

BUSINESS FAST TRACK #1

Name: _____ Date: _____

Customers are literally all around you twenty-four hours a day. Learning how to see people who are ready, willing, and able to buy things is a key skill for business owners.

QUESTIONS	THOUGHTS
List 5 services most of the people in your neighborhood buy twice a week or more.	
List 5 services most of the people in your neighborhood need from time to time throughout the year.	
List 5 services your friends buy two or more times a week.	
List 5 services your friends need but can't easily find.	
List 5 very frustrating problems you've had recently that you would have paid to solve.	

Smart business professionals look at what people need, what they want, and what they will pay for. They know that **every problem, every irritation, every frustration** is a possible business. It's a real advantage to be able to reach customers without having to pay to find or speak to them, if you do it right they will even come to you. So, keep your eyes open for people near you who pay to buy what they want. Look for common problems that need a quick and cost-effective solution.

BUSINESS FAST TRACK #2

Name: _____ Date: _____

Most successful business owners design their businesses around their innate strengths. Do you know what yours are? Often they are the traits that got you in trouble a lot when you were a kid.

QUESTIONS	THOUGHTS
When you were a kid in school, what trait used to get you in trouble? Talking too much, drawing in class, being the class clown, arguing, being unable to sit still?	
What do you get the most compliments about from people who know you? Good cook? Loyal friend? Being smart? Being determined? Looking great? Knowing where to shop?	
Do you have any obsessions or serious hobbies that make you a bore at parties? Astrology, coin collecting, D&D, music, etc? The things you are <i>driven</i> to do when no one pays you are often things you come to do better than others.	

Everyone has some characteristic that sets them apart, and often this unique trait is something that makes life difficult for them early on. It could also be a trait that, in the right circumstances, got them a lot of positive attention. For example, the kid who talks way too much in class is often the adult who has no problem making phone calls or taking meetings. If you think about Magic Johnson who is 6'9" tall and very athletic, it is not a surprise that he did well in basketball. Would he have done as well if he had tried to sell compact cars? Would that career have played to his strengths? Or would his height have been an ongoing distraction? What made him different made him a fierce competitor in the field he chose to work in. Figure out what your unique strengths are and bring them into your business.

BUSINESS FAST TRACK #3

Name: _____ Date: _____

Is there anything about your past experiences that give you an advantage when you are working with or serving others?

QUESTIONS	THOUGHTS
Have you had experiences that you think set you apart from most other people? Have you had to become stronger, faster, more patient, more inventive than others as a result? If you survived cancer, you probably got good at dealing with doctors. If you had ten siblings, you got a lot of opportunity to negotiate.	
Have you had special training, unique schooling, engaged in studies that give you special insight or unique skills others don't have? Four summers as a summer camp counselor probably made you pretty good at helping people try new things.	
Did growing up in your family give you an edge in any particular industry, unique location, or particular lifestyle? If you were a kid from a military family you may've moved a great deal and became good at making friends.	

Successful business owners often build their companies around traumas they survived, unique experiences they lived through, special training they were lucky enough to receive. **Taking time to think about your past in the context of how it can help you going forward is really important.** These "inherited" characteristics and capacities can connect new business owners to markets others cannot reach, and can help them deliver services others can't provide.