

Master Thesis & PhD Forum

Information Session

Chair of Business-to-Business Marketing, Sales & Pricing
Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. mult. Christian Homburg

- Prerequisites for a Master thesis
- Requirements of a good Master thesis
- Success factors for creating a Master thesis
- Value proposition of the Chair
- Types of Master theses at our Chair
- Presentation of exemplary Master thesis
- Your contact for a Master thesis at our Chair
- The entire process - from finding a topic to the final submission
- Further development: special opportunity - position yourself for a PhD

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- The prerequisite for writing a master's thesis at the Area of Marketing is the successful completion of a seminar **MKT 7X0** at one of the marketing chairs (LS Homburg MKT 710, LS Stahl MKT 720, LS Kuester MKT 730 or LS Kraus MKT 740) **and** the successful completion of the courses **MKT 510 (or MKT 301) and MKT 520**.
- We also recommend that students write their Master's thesis at the chair where the seminar paper was written, thus enabling early involvement in the respective research and project work of the chair.

▪ **Design/ Structure**

- The basis: eight to ten marketing related “key topics” (e.g. pricing, innovation management,...)
- For each “key topic“ there are approx. three specific topics
- Those range from around 30 current topics in marketing
- Maximum number of participants: approx. 20; surplus applicants will definitely get a place at another marketing chair

▪ **Components of the seminar paper**

- Preparation of the seminar paper ("mini-thesis") in individual work
- Submission of work: after eight weeks
- Presentation of the work in the context of block courses during the semester (20-minute presentation including discussion)

▪ **Grading**

- Attending block courses is mandatory
- Composition of the grade: 70% written work, 30% oral presentation
- Receipt of the seminar certificate with at least gaining a 4.0 (german grading system)

▪ Goals

- Learning how to interpret, structure, and present academic work in the area of Marketing
- Seminar prepares participants for writing a master thesis at our chair

▪ Application / Admission

- Application for the course in the following semester starts at the end of each semester
- Announcement of the dates for registration in the lectures and the Internet
- Applications are made via e-mail including references of topics as well as application documents (including CV, high school diploma, bachelor's degree certificate or "Vordiplom"-certificate, transcript of records in Master program, and a letter of motivation to participate)
- Contact: Dr. Jana-Kristin Prigge

▪ Next seminar

- FSS 19
- **Please note:** It makes sense to write the seminar paper and the master thesis at the same chair
- All information provided on our website

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Requirements

Meaningful

- Clear presentation of the benefits of the thesis
- Creation of added value for research and / or practice

Scientifically sophisticated

- Identification of relevant research gaps
- Systematic and comprehensive screening and adaptation of high-profile national and international literature (conceptually and empirically)
- Clear presentation of theoretical reference points
- Terms of theoretical/ scientific knowledge in the context of the provided argument
- Critical acclaim of scientific articles
- Development of own approaches and concepts
- May involve own empirical investigation
- Representation of implications for further research and practice

Structured and clearly presented

- Informative outline
- Clear objective
- Meaningful classification of the subject
- Clear integration and processing of relevant scientific literature
- Clarity of rational and structured thinking (1 paragraph = 1 thought)
- Sound and logical argumentation
- Critical acclaim of the literature

Formally error free

- Accurate spelling and writing
- Error-free grammar
- Absence of punctuation errors
- Flawless citation
- Other formal aspects

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- **Personal success factors**

- Analytical thinking
- Enthusiasm for the selected topic
- Motivation

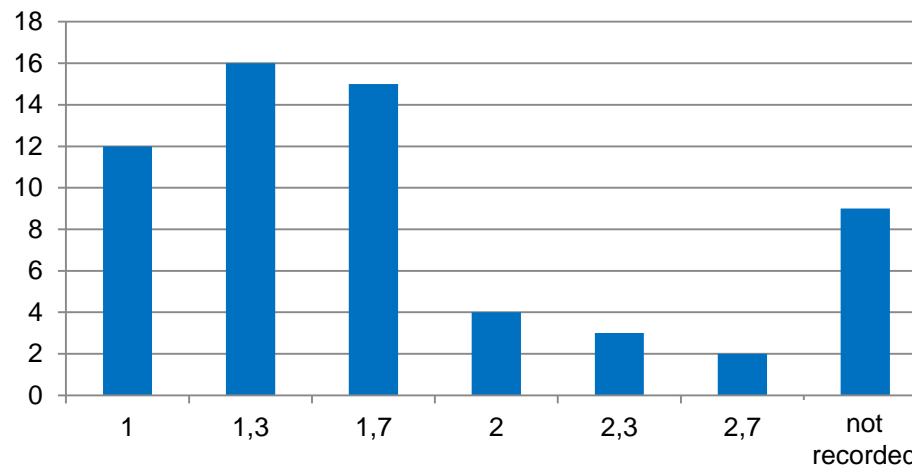
- **Process-related success factors**

- Timely and regular interaction with the supervisor
- Professional time management

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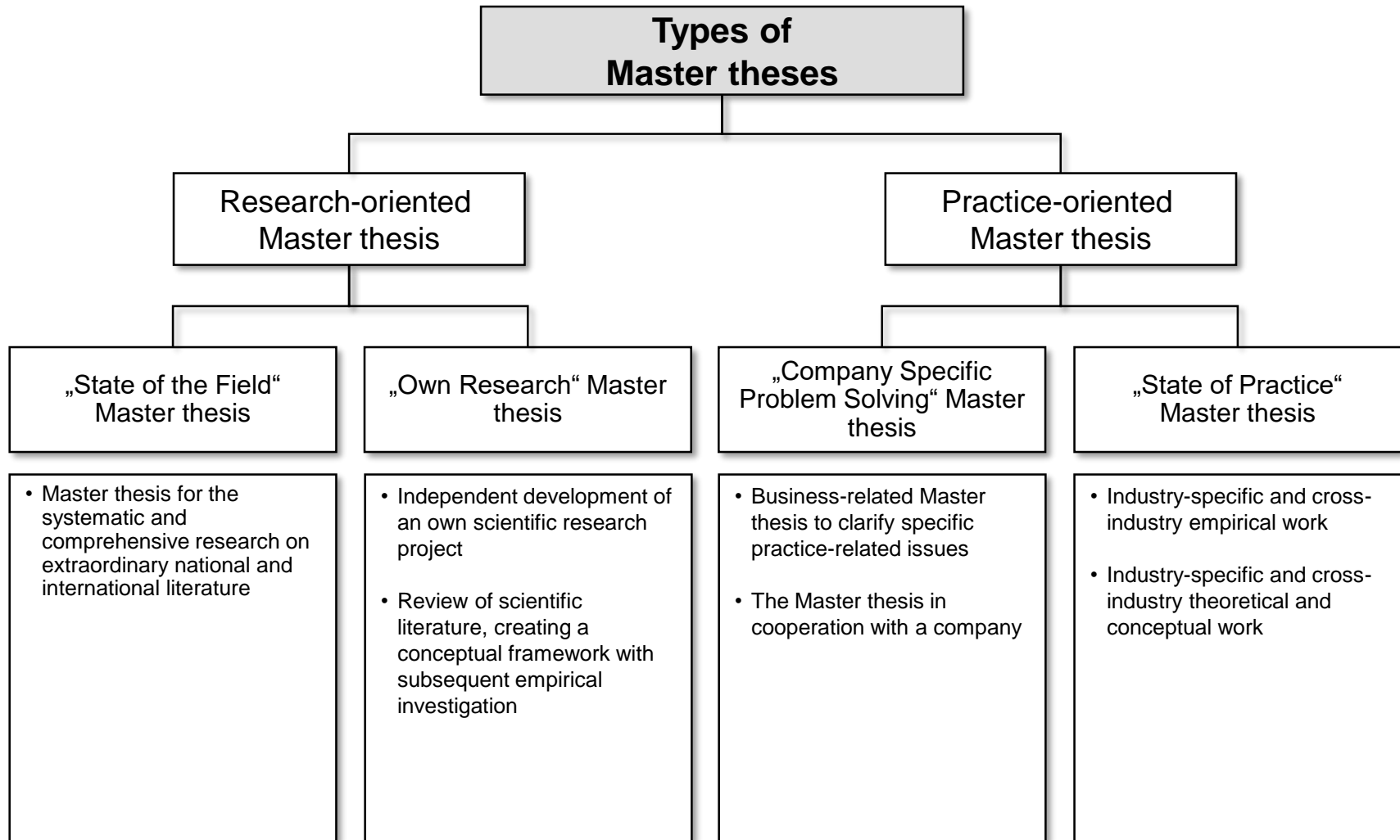
- **Topics of interest**
 - Topics of high relevance for research and practice
 - Variety of interesting questions
- **Intensive supervision**
 - Competent and “customer-oriented” service
 - Teaching and use of the latest scientific and methodological knowledge
- **Valuable results**
 - Challenging Master thesis in terms of content
 - Opportunities for publication

- **Frequency distribution of 2015/2016 grading**

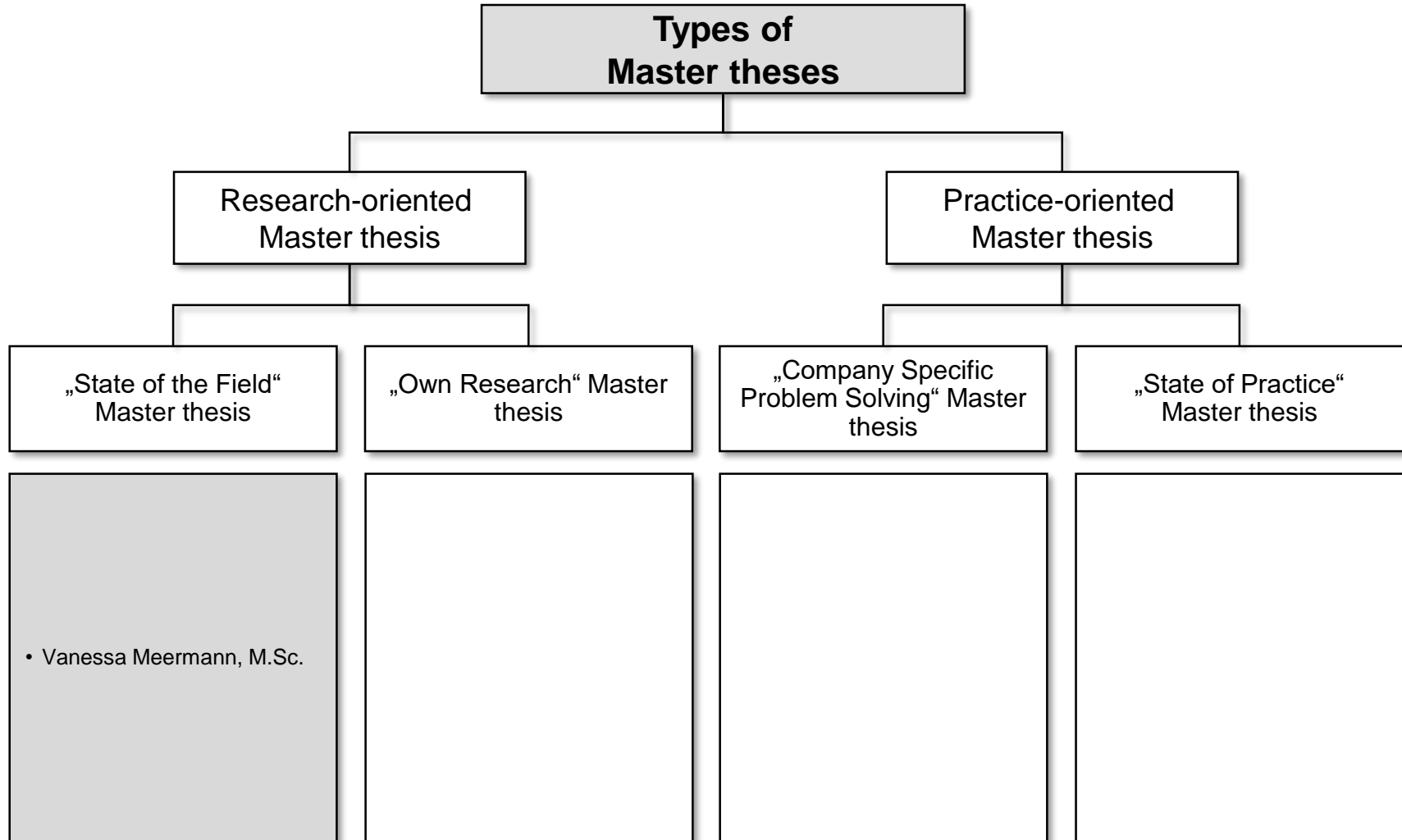


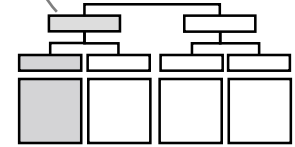
- **Average rating 1.51**

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■ Overview

Topic

Incentivizing Sales Force – The role of group incentives

Content

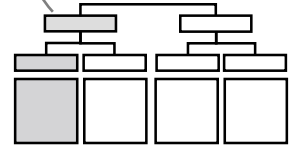
Answer the following research questions

- What are group incentives?
- How can group incentives be operationalized?
- Which desired effect on performance measures can group incentives have?
- Which undesired effects may group incentives trigger?
- In how far does the relational structure within the group influence the performance outcomes of group incentives?
- In how far can group incentives be framed to influence performance outcome?

Findings

- Group incentives can have both desired and undesired performance outcomes
- A simple perspective on the effectiveness of incentives is not enough to evaluate its net outcomes and effects
- Certain structural measures of groups have influence on group performance
- Framed incentives have an effect on performance and productivity, however, companies hardly use them

Example of selected types of Diploma/ Master theses



- | Phases | May | June | July | Aug | Sept | Oct | |
|---|-------|-------|------|-------|-------|-----|---|
| Search Topics and derivation of research questions | [Bar] | | | | | | |
| Review of the literature on the relevant fields | [Bar] | | | | | | |
| Development of frameworks to structure the research field | | [Bar] | | | | | |
| Derivation of the Conceptual Model and Propositions | | | | | [Bar] | | |
| Actually writing the thesis | | | | [Bar] | | | ● |
- Legend: ● Submission

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For questions regarding Master:

- Moritz Tischer
 - *Office Hours: Please make an appointment*
 - *Office: L5,1 – 2nd floor, room 209*
 - *Tel. 0621 / 181-3552*
 - *E-Mail: moritz.tischer@bwl.uni-mannheim.de*

Suggested topics of the chair (See list of topics on the Website)

Suggested topics regarding
- "State of the Field",
- "Own Research" and
Master thesis

Proposals regarding
"Company Specific
Problem Solving" and
"State of Practice"
Master thesis

**Moritz
Tischer:**
General
inquiries
about a
Master thesis

Research
Assistants /
Assistants

Moritz Tischer

Topic suggestions by students

Proposals regarding
- „State of the Field“,
- „Own Research“ and
Master thesis

Proposals regarding
"Company Specific
Problem Solving" and
"State of Practice"
Master thesis

Moritz Tischer

Moritz Tischer

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- **Start time fully flexible** (once all conditions are met by students)
- **Individual schedules** are arranged directly with the respective supervisor
- **Time required:**
 - **2-6 weeks for finding the topic** → care early about your topic
 - **1-2 months preparation phase** → first reading, drawing the outline, where necessary, preparing own investigations
 - **4 months official processing time**

- ✓ Specific preparation for the Master thesis by attending the seminar
- ✓ Choose from a **variety of topics** (Price management, product management, customer relationship management, B2B marketing ...)
→ see list of topics on the Internet
- ✓ Opportunity to **propose own topics**
- ✓ Ability to write **different types** of Master theses
(research-oriented vs. practice-oriented)
- ✓ Opportunity to submit work in **German** or **English**
- ✓ For empirical work opportunity to **submit in the form of a scientific paper**,
allowing **publishing** opportunities where applicable
- ✓ Given opportunity to **access old theses**

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A PhD is a great opportunity to learn:

- Independent & creative idea development
- Conceptual & logical reasoning
- Statistical & textual analyses
- Writing & results presentation
- Project & time management



Major goal of a PhD is to prepare oneself for an academic career (i.e., „Habilitation“), but PhDs are also valued in business practice.

Industries where business PhDs are valued highly:

- Chemistry
- Machinery
- Automotive
- Pharmaceuticals
- Banks/Insurance Companies
- Consultancy



Special opportunity:
You can outline your
PhD topic in your
master thesis!

- A PhD at our chair lasts about 3.5 years in total
- We offer a diverse set of tasks at our chair
 - Teaching of students
 - IMU-related activities
 - Communications with the press
 - Strategy projects with firms
 - Event organization
- Dissertation projects in cooperation with industry partners possible
- You are employed at a 75% position (EG 13 TV-L)
- Side jobs are encouraged, i.e. teaching at other institutions (up to 2.400 € tax free per year) or consulting jobs at Homburg & Partner (400 €/day)
- Our alumni are placed within major industrial and consulting firms

Hubert Burda Media

McKinsey&Company

arvato
BERTELSMANN

DAIMLER

BASF
We create chemistry

BCG
THE BOSTON CONSULTING GROUP

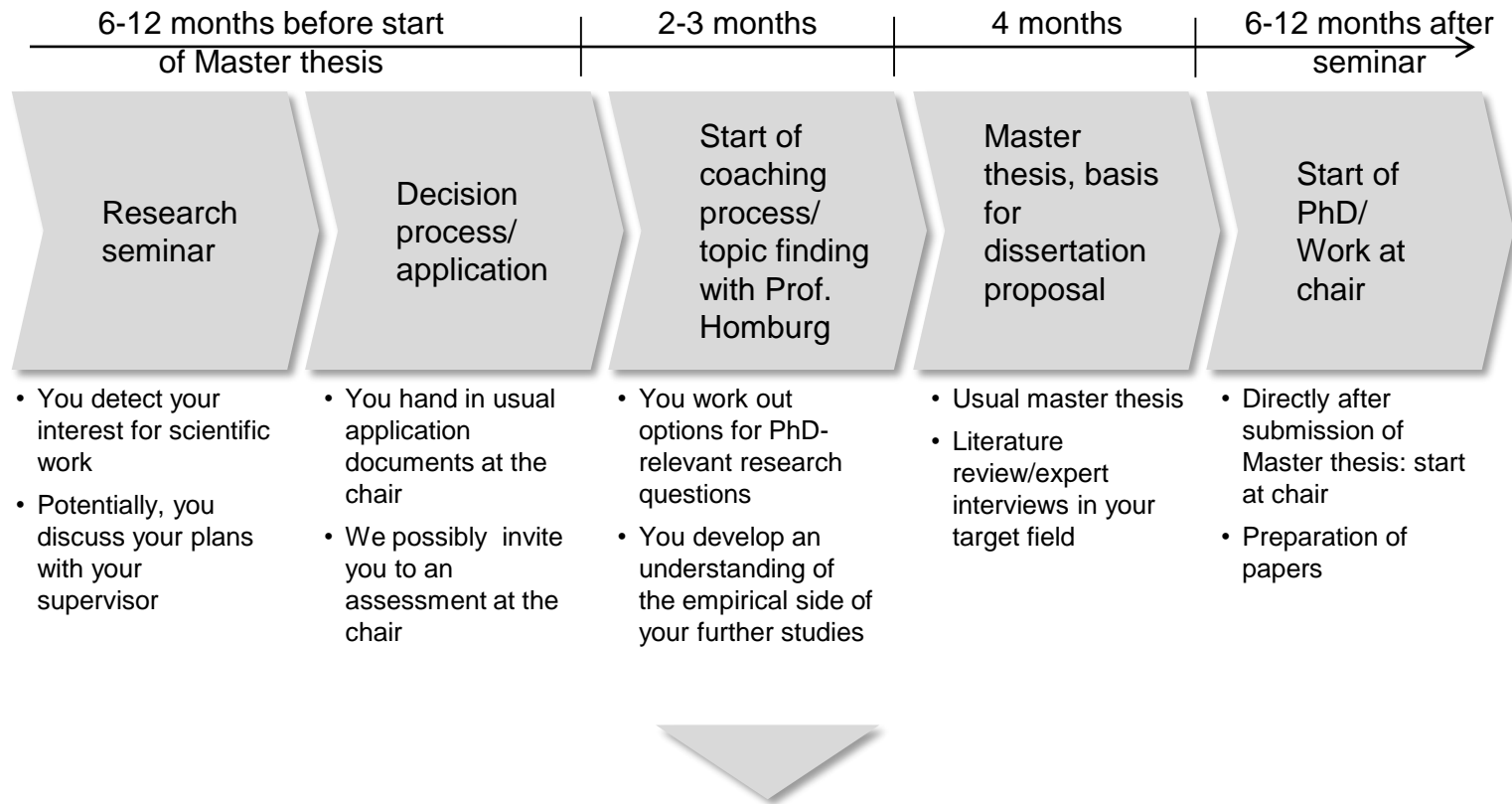


AT&T



Lufthansa

SIEMENS



- **Early career planning: we can offer positions about one year in advance**
- **Smooth transition between master thesis and PhD assures time synergies for your dissertation**
- **We integrate prospective PhD students in our team, i.e. at our chair events**

■ Overview

Topic

Motivating Sales Reps for Innovation Selling

Paper 1

Motivating Sales Reps for Innovation Selling in Different Cultures.

Journal of Marketing: March 2016, Vol. 80, No. 2, pp. 101-120.

Research questions:

- Which financial steering instruments are appropriate in different cultures?
- Which nonfinancial steering instruments are appropriate in different cultures?

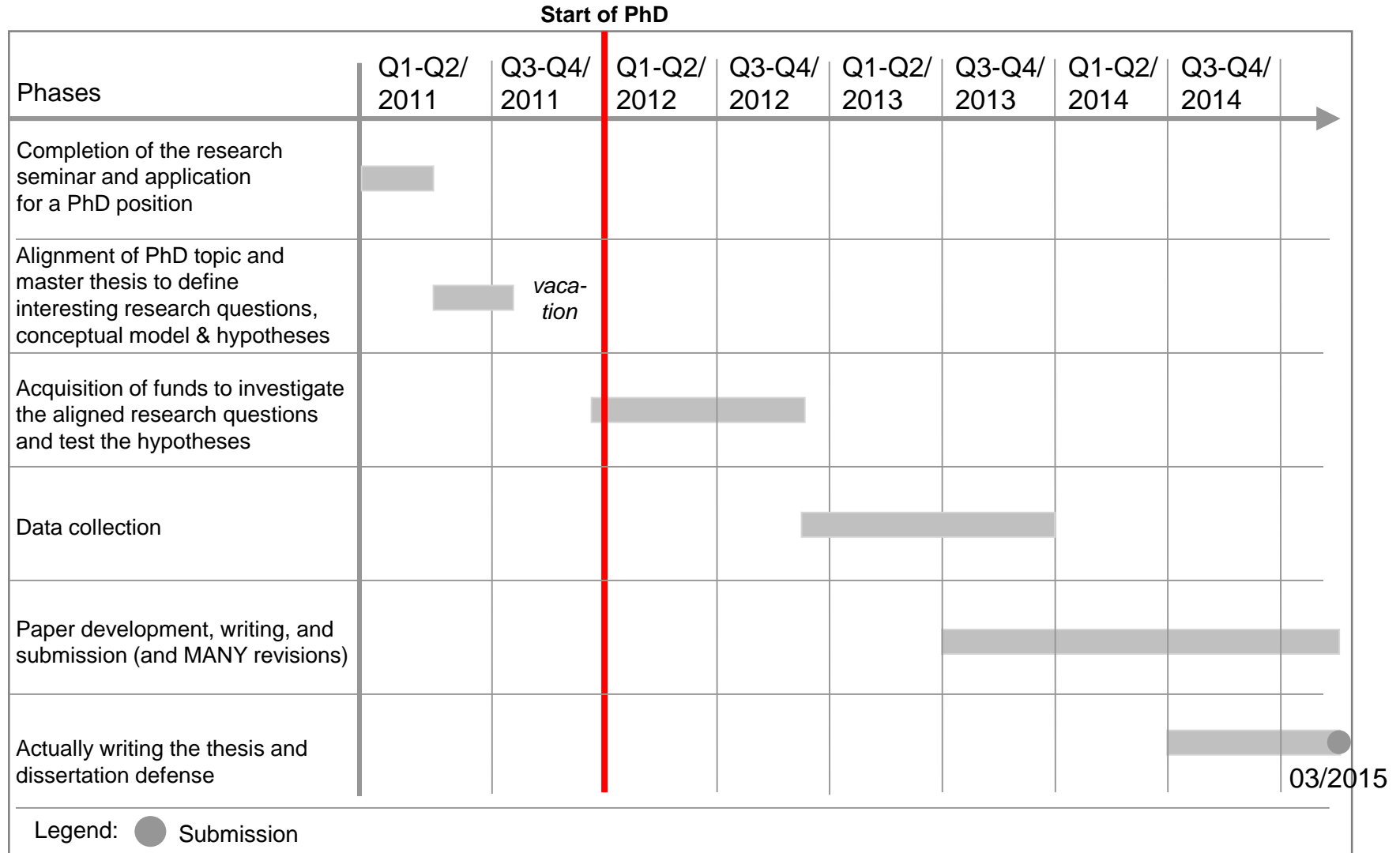
Paper 2

Which Steering Instrument for Whom? Motivating Different Types of Sales Reps for Innovation Selling

Research questions:

- Which types of sales reps are most likely to succeed at innovation selling?
- Which steering instruments are appropriate for which type of sales rep?

- Temporal and procedural flow of the dissertation process



▪ How does the “non-scientific part” look like? My experiences...

- Consultancy projects: BOSCH (Business Modelizer, ~6 months); Homburg & Partner (Marketing Excellence, ~ 4 months)
- Company contacts and project acquisitions
- Teaching: lecture “Marketing for Minors”
- HR representative
- Books, e.g., “Customer Retention Management”

▪ Why doing a PhD at the chair of Professor Homburg? My experiences...

- Close supervision by Professor Homburg and “the coach” (e.g., an assistant professor at the Marketing Department)
- Steep learning curves (e.g., through scientific projects and consultancy projects)
- Flexible working environment
- Variety of tasks (e.g., teaching, consultancy projects, data analysis, paper writing)
- Very high autonomy (the PhD student is the driving force of his/her project)
- ...



Further questions? Please contact:

Aline Lanzrath

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Tel. 0621 / 181-1870

E-Mail: aline.lanzrath@bwl.uni-mannheim.de

- We wish you all the best with your Master thesis!
- For further questions please contact **Moritz Tischer**.
- Slides will be uploaded on our website.