This worksheet is a step-by-step guide to help you start crafting your brand and elevator speech. While it is by no means all-inclusive, these exercises will get you started.

Building a brand is long-term strategic process that defines who you are as a company, where you stand in the market, what you do, who you serve, where you’re going in the future, and — most importantly — helps establish lasting relationships with your customers.

**What is a brand?**

* It’s your customer’s overall perception and experience of your business.
* **It’s your business’ reputation, position, perception of value and personality.**
* **It’s the messaging that communicates your business.**
* It includes, but is not limited to, your logo, color palette, tag line, slogans, stories and digital assets such as your website and social media.

**What is an elevator speech?**

* It’s a brief, persuasive speech that sparks interest in your business, project, service, idea, or product.
* It’s short, just 20 to 30 seconds.
* It explains who you are, what you do, why you are different, and what in it for them – why they should use your business.

**What’s the difference between a customer and a client?**

* You have a “customer” when you’re selling a product.
* You have a “client” when you’re selling a service.
* The same branding advice is applicable for both customers and clients. You will notice both terms used interchangeably throughout this worksheet.

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| **WORKSHEET TIPS**  Start by going through the worksheet and filling in as many boxes as you can. *Don’t feel that you need to complete every box or even have fully thought-out responses right now.*  Crafting your brand and elevator speech are not quick, one and done, exercises. They’re iterative processes that you’ll tweak, refine, and redo as your business grows. The most important step is to get started now. Then, on a monthly or quarterly basis, revisit, review, and refine your worksheet!  One more thing! Try to see things from your client’s point of view. Always! What do your clients need that you can provide?  *\*\*As you start completing the template, the boxes will automatically expand to fit all of your important thoughts and ideas.* |

**YOUR NAME/COMPANY NAME or IDEA**

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| **WHAT’S YOUR BIG IDEA?**  *Follow your passion.*  Describe what you want to do. List as much as you know right now. Maybe you have a business that you’ve been planning for years. You may be exploring several options. Or you may be brainstorming ideas to turn an interest (i.e., being outdoors, working with animals, helping people) into a business. | **WHAT PROBLEM ARE YOU SOLVING?**  *Show off your superpower.*  Put yourself in your future client’s shoes. What is the painful, urgent, or annoying problem that you can confidently solve? What do you offer that makes clients want to hire you?  Consider:   * Are there urgent problems that you can step in and solve? * Can you prevent problems and provide peace of mind? * Will you help save time and/or money? * Does your product/service make a process more efficient or effective? * Is there an urgency and a reason for them to act now? |
| **WHO’S YOUR IDEAL CLIENT?**  *You’ll work well together.*  Describe your perfect client — the one who wants and needs what your business has to offer. Do you want to share values and a sense of purpose?  Are your target customers:   * Businesses, individuals or government agencies? * Located in a specific geographic area? * A defined demographic, industry, or profession? | **WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT?**  *A diamond, like you, has many facets.*  What makes you or your product/service stand out from the competition? What qualities or attributes do you have that makes your business unique?   * Do you a special communication skill? * Is your process or product unique? * Do you have certifications or special training, or experience? * Is your business woman, minority, veteran, or service-disabled veteran-owned? * What languages do you know other than English? * Are you an expert or thought leader in this field? * Other? |
| **WHAT ROI DO YOU PROVIDE?**  *Your value proposition is your promise to clients.*  Your unique value proposition (UVP) is a positioning statement that explains the benefit you provide, who you provide it for, and what’s uniquely special about how you do it. It should explain:   * How your solution solves your customer’s problem. * What specific benefits it provides. * Why they should choose you over your competition. * In a nutshell, your UVP covers how your product or service works, what makes it valuable, and why it is better than the rest.   **Sample UVPs:**   * **Tortuga Backpacks.** Bring Everything You Need Without Checking a Bag * **Fort Hunt Preschool.** is a community of families who believe that children learn best in a safe, nurturing environment, supported by a cooperative partnership of parents and teachers. * **EMMAvet** Not every pet emergency needs to be treated at a Specialty Center or 24-hour ICU. We’re here when your Primary Care Veterinarian is closed. * **Discover Books** is dedicated to the sale of gently used books to support our goal of fighting global illiteracy and to Let the Stories Live On. We fundamentally believe that books exist to be read. * **Allison Barnes Events.** From consulting to full planning & design, Allison & her team are here to alleviate the stress that surrounds wedding planning...after all, thoughtful and stylish events don't just happen, they're planned! * **Opterre**. Where technology, outsourcing and corporate takeovers threaten to eliminate jobs, we help experienced people take their skills on a new path as independent consultants.   **Now it’s your turn!** Write out a draft UVP. This may change as you gain more feedback from customers or as your business evolves. | |
| **WHAT DOES IT DO?**  *Describe how your product or service works.*  **Features** are descriptive statements that set the product/service apart from the competition.  For example, the features for an accountant might be,   * We do tax preparation for individuals, partnerships, and companies. * A retired Army controller and experienced CPA * Active member of the National Association of Tax Professionals. | **WHAT IT DOES FOR YOU!**  *Explain how it will benefit your client*  Benefits describe how the features can help the customer. They explain why the **feature matters** for your customers and how the customer's life gets better because of it.  For example, the benefits for the accountant might be:   * One-stop shopping for all your personal and professional tax needs. * Specialist in the needs of active-duty and retired military personnel. * Available nights and weekends to fit your busy schedule.   **Your Pillars** are a blend of your features and benefits, mostly benefits. It’s the reasons your customers will buy from you. Example: Experienced, Convenient, Affordable |
| **MAKE YOUR CASE**  *Back up your promise with proof.*  Your **“Proof Points”** back up your claims, so customer will not just take your word for it.  Customers are generally skeptical of unsubstantiated claims.  What evidence can you offer to back up your claims?  Testimonial?  Case study?  Industry recognition?  Proof is an important confidence builder and a necessary component of validating your capabilities. | **WRITE THE RIGHT MESSAGES**  *Be clear, concise, and consistent.*  Your **“Copy Points”** are the messages that support your value proposition using the qualities and voice you’ve identified. Focus on the benefit to your client. Don’t worry about being perfect. Use active voice, lots of verbs, and write as if you are speaking to a client! |
| **WHAT DO YOUR CLIENTS THINK?**  *Positioning your business in their mind*  What qualities do you want associated with your brand? Affordable? Trustworthy? High quality? Convenient?  Your messages should make an emotional as well as an intellectual connection.   * Are you the affordable dog groomer with flexible appointments or the high-end groomer who styles show dogs? * Are you the jack-of-all-trades accountant for small businesses or the specialized financial analyst specializing in mergers and acquisitions? | **WHAT’S YOUR DRIVING FORCE?**  *Stay true to your higher purpose.*  Describe the reason you are passionate about your business idea. Why is it important to you? **This is your why; the reason you get up every day.**  [**Simon Sinek's TED talk**](https://bit.ly/2W6lGye) **describes WHY it matters.** |
| **SOLVE THE PROBLEM**  *A good solution provides value*  Describe the value your product or service offers your clients. Use your UVP – think about how your business improves your clients’ lives. In B2B, it’s usually about outcomes or results such as improving revenue or saving time or money. In B2C, it is usually associated with an enhanced experience or cost/time savings. | Price is what you pay. Value is what you get.  --Warren Buffett |
| **WHAT’S YOUR BUSINESS?**  *Introducing yourself in 30 seconds or less.*  Now you get to pull everything that you’ve been working on into your elevator speech — a compelling yet, concise statement. In just 20 to 30 seconds, you want to provoke interest and start a conversation about your business.  Having a good elevator speech ready can help entrepreneurs make a good first impression and generate interest in themselves or their company. Remember, this is something you should be able to easily tell someone about you and/or your products or services. **It is not a sales pitch. It’s your business introduction.**  Start drafting your elevator speech using the elements you’ve built out above. Your elevator speech will evolve along with your business. You may have multiple “speeches” targeted to each audience you serve. (Two examples are provided in the next box.) | |
| **SAMPLE ELEVATOR SPEECHES**  **The Elevator Speech: Brooklyn Doula**  "I offer nonjudgmental support throughout pregnancy, birth, and the postpartum period. Labor doula services, prenatal consults, private childbirth education, postpartum doula services, lactation support, and more are all available and tailored to your preferences."  **Why it works**  In her pitch, Megan Davidson, PhD aims to educate prospective clients about both her business and her profession. Many new parents don't know what a doula is–and even those who are familiar with birth doulas don't always realize that doulas can help after the baby's arrival.  **The Elevator Speech: Hux**  "Hux is an online platform directly connecting local consumers with house cleaners. With Hux, you can easily compare local house cleaners on total price, reviews, availability and instantly book a service. Our technology empowers local house cleaners by replacing costly overhead found in the traditional service industry and makes it easy for consumers to book services online in just two minutes. Just think of us as the Uber of house cleaning!"  **Why it works**  Plenty of businesses want to be the Uber of their industry–so much so that the comparison can be a cop-out for an original pitch. The statement explains the platform on its own merits first, describing its benefits for both the consumers and housecleaners who use the service. But adding the Uber line–as she and colleagues did after clients kept making the comparison–helps drive home the platform's ease of use and instant booking features. | |
| **LAST POINTERS**   1. **Don’t try to be everything to everyone.** You want a well-defined, niche audience. Even if someone isn’t your target, they may know someone who is! Brands that target everyone, connect with no one. The biggest mistake businesses make is casting too wide a net, for fear of leaving anyone out. Women 25 to 54 is not a valid target segment, it’s a census box. More niche: Women 25 to 54 who need a flexible workout option that fits with their unpredictable schedules. 2. **Differentiate yourself from the pack.** Think of a UVP as a twist. Something unique, unexpected, and meaningful that can set you apart. A UVP is any aspect of your brand or business that is different from the competition and can be communicated to your audience to encourage people to try your brand or switch from another brand. 3. **Be authentic.** Start establishing trust by being unabashedly, authentically yourself. Own your history, personality, culture, sense of humor and personal expression. As a solo entrepreneur, YOU are your business! Help your customers trust you so that they say, “I want to hire you!” | |

**NOW LET’S PULL IT ALL TOGETHER!**

Once you’ve completed the boxes, here is a quick sheet for crafting your elevator speech:

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| **Business** |  | | |
| **Product/Service**  **Description** |  | | |
| **Target Market** |  | | |
| **Value Prop/Why** |  | | |
| **Pillars (1 to 3)** |  |  |  |
| **Proof Points** |  |  |  |
| **Copy Points** |  |  |  |