



LE CLUB DU  
KEY ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT



# 11ème Symposium du Key Account Management

Le RDV incontournable des professionnels  
francophones du Key Account Management  
**9 et 10 octobre 2025**

HALIFAX CONSULTING

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## Different world, different key account managers



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President, Association for  
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- KAM research, writing, teaching & education, consultancy, and developing new concepts
- Building communities: founder of 3 KAM Best Practice Clubs – Cranfield, Warwick & AKAM
- 30 years of KAM!

**What is KAM?**

**Is it worth it?**

**How does it work?**



# The Association for Key Account Management



**Making  
connections**



**KAM qualifications**



**Recognising excellence**



**Learning and developing  
knowledge**

A not-for-profit professional membership organisation on a mission to advance Key Account Management by:

- deepening understanding
- raising professional recognition
- driving higher standards of practice

Global and online, with focus on Europe



[www/akam.org](http://www.akam.org)

**Professionalising Key Account Management**

# How has the world changed?



A different world...

## Heightened customer focus



- More global interconnectivity and specialist participants
  - More complex supply chains, wider ecosystems
- More indirect customers, collaborators and influencers

## New/different emphasis on key account manager capabilities

## Machines v salespeople

« **65%** short-term decisions within Supply Chain Planning automated or autonomous by 2026. »  
*Gartner, 2023: 'Hype Cycle for Supply Chain Planning Technologies'*

« By 2030 **30%** of all B2B commerce will be machine to machine. »

Merkle, 2023: 'B2B futures: the view from 2030'

**Many sales jobs will disappear**

## What about Key Account Managers?

« We do not think AI will replace the role of the key account manager, but a key account manager who has mastered the use of AI will probably replace a key account manager who hasn't. »

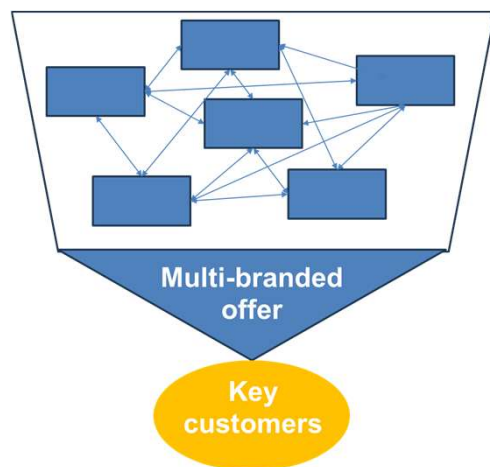
*Prior & Marcos-Cuevas, IMM, 2025*

« Emotional intelligence will rise in importance ... it's one of the few things machines can't replicate. »

*Tyler Cowen, 'AVERAGE IS OVER', 2015*

**Key Account Management is a management role,  
selling is a marginal part**

## Managing more complex supply chains: value-creating ecosystems

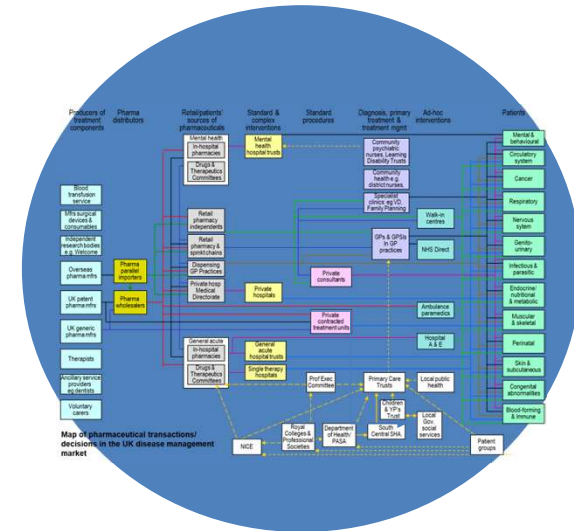
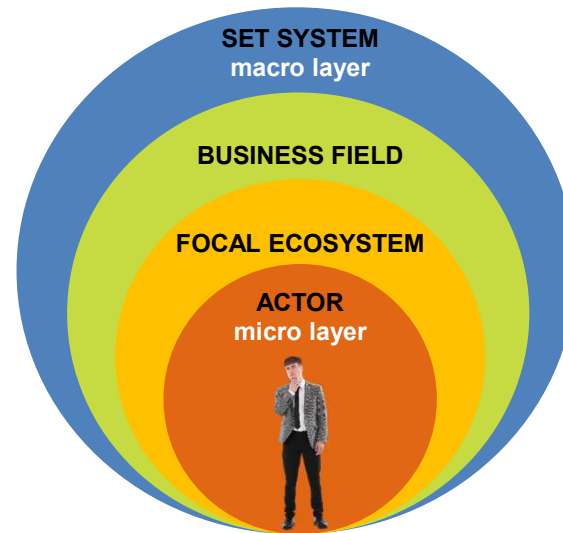


- Dramatically reduced hurdles to partnering due to technology.
- Ecosystems drive innovation, pace and capital efficiency.
- 'Build, buy, partner' decisions: 'partner' option favoured, building takes time and buying takes capital.

Business ecosystems create a higher level of value collectively than members can create individually.

(Sarafin, EY 2023)

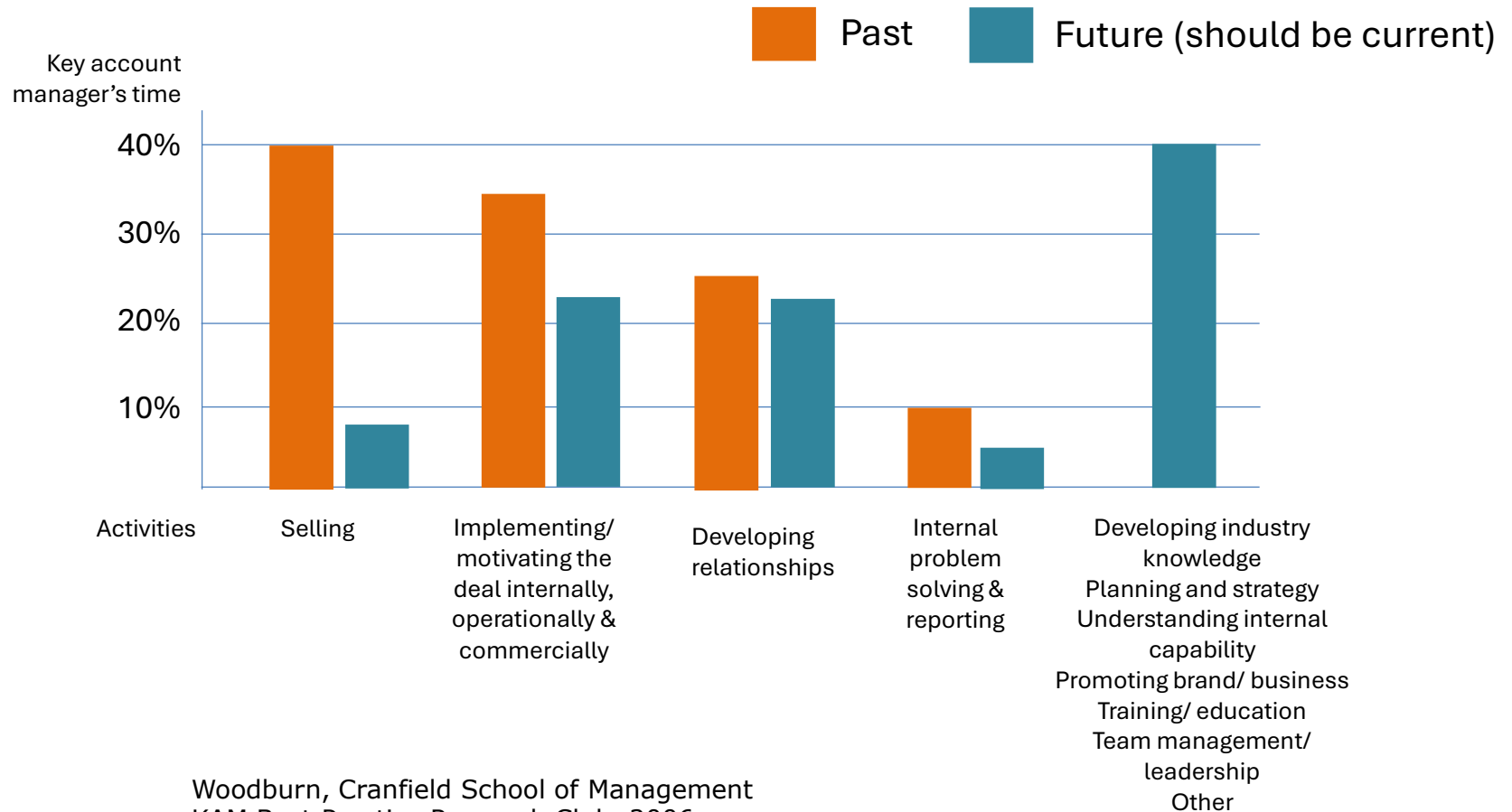
# Reality: even larger ecosystems



Networks, ecosystems, fields, market systems?  
 Making sense of the business environment  
[Möller, Nenonen](#) and [Storbacka, IMM](#) 2020

Who else is there to understand and work the ecosystem?

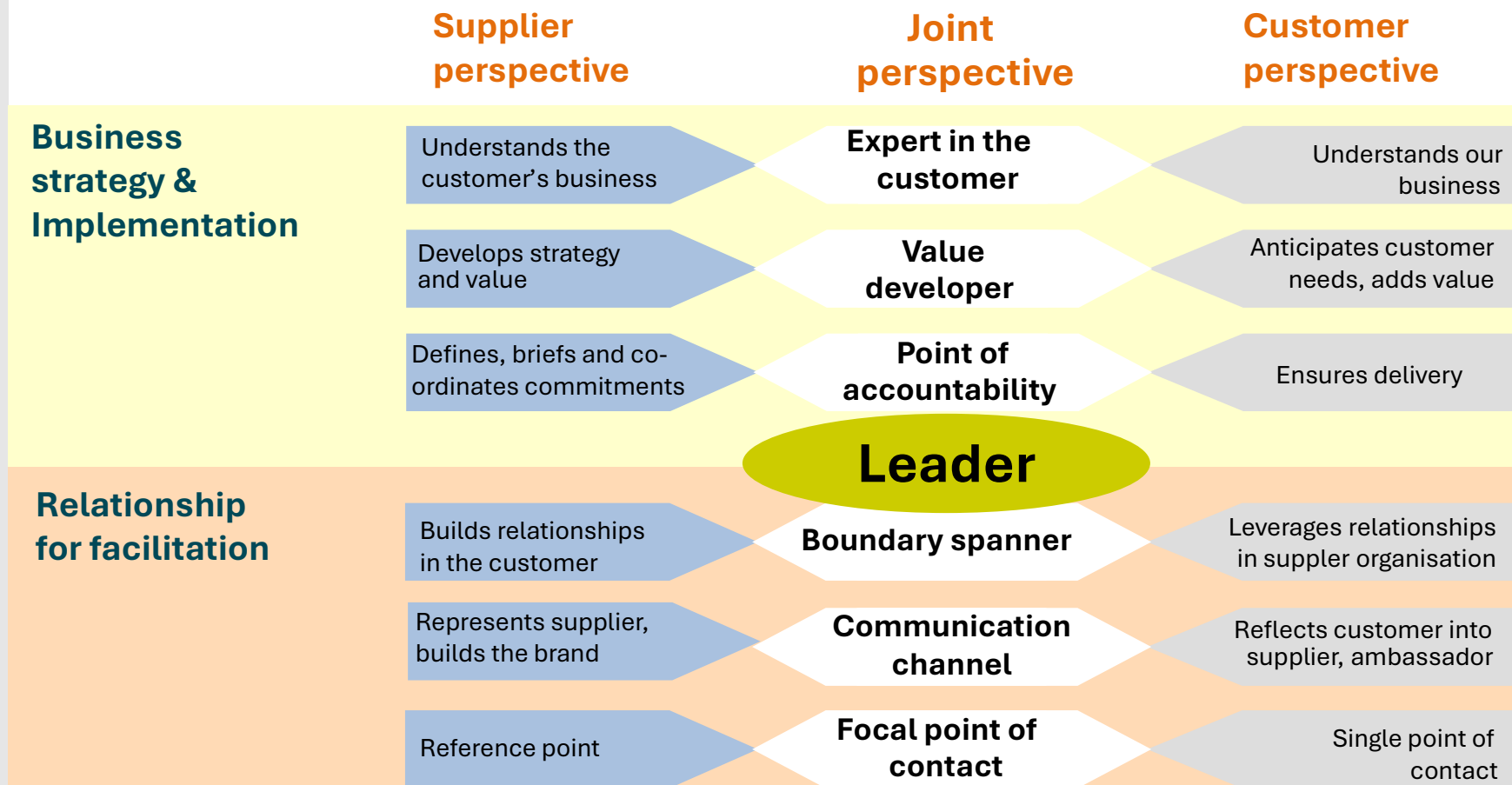
# Interpreting the role by time spent



# The key account manager role

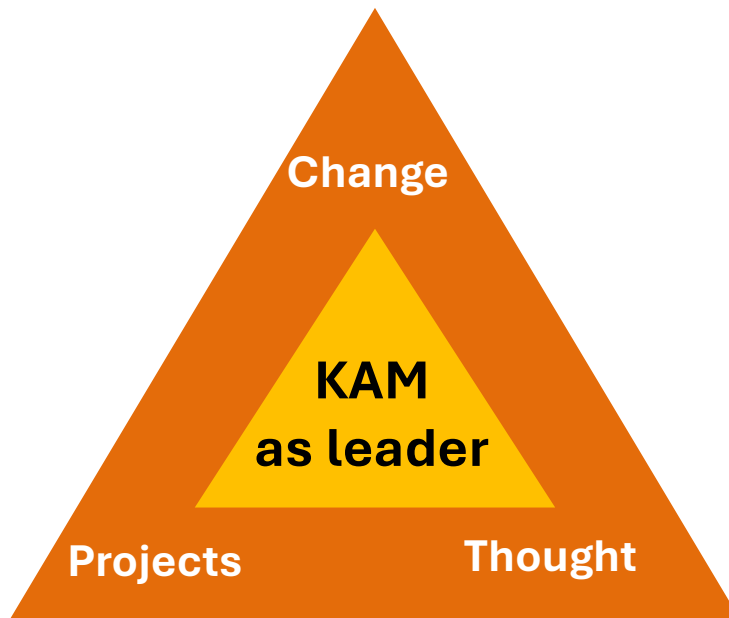


# What do customer and supplier expect of the key account manager role?

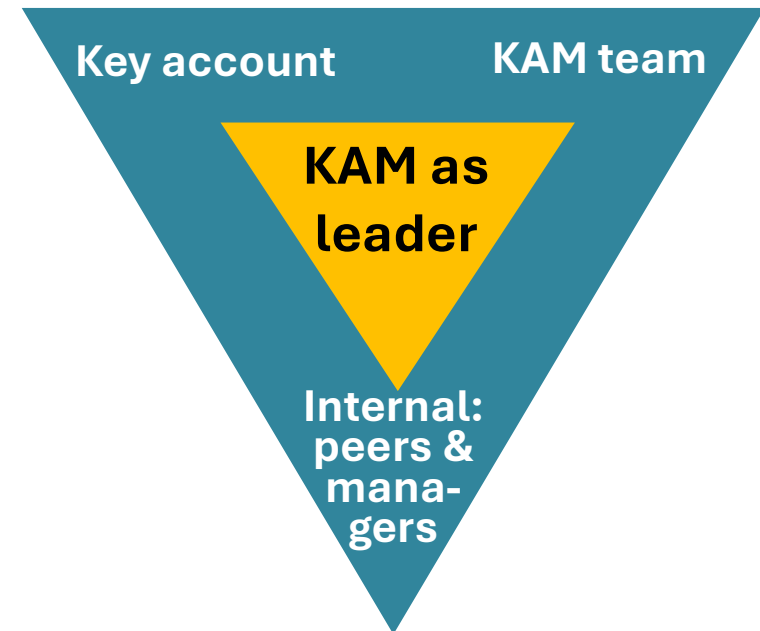


# Key account manager leadership roles

**Leading what?**



**Leading whom?**



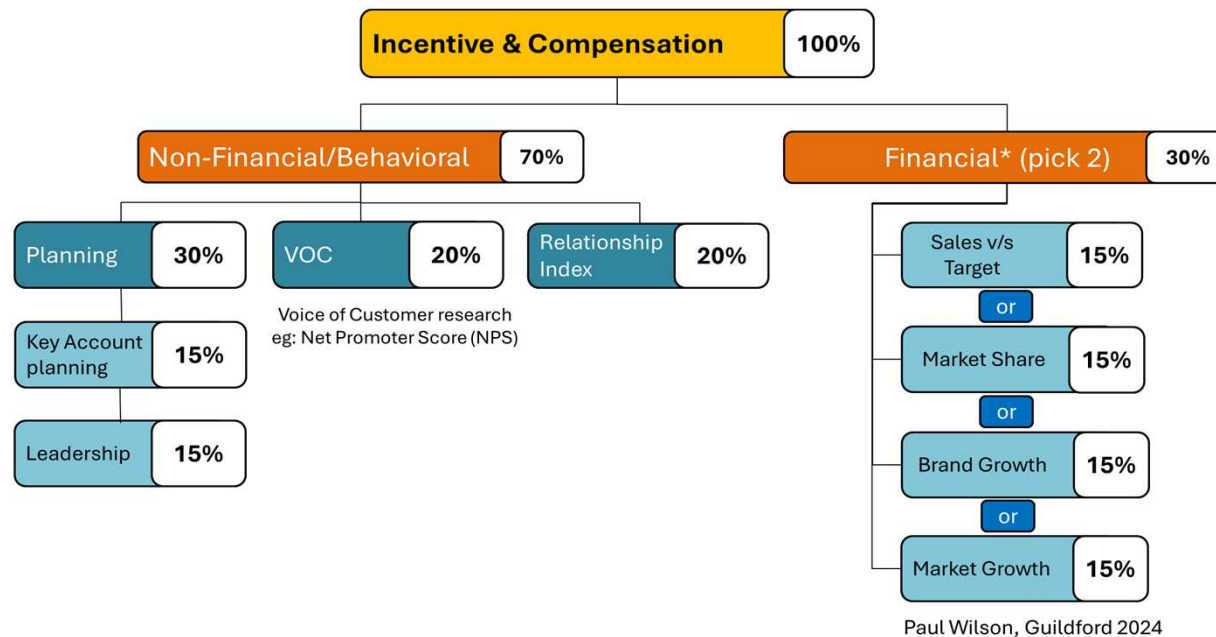
# But are your compensation plans driving in the wrong direction?

2022 AKAM survey result

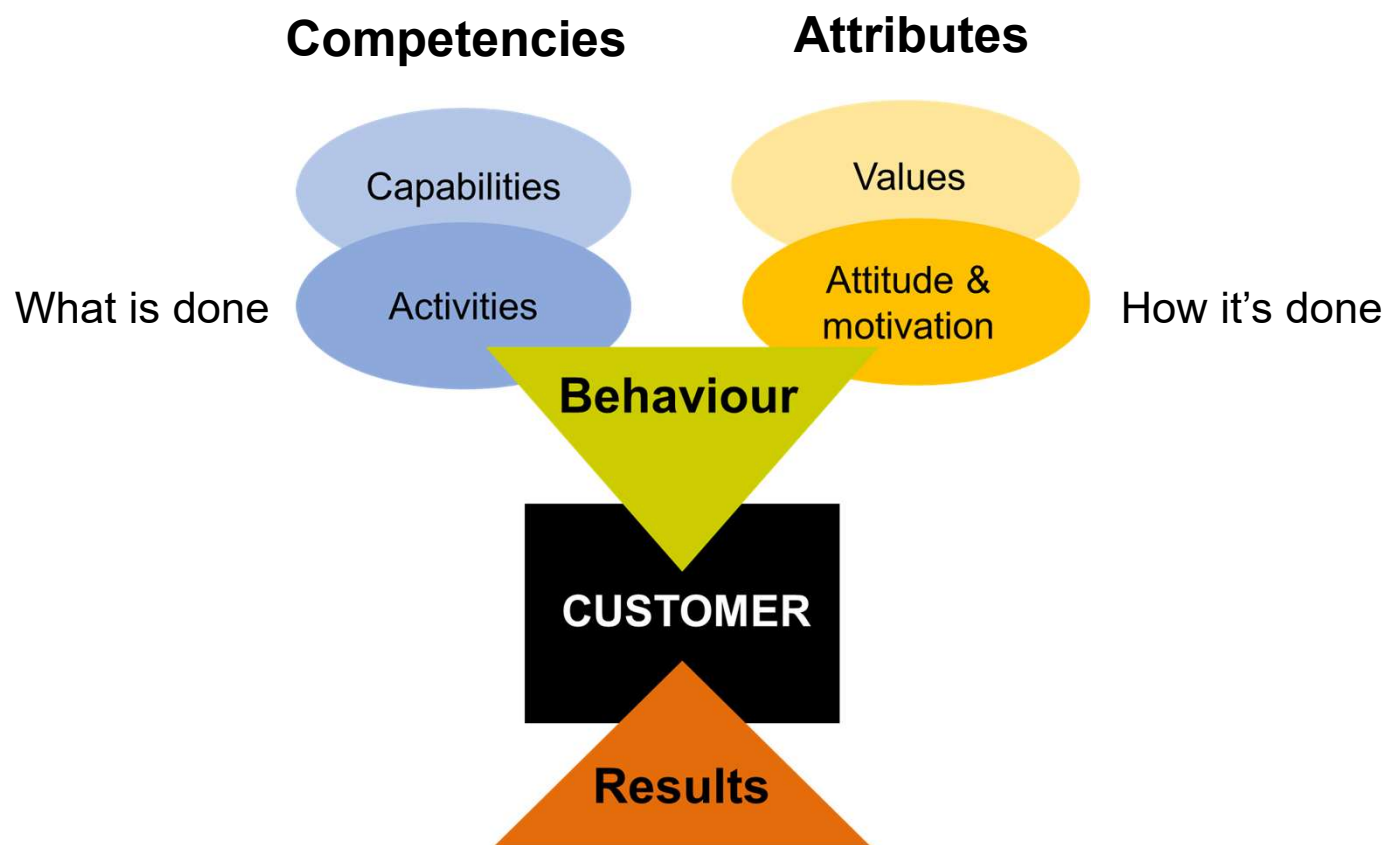
Q: On what basis is your reward calculated?

A: 65% said 'Sales'

**Incentivising critical inputs gets better outputs!**



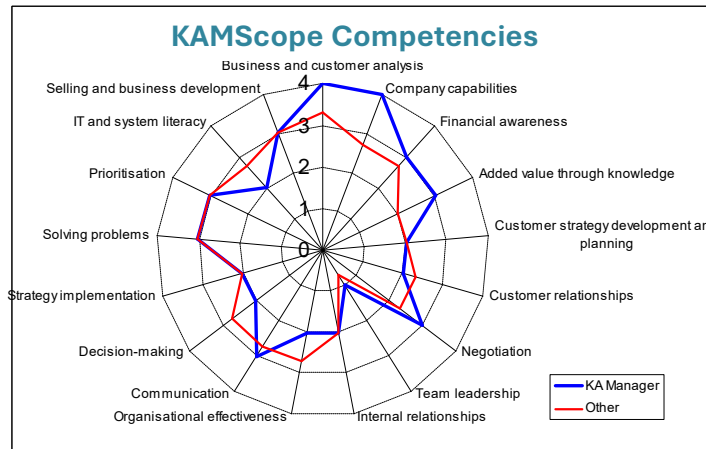
# Input behaviour drives output results



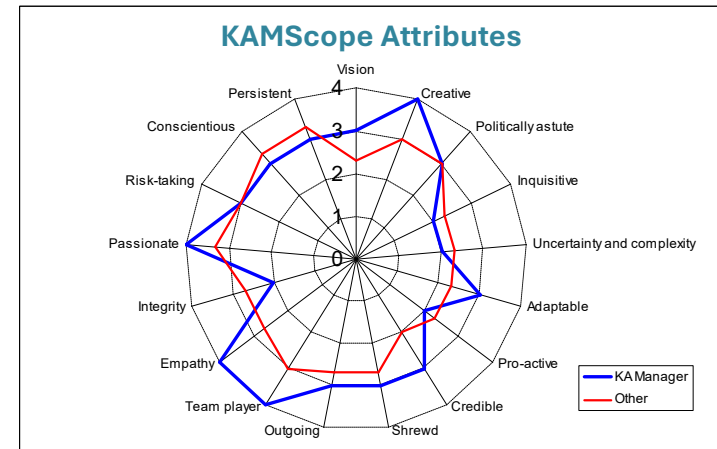
# Competencies and attributes

**“We recruit for the attributes and train for the competencies.”**  
**Global finance company**

**Competencies:** trainable, courses exist



**Attributes:** based on personal values, harder to change

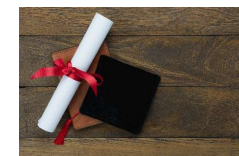


## To summarise

1. Do you have the right key account managers for the future/present?  
(How do you know?)
2. It's probably more about recruiting different people than training.
3. Is your company set up to identify, cultivate, deploy and retain the right people?

# Your questions for me?

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**Qualifications**



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**AKAM Bulletin**

