

Idea Generation Tool

Hunting Grounds



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WHAT IS HUNTING GROUNDS?

The Hunting Grounds Idea Generation Tool contains two separate worksheets, each with three columns and eight rows to fill in. The first worksheet asks “Negative” questions for each of the eight hunting grounds. You should think very critically about your products, services, or business when writing your answers and notes. The second worksheet asks “Positive” questions about the same eight hunting grounds. You should think optimistically when filling in your answers and notes, and also look to products, services, and businesses outside your own for inspiration.

WHY USE THIS TOOL?

- Learn new ways to define innovation.
- Develop fresh ideas for expanding your business.
- Recognize potential opportunities to satisfy your customers’ unmet needs.
- Gain a significant advantage over some of your competitors.



new product or service



new strategic partnership



new business model



new customer segment



new brand experience



new communication channel



new distribution channel



new business process




FACILITATION GUIDE

NUMBER OF PEOPLE:	Up to 20 people.
SUGGESTED AUDIENCE:	Relevant for all levels of staff and ideally facilitated with employees across all departments.
MATERIALS:	Blank copies of the worksheets for participants. White board if completing the exercise as a group.
SET-UP:	Ask participants to think about issues facing your company and your target customers from both an internal and external perspective.
FACILITATION:	<p>Give each participant a blank worksheet to capture his or her own thoughts and ideas for discussion.</p> <p>If you use a white board, have the facilitator recreate the CAPABILITIES and CONCERNS columns for the group to focus on collectively. The facilitator should then ask “Negative” and “Positive” questions to help the group fill in these columns. Together, they review the answers, using them as a springboard to complete the IDEAS/SOLUTIONS columns.</p> <p>Variation: Participants may also do this in pairs, each taking 20 minutes to complete the CONCERNS column, before exchanging worksheets to complete their partner’s SOLUTIONS column. Repeat for Worksheet #2.</p>
RECOMMENDED TIMING:	30–45 minutes per column. 15 minutes to wrap-up. (Total time = approximately 1.5 hours)



HOW IT WORKS


- 1. Define the Challenge.**
What is it that you want to change?
Are you looking at your business as a whole, or at a particular product or service? Be as specific as possible so you don't limit the scope of the brainstorm.
- 2. Review the Hunting Grounds.**
Refer to the eight hunting grounds on the worksheet.
- 3. Explore the Negatives.**
Record your honest and critical thoughts.
- 4. Generate Possible Solutions.**
Identify solutions to your concerns.
- 5. Rank the Solutions.**
Consider which solutions will have the biggest impact on your business.
- 6. Explore the Positives.**
Record your honest and optimistic thoughts.
- 7. Generate Ideas.**
Identify ideas for your capabilities.
- 8. Rank the Ideas.**
- 9. Discuss Top Solutions and Ideas.**
Compare the top priorities from each list.



Idea Generation Tools
Hunting Grounds

WORKSHEET #1: EXPLORE THE NEGATIVES
Define the Challenge: _____

HUNTING GROUNDS	THOUGHT-STARTERS	CONCERNS	SOLUTIONS	PRIORITY
New Products or Services	What are the most basic problems our customers face? What are the major pain points of our customers that we don't address?			
New Brand Experiences	What do consumers dislike about our brand? What negative words would they use to describe it?			
New Business Model	Which aspects of our current business model are unprofitable, inefficient or incompatible in the marketplace?			
New Distribution Channel	What distribution channel have we previously overlooked? What kind of distribution does our competition have that we are jealous of?			



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SAMPLE WORKSHEET #1: EXPLORE THE NEGATIVES

Find Ways to Improve Our Smartphone Business





In this example, a smartphone company is looking for ways to improve their business. By first thinking about their customers' pain points, their brand's strengths, and the competitive landscape, the company generated ideas for improvement.

HUNTING GROUNDS	THOUGHT-STARTERS	CONCERNS	SOLUTIONS	PRIORITY
New Products or Services 	What are the most basic problems our customers face? What are the major pain points of our customers that we don't address?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short battery life • Unreliable Operating System • Clunky browser • App store too limited 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • License battery technology from NASA • Challenge engineering schools through incentives to create a stable operating system • Partner with a trusted name in Web browsing • Devise a program to transcode apps on other platforms for use with ours, simplifying the process for developers 	5
New Brand Experiences 	What do consumers dislike about our brand? What negative words would they use to describe it?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overpriced • Untrendy • Outdated technology • Anti-social media • Bad customer service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated social media handle and team for customer service • Hire brand image consulting agency 	8 1
New Business Model 	Which aspects of our current business model are unprofitable, inefficient, or incompatible in the marketplace?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sales model • App compatibility — our platform is not easily adaptable by third-party developers • Lack of centralization for manufacturing process causes costly inefficiencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strike exclusive deals with carriers in exchange for percentage of phone users' consumption revenue • If we control more of our value network, we could specifically address customer preferences and improve communication and compatibility between all the links in our supply chain 	6
New Distribution Channel 	What distribution channel have we previously overlooked? What kind of distribution does our competition have that we are jealous of?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black market • Factory outlets • Airport vending machines • Unlocked phones available directly to consumers through competitors' websites • Ultra-recognizable brick-and-mortar retail presence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forge alliances with previously unauthorized resellers • Allow Big Box stores to stock our product in their vending machines • Modify carrier contracts that prevent us from selling unlocked phones directly to online consumers • Commission an up-and-coming urban retail-architect to create flagship store experience 	



SAMPLE WORKSHEET #1: EXPLORE THE NEGATIVES *(continued)*





Find Ways to Improve Our Smartphone Business

HUNTING GROUNDS	THOUGHT-STARTERS	CONCERNS	SOLUTIONS	PRIORITY
New Customer Segment 	What customer segments are currently underserved?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Younger and tech-savvy users, creative professionals, early adopters, and heavy social-media users in developed countries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aggressively recruit employees who fit this criteria 	4
	What segments have competitors ignored that we could explore?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government employees • Low- and middle-income women 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen and market security of our software to further solidify our industry advantage • Conduct market research on women’s mobile habits and eliminate barriers to purchase 	3
New Strategic Partnership 	What has gone wrong in our previous partnerships?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lost retail distribution opportunity when exclusivity deal went bad • Risky partnership failed and alienated customers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retain control of distribution rights throughout the fulfillment process • Initiate pilot programs for untested partnerships 	
	What partnership mistakes have our competitors made?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outsourcing to unethical, foreign EMS • Faulty software integration • Abandoning proven partner to create inferior in-house version 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn vicariously through our competition! 	
New Communication Channel 	Are there any emerging communication channels that we have not used?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Branded Web content • Mobile Video • Gamification • Location-based marketing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team up with an award-winning viral marketing agency to establish our brand in this space • Expand our social strategy to include gamification and point of inspiration messaging 	2
New Business Process 	Which business processes in our organization are the least valuable?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • R&D pipeline is slowed by the approval and prototype process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a special advisory group to streamline idea implementation 	7



SAMPLE WORKSHEET #2: EXPLORE THE POSITIVES





Find Ways to Improve Our Smartphone Business

HUNTING GROUNDS	THOUGHT-STARTERS	CAPABILITIES	IDEAS	PRIORITY
New Products or Services 	What do we offer that no one else does?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strongest security on the market 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a military-grade model with security as its primary function 	4
	Where do we see our customers in 10 years? How can we meet their future needs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cloud computing • Virtual wallets • Increased data consumption 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply our best-in-class protocol for security to software integration for all future products 	3
New Brand Experiences 	What brand experience (outside our industry) have we enjoyed?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lido Deck installation in New York's Grand Central station by upscale cruise line 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pop-up, invite-only shops in neighborhoods with early adopters and creative entrepreneurs, who can interact and provide feedback on beta models 	1 6
	How does an ideal brand experience engage you?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transcends "accessory" to become necessity • Inspires us to become unofficial brand ambassadors, on- and off-line 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elevate our design and OS to rival our competition • Incentivize tastemakers to replace their current smartphone with ours 	
New Business Model 	If we could reinvent the way we do business, what would we do?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Control more of our value network • Acquire an emerging mobile carrier 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Controlling 95% of our value network will facilitate seamless component integration and enable us to become a one-stop mobile empire. 	2
New Distribution Channel 	Working within our current business model, what is the most streamlined and cost-effective way for our products or services to reach customers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring all manufacturing in-house • M&As with app and content providers, handset makers, and network operators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and appraise most promising young companies in our value chain for potential M&As 	5
	What distribution partners could we leverage to expand distribution options?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tap into airport vending market through our Big Box retail partners 		



SAMPLE WORKSHEET #2: EXPLORE THE POSITIVES *(continued)*





Find Ways to Improve Our Smartphone Business

HUNTING GROUNDS	THOUGHT-STARTERS	CAPABILITIES	IDEAS	PRIORITY
New Customer Segment 	Can we apply one of our successful sales strategies to reach a new customer segment?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bulk/corporate pricing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply our corporate pricing model to individuals and families 	
New Strategic Partnership 	Who are our dream partners? What attributes must our partners have? What can we offer a potential partner? What are our differentiating strengths?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic, fair-trade EMS • Established camera manufacturer • Internationally successful foreign carrier with plans to enter domestic market • Market longevity • International market share • Free messaging service • Lucrative patents • Strongest mobile security 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance and differentiate our brand through widely publicized ethical partnerships • Introduce first brand-name camera on a smartphone • Determine a partner in our value network who can benefit from our strengths, and partner with them before our competitors do 	2
New Communication Channel 	How have we been surprised by a brand message in an unexpected place?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taxi ads in bar bathroom stalls • Fake news story as marketing stunt/prankvertising • Twitter-activated vending machine • Train-tunnel video ad installation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retain agencies with proven track records for innovative social, viral, and OOH campaigns 	
New Business Process 	Which business processes in our organization are the most valuable? Can we apply these strengths elsewhere?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal process for growing our patent portfolio • Apply same principles to other departments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remodel HR and new business development to adopt Legal's aggressive approach 	



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New Business Model 	Which aspects of our current business model are unprofitable, inefficient, or incompatible in the marketplace?			
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Define the Challenge: _____

HUNTING GROUNDS	THOUGHT-STARTERS	CONCERNS	SOLUTIONS	PRIORITY
New Customer Segment 	What customer segments are currently underserved? What segments have competitors ignored that we could explore?			
New Strategic Partnership 	What has gone wrong in our previous partnerships? What partnership mistakes have our competitors made?			
New Communication Channel 	Are there any emerging communication channels that we have not used?			
New Business Process 	Which business processes in our organization are the least valuable?			



WORKSHEET #2: EXPLORE THE POSITIVES





Define the Challenge: _____

HUNTING GROUNDS	THOUGHT-STARTERS	CAPABILITIES	IDEAS	PRIORITY
New Products or Services 	What do we offer that no one else does? Where do we see our customers in 10 years? How can we meet their future needs?			
New Brand Experiences 	What brand experience (outside our industry) have we enjoyed? How does an ideal brand experience engage you?			
New Business Model 	If we could reinvent the way we do business, what would we do?			
New Distribution Channel 	Working within our current business model, what is the most streamlined and cost-effective way for our products or services to reach customers? What distribution partners could we leverage to expand distribution options?			



WORKSHEET #2: EXPLORE THE POSITIVES *(continued)*

Define the Challenge: _____

HUNTING GROUNDS	THOUGHT-STARTERS	CAPABILITIES	IDEAS	PRIORITY
New Customer Segment 	Can we apply one of our successful sales strategies to reach a new customer segment?			
New Strategic Partnership 	Who are our dream partners? What attributes must our partners have? What can we offer a potential partner? What are our differentiating strengths?			
New Communication Channel 	How have we been surprised by a brand message in an unexpected place?			
New Business Process 	Which business processes in our organization are the most valuable? Can we apply these strengths elsewhere?			



TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Be Candid

Write down your first, most honest response to the thought-starters. The best ideas come from a starting point of brutal honesty.

Be Flexible

If a thought-starter inspires a related, yet slightly off-topic discussion, see where the ideas take you.

Rank Most Important Solutions First

Set less urgent solutions to the side to better focus on ranking the more critical or interesting solutions first. This will help you better focus on prioritizing your strongest solutions.

Look for Themes

Pay attention to top solutions that emerge from both your Negatives and Positives lists. This is a strong indicator of where to focus your next steps.