

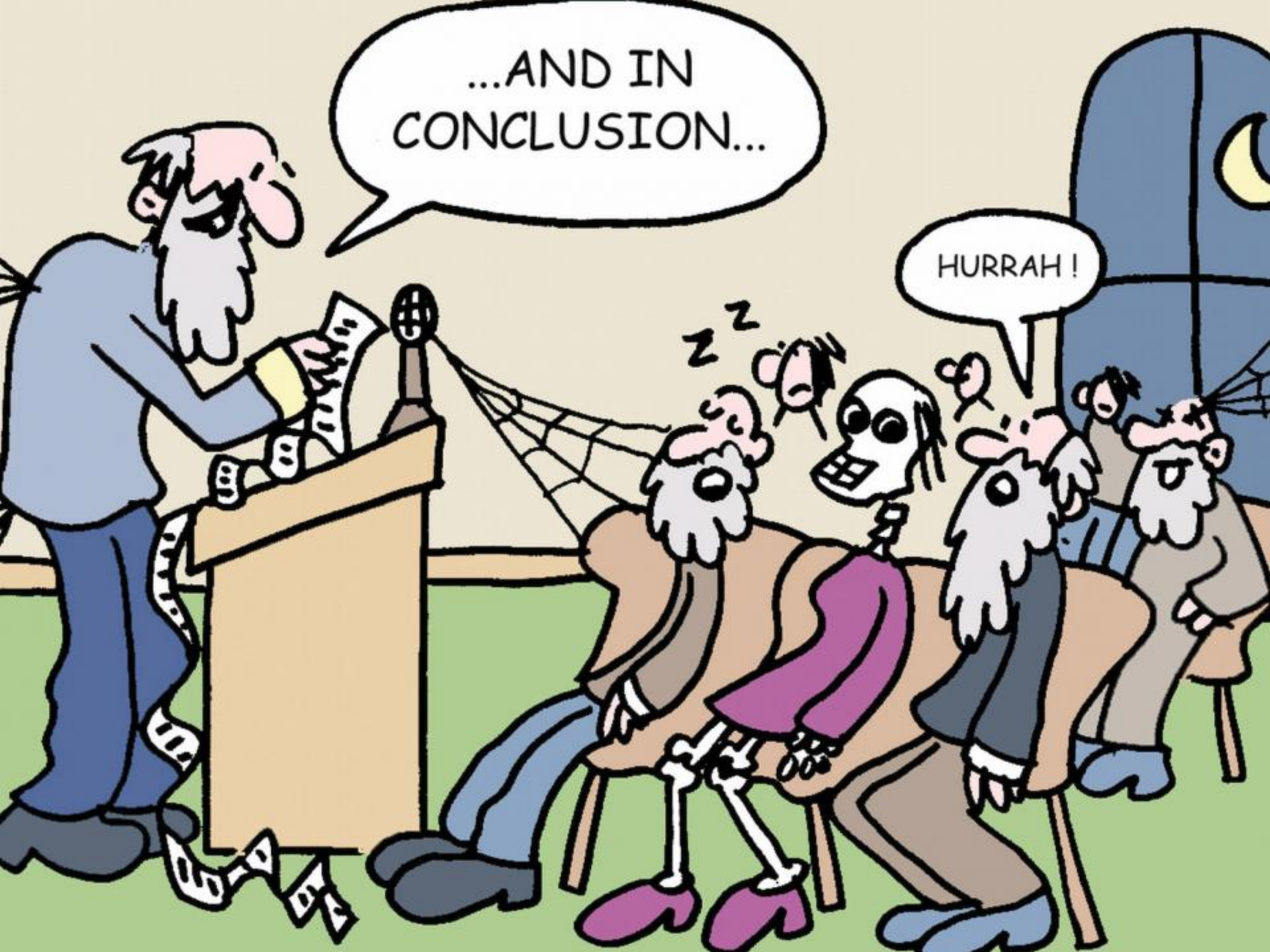


# HOW TO RUN A KILLER MEETING

(and get a promotion, not a  
prison sentence)

ARABELLA POLLACK

Nov 14, 2014



...AND IN  
CONCLUSION...

HURRAH!

Z Z



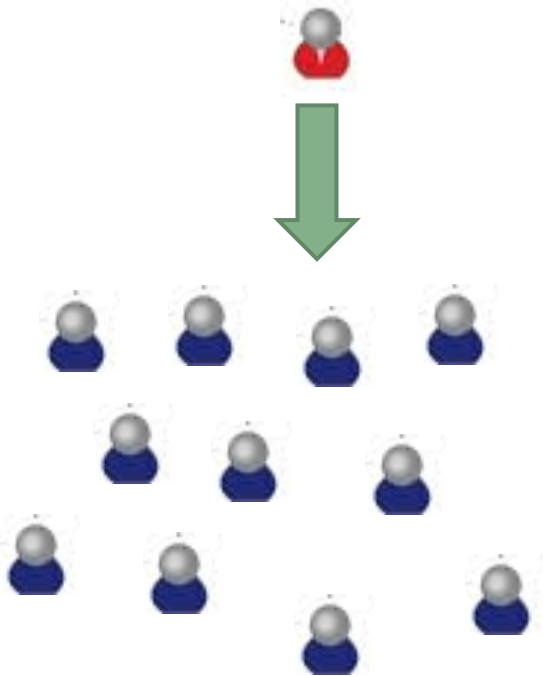
# WHAT IS A KILLER MEETING?

- ❑ Participants engaged
- ❑ Outcome that delivers against objectives
- ❑ Participants aligned on outcome

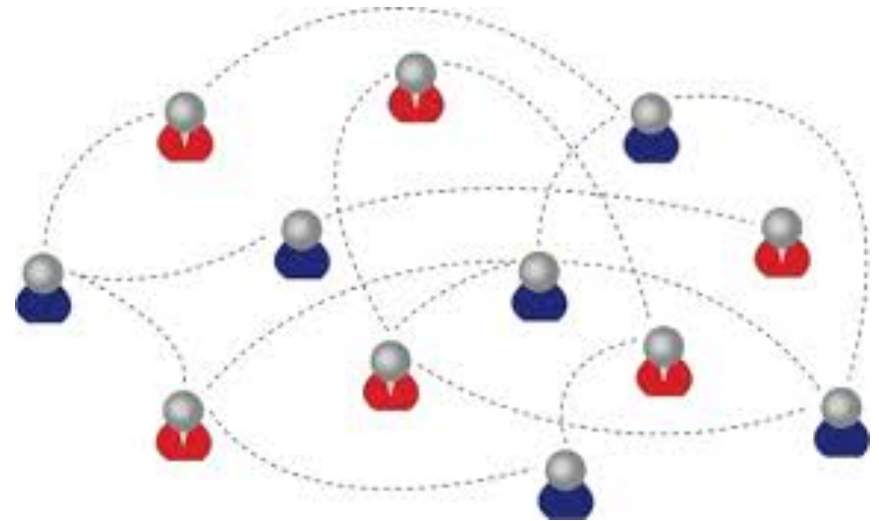


# The goal

From this...



... to this



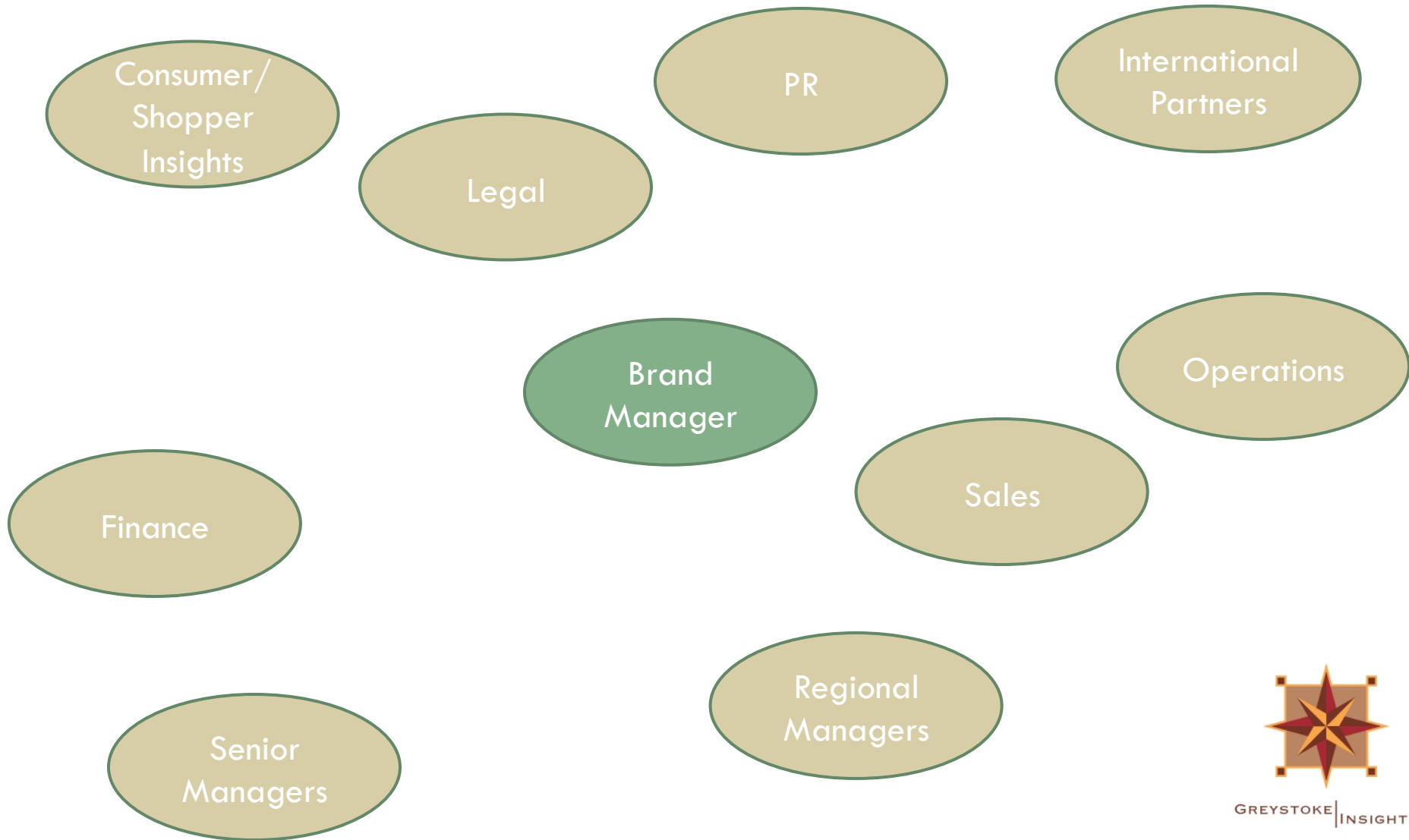
# Who gets to decide?

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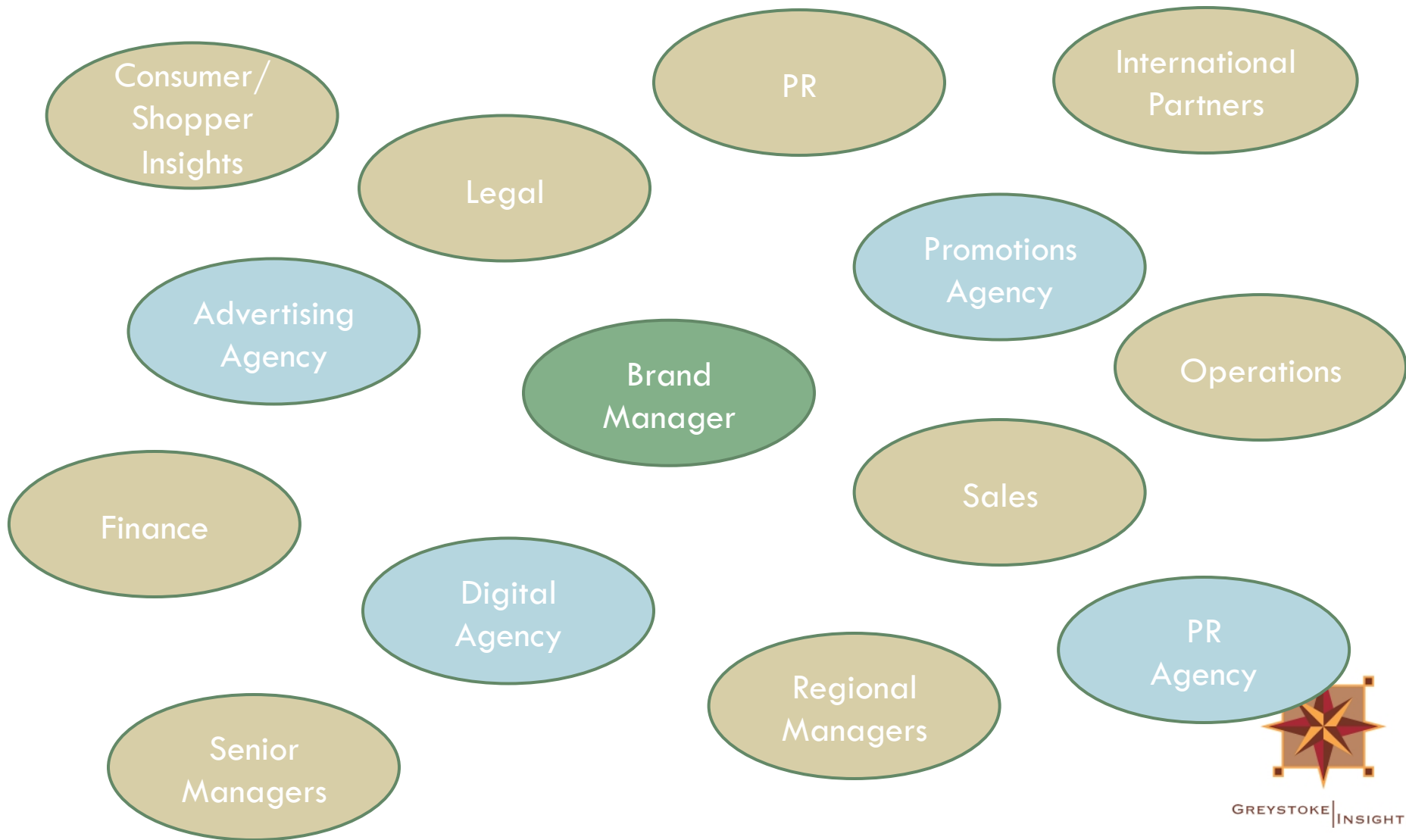
Brand  
Manager



# Who gets to decide?



# Who gets to decide?





# Let's Break it Down...

**PLOTTING**

**EXECUTION**

**POST-MORTEM**



# THE PLOTTING

velalat-1429-63700-6145



# P...P....P....Plotting...

- P
- P
- P
- P
- P
- P
- P



# P...P....P....Plotting...

- Perfect
- Planning and
- Preparation
- Prevents
- Piss-
- Poor
- Performance!



# What? (Part I)

- What are the meeting objectives?
  - ▣ What decisions are going to be influenced?
  - ▣ How important is it to the business?
  - ▣ Who are the major stakeholders and what are their going-in views?
  - ▣ What deliverables are required?



# Who?

Based on the Meeting objectives...

- Who should attend?
  - Max 15-20
- Consider external facilitator
  - No personal agenda
  - Able to focus on meeting flow and capturing ideas vs. getting pulled into discussions
- Predefine small groups with mixture of backgrounds



# How? ...

Think of a diamond....

First expand ideas.....

- Engaging exercises to spur creativity



... Then narrow them down

- Structured approaches to gain consensus



# Expanding Ideas: The Importance of Play



## **Dr Stuart Brown**

Medical doctor, Psychiatrist, Clinical Researcher,  
and Founder, National Institute for Play





# We are animals too!

## The benefits of Play:

- ❑ Overcome power differentials
- ❑ Tap into creativity
- ❑ Break out of rut
- ❑ Enhance engagement
- ❑ Improve alignment
- ❑ Provide stimuli for future development



# How to incorporate play successfully

- Create a playful environment
  - Fun ice-breaker
  - Casual clothing
- Have a variety of exercises
  - Keep it interesting
  - Ideas include collages, story-telling, post-it work, role-plays etc.
- Have a clear objective for each exercise
  - What do you want to achieve?
  - How does it link to the overall meeting objective?



# Creativity is a numbers game...



# Narrowing ideas down

- Moving post-its
  - Discover themes
- Voting dots
  - Identify front-runners
  - Force prioritization
  
- Can also be done post-meeting by smaller group



# When?

How long do you have...vs. how long do you need?

- Estimate how long each piece will take
  - Allow enough time for exercises...  
...But not too much time
  - Allow plenty of time for discussion – this is where the real breakthroughs come from



# When?

How long do you have...vs. how long do you need?

- Estimate how long each piece will take
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...But not too much time
  - Allow plenty of time for discussion – this is where the real breakthroughs come from
  
- Make sure to include:
  - Time for people to arrive and settle in
  - Creative icebreaker to set tone and make introductions
  - Wrap up & next steps
  - Breaks



# Ways to Save Time...

- Pre-reads
  - Get everyone up to speed before meeting
  - Avoid starting with uni-directional format
- Homework
  - Get the creative juices and brainpower started
  - Provide stimuli for later exercises



# Where?





# What?

- What do you need?
  - ▣ Flipcharts – ones with sticky backs? Markers? Post-its?
  - ▣ Room layout?
  - ▣ Music
  - ▣ Projector, power sockets
  - ▣ Print outs of key reference materials, exercise instructions
- FOOD, caffeine, water



# THE EXECUTION

15

*Handwritten notes on the left margin:*  
The  
men

*Handwritten notes on the right margin:*  
The  
men



# Execution

---

- Set tone!
- Discourage phones/laptops – reassure that time allowed to check messages
- Share objectives, overall agenda
- Get people moving physically



# Keep things moving...



# Keep things moving...



**Enough,  
Let's  
Move  
On!**



# Keep things moving...



**Enough,  
Let's  
Move  
On!**

- Page for capturing offline items
- Time, time, time
  - Move around groups
  - Music
  - Tell people how much time, give heads up near end



# Gain consensus

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- ▣ Identify overlaps and common themes
- ▣ Identify areas of disagreement
- ▣ Red cards, green cards
- ▣ Power of the pen



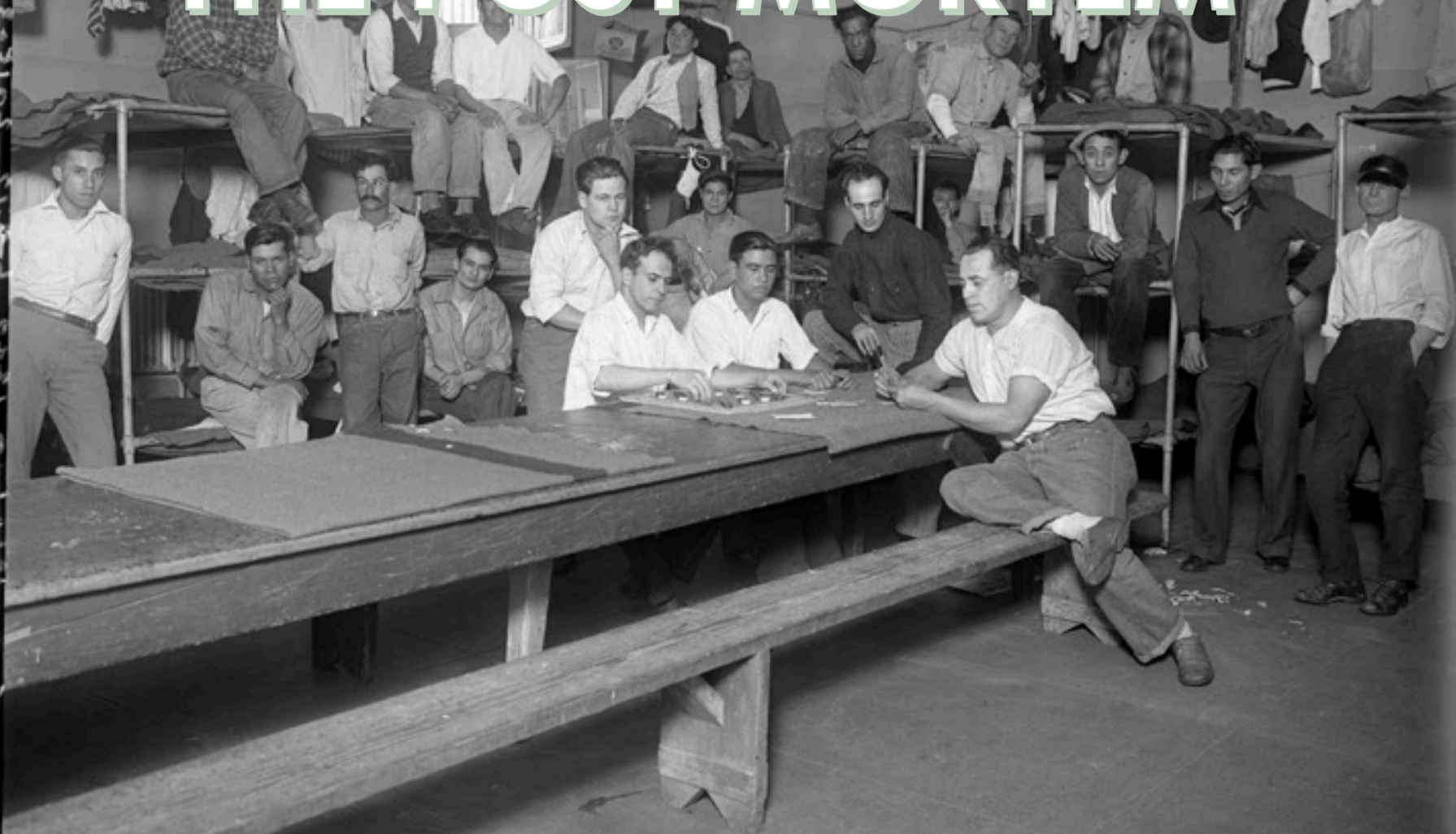
# Be flexible...

- ▣ At break times, consider if agenda needs changing
- ▣ If discussion is rich, let it have extra time
- ▣ If it's stuck or finished, move on





# THE POST-MORTEM

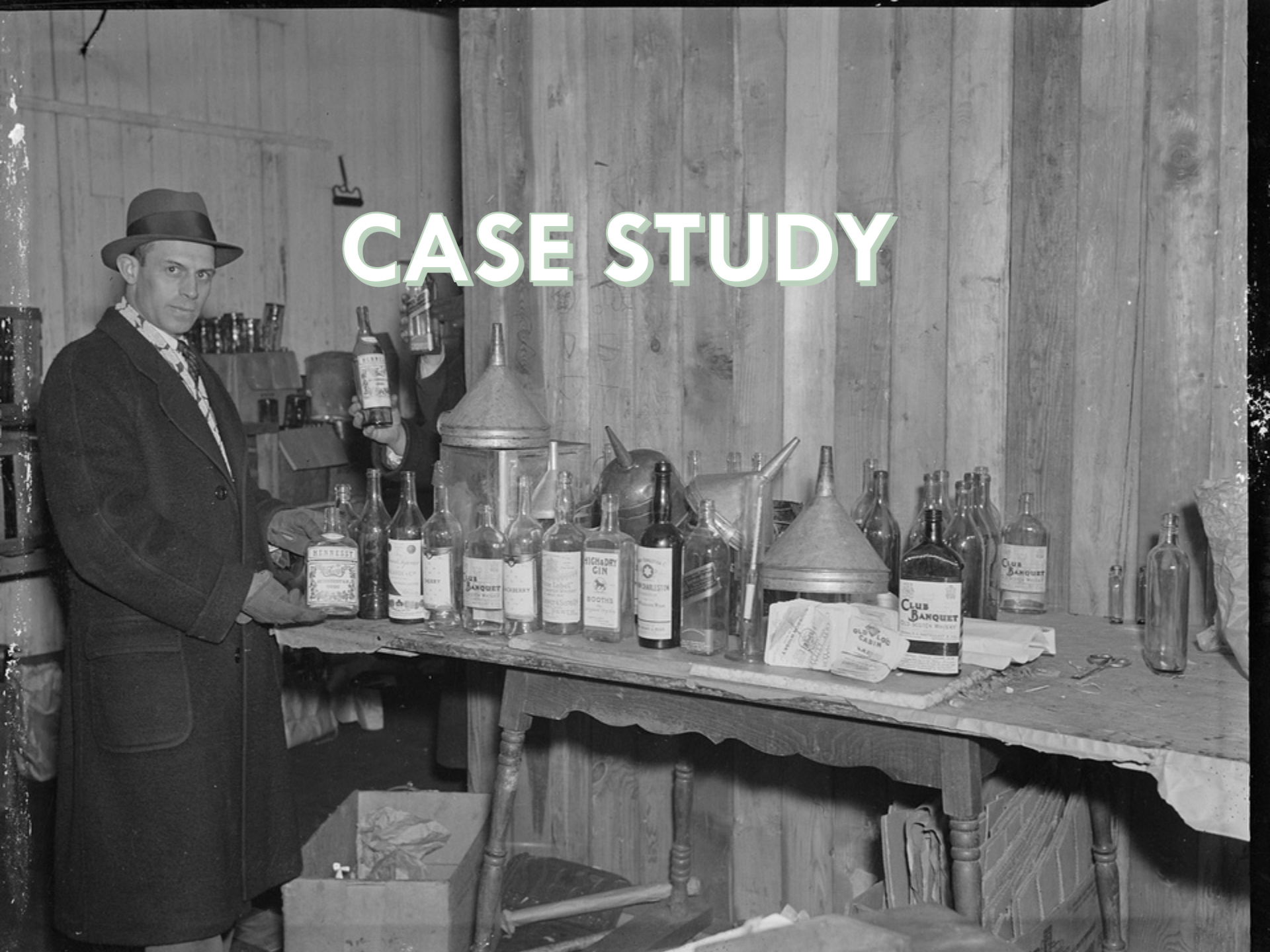


# Post Mortem

- Take ALL the flipcharts/outcome with you, you never know what will be useful
  - Write it all up and categorize it
  - Appendix
  - Photos of images
- Draw key conclusions – make it easy for someone who wasn't there
- Identify next steps and who's responsible



# CASE STUDY



# Case Study

You are part of a team developing a brand identity for a new vodka.

- ❑ Originated in Australia (6100 area code)
- ❑ Partly owned by Robert de Niro
- ❑ Distilled in New Zealand from whey and spring water
- ❑ Packaging already in place



# Case Study Exercise Part I

In groups of three, imagine VDKA 6100 is a person...

Are they male or female?

How old?

Married or single?

Where do they live?

What do they do for a living?

You have 5 minutes



# Case Study Exercise Part II

And now draw a picture to show this person on a Thursday night..

What are they doing and where?

Who with?

Is music playing? If so, what?

What types of things are around them?

Etc...

You have 10 minutes



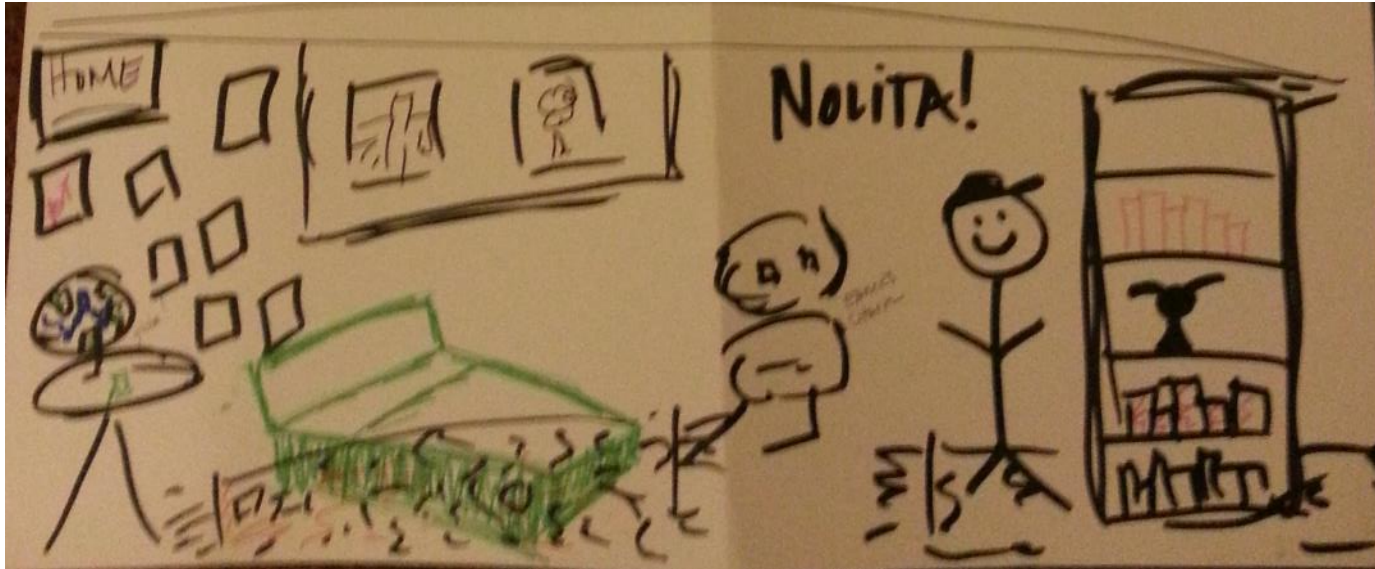
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# Example – The Brand at Home



- Eclectic, things collected from all over
- Warm, sanctuary, especially as travels a lot
- Nolita





- ELMO doll
- VDKA 6100
- Paper
- Sharpies

