



Guide to creating a customer-centred golf club



This document provides golf clubs with information and tools to increase the appeal of and engagement with their clubs from new, current and potential members. It will help improve the quality of current products and services, and aid in creating new products and experiences. By achieving one, or both of these aims, clubs will be able to increase commercial returns from current revenue streams and open up new ones.

The document outlines a simple approach to the ‘customer-centred’ process. It provides easy to follow steps, all the way from identifying the problem you are trying to solve, to brainstorming potential solutions and creating easy to test prototypes to test at your club.

Phase 1 - framing your challenge

- easy-to-follow steps – page 4
- approach in action – page 5
- example – page 6
- checking out the landscape – page 7

Phase 2 - customer conversations

- easy-to-follow steps – page 9
- approach in action – page 10
- example – page 11

Phase 3 - dive into your learnings

- easy-to-follow steps – page 13
- approach in action – page 14
- example – page 15
- translating insights to opportunities – easy-to-follow steps – page 16
- example – page 17

Phase 4 – brainstorming

- easy-to-follow steps – page 19
- brainstorming rules – page 20

Phase 5 – create a concept

- easy-to-follow steps – page 22

Phase 6 – test your solution

- easy-to-follow steps – page 25

Appendix – blank templates for your use

- framing your challenge – page 27
- conducting customer conversations – page 28
- developing insights – page 29
- translating insights to opportunities – page 30
- creating a concept – slide 31

Phase 1: Framing your challenge

Properly framing your challenge is essential to success.

The first step in adopting a customer-centred approach is to identify a problem your business needs to solve for your customers. Identifying the problem provides focus to your research.

A well-formed challenge statement should identify:

- 1. WHO IS EXPERIENCING THE PROBLEM?** Who is the customer you will be focusing on?
- 2. WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?** What task is the customer trying to accomplish, and what is standing in their way?
- 3. WHERE DOES THE PROBLEM PRESENT ITSELF?** Where is the user when they face this problem? Are there any other people involved?
- 4. WHY DOES IT MATTER?** Why is it important that this problem be solved? What value would a solution bring?

STEPS

1. Start by taking your first shot at writing your challenge statement. It should be short and easy to remember, a single sentence that outlines what you want to do. For us, it always starts with “How might we...” We encourage you to phrase these as questions which set you up to be solution-oriented and to generate lots of ideas.
2. Properly framed challenges statements drive toward ultimate impact, allow for a variety of solutions, and take into account constraints and context. Now try articulating it again with those factors in mind.
3. Now you’ve got a solid draft statement, a quick test the Kinlab team often run on a challenge statement is to see if we can come up with 4-5 possible solutions in just a few minutes. If so, there is a good chance you are on the right track.

Approach in action

We know every golf club in Australia wants to grow its female membership. The challenge facing clubs is directly reflected in these insights:

- Only 20% of club members are female (Golf Participation Report, 2019, Golf Australia)
- Only 12% of the new member demand in 2020 is from females (2020 New Member Demand in Australian Golf Clubs, Golf Australia)

This challenge is one that most golf clubs can identify from looking at their own membership data as well.

In this case we ask ourselves:

1. WHO IS EXPERIENCING THE PROBLEM?

Potential female members of our club.

2. WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?

Our membership offer does not meet their needs.

3. WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Not appealing to females limits the market of potential golfers for our club. We are not attracting and retaining women members of our club.

The problem statement we surfaced from the problem outlined above is:



*We are not attracting
and retaining women
members of our club.*

Something to work with

1. WHAT IS THE PROBLEM YOU ARE TRYING TO SOLVE?

We are not attracting or retaining women members of our club.

2. FIRST SHOT AT FRAMING A CHALLENGE STATEMENT

How might we attract more women members?

3. NOW, STATE THE IMPACT YOU'RE TRYING TO HAVE

We want more women and girls as members of our club

4. WHAT ARE SOME POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS TO YOUR PROBLEM?

Think broadly, you want to start a project with a hunch or two, but make sure you allow for surprising outcomes.

Lower fees for female members in their first year.

Tee times set aside for teenage girls after school.

5. FINALLY, WRITE DOWN SOME CONTEXT AND CONSTRAINTS YOU ARE FACING.

They could be geographical, technological, time-based, or have to do with the customer you are trying to reach

Afternoon tee times are when existing members want to play a round for business and not be on course with teenage girls.

Existing male members might be upset by offering initial membership fees to females only.

6. DOES YOUR ORIGINAL QUESTION NEED A TWEAK? TRY...

How might we attract and retain women and girl members at our club?

Checking out the landscape

Before we dive in, getting up to speed on the challenge will help.

Being customer-centred is all about talking with customers about their challenges, ambitions, and pain points. Now that you have a challenge statement it will be helpful to check-out the context, history, or data surrounding the challenge. This can be done online, by reading books, or by crunching some numbers and it will help you ask the right questions of your customers.

STEPS

1. Start by taking your first shot at writing your challenge statement. Once you've nailed your challenge statement, it's time to start learning about its broader context. You can get up to speed up quickly by exploring the most recent news in the field. Mr. Google will be your best friend to find out what's new.
2. Take a look at other solutions being applied related to your challenge. It can be from the golf industry but we encourage you to look beyond into other industries. Which ones worked? Which ones didn't? Are there any that feel similar to what you might create?
3. Dive into your customer data to find out what is occurring, and how your customers are behaving related to the challenge. Then you will be ready to go 'into the field' and ask them why?

A WORD FROM THE CADDY: FIND THE PARALLEL WORLDS



As you look beyond the golf industry for data and information, we encourage you to look for 'parallel worlds' to your challenge.

This means looking to other places, businesses or industries where your challenge statement is also relevant, and solutions have already been created.

Phase 2: Customer conversations

There's no better way to understand your customers' attitudes, needs and behaviour than by talking with them directly.

Being customer-centred is about getting to the customers you're creating solutions for and hearing from them in their own words. Research-focused conversations can be a bit daunting, but by following these steps below you'll unlock all kinds of insights and understanding that you'll never get sitting behind your desk. Whenever possible, engage in customer conversations in the spaces where customers are experiencing your services. You can learn so much about a customer's mindset, behaviour, and lifestyle by talking with them out on the course, in the restaurant, or in the pro shop.

STEPS

1. No more than two staff members should engage in a research- focused conversation so as to not overwhelm the customer.
2. Create a set of questions you'd like to ask. Start by asking broad questions about the customer's life before asking more specific questions that relate directly to your challenge.
3. During the customer conversations make sure to capture (e.g. write down, audio record – be sure to get permission first) exactly what the person says, not what you think they might mean. Most people only tell you part of the story with an answer. Keep asking “why?” to uncover their feelings.
4. Remember, what you hear is only one data point. Be sure to observe the person's body language, and the objects they have. Take pictures, again, be sure to get permission first.

Approach in action

Thankfully, a golf course is a perfect setting for talking to golfers. Many of these conversations already happen in the clubhouse and proshop. By simply adding some intent about what you want to learn, you can add research to these customer service moments.

Q: How was your round today?

A: It was ok.

Q: Why only ok?

A: I played pretty average.

Q: Why do you think you didn't have your best day?

A: From the first tee shot really, I topped it and just didn't feel confident all day.

Q: Why a lack of confidence?

A: I hit it really well on the range. I met the group I was paired with on the tee and they all ripped their drives from the men's tee.

Q: Why do you think you were unable to transfer your ball striking from the range to the course?

A: I feel much more confident playing with people I know. When paired with people I don't know, I play average.

WE CALL IT CLUE CAPTURING

Put some post-it notes and a pen in your pocket and write down anything interesting you uncover. Focus on:

- Quotes
- Descriptions of what you have observed people doing
- Attitudes or behaviors you noticed

A WORD FROM THE CADDY: THE RULE OF FIVE WHYS



To get the depth of understanding that will help you create impactful solutions, we encourage you to use the 'rule of 5 whys'.

To do this, for every line of questioning deep dive by asking, "why?". Using this method will help you get to the root cause of the attitude, perception or belief shared by the customer.

Something to work with

Open & General Questions

What are some broad questions you can ask to open the conversation and warm the customer up?

HOW DID YOU HIT THEM TODAY?

**I HAVE NOT SEEN YOU AROUND THE CLUB AS MUCH RECENTLY.
WHAT HAS BEEN KEEPING YOU BUSY?**

ARE YOU ENJOYING A ROUND AS MUCH AS YOU USED TO?

Experiential Questions

What are some questions that can help you understand the customer's attitudes, needs and behaviours?

WHAT HELPS YOU FIT A ROUND OF GOLF IN YOUR WEEK?

HOW CAN WE MAKE IT EASIER FOR YOU TO GET THAT ROUND IN?

**HOW CAN WE ENTICE YOU TO BRING YOUR DAUGHTER TO THE
CLUB WITH YOU MORE OFTEN?**

Phase 3: Dive into your learnings

Now that you've gathered lots of information, here's how you share it with your team and put it to use.

You've got notes, photos, impressions, and quotes, it's time to start making sense of them. Because teamwork is so critical to creating customer-centred solutions, we encourage you download your learnings as a group. The real work starts here, as this varied and messy information needs to be analysed and consolidated into themes.

STEPS

1. As a group, take turns downloading. Start by getting rid of other distractions and sitting in a circle.
2. Everyone takes a turn to share and discuss their findings. They should describe who they met, what they saw, the facts they gathered, and their impressions of the experience.
3. Move the most compelling, common, and inspiring quotes, stories or ideas to a new board and sort them into categories.
4. Look for patterns and relationships between your categories and move the post-its around as you continue grouping. The goal is to identify key themes and then to translate them into strategic opportunities for solutions.

A WORD FROM THE CADDY: CREATE A CLUE WALL



Assign a space in your office area for a 'clue wall'. Place your challenge statement on your wall and encourage your team to gather together clues over a set period (e.g. one week) and place them on the wall. Then when your clue wall is full, dive into your learnings.

Approach in action

Your Goal

Your themes should identify barriers, pain-points and opportunities from the clues you have captured. For example, coming back to our challenge statement of women and girls' membership:



Something to work with

Write your challenge statement

How might we attract and retain women and girl members at our club?

THEME: Women and girls don't feel like they belong in the clubhouse

INSIGHTS:

- The clubhouse feels like a sports bar
- All the pictures on the walls are of old men
- I bought my shoes at Drummond, there is no ladies range here

THEME: Women and girls don't feel like they have equal access to the club

INSIGHTS:

- All the Saturday morning tee times are groups of men
- The women and girls' competitions are midweek, and not suitable for women and girls in full time work or study
- Some of the red tees seem like an afterthought

Translate your insight statements into opportunities for design by reframing them as ‘How Might We...?’ questions.

By creating insight statements you’ve identified problem areas that pose challenges to the customers you’re designing for. Now, try reframing your insight statements as ‘How Might We...?’ questions to turn those challenges into opportunities for customer-centred solutions. We use the ‘How Might We...?’ format because it suggests that a solution is possible, and because they offer you the chance to answer them in a number of ways.

STEPS

1. Start by looking at the insight statements that you’ve created. Try rephrasing them as questions by adding ‘How might we’ at the beginning.
2. Now take a look at your ‘How Might We...?’ question and ask yourself if it allows for a variety of solutions. If it doesn’t, broaden it. Your “How Might We...” should generate a number of possible answers and will become a launchpad for your brainstorm.
3. Finally, make sure that your ‘How Might We’s?’ aren’t too broad. It’s a tricky process but a good ‘How Might We...?’ should give you both a narrow enough frame to let you know where to start your brainstorm, but also enough breadth to give you room to explore wild ideas.

Something to work with

Create 'How might we...?' statements

INSIGHT: I bought my shoes at Drummond, there is no ladies range here

HOW MIGHT WE: Offer a quality range of women and girls clothing and equipment for purchase at the club?

INSIGHT: The women and girls' competitions are midweek, and not suitable for women and girls in full time work or study

HOW MIGHT WE: Adapt the competition scheduling to allow more women and girls to also play on the weekend?

INSIGHT: All the pictures on the walls are of old men

HOW MIGHT WE: Decorate the clubhouse in a way that reflects gender balance?

Phase 4: Brainstorming

Get your team excited and surface a bundle of innovative ideas.

Use brainstorms to tap into a broad body of understanding and creativity. We encourage you to promote openness, lots of ideas, and creativity over immediate feasibility. Brainstorms work best when the group is positive, optimistic, and focused on generating as many ideas as possible.

STEPS

1. Pass out pens and post-its to everyone and have a large piece of paper, wall, or whiteboard on which to stick them.
2. Review the Brainstorm Rules before you start.
3. Pose the question or prompt you want the group to answer. Encourage everyone to individually write down their ideas.
4. Then encourage each individual to describe their ideas to the group as they put their post-it on the wall or board.
5. Generate as many ideas as possible.

A WORD FROM THE CADDY: SILENCE IS GOLDEN



Always start your brainstorming session with all participants writing down their ideas onto post-its in silence for 10—15mins. Then have each person share their ideas with the group.

This gives the introverts in the group the opportunity to share their ideas early and get engaged. The extroverts were engaged the minute you sat down.

At Kinlab we have a few rules that help unlock the creative power of a brainstorming session.

Brainstorming rules

1. VALUE EVERYONES VOICE

You never know where a good idea is going to come from. The key is to make everyone feel like they can say the idea on their mind and allow others to build on it.

2. ENCOURAGE ‘OUT-THERE’ IDEAS

These ideas can often give rise to creative leaps. When devising ideas that are wacky or out there, we tend to imagine what we want without the constraints of technology or materials.

3. BUILD ON THE IDEAS OF OTHERS

Being positive and building on the ideas of others takes some skill. In conversation, we try to use “yes, and...” Instead of “but.”

4. STAY FOCUSED ON THE TOPIC

Try to keep the discussion on target, otherwise you may diverge beyond the scope of what you’re trying to design for.

5. ONE CONVERSATION AT A TIME

Your team is far more likely to build on an idea and make a creative leap if everyone is paying full attention.

6. QUANTITY OVER QUALITY

Aim for as many new ideas as possible. Get the ideas out quickly and build on the best ones.

Phase 5: Create a concept

Move your handpicked ideas into a solution concept, one that you'll refine and push forward.

Armed with themed analysis of the thoughts, feelings and attitudes of your customers you can now move to solving problems and increasing the moments they enjoy. Using tools for the ideas process ensure we continue to operate with structure which will benefit the next stage in the process as we generate concise and targeted ideas.

This is the moment where you move from problem to solution and it drives everything forward.

STEPS

1. Take the ideas that you bundled and put them up on the wall on post-its and as a group select the ideas you'd like to move forward to concepting.
2. Keep referring back to your 'How might we...?'. Are you answering it? Are there elements missing in your solution? What else can you incorporate to come up with a great solution?
3. Pose the question or prompt you want the group to answer. Encourage everyone to individually write down their ideas.
4. Create an elevator pitch for each idea that has moved forward. If you had 2mins with the customer how would you pitch it to them so they would buy?
5. There's a bit of trial and error. Creating a concept means you'll probably create a couple that don't work out. That's fine.

A WORD FROM THE CADDY: GET AN EARLY LOOK



After you have created your solution concepts on paper, set up a wall space where customers can take a look. Provide some post-its so they jot down their thoughts and feedback and leave them with your ideas.

Use this feedback to continue to move your concepts forward.

Something to work with

Elevator pitch

CONCEPT NAME:

PROBLEM IT SOLVES:

TARGET CUSTOMER:

KEY ATTRIBUTES OF THE SOLUTION:

GIVE IT A CREATIVE TAGLINE:

Phase 6: Test your solution

Testing your solution (we call it ‘live prototyping’) is the opportunity to implement your solution for a couple of weeks (or days) in your club.

Live prototyping gives you a chance to test your solution in club conditions. It can run from a few days to a few weeks, and is a chance to learn how your solution works in the field. It’s all about understanding the feasibility and viability of your solution concept.

STEPS

1. Once you’ve decided on what you’re testing, sort out the logistics. Do you need a physical space, equipment, signage or anything else?
2. Never stop iterating. If something went wrong on Day 1, try a new approach on Day 2. Live prototypes are all about learning quickly, iterating on the fly and pushing your solution closer and closer to the real thing.
3. As always, capture feedback from your customers.
4. Once you have completed your testing, package all that you’ve learnt and use it to move your solution concept to a final solution ready to implement in the club.
5. Implement your solution, but be constantly learning. Monitor, evaluate and iterate your solution as more customers engage with it.

A WORD FROM THE CADDY: DON’T TAKE IT PERSONALLY



Testing new solutions is risky business. The solutions you test won’t receive glowing feedback from everyone who touches them.

Use all customer feedback, whether positive or negative, as fuel for a solution that will improve the experience of your customers and help your club be successful into the future.

KINLAB



GolfAustralia

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Framing your challenge

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6. DOES YOUR ORIGINAL QUESTION NEED A TWEAK? TRY...

Conducting customer conversations

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What are some broad questions you can ask to open the conversation and warm the customer up?

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Developing insights

Write your challenge statement

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THEME:

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INSIGHTS:

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THEME:

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INSIGHTS:

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Translating insights to opportunities

Create 'How might we...?' statements

INSIGHT:

HOW MIGHT WE:

INSIGHT:

HOW MIGHT WE:

INSIGHT:

HOW MIGHT WE:

Creating a concept

Elevator pitch

CONCEPT NAME:

PROBLEM IT SOLVES:

TARGET CUSTOMER:

KEY ATTRIBUTES OF THE SOLUTION:

GIVE IT A CREATIVE TAGLINE:
