FINANCIAL LEARNING CAFE

Business Academy • B01

Lesson 1 Resource

Define the problem, customer, and value proposition

Startup checklist

Premium lesson companion

Teaching brief • applied vocabulary • guided workbook • knowledge check • answer guide

Name ____

Date ____

LEARN • PREPARE • APPLY

Define the problem, customer, and value proposition

A business begins with a specific person, a meaningful problem, and a credible reason that person would choose your solution. Separate assumptions from facts and describe value in the customer's language.

The deeper idea

A problem becomes a business opportunity only when a recognizable customer experiences it strongly enough to act. Compliments are encouragement; interviews, deposits, purchases, and completed pilots are stronger evidence.

Learning objectives

- Explain target customer in the context of define the problem, customer, and value proposition.
- Distinguish problem statement from an assumption or promotional summary.
- Show how value proposition changes cost, timing, control, responsibility, or risk.
- Complete the startup checklist using traceable source information.

Vocabulary in action

target customer	Locate it in source material and state what it measures or governs.
problem statement	Use it to make the comparison concrete instead of relying on a label.
value proposition	Name who carries responsibility, what triggers it, and which control makes it visible.

FIVE-STEP DECISION METHOD

Move from information to a responsible next step.

1. Define the exact question

State the purpose, deadline, and consequence of delay. Connect the question directly to define the problem, customer, and value proposition.

2. Gather governing evidence

Collect current agreements, statements, official disclosures, operating records, or program instructions. Record the source and date.

3. Apply the vocabulary

Locate target customer, problem statement, and value proposition in the real document or process. Translate each into a dollar, date, action, control, or responsibility.

4. Test a difficult case

Change one important assumption - timing, volume, cost, income, access, or support - and explain whether the plan still works.

5. Record the decision

Choose proceed, revise, compare, seek qualified review, or stop. Name the next action, its owner, and the review date.

Applied scenario

A learner must make this decision this month. The learner gathers governing records, locates target customer, problem statement, and value proposition, and completes the assignment. The decision pauses if the difficult-case test exposes an obligation or operating risk that cannot be managed.

Startup checklist

Interview three potential customers and write a one-sentence problem statement and value proposition.

Purpose: What exact decision does define the problem, customer, and value proposition support?

Evidence: Which source documents prove the facts? Include dates.

Terms: Where do target customer, problem statement, and value proposition appear, and what does each change?

Stress-test and decision record

Stress test: Which assumption is most fragile, and what happens if it fails?

Decision record: What is the next action, who owns it, and when will it be reviewed?

My recorded status

☐ Proceed ☐ Revise ☐ Compare ☐ Seek qualified review ☐ Stop

KNOWLEDGE CHECK

Confirm your understanding.

1. State the central teaching in your own words.

2. How do target customer and problem statement work together?

3. What evidence is strong enough to use?

4. What would make the plan pause?

5. What belongs in the finished assignment?

ANSWER GUIDE

Compare reasoning, not just wording.

1. State the central teaching in your own words.

A problem becomes a business opportunity only when a recognizable customer experiences it strongly enough to act. Compliments are encouragement; interviews, deposits, purchases, and completed pilots are stronger evidence.

2. How do target customer and problem statement work together?

Define each, locate both in source material, and explain their combined effect on the decision.

3. What evidence is strong enough to use?

Current, relevant, traceable information from an agreement, statement, official source, operating record, or qualified professional.

4. What would make the plan pause?

A missing governing fact, unsupported claim, unmanageable stress case, or inability to explain the responsibility attached to value proposition.

5. What belongs in the finished assignment?

Purpose, sources, term definitions, comparison or calculation, difficult-case result, unanswered questions, responsible owner, and review date.

Education-only boundary

This resource provides general education. It does not submit applications, negotiate with providers, handle customer funds, promise outcomes, or replace individualized guidance from an appropriately qualified professional.