

Lesson 12 Worksheet: Finding Your USP

This worksheet will help you identify your Unique Selling Proposition (USP) a.k.a. your Unique and Special Proposition.

If possible, get at least two answers to all of the questions below. Firstly, answer them yourself. Secondly, get someone who knows you and your work well to answer them.

Ideally, you should get your customers or (if you're an employee) your colleagues or boss to answer them as well. This is because a USP is about *other people's perceptions of you*. What makes you remarkable in their eyes may not be obvious to you.

1. What are you better at than anyone else?

2. What do you enjoy doing the most?

3. What do (or could) you provide that no one else is providing?

Remember Rosser Reeves' definition of a USP as something the competition cannot or does not offer. Think about what you could offer that they wouldn't dream of offering, or which would be too difficult for them to offer.

4. What annoys people the most about your industry?

Customers' pet gripes could be an opportunity for you. Big faceless companies with poor customer support create an opportunity for small, responsive, service-oriented companies to pick up business from frustrated customers.

5. What is remarkable about you?

Have you ever discovered people saying nice things about you or your business behind your back? It could be online or offline.

What were they saying? Could that give you a clue to your USP?

6. Do you have an unusual combination of elements?

If you're a lawyer who also happens to be a preacher, or a footballer who also writes novels, you're a member of a select club. Your USP is staring you in the face.

7. Do you have a big personality?

If you're a larger-than-life personality – the kind that your friends and acquaintances can't help remarking on – then that could give you a personality-driven USP.

Don't worry if that's not you, or you'd rather not put yourself in the spotlight so much – there are plenty of other ways to find a USP.

8. Write a USP statement

Once you've sifted through the answers to the questions, write out a USP statement to get it clear in your mind. You probably won't want to use this publicly, but it will serve as a reminder to you (and your colleagues if you work in a team) of what makes you distinctive.

Use the following format:

“I am unique and different because I provide [USP] which no one else in my field provides. No one else can or will provide this because [insert reason].”

E.g. “Wikipedia is unique and different because it provides a free, authoritative online encyclopedia which no one else in the field provides. No one else can or will provide this because commercial publisher can't afford to give their encyclopedias away for free, and it would be futile for another website copy the 'free encyclopedia' format.”