



Welcome!



Free Webinar

Fire your clients: you can't grow
unless you specialize as a
consultant...

Introduction - 1

- Why this subject? 2 most asked questions: specialization & sales
- Every consultant I am talking to has some kind of ambition/dream to be recognized as an expert
- The truth is, only a fraction of consultants I've been talking to the past 12 months make a sustainable, carefree living from their work
- It sometimes turns me sad because there's so much opportunity out there!
- Fire your BAD or NON-IDEAL clients to improve your 'Altitude of Involvement'

Introduction - 2

**Luk Smeyers**
Teaching Consultants To Win More Work By
Transforming Them Into Visible Authorities...
1d • Edited • 

What will impact your consulting business the most?

👉 Your focus on building the deep and unique expertise that clients are looking for and are prepared to pay a premium for!

Consulting clients are searching for brilliant subject matter experts and trusted advisors to help solve their problems. Clients have more options today than ever before - there are more consultants and experts and advisors than ever and buyers can find anything in seconds.

- ✅ Evolve from 'doing activities for your clients' to 'doing a pain-resolving transformation for your client'.
- ✅ Picture them 'The Promised Land'. Explain to them your distinctive 'vehicle' to drive them from point A (problem status) to point B (problem-solved status).
- ✅ Show them how you can secure a transformation home run, with process details. Show them how you can ensure stakeholder buy-in. Shift their thinking. Inspire behavioral change.

⚠️ I will explain this in detail in my FREE WEBINAR this week WEDNESDAY at 2 pm CET. Claim your seat here:

The Grist 2020 Thought Leadership Study found that:

- 29% of executives are now zeroed in on the next 3 months
- 49% have their sights on the 3-12 month period.

This has inevitable led to:

- Sticking to existing consultants
- Shorter selection time for new consultants: focus on expertise profiles

Here's what you will learn

- Saying NO, the vicious-loop-to-hell TAX you will pay if you don't specialize
- Specialize or die, reasons why you should specialize
- Change your mind: narrow focus requires courage
- Transform your business model: moving from generic to specific using lean principles

Logistics

- Have a cup of coffee ☺
- You will receive a PDF & recording
- Duration 45'
- Q&A 30'
- Questions in the Zoom CHAT – It's a Zoom Webinar



Luk Smeyers

I teach consultants the strategies to grow revenue by transforming them into visible authorities.



Luk Smeyers

- Left my well-paid & safe CHRO role in 2007
- To start a productized consultancy from scratch
- In 2007, in the middle of the financial crisis
- Against advice of my inner-circle “Luk is ignorant & naïve”
- My overly-skeptic inner-circle gave me superpowers
- Never been afraid of failure: I had a conscious plan & executed disciplined
- My superpower: focus!
- I never had to sell, persuade, negotiate
- iNostix got acquired by Deloitte in 2016

<https://www.thevisibleauthority.com/blog/i-never-had-to-sell-persuade-or-negotiate-to-grow-my-consulting-business>

Specialization

- Not: educational aspect
- **Focus** of a consulting business
- But: vertical expertise in combi with t-shape
- Challenge: open declaration of focus

What if we have a problem?

- We google: repair broken IKEA dishwasher
- How do we google? 2 possibilities:
 - The name of the dishwasher: Miele EX5693B
 - The problem: how to repair a broken dishwasher?
- Finally: you check the reviews
- IKEA or Miele strive for:
 - Getting found: **visibility**
 - Getting good reviews: **building trust**

What your prospects do

- 2 Possibilities:
 - Google your name (in case of reference)
 - Google their problem
- They hope to find (**visibility**) an abundance of **TRUST** stuff:
 - This person can solve my problem (expertise)
 - Strong social proof (reviews, references)

The 90/80 challenge*

90%

OF PROFESSIONAL
SERVICE BUYERS
CHECK OUT
A CONSULTANT'S
EXPERTISE ONLINE
BEFORE MAKING A
DECISION

80%

OF POTENTIAL CONSULTANTS
PUT THEMSELVES
OUT OF THE PICTURE
STRAIGHT AWAY
BECAUSE OF THE
LACK OF VISIBLE
EXPERTISE

* Data from Hinge Research Institute

But...it's not all about Google

- But it is extremely helpful to understand how prospects think & react when they have a problem
- Quote Blair Enns: *“As a consulting profession we appreciate that Google has driven specialization like nothing else before”*
- Google has helped us to stay relevant: the **E.A.T.** principle
- Like it or not: your competitor is only one click away !!!

Marketing in consulting

- Is about building **visibility** & **trust**
- Marketing is not separate from you
- As a consultant, you ARE the marketer of your expertise
- The cross-pollination between work & marketing

Consultants sell, experts share

- **Cross-pollination**: What knowledge did you acquire you can start sharing?
- That's why you should think about your **learnings**. And write them down. All the time.
- **Content-driven visibility** is the only thing that is going to make you **stand-out**
- Market is extremely crowded & competitive
- The more you open up, the more your prospects **can relate to you**

<https://www.thevisibleauthority.com/blog/why-you-should-share-your-expertise-to-grow-your-consulting-business>

2 Biggest mistakes

- We keep **options open**, afraid of saying NO
 - Consultant on the verge of HR, Finance & Marketing
 - Specialist in employer branding, talent management, learning & development, performance management, engagement & digitalization
 - Strategy. Marketing. Enterprise innovation. Entrepreneurship.
 - Strategist, advisor, sense-maker
 - Integrators, Innovators, Intra-preneurs
 - We help to trust, to connect and to discover
 - Project management, strategy, consult, digitalization, CSR
- We develop our offering in a **backward way**
 - We create an offering
 - We show 'activities'
 - Start selling & pushing
 - Wonder why nobody's interested (and no traffic)

It's counter-intuitive to narrow

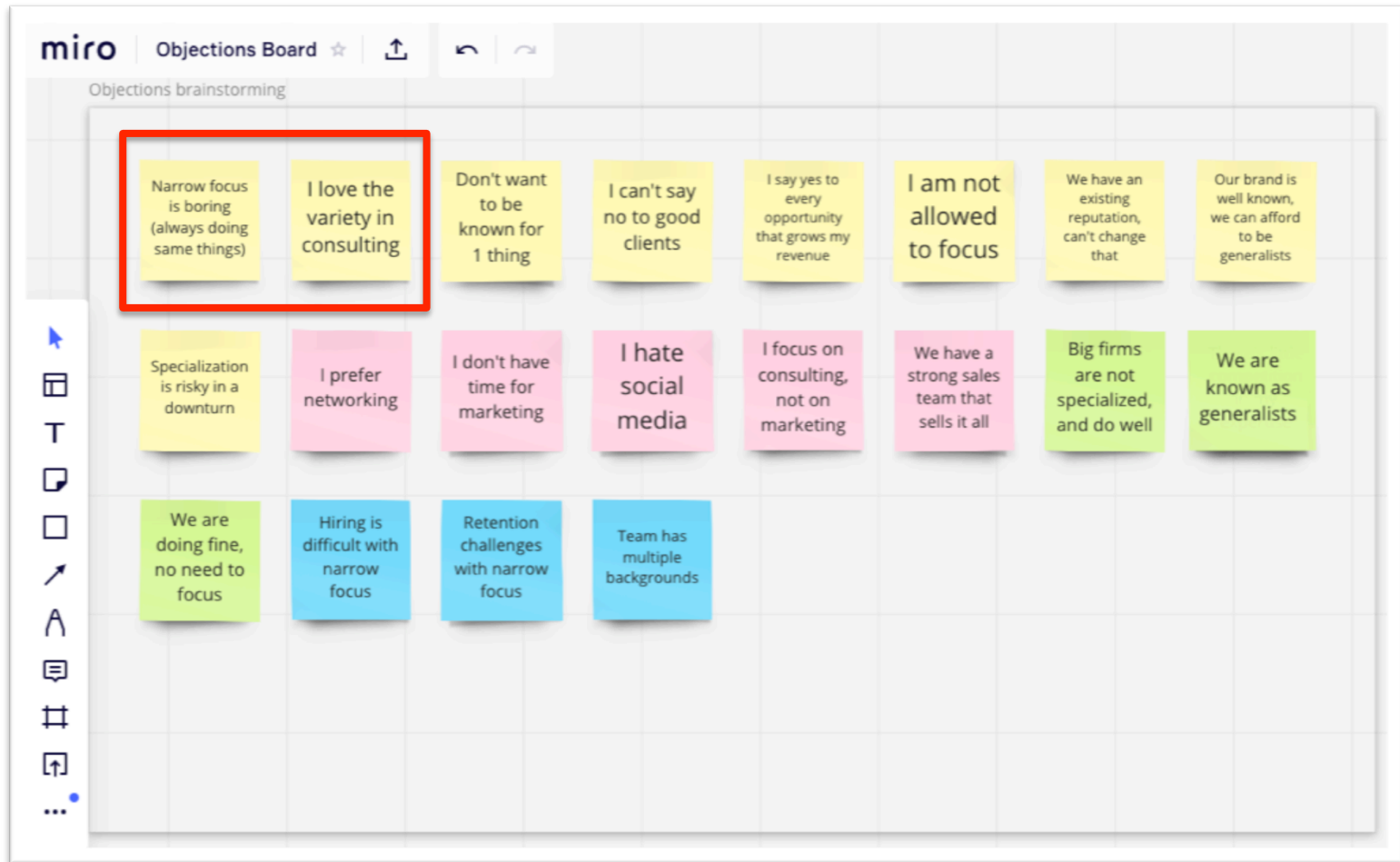
- We are afraid to lose business when we narrow
 - because it's risky & scary
 - traditional wisdom is inherently risk-avoidant
 - the biggest 2 bottlenecks to narrow: financial buffer & risk attitude
- Consultants have big(ger) ego's: we believe we can crush everything
- We show expertise in multiple areas because we believe it's smart business practice
- However it gets us stuck in the race to the bottom:
 - endless competition of 'same-as-you' people
 - no negotiation power
 - buyer expectations 'to be obedient'
 - working on a low day rate
 - trivial and risk-free to replace.

<https://www.thevisibleauthority.com/blog/want-to-be-a-successful-consultant>

Quotes to learn from

“Your narrow positioning is an exercise in irrelevance. The more irrelevant you become to non-ideal prospects by turning your positioning away from them, the more relevant you become to your chosen target clients. But that requires courage and discipline”. (David C. Baker, The Business of Expertise)

My objections Miro board



<https://www.thevisibleauthority.com/blog/get-through-the-repetition-boredom-to-grow-your-consulting-business>

Quotes to learn from

“An expert is somebody who benefits from repeated observation and repeated application. So to build deep expertise, you need to study the same sorts of problems over and over again. So you start to see patterns”. (Blair Enns, Win Without Pitching)

Vicious-Loop-To-Hell Tax

- We say YES (to everything) to earn a living
- We don't have time to grow the pipeline
- We work harder and harder: saying YES more
- We erode our reputation, we get non-ideal clients/projects, we can't sleep of scope creep, we don't get WOM (because we confuse), we don't get the right references or reco's
- The Tax: we burn ourselves out in the long run

Prospects/clients have pains

- They are looking to solve these pains
- They are looking for trust (he/she can solve it)
- They are not looking for a broadly focused, one-size-fits-all consultant

Your unique opportunity

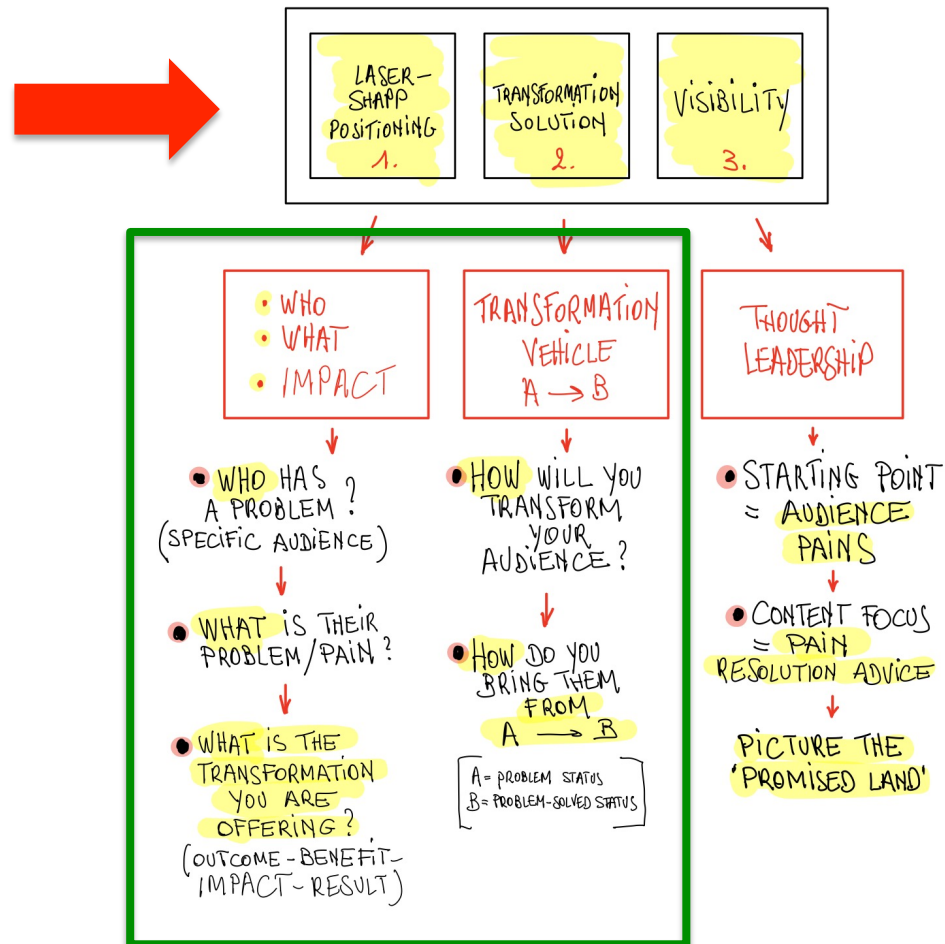
- Vertical expertise: your deep pain-resolution capacity
- T-shaped contextual understanding
- For a specific, narrow audience

Value Proposition Design

- The book
- Pains, gains, jobs
- Testing & validating
- Iterative process
- Strategyzer.com

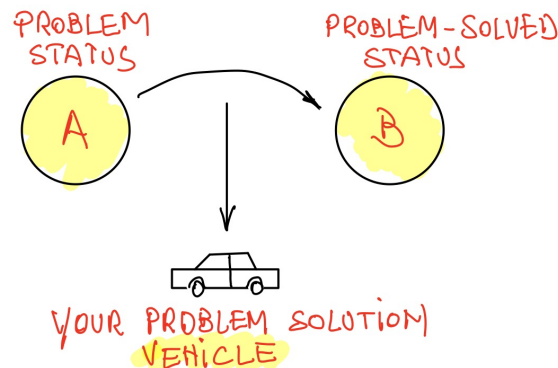


Specialization: 3 success pillars



The starting point

- Always:
 - What problem are you solving?
 - For which target audience?
 - What is the intended outcome? (result, gain)
 - How do you bring them from A to B?



Your positioning statement in 30”

- **We help CHRO's move to data-driven HR processes by building people analytics capabilities in the HR team**
- **I teach consultants the strategies to grow their revenue by transforming them into visible authorities**
- We help tech startups build the ideal scaling sequence with our IT capability modeling roadmap
- I help tech start-ups in France deliver web applications on the AWS tech stack

I help subscription businesses retain more members by optimizing their digital membership platform

I help large media companies to protect for digital disruption with Salesforce as transformational platform

I help sales leaders to grow a viable client pipeline by transforming to a co-creative selling team

I train sales teams in SME's to improve their sales processes with Hubspot as support platform

I help drinks companies grow their market share by improving the visual attractiveness of their bottles

I help B2B companies generate leads by using new LinkedIn prospection techniques

I turn consultants into thought leaders through content marketing

I help small business owners create 2 to 5 high quality leads per day through LinkedIn without paying for ads

We are helping 40+ women conquer their weight loss struggles with our personalized 90 days fitness plan

We help B2B software companies grow their business with innovative inbound marketing strategies

I help medium sized businesses increase sales by leveraging the power of paid ads in Google

I help technology startups/scaleups acquire new customers by advertising their services using social media

We help Shopify stores increase their revenue with Facebook ads

I help busy entrepreneurs streamline their life so they can focus on what matters with my coaching programs

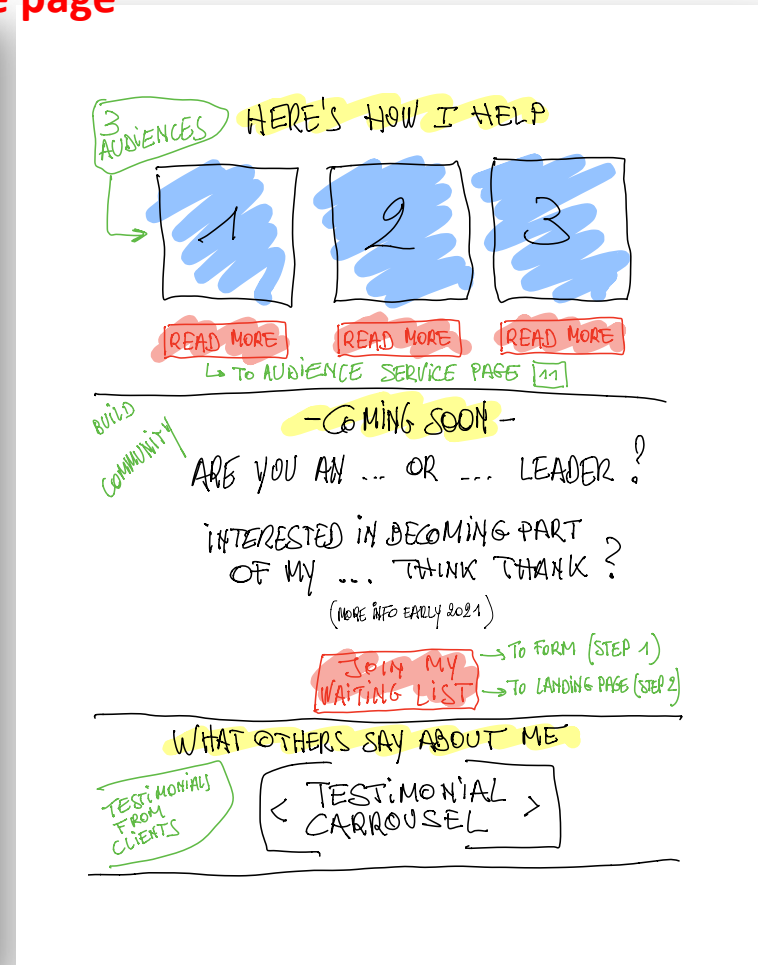
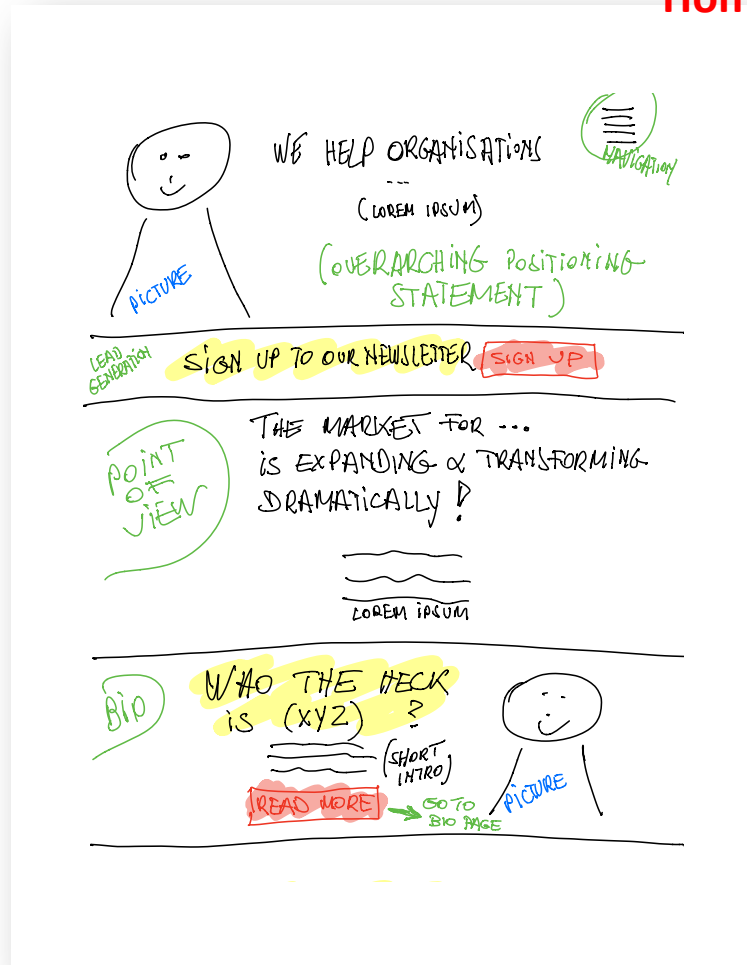
We help digital nomads save time by organizing their logistics (housing, co-working space, SIM cards, VISAS, etc.)

We advice food manufacturing companies reduce waste by redesigning their production processes

We help large organizations with strategy adoption by strengthening trust in the leadership team

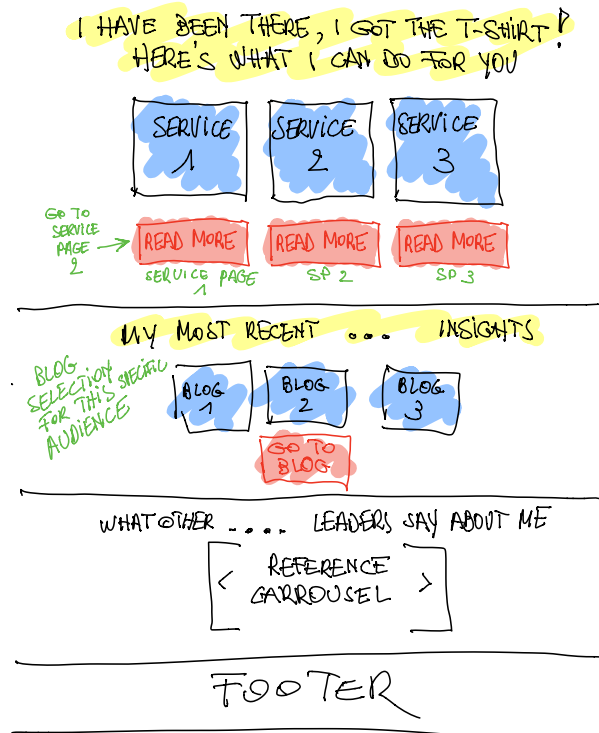
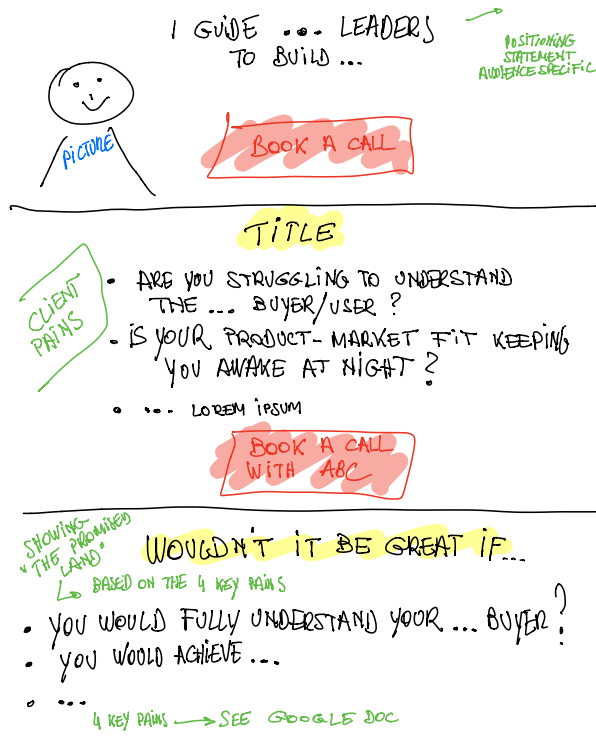
Case study: Otter Advisory – Intro 1

Home page



Case study: Otter Advisory – Intro 2

Service page



Case study: Otter Advisory

Positioning Statement

OTTER ADVISORY THOMAS OTTER ADVISORY OTTER COLLECTIVE HR THINK TANK RESOURCES CONTACT

I empower HRTECH leaders and investors in building & scaling great product businesses

Dr. Thomas Otter, HR Tech Expert

Stay on the cutting edge of HRTECH by subscribing to the newsletter.

Email* SUBMIT

We use your email address exclusively for sending newsletters. You can revoke your consent to this at any time with effect for the future. For more information, please refer to our privacy statement.

The **HRTECH** market is undergoing a radical expansion and transformation

Opportunities to build great products and businesses are more plentiful than ever. New technologies are generating new possibilities. Change is happening as we watch - the landscape of competitors, investments and regulations is in continuous flux.

Navigating this dynamic environment isn't simple. When it comes to grasping new software development techniques, understanding the real-life pains and challenges of HR and company executives and applying effective product management practices, **expert guidance from someone who has already achieved success is invaluable.**


Bold Point of View

<https://www.thevisibleauthority.com/blog/9-things-my-highly-successful-consulting-clients-started-doing>

Case study: Otter Advisory

Client pains

Building the bridge

 OTTER ADVISORY

THOMAS OTTER ADVISORY ▾ OTTER COLLECTIVE HR THINK TANK RESOURCES [CONTACT](#)

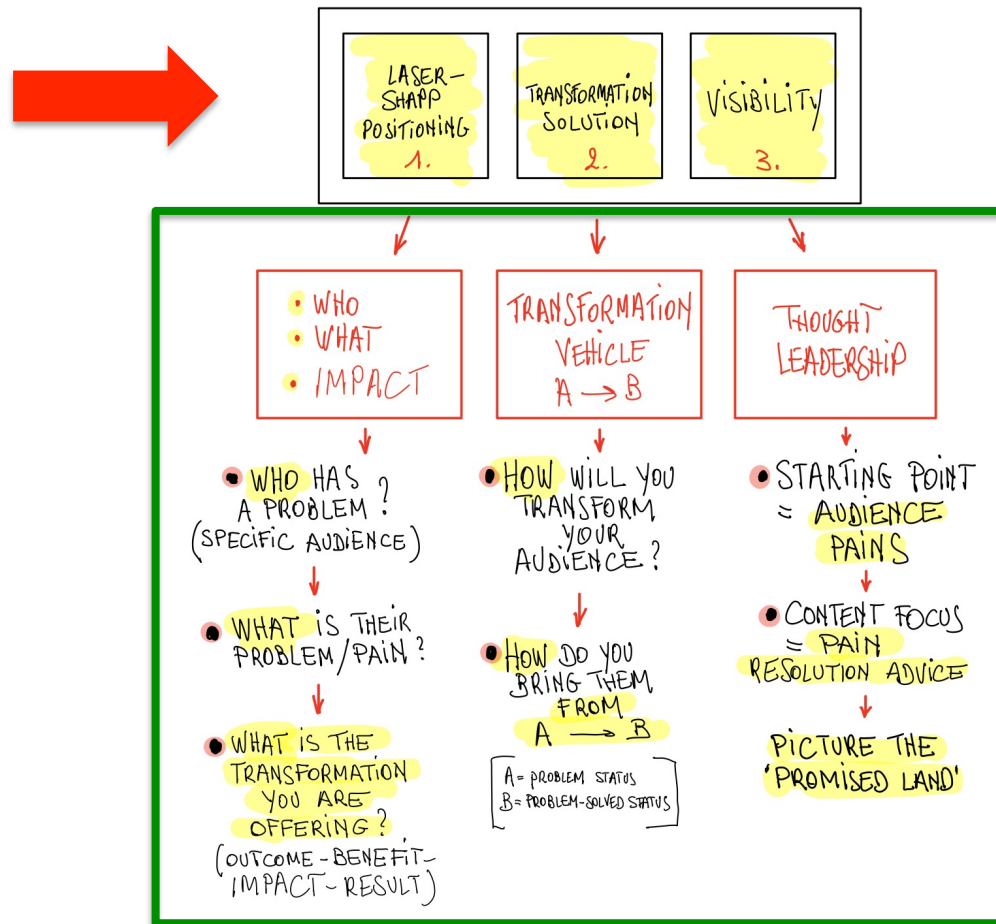
Challenges HRTECH founders are facing

- Understanding **how large enterprises buy** software from start-ups like yours
- Setting up a product function and **roadmap** that can scale effectively
- Developing an **exit plan** that is ready and waiting when large vendors come knocking
- Accepting your **first investment** from a venture capitalist
- Gaining a clear understanding of HR leaders' **needs and challenges**
- Setting up a **satellite office** in the United States (or another region)
- Creating a **pitch** that really resonates with potential customers
- Determining how much you should spend on **sales & marketing** and where to focus your efforts
- Developing an **adjacent product** that is more successful than your first big hit
- Improving your sales cycle times and **win rate**

Do some of these sound familiar?

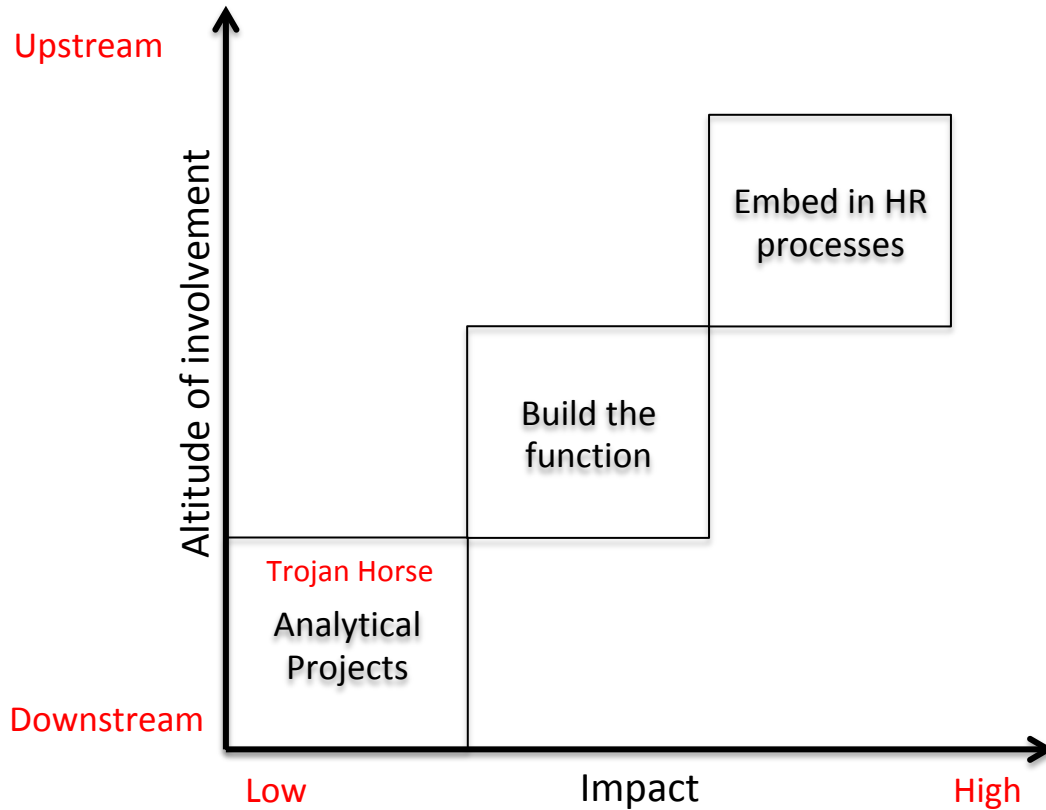
Deeply understanding the customers purchasing your HR product, achieving the ultimate product-market fit, scaling up smoothly, pitching effectively and managing investors: how well you perform in these five areas **will make or break your business.**




Specialization: 3 success pillars



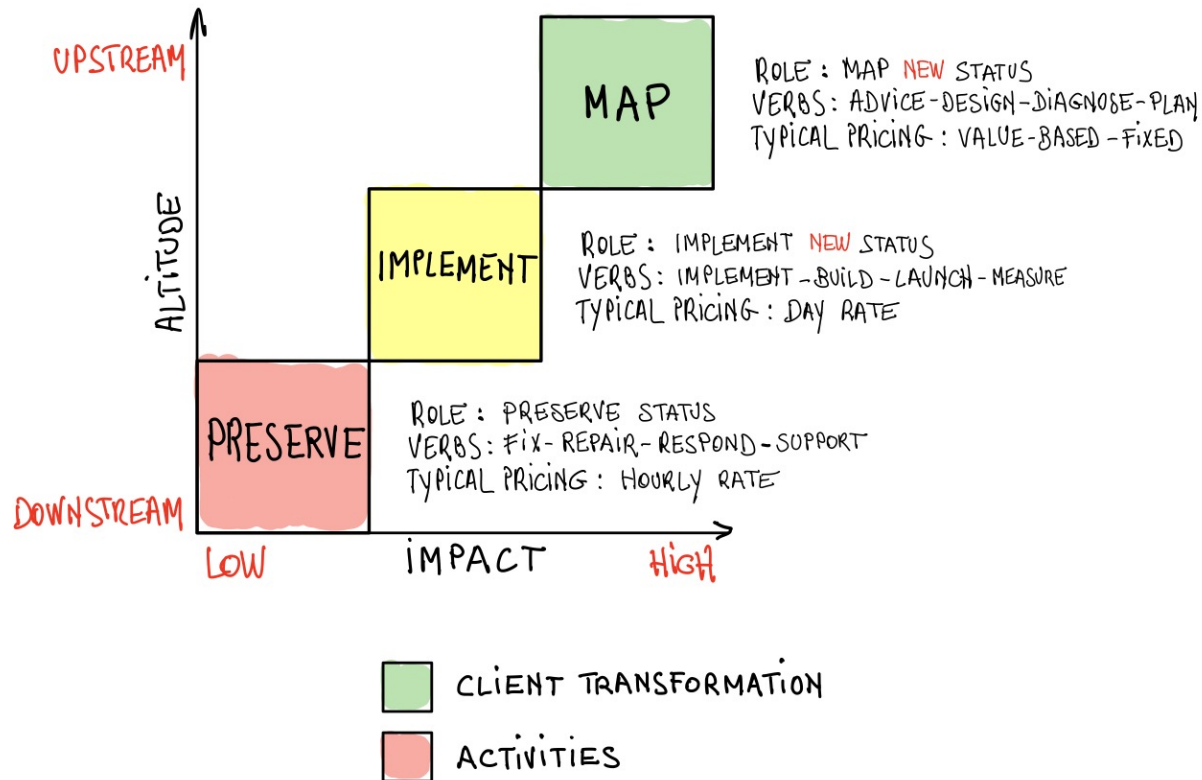
Altitude of involvement – 1

iNostix/Deloitte approach

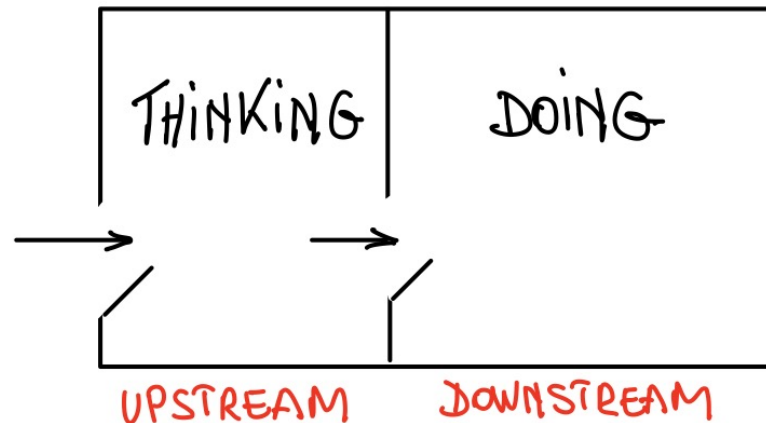


- Value 
- Speed 
- Cost 

Altitude of involvement - 2

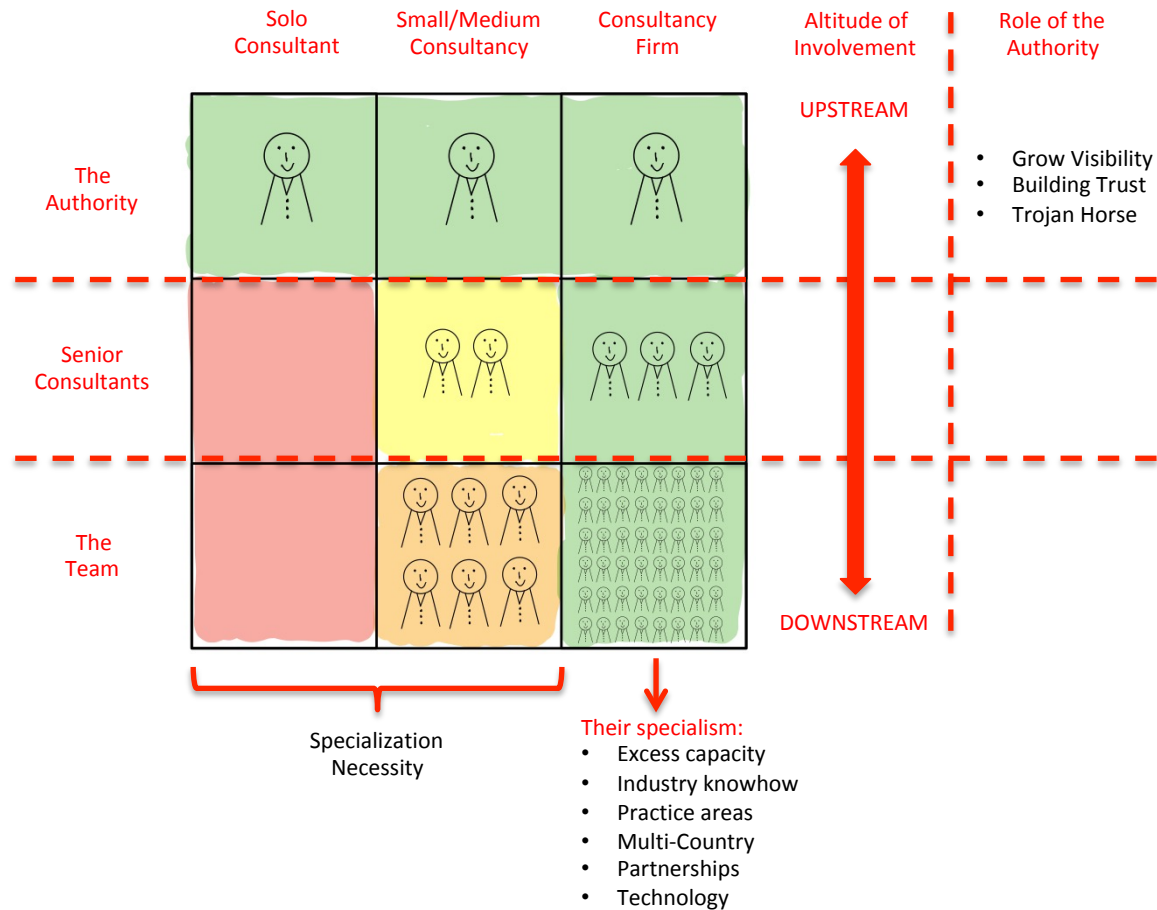


Altitude of involvement – 3



Model from the book 'Business of Expertise', David C. Baker

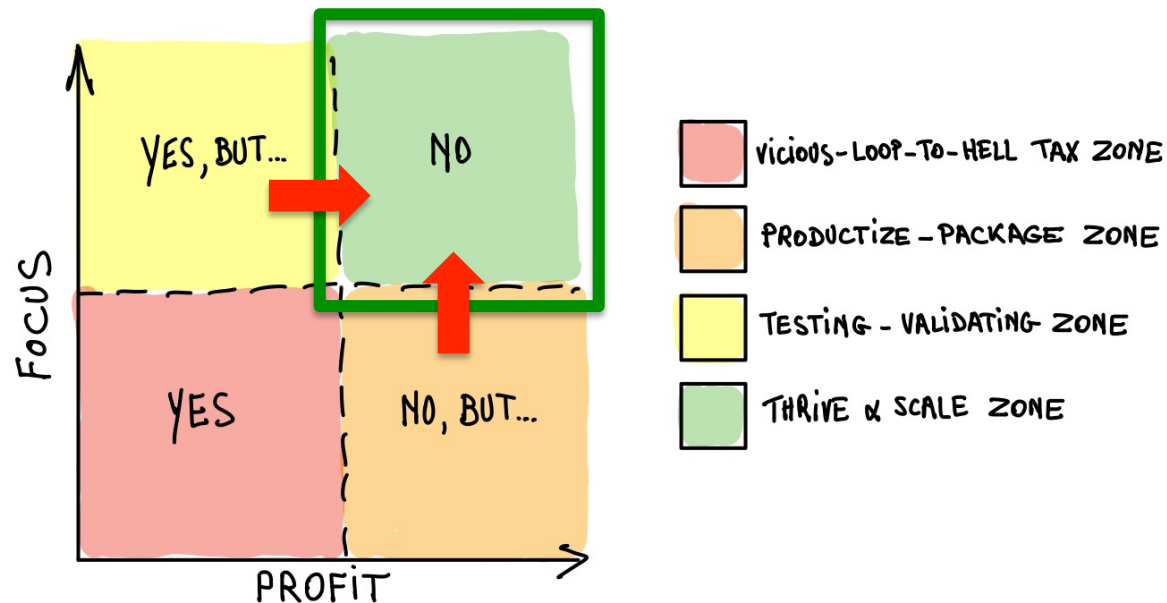
Altitude of Involvement - 4



Your lean transformation

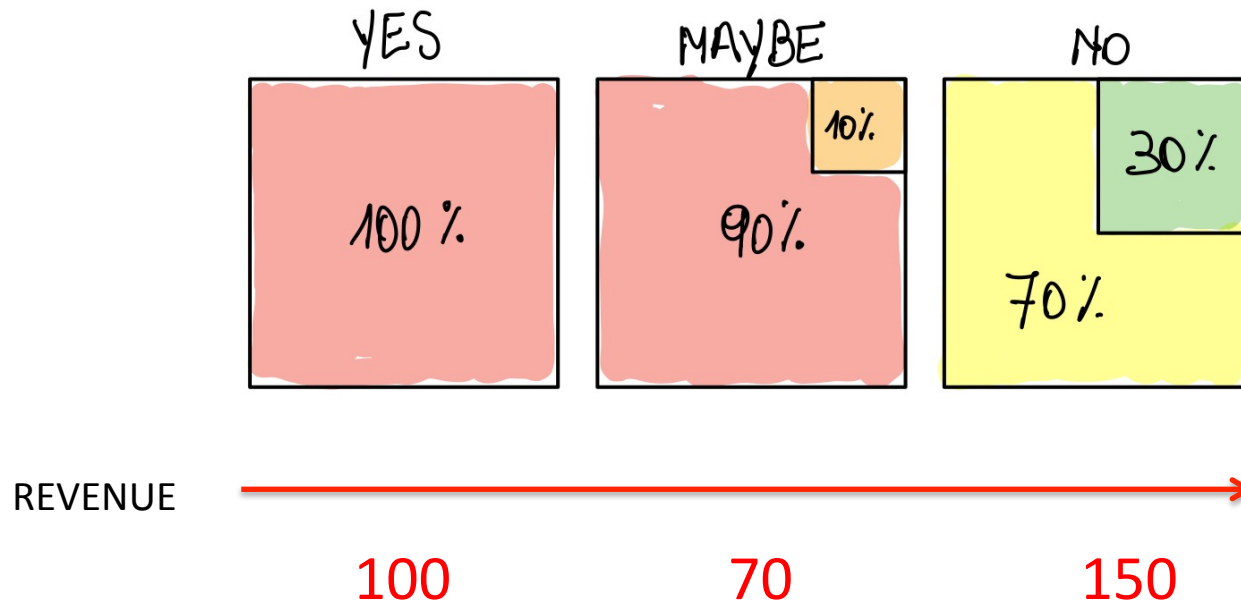
- From radical to agile specialization progress
- Transformational offer: upstream & packaged
- Test/pilot – Validate – Iterate: 10x
- Warning: moving from downstream to upstream with same client = difficult

Agile progress: the Focus-Profit grid



The most important word in consulting: NO

Agile progress: moving to 70/30



- Yes -- 100/0/100
- Maybe -- 90/10/70
- No -- 70/30/150

Here's what I covered

- Saying NO, the vicious-loop-to-hell TAX you will pay if you don't specialize
- Specialize or die, reasons why you should specialize
- Change your mind: narrow focus requires courage
- Transform your business model: moving from generic to specific using lean principles
- **What could you start doing tomorrow?**

What can you do tomorrow?

- Questions to ask yourself:
 - Are we keeping our options open?
 - Do we have a backwards offering?
 - Where can you start saying NO? Reduce? Focus?
 - Do we have 1 door to enter? A Trojan Horse upstream package?
 - Are we (am I) (getting) into downstream work? (solo & S/M)
 - Are you struggling with the 2 bottlenecks: risk attitude & financials
 - Do you ask, pilot/test, validate, iterate 10x?
- How clean is your positioning?
 - Audience clarity? Pain clarity?
 - Can you explain the transformation, the impact, the result, the promised land?
 - A → B clarity (process to solve problem)?
- Can we start (step-by-step) to move upstream?
 - 100/0/100
 - 90/10/70
 - 70/30/150

Training Program 2021

- Next Webinar: APRIL 14, 2 pm CET
(If you are afraid of selling in consulting, you are doing it the wrong way)
- Private training: on my website (Accelerator Program)
- Group training: soon to come (late April)
- Mastermind Retreats – Fall 2021: on my website (join the waiting list)
- Newsletter has all the info's (bi-weekly):
www.thevisibleauthority.com/theauthority19

Thanks a lot!

Let's get to the Q&A

Kind regards,
Luk Smeyers

luk.smeyers@thevisibleauthority.com
You can book a call via my website