



The agency perspective
Anna Timbrell

14 January 2016

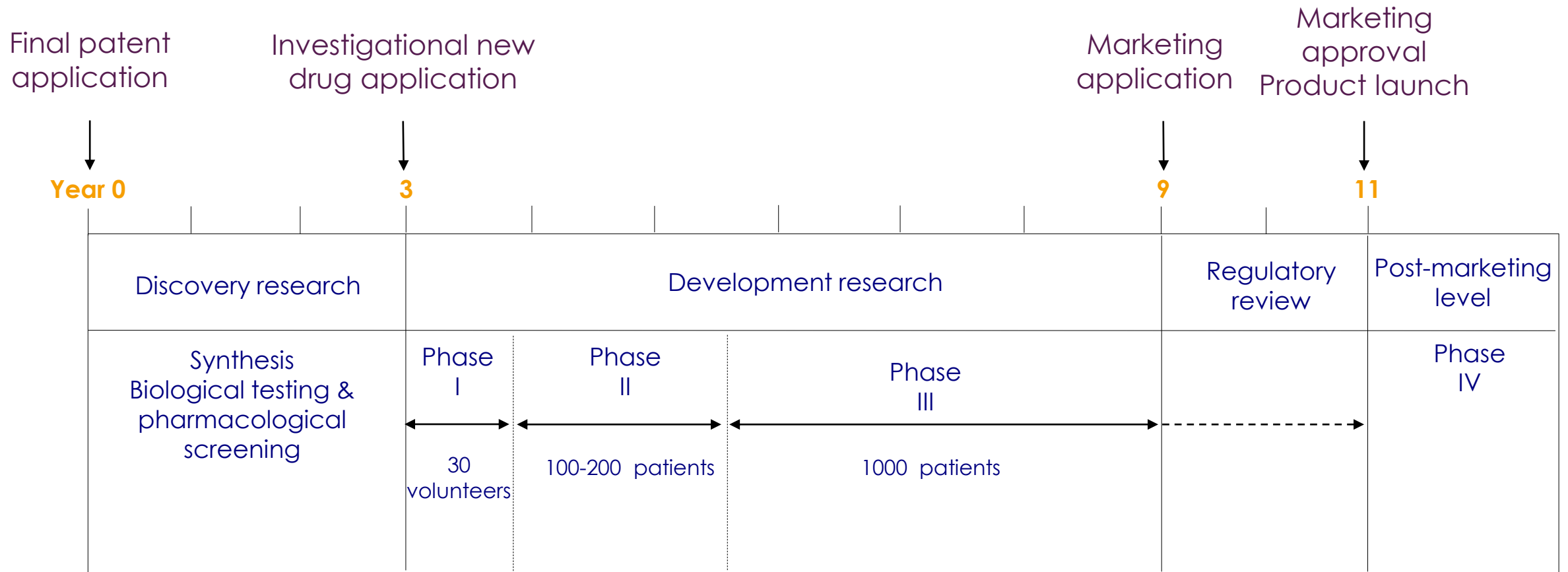
- 1 What is medical communications?
- 2 Why might you like a career in med comms?
- 3 The role of an Account Manager and what we look for
- 4 The role of a Medical Writer and what we look for



What is medical communications?

What is medical communications?

Communication of medical/scientific information to healthcare professionals, most often around a particular disease or a specific drug, and generally on behalf of a pharmaceutical company

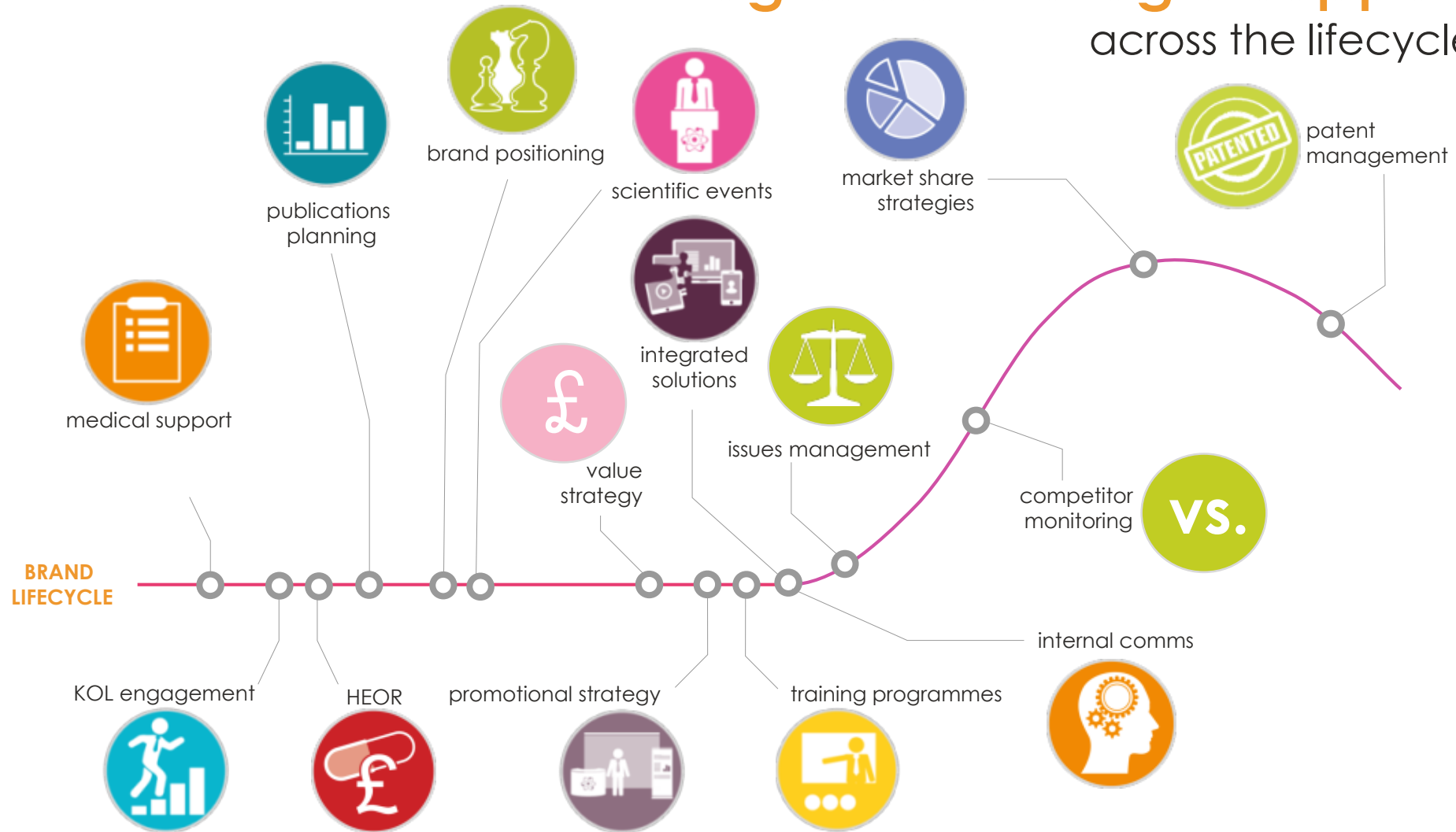


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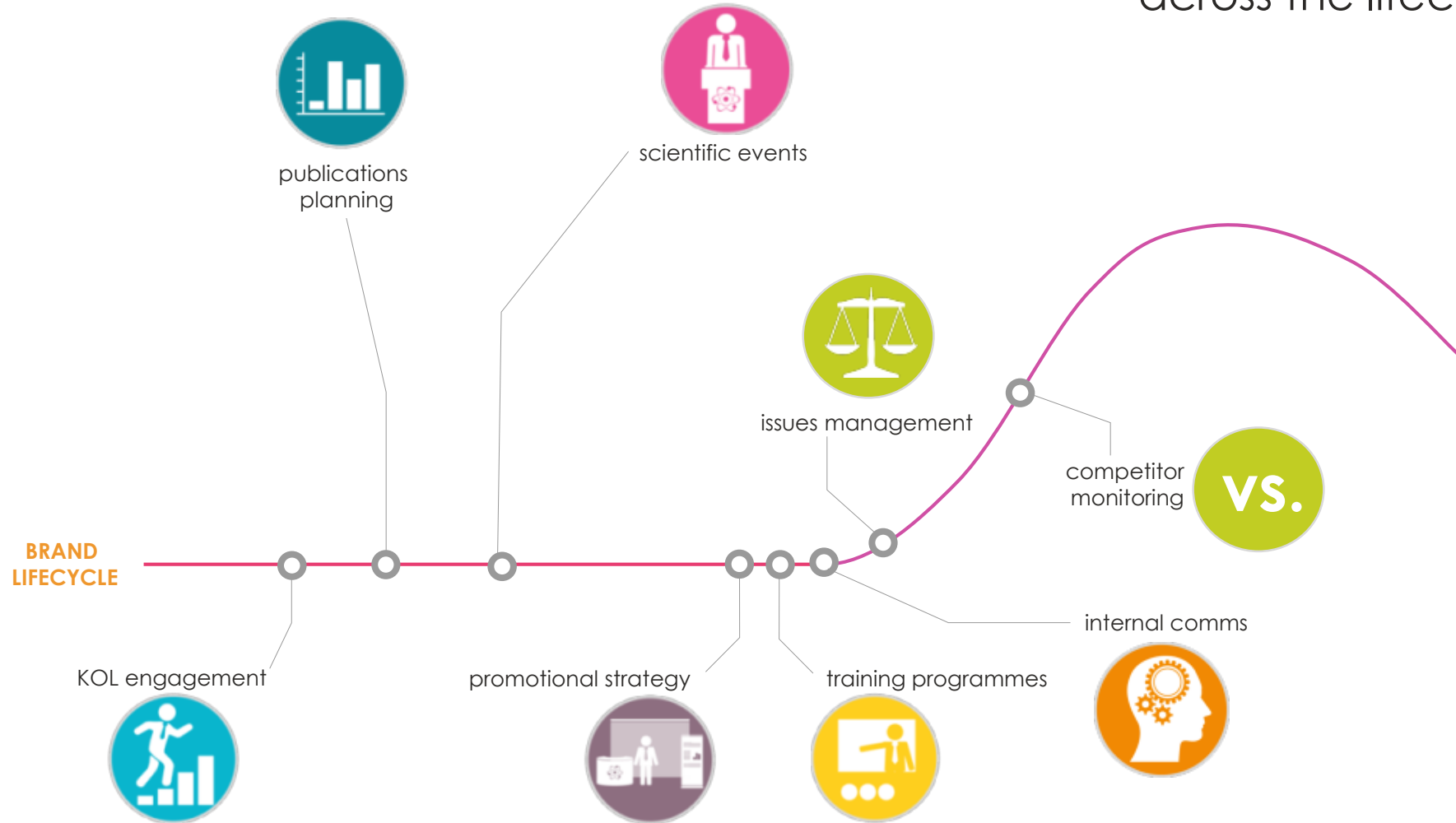


1 new medicine

integrated strategic support across the lifecycle



integrated strategic support across the lifecycle



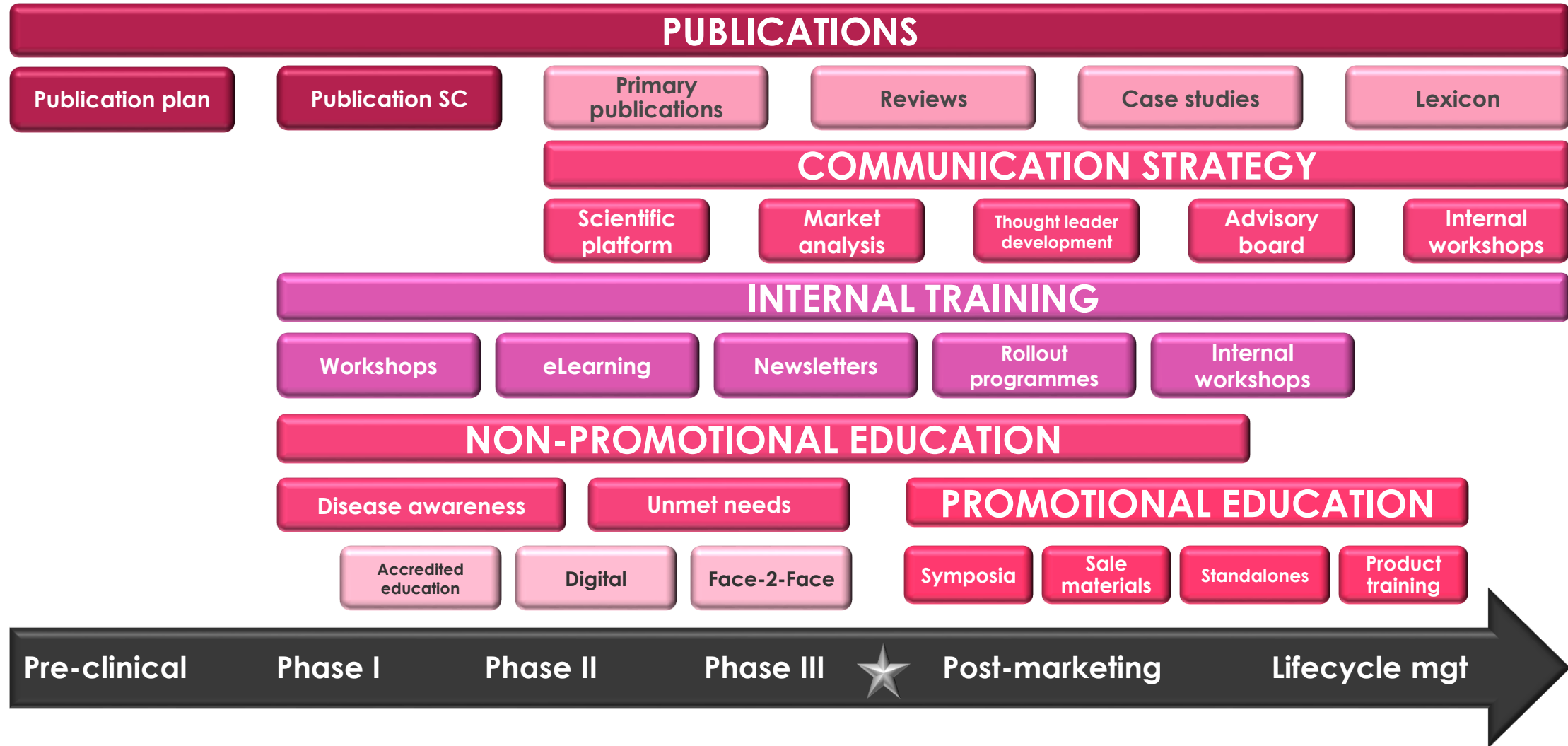
Medical support – from strategy to tactics

Raw data/lead manuscripts

Tactical implementation



Medical education: a snapshot



Challenges

- Scientific complexity: simplification with rigour
- Legal complexity: regulations
- Sensitivity: relationships with doctors, nurses, patients, experts
- Competition for time and attention
- Speed

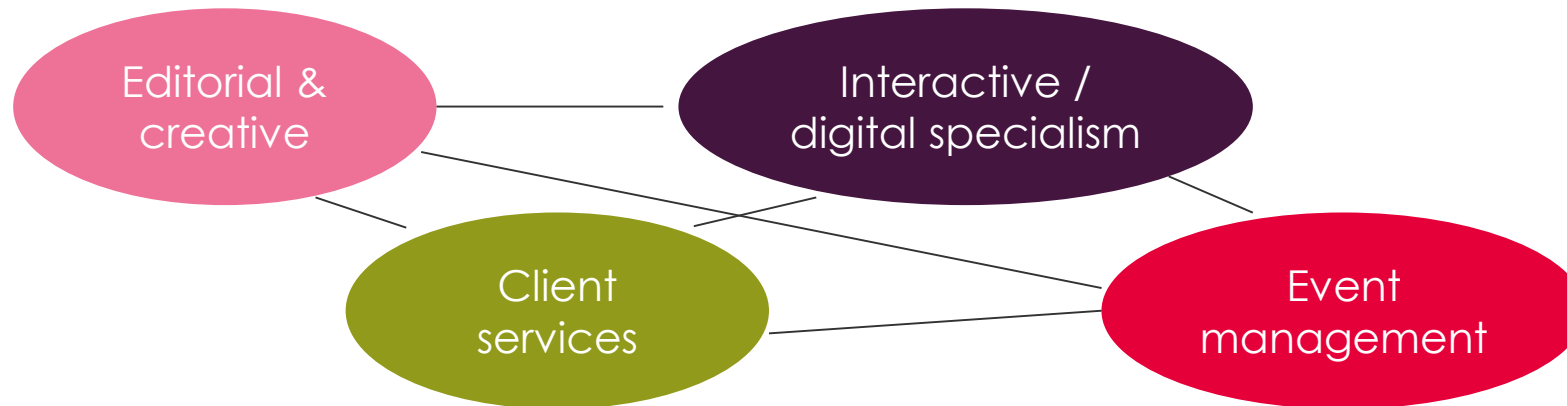


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Why might you like a career in med comms?

Why might you want to join an agency?

- Broad experience to be gained...
 - Opportunity to work with global experts in their field
 - Opportunity to work in a wide range of therapy areas
- Possibilities for a change in direction within agency



- Travel
- Fast-paced, challenging and never dull!

Scientific events in the last 12 months



186

Speaking faculty

249

presentations

46

advisory boards

12

symposia

12

standalones

Training

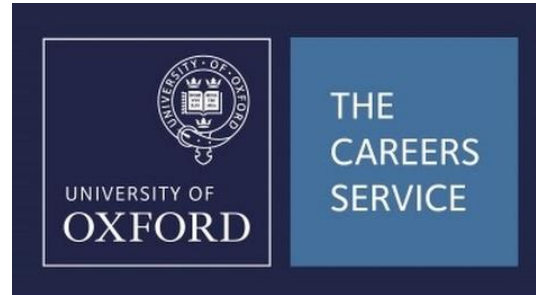
Medical communications agencies offer opportunities for training, these might be

- Mentoring
- Training offered by colleagues internally – lunch and learn-style sessions, learning from those with more extensive experience, sharing knowledge from one account to another
- Formal training offered by external sources
 - Presentation training
 - CMPP training
 - Code of practice training (ABPI, EFPIA)
 - Negotiation skills training

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The role of an Account Manager

My route into med comms



Got a BSc in Applied Biology
Worked in medical research

Discovered that the medical communications industry existed

Got a job as an Associate Medical Writer and Editor

Changed roles to become an Account Manager, Sr AM, now an Account Director

14 years



A typical day for an Account Manager

there isn't one

A typical day rarely goes as you planned

What I planned to do

Tuesday 12 January 2016

1. Write list 😊
2. Finish proposal for client X
3. Finish budget for proposal
4. Draft slides for careers event
5. Attend internal account status call at 2pm
6. Attend client call at 3.30pm
7. Complete appraisal form for colleague
8. Review budget status for account Y
9. Review advertising schedule for account Y and make recommendations to client to go through 2016
10. Liaise with stand builders to obtain design and cost estimate

What I ended up doing

Tuesday 12 January 2016

1. Write list 😊
2. Get half way through proposal for client X – who then calls to discuss current project, asks for extra work to be done that we thought he was going to do
3. Scramble to find resource to accommodate the client X request in order to maintain timelines
4. Get involved in taking on part of task – we're a team, divide and conquer!
5. Attend internal status call
6. Get a bit more done on proposal for client X
7. Receive a barrage of confusing emails from one of the client Y team about a handful of current projects, attend project related call with same client at 3.30pm
8. Write 'to do list' for tomorrow which contains approximately 30% of those things that I didn't manage to fit in today...
9. Oh – and I need to complete my timesheet!

What do we look for in an Account Manager?

Someone who

- Has an **interest** in science – many, but not all, have a science background
- Has a '**can do**' **attitude** and enjoys a challenge
- **Stays calm** under pressure
- **Enjoys liaising** with clients and the wider team
- Has good **communication skills**
- Is **organised** with the ability to plan and drive a project
- Enjoys working as **part of a team** and knows how to get the best out of it
- Is **comfortable with numbers** (budgeting, reconciliations)
- Is **comfortable presenting**
- Understands the product strategy and can **offer ideas**
- Can **problem solve**
- Is willing to **travel** and work **flexibly when needed**

The ability to deliver what the client wants, on time and on budget!

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The role of a Medical Writer

A typical day for a medical writer

there isn't one

A typical day for a medical writer

Take minutes at an advisory board and draft a meeting report/ consensus document

Brainstorm ideas, research new disease area and prepare slides for pitch presentation

Draft a manuscript/ primary paper for a peer-reviewed journal

Review another writer's work and provide feedback on scientific content / style / quality check

Work to tight deadlines as well as ad hoc requests!

Devise content and functionality for the launch of a new educational website

Teleconference with client and authors of a publication to take feedback/ authors' comments

Finalise core slide deck for use by physicians in national educational meetings

Draft presentation for salesforce training programme and assessment

Attend strategic planning meeting at client's offices to discuss next projects

Prepare CME accreditation application for a satellite symposium on behalf of faculty

What do we look for in a Medical Writer?

Someone who

- Has a **science background** – a PhD is an advantage but it is not mandatory
- **Enjoys writing** and has a talent for it
- Is able to **absorb new concepts** rapidly
- Has good **desktop research** skills
- Has a '**can do**' attitude and is willing to have a go at most things
- Enjoys working with others as **part of a team**
- Has good attention to **detail**
- Presentation skills
- Is willing to travel and work **flexibly**
- **Takes feedback** from others well

The ability to deliver what the client wants, on time and on budget!

Kate Kavanagh

My experience!

How did I get here?... Without a PhD!

- Environmental biology degree (nope, not medical!)
- Teaching secondary science and A level biology
- Here I am! Why I decided to go into med comms

What my experience has been like so far – the good and the bad

- The types of projects I have got involved in
- How I have been mentored
- Highlights
- The less enjoyable aspects
- What has been surprising

A typical day rarely goes as you planned

What I planned to do

Wednesday 13 January 2016

1. Write list 😊
2. Write an advisory board meeting report for client X for a colleague to review
3. Attend a line manager meeting
4. Draft some slides for a careers event (left over from the day before!)
5. Attend a scientific services meeting

What I ended up doing

Wednesday 13 January 2016

1. Write list 😊
2. Get half way through the advisory board meeting report and realise the recording is rubbish
3. Attend a line manager meeting 😊
4. Write the conclusions for the report before the main report, after receiving an 'urgent' email from client X to send it to her that day
5. Get a bit more done on meeting report
6. Attend half a SS meeting (to spend a bit more time on meeting report)
7. Draft some slides for a careers event (here they are!)
8. Write 'to do list' for tomorrow which contains finishing the meeting report...
9. Oh – and I need to complete my timesheet! (thanks for the reminder Anna!)

thank you.