



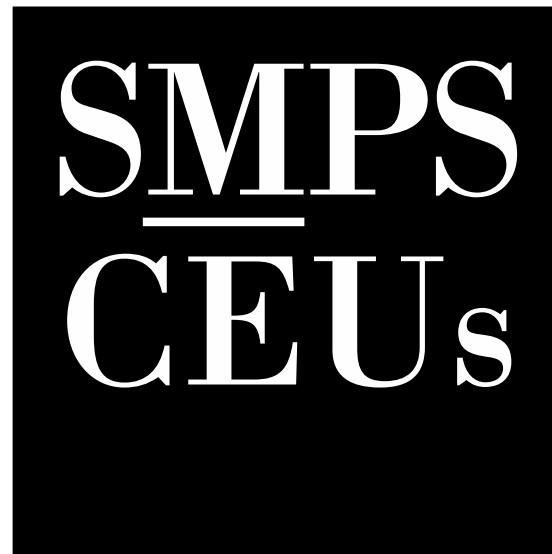
Engage Clients With Research

Presented by Elizabeth Harr and Karl Feldman



SMPS CEUs

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Steps:

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2. Attend the webinar
3. Email: ceu@hingemarketing.com

Subject Line: SMPS CEUs webinar credit

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Presenters

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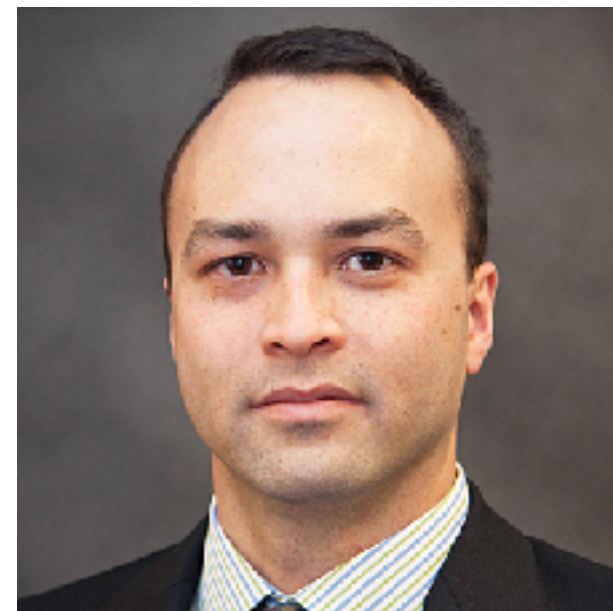
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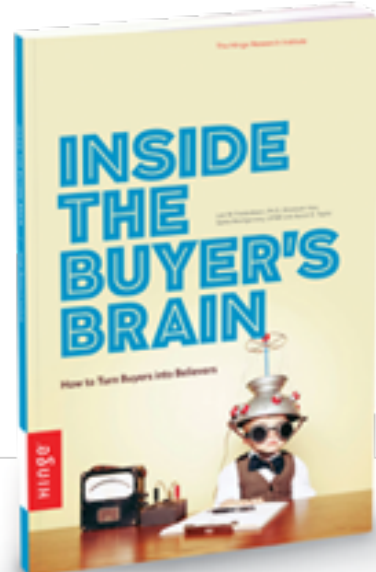
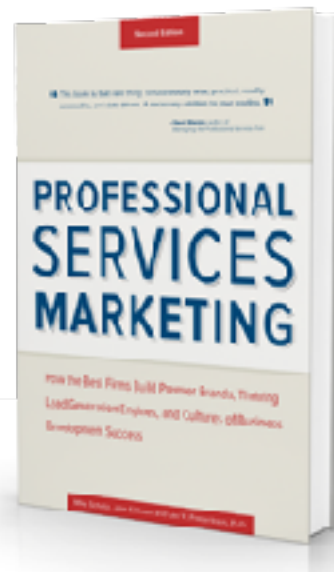


Agenda

- Different types of research to further client engagement
- Which type of research to use to meet your goals
- How to implement a research project



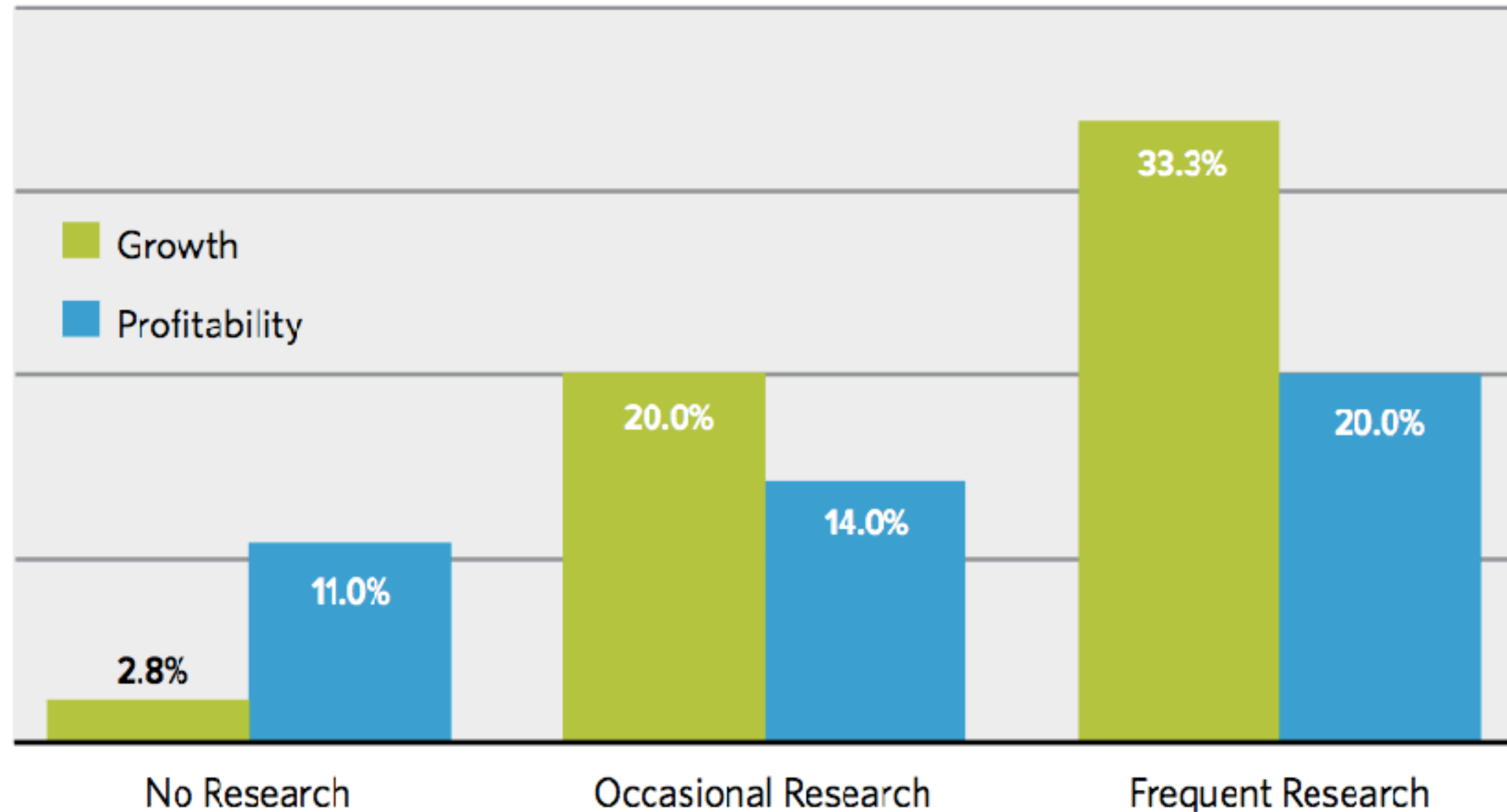
10 years,
15 studies,
15,000+ firms,
and 5 books later...



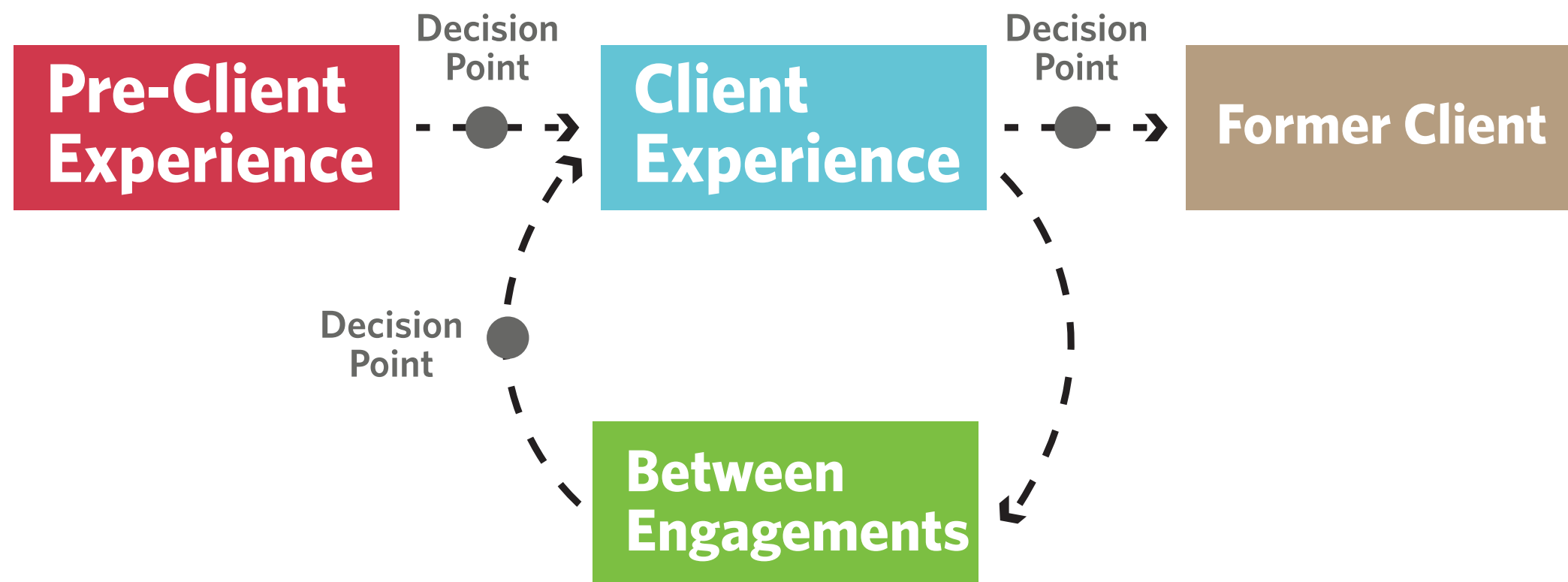
A black and white photograph of a car's dashboard, featuring several analog gauges. A semi-transparent blue rectangular overlay covers the middle portion of the image, serving as a background for the text. The gauges visible include a speedometer on the left with markings for 100, 200, and 300; a central tachometer; and a fuel gauge on the right. The text is centered within the blue overlay.

Research answers the questions that can
drive your business forward — or hold it back.

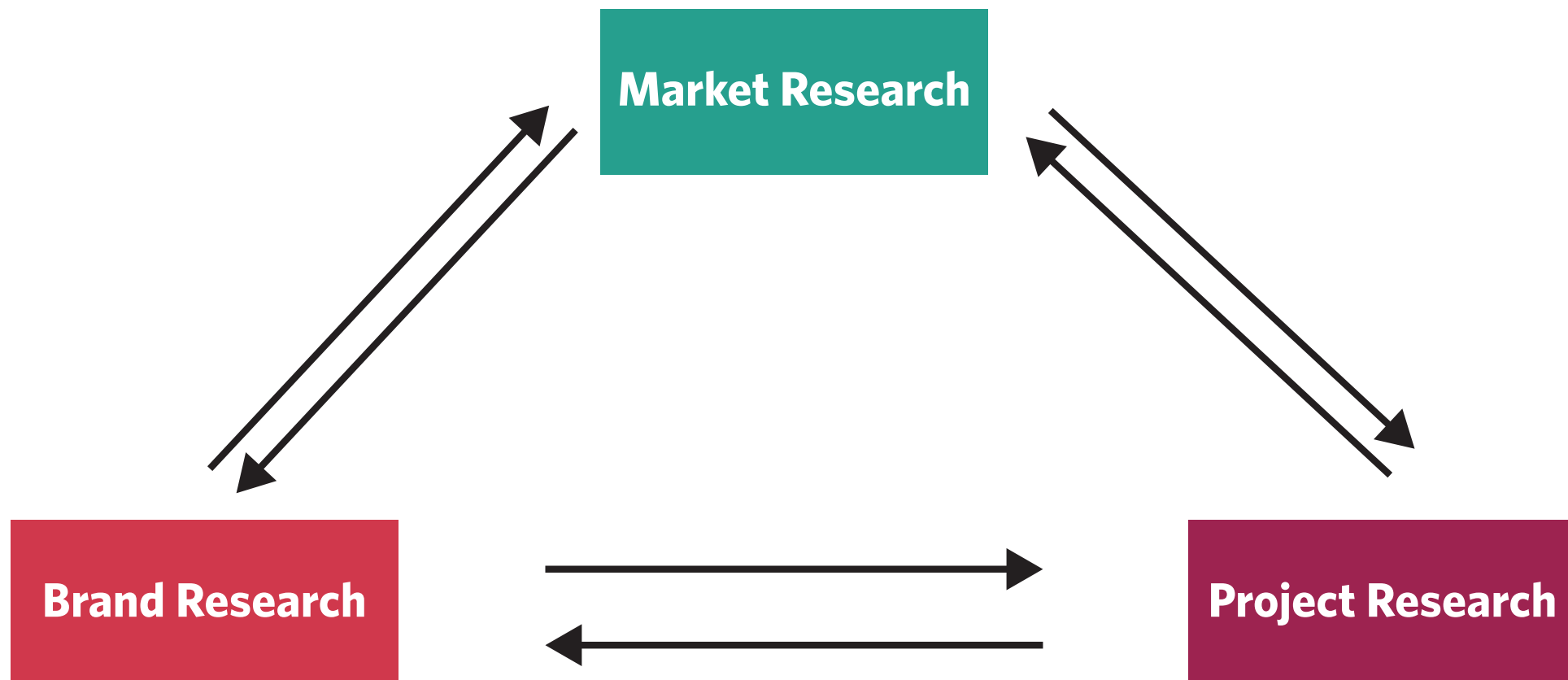
Impact of Research on Growth and Profitability



Client Experience Journey



Research Types Work Together



**What is
Important to
Your Clients?**



**What is
Important to
Your Clients?**

**What
Services Are
Important to
Your Firm?**

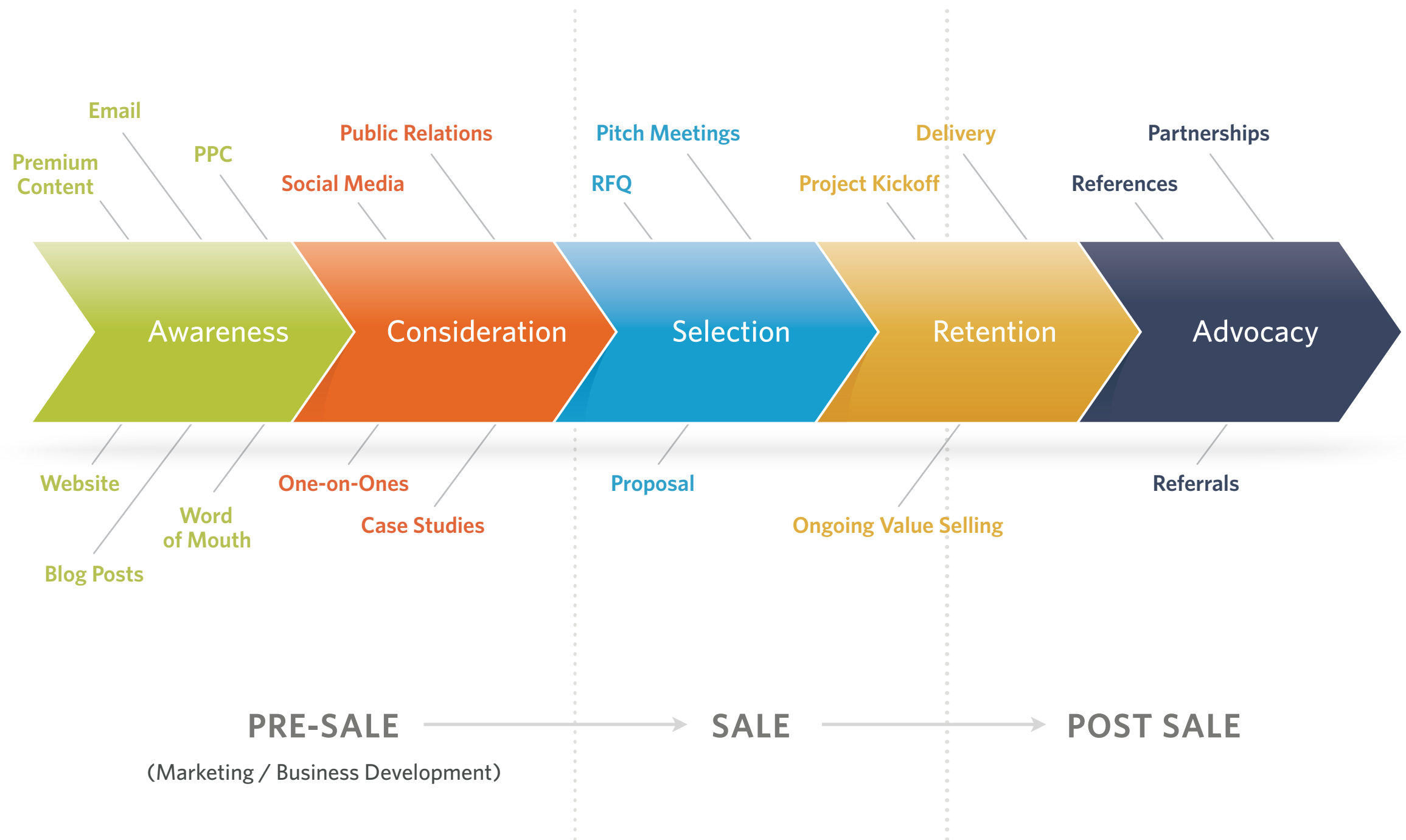


**What is
Important to
Your Clients?**

**What
Services Are
Important to
Your Firm?**

***Focus on
These Issues***

Professional Services Client Experience Journey



Brand Research





What parts of client experience
are most valued?

How should we talk about ourselves?

Why don't we win more business?

What is our competitive advantage?



Benefits of Brand Research

- Better understanding of your target audiences
- Identification of a true competitive advantage
- Alignment of YOUR voice to THEIR key issues
- Focused efforts



Outcomes from Brand Research

- > Clear targets
- > Differentiators
- > Positioning and expertise issues
- > Techniques you will use and how often
- > Tracking methods



High growth firms are

3X

more likely to have a
strong differentiator.

Source: *Spiraling Up: How to Create a High Growth, High Value Professional Services Firm*

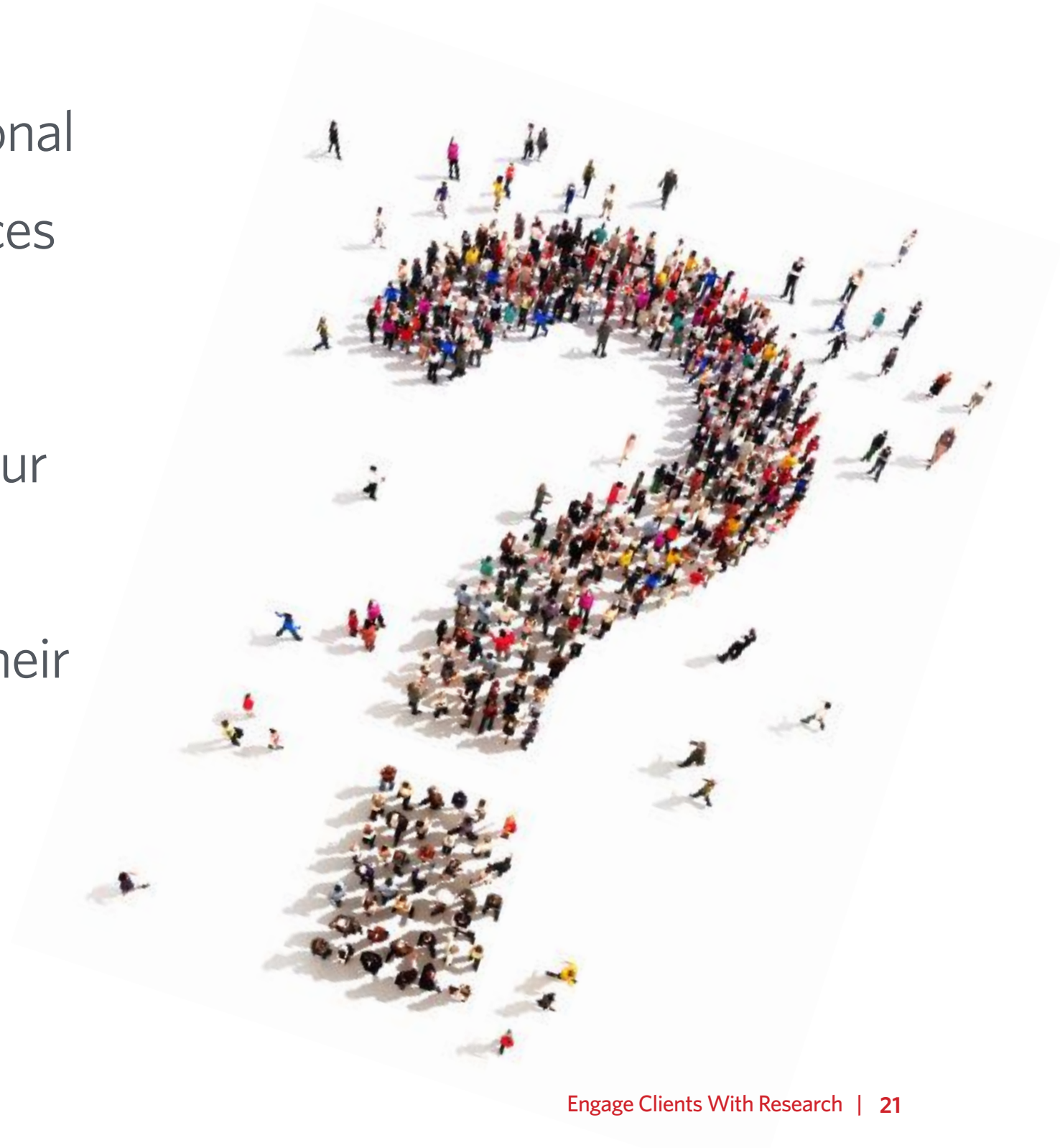
Competitive Advantage

- > Most firms take a similar approach to the marketplace
- > Buyers have trouble distinguishing between service provider options
- > Positioning sets firms apart and helps buyers recognize and prefer them — ultimately providing a stronger competitive advantage



Brand Research Will Help You Select Your Issues

- > What are the organizational priorities that your services help address?
- > What approaches are your target audiences considering to address their priority issues?



Criteria for Selecting an Issue

- > Relevant to client and service you provide
- > No consensus on the solution
- > Not something that is likely to go away in the short-term
- > Not already “owned” by another firm
- > You can offer a valuable perspective
- > Broad enough for multiple topics

Examples of Issues

- > Ensuring the security of financial data
- > Managing millennials in the workplace
- > Evolving international tax laws
- > Financing adaptive reuse of historic theaters



Brand Perception Research

- > **Ask your clients:**

- > Why did you select us?
- > What tipped the scale?

- > **Ask your got-aways:**


- > What made the winning company stand out?
- > What tipped the scale?
- > What could we have done better?

Be the resource,

not a commodity

Market Research





Market research helps you act on market realities — not assumptions.



What language should we to better
connect with our audiences?

What are trends and opportunities
in this marketplace?

How do I package a new service?



Benefits of Market Research

- Better understanding trends and opportunities
- Growth planning
- Better understanding of relevant market issues and topics



Outcomes from Market Research

- > Market specific targeting and messaging
- > Market specific statistics that may support messaging
- > Adjustment of market strategies

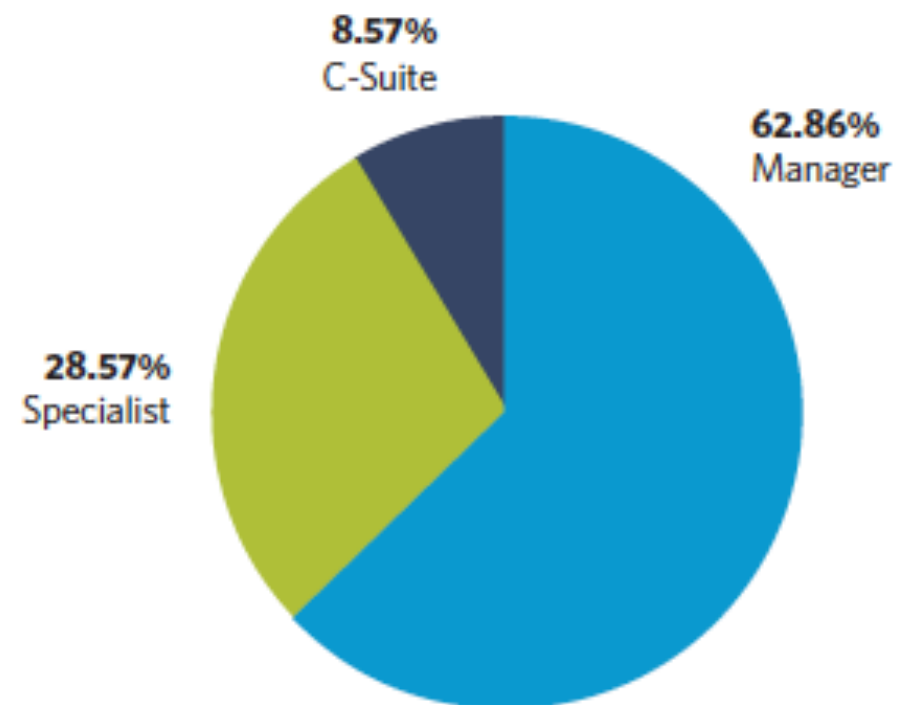
An Engineering Case Study



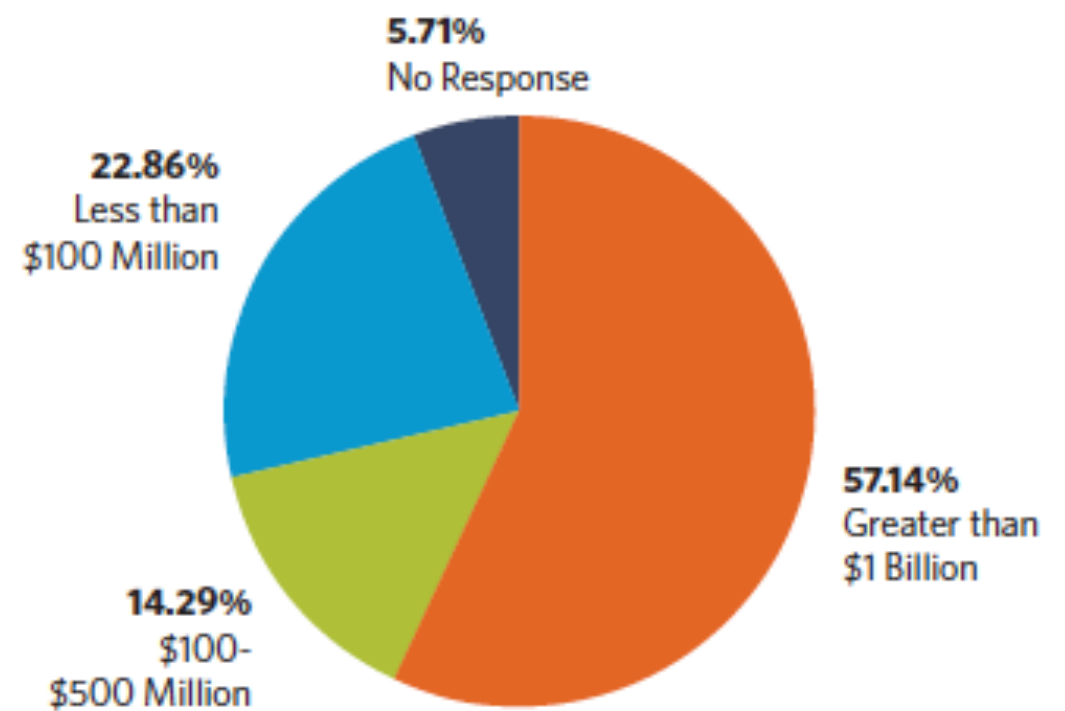
Environmental Health and Safety Market Research

- > What does it mean? (language)
- > Does it mean different things to different size organizations?
- > How to avoid “Fireman” scenario
- > Appetite for a completely out-sourced solution

Purposive Sampling



Roles (Title)



Revenue

Environmental Health and Safety Market Research

- > What does it mean? (language)
 - Mostly consistent with current services and messaging
 - “Zone of confusion” around macro issues such as global warming or overall healthcare costs

Environmental Health and Safety Market Research

- > Does it mean different things to different size organizations?
 - No - Consistent understanding
 - Also - Woodard & Curran had better visibility at small-medium firms

Environmental Health and Safety Market Research

- > Proactive / completely outsourced?
 - Tough hill to climb
 - Appetite for partial services
 - ***Best target = Mid-size firm, Managers***
 - ***Over 45% actively searching***



Project Research





Lessons from a client experience on
specific projects?

What client experience trends
can be identified and adjusted?

Can we describe client experience
at the brand and market level?



Benefits of Project Research

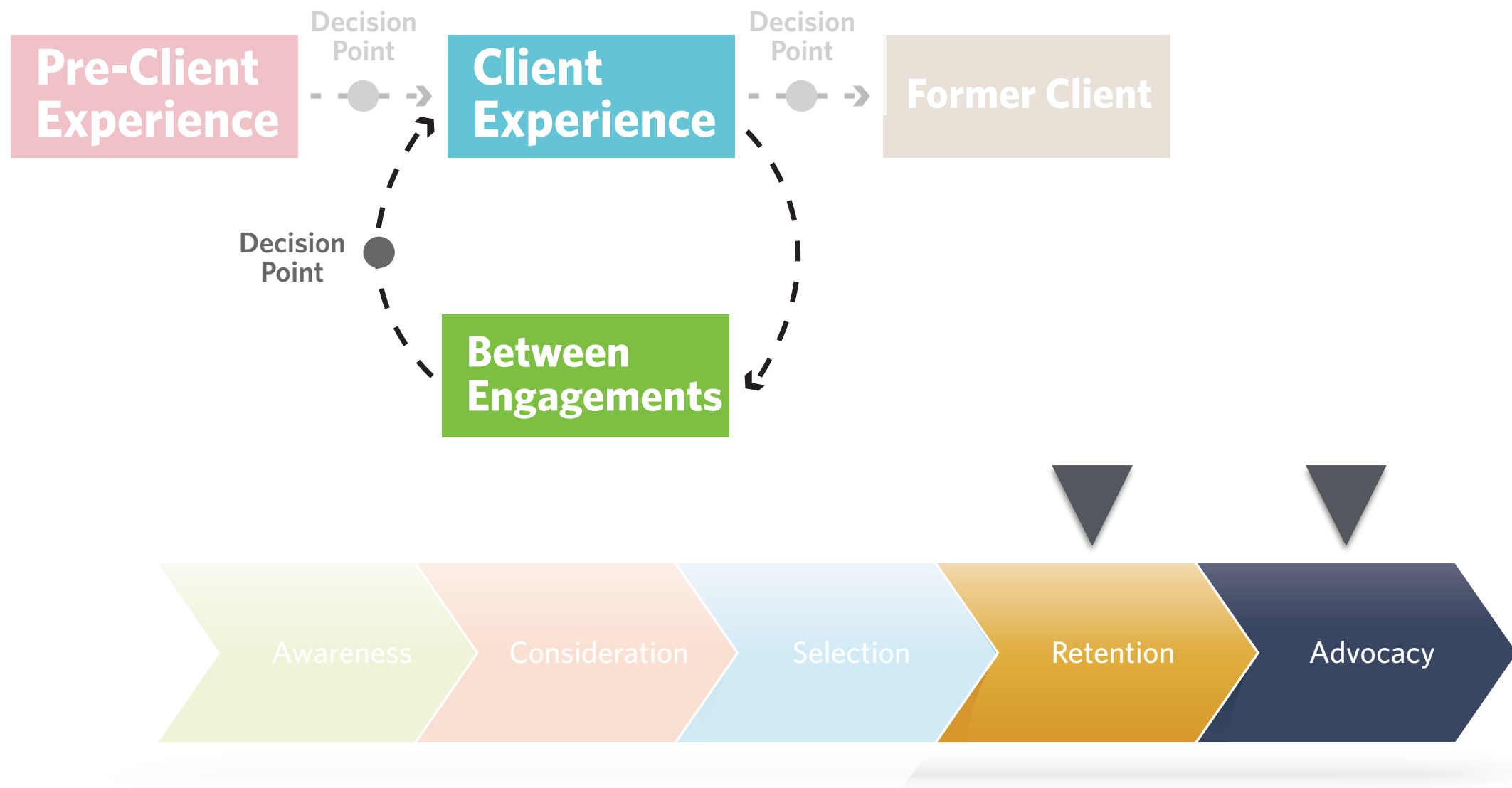
- QC - immediate tactical benefit for retention
- Benchmark to peers
- Validate / add detail to other types of research
- Consistency / visibility



Outcomes from Project Research

- > Address performance issues
- > Create more advocates
- > Strategic operational improvements
- > Engagement and repeat work
- > External validation

Operational Insights



10-15x

Harder to win new business


10-15x

More costly to win new business

Optimize Client Experience and Layer Insights


- > Survey tool for existing clients
- > Satisfaction with processes and performance relative to peers
- > *Not anonymous* - Follow up is critical (tactical)
- > Opportunity to layer on other types of research (strategic)

From *How Buyers Buy*: *The criteria buyers are using when considering firms*




Criteria	Percentage
Expertise / technical skills	19.8%
The project team	18.1%
Firm experience	14.9%
Knowledge of my industry / situation	12.5%
Reputation	11.1%
Firm size and reach	5.6%
Availability / flexibility	5.6%
Personal relationship	4.5%
Price	4.2%
Firm management approach	3.1%
Firm resources	0.7%

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In Closing



Key Takeaways

- > Differentiate between three types of research to use to further the client experience
- > Identify the type of research that will meet the client experience goals
- > **Implement a research project**



How Hinge Can Help

Free Marketplace Visibility Consultation:

- > Ways you can use research
- > Ways your firm is generating referrals
- > Why buyers may have ruled out your firm
- > The state of your website
- > The role of thought leadership and social media
- > What's working for you now, and what isn't



**Respond to follow-up
email or call:**

703 391 8870

For webinar registrants only!

Thank you! Questions?

Elizabeth Harr

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Thank You

