

4 Billion New Customers!

Think about that! If you had access to 4 billion customers, how would that impact your marketing, your strategy, your vision, your opportunities, and your profit potential? Well it's coming, and I see it happening right before my eyes.

Let me back up for a moment and give you some perspective. As I write this, I am at my office in Pondicherry, India. I started [Efficiencie](#) with my partners April and Rich back in 2004 and came to India shortly after to set up the office. We started with one full time team member and one intern and then quickly added five more. We have now grown to 40 bright, enthusiastic, hardworking men and women.

Mobile Takeover

When you look at the aspects of positioning yourself in business, think about where the world is going and where you should be to set yourself in its path. Easier said than done, right? How does one know where the world is headed? The answer is to take in as much information as you can that provides the clues to where things are going. Back in my investment days, I spent a lot of time reading research reports and other material that discussed future technologies and trends.

I used to follow an internet analyst named [Mary Meeker](#) of [Morgan Stanley](#).

WHO is on First?

You might be thinking “who is on first and what is on second?” if you’ve had any exposure to the old [Abbott and Costello joke](#). What I’m actually referring to though is the first thing that should be done in business; finding the WHO that is your client and defining them as descriptively as possible. To get to second base you do want to find your “What” which is defining your unique offering.

Back in 2007 at the [Fortune Growth Summit](#) in Las Vegas, I had the pleasure of meeting and getting to know [Robert Bloom](#) (engaging in conversation around Italian food and his love of the country).

Discovering Your How, and Owning It

Recently I wrote two blogs on the [Inside Advantage](#), discussing the Who and What that make up your offerings. Today I’m going to finish up this topic and talk about the How and the Own It’s of this great strategy.

The HOW part is your persuasive strategy that gets your Who (your core customer) to buy your What (your uncommon offering). This approach doesn’t void out competition, but it does allow you to stay ahead of them and to stand out from them, a process that is both dynamic and constant.

[Bob](#) (author of [Inside Advantage](#)) states that there are five hallmarks to a good persuasive strategy:

Wisdom from the Cash King, Buffett!

Having come from the investment world, I like to stay informed and keep my eye on what people are seeing and thinking about prospects for growth and where the world is going. For that reason, I always find reading [Berkshire Hathaway's annual report](#) written by [Warren Buffett](#) very informative, down to earth, and a balancer to all the hype and exaggeration about how bad things look out there. The world is not ending, even though it is going to be a hard road for many.

WHAT do you provide your clients?

We've made it to first and discovered our "who" in the last blog. Now it's time to talk about our "what" that is sitting on second. To further the discovery into your [Inside Advantage](#), we need to have a clear understanding of the "what" that you offer to your clients.

What you learn is the difference between what business you think you're in, versus the business you are actually in. Many businesses think that the transaction that takes place between them and their client is their business. For example, if I remove junk, I'm in the junk business. If I develop software I'm in the software business. If I sell coffee, I'm in the coffee business.

Success is a Process of Discovery

p>Doesn't it seem like some of these people making it big in the business world just have this epiphany one day about a great idea, then they just go and make it happen...ending up with millions and sometimes billions later on?

This was not my experience. What I've seen is that, one day you start working on this small idea, then somewhere along the way you stumble upon a bigger idea, which usually isn't anywhere close to your original idea. If you have gone down the path of an entrepreneur, is this how it happened for you?

Meetings That Motivate

How many times have you heard "I spend so much time in meetings, I don't have time to do all the things I say I'm going to do in those meetings"? It's a constant battle I face, trying to improve our meetings so that they are as productive as possible in the least amount of time, and ultimately beneficial to our business. After all, business is about bringing a group of people together to accomplish something, together. So you could say that these gatherings are one of the most crucial parts of business. It's difficult to align people without that infamous word "meeting".

Imagine a US football team in a huddle. Before each play, the offense and defense take a few seconds to analyze where they

are, what down it is, what they think the opposing team will do and their own next play options.

Can you find value in a blue ocean?

In last week's blog I discussed what it means to create value, and mentioned that simply asking your customers what they want is a viable way to determine value opportunities. When your customers don't know what they want, an alternative is to use the [Blue Ocean Strategy](#) (BOS).

Is Your Head Stuck In a Recession?

Watching the news these days doesn't leave one with much hope for the future, when all we're hearing is about inflation, unemployment and national debt. Reports are spreading of an ongoing recession and even a possible depression before things get better. So what is an entrepreneur to do? Constantly trying to keep your head above water can get discouraging when you have nothing solid to look towards. As much as I'd like to bury my head in the sand sometimes, I know that's not a viable option. Instead, I practice the [Stockdale Paradox](#), which is to retain faith, regardless of the difficulties, AND confront the brutal facts, whatever they may be.