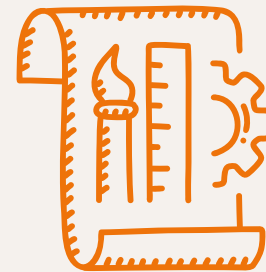




SYNAPSE

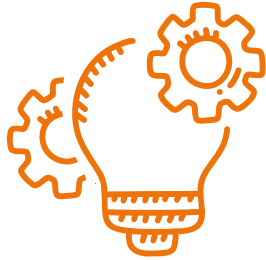
Goldsmiths
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

STARTUP TOOLKIT



VERSION 2 – DECEMBER 2022

INTRODUCTION



The resources in this Startup toolkit are created and based on the work we've done with over 10,000 entrepreneurs, as well as our extensive reading, and generous inputs from our communities. The insights that have come from the creation of this toolkit are based on much trial and error, as well as many light bulb moments from entrepreneurs, and those who have worked with entrepreneurs over decades. Knowing what it means not only to start a business, but to manage it, and even potentially sell it and start anew – those are just some of the many factors that have gone into the preparation of these resources.

However, the most important ingredient in this kit is you. We've tried to ensure that no matter where you are on your path towards building your own enterprise, there's something in here to propel you forward. We hope the exercises make you ask questions and search for answers – whether that's through research or deep reflection. We hope the kit enables you not only to move your endeavour forward, but also to put your customers and beneficiaries at the heart of everything you do.

This kit has been created by **Synapse**, a programme that runs out of Goldsmiths College, University of London.

ABOUT SYNAPSE

Synapse is a programme developed through the **Institute of Creative and Cultural Entrepreneurship** at Goldsmiths, University of London. This programme works as a series of workshops for business development support, originally aimed at students looking for careers and opportunities in the Creative Industries. Since its inception, the Synapse programme has assisted over 6,000 students in understanding and developing an entrepreneur's mindset and in using entrepreneurial thinking when evaluating career progress. This could be becoming an 'intrapreneur' within the organisation of their choosing, or starting businesses, charities, or social enterprises of their own.

Synapse's reach has since been extended outside the scope of students to working with additional communities. Synapse has been worked globally with myriad groups and organisations: from local rural communities to policy makers.

The Synapse programme has also been delivered in: Uganda, Kenya, Egypt, Turkey, Greece, Italy, Spain, Belgium, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Poland, Germany, Russia, China, Hong Kong, Chile and Mexico.

Synapse makes use of creative activities and hands-on exercises as a way to get creative minds to align with business and entrepreneurial thinking. This process helps creatives to find confidence in a multitude of business skills, including financial literacy, networking & selling, engaging in collaborations with peers, and project management.

ABOUT THIS TOOLKIT

This Startup Toolkit has been created as an added resource to assist those who attend the Synapse Workshops. Additionally, the toolkit contains exercises that can be done on your own (or with a partner) to help anyone, whether you attend the workshops or not, to engage in entrepreneurial thinking.

The kit takes you through the process, from ideation to fulfilment, of what it means to start, manage and build a business within the creative and cultural industries. It can be used as a tool to help anyone on their entrepreneurial journey. There might be some exercises that are more useful than others, and there might be some that don't speak to you at all. It would be good to take a look at each exercise and read through the process of each one.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Adrian De La Court is a creative advisor, academic and business development consultant. As a critical practitioner he trained and worked professionally as a fine artist, live artist and contemporary dancer and choreographer. He has developed a strong portfolio career in the creative industries.

Siân Prime has worked to find new, impactful ways to engage highly creative individuals and social innovation and cultural organisations in sustainable practice.

Adrian and Siân have worked together in a range of roles, but most recently at Goldsmiths, University of London, where they lead the entrepreneurship education work.

Ashley Evenson is a facilitator for the Synapse programme and a lecturer in Creative Enterprise. She has worked with a number of different funders to bring Synapse workshops to local communities across London, including Inspire Lewisham, Start Up In Stride, UK Community Renewal Fund and Deutsche Bank Award for Creative Entrepreneurs. She currently runs Oval Productions, a storytelling agency that focuses around personal narrative.

For this kit we have collaborated with **Alistair Hall**, founder of the design agency [We Made This](#). As well as his inestimable visual communication skills, he brings great clarity to our thinking.

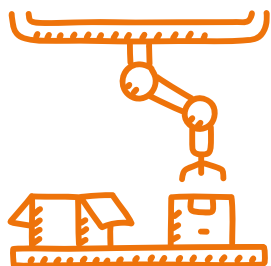
USING THIS TOOLKIT

We have written this toolkit to support your ongoing entrepreneurial experience – we’re trying hard not to use the word ‘journey’! Our experience is that planning your own business is an iterative process: the more work you do, the more research and thinking you uncover – requiring you to revisit your earlier thoughts and assumptions. That approach often mirrors the reality of running your own business. We expect and hope that you may revisit these tools as you refresh and adjust your business model.

A business model is simply a way of showing how you will create financial and social value. We also want this value to be of worth to you – and not just economically.

Feel free to pick a starting point in this guide that is useful for you. Use it as you would a map, to guide you through unfamiliar parts of your environment.

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HOBBY OR BUSINESS?

INTRODUCTION

You have passions and skills. But do they constitute a **hobby** or a **business**? To answer that, you need to define each of them.

Hobbies can bring great joy into your life. With some hobbies, you make things – you might even make things for other people. Or perhaps you provide services for other people. For example, you might help friends or family to use their tech, or help out with a bit of DIY.

However, a **hobby** can become a **business** when you extend your offer beyond your own network (your friends and family for example).

As a result, you might need extra people to help you meet demand, and you might need to formalise your processes too.

But crucially you move from doing what you are great at, or love, for **free**, and now ask for **an exchange of some kind**.

That exchange usually relies on the fact that there's some kind of **'value added'** in what you offer.

The best way to discover if what you are doing could be a business is to answer the following questions:

- Does it add value to other people's lives?
- Would they pay for it?

PREPARATION

- Think about all the things you can do. Think about all the things **you enjoy and are skilled at**. Be optimistic and pragmatic. What are the outputs of these hobbies? Are you creating something?
 - **Think about the things you make.** How often do you make them? What are the costs of the supplies you use? If this became a business, would you be able to offset those costs, *and make a profit*, with the amount you could charge?
 - **Think about the things you do** (which could be seen as services). If you are great at writing, could you write copy for websites? Would that interest you? If you are skilled at communicating, could you charge for your communication skills? Would you want to?
- One of the key ingredients to a hobby becoming a business, is that there's an audience for it. So, after deciding if this is a business, you need to start thinking about your audience. Who are they? Who would you reach out to? Who else? Keep extending this – try and think of more than five sets of people who would want you to do this.
- Then review how you feel about charging for this activity, or asking for people to support you in some alternative way for you to do this activity. If you are not comfortable with charging, then maybe another skill set should be used to find your business idea – or an alternative approach to coming up with ideas could work better for you.

MATERIALS

You will need the following materials:

- A printout of the Hobbies sheet
- Several printouts of the Business and Audience sheets
- A pen

EXERCISE

1. List all the things you do as hobbies in the bubble on the Hobbies sheet. If there are products you can make, or services you can deliver, even better. But **list all of your hobbies** here.
2. Once you have listed all your hobbies, take each one, and think about who might benefit from what you make or do, and whether they would pay for it. Is there any **value added** to their life if they were to purchase this from you? If there is, put that hobby into the central bubble of the Business sheet (you'll need to print a separate sheet for each one), and list out the value that is added for paying customers. *See the Photography example.*
3. Now put your new business into the central bubble of the Audience sheet. Who is the first set of people to gain from your idea? Who is the next?

And the next, and so on... it could be you, or your family, someone who buys it, or it could be someone a part of the process, who helps you to make it (also known as a **supplier**), and then their friends and family, and so on and so on – name them all.

Once you have named all these people, and grouped them, you now have a list of **leads**. Leads are customers to reach out to, who might potentially buy from you.

WHY THIS IS HELPFUL

People often start on a journey like this by themselves, without involving anyone else. One of the best things you can do is to invite people close to you to join you on the journey. Especially to check whether or not the journey even makes sense.

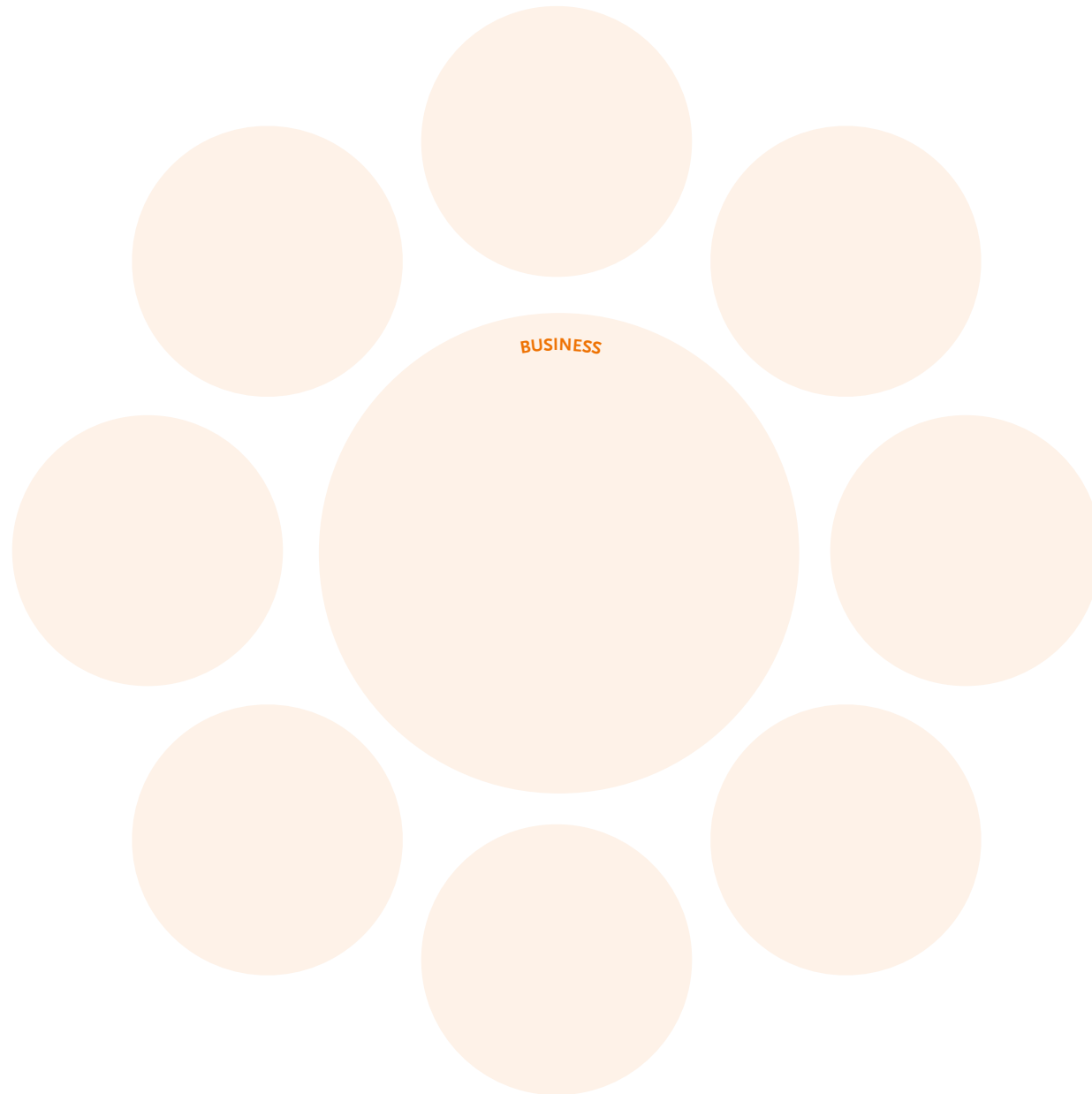
Also, it can help to make sure you aren't wasting your time. You might really want to create something, but if you find nobody will pay for it, then it's probably not the right thing to turn into a business. At least, not right now.

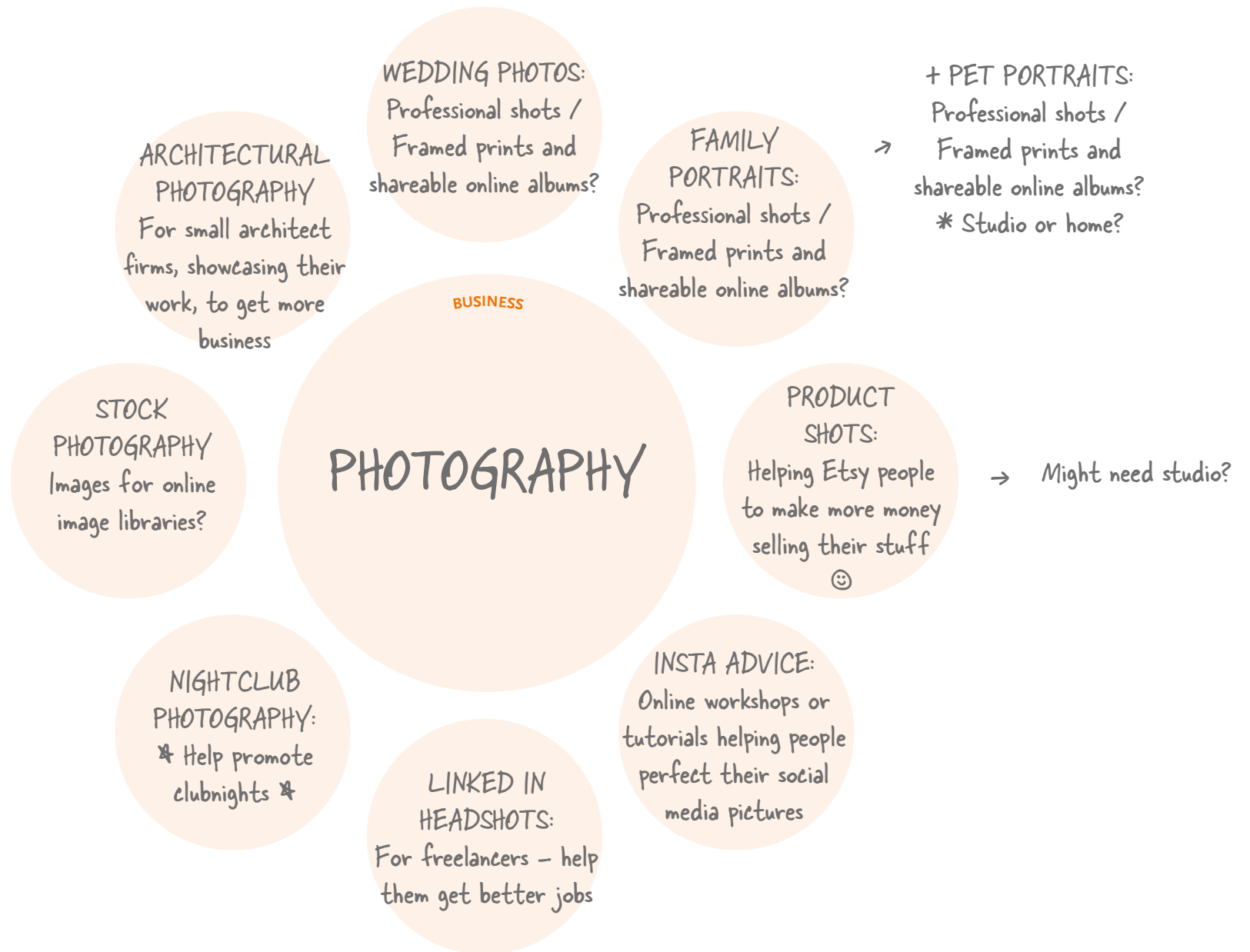
By asking people to pay for something, you can start prototyping your service or product.

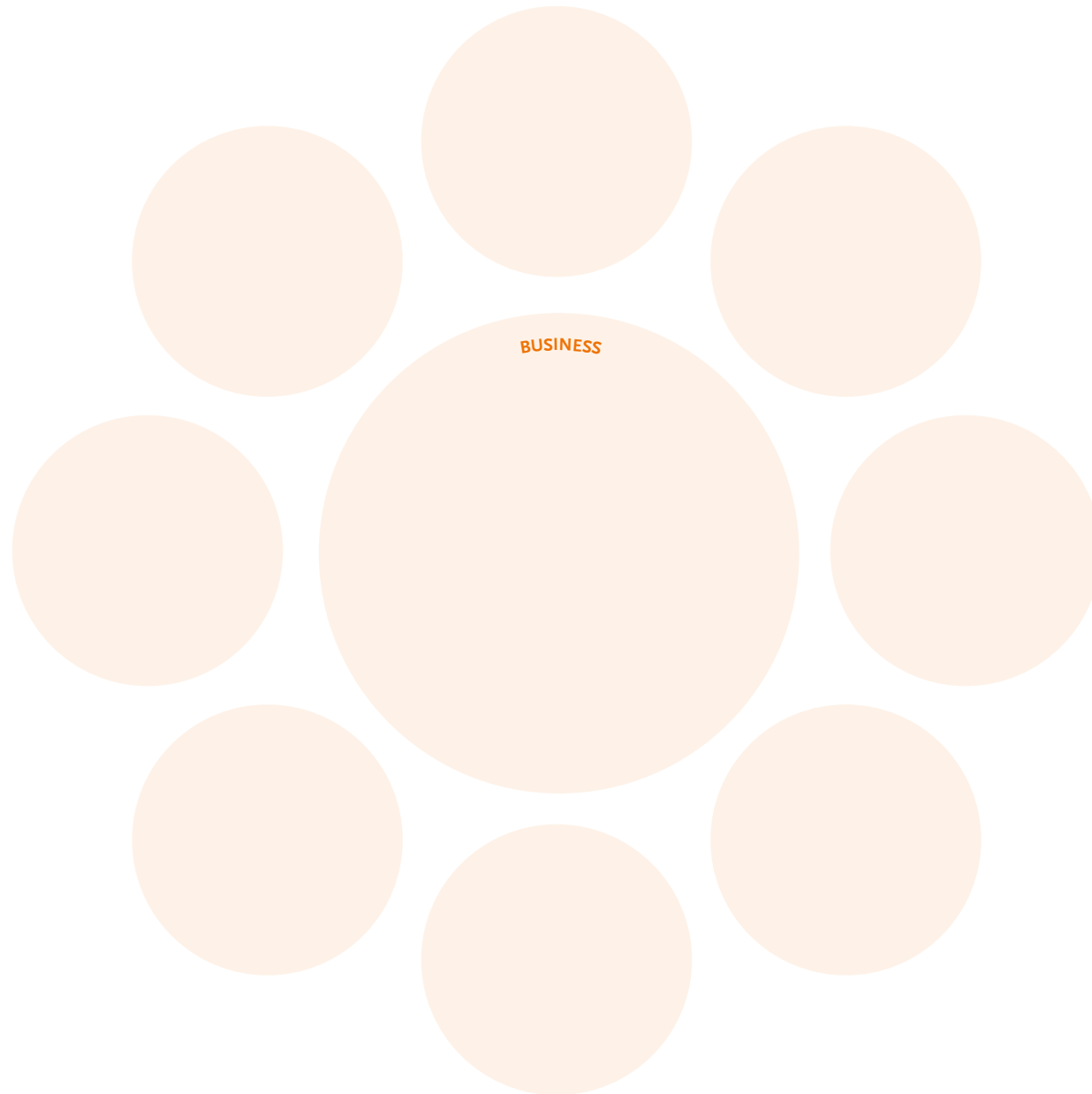
It also helps you to know if you are, or can become, comfortable with commercialising your product or service, and formalising some of your skills areas.

HOBBIES

Things you enjoy and are skilled at







VALUES & VALUE CHAIN

INTRODUCTION

Values are at the centre and heart of every business. They are a culmination of the way you work, why you do what you do, and how you do it. Values can guide you in the direction of your business, and how you operate it. They can centre you if your business feels off balance. Additionally, they should inform how you interact with your audience and community. They can also put into perspective how you want to define the relationships you make along the way. Values can be a number of different things to different businesses and their communities. Values should determine the way the business operates. Values must also be part of determining how much to charge your clients and customers.

Values can be seen as intangible assets – for more on this see the [Skills & Ideation](#) exercises.

We all have individual or personal values, they could be things like environment or family. They might even be difficult to sum up in one word – for example a whole set of values can be included in “my values are something about hosting people well, including them and treating them really with respect”. If you are trying to determine your values, start with how you like to be treated, how you like to treat others, when you come alive, or when you feel uneasy or annoyed with something.

Writing down all of your values and then working out which ones you want to bring to your business is an important part of determining how you begin to separate yourself from your business, but also what elements of you that you want to bring to your business.

If you are creating a start-up with others, you might ask them to write down all of their personal values, then see what are shared team values, then which will become the business’s values.

WHY THIS IS HELPFUL

Knowing your values can help guide your decisions, and also ensure that your enterprise stands out to others.

VALUE

When we speak of value added, this can show up in a number of different ways. For example, if you are creating a product or service for a community, and you hope to employ some of the members of that community, the value you are adding can be seen in a number of different ways.

1. You are adding value to the community with your service
2. You are adding value to the community, by employing part of that community.
 - a. The first way is through giving them employment and a pay cheque
 - b. The second is through giving them autonomy, and self-confidence
3. You are adding value if you really engage with your community, giving them space, and a voice through your service.

You can also add value to the ingredients or elements that you work with. For example, you add value to base metals by crafting and designing them, you add value to canvas and paint as a painter, you add value to basic food ingredients in the recipe and how and where you serve them when cooked.

Sometimes you will be in control of all the elements of value, sometimes you will collaborate with others to generate the value and distribute it to the customer or final beneficiary. *These are just some of the ways you can add value. In the following exercise, you might discover that there are lots of other ways to add value.*

VALUE CHAIN

A value chain is an excellent way to understand how and where your value, the value of your business, and the value to your beneficiaries can be realised. Often before a business gets started, or has a website, value chains are an excellent thing to do, to show who you are and what you want to achieve and who and what you will need to achieve your idea.

THE EXERCISE

- Answer the questions on the **Value Chain** sheet. Follow these questions in order as best you can in the beginning. If you get stuck on one question or aren't sure, make a note, and come back to it later. Do the best you can to fill out all of the questions.
- After you have finished and you have the majority of your answers, look at where your gaps are. Where did you get stuck? What research do you have to do in order to answer these questions?
- Once you've completed the sheet, review where social, financial and cultural impact is made. It might be a good idea to look at the [Making a Change](#) exercise first, and consider what problem you will be solving for your customers or audience. You might also want to do the [Draw Your Customer Avatar](#) exercise, to show the needs of your customer.

MATERIALS

You will need the following materials:

- Pens
- Paper/ Sticky notes
- Copies of the **Value Chain** sheet

WHY THIS IS HELPFUL

The value chain can help you to figure out where you are adding value to the lives of your community, while also understanding how the value added can be compensated for your business. This exercise allows you to think about your business holistically and understand how much work you might have ahead of you, while understanding the impact you are looking to make.

You might need to come back to this repeatedly.



VISION & MISSION

INTRODUCTION

A clear **Vision & Mission Statement** allows clarity for both you and your audience – whether that is beneficiaries, future investors or customers. To be able to clearly articulate your intentions – what you hope to do with your business – in one sentence, or a few sentences, can help gain an audience’s attention quickly. As the world changes, people are looking for more transparency with those they are working with and buying from. Having a clear Vision & Mission Statement helps them to understand you, quickly. When someone reads your Vision & Mission Statement, they should quickly and easily understand the following:

- What your company does
- The intended impact your company will have on the world / on its audience
- An understanding of your values

The Vision Statement tells your audience what impact you will achieve, the Mission Statement should tell them how you will achieve it.

HOW TO DO THIS EXERCISE

As you do this exercise, think about your Values. The things that make you, you. The reason you started your business. Your Vision & Mission Statement should be the heart and foundation of what you are doing or hoping to do.

- **Vision:** In the first part of the exercise, focus on your Vision. What is the change you want to make in the world? What is the way in which your business will tackle this change? From what angle will you dissect it and try to make the world better for your audience? Answer the questions in part one. Then after answering those questions, construct a sentence that details what you hope to change about the world for your audience. This is your **Vision Statement**.
- **Mission:** In the second part of the exercise, you will answer the questions in number 2. The focus of this will be **how** you will achieve the vision you want to create for the world and for your audience. In this part, you will introduce your business. You will articulate what your business will offer to actualise this vision. Then you will write a sentence or two detailing how you will do this. This is your **Mission Statement**.
- Finally, put your **Vision & Mission Statement** together as a single sheet.

MATERIALS

You will need the following materials:

- Pen
- Copies of the Vision & Mission sheet

THE EXERCISE

Complete the Vision & Mission sheet.

WHY THIS IS HELPFUL

Having a clear **Vision & Mission Statement** makes it easier to:

- Explain your business at networking events
- Articulate what you do to future customers
- Invite people to join your community
- Raise awareness of your brand and your company
- Invite those who have the same vision to become collaborators

This tool will help you describe the change that you want to make by defining your Vision and Mission statements. Remember these statements need to be aligned to your values. Try to keep it simple and be aspirational!

VISION

- Why does your business exist?
- What does the future you want to create look like?
- What are the changes you want to bring with your business?



MY VISION STATEMENT IS...

MISSION

- What will you do?
- Who will benefit, and how?
- How will you reach the goal stated in your Vision?



MY MISSION STATEMENT IS...



Keep this in mind for future exercises!

THE GOLDEN CIRCLE

INTRODUCTION

Thought leader Simon Sinek created the concept of the **Golden Circle**, which has been useful for clarifying thought and purpose in companies around the world. In the beginning stages of your business and enterprise, it is a great idea to do this exercise, as it will inform how you do everything else, and the underlying reasons behind it. This exercise will help you to clarify the following information:

- The reason why you want to do what you are attempting to do.
- The way you want to focus on your efforts, and ensure you are leading holistically and purposefully
- Articulating the **Purpose** of the business, as well as the **Offer** and how it will appear, to clients, customers, collaborators and stakeholders.

HOW TO DO THIS EXERCISE

To get the most out of this exercise, do it in sections, and try to do it as pensively as possible. Before you get started, think about your **Vision & Mission Statement**. Think about what your **Offer** to your community or audience is. Think about the reasons you want to be doing what you are proposing to do with your company. Thought leader Simon Sinek discusses that often companies will start with **What** they do, then move to **How** they do it, then **Why** they do it. The purpose of this exercise is to work backwards. Starting with **Why** allows you to gain clarity much quicker and have a deeper, stronger foundation.

- **WHY** During this part it helps to have a partner, someone sitting next to or across from you, asking you **why** you want to do what you are doing. The first part of the exercise involves asking why five times. See how deep you can get in terms of your answers. After your partner asks you, have them write your answers so you can keep track of what it is you say. If you don't have a partner, then just use your phone to record your answers.
- **HOW** As you figure out how you are going to deliver your product, service, or clarify your offer, it might also be a good time to think about what makes you unique. The **how** of the delivery should be focused on what makes you special, what sets you apart from your competitors. How are you going to deliver this in a way that has not been done before, or not handled with such care? What is it about you that puts you in an extraordinarily unique position to do this the way only you can do it?
- **WHAT** What is your product or service or offer? Write it out clearly and succinctly.

MATERIALS

You will need the following materials:

- Writing paper or journal
- Recording device (if you don't have a partner)
- Pens
- Optional: A partner to ask you questions
- A few printouts of the Golden Circle sheet

THE EXERCISE

Fill in your own Golden Circle:

1. Start with a **Statement of Your Offer**. For the first go, this can be your **Vision & Mission Statement**.

Read it out loud.

Example:

“I want to change the way women’s issues are dealt with in popular culture, and I hope to change this by starting a femme-inspired theatre company.”

2. **WHY**

Now your partner (or you if you’re alone) will ask ‘Why?’ Answer with as much conviction as you can.

- a. Document your answer.
- b. Read back your answer.
- c. Repeat this whole process again, using that answer as your new **Statement of Your Offer**.
- d. Do this **five times**. Each time you should be going deeper into yourself, into what you hope to achieve and why you hope to achieve it.
- e. By the fifth time you do this, you should be gaining clarity on what your **Why** is.
- f. Write your five answers in the centre of the **Golden Circle** sheet.

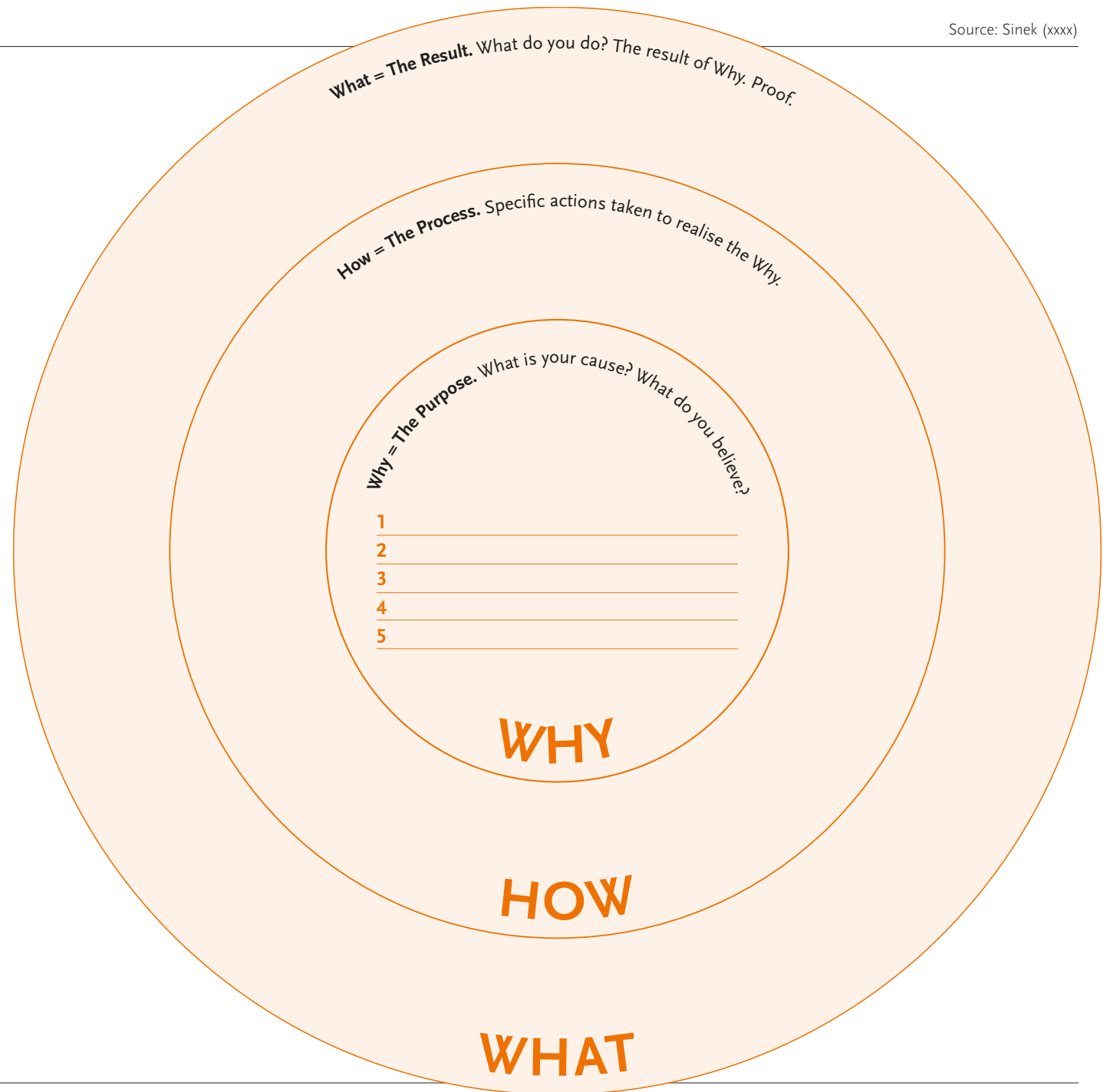
WHY THIS IS HELPFUL

Knowing your **Why** clarifies what you are doing for yourself, your audience, and your team. If ever you get stuck and don’t know what the best way to proceed is, go back to your Why. What measures up to that? If you want to give a talk, or pitch for funding, having a clear reason why you are doing what you are doing creates confidence and makes you know exactly what you stand for. Spending the time now on getting clear on these terms will help you when you are under pressure later on.

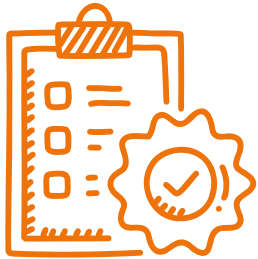
THE GOLDEN CIRCLE

Source: Sinek (xxxx)

Statement of your offer



SKILLS & IDEATION



SKILLS: SKILLS MAPPING

If you are creating a new business, setting yourself up as a sole trader, or even looking to apply for new opportunities (such as applying for a job, or taking a course) then it is important to know what skills you have. Whether you use these skills frequently or not, it is still important to know you have them or can access them. Think of it as if you were making a meal – you need to know which ingredients you have in your cupboard, and which ingredients you need to find at the shop, or borrow from a neighbour.

Recognising these skills helps by:

- Boosting your confidence in your own abilities.
- Identifying how your strengths can be helpful to you in growing or developing your business, idea, or further opportunities.
- Highlighting any skills gap – areas where you might need to develop your existing skills, build some new ones, or even outsource them, in order to move yourself / your business / your project forward.

You are going to create a **Skills Map**. You'll put all the things you can do, across various aspects of your life, onto one large sheet of paper. In doing this, you'll clarify how much you're capable of doing yourself, while also realising that for your goals and ambitions, there might be a few gaps. Then you can focus on filling those gaps, creating a really solid foundation for yourself and your future endeavours.

HOW TO DO THIS EXERCISE

To get the most out of this exercise, it's best to approach it in two ways:

- The first is to be honest and realistic about what you can do. Don't write that you can do something if you can't. You'll just be shooting yourself in the foot and making life more difficult for yourself.
- The second approach is to be confident. In fact, the best way to do this exercise is to think about someone in your life who's always bragging about you in an embarrassing way. Maybe it's a family member (even if they say it *about* you, not *to* you), or your best friend, or partner – someone who talks about you all the time and everything you do. Do the exercise from their perspective. Be bold about all the things you can do – whilst still being realistic!
- Find evidence for all of the skills you mention – this makes sure you have confidence and credibility.

MATERIALS

You will need the following materials:

- Several large sheets of paper, poster size, A2-A3. (Or you can use different packs of sticky notes)
- Markers and pens of various colours and sizes

EXERCISE 1

1. Think about some of the main areas of your life. These could be **Hobbies, Work, Work Placements, Life Experience, Relationships, Interests, Education, Travel...** choose whatever feels right for you.

Each area gets its own sheet of paper – write the area at the top of the paper. The following questions might help:

- What are your hobbies?
 - What knowledge do you have?
 - What are you passionate about?
 - What skills do you have?
 - What are you good at?
 - What do you enjoy doing?
 - What do other people say about you?
 - How susceptible to change, or adaptable, are you?
2. Now draw out, in a single colour, a large bubble to represent each of your main skills in that area – each skill bubble gets a different colour. Try to avoid overlap – keep each skill to just one area.
 3. Around each skill bubble, write out the all the other knowledge / skills you have that contribute to it. (Remember that anything that looks like a job title is not a skill – but you do have many skills that make you good at that job.)

4. For example, let's say one of the bubbles on your **Hobbies** sheet is **Woodworking**. You could add around that skill bubble many other smaller skill bubbles:
 - Understanding types of wood
 - Working with knives
 - Whittling
 - Carving wood
 - Understanding different saws and how they work
 - Sculpting things from wood
 - Staining wood
5. Repeat this process for each the different area of your life. Collectively, this forms your **Skills Map**.

WHY THIS IS HELPFUL

This exercise is geared towards helping you better understand yourself and what you are capable of. It takes your skills and lays them out on paper. In doing this, it can help you to articulate the things you **like doing**, the things you **want to know more about** and the things that can **help you to find employment or perhaps start a business of your own**. If you know what you are good at, then you can build upon those skills.

Additionally, if you know what you are **not** good at, then you know where to start looking for help, or find training to learn more. For anyone who has recently found themselves without a job, or a new set of circumstances in life, then doing a skills audit can help to centre you, remind yourself who you are, what you know you can do, and help reignite the confidence to do it.

IDEATION: ASSET MAPPING

Ideation: the process of forming ideas (*noun*)

Ideate: to form an idea (*verb*)

“Ideation can come from a profound experience.”

Siân Prime

Many entrepreneurs start businesses because they have lived through an experience that left a gap in their life or the life of others, so they find themselves wanting to fill that gap in the market.

As an example, a man retired from his job of 45 years. In retirement he found he had lost his purpose, and felt isolated from the life he previously lived. So he created a business to help those facing retirement plan for what they want to spend their retirement **doing**. If he hadn't gone through that experience, he never would have started his own company at the age of 67. Because he went through that experience of isolation and solitude, he knew he wanted to fill that experience for others.

How often have you been in a situation and found that whatever was happening around you simply wasn't working? Perhaps there was a waste of resources, or people weren't using their full potential, or something just didn't work as well as it could. Have you had a moment where you thought, 'I *know* I could make this better'?

That is the starting place of an entrepreneur's ideation process. Entrepreneurs around the world have looked at their corner of the universe and thought 'there has to be a *better* way'. Sometimes that comes out of a **Pain Point**¹. Other times it could come from seeing a real problem or need in your community. Or from a love or passion for something in your industry. It can come from potential and from assets that you have. An example of assets might be if you have access to a space, that you know is sitting empty, and you know there are a lot of students who need extra help in school. Maybe you fill your space (your asset) with students from 4pm–6pm every Tuesday and Thursday and charge a minimum fee to cover the cost of your tutors. You are filling a gap, and creating a business, while fulfilling a need in the community.

(For some of you of course, ideation might come naturally. You might need to shape your enterprise to allow for you to continually develop new products, services or experiences. If you are someone who really enjoys and engages with new ideas, it may be that you are a **serial entrepreneur** and you might need to consider how to **develop** new enterprises, rather than run them. But that's for later. Let's get to start-up and running first!)

The ability to come up with ideas is like a muscle: the more you exercise it, the more it will grow. So in this next exercise, we are going to look at how to create ideas from where you are right now.

HOW TO DO THIS EXERCISE

You are now going to look at what your **Assets**² are, and how can you use them to ideate your potential next move. Maybe it will be starting a new career path, or creating a new business or enterprise that will help you and your community.

The best way to go into this exercise is to really look around. What surrounds you? What do you have access to? Try to think in a positive way. Instead of thinking of what you *don't have*, think deeply about what you *do have*. Also, look at the people surrounding you – they are assets too – how can you utilise their talents?

¹ **Pain point:** A very specific problem that a user or customer of a service or product has in their journey of engaging with a service or product. For example: if supermarkets put shopping baskets at the back of the store, so every customer had to trek to the back of the store before they could start shopping, that makes the customer's journey more difficult and would be a pain point.

² **Asset:** An asset is anything of value. This can be adding value to your life, or it can be adding value to the lives of others. Take the time to define this for yourself. An asset might be a book. A book is both a tangible asset (something you can touch) and intangible (something not necessarily you can touch). The tangible value on the book might be £5 as a resale value, or it could be the wealth of knowledge you may learn from reading that book. Or will that book add a wealth of curiosity to you, in the form of a new career? Take the time to think about each of your assets, and understand the value associated with each of them.

MATERIALS

You will need the following materials:

- A large sheet of paper, poster size, A2-A3
- Markers and pens of various colours and sizes
- Various sticky notes of colours and sizes
- If you have legos, or building blocks, you can use those as well – but they aren't a necessity.

A note for this exercise:

It's best to do in a group, or with a partner.

EXERCISE 2

PART 1

It would be good to give yourself an hour or so to do this first part. Be in the moment and try to take everything in as you do it.

- In a group, or with a partner. Walk around your space. Take in your surroundings. Try to memorise your surroundings, looking at each item, each space, each person, and see what's happening with it. Take note of everything you see, everything you can feel, touch, or hear.

While walking around ask yourself questions:

- Are there spaces that are being under-utilised?
- Are there resources that have not been used (maybe tables, chairs...)?
- How are things laid out?
- Who is where?
- What are they doing?
- How is the space used?

PART 2

After you and your partner have done a thorough exploration of your surroundings, and defined the assets that are available to you, now is the time to create an **Asset Map** of what you've seen.

- On your large sheet of paper, draw a map of everything you've just seen. Be as creative as you want – you can use sticky notes, markers, or building blocks. But create a map – a sort of treasure map.
- What are the different areas of the map that are real assets?
- What do those assets offer?
- Make note of everything, thinking about the **different ways** things can be used or turned into an asset.

PART 3

Think about all the people you know, have worked with, or been educated with...

- What do they bring to you? It could be emotional support, a different skill set, or possibly even financial support or emotional support.
- Add them to the map as your **human assets**

PART 4

Look at the map you have created, and now think about an **offer**. From the map and assets you have laid out, what could you do – or create – to solve an issue, or pain point, for those around you?

- What can you offer to your community?
- What can you try to build to make this community better?
- How can you re-purpose some of your assets to create a product or service?
- How can you make your surroundings better? What can you design?

WHY THIS IS HELPFUL

Often when we think about what stops us from creating something new, or going after what we want, we look at what we **don't have**. This is a good way to **change that mindset** and see that you might have quite a few things at your disposal. This approach is a way of coming up with ideas that have fresh perspectives but are also rooted in reality.

DRAW YOUR CUSTOMER AVATAR

INTRODUCTION

Your **Avatar**¹ is your perfect customer. They are the person who will shout about how incredible your products or services are – the very best they have ever seen! The moment you release a new offer, they will be waiting at midnight to purchase it. If you post on social media, they are the first person to like it. They are so excited about everything you do, they can hardly wait. The question you hear most frequently from them is “When’s the next event / product / offer coming out?”

In this exercise you are going to draw that person. They are representative of your target audience. This is to help you:

- Gain a better understanding of your target audience
- Fill in everything you can about your ideal customer
- Realise what you *don't know* about your audience

HOW TO DO THIS EXERCISE

This is another creative exercise. There are no wrong or right answers to it. However, it's good to be as realistic as possible. Also, while it's difficult to know *everything* about this person, the more specific you can be, the better you'll understand your audience.

When you think of one thing, try to break it down into multiple things. How can each sticky note, or each item, inform the next?

It's okay if you need to take breaks, or even spend a week doing this exercise. It might be one of those exercises that you will exhaust your mind trying to think of everything. That's okay, give yourself some time between each go. Because by the end of the exercise, this person should feel very real to you.

MATERIALS

You will need the following materials:

- Paper
- Pens
- Sticky notes

¹**Avatar** Sometimes known as a 'pen portrait'.

THE EXERCISE

On a blank piece of paper start to draw your **Avatar**. This is your ideal customer. You want to know them better than you know yourself. Use your own discretion but try to fill out every aspect of their life.

Start by giving them a name.

Now fill in the following information about them:

1. Age?
2. How they might describe their Gender or Identity?
3. Relationship status?
4. Are they a parent or guardian?
5. Are they a carer?
6. How does their family status affect their life?
7. What is their ability status?
8. What is their neurological scaling like?
Are they neurotypical?
Where do they appear on the autism spectrum?
9. Are they able-bodied?
10. Fitness level?
11. Amount of leisure time in any given week?
12. What religion or culture are they part of?
13. What languages do they speak?
14. Where do they live?
15. What level of education do they have?
16. What income level are they (or do they identify as, which might be different)?
17. How much disposable income do they have?
(The money they have left over each week or month after they've paid all their bills.)
18. How many jobs have they had?
19. What are their interests?
20. What do they pay for?
21. What do they collect?
22. How were they affected by COVID?
23. Are there any other societal issues / political issues that directly affect them?
24. Who do they follow on social media?
25. Where do they work?
26. Who do they hang out with?
27. What do they do during the week?
28. What do they do on the weekends?
29. Where do they go on holidays?
30. How often do they take a holiday?

This list is not exhaustive! If you can think of other questions, include those.

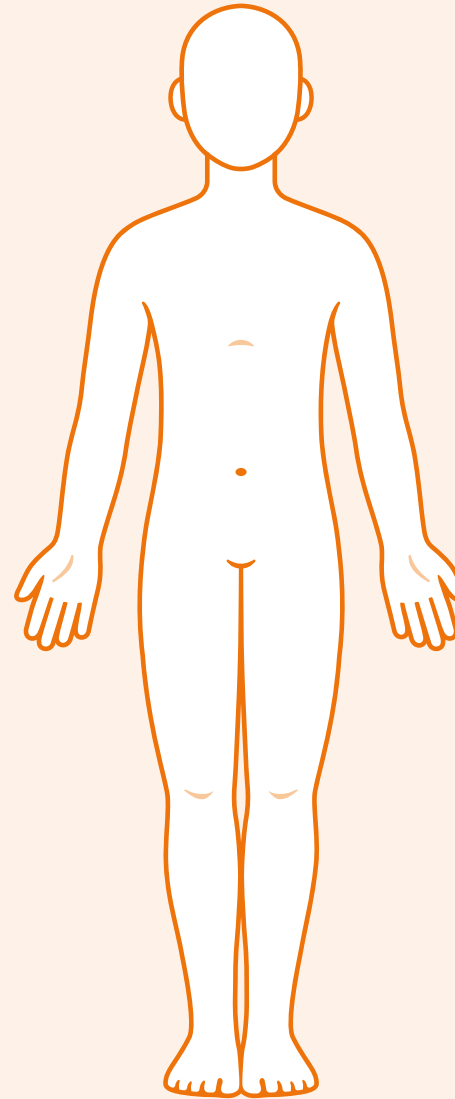
WHY THIS IS HELPFUL

The better you know your customer, and what they want, the better you can serve them. Taking the time to ask yourself these questions about your audience will help you better prepare your offer or understand what their availability or engagement can be.

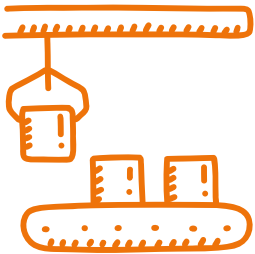
CUSTOMER AVATAR

NAME:

- Age
- Gender/ Identity
- Relationship status
- Parent or guardian?
- Carer?
- How does their family status affect their life?
- What is their ability status?
- What is their neurological scaling like?
- Able bodied?
- Fitness level
- Amount of leisure time in any given week
- Religion / culture
- Languages spoken
- Where do they live?
- Education level
- Income level
- Disposable income
- How many jobs have they had?
- Interests
- What do they pay for?
- What do they collect?
- How were they affected by COVID-19?
- Societal issues / political issues
- Who do they follow on social media?
- Where do they work?
- Who do they hang out with?
- What do they do during the week?
- What do they do on the weekends?
- Where do they go on holidays?
- How often do they take a holiday?
- What else?



CUSTOMER JOURNEY



INTRODUCTION

When customers interact with you, they go on a journey (whether it's a predetermined journey or not). The more care you take in how that journey goes, the more likely they are to repeat it again and again. They might even introduce it to their friends, family, or anyone else who shares the same level of interest in your service or product – through word of mouth recommendations, social media shares and likes etc.

Taking the time to map out the **customer journey** can be beneficial in the following ways:

- The more care and attention you put into the customer experience, the more likely you will have returning customers, or recommendations
- The more you know your customer, the better offer you can provide to them
- You'll spot the pitfalls that other companies might encounter

HOW TO DO THIS EXERCISE

Using the worksheet provided, you are going to go through what a customer will experience **Before**, **During** and **After** interacting with you and your business. By understanding what your customers are **Doing**, **Thinking** and **Feeling** when they come in to contact with your business, you can prevent any hesitation about buying into it.

- **Touchpoints** are important. A touchpoint is the moment that a potential customer comes into contact with your business. This can be anything, from seeing a flyer, to taking your business card, visiting your website, or listening to a friend speak about your business (**word of mouth**). It could also be the buy-in moment, or the moment they receive your product or service. It could also be what they do with your product or service after they buy it. Do they come back? If so, how often?
- You need to define a baseline for the experience – what is your standard level of service going to be? Then consider what would take them above or below that.
- Think about what the customer is doing at each touchpoint, and what are they doing in between, before or after touchpoints. What research would they do? What is happening in their life, that they would need you? What mental state are they in? How do their feelings affect the interactions?
- As you do the exercise – take it in stages. Try going through every row in the **Before** column, before moving to the **During** column.

MATERIALS

You will need the following materials:

- Pen
- Printouts of the worksheet provided
- Sticky notes / paper (if you want to re-create this worksheet on a larger or smaller scale)

THE EXERCISE

Fill out the columns – every column on every row. For help, see below. It might be a good idea to know your customer really well before you do this exercise, so do the [Draw your Customer Avatar](#) exercise first.

1. **Doing:** Looking at your product or services, what does someone need to be doing to find you? Or rather what are they doing in their life, and where can you show in that doing, so they can see you and interact with you?
2. **Thinking:** Does your customer have a pressing desire? Are they looking to solve something in their lives? Will this product or service do that? Are they overwhelmed by the state of the world, or the decisions they need to make? Are they carefree and ready for fun? Do they think they should be doing more?
3. **Touchpoint:** (object, service, system, e.g. website, phone, retail outlet, word of mouth, social media, etc.) Where will they find you? How are they going to see you? Talk to you? Hear from you? Does your aesthetic, language, mode of operation etc. match to what they expect / like?
4. **Feeling – Positive:** Are they only coming to you in a state of positivity? What happens if they are in a negative mindset, would they still use you then?

Feeling – Negative: Or do they only seek you out, when feeling negative, feeling like they need you to get them past a certain emotion?

5. **Opportunities:** Is there anything you are leaving on the table? Have your customers mentioned something that would be more useful, that they would pay for? Is there an opportunity for you to engage with them more often, or less often but better?

WHY THIS IS HELPFUL

If you can understand what your customers are feeling, or thinking, how they are operating, how you want them to feel after they have interacted with you, then the care and consideration you provide will not go unnoticed. Customers come back to businesses who listen and attune to their needs. If you can show thought, consideration, and accessibility, breaking down the barriers between you and your potential customers, your business will be better for it.

CUSTOMER JOURNEY

This tool will help you understand your customer experience so you can build stronger customer relationships. It will help you gain deeper insight into exploring **when**, **how** and **why** your customers interact with your business.

At each stage of interaction, consider what the customer is **doing**, **thinking** and **feeling**.

CUSTOMER	BEFORE Research, explore, ask friends	DURING Order, paying for delivery	AFTER Get it, reaction, share, returns
DOING			
THINKING			
TOUCHPOINT Object, service, system et. website, phone, retail outlet, word of mouth, social media etc.			
FEELING POSITIVE 😊			
FEELING NEGATIVE ☹️			
OPPORTUNITIES			

GETTING TO KNOW YOUR INDUSTRY



INTRODUCTION

Often the industry we started in isn't the industry in which we're creating a business.

These next exercises are about understanding your grasp on your industry. What happens in your industry on a daily, weekly, monthly, or seasonal basis?

Also, who is doing what? How do you understand the key players of this business, what are their relationships with their customers, audience or beneficiaries? Who has most of the market, and how much of that market do you want to take up? Who are the gatekeepers? How can you access them?

Especially within the creative industries, we find there are lots of ways to make things better, more sustainably, with more awareness for the planet. As an entrepreneur, there are times when you might notice an issue for a certain community, and realise that you have the passion and spirit to try and address it. So it's important to consider whether the industry norms need to be altered. If you're aware of structural imbalances and abuses, you'll need to acknowledge them, and consider whether you'll be able to change those practices.

The following two exercises will help you to:

- Understand what happens in your industry in any given time period
- See how much you know about your own industry
- Identify the gaps between **what you know** and **what you need to learn** about your industry
- See if there could be new ways of working in your industry

1. CLOCK OR TIMELINE

In this exercise, you will determine what happens in your industry in any given time period. There are different ways to do this exercise, so choose the path that most makes sense for you and your industry. Return to it and try it a different way to see if there are new insights.

MATERIALS

You will need the following materials:

- Large (A2/ A3) size piece of paper
- Markers / pens
- Sticky notes

HOW TO DO THIS EXERCISE

The first thing you need to do is determine the amount of time you want to focus on.

- **CLOCK**

In the clock exercise, you focus on what happens from midnight to midnight of one day in your industry. Use the clock sheet provided (you'll probably need to copy it onto a larger sheet), marked up with 24 hours.

- **TIMELINE**

Pick your time frame: it could be a year, a quarter (three months), the length of a project, or a season. Determine the beginning date and end date, then draw a line with the beginning date at one end, and the end date at the other.

As you go through either of these exercises, be as thorough as possible. Think of every person who comes through the doors of the building, from the cleaners to the CEOs. Think of every part of the supply chain, from the initial idea to the product landing in a customer's hand (perhaps even beyond that if there are returns / reviews to think about). Again, the thoroughness of your thinking will be what makes this exercise work, so that you fully understand how much you know about your industry.

THE EXERCISE

Starting from the beginning of your clock or timeline, write everything you know about the industry.

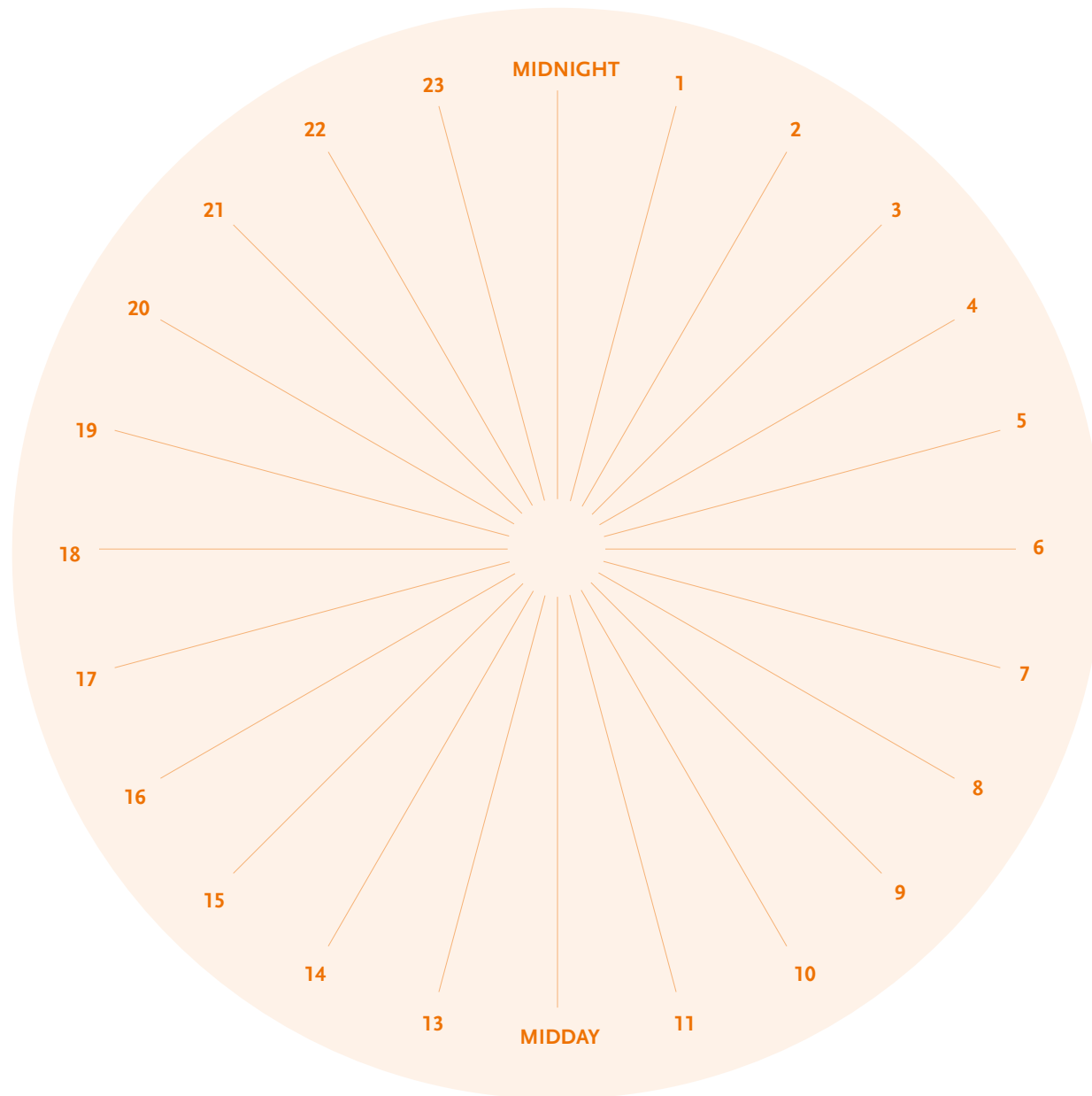
- Who works when, and for how long?
- When do things happen?
- What are the activities that take place?
- What group of people are needed?
- How do things move forward?
- What are the deadlines?
- How soon after one thing finishes does another begin?
- What are the different sectors, or departments of the industry? What do they all do?
- How often do they show up? Does anything get repeated?
- What does a handoff look like? Who takes the project from what stage to what stage? And how will the handoff happen?
- What aspects are you involved in?
- What aspects is your business involved in?
- What part of the industry has gaps?
- Does your business also have this gap?
- Can you fill this gap? Would you want to?
- What areas of the day, project, or timeline are you unclear about?
- Where do the activities happen?
- What do you need to research or better understand?

This list is not exhaustive. Some of these questions might bring up other questions, try to answer those as well, to get as clear a view as possible.

WHY THIS IS HELPFUL

This exercise can be helpful in two ways:

- As an entrepreneur, it's important to know every inch of your industry. Doing this exercise allows you to see what you know and what you do not know. It fills in how much you know about one area, but highlights what you might not know at all in another area.
- It can help you to look at how you want to plan your activities, meetings, and other areas of your business. Additionally, this will help you to plan all that you need to do if your business is seasonal, or if there are seasons where you can gain larger traction.



BEGINNING

END

2. INDUSTRY MAP

An **industry map**, as with the clock and timeline, is all about getting to know your industry. In this exercise though, there's more emphasis on relationships. What are the relationships between the audiences or consumers, and the businesses or organisations of this industry? How do they operate? Who are the key players? Who are the gatekeepers to the key players? What are the gaps? And how are you going to find a place in this industry?

MATERIALS

You will need the following materials:

- Large (A2/ A3) size piece of paper
- Markers / pens
- Sticky notes

HOW TO DO THIS EXERCISE

As before, the more information you can put on paper, the more informed you can be about your industry. It might be a good idea to do the [Relationship Modelling](#) exercise either right before or right after this exercise. They can inform each other, and help you think more widely about the relationships you need to make, as well as who the key industry operators are.

- It's good to use sticky notes for this exercise, as you might need to move things around – some relationships might be more or less connected than you originally thought.

THE EXERCISE

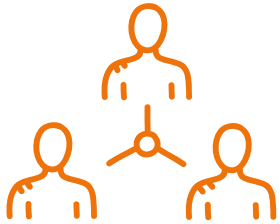
1. On a large piece of paper draw your industry. Think of this as a mind map, and draw connections between suppliers, customers, distributors, influencers. Who are the key players? Name them, draw connections between them.
2. Who are the gatekeepers? Draw them.
3. Write out all the people who are involved in your industry. How do they interact? What are the activities they do?
4. What are the gaps in the industry? Are they gaps in the industry? Or gaps in your understanding of the industry?
5. What do you know? What do you not know? What do you need to do to find out?
6. From this map, devise a plan of next steps. Who do you want to reach out to? Which key players would you want to know or work with? What research do you need to do? How are you going to do it?
7. Make a plan for going forward

WHY THIS IS HELPFUL

This map will help you make a plan to discover who your collaborators and competitors are. It will inform how far you can move forward with the knowledge you have, and give a clear idea of the knowledge you need to gain.

Source: De La Court & Prime (2012)

RELATIONSHIP MODELLING



INTRODUCTION

Developing a Value Chain and a strategy for your business needs the logic of research. It also requires empathy, and an understanding of other people's needs, their ways of working and living. To build a strong organisation, you have to understand the relationships you need to make it work. Then your idea can move forward to a customer offer. You will need to know how the relationships of your industry work – this is vital to building a strong enterprise. It's the same whether you intend to be self-employed, to start a small company, or to run an organisation with over fifty employees. Understanding the relationships between yourself and your customers, suppliers, distributors, audience, and the wider industry, is going to be vital to the survival of your business.

What you'll learn in this exercise will help with the following:

- Building and creating the relationships between you and your audience, customers and stakeholders
- Understanding how far your outreach can go
- Laying out how the relationships in your industry work, and finding ways to use those to benefit your enterprise

RELATIONSHIP MODELLING

In this exercise you'll think about the different ways people come in and out of your industry. What are the different positions within the industry, and how are they changing? The focus of this is how those positions intertwine, and who has a relationship with whom. (If you haven't already, it might be helpful to do the **Clock** or **Timeline** exercises, in the [Getting to Know Your Industry](#) section, before this one.)

HOW TO DO THIS EXERCISE

To get the most out of this exercise, remember that this is a *creative* activity, there are no right or wrong answers here. Your answers will be based around your knowledge and understanding of your industry and networks. Try to think about all the people you know, and who they know. Who can you gain access to? Also, think about who you *want* to be working with. Are there people in your industry that with whom you want to have a business relationship? Are there people or organisations that may be threatened by you, who you might have to work around?

- Try to make this fun for yourself – put on a good music playlist, or do the exercise in a creative area
- Ask other people about what they know about your industry, and who they interact with

Source: From a model developed at Nesta, by Fenwick & Prime, adapted Prime & De La Court (2021 last iteration)

MATERIALS

You'll need the following materials:

- Pens / markers
- A large sheet of paper
- Sticky notes – various sizes and colours
(these can be useful for moving things around)

THE EXERCISE

1. On a large piece of paper, draw the relationships around your business, or enterprise idea.
 - a. Who do you need to move things forward?
 - b. What relationships do other people in your industry have with their customers / with each other?
 - c. Start mapping the ways the relationships work. Think about:
Who is **giving** money, time or anything else?
Who is **receiving** money, time or anything else?
What would compel someone to work with you?
2. Write down as much as you can. Feel free to move things around. (This is why we recommend using sticky notes, as it is unlikely that you will get it right – whatever that means – first time.) Try to break down the relationships beyond what is just on the surface – really analyse what's happening.
3. When you've written as much as you can, ask a trusted friend or partner and look over your map. Have you explored every alleyway? Ask them for their opinions and ideas. Have you overlooked anything? Is there anything more they can add? Where are the gaps? Do you notice any relationships you would need to move something forward?
4. Plan. How are you going to fill the gaps, or make the connections your business needs?

WHY THIS IS HELPFUL

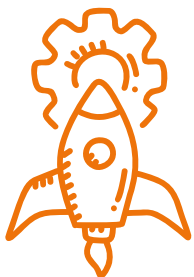
When we first get started in our own enterprise, we don't always understand how the relationships within and around our business work. So it's good to try to get an idea of **what you know**, and **what you are missing**. Additionally, going through the relationships you have prompts you to realise that your network might be more expansive than you originally thought. Or conversely, it might not be as vast as you once thought, and now you have a bit more work to do.

It might also mean that you should generate an income from some of your other skills before this idea earns you money. If so, then the relationships may have to alter.

Recommendation

Follow up this exercise with **Stakeholder Mapping** in [Making a Change](#).

MAKING A CHANGE



INTRODUCTION

We like looking at potential and amplifying it, which is why we put Asset Mapping in earlier. However, many people like to jump ahead to identifying *something that needs to be changed*.

The ability to make a change usually starts with this question: What do you want to change or add to in the world? It's a question that tends to raise more questions than answers. This exercise will ask you a series of questions, in the hopes that by the end of it you will:

- Understand the purpose of your organisation more clearly.
- Define ways of working that will set you apart from other organisations.
- Create a **Theory of Change**, which can help in funding applications.
- Better understand your community and your audience.
- Identify areas within your business and community that have resources, and find gaps to clarify your **unique selling point**.

HOW TO DO THESE EXERCISES

Take one section at a time. If you try and tackle them all at once it can become confusing, so break it down into smaller chunks. Each chunk is a building block to help you get to the next step. Sometimes some points in the exercises might not seem to fit. Please trust the process, and you will get rewarding results.

MATERIALS

You will need the following materials:

- Pen / markers
- Paper / Printouts of the following exercises
- Sticky notes (these will be useful when you need to move things around)

EXERCISE 1: PROBLEM + DEFINITION

- This tool will help you to see your problem from various angles. It will also support you to define the wider context and issues associated with it.
- As you go through the columns of this exercise, you might find the answers to each of the questions overlap, or need to be moved around. Writing your answers on sticky notes makes them more easily transferable.
- It might be a good idea to find focused time to work on this exercise, or to take it in smaller pieces over time. Some of the questions might require you to do more research. Take the time to do the proper research. Get out and talk to people. It will help in understanding and defining the needs of your community and your future company.
- After completing the tool, you'll be able to analyse your problem with a clearer structure.



PROBLEM + DEFINITION

What is the key issue you are trying to address, and why is it important?

Who is it a problem for?

What made this a problem?

What evidence do you have that this problem is worth the investment?

How will you know that you have solved the problem? What evidence of having made that change/solution would there be?

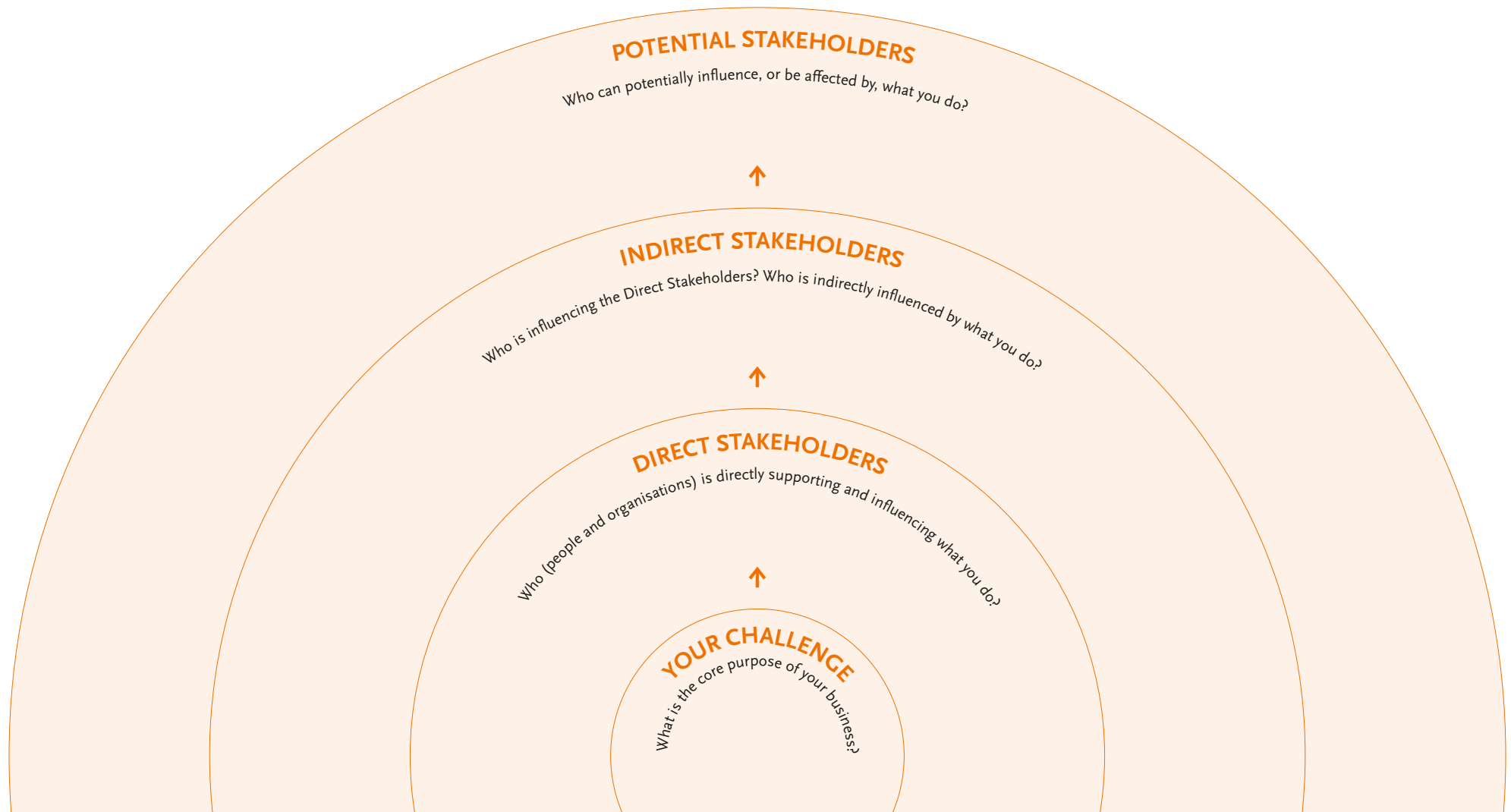
EXERCISE 2a: CUSTOMERS + STAKEHOLDERS: MAPPING YOUR STAKEHOLDERS

This tool helps to make tangible who your different key stakeholders are, and how affected they are by what you do. It also helps map how these people are related.

Start from the bottom of the page and work your way upwards.

- After you define your **Problem**, take time to think about the community it is affecting. The problem that you've defined in Part One now becomes **Your Challenge**, at the base of this exercise. Start there and input the problem.
- **Direct Stakeholders:** The bubble above your challenge is direct stakeholders. These will be the people you have direct contact with. They can be your customers and / or your beneficiaries, but they're all people you have a direct relationship with. They can also be the suppliers or distributors that you work with directly.
- **Indirect Stakeholders:** This section could include a number of different groups – who else is directly affecting your stakeholders? Or who is affecting your relationship with your stakeholders? Additionally, who is going to be affected by what you do, but won't have a direct relationship with you?
- **Potential Stakeholders:** This could be a customer segment you haven't reached yet. Maybe it's a portion of the market you want to tap into? Maybe it's people who are affected by the same problem or definition, but not part of your community, or the community of your direct stakeholders. These are the furthest away from you, and the people who you might want to get involved but would take the most amount of outreach.
- After you fill out all the stakeholders, it's good to look at the direct stakeholders, and acknowledge **Potential and Target Customers**.

MAPPING YOUR STAKEHOLDERS



The action I will take after completing this exercise is:

EXERCISE 2b. CUSTOMERS + STAKEHOLDERS: TARGET AUDIENCE

Again, for this section it's helpful to use sticky notes, in case you need to move anything around.

Start with an image, or create an image, of who you think your **ideal customer** is. This can help you to understand your target audience.

The more specific you can make it the more helpful it is to you. This helps you gain a clearer understanding of who they are and how you can reach them.

This tool will help you by thinking about who you are trying to reach – grouping your users according to their different interests, needs and behaviours.

Fill out the boxes in the following order:

- 1. Can you draw them?**
To gain a clear picture of this target audience, it would be smart to do the [Draw Your Customer Avatar](#) exercise.
- 2. What are their needs?**
Go back to the [Problem + Definition](#) exercise, look at what their problem is, and decipher their needs.
- 3. What are you offering them?**
How are you addressing their needs?
Be specific with your product or service.
- 4. How many are there?**
You should know how many people are affected by this issue, or at least have a very rough estimate of this number, as well as how other people are dealing with this issue.
- 5. How many of them will you reach?**
Of the percentage of people who are affected by this problem, realistically, how many can you gain access to? What are the channels it would take for you to reach them?
- 6. How frequently will you interact?**
Think about the number of times they need to be in touch with you to solve their issue, will it be recurring? Do you want to have repeat customers? Or would you hope that after they have seen you, they won't have this issue anymore?
- 7. What do you get in return?**
How will the interaction grow in your benefit? Are they ambassadors for this cause, or ambassadors for what you are doing? Will you want to keep in touch with them? Are you only having a financial interaction, or is this a more intertwined relationship?
- 8. How can your relationship grow?**
It might be a good idea to look at the [Relationship Modelling](#) exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

What do you call this group?

What are their needs?



Can you draw them – or stick a picture here that represents them?

What are you offering them?



How many are there?

How many of those will you reach?

How frequently will you interact?

What do you get in return?

How can your relationship grow?



The following three exercises use the same template:
THEORY OF CHANGE

EXERCISE 3. ACTIVITIES

- You've identified the **Problem**, and the **Target Audience** for who you will be trying to make this change. Now you're going to figure out what you **can** and **need** to do to start making this change. What are the activities you want to put in play? Is this a service you are going to create for your community and your stakeholders? If so, what steps will you need to take to put it in place?
- Are you creating a product for a community? What are you going to develop, and how will you develop it? The activities stage can also be seen as a prototype and beta testing phase. This section should be filled with the most sticky notes, as there might be lots of different activities and options.
- List all the things you need to do to put your enterprise in the right place to solve the problem you defined, and who will need it, based on your stakeholders.
- Think about who will need what activity, and work accordingly.
- This where you're going to put your offer, service, product, or prototype in front of your stakeholders, and aim to solve the problem you have identified.

This tool will help you better understand the change you want to see.
Use sticky notes to map your path to creating change, from problem through to impact.

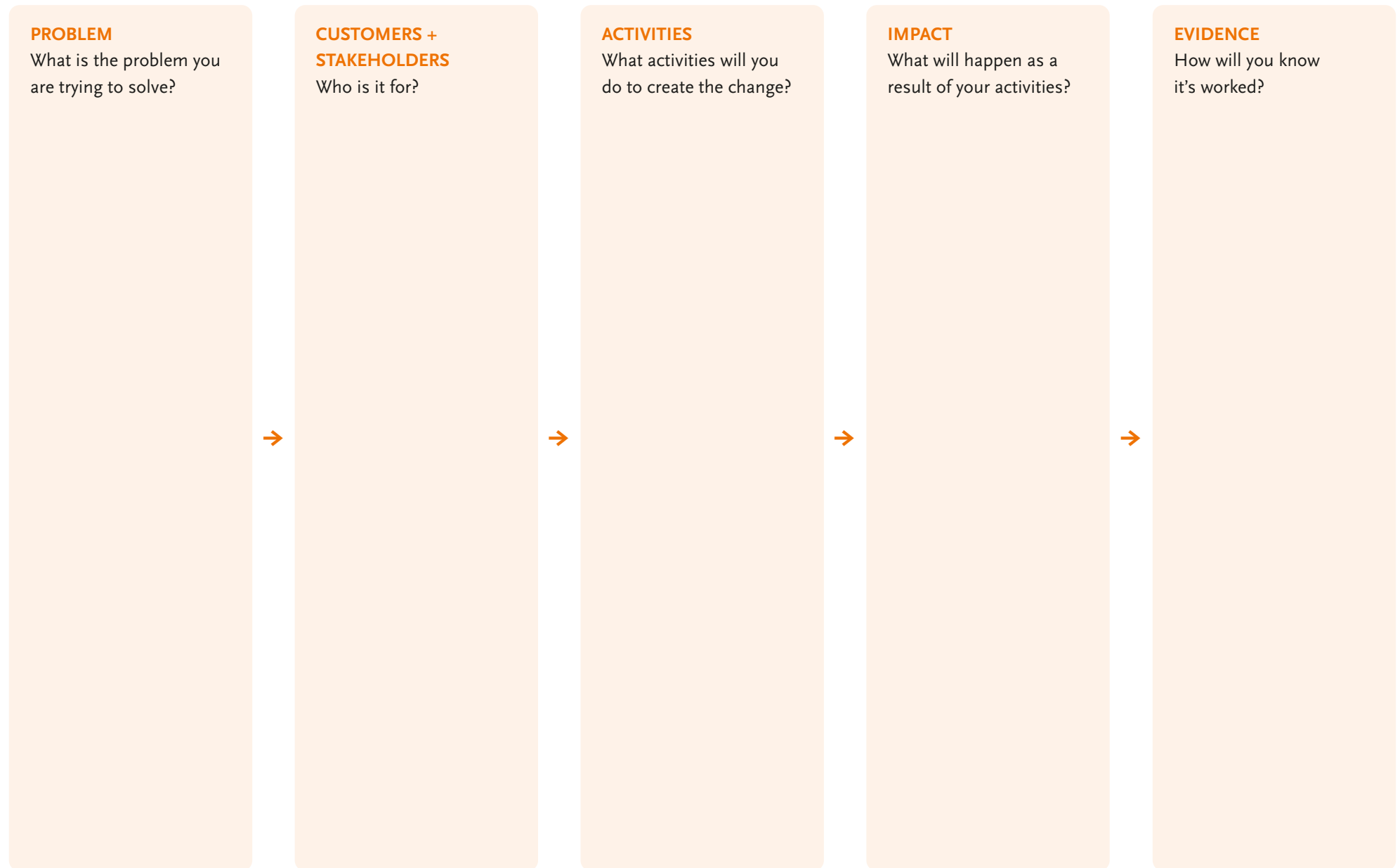
EXERCISE 4. IMPACT

- This phase can often see the best results, or can be the most challenging stage of your process. This is where everything begins to come together.
 - Starting with the **Problem** that you have defined: How have you been able to address this problem for the community you have laid out? How have the **Activities** you've defined helped or hindered your community in overcoming this problem?
 - How many people have you been able to reach? What was their response to your offer?
- This is the time to measure the impact of your activities. Have you made the problem less of a problem for your stakeholders?
- Here is where you get feedback. How much of the audience have you reached?
- Who has appreciated what you have done?
- Does anyone think you haven't done what you said you were going to do? Why do they feel that way? Is there something you could have done differently?

EXERCISE 5. EVIDENCE

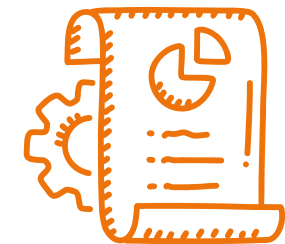
- This is the last stage of the exercise. How are you going to prove what you've done is actually working? Now is the time to show evidence of everything you've done, and the results. From defining the **Problem**, to **Mapping your Stakeholders**, to developing and delivering your **Activities**, to understanding the **Impact** of what you did.
 - Who has benefited?
 - What went well?
 - What didn't work, or go as planned? Why was this?
 - What was the benefit / drawback of going off course?
 - What did go according to plan? How was this received?
 - Have you solved the issue for the community?
 - What would you do differently?
 - What would stay exactly the same?
- What are you going to do with the findings? Find a way of documenting that would work for you. Is it writing a report? Or creating a map of the process? This is a time of reflection.
- If you're looking for investment, or being funded by a funding body, this is the part they'll be most concerned with. What are the key takeaways? Have you succeeded? And what would a success look like for you and for everyone involved?

THEORY OF CHANGE



WHY THIS IS HELPFUL

- As you develop your business, there will be times when you have to explain your **Theory of Change**. This could be as part of a funding applications, if you invite investors in, or if you want to create a business plan, or apply for a business loan. Understanding the change you are trying to make, and being able to articulate it clearly can be the difference between moving forward or having barriers put in your way.
- Knowing what the problem is and having a clear definition of it can help to keep you on track, and make you accountable to the community you're serving.
- Knowing your community and knowing them well, knowing how you will affect them, and how that effect will trickle on to others, is of vital importance for those who are aiming to make a change, or to build something better. Thinking through all those who will be affected can be crucial to a community.
- Having a plan of activities can also help you stay on course and reinforce your purpose.
- Measuring impact and keeping evidence of the process can be the difference between funding, and working with communities, or not. It's really important to keep track of what you're doing at every stage, and to acknowledge where things are working and where they aren't.



PITCHING

INTRODUCTION

Pitching can happen in a number of different ways. You might find yourself pitching as you talk to your friends or close ones about the business you're starting. You might find yourself pitching as you submit funding applications. Or, if you attend networking events, or find yourself introducing yourself to people over and over again, you're pitching then too.

But mostly, pitching happens when you want to invite someone into your business – through their time, money or support. Having a clear pitch can do the following:

- Build your confidence as you speak about your business.
- Encourage investors to join you and to invest in your business or idea.
- Make you more comfortable asking for the things you need to move your business forward.

Sip Pitch source: Prime (2011)

HOW TO DO THIS EXERCISE

It's good to have a clear **Vision & Mission Statement**, so do that exercise before this one.

SHORT AND SIMPLE PITCHES

- **Sip Pitch:** Vision & Mission Statement (if there is a way to, try shortening this as well.)
- **Elevator Pitch:** Vision & Mission Statement plus an invitation:
 - Mention your Vision & Mission Statement
 - Then follow it up with an invitation, or question, to see if they might be interested in engaging in your business somehow.

LONGER AND MORE ENGROSSING PITCHES

If you are attending an event or pitching for some finance, this is an easy format to follow, which would work for many forms of pitching such as **Networking** and **Video** pitches:

- **Introduction:** Introducing yourself and the story of how you came to start your business can be a great discussion topic at a networking event, or if you are doing a video pitch. Learning about the genesis of your project makes you more memorable.
- **Vision & Mission:** After the introduction to you and why you started this business, the next thing is to explain your vision of the world you want to create, and your mission of how you hope your business will do that.

- **Target audience:** The next most vital piece of information, is who you are doing this for. Mentioning your target audience, your community.
- **Impact & Outcome:** What do you hope to achieve for this community? How will it have an impact on your community? What have you done so far? What are the outcomes? For clarity:
 - **Impact:**
What you hope to achieve for your community.
 - **Outcome:**
What you've done and have evidence of.
- **Invitation:** This final bit can be so important. If you are pitching for money or support, this part can be slightly uncomfortable. However, reframe it as a way to invite your potential funders to be a part of a growing and impactful organisation. Then it becomes a win-win situation: you are adding value to their portfolio, and they're adding value to you with their funding or support.

MATERIALS

You will need the following materials:

- Pen
- Paper/ note cards
- Recording device (phone, camera)
- Partner/ friend/ other entrepreneur

THE EXERCISE

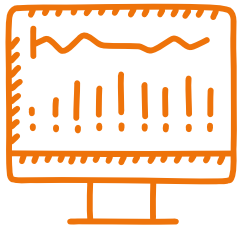
1. **Sip Pitch (5-10 seconds)**
Write out a very short one sentence pitch. Then deliver it. Practice this as a friend takes a sip of a drink, and try to finish your pitch before that sip is done. Either audio record this or write down what you say and memorise it.
2. **Elevator Pitch (30-60 seconds)**
A pitch you could make during an elevator ride. This should be a bit longer than your Sip Pitch. Write out a thirty second pitch. Start with your Vision & Mission Statement, then fill in a bit more, within the allotted time. Either audio record this or write down what you say and memorise it.
3. **Networking Pitch (1-3 minutes)**
Practice with a friend, or other entrepreneurs. Ask about each other's businesses and ideas. Allow each other to speak organically about what you are doing, where you hope to go, who your audience is. Refine and hone your pitch, and repeat it again and again, so that you're comfortable with it, but without being over-rehearsed.
4. **Video Pitch**
Follow the format laid out in the Networking Pitch. It would be a good idea to write out your ideas first and know your **talking points**. You don't have to memorise these things verbatim. Sometimes it comes across better when you speak naturally in a video pitch, rather than reading off cue cards.

WHY THIS IS HELPFUL

Practicing doing your pitch for different bursts of time can have you ready for when you find yourself in different situations and you need to tell people about your business. Additionally, knowing that some people might have more or less time than in previous situations helps you to have an arsenal of content prepared to speak about your business. The more articulate you can be about your business, the more confident you sound. Often that confidence can determine what gets funded or supported, and what doesn't.

CASHFLOW

UNDERSTANDING FINANCIAL ESSENTIALS



INTRODUCTION

In running your business, it's good if you know how much you will need to get started, and how much you will need to keep operating or make a profit. In this exercise, you'll lay out some ideas for revenue streams, and what you hope to charge, set against the costs of what you'll have to spend to get things up and running. This can give you a really clear idea of:

- How attainable things can be, when you take a pragmatic look at costs.
- How you'll get income from multiple, or focused revenue streams.

HOW TO DO THIS EXERCISE

During this exercise it's important to know how much things cost. If you don't know, you need to find out. If you already have a wholesaler (or supplier who gives you supplies at cost), this is one source of your costs. This is an extremely important task, as it will give you a detailed understanding of the finances of your business. The more accurate you can be, the more you'll set yourself up for success. Dividing this exercise into two separate parts will allow you to get a comprehensive picture of what your business costs, and what your revenue streams might look like.

The first part will focus on research, brainstorming and idea generation. The second part will focus on putting that into practice, and building a budget.

- **Part 1:** On the top half of the **Financial Essentials** worksheet, there is a section titled: **How does your organisation make money?** This part of the exercise is for ideas. It's a good idea to have some sticky notes: write each question down on one, and put your answers on others. Create a map, or line of posts-its under each question.
- **Part 2:** The second half of the worksheet deals with specific amounts. There's a matching Excel spreadsheet called **Financial Essentials Baseline Costs + Business Expenditures**. This is a template you can use to discover what your baseline costs might be, or what your business revenue and expenditures could be. This spreadsheet has been input with simple formulas to help you see potential costs. But the template is there for you to make your own. So, insert and delete things as you see fit.

MATERIALS

You will need the following materials:

- Financial Essentials worksheet
- Pens
- Sticky notes
- Financial Essentials Baseline Costs + Business Expenditures spreadsheet
- (Optional) Calculator

THE EXERCISE

HOW DOES YOUR ORGANISATION MAKE MONEY?

This section is about understanding how you're going to get money into your business, and once it's in, what you're going to spend it on.

1. How many products or services do you want to sell per month / year?

It's a good idea to look at a draft of what it would look like to sell in stages. So for the first month, think about what your business would look like with one or two customers or clients. Or think about how much it will cost to produce your product, service or offer, and work backwards. If your costs were £500 a month, how many products or services would you have to sell to break even?

2. How many potential customers are there?

Look at your outreach. How many people have you reached out to? How many are ready to pay you for what you offer? Who else could you get, and where can you find them? It would be good to think of your ideal customer and go through the customer journey for them, to see what comes from those activities.

3. How much will your customers pay per item / offer?

Now it's time to research the market. What other options are out there? What is the industry price for what you're bringing to the market? If you price things too low you can't cover your costs. If you price too high, you might lose customers or clients. Do your due diligence in seeing what else and who else is producing something similar, and check that your prices are not completely out of range.

4. How will you reach your customers?

What costs does that bring?

Launching a business or expanding an existing business to a new clientele can be costly. Think about what your marketing strategy will be, and how you want to reach your customers. How expensive will it be? Will you need to start doing ads? Will you need to do email, or billboard outreach? Where are these customers? And how will you best meet them? What will it cost to get there?

5. How much per unit does it cost to produce your product or service, including your time?

This is something you can go through in **baseline costs**. Ensure you look at every aspect of delivery. What are all the different things you need to pay for to get the service or product into your customers' hands. Be sure that you include paying yourself for your time and expertise.

6. How many partners are there to split the costs to start-up and returns?

In the beginning, it might be you, or you and a partner. Perhaps partners will join you later on in the business development journey. Whatever stage you are at, ensure that you have conversations about what the costs are to run the business, and how the income will be distributed: into the business, or back to each of the partners. Who has more of a stake? What kind of split are you looking to do?

7. What is the amount of financial capital needed?

Do you need to look for investment? Using the **Baseline Costs** part of this exercise could help inform what you will need to get things started. The Baseline Costs can also be thought of as Startup Costs.

8. When will sales start? When will customers come back to you?

Anticipating when you can realistically start getting income will be important to estimate. When will customers actually start buying from you, and how will you have them return to you? In what cycle, or season – how often will they return to you?

9. Will you want to offer shares in the future? And if so, what percentage of the company will be available for an Employee Share Option Pool (ESOP)?

This is something to consider when you are setting up your company. At what point do you want to bring others in, at what point do you want to give them the option to have more control? But also, if you decide to go public, is that something you want to consider as an added Employee Benefit?

10. What are the key dates for moving from prototype and/or proof of concept to investment readiness?

What are all the things you will need to put in place to make this happen? Often entrepreneurs will set a date for when they want to launch, or apply for money, and then work backwards to ensure they're achieving what they must do to make that date. In doing this, it's always good to give yourself a contingency period, as things often don't go to plan.

**BASELINE COSTS,
BUSINESS REVENUE & EXPENDITURE**

1. Baseline Costs

The first tab on the Excel spreadsheet is **Baseline Costs**. Go through each line item and if it's something you'll need to pay for every month to cover your costs, write it in under the **Baseline Expenses** column, then put the amount you must pay under the **Amount** column. If there's anything you don't have to pay for (such as rent or a business loan) just delete that and input something you do have to pay for. At the bottom, the **Total** will add up all the costs you've entered. This is the amount you need to make each month just to break even.

2. Business Revenue & Expenditure

a. Revenue (Sales):

It's important you do at least your Baseline Costs before looking at your revenue. This is because you must make sure that you're set up to accept income and price things in a way that **at the very minimum** will cover your costs. Look at your pricing model and compare this to your baseline costs.

b. Non-Sales Revenue

This exercise might show that your Baseline Costs are not covered by Revenue. This could be for a multitude of different reasons, including that your offer is a much-needed service, but the target audience cannot afford to pay. Or that this is a product that might need to be developed, and that development takes time and money. In these cases, looking for

investment, applying for funding, or receiving grants can subsidise your costs. Estimate what funding or business loans you might need and input this into this section. Then do your research into where you could access this funding.

**Please ensure that if the money needs to be paid back you include that in your costs.*

c. Expenditure

Expenditure is essentially the same as costs. This is all the money that the business is spending to remain operational. The Baseline Costs might be the starting point, but to keep the business running, what do you need to **keep paying for**? Keep track of what your monthly / annual expenditure is, and compare that to your revenue. In the Excel spreadsheet there's a place after Total Business Expenditure that will calculate what your profit or loss is at the end of each month.

WHY THIS IS HELPFUL

Having a clear budget will provide evidence of how your business could do, or is doing. It will also clarify what your hopes for your business are, moving forward. It makes clear what your costs are, and how much you can realistically make from your business. Doing this exercise will not only help you understand what you need to research to create your business, but also understand what you will need to keep doing to stay in business.

BLUEPRINT CANVAS

A Blueprint Canvas is a skeleton of a business plan. It helps to get all the areas of your business onto a single large page and clarify what you need to do, who your customers are, where your income is going to come from and what your costs will be.

HOW TO DO THIS EXERCISE

This exercise is about bringing it all together. This should be the last exercise you do, after all the other exercises. If you've done everything else, then it should go smoothly. However, don't be alarmed if you find there are gaps – taking the time to do this exercise will help to fill them in.

1. **Value Proposition:** This is another term for your **Offer**. When you think of your Offer, think of the value you are adding to the lives of your clients and customers. You can find what your Offer is by looking at your **Mission** statement. What product / service are you selling? And how does that fit into your **Vision & Mission Statement**?
2. **Customer Segments:** Customer segments are the different audiences you want to target. You can find your first segment by doing the [Draw Your Customer Avatar](#) exercise. After you've done that, you might find that there are other target audiences who could also use your offer. Each one of these audiences is a **Customer Segment**.
 - a. **Customer Relationships:** This is where you want to define your relationships with your customers. You might have a different relationship to each Customer Segment. For one

audience, they might need to use you monthly, or buy from you annually. For another Customer Segment, they might only want to use your product or service once. Knowing the relationship between you and your customers can help both of you.

- b. **Channels:** The channels are how you reach your customers. This can be your publicity, your marketing campaigns, the festivals you attend, the magazines your customers read, the content your customers consume. Channels are all about how you are going to reach your customers and develop those relationships.
3. **Key Partners:** The key partners can be your collaborators, your suppliers, your distributors. A key partner is anyone who will be part of the process in ensuring you can deliver your product or service to your customers or clients.
 - a. **Activities:** These are the things you are going to do to get your product from your Key Partners and into the hands of your customers. What actions do you need to take to ensure your customers or clients are getting the best possible product or service? This can be anything from creation, marketing, to delivery and review.
 - b. **Resources:** What are the resources that are available to you to ensure you can do your Activities? (Doing the [Skills and Ideation](#) exercises is a great way to discover the resources you have available to you.)

4. **a. Cost Structures:** The Financial Essentials, Baseline Costs + Business Expenditures exercise, is a good start to understanding your Cost Structures. Essentially a Cost Structure is the model you use to calculate all the money that is going out of the business. However, please note that this area can also be used to think and discover of new ways to run your business. How?

b. Revenue Streams: Going back to the Financial Essentials, Baseline Costs + Business Expenditures, the Revenue and Total Income detail your different Revenue Streams.

MATERIALS

You will need the following materials:

- Paper
- Blueprint Canvas worksheet
- Pens
- Sticky notes

THE EXERCISE

Draw out your own Blueprint Canvas on a large sheet of paper.

1. Start with the **Value Proposition** and fill that in. Once that is defined you can move on to step 2.
2. Next is **Customer Segments**. Define at least one customer segment, but it might be better to have at least 2-5. Fill in your customer segments. Once the customer segments are filled in then, it is time to define:
 - a. **Customer Relationships:** What are the relationships you have with customer segments? Or what kind of relationships do you want to have with your customer segments?
 - b. **Channels:** What are the plans, marketing or otherwise, to get in front of your customers and develop these relationships? Write them out in separate areas.
3. **Key Partners:** Write out all the people you do, will, or want to work with to get your products or services out to your current, desired, and potential customers.
 - a. **Activities:** This is your action plan. Write out what you are going to do to ensure your customers get your products and services. How are you going to find your customers? How will they find you? What will make them buy? All of this will inform your activities.

b. Resources: Look at your **Asset Maps**. What do you have? What do you still need? Take an inventory of all the resources you will need to get your business operating.

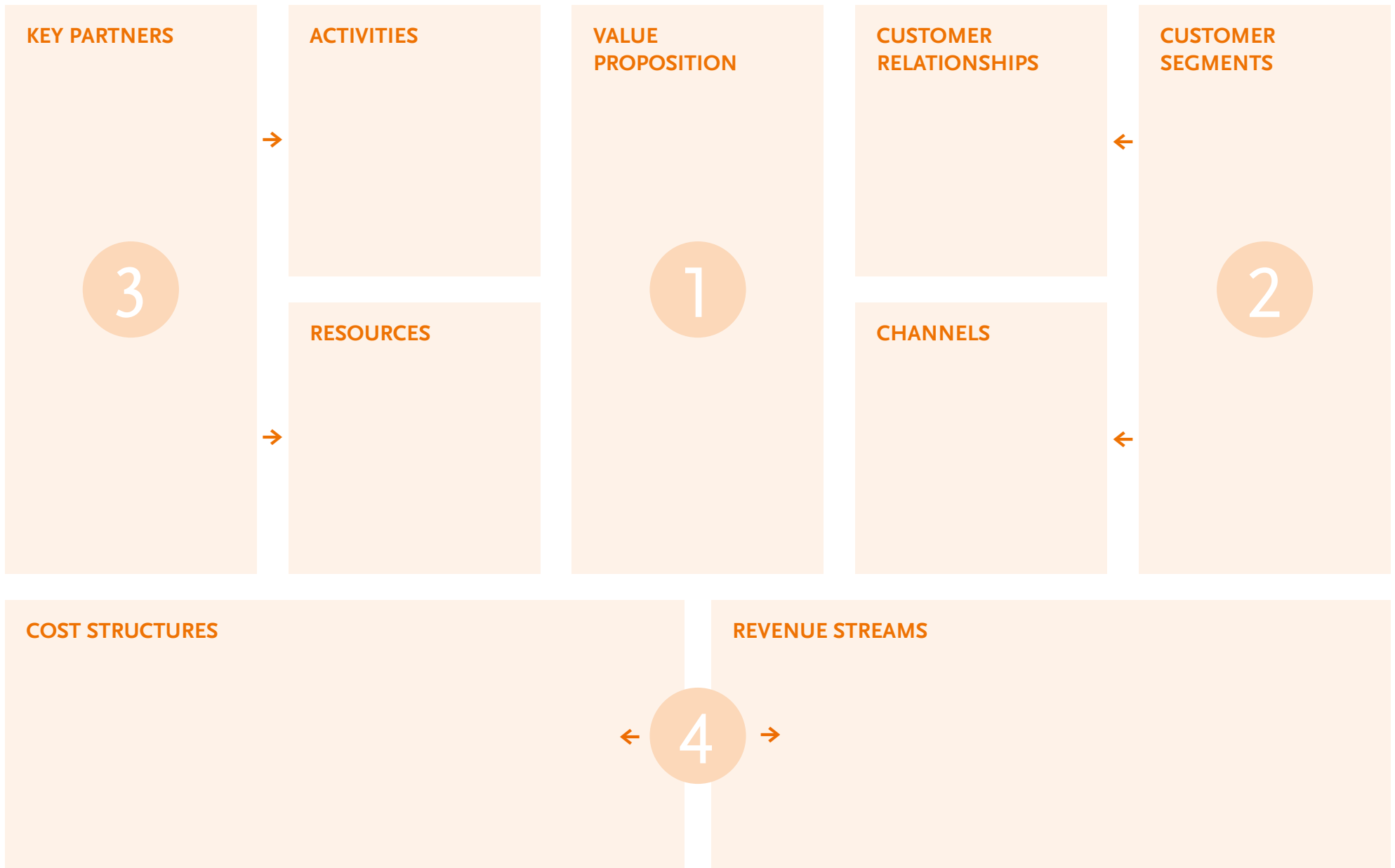
4. **a. Cost Structures:** Write out all the costs of your operation. What are the startup costs? What are the operating costs? What do you have to pay for? What would be nice to pay for? Are you getting a good return on investment in the methods you are using?

b. Revenue Streams: Where is your business receiving money? How can you find other revenue streams? What part of the business can be expanded? Fill in all the different ways you hope your business will make money.

WHY THIS IS HELPFUL

Taking the time to get all of this on one page can help you to start to put together a business plan. After this exercise, you should have a clear picture of what your business is going to look like (whilst knowing it could also still change). It can also help to summarize if things are feeling complicated, helping you to find the key areas that you want to focus on.

BLUEPRINT CANVAS



GLOSSARY

Asset – a positive resource – either tangible (a thing such as a building, a table, desk) or intangible (a skill, a community that supports you, your reputation).

Avatar – the manifestation of an idea – turning an idea into a character, or having an avatar to represent a customer type.

Baseline expenses – the minimum amount you need to do what you do, this should include materials, a contribution to your time and others’.

Business – grouping of activities that generate financial, social, personal and sometimes artistic value within a recognised framework such as a Limited Company.

Customer Journey – the experience that a customer, user, client or audience member has with you – from when they first hear about you to when they reflect on their experience and hopefully recommend you to others.

Gatekeepers – a term for the people who will allow you into a sector, to meet someone or not; for example a Personal Assistant to a Chief Executive is gatekeeper to the diary of that Chief Executive.

Golden Circle – originally coined by Simon Sinek, leadership expert and author of the classic *Start With Why*, the Golden Circle theory says that many of today’s most successful companies think beyond the practical, rational benefits of the products and services they offer.

Grant – a sum of money that is given on application. Normally gained through applying to a Local Authority, a Trust or Foundation. It is awarded on the basis of an application that sets out what you will do in return for the grant. It is different to payment for goods or services, and sometimes will be for development, research or other activity that will develop the business. It is worth being mindful that grants are sometimes treated differently in terms of tax – an accountant can advise. Also worth being aware that applying for grants sometimes takes longer than making sales, however, if you are working in social change it might be that your work should be majority funded by grants.

Hobby – an activity undertaken for enjoyment, normally personal passion-led.

Impact – the effect that your work will have. Often in terms of social change.

Investor – an individual or a company that puts money in to a business in the hope that the business will grow, and that the investor will be able to receive the initial money plus a percentage of the business’ profit in return. The investor will own a percentage of the company in return for their risk.

Leads – often used when there is potential for a new relationship, a new customer or opportunity of any kind.

Mission – often used as **Mission Statement** – the approach you will use to achieving your goals, the “how you will achieve the Vision”.

Offer – the activity or product that you will provide to customers or audiences or clients.

Outcome – similar to Impact – often the change that happens because of your work.

Overheads – the costs to be ready to deliver your work, so any wages, rent, council tax, other taxes, heating etc.

Pain Point – “pain” in enterprise is often used to show what problem your idea is solving, or how your idea is enhancing or improving someone’s life. The Pain Point is the precise thing that you are working to make better.

Pitch – a brief description of your work, designed to convince people who hear, read or see it to collaborate with or buy from you. **Elevator Pitch** is a term coined to give a time cut-off for a verbal pitch, often 3 minutes, or the time of a long elevator/lift journey. We have created the idea of a **Sip Pitch** – the time taken for someone to have a sip of a drink at a networking event and to decide whether to continue to talk with you about work.

Purpose – the reason and motivation for your work.

Stakeholders – the people or organisations that you might collaborate with or that your work might impact. Sometimes there are **Direct Stakeholders** who are the immediate people and organisations who benefit and **Indirect Stakeholders** who benefit in a removed way. For example, your offer may directly benefit young people – their parents or guardians, schools or local community may be the indirect beneficiaries who are also stakeholders, *ie* they have a “stake” in this being successful.

Target Audience / Target Users – the main people that you hope will benefit from your idea.

Theory of Change – a way of showing why your idea of how to make a difference will work. This is a tool that is commonly used by funders and organisations that work for social good.

Touchpoint – the various ways that a customer/client / audience member or user can interact with you. Every contact point is termed a touchpoint, even when virtual. For example a website is one touchpoint, the check-out experience another, and so on.

Unique Selling Point (USP) – Also known as Unique Selling Proposition, this is a single, tangible, identifiable thing that makes your business or service different, and ideally better, than your competitors’.

Value Added – the additional social, aesthetic or the price mark-up that can be given, because of an activity. For example, value is added to a piece of wood when it is carved. Value can be added to a garment because of a label or packaging. Value is added to an experience because of the level of service given. Value is added to someone’s life or work experience through training.

Vision – where you want to go – your look to the future. Often used as **Vision Statement** and normally aspirational but achievable.



SYNAPSE

Goldsmiths
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON