

HOW TO CREATE

★ BUYER PERSONAS ★

FOR YOUR BUSINESS



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What Are Buyer Personas?

Buyer personas are fictional and generalized representations of your ideal customers. They help you understand your customers (and prospective customers) better, and make it easier for you to tailor content to the specific needs, behaviors, and concerns of different groups.

The strongest buyer personas are based on market research as well as on insights you gather from your actual customer base (through surveys, interviews, etc.). Depending on your business, you could have as few as one or two personas, or as many as 10 or 20. (Note: If you're new to personas, start small! You can always develop more personas later if needed.)

What Are Negative Personas?

Whereas a buyer persona is a representation of an *ideal* customer, a negative or “exclusionary” -- persona is a representation of who you *don’t* want as a customer.

This could include, for example, professionals who are too advanced for your product or service. Maybe they are not the decision maker you are looking for like students who are only engaging with your content for research/knowledge.

There are potential customers who are just too expensive to acquire (because of a low average sale price, their propensity to churn, or their unlikeliness to purchase again from your company) or they require too much hand holding making the customer unprofitable. It is just important to know who you don’t want as a customer as knowing who you do want.

How Can You Use Personas?

At the most basic level, personas provide you direction to allow you to personalize and target your marketing for different segments of your audience. For example, instead of sending the same lead nurturing emails to everyone in your database, you can segment by buyer persona and tailor your messaging according to what you know about those different personas. If you take the time to create negative personas, you'll have the added advantage of being able to segment out the "bad apples" from the rest of your contacts, which can help you achieve a lower cost-per-lead and cost-per-customer (and see higher sales productivity).



How Can You Use Personas?

When combined with lifecycle stage (i.e. how far along someone is in your sales cycle), buyer personas also allow you to map out and create highly targeted content. It also allows you to plan (what channel to use) where they most likely will find you.



How Do You Create Buyer Personas?

Buyer personas are created through research, surveys, and interviews of your target audience. That includes a mix of customers, prospects, and those outside of your contact database who might align with your target audience.

Here are some practical methods for gathering the information you need to develop personas:

- Interview customers either in person or over the phone to discover what they like about your product or service. I like using a recording device like an app off my phone, but make sure you ask them if its OK to record your conversation. Tell them what you are using it for marketing research – which is true.
- Look through your CRM (Customer Relations Management) contacts database to uncover trends about how certain leads or customers find and consume your content.

How Do You Create Buyer Personas?

(continued)

- When creating forms to use on your website, use form fields that capture important persona information. (For example, if all of your personas vary based on company size, ask each lead for information about company size on your forms. You could also gather information on what forms of social media your leads use by asking a question about social media accounts.)
- Take into consideration your sales team's feedback on the leads they are interacting with most. (What types of sales cycles does your sales team work with? What generalizations can they make about the different types of customers you serve best?)
- Remember this is a living document that grows as your knowledge grows.

Persona Name

BACKGROUND:

- Basic details about persona's role
- Key information about the persona's company
- Relevant background info, like education or hobbies

DEMOGRAPHICS:

- Gender
- Age Range
- HH Income (Consider a spouse's income, if relevant)
- Urbanicity (Is your persona urban, suburban, or rural?)

IDENTIFIERS:

- Buzz words
- Mannerisms



Persona Name

GOALS:

- Persona's primary goal
- Persona's secondary goal

CHALLENGES:

- Primary challenge to persona's success
- Secondary challenge to persona's success

HOW WE HELP:

- How you solve your persona's challenges
- How you help your persona achieve goals



Persona Name

REAL QUOTES:

- Include a few real quotes – taken during your interviews – that represent your persona well. This will make it easier for employees to relate to and understand your persona.

COMMON OBJECTIONS:

- Identify the most common objections your persona will raise during the sales process. Once identified they can be addressed and prepared for when sales people are in the field.



Persona Name

MARKETING MESSAGING:

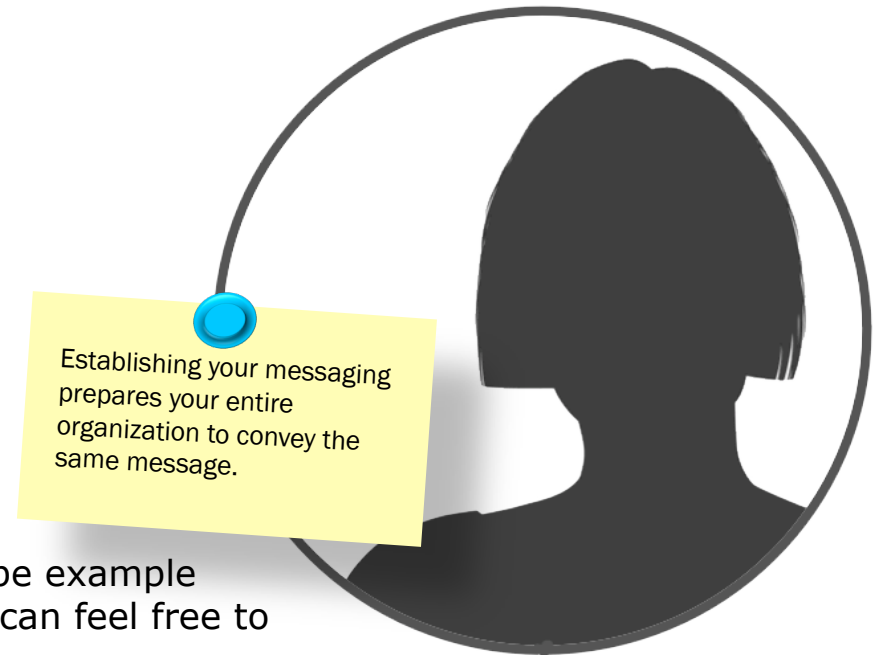
- How should you describe your solution to your persona?


ELEVATOR PITCH:

- Make describing your solution simple and consistent across everyone in your company. Write it down – post it. Don't make it hard to find or repeat. Practice it until it is like remembering your name.

In the next few pages we will look at proto-type example of what a buyer persona should look like. You can feel free to add or subtract as you see fit.

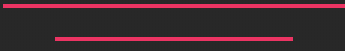
This exercise is about gaining insight from the perspective of the buyer.





In the next few pages we will look at prototype example of what a buyer persona should look like. You can feel free to add or subtract as you see fit.

This exercise is about gaining insight from the perspective of the buyer.



Sample Sally

BACKGROUND:

- Head of Human Resources
- Worked at the same company for 10 years;
- worked her way up from HR Associate
- Married with 2 children (10 and 8)

DEMOGRAPHICS:

- Skews female
- Age 30-45
- Dual HH Income: \$140,000
- Suburban

IDENTIFIERS:

- Calm demeanor
- Probably has an assistant screening calls
- Asks to receive collateral mailed/printed



Sample Sally

GOALS:

- Keep employees happy and turnover low
- Support legal and finance teams

CHALLENGES:

- Getting everything done with a small staff
- Rolling out changes to the entire company

HOW WE HELP:

- Make it easy to manage all employee data in one place
- Integrate with legal and finance teams' systems



Sample Sally

REAL QUOTES:

- "It's been difficult getting company-wide adoption of new technologies in the past."
- "I don't have time to train new employees on a million different databases and platforms."
- "I've had to deal with so many painful integrations with other departments' databases and software."

COMMON OBJECTIONS:

- I'm worried I'll lose data transitioning to a new system.
- I don't want to have to train the entire company on how to use a new system.



Sample Sally

MARKETING MESSAGING:

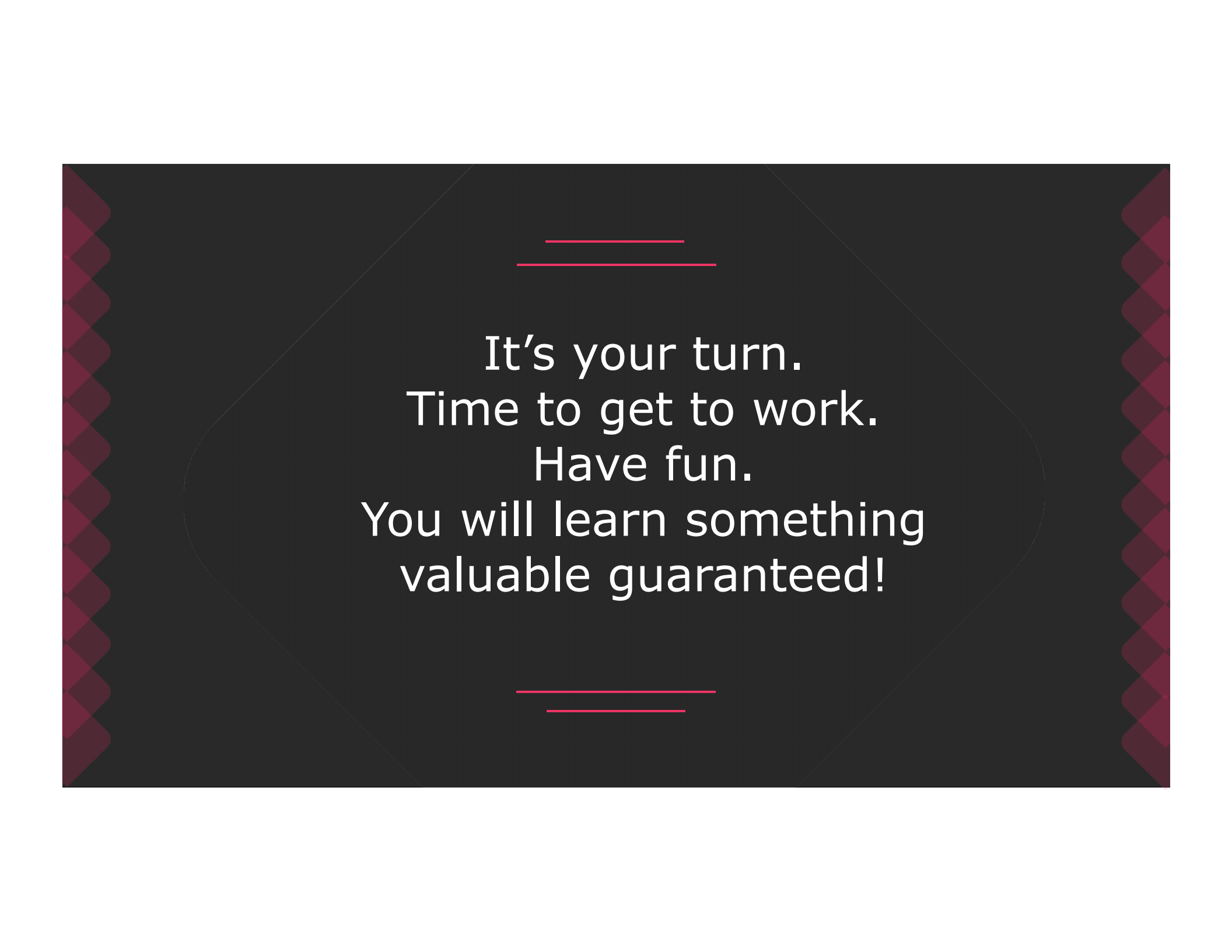
- Integrated HR Database Management

ELEVATOR PITCH:

- We give you an intuitive database that integrates with your existing software and platforms, and lifetime training to help new employees get up to speed quickly.

You can use the following 4-slide template to organize your persona data. Good luck and have fun.





It's your turn.
Time to get to work.
Have fun.
You will learn something
valuable guaranteed!

Name of Persona	Persona 1
BACKGROUND Job? Career path? Family?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job • Career Path • Family life
DEMOGRAPHIC Male or female? Age? Income? Location?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender • Age • Income • Location
IDENTIFIERS Demeanor? Communication preferences?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demeanor • Communication Preference

Name of Persona	Persona 1
GOALS Primary goal? Secondary goal?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary Goal • Secondary Goal
CHALLENGES Primary challenge? Secondary challenge?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary Challenge • Secondary Challenge
WHAT CAN WE DO ...to help our persona achieve their goals? ...to help our persona overcome their challenges?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What we can do point 1 • What we can do point 2

Name of Persona	Persona 1
REAL QUOTES About goals, challenges, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quote 1 • Quote 2 • Quote 3
COMMON OBJECTIONS Why wouldn't they buy your product/service?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common Objection 1 • Common Objection 2

Name of Persona	Persona 1
MARKETING MESSAGING How should you describe your solution to your persona?	• [Type in your marketing message]
ELEVATOR PITCH Sell your persona on your solution!	• [Type in your elevator pitch]



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