



IAPI Webinar

Think like a Client

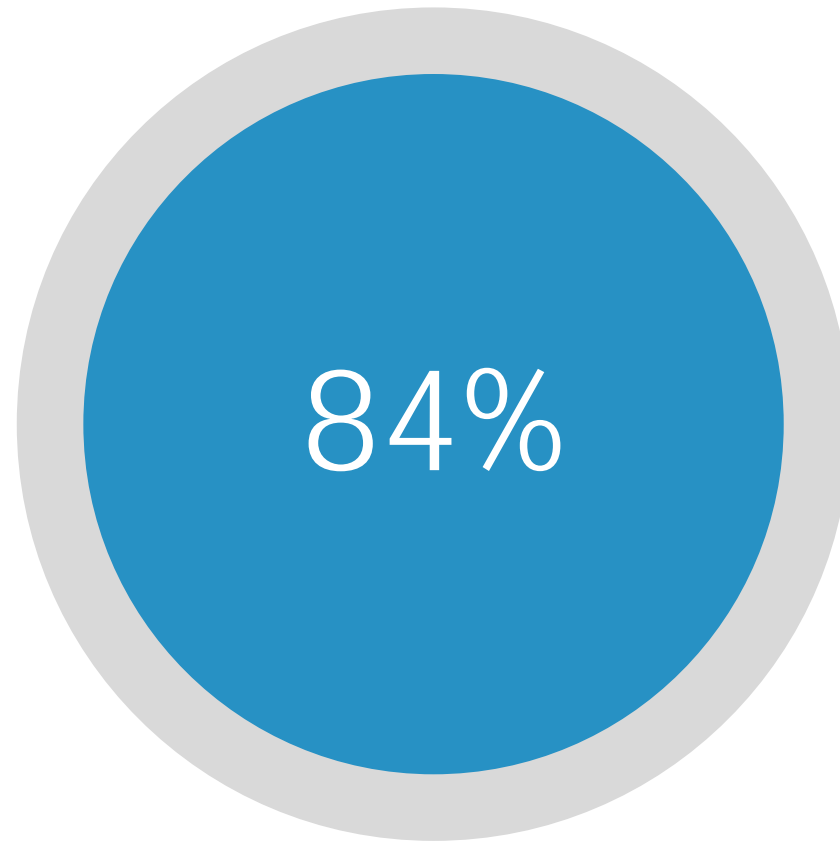
14th October 2021  
[uptothelight.co.uk](http://uptothelight.co.uk)

# Agenda

## **Introduction**

What clients care about  
Organised nurturing





OF CLIENTS WITH A WEAKER OR MORE  
VULNERABLE RELATIONSHIP WITH THEIR  
AGENCY MENTIONED **CLIENT SERVICE ISSUES**  
AS THE MAIN REASON



'I used to think that great work would lead to a great relationship. Now I think the opposite: a great relationship leads to great work.'

(Robert Solomon, 'The Art of Client Service')

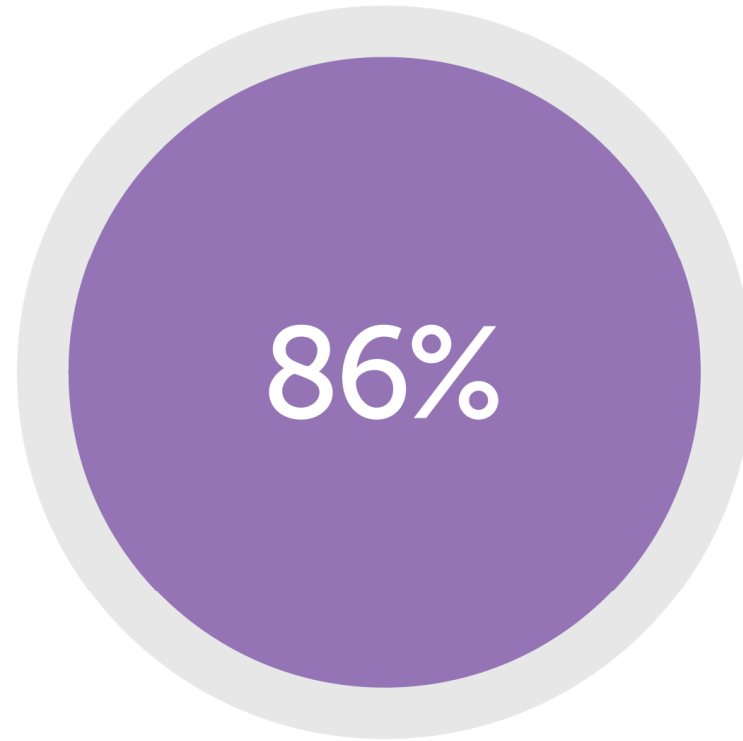
# Agenda

Introduction

**What clients care about**

Organised nurturing





OF CLIENTS ARE **EXPECTING MORE** FROM  
THEIR AGENCY NEXT YEAR

# Expecting more



- *More* brand understanding
- More feeling for what's right for the brand
- *More* high level, Board level relationships
- *More* added value ideas
- *More* openness and self criticism
- *More* people dedicated to the account
- *More* commercial awareness
- *More* proactivity

# Top 3 client expectations





# Most common client service issues

Day to day  
Not flagging  
things up

Hiding problems  
Weak budget  
management  
'They should have  
come to me, rather  
than the other way  
round'

Overall  
Not driving  
things

Difference between  
managing and 'driving'  
Taking responsibility  
and taking pressure off  
client

Day to day  
Attention to  
detail lacking

Typos and small  
errors  
Lack of quality  
control  
'Are they too busy  
with other clients?'  
'Are they too  
stretched?'

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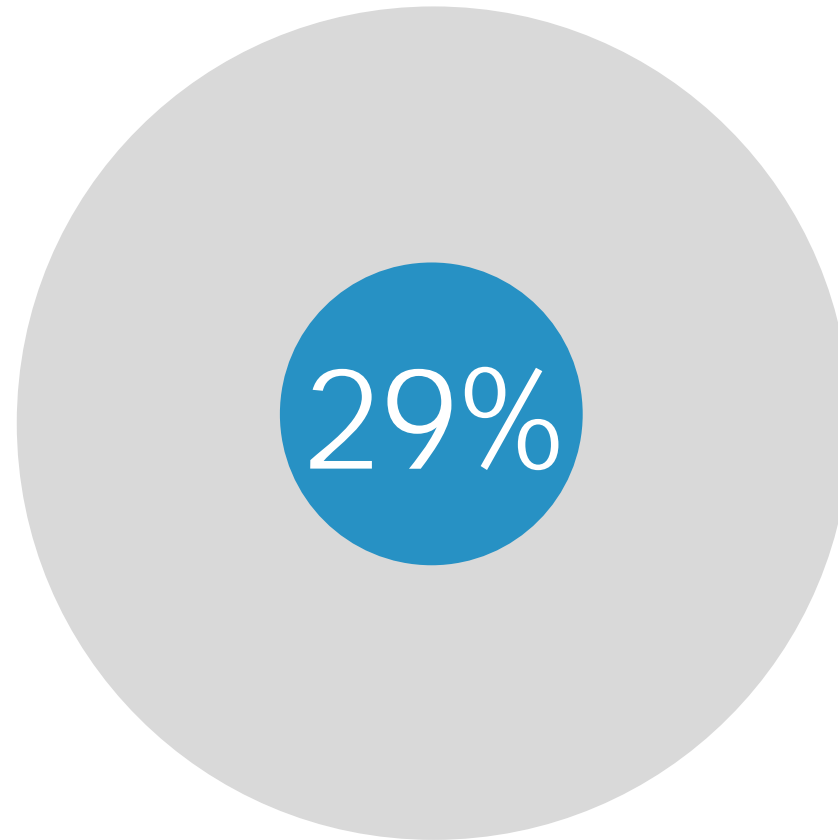
## Not 'driving'



'Understand the value of being really good at account management. It's not just about getting the job done. It's about the reassurance it gives and the feeling it gives the client.'

'For them to get more out of us and us to get more out of them, they could drive us a bit harder...A bit of pushing and chivvyng of us would be good.'

'It sometimes feels as if we're driving everything, not them. In the end, that means I'm spending more time on managing things than I should. I need them to take that pressure off me.'



29% OF CLIENTS REFERRED TO AN AGENCY  
'MISTAKE' THAT HAPPENED OVER A YEAR AGO

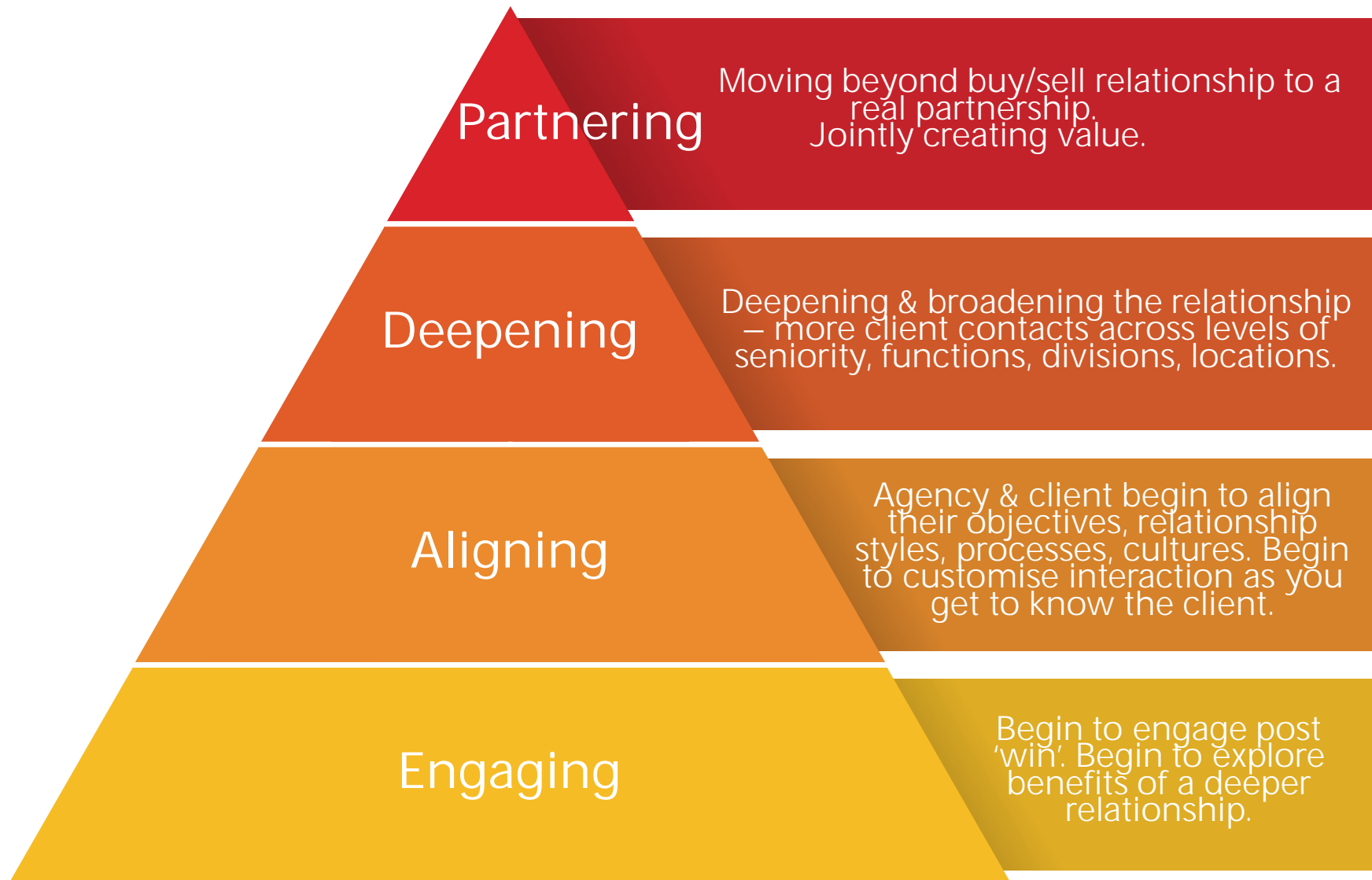
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# Avoid internal embarrassment



'We had a bad experience and then the bad experience was repeated after much embarrassment the first time ...Some of my colleagues have really lost confidence in XXXXX...It was a really embarrassing thing for me to have to deal with internally. We were burnt once and then we got burnt again. It felt like a fundamental lack of learning...It was hard to tell whether XXXXX realised the level of aggravation and embarrassment it caused me internally.'

## Key stages



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## Too 'comfortable'



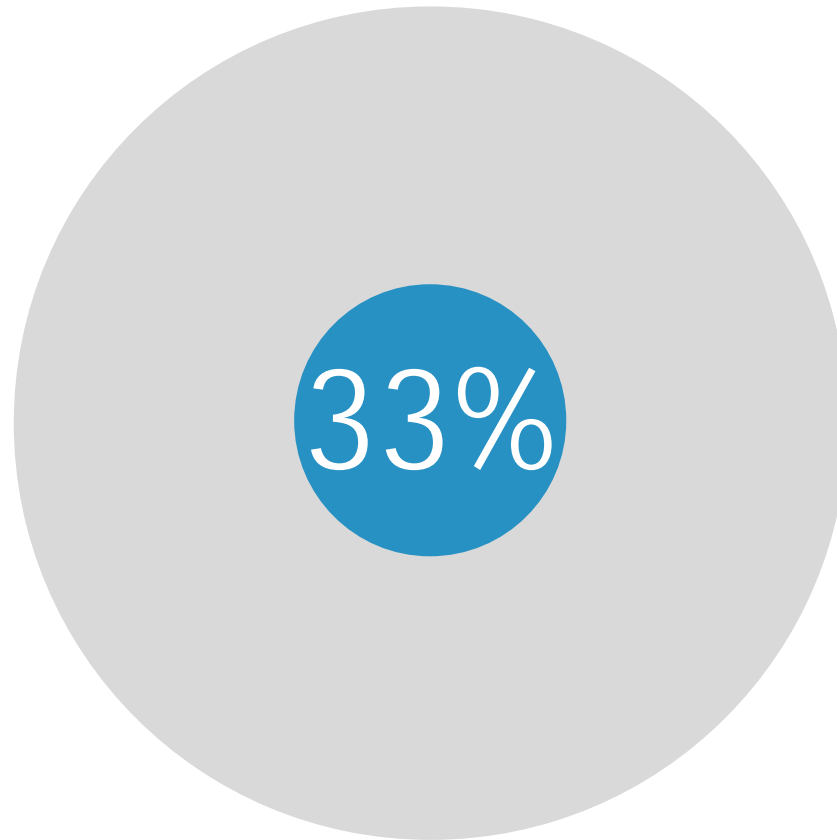
'They know a pattern that works. It feels like more of the same rather than innovation.'

'I know they're comfortable second guessing the client because they know what's been accepted in previous presentations, but sometimes it just becomes formulaic and not challenging.'

'They know the brand so well that they're almost filtering, rather than being more open.'

WHAT CHANCE DOES THE  
INCUMBENT AGENCY HAVE  
OF WINNING THE  
BUSINESS?

38%



OF CLIENTS WISH THEIR AGENCY  
WAS MORE SELF-CRITICAL



# Not feeling valued



'I sometimes think they should be treating us better than they are. We're a kind of anchor client for their London office. It doesn't always feel like we're being treated like that.'

'We don't necessarily feel like their most valued customer...There is kind of a feeling that they are resting on their laurels. It sometimes feels formulaic.'

'Instead of just saying, "No, we can't do that", it's trying to frame that in a slightly more positive way. In those everyday things, try to still make us feel like a valued client.'

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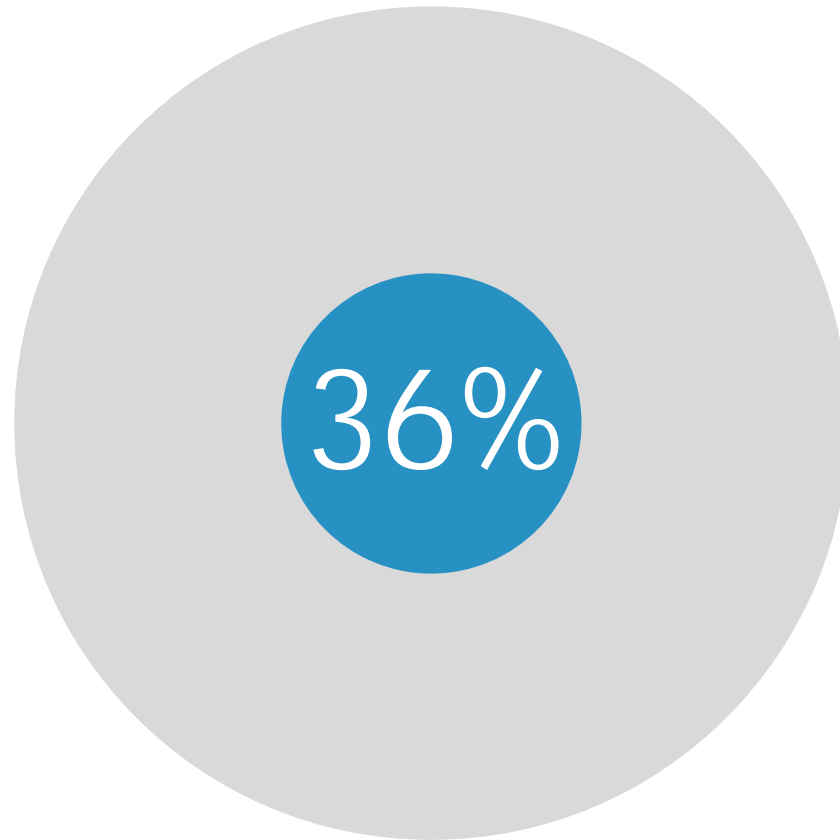
# Clients aren't interested in your other pressures



'I'm not sure whether we can do that because we've got so much work on for other clients.'

'I'm really stacked up at the moment so I'm not sure if I can do that.'

'We're so busy right now. We're all feeling the strain. Oh God, I need a day off.'



OF CLIENTS HAVE EXPERIENCED PERIODS  
WHERE **SERVICE LEVELS** HAVE  
SIGNIFICANTLY DROPPED

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# Passive & fudging



'Maybe I can get that done...'

'We should be able to do that...'

'Maybe we could look at that...'

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## Positive & clear



'I'll ensure that it's done...'

'We will definitely do that...'

'Let's look at that...'

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# When we haven't got an immediate answer



'I understand what you are asking for, your priorities and the deadlines we need to hit. Let me take that away and I'll come back to you with a firm update on when we can get this back to you.'



OF CLIENTS BELIEVE THAT  
THEIR DESIGN AGENCY  
SHOULD **ASK MORE**  
**QUESTIONS**

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# Questions are so important



'They don't listen to the brief hard enough, ask the right questions or listen to the sub text.'

'They are very willing to accept poor briefings on my part and not probe and find out more. They just run away without extracting more information.'

'It didn't feel like a systematic exploration. It felt like we were jumping from point to point on his agenda, rather than "Make sure I've understood what the brief is asking me to do."



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# Questions are so important



'They sometimes need to be more challenging about the brief and push back – "Is it the right thing to do?" Challenge what we give them rather than just heads down.'

'Sometimes I feel that we don't arrive at the best solution. This is because sometimes we don't really know what we want, so I think it's important to explore and probe more at the brief stage.'

'I'm obviously not being clear with them and I accept some of the blame, but they're the experts and they should be able to drag it out of me.'



10 curious questions

# Example curious questions

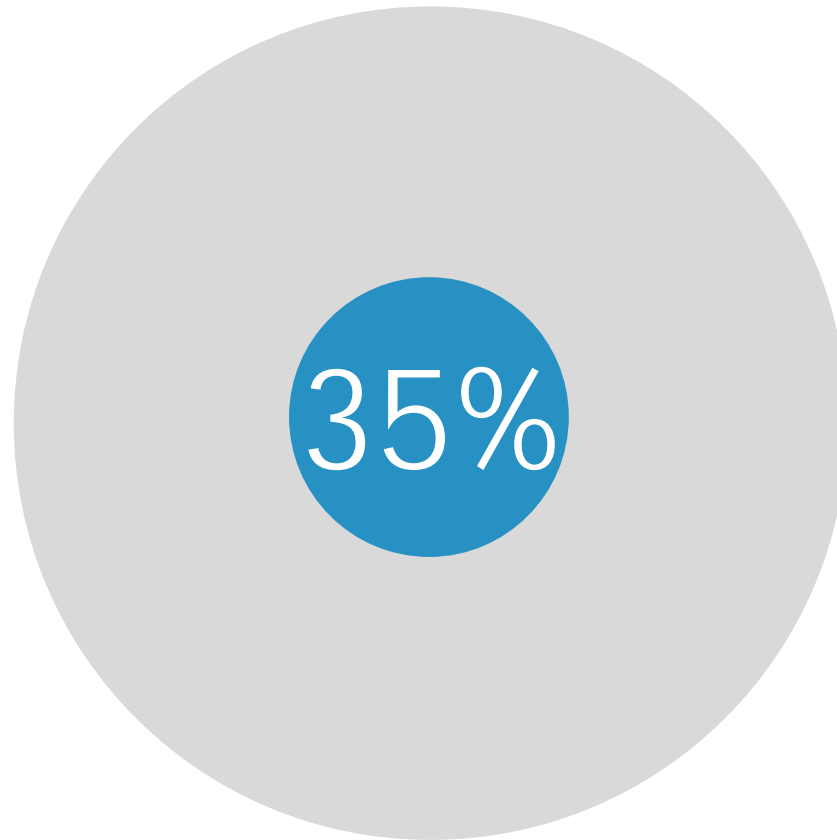


- How many organisational levels are there between your client contact and the CEO?
- How is your client's business organised differently from its chief competitors?
- Where was your client brought up?
- Who is your client's boss's most trusted advisor?
- What is the biggest threat to your client's business?
- Why is your client's company HQ situated where it is?

# Example curious questions



- When was the last time your client significantly altered the product/service?
- How does the client's sales people approach selling?
- What are your client's children's names
- When was the last time your client got promoted?
- What's the level of staff turnover in your client's business?



OF CLIENTS HAVE EXPERIENCED  
AGENCY PROCESSES THAT ARE  
OVERBLOWN OR TOO RIGID

# A difficult balance



Need to be  
**Pragmatic &  
Agile**

Speedy turnaround  
Very responsive

Not rigid processes  
– 'Just get it done'

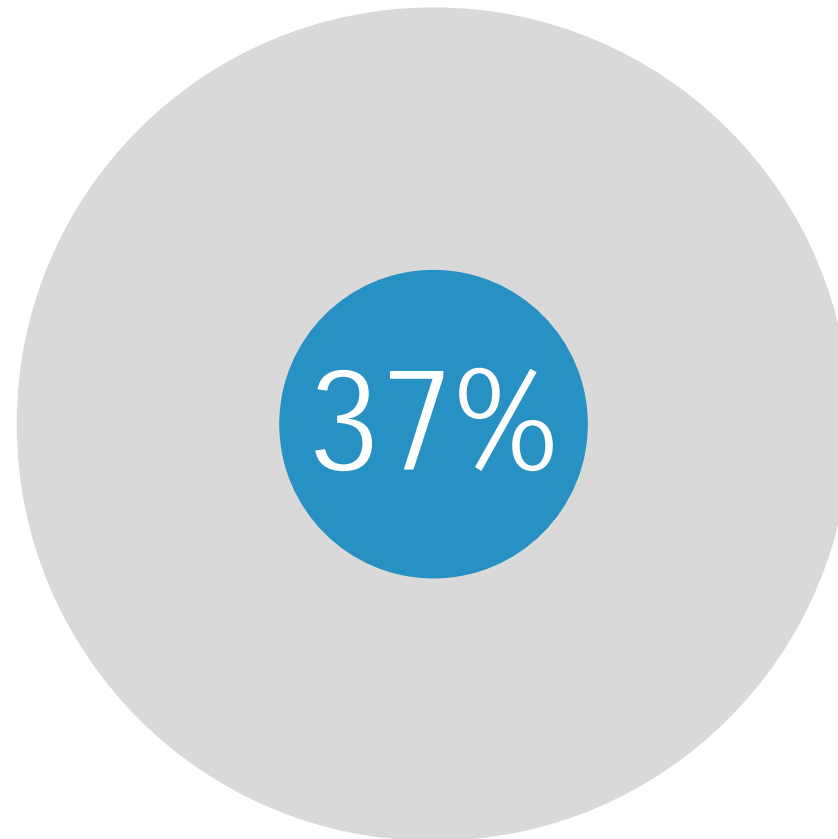
A supportive ally  
- 'On our side'

Need to be  
**Big picture &  
Strategic**

Longer term thinking  
Brand guardian role

Client's eyes and ears

Seeing beyond the task  
in hand



OF CLIENTS BELIEVE THAT THE ABILITY OF AN  
AGENCY TO WORK WELL WITH OTHER  
AGENCIES IS CRITICAL

# Challenges of agencies working together



Beware of  
**Clashing  
egos**

Reduces team  
ethic

Choosing the  
wrong battles

Making it personal

Tensions around  
**Competing  
not teamwork**

Grey areas caused by  
overlapping skills

Some jockeying for  
position

Fighting for a bigger  
slice of the pie

Defining roles  
Want to be  
lead agency

Can only be one  
lead agency

Agencies need to  
accept their  
positions in the  
team



# Client service versus account management



## Client Service

- Client centred
- Anticipates
- Good listener
- Keen to exceed expectations
- Looking to build business
- Keen to give options

## Account Management

- Agency centred
- Reacts
- Hears but doesn't listen
- Does what's necessary
- Looking to win new jobs
- Tries to sell one thing

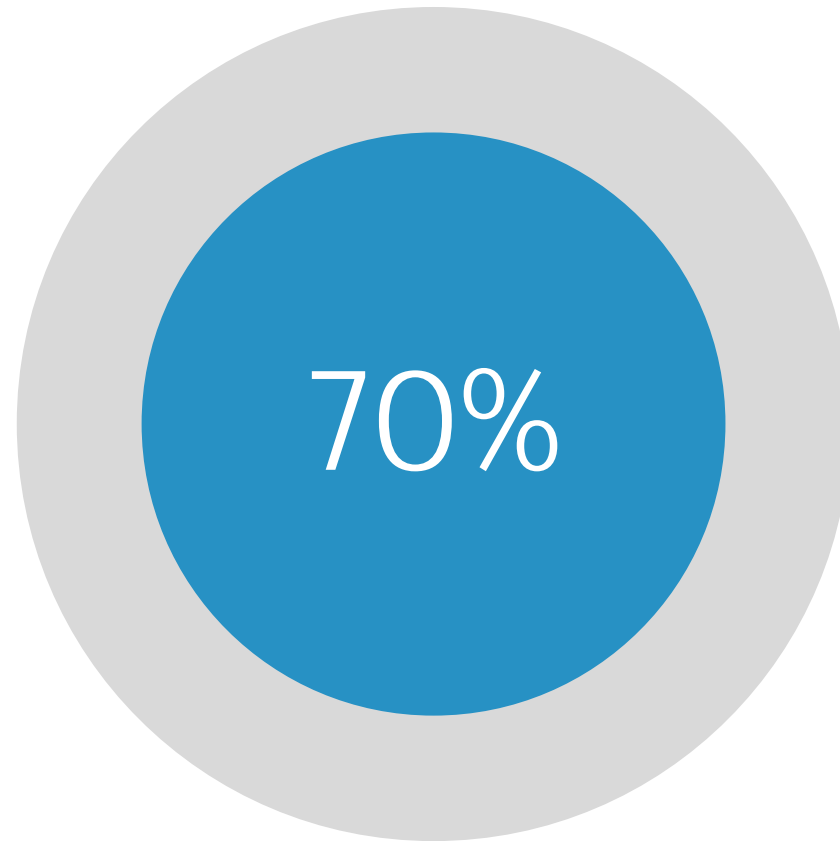
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Introduction

What clients care about

**Organised nurturing**





OF CLIENTS BELIEVE THAT GOOD CLIENT  
DEVELOPMENT STRENGTHENS THE CLIENT/  
AGENCY RELATIONSHIP

'The agencies that win have this amazing ability to build the relationship in such a way that they keep adding value and creating more value for themselves.'

1. Which clients have the biggest potential for growth?
2. How good is our relationship today?
3. What is the scope of our offer?
4. What is the client's agenda?
5. Which individual relationships do we need to develop?
6. What is the overall plan?
7. How do we leverage our resources?



Preening — showing off,  
merchandising success, talking about us

# Preening examples



- Case studies
- Newsletter
- Re-presenting credentials
- Presenting credentials to people you haven't met
- Act of kindness
- Link up on LinkedIn, comments, shares
- Awards, articles, new hirings



Crowing — sharing knowledge



# Crowing examples



- Events, webinars
- Trends pieces, insight driven pieces
- Interview a client on your website
- Article with promise of insight presentation
- Arrange to speak at client's set piece meeting
- Quarterly strategy meetings
- Monitor top competitors
- Experience/insight that can be re-packaged
- Training modules



Squawking –  
specific business generating  
ideas, proposal or next steps

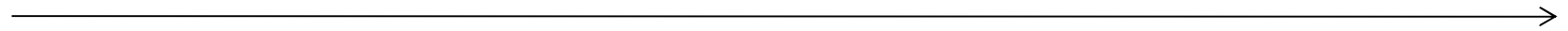


Supplier  
Good

Partner  
Excellent

Reactive

Proactive



# Proactivity



## Day to day

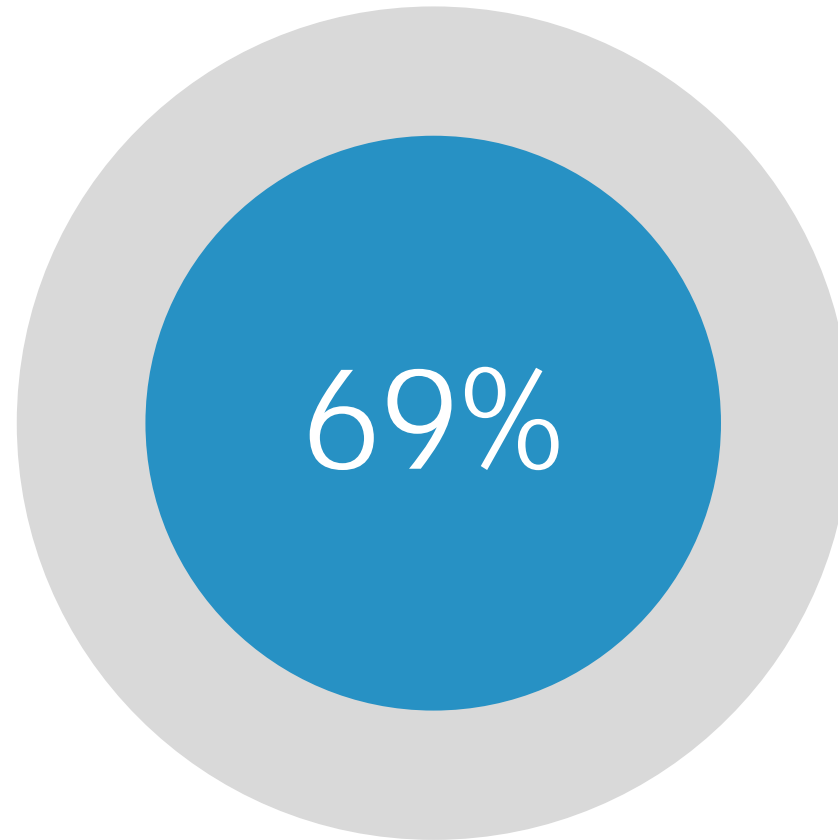
Continuous monitoring  
Spotting errors & issues  
Flagging things early  
Driving things

## Added value

Learning from other clients  
'We've seen this'  
Wider market intelligence  
Competitor analysis

## Future needs

Big picture view  
Identifying opportunities  
Stepping back from the day to day



OF SENIOR CLIENTS (MARKETING DIRECTOR  
LEVEL AND ABOVE) STATE THAT A BUDGET  
CAN ALWAYS BE FOUND FOR A **GREAT IDEA**



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