

# Mike Rose

Executive Director, ThinkGen



## Specializing in Qualitative Research

The path to healthcare market research was somewhat indirect and incidental for Mike Rose. After graduating high school, Mike enlisted in the U.S. Air Force where he served as a combat controller. In short, combat controllers are highly-trained special operators and certified FAA air traffic controllers. After completing six years of service in the military, which included multiple combat deployments, Mike enrolled at Temple University where he majored in business legal studies, intending to pursue a career in law. However, it was working as a bartender while attending Temple that Mike (and his customers) realized that he has a high aptitude for interpersonal communication that would eventually lead him to a career in qualitative healthcare market research.

While pursuing his degree at Temple, Mike began an internship in records and information management, within the legal department, at a mid-sized, biotechnology company in the greater Philadelphia area. There, he sought career guidance and advice from the in-house attorneys. What Mike learned was that, while he enjoyed the pharma culture of helping people through rigorous scientific innovation, the career path to becoming corporate counsel was less aligned with his vision. However, Mike was determined to continue working in the healthcare and pharmaceutical industry to help improve the lives of those with acute and chronic conditions.

### First Market Research Position

This led Mike to his first position in market research, working as a project manager for a well-known Philadelphia-based fieldwork agency serving the healthcare industry. There, he

focused on quantitative research projects and gained experience by ensuring online surveys conducted for clients are logically and functionally sound. After a year and a half immersed in quantitative projects, Mike wanted to broaden his experience in pharmaceutical and healthcare market research, including qualitative methodologies. This motivated Mike to begin networking with former colleagues.

### Joining ThinkGen

One of those colleagues worked for ThinkGen at the time and was kind enough to help Mike expand his network by connecting him with several experienced researchers at the company, including CEO and Founder, Noah Pines. Coincidentally, ThinkGen was looking to add motivated employees to their ranks who saw a future for themselves in pharmaceutical market research. While Mike's intention was simply to network, after speaking with the ThinkGen team, including Noah, he was offered a position and joined as employee #6. Noah recognized that Mike had not only the ambition, but also the discipline and attention to detail, to become a great moderator and analyst. Mike has now been with ThinkGen for over five years.

Having worked mostly on quantitative projects at his previous company, Mike was excited at the opportunity to work on qualitative research projects. The interpersonal skills he developed while working in the service industry gave Mike an edge in moderating in-depth interviews. Early on at ThinkGen, Mike focused on projects involving viral illnesses, including Hepatitis C and HIV. Subsequently, Mike turned his focus to rare diseases: Hereditary Angioedema (HAE), Primary



Immunodeficiency (PID), and Spinal Muscular Atrophy (SMA). Mike found the work on rare diseases and their life-saving therapies particularly rewarding. In addition to rare diseases, he has expanded his therapeutic expertise to include hemophilia A, congestive heart failure, Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer (NSCLC), and chronic cough, which he found very relevant over the past year during the COVID-19 pandemic.

One of the more memorable projects Mike was fortunate enough to work on involved visual aid testing for a gene replacement therapy for SMA Type 1. While another treatment was available, there was significant excitement surrounding the launch of this gene therapy. The research was conducted at the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA) Conference in Orlando in 2019. Mike had the opportunity to speak with many brilliant physicians and thought leaders who were attending the conference and to see their passion for helping these very young SMA patients first-hand.

## Passion for Market Research

Mike has developed a real passion for research. He finds it fulfilling to be in a career that encourages those within it to be cerebral – intently mining insights through in-depth interviews and making logical, relevant, and ultimately impactful recommendations to clients. He enjoys all the intellectual aspects – from reading and research prep to intensively querying customers, examining transcripts and looking for the nuance in the details – ultimately building well-informed and data-driven solutions to clients' business problems.

Mike adds that one of the rewards of working at ThinkGen has been the opportunity to observe the different moderating techniques of his experienced colleagues and continuing to adapt these techniques for his own use. Additionally, Mike understands that clients put their faith in ThinkGen to provide actionable insights – ensuring that clients are satisfied and return for on-going partnerships is something he finds highly rewarding.

## Why ThinkGen?

What Mike enjoys most about working at ThinkGen are the people. Having been with the company since its earlier days, Mike has developed strong relationships with many co-workers. Mike admits that while working remotely can sometimes feel isolating, he knows that he can reach out to any one of his colleagues when he needs input that matches their expertise. Further, the remote model facilitates flexible hours that promote better work-life harmony. Even when working longer hours, Mike is able to take a quick break to go for a

neighborhood run, play a quick game with his children, or have lunch with his wife, Angela.

Mike describes ThinkGen as a company that is always seeking new, innovative research approaches to solving business problems. For example, he was particularly excited to have worked on one of the company's first On Doctors' Minds<sup>SM</sup> (ODM) projects about the impact of COVID-19 on oncology practices. Through these candid exchanges with otherwise cerebral oncologists, he felt tremendous empathy for the doctors with whom he spoke. ODM is different than the typical in-depth interview in that it follows a less structured format, allowing the moderator the flexibility to react to the respondent more instinctively and adapt to changing topics. Mike found the new approach refreshing and enjoyed creating a comfortable atmosphere in which participants could speak candidly about whatever is on their minds.

While Mike has several interests outside of work, the majority of his personal time is dedicated to his two daughters—6-year-old Mia and 3-year-old Vivienne—both of whom he describes as “amazing” and “funny.” When not spending time with his girls, Mike can most likely be found exercising, reading some type of non-fiction, or practicing Spanish using a language-learning app.

El fin.

