

The Business Bible
for the
Unconventional
Entrepreneur

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Welcome!

Thank you for downloading The Unconventional Entrepreneur worksheets and #LADYBOSSCHALLENGES. This workbook is designed to accompany the book The Business Bible for the Unconventional Entrepreneur. Each chapter focuses on a different aspect of running a business. Therefore, each worksheet is designed to reflect on your role as a business owner and the change you can affect within your company. Each #LADYBOSSCHALLENGE is designed as a 5-day challenge to push yourself to try something new or focus on a technique discussed in the book, while utilizing a hashtag to reference on social media for public accountability and support from other participants and mentors.

Take your time. Do the work. Enjoy the growth.

*Time to put on your big girl panties and get to
work, Ladyboss.*

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WORKSHEET 1:

Reflecting on Your Journey Thus Far

Why did you start your business? In one sentence, describe your original mindset and vision for starting your business in the first place.

What's that end-of-the-line point when you can breathe a sigh of relief and feel finished with your entrepreneurial work? When will your business be "done" or at least a well-oiled machine?

Do you take regular vacations? Any vacations?

Ever played hooky to meet friends for lunch or a date night? Or do you feel stress when your child is sick, and you have to balance parenting with your daily workload? When was the last time you took the dog for a walk without your phone in your hand, checking email along the way? Just sat in the park people-watching alone without feeling guilty that you weren't being more productive? When was the last weekend you did absolutely nothing without that nagging feeling come Monday that you didn't do what you should have accomplished?

- I'm pretty pleased with my work-life-family-vacation balance
- I really need more balance and downtime
- I don't even remember what it's like to "clock out" from work for a little while

What does your daily work routine look like as a business owner?

- I do not have a routine. I open my laptop and just start putting out fires, reacting to what has come up in the 5-6 hours I slept.
- My day starts while I'm lying in bed checking email, groaning and jumping out of bed to get the kids out the door so I can figure out what to do about the mess that so-and-so made.
- I make a plan each day and tackle it.
- I have a set routine I follow

My Current Daily Routine (If you have one):

I "clock in" around _____

Hour 1: _____

Hour 2: _____

Hour 3: _____

I take breaks by _____

I usually take _____ for lunch around _____.

Hour 4: _____

Hour 5: _____

Hour 6: _____

My Ideal Daily Routine – We'll dive into a detailed goal-setting session for this further into the process, so for now, just check the boxes that would be ideal for your daily routine as a business owner:

- Specific daily office hours, outside of which I don't work
- Full 40-hour work week
- 2-3 full days of work and having the rest of the week free
- 1-3 hours of work each day
- Spending 80-90% of my time working on the fun stuff around which my business revolves—crafting, designing, building, writing, teaching, etc., and having staff handle the admin and customer service.
- Spending 80-90% of my time on business growth tasks and admin, and having a staff of technicians to carry forward the creative & production
- Doing something different every day/week

What does the schedule of produce/service fulfillment look like right now?

Picture the last request for work you received from a client. Did you drop everything and get to work on their request for fear of losing the opportunity? Or do you have your work scheduled at least a week in advance, so you can confidently tell a new client, “I have a 2-week turnaround, so I’ll slate your project for completion next Thursday, end of business day.” Or does just thinking about saying that make your stomach hurt because you’re really thinking, “OMG, I NEED THIS MONEY I WILL STAY UP ALL NIGHT DOING THE PROJECT JUST DON’T HANG UP THE PHONE!!!”

How do you know when the right time to hire staff will be? Are you winging it alone, hoping one day there might be enough extra income to share with another staff member? Are you laughing at the *idea* of hiring someone, knowing you can’t picture affording it or knowing how to go about covering all the legal crap that goes along with hiring, insurance, 401Ks, healthcare...*oh my god I can’t even with all that?*

If you were critically injured tomorrow and someone else had to jump into your work to keep the business afloat, could they follow your processes to figure out how to keep things moving for 2 weeks without you? *Are you laughing again right now?*

- Absolutely—my team could keep things running for a little while.
- Absolutely not—the store would have to close.
- If there was someone who could jump on board, they could figure out how to fulfill current orders, but I don’t know about the rest.

Do all customers experience the same service? Is your service consistent, or hit or miss? Do you have any nasty reviews online from that ONE guy, leaving you crying—*“But I can EXPLAIN, Liz!”*

- Customer service is very consistent.
- Service isn’t always perfect, but it’s not an area I’m worried about right now.
- We’re doing our best, but I wish we had more good reviews.

WORKSHEET 2:

How do You Measure Up?

1. PROFESSIONALISM

What percentage of the time do you speak to clients respectfully?

100% 75% 50% 25% Not very often

What percentage of the time do you speak to colleagues/teammates respectfully?

100% 75% 50% 25% Not very often

If a staff member or another vendor makes a mistake that causes bad service to a customer, do you usually tell the customer everything that led up to the mistake?

No Yes

What percentage of the time are you late to shifts, meetings, and appointments?

Never Once a year A few times a year Once a month

2. INTEGRITY

Your team and clients can rely on you to do exactly what you commit to doing:

No Yes

How often do you stretch the truth, omit a detail that you don't want to admit, or tell a customer or colleague something that flat-out isn't true?

Never A few times More often than I'd like to admit

3. BRAND CLARITY

How much continuity is there between your marketing visuals? Do all your flyers, web graphics, promotional items, coupons, etc. have the same logo, font, colors, and taglines?

- Everything we put out is 100% obvious that it comes from the same company.
- Our main visuals are the same, but we try out different looks in promotions.
- I have a few variations for different audiences.
- I haven't settled on a clear brand yet.

4. TIME MANAGEMENT

How well do you manage your time on a daily basis?

- Fantastic
- I'm getting by
- So bad it's not even funny

5. CLEVER MARKETING

Do you have a written marketing strategy – even if it's casual?

- Yes
- No

Write down the last unique idea you had for connecting with new clients.

6. FINANCIAL MILESTONES

What is your bottom-line number for how much money your business needs to bring in each month to keep the doors open? (Estimate, take a wild guess, or write "no effin' clue.")

What paycheck do you *personally* need each month to guarantee your minimum bills and personal financial responsibilities are covered? (Estimate, take a wild guess, or write "no effin' clue.")

If you charge hourly rates for services, what's your current average hourly wage?

Pick your best-selling product. What does it cost to make/buy? _____

How much do you sell it for? _____

How many do you need to sell each month to make it worth it? _____

7. CONTINUED EDUCATION

When was the last class/seminar you attended in the topic of your craft/service?

Within 6 months 6mo-1yr ago 2+ years ago Never

What was the last book you read in the area of your industry? (not including this one)

Within 6 months 6mo-1 yr ago 2+ years ago Never

8. TEAM MANAGEMENT

Do you have a written handbook of expectations and job duties?

Yes Sorta No

Do you do annual performance evaluations of your staff?

Yes No I have, but not in a few years

What's your new employee turnover rate like?

___ No one stays longer than 6 months

___ 6 months – 1 year

___ Several years

Do you think your staff generally does a great job?

___ My team is awesome.

___ My team is pretty average.

___ I cannot find good help.

9. CUSTOMER SERVICE

Do all customers experience the same service?

Customer service is very consistent.

Service isn't always perfect, but it's not an area I'm worried about right now

We're doing our best, but I wish we had more good reviews.

What percentage of your interactions with customers leave you feeling really proud of the work you do?

100%

80%

60%

40%

I am often embarrassed/feel guilty.

#LADYBOSSCHALLENGE 1:

Professionalism

Day 1

Be on time everywhere you go today. Jot down every meeting or appointment you have today (or this week if you don't have anything today). Write down the time you'd usually leave to make the appointment, then add 7 minutes.

Day 2

No complaining for 24 hours. Anytime you find yourself complaining, bite your tongue and write it down. Keep a notepad handy to jot down every occasion you feel yourself complaining or getting annoyed. After jotting it down, close your eyes and think of a creative solution to prevent the nuisance from occurring again. Then write down something that makes you smile—your favorite meme, something silly your kid or dog did earlier, or a sweet thought about your significant other.

If you find that you most often complain when other people start venting their problems to you, be empathetic without letting their issue snowball into a full-on bitch session. You might even need to suggest going out for drinks after work so you can keep on bitching without grinding your productivity to a halt. "Girl, let's put a pin in this and go out tonight. I've just *got* to get some things done today!"

Day 3

Memorize your rudeness shield. This is the phrase you're going to have memorized by heart for those times when a customer or team member starts pushing your temper over the edge.

"I really feel bad about your experience today, but at this point the conversation is no longer productive. So, let's put an end to this for now and we will try to resolve the issue another time."

Now, think about two situations in your past in which you wish you would have maintained composure, used your rudeness shield, and came out looking professional in a difficult situation.

Day 4

Define the guidelines for professional attire for yourself and anyone who represents your company:

Is there a uniform or a certain look you want to achieve?

Are there any accessories you want to limit? (hats, scarves, wallet chains, jewelry, etc.)

Are piercings allowed? _____

Are non-natural hair colors allowed? _____

Can tattoos be visible? _____

Are bare midriffs acceptable? _____

Low-cut shirts? _____

Are skirts and shorts allowed? Is there a minimum length requirement?

Must belts be worn with pants? Are sagging pants allowed?

Are there any limits you want to put on clothing with brands, phrases, or graphics to make sure nothing is offensive? _____

What other considerations do you want to include in your professional attire guidelines?

Day 5

No cursing, yelling, or teasing today. For 24 hours, practice *uber* professional behavior. Think about situations in which you might need to channel this conservative attitude.

WORKSHEET 3:

Integrity Introspection

Time for some deep, honest introspection. No one will read this but you, and if you can't be honest with yourself, then you should *not* be running a business.

Mark any of these situations in which you might have acted without integrity.

- Not following policies yourself while disciplining staff for doing the same
- Destructive gossiping about a competitor or colleague
- Over-promising to a potential customer just to earn their business, even if you know you can't deliver
- Using company property or services for personal gain
- Blaming a team member for a mistake that you made
- Referring other business based on bribes rather than personal experience
- Putting yourself in a conflict of interest, such as dating someone who reports to you
- Taking credit for someone else's work or success
- Failing to uphold a promise you made
- Agreeing to terms you wouldn't normally offer or offering services or products you wouldn't normally offer just to win a new client
- Saying "yes" to everything, and not being able to fulfill all the obligations you commit to at your best capacity or fullest attention
- Selling products that you know will disappoint buyers
- Not giving every service order your full attention, time, and talent
- Supporting other businesses that act outside of your values
- Hiding important information from colleagues, clients, or staff that you think will make them lose confidence in you

Pick three of those instances that you checked and answer these questions:

Scenario 1

What would have been the *most "right"* thing to do in that situation?

What was I afraid of that made me act differently?

What's the worst that could have happened if I *had* done the right thing?

Scenario 2

What would have been the *most "right"* thing to do in that situation?

What was I afraid of that made me act differently?

What's the worst that could have happened if I *had* done the right thing?

Scenario 3

What would have been the *most "right"* thing to do in that situation?

What was I afraid of that made me act differently?

What's the worst that could have happened if I *had* done the right thing?

WORKSHEET 4:

Brand Clarity

Company Name:

What are your products & services?

Do you work/sell from a brick-and-mortar shop, online shop only, or both?

DEFINE YOUR BUYER PERSONA

Who exactly are your customers, and what specific problem are you solving for them? Answer as many of these questions as you can. Any gaps should be considered homework over the next week for you to research and ask questions about.

What are your customers trying to achieve?

What is their age range? _____

Is your product more relevant for one gender or another?

Where do they live? Suburbs or city? Apartment or house?

What are two occupations your buyers could have?

Are they more likely to be single, dating, married, or divorced?

Is it likely they have children? _____

Are their kids under 5 years old?

5-12 years old?

Teenagers?

College students?

Adult children?

What specific problem does your company solve for your client?

Think of 5 places your client could go to find a solution to this problem. Whether it's a physical location (to find a DIY book, a high-end retail store, asking friends for recommendations, etc.) or online (Google, Pinterest, Facebook groups for moms, etc.)

1

2

3

4

5

IDENTIFY YOUR UNIQUE SELLING PROPOSITION

Why is your product going to work better for your clients than other products?

Is there something people hate about the current model that your company will do differently?

What aspects of your services will be more successful?

What will be unique?

How is your product/service priced? Do you plan to sell at a lower cost than the competitors, competitively similar, or will your product be valued higher?

DEVELOP YOUR BRAND COLORS

Did you know that there's a ton of research on the psychology of color in branding?

Studies show that color affects a consumer's emotions, and emotions play heavily into purchasing decisions. But I don't want you to agonize too long about it because perception is subjective, isn't it? Regardless, here are some questions to help channel your brand color decisions:

What is your personal favorite color or color schemes?

Will your logo be going on an item or package with specific colors? (For example, an airline logo will need to look good on an all-white airplane, while a yoga studio logo should look good on the standard pink and purple yoga mats, etc.)

In your industry, is there a color scheme that is utilized by the majority of competitors? (For example, pastels in baby products, teal in bath & body products, pink and teal in the feminine hygiene industry, green in food and organic industries, etc.)

If your aim is a luxury brand, are there colors that you feel reflect luxury?

If your aim is a children's brand, what colors appeal to children and parents?

Are there any colors that should be avoided completely in your industry due to poor customer perception?

What are some of the current trends in color and style for branding?

DEFINE YOUR BRAND'S PERSONALITY

This might be in line with your own personality, or it might be completely different. How do you want your company to be perceived and described if it were a human? Funny and playful, serious and focused, trendy, aggressive and to-the-point, rebellious, peaceful, etc.?

CONSIDER A MASCOT OR SYMBOL

Is there an animal or character that could physically embody your brand's personality? Or is there a character that has become part of your brand's history/story that could represent you?

Is there a symbol often associated with your industry that could easily identify your industry at first glance to a customer? For example, a leaf for an organic product, a fork/knife for a restaurant, scissors for a beauty shop, etc.

Is there a symbol or object that you personally gravitate toward that you'd like to consider incorporating into your brand identity?

CHOOSING FONTS

Your brand should have two different fonts as part of its imagery. Some companies like to have a scripted and a print font to contrast, or *serif* vs. *sans serif*. Are there any fonts or styles of text you know that you want to use? (Pinterest is a fabulous place to get an idea of which fonts look good together and the type of brand personality they convey. Designers *love* creating their own combinations, so browse away!)

FONT SAMPLES:

Traditional Print Fonts

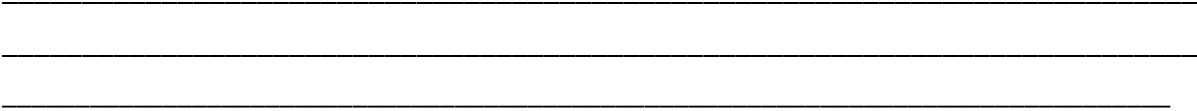
Arial
Bookman Old Style
ARCHER
Arabic Typesetting
Times New Roman
Candara

Script/Cursive Fonts

Canela Bark
Hensa
Magneto
Bella Donna
Rage Italic
Edwardian Script

Unique/Trendy Fonts

Bahnschrift
BEBAS NEUE BOOK
DIN Neuzeit
CAVEMAN
GRAVITY
Harrington
TRASHHAND



Now, take a few days to reflect on the overall picture you've created from the branding goals you have.

CREATE INSPIRATION BOARDS

Create a secret Pinterest board where you can collect ideas that you love. Use search terms like “logo,” “brand kit,” and “brand.” Search for some that are in the colors you've now defined for your brand. Or if you can't decide between a few colors, add some pins with each color, and see if you start to gravitate toward one collection more than another.

If you've considered a mascot or symbol for your company, browse some existing designs that include it just to see how it plays out in real life. There are some hideous design f***-ups that will make you see just how important the design can be.

CREATE A BRAND BOARD

A brand board is a visual collection of everything you decide for your brand. They're useful for quickly showing someone else how to represent your brand properly when you need to get new flyers made, hire a social media manager, or collaborate on a project. I've included a few samples in Appendix E.

#LADYBOSSCHALLENGE 2:

Time Audit

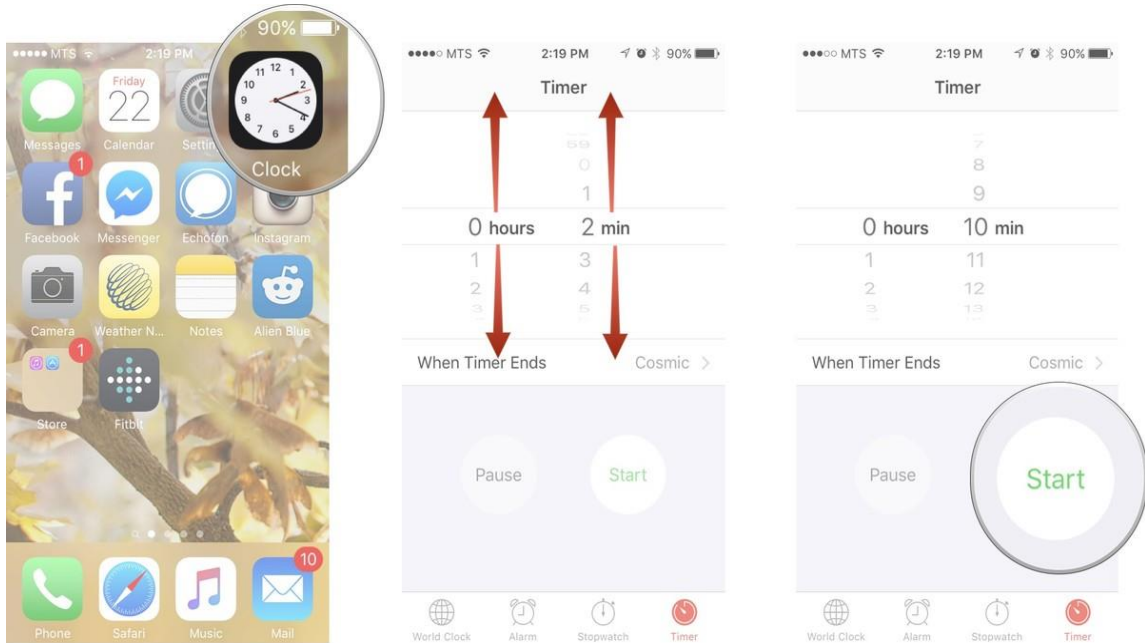
I challenge you now to conduct your own time audit.

Pick 3 days to audit. Keep this book handy or grab a sheet of paper to shove in your back pocket.

When you wake up on log days, start your timer. Every time it goes off, restart it and jot down a note as to what you're doing at that moment.

Use an odd time to start your timer, like 10 minutes after the hour. I find we're less likely to be switching tasks like going to lunch or heading into a meeting, so you're less likely to forget to log or be in a hurry out the door.

Using the timer on your phone:



Day 1

6:10	
7:10	
8:10	
9:10	
10:10	
11:10	
12:10	
1:10	
2:10	
3:10	
4:10	
5:10	
6:10	
7:10	
8:10	
9:10	
10:10	
11:10	

Day 2

6:10	
7:10	
8:10	
9:10	
10:10	
11:10	
12:10	
1:10	
2:10	
3:10	
4:10	
5:10	
6:10	
7:10	
8:10	
9:10	
10:10	
11:10	

Day 3

6:10	
7:10	
8:10	
9:10	
10:10	
11:10	
12:10	
1:10	
2:10	
3:10	
4:10	
5:10	
6:10	
7:10	
8:10	
9:10	
10:10	
11:10	

Now, Review and Reconsider

It's time to categorize your activities into the following:

Very important: the tasks you should be doing all the time

Not particularly important: something that may need to be done, but doesn't add significant value to your life, your family, or your business

Worthless: things that fill our time, but we don't realize how pointless they really are

Be deliberate. Be picky. Be really honest.

- 1) **Can I shift the timing of tasks to be more efficient?**
- 2) **Is my time worth more than this activity brings in?**
- 3) **Is this something I could hire someone to do for me?**
- 4) **What's the worst that could happen if I don't do this at all?**

Following is a list I've put together of examples of each priority category to help you be critical for your own audit. There might be ways you can still get these tasks done while not wasting precious time (i.e. outsourcing or scheduling specific times to get them done more efficiently.)

Very Important

Crafting new merchandise
Brainstorming marketing ideas
Responding to customer inquiries
Meeting with a gallery owner who wants to feature your work
A hobby that you enjoy for relaxation, exercise, or social enjoyment
Meaningful time with your family
Date night
Sleeping
Eating

Not Particularly Important

Entering receipts/bookkeeping
Housecleaning
Picking up dry cleaning
Running back to the grocery store for something you forgot
Driving home on your lunch break to let your dog out
Reading a blog about something not directly related to a project you're working on right now

Worthless Time-fillers

Staff meetings for agenda-setting

A TV show you're addicted to that is stressful or depressing

Getting sucked into a political debate with a "friend" on Facebook

Pinterest-perusing

Sitting on hold on the phone

Wading through junk mail in case something important fell through the cracks

Having weekly coffee with that "friend" who makes you crazy

#LADYBOSSCHALLENGE 3:

Creative Warmups

Pick a creative warmup from the following list of suggestions, and do one every day for 5 days. Do them right here in your book if you want, or get a sketchpad dedicated to your creative habit. I encourage you to try out a different warmup every month, once per week. Keep a journal for jotting down random ideas that are sparked during your mindless creativity sessions. You never know when a painting will jog an idea for a flyer design or a collage might give you an idea for a lead magnet or promotion.

- ✦ **Single line drawings**—put pen to paper and don't lift it for the entirety of a doodle. *(credit: Justina Blakeney)*
- ✦ **Face the Foliage**—go for a walk, collecting leaves, twigs, and flowers. Create a face out of the pieces. *(credit: Justina Blakeney)*
- ✦ **30-minute painting**—Follow along with @TheArtSherpa on YouTube for 30-minute beginner paintings.
- ✦ **Fill a Box**—Pick a project you're working on, and fill a box with items that conjure any emotion or symbolism toward your goal. Spend 30 minutes clipping images from a magazine walking around your house collecting items, or shopping at a dollar store. After your box is full, dump it out, and start brainstorming. For example, if you're designing a marketing plan for a new product, fill the box with items, images, and words that spark a feeling that you want customers to have when they purchase. *(credit: Twyla Tharp)*
- ✦ **Shaped by the Elements** – Create a shape with your body. Then imagine how your shape would move if you were underwater; blown by the wind; battered by a storm; melted in the sun.

List more of your own ideas here:

Day 1:

Day 2:

Day 3:

Day 4:

Day 5:

#LADYBOSSCHALLENGE 4:

Setting Goals

Here's your next 5-day challenge: Set your financial milestones for the next 3-5 years.

Day 1: Break your endgame into 3-5 phases of growth.

Phase 1:

Phase 2:

Phase 3:

Phase 4:

Phase 5:

Day 2: Break each phase into 4 milestones to level up to the next phase.

Phase 1:

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____
- D. _____

Phase 2:

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____
- D. _____

Phase 3:

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____
- D. _____

Phase 4:

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____
- D. _____

Phase 5:

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____
- D. _____

Day 3: Brainstorm a timeline that reflects a few seasonal consumer trends, product launches, and promotions that you have in mind for the next year.

Jan	Feb
Mar	Apr
May	Jun
Jul	Aug
Sep	Oct
Nov	Dec

Day 4:

What is the next milestone toward which you are working?

Create some D.A.M.N. goals that will take you closer to your next milestone. Choose a deadline. Define the action you must take by that deadline. How will you measure whether the task is complete? What will the negative consequences be of not hitting the goal?

Deadline _____

Actionable _____

Measureable _____

Negative Consequence _____

Day 5

Affirm your goal-setting by filling in the blanks:

I **have the capabilities** necessary to achieve my goal because

_____.
Therefore, _____
whenever _____
so that _____
if _____
in the same way that _____.

I **want** to achieve my goal

Because _____.
Therefore, _____
whenever _____
so that _____
if _____
although _____.

I **will** achieve my goal

because _____.
Therefore, _____
after _____
while _____
whenever _____
so that _____
if _____
although _____
in the same way that _____.

#WORKSHEET 5:

Reinvention & Re-education

1. Pick your two lowest-selling products or services. How can you conduct new market research on them? Brainstorm 3 different ideas and jot them here:

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

2. Spend 20 minutes searching online for any competitors in your niche. Use search engines, hashtag searches on Instagram, Pinterest, and Facebook.

Company A _____

How are they better than you?

Lower Price

Better Quality

Newer Tech

Trendier Packaging

Catchier Marketing

Stellar Customer Service

Other _____

Company B _____

How are they better than you?

- Lower Price
- Better Quality
- Newer Tech
- Trendier Packaging
- Catchier Marketing
- Stellar Customer Service
- Other _____

Company C _____

How are they better than you?

- Lower Price
- Better Quality
- Newer Tech
- Trendier Packaging
- Catchier Marketing
- Stellar Customer Service
- Other _____

3. "Continuing education + *your industry.*" Jot down any courses or events that you discover. Also try searching for "conventions," "expos," and "workshops."

4. Head to any of the free course listings in Appendix I and jot down any that look interesting to you, whether they're directly related to your industry or satellite concepts that could apply to rounding out your craft, your business expertise, or your creativity.

5. Write down two topics in business or entrepreneurship that you wish you knew more about:

Now search for online courses or local workshops in each.

6. What are the current trends in design?

7. What's new in technology? What apps are folks talking about?

WORKSHEET 6:

Customer Service Reflection

Jot down a recent less-than-perfect experience with customers in your work.

How did you react to the situation in the moment?

Did any of your actions break your new Code of Professional Conduct?

How would you feel if an employee did that exact same thing?

What is one tiny adjustment you could make if this situation happens again to set a better example for yourself and your future team for great customer service?

Now, go to each of the following websites to see if your company has a review. Make a note of how many good and bad reviews are on each.

Amazon ___ Positive ___ Negative

Google ___ Positive ___ Negative

Yelp ___ Positive ___ Negative

TripAdvisor ___ Positive ___ Negative

Etsy ___ Positive ___ Negative

Facebook Business Profile ___ Positive ___ Negative

Follow the tips offered in this chapter to respond to 3 of your negative reviews, including contacting the customer to attempt to right the wrong and have the review updated.

For any platforms that have less than 5 reviews or any platform with a negative review, contact 10 customers to ask them to leave a review on that specific platform.

Set a date in your calendar 2 weeks from now to follow up on these requests to see if any reviews have been modified or added.

Set a date in your calendar 6 months from now to contact recent customers for new reviews.