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Selected deal and build experience

SELECTED TRANSACTIONS (ANONYMIZED)

Kraft Heinz, 2018–2026. Counterparties are described generically, other than the publicly announced Primal Kitchen acquisition.

100+	**~20**	**5-10**	**50+**	**$100MM+**
companies screened ($20MM-$100MM revenue)	deep diligences ($200MM-$1B revenue)	large deals scoped as acquisition, JV or partnership	founder relationships in the sourcing pipeline	first-year sales from a partnership I negotiated

DEAL TYPE	SIZE	ROLE	OUTCOME / WHAT IT SHOWS
Acquisition and integration: Primal Kitchen Kraft Heinz, 2018 (closed)	Closed acquisition	Worked on the deal from the Springboard accelerator team, then one of two Kraft Heinz team members sent to integrate and grow the brand	Brand grew 100%+ over three years. Realized distribution, manufacturing, technology and sales synergies; part of the team that led the 6-month ERP integration; helped implement systems that generate regulatory-compliant nutrition facts panels; led the move of manufacturing in-house (+60% margins) *Shows: deal through integration through scale*
Cross-border acquisition (evaluated) European consumer brand, 2022–2024	$1B+	Ran diligence, including in-person meetings with the target's CEO; owned the growth, synergy and positioning assumptions behind Corporate Development's valuation	Informed the executive team's decision not to proceed at that valuation *Shows: price discipline; walking away from a full price is a result*
Strategic partnership $1B+ brand, new product category, 2022–2024	$1B+ partner brand; $100MM+ first-year sales	Sourced, structured and negotiated the deal; liaison between both companies' executive teams	Entered a new product category and generated over $100MM in incremental sales in its first year *Shows: origination through signature, with two executive teams aligned*
Acquisition pipeline and diligence M&A Strategy & Partnerships, 2022–2024	100+ screened ($20MM-$100MM revenue); ~20 deep diligences ($200MM-$1B revenue)	Led diligence and buy, build and partner recommendations to the North America Investment Committee	Executive Leadership Team alignment on four high-impact acquisition targets *Shows: a repeatable funnel from wide screen to Investment Committee*
Deal structuring Acquisition vs JV vs partnership	5-10 large deals; targets $200MM-$1B revenue	Scoped each deal's structure and recommended it, such as a joint venture versus a full acquisition, to the executive team each quarter	Quarterly structure recommendations to the executive team across the large-deal slate *Shows: choosing the structure, not only the target*
Founder-led sourcing Proprietary pipeline, 2022–2026	50+ founders; 10+ prioritized targets	Built founder relationships and tracked companies to growth thresholds against the growth plan and portfolio gaps	Kraft Heinz first in line, often ahead of any sale process; identified acquisition targets sized to expand the portfolio by over $300MM *Shows: access before an auction sets the price*
Post-acquisition integration playbook Smaller-brand acquisitions	End-to-end program	Worked on the playbook, from a study of how competitors handled integration through best practices to recommendations presented to the C-suite	Later used in the restructuring of an acquired European direct-to-consumer brand *Shows: integration treated as part of the deal, not an afterthought*

HOW I WORK A DEAL

1. Sourcing	2. Thesis	3. Diligence	4. Valuation inputs	5. Structure	6. Integration
Founder relationships; companies tracked to growth thresholds, often ahead of a process	Tie each target to the growth plan and portfolio gaps; decide buy, build or partner	Screen wide, go deep on few; meet management in person	Own the growth, synergy and positioning assumptions behind the DCF and comparables	Acquisition, joint venture or partnership, chosen deal by deal	ERP and reporting, manufacturing, distribution and sales synergies, run to a written playbook

Valuation models were run by Corporate Development with bankers; my role was the strategic inputs that drive them. Finance foundation: five years at PIMCO; CFA Level I (passed).

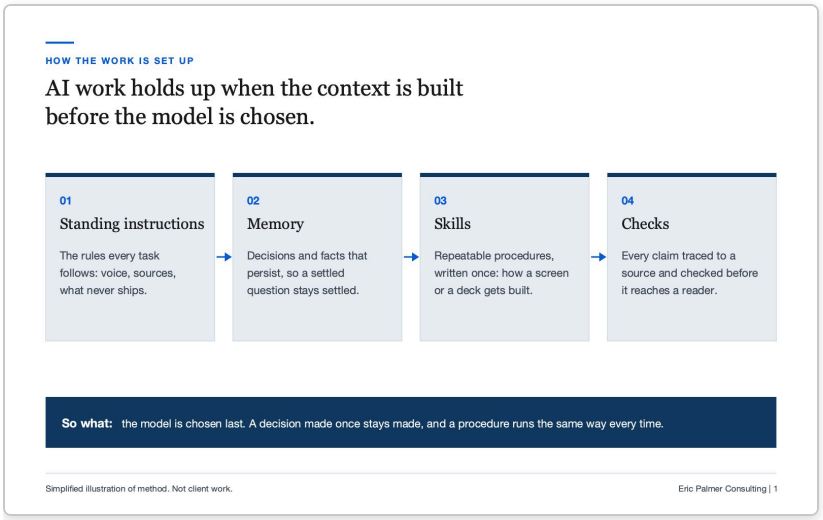
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HOW AI FITS INTO THE STRATEGY AND M&A WORK

AI is part of how I deliver strategy and M&A work, not a separate service. AI assembles the evidence. The time goes into the argument.

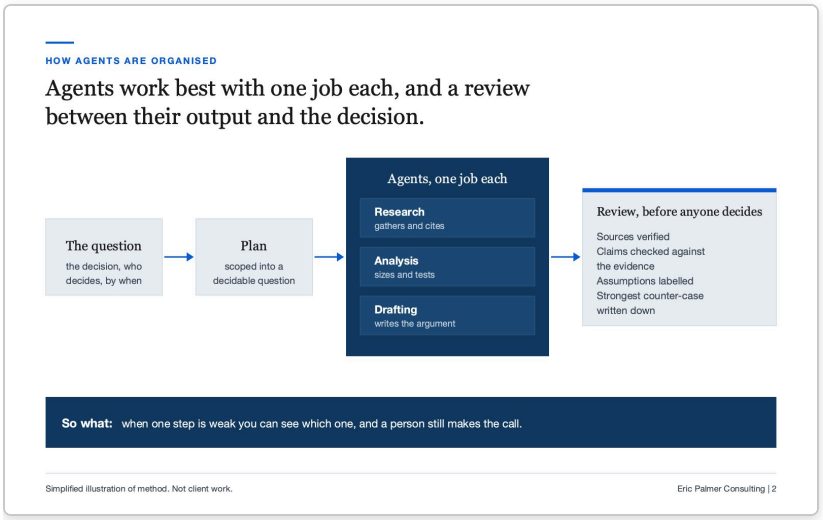
Three slides on how the work is set up. Simplified illustrations of method from my own practice, not client work.



1. HOW THE WORK IS SET UP

Context before the model

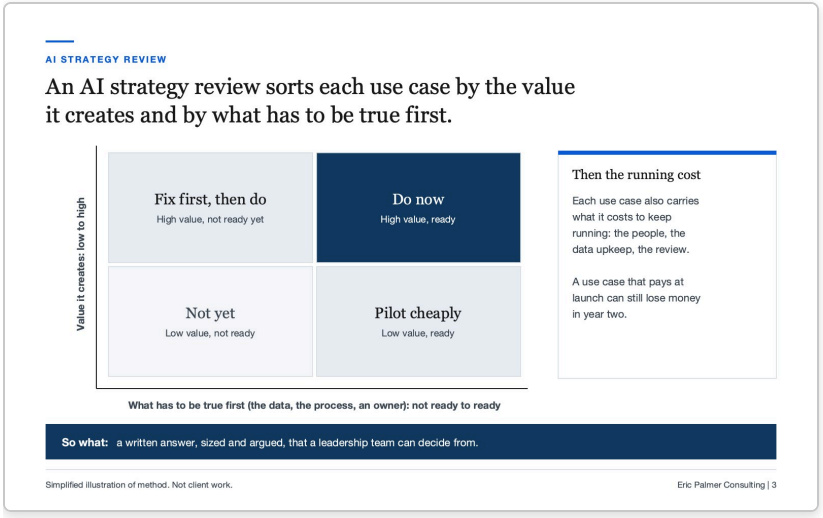
Standing instructions every task follows, a memory of settled decisions, written skills for each repeatable task, and checks that trace every claim to a source. The same setup runs a research system I architected and built, which orchestrates 25+ AI agents across 60+ data sources every day.



2. HOW THE AGENTS ARE ORGANISED

One job each, and a review before the decision

Research, analysis and drafting run as separate agents against a question scoped first. A review sits between their output and anyone's decision: sources verified, claims checked, assumptions labelled, and the strongest counter-case written down.



3. WHERE AI PAYS

An AI strategy review

Each use case is sized by the value it creates and by what has to be true first (the data, the process, an owner), then by what it costs to keep running. Each one lands in one of four groups: do now, fix first, pilot cheaply, or not yet.

Applied to the same kinds of work as page 1: category and market assessments, acquisition screens, first 100 days integration plans and board-ready strategy decks. Full write-ups at ericwpalmer.com/work-ai.