

Building the Plane While Flying (Or, How to Develop New Identity Talent)



Arynn Crow

Sr. Manager, User Authentication
AWS

Who am I, and why am I talking to you about this?

- I've been there, done that (and still am)
- IAM's talent supply/demand means we should all be helping to build the bench

The 1,000 foot view of IAM Hiring

~3-5MM

Global
cybersecurity
workforce today

**~250-
300K**

Roles may be IAM-
related

40-60K

Open IAM roles

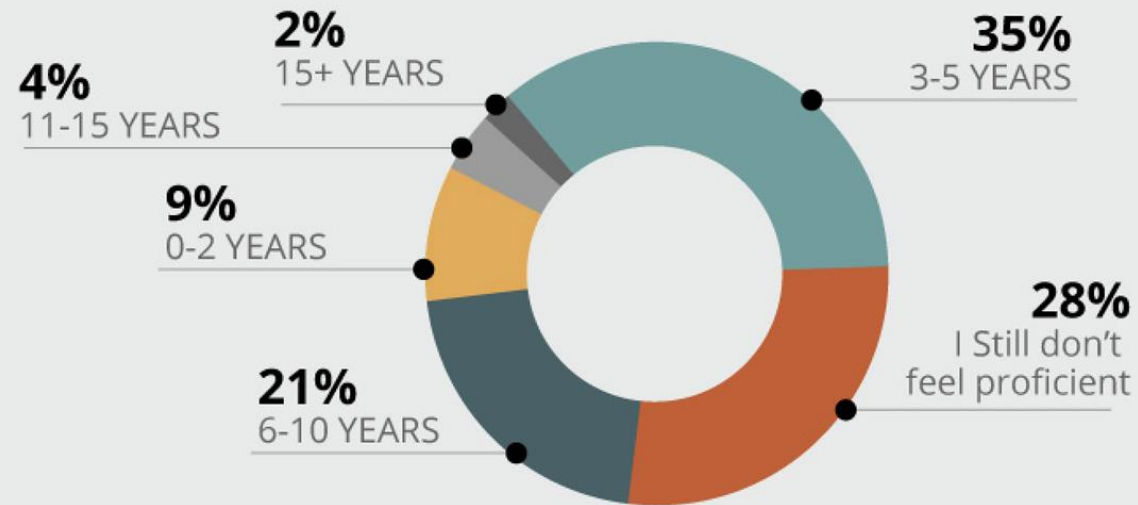
***This slide contains
educated guesses**

**12-
15%**

YoY market
growth for
5-8 years

Why that's a problem: proficiency is a long game.

How long did it take you to feel that you're a proficient identity professional?



2023 SKILLS, PROGRAMS, AND DIVERSITY SURVEY

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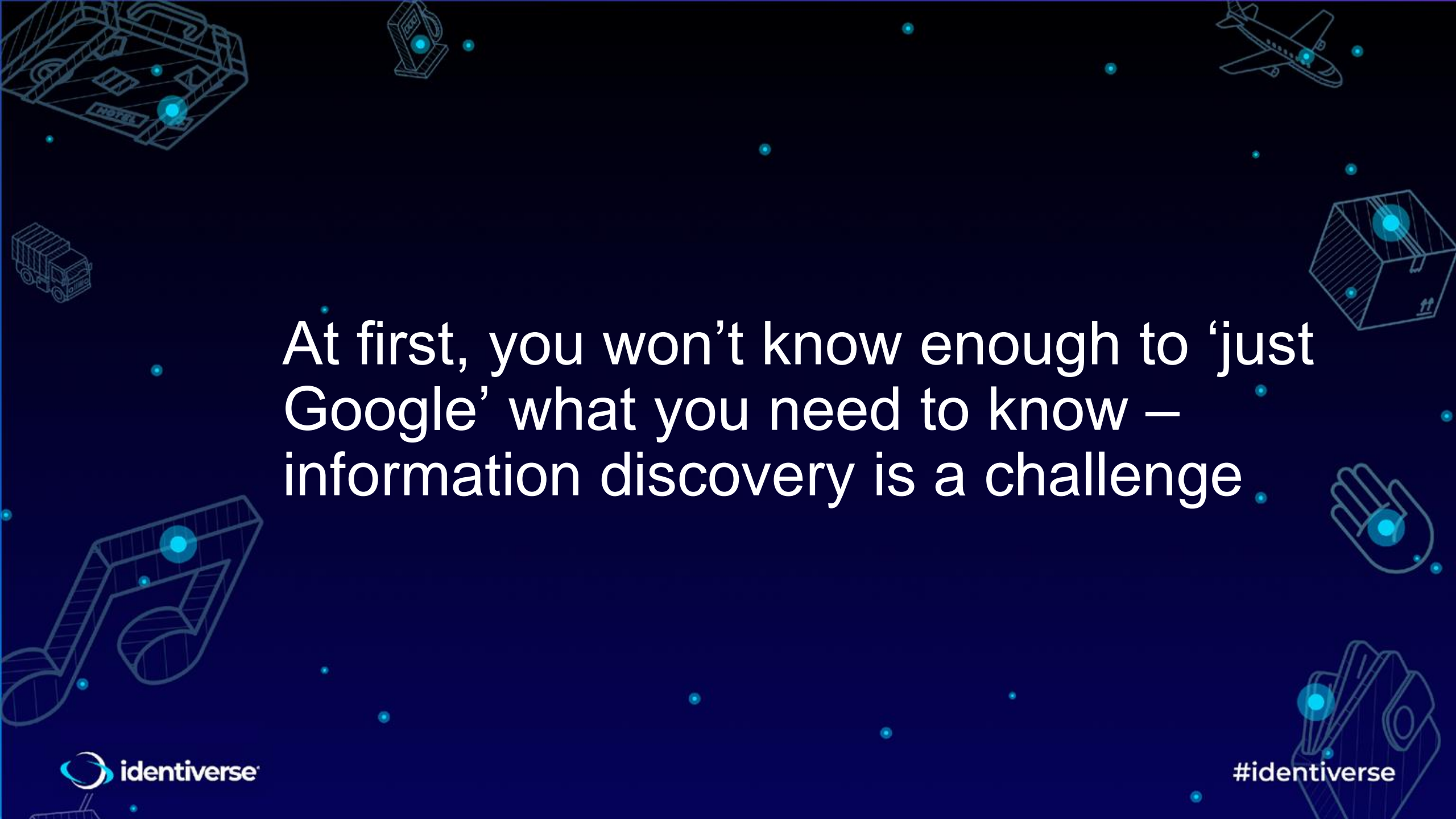
Making tradeoffs in hiring doesn't have to be painful – and it helps us all to build the bench.

**I've observed
three most
common obstacles
to overcome in
training**



1 – So much \$#%* information!

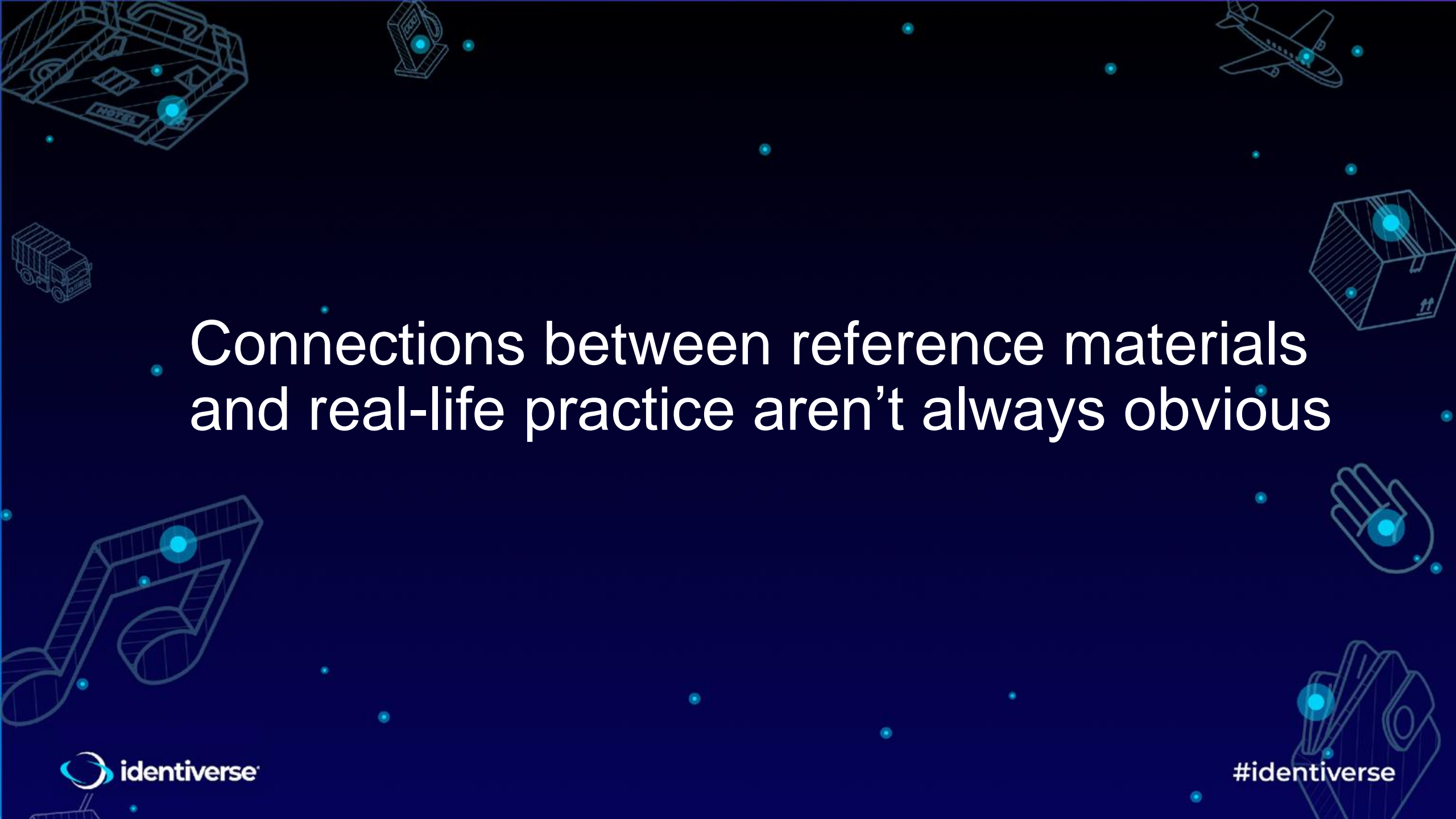
Or, “getting to know what you don’t know”



At first, you won't know enough to 'just Google' what you need to know – information discovery is a challenge.



Many different sources of information –
few of which are authoritative – and may
include vendor biases



Connections between reference materials
and real-life practice aren't always obvious


**2 – Identity is broad; few
concepts are cleanly
compartmentalized**

The background is a dark blue gradient with a pattern of small, light blue dots. Scattered throughout are white line-art icons of various objects: a building with a 'HOTEL' sign, a telephone, an airplane, a truck, a hand, a puzzle piece, and a folder. The text is centered in a white, sans-serif font.

You may start with only one small piece, but...

Puzzle pieces only make sense in the
context of other pieces – being
effective early means developing
systems-based thinking

3 – High-order judgment is a hard-won skill



Balancing risks in security “feels”
scarier, leading to overreliance on
decision-making models that are
consistently either too restrictive or too
permissive

A Growing Body of Learning Materials

- IDPro's Body of Knowledge (and Slack)
- NIST frameworks and articles
- Common standards, specs, etc.
- Vendor-driven blogs, podcasts, and books



IDPRO® Body of Knowledge

✓ [Introduction to Privacy for Consumers \(v2\)](#) – Clare Nelson – Originally published 2020-06-18; updated 2022-12-16

Workforce IAM

- ✓ [An Overview of the Digital Identity Lifecycle \(v2\)](#) – Andrew Cameron and Olaf Grewe – Originally published 2020-10-31; updated 2022-02-28
- ✓ [User Provisioning in the Enterprise](#) – Ian Glazer, Lori Robinson, Mat Hamlin – 2022-06-03

Standards, Regulations, and Laws

- ✓ [Impact of GDPR on Identity and Access Management](#) – Andrew Hindle – 2020-03-31
- ✓ [An Introduction to GDPR \(v3\)](#) – Andrew Cormack – Originally published 2020-03-31; updated 2021-06-30, 2022-09-30
- ✓ [Laws Governing Identity Systems](#) – Thomas J. Smedinghoff – Originally published 2020-03-31; updated 2021-06-30
- ✓ [Review – ISO/IEC 24760-1:2019](#) – Corey Scholefield – 2020-03-31
- ✓ [Review – ISO/IEC 24760-3:2016](#) – Espen Bago – 2021-06-17
- ✓ [Review – ISO/IEC 24760-2:2015](#) – George B. Dobbs – 2020-06-18

IAM Architecture and Solutions

- ✓ [Delegated Authentication Using a SAML Web Browser SSO Profile \(v2\)](#) – George B. Dobbs – Originally published 2021-09-30; updated 2022-12-16
- ✓ [Designing MFA for Humans](#) – Nishant Kaushik – 2020-10-31
- ✓ [Federation in the Enterprise](#) – Patrick Lunney – Originally published 2021-04-19; updated 2022-06-03
- ✓ [IAM Reference Architecture \(v3\)](#) – George B. Dobbs – Originally published 2021-09-30; updated 2022-12-16
- ✓ [Introduction to IAM Architecture \(v2\)](#) – Andrew Cameron and Graham Williamson – Originally published 2020-06-18; updated 2021-09-30
- ✓ [Multi-factor Authentication](#) – Khaled Zaky and Dean H. Saxe – 2022-12-16

**All good things – but
not enough.**

Effective IAM learning needs connective tissue

- **Onboard (and Beyond) Intentionally**

- Think 1-2 years ahead
- You don't have to turn over every stone for them – but you should know roughly how deep the canyon is



Expose them to breadth and risk early

- Initial priority selection is important when flexible – look for areas that cross multiple systems and stakeholders
- Find ways to expose them to risk evaluation within the first ~3 months (and to people who are great at it)
 - Support with guardrails, but give them room to discover and build confidence

Support information discovery and processing

- Develop annotated, ordered 'brain banks' of educational resources
- Example inclusions: common standards (and how/why they are applied in your environment, versus customizations), relevant regulatory statutes, etc.



Developing internal learning networks

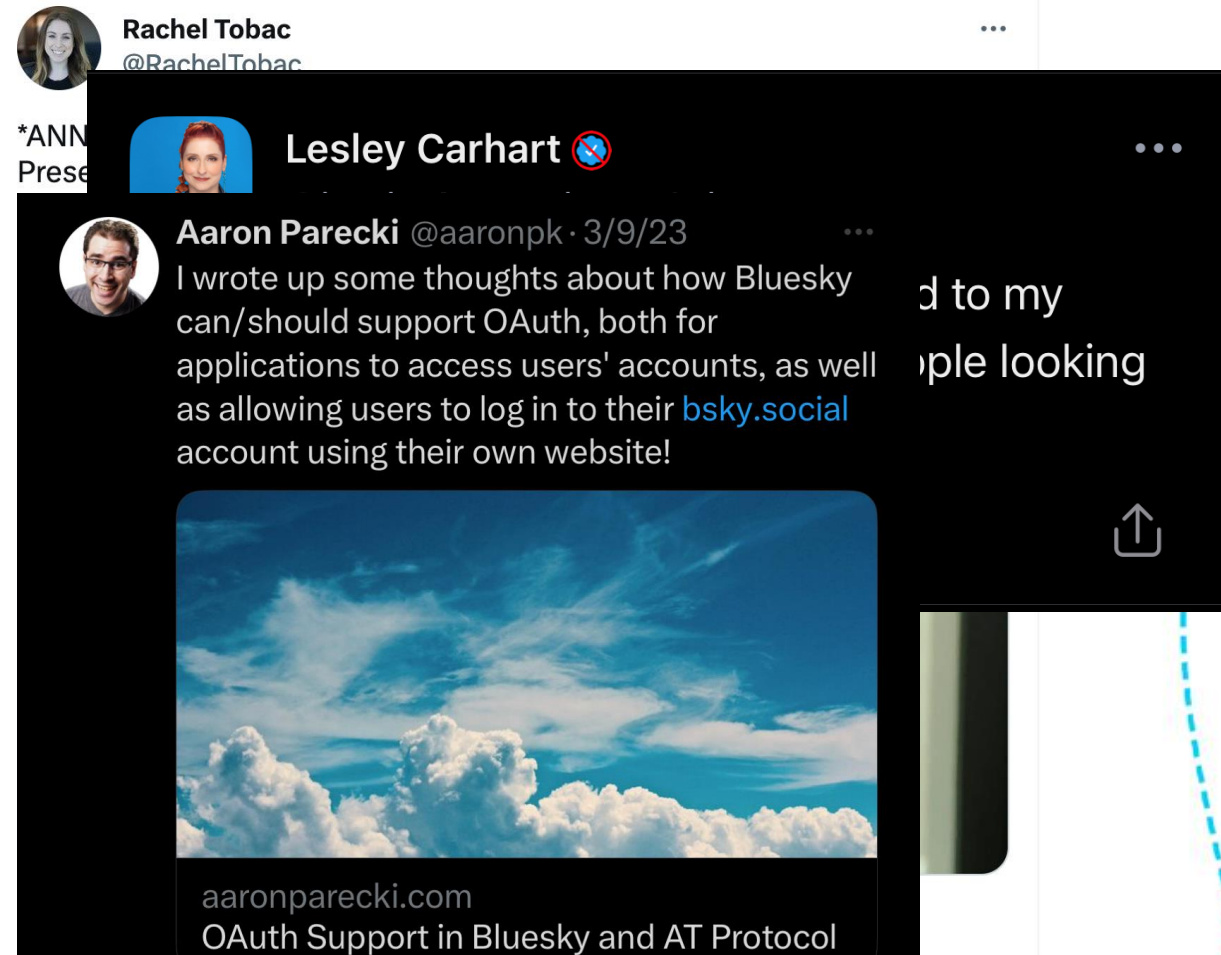
- Establish a dedicated mentor early – no point is “too early”
- Organic connections can be harder for new remote employees – support this network intentionally
- Ensure mentoring helps mentors, too – developing others develops us

Scaling the Helpers

- This isn't just for big companies!
- When you don't have enough tenured folks to support rapid hiring, scaling their time becomes mission-critical
- Guided study groups contextualize industry resources for more people with fewer mentors
- Record everything – interactive learning is best, but not always practical

Plant seeds for the external network

- Conferences (hey, Identiverse!), standards bodies, meetups
- Nearly-free double-whammy mechanisms for networking and learning
 - IDPro Slack
 - curated Twitter/ Mastodon/ BlueSky, etc. follow lists



Recap

- Common obstacles will be 1.) processing sheer volume of information, 2.) contextualizing it in the 'bigger picture', and 3.) applying learnings to inform independent judgment
- Creating curated learning materials (annotated guides, study groups, etc.) is up-front work, but provides scalable value
- The 'human element' is critical – help them establish internal as well as external networks for deeper learning



THANK YOU!

TWITTER: @ARYNNCROW

@arynn@infosec.exchange