

PART I

DEFINE THE OPPORTUNITY

Taking thousands of shots at an undefined target (unfocused ideation) won't result in an innovation goal. Yet, the very nature of innovation seems to imply that the target is hazy and disguised—but this is a myth. Those who know how to clear the haze will see that the front edge of innovation isn't as elusive as it may seem; it's only unreachable by those who don't know how to find it and bring it into focus for their own advantage.

This first phase of innovation enables you to bring the aims of organic growth into focus and *create viable innovation opportunities*. Use the Jobs To Be Done (JTBD), Outcome Expectations, and Value Quotient techniques to identify actionable innovation gaps, or high-potential innovation projects based on the identification of unmet customer needs and new market territory. As well, use the Ethnography technique to directly observe how customers struggle with existing solutions so you can understand their unarticulated needs.

Once you've defined your opportunity, you can *scope and focus your innovation projects*. The Heuristic Redefinition technique will help you do this by identifying all the elements of your current solution and how they relate to one another. The Nine Windows technique will do this as well, adding the dimensions of time and scale to your innovation problem. Then Job Scoping is a simple but powerful technique for either narrowing or broadening your project's focus.

Also in Part I, we give you techniques to *manage people, projects, and return on innovation investment*. Specifically, the Stakeholder Management technique helps get all pertinent people lined up to support organic growth

2

DEFINE THE OPPORTUNITY

projects. The Cognitive Style technique ensures your team is staffed with the right people. The Project Charter technique is a living document used to keep the project on time and on task. And the Innovation Financial Management technique keeps you on the straight-and-narrow fiscal path, even enabling you to discontinue your project if it becomes too risky.

TECHNIQUE 1

Jobs To Be Done

Determine the human need you're trying to fulfill.

A *job to be done* (JTBD) is a revolutionary concept that guides you toward innovation and helps you move beyond the norm of only improving current solutions. A JTBD is not a product, service or a specific solution; it's the higher purpose for which customers buy products, services and solutions.

For instance, most people would say they buy a lawnmower to “cut the grass,” and this is true. But if a lawnmower company examines the higher purpose of cutting the grass, say, “keep the grass low and beautiful at all times,” then it might forgo some efforts to make better lawnmowers in lieu of developing a genetically engineered grass seed that never needs to be cut.

This is the power of the JTBD concept and technique: it helps the innovator understand that customers don't buy products and services; they hire various solutions at various times to get a wide array of jobs done. You may need light survey design and sampling help from a statistician to apply this technique, but for the most part it requires no expert assistance.

Background

Harvard Business School professor Clayton Christensen and coauthors articulated the JTBD concept in a *Sloan Management Review* article (Spring 2007) as follows: “Most companies segment their markets by customer demographics or product characteristics and differentiate their offerings by adding features and functions. But the consumer has a different view of the

4

DEFINE THE OPPORTUNITY

marketplace. He simply has a job to be done and is seeking to ‘hire’ the best product or service to do it.”

Therefore, if you understand the jobs your customers want done, you gain new market insights and create viable growth strategies. Sometimes a good solution for a JTBD, or a family of JTBDs, does not exist; when this is the case, you have a great opportunity to innovate.

There are different types of JTBDs:

- *Functional jobs* describe the task that customers want to achieve.
- *Emotional jobs* are related to feelings and perception, and as such they are subjective. One type of emotional job is a *personal job*, which describes how customers want to feel about themselves; another type is a *social job*, which refers to how customers want to be perceived by others.
- *Ancillary jobs* are other jobs that customers want to get done before, during, or after they get their main job done.

For example, brushing one’s teeth is the solution to the problem or the functional JTBD of cleaning teeth and gums and removing plaque. While getting this job done, we might also achieve additional emotional jobs. While we clean teeth, we might want to feel fresh (personal job), and might want to be perceived by others as having fresh breath (social job). As well, around teeth-cleaning time, we might want to whiten our teeth, wash our face, or groom our eyebrows. In the context of cleaning teeth, these are all ancillary jobs.

You can tell when a company thinks in terms of JTBDs because the result not only fulfills a need, but is often quite innovative. Consider the recent developments in self-cleaning glass for cars and high-rise buildings, or in car paint that “heals itself” and, thereby, removes the need to paint over scratches. While you could think of *painting scratches* as a JTBD, it really isn’t. Painting scratches is actually a solution for accomplishing the JTBD called *maintain a blemish-free vehicle*.

Consider the examples of new solutions for old JTBDs in Exhibit 1.1. Then, ask not how you can make your current products and services better but, instead, ask how you can fulfill your customers’ JTBDs in unexpected and more effective ways.

This is the story of innovation in a nutshell: while some companies went about making better pills, or becoming better law firms, or making their flares better and brighter, others went about breaking the mold. No

Jobs To Be Done

5

Jobs To Be Done		
Jobs To Be Done	Old Solution	New Solution
Ingest medicine	Pills and Shots	Skin patches
Make many products for mass market	Many craftsmen	Production line
Execute rote legal functions	Lawyers	legalzoom.com
Detect enemy at night	Flares	Night vision
Keep windows clean	Clean with squeegee	Self-cleaning glass
Clean teeth	Manual brushing	Automated with sound waves
Search for information	Library	Internet

EXHIBIT 1.1

new solution automatically or instantly makes an old solution obsolete, but change does happen as a result of finding new ways to fulfill the jobs customers need to get done.

If you remember anything about jobs to be done, remember this: they are completely neutral of the solutions you create (your products and services). While a customer JTBD remains fairly stable over time, your products and services should change at strategic intervals as you strive to provide ever-increasing value.

Steps

1. Identify a Focus Market

Markets can be identified by considering any one of the organic growth strategies we cover in the Introduction: core growth, disruptive growth, related job growth, and new jobs growth. For example, a computer manufacturer might be interested in expanding beyond just selling computers, so it would look for related job growth opportunities in adjacent market spaces.

2. Identify Jobs Customers Are Trying to Get Done

You want to study customers and find out what they are trying to accomplish—especially under circumstances that leave them with

6

DEFINE THE OPPORTUNITY

insufficient solutions relative to available processes and technologies. What jobs have ad hoc solutions or no good solutions? When you see customers piecing together solutions themselves, these are great clues for innovation.

Several methods exist to help an innovator study customers and the way they use solutions to get their jobs done. Ethnography (Technique 4) and cultural archetype research are especially useful in this regard. Other techniques include observation, interviews, customer complaints, and focus groups.

Sometimes jobs to be done are not as straightforward as one might think. For instance, a fast-food provider found that its customers were buying flavored milkshakes when faced with a long, boring commute in traffic; they were not only looking for convenient, non-messy nourishment in the morning, but they also wanted to make their commute more interesting by entertaining themselves with a breakfast that took a while to consume.

3. Categorize the Jobs to Be Done

Jobs can be main jobs or related jobs. Some jobs are parents of other jobs. If a person wants to self-actualize, for instance, this job could be the parent to any number of lower-order jobs having to do with a person's physical, mental, social, emotional, financial, and spiritual well-being.

There is no one way, or standardized, commonly used scheme for categorizing JTBDs—so our best advice is to use a scheme that makes sense for you and your industry. In the retail sales industry, for instance, many main JTBDs are related to how you make people feel (emotional jobs) rather than what a product or service actually does (functional jobs). Many noncustomer-facing jobs in the engineering industry are functional rather than emotional in nature.

We mentioned earlier that jobs can be functional, emotional (including personal and social), and ancillary. One family of jobs is to *organize and manage music for personal use*. An important functional job is to *listen to the music*. A related personal job is to *organize and manage music in a way that feels good*; a related social job is to *share songs with friends*. Ancillary jobs might be to *download songs from the Internet*, *make play-lists*, *discard unwanted songs*, and *pass the time*.

4. Create Job Statements

The *job statement* is used to describe a JTBD. Key components of a job statement are an action verb, the object of the action, and clarification of the context in which the job is performed. *Manage personal finances at home* is a job statement. So is *clean clothes at home*, as shown in Exhibit 1.2. *Listen to music while jogging* is also an example of a job statement.

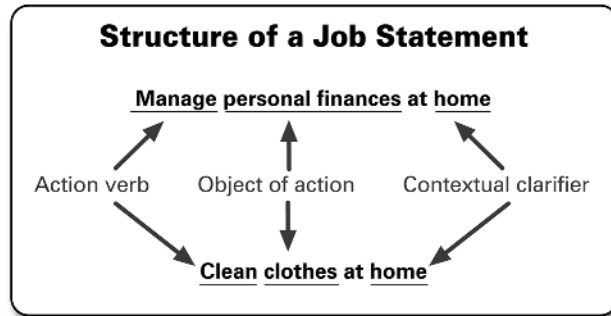


EXHIBIT 1.2 (Downloadable)

Copyright © 2009, Breakthrough Management Group. A blank version of this customized form is available for download at www.innovatorstoolkit.com/download.

5. Prioritize the JTBD Opportunities

There are hundreds of jobs that customers are trying to get done in every market. Which one of these offers the best opportunities for you? Which ones provide opportunities to create uncontested market space? In most situations, the jobs that customers want to get done for which no good solutions exist are the ones that provide the greatest opportunity for innovation.

Prioritizing JTBDs is a function of how *important* they are, how *satisfied* customers are with existing solutions, the general potential for developing new (or more ideal) solutions, and the specific potential of the provider for creating new solutions that better meet outcome expectations (see Technique 2). The importance-satisfaction dimensions establish priority from the customers' perspective, while new-solution potential forms the basis for prioritization from the provider's perspective.

You can use different assessment and rating schemes to determine which JTBDs should be a priority for innovation. One way to measure the importance of a job is by asking customers based on a Likert Scale (degree of importance to them), using sound *sampling* techniques. A Likert Scale can also work for assessing the level of satisfaction customers have with current solutions.

The priority of jobs can thus be calculated as,

$$\text{Opportunity} = \text{Importance} + \text{Maximum (Importance} - \text{Satisfaction)}$$

with adjustments made for how likely it is that you or your competitors can come up with a commercially viable and materially better solution for priority jobs. High opportunity items are ripe for a core-growth innovation strategy (make the existing solution better); low opportunity items are ripe for a disruptive innovation strategy (remake the solution so it becomes available to those who can't afford the existing solution).

Sometimes innovation is as simple as finding a new JTBD that your existing solution meets. Post-it Notes, for example, were developed by a 3M scientist looking for a new and better adhesive compound. The scientist didn't quite reach his goal because his adhesive was weak. Ten years later, another 3M scientist led the way in applying the adhesive for jobs that fit the solution perfectly.

6. Identify Outcome Expectations Regarding the Job

For a particular job, identify its associated desired and undesired outcome expectations. These become the drivers of further ideation activities in the innovation process. Outcome expectations are explained in Technique 2.

Resources

For more on the jobs to be done concept and technique, see:

Christensen, C. M., S. D. Anthony, G. Berstell, and D. Nitterhouse. "Finding the Right Job for Your Product," *MIT Sloan Management Review*, Spring 2007 2–11.

Christensen, C. M., and M. E. Raynor. *The Innovator's Solution: Using Good Theory to Solve the Dilemmas of Growth*. Watertown, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 2003.

Ulwick, A. *What Customers Want: Using Outcome-Driven Innovation to Create Breakthrough Products and Services*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2005.

Ulwick, A., and L. A. Bettencourt. "Giving Customers a Fair Hearing." *Sloan Management Review*, 49, no. 3 (2008): 62–68.