



# The Science of Love

How the deliberate use of relationship insight can improve partnerships and ensure the continued alignment of expectations between clients and agencies.

**By: Bruno Galpois**

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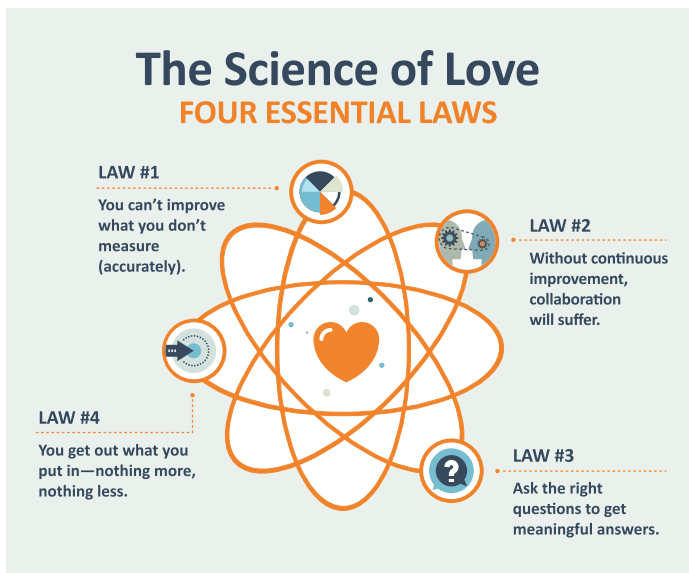
In November 2016, M6, one of the most-watched TV networks in the French-speaking world introduced a highly-entertaining reality TV concept called “Mariés au Premier Regard” (Married at First Sight). Based on a Danish concept (Gift Ved Første Blik), the series features three couples, paired up by relationship experts, who agree to marry when they first meet. The experts include a clinical psychologist, a sexologist, and a sociologist/marriage counselor, working together to find the perfect match. Then, the chosen couples meet for the first time, get married, and leave for a honeymoon. Upon returning home, they live together as a married couple for eight weeks. Thereafter, they choose to divorce or stay married.

I became aware of the concept while traveling in France to visit family. Upon my return, I decided to look into the experimental concept and see how effective these experts would be at 1) finding the right people to match, and 2) whether the couples who decided to get married ultimately stayed together. In other words, is the science of love a reality or a scam? I soon discovered that there was also an American version of the

show that had been running in the US for five years and results were available. Here is what I ultimately learned from the US experiment. From the five seasons of the show, 10 out of the 15 couples chose to stay married after the six-week period of the experiment. Out of these 10, only three remained together as of November 2017. Compared to statistics claiming that half of all marriages in the US eventually end in divorce, the results do not seem at first glance to be overwhelmingly positive. But given that each of these individuals effectively marry a perfect stranger, one could have expected a significantly lower marriage success rate and a much higher divorce rate than the results indicate.

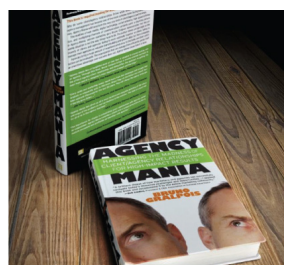
Now, if we transfer these findings to the world of advertising, brands, and agencies, we may ask ourselves about the ability to predict the likelihood of two partners coming together to realize greatness and build a lasting relationship. In my book *Agency Mania*, I speak to another fascinating experiment called *The Sweaty T-Shirt* by Swiss biological researcher Claus Wedekind, and how it applies to the business world of partnerships between clients and agencies.

The key takeaway of these experiments is that the careful evaluation of data can provide useful insight on how to find the right partnerships in the first place, and perhaps more importantly, once established, ensure that these partnerships flourish. As in science and physics, there are universal laws that provide the foundation of any purposeful analysis in client/agency relationships and, if applied, can improve them. Based on our vast experience conducting client/agency evaluations for the largest brand advertisers in the world, here are four essential laws that we live by:



### **Law #1: You can't improve what you don't measure (accurately).**

**What it means to us:** Too many advertisers still rely on rudimentary survey tools or spreadsheets to capture survey data about their multi-million-dollar relationships with their agencies. It's hard to conceive that these multi-billion-dollar companies are still using outdated tools and labor-intensive processes. Instead, they should use specialized outsourced solutions like EvaluationDeliver™ to accurately measure the various aspects of their partnerships and improve them.



If you would like to learn how to drive greater value from your client/agency relationships, consider reading best-seller and industry reference Agency Mania:

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**Bruno Galpois** is the co-founder of Agency Mania Solutions, a premier service and technology firm specialized in helping companies realize the transformational value of managed partnerships. Bruno is the author of best-seller "Agency Mania" and the former chair of the Association of National Advertisers (ANA) Client/Agency Committee and a faculty member of the ANA School of Marketing.

### **Law #2: Without continuous improvement, collaboration will suffer.**

**What it means to us:** Commit to follow up and take action based on the findings of the client/agency relationship evaluation. The inevitable pressure of the work relationship will weaken performance over time unless both parties are willing to take ownership of the role they play in making the relationship thrive. Don't waste precious time and resources and conduct this type of evaluation unless you are fully committed to leverage the findings and drive change.

### **Law #3: Ask the right questions to get meaningful answers.**

The French writer and philosopher Voltaire said, "Judge a man [or woman] by his [or her] questions rather than his [or her] answers." We believe this applies to building strong relationships. We often provide guidance to our clients about which questions to ask in order to tease out insightful answers. Only then can you identify what actions, if any, should be taken to strengthen the relationship.

### **Law #4: You get out what you put in—nothing more, nothing less.**

**What it means to us:** It won't surprise you if I tell you that the most successful partnerships can be found among organizations that truly value each other's contribution. When a party doesn't feel appreciated or valued, the commitment level is proportionally reduced, and the results speak for themselves. Instead, take the time to acknowledge everyone's contribution, provide constructive feedback, take accountability, and get the work you deserve.

If any of the above laws are broken, the client/agency relationship is simply at risk. The client/agency relationship is too demanding, too complex, and under too much pressure to thrive without relying on a regular feedback process to course-correct accordingly. Love, especially at first sight, may never be fully understood by science. But why not use relevant insights to improve its chances and turn a spark into a lasting fire?

Our clients' continued accomplishments result from cutting-edge practices in the area of client/agency performance evaluations. See how stronger relationships contribute to better marketing.

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