

Building a
Solid
Foundation
for your
business



Figuring Out Your *Why*



Running your own business is hard, I'm not going to lie. Does it have its rewards? Absolutely. But it will challenge you mentally, physically, and emotionally.

I promise you, that at some point in your professional organizing career you'll feel like giving up. You'll wonder what the point is, why bother? Keeping your **why** front and center will help you stay motivated and focused on your goals.

When things start getting tough, and you're getting frustrated, go back to your **why**. Then get up and keep going.

When filling out the questions, be sure to be as specific and detailed as possible.

Consider your motivation for starting your own business. Is it for your family? So you can afford a better lifestyle? Simply because you enjoy it? Whatever it is, name it. Then, list out how your life will look differently if you succeed. Again, be specific. How will you feel different? How will your time be spent differently? How will your situation change? Finally, what if you don't succeed? What will happen, how will that impact you?

Use the space on the bottom for inspirational pictures, quotes, whatever you'd like to keep you motivated.

My Why



WHY DO I WANT TO START THIS BUSINESS?

HOW WILL MY LIFE LOOK DIFFERENT IF I SUCCEED? HOW WILL I FEEL DIFFERENT?

WHAT HAPPENS IF I DON'T SUCCEED?

Add a photo, magazine cut out, quote, etc. here for inspiration.

Competitive Analysis



This competitive analysis will help you dive into your local competition to identify opportunities for unmet needs within the community. The purpose is not to copy or mimic other organizers in the area, but rather to identify room for you to step in. If every organizer in your area is focused on working Moms, then you'll know that may be a saturated market. Whereas, if nobody seems to be targeting the college students in your university town, you'll know that's an opportunity. You can fill this form out digitally, or print it off and complete it by hand. When completing the sections within the comp analysis, it may be helpful, or even necessary, to visit their social media page.

Step One - Reviews & Locations

To start, you'll do a quick Google search of professional organizers in your city. If none come up, try searching by the next closest larger city. You can complete as many pages of analysis as you'd like, but by completing at least 4-5 you'll get a good idea of the market. Complete the top section on the first professional organizer that comes up. You'll enter their name, location, and information about their online reviews. The review section is important, as it'll give you an idea of their level of customer service and potential likelihood of repeat customers. You can also use any of these negative reviews to identify possible pitfalls to avoid.

Step Two - Website, Niche, & Pricing

For the first row of columns, you'll record information on the professional organizer's website, niche, and their pricing. For the website review, include as much relevant detail as possible. You can use a simple rating system such as 2/5 stars; but be sure to add additional information. Is their website easy to navigate? Is their contact information easy to find? Do they have their pricing posted or are potential customers required to contact them for pricing? All of these aspects are important. Next, you'll need to try and identify their niche. Who do they seem to be targeting? Not every organizer has a defined niche, but they likely focus on a specific type or group of clients when they market (particularly via social media). You can see this especially when reviewing an organizer who focuses on "luxury" organizing. Once you've identified their niche, you'll want to record their pricing. This is important, not because you want to underprice them or copy them, but because you want to price yourself fairly. When new organizers enter the industry and attempt to attract new clients by pricing themselves far below the industry average, it brings that average down and hurts us all. When recording pricing, you'll want to include how or if they charge for consults, what their hourly rate is (as well as the minimum), and how their packages are structured.

Competitive Analysis



Step Three - Areas Served & Opportunities

The second row of the form is fairly straightforward. You'll record the areas served, which can be important, specifically if you live in a more rural area or don't have a lot of competitors nearby. If you see that all of the other professional organizers don't service a particular town or region (or they apply a surcharge) then you'll know that's a potential area of opportunity. The opportunity section is for just that, opportunities you've identified during your review. It may be that their website isn't very user friendly, leaving an opportunity for you to stand out, that they don't offer package pricing, or that they don't serve a certain region that perhaps is more accessible based on your location.

Step Four - Repeat

Once you've completed your first analysis complete 3-4 more so you get a clear understanding of opportunities in your area. You'll use this information next when identifying your niche. Be sure to save all the information you collect, as you'll likely want to look back on it later on.

Competitive Analysis



NAME OF COMPETITION:

LOCATION:

ONLINE REVIEWS:

WEBSITE REVIEW:

NICHE:

PRICING:

AREAS SERVED:

OPPORTUNITIES:

NOTES:

Competitive Analysis



NAME OF COMPETITION:

LOCATION:

ONLINE REVIEWS:

WEBSITE REVIEW:

NICHE:

PRICING:

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Competitive Analysis



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Competitive Analysis



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LOCATION:

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OPPORTUNITIES:

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Competitive Analysis



NAME OF COMPETITION:

LOCATION:

ONLINE REVIEWS:

WEBSITE REVIEW:

NICHE:

PRICING:

AREAS SERVED:

OPPORTUNITIES:

NOTES:

Identifying Your Niche



Now that you've spent some time thinking about your reasons for starting your own business, and taking a look at the competition, it's time to narrow in on your niche. Now I know, I know, you're new, you just want to focus on everybody so you can get the ball rolling, get some experience, and start making some money. I've been there, I said the same thing. But by identifying and focusing on a niche, you're not necessarily excluding any potential clients, you're setting your business up so you know what opportunities to focus on, who your ideal client is, and how you'll market to your ideal client within your niche.

Imagine a car salesman. If an expectant mother comes onto the lot, his message and sales pitch would likely focus on safety. He'd show her some minivans and talk about all the amazing safety features (I love my minivan btw). But if a 25 year old newly graduated law student were to come onto the lot, the salesman's message would be completely different; and rightly so. He'd talk about all those fancy features, the speed, all those terms I know nothing about, and he'd try to sell him one of those fancy little sports cars. In our case, as professional organizers, we often have to attract our customers by speaking to them before we see them. So we don't know if we're talking to the soccer mom, or the law student. And we won't attract either of them as a client if we don't tailor our message to speak to them. Make sense? Great, lets move on.

Identify Your Niche *Sample*

PASSIONS

Busy Parents

Teachers

Kids

*Neuro-
divers / ADHD*

Moms

Small biz Owners

Seniors

COMPETITORS

Seniors

Busy Parents

Professionals

OPPORTUNITY

Teachers

Kids

Neuro-divers / ADHD

*Small Business
Owners*

*Opportunity
Rich Niche*



WHAT ARE YOU PASSIONATE ABOUT THAT ARE UNTAPPED BY YOUR COMPETITION? IF YOU FIND COMPETITION FOR EACH OF YOUR PASSIONS, THEN FOCUS ON THE PRIMARY COMPETITION ONLY (THE BIG FISH).

NAME YOUR NICHE:

Identify Your Niche



PASSIONS

COMPETITORS

OPPORTUNITY



WHAT AREAS ARE YOU PASSIONATE ABOUT THAT ARE UNTAPPED BY YOUR COMPETITION? IF YOU FIND COMPETITION FOR EACH OF YOUR PASSIONS, THEN FOCUS ON THE PRIMARY COMPETITION ONLY (THE BIG FISH).

NAME YOUR NICHE:

Your Ideal Customer



A Day in the Life

Once you've narrowed down your niche, it's time to consider who your ideal customer is. This packet will help you outline your ideal customer, and details that'll be important later on, particularly in marketing. To start, complete the day in the life page to map out what a typical day looks like for your ideal customer. If you're focusing on working parents, then list out what you think their typical day may look like. A working mother would likely have a hectic morning and a hectic evening. Use your outline of their typical day to identify when they may have some freetime. A working mother may have free time in the morning, before the kids wake up, during her lunch break, and after bedtime.

List out what social media platforms they'd be more likely to use, and what their priorities are. If you're focusing on working with bachelors, their priorities and social media platforms are likely much different than a working mother. Finally, list out what problem they need solved (the one you'll solve for them). Go into detail if you can. A busy student for example could be frustrated with the lack of organization and how it impacts their ability to focus on their studies. A bachelor may want their home to look more put together so they're not as embarrassed to bring dates home. A working mother would be stressed with time management and an accumulation of stuff (speaking from experience). If you don't know your ideal customers problem, then you wont understand the best way to solve it.

A Day In The Life *Sample*

IDEAL CLIENT AGE RANGE: *25 - 50*

IDEAL CLIENT GENDER: *Female*

INCOME LEVEL: *Mid to Upper*

IDEAL CLIENT DESCRIPTION:

Moms who work from home or run their own business

A TYPICAL DAY FOR YOUR CLIENT:

6am - wake up, have coffee

6:30 - get kids up and ready for school

7:30 - Carline, drop kids off

8am - Work from home office

11-12 - Lunch/Errands

4pm - Carline, pick kids up

4-6pm - Make dinner, house work, help kids with homework

6pm - unwind

8pm - get kids ready for bed

9pm - get in bed

WHEN DO THEY HAVE FREE TIME?

6am - Coffee time

7:30 - Carlinee

4pm - Carline

6pm - Unwind time



This is when they may use social media

WHAT ARE THEIR PRIORITIES?

Family Career Home

Kids Education

WHAT PROBLEM DO THEY NEED SOLVED?

The disorganization in increasing their stress level, the amount of work they have to do, and taking time from their family

WHAT SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS DO THEY USE?

Facebook

Pinterest

A Day In The Life



IDEAL CLIENT AGE RANGE:

IDEAL CLIENT GENDER:

INCOME LEVEL:

IDEAL CLIENT DESCRIPTION:

A TYPICAL DAY FOR YOUR CLIENT:

WHEN DO THEY HAVE FREE TIME?

WHAT ARE THEIR PRIORITIES?

WHAT PROBLEM DO THEY NEED SOLVED?

WHAT SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS DO THEY USE?

Your Ideal Customer



Speaking Their Language

Now that you have a clearer picture of a typical day in your customers life, and their problem, you'll need to look more closely at how you'll impact their problem. This will be critical later on when marketing to your ideal customer. On the lefthand side of the page, you'll list out their problem, their feelings, their failure, and their status prior to your service.

In this example, we're going to consider a small business owner who works from their home office. The problem they are facing is that the lack of organization is having a major impact on their productivity. They are misplacing important papers, missing deadlines, and spending more time looking for things than they'd like to admit. This causes them to feel frustrated, stressed, overwhelmed, and is even starting to impact their relationships as the stress is carrying over to their personal life. If they fail to get organized and make a change, then they'll continue to have an increasing amount of stress and anxiety, their business will suffer due to the decrease in productivity, and they could even face financial difficulties. Within the status section, you'll list the labels that their situation has resulted in, such as being cluttered, disorganized, scattered, etc.

Now, you'll want to do the same exercise on the righthand side of the paper, detailing how their life will be different after your services, once you've solved their problem. Following the same example of the small business owner working from home, we'd assume that after your services, they'd have an organized, more efficient office. They'd be more productive and could possibly even have more time to spend with their friends and family. They would feel relieved, more relaxed, likely be more proud of the work their putting towards their business. The labels they place on themselves will likely change as well, they'll consider themselves organized, punctual, efficient, and successful. We will come back to this page later on when it's time to start marketing your services.

Speaking Their Language *Sample*

Before your Services

WHAT PROBLEM DO THEY FACE?

Office is a mess, causing them to waste time looking for things and reducing efficiency

HAVE DO THEY FEEL?

*Frustrated and overwhelmed.
Not sure where to start.*

FAILURE?

Continued loss of productivity.

Increased anxiety.

Potential financial difficulties due to bills being missed.

THEIR STATUS?

Cluttered, disorganized, scatter brained

After your Services

WHAT PROBLEM DO THEY FACE?

*Office is organized.
Much more efficient.
Better time management.
More time with the kids.*

HAVE DO THEY FEEL?

*More relaxed. Less rushed.
Feeling more impactful in the business.*

SUCCESS?

Less time spent looking for things, more productive.

*More profitable business.
Able to manage paperwork and responsibilities.*

THEIR STATUS?

*Successful business Organized
Put together Knowledgeable*

Speaking Their Language

Before your Services

WHAT PROBLEM DO THEY FACE?

HAVE DO THEY FEEL?

FAILURE?

THEIR STATUS?

After your Services

WHAT PROBLEM DO THEY FACE?

HAVE DO THEY FEEL?

SUCCESS?

THEIR STATUS?

Your Ideal Customer



Potential Partnerships

Since you're already focused so intently on your ideal customer and their life, now is a good time to consider potential partnerships or marketing options that would help reach your ideal customer. Our small business owner likely uses an accountant, goes to a grocery store, maybe even hires a house cleaner.

These are all potential partners to team up with in your business and utilize for marketing and referrals. Once you're ready to start marketing, you could reach out to a local accountant who specializes in small businesses, and offer discounted services in exchange for referrals. Or simply ask if you could bring by a few brochures to have on display. You'll also want to consider what social media groups your customer may be in.

A small business owner would likely be part of a local small business Facebook group, or a chamber of commerce group. While a mother would likely be in a local playdate Facebook group. This information will all come in handy later on, but it's easier to brainstorm while you're already focused on your ideal customer.

Potential Partnerships



PLACES YOUR CLIENTS SHOP:

OTHER SERVICES YOUR CLIENTS USE:

ONLINE GROUPS THEY MAY BE IN:

LOCAL PUBLICATIONS THEY MAY READ:

OTHER:

Potential Partnerships *Sample*

PLACES YOUR CLIENTS SHOP:

Grocery Store
Pre-school / Afterschool / Sitter
Office Supply Store
Consignment shop
Local Moms Group
Hobby / Craft Store

OTHER SERVICES YOUR CLIENTS USE:

Salon *Realtor*
Dry-Cleaners *Interior Decorator*
House Cleaners *Lawn Care*
Accountant

ONLINE GROUPS THEY MAY BE IN:

Facebook Moms group
Facebook yardsale groups
Local business groups
Chamber of commerce groups

LOCAL PUBLICATIONS THEY MAY READ:

Church newsletter?
Local paper
Local parenting magazine
Realtor and moving magazines?

OTHER:

What's Next?



Now that you have a clear idea of how you plan to stand out in the market, and the details of your ideal customer, it's time to move on to the branding phase of your business. If you're like most, you've likely already started or at least thought about it. The branding phase is often considered the most fun and creative step. Many business owners mistakenly skip the foundational planning level, and jump right into the fun stuff. The fact that you have already done the leg work to build a solid foundation for your business, means you'll be ahead of the game once you actually get started.