



5 STEPS

To Uncovering the Secrets of
Physician-Hospital Alignment



Bridging the Strategy Chasm

A recent survey of healthcare executives found that physician-hospital alignment was the top priority in order to reach their financial targets.

However, over half also recognized that this is not a strength of their organization.

Even more alarming, when asked about how they plan for growth, efforts to improve alignment between physicians and hospitals didn't even make their list.

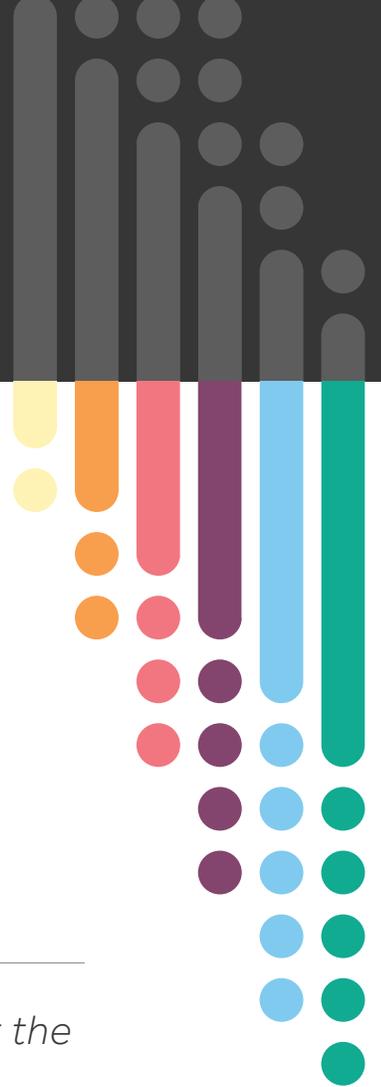
Frankly, healthcare organizations cannot grow without the support of their physician community. Period.

Physician alignment is crucial to promoting quality and cost-effectiveness within the organization. Physician referrals also drive patient volume.

Whether or not there's a contractual agreement between the physician and the organization, it's vital to pull physicians into the fold. This will be an uphill battle unless you know the drivers of physician decision-making and how you do compared to your competition.

There are five keys to creating a powerful physician-hospital growth strategy:

1. Know How Physicians Make Decisions
2. Know How Physicians Perceive You
3. Know How Physicians Perceive Your Competition
4. Use These Insights to Drive Your Strategy
5. Measure Your Impact



1 Know How Physicians Make Decisions

Healthcare is no stranger to the idea of listening to the “Voice of the Customer,” but this is usually referring to patients. However, physicians are also customers – important customers – when it comes to financial growth.

**YOUR CUSTOMER:
PHYSICIANS**

It all comes down to winning the customers' choice.

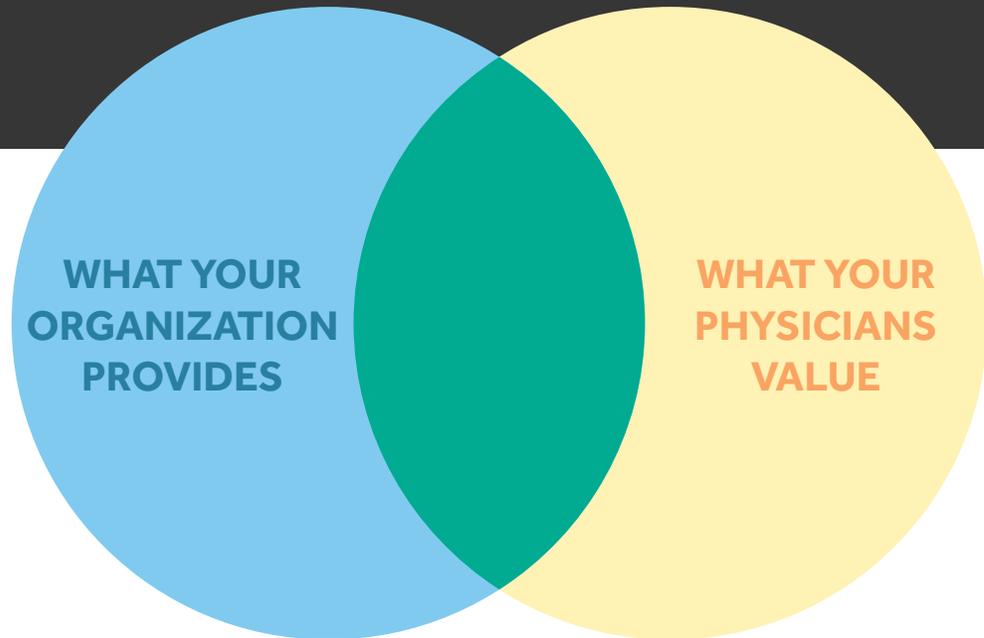
Physicians make choices that impact your success. You need to understand what factors impact those choices before you can strategize to influence them.

We may think we already know some of this, but aligning physicians is too important to develop strategies based on assumptions. Therefore, in order to understand what impacts physician decision-making, we have to ask them.

Obtaining insights from physicians about their decision-making allows you to visualize your opportunities through their eyes. Their perceptions (which drive their behavior) determine whether or not our strategy will be successful.

However, this isn't enough by itself. We also need to know how we perform on these factors...

2 Know How Physicians Perceive You



Most organizations conduct physician satisfaction research and employ physician leaders in order to maintain a pulse on how well they are meeting the needs of their physician community. This is important.

The overlap between what physicians value (yellow circle) and what you provide (blue circle) represents the value you provide to physicians.

But not all physicians make decisions the same way.

It's vital to dig into potential differences amongst segments of your physician community (hospitalists vs. primary care, for example). Understanding these nuances increases the effectiveness of your strategy.

While this understanding of physician perceptions of your organization can begin to spark ideas for your strategy to improve alignment, you still have a huge blind spot...

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Know How Physicians Perceive Your Competition



Physicians have options to consider when making a choice. They may have the option to refer to you or your competitor; they have the option to take their skills and business elsewhere; and they have the option to ignore or comply with your policies and procedures.

Healthcare is becoming increasingly competitive. Hospitals compete with one another for dollars and talent. So, in addition to knowing how we win in the market, we also need to understand how our competitors win.

The truth is that we can't assume we know how physicians view our competition. Our own perception likely differs from theirs. When we have the wrong data going into our strategy, we develop solutions for the wrong problems, wasting our limited time and resources.

Hospitals compete with one another for dollars and talent.

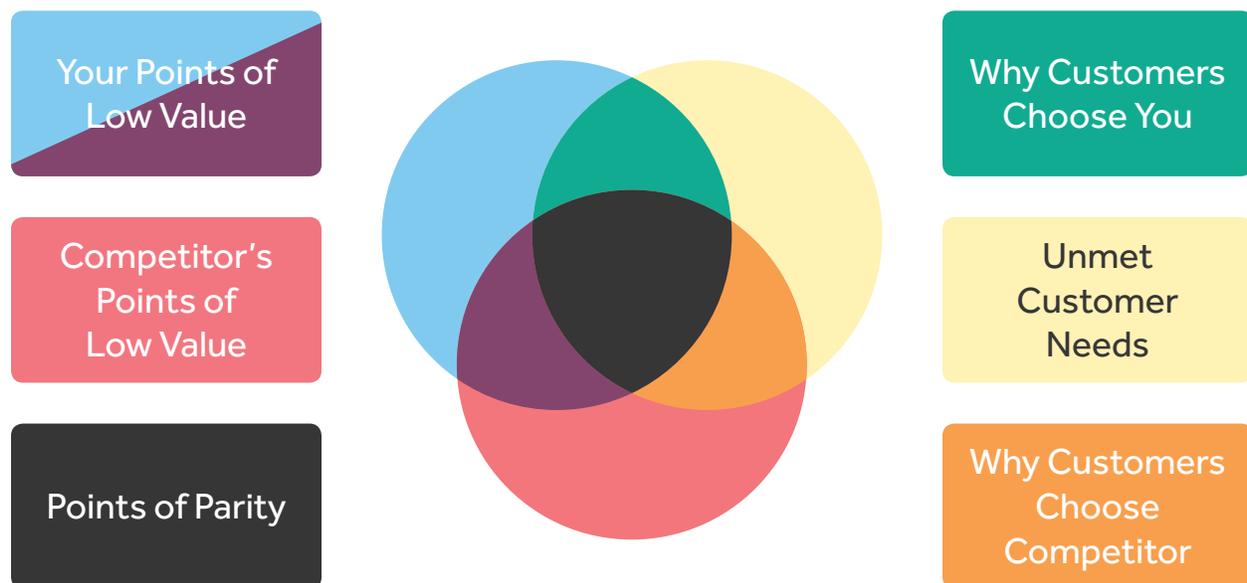
Therefore, it's crucial to ask physicians how they perceive our value and the value of our competitors (red circle) so that our strategies build our competitive advantage.

Armed with this competitive information, you may realize that much of the value you provide is matched by your competition. In other words, the value you provide is not actually a competitive advantage. Ouch. You may also find that your competitor is providing value that you do not.

This can be a wakeup call, creating a sense of urgency to develop strategies to improve your competitive position.

View Your Competitive Landscape Through the Lens of Your Customer

Understanding your competition through the eyes of your physicians provides an often missing piece of the strategic landscape. Each colored zone here tells an important story about how your physicians make decisions.



By adding the third circle, you have a complete picture of what physicians consider important, how they perceive you, and how you stack up against the competition. You understand how they make decisions that impact your success.

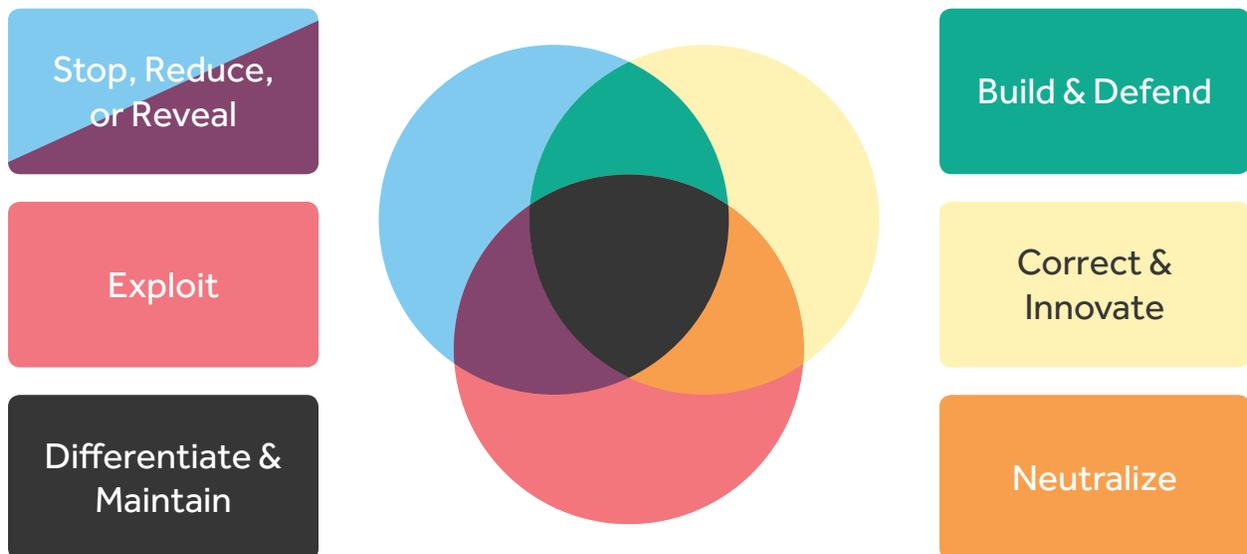
With this information in hand, you just need to build your strategy – easy, right?

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Use These Insights to Drive Your Strategy

Now you have the key insights necessary to build a strategy to better align physicians with your organization. Each of the zones within the three circles has implications for your growth strategy.

Your green zone is the most important – this is your competitive advantage, why your physicians align with you. On the flip side, you also know your competitor's orange zone - why physicians would align with your competition. Strategic initiatives should all aim to grow and strengthen your green zone.



Now it's up to your team to determine which factors are the easiest to impact and have the greatest potential for return, building these into your strategy to improve hospital-physician alignment. This method keeps your team focused on initiatives that will drive value for your physicians.

When you understand how physicians make decisions, you can develop strategies to influence their decision-making so that more physicians choose you.

Example Physician Alignment Strategy

The factors that are most important to physicians' decision reside within the yellow circle. Factors outside of this circle represent areas of lower importance (which shouldn't be front stage in your growth strategy!). Let's take a look at this example.

Two factors fall into the green zone, our competitive advantage. But there are perceived points of parity with the competition (grey zone)... and the competitor is also differentiated by two important factors (orange zone).

1. What can we do to build and defend the factors in our green zone?
2. What can we do to neutralize our competitor's advantage?

Possible initiatives resulting from these insights:

- Continue to provide frequent communication to physicians but develop a strategy to increase the physician's involvement in decisions they care about
- Increase awareness of staff availability after peak hours
- Create opportunities to improve relationships between physicians and anesthesia
- Involve physicians in process improvement efforts to increase efficiency in their job flow



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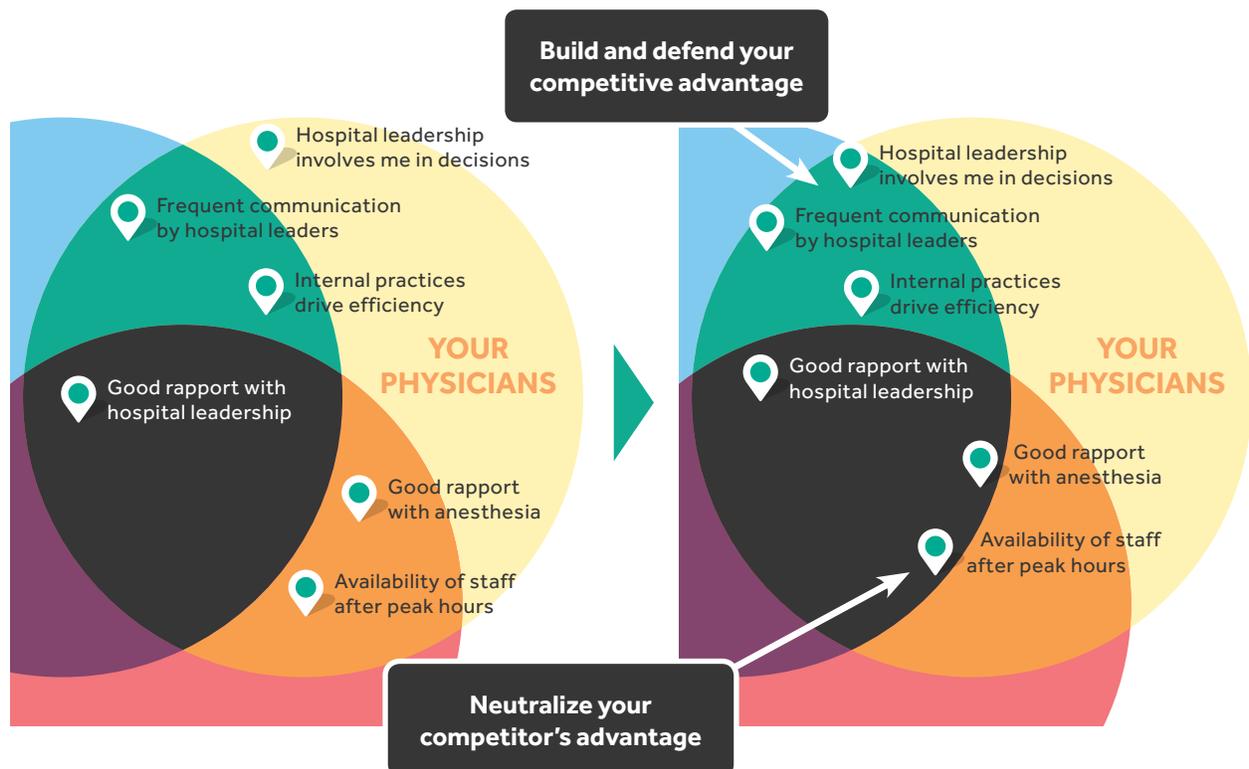
Measure the Impact

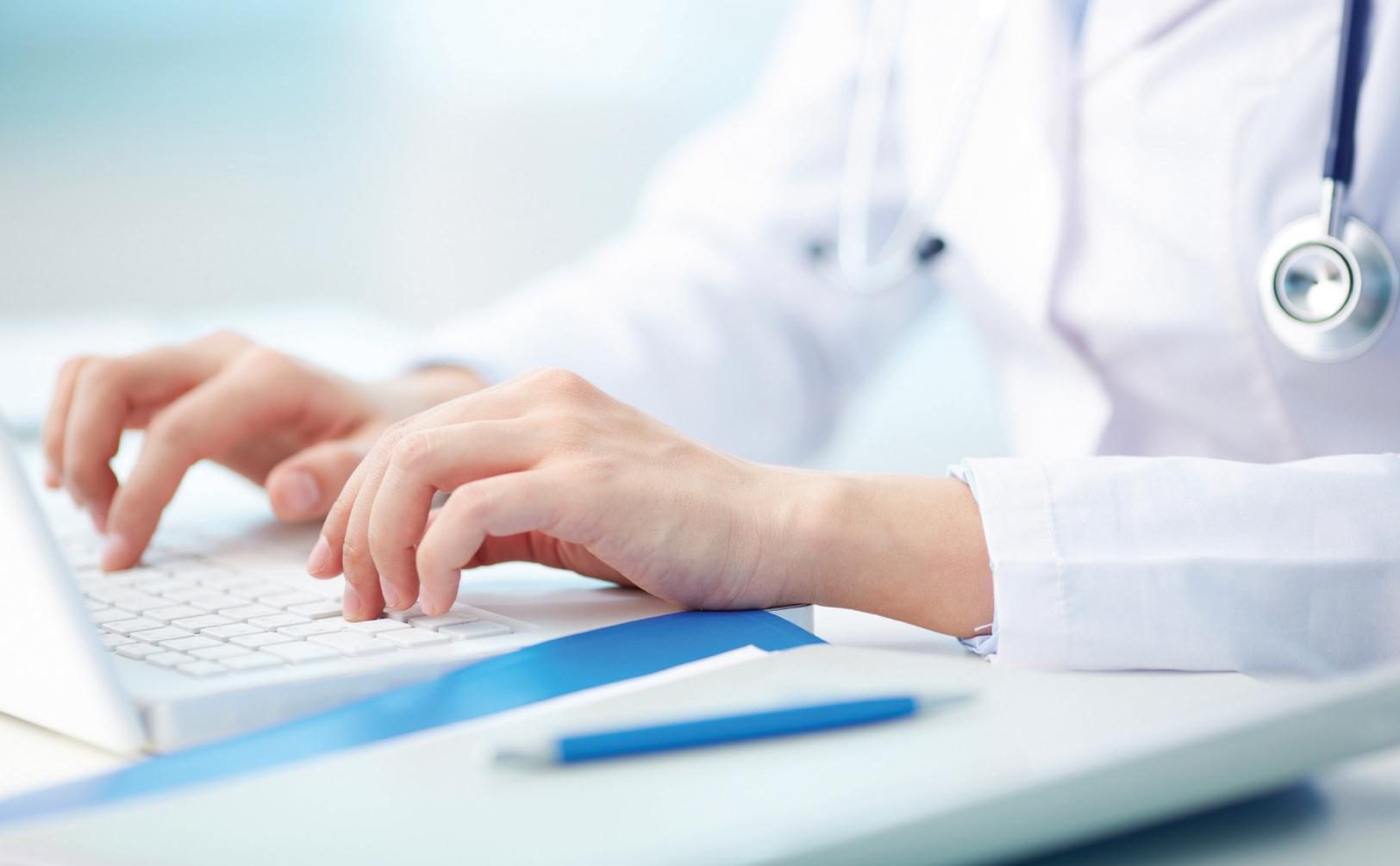
The true test of whether or not you have really changed physician perception is time and results.

Growth strategy is a process, not an event. Today's healthcare market requires an agile organization that is constantly innovating, capitalizing on new opportunities, and evolving with their customers. High performing organizations continuously assess their performance and changes in their market.

When you win more competitive advantage, you have to continually work to keep it. You must be relentless in your pursuit of growth.

This requires ongoing measurement of the impact of your alignment strategies - how your competitive market is changing and how your efforts are resonating with your physicians. Ongoing customer conversation allows you to capitalize on opportunities quickly (before your competition) and make real-time adaptations to your strategy to achieve your vision.





Start Now

Physician-hospital alignment is a critical component of your growth strategy. Without aligning physicians with your organization, none of your strategic initiatives are likely to succeed long-term. In today's market, whoever engages physicians the best and is able to impact their decision-making in their favor, wins.

By gaining insights into physician decision-making and their perceptions of you and your competition, you obtain actionable intelligence to build a formidable advantage.

This is what we do. Vennli harnesses real-time customer insights and transforms them into growth strategies for immediate action. Not only is it effective, but it's fast and easy to implement across your team or organization.



About Vennli

Healthcare organizations must move quickly. Markets are changing. Customer needs are continuously evolving. You need insights to:

- Engage and align physicians
- Drive marketing effectiveness
- Identify opportunities for growth
- Ensure the success of a new service line or initiative
- Optimize your financial performance

Ultimately, it all comes down to winning the customers' choice. How? **Grow by being different from competitors in ways that matter to customers.** Therefore, nothing is more important than understanding how customers make decisions.

Traditionally, market research and growth strategy development were considered separate activities. Vennli is something new. We're relentless in our pursuit of growth. We're cloud-based strategy software that bridges the gap between customer research and strategy to drive business growth.