

Busy Doing Your Job, Can't Get Any Work Done

“Your job is an historical artifact. It's a list of tasks, procedures, alliances, responsibilities, to-dos, meetings (mostly meetings) that were layered in, one at a time, day after day, for years. And your job is a great place to hide. Because, after all, if you're doing your job, how can you fail? Get in trouble? Make a giant error? The work, on the other hand, is the thing you do that creates value. This value you create, the thing you do like no one else can do, is the real reason we need you to be here, with us. When you discover that the job is in the way of the work, consider changing your job enough that you can go back to creating value. Anything less is hiding. — Seth Godin, 2016”

By Stan Pohmer



Stan Pohmer

Like many of you, I'm always looking for ideas that can help my business or my clients' businesses. Sometimes I find the ideas online, in books or articles in business and trend publications, sometimes by listening to lectures and presentations. For every 100 ideas I read or hear about, there might be two or three that resonate with me

that have potential application to challenging my thinking or the way I approach things.

Noted author and speaker, Seth Godin, offers a daily blog (like the one above) that's short, pithy and thought provoking, an easy read that I think you might enjoy. The blog is free and you can sign up to get it as an email at www.sethgodin.com.

Godin's delineation between a "job" and "work" really hit home to me because, if we're honest about it, most of us truly do spend the vast majority of our time doing our job — the routine things that allow a company to function, engaged in things that are relatively automatic and don't necessarily require a lot of thought to accomplish.

The job is made up of all those busy tasks that occupy a lot of time. Don't get me wrong; all of these jobs are critically important to keep our business machine in motion and firing on all cylinders, and I'm not denigrating the necessity of getting all of this stuff done, but most of your competition can perform their job as well as you can; doing your job well is the cost of a ticket to play in our game!

"Work," in Godin's vernacular, is what creates value. And value is what sets you apart, both personally and as a company, from your competition. Work is the basis for developing a sense of relationship with your customer.

Think about the classic definition of "value." It is "the regard that something (or someone) is held to deserve; the importance, worth, or usefulness of something (or someone)."

There's a distinct difference in simply providing a product at a price to your customer versus providing an experience and solutions that create value built around a product to your customer.

The work of creating value just doesn't happen without dedication and effort, but in the long run, it's what really counts in building relationships and loyalties!

Levels of Value

Thinking about it, value can be created on three different levels: internal, personal and external.

- **Internal Value:** You can be the catalyst for creating value within your company and among your peers by focusing on things like process improvements, implementing strategic thinking and direction, providing leadership and encouragement, being inspirational, and being a visionary.

In these ways, you are demonstrating your value to your organization.

- **Personal Value:** Though you don't want to be so skilled and unique that you're perceived to be irreplaceable (or you'll never be able to be promoted or moved up in your company), there is benefit to being the only one that can do some critical or essential things (or do them better than anyone else in your organization can). Consider focusing on continuous improvement and learning new skill sets, seeking new challenges and raising the bar, not only for yourself, but for the whole team.
- **External Value:** To me, this is where we need to work hardest to create value because it is focused on the most important asset you have ... your customer. Think in terms of creating things, intrinsic feelings and experiences that truly set you apart from your competition, validates the reasons the consumer shops in your store, feels good about the experiences they have with you.

What can you do to create the value in the consumers' minds that comes from success, satisfaction, a sense of accomplishment and walking away with real solutions to their needs?

Though we can work on creating value opportunities, it is ultimately the customer who determines whether the value we create is relevant to them; at its core, "value" is very personal.

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The Value Proposition

Here are some of the ways a consumer looks at the different faces of value:

- **Functional Value:** This type of value is what a product or service does; it's the solution in response to the customers' needs or problems.
- **Monetary Value:** This is where the function of the price paid is relative to a product or service's perceived worth. This value invites a trade-off between other values and monetary costs.

• **Social Value:** This is the extent to which owning a product or engaging in a service allows the consumer to connect with others.

• **Psychological Value:** This is the extent to which a product allows consumers to express themselves or feel better (see my column, "The IKEA Effect," in the June 2016 issue of Lawn & Garden Retailer).

You've heard this before, but it deserves to be reinforced again ... communicating your value proposition is equally as important as creating

the value itself. A value proposition is a promise of value to be delivered. It's the primary reason a consumer should buy from you. **LGR**

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