Solution validation toolguide

Description of the tool: "Solution validator

Once you have found a problem worth solving, it is time to focus on the solution that will solve that specific problem, and will do so better than other existing solutions.

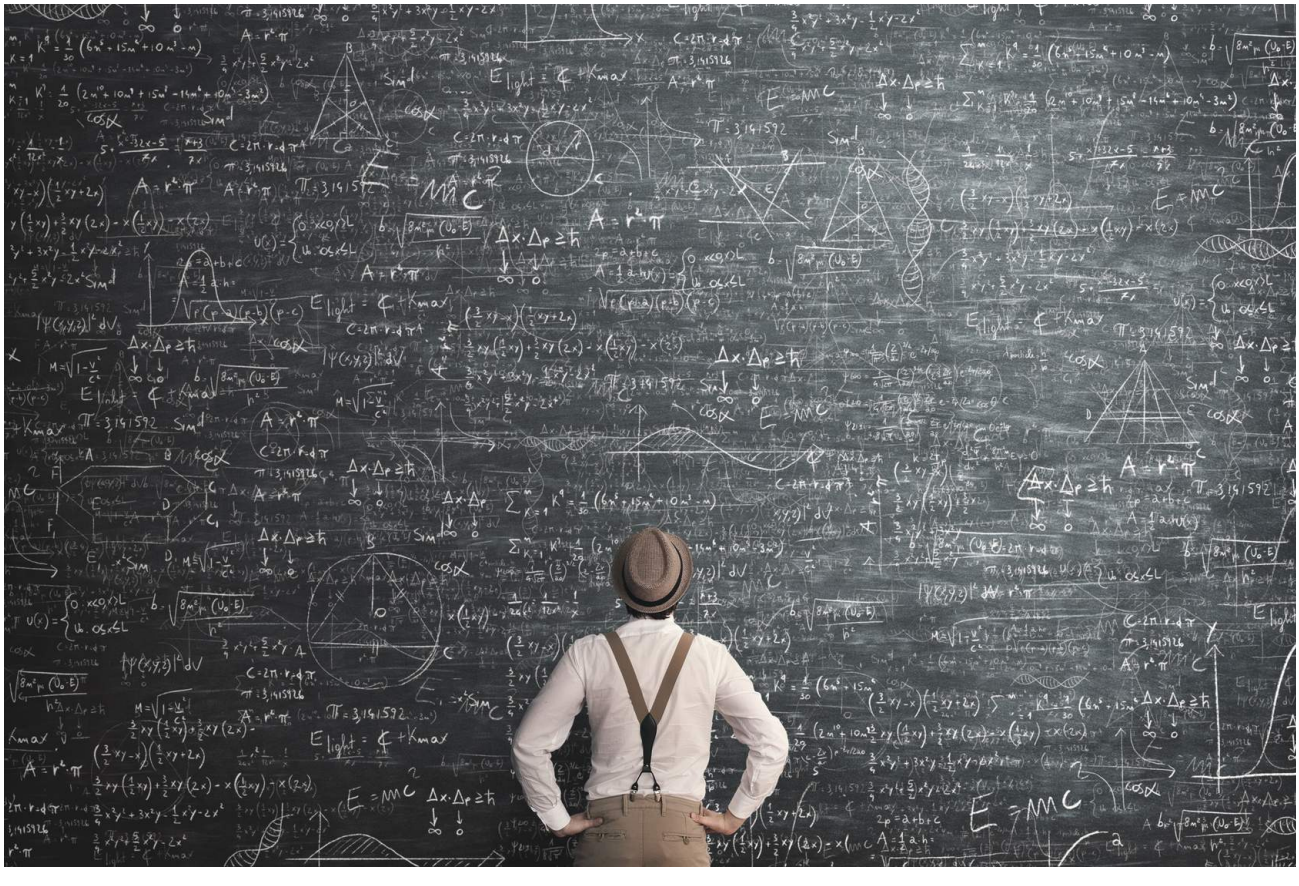
Mind you, we are talking about the solution to a problem, not a product. What you need to validate at this stage is the What (the solution) and not the How (the product/service, which you will validate with the MVP tool).

Solution Validator tool

1. Description of the job-to-get-done

First of all, report the main elements of the Problem Validator (customer and problem) that you validated earlier.

This is the job-to-get-done, i.e. what the customer would like to achieve or do but is unable to do (the problem).



2. Description of 'positive' constraints

Report also the positive constraints, i.e. the 'sacrifices' that your audience is willing to accept and endure in order to solve the problem felt.

Tips for adopting a scientist's approach

It is important, therefore, for those who decide to start a start-up to adopt a scientific method and to understand how important the culture of mistakes actually is in order to learn and improve one's offering.

Here we outline a number of behaviours to adopt in order to act with scientific rigour.

Transforming an “I-know-i-am-right-attitude” into a “mistake-driven” culture

Think as a scientist:
Everything is a hypothesis

Build a network of challengers,
not of supporters

Define your identity in terms of values instead of opinions (curiosity, mental flexibility, explorative attitude)	**Incentive constructive conflict.**
Trust your learning skills, beware of your current solution	**Abandon the best practice, implement process accountability**
If you make a mistake, you have learnt something	**Implement psychological safety**

In other words, there is an opportunity when a problem is solved.

Ok, but what does “opportunity really mean?”

An opportunity is an idea that meets market demand and willingness to pay.

Problem - solution - fit

By starting with the problem, hypothesising and testing a solution, you get to the opportunity that you can put on the market.

Specifically, it means that you have evidence that customers care about certain problems (pain/gain) and you have devised a solution for those problems.

The 'attractive' problems, i.e. anything that prevents customers from doing their work effectively, are:

1. problems that **many others have**
2. problems that **occure quite often**
3. problems that are **serious enough so that customers are prepared to pay** to get rid of their problems

Entrepreneurial mindset

We can, therefore, say that the entrepreneurial mindset must start from this assumption.

Don't bring me solutions,

bring me a relevant problem!

Description of the tool: "Problem validator

Finding a problem worth solving

Correct problem definition and validation is the most important and difficult part of any business creation.

The "Problem Validator" tool will help you identify the biggest problem, felt by your customer, for which it is worth building a solution.

Use the tool to test and validate the problems you identify for each customer segment.

The objective of the tool is to test and learn quickly, using the least amount of resources.

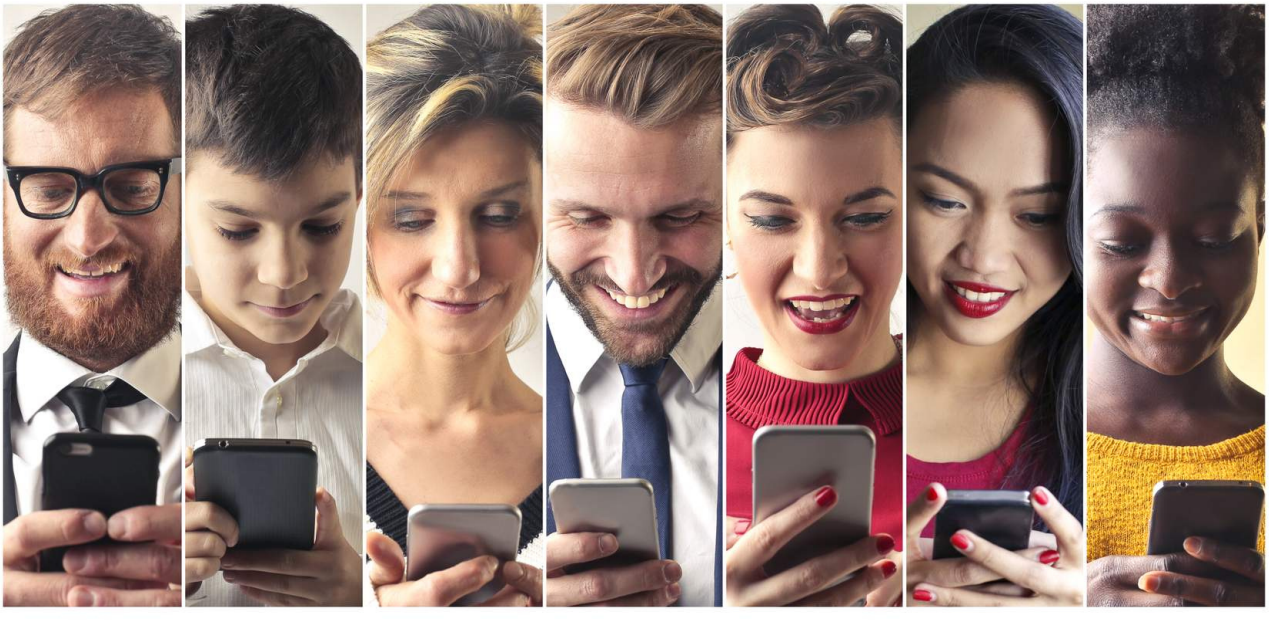
At the end of validation, you should have a clear, validated idea of your customer's problem.

Problem validator tool - process steps

1. Analysis of the identified customer segment

The first time you use the tool, not having any real data at hand, start with the customer segment you think might be most interesting.

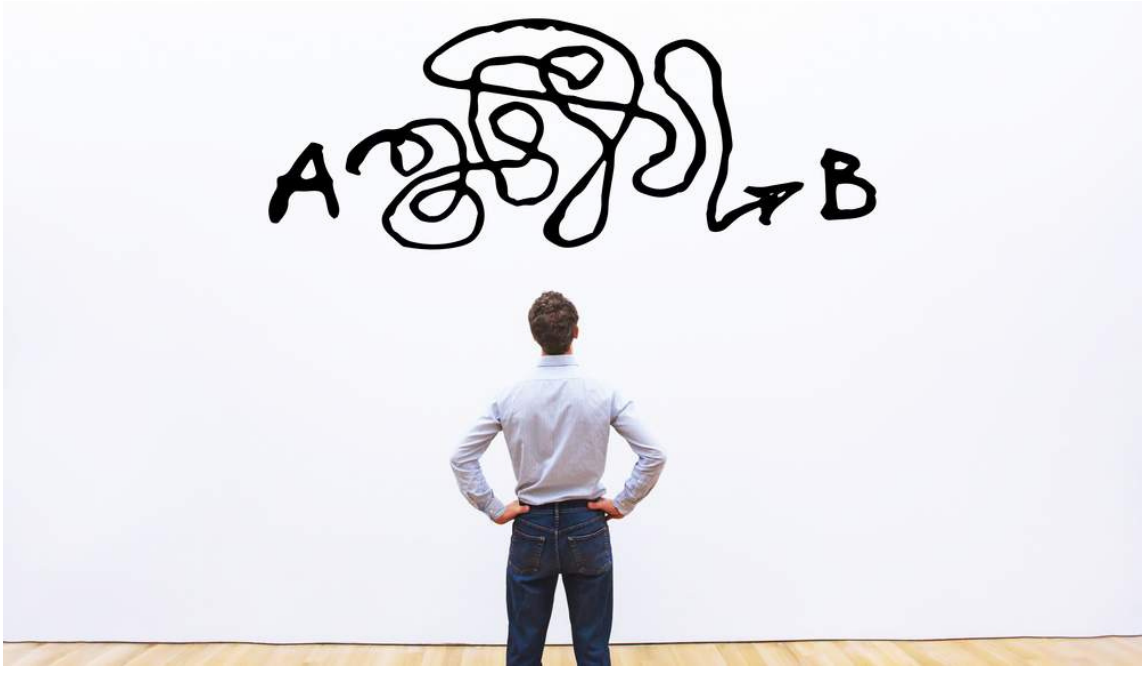
Use Post-It notes and write an option (different market segments, different problems, etc.) on each Post-It note.



2. Defining Problems

Try, then, to define their problems. Be as specific as possible when defining problems, put yourself in your customers' shoes.

Then choose the problem that seems "most urgent and serious" to you.



3. Defining limits (negative and positive constraints)

Next, identify the constraints, the limits, i.e. what, in your opinion, your client would not be willing to do to solve the problem, whatever the solution (negative constraints). What, on the other hand, he/she would be willing to accept (positive constraints).

At this point you have the first elements of your Problem Statement.

4. Validation of assumptions

It is time to validate your assumptions (hypotheses) outside the room, in the real world

Before doing this, define the criteria for success or failure of the experiment. The criteria must be specific and measurable. When is the test successful? Which behaviour of your audience, which event or the achievement of which numbers represent a satisfactory result for your hypothesis to be said to have been verified? (For example, if 8 out of 10 respondents recognise the problem as urgent and important to them, the test is a success).

Well, the next step is to take your assumptions into the real world to see if they are confirmed by your audience and are, therefore, validated.

Get out of your room and test your assumptions by talking to your potential customers.

Investigate and understand whether the problem you have identified is really felt by that customer, and whether that customer would be willing to pay for any solution to solve that problem.

5. Record the Learning Points

At the end of the field test, go back to your Problem Validator and record the Learning Points, what you learnt from the comparison with your audience.

Have you validated all three elements?

If even one of these elements has not been validated, modify it, make new assumptions and go back to validate them in the field.

Do not stop until all three elements of Problem Validation have been validated!

You have now found a 'job-to-get-done' for your customer.

The sheet below summarises schematically what has been described so far.