



Course

The Complete Nonprofit Marketing Course

Study Guide

Lesson 1: Why do you exist?

Learning Objectives

- Create a Belief Proposition
- Understand the role of Vision and Mission Statements
- Know your Values

Prep Work Checklist

(Things to do before watching the lecture.)

Review survey results, focusing on questions #14 and #15.

Read [3 Statements That Can Change the World: Vision, Mission and Values](#) by Hildy Gottlieb.

Watch Simon Sinek's TEDx Talk: [How great leaders inspire action](#).

Lecture Notes: Why do you exist?

1. Course Overview

a. Key Concepts

i. Engagement Cycle

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

ii. Claxon Method

1. _____?
2. _____?
3. _____?

2. Why do you exist?

a. Why start with why?

- i. _____
- ii. _____

b. Your vision should be oriented towards your _____.

c. Your Belief Proposition is an internal guide for decision-making. Initial notes on what you believe (to be completed in assignment.)

d. Your messaging house

- i. Foundation = _____
- ii. Walls = _____
- iii. Windows = _____
- iv. Values = _____

e. Consider your Mission Statement. Is it used in messaging? yes or no?

Your Notes & Doodles

Different people learn in different ways. You may learn best by using the Lecture Notes with prompts on Page 2. You may want to jot down notes as you listen to the lecture or do the Pre-Work. You may be someone who learns through doodling. This page is for you to use in a way that helps you learn best!

Lesson 1: Assignment

In this assignment, you will develop a Belief Proposition for your organization and assess how it connects to your **Mission**, **Vision**, and **Values**.

Step #1: Review survey results

Compile the answers from the following questions:

- What would be different if we didn't exist? (#14)
- What personal values are you expressing by supporting us? (#15)

List any themes that emerged in the following table. Group similar things together, rather than making an exhaustive. Aim for 5–7 per column.

Reasons to Exist	Personal Values
Ex: Ending hunger, empowering teens, protecting farmland	Ex: Altruism, humor, family, patriotism

Extra Credit!

A word cloud is a great way to keep a big picture view from a lot of different responses. Words that show up more often will be bigger, exposing common themes. If you have a lot of survey responses, this may help bring clarity. To make your word cloud ([Wordle](#) is a popular platform), use your results from the survey question: “**What personal values are you expressing by supporting us?**” (#15).

Helpful Tip

Feel like you need more information to create your Belief Proposition? Chat with other supporters and staff as a follow-up to the survey. Ask them questions like:

What personal values do you value most?

How do your values motivate your work here and/or support of us?

If you could wave a magic wand and change one thing about our community/world, what would it be?

Step #2: Create your Belief Proposition

If others in your organization are taking this course with you, try answering all three questions by yourself. Then compare your different answers and synthesize a single Belief Proposition for the organization as a whole.

1. Why does your organization exist?

In other words, what motivates the work your organization does? Why is it important?

How does it benefit society?

2. What would be different if your organization didn't exist?

What you do is important. Why is it needed? Is there an area or demographic that doesn't have the benefit of an organization like yours?

3. Write your Belief Proposition.

Use your answers above to write a succinct Belief Proposition. Remember: this sentence should be true to you, but won't necessarily be unique to you. It takes many people and organizations to solve the big problems you are looking to solve. So don't worry if another organization might share your Belief Proposition.

Examples:

We believe that technology can play a pivotal role in creating the greater good.

We believe every child deserve to be a great reader.

We believe animals deserve to be nurtured, loved and never abandoned.

We believe everyone deserves the gift of health.

We believe...

Step #3: See what your messaging house looks like.

In the lecture, Erica talked about how the Belief Proposition, Mission, Vision, and Values all come together to form your messaging house. Gather all of these statements.

Is your house up to code?

Using the 1–5 scale in the table below (1 being severely mismatched or oppositional, 5 being perfectly aligned), indicate to what extent your Mission, Vision and Values align with your Belief Proposition.

	1 Severely Mismatched or Oppositional	2 Disconnected or Irrelevant	3 Somewhat Related	4 Relevant or Overlapping	5 Perfectly Aligned
Mission					
Vision					
Values					

If you are working through this course with others in your organization, compare your ratings. If you disagree, discuss why.

Lesson 1 Checklist

- Completed pre-course Prep Work (including survey)
- Completed Lesson 1 Prep Work
- Watched Video Lecture
- Completed Assignment
- Discussed Assignment with colleagues (optional...yet encouraged!)

Lecture Review: Why do you exist?

1. Course Overview

- a. Key Concepts
 - i. Engagement Cycle
 1. Know
 2. Understand
 3. Engage
 - ii. Claxon Method
 1. What does success look like?
 2. Who do you need to reach to be successful?
 3. How are you going to engage your ideal supporters?

2. Why do you exist?

- a. Why start with why?
 - i. That is what motives people.
 - ii. Your beliefs are your currency.
- b. Your vision should be oriented towards your community.
- c. Your Belief Proposition is an internal guide for decision-making.
- d. Your messaging house
 - i. Foundation = Beliefs
 - ii. Walls = Mission
 - iii. Windows = Vision
 - iv. Values = Building material
- e. Consider your Mission Statement
 - i. Often the core of messaging by default rather than design

Further Reading (Optional)

- Start with Why: [How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone to Take Action](#) by Simon Sinek

You are ready to take the Quiz for Lesson 1!