



# Top tips on proposition development

**01**

## Define your market.

This sounds easy to do, but in practice you may think you are in one market, but you're actually competing in a different one. If you are an Osteopath are you selling your services in the market for osteopathic treatment or in the market for relieving pain? Depending on which way you look at it, this can lead to different decisions about who your competitors are, who your target customer is and how you structure your offer. Getting this right can really help focus your thinking, energy and resources.

**02**

## Define your audience.

Avoid at all costs trying to be everything to everyone. The more defined your target is, the easier it is to understand what job you are doing for them and the easier it is to design the offer they will value and pay for. Demographics such as age and location are a start, but it's ideal to build on this with as much detail about lifestyle and attitudes as possible. Be clear on the key job you are helping them with, the key issues they face with getting this job done and what they would value out of a product or service that can help them get it done.

**03**

## Check that customers care about what you're offering.

If customers don't care about or value what you're offering they won't pay for it, so pin down

exactly what feature of a product or service can actually remove an issue that customers face and helps them get a job done. Don't be afraid to do customer research to validate your assumptions along the way. There are lots of inexpensive ways to test out your assumptions these days, such as Survey Monkey. However, it will pay real dividends if you get expert help to structure the questions as this will make sure you get information out of the exercise that you can use to drive decisions.

**04**

## Identify why your offer is different and better and build on this.

It might be better to start with a narrow focus on the strongest key feature and use this to build a specialized offer. You can then build on this specialization to further differentiate your offer. Genuine specialist products and services often command a premium prices.

**05**

## Don't forget to look outwards to the competition.

If you're not doing the job better than the competition, then customers will go elsewhere. Try to make a comprehensive list of competitors, which customers you think they are talking to, how they describe their offers, what elements make up these offers, how they are priced and how they distribute and promote them. Summarise the good and bad things you think they are doing and look for gaps. You'll often be surprised at what you can learn from what your competitors are (or are not!) doing and this can feed into your action plan.