



“Knowledge is Power”

June 9-12, 2009, Chandler, AZ

## **It's *OK* to Have a Career in Proposals!**

Presenters:

**MCKESSON**

*Empowering Healthcare*

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McKesson Health Solutions

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McKesson Specialty Care Solutions



# Discussion Overview

- Introduction
  - About us
  - Goals for Session
- Survey
  - Overview and Approach
  - Results
- Using Survey Results for Career Mapping
  - Proposal Careers
  - Switching Careers
- What We Learned



# About Us

- Carey
  - 15 years in proposal development
  - BS in Communication, MA in Organizational Management
  - Experience in writing, project facilitation, marketing
- Tracy
  - 20 years in proposal development
  - BA in English, MA in Professional Writing
  - Experience in consulting, marketing, technical writing



# Goals for Session

**By the end of this session, we want you to:**

- Appreciate the career-critical knowledge and skills that you have
- Realize you have the knowledge and power to drive your career
- View this profession a little differently



# Survey Overview & Approach

- Objectives
  - Understand viewpoints of profession
  - Identify primary skill sets for career path goals
- 10 questions, mostly open-ended
- 38 respondents
- Two-week surveying time
- Various companies and industries

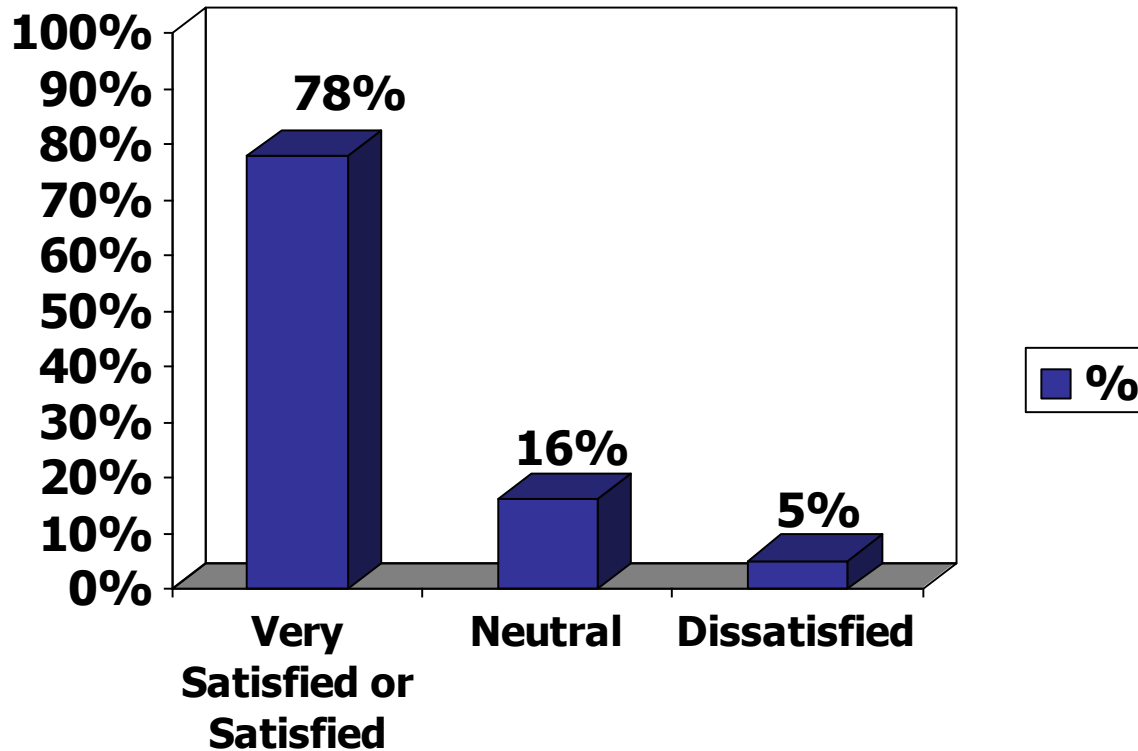


# Survey Respondent Profiles

- 76% doing proposals now
- Functional areas: 71% in sales or marketing
- Varied backgrounds: sales, marketing, technical
- Education: 74% have bachelors degree or higher
- Number of years doing proposals
  - 10.6 years average
  - 1.5 years was lowest, 30+ years was highest



# Survey Question: Are you satisfied in your current position?



- 78% are satisfied or very satisfied with their proposal-related jobs
- No strong correlations to number of years in proposals or other variables



# Dedicated to a Proposal Career!

## This must be a very satisfied RFP person







# Survey Question: How did you get here?

- Completely by accident!
- Looking for a writing job
- Role migration
- Intentionally sought position

I turned to another form of fiction... proposal writing

A light blue thought bubble with a black outline and three smaller circles leading to it from the bottom right.

My manager went on maternity leave...

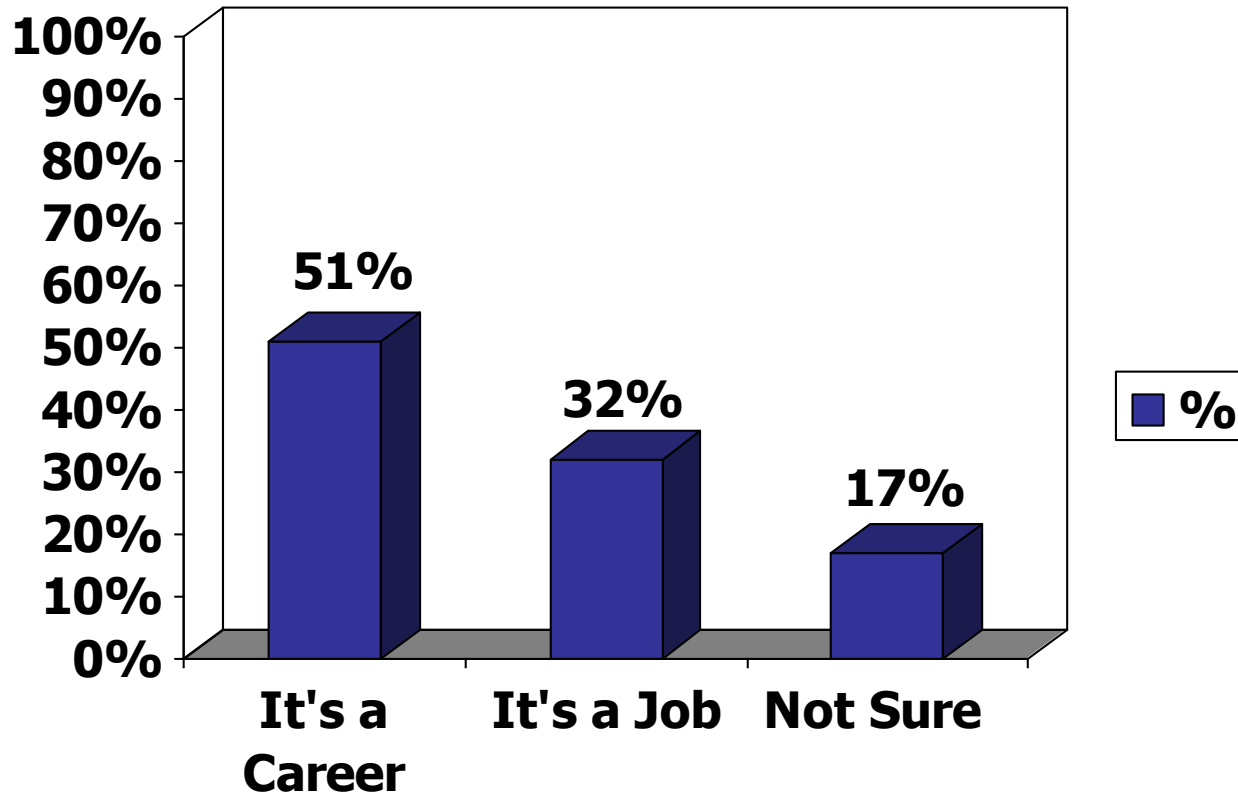
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Database administrator

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# Survey Question: Is it a job or is it a career?





# Survey Question: Is it a job or is it a career?

## 51% clearly said "career"— why?

- Takes skills and creativity that not everyone has
- Directly supports company's goals
- Opportunities for growth and development

## 32% clearly said "job" – why?

- Some find professional development opportunities lacking
- Some find career path coaching lacking
- Some just don't like the work
- Some are only *looking* for a "job"

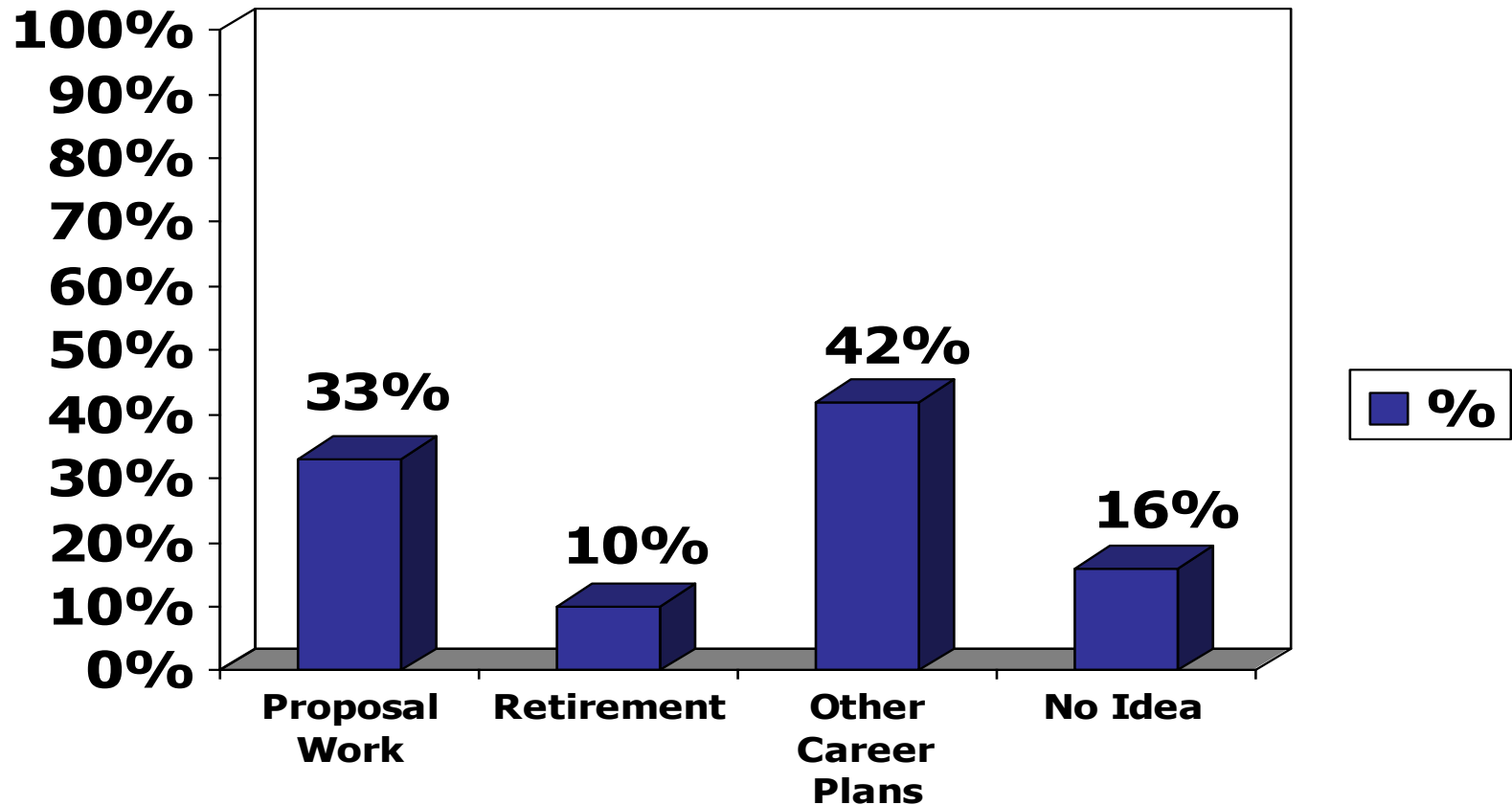


# Survey Question: Is it a job or is it a career?

*Some question if management or colleagues would agree that it is a career...*



# Survey Question: Where will you be in 5 years?





# Survey Question: Where will you be in 5 years?

- Some plan to remain proposal professionals
  - Staying right where they are
  - Developing further (APMP accreditation, leadership role, develop expertise in a specific area)
- Some think they will move on
  - Sales, marketing, business development
  - Project management or product management
  - Writing/communications or training
  - Consulting
  - Business administration



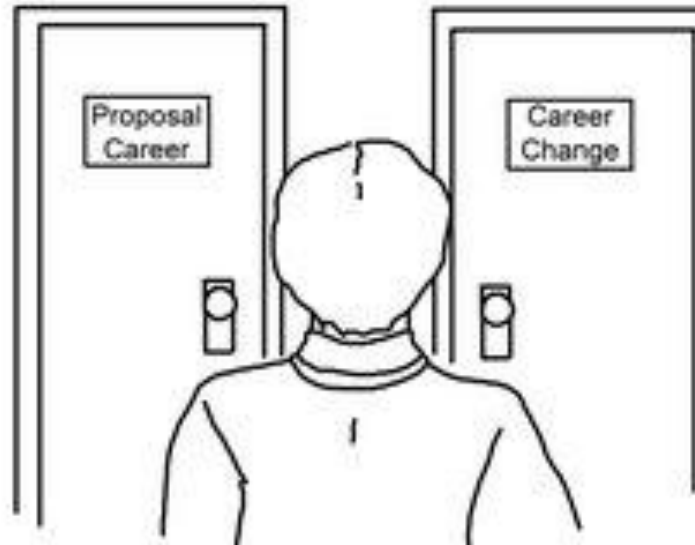
# Survey Question: Which of your skills would you stress on a resume?

## Most mentioned:

- Project management
- Writing and editing
- Strategic and conceptual thinking
- Multi-tasking
- Time management
- Work ethic
- Collaborative, interpersonal communication
- Team management and development
- Industry, business, product knowledge
- Business acumen



# So What Does All This Mean?



- If you want a career in proposals, it's OK!
- If you want to move to another career, that's OK too!





# Proposal Careers

## APMP Job Bank Posting Excerpts

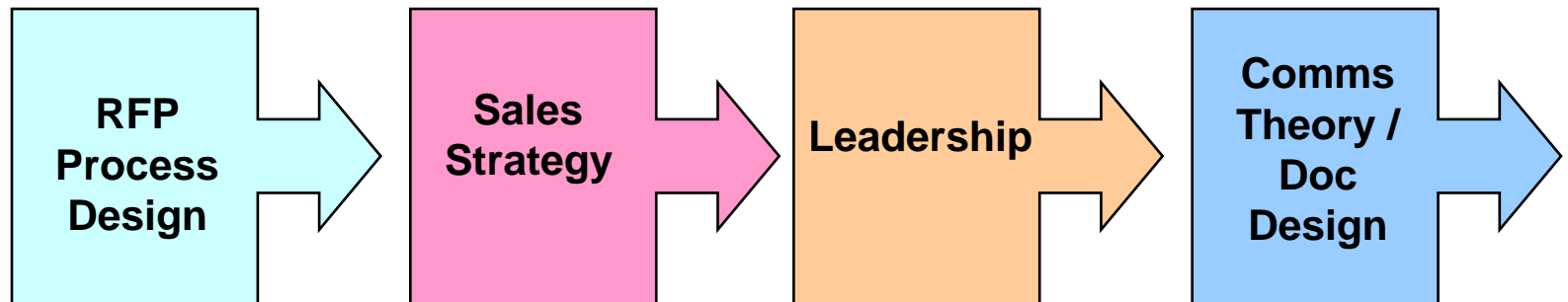
- *Proposal Manager*
  - Report to Executive Mgmt, Business Development
  - Strong research, writing, editing, proofreading skills
- *Proposal Supervisor*
  - Work independently in collaborative atmosphere
  - Thrive in a fast-paced, rapidly-changing environment
- *Capture Manager*
  - Develop win strategy
  - Conduct competitive assessment
  - Manage cross functional teams



# Proposal Career: An Example

## Karen Kremer Long-term Proposal Professional

- Enjoy strategizing to meet customer needs
- Draws on my technical, analytical and writing backgrounds—brings it all together for me!
- No 2 days are alike!

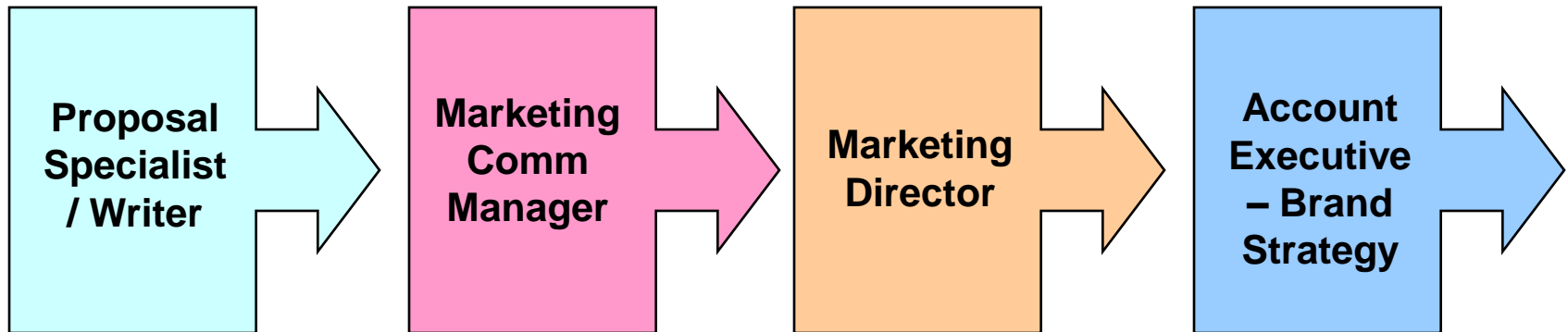




# Other Careers / Jobs

## Career Mapping Tool Example

- Enter “Proposal Writer / Specialist” in Monster.com Tool
- Generates *Most Likely Next Steps...*
- Select one avenue





# Other Careers: an example

## Kelly Yoshihara Market Analyst

### **Helped me attain my new job:**

Being on the RFP Team allowed me to showcase my work ethic and customer service on a daily basis.

### **Helping me succeed in my new**

**job:** As a Proposal Specialist, I developed a street-level view of our customers, what they are purchasing and how. This type of knowledge isn't easily hired from outside.





# What We Learned

- Regarding Career Paths:
  - Most think they will no longer be in proposal work after 5 years ... but have done it for >10 years
  - What does that mean?
- The Pros and Cons:
  - Pro: Respondents had no problem identifying numerous skills proposal work both demands and develops
  - Concern about level of respect from colleagues and management
  - Concern about opportunities for professional development



# What We Learned

- There are valuable, tangible skills to apply to career options within and outside of proposals
- Importance of recognizing true strengths and selling yourself whenever possible

**Be proud! It really *is* OK to have a career in proposals!**