

ThinkGen Spotlight On:

Deanna Whitlock

Senior Vice President, ThinkGen



Extensive Experience in Quantitative Research

Like most people who end up realizing their academic interests lend well to careers in market research, Deanna Whitlock didn't intend to have a career in healthcare market research, but it's no surprise this is where she landed. After Deanna graduated with a degree in linguistics, she initially considered going to graduate school and doing field work or pursuing a career as a speech pathologist. As she began job hunting, she found a posting for a position at a healthcare market research agency with a focus on linguistic research. She loved the way the job enabled her to shine as a self-proclaimed "data geek" while also giving her the opportunity to apply her degree in a way that she had never anticipated.

After starting out the first two years of her career working more behind the scenes, Deanna moved into frontline research as a qualitative moderator. As she progressed in her career, Deanna began gravitating more toward quantitative work and has amassed extensive experience in quantitative methods and analysis over the years. Although she has years of moderating experience and still loves to conduct focus groups and individual depth interviews, she really considers herself a quantitative specialist, with over ten years of her career focused almost exclusively on demand modeling, market mapping, and customer segmentation.

There are two main drivers for Deanna's interest in healthcare market research. First, she derives great intellectual satisfaction in exploring and solving how to best approach marketing challenges for her clients. Secondly, she has always had a

general curiosity about science and medicine, and she continues to be fascinated daily by what she learns on the job about the progress the industry is making against different illnesses.

Joining ThinkGen

Deanna joined ThinkGen in 2018, bringing her career path full circle. In such a tight-knit industry, it's not surprising that she's working today with some of the same people she worked with in the early 1990s. In fact, she worked with and reported to ThinkGen Founder and CEO Noah Pines early on in her career. When he reached out to invite her to join ThinkGen, she had been working for a larger company and found herself missing the small company feel. ThinkGen has since provided her the opportunity to spread her wings as a business unit leader, build her own team and work with colleagues who are both knowledgeable and inspiring.

Why ThinkGen?

What Deanna enjoys most about working at ThinkGen is the people—something we hear often when asking our employees what they enjoy about working at ThinkGen. She particularly enjoys leading and mentoring her team and finds fulfillment in helping them advance as researchers.

Additionally, Deanna enjoys the flexibility ThinkGen offers in how she can execute research. She finds it refreshing to be given the freedom to do so in the way she believes will yield the deepest insights and that she's encouraged to look outside



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typical parameters to find the best solution for each project. She finds that this allows her the opportunity to choose the best partners and do her best work, resulting in delighted clients.

Like many researchers at ThinkGen, Deanna has broad experience across many different therapeutic categories. However, she has particularly extensive experience in the respiratory market, having worked in asthma and COPD with nearly every manufacturer in that space dating back to the early 1990s. Beyond respiratory, areas where she is especially knowledgeable include metabolic disorders and infectious disease.

Deanna believes that even for the more mundane types of market research studies, ThinkGen deliverables should be exceptional every time. As she became a more seasoned researcher, Deanna learned that to deliver an impactful client presentation, you need to tell a truly compelling story with visually engaging slides.

Memorable Projects

One of the most memorable projects Deanna has worked on was a long, extended engagement for a surgical device manufacturer. The project presented all types of challenges. First, Deanna had to learn a highly specialized market extremely quickly. While it is not uncommon for a healthcare market researcher to be tasked with learning a new therapeutic area, this market was unusually complex and involved discussions with engineers as well as healthcare practitioners. Secondly, the project was exceptionally intense in terms of the volume and complexity of the data to be distilled. At one point, Deanna had a map of the data and analysis covering the entire floor of her den. Ultimately, she was able to boil down these stacks of complex data into a concise report that quickly highlighted new development opportunities for her client.

Like she challenges herself, Deanna challenges her team daily to distill and present information in creative ways to effectively tell the story, whether it's for the 10th wave of an ATU or for a breakthrough treatment in a rare disease.

Outside of Market Research

If Deanna had not stumbled upon healthcare market research as a fitting career, she suspects she would most likely have pursued a career practicing medicine given her fascination with science and people, and her natural interest in problem-solving.

When Deanna is not working, she enjoys spending time with her family in their RV and hopes to travel around the US one day on an extended excursion. She especially enjoys spending time at the river by the Chesapeake Bay and brings her two snorting pugs along, who also love camping. Deanna is also a musician who enjoys singing, playing guitar, and playing piano. Most of her free time, however, is spent raising her two boys, with one in the last year of middle school and the other in high school.

