1 Leveraging Institutional Databases and Firm IP

- ✓ Before conducting external research, tap internal knowledge centers, information specialists, and archived engagement decks across the firm's global practice.
- ✓ Professional information centers can synthesize industry benchmarks, regulatory shifts, and competitor cost structures in hours, saving weeks of amateur web browsing.
- ✓ A consultant who ignores internal firm research squanders institutional equity and wastes client budget duplicating baseline industry discoveries.

2 Uncovering Secrets in Public Filings and Annual Reports

- ✓ The most revealing competitive secrets are not hidden in espionage; they are openly published in 10-K filings, annual report footnotes, and regulatory submissions.
- ✓ Scrutinizing inventory accounting footnotes, capital depreciation schedules, and segment disclosures exposes hidden structural vulnerabilities that executive press releases omit.
- ✓ Comparing footnote details across five competitor filings often unmasks diverging unit economics, shifting margins, and upcoming supply-chain disruptions.

3 Pre-Framing Hypotheses Before Secondary Analysis

- ✓ Unstructured research leads into an endless labyrinth of peripheral facts; effective research begins with a clear hypothesis and specific data criteria.
- ✓ Define in advance exactly what numbers are needed to confirm or disprove a hypothesis, and stop digging the moment that threshold is satisfied.
- ✓ Targeted fact-seeking transforms research from a passive reading exercise into an active, hypothesis-driven filter that accelerates strategic synthesis.