MODULE EIGHT: HOW DO I MARKET MYSELF?
The Highlights
Understanding Your Market

A marketing strategy will describe the way in which you intend to achieve your overall marketing goals: what you will do, when you will do it, where you will do it, and with which tools.

Marketing is any action you take to bring your product or service OR YOUR SKILLS, to your customer's or client's attention. The 'customer' can be a potential employer. The more frugal you must be with your resources, the more important it is that you target your marketing effectively where it is most likely to reach the 'target' with the greatest need (or best match) for what you have to offer.

When seeking employment, the better you know yourself, and the more you know about the potential employer's context and needs, the better you will be at targeting your self-marketing approach. This can include networking, cover letter and resume, "cold"' calling, and other equivalents to the product marketing tools of advertising, public relations, direct mail, networking, and promotions.

For the creative person who wants to be more in control of managing their employment activities and choices, when much of the work available is nonstandard and presents challenging choices, a marketing approach will keep you in the right frame of mind. Marketing, in a 'product' sense, is used to generate interest in your services and to help sell your product. Marketing is *the* most important skill you'll need to succeed as an artist who makes a living from their work. But marketing is NOT selling. A marketing approach to your application for a job will ensure that you spend some time thinking about the point of view of the employer – and researching that 'market' so that your application will stand out for its effectiveness at speaking to the 'customer' and his or her needs.

Starting point
To begin with you need to know: what you are marketing? Once that's determined, the second piece of the puzzle is: to whom are you marketing? Thirdly, what is the best way to market it? Finally, and most importantly, you need to evaluate your progress. How effective is your current marketing? Is it working?

Who or what is your market
Ideally, marketing involves the matching of your service or product to the person or people who will benefit most from what you do. This may sound easy but in reality requires focused research.

The Three 'M's of Marketing
- Market – Research your target market
- Message – what is the marketing message you need to convey to that market
- Medium – what is the most effective medium to reach that or those markets

THE HOMEWORK

Precision Marketing

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After choosing the right kind of customers to target, you will need to communicate your key messages to them.

'Precision Marketing' is all about getting the right messages to the right people in the most effective way possible. The '3Ms of Marketing' technique helps to achieve that precision. The three Ms are: **Market, Message, Medium** – and it's important to deal with them in that order. This technique invites us to think things through in a rational way, dealing with each market segment (or 'customer type') in turn.

Firstly, for each product or service, list the different types of customer that you are targeting. Secondly, for each customer type, list the marketing messages you need to convey. Then thirdly, for each message to a market segment, choose the most effective medium to convey the message to that type of customer. The right medium might be an email, an article in a newspaper, a text message, a poster in the right location, or a radio advert, for example.

This is why it is meaningless to evaluate different marketing media relative to each other unless you put them in context. In other words, the answer to the question "Is a website better than a press campaign?" is "It depends…". That is, it depends who you are addressing and what you need to say.

The beauty of this process is that it untangles a pile of bright ideas about media, messages and markets – and lays them all out in straight lines, aligning a market with a message and then a medium in a precise way.

When each 'Market-Message-Medium' communication is identified, the best ones can be prioritised (you won't have the time or resources to do them all) and put together into a coherent marketing campaign.

When constructing marketing messages, we need to differentiate between features and benefits. Irrespective of the features we think are important, the customer will buy on the basis of the benefits to them, asking "What's in it for me?" Features and benefits can be separated according to this simple test: if the customer's reaction to your marketing message is "So what?", then you've been talking about features, not customer benefits.

Often we want to enthuse about what we create from our own point of view, but effective marketing requires us to look at it from the customer's point of view. So, for example, customers want to know about how your design will increase sales, how your product will make them look good, or how your cultural heritage offering will entertain, educate or be part of a great day out. We need to devise marketing messages that press their buttons, not ours.

Tight budgets for marketing communications can be a problem – or a blessing in disguise. Financial constraints can help us to become more creative and prompt us to look for low-cost

marketing methods which are highly effective, for example press releases which result in editorial coverage. 'Word of mouth' publicity managed well can become 'Viral Marketing', in which people pass along the news or 'story' about your product or service in an energetic and excited way, 'infecting' many other people with their enthusiasm in a manner akin to the spread of a virus. For this there needs to be a 'story' about your product or service such as those described in the book Buzz Marketing by Mark Hughes. Or it could be a product or service that gets passed along from person to person, carrying your message with it as it spreads. In our online world, digital files such as e-books, photos, music, videos and text spread around the internet at the speed of broadband, from one sender to multiple recipients. The MUTU viral video of graffiti art spreads the word about the artist and his art because it is shown in a fascinating film that people really want to pass on to all their friends.

Further information about a range of marketing communication techniques and media which might be appropriate to your creative enterprise or cultural organisation can be obtained from organisations such as the Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM), the Arts Marketing Association (AMA), and trade associations or professional institutes in your own sub-sector of the creative industries.

In your marketing communications campaign there might be a place for Twitter, MySpace, Flickr, Facebook, YouTube, Scribd and other platforms and networks. But before you become seduced by these exciting and powerful technologies, think about the two 'Ms' first: Market and Message. In other words, be clear about who you are targeting and what you need to say to them. Then choose the most suitable medium or media that will help you deliver your key messages to your carefully selected customers.

REACHING & SERVICING YOUR MARKET

Your research has revealed who is your "target market". The next step is to determine what is the best way to reach your potential client/customer. Here is a promotional checklist to consider:

Promotion

- Word of mouth
- Portfolio
- Flyers
- Newspapers (advertising/interview)
- Direct mail (postcard/letter/catalogue)
- Writing books/publications
- Outdoor ads (display board/billboard)
- Public Relations (press release/kit)
- Promotional speeches
- Networking
- Demonstrations
- Radio (advertising/interview)
- Agent
- Membership directories
- Mailing lists
- Entering contests

- Business card
- Promotional video
- Brochures
- Magazines (advertising/interview)
- Trade publications (listing/adverts)
- Telephone directories
- Web site
- Free introductory seminars/events
- Trade shows/Conferences
- Telemarketing
- Television (advertising/interview)
- Manager
- Promotions (gifts/samples/discounts certificates/coupons)
- Busking/door to door

Which of these marketing strategies are used regularly in your chosen field of work? Some are clearly better for marketing a product, others for marketing a service.

SERVICING YOUR MARKET

Having decided what types of promotion you'll use, you must now determine *how* you will distribute your product or service. Here's a checklist of possibilities:

DISTRIBUTION

- Self
- Trade shows/Showcases
- Manufacturing representatives
- Sell to manufacturer

- Retail
- Telemarketing
- Independent agents
- other:

- Mail order
- Wholesale
- Special events

Defining the Market

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Defining your market is of key importance and has two key objectives.

- Understanding its attractiveness. Is this where you want to invest your resources (talent, time, money)? Is the payback worth the effort?

- Understanding the market dynamics, so you can take advantage of opportunities and respond to challenges proactively.

Answer the questions below to define the potential market or markets you want to research.

1. Are there **entry barriers**? Will I need training, skills, credentials, resources, certification, or union membership?

2. What is the **size** of the market? Are there many participants and what is their budget?

3. What's its **growth potential**? Is it growing, declining or staying steady?

4. What is the **revenue potential**? Are there many competitors? Are there gatekeepers (casting agents, music contractors, etc.)?

5. What will it **cost to operate** in the market?

6. How do you **distribute** your art in this market? Are the channels of distribution tight or open?

7. What **trends** are influencing the market? Are there social, financial, environmental or other issues that are affecting the market?

Marketing action plan overview

Target Consumers	Benefits	4 Ps - product, price, place, promotion	Marketing Tools and Resources	Time Lines	Budgeted Expenses and Revenues	Evaluation
• Cornerstone of my business • Those who know my work • Those who like the art form such as relevant groups, clubs, social groups • Those who follow similar art forms • Those with similar demographics (e.g. age, lifestyle, etc.) • Funders (government), donors, sponsors, agents, etc.	Examples: 1. They like my work and find it stimulating 2. My work promotes a healthy lifestyle and inspires passion 3. My work is a distraction from everyday life 4. My work is educational without being didactic	1. **Product** - the actual product you provide, the way you relate to your consumers 2. **Place** - how you sell your work, where people can find out information and purchase it (sometimes called POP - Point of Purchase) 3. **Price** - affordable for your target consumers, added value, packaging, discounts 4. **Promotion** - the correct tools and resources	1. Use the tools that sell your product best and achieve the results you want 2. Reflect your branding in your tools 3. Remember the benefits and the 4 Ps 4. New technologies are not strategies in and of themselves 5. Follow the rules of thumb: clear, concise, consistent, communicative	• Leave yourself enough time to do all the things you want to do • Your timelines will also show your cash flow • Set aside at least one day a month for your marketing/ communica-tion strategy	• Account for costs relating to all your marketing tools • If you can't afford to carry out your plan, don't throw it out; instead look for lower-cost or no-cost alternatives • Set achievable sales goals and include them in your overall revenue projections	• You need to audit your activity by reviewing financial goals and objectives and evaluating results • Looking back helps you see if your strategy was successful • Track sales on an ongoing basis • Don't repeat mistakes

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Marketing action plan worksheet © Jack Cunningham, 2009

Target Consumers	Benefits	4 Ps - product, price, place, promotion	Marketing Tools and Resources	Time Lines	Budgeted Expenses and Revenues	Evaluation

THE PROPOSAL-WRITING APPROACH

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We encourage you to think of your response to every paid work opportunity as though you were making a proposal. If you follow this approach even to applications for jobs, you will be more confident in your approach, much more likely to see the opportunity **beyond** 'the job' itself, and to prepare self-marketing materials like cover letters and résumés that target the right things.

1. The Need: state the issue, problem or challenge. This could be something you share in common with the person, company or community, and you have an idea that will meet the challenge, or your ideas/ project/ skills may be the solution to a need felt by others. Either way, proposals offer solutions to issues, problems or challenges.

Despite your enthusiasm for your project, that is not enough to engage others in making it happen, if the only need served is perceived to be your own. To focus attention, hook interest and galvanize others into action there must be a strong reason: a theatre company must draw new audiences, a small business owner wants to increase walk-in traffic, or a large corporation needs a highly skilled and flexible worker on a project.

2. Background: tell what is being done now about the issue.

3. Proposed Solution: state what needs to be done.

4. Rationale: explain the benefits of approaching the issue this way.

5. Proposed project: tell what you propose to do about the issue.

6. Methodology: tell how you propose to do it.

7. Resources required: explain what it will cost, how much time it will take and who will be involved.

8. Accountability: explain how and when the project and process will be evaluated, and how the resources will be accounted for.

9. Keep it simple: There is no one right way to write a proposal, but we have included some key elements and guidelines in this module. The most important thing about this process is to change the way you think about proposal writing, and begin to use this approach as a model for much of your paid work creation, including job applications.

Rather than just thinking of your own need (for a job, to get your work in an exhibition, to get resources to mount your play, etc.), you begin to see **what others might need** from you to help them understand your point, to demonstrate your credibility/professionalism, and to become a booster of your ideas. This will then guide your research, your writing and your decisions about whom you approach with your proposal ideas.

ELEMENTS OF THE PROPOSAL

RESEARCH:

What: developing the idea
Why: who needs it, who benefits
How: management, production, structure, organization
When: timeline
Who: team, funder, target audience/ participants
Remember to tie your proposal in with your business plan or mission statement

WRITING:

Cover letter
Title page
Executive Summary
Introduction (the idea)
Main body of the text including:
  o Detailing the needs
  o Your motive (your relationship to the need)
  o Benefits of the project
What you propose to do (the means)
Control mechanisms (accountability during project development)
Project's future, including objective criteria for evaluating the project
Budget
Time line
Summary (three key points)
Conclusion
Your qualifications (resume, c.v., biography, artist's statement)
Additional documents (such as letters of support)

PRESENTATION:

Document formatting
Critical reading and proofing (by a third party)
1 bound copy for presentation - 1 loose leaf for reproduction
Delivery

FACILITATION

Follow up
Negotiation

GUIDELINES FOR PROPOSAL WRITING

1. MAKE IT SHORT
An initial proposal should be no longer than 5 pages, including budget and time line, unless otherwise informed.

2. MAKE IT READABLE
Some committees will not read small type. Minimum font size should be 12 point. If you are faxing a draft to someone, use a sans serif typeface.

3. BE CONSISTENT IN YOUR SPELLING
Canadian spelling, which incorporates English and Scottish preferences, differs from American.

4. INVEST IN YOUR PRESENTATION MATERIALS
Indulge in a luscious creamy paper, a nice looking folder, and a big smile on your face during delivery.

5. LEARN THE VOCABULARY
Not all words mean the same thing to different people. Some ministries or arts industries assign a specific meaning to certain words or phrases - even very familiar ones. Learn what they are before proceeding with your proposal.

6. FIND AN ALLY
When approaching a large corporation, association, or government ministry, find someone within it who could be of service to you, whose career or interests your project might advance. They can be one of the critical readers you send drafts to.

7. USE THE TELEPHONE
This is a cheap and impersonal research tool. Telephone research is often more productive than face-to-face meetings. While trying to get through closed doors, don't forget to cultivate the goodwill of the executive secretary.

Determining Needs and Benefits

Who does your project involve and affect? In proposal writing, the benefits of the project must be determined and then written into it. Examining the needs of all potential collaborators and users is the starting point for determining benefits.

EXERCISE

The City of Surrey has made an artist credential call for its Guildford Multi-Purpose Community Centre Public Art Project. The call outlines the selection criteria as well as a request for submission of a number of items.

In answering the credential call, the needs of and benefits for the following potential users and collaborators (often referred to as "target groups") must be determined.

1. City of Surrey Officials
2. Practicing Art and Design Professionals
3. Consulting Team
4. Community Members/Centre Users

NEEDS AND BENEFITS

Working in Teams, determine what the needs and benefits are for one identified target group, to be included in a response to the artist credential call.

> Group 1 will address the needs of **city officials.**
> Group 2 will focus on the needs of **art and design professionals.**
> Group 3 will look at the needs of **the consulting team.**
> Group 4 will determine the needs of **community members/centre users**.

Each Team will then present to the group the needs and benefits they have identified. After each presentation, everyone will offer comments and analysis.

LISTING BENEFITS

After determining the benefits of a project to its specified users or target market, list and include them in the proposal.

The conventional proposal consists of linear paragraphs. Increasingly, however, other methods are being employed to convey the necessary information. The most important criteria for any presentation style are accessibility and clarity. The following is an example of an alternative way to share the necessary information.

PROJECT EXAMPLE

The following is the benefits listing in a fictional proposal for the creation of an arts service organization, The BC Blues Society. This project is addressing the needs and benefits of:

- The blues music community (musicians, agents, managers, club and festival programmers, media, producers, label owners, blues music consumers)
- Various levels of government arts agencies (municipal, provincial, federal)
- Various types of private foundations
- Potential corporate sponsors
- Consumers and the broader community

BENEFITS BY STAKEHOLDER GROUP

For the blues music community:

- Strong advocacy and support for the work of BC blues musicians, affording greater recognition of their contribution to the art of blues music in BC, across Canada and internationally.
- Increasing the financial viability of earning a living as a working musician, as well as in all connected sectors of the music industry where blues is performed, recorded and produced, distributed and sold.
- Offering the opportunity, through establishing networks and development workshops, for members of the blues community to improve and diversify their craft while operating within an established peer group.

For government agencies (for example but not limited to, arts councils):

- Providing a means of accessing musicians in an under-serviced music community, while assisting the agency in fulfilling its mandate to broaden its range of clientele.
- Facilitating the delivery of programmes and providing a mechanism for research and feedback.

For foundations:

- An opportunity to develop unique one-time programmes, separately or in collaboration with government and private sector funding partners, such as blues-in-the-schools educational programmes for music students, and mentorships for students with established musicians.
- Involvement in programmes which benefit artists directly, as well as participating members of the general public.
- Increased public profile at society events and in all publications.

For corporate sponsors:

- Involvement in public events with broad public appeal and high level market penetration in supportive media environments, such as annual awards shows, showcase concerts and recording projects, to be associated with.
- Priority recognition at all functions and publications, with discounted corporate advertising rates available for sustaining sponsors.
- Access to targeted commercial markets through society events and activities.

For consumers:

- Improved access to information about BC blues musicians, including a newsletter with feature articles, profiles, historical anecdotes, reviews and performance schedules, as well as a musician's directory.
- A variety of unique events to complement existing ones, such as workshops, showcases, award dinners and ceremonies, and theme concerts.
- The production of original recordings, as well as other marketing goods such as posters, T-shirts, caps, coffee mugs and more.

For the broader community:

- Increased awareness of and access to information regarding blues music, in BC and within its worldwide context.
- A greater appreciation for the role of the blues community in BC's musical heritage, both historically and on an ongoing basis.

BUDGET

In most proposals it is generally acceptable to submit a simplified budget, many times a single line with accompanying explanation. If required, a lengthier budget estimate should contain rough details of project expenses and revenues, including donations and grants.

SAMPLE BUDGET

The following budget was submitted as part of a proposal to the Toronto Blues Society (a non-profit arts service organization) to produce an event titled Caribbean Soul in March of 1996.

ITEM	BUDGET	COMMENTS
EXPENSES		
Artistic Fees	3000	Incl. 5 featured performers plus backup band
Sound Technician	200	sound check and performance
L.I.P. Promotions	500	publicity
P.A. Rental	1648	using quote from P.A. Plus Productions
Venue	600	hall rental
Metro Word Ad	450	half page
Share Ad	260	quarter page
Poster Printing	265	500 copies - quote from Canadian Photocopy
Artwork	200	original design for poster
Liquor/Refreshments	1000	beer and wine
Courier, etc.	100	distribution of poster, etc.
Total	**$8223**	
REVENUE		
Admissions 250 @ $8	2000	assuming 75% capacity
Food Sales $300 @ 10%	30	as agreed with Tipper, 10% of sales over $100
Bar Sales	2000	assuming 2 drinks per person (250) @ $4
Corporation	500	Heineken Beer promotion (Molson's)
Toronto Arts Council	1000	
Metro Outreach Project	1000	(Metro Toronto Arts Council)
OAC Music Office	1000	(Ontario Arts Council)
MCC	1000	(Ministry of Culture & Communications)
Total	**$8530**	
Surplus/(Deficit)	307	

TIME LINE

A time line is used to establish the framework of planning a proposal. It is used similarly in action, marketing, and financial planning. A time line is a vital component of any proposal, big or small, helping to establish the credibility of the proposer's management skills with potential funders or project partners.

SAMPLE

Note that for the purposes of proposal writing, a time line often lists the result first then moves backwards chronologically.

TIME	ACTIVITIES
Mar 2, 2009	Caribbean Soul event
Feb 25	Band rehearsal
Feb 15 - 24	Street postering
Feb 20	Ad runs in Share Magazine
Feb 15 - 25	Meeting with band leader confirming the order of the performances
Feb 2	Ad runs in Metro Word
Jan 25 - 31	Camera ready art work produced
Jan 15 - Mar 2	Publicity campaign formulated, developed and delivered
Jan 1 - 19	Contracts negotiated and sent out
Jan 5 - 25	Find artist for poster, begin process of developing art work
Nov 15 - Jan 1	Contact and confirm performers
Sept 22 - Oct 21	Proposal with budget submitted to Toronto Blues Society for final approval
Jul 21- Sep 22	Write second draft of proposal with first detailed budget and marketing plan
Jul 1 - 21	Write first draft of proposal. Present to Toronto Blues Society B of D
Mar -Apr 15	Assist writing of a grant - Metro Toronto Arts Council
Mar - Jul	Research proposal - funding sources, community outreach
Feb 2008	Conceptualize and discuss initial proposal idea with Toronto Blues Society

STYLES AND FORMATS

How do you make your document look professional? Clean and simple are the keywords. The following guidelines will help to get your proposal read.

FONTS

A font is the style of lettering used on the page. It is suggested to limit the number of fonts used in a single document to no more than two.

SANS SERIF AND *SERIF* FONTS

Sans serif fonts are very spare, such as Tahoma (the one you are currently reading). Sans serif fonts were once used mainly in headlines, headings, and large-print advertising, but are now increasingly being used for regular text. If you must fax documents with a lot of text such as letters and press releases, use a sans serif font as it transmits cleanly.

> Serif fonts are the kind that have the little "hooks" at the end of every letter. These are a good font for the body of a letter or proposal. The serifs act as "hooks" for the eye to follow as it reads. This paragraph is written using Times New Roman a classic serif font.

With many fonts to choose from, finding one that suits your individual style is possible but don't use gimmicky fonts. If it makes it difficult to read, don't do it!
Here are two additional examples of popular fonts used in different applications:

This is Arial, 12 point, normal.	This is Garamond, 12 point, normal.
This is Arial, 12 point, bold.	**This is Garamond, 12 point, bold.**
This is Arial, 12 point italic.	*This is Garamond, 12 point, italic.*

FORMATTING YOUR DOCUMENT

Many computer systems, such as MS Word, have templates to work from. Most word processing programs now carry templates that automatically format headings, body text, headers, footers, page numbering, etc. Try them, use them, alter them, but remember - there is no need to reinvent the wheel. As you become familiar with creating documents, you can modify the templates to suit your style, or the particular needs for the kind of document you are creating.
As a final point, always maintain inner consistency in your document. For example, headings that change format within one document make your work appear disjointed and unrelated.

IMPROVING YOUR WRITING IN THIRTY MINUTES

Use these ideas in any context where you find yourself required to write.

1. Take 10 minutes to write down everything you want to say. Don't stop yourself in the middle and tell yourself it's wrong or try to edit. Use mind mapping as another technique, or conduct an interview where someone records your ideas.
2. Write your first draft in longhand (double-spaced for editing purposes). *Then* transfer to a computer.
3. At the beginning, make it easy on yourself. Start writing those sections you are most familiar with, or excited about.
4. Read your text aloud. Mark problem spots with a pencil. Notice where you can't read through a sentence without taking a breath, words that are used too frequently, and awkward combinations of words.
5. Now edit. If you are introducing yourself, an idea, a service, project, or product, too much talk will reduce the effectiveness of what you have to say.
6. Keep sentences relatively short. It isn't necessary to impress the reader with your lofty ideas and the verbose expression of them.
7. Don't be cute. Your reader may not find your humour to their liking.

8. Don't be too erudite. For your document to be clear, it requires using precise and simple language. Long or rarely used* words are easy to misuse, and it is always embarrassing to be "shown up". (*_Erudite, for example)._
9. Don't talk down to the reader. Strive to be informative and intelligent, without sounding condescending. Don't assume that jurors or assessors have a similar education or background as yours.
10. Cross out all occurrences of "I think" and "I believe". If your have done your research, you "know" and they will be unnecessary.
11. Get rid of the word "very". It lacks force and sounds vague. Use concrete statements. "The product is very popular", is less effective than, "The product is twice as popular as its nearest competitor."
12. Underline every adjective and adverb in red. Is there too much red on your page?
13. If your sentence starts with an adverb ("Evidently", "Usually"), get rid of it.
14. Use simple verb tenses as much as possible, compound verbs weaken prose. "This arrangement _will be covering_ all contingencies", does not have the punch of, "This arrangement _covers_ all contingencies."
15. When finished, try reading the entire document backwards (paragraph by paragraph, _not literally_). Any jump in flow or logic needs to be corrected.
16. Show it to at least one other person for a critical reading and a style, format, and content reading.
17. When making notes or revising drafts use different coloured pens to highlight areas of strength or difficulty, or to categorize similar themes.

Pre-Proposal Idea Jogger

- Briefly state the problem you wish to address, or the opportunity that has presented itself.
- State several reasons why this problem or opportunity needs to be addressed. Be as specific as you can.
- What is the solution you propose to solve the problem, or the program you will implement as a result of the opportunity that has presented itself?
- List ways in which you will be able to tell that your solution is working; that the implementation strategy you have chosen is appropriate.
- State several reasons why you are the one to do this.
- How does this project relate to your institution (or business or organization)? Mention any circumstances that justify doing the project with you.
- Made a list of the people who will be involved in the project. If you don't have names, list job titles (or areas of responsibility or function).
- How long will the project run? If it is a multi-year task, make out a time chart for each of the project years.
- When would you like to start the project? When is the latest you would consider starting?
- Make a list of major items to be purchased, of space to be renovated, of major requirements for leased facilities and/or equipment, and of any major services to be contracted.
- Will there be an impact of the project beyond your institution? If so, who else will be interested and how will you let them know? If not, state your reasons.

What I Learned From Steve Jobs

Many people have explained what one can learn from Steve Jobs. But few, if any, of these people have been inside the tent and experienced first-hand what it was like to work with him. I don't want any lessons to be lost or forgotten, so here is my list of the top twelve lessons that I learned from Steve Jobs.

1. Experts are clueless.

Experts—journalists, analysts, consultants, bankers, and gurus can't "do" so they "advise." They can tell you what is wrong with your product, but they cannot make a great one. They can tell you how to sell something, but they cannot sell it themselves. They can tell you how to create great teams, but they only manage a secretary. For example, the experts told us that the two biggest shortcomings of Macintosh in the mid-1980s was the lack of a daisy-wheel printer driver and Lotus 1-2-3; another advice gem from the experts was to buy Compaq. Hear what experts say, but don't always listen to them.

2. Customers cannot tell you what they need.

Apple market research" is an oxymoron. The Apple focus group was the right hemisphere of Steve's brain talking to the left one. If you ask customers what they want, they will tell you, "Better, faster, and cheaper"— that is, better sameness, not revolutionary change. They can only describe their desires in terms of what they are already using—around the time of the introduction of Macintosh, all people said they wanted was better, faster, and cheaper MS-DOS machines. The richest vein for tech start-ups is creating the product that you want to use—that's what Steve and Woz did.

3. Jump to the next curve.

Big wins happen when you go beyond better sameness. The best daisy-wheel printer companies were introducing new fonts in more sizes. Apple introduced the next curve: laser printing. Think of ice harvesters, ice factories, and refrigerator companies. Ice 1.0, 2.0, and 3.0. Are you still harvesting ice during the winter from a frozen pond?

4. The biggest challenges beget best work.

I lived in fear that Steve would tell me that I, or my work, was crap. In public. This fear was a big challenge. Competing with IBM and then Microsoft was a big challenge. Changing the world was a big challenge. I, and Apple employees before me and after me, did their best work because we had to do our best work to meet the big challenges.

5. Design counts.

Steve drove people nuts with his design demands—some shades of black weren't black enough. Mere mortals think that black is black, and that a trash can is a trash can. Steve was such a perfectionist—a perfectionist Beyond: Thunderdome—and lo and behold he was right: some people care about design and many people at least sense it. Maybe not everyone, but the important ones.

6. You can't go wrong with big graphics and big fonts.

Take a look at Steve's slides. The font is sixty points. There's usually one big screenshot or graphic. Look at other tech speaker's slides—even the ones who have seen Steve in action. The font is eight points, and there are no graphics. So many people say that Steve was the world's greatest product introduction guy… don't you wonder why more people don't copy his style?

7. Changing your mind is a sign of intelligence.

When Apple first shipped the iPhone there was no such thing as apps. Apps, Steve decreed, were a bad thing because you never know what they could be doing to your phone. Safari web apps were the way to go until six months later when Steve decided, or someone convinced Steve, that apps were the way to go—but of course. Duh! Apple came a long way in a short time from Safari web apps to "there's an app for that."

8. "Value" is different from "price."

Woe unto you if you decide everything based on price. Even more woe unto you if you compete solely on price. Price is not all that matters—what is important, at least to some people, is value. And value takes into account training, support, and the intrinsic joy of using the best tool that's made. It's pretty safe to say that no one buys Apple products because of their low price.

9. A players hire A+ players.

Actually, Steve believed that A players hire A players—that is people who are as good as they are. I refined this slightly—my theory is that A players hire people even better than themselves. It's clear, though, that B players hire C players so they can feel superior to them, and C players hire D players. If you start hiring B players, expect what Steve called "the bozo explosion" to happen in your organization.

10. Real CEOs demo.

Steve Jobs could demo a pod, pad, phone, and Mac two to three times a year with millions of people watching, why is it that many CEOs call upon their vice-president of engineering to do a product demo? Maybe it's to show that there's a team effort in play. Maybe. It's more likely that the CEO doesn't understand what his/her company is making well enough to explain it. How pathetic is that?

11. Real CEOs ship.

For all his perfectionism, Steve could ship. Maybe the product wasn't perfect every time, but it was almost always great enough to go. The lesson is that Steve wasn't tinkering for the sake of tinkering—he had a goal: shipping and achieving worldwide domination of existing markets or creation of new markets. Apple is an engineering-centric company, not a research-centric one. Which would you rather be: Apple or Xerox PARC?

12. Marketing boils down to providing unique value.

Think of a 2 x 2 matrix. The vertical axis measures how your product differs from the competition. The horizontal axis measures the value of your product. Bottom right: valuable but not unique—you'll have to compete on price. Top left: unique but not valuable—you'll own a market that

doesn't exist. Bottom left: not unique and not value—you're a bozo. Top right: unique and valuable—this is where you make margin, money, and history. For example, the iPod was unique and valuable because it was the only way to legally, inexpensively, and easily download music from the six biggest record labels.

Bonus: **Some things need to be believed to be seen.** When you are jumping curves, defying/ignoring the experts, facing off against big challenges, obsessing about design, and focusing on unique value, you will need to convince people to believe in what you are doing in order to see your efforts come to fruition. People needed to believe in Macintosh to see it become real. Ditto for iPod, iPhone, and iPad. Not everyone will believe—that's okay. But the starting point of changing the world is changing a few minds. This is the greatest lesson of all that I learned from Steve.