



Ipsos Reid



Alumni Engagement: Research in Action

Ipsos & SAIT Polytechnic Alumni Research: A Case Study

CASE VIII – Portland, Oregon (17-19 February 2010)



February 2010

Nobody's Unpredictable

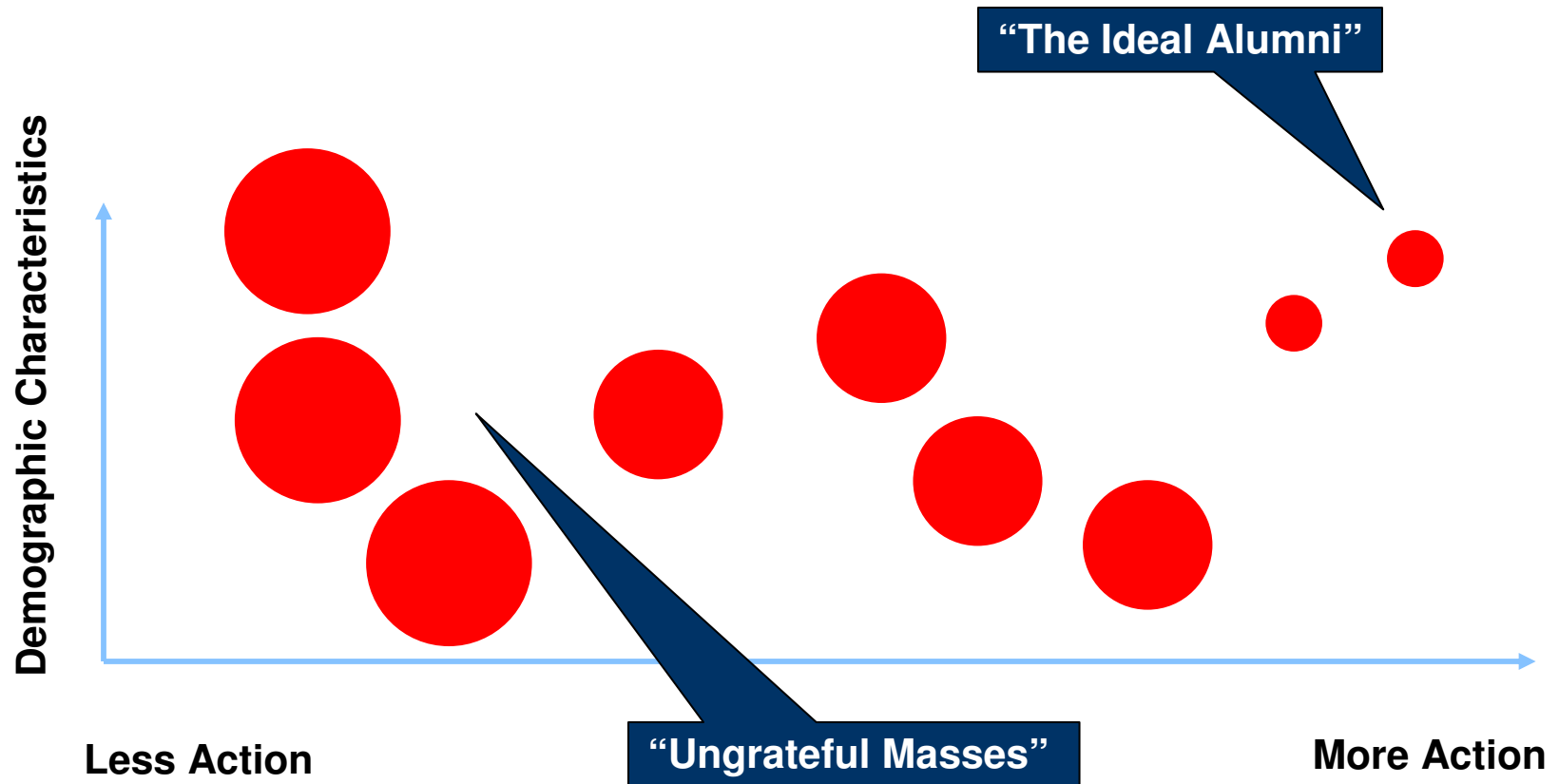
**How does an institution change
alumni indifference to interest,
and interested alumni into
champions?**





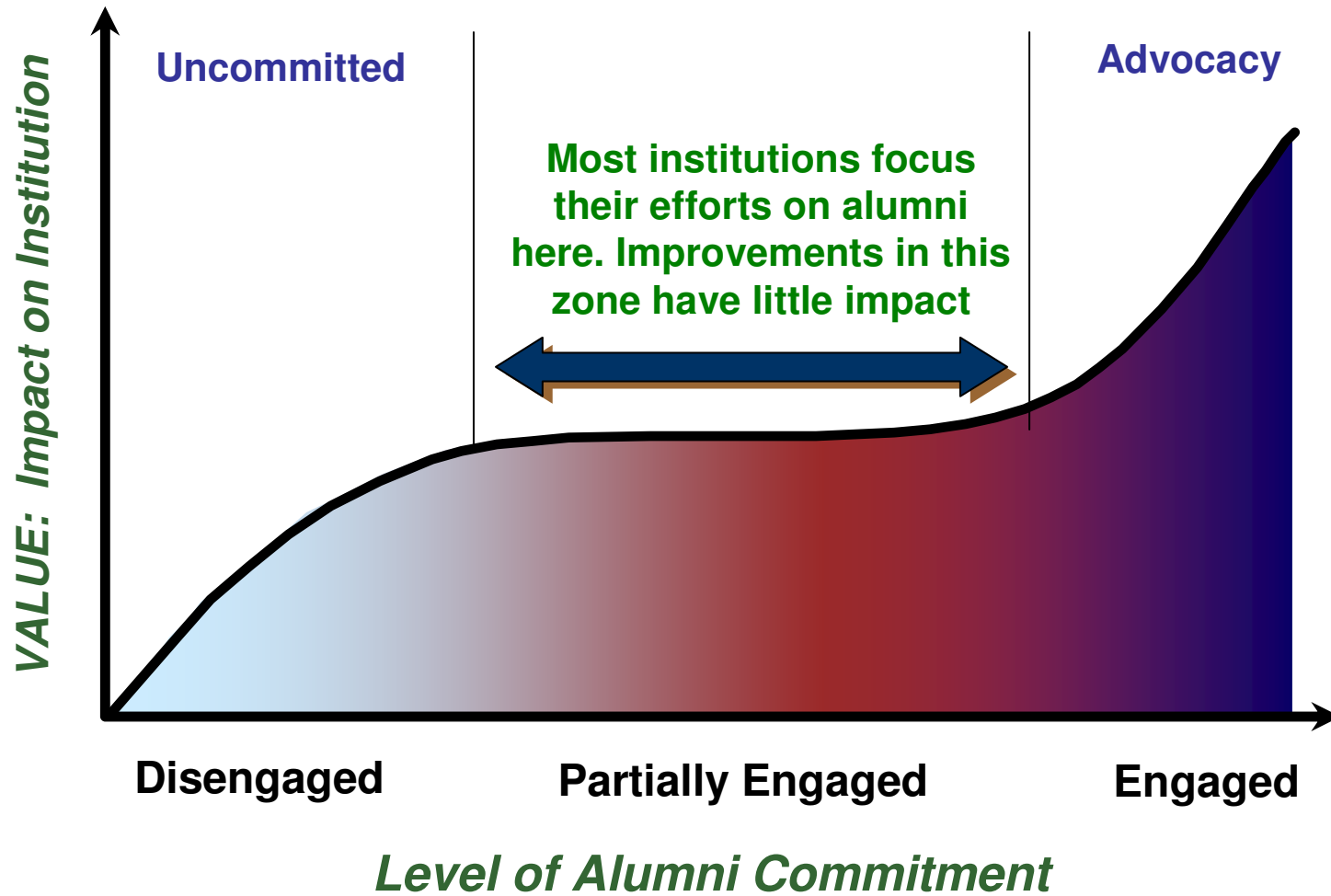
The Traditional Approach

Use the Database to Target Alumni





The Challenge: Engaging Alumni for Maximum Impact





Ipsos Reid



SAIT Polytechnic

Research to Strategy



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Key Objectives of SAIT Research



- ◆ Establish a measurable definition of alumni engagement;
- ◆ Provide a benchmark for the current level of alumni engagement;
- ◆ Identify differences in the level of engagement between alumni segments;
- ◆ Identify, at a segment level, the specific barriers and drivers that can either limit or build the alumni relationship;
- ◆ Identify and prioritize the specific actions, attributes and attitudes that SAIT will need to change in order to modify the current barriers and drivers of a fully engaged relationship with its alumni.

What do you want your alumni to do?

- ✓ Donate to your institution.
- ✓ Be active in alumni events and local chapters.
- ✓ Use and purchase alumni services.
- ✓ Recommend your institution to prospective students.
- ✓ Send their children to your institution.
- ✓ Hire your institution's students and graduates.
- ✓ Attend your institution's sporting or cultural events.
- ✓ Participate in the educational process (mentor, instructor, industry contact).
- ✓ Champion or advocate for your institution (formally or informally).
- ✓ Volunteer within your institution (boards, judging, committees, etc.).
- ✓ Volunteer at events.
- ✓ And more ...



Step 1: SAIT Defines Alumni “Value”



Fund-raising + Friend raising

SAIT wanted its Alumni to do the following:

- ◆ **Make financial contribution to SAIT**
- ◆ **Volunteer at SAIT events**
- ◆ **Recommend SAIT to others**



Step 2: Identify Attitudinal Levers of Engagement



- ◆ **Satisfaction with SAIT as a student, and satisfaction with SAIT as an alumnus.**

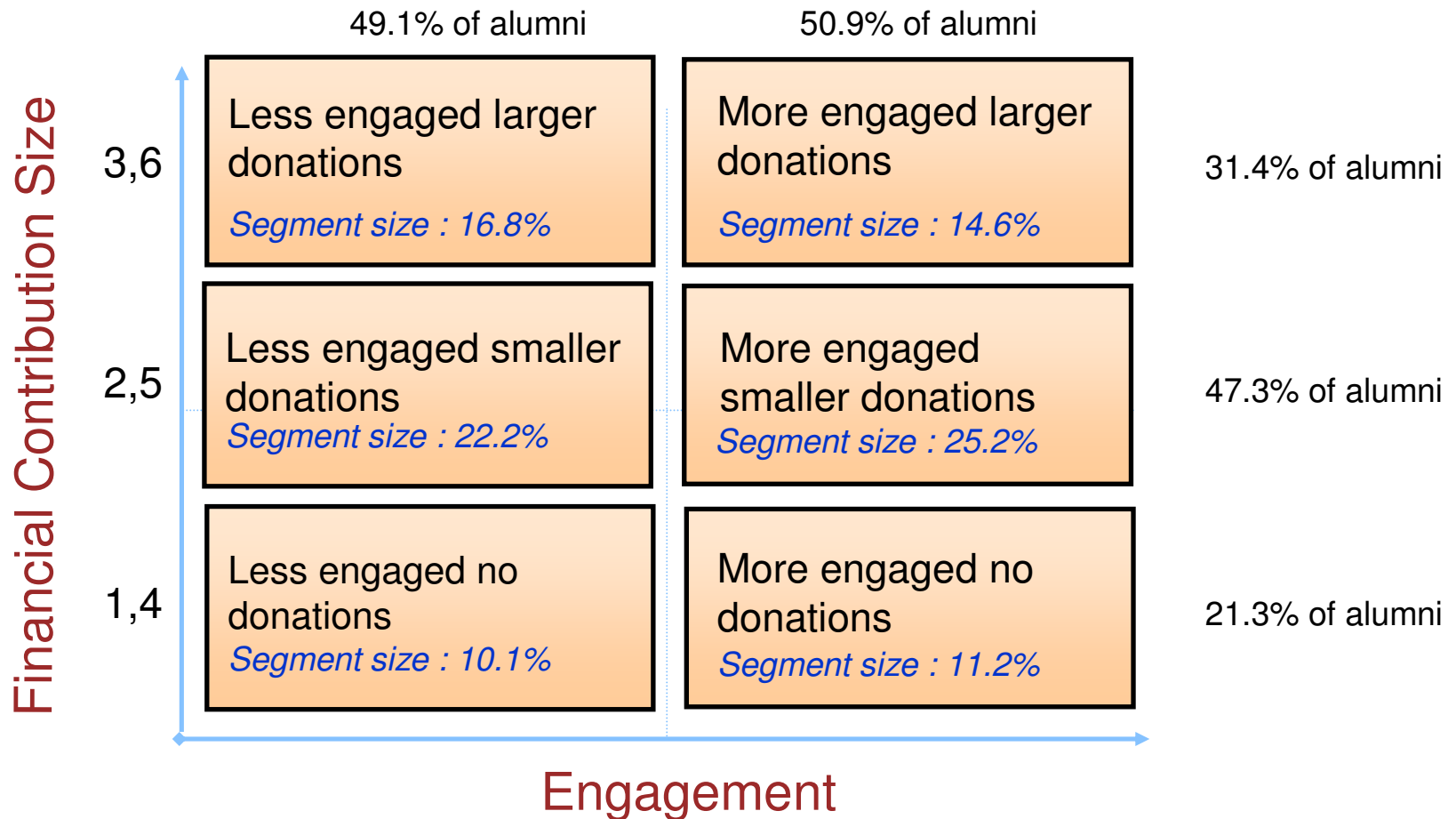
- ◆ **Four emotional linkage questions:**
 - I feel like I am part of the SAIT community
 - If I were to visit a SAIT campus, I would feel welcomed
 - SAIT feels like a friend
 - I am a strong supporter of SAIT through the things I say and do

- ◆ **Some attitudinal measures:**
 - Likelihood to show a preference for SAIT with regard to education as a choice for continuing education, recommending SAIT to potential students, and recommending hiring a SAIT graduate
 - likelihood to show a preference for SAIT as a place to volunteer and as a place to make a financial contribution

- ◆ **Some behavioural measures:**
 - Whether or not have volunteered for a SAIT event
 - Whether financial contribution increased or decreased in past 12 months
 - Whether or not recommended SAIT or recommended hiring a SAIT graduate

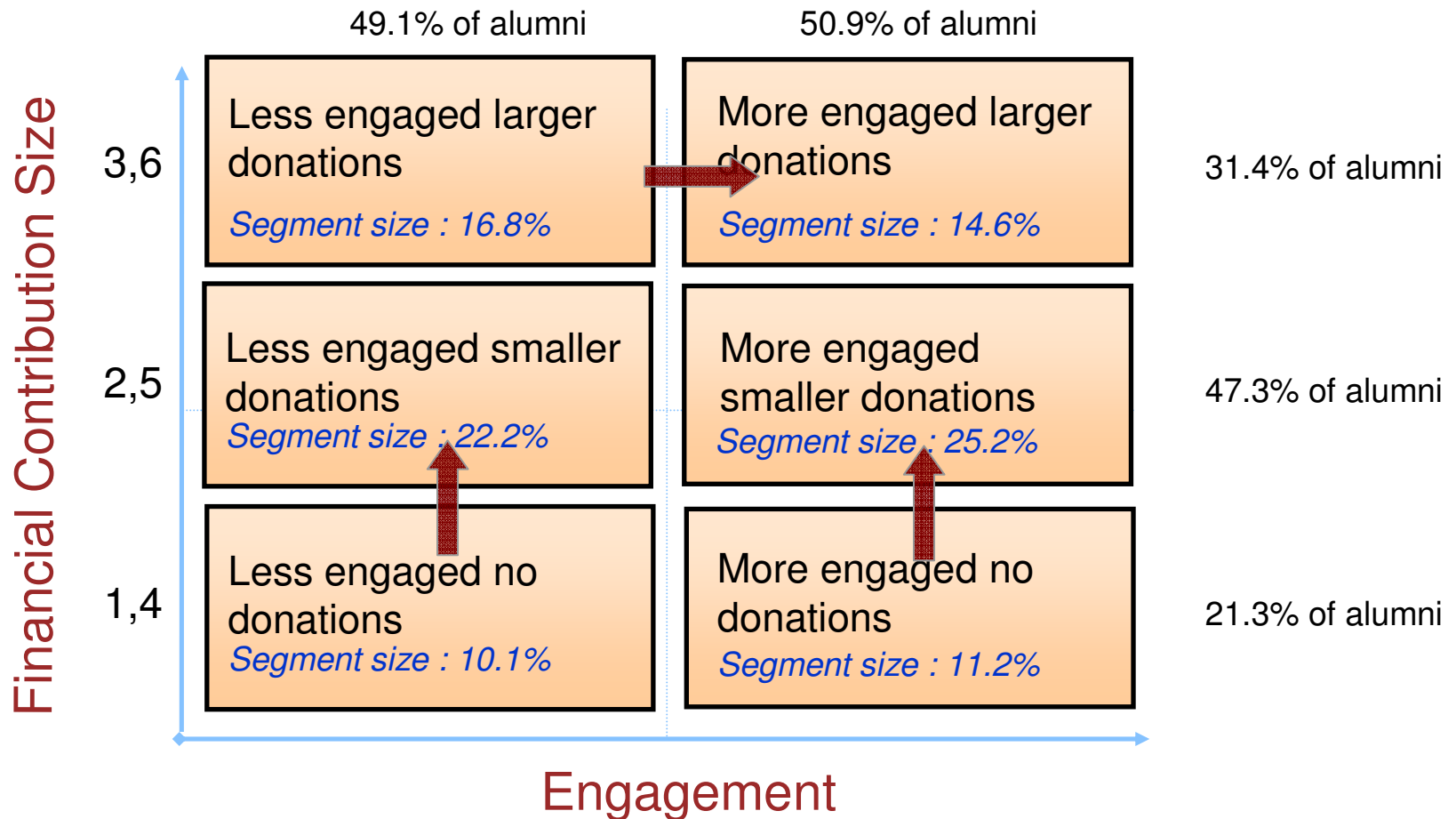


Step 3: SAIT's Alumni Engagement Segments Bringing Value and Commitment Together





Step 4: Choosing a Priority Segment: Shifting Behaviour of Alumni Groups



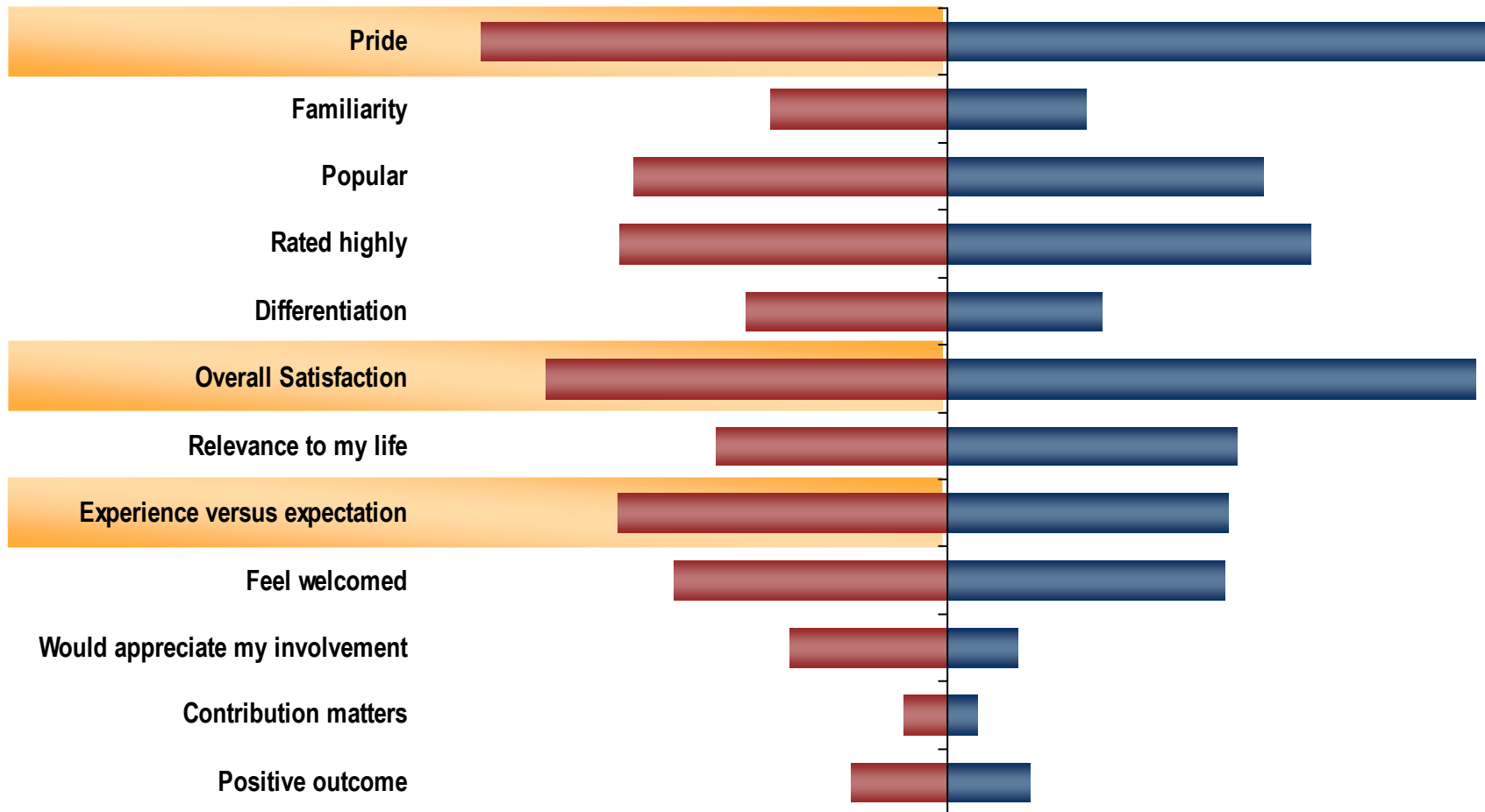


Step 5: Identify Barriers & Drivers

“Do not donate to SAIT” to “Donate to SAIT”



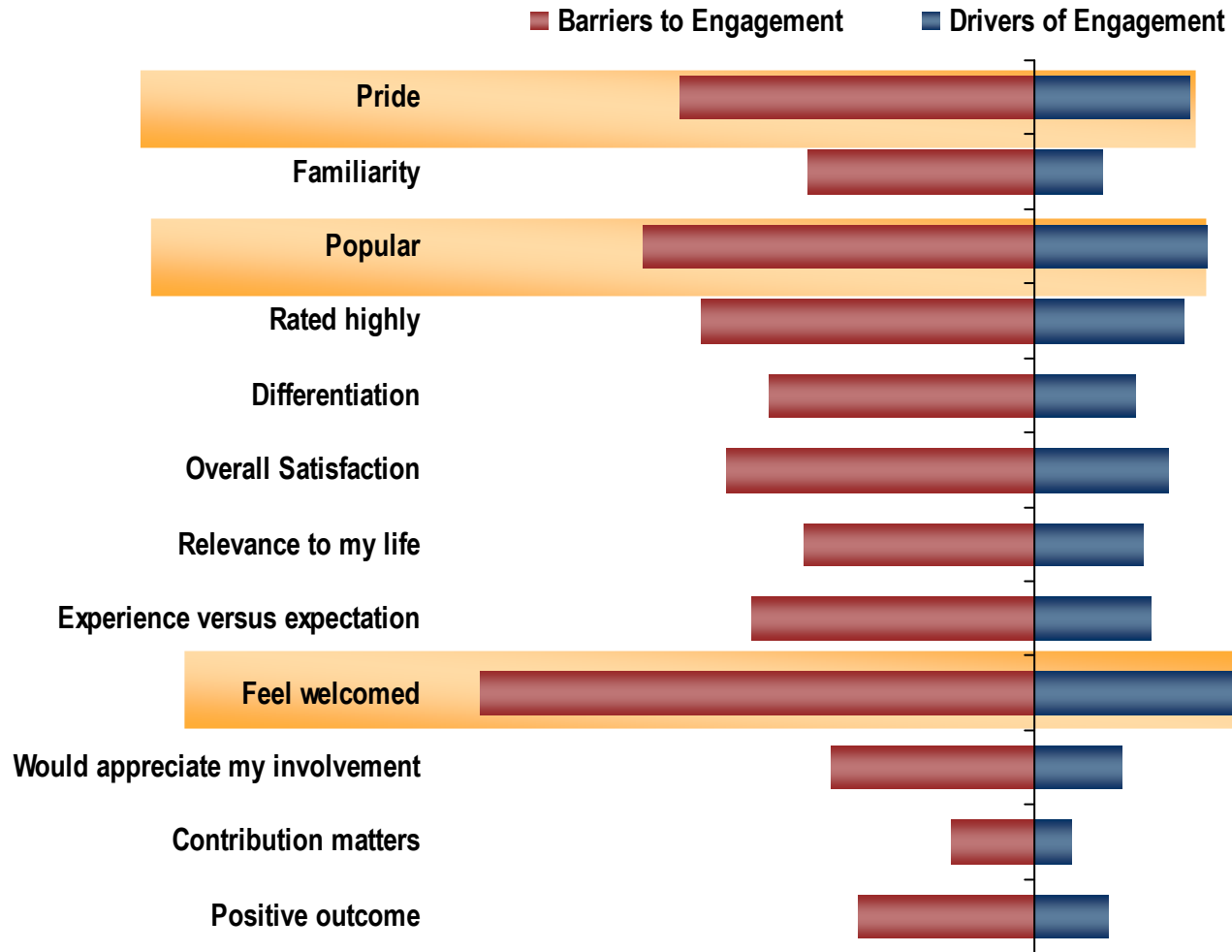
■ Barriers to Engagement ■ Drivers of Engagement





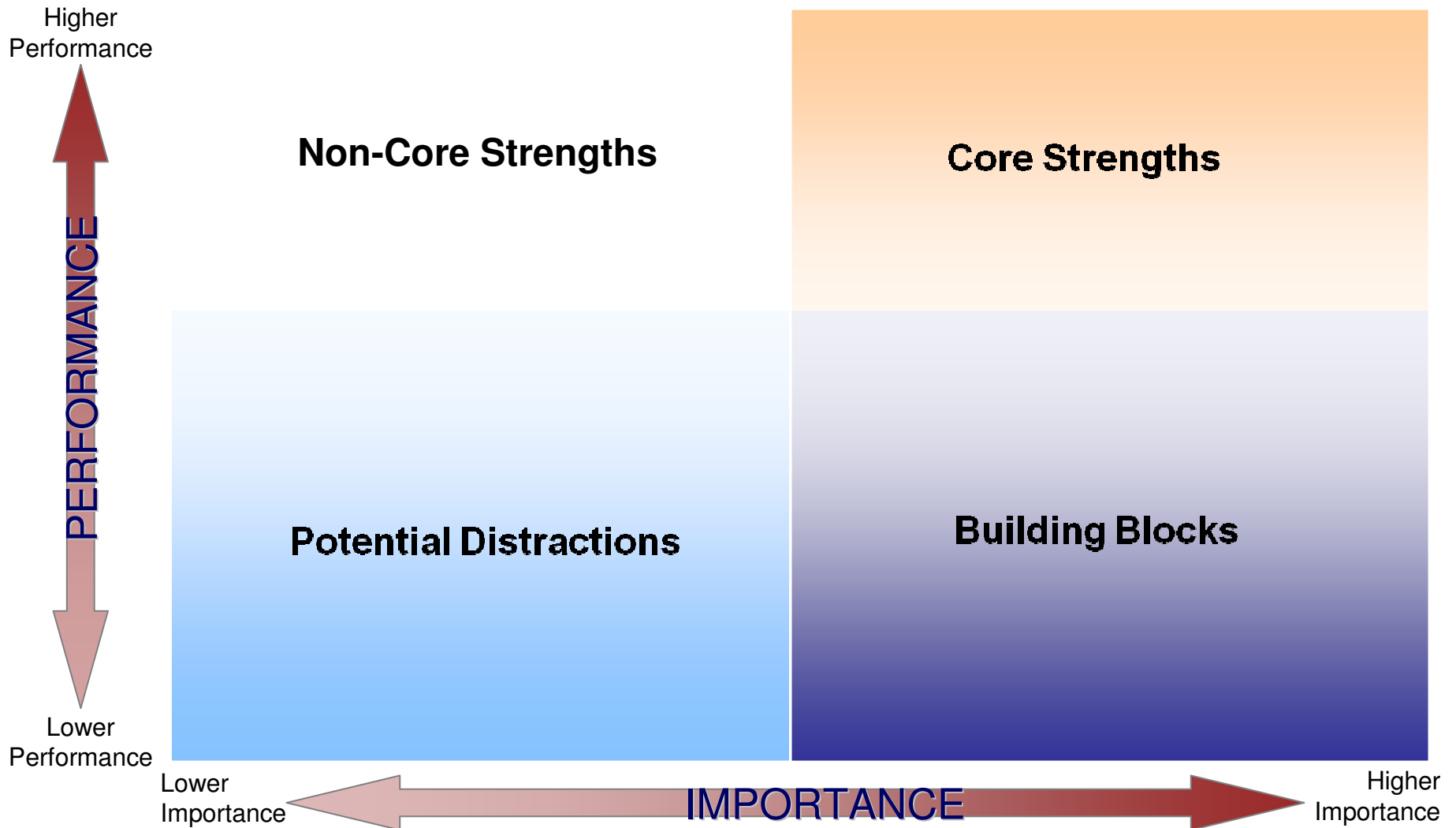
Step 5: Identify Barriers & Drivers

“Less engaged larger donations” to “More engaged larger donations”





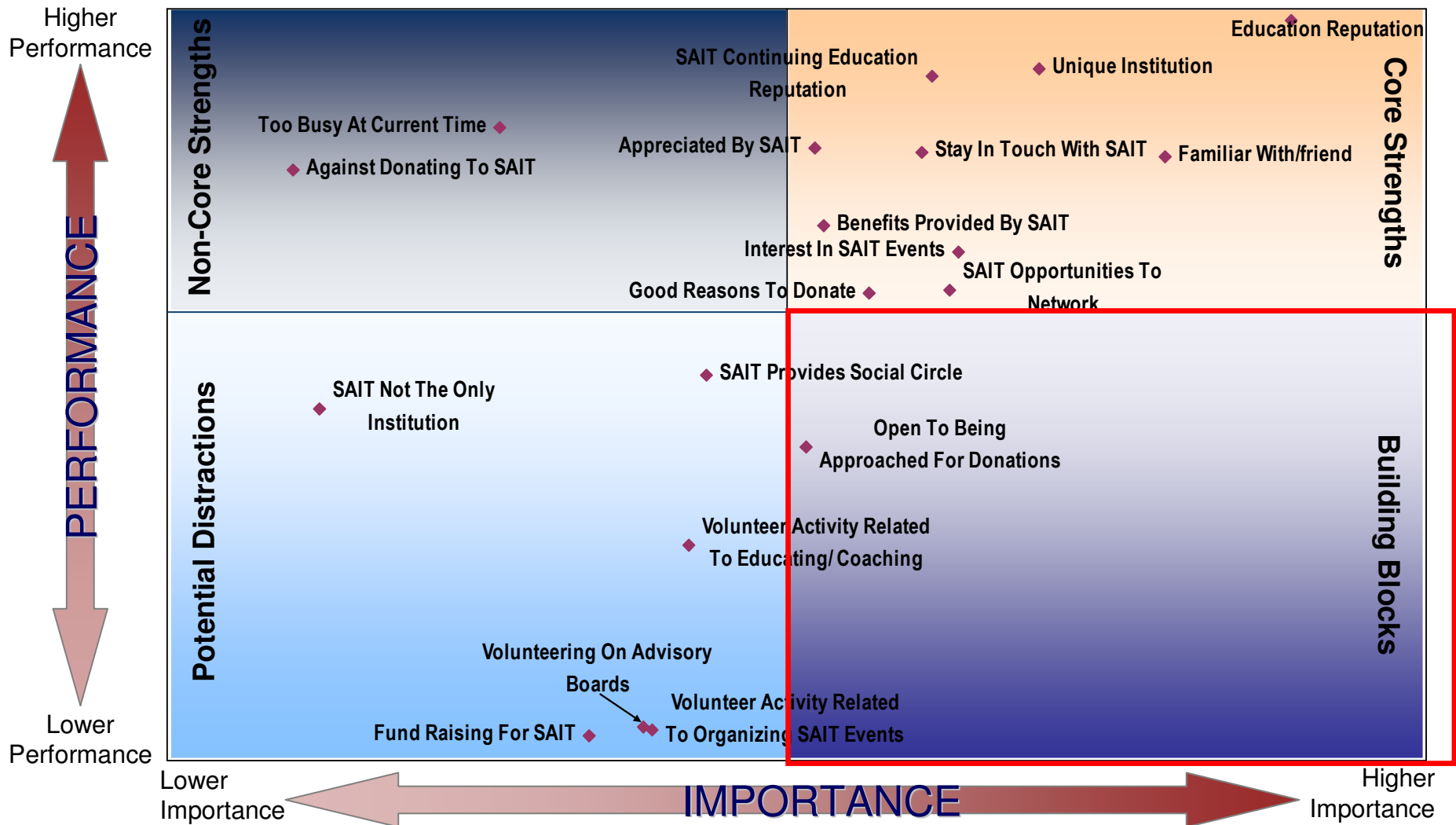
Step 6: Identify Actions to Address Barriers The Priority Matrix





Step 6: Identify Actions to Address Barriers

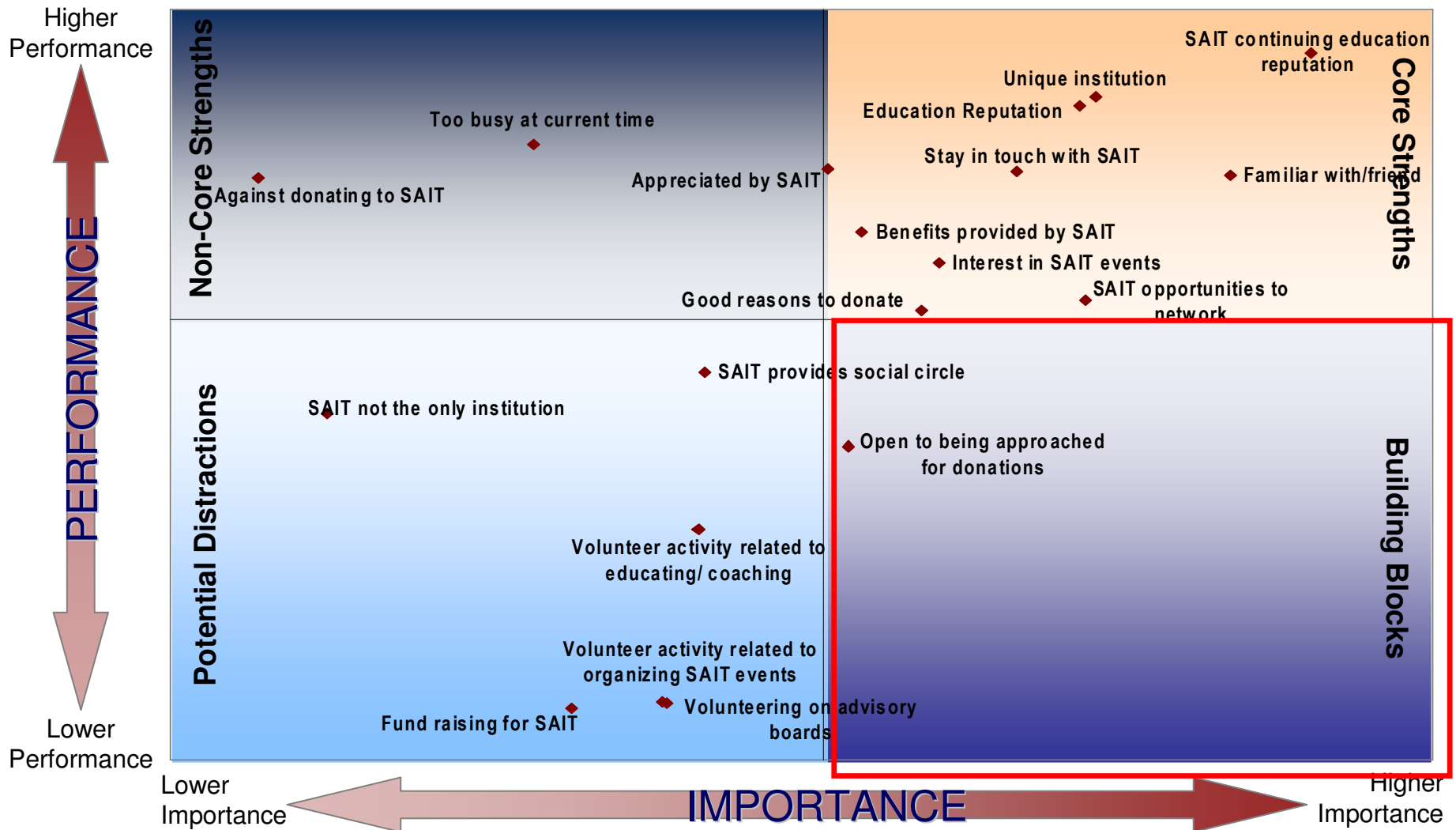
- "PRIDE"





Step 6: Identify Actions to Address Barriers

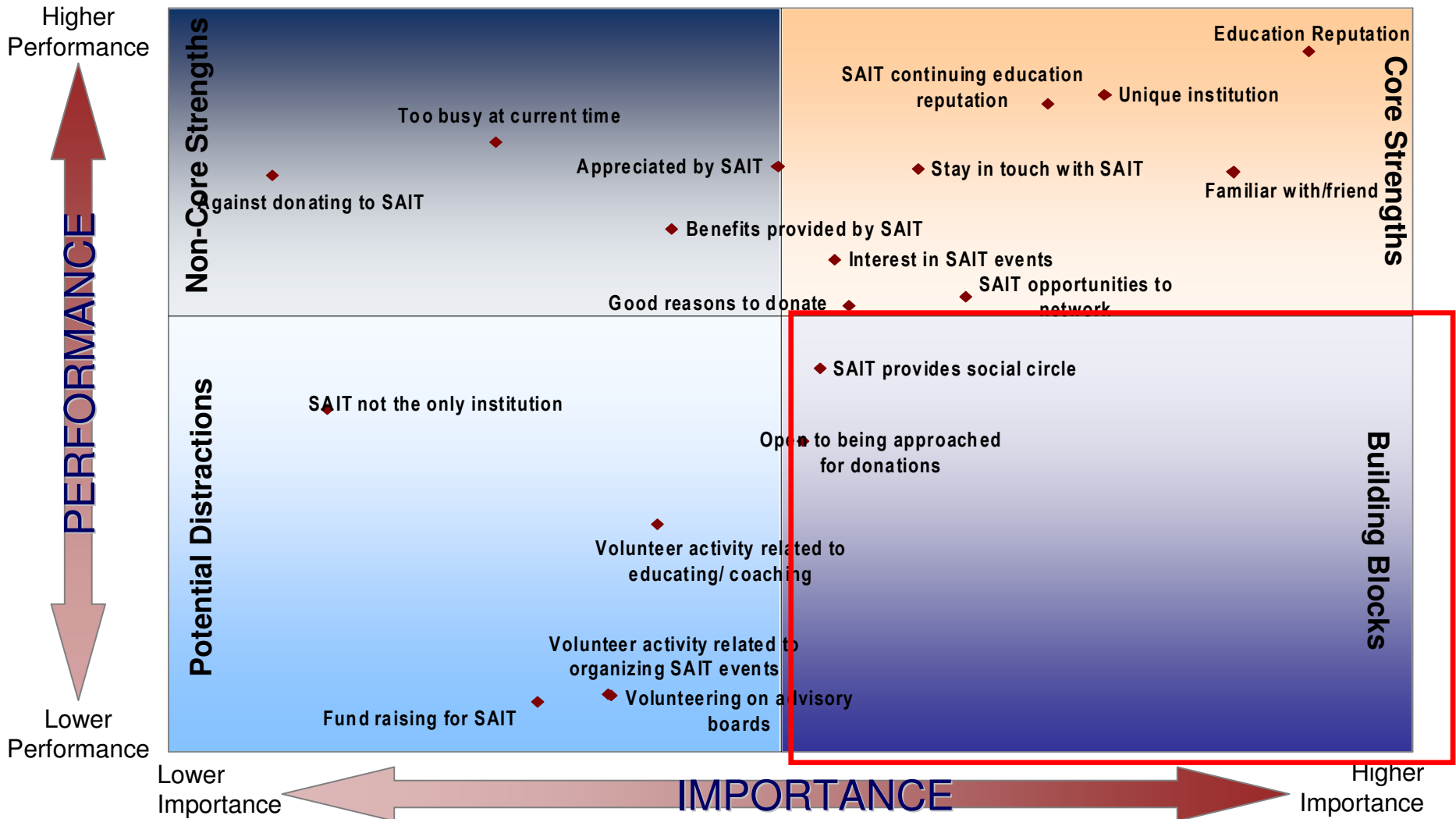
- "OVERALL SATISFACTION"





Step 6: Identify Actions to Address Barriers

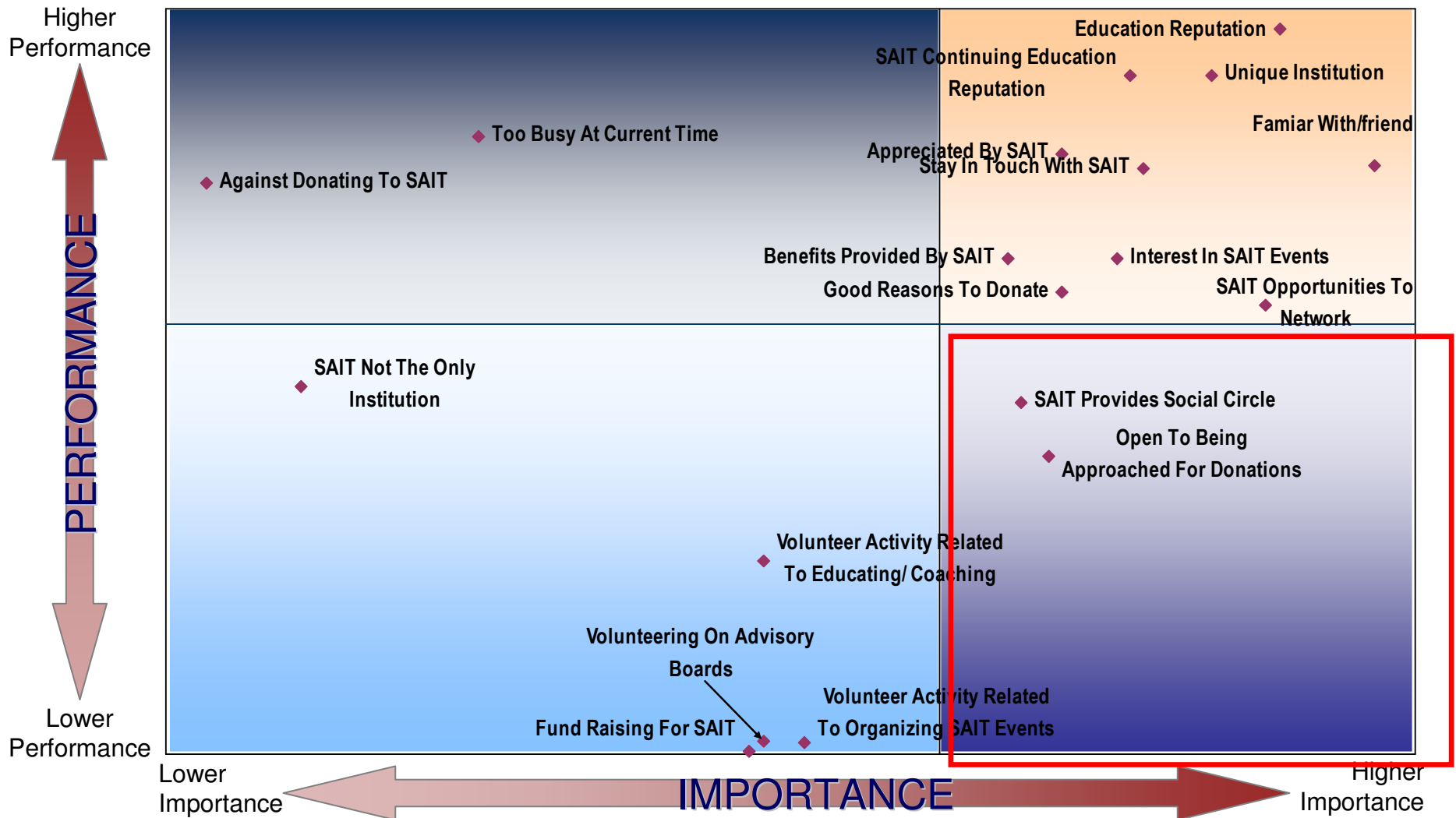
- "EXPERIENCE vs. EXPECTATION"





Step 6: Identify Actions to Address Barriers

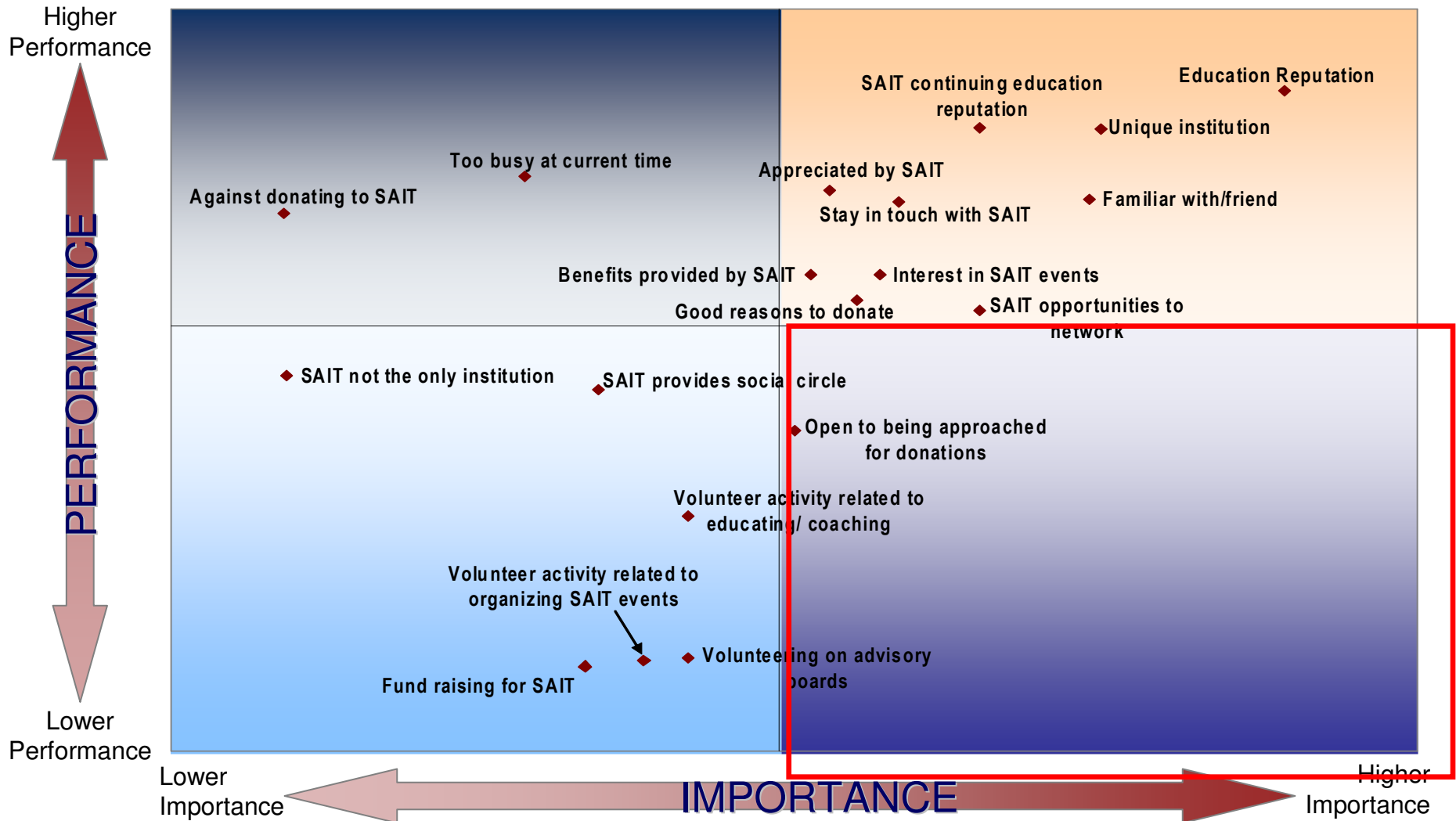
- "FEEL WELCOMED"





Step 6: Identify Actions to Address Barriers

- "POPULAR"



Core Strengths

- ◆ SAIT Continuing Education Reputation
- ◆ Familiar with / Friend
- ◆ Unique Institution
- ◆ SAIT Opportunities to Network
- ◆ Education Reputation
- ◆ Stay in Touch with SAIT
- ◆ Interest in SAIT Events
- ◆ Good Reasons to Donate
- ◆ Benefits Provided by SAIT
- ◆ Appreciated by SAIT

Building Blocks

- Provides Social Circle
- Open to Being Approached for Donations



What does “Open to Being Approached for Donations” & “Provides a Social Circle Mean?”



◆ Open to Being Approached for Donations:

- The size of the financial contribution I am able to make to SAIT would matter to them.
- My classmates or people I respect have encouraged me to donate to SAIT.
- I would like to know more about the different ways I could donate money to SAIT.
- Donating to SAIT increases the value of my certificate, diploma or applied degree.
- I appreciate that SAIT contacts me to tell me about opportunities to donate money.

◆ Provides a Social Circle:

- I stay in contact with many other SAIT graduates in my personal life
- Many of my close friends are people I met at SAIT
- I was more involved with organized extra-curricular activities and groups at SAIT than most students

RECOMMENDATION #1

- ◆ In the longer term, given that SAIT wishes to build relationships with Alumni that lead to greater involvement with SAIT.
 - ◆ This could include fund raising (i.e. making financial contributions) but also friend raising (i.e. participation in SAIT events and programs, recommending SAIT to prospective students, and hiring SAIT graduates).
 - ◆ Research showed that hot buttons associated with both goals are likely to have a synergistic effect on SAIT's efforts.

- ◆ **SAIT should design an Alumni program that pursues both fund raising and friend raising goals.**

RECOMMENDATION #2

- ◆ **SAIT should build an Alumni Program in a way that addresses the following current gaps:**
 - ◆ There is an opportunity to do more along the lines of providing social circles (both among students and among alumni).
 - ◆ There is an opportunity to create an atmosphere in which students and alumni would be more receptive to receiving requests to ‘give back’ to the SAIT community.



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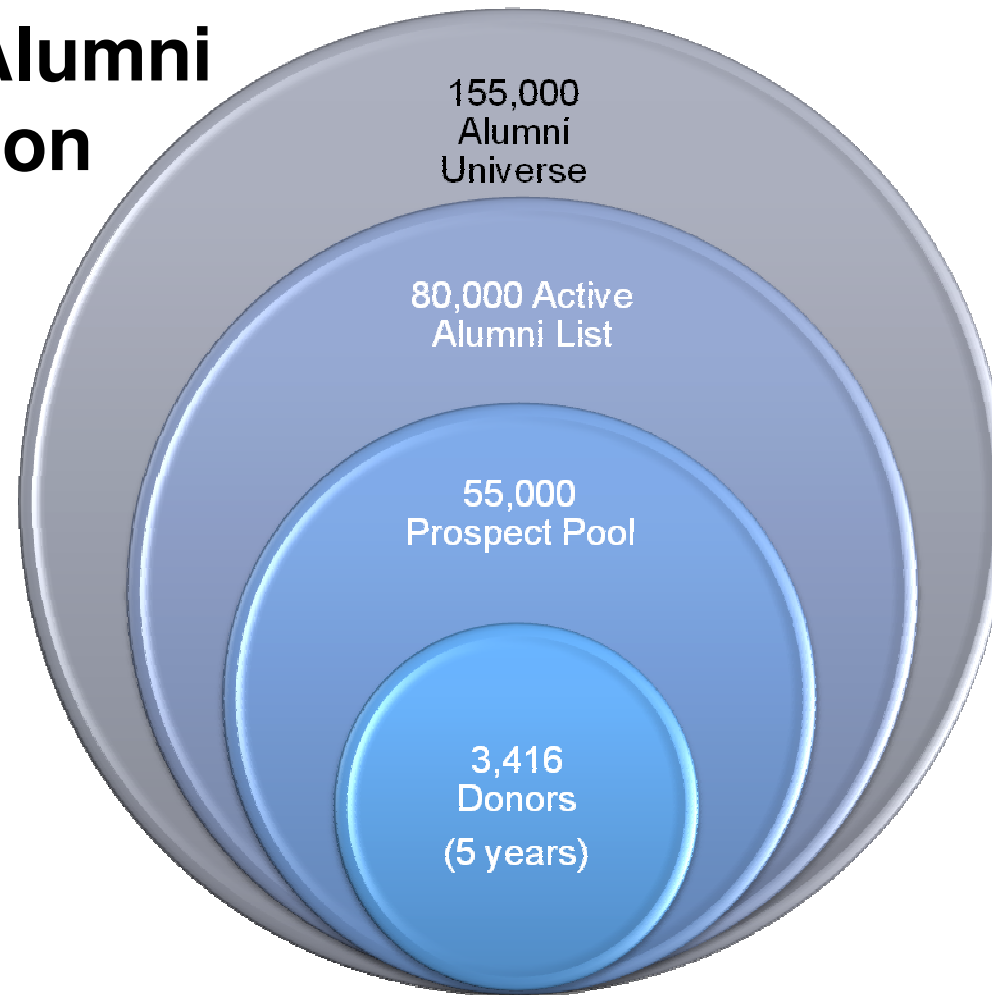
SAIT Polytechnic Strategy to Action



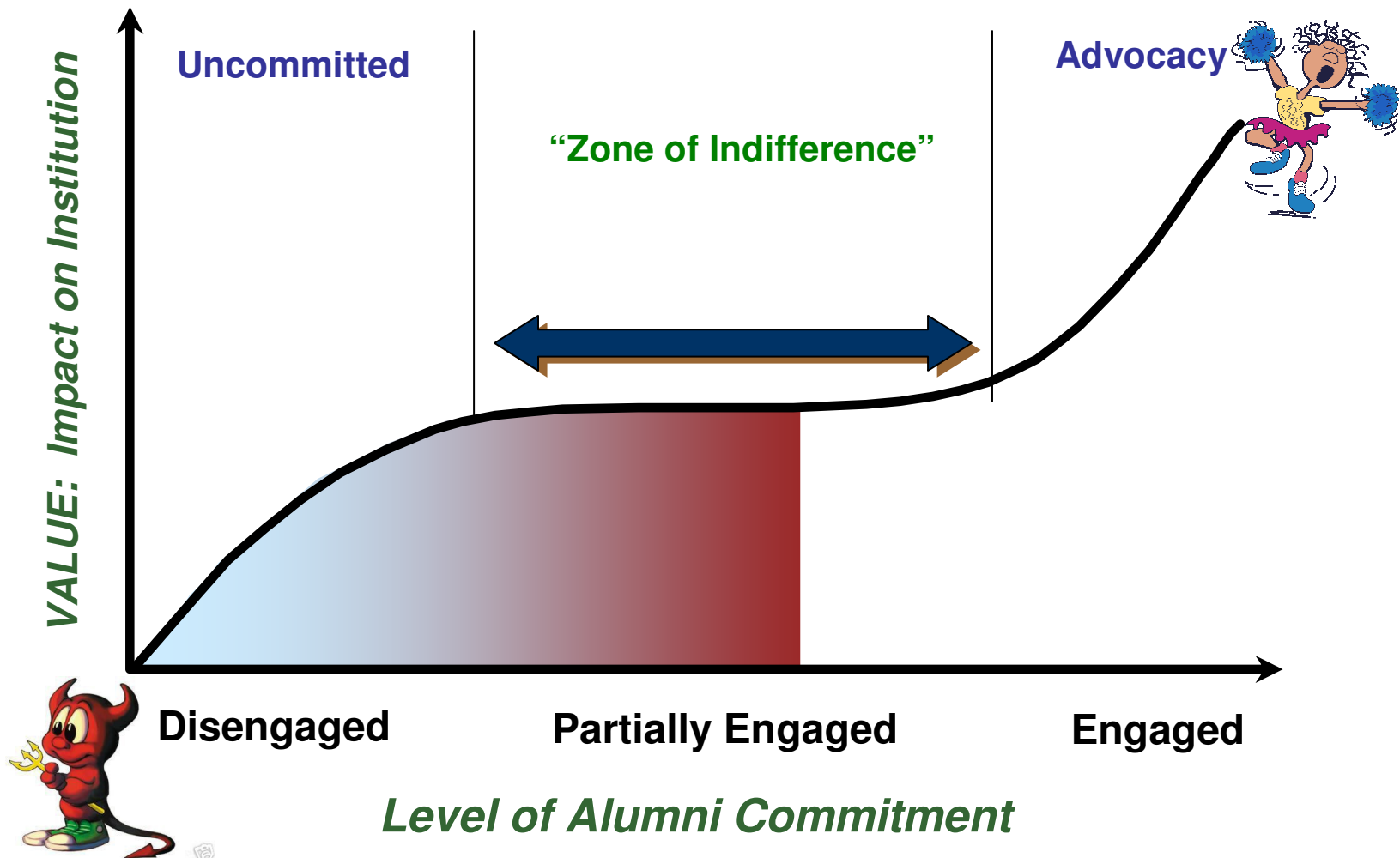
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SAIT's Alumni Population











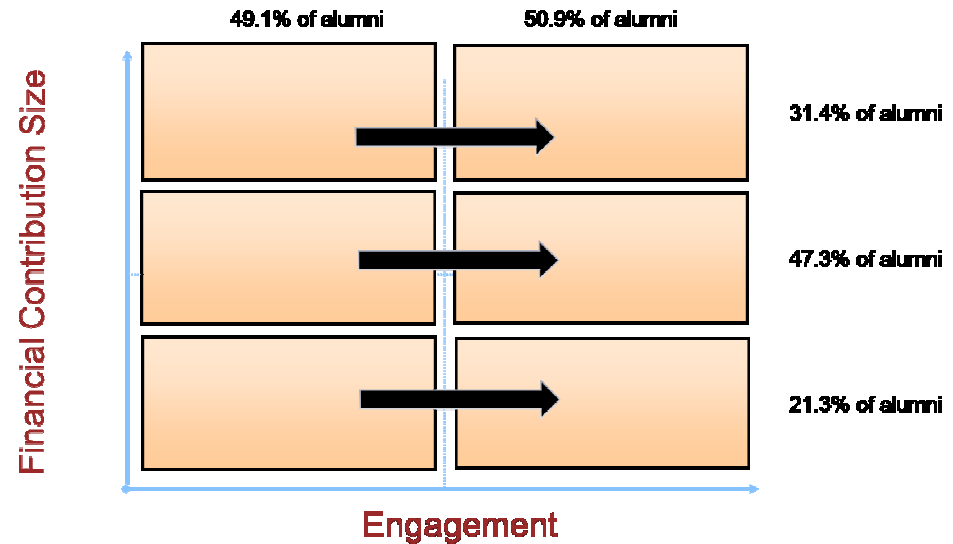
SAIT – Strategy to Action



FEEL WELCOME

REPUTATION

PRIDE





SAIT – Strategy to Action





VIP ACCESS FOR POTENTIAL STUDENTS OF ALUMNI

Visit SAIT for Open House February 6 and get VIP access, exclusive to SAIT alumni and anyone in their family who may be interested in studying at SAIT in the future.

- Jump the line-up for free program application (Applicant must bring Alberta Student Number to apply)
- Enter the tuition prize contest
- FREE coffee and treats in the private alumni lounge
- Loads of free stuff
- Enter to win dinner for two at the Highwood Dining Room
- Free parking on February 6 in P1, the first level of the new parking garage, and the Jubilee overflow lot.



Reputation

THANKS A MILLION. TIMES TEN.

TRADES AND TECHNOLOGY COMPLEX



“Alumni want external stimuli confirming the quality of their decision about where they got their higher education.”

- Robert Shoss, *Creating Alumni Success*



ONE MORE REASON TO BE PROUD

Your contribution to SAIT Polytechnic truly changes lives. We thought you would appreciate hearing a story of one student whose education was immeasurably improved because of your generosity through the SAIT Opportunities Fund.

When Nancy* arrived at SAIT she knew she was embarking on a life-changing journey. Although all new students face challenges adjusting to their new environment, her situation presented some unique difficulties. Nancy is disabled and makes her way through the world in a wheelchair.

Nancy is used to navigating the obstacles that being in a wheelchair presents and SAIT had long since created a wheelchair accessible campus. The issue that no one had anticipated was finding a restroom that Nancy could easily access. She discovered that none of the restrooms on campus were equipped with a special lift that she required to get from her wheelchair.

As a temporary solution, Nancy found herself travelling several blocks between SAIT and her home to use the restroom. As you can imagine, it wasn't an easy thing to coordinate considering her class schedule.

Upon hearing of Nancy's plight, the Free Access Committee at SAIT, a committee that consults with disabled students on campus to identify issues and arrange modifications, came up with a solution. They used funding from the SAIT Opportunities Fund to install an automatic lift that allows Nancy to easily access the restroom.

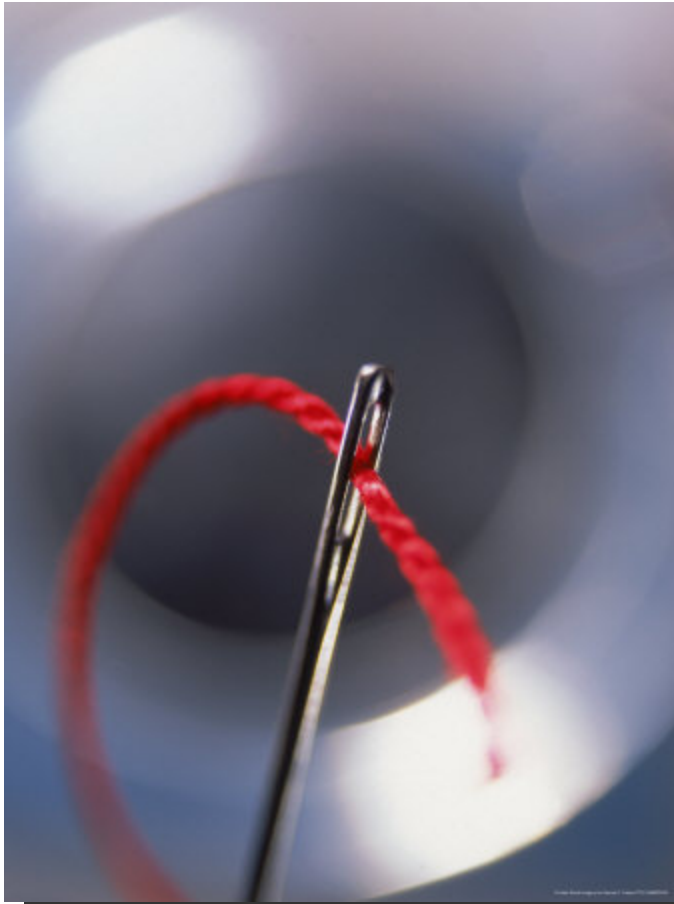
"I can't tell you the difference that lift made," says Nancy. "It allows me to focus on my studies, rather than having to build my class schedule around the next washroom break."

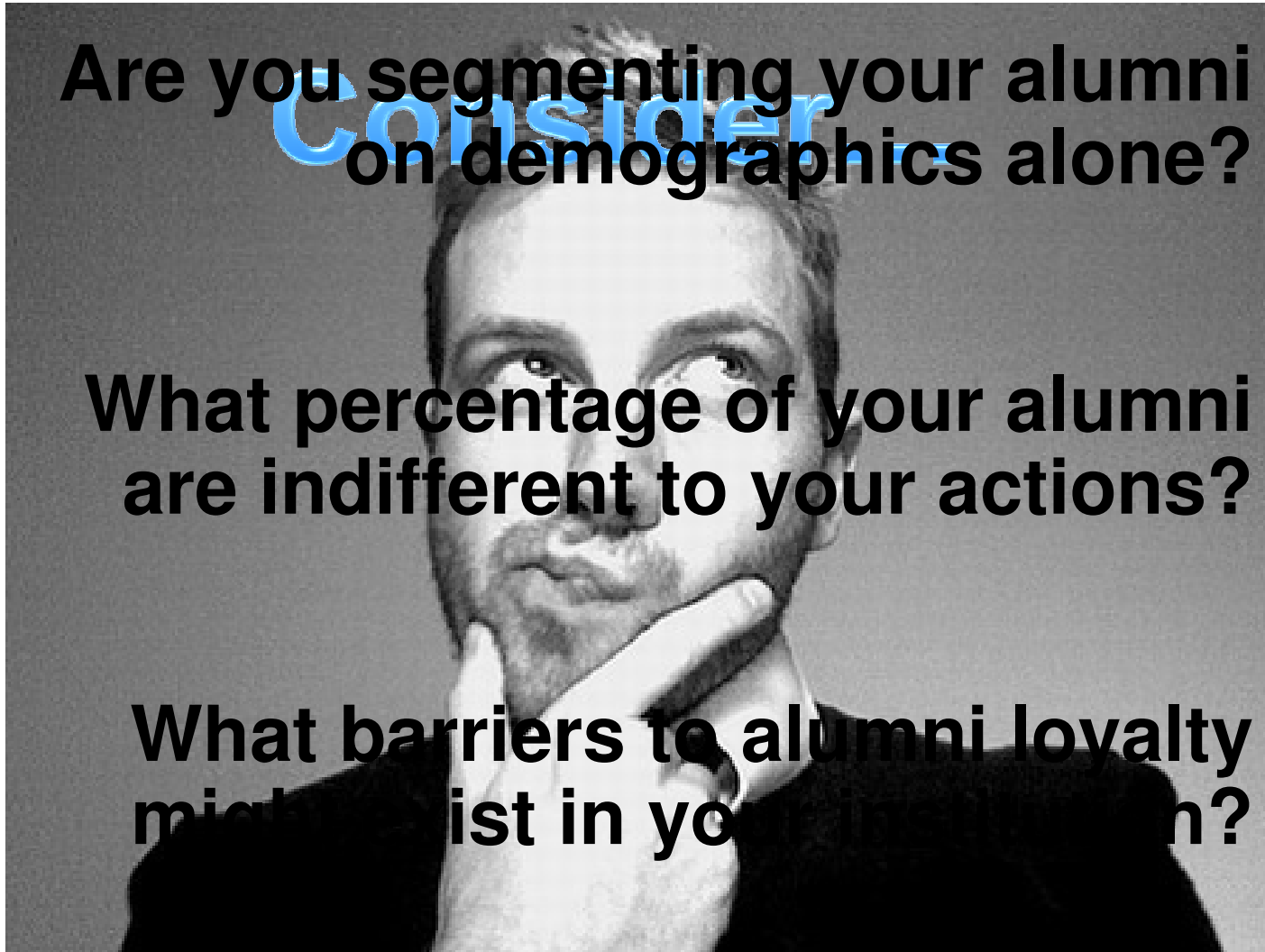
"We want to change the minds of people with disabilities who may think they can't enroll in certain programs at SAIT because they're in a wheelchair," says Delisa Daniel, chair of the Barrier Free Access Committee. "By removing barriers, we help make it possible for them to attend school, receive training and transform their lives."

The SAIT Opportunities Fund allows SAIT to provide unparalleled access to education for all students despite any disabilities they may have. Nancy is one of the many students who has benefited from the Fund. Her access to education would not be possible were it not for your generosity. Your support allows SAIT to create a better learning environment for our students, an opportunity for which we are very grateful.

And so, whether your support is for Student Awards, the new Trades and Technology Complex, or the SAIT Opportunities Fund, on behalf of the 55,000 students who proudly attend SAIT this year, our deepest thanks.

*Nancy's name and some details have been changed to protect her identity.





Consider

Are you segmenting your alumni on demographics alone?

What percentage of your alumni are indifferent to your actions?

What barriers to alumni loyalty might exist in your organization?



Key “Take Away” Questions to Ask Yourself



Are you segmenting your alumni on demographics alone?

What percentage of your alumni are indifferent to your actions?

What barriers to alumni loyalty might exist in your institution?



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QUESTIONS? / COMMENTS?



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