This isn't just a research presentation. It's a rethinking of how research shows up

It's not about doing more research. But making research matter more

It's not about louder insights. It's about stickier ones

This isn't about better methodology. It's about unlocking the work you've already done

THE RESEARCHER'S JOURNEY

Proposed

Analyzed   Charts are built

Approved   Appendix has grown

Questioned   Personas are named

Designed   Deck is finalized

Reworked   Takeaways are written

Conducted

Share Screen

TAKEAWAYS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

KEY FINDINGS

White	108	78%
Hispanic	111	20%
Black/AA	69	10%
Asian	115	8%
Mixed Race	101	2%
American Indian or Alaska Native	67	1%
Native Hawaiian	152	0.7%

Methods	Methodology
• Surveys	• Overall approach
• Interviews	• Justification
• Experiments	• Research design
• Observations	• Rationale

SOCIAL MEDIA VISIT FREQUENCY
How Often Do You Visit or Use These Services?

More Than Once a Day · Daily · Weekly · Monthly

Linguistic

- Society 21.3%
- Games 1.2%
- Science 20.7%
- Computers 6.2%
- Recreation 9.5%
- Shopping 3.9%
- Sports 4.6%
- Business 14.8%
- Health 8.8%
- Home 8.9%
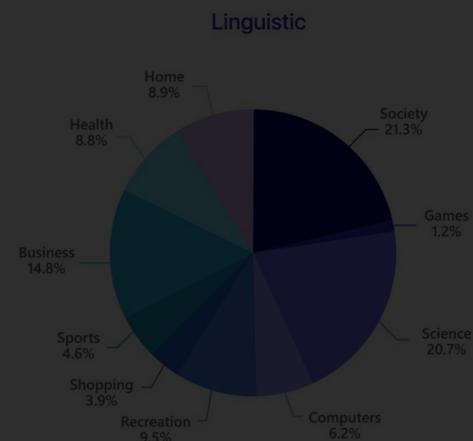
Savvy Spender Shannon
Shannon is a bright and ambitious freshman juggling a heavy course load with a part-time job at the campus bookstore. She's financially independent from her parents but relies on them for occasional support. She's tech-savvy and manages her money through budgeting apps.

NAME

Omaha, NE

AGE

Biology Major

TITLE
Student at University

GOALS
- Earn good grades and get into medical school.
- Manage her finances effectively and avoid debt.
- Balancing schoolwork with a part-time job.
- Sticking to a budget with limited income.
- A user-friendly mobile banking app with budgeting tools.
- Educational resources on managing finances and building credit.
- No-fee checking accounts with student discounts.
- Debit cards with purchase rewards or cashback programs.

QUOTES
- "I need a bank that makes managing my money easy, even with my crazy schedule."
- "I'm worried about student loans, but I don't want to get stuck with unnecessary credit card debt."
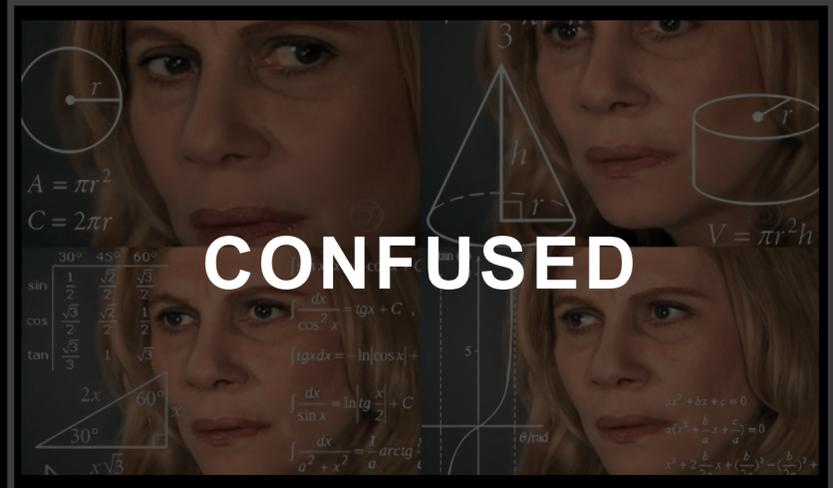- "I want to be smart about my finances now so I don't have problems later in life."
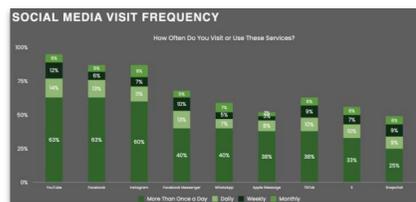
TAKEAWAYS

KEY FINDINGS

NEXT STEPS
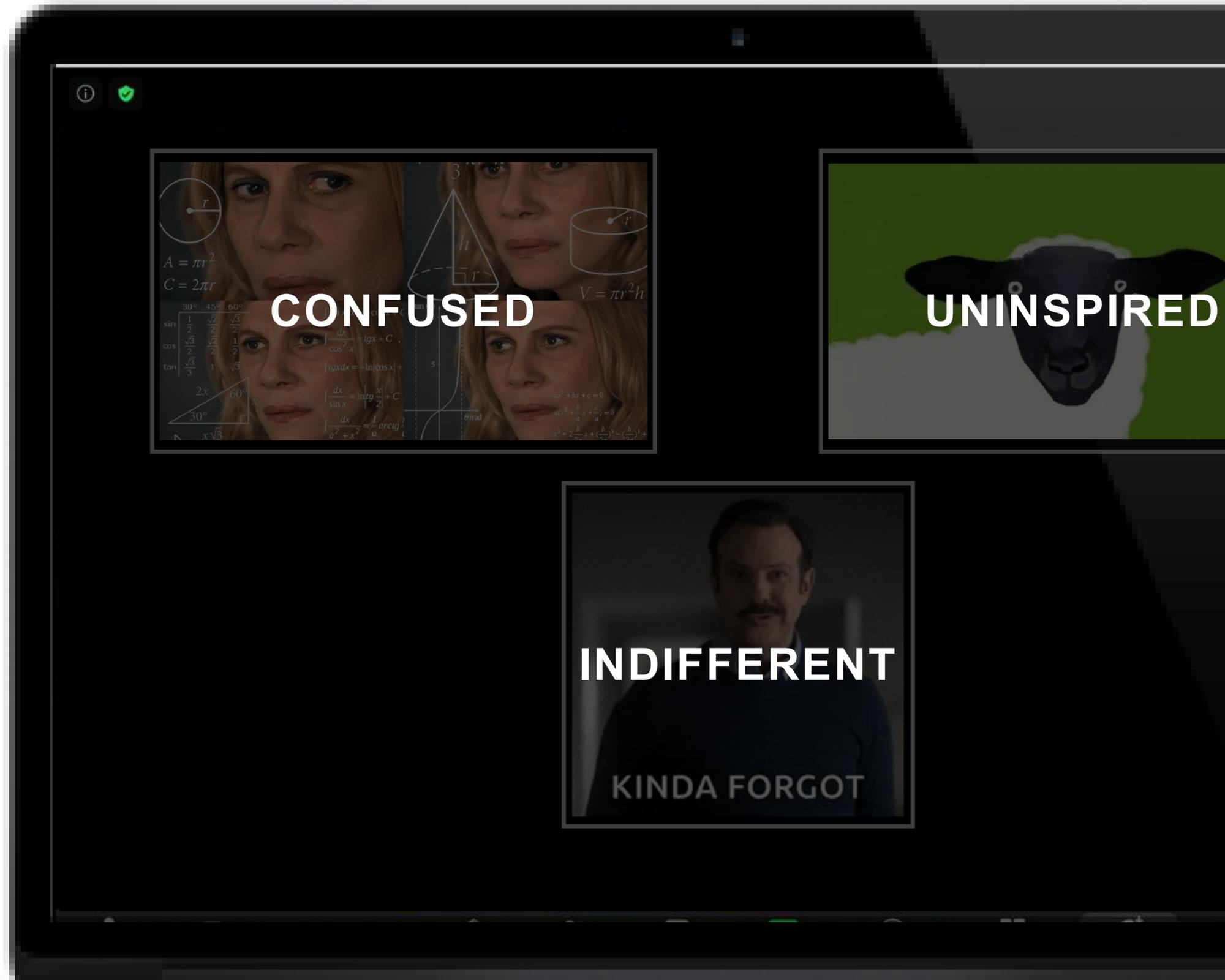
THE RESEARCH WAS GOOD.
BUT SOMEWHERE ALONG THE ROAD, I LOST THEM

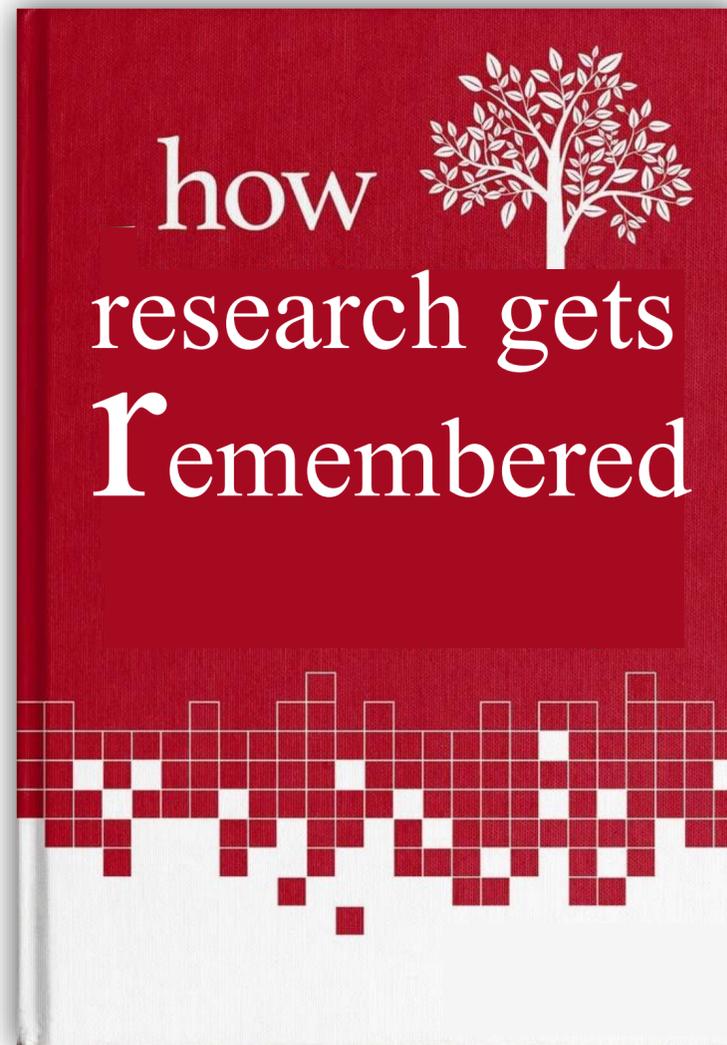# WHAT IF WE APPLY THE SAME METHODS OF EFFECTIVE ADVERTISING TO THE WAYS WE SHARE OUR WORK?

Mental Availability

The probability that a buyer will **notice**, **recognize**, and **remember** your brand, driven by strong, accessible memory structures
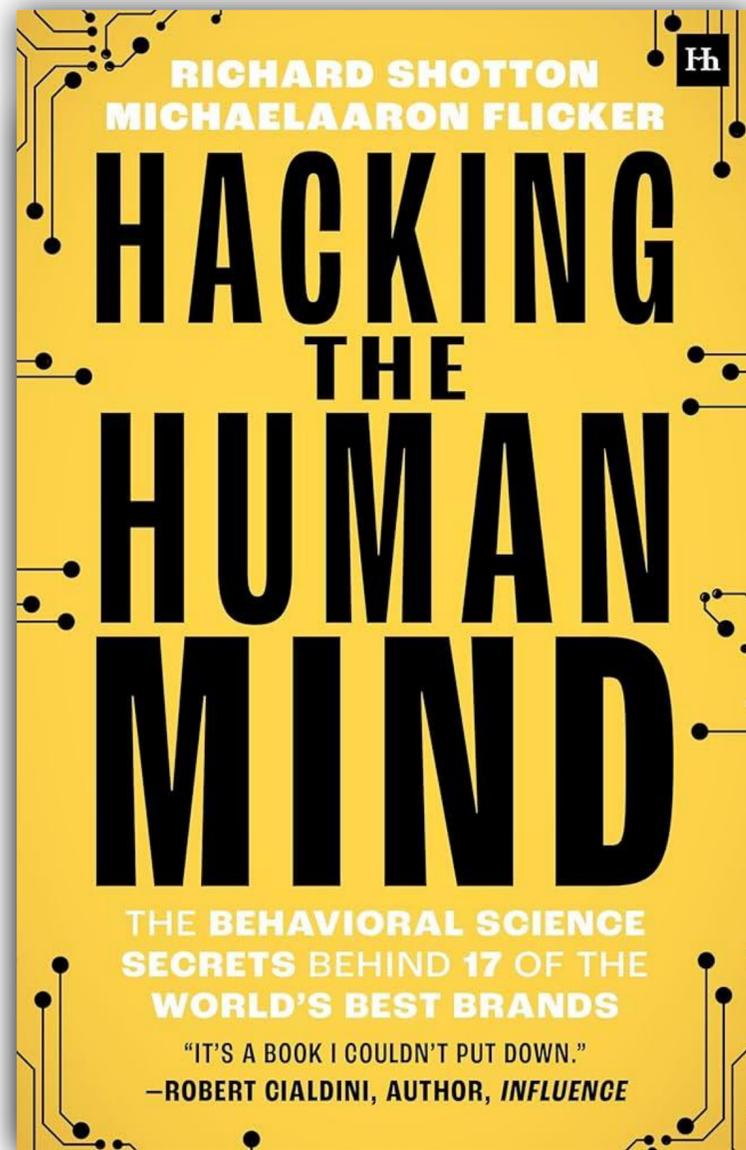

Physical Availability

The ease with which consumers can find, notice, and buy your brand

WHAT IF WE APPLY THE SAME METHODS OF EFFECTIVE ADVERTISING TO THE WAYS WE SHARE OUR WORK?

Behavioral bias: "CONCRETENESS"

"We are far more likely to recall concrete things — things we can see in our mind's eye — than abstract ideas"

Concrete information

Is easier for the brain to visualize

Feels more real and diagnostic

Requires less cognitive effort to process

Creates stronger memory encoding

A STUDY IN CONCRETE

25 students heard a list of 20 two-words phrases read aloud and were then asked to remember them

WORD LIST

Square door

Apparent fact

Impossible amount **RESULTS** Muscular gentelmen

Abstract phrases: 9% were remembered

Concrete phrases: 36% were remembered

Flaming forest

Subtile fault

Ian Begg, University of Ontario, 1972

4X difference

A STUDY IN CONCRETE

425 participants read a list of 10 phrases; some concrete and some abstract. They then waited five minutes before before being prompted to remember.

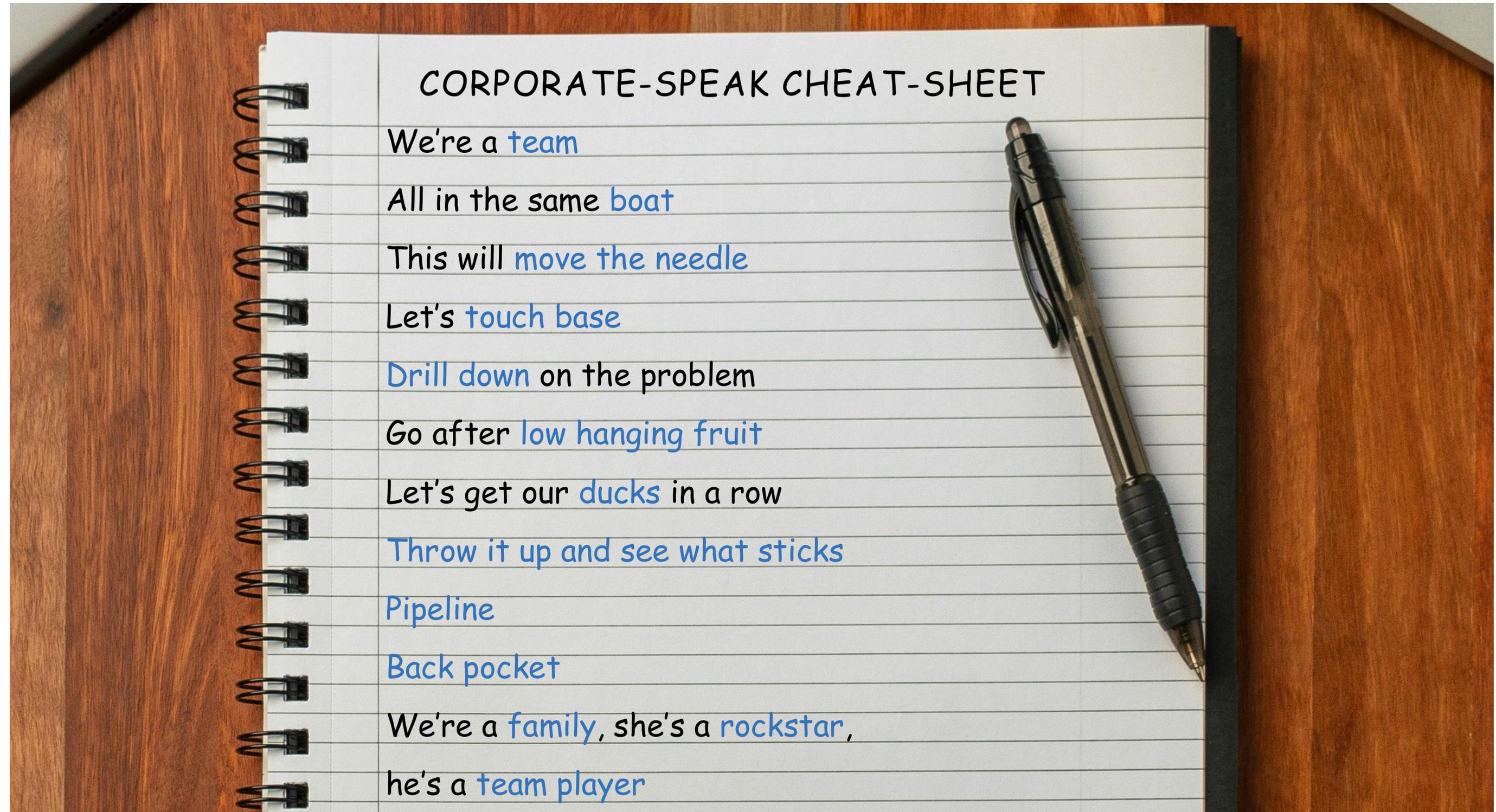| CONCRETE	ABSTRACT
fast car	innovative quality
skinny jeans	trusted provenance
cashew nut	central purpose
money in your pocket	wholesome nutrition
happy hens	ethical vision

RESULTS

Abstract phrases: 0.7% were remembered

Concrete phrases: 6.7% were remembered

Leo Burnett, 2022

10X difference

THIS ISN'T A NOVEL IDEA

WE USE CONCRETENESS EVERYDAY

CORPORATE-SPEAK CHEAT-SHEET

We're a team

All in the same boat

This will move the needle

Let's touch base

Drill down on the problem

Go after low hanging fruit

Let's get our ducks in a row

Throw it up and see what sticks

Pipeline

Back pocket

We're a family, she's a rockstar,

he's a team player

APPLE USED IT 25 YEARS AGO

APPLE USED IT 25 YEARS AGO

What Apple was selling
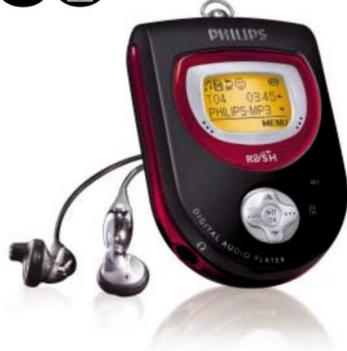
How they sold it

JAMES WATT USED IT 250 YEARS AGO

JAMES WATT USED IT 250 YEARS AGO

What he was selling

Power of steam pressure

Level of Torque

Cylinder diameter

Thermal efficiency

Mechanical novelty

Engineering elegance

How he sold it

Horse replacement
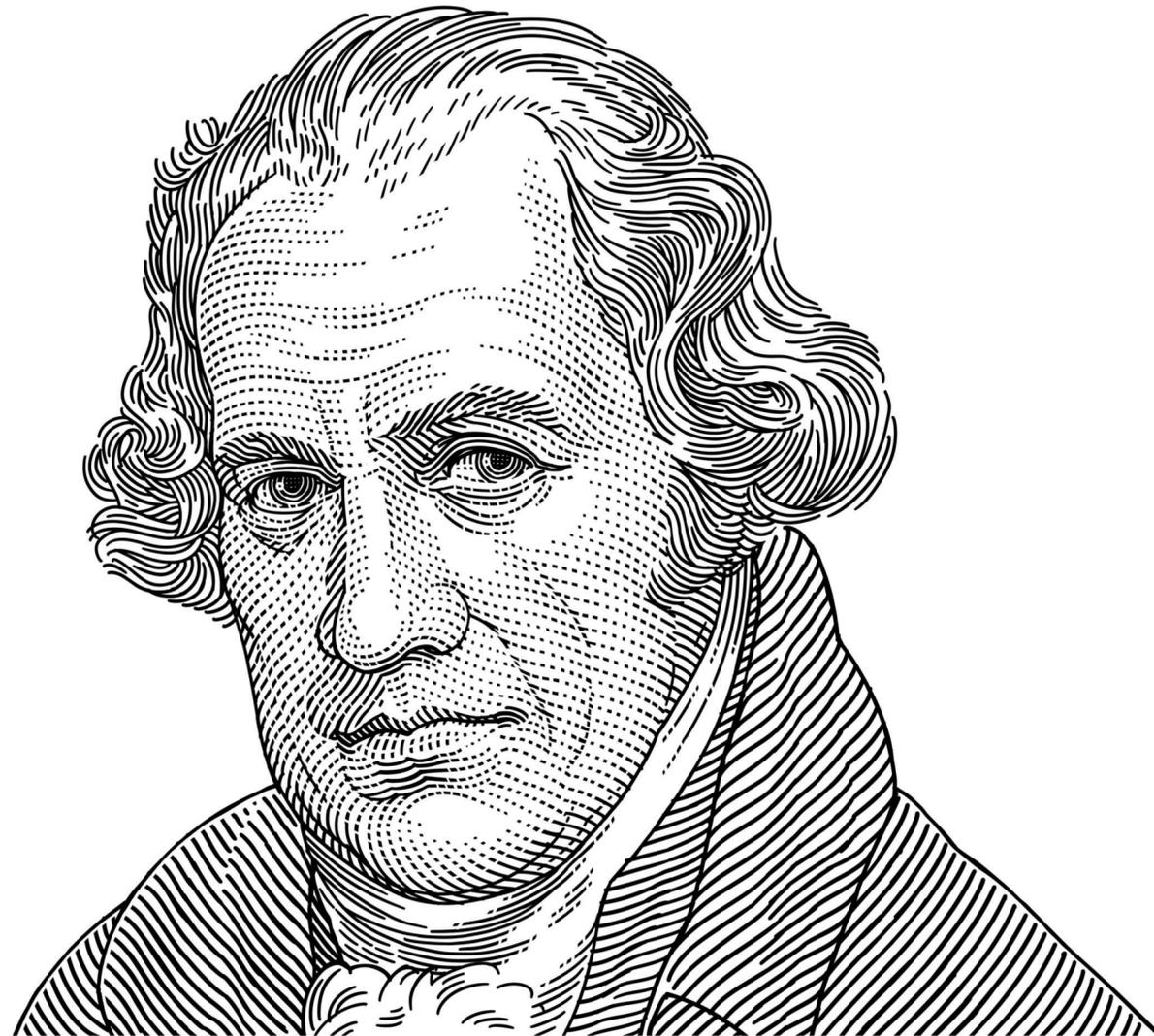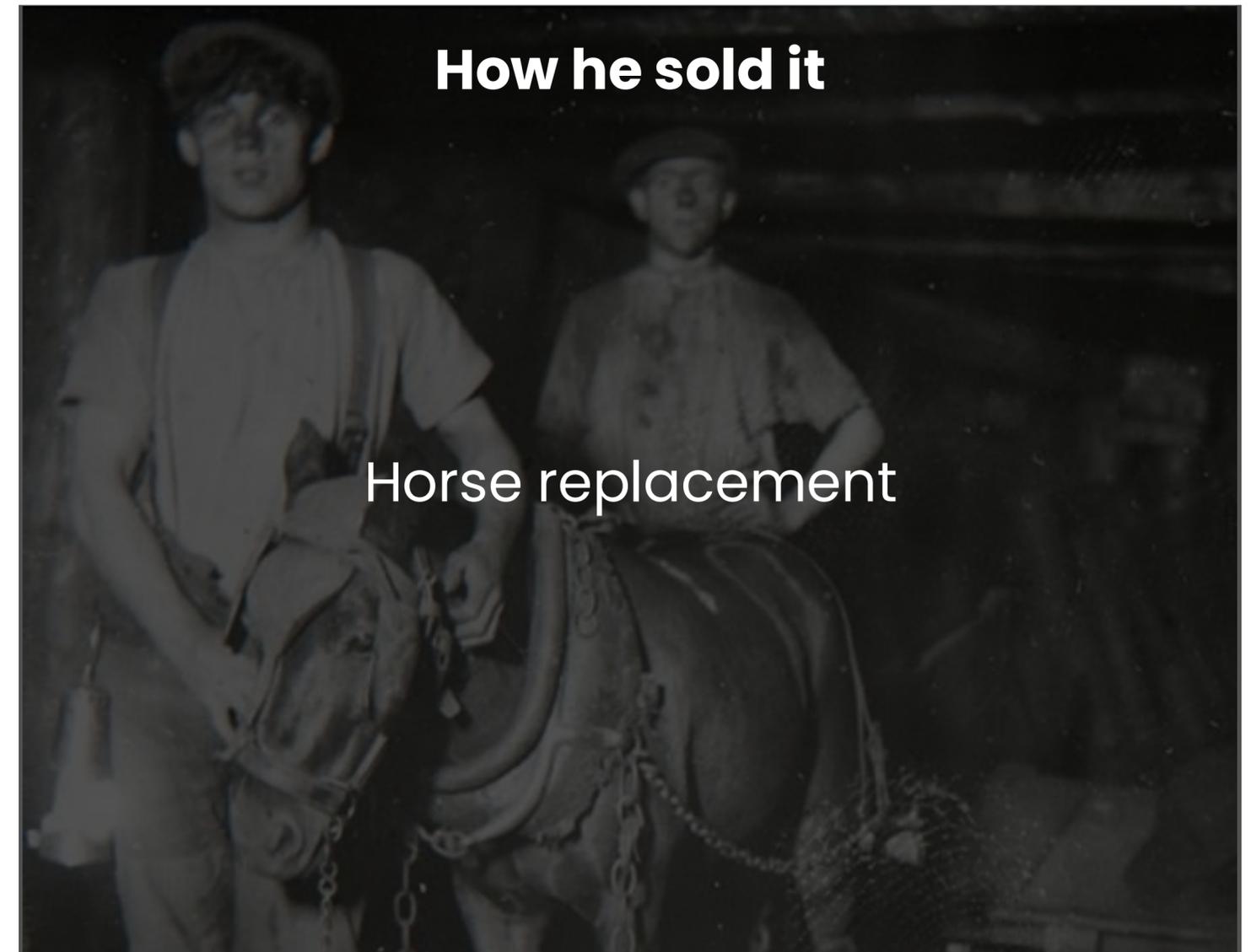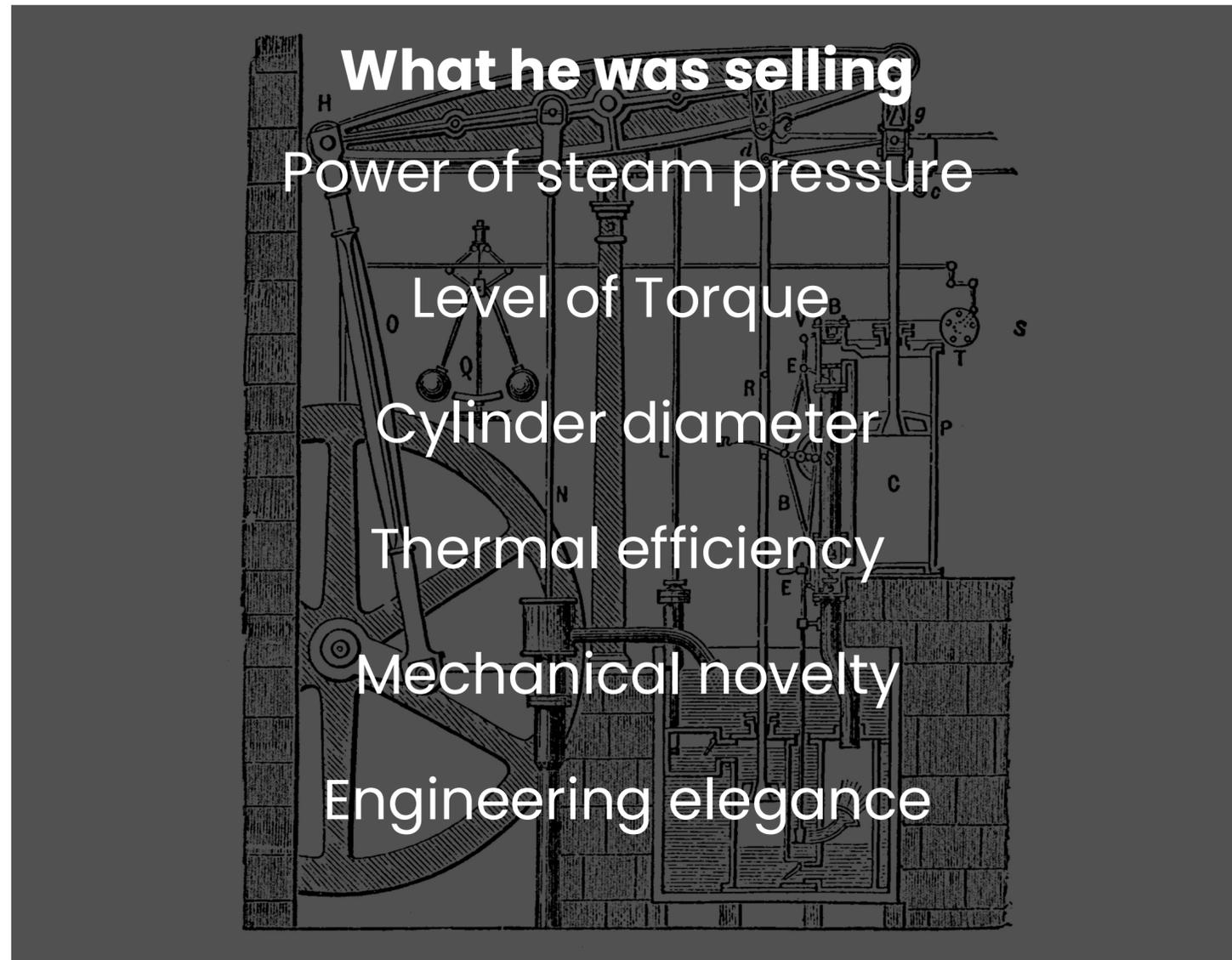
JESUS USED IT 2,000 YEARS AGO

What He was selling

Salvation

How He sold it

Parables that related to everyday life

"Once you present information in a way that's compelling and easily understood, behavior changes immediately"

— Rory Sutherland, vice chairman Ogilvy & Mather UK
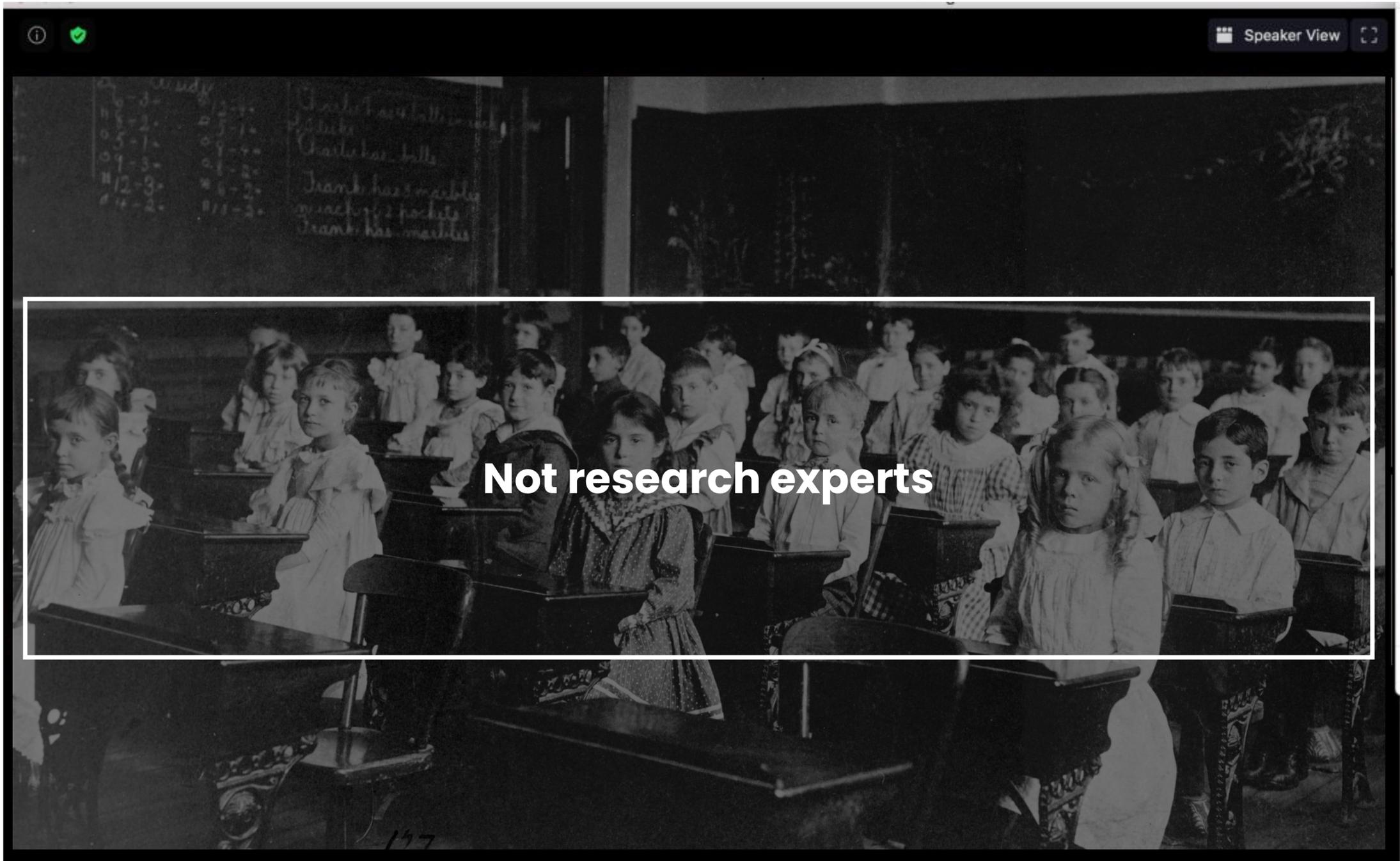
IN RESEARCH, WE MAJOR IN ABSTRACT IDEAS

ABSTRACT DATA

CONCRETE MEANING

Narrative tension

Data palate cleaners

Contextual outside sources

Cultural references

Social posts

Images of real people

Memes
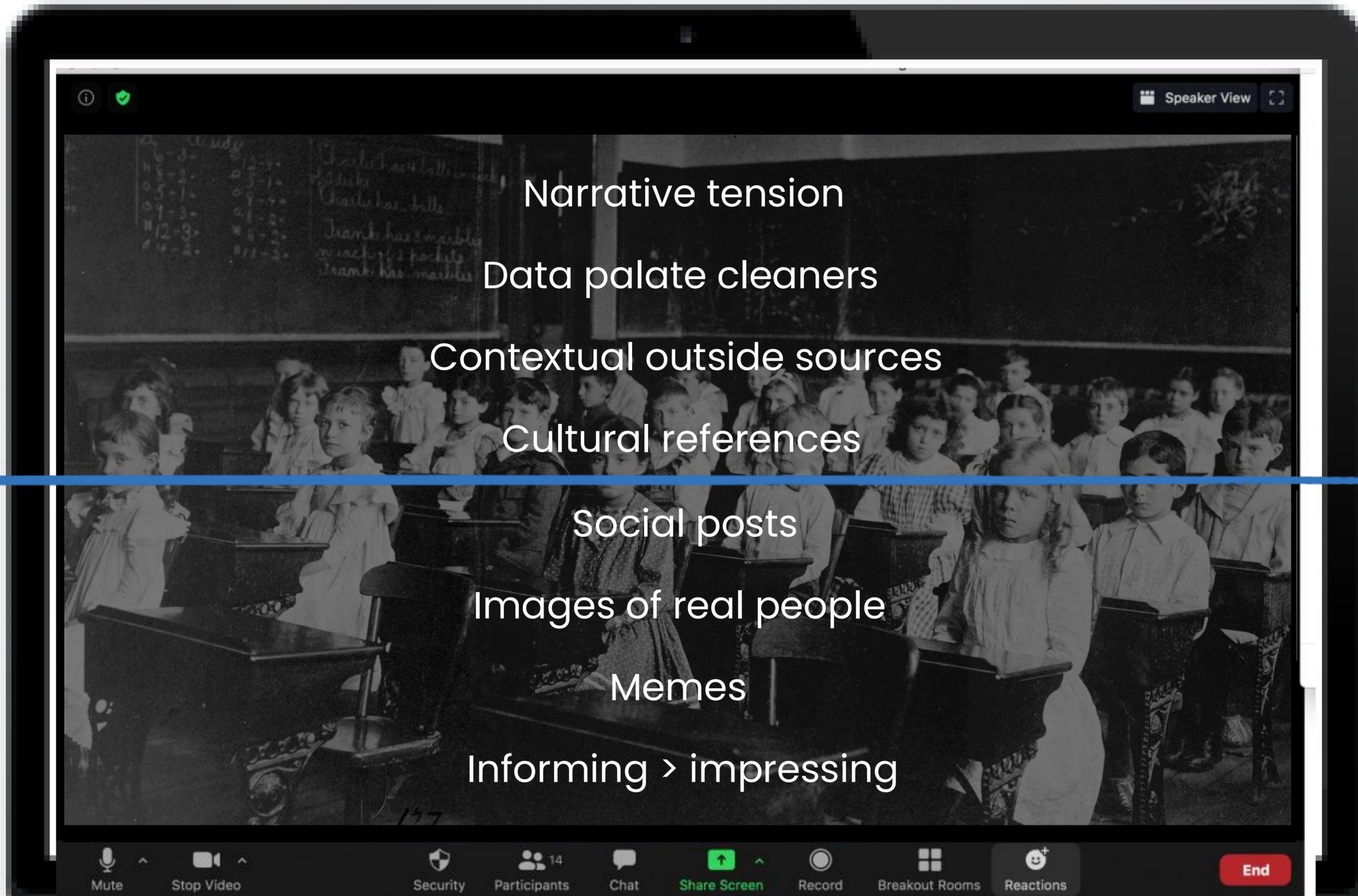
Informing > impressing

IN RESEARCH, WE MAJOR IN ABSTRACT IDEAS

IN RESEARCH, WE MAJOR IN ABSTRACT IDEAS

ABSTRACT DATA

CONCRETE MEANING

ADVERTISING YOUR RESEARCH

noticed —> understood —> remembered —> used

🚨 **Showing anything but the empirical results will cheapen the findings, distort reality, hide outlier data, and let you bend the narrative** 🚨

Nothing has meaning until it can sit in someone's mind

HOW DO WE DO T[...]

Tips to develop concreteness that will increase the m[...]

Not exhaustive

Don't work with every project

Should always be used to tell the same story the data told you

THE BEGINNING IS A GOOD PLACE TO START

Tip: **Focus on informing a human vs impressing an audience**

Grocery Brand Example: Customer Qual + Quant

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The study examines how perceived effort negatively influences consumers' willingness to adopt healthier purchasing behaviors

OR

We studied whether people avoid buying healthy food simply because it feels like more work

OR

This study tests whether people avoid buying healthy food simply because it feels like more work

YOUR RESEARCH DOESN'T LIVE IN A VACUUM

Grocery Brand Example: Customer Qual + Quant

1/2

OUR CUSTOMERS' PRIMARY STRUGGLE IS WITH CONFUSING FOOD LABELS

Top Reasons Our Customers Struggle to Live a Healthy Lifestyle

Food Challenges		Lifestyle Challenges	
Food labels are confusing	72%	I'm too busy with work or life	68%
Healthy food is too expensive	61%	It's hard to resist temptations	62%
Healthy meals take too much time	59%	I feel too tired or stressed	48%
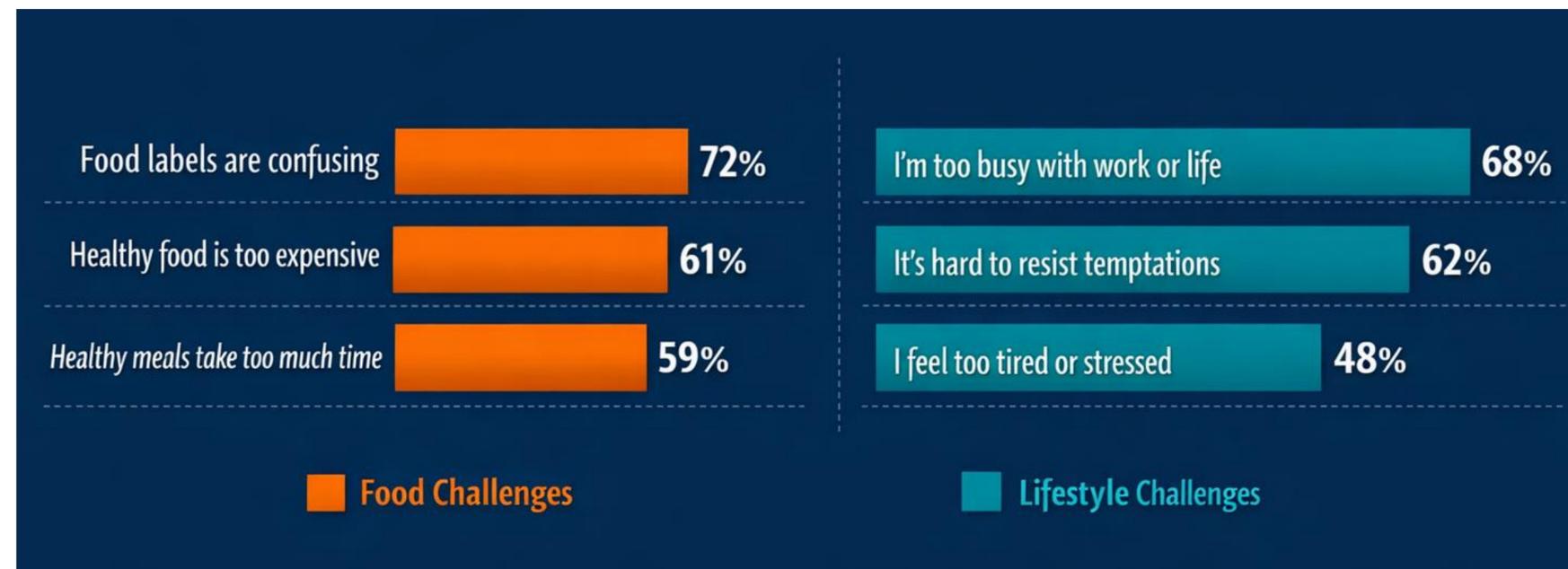
YOUR RESEARCH DOESN'T LIVE IN A VACUUM

Tip: **Don't be afraid to contextualize outside your datasource**

Grocery Brand Example: Customer Qual + Quant

THEY AREN'T ALONE

McKinsey & Company

Hungry and confused: The winding road to conscious eating

Despite consumers' desire to eat more healthily and sustainably, nearly half struggle to find the right ways to do so.

Fewer than a third of people are satisfied with the healthy options available at their local grocery stores.

Source: McKinsey

YOUR RESEARCH DOESN'T LIVE IN A VACUUM

Tip: Show what your participants are describing in a way that feels familiar

YOUR RESEARCH DOESN'T LIVE IN A VACUUM

Tip: Show what your participants are describing in a way that feels familiar

Grocery Brand Example: Customer Qual + Quant

THE PROBLEM OUR CUSTOMERS FACE

$1

$12

IT'S COSTLY

Source: Google

YOUR RESEARCH DOESN'T LIVE IN A VACUUM

Tip: Show what your participants are describing in a way that feels familiar

Grocery Brand Example: Customer Qual + Quant

THE PROBLEM OUR CUSTOMERS FACE

IT'S CONTRADICTORY

Source: Google

QUALITATIVE LETS YOU HAVE MORE FUN

Tip: **Show *and* tell**

OUR CUSTOMERS' PRIMARY STRUGGLE IS WITH CONFUSING FOOD LABELS

Customer Verbatims

"The hardest thing for me to think through is all the labels"

"I don't have the time or the energy to educate myself on the difference between 'GMO free' and 'non-GMO'"

"Feels like I need a PhD in food nutrition to just shop for eggs. Cage-free...pasture-raised...free-range...organic...certified humane...I guess whichever one's more expensive is the best?"

33

QUALITATIVE LETS YOU HAVE MORE FUN

Tip: **Show _and_ tell**

Grocery Brand Example: Customer Qual + Quant

OUR CUSTOMERS' PRIMARY STRUGGLE IS WITH CONFUSING FOOD LABELS
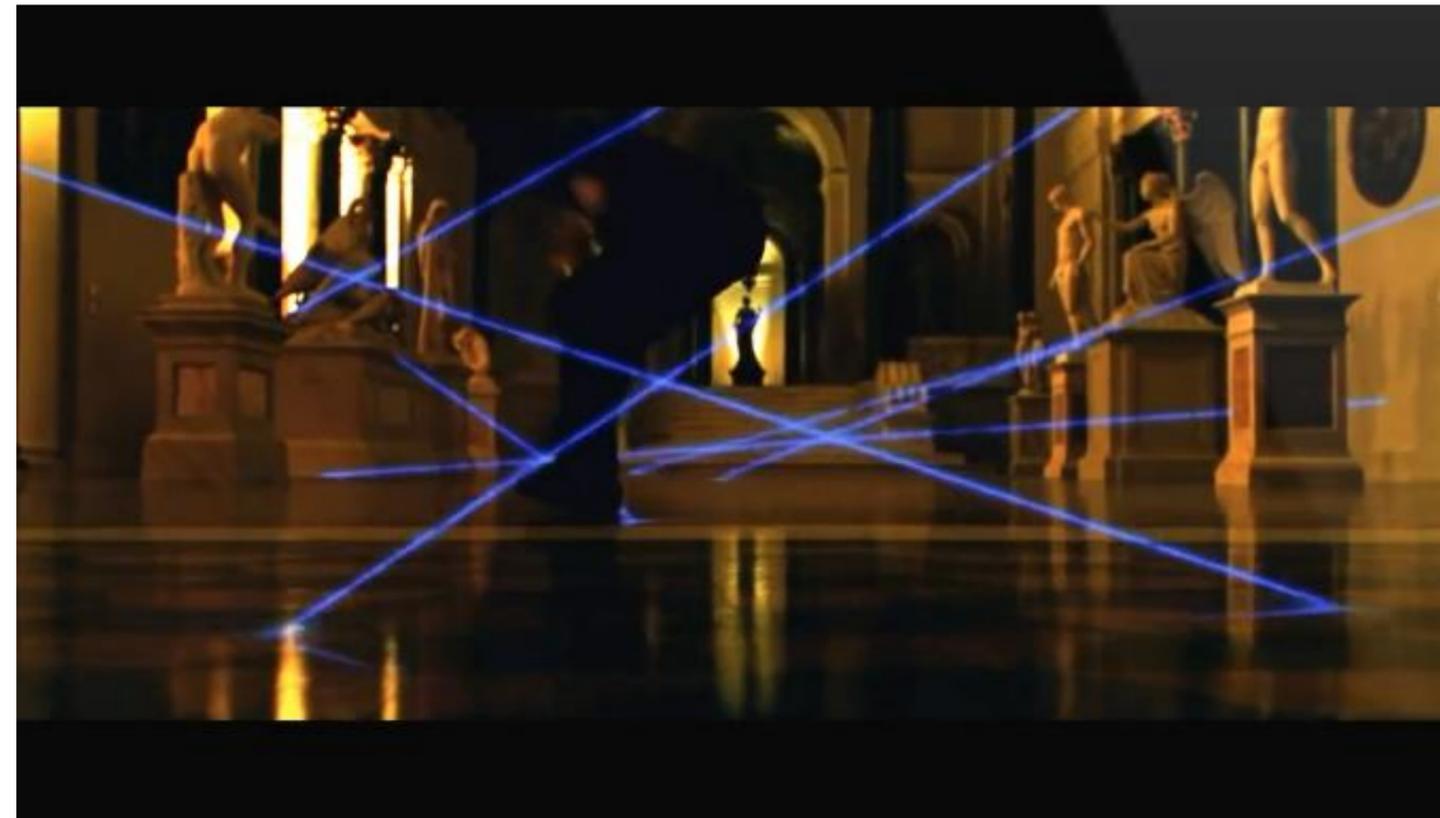
NAVIGATING A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE TODAY
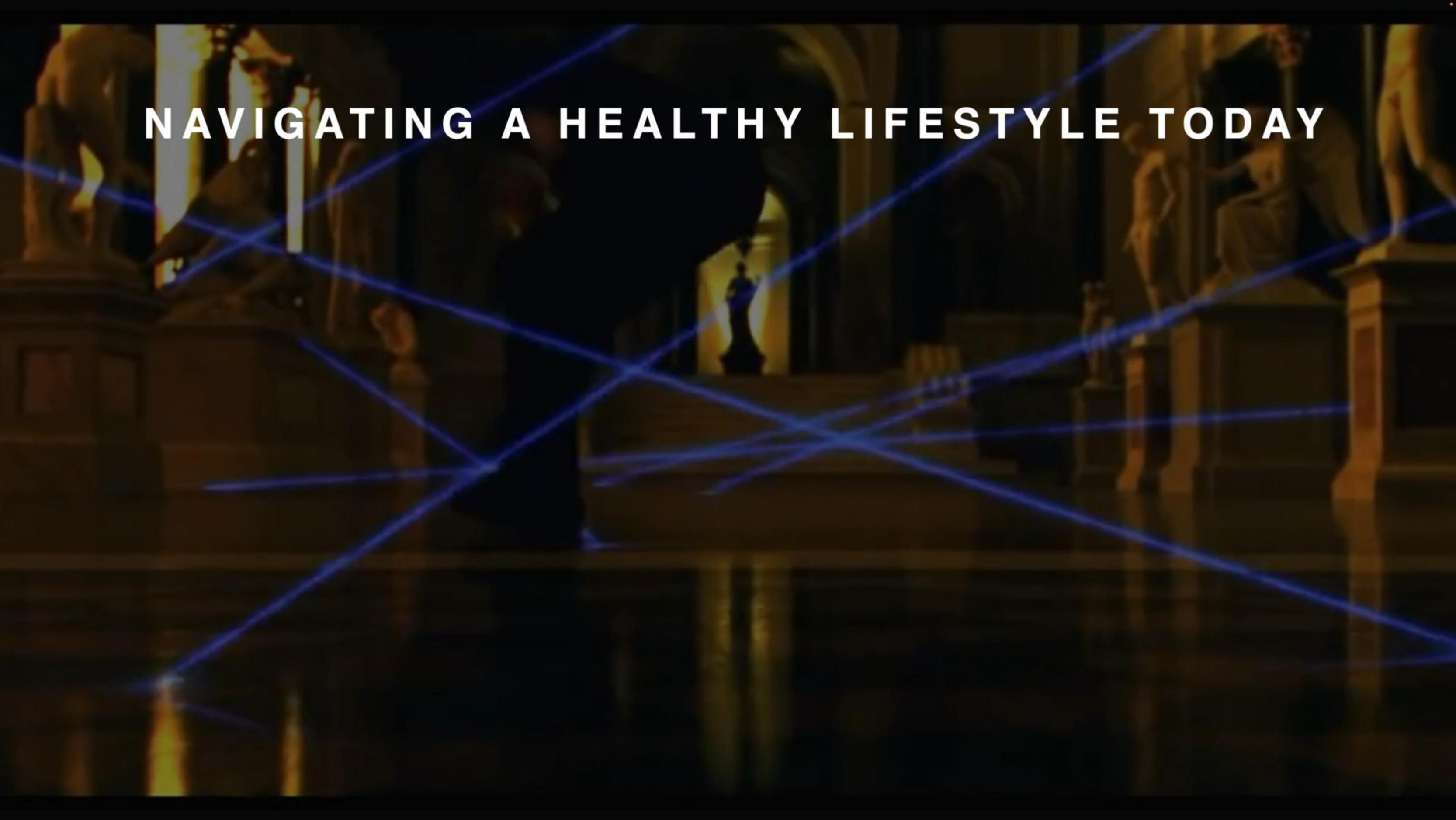
TENSION DESERVES TO BE HIGHLIGHTED

B2B Machinery Brand Example: Customer Survey

CUSTOMERS SAY THEY KNOW OUR PRODUCT LINES

390/415 respondents claimed to be either 'very familiar' or 'somewhat familiar' with the product lines

TENSION DESERVES TO BE HIGHLIGHTED

CUSTOMERS FAIL TO CORRECTLY IDENTIFY OUR PRODUCT LINES

83 out of 415 respondents (20%) correctly identified an actual product line. The Majority of respondents used a product number instead of the name
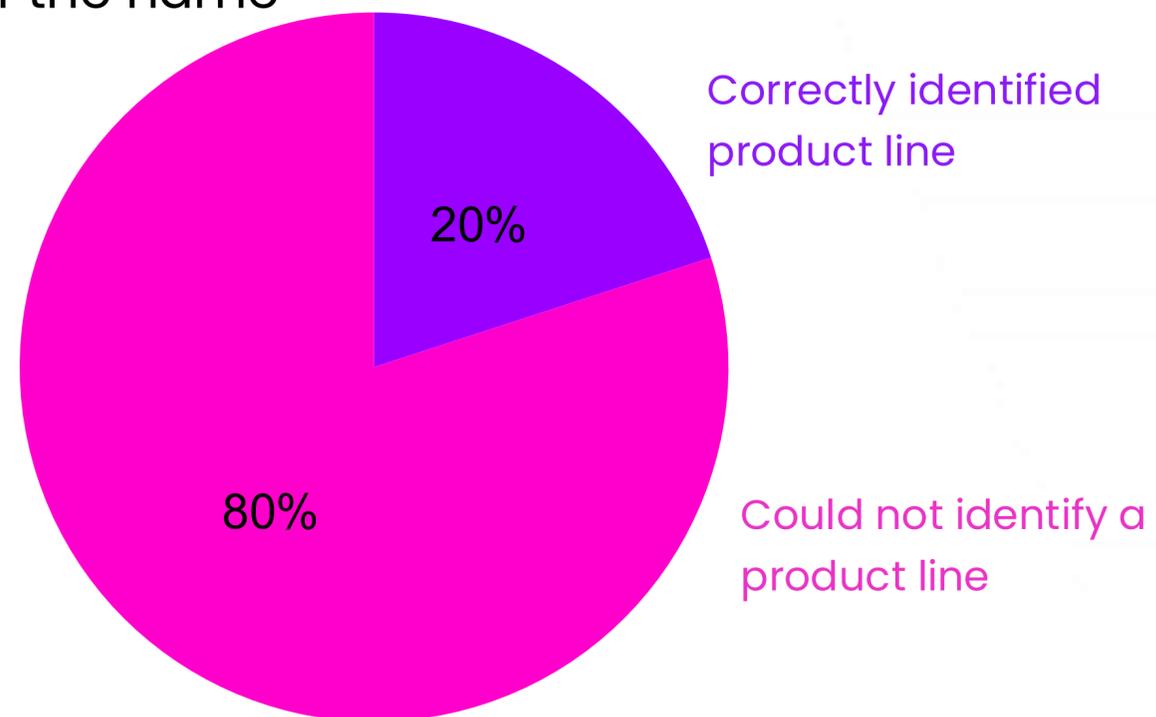
Correctly identified product line

20%

80%

Could not identify a product line

37

TENSION DESERVES TO BE HIGHLIGHTED

Tip: **Signify tension to build your research narrative. Without it, everything seems positive**

B2B Machinery Brand Example: Customer Survey
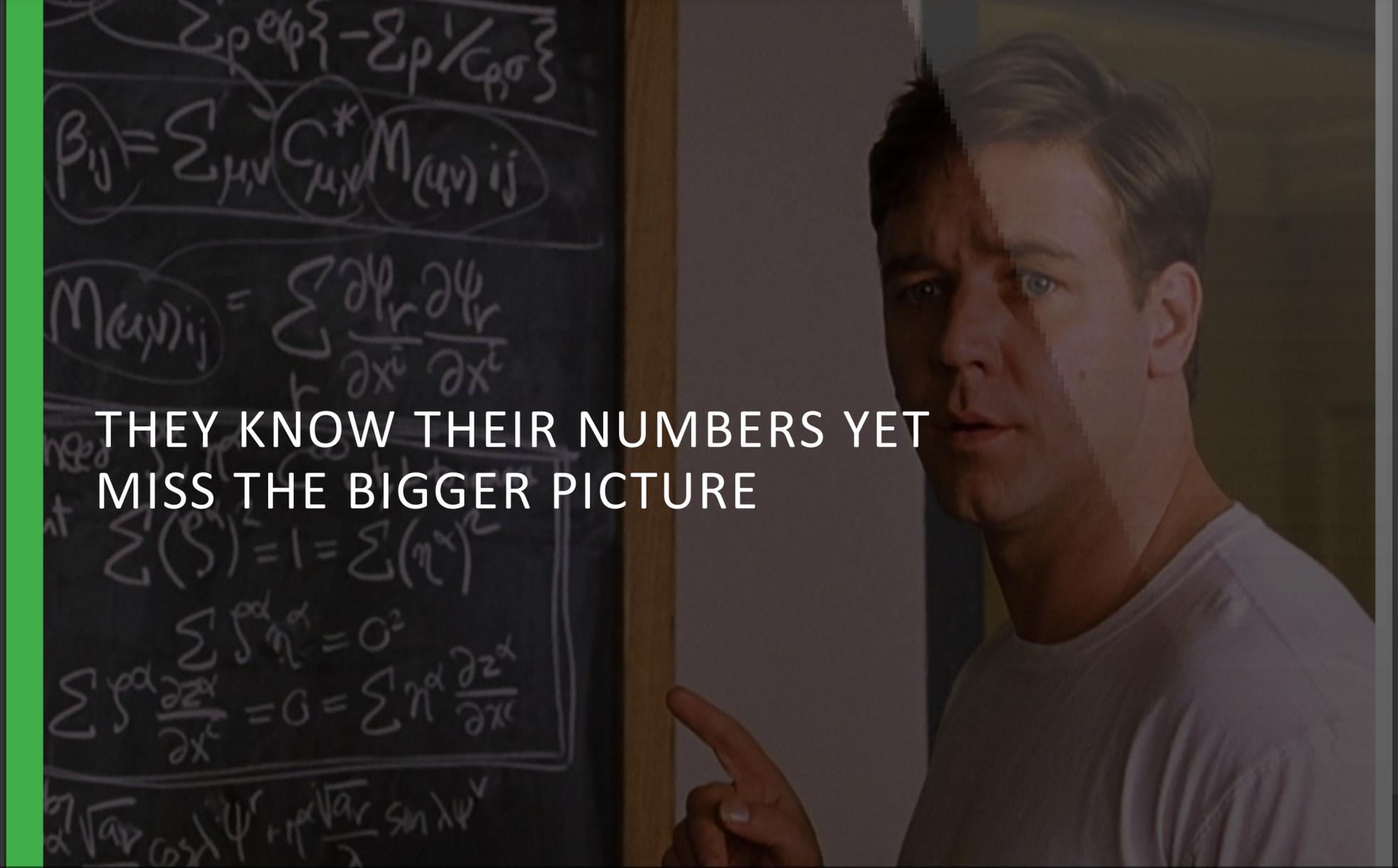
THEY KNOW THEIR NUMBERS YET MISS THE BIGGER PICTURE

TENSION DESERVES TO BE HIGHLIGHTED

Tip: **Signify tension to build your research narrative. Without it, everything seems positive**

B2B Machinery Brand Example: Customer Survey

HOWEVER;

TENSION DESERVES TO BE HIGHLIGHTED

Tip: **Give a finding a name. Better yet, use a name already coined.**

Beauty Brand Example: Competitor Analysis

" THE SEPHORA EFFECT "

THE SEPHORA EFFECT

"A mascara I recently purchased put a name to this incredible feeling: I call it the Sephora Effect. When you're in a bad mood and feel like nothing is going right, all you have to do is walk into Sephora. It's the great equalizer for shoppers because there's something for everyone, no matter your skin type or budget. It's a source of instant gratification and of the conviction that whatever you buy will make you look and feel better. *Is there anything that makes you feel more pampered than that?*"

THE REAL SEPHORA EFFECT

That moment when...
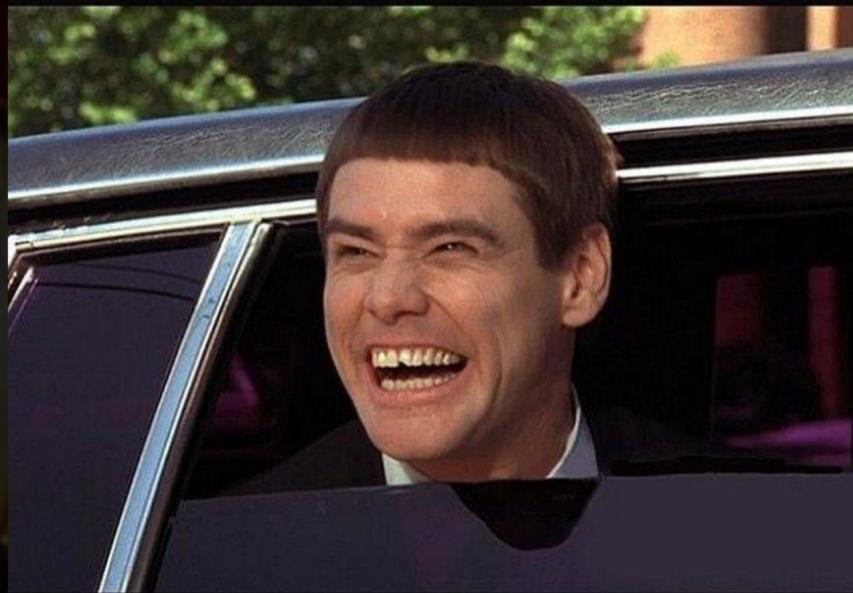
you pull up to your local Sephora

TENSION

when u walk into Sephora only tryna spend like $50 and the cashier says "your total is $268.32"

THE REAL SEPHORA EFFECT

TENSION

Sephora is intimidating

"Each time I go in, I feel judged: either I don't know how to answer 'How can I help you?' or I don't answer because I know they'll point me to something expensive"

– Focus Group

THE REAL SEPHORA EFFECT

Sephora is intimidating

That moment when...

you pull up to your local Sephora

pov: I was bullied by a Sephora Kid

because I watched as an employee

121.3K

897

14.3K

1538

TENSION

INDEXES CAN CARRY MORE IMPACT

Athletic Brand Example: Syndicated Audience

UNDERSTANDING THE AFFLUENCE OF
"RANDOM ATHLETIC COMPANY'S" HISPANIC
FAMILY AUDIENCE

INDEXES CAN CARRY MORE IMPACT

Tip: **Add additional audiences to prove index significance**

Athletic Brand Example: Syndicated Audience

TARGET AUDIENCE

RANDOM
ATHLETIC
COMPANY
LOGO

+

Hispanic Families

46%
+$100K HHI

INDEXES CAN CARRY MORE IMPACT

Tip: **Add additional audiences to prove index significance**

Athletic Brand Example: Syndicated Audience

TARGET AUDIENCE

RACL

DICK'S SPORTING GOODS

+
Hispanic Families

+
Hispanic Families

46%
+$100K HHI

43%
+$100K HHI

RACL

+

Hispanic Families

46% *+$100K HHI*

Gen Pop **+** **Hispanic**	RACL **+** **Hispanic**	RACL **+** **All Customers**
26%	34%	41%

RACL

+

Hispanic Families

46%
+$100K HHI

Foot Locker   FINISH LINE   CHAMPS SPORTS   Bass Pro Shops   DICK'S SPORTING GOODS

31%   35%   41%   43%   44%

RACL

+

Hispanic Families

46%
+$100K HHI

36%   46%   46%   47%   47%

RACL

+

Hispanic Families

$128K
AVERAGE INCOME

Foot Locker	FINISH LINE	CHAMPS SPORTS	Bass Pro Shops	DICK'S SPORTING GOODS	Nike	Cadillac	THE NEW YORKER	Apple	WHOLE FOODS MARKET
$93K	$99K	$116K	$117K	$116K	$100K	$125K	$117K	$124K	$122K

WE'RE SPEAKING TO SOMEONE WHO IS MATERIALLY ACCOMPLISHED

Tip: **Combine the findings on a single page and write plainly**
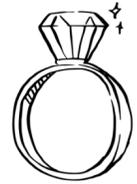
They have someone

69% are married vs. 56% of RACL's average shoppers

They have a good job

70% are employed full-time vs. 55% of RACL's average shoppers

They know their stuff

29% have master's degrees vs. 21% of RACL's average shoppers

They're doing well for themselves

46% earn over $100K vs. 41% of RACL's average shoppers; 20% consider themselves to be affluent vs. 17% of RACL's shoppers

They're healthy

28% say they are in excellent health vs. 25% of RACL's average shoppers

INDEXES CAN CARRY MORE IMPACT

Tip: **Summarize your audience with opposing indexes. Bonus points if you use an image**

Sub-Prime/Near Prime Credit Card Brand Example: Syndicated Audience

A QUICK REMINDER OF WHO WE'RE TALKING TO
(AND WHO WE'RE NOT)

INDEXES CAN CARRY MORE IMPACT

Tip: **Summarize your audience with opposing indexes. Bonus points if you use an image**

Sub-Prime/Near Prime Credit Card Brand Example: Syndicated Audience

Soothing

126 Index

Screaming

44 Index

Soothing

126 Index

Screaming

44 Index

Music Genres: Soul / classic (41% / 249); Punk (10% / 85)
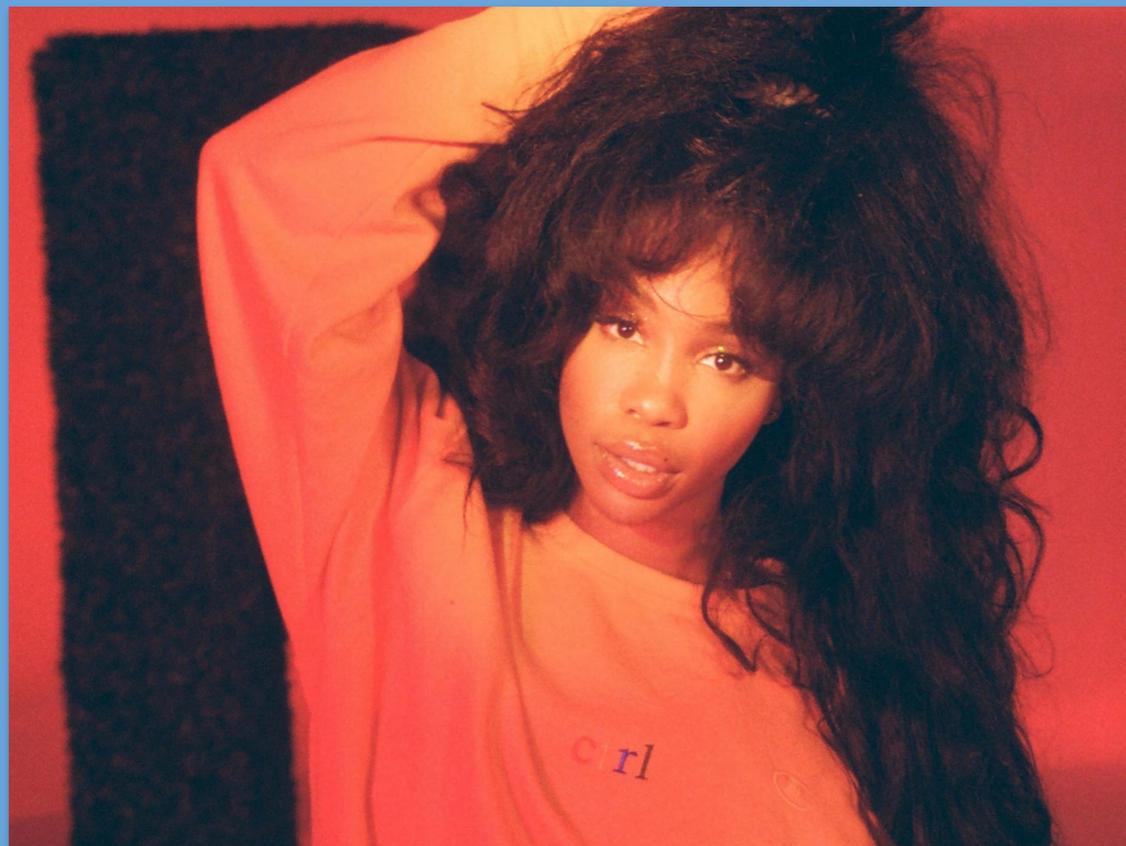
Dramatic

139 Index

Dull

88 Index

Movies and TV shows: Reality TV (35% / 139); Wild Life and Nature (20% / 88)
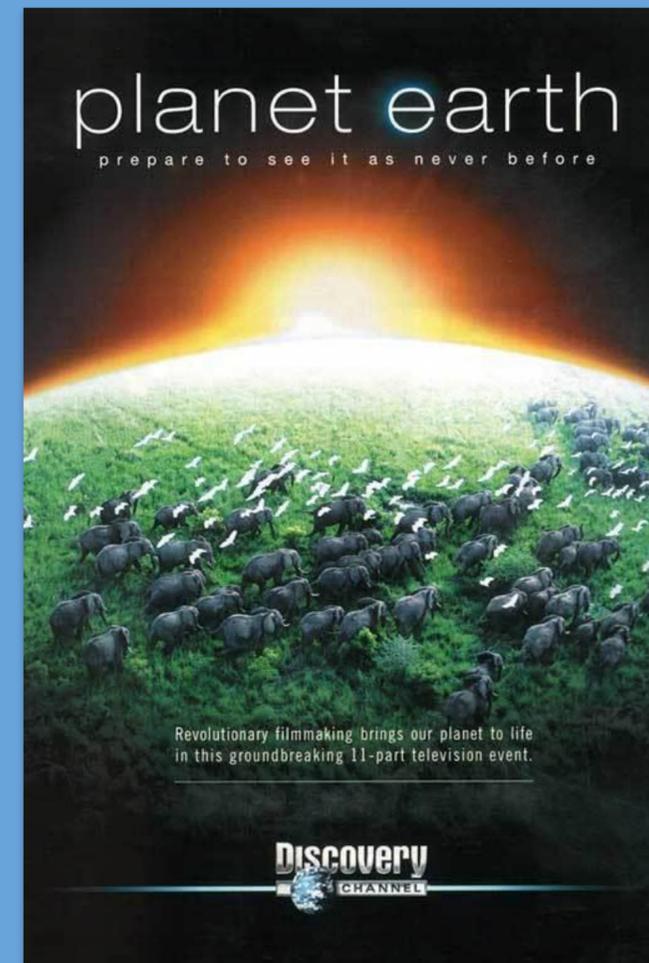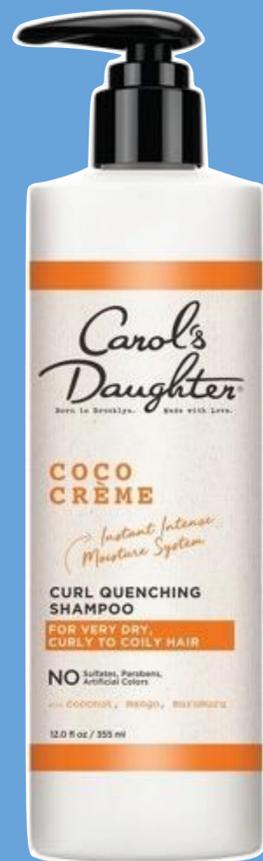
Specific

720 Index

Generic

85 Index

Shampoos: Carol's Daughter (720 / 14%); Redken (3% / 85)

Spend

139 Index

Save

88 Index

"In the next 6 months, I plan to get a new credit card" (24% / 132); "I'm good at managing money" (Agree 43% / 90)

Be seen

152 Index

Behave

79 Index

"I love standing out" (12% / 152); "I hate standing out" (18% / 79)

Risk it

152 Index

Play it safe

79 Index

"I always take risks" (9% / 140); "I never take risks" (12% / 86)

Flavorful

191 Index

Flavorless

75 Index

Light beer: (6% / 75); Flavored coolers: (16% / 191)

Trendy

163 Index

Typical

73 Index

"I prefer buying traditional styles rather than trying something new" (24% / 73); "I take note of what influencers and celebrities are wearing" (13% / 163)

Stars

174 Index

Stars

88 Index

Flair

290 Index

Function

68 Index
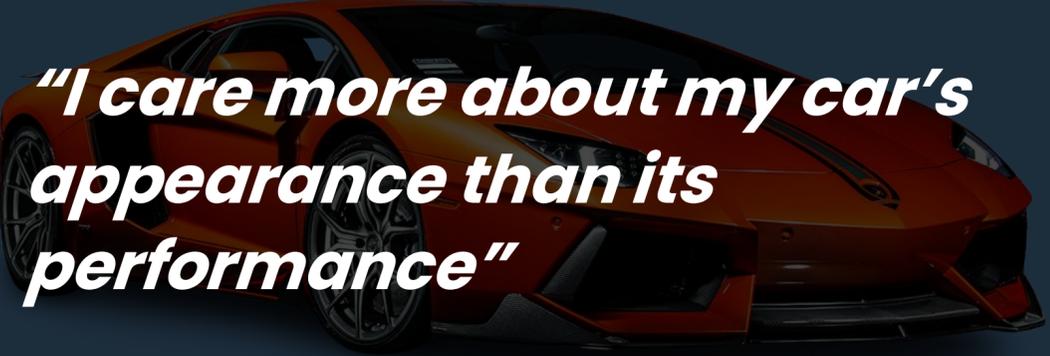
Vehicle brands owned: Lamborghini (2% / 290); Toyota (12% / 68)

Flair

142 Index

Function

83 Index

"I care more about my car's appearance than its performance" (7% / 142); "I want my vehicle to be as cheap and easy to maintain as possible" (26% / 83)

INDEXES CAN CARRY MORE IMPACT

Tip: Add an additional audience to create a delta that shows index significance

THEY CHOOSE ACCESSIBLE LUXURY OVER OPULENCE

Luxury / Designer Brands	Average American	Our Homeowner
Kate Spade	100	176
Ray-Ban	100	171
Ralph Lauren	100	168
Michael Kors	100	161
Tory Burch	100	151
Fendi	100	95
Balenciaga	100	85
Valentino	100	85
Alexander McQueen	100	72

DATA EXHAUSTION SHOULD BE ACKNOWLEDGED

B2B Machinery Brand Example: Syndicated audience

THEY CHOOSE FAMILIARITY AND COMFORT OVER TRENDS

Apparel purchase drivers	Average American	Our Homeowner	Average Homeowner	Delta
Brand you know / have tried before	100	135	108	27
Fit / comfort	100	123	109	14
Quality	100	120	108	12
Designer brand name	100	103	89	14
Keeping up with trends	100	101	89	12

DATA EXHAUSTION SHOULD BE ACKNOWLEDGED

THEY CHOOSE FUNCTION OVER FORM

"I want my brands to be"	Average American	Our Homeowner	Average Homeowner	Delta
Honest and trustworthy	100	124	110	14
Reliable	100	121	109	12
Socially responsible	100	121	97	24
Sustainable	100	119	98	21
Cool	100	87	81	6
Bold	100	75	87	−12
Funny	100	86	76	10
Exclusive	100	74	86	−12

DATA EXHAUSTION SHOULD BE ACKNOWLEDGED

B2B Machinery Brand Example: Syndicated audience

THEY CHOOSE FUNCTION OVER FORM

"I want my brands to be"	Average American	Our Homeowner	Average Homeowner	Delta
I want my vehicle to be as cheap and easy to maintain as possible	100	120	105	15
I care more about my car's appearance than its performance	100	93	100	−7
I'm thrifty	100	133	114	19

DATA EXHAUSTION SHOULD BE ACKNOWLEDGED

Tip: **When you're reaching data overload, offer a palate cleanser**

B2B Machinery Brand Example: Syndicated audience

"Too many people spend money they earned to buy things they don't want, to impress people they don't like."

– Will Rogers

DATA EXHAUSTION SHOULD BE ACKNOWLEDGED

Tip: **When you're reaching data overload, offer a palate cleanser**

PERSONAS ARE PEOPLE, TOO

Tip: **Use someone you know so it feels like someone they know**

B2B Machinery Brand Example: Persona Placemat

YOUR CUSTOMER ON A PAGE

OUR HOMEOWNER

(*Typical persona information)

MEET YOUR CUSTOMERS

Kevin S.

36 years old
Married with a second kid on the way
HHI $120K
Enjoys gaming, being outside, and working on his project car. He's worked hard to save enough to soon become his own boss.

Cody C.

36 years old
Married with a second kid on the way
HHI $120K
Enjoys gaming, being outside, and working on his project car. He's worked hard to save enough to soon become his own boss.
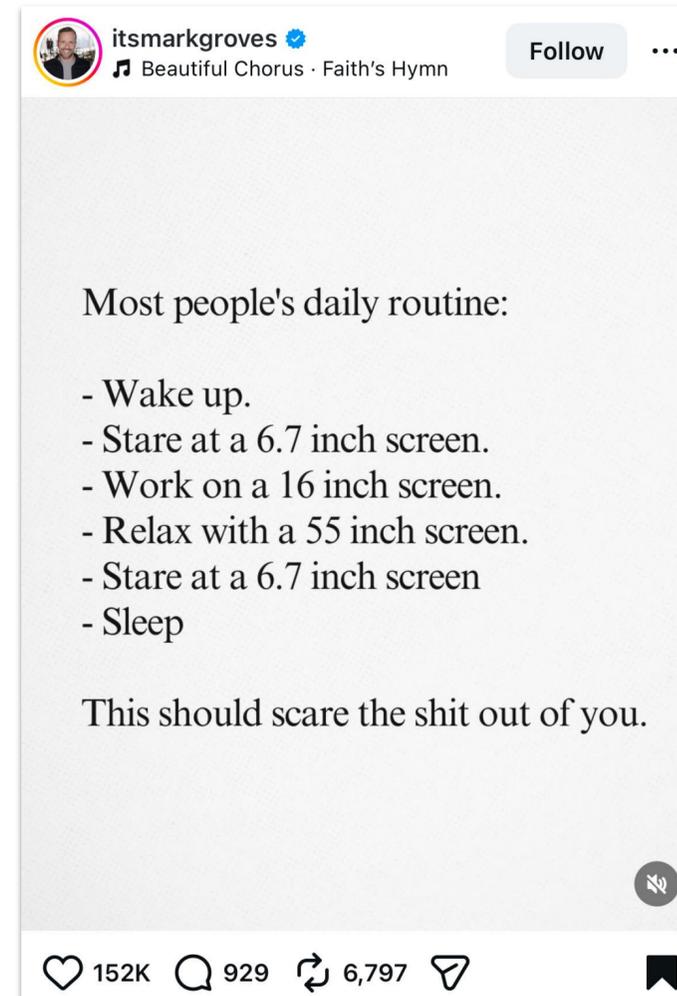
49

SCROLL AND WALK WITH INTENTION

Tip: **Take pictures, save posts, write down conversations in your note's app. There's potential for concreteness in every one of them.**

SCROLL AND WALK WITH INTENTION

Tip: **Take pictures, save posts, write down conversations in your note's app. There's potential for concreteness in every one of them.**

FINAL ~~TIP~~ CHALLENGE

Try adding a bit of concrete

It might feel forced, wrong, or silly at first. But the payout comes when

CMO's reference your personas by their first name

People interrupt to share personal antidotes

Clients ask you to share the findings with people you've never met

Research gets called back (remembered!) long after it's presented

You see behavior change

ADVERTISING YOUR RESEARCH

Designing findings to be noticed —> understood —> remembered —> used