



LAUNCHPAD · METHODOLOGY

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# The talent agency.

How Launchpad represents talent. **The 6-stage representation cycle**, the agent operating model, the placement-fee structure, and the alignment guarantees. **Published openly so other agencies can adopt the framework.**

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Launchpad Research · **The methodology team**



# The 6-stage cycle.

Every Launchpad client moves through these six stages. The cycle is the methodology. Published in full so it can be critiqued and adopted.

## 01 · DISCOVERY

### Who is this person?

2-hour intake. Career story, ambitions, constraints, deal-breakers. Not a résumé review — a representation conversation. Output: the client's three-year career thesis.

## 02 · PROFILE CONSTRUCTION

### The case for representation

The agent constructs the representation case — the document that goes to employers. Not a résumé; a curated portfolio with evidence, references, and trajectory framing.

## 03 · MARKET MAP

### Where to land

Named target companies, named target roles, named hiring managers. 30-40 specific targets per client, mapped by fit-confidence + close-probability.

## 04 · PITCH

### Warm intros, not cold apps

The agent pitches the client through the agency's relationship network. 78% of placements never see a public posting.

## 05 · NEGOTIATION

### The agent negotiates

Comp, equity, title, start date, signing bonus — negotiated by the agent on the client's behalf. Avg uplift: **22-38%** vs. self-negotiation.

## 06 · STEWARDSHIP

### The relationship lasts

Quarterly check-ins for 5 years post-placement. The agency exists to manage a career, not close a transaction. Re-representation cycle when ready.

## Why six stages

The cycle was derived from 480 successful Launchpad placements 2014-2024 and reverse-engineered from athlete + entertainment agency methodologies. **Six is the smallest number of stages that captures every value-add an agency provides without redundancy.** Five

collapses Negotiation into Pitch and loses 22-38% of comp value. Seven splits Profile Construction artificially.

# The **agent** operating model.

The empirical basis for the 1-agent-to-12-clients ratio, the agent training program, and the alignment structure.

## The 1:12 ratio

Each Launchpad agent represents 12 active clients at a time. The ratio is not arbitrary — it was derived from outcome data. Below 8 clients, the agent is under-utilized and the unit economics break. Above 16, individual representation quality degrades; placement close rate drops from 78% to 51%.

**51%**

CLOSE RATE AT  
16+ CLIENTS

**68%**

CLOSE RATE AT 14  
CLIENTS

**78%**

CLOSE RATE AT 12  
CLIENTS

**82%**

CLOSE RATE AT 10  
CLIENTS

The ratio is the methodology. **An agency that scales beyond 1:12 stops being an agency and starts being a recruiter.** The economic incentive is to raise the ratio; the alignment incentive is to hold it. Launchpad holds it.

## Agent training program

Every Launchpad agent completes a structured 12-week training before taking clients. The curriculum:

- **Weeks 1-2:** Career architecture, role frameworks, comp benchmarks across 14 sectors.
- **Weeks 3-4:** Profile construction methodology + 20 portfolio teardowns.
- **Weeks 5-6:** Relationship network mapping. How to build, maintain, and call on a warm-intro graph.
- **Weeks 7-8:** Negotiation training — comp, equity, leveling, signing bonuses, counter-offers.
- **Weeks 9-10:** Difficult conversations — layoffs, performance issues, agent-client disagreement.
- **Weeks 11-12:** Apprentice cycle with senior agent, supervising 4 active clients before solo certification.

## Alignment structure

**The placement-fee model.** Launchpad agents are compensated by employer-paid placement fees — not by client subscription. The client never pays. This matters because it sets the alignment vector: **an agent only earns when the client lands a role they accept and keep.** Subscription-based career coaches have no skin in the outcome; recruiters have skin in *any* outcome that closes. Launchpad agents have skin in the *right* outcome — the one the client says yes to and stays in.

# Outcomes + governance.

How Launchpad measures whether representation worked, and how the agency holds itself accountable to clients.

## The four outcome metrics

METRIC	DEFINITION	2024 RESULT
Close rate	% of clients placed within 6 months of representation	78%
Comp uplift	Realized comp vs. estimated self-negotiated comp	+27%
Time-to-offer	Days from kickoff to first offer in hand	52 days median
12-month retention	% of clients still in placed role 12 months later	91%

## The client bill of rights

Published openly so candidates can hold the agency accountable.

- **The agency works for the client.** Employers pay; the agency answers to the candidate.
- **No exclusivity for >60 days unless mutually renewed.** If representation isn't working, the client can leave.
- **Full transparency on placement fees.** The client knows what the agent earns and when.
- **Negotiation is a partnership.** The client signs off on every offer position; the agent never accepts on the client's behalf.
- **The relationship survives the placement.** 5-year stewardship is standard, not premium.

## Citation

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