

WHAT DO YOU DO?

How to Tell People What You Do in 3 Easy Steps



A WHITE PAPER

Contents

2 **What Do You Do?**

3 **The Problem**

What's the Big Deal?

4 **The Solution**

5 **How To Build A 'What Do You Do' Phrase That Works**

First - The Opener

Next - Your Solution

6 **Finish - The After Effect**

7 **Case Study**

The Sales Team Free-For-All

8 **Concluding Summary**

9 **About Your Sponsor**



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2

What Do You Do?

Every industry, from non-profits to Fortune 500s, benefits from having a strong, company-wide answer to “what do you do.”

“I never know what to say to people when they ask me what I do.” This is the most common reaction to the question that everyone hears when meeting someone new.

The most successful companies and salespeople have an excellent answer prepared for the “What do you do?” question. If you stumble and fumble around for an answer when you’re asked this question, it’s like taking the long path around. Get straight to your destination with a perfect answer every time.

This guide will help you get clarity and create a succinct phrase that not only answers that question, but also allows your ideal customers to hear what you offer in a way that they can see clearly how your solution would help them.

The first thing to realize is that your answer is not an “I” statement. Overcome the urge to talk about yourself and you’re on your way. Try creating a phrase that includes:

- ✓ **The Problem** – Define the problem your customers face.
- ✓ **The Solution** – Define the solution your product or service provides.
- ✓ **The Life After** – Paint a quick picture of what life is like after your solution.

Every industry, from non-profits to Fortune 500s, benefits from having a strong, company-wide answer to “what do you do.” Having something that everyone from the sales team to the receptionist understands as your go-to-explanation keeps brand messaging consistent.

Let the next few pages guide you to creating an effective, quick, profit-building explanation of what you do; and you’ll never have to fumble through answering that question again.

3

The Problem

Why do people struggle so much with explaining what they do? There are common misconceptions about what the difficulty is. People blame not being to tell others what they do on:



Notice that most of these excuses focus on the self. The greatest misconception about answering the "what do you do" question is thinking the response is all about you!

It's not about you. The real problem is not taking the time to create a go-to "elevator pitch" about your customer's reality.

What's the big deal?

What's the difference if you stumble through a description of what you do that takes ten minutes, or you take one minute to explain it with a quick phrase? The difference could mean big money left on the table.

If you do not have clarity in what you do and cannot recite a simple, compelling phrase that says exactly what you do, you risk your potential client either tuning out or not understanding what you do. Losing their attention and interest means they won't see themselves as your customer.

Vicki recently discovered a passion for a new home-based business selling clothing. Her background was in nursing, and she found that the sales part of her new business made her nervous. She was introduced to this method of creating a "what do you do" phrase that put the focus on her customers. She gradually lost her fear of "selling" and soon was one of the top consultants in her area.

4

The Solution

Create a repeatable phrase that answers three questions:

1. The problem
2. Your solution
3. The after effect

Make a point to use this phrase throughout your enterprise. Everyone from the receptionist to the CEO needs to know it and use it on a daily basis. Put it on your marketing materials, on your business cards, on your website, and on your social media properties. The clearer you are, the more effective that phrase is at reaching out to your ideal customers.

➔ Add your message to your business card. It will help reinforce the message consistency with each employee.

➔ Print 'What We Do' signs to place strategically around your place of business in both customer and employee only facing areas.



5

How To Build A 'What Do You Do' Phrase That Works

Add your new phrase to your brochures and flyers in a prominent location. You'll have a clear, emotional connection with your reader, enticing them to dig into the meat and potatoes of the rest of your content.

You may be wondering what the difference is between a 'what do you do' phrase and a tag line.

A tagline is meant to be a few quick words about your value proposition. It is a sound byte. This is not what we're going to focus on. We will concentrate on a phrase with greater value. Think of it like an attention-grabbing headline in social media. You want to create a phrase that makes people want more.

First - The Opener

Build your description with an opening that pinpoints the pain that your customers feel before they find you. What is the problem?

Avoid the temptation to talk about yourself. Many people start their introduction with the obvious description of themselves.

For example, don't answer like this:

Them: *What do you do?*

You: *I'm in IT.*

Remember: it's not about you! Instead, think of the pain point that your customers have and start with that.

Them: *What do you do?*

You: *Small businesses might not have the budget for in-house IT management.*

Start your introduction with a problem that you solve every day. The pain point of small companies without IT people is that they still need IT support.

Next - Your Solution

The meat of your phrase is the solution to their problem. What is it that you actually provide? The second part of building your description is to tell them how you solve the problem.

Keep it simple.

Them: *What do you do?*

You: *Small businesses might not have the budget for in-house IT management. That's where I come in. I take care of IT needs of small businesses on an as-needed basis, on the phone or in person.*

6

Notice that we didn't go into a long menu of services, just the overall solution to your client's problem. Here it's okay to acknowledge that you are part of the solution, but make it quick and to the point.

Finish - The After Effect

The last piece of the puzzle is to give them an idea of what life is like after becoming your customer, like the icing on the cake. End with an emotional sell.

Them: *What do you do?*

You: *Small businesses might not have the budget for in-house IT management. That's where I come in. I take care of IT needs of small businesses on an as-needed basis, on the phone or in person. It gives them the peace of mind that their files are backed up and technology works like it needs to.*

In the life after, we made sure to use emotional words like peace of mind to help describe a bright future for the client. It is one way to help solidify the enticement of "work with me, and you'll feel like that too."

Remember: it's not about you! Instead, think of the pain point that your customers have and start with that.

7

Case Study

The Sales Team Free-For-All

A young tech company with a cloud-based product for real estate agents was struggling to grab a foothold in their market. They had salespeople in four different regions of the country that worked out of their homes. The company had a yearly sales meeting where the team would be together in the same room, but most of the year they were only in contact with each other when necessary.

When asked “What do you do?” each of the salespeople had a different response. Each sales person started creating their own way of describing the company they worked for and the software solution they had. Soon the company realized that their customers sometimes didn’t really know what they were buying. After a few lucrative contracts had been broken, the company had to make some changes.

**Unclear messaging can lead to dissatisfied customers.
Do they really know what they’re buying?**

The separation became a problem for the company, as each of the salespeople were inconsistent at brand messaging. Among a number of different branding solutions, they implemented a solution to bring the team into better communication with a solid “What do you do” message.

This phrase became everyone’s message. The accountants knew it, the programmers knew it, and the marketing team branded it on everything.

The new “What do you do?”

The tech company was able to develop this new “What do you do?” message:

Real estate agents are not web developers, yet most online listing services make it hard to upload new houses for sale. We make it as easy as drag and drop so agents can focus on selling homes and making a living.

“I fought it at first,” said Russell, the company’s leader in sales, “but then I started to notice that the leads the market developers were giving me were better, they seemed to already understand the product better, and my job got a whole lot easier.”

Consistent messaging created increased lead generation by the market development team, increased inquiries on website forms, increased shares in social media, and increased overall sales. When the whole team is on board, the whole team wins.

8

Concluding Summary

Give employees a consistent message and they can't help but build your brand!

Don't overlook the impact of a consistent message.

The people on the sales team aren't the only people on staff who need to tell others what they do. By giving your employees this tool, you turn accountants into lead generators, developers into brand ambassadors, or receptionists into market developers.

Whether you are a company of one or have hundreds of employees, brand messaging is everything. "What do you do" must be more than an "I" statement. Turn your focus to your customers, and only then will the person you're talking to be able to see themselves in your customers' shoes.

About Your Sponsor

As your local print service, we strive to always have the resources you need to make your business grow. This white paper, along with our other design, digital, and print services, are here to support you and your brand messaging.

Contact us with all of your print and design needs. We will walk you through the creative process and give you great advice and excellent service along the way. We hope to build a long and lasting relationship with you and are here to fulfill your print and marketing needs.

When you are ready to add your newly minted “What do you do” phrase to your print materials and promotional items, we have the creative staff to get it done quickly and on budget. We are looking forward to earning and keeping your business.

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