

# Strategic KOL Engagement Planning...

Concepts  
Methods  
&  
Tools

... For a better  
**Efficacy & Efficiency**



**Smart Pharma**  
**Consulting**

*Position Paper*

**May 2019**

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# 1. Introduction

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**This position paper proposes guidelines to help pharmaceutical companies partner with KOLs to better support the development and the marketing of their products**

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## **Context & Objective**

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- **KOLs<sup>1</sup> are part of the means used by pharma companies to:**
  - Develop their products through pre-clinical and clinical trials
  - Disseminate information (scientific, medical, therapeutic, etc.) to raise health authorities, payers, HCPs (Health Care Professionals), PAGs (Patient Advocacy Groups), individual patients awareness to optimize the positioning and the usage of their products
  
- **This position paper:**
  - Reviews the best practices in terms of KOL engagement
  - Proposes a simple but rigorous approach and...
  - ... a set of practical tools...

... to recruit, engage and manage KOLs

*This position paper has been written, assuming that it is not illegal nor reprehensible to collaborate with medical thought leaders to influence other stakeholders opinion and behavior vis-à-vis a medical practice or a given medicine, provided it is in the best interest of patients*

KOLs have the potential to influence their peers, but also other stakeholders in a specific area, at global, international, national and local levels


### Working definitions (1/2)

#### KOL (Key Opinion Leader)

- KOLs are also called: Key Experts, Key Therapeutic Area Experts, Key Scientific Experts, Thought Leaders, Influencers, depending on the companies
- KOLs are **recognized** physicians with an **expertise in a specific field** (e.g. oncology, endocrinology, epidemiology, biostatistics, etc.)...
- ... and can **influence the opinion** and **the medical practice** (e.g. treatment scheme, prescribing habits, preference for a given product, etc.) **of their peers** (specialists or GPs)
- KOLs contribute also to **modify medical guidelines** when they are members of learned societies or when they advise health authorities
- Their influence can be global, international, national or local
- Other stakeholders are also considered as KOLs<sup>1</sup>

#### Pyramid of influence & types of influencers



 Other stakeholders than physicians likely to have an influence on medical practices and on physicians opinion and behavior

Strategic KOL Engagement Planning is essential for pharma companies to ensure an effective, efficient and sustainable relationship with KOLs

### Working definitions (2/2)

#### KOL Engagement

- KOL engagement is a **process** in which pharma companies **build** and **maintain constructive** and **sustainable relationships** with KOLs
- KOL engagement is **essential** for **understanding** their **wants** and **needs**; and **may** result in implementing ideas that **benefit** both **KOLs** and **pharma companies**
- Engaging with KOLs **occurs** when pharma companies want to **consider** the **views** and **involvement** of **KOLs** in making and implementing a scientific or medical decision...
- ... **which might** have an indirect **business impact**
- Pharma companies should **initiate open, two-way dialogue**, **seeking solutions** to issues of mutual interest

#### Strategic KOL Engagement Planning

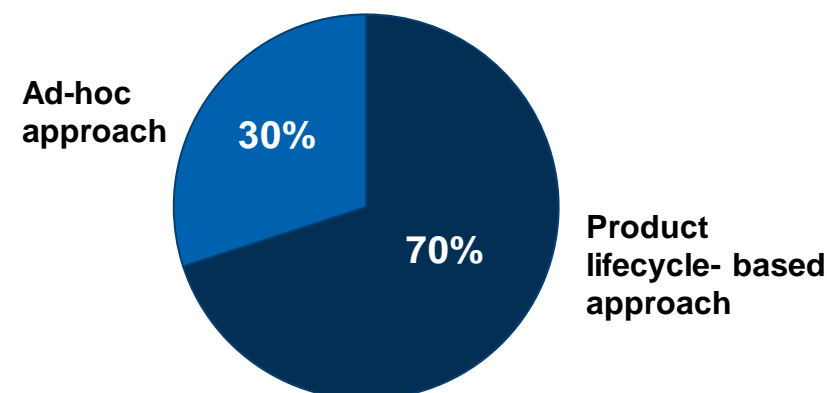
- Considering the **increasing complexity** of the pharmaceutical **environment** and of **pharma companies** organizations<sup>1</sup>, it is essential to **plan** and **organize** the **interactions with KOLs**
- Thus, pharma companies should develop Strategic KOL Engagement **Plans** to **ensure**, as a general rule, that KOL Engagement **initiatives**:
  - **Support** the Critical Success Factors (**CSF**) to fulfill the corresponding Strategic Imperatives (**SI**) of the related product
  - Are put in a **mid- to long-term perspective** to **build** a **sustainable** win-win **relationship**
  - Are carried out in a **coordinated manner** across the company departments and from headquarter to affiliates to **guarantee** an **optimal efficiency**

More and more pharma companies are adopting an integrated strategic approach of their relationship with KOLs, based on their product position on their life cycle

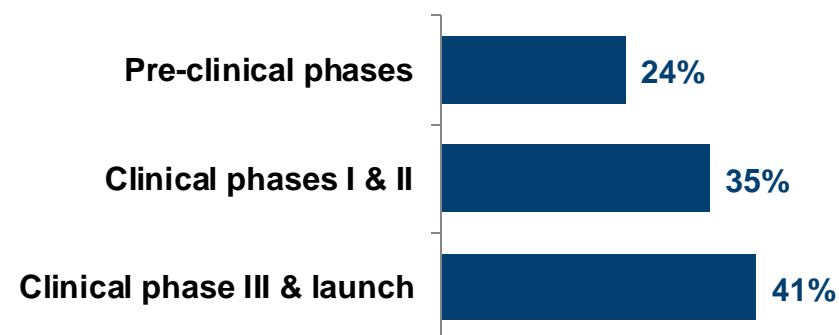
### Types of KOL engagement

- According to a study carried out in 2017 by Arx Research, through interviews of 47 executives from medical departments of 34 life science organizations, across 15 countries:
  - 70% of companies indicate that their strategy to engage with KOLs is based on the position of the product on its life cycle, while the remaining 30% adopt an ad-hoc approach
  - 24% of surveyed companies engage with KOLs during pre-clinical phases of the product development and...
  - ... 41% begin developing relationships at phase III of their product life cycle, or after
- KOLs exposed to early research and development phases will better support the products due to:
  - A better understanding of the underlying science
  - A better commitment and interest in outcomes

KOL engagement approach



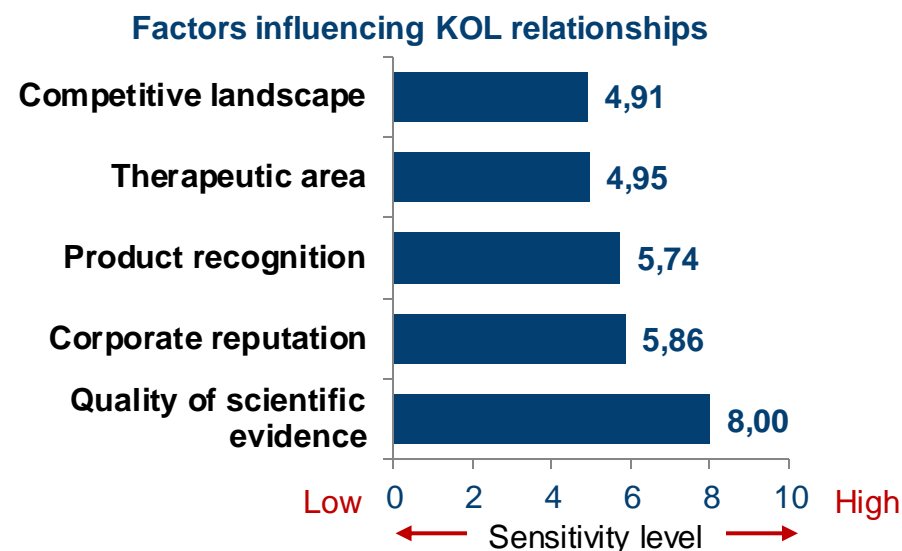
KOL engagement according to product lifecycle



The strength of KOL engagement will strongly depend on the quality of scientific evidence related to the product as well as on corporate and product perception

### KOLs engagement & Influencing factors

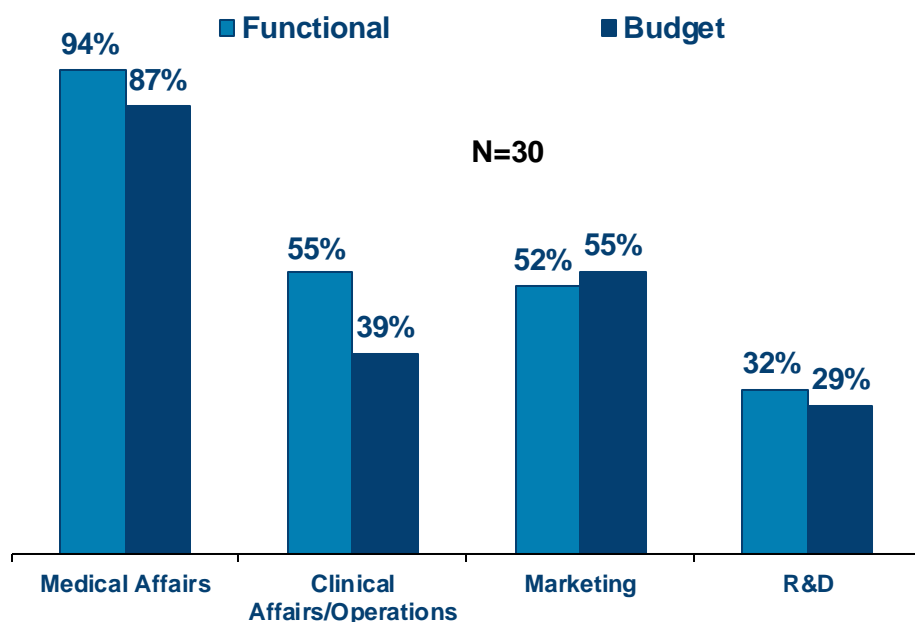
- From preclinical to phase II studies, Global KOLs are engaged to carry out scientific and clinical activities
- At phase III level, Global, International and National KOLs are mainly involved in clinical studies and in disseminating scientific information to physicians communities
- While preparing the launch of their products or of new indications, pharma companies may engage KOL to support the preparation of the marketing authorization and of the price & reimbursement dossiers
- At launch time, pharma companies usually shift the balance of their focus to national and local KOLs
- The quality of the scientific evidence is critical to establish strong and effective relationships with KOLs
- Corporate reputation and product recognition are also essential to expect a clear commitment from KOLs



The hybrid and centralized management of KOLs are viewed as optimal by interviewees as they enable better coordinated and more consistent interactions

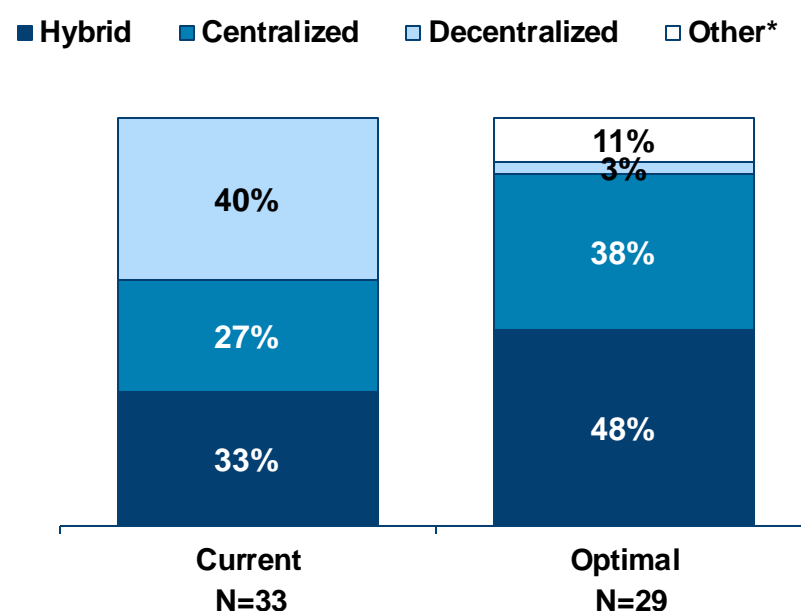
### KOLs management by pharma companies

KOL Management responsibility at pharma companies



- Functional and budget responsibility for KOL management are mainly in the hands of **Medical Affairs** departments

KOL Management organization at pharma companies



- Decentralized organizations are used by 40% of companies but recommended by only 3% of them due to lack of coordination and consistency



If KOLs services are mainly focused on clinical research, clinical advisory boards and disease state awareness exchanges; their impact is most often not formally evaluated

### Main KOLs services & assessment

Most important services carried out by KOLs

N=28



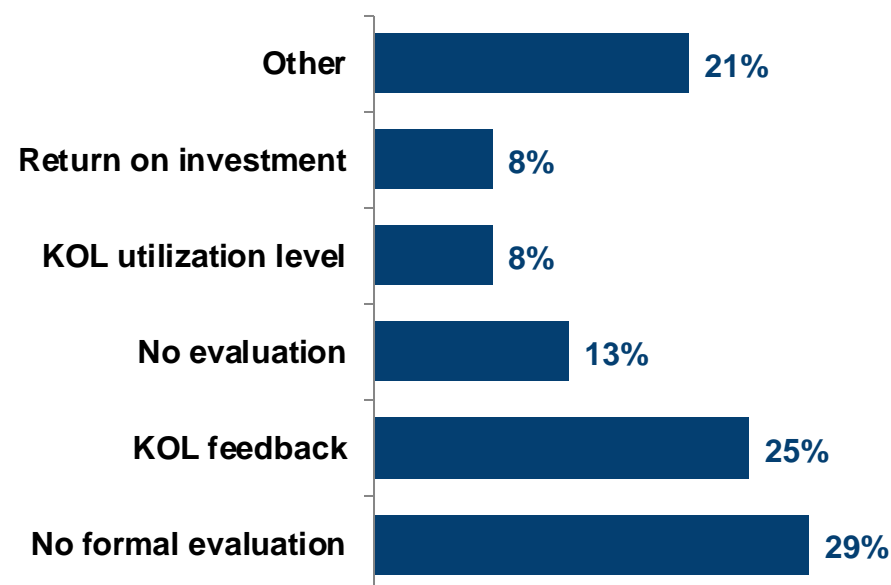
Mean score: 75

Note: Score based on the average importance rating (0 to 5) multiplied by the number of respondents per activity

- Clinical research support, participation to medical advisory boards and disease state awareness are viewed as the most important KOLs activities

Evaluation of KOL Management & Engagement

N=24

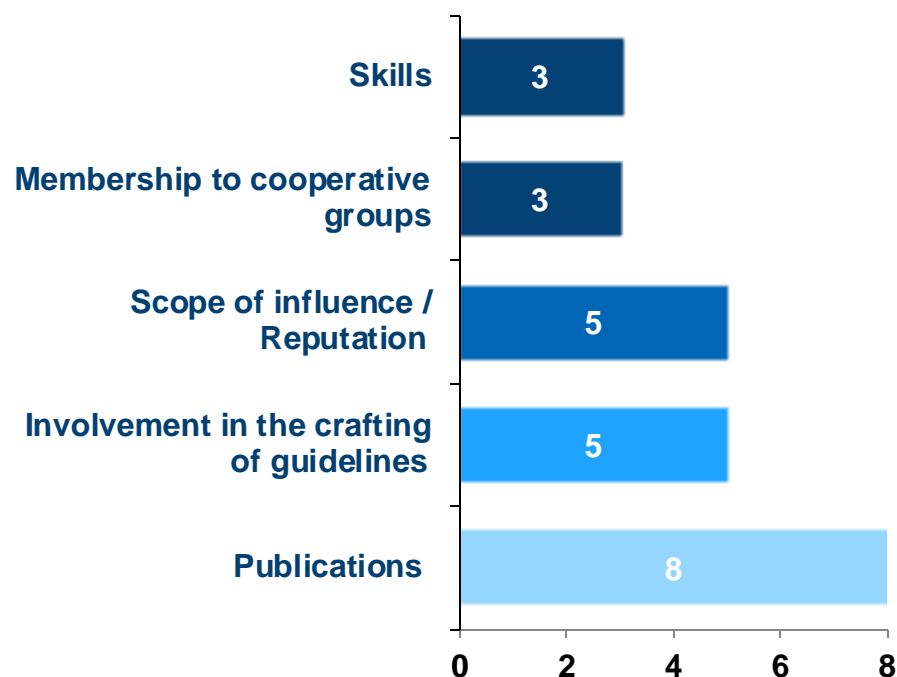


- There is no formal nor systematic measurement of the impact of KOLs engagement carried out by most of the pharma companies from the panel

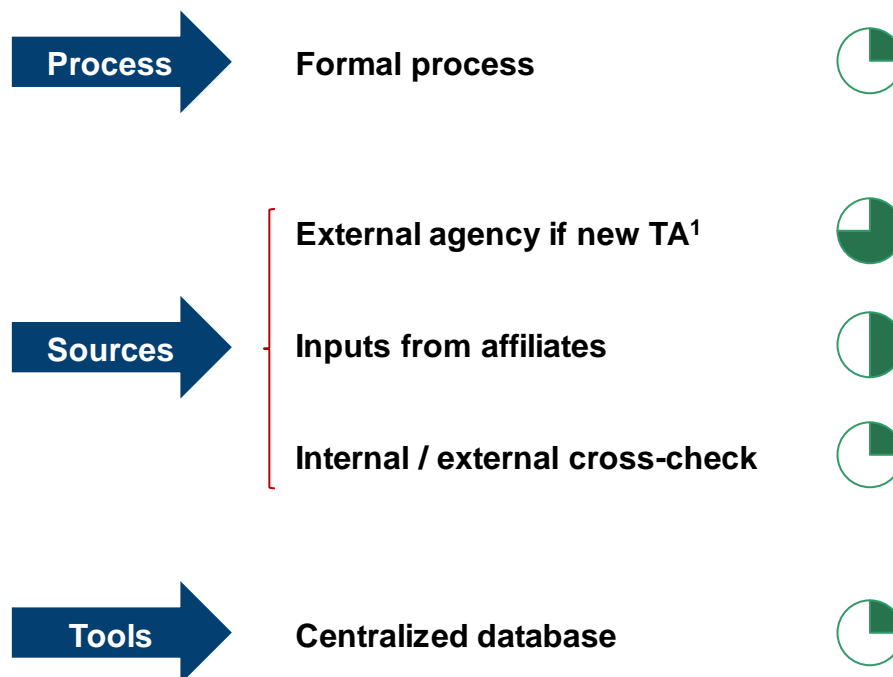
Few of the 8 benchmarked pharma companies have put in place a systematic and formalized process to qualify and select Global KOLs

### Global KOLs qualification & selection

#### Main criteria to select Global KOLs



#### Data gathering



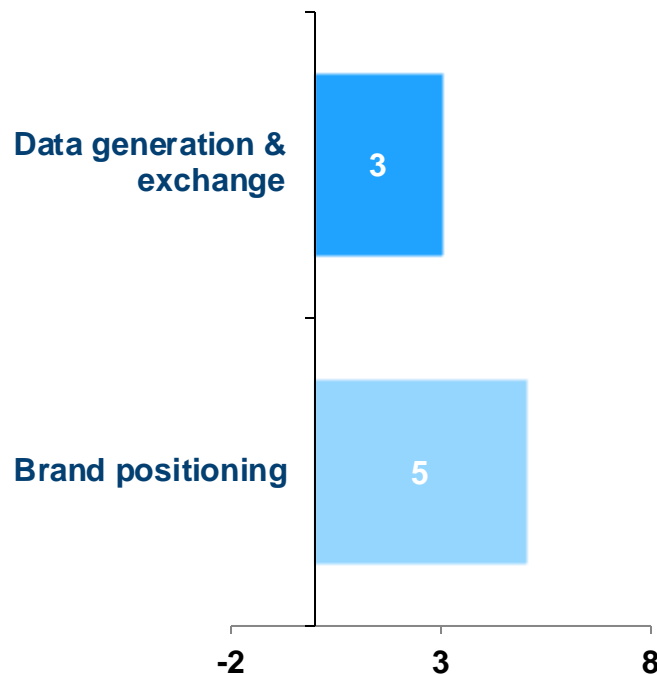
Note: Behavior & personality has been mentioned by one interviewee, as well as KOLs field of interest

*"In case of doubts, Global Medical Affairs may contact local Medical Affairs to get their own opinion regarding a Global KOL"*

According to the spontaneous statements of interviewees, Global KOLs are mainly engaged to give advice on brand positioning, produce and exchange scientific data

#### Main objectives while engaging with Global KOLs

Main objectives<sup>1</sup>



*“While engaging with a KOL, we make sure he is interested by the project on which we want to involve him”*

Objective setting

No formal approach, based on specific KOL expertise and company needs



#### Objective alignment on product Strategic Imperatives & Critical Success Factors

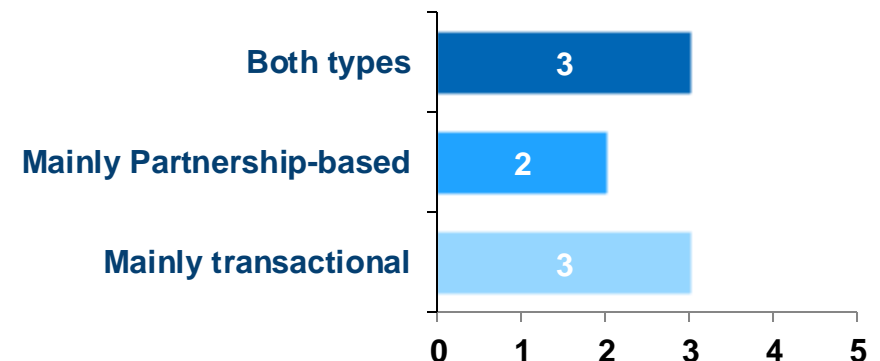
No formal alignment / no global vision



Alignment on Global Strategic Brand Plan / R&D Plan / Global Medical Affairs Plan



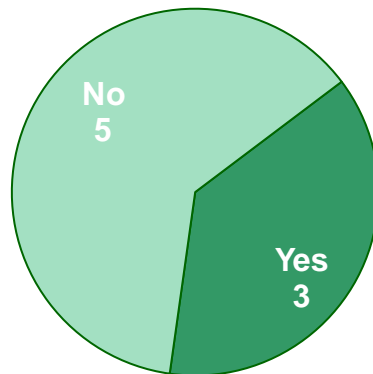
Type of agreements



Global KOL engagement plans are most often not formalized for each KOL and their follow-up over time is far from being systematic

### Global KOL engagement planning & execution follow-up

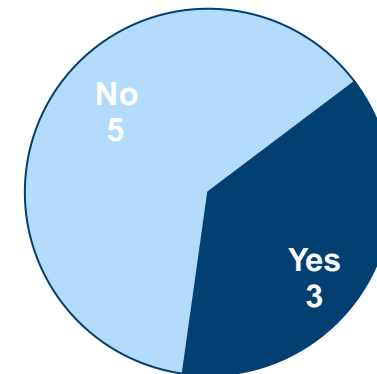
Global KOL engagement plans



*"We prepare an engagement plan but by project rather than by KOL. We engage a KOL to carry out a project"*

Execution quality follow-up

System to monitor the implementation of Global KOL engagements



*"In Europe, it is difficult to evaluate the performance of KOLs. It should be fact-based and not a judgement"*

### Main difficulties while engaging with Global KOLs

Poor internal alignment and multiple contact points

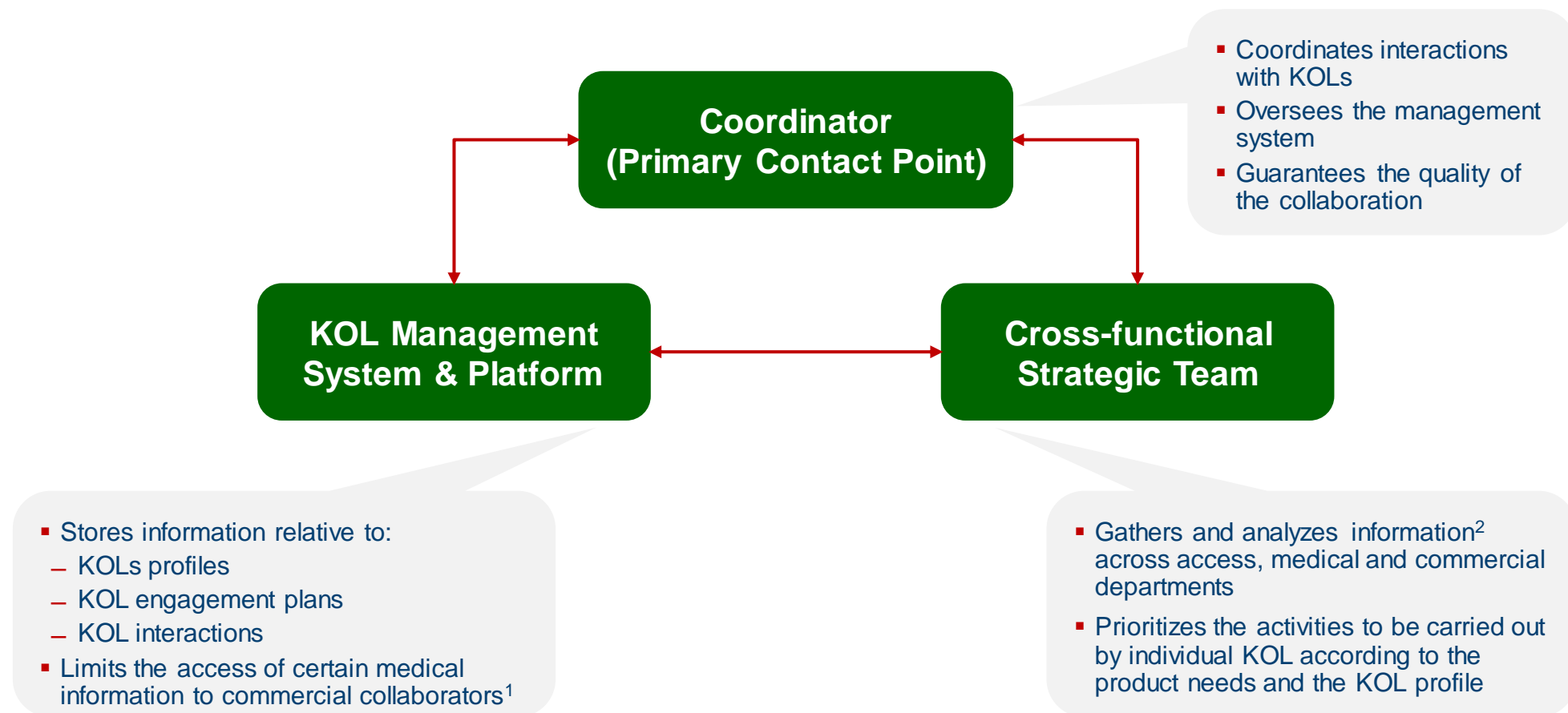


Overbooked and overused KOLs



The effective KOL management requires a cross-functional team working in the same direction, in a coordinated manner, with the help of a shared information system

### Strategic KOL Management components

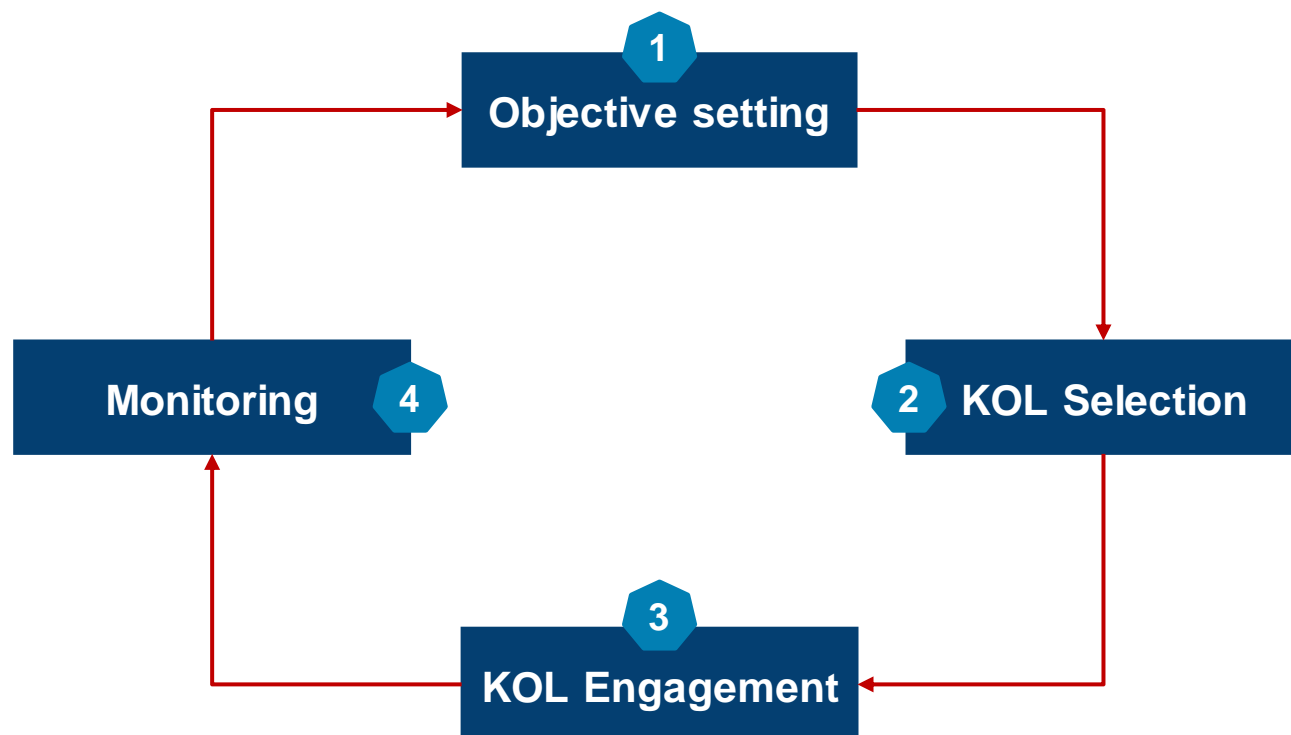


Sources: Best Practices, LLC (2014 & 2016) based on 33 companies, amongst which: Abb Vie, Amgen, Bayer, Genentech, Genzyme, Janssen, Merck & Co, Pfizer, Roche – Smart Pharma Consulting analyses

<sup>1</sup> Whenever required by the compliance rules – <sup>2</sup> Internal and external sources

The following 4-step approach is proposed to ensure an effective and efficient Strategic KOL Engagement Planning

### A 4-step approach



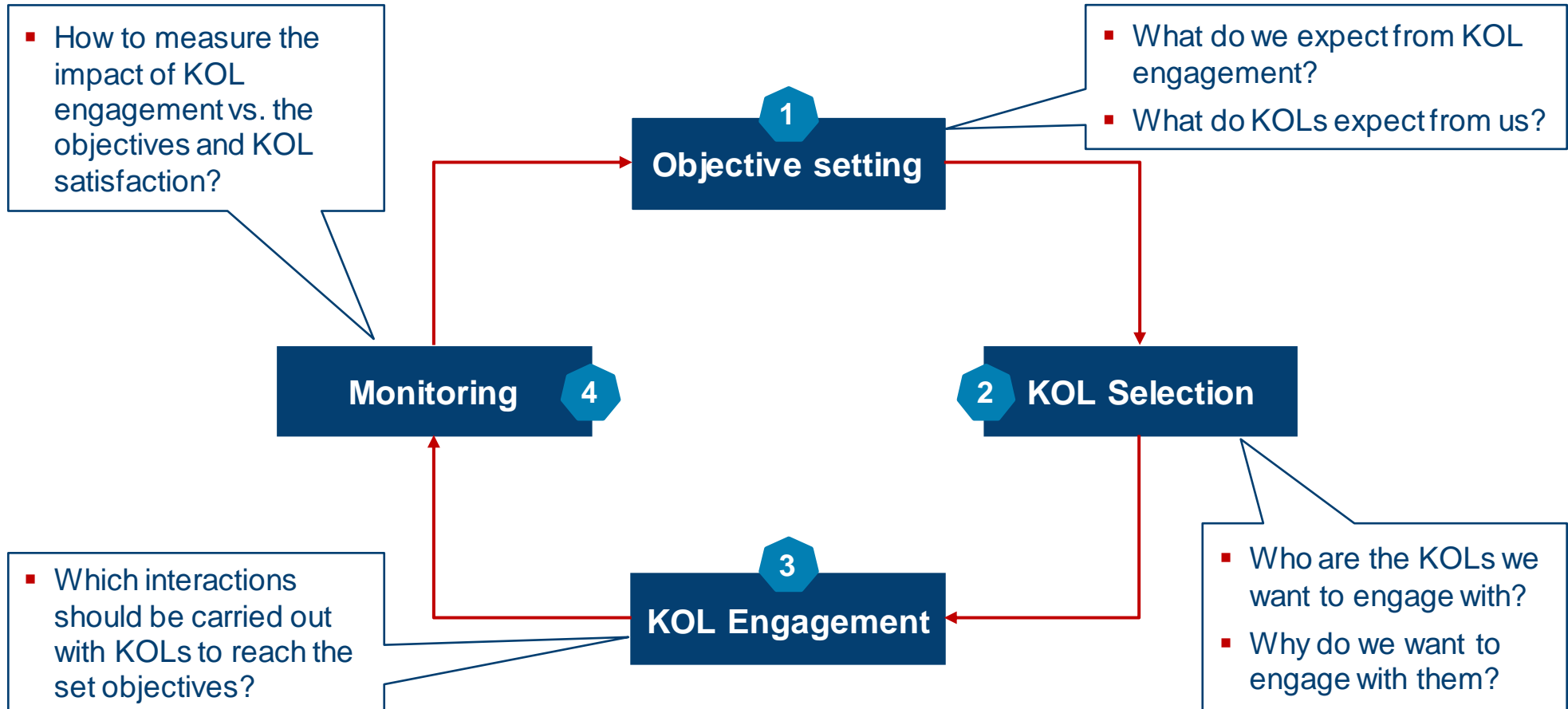
- Relationships with KOLs should be defined according to the **set objectives**
- Then, the prospective KOLs should be profiled and targeted
- Once KOLs have been selected, their **interactions** with the pharma company and the **activities** they are expected to carry out should be **defined** and **formalized** in an **engagement plan**
- The **execution** of the plan should be carefully **monitored** with the help of **KPIs** (Key Performance Indicators) and of **KEIs** (Key Execution Indicators)

## 2. Strategic KOL Engagement Planning

A 4-step approach (Introduction)

At each step, the following key questions should be carefully answered to ensure the proper implementation of the proposed Strategic KOL Engagement Planning process

### Key questions to be answered by key step

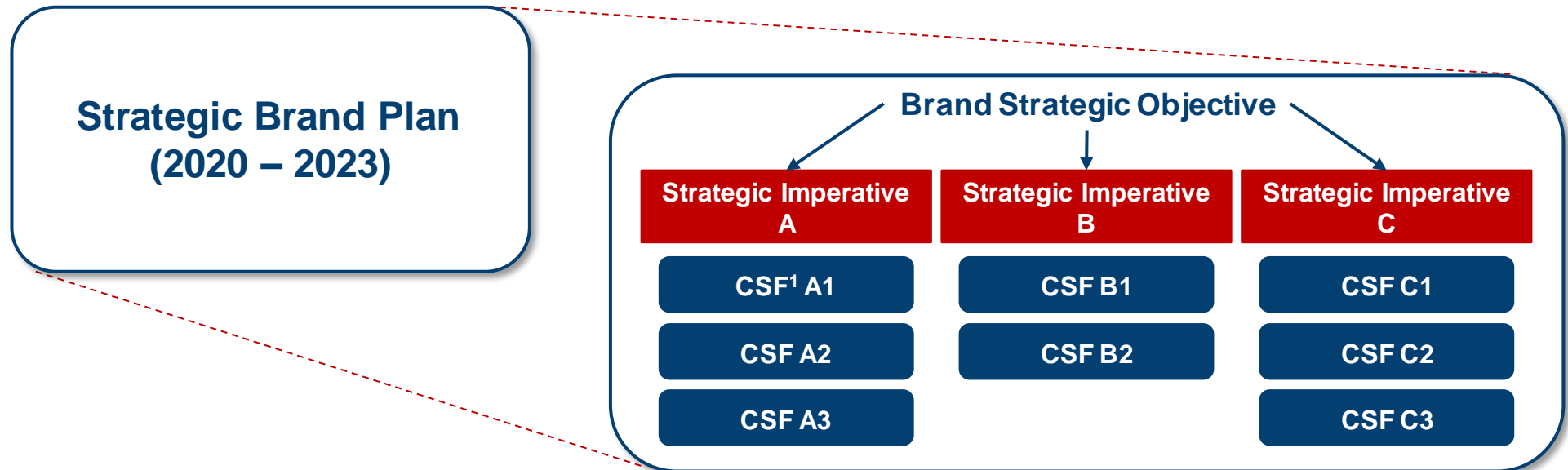


Sources: Smart Pharma Consulting

The global objectives set for KOL engagements should contribute – directly or indirectly – to meet the brand strategic objectives, irrespective of its life cycle position

1

### Strategic alignment



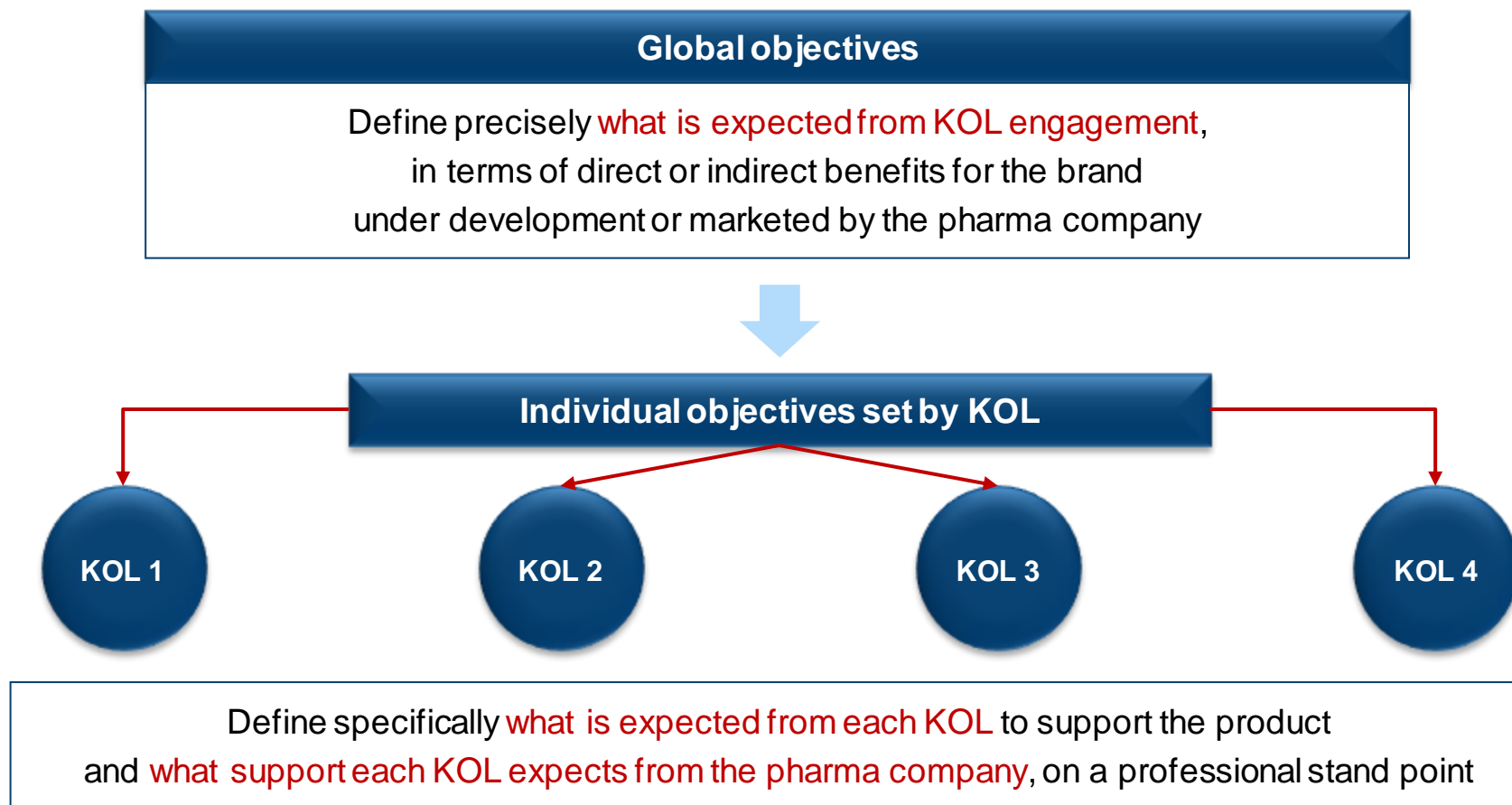
*The global objective of KOL engagements must support one or several CSFs and thus, contribute to fulfill the strategic imperatives to reach the Brand Strategic Objective*



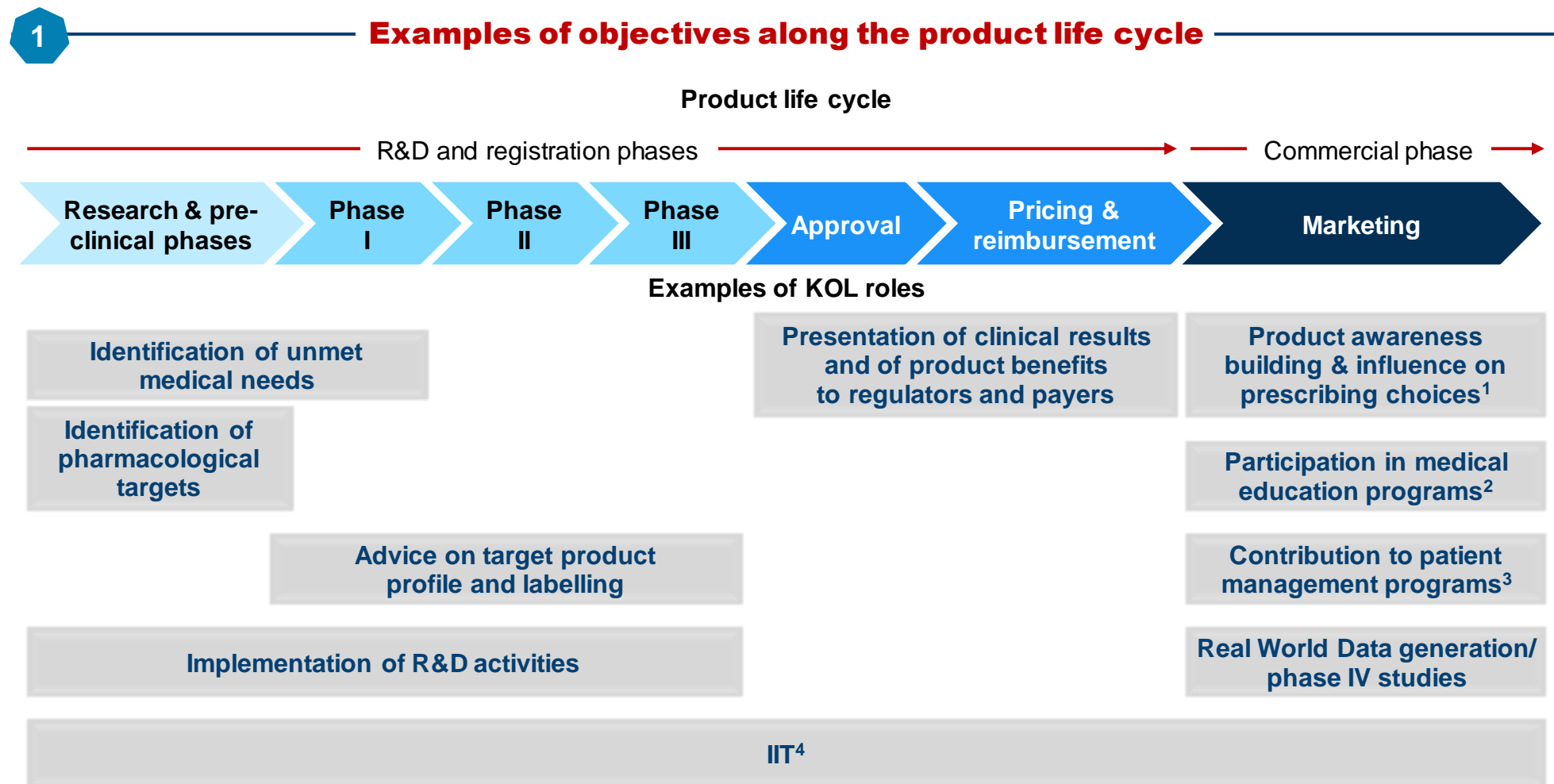
Before defining the KOL Engagement Plan, specific objectives by KOL, consistent with the Brand Strategic Objective, must be set

1

### Global vs. individual objective setting



The objective of the KOL partnership and the corresponding activities will depend on where the product is positioned on its life cycle



The selection phase consists in a 4-step process leading to a pool of KOLs with whom to engage to benefit (directly or indirectly) the brand

2

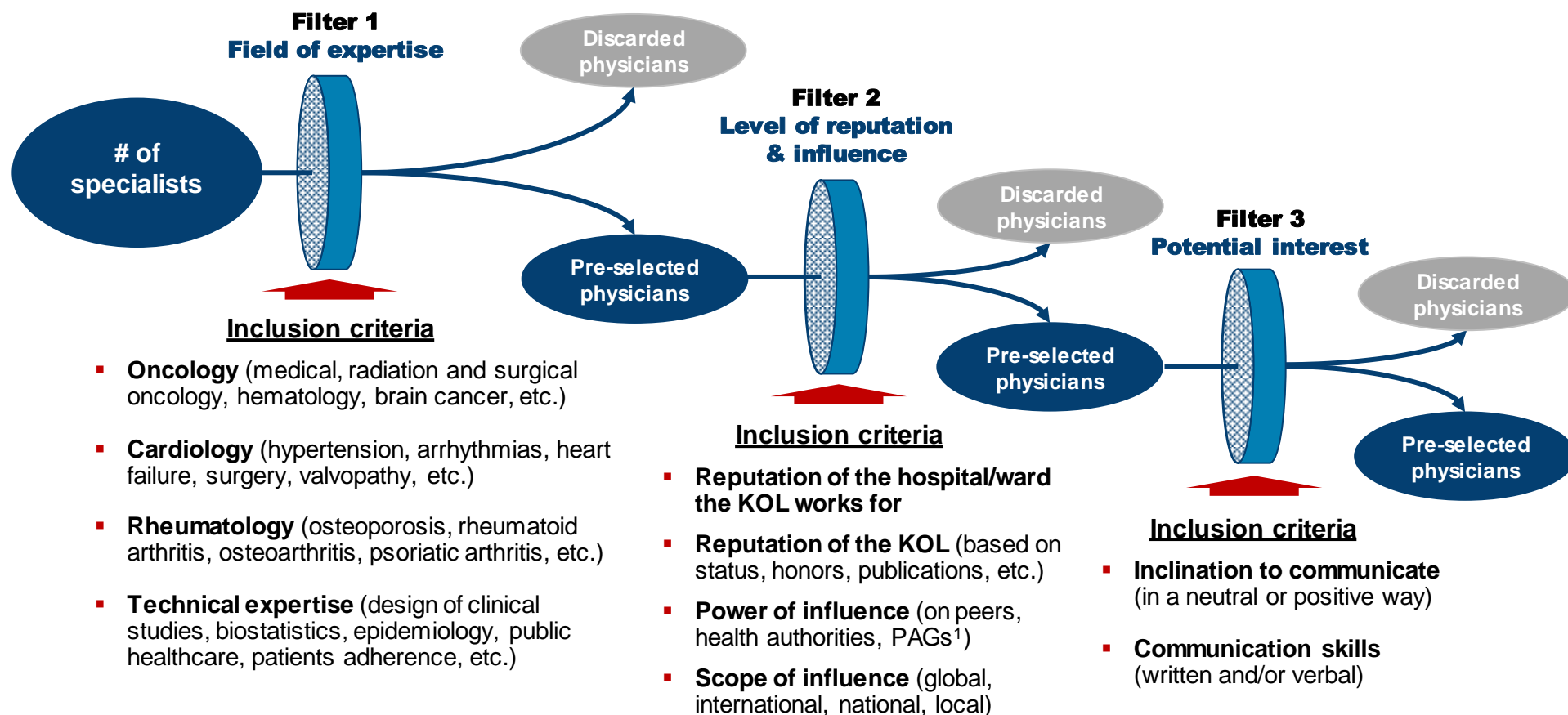
### Methodology

|                           | Key questions  | What to do?   |
|---------------------------|--|---|
| <b>Selection criteria</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What are the relevant selection criteria to be used considering the final objective?</li> </ul>                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review the relevant criteria (e.g. level of influence, scope of influence, scientific/media awareness, membership of a network, presence in Internet, etc.)</li> <li>Select a limited number of relevant criteria</li> </ul>       |
| <b>KOLs profiling</b>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What information should be collected?</li> <li>How to collect and analyze this information?</li> </ul>                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review internal / external databases to qualify KOLs</li> <li>Assess the number of publications, quality of journal, the impact factor, Almetrics<sup>1</sup>, quotes, lectures during conferences and congresses, etc.</li> </ul> |
| <b>KOLs segmentation</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What is the scope of influence and the degree of interest of the KOL for the brand and the related disease(s)?</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Map a preselection of KOLs on a matrix according to the most relevant criteria</li> <li>Identify KOLs networks of collaboration and influence (e.g. cooperative groups)</li> </ul>   |
| <b>KOLs selection</b>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Who are the KOLs that should be engaged?</li> <li>For which kind of engagement?</li> </ul>                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Select the KOLs</li> <li>Preliminarily define the types of engagement to carry out with the selected KOLs</li> </ul>   |

Relevant selection criteria and gathering of accurate and reliable information about the KOLs profiles are of utmost importance to optimize the value of their engagement

2

### Screening process (illustrative)



Qualification of KOLs should be documented with reliable and real-time data collected through desk research and field research (e.g. interviews of peers, pre-identified KOLs)

2

### How to qualify KOLs? (1/2)

| What data to collect?   | How to collect data?  | How to analyze data?   |
|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Education</b><br/>(e.g. university – hospital)</li> <li>▪ <b>Medical activity/position</b><br/>(e.g. specialty, medical department, status in the medical department)</li> <li>▪ <b>Teaching activity/position</b><br/>(e.g. topics taught, professor, lecturer)</li> <li>▪ <b>Field of expertise and interest</b><br/>(e.g. specific disease, pharmacological route, mode of action, medical technique)</li> <li>▪ <b>Membership in learned societies</b><br/>(titles / positions / activities) <b>and/or in more or less structured networks</b></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Internet search, direct search</li> <li>▪ Field research (e.g. peers, hospital pharmacists interviews, etc.)</li> <li>▪ Probing by collaborators from the medical department (e.g. MSLs<sup>1</sup>) and collaborators from other departments of the pharma companies (data could be stored and shared on a platform)</li> <li>▪ KOL Management vendors (e.g. Truven; KOL, LLC; OpenQ; Veeva Systems)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Being head of hospital and professor is a plus</li> <li>▪ Reputation of the hospital/teaching hospital or of the private institution where the KOL works should be considered</li> <li>▪ Global or International scopes of influence are preferable, in general, to national or local levels (but it depends on the objective)</li> <li>▪ Being a member of the management board of a learned society is a plus in terms of potential level of influence</li> </ul> |

Qualification of KOLs should be documented with reliable and real-time data collected through desk research and field research (e.g. interviews of peers, pre-identified KOLs)

2

### How to qualify KOLs? (2/2)

| What data to collect?   | How to collect data?  | How to analyze data?  |
|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Communication activities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– # articles published (impact factor<sup>1</sup>, Almetrics<sup>2</sup>, peer-/non peer reviewed journals, principal investigator (PI), etc.)</li> <li>– # of training/teaching activities p.a. (CME<sup>3</sup>)</li> <li>– # of lectures (congresses, symposiums, round tables)</li> <li>– Presence on the Internet</li> <li>– # of quotes by journalists in current year</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ <b>Partnership activities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Types of activities (e.g. lectures, clinical investigations, advisory boards)</li> <li>– With the company and its competitors</li> <li>– Potential level of interest (inclination to support the development/the proper use of a brand)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Review of published scientific articles (PubMed/Medline, Google scholar, Expertscape, Cochrane Library)</li> <li>▪ Evaluation of training/teaching activities and lectures by interviewing peers and collaborators of pharma companies</li> <li>▪ Google searching for presence and quotes on the Internet</li> <li>▪ Review of past performances with the company or its competitors (e.g. probing by collaborators of the company)</li> <li>▪ Interviews of peers</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The higher the impact factor is, the better</li> <li>▪ KOLs should be ideally positioned as 1<sup>st</sup> or last author in articles</li> <li>▪ A high number of training/teaching seminars and lectures is a plus</li> <li>▪ The perceived quality of articles, training, teaching and lectures should be assessed</li> <li>▪ Verbal (e.g. lectures, courses) and written communication (e.g. articles, websites)</li> <li>▪ KOLs should express their field of interest over the long term and their expectations from an engagement with the pharma company</li> </ul> |

The following table shows a proposed approach to evaluate and rank candidate KOLs to set up a list of Top Global KOLs, that should be continuously updated

2

### Scoring of candidate KOLs

Illustrative

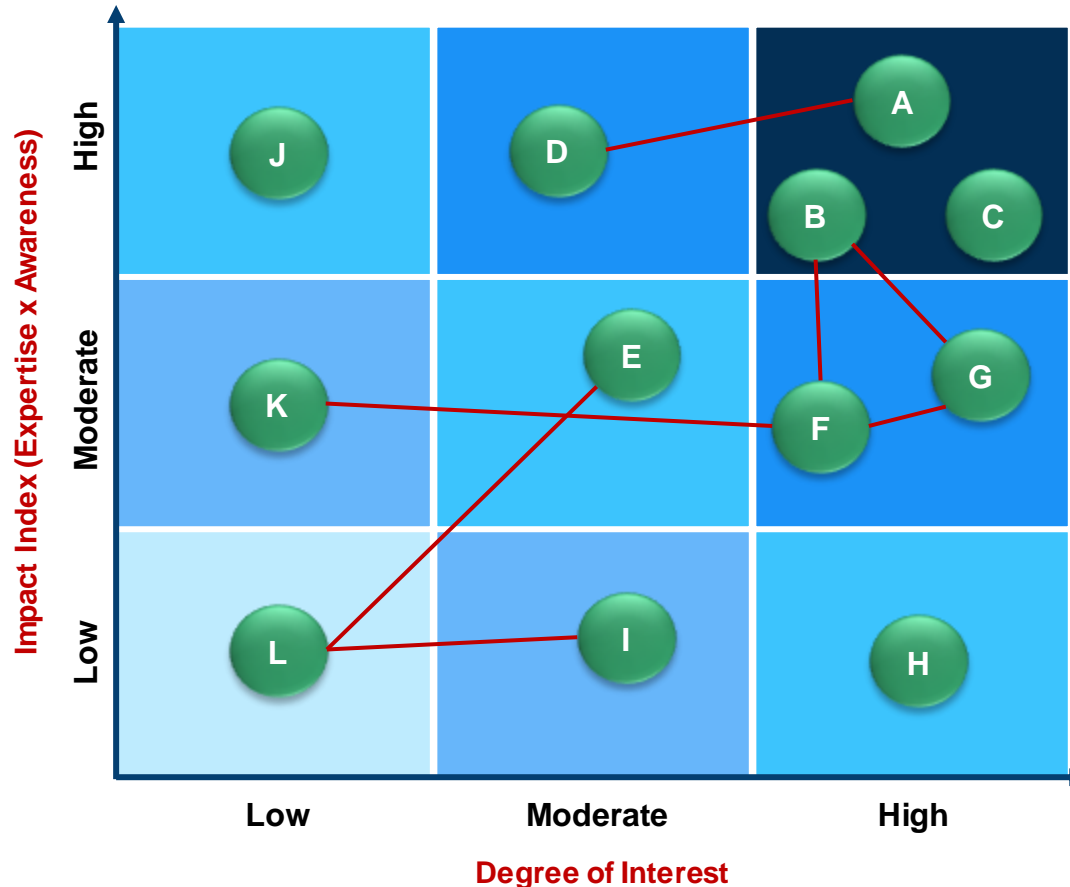
| Profiling parameters                                 |                                  | Prof. A  | Prof. B | Prof. C  | Dr. D |
|--|----------------------------------|----------|---------|----------|-------|
| EXPERTISE  | Pharmacological expertise        | 8        | 0       | 6        | 0     |
|  | Academic research                | 5        | 9       | 0        | 0     |
|  | Clinical research                | 5        | 0       | 9        | 5     |
|  | Clinical practice                | 0        | 0       | 6        | 9     |
|  | Scientific advisory board        | 8        | 8       | 7        | 6     |
|  | Sub-total score (A) <sup>1</sup> | 5.2      | 3.4     | 5.6      | 4.0   |
| AWARENESS  | Publication record               | 8        | 5       | 4        | 3     |
|  | Speaker record                   | 3        | 4       | 8        | 7     |
|  | Communicate skills               | 6        | 6       | 5        | 7     |
|  | Density of the network           | 5        | 7       | 7        | 3     |
|  | Sub-total score (B) <sup>1</sup> | 5.5      | 5.5     | 6.0      | 5.0   |
| Impact Index <sup>2</sup> score (A x B) <sup>1</sup> |                                  | 14.3     | 9.4     | 16.8     | 10.0  |
| KOL degree of interest                               |                                  | Moderate | High    | Moderate | Low   |
| Ranking  |                                  | 2        | 3       | 1        | 4     |

- The candidate KOLs can be ranked according to their **field of expertise**, their associated level of recognition in these fields, and their **level of awareness**
- The **KOL degree of interest** for the product should also be considered
- The assessment could be done on a **10-point scale** based on data coming from **external providers**, a panel of peers who will score each expert, combined with **the internal insights** available at the pharma companies level, etc.
- This approach will **help make a first cut** of the Top Global KOLs that should be continuously reevaluated

The proposed matrix is a useful tool to prioritize the KOLs with whom to engage and to pre-define the types of collaboration to carry out with them

2

### KOL targeting – Segmentation & selection



- The proposed matrix facilitates the **final selection** (targeting) of pre-selected KOLs based on their:
  - **Impact index** (combining their degree of expertise and awareness<sup>1</sup>)
  - **Potential interest**
- The **impact index** reflects the KOLs **ability to influence** other stakeholders (i.e. HCPs, policy makers, payers, patients, PAGs)
- The **degree of interest** reflects the KOLs **willingness to support**:
  - The **development** of the company **brand**
  - The proper **use of the brand**, once marketed
- The **network**<sup>2</sup> of KOLs should also **be considered**

■ Priority 1 ■ Priority 2 ■ Priority 3 ■ Not a Priority

— Networks of influence / collaborations amongst KOLs



To convince KOLs to partner, it is important to consider their expectations and to highlight the benefits they will draw from it in terms of professional development

2

### How to convince KOLs to partner?

#### What do KOLs want through engagements?

- The selection of KOLs should consider the **benefits they can offer** to the pharma companies and the **benefits** the pharma **companies** can **offer to them**
- *For so doing, the following questions should be addressed:*
  - Is the KOL **yet a partner** of the pharma company?
  - What has been qualitatively and quantitatively **his level of involvement**?
  - What has been **his feed-back** (level of satisfaction) from previous collaborations?
  - What is his mid- to long-term professional **ambition**?
  - What does **he expect from collaborations** with pharma companies?
  - Is he looking for a long-term partnership or a “fee-for-service” transaction?

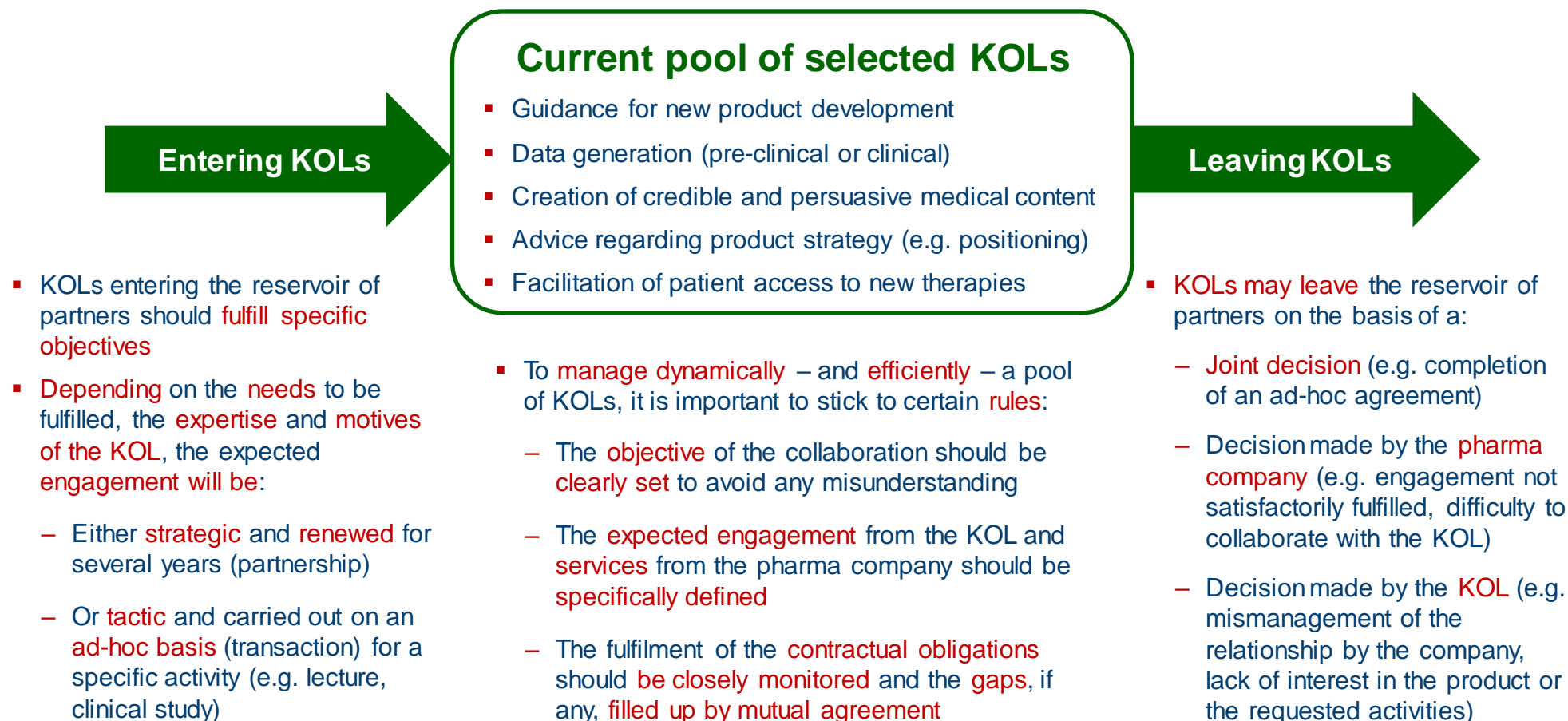
#### What should pharma companies propose to KOLs?

- Based on KOLs professional expectations, pharma companies can **propose ideas** of “**win-win**” **activities** to be carried out through engagements
- The **benefits** the **KOLs** will draw in terms of **personal awareness** and **competence development** through the engagement should be **emphasized**:
  - **Opportunity to participate in publication** of articles, **interviews** in media, **presentations** during congresses, lectures during medical meetings, etc.
  - **Provide expert opinion/guidance and/or...**
  - **... opportunity to participate in clinical research (e.g. clinical trials) or to carry out IITs**<sup>1</sup>
  - **Professional development** through the **access to recent information**, to **high education programs**<sup>2</sup>, by working in **new research/medical areas**, etc.

Pharma companies should be able to manage dynamically their selected KOLs by attracting newcomers and putting an end to some existing collaborations

2

### Dynamic management of selected KOLs

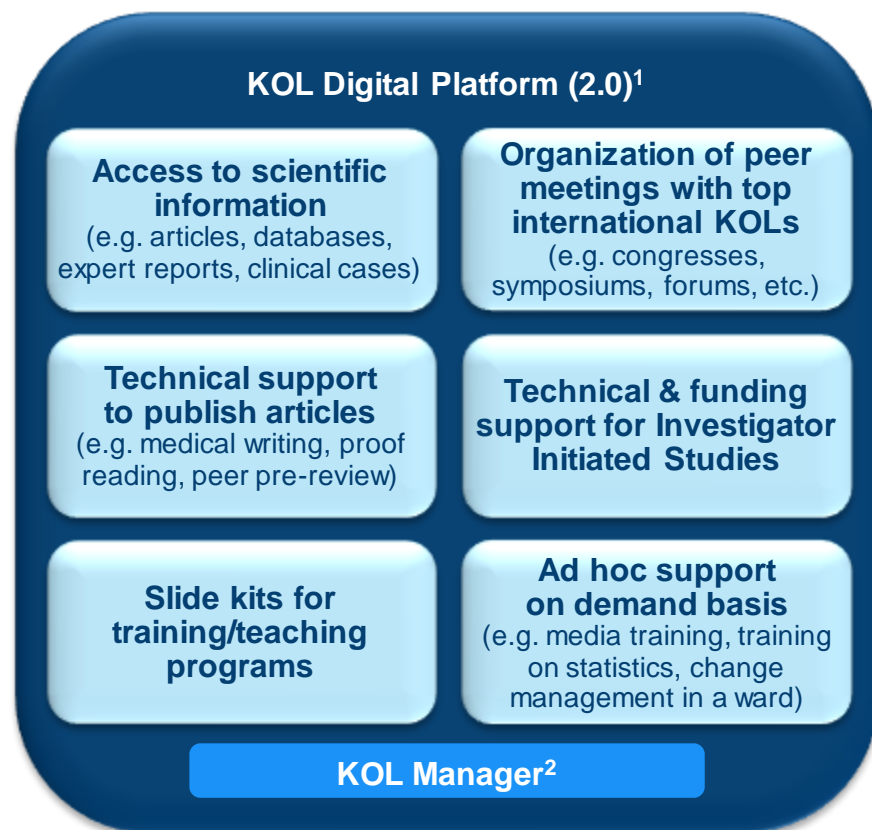


Pharma companies should balance what they expect from KOLs in terms of activities and what they give them in terms of services to ensure a win-win partnership

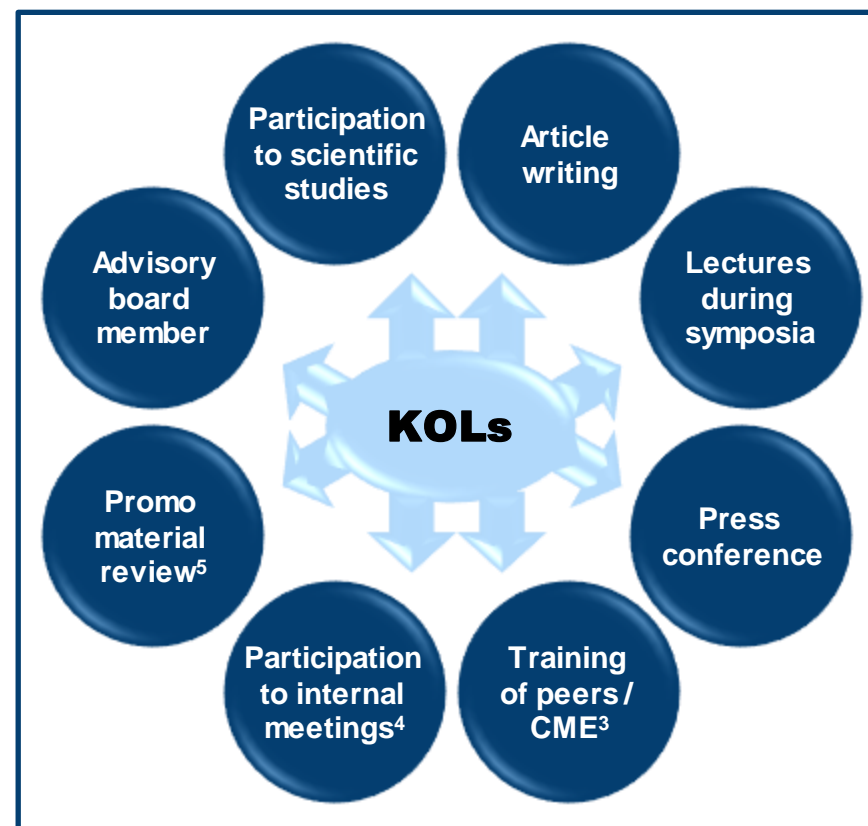
3

### Services proposed to & activities carried out by KOLs

Services proposed to KOLs (Illustrative)



Activities carried out by KOLs (Illustrative)



Sources: Smart Pharma Consulting

<sup>1</sup> Access limited to KOLs – <sup>2</sup> Each KOL should have a dedicated KOL Manager (e.g. a MSL) –

<sup>3</sup> Continuous Medical Education – <sup>4</sup> Such as lectures to sales forces, face-to-face meetings with the marketing team, etc. – <sup>5</sup> Such as visual aids, leaflets for patients

If KOLs share the objective of the pharma company and accept to communicate, the following means can influence medical practices and help better position products

3

### Potential value of KOL activities (1/2)

#### Article writing

- KOLs may support the pharma company priorities by communicating in scientific journals, professional magazines or lay press regarding:
  - New medical approaches, new guidelines, patient management, etc.
  - The position of its products in the therapeutic strategy

*Perceived reliability by readers: H*

*Number of exposed readers: L-H*

#### Lectures during symposia

- While giving lectures, KOLs may accept to cover topics of interest for the company...
- ... and/or to position its product vs. direct competitors or indirect therapeutic alternatives based on scientific data/rationale
- KOLs may also share their own experience as a prescriber of the company products

*Perceived reliability by participants: M*

*Number of exposed attendants: L*

#### Press conference

- Press conferences enable to have indirectly access to a larger number of readers
- The messages conveyed by KOLs may sometimes be modified by journalists
- It is rare for KOLs to make strong statements in favor of a product during a press conference

*Perceived reliability by readers: M*

*Number of exposed readers: M-H*

#### Training of peers / CME<sup>1</sup>

- KOLs may communicate to HCPs during training sessions regarding:
  - Medical topics of interest for the pharma company
  - The position of its products in the therapeutic strategy
- In such circumstances, KOLs may convey strong messages, if they decide to do so

*Perceived reliability by participants: M-H*

*Number of exposed attendants: M*

*H: Higher – M: Medium – L: Lower*

KOLs can be of great value through direct collaboration (by training, informing, giving advice, etc.) with medical and marketing teams of the pharma company

3

### Potential value of KOL activities (2/2)

#### Participation to internal meetings

- KOLs may play an effective role during internal meetings by:
  - Informing / training medico-marketing teams about scientific trends and position of competitors
  - Being invited as a “guest star” to show collaborators the ability of the pharma company to partner with top medical leaders
  - Playing a role with sales reps (e.g. selling forums)

#### Participation to scientific studies

- KOLs, especially if they are supposed to sign or co-sign the corresponding publication, may be very helpful to:
  - Participate to the design of the study
  - Carry out the study (either about a given pathology only or a pathology & its treatments involving the pharmaceutical company product)
- Involvement of KOLs in medical/clinical studies will depend on their field of interest

#### Advisory board member

- Advisory board meetings with KOLs should be preferred to individual meetings with KOLs when the objective is to get advice on:
  - **Estimating** the impact of key **market trends**:
    - Scientific innovation
    - New product development
    - Evidence generation
    - Market access strategy
    - Marketing strategy (positioning)
  - New **ideas** or **concepts**

#### Promo material review

- KOLs may collaborate with the marketing team by contributing to the creation of promotional materials
- Thus, they can create value by:
  - Suggesting messages
  - Developing a scientific rationale to support messages/claims of the products
  - Assessing and editing the content of promotional materials (visual aid, booklet...)

A comprehensive KOL engagement strategy requires from pharma companies to gain an in-depth understanding of KOL challenges, motivators and expectations

3

### KOLs challenges – motivators – expectations

#### Challenges

- **Trusting pharma:** product efficacy and safety, corporate reputation and service quality
- **Pharma engagement approach:** transactional arrangement vs. real relationship, multiple contact points
- **Time and doctor/patient ratio**
- **Regulation:** compliance, accountability, disclosure of compensation from pharma companies

#### Motivators

- **Prestige and renown**
- **Better healthcare outcomes**
- **Scientific journals and publications**
- **Membership in advisory boards, steering committees**
- **Formulation of guidelines and medical policies**
- **Speaking opportunities at congresses, symposia**
- **Participation in clinical trials and academic researches**

#### Expectations from pharma companies

- **Fair market value remuneration**
- **Presence in KOLs field of expertise**
- **Consistency, communication, support and interaction**
- **Value-adding interactions with pharma companies collaborators**
- **Research assistance**
- **Credibility and commitment to patient care**
- **Continuous engagement**
- **Genuine involvement & meaningful partnerships**
- **Transparency**

***“One goal that most KOLs share is to capture attention and prestige within their community”***

In general, the most common criticisms by KOLs at pharma companies are related to absence of true partnerships and of cohesive internal strategy and processes

3

### Top 10 poor pharma companies practices & key learnings

#### Top 10 poor practices

1. “30-page confidentiality agreement”
2. Unclear unspoken objectives
3. Inconsistent honoraria payments across projects
4. Strong commercial bias in discussions about treatments
5. Lack of listening
6. Lack of on-going communication
7. Sporadic approach: “No follow-up to show how they used our input or what they did”
8. “17 different people from the same company contacted me in the course of one month”
9. Changes in staff: “I never know who is who”
10. Relationship held by the CRO



#### Key learnings

- Set clear objectives
- Favor partnership-based to transactional agreements
- Consider what KOLs want from a relationship with pharma companies
- Ensure a transparent communication
- Have a clear demarcation between commercial, medical and clinical needs (and others, if needed)
- Ensure a consistent and coordinated communication between the pharma company and the KOLs



The development of a KOL Engagement Plan is a centerpiece to maximize the probability of success while partnering with KOLs

3

### KOL engagement plan (1/2)



WHY?

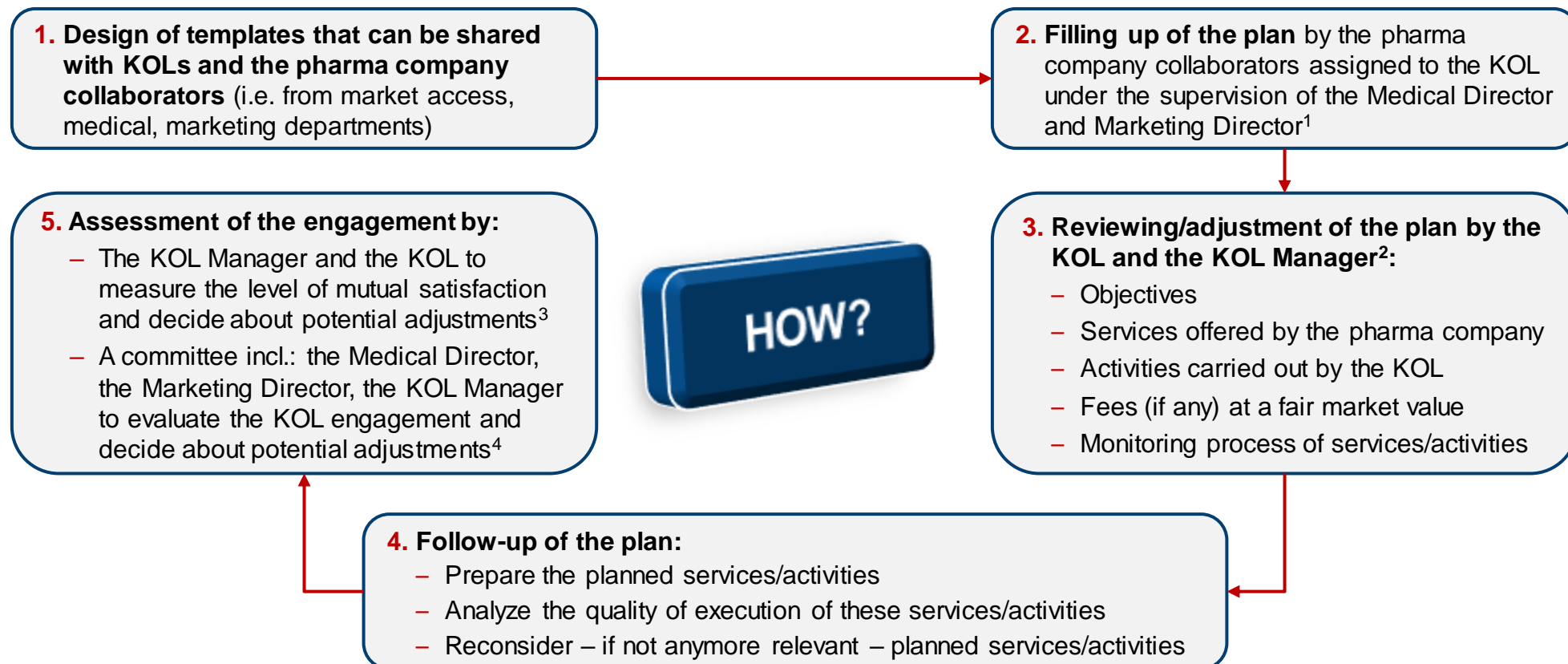
- The development of a clear – precise – concise and shared engagement (activity) plan, between KOLs and pharma companies – will ensure that:
  - Objectives of collaboration are well understood and agreed upon
  - Reciprocal expectations are well defined and accepted
  - Respective commitments are fulfilled and in due time
- The preparation of an engagement plan increases the probability of success of the partnership over time...
- ... and minimizes the risks of mutual disappointments
- The KOL Engagement Plan (KEP) will facilitate the coordination and the communication across the pharma company and thus optimize synergies across market access, medical and marketing departments



To build a useful and effective KOL Engagement Plan, it is recommended to follow the 5-step process proposed here-below

3

### KOL engagement plan (2/2)



***“To find common ground is a key success factor in KOL engagement”***

Individual KOL Engagement Plans should be co-developed by the KOL and the pharma company to avoid any misunderstanding and subsequent disappointments

3

### Development of KOL Engagement Plans

Strategic Brand Plan  
(2020 – 2023)



- The KOL engagement plan should be developed to support the Brand Strategic Objective as per the Strategic Brand Plan
- Each individual KOL engagement plan should be designed accordingly and be consolidated in a single document
- The Consolidated KOL Engagement Plan can cover a period lasting from one year to 3 or even 5 years, depending on the product position on its life cycle



The KOL Engagement Plan should be formalized in a document that could be structured as proposed in the table of contents, here-below

3

### Structure of a Consolidated KOL engagement plan

Illustrative



#### Table of Contents

- Introduction
  - Brand Strategic objective (vision)
  - Brand Strategic Imperatives & Critical Success Factors
  - Brand development priorities (3-year perspective)
- Expected contribution from the pool of Global KOLs
- Expected contribution from individual Global KOLs
  - Type of agreement (ad-hoc, partnership, duration, etc.)
  - Key activity selection (e.g. advisory board meeting, lecture, clinical study, peer-to-peer trainings)
  - Key activity description (e.g. objective, timing, accountability, budget)
  - Key activity monitoring (e.g. KPIs<sup>1</sup> and KEIs<sup>2</sup>)

The KOL Engagement Plan should include key information extracted from the KOL database, specify the objectives of the collaboration, its scope and duration

3

### Individual KOL engagement plan – ID Card

Illustrative

|                           |   |                            |  |  |                                 |  |
|---------------------------|---|----------------------------|--|--|---------------------------------|--|
| <b>KOL name</b>           | First name – surname  | <b>Medical status</b>      | MD – head of medical department – professor of medicine, etc.                  |  | <b>Medical setting</b>          | Private hospital –<br>Public hospital –<br>Teaching hospital |
| <b>Expertise</b>          | E.g. therapeutic area, organ, pharmacology, academic and/or clinical research, scientific advisory boards, etc. | <b>Awareness</b>           | Publications – Lectures –<br>Communication skills - Network                    |  | <b>Impact Index<sup>1</sup></b> | Numerical scale to be determined                             |
| <b>Degree of Interest</b> | Low – Moderate – High   | <b>Points of vigilance</b> | E.g. mobility, adherence to deadlines, quality of presentation documents, etc. |  | <b>Ranking</b>                  |  |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| <b>Primary objectives of the collaboration</b>                       |  |  |  |  |  |
| <b>Specific activities planned within the engagement<sup>1</sup></b> |  |  |  |  |  |

|                            |  |                                  |                                   |
|----------------------------|--|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>Type of agreement</b>   |  | <b>Duration of the agreement</b> |                                   |
| • Transactional agreement: |  | • Annual:                        | from: ---/---/--- to: ---/---/--- |
| • Partnership agreement:   |  | • Multi-year:                    | from: ---/---/--- to: ---/---/--- |

The KOL Engagement Plan should describe the activities the KOL is engaged to carry out to meet specific objectives, and it should include monitoring indicators

3

4

### Individual KOL Engagement Plan – KOL Activity Card

Illustrative

|                     |  |                   |   |                                     |  |
|---------------------|--|-------------------|---|-------------------------------------|--|
| <b>KOL Activity</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lecture, training of peers, advisory board, press conference, article writing, IIS, clinical study, etc.</li> </ul> | <b>Objectives</b> | • | <b>Pharma company contact point</b> |  |
|---------------------|--|-------------------|---|-------------------------------------|--|

| Key implementation steps | Timing | Points of caution | Expected output / value of the activity for... |                        |                                      |
|--------------------------|--------|-------------------|--|------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| •                        |        | •                 | ... the KOL herself/himself                    | ... the pharma company | ... 3 <sup>rd</sup> parties<br>----- |
| •                        |        | •                 | •  | •                      | •                                    |
| •                        |        | •                 |  |                        |                                      |
| •                        |        | •                 |  |                        |                                      |
| •                        |        | •                 |  |                        |                                      |

| Feasibility (High – Moderate – Low) |   | Key Execution Indicators  | Key Performance Indicators  |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|---|
| <b>Technical</b>                    | • | • These indicators measure the quality of execution of the activity | • These indicators measure the impact (output/value/benefit) of the activity for the different targets (the KOL, the pharma company and possibly for 3 <sup>rd</sup> parties, like peers, patients, PAGs) |
| <b>Regulatory</b>                   | • |   |   |
| <b>Financial</b>                    | • |   |   |

Sources: Smart Pharma Consulting

The KOL Engagement Plan should also describe, plan and follow up the services proposed to the KOL, as a constituent of the partnership-based agreement signed

### 3 4 Individual KOL Engagement Plan – Partnership-based Service Card Illustrative

|                         |  |            |   |                              |  |
|-------------------------|--|------------|---|------------------------------|--|
| Pharma company services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to scientific information, technical support to publish articles, provision of training/teaching materials, organization of peer meetings, etc.</li> </ul> | Objectives | • | Pharma company contact point |  |
|-------------------------|--|------------|---|------------------------------|--|

| Key implementation steps | Timing | Points of caution | Expected output / value of the service for... |                        |
|--------------------------|--------|-------------------|---|------------------------|
| •                        |        | •                 | ... the KOL herself/himself                   | ... the pharma company |
| •                        |        | •                 | •   | •                      |
| •                        |        | •                 |   |                        |
| •                        |        | •                 |   |                        |
| •                        |        | •                 |   |                        |

| Feasibility (High – Moderate – Low) |   | Key Execution Indicators   |  | Key Performance Indicators   |  |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|--|--|--|
| Technical                           | • | • These indicators measure the quality of execution of the service provided to the KOL |  | • These indicators measure the impact of the service provided to the KOL |  |
| Regulatory                          | • |  |  |  |  |
| Financial                           | • |  |  |  |  |

Sources: Smart Pharma Consulting

**Key execution and performance indicators are essential to optimize the chance of a proper execution of services / activities and of a win-win partnership**

4

### Examples of tools to monitor engagements with KOLs (1/2)

| KOLs activities   | Key execution indicators (KEIs)  | Key performance indicators (KPIs)   |
|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lecture during symposia or congresses</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interest (10-point scale)</li> <li>Utility (10-point scale)</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Global level of satisfaction of attendees (10-point scale)</li> <li>Inclination of attendees to support &amp; prescribe the product:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of lectures/trainings/publications</li> <li>Quality/objectivity of messages conveyed to peers, pharmacists, PAGs, etc.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training of peers</li> </ul>                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Practicality (10-point scale)</li> <li>Implementation<sup>1</sup> (10-point scale)</li> </ul>                                       |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Article writing</li> </ul>                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acceptance by recognized journals (scientific, medical, or in lay press, etc.)</li> <li>Post on highly regarded websites</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Impact factor and Altmetrics<sup>2</sup> (for scientific / medical journals)</li> <li>Number of broadcasted issues for lay press</li> </ul>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Press conference</li> </ul>                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number and quality of press conferences conducted</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of views / likes on Internet</li> <li>Contribution of content to support the product</li> </ul>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participation in scientific studies</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementation (number of patients recruited, timing, actual costs vs. budget)</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publication of an article in a renowned scientific journal</li> <li>Impact of the publication on product reputation</li> </ul>   |

**Key execution and performance indicators are essential to optimize the chance of a proper execution of services / activities and of a win-win partnership**

4

### Examples of tools to monitor engagements with KOLs (2/2)

| Pharma company services  | Key execution indicators (KEIs)   | Key performance indicators (KPIs)   |
|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to scientific information</li> </ul>                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interest (10-point scale)</li> <li>Utility (10-point scale)</li> <li>Practicality (10-point scale)</li> <li>Implementation<sup>2</sup> (10-point scale)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Global level of satisfaction of KOLs (10-point scale)</li> <li>Inclination of KOLs to support the pharma company products:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of lectures / trainings / publications</li> <li>Quality/objectivity of messages conveyed to peers, pharmacists, patients, etc.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Increased level of KOLs awareness and reputation</li> <li>Increased level of products awareness and reputation</li> </ul> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organization of peer meetings with top global / international KOLs</li> </ul> |   |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publications support</li> </ul>   |   |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>IIT<sup>1</sup> support</li> </ul>  |   |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Slide kits for training / teaching programs</li> </ul>                        |   |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ad hoc support on demand basis</li> </ul>                                     |   |   |



### 3. Conclusions

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#### Future trends *in KOL Engagement Planning*

- Fewer opportunities for transactional and agreements (e.g. ad-hoc contributions such as lecture at a symposium)
- Greater independence of KOLs and increasing pro-bono contribution where mutual benefits lie (e.g. research program, lectures reinforcing their awareness)
- More independent collaboration projects, indirectly or not connected to a specific product (e.g. research program, education program, best practice sharing)
- Increasing presence, awareness and influence of KOLs on Internet
- Broader definition of KOLs from clinical expert to patient advocate, payor, academic institution, charity, etc.
- Evolving internal policies to foster transparency and compliance with industry code of practice

### 3. Conclusions

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#### **Recommendations** *for a Successful KOL Engagement Planning*

1. Define **clear** and **precise objectives** for each KOL
2. Build a **relationship** based on an **exchange of services / activities** (vs. fee-for-service deal)
3. Make sure that **services** provided to KOLs **contribute to fulfill** their **needs/expectations**
4. Ensure an **open** and **transparent relationship**
5. Do not ask **KOLs** to **promote** your **products**, you would affect their reputation and yours
6. Make the **best use** of **KOLs limited time** by organizing useful exchanges
7. Assign a **KOL Manager** who is the KOL-preferred contact point and who ensures alignment and information sharing between all collaborators of your company in contact with her/him
8. Create a **technology platform** to **store**, **structure** and **share data** relative to KOL profiles and engagements (planned and achieved)

*Define **internal guidelines** and a **control process** to prevent any **compliance issues** that could damage your corporate reputation*

## Best-in-Class Series

- This series intends to share concepts, methods and tools to boost the efficiency and efficacy of executives having operational responsibilities in the pharma business
- We have yet published eight Best-in-Class issues:
  1. MSLs
  2. Pharma Marketers
  3. Medical Reps
  4. Hospital KAMs
  5. Pharma BD&L
  6. Pharma Market Research
  7. Pharma Strategy Crafting
  8. Pharma Field Force Organization
  9. Hospital & Institution Relationships in Regions

## Strategic KOL Engagement Planning

- This position paper proposes an approach and a selection of enabling tools to help pharma companies effectively and efficiently engage with KOLs (Key Opinion Leaders)
- We recommend an approach in four steps:
  1. Objective setting
  2. KOL selection
  3. KOL engagement
  4. KOL monitoring

## Smart Pharma Consulting Editions



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  - Our teaching and training activities
  - The publication of articles, booklets, books and expert reports
- As of today, more than 100 publications in free access can be downloaded from our website
- Since the beginning of 2019, we have published one business report (The French Pharma Market 2018 – 2023)
- Since the beginning of 2018, we have published:
  - 10 position papers in the “Best-in-Class Series” and 3 in the “Smart Manager Series”
- Our research activities in pharma business management and our consulting activities have shown to be highly synergistic
- We hope that this new publication will interest you and we remain at your disposal to carry out consulting projects or training seminars to help you improve your performance

Best regards

Jean-Michel Peny