enterprise partners.
RCS	Root Coherence Score (0.00–1.00). Tracks longitudinal deconditioning of recurring behavioral trigger patterns: $\text{RCS} = \text{resolved trigger scenarios} \div \text{total logged trigger scenarios}$. Because RCS is a ratio over an individual's logged history, it is only meaningful after repeated UPROOT use — the Event Score is a continuous-tracking measure, not a one-time diagnostic.

Event Score Tiers (Working Heuristic — see Validation Note above)

- Below 70 — Reactive / High Bracing: sympathetic reactivity dominates; executive logic is more likely to be compromised under stress.
- 70–99 — Conditional Composure: effective under routine conditions; more vulnerable to acute operational friction.
- 100–115 — Integrated Command: solid baseline state command across standard and moderate-friction scenarios.
- Above 115 — Sovereign 0–1 Synergy: composure and prefrontal clarity preserved under high-stakes friction.

These bands are XTES's internal design targets, not the output of a normed population study. They should be read as directional (higher is better, and movement over time is the meaningful signal) rather than as absolute clinical or statistical benchmarks until formal validation data is published.

Section IV: Software Telemetry & Workflow Engine

The UPROOT Software Engine (currently in active development as the mobile telemetry extension of the XTES ecosystem) is designed to provide automated tools for logging Event Scores and, over time, connecting them to trends in an individual's periodic Baseline Assessment.

1. Dynamic Body Mapping & the Impulse Manual

- Embodied Hot-Zone Scan: the user logs physical holding areas in the moment (jaw, cervical spine, chest, gut).
- Impulse Manual Routing: the app matches logged hot zones to targeted somatic reset protocols from the proprietary Impulse Manual — e.g., masseter release, thoracic vagal breathing — intended to support a return to Station 0 composure.
- Urge Delta Tracking: records the gap between an initial impulsive reaction (e.g., "wanted to withdraw or confront") and the executive's chosen response.

2. Cognitive-Somatic Pattern Deconditioning

Once Station 0 composure is re-established, the user is guided to revisit the trigger scenario and identify which of four common executive behavioral modes was active:

- Over-Functioning Mode: compensating for perceived systemic vulnerability through micro-management and hyper-control.
- Resource-Deficit Mode: reactive anxiety driven by perceived systemic or budget constraints.
- Approval-Seeking Mode: defensive decision-making driven by external validation dependency.
- Decision-Paralysis Mode: strategic avoidance and operational inertia under high-stakes threat.

Through guided visualization paired with somatic down-shifting, the goal is to decondition the association between the trigger and the reactive mode, gradually increasing Root Coherence (RCS) over repeated use. Sustained gains in RCS are intended, over time, to be reflected in an individual's next periodic Baseline Assessment (Section III.1) — the mechanism by which moment-to-moment Event Score work is designed to translate into overall SQ standing.

Section V: Intellectual Property Suite & Implementation Roadmap

1. The Integrated 4-Tier IP Portfolio

- SQ Baseline Assessment: proprietary 20-item diagnostic question bank, age-weighted composite scoring algorithm, Somatic Tax calculation, and Stress-Reaction Archetype system (Fight/Flight/Fawn/Freeze cross-referenced with body-zone mapping) — protected as original copyrighted content and trade secret methodology of XTES. Available at somaticquotient.xaylatrinity.com.
- Tier 1 — Subconscious Audit Engine: Free Your Mind™ LMS platform; audits recurring subcognitive patterns, establishes baseline HAS scores, and provides foundational self-governance training.
- Tier 2 — Standalone Literature & Handbooks: IN POSSE (Somatic Governance), Manifestation Codex (Reality Engineering), and Tough Team Talks™ (Interpersonal Friction Resolution).
- Tier 3 — Live Facilitation & Executive Containers: The E.L.I.T.E. Empowerment Framework™ (B2B team interventions) and The Emerald Journey Framework™ (high-touch 1-on-1 C-Suite Master Coaching).
- Tier 4 — Digital Telemetry Extension: UPROOT mobile platform, currently in active development, delivering automated trigger logging, Impulse Manual reset routing, and longitudinal SQ tracking.

2. The 90-Day Enterprise Implementation Roadmap

- Days 1–30 (Audit & Onboarding): subconscious belief audits via Free Your Mind™, baseline HAS/SRI calculation, and deployment of standalone literature (IN POSSE, Tough Team Talks™).
- Days 31–60 (Live Facilitation): bespoke 1-on-1 C-Suite Master Coaching, live corporate workshops (The E.L.I.T.E. Framework™), and facilitated resolution of backchannel organizational friction.
- Days 61–90+ (Telemetry & Retention): ongoing somatic tracking, 30-day post-intervention case reviews, and publication of an internal executive SQ Scorecard.

3. Hypothetical Executive Scenario (Illustrative Model Only)

The following is a constructed, illustrative example provided to demonstrate how the SQ Event Score (Section III.2) is calculated for a single logged incident. It does not represent a real client engagement, a completed pilot, or verified outcome data, and it does not reflect a periodic Baseline Assessment score. XTES has not yet published independently verified case results; this example should not be cited as evidence of program efficacy.

Context: A Chief Technology Officer facing high-friction software migration deadlines.

Logged Inputs: During a contentious stakeholder meeting, the CTO logs a high Friction Index (FI = 4.0) with masseter and thoracic holding (baseline SRI = 0.50). Baseline HAS = 0.85 and RCS = 0.80.

Modeled Intervention: The CTO completes a 60-second targeted vagal release (Impulse Manual masseter protocol), modeled here as restoring composure to Post-Reset SRI = 1.00.

$$\text{Friction Factor} = 1 + (4.0 - 1) / 4 = 1.75$$

$$\text{SQ Event Score} = [1.00 \times 1.75 \times 0.85] \times 0.80 \times 100 = 119$$

Modeled Result: An Event Score of 119 falls in the "Sovereign 0–1 Synergy" tier as defined in Section III.2. In this illustrative model, restored composure is associated with the CTO addressing stakeholder objections without defensive posturing. Real-world results will vary by individual and have not yet been independently measured.

Section VI: The XTES Enterprise Intelligence Architecture

This section describes a future-state product vision. Nothing in Section VI reflects a currently built or deployed system — it is included to communicate design direction for enterprise and platform partners, and should be read alongside the Methodology & Validation Status note above.

As the SQ ecosystem matures beyond its current tiered set of standalone tools (Section V), XTES envisions consolidating the Baseline Assessment, UPROOT, Free Your Mind™, live coaching, and enterprise reporting into a single AI-coordinated architecture. An AI Intelligence Layer sits between an individual's profile and the rest of the ecosystem, routing each person toward the right track and personalizing interventions as more of their data accumulates — rather than each tool operating as a separate, disconnected product.

1. Entry Point & Routing

An individual's first touchpoint is the SQ Baseline Assessment (Section III.1), which establishes their subscale scores and Stress-Reaction Archetype. At that point, each individual is assigned a persistent, pseudonymous Archetype ID — their behavioral data is tracked against this ID rather than against their name or email. The AI Intelligence Layer uses the Baseline profile, archetype, and (over time) accumulated UPROOT event history to route the individual and tailor which interventions, resources, and Impulse Manual protocols are surfaced to them.

2. Two Tracks

The architecture organizes around two tracks, both coordinated by the same AI layer:

- Individual Journey — The Emerald Journey™: in this future-state architecture, Emerald Journey becomes the umbrella brand for an individual's full personal path — Free Your Mind™ belief auditing, high-touch 1:1 coaching (today's Emerald Journey offering per Section V), and everyday UPROOT use — coordinated as one continuous experience rather than three separate products.
- Group / Team / Organization Track: individual data, in aggregate and de-identified form, rolls up into team- and organization-level analytics — feeding the executive SQ Scorecard (Section V.2) and helping target E.L.I.T.E.™ live facilitation at the teams or archetype clusters showing the most strain.

Gains an individual makes at the Event Score level (Section III.2) are designed to feed back into their next periodic Baseline re-assessment — the mechanism connecting day-to-day UPROOT use to an individual's longer-term SQ trend, and in aggregate, to the organization's SQ Scorecard.

3. Identity, Privacy & Data Governance

The architecture is designed so that no name, email address, or other direct identifier is attached to an individual's behavioral or scoring data as it moves through the AI Router, the event-logging system, or any team/organizational analytics view. Identity information (name, email, employment record) is intended to live in a separate, access-controlled Identity & Access Layer, used only for account authentication, scheduling, and billing — architecturally isolated from the behavioral dataset the AI layer and any HR or leadership reporting can see.

- No individual score is ever visible above the individual — leadership and managers see aggregated, anonymized trends only.

- Group-level reporting is gated by a minimum group size, so no individual can be inferred by elimination from a small team's data.
- Data rolling into any team-level view requires a separate, explicit opt-in from onboarding consent.

One honest limitation worth stating plainly: this is pseudonymization, not full anonymization. A re-identification path must exist so an individual can authenticate and view their own history over time, and live 1:1 coaching inherently requires the coach to know who they are meeting for that session. Because a re-identification path exists, this behavioral data should be treated as regulated personal data under frameworks such as GDPR — the architecture is designed to minimize who can exercise that re-identification path and for what purpose, not to place the data outside such regulation entirely.

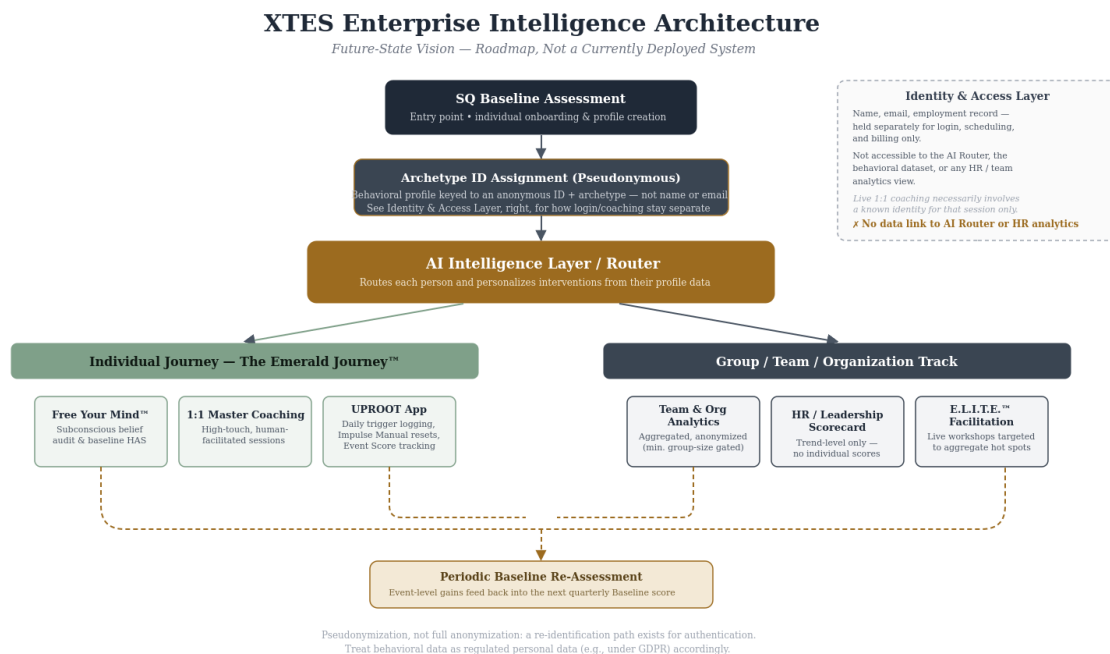


Figure 1. XTES Enterprise Intelligence Architecture — future-state vision.

4. Comparable Enterprise Architectures

The three-layer pattern above — individual assessment, AI-driven personalization, and aggregated organizational reporting — is not unprecedented. It is the established architecture for enterprise wellbeing and resilience platforms already operating at scale, which supports the viability of this design direction:

- meQuilibrium: an individual resilience assessment across 18 factors feeds AI-driven, personalized digital coaching, rolling up into aggregated, anonymized workforce analytics used by enterprise HR and leadership teams — including subpopulation-level dashboards and industry benchmarking, deployed with Fortune 500 employers. This is the closest existing precedent for XTES's overall three-layer structure.
- BioBeats: combines wearable biometric data (including heart-rate variability) with self-reported psychometric data through machine-learning models to deliver individualized coaching, while surfacing only aggregated, anonymized insights to employers. This is the closest existing precedent for pairing physiological signal with enterprise-facing, privacy-by-aggregation reporting design.

- Spring Health / Modern Health: architecturally separate individual-level clinical and behavioral data from employer-visible reporting — employers receive only de-identified, aggregated utilization data, with individual usage never shared with a manager, HR, or leadership. This is the closest existing precedent for the Identity & Access Layer isolation principle described above, and both platforms' documentation flags small-population de-anonymization risk as a known limitation — the same reasoning behind the minimum group-size gating proposed in this section.

XTES's positioning differs from each of these in scope: unlike meQuilibrium's cognitive/behavioral-therapy orientation, and unlike BioBeats' dependence on wearable hardware, the SQ architecture is designed to be self-report-based and hardware-free, framed around nervous-system regulation rather than clinical mental health, and positioned for executive-level performance rather than as a general employee mental-health benefit. Nothing in this subsection should be read as an endorsement, affiliation, or comparative efficacy claim regarding meQuilibrium, BioBeats, Spring Health, Modern Health, or any other named organization; each is referenced solely to describe existing, comparable enterprise architectures.

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Somatic Intelligence, Enterprise Governance & State Command Systems