

THE DONALD COOPER CORPORATION

Speaking and coaching internationally on management, marketing and profitability



Management tool #B-9: ©

The incredible power of redefining our business by how we 'HELP' ...not by what we sell:

Note: This transformational Biz Tool requires a total time commitment of approx. 15-18 hours over a period of a few weeks. It also requires a committed Team Leader from a high level in the business.

Clients who have embraced this process find that it delivers extraordinary customer insights, compelling customer value and experiences and clear market differentiation. This Biz Tool is designed to be intuitive and self-guiding but if you'd like some coaching help with the process, I'm easy to find at donald@donaldcooper.com.

Most businesses make the mistake of defining themselves by what they sell and their focus is on their need to sell more. In this transformational exercise, we'll redefine our business by how we and what we sell **helps** our target customers and how we'll deliver some of that help, *better* than our competitors, in a way that makes us the clear and compelling 'wise choice' for our target customers. See the back page for 2 examples of the power of defining your business by how you help...and what can happen if you don't!

A fundamental question that every business must answer is this. ***"Are we trying to get our customers to do what we want them to do...or are we committed to helping them do what they want to do?"***

Note: Whether you sell 'Business to Consumer' (B2C), or 'Business to Business' (B2B), or some combination of the two, defining yourself by how you help will create dozens of powerful customer insights and hundreds of new ways to add value, delight customers, differentiate yourself and grow your bottom line. Ultimately, you'll sell more by helping more. People are tired of being 'sold'. They want to be helped. And they want to be uplifted and appreciated while they're being helped. Never underestimate the power of joy and gratitude.

First, we must consider each of our target customer groups:

Most businesses have more than one target customer group with each group having different motivations, different wants and needs, wanting different outcomes, with a different sense of urgency and requiring different services (help). As we work through this exercise, we'll complete separate copies of the templates for each of our different target customer groups so as to create insights, value propositions and marketing initiatives specific to and effective for each. To facilitate this, we'll list and describe each of our target customer groups below. The more clear and specific our descriptions can be, the better our results will be.

Note from Donald: As an example, we'll look at a luxury hotel in Singapore that asked for my help in creating targeted value, service and experience packages that would clearly differentiate them from their competitors, increase their occupancy rate and grow their bottom line. They had been lumping all guests together, as if they were all the same. So, we started out by listing and defining different target customer groups:

1. Local business people who want to **do** what, **know** what and **feel** how... _____.
2. Local families who want to **do** what, **know** what and **feel** how... _____.
3. Overseas business people who want to come to Singapore to **do** what, **know** what and **feel** how... _____.
4. Overseas shoppers who want to **do** what, **know** what and **feel** how... _____.
5. Upscale tourists who want to **do** what, **know** what and **feel** how... _____.
6. Brides planning a wedding who want to **do** what, **know** what and **feel** how... _____.
7. Conference Planners who want to **do** what, **know** what and **feel** how... _____.

Listing target customer groups and answering the question, "*Who want to **do** what, **know** what and **feel** how?*" helped this hotel develop compelling and targeted value, experience and service programs for each target customer group.

If we just list our target customer groups, all we have is a list. By digging deep and answering the question, "*Who want to **do** what, **know** what and **feel** how?*", we develop powerful customer insights.

Our main target customer groups are:

Using the hotel example on the previous page, we'll use the section below to list and develop some valuable insights about each of our target customer groups.

1. _____ who want or need to **do** what, want or need to **know** what and **feel** how...
_____.
2. _____ who want or need to **do** what, want or need to **know** what and **feel** how...
_____.
3. _____ who want or need to **do** what, want or need to **know** what and **feel** how...
_____.
4. _____ who want or need to **do** what, want or need to **know** what and **feel** how...
_____.
5. _____ who want or need to **do** what, want or need to **know** what and **feel** how...
_____.
6. _____ who want or need to **do** what, want or need to **know** what and **feel** how...
_____.

Note: If we have more than 6 target customer groups, we'll list and describe them by what they want or need to **do**, what they want or need to **know** and how they want to **feel** on a sperate page.

The 3-Step process of defining ourselves by how we 'help' our target customers:

Introduction:

To facilitate this simple but powerful shift in thinking, we'll use the 3-Step Template shown on the following pages. It has worked for 100s of businesses around the world.

In summary, the 3 Steps are:

Step #1: 'We're in the business of HELPING whom, located where.' Here we'll define our target customer groups and the geographic area that we choose to serve.

Step #2: 'To do what:' Here we'll list all the help that each of our target customer groups might need or want and then we'll decide what we commit to help them to do, know and feel...all at a price that they're willing to pay.

Step #3: 'By doing what specific things for them...*better* than our competitors!' Here we'll state the specific and extraordinary things we commit to do and deliver to help them to do, know and feel what they want or need...all at a price that they're willing to pay.

The 3-Step process of defining ourselves by how we help:

1. Step #1: We're in the business of helping whom, located where...

- a) List each target customer group (from our work on Page #2) in the box below.
- b) Located where (state the geographic area we choose to serve).

Step #1: We're in the business of helping whom, (including where):

1. _____
_____.
2. _____
_____.
3. _____
_____.
4. _____
_____.
5. _____
_____.
6. _____
_____.
7. _____
_____.
8. _____
_____.
9. _____
_____.

Note: If we have more than 9 target customer groups, we'll list them on a separate page.

2. Step #2 (a): Getting creative by thinking & feeling like a customer at every touch-point.

In this Step #2, we'll make a list of all the help each target customer group might want or need in any way related to doing business with us and having an extraordinary, stress-free and uplifting experience with what we sell, at every touch-point.

This includes knowing about us, finding us, understanding all the value we or what we sell delivers, having confidence in us, in themselves and in what we sell and (*depending on what products or services we sell*) fully understanding, wisely choosing, effectively using, storing, maintaining, transporting or, in the end, disposing of what we sell. Finally, what kind of help or encouragement might our target customer groups need to tell all their friends, followers and colleagues about us.

First, we'll list all the touch-points below.

Step 2 (a): List all the touch-points at which our target customers 'touch', see, access, interact with or experience our business and what they buy from us in any way, from start to finish.

1. _____.
2. _____.
3. _____.
4. _____.
5. _____.
6. _____.
7. _____.
8. _____.
9. _____.
10. _____.
11. _____.
12. _____.
13. _____.
14. _____.
15. _____.
16. _____.
17. _____.
18. _____.
19. _____.
20. _____.
21. _____.

Note: If we have more than 21 touch-points, we'll create a separate page to document them.

3. Step #2 (a) continued: Getting creative by thinking & feeling like a customer at every touch-point.

Note: The 2 paragraphs below are repeated from Page 4 as an important reminder of this next task.

In this Step #2, we'll make a list of all the help each target customer group might want or need in any way related to doing business with us and having an extraordinary, stress-free and uplifting experience with what we sell, at every touch-point.

This includes knowing about us, finding us, understanding all the value we or what we sell delivers, having confidence in us, in themselves and in what we sell and (*depending on what products or services we sell*) fully understanding, wisely choosing, effectively using, storing, maintaining, transporting or, in the end, disposing of what we sell. Finally, what kind of help or encouragement might our target customer groups need to tell all their friends, followers and colleagues about us.

Our customers need a lot of help, so the list will be lengthy. We'll keep adding to the list of help they need as we develop new customer insights.

Note: We'll make sure to involve our front-line team in the process of understanding all the help our customers need. Our front-line people know stuff...and they hate it when we don't ask.

For more insight into what kind of help our target customers need, think and feel like a customer. We'll ask again here a key question that we've already discussed:

When folks are understanding, choosing, buying, using, maintaining, transporting, storing or disposing of what we sell...

- a) Functionally, emotionally and financially, what are they *really* trying to **do**?
- b) What do they want or need to **know** about us and what we sell?
- c) How do they want to **feel**?
- d) About how much do they expect to **pay**?

Note: We'll complete a separate copy of the Step #2 box below for each of our different target customer groups.

Step #2 (a): What kind of help does this target customer group need...

- a)** To know about us and all the value we offer.
- b)** To have confidence in us...and in themselves.
- c)** To have a convenient, uplifting, stress-free experience with us at every 'touch-point'.

Name the target customer group here: _____

- 1. _____.
- 2. _____.
- 3. _____.
- 4. _____.
- 5. _____.
- 6. _____.
- 7. _____.

Note: This Step #2 (a) box continues on the next page to allow for more target customer insights.

Step #2 (a): (Cont'd) What kind of help does this target customer group need?

Name the target customer group here: _____.

8. _____.

9. _____.

10. _____.

11. _____.

12. _____.

13. _____.

14. _____.

15. _____.

16. _____.

17. _____.

18. _____.

19. _____.

20. _____.

21. _____.

22. _____.

23. _____.

24. _____.

Note: If we think of more than 24 types of 'help' that this target customer group needs or wants, we'll list them on a separate sheet.

Step #2 (b): Deciding and prioritizing:

Now that we've listed in a series of boxes like the one above (one for each target customer group) the help that each of our target customer groups needs to have an extraordinary, stress-free and uplifting experience with us at every touch-point, including knowing about us, finding us, understanding all the value we deliver, having confidence in us and themselves and (*depending on what products or services we sell*) fully understanding, wisely choosing, effectively using, maintaining, transporting, storing or disposing of what we sell...

...we'll decide which of this 'help' we'll commit to deliver, and in what order of priority, in order to create clear and compelling value and experiences. We can't do everything at once, so what specific help, compelling value and extraordinary experiences will best 'grab' each of our target customer groups, clearly differentiate us from our competitors, make us 'famous' and grow our bottom line?

3. Step #3: How will we deliver some of this 'help'...better than our competitors?

Now that we've decided which help we'll deliver to each of our target customer groups, here in Step #3, we'll get creative and courageous and determine specifically how we'll deliver that help...better than our competitors.

There's lots of talk in business today about 'creativity'...but very little talk about 'courage'. There's absolutely no point in being creative if we're not also courageous because, if we lack courage, we'll never have the guts to implement the creative and compelling stuff that we come up with. Creativity and courage walk together, hand in hand, throughout business and life!

Note: Two levels of business improvement:

Level #1: The easiest way to improve our business is to learn from the best. Do we know who does it better than us, anywhere in the world? Better design, better service, a more amazing customer experience, better packaging, more effective processes and logistics, quicker response time, better policies, marketing or promotion? What are they famous for and how do they do it? Have we physically gone to check them out, wherever they are or, if that's not practical, have we checked out their website?

Who in our industry, in the entire world, has the lowest price? Are they making money? How do they do it? What can we learn from them about efficiency, logistics and process?

Who in our industry charges the highest price? What do they do to justify that high price? Are they making money? What can we learn from them about creating extraordinary customer experiences, adding value, marketing and brand positioning?

Who are the 'disruptors' in our industry...those innovative upstarts who are changing 'the game' completely and making our business model obsolete? Don't dismiss them or write them off. They may be the future.

Who are the legends, the 'celebrities' in our field? What are they famous for and how did they get there? In every industry there are 'commodity' suppliers who are undifferentiated and, usually, struggling. Then, there are the 'experts' who are known, respected and sought out for their knowledge and ability to deliver. They get more than their fair share of the business and often command a premium price for their products or services. And then there are the 'celebrities'. Those few brilliant operators and tireless marketers who have mastered the art of becoming famous. Customers rave about them, the media talks about them and makes them even more famous.

So, what will we do to learn from the best...then do it even better...and become the new best? How could we take it to a whole new level and become a sought-after 'celebrity' in our industry?

Level #2: How could we improve and differentiate our business by doing what has never been done before? What is it that no other business has had the creativity and courage to do that would be so powerful, so compelling, that our target customers simply could not resist us? What could we become 'famous' for and are we willing to do the work to make that happen?

So, stop playing it safe. Stand out...aim higher. Be 'famous' for something! The very successful Yard House restaurants in the USA are famous for offering the world's largest selection of draft beers. They have over 150 selections listed on their website, including a gluten-free beer for people with wheat allergies. Beer-lovers flock to Yard House for an extraordinary beer experience.

As an award-winning fashion retailer, Donald Cooper, the creator of these Business Tools, fundamentally changed the customer experience. His award-winning 'Alive & Well' destination 'warehouse boutique' delivered honest savings of 20% to 40% every day...*"No games, no tricks, no lies!"* They had electric massage chairs for husbands, a pirate ship play area for kids, free beverages

for everybody, free diapers, wipes and cream for young mothers with babies in distress. Whether you needed the diapers or not, you were blown away that they were there.

The store became famous for their invitation to *"Please take as many items in the change room as you wish"*. A large sign at the front door declared, *"Our staff are not on commission...they treat you this well because they love what they do!"*

This was the only fashion retailer in the world doing any of this stuff. And, it was all wrapped up in 'the world's most unusual guaranty', *"We're so sure you'll love our store that if you show up and think, 'we're for the birds', we'll pay your gas mileage!"* Customers loved it! They raved, *"It's amazing, you've thought of everything!"*

It was a heck of a lot of work to pull it off, day in and day out, but women drove up to three hours to shop in that store. Customers told their friends and sales were 4 times the national average. So, have we thought of 'everything' in our business? If not, we still have work to do.

The '4 Currencies' in our customers' lives:

Another insight that will help us deliver compelling value, help and extraordinary experiences is the '**4 Currencies**' in people's lives. A 'Currency' is anything of value to our target customers that they don't have enough of. The '4 Currencies' in people's lives are:

1. Money,
2. Time,
3. Feeling safe (physically and emotionally safe)...and,
4. Feeling special.

How can we use the insight of the '4 Currencies' to create compelling customer value & experiences?

Jump-starting our creativity:

To jump-start our creativity, we'll use 'trigger' words like those below. Circle the 'trigger' words that could provide insight as to how we can attract, delight and help our various target customer groups...*better* than our competitors: bigger, smaller, faster, slower, simpler, easier, high-performance, low price, high price, high-style, custom design, color options, dependability, more welcoming, more joyful, simple acts of kindness, more environmentally friendly, more community involved, bigger selection, limited curated selection, availability, convenience, comfort, caring, communication, coaching / advising / training, ongoing support, reminders, updates, follow-ups or ongoing maintenance, policies, honesty (no games, no tricks, no lies), payment terms, proactivity, peace-of-mind and a great guarantee.

What do we commit to do to deliver the 'help' our target customers need or want?

Now that we've determined what kind of help each of our target customer groups wants or needs at every tough-point', and we've decided and prioritized which of those we'll commit to deliver, it's time to get creative and courageous about how we'll do that.

Using a separate copy of the box on the next page for each target customer group, we'll list specific ways that we'll deliver extraordinary, stress-free, helpful and uplifting experiences that will help them **do** what they want and need to do, **know** what they want and need to know and **feel** how they want to feel...all at a price that they're willing to pay. Experiences that will make us the clear 'wise choice'.*

Note*: Don't try to be the 'wise choice' for everyone. It's not possible. It will drive you nuts and you'll go broke.

A special note on the importance of making 'commitments'!

Throughout this Biz Tool we've used the words '**commit**' and '**commitments**'. Most businesses make the mistake of talking about 'goals, targets, aims and objectives'. They have sales 'targets', customer satisfaction 'goals', profit 'objectives' and they 'aim' to be a good employer, etc.

'Goals, targets, aims and objectives' are weak and wishy-washy words that leave way too much wiggle room to not perform. They should all be replaced with one powerful word...'**commitments**'. We need to stop 'aiming' and start committing.

There's a huge difference between a goal or a target and a commitment. A 'goal' is something we score sometimes and don't score other times...and that's life. At least we tried. A 'target' is something we hit sometimes and miss other times...and it's OK, it's just a target. But a 'commitment' is something fundamentally different. It feels different, because it *is* different.

Some folks argue that we're just playing with words here...but it's much more than that. You see, when we change our language, we change our business culture. You can't have an engaged, committed and effective team without clear commitments.

So, please, never again talk about goals, targets, aims and objectives in your business. From now on, in every memo, every meeting, every email and every conversation, talk about your clear commitments to customers, to your team, to efficiency and profitability, to safety, to the environment and to your community. You'll be amazed at the difference it will make. We become what we speak.

Business don't die from a single shot to the head. They die slowly but surely from a thousand uncompleted tasks. The solution is simple. Here are the 10 words that can change everything in your business. Whenever you assign a task or project to a team member or group, ask this magic question. ***"By when can we agree that this will be completed?"***

Agree on a 'due date' or dates on which progress reports will be delivered, if it's a more complex, longer-term project. Document those completion or update commitments and then be sure to follow up. The world is run by those who follow up! This simple 10-word sentence creates the clarity, commitment, urgency and accountability that every business needs.

If certain team members consistently fail to meet their performance commitments, you now have a serious 'rescue' challenge to undertake, or a decision to invite them to seek employment in some other business where 'failure to perform' is more acceptable. Failure to deal with non-performance is one of the biggest problems in many businesses.

By when can we agree that this will be completed?



Step #3: What extraordinary things will we do to deliver the 'help' and experiences that our target customers need or want in order to **do** what they want or need to do, **know** what they want or need to know and **feel** how they want to feel...all at a **price** that they're willing to pay?

Name the target customer group here: _____.

1. _____.
2. _____.
3. _____.
4. _____.
5. _____.
6. _____.
7. _____.
8. _____.
9. _____.
10. _____.
11. _____.
12. _____.
13. _____.
14. _____.
15. _____.
16. _____.
17. _____.
18. _____.
19. _____.
20. _____.
21. _____.
22. _____.
23. _____.
24. _____.

Note: If we think of more than 24 extraordinary things will we do to deliver the 'help' and experiences that our target customers need or want, we'll list them on a separate sheet.

Our 'Commitment to Action':

Our 'Commitment to Action': How will we effectively and efficiently implement each extraordinary thing that we've committed to in Step #3 above?

Specifically, what will be done, by whom, by when, at what cost, with what outcomes, measured how, to make it happen...and who will follow up, report on progress and take corrective action, when necessary?

Name the target customer group here: _____.

1. _____
_____.

2. _____
_____.

3. _____
_____.

4. _____
_____.

5. _____
_____.

6. _____
_____.

7. _____
_____.

8. _____
_____.

9. _____
_____.

Note: Continue the 'Commitment to Action' on the next page:

Our 'Commitment to Action'...continued:

Our 'Commitment to Action'...continued:

How will we effectively and efficiently implement each extraordinary thing that we've committed to in Step #3 above?

Specifically, what will be done, by whom, by when, at what cost, with what outcomes, measured how, to make it happen...and who will follow up, report on progress and take corrective action, when necessary?

Name the target customer group here: _____.

10. _____
_____.

11. _____
_____.

12. _____
_____.

13. _____
_____.

14. _____
_____.

15. _____
_____.

16. _____
_____.

17. _____
_____.

18. _____
_____.

Note: Continue the 'Commitment to Action' on the next page:

In conclusion:

'Congratulations' on embracing and completing this transformational process of defining yourself by how you help! Be sure that this commitment to extraordinary customer experiences at every touch-point becomes part of your business culture. Make sure that this commitment is a key part of your ongoing recruitment process. Don't hire anyone who won't buy into your customer commitments and make sure that you reinforce your customer commitments and standards of performance in the new employee 'onboarding' process and on an ongoing basis.

We'll be delighted to hear of your successes from implementing this powerful 'redefine' process. I'm easy to reach at donald@donaldcooper.com.

Two examples of the power of defining our business by how we help...not by what we sell:

Example #1:

This is one of my favorite examples of the power of redefining our business by how we help...and what can happen if we don't. Back in the late 1800s and early 1900s the companies that made 'ice boxes' made a lot of money. Everyone needed an ice box. These were large insulated cabinets where food was kept cool by a block of ice which you bought on a frequent basis from the 'ice man'.



The first electric refrigerators were invented in the 1920s by people who never made an ice box. The 'ice box' became a thing of the past and the companies that made them went out of business because they defined themselves by what they had always sold...ice boxes.

All they had to do was to define themselves, not by what they had always made and sold, but how they 'helped' people. All they had to do was say, *"We are in the business of helping people make food last longer."* This would have been transformational.

In their factories they would have been making the best darn ice boxes that could be produced at the time, but in their 'back room' a few of their best minds and hearts would have been working diligently on the next best way to make food last longer.

They would have been the first to pick up on the emerging technologies of electricity, the electric pump, freon and copper tubing and, after lots of trial and error, they would have cobbled those together, stuffed them in an ice box and invented the refrigerator...and none of them did. So, who in your business is working diligently on the new 'best way' to do or deliver what you do?

And let's say, for the purpose of this example, that you are the son of a refrigerator maker and the grandson of an ice box maker. You, the third generation of a family that's committed to helping people make food last longer, are working to perfect irradiation technology to bring healthy, safe and abundant food to the 80% of the world's population that cannot afford refrigeration from farm to table as we can in our privileged society. In most developing countries 1/3 of the food produced spoils before it can be consumed.

Refrigeration doesn't stop food from spoiling...it just slows it down. Milk still spoils in the fridge; it just takes longer. But irradiation kills the bacteria that causes food to spoil. So, if you could perfect irradiation technology and bring healthy, safe and abundant food to 80% of the world's population, could you be successful? Could you make a buck or two? And could you be significant in the lives of millions of people?

'Success' is anything we do that makes a difference in our own lives. **'Significance'** is anything we do that makes a difference in the lives of others. By defining ourselves by how we help and committing ourselves to that mission, we can create both success and significance!

Example #2: ***"We sell mortgages!"***

Over my many years of management speaking, I've worked often in the mortgage industry. When I interview industry CEOs as part of my commitment to 'doing the homework', I always ask them what business they're in and the response is always the same, ***"We sell mortgages!"***

So, I ask them what that would sound like if they defined themselves by how they help their target customers...and they have no idea what I'm talking about. This is what it would sound like if they defined themselves by how they help.

"We're in the business of helping people buy a home and to own that home, mortgage-free, as quickly, conveniently and inexpensively as possible!"

A few questions:

- Does that sound like the mortgage company that you'd like to do business with?
- Could this definition help everyone on their team focus on helping you do what you want to do?
- Might this definition guide them in creating dozens of value and customer experience innovations that would clearly differentiate them from their competitors?
- Does this sound like the mortgage company that the media and key influencers would talk about, promote and make famous?
- Does this sound like the mortgage company that customers would rave about on social media?
- Would this be the mortgage company that the best, most caring people in the industry would be excited to work for?

We sell mortgages!



Kindest regards...

Donald Cooper