How to succeed in the Nordic pharma markets

Get the curated **data-driven** insights

Top experts and key opinion leaders from the Nordic pharma industry share insights into how savvy life science businesses can ensure strong, continuous growth over the next 3-5 years.

SPI DLIMI atrium

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Introduction

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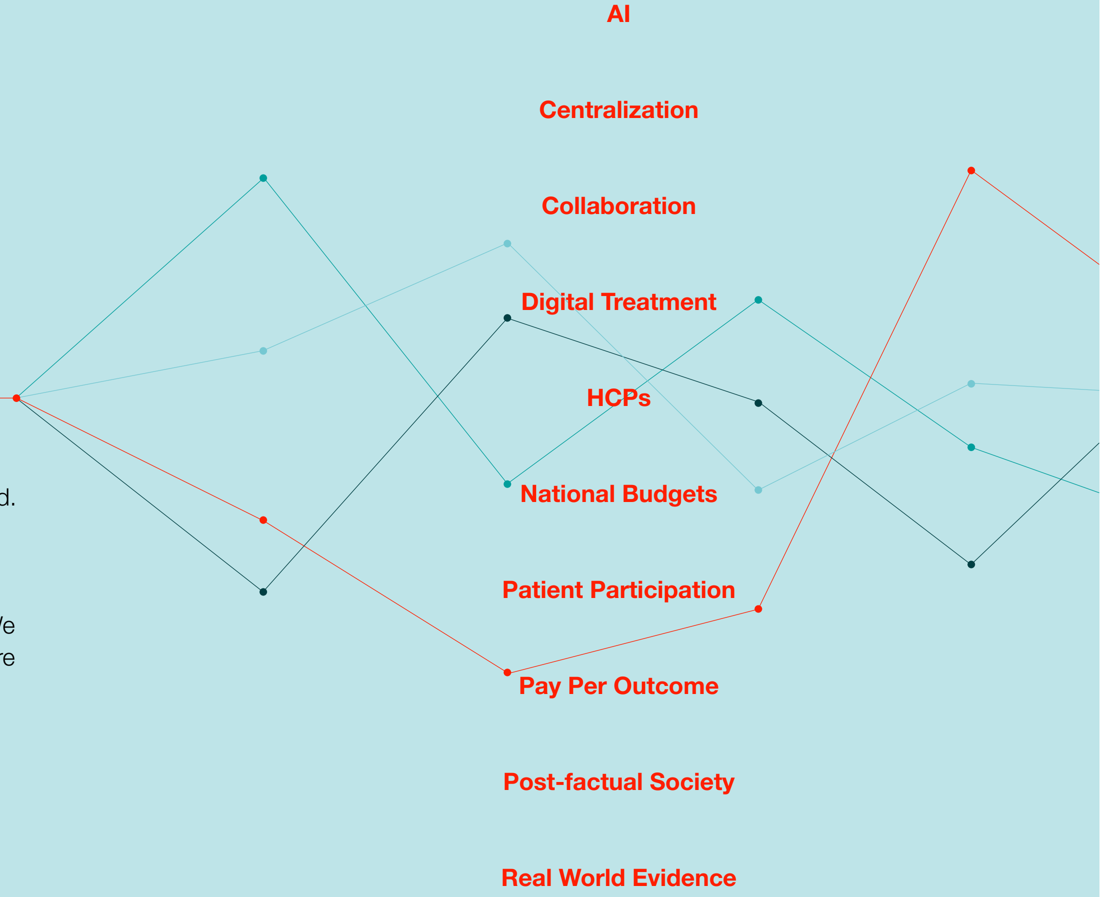
Your future as you see it



With Forward Thinkers Review we wish to offer the Nordic pharma industry a glimpse into your own future.

As the industry is going through times of change with restricted payer budgets, new digital opportunities and Covid-19 simultaneously slowing down and fast-tracking developments, we believe the time is right for an empirical take on where the industry is headed.

This report is based on a study of the Nordic pharma industry's perceived challenges and opportunities in the next three to five years: We have asked you to think forward, and these are our findings.

Executive summary

In the next 3-5 years, the Nordic pharma industry faces four key battlegrounds. Each battleground presents both a clear challenge and a clear opportunity — and each is set to heavily impact the industry and its organizations.

The key battlegrounds are:

1. Use of Real World Evidence for regulatory decision-making and of digital treatment solutions in healthcare.
2. Collaboration between pharma and public healthcare.
3. Centralization of national medicine approval, reimbursement, and tender bodies.
4. Restrained national budgets for procurement of medicines.

Mobilizing new personnel

To successfully navigate said battlegrounds, pharma companies are employing new roles and partnerships. Notably, the classic sales rep role is on the way out, making way for new profiles within market insight, data and digital. Companies are increasingly looking to external service providers for real-world data and support for HEOR studies and digital solutions.

Deploying new skills

At the same time, Nordic pharma companies will reshape their organizational setups to accommodate specialized, project-based teams and local sales representatives. New competences such as solution management and network management will be sought after to work together with staff with classic pharma skills such as Medical Science.

Basic study design

18 | 100+

Core questions

Which trends, opportunities and challenges will define the Nordic markets over the next 3-5 years?

Which external services and internal roles will ensure market success over the next 3-5 years?

Which organizational and internal competences will ensure market success the next 3-5 years?

Data collection and analysis was carried out Q3, 2021. If you want to find out what the report's conclusions mean for your business, please feel free to get in touch.

Qualitative interviews

18 external key opinion leaders

9 from life science NGOs and innovation funds, health and data science research, public health data actors and pharma service suppliers.

9 pharma executives
Spread across profiles and titles, with all Nordic countries represented

Method: Interviews

Quantitative survey

Sent to 168 people working in the Nordic pharma industry

- 91 completed the survey
- 43% have staff responsibility
- 45% work with both secondary and primary sector
- 41% work with only secondary sector

Method: Online questionnaire

To know which path to take, you need insights into what lies ahead.

Future trends, challenges, and opportunities

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Chapter summary:

No more operating like it's 1999

With narrowing market paths, the Nordic pharma industry looks to focus on digitalization, data and new partnerships

Which trends will impact the Nordic pharma sector in the coming 3-5 years? This survey's results point to three tough challenges, three clear opportunities, and four key battle-grounds.

Issues anticipated

Answers suggest two challenges that will impact pharma: The emergence of the post-factual society and HCPs closing their doors on sales reps. However, the biggest obstacle is projected to be restrained budgets for medicine procurement.

Innovation offers opportunity

Asked about business opportunities, respondents point to digitalization: The use of digital treatment opportunities and artificial intelligence score high along with patient participation in medicine approval.

Four growth areas

After correlating the survey data, four key battlegrounds emerge. These are the use of Real World Evidence for regulatory decision-making, centralization of national medicine approval, public/private collaboration, and pay-per-outcome schemes.

Methodology:

Taking the industry's temperature

We asked respondents to consider the 10 themes/developments listed bottom left — and score each one in relation to the three questions below

- Use of digital treatment solutions in healthcare (eMedicine, apps, etc.)
- Use of Real World Evidence for regulatory decision-making (approval, tenders, reimbursement, etc.)
- Collaboration between pharma and public healthcare (e.g. clinical research, developing healthcare solutions, etc.)
- Centralization of national medicine approval, reimbursement, and tender bodies
- Restrained national budgets for procurement of medicines
- HCPs with “closed doors” (i.e. not willing to meet sales reps)
- Use of artificial intelligence in healthcare (e.g. in decision-supported systems for diagnose and treatment)
- “Pay-per-outcome schemes” (value-based payment models in tenders, etc.)
- The proliferation of the post-factual society (e.g. citizens believing in the concept of fake news, distrust of scientific authorities, etc.)
- Patient participation in medicine approval and reimbursement evaluation

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Impact
On a scale from 1-5:
To what extent will this impact your market(s)?

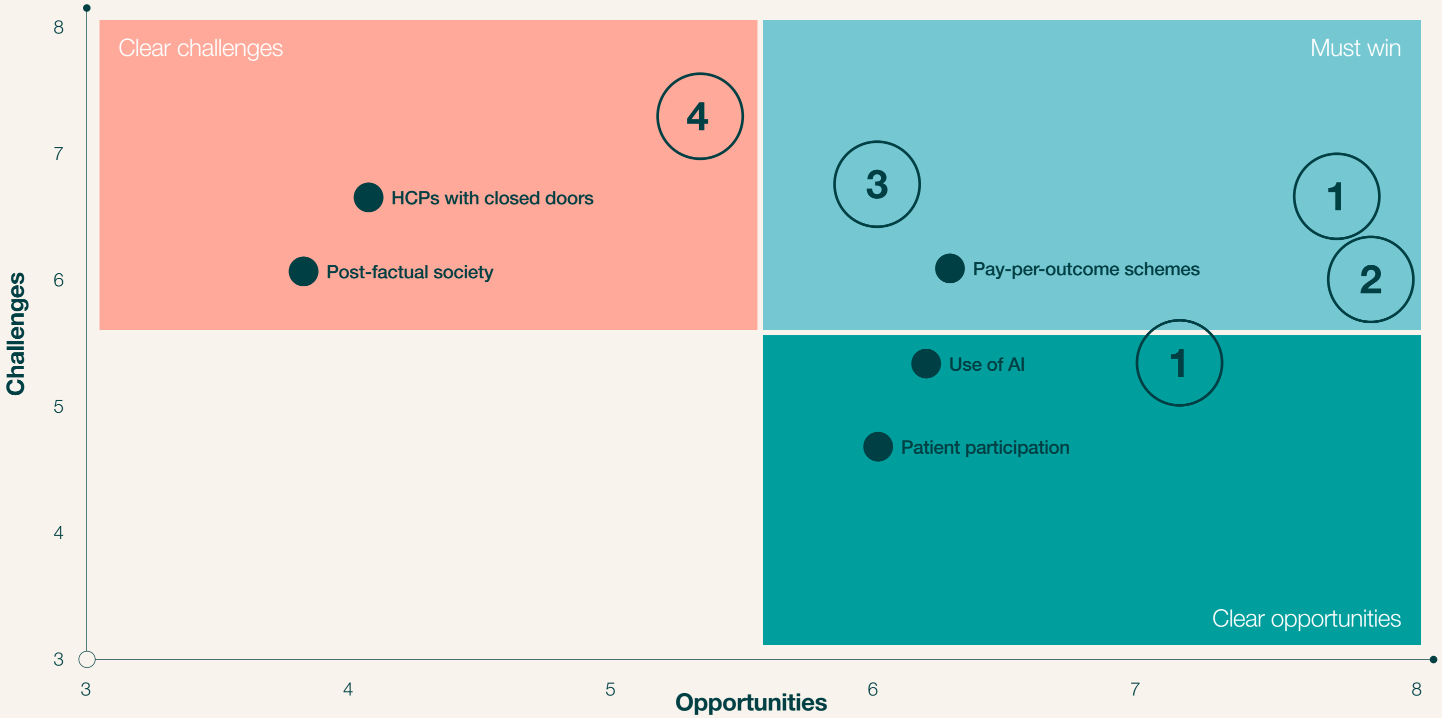
Opportunity
On a scale from 1-10:
To what extent does this represent an opportunity for your company?

Challenge
On a scale from 1-10:
To what extent does this represent a challenge for your company?

Results:

Four key battlegrounds emerge

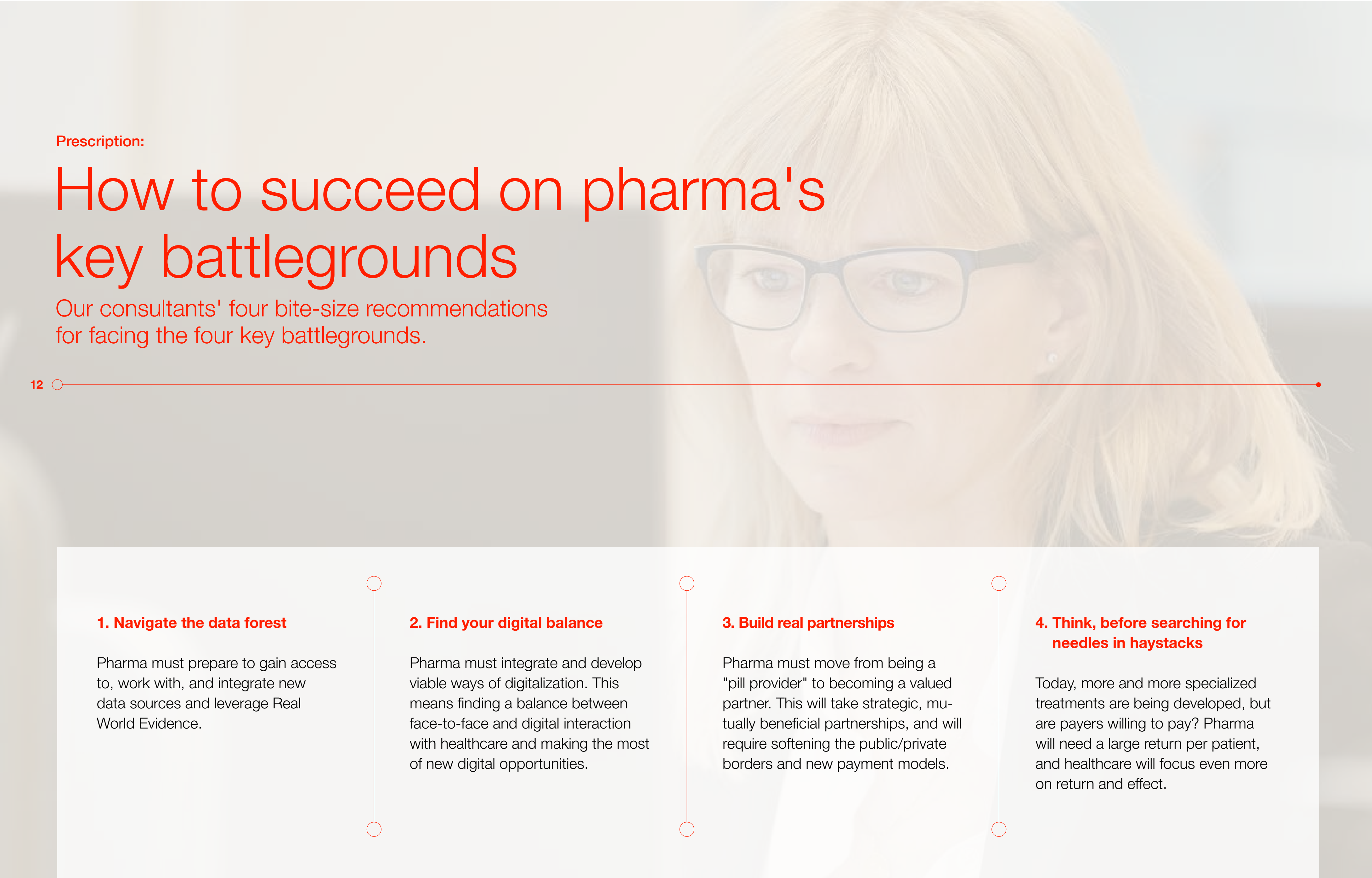
The model below shows how respondents rated each statement in relation to 'challenge' and 'opportunity'. The large dots, indicate the statements which were scored high for 'impact'



Key battlegrounds

Trends scoring high (1 being highest) regarding both challenge, opportunity and impact.

1. Use of Real World Evidence for regulatory decision-making and of digital treatment solutions in healthcare.
2. Collaboration between pharma and public healthcare.
3. Centralization of national medicine approval, reimbursement, and tender bodies.
4. Restrained national budgets for procurement of medicines.



Prescription:

How to succeed on pharma's key battlegrounds

Our consultants' four bite-size recommendations for facing the four key battlegrounds.

1. Navigate the data forest

Pharma must prepare to gain access to, work with, and integrate new data sources and leverage Real World Evidence.

2. Find your digital balance

Pharma must integrate and develop viable ways of digitalization. This means finding a balance between face-to-face and digital interaction with healthcare and making the most of new digital opportunities.

3. Build real partnerships

Pharma must move from being a "pill provider" to becoming a valued partner. This will take strategic, mutually beneficial partnerships, and will require softening the public/private borders and new payment models.

4. Think, before searching for needles in haystacks

Today, more and more specialized treatments are being developed, but are payers willing to pay? Pharma will need a large return per patient, and healthcare will focus even more on return and effect.

Future external services and internal roles

3

Chapter summary:

New playing field, new players

Faced with new market conditions, the previously dominant sales rep role is making way for new competences internally and externally.

Which internal roles and which external services will pharma rely on to ensure future market success? Results point to an internal shift in focus and a continued reliance on external partners.

From salespeople to specialists
The classic sales rep role is viewed as less important for future market success. Taking over this role are Medical Affairs and Market Access profiles with the support of specialists who can generate insights and integrate these in (digital) healthcare solutions.

Insights will be instrumental
Pharma companies will continue to use external service providers to supply data and deliver insights, especially within RWD/RWE, patient insights, and HEOR studies. However, market access guidance (as a specialized service) is less needed.

In an increasingly digital and data-driven industry, specialists who can generate and integrate insights will be crucial.

Methodology:

A prognosis for in-house roles and outsourced services

Future roles to ensure market success

- Market Access Manager
- Medical Affairs Manager
- HEOR manager (Health Economics and Outcomes Research)
- Market Insight Manager (analyzes and reports on sales data, RWD, etc.)
- Digital Solution Manager (digital solutions to patients and HCPs)
- Digital Marketing Manager
- Healthcare Solution Manager (develop projects and solutions with HCPs)
- Marketing Manager
- Public Affairs Manager/External Affairs Manager
- Policy Affairs Manager (develop policy input to political bodies)
- Data Science Specialist (specialized in data science and AI)
- Patient Relations Manager
- Sales Rep
- Sales Manager

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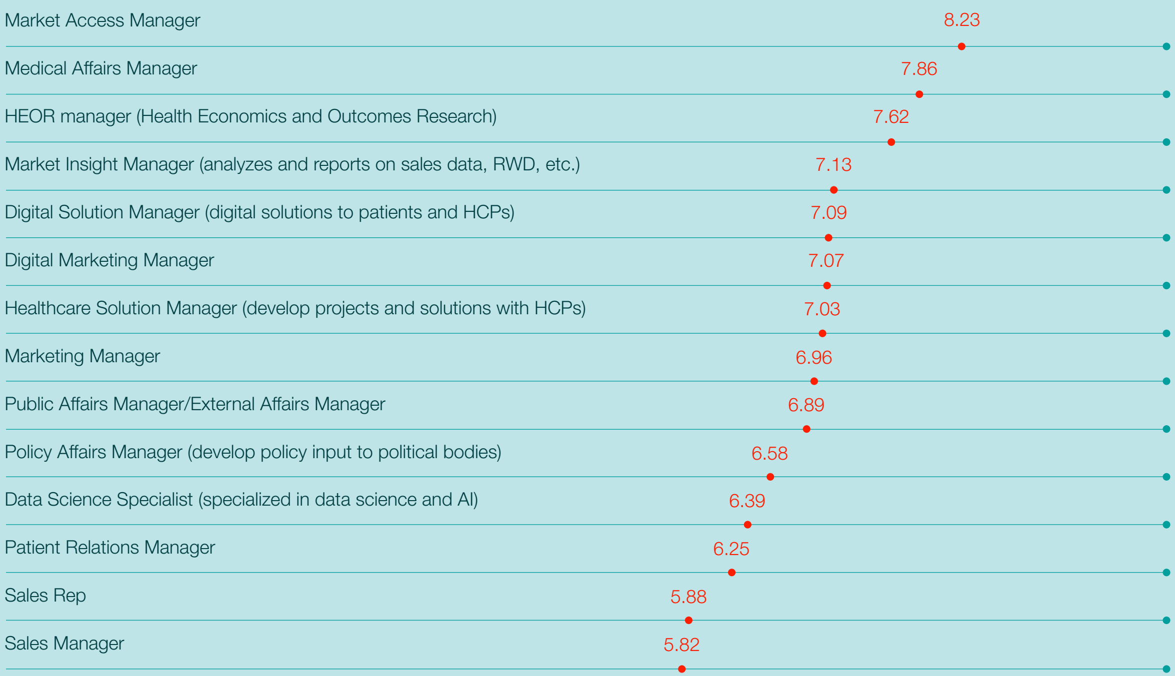
We asked respondents to indicate how much they will need the following roles in their organization within the next 3-5 years.

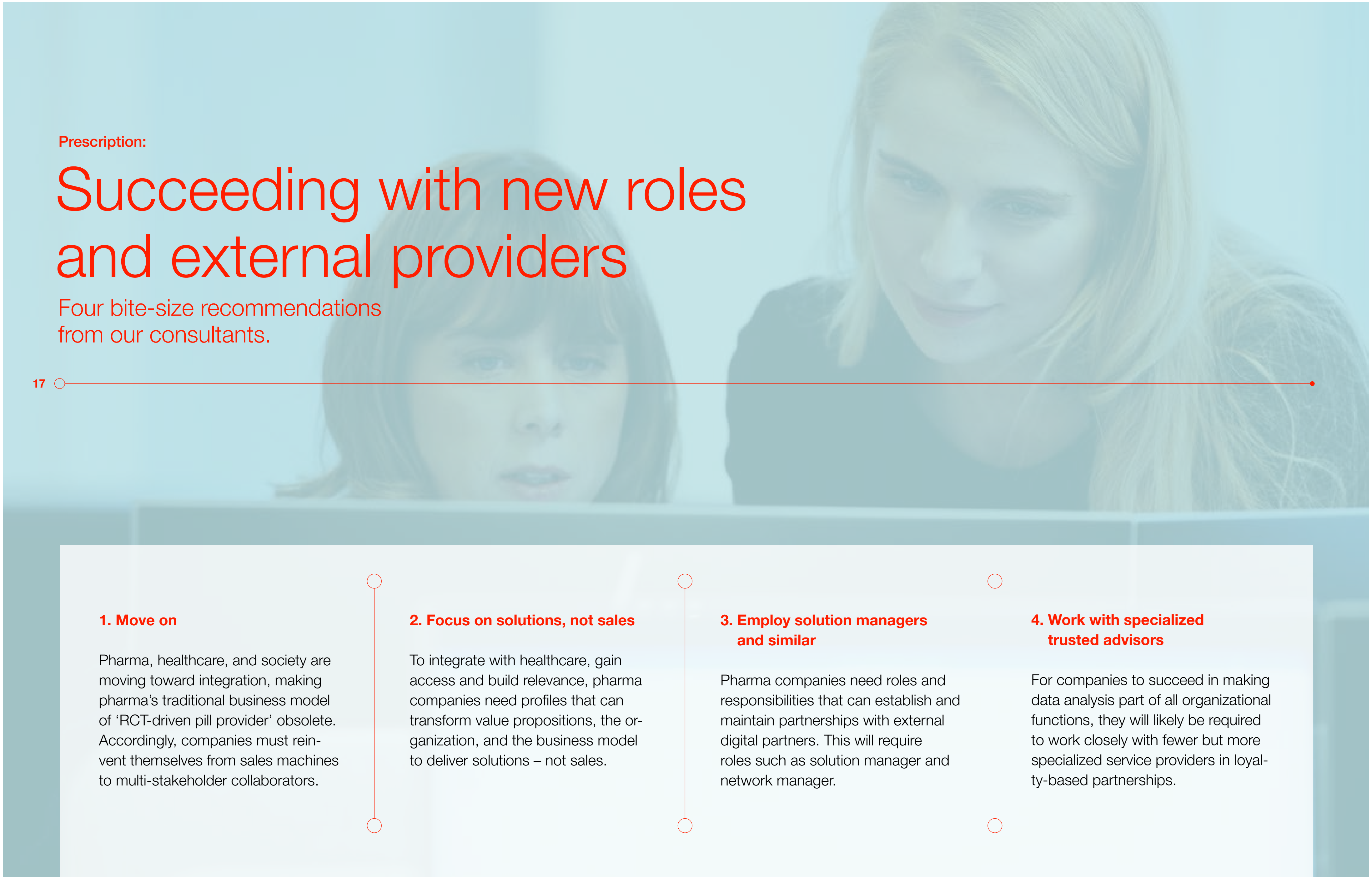
Results

Moving on from the Sales Rep to profiles within stakeholder relations, data and digital

Future roles to ensure market success



Respondents were asked to indicate to what extent they will need the following roles on a scale from 1 (do not need role) to 10 (pivotal role) N= 95



Prescription:

Succeeding with new roles and external providers

Four bite-size recommendations from our consultants.

1. Move on

Pharma, healthcare, and society are moving toward integration, making pharma's traditional business model of 'RCT-driven pill provider' obsolete. Accordingly, companies must reinvent themselves from sales machines to multi-stakeholder collaborators.

2. Focus on solutions, not sales

To integrate with healthcare, gain access and build relevance, pharma companies need profiles that can transform value propositions, the organization, and the business model to deliver solutions – not sales.

3. Employ solution managers and similar

Pharma companies need roles and responsibilities that can establish and maintain partnerships with external digital partners. This will require roles such as solution manager and network manager.

4. Work with specialized trusted advisors

For companies to succeed in making data analysis part of all organizational functions, they will likely be required to work closely with fewer but more specialized service providers in loyalty-based partnerships.

Future organization and competences

4

Chapter summary:

Broad coalitions working as special operations forces

In order to build new partnerships, organizations are bringing established competences together with new skills in project-based, specialized teams.

Which competences and organizational setups are necessary for future market success? Results suggest a mix of well-known and new competences will be brought together in future organizations.

Changing requirements

Skills such as data science, specific project management and social science are viewed as important. At the same time, new skills required to engage with specialized HCPs are also seen as important.

Evolving structures

The future organization in Nordic pharma companies will be characterized by local sales capabilities (not Nordic), a project-based setup and specialized teams. Key commercial functions look to be kept in the organization or in-sourced.

Methodology:

Examining who we will be and how we will work

We asked respondents to indicate how much they need the following **competences** in the next 3-5 years.

- Medical Science competencies
- Network/partnership (e.g. the ability to collaborate with public partners)
- Project management skills
- Holistic outlook on healthcare (a broad understanding of healthcare)
- Data literacy (i.e. the ability to read, analyze and act on data insights)
- Patient insight (i.e. the ability to understand patients)
- Specialized medical capability (i.e. the narrow, specialized understanding of a medical treatment)
- Sales/Marketing (i.e. drive sales and face customers)
- Data science skills (AI, Big Data, etc.)
- SCRUM/Agile skills
- Social Science competencies (sociological, political science, etc.)

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We asked respondents to indicate how much they agree or disagree with the following statements about how their **organization** should be organized within the next 3-5 years.

- Be a project organization (i.e. organize into ad hoc teams/network according to projects)
- Be an organization made up of highly specialized teams
- Have a local sales organization (local sales capabilities)
- Insource more key commercial functions (i.e. data science analytics)
- Be a nordic sales organization (only nordic sales capabilities)
- Have outsourced key commercial functions (i.e. sales reps.)

Results

New and classic pharma competences working together in tailored formats

Top 5 future competences

Scale 1-10

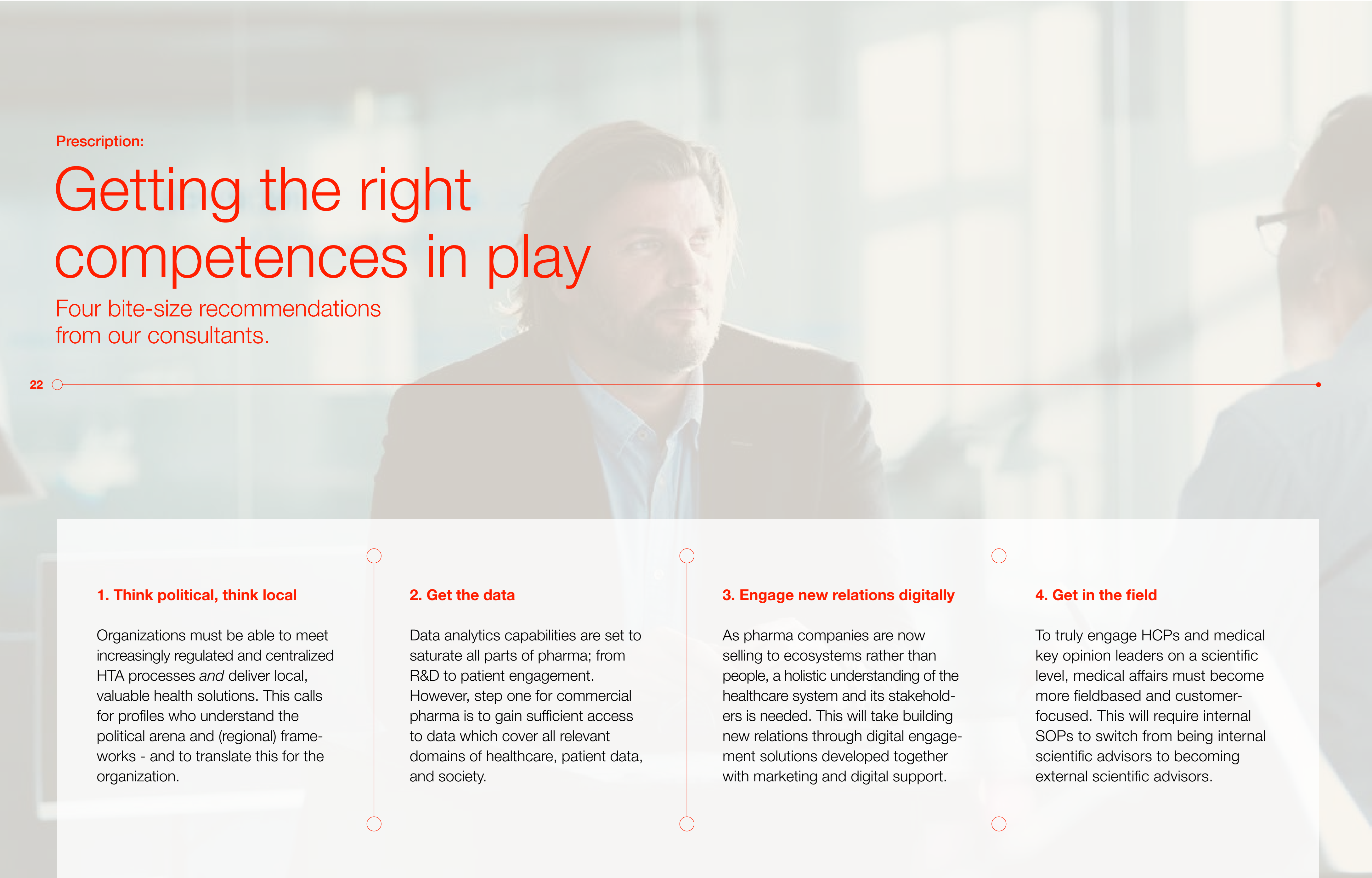
Medical Science competencies	8.00
Network/partnershop (i.e. the ability to collaborate with public partner)	7.88
Project management skills	7.68
Holistic outlook on healthcare (a broad understanding of healthcare)	7.53
Data literacy (i.e. the ability to read, analyze and act on data insights)	7.52

Top 3 future organizational setups

Scale 1-5

Be a project organization (i.e. organize into ad hoc teams/network according to projects)	3.94
Be an organization made up by highly specialized teams	3.92
Have a local sales organization (local sales capabilities)	3.67

Providing the right organizational structure will help get the best out of your teams' competences.



Prescription:

Getting the right competences in play

Four bite-size recommendations from our consultants.

1. Think political, think local

Organizations must be able to meet increasingly regulated and centralized HTA processes *and* deliver local, valuable health solutions. This calls for profiles who understand the political arena and (regional) frameworks - and to translate this for the organization.

2. Get the data

Data analytics capabilities are set to saturate all parts of pharma; from R&D to patient engagement. However, step one for commercial pharma is to gain sufficient access to data which cover all relevant domains of healthcare, patient data, and society.

3. Engage new relations digitally

As pharma companies are now selling to ecosystems rather than people, a holistic understanding of the healthcare system and its stakeholders is needed. This will take building new relations through digital engagement solutions developed together with marketing and digital support.

4. Get in the field

To truly engage HCPs and medical key opinion leaders on a scientific level, medical affairs must become more fieldbased and customer-focused. This will require internal SOPs to switch from being internal scientific advisors to becoming external scientific advisors.

Perspectives and recommendations

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Perspectives

Resolving the industry's dilemma

Today, Nordic pharma companies find themselves squeezed between two opposite trends that are set to fundamentally alter the industry.

From one side, authorities are increasingly applying pressure in the form of restricted budgets and a growing focus on effect. From the other, the market demands pharma moves ‘beyond the pill’ and create value within – and together with – the health care sector.

This dilemma poses an existential question:
How do pharma companies create value for society? Thus, dealing with the problem requires challenging the industry’s self-perception.

New directions

On a more practical level, companies are required to carry out – if not a revolution – then a realignment of ingrained inner workings: organization-wise, culture-wise and staff-wise.

Looking ahead

The good news is the industry seems to have taken up the gauntlet. RWE, digital solutions, and collaboration with the health care sector are seen as key focus areas in the years ahead – along with bringing in new competences, roles and organizational setups that can support a holistic approach to the market. At least, that is the picture painted by our survey.

A rocky road awaits

Still, tackling the many challenges is bound to be a bumpy ride with very few certainties. However, as detailed on previous pages, we believe there are passable paths ahead to solve the Nordic pharma industry’s challenges.

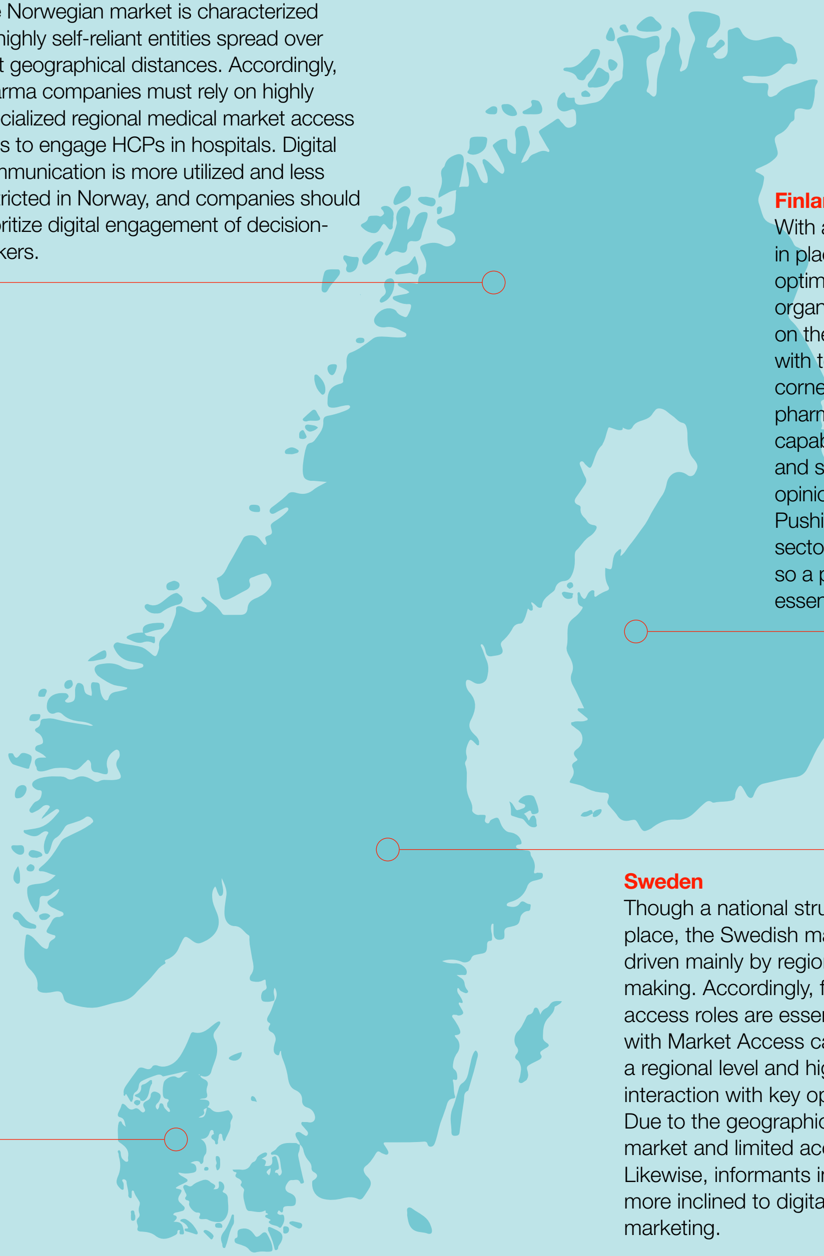
3 questions all decision-makers should ask themselves

- How fit is your organizational structure to face the future market?
- How ready is your company culture to embrace a holistic approach to the market?
- Do you have the comptences necessary to face the new opportunities and challenges?

Nordic differences

Where Nordic neighbors differ

Their many similarities notwithstanding, the Nordic countries can hardly be viewed as one unified market. Several structural and cultural differences mean pharma companies should tailor their approach to each country.

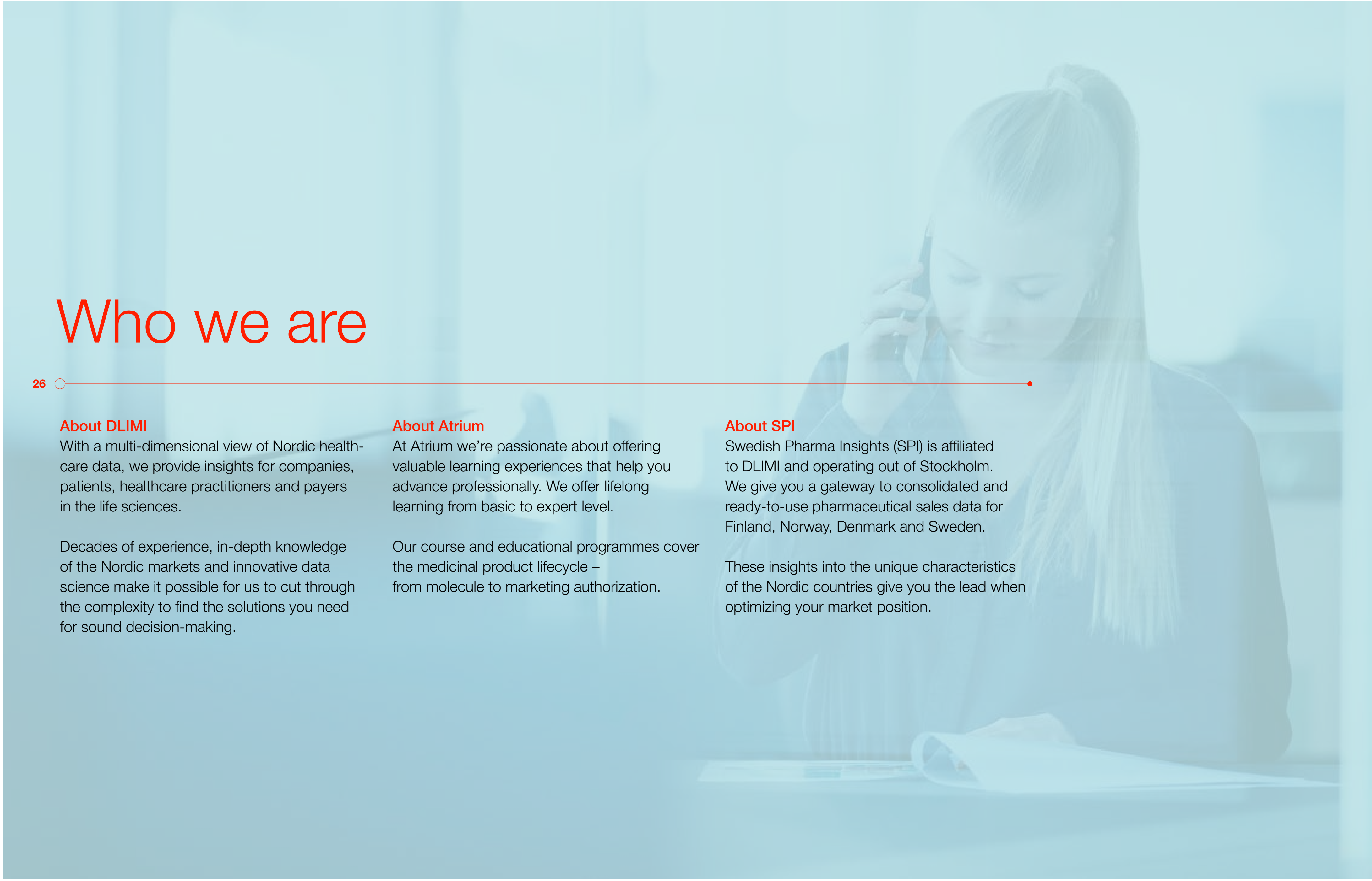


Norway
The Norwegian market is characterized by highly self-reliant entities spread over vast geographical distances. Accordingly, pharma companies must rely on highly specialized regional medical market access roles to engage HCPs in hospitals. Digital communication is more utilized and less restricted in Norway, and companies should prioritize digital engagement of decision-makers.

Finland
With a new healthcare reform in place, it is uncertain what the optimum mode of operation and organizational setup looks like on the Finnish market. However, with tender processes as a cornerstone of the new reform, pharma companies should secure capabilities that can handle tenders and scientific interaction with key opinion leaders on a regional level. Pushing products in the primary sector after approval is necessary, so a potent field sales force is also essential.

Denmark
On the Danish market, pharma companies need capabilities that can handle central reimbursement processes and ensure guideline implementation on a regional level. In other words, roles within Public Affairs, policymaking, and market access are essential, as is a solid local Key Account Management presence. A difficult path to HCPs means digital marketing and sales solutions should also be prioritized.

Sweden
Though a national structure is in place, the Swedish market is in effect driven mainly by regional decision-making. Accordingly, field market access roles are essential — along with Market Access capabilities on a regional level and highly scientific interaction with key opinion leaders. Due to the geographical size of the market and limited access to HCPs. Likewise, informants in Sweden appear more inclined to digitalize sales and marketing.



Who we are

About DLIMI

With a multi-dimensional view of Nordic healthcare data, we provide insights for companies, patients, healthcare practitioners and payers in the life sciences.

Decades of experience, in-depth knowledge of the Nordic markets and innovative data science make it possible for us to cut through the complexity to find the solutions you need for sound decision-making.

About Atrium

At Atrium we're passionate about offering valuable learning experiences that help you advance professionally. We offer lifelong learning from basic to expert level.

Our course and educational programmes cover the medicinal product lifecycle – from molecule to marketing authorization.

About SPI

Swedish Pharma Insights (SPI) is affiliated to DLIMI and operating out of Stockholm. We give you a gateway to consolidated and ready-to-use pharmaceutical sales data for Finland, Norway, Denmark and Sweden.

These insights into the unique characteristics of the Nordic countries give you the lead when optimizing your market position.

Contact us

Data collection and analysis was carried out Q3, 2021. If you want to find out what the report's conclusions mean for your business, please feel free to get in touch.

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