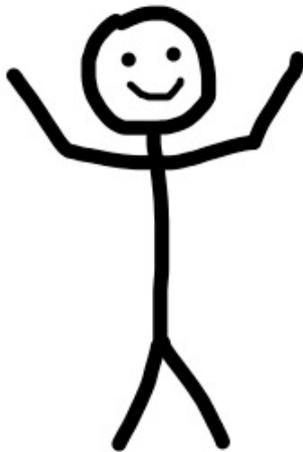
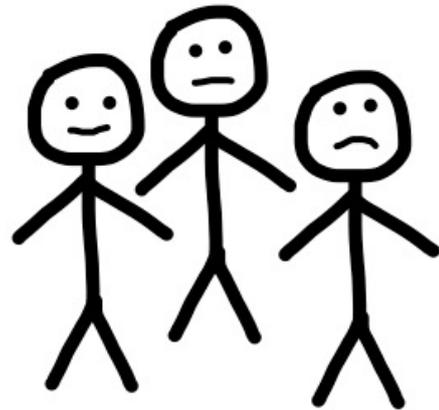


# Problems to Solve

a framework for driving innovation and growth

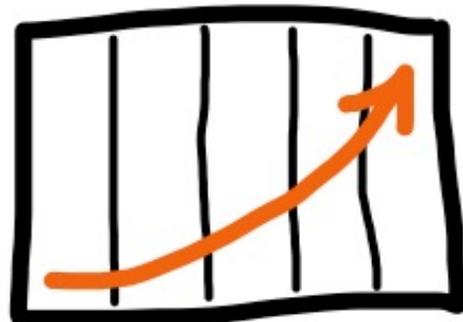
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Learn how to define your target audience and understand the problems they're trying to solve...



...so you can provide products and services that help them to succeed...

...enabling you to grow your business

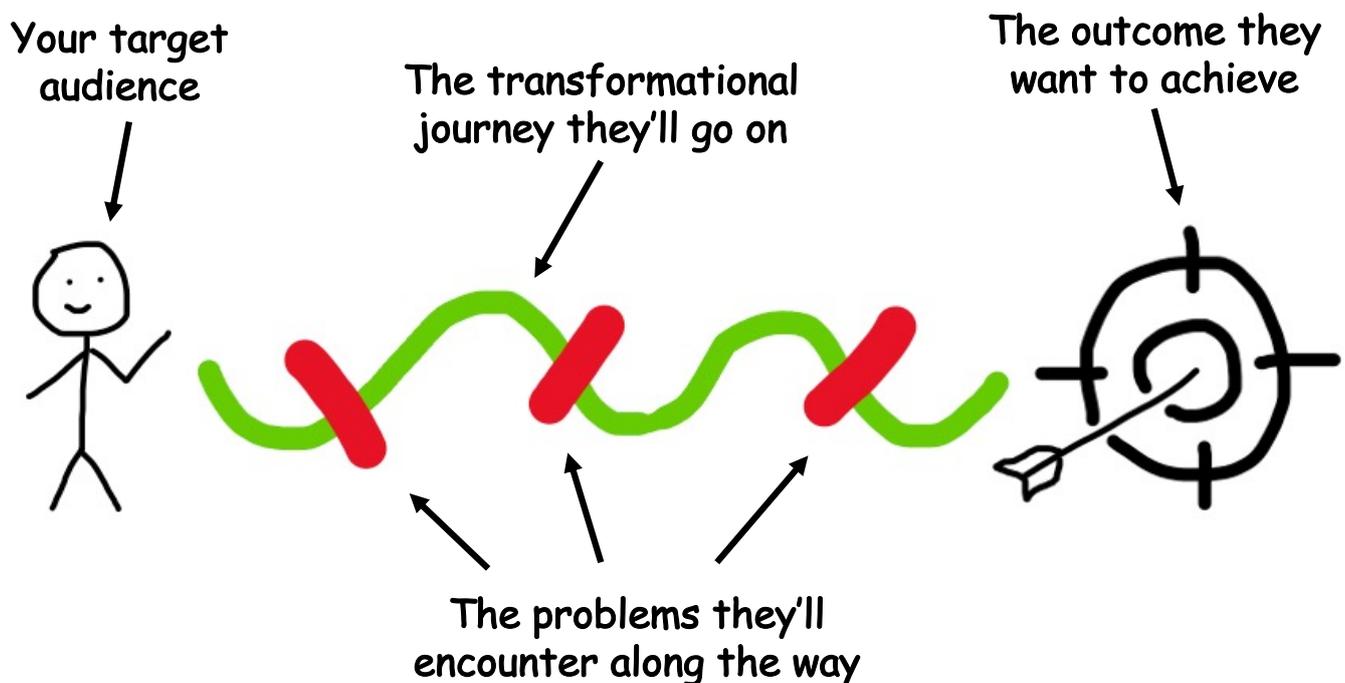


Problems to Solve (PTS) is a framework for identifying opportunities to help your customers achieve their goals.

It works like this...

Your target audience want to achieve an outcome. For example, Dads who want to lose weight.

To reach their outcome they'll go on a transformational journey.

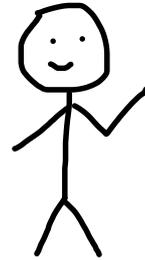


Along that journey they'll encounter **problems** stopping them reaching their goal (e.g. don't understand nutrition, too easily tempted, no time to exercise etc).

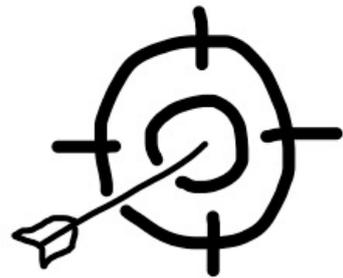
Each of these **Problems to Solve** is a potential opportunity to help your customers.

So here are the key steps:

**Step 1** - identify your target audience



**Step 2** - Engage with your audience to understand their goals



**Step 3** - work backwards from this outcome to map the transformational journey



**Step 4** - understand the problems blocking their progress

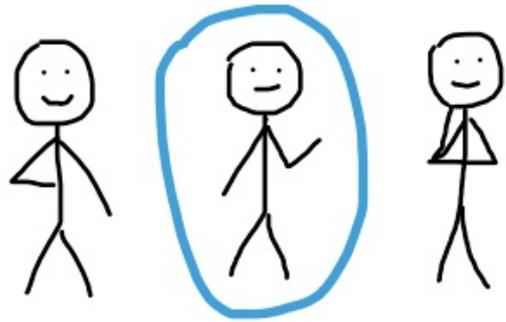


**Step 5** - prioritise the problems and start testing propositions

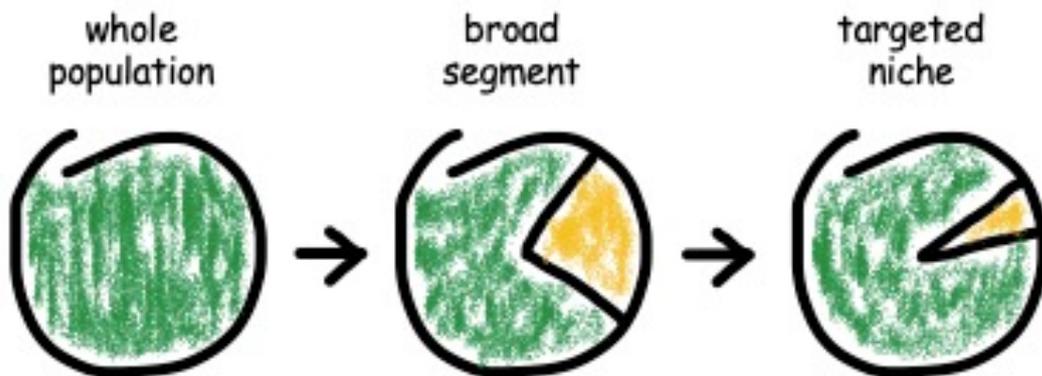


## Step 1 - identify your target audience

The more targeted you are in defining your audience, the easier it is to understand their problems to solve.



So start segmenting to niche down to a very specific audience.



There are many ways to segment your audience:

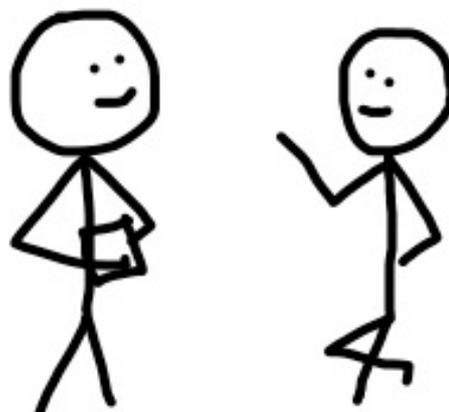
- industry
- company size
- geography
- aspirations
- professional role
- management level
- capability areas
- lifestyles

Keep going until you have a single person in mind who represents the target audience you want to help et voilà - you've created a persona !



## Step 2 - Engage with your audience to understand their goals

To find out the goals and outcomes your audience are striving towards, you gotta get out of the building to go and talk with them and observe what they do.



*'Get out of the building'*

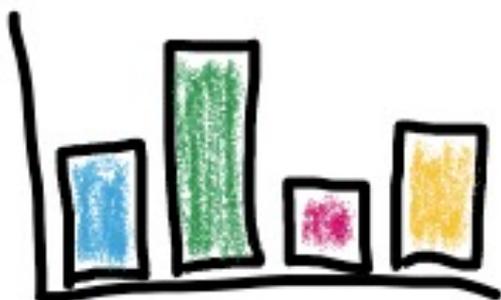
Steve Blank



Use 1-2-1 interviews, contextual observation and workshops to build a picture of your audience's goals.

Understand what motivates them.

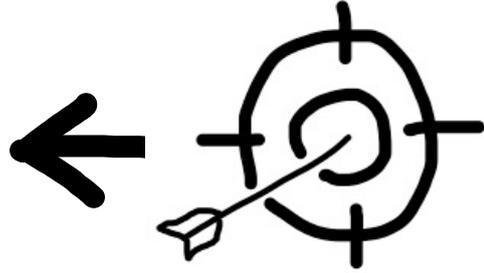
*Why?*



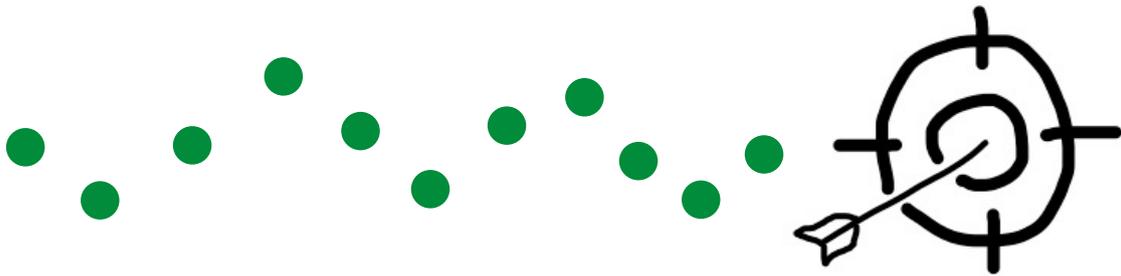
Combine quantitative and qualitative data to improve your insights.

### Step 3 - work backwards from the outcome to map the transformational journey

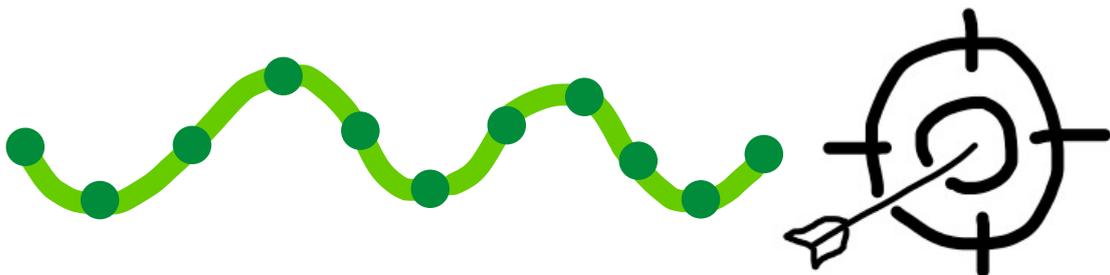
Starting with the outcome, work backwards to map their journey.



Talk to your audience to find out the steps they take.

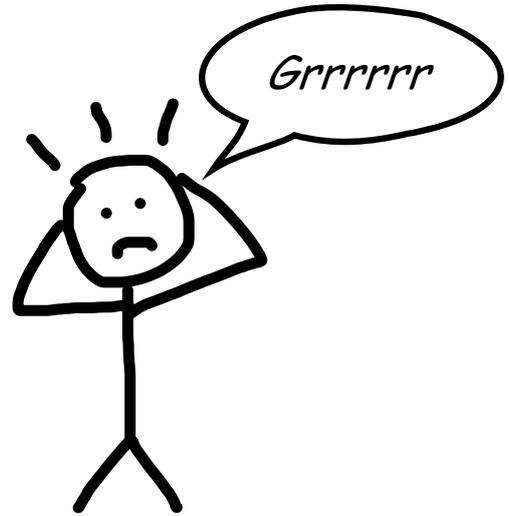


Compile your findings to 'join the dots' and create a picture of the transformational journey.



## Step 4 - find out the problems blocking their progress

As you continue to talk with your customers you'll begin to uncover the blockers, pain points and causes of friction preventing them from reaching their goals.

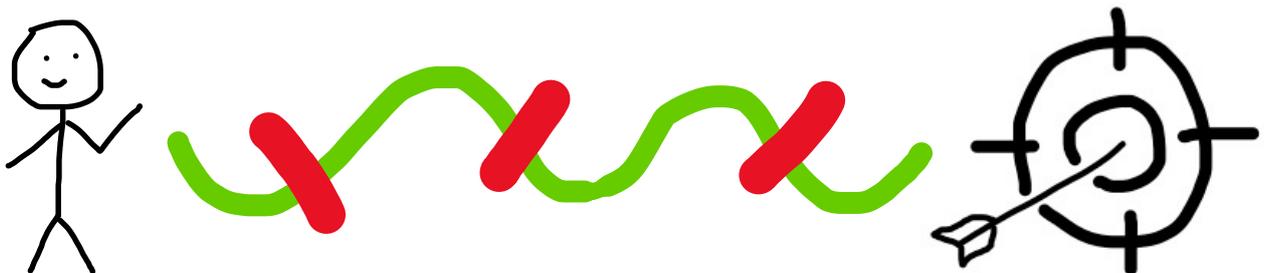


These are the Problems to Solve...



... and some of them will be a gold mine of opportunity!

As you discover more Problems to Solve, map them onto the transformational journey.



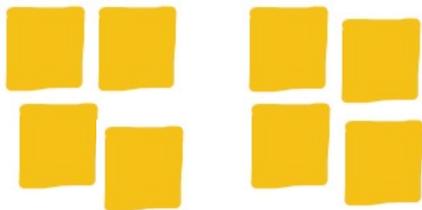
## Step 5 - prioritise the problems and start testing propositions



Once you've identified a set of problems, prioritise the ones you feel are most valuable.

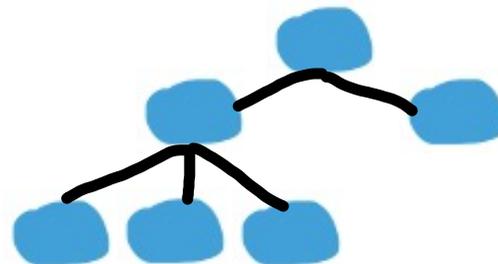
Some useful methods to use include...

Affinity maps



Opportunity Solutions Trees

from Teresa Torres



BELT from Vivek Kumar

**B:** Does the key behaviour already exist?

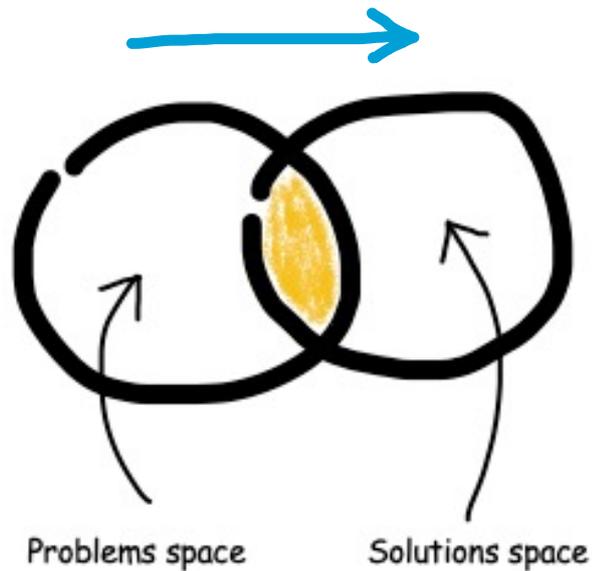
**E:** Is the problem enduring, and does solving it result in consumer satisfaction?

**L:** How deep is the lock-in, and what can you do to counter it?

**T:** How can you solve the transient problems and delight the consumer on their way to getting the job done?

# Testing propositions

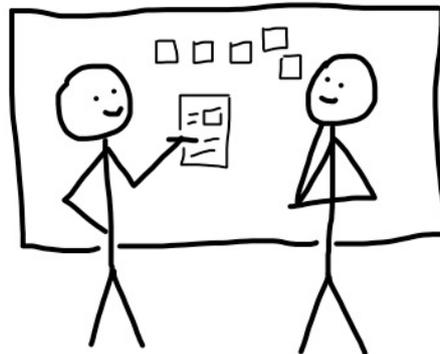
This is where we move from the problems space to the solutions space.



Propositions start out as a problem statement...

**How might we help Dad's understand nutrition?**

... and with some creative thinking...



... become a hypothesis...

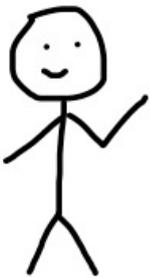
**We believe Dad's can lose weight by developing a nutritious diet habit and peer-to-peer fitness coaching**

... that we can test and iterate

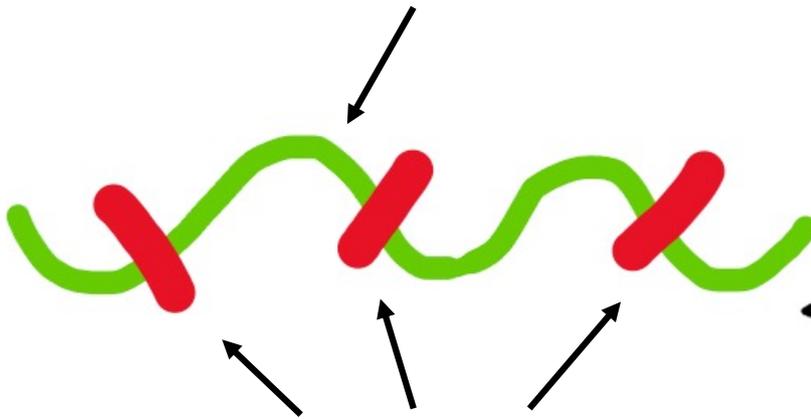
# Wrapping it all up

Finding Problems to Solve is a five step process:

Step 1 - identify your target audience



Step 3 - Map transformational journey they'll go on



Step 2 - Find out the outcome they want to achieve



Step 4 - find out what problems are blocking their progress



Step 5 - prioritise the problems to start testing propositions

Then get creative...

... to test and iterate customer propositions



Problems space

Solutions space

Thank you for reading this zine.

If you enjoyed it, please feel free to share with a friend or print out a copy for the future.

And if you need help with problem discovery and service design, please give me a shout...



Donal Suter  
[www.donaldsuter.com](http://www.donaldsuter.com)  
[@donaldsuter](https://twitter.com/donaldsuter)

#### Credits

Special thanks to Dr Sreemoyee Roy Chowdhury for reviewing and editing.



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