

# How to Talk to an Exec

*Presented by: Sally Williamson  
March 31, 2015*

# Balancing Perspectives



# Establishing Credibility with Leaders



**Executives**

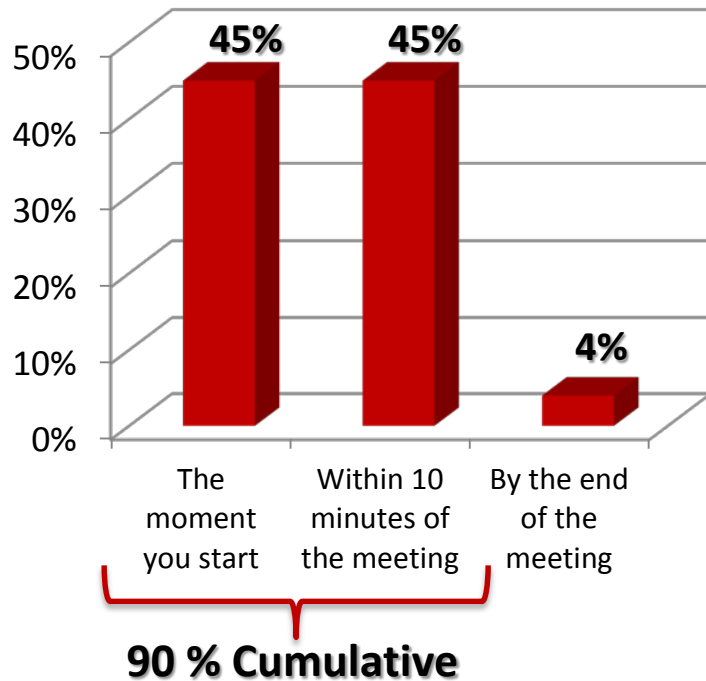


**Mid-level  
Managers**

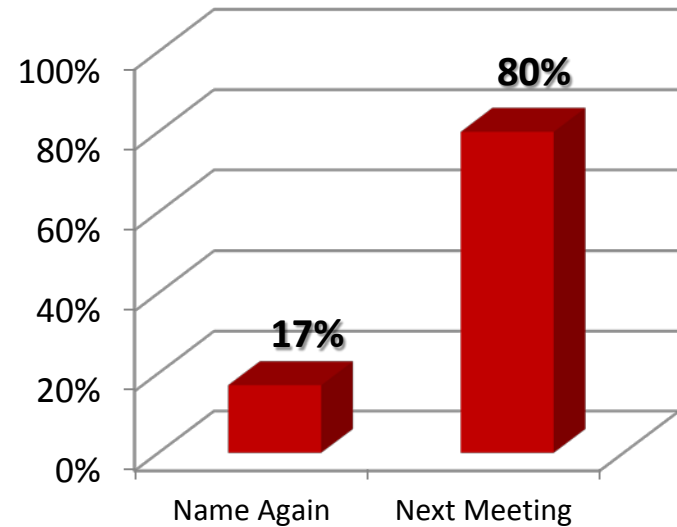


# Establishing Credibility with Leaders

### How Long It Takes to Form an Impression in a Meeting



### How Long Impressions Last



# Underachieving Meetings with Leaders



**Executives**

**29%**

of these meetings are  
perceived to be run poorly



**Mid-level  
Managers**

**39%**

of these meetings do not  
achieve intended results

Q25. What percentage of the executive-level meetings you have with mid-level managers go poorly (meaning you felt there was not a clear outcome)?  
Q5. What percentage of your executive-level meetings achieved the results you intended?

# What Makes Executive Level Communication Unsuccessful?



## *Executive*

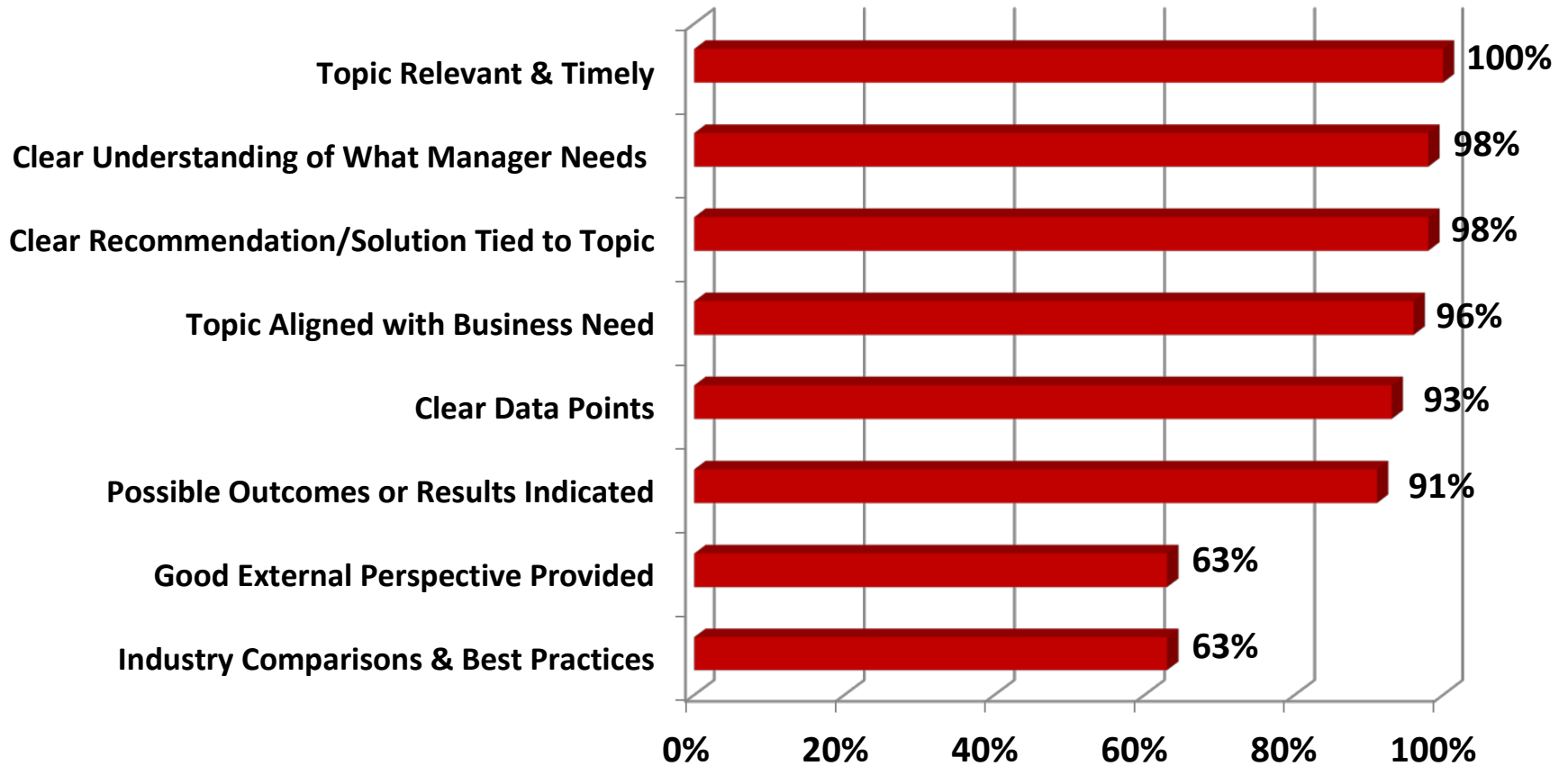
- I ask things they are unprepared to answer.
- They present too much detail. It's not high level enough.
- The presenter can't make his/her point effectively.
- There is no clear takeaway.



## *Senior Managers & Vice Presidents*

- I was rushed.
- The executive side-tracked the meeting.
- I didn't get through all my material as planned.
- The meeting was cut short.

# What Makes Executive Level Communication Successful?



# Listener Perspective vs. Communicator Perspective

## *What Drives Impact for Listener*

Threshold 30



Storyline or Journey



Details & Data Points

### My Reaction to You

- Pull me in
- Compelling message
- Engaging presence

### My Interest in Your Topic

- Frame the topic
- Set direction for the discussion
- Lead the journey

### My Memory of Sound Bites

- Make it relevant to me
- Show impact to me
- Validate

## *What Drives Preparation for Communicator*

Threshold 30



Storyline or Journey



Details & Data Points



# C-Suite Perspective

**# 2**

## ***Credibility / Confidence***

- Is this person: professional, confident, sharp, flexible, honest?
- Can this person: think on their feet, listen?

**# 1**

## ***Connection to a Business Need***

- Does this person understand our needs and our strategies?
- Do I understand how their service applies to me and how it compares to what I'm already doing?

# Executive Expectations

What's your point?

• **Message**

How are we going to get there?

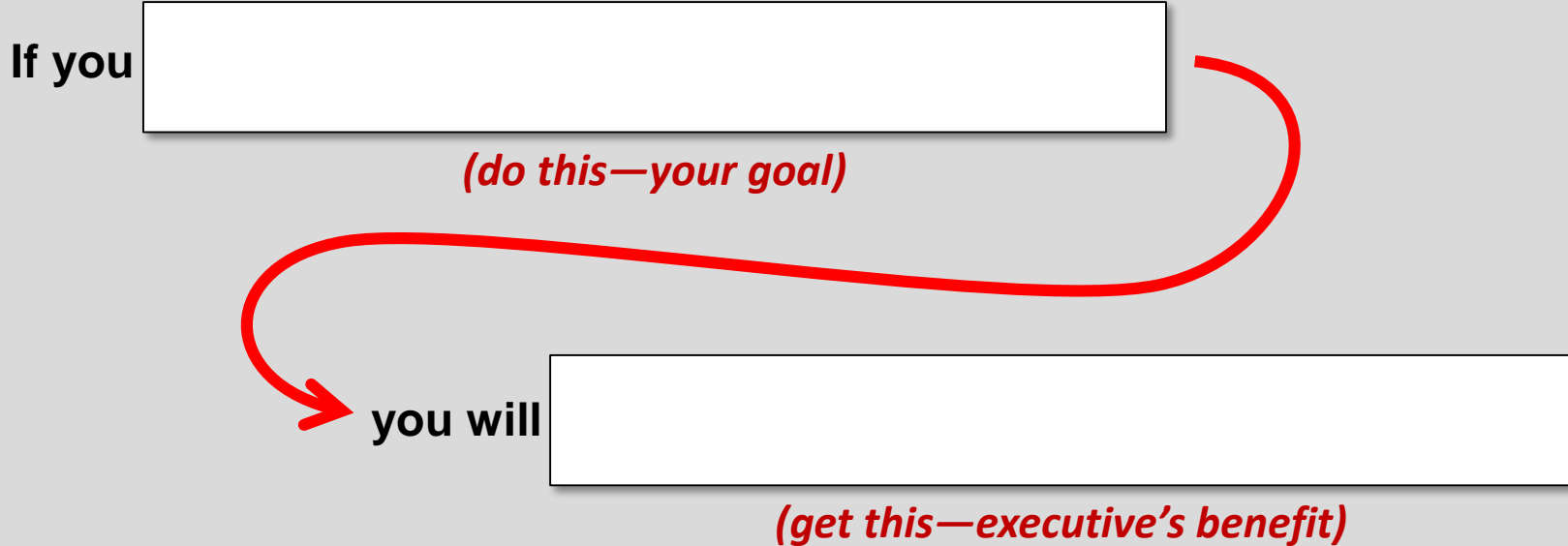
• **Framework**

Prove the benefit.

• **Impact**

# Create a Compelling Message

**Your Goal + Executive's Benefit = Message**



# Message Examples



*If we better understand your strategy for revenue growth, we can help you capture up to 20% growth across your existing initiatives.*



*By partnering to develop a mobile strategy, we can engage a younger membership and reduce costs of engagement by 30% in two years.*



*If we implement an IT initiative within your division, you could see a reduction in your sales cycle of up to 30 days and a potential savings in operating costs of 15% this year.*

# Scenario

←—————→

You are a senior marketing manager for a consumer products company that launched a mobile app last year. You've had a great response to the app (over 30,000 people have downloaded it!), but to date, those downloads haven't turned into a significant lift in sales. Your team has put time and effort into analyzing why the leads don't create sales, and you've learned that industry stats say it takes four visits to generate a sale. You've explored best practices to keep an app active, and gaming is the most innovative concept that companies are using to generate repeat interest. You'd like to get your EVP of sales and marketing interested in this, and you're meeting with him to ask for initial funding to develop a game concept that could be launched in six months.

**What's your message?**

# Message

***If we enhance the consumer's experience with a gaming concept, we should triple visits to our mobile app and see product sales in six months.***

# Common Points Covered

## SOLUTION:

- *A Gaming Solution to help us generate repeat usage of our app*
- *Funding of \$50,000 and a cross-functional team*
- *Launched in 6 months*

## NEXT STEPS / IMPACT:

- *Triple visits to our mobile app*
- *See increase in product sales in 6 months*
- *Next Step: Get the CTO's buy-in*

# Executive Perspective

- ➔ ***What is happening in the marketplace?***
- ➔ ***Was the app the right idea?***
- ➔ ***Are others struggling with results from apps?***
- ➔ ***Who has best practices?***
- ➔ ***What are our competitors doing?***
- ➔ ***How is gaming being used?***



# Framework for Organizing Ideas

## SITUATION:

- *Industry perspective on topic*
- *Current state of topic in company*
- *Opportunities or gaps.*
- *What are you solving for?*

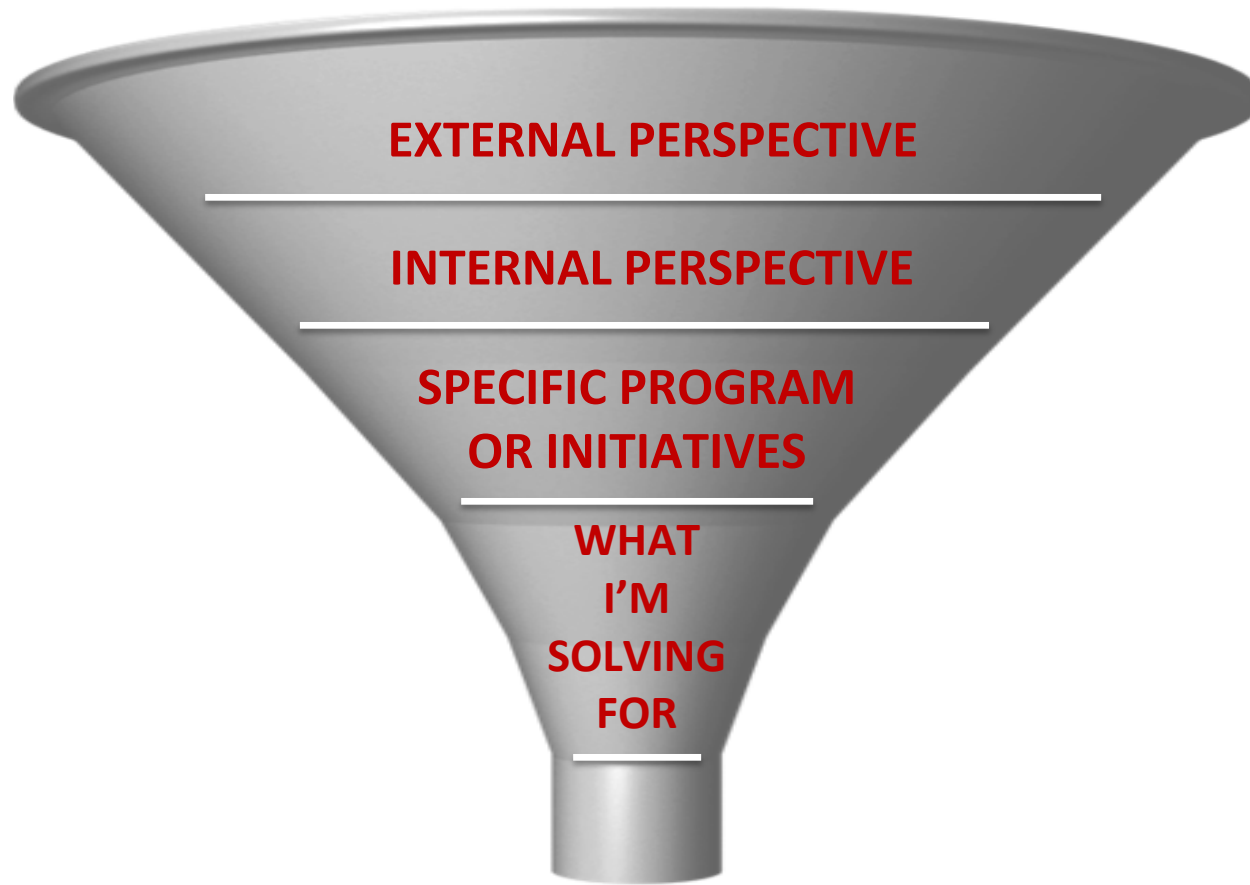
## SOLUTION:

- *Recommendation*
- *Who & what will be required to implement*
- *Proof points/ examples*

## NEXT STEPS / IMPACT:

- *Expected outcomes*
- *Measurements*
- *Starting point*
- *Requests of executive*

# Framing the Situation: Discovery in the Conversation



# Situation Elements

## EXTERNAL PERSPECTIVE:

- *By 2016, there will be 1 billion smartphones.*
- *By 2016, consumer spending in the mobile app market will amount to \$56 billion.*

## INTERNAL PERSPECTIVE:

- *Apps are creating a buzz, but not a lot of results.*
- *Best Practice – People come back multiple times.*

## SPECIFIC PROGRAM OR INITIATIVES:

- *Gaming impacts a company's ability to brand a product or introduce other pop-ups.*
- *A competitor just launched their version of an Angry Birds game, and our research indicates they've seen an increase in sales conversion rates.*

## WHAT I'M SOLVING FOR:

- *Gaming will make the app fun, interactive, and compelling for return visits.*

# Flow of the Conversation

**MESSAGE:** *If we enhance the consumer's experience with a gaming concept, we should triple visits to our mobile app and see product sales in six months.*

## SITUATION:

- *By 2016: 1 billion smartphones; consumer spending in mobile app market at \$56 billion.*
- *Apps are creating a buzz, but not a lot of results.*
- *Gaming impacts a company's ability to brand a product or introduce other pop-ups.*
- *A competitor just launched their version of an Angry Birds game, and our research indicates they've seen an increase in sales conversion rates.*
- *Gaming will make the app fun, interactive, and compelling for return visits.*

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