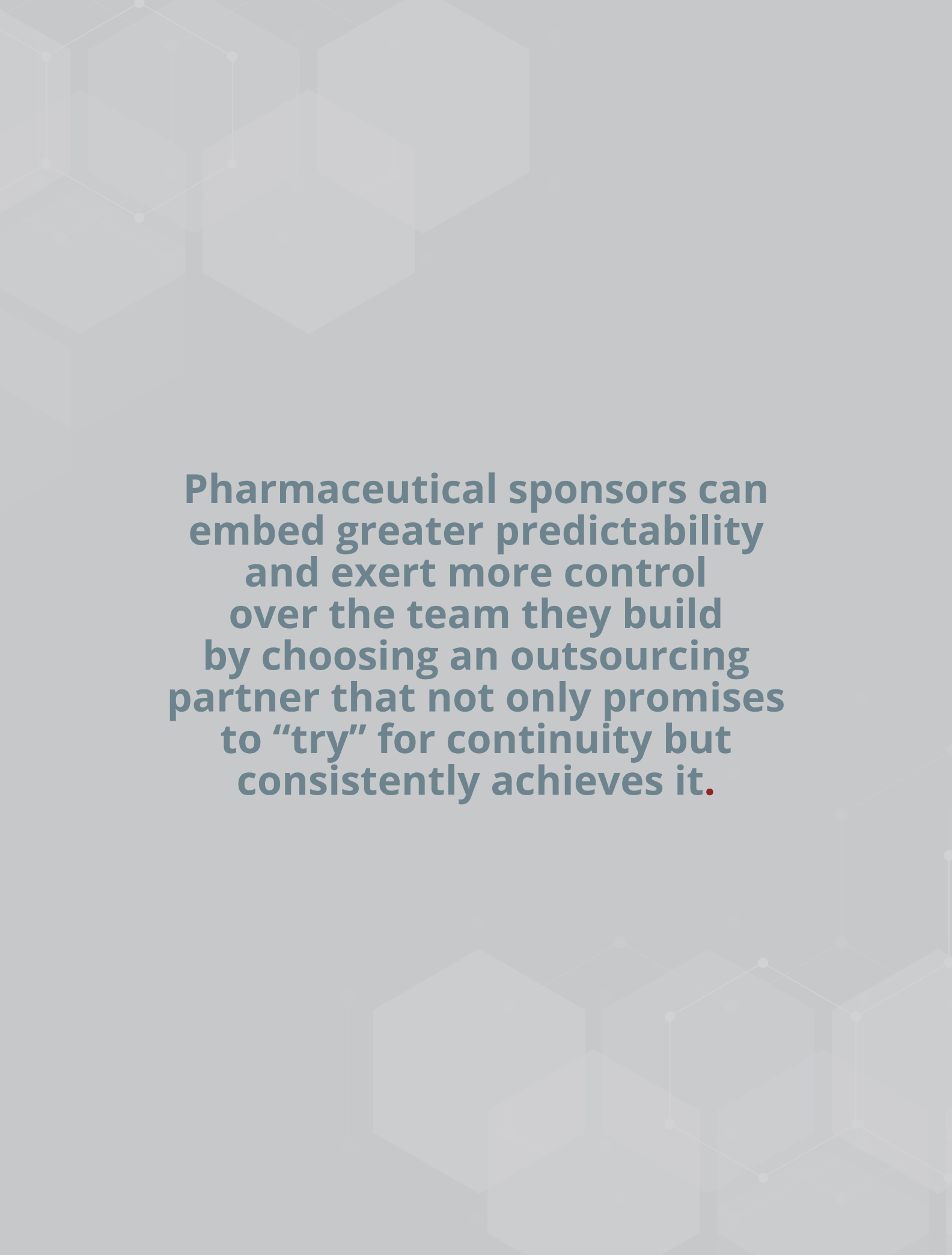
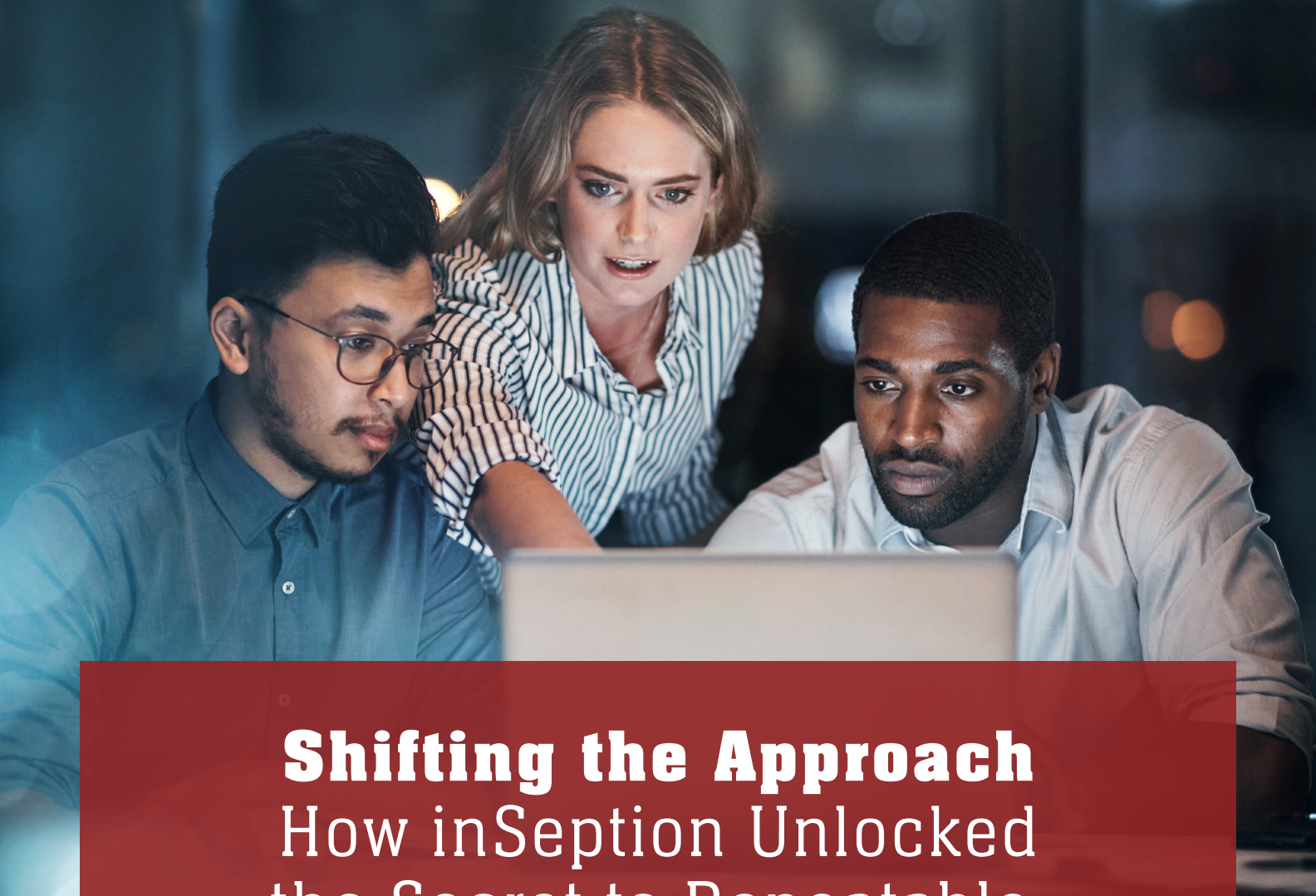




Shifting the Approach
How inSeption Unlocked
the Secret to Repeatable,
Scalable Low Turnover



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inSeption Group

As inSeption Group (ISG) wraps up a long-term relationship with one of our foundational partners, we are celebrating a collaboration built on trust, a commitment to excellence, and client satisfaction. Sounds like any other case study, right? Except two factors set this one apart.

First, the relationship lasted for a decade and spanned multiple projects, products, and submissions.

Second, there was 0% attrition. You read that right. Every person ever assigned to this project remained for the duration of this partnership. Obviously, this is not a common scenario, but ISG's turnover rate is as rare as it gets: less than 6%, compared to the industry average of 25%-30%.

Pharmaceutical sponsors can embed greater predictability and exert more control over the team they build by choosing an outsourcing partner that not only promises to "try" for continuity but consistently achieves it. In this case study, we explore the evolution of this unique partnership and extrapolate the ISG principles that create cohesive teams with less turnover.

Hire the Right People

How does an organization encourage long-term commitment to the sponsor, the project, and the work? Step one is hiring the right people. ISG seeks out highly experienced individuals, sometimes cultivating relationships with potential employees over many years until the time and opportunity are right for both sides.

But finding candidates with the appropriate professional experience is only the start. It is just as important to gauge each person's ability to thrive within a team culture. One critical element of doing this successfully is involving the client in the hiring process. Sharing resumes, scheduling interviews, and collaborating on outsourcing hires is the kind of co-creation that leads to mutual investment and accountability.

For example, in the case of this client, ISG's QC function started as a dedicated group of three QC Specialists and grew to a full-service provider (FSP) of eight under the client's guidance. As the client grew and added to their portfolio of drugs and programs, ISG's QC function grew along with them to meet the client's expanding needs—without sacrificing the commitment to providing the right resources.

From the beginning of the relationship, ISG demonstrated an innate ability to create the right team. We prequalified potential team members, all of whom the client had an opportunity to interview and approve. ISG's QC Lead established a close relationship with the client, which gave her insight into the technical skills team members would need to possess, as well as the personality types that would fit best within the client's company culture and workplace dynamics.

"I don't think [ISG] ever sent me a CV for someone who had less than eight years of experience. In fact, I don't think I would even have looked at a CV for a candidate with less than eight years of experience," said the client QC Manager. "So, the interview process was

more about making sure this person was going to fit with the team and our culture. Of course, I always interviewed the candidates for their work expertise and knowledge, but since they were presented by ISG, I had a lot of confidence they were qualified."

Cultivate Mutual Trust with a Quality Culture

In the end, trust will always be the most important currency exchanged between vendors and sponsors. Cultivating trust early and often lays a foundation that gets stronger with time, withstanding the inevitable pressures that come with the territory and easing stress for all involved.

When team members work together over many years, they learn the job (and each other) inside and out: the document types, the nomenclature, and the small things that can win over clients and colleagues alike. A vendor can make sound decisions based on this acquired knowledge that are in the best interest of the work and the mission. As a result, the client tends to give the vendor more autonomy; an empowered team becomes a strong, confident, and committed team.

"I never viewed our QC contractors as the vendor, ever. I viewed them as my partners," stated the client QC Manager. "We made sure that all QC Specialists felt part of the team and that they knew they were valued. You cannot put a price on that kind of culture."

Trust must also be earned through genuine care for an employee's professional fulfillment. Traditional CRO models often operate at either end of the work culture spectrum, either isolating an employee in one narrow lane of focus or stretching them across multiple accounts until burnout occurs. A better strategy to encourage personnel continuity is to ensure the work is plentiful and varied enough to remain interesting and manageable.

Recognizing this, the ISG QC Lead and client QC Manager took advantage of the client's wide range of products, indications, and project types. QC Specialists typically responsible for a focused set of projects had an opportunity to become familiar with other areas of the business. This collaboration served to keep the team actively engaged through workload diversity, thereby increasing productivity, eliminating turnover, and mitigating "brain drain." Moreover, greater mutual understanding of each other's responsibilities deepened trust between team members as the partnership progressed, fostering consistency and continuity in process, document structure, and communication style.

This cadence was supported by regular team meetings where the entire QC team discussed project status and worked through any issues that had arisen during prior projects. The transparent leadership style forged a sense of community and, as a result, QC Specialists were always willing to go the extra mile and power through challenging times.

Additionally, this approach was invaluable when shifting timelines or unexpected projects created more work than the current team could manage. For example, at times the team faced overlapping submissions and 400-page clinical study reports (CSRs) with aggressive deadlines. Since the ISG QC Lead had pre-qualified candidates and had given them exposure to various projects, ISG was able to activate auxiliary resources who could jump in on short notice.

"[The additional candidates] were great, and they filled in that gap," recalled the client QC Manager. "It was clear how their years of experience benefited the work and the program. They could juggle multiple projects and schedules. They demonstrated a flexibility I had not seen before and handled disruptions with grace and poise."

Extend Excellence to Changing Vendor and Sponsor Relationships

When a vendor puts the quality of the work above all else—egos, stressors, and shifting circumstances—they can navigate even the trickiest dynamics. Professionalism and grace are especially important when high-level organizational changes take place mid-project, and new leadership or unexpected vendor partners are brought into the mix. When this happens, vendors may proactively make changes to a team, removing and reassigning their best people in anticipation of losing business. Team culture may be affected, and employees can become consumed by negativity, ambiguity, and fear. Setting the right example and leading with a collaborative spirit not only quells superfluous discord, it also provides uncertain team members solid ground during times of transition.

When this client was acquired by a larger organization, the entire QC team and ISG QC Lead were retained—not a common occurrence in such a scenario. This happened in large part because the incoming medical writing management observed ISG's proficiency and intimate knowledge of the client's products after working on them for 10 years. Incoming management recognized the importance of continuity and that changing resources and processes could put projects at risk.

The incoming management's existing relationships with other vendors meant that ISG would be working alongside an additional vendor that performed similar services on some shared documents. While many other vendors might have become territorial in an effort to protect their bottom line, ISG worked closely with the client to ensure open communication and cooperative working practices between vendors. As a result, the quality of deliverables remained high and ISG employees assigned to the account did not waver from their dedication to seeing the project through.

Replicate Success With Proven Strategies

The secret to strong, long-lasting relationships is not as complex as you'd imagine. When you have invested, experienced people combined with continuity, it makes a difference every single time. The resulting staffing longevity can make or break a program, and the downstream impact is always reduced cost and increased operational efficiency.

Another critical factor in a program's success is having a champion on the client side, someone who embraces these principles, recognizes the value of a positive work environment, and shares the responsibility of creating and protecting that culture.

ISG's relationship with this client gave us our start in the industry. It gave us the opportunity

to define and refine our working practices over time, as well as to develop our trademark model, proving that high turnover in this industry can be conquered. But minimizing turnover was not necessarily the goal. It was a byproduct of seeking the right people for a given assignment, recognizing their talent, and prioritizing the kind of work they enjoyed.

The quality, integrity, and trust that grew during this 10-year relationship became the blueprint for the future of inSeption Group and remains the foundation on which we continue to build across all functions.

To learn more, call:

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About inSeption Group

Unified in our passion to bring therapies and an improved quality of life to patients around the world, we will only provide solutions that increase speed and efficiency in making available life-changing treatments to the patients we serve.

We build the foundation for success by assembling an elite team for every client, every time. Every team member has a mutual passion and an insatiable desire to share in offering hope and making a difference for the patients we serve during their fight for a better, longer life.

We believe that only teams of functional experts, who share personal attributes of excellence and grit, can deliver transparency, precision, and certainty to an industry that is rife with complexity and disappointment.