



HOWTOFASCINATE
DISCOVERED BY SALLY HOGSHEAD

HOW TO BECOME THE **MUST HAVE SOLUTION**

FOR YOUR CUSTOMERS AND YOUR COMPANY



PART OF THE **FASCINATION ADVANTAGE® SYSTEM**

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ARE YOU A “NICE-TO-HAVE” OR A “MUST-HAVE”?

Some things in life are a “NICE-TO-HAVE.” Like a morning cup of Starbucks gourmet espresso latte. Or a subscription to all the cable channels. Or a gym membership.

It might seem like we *need* these things on some days, but in reality, they’re just nice to have. If things got tight, you’d probably cut these things first.

On the other hand, we have things that are **MUST-HAVES**. These include things like health insurance for your kids. Or nutritious food for your loved ones.

In your business, you have certain things that are NICE-TO-HAVE, and others that are MUST-HAVES.

If forced to choose, odds are, you’d give up the coffee and gym membership first, and you’d give up these things dead last. They are central to your life, and you will fight to keep them in place.

For example, in a fatter economy, you might not even have thought twice about offering perks such as free snacks, expense accounts, paying for cell phones, mileage allowances, and fancy client lunches. Those things might even have gone in the **MUST-HAVE** category. Bonuses and raises probably went in this category too.

◀ In a competitive environment, we must work harder. It's not enough to be better. We must out-deliver, out-perform, and out-fascinate.

HOW TO BECOME THE MUST-HAVE SOLUTION

But as competition rises and disposable income falls, you might have learned to cut back to true necessities. You define these for yourself and your company, but they're the things that you depend upon the most. This might include teamwork, customers that share the same values, and really, really strong coffee.

In the same way, you probably have certain employees who are **NICE-TO-HAVE**. They get the job done, sure, but they're not necessarily superstars that your company wholeheartedly depends on. On the other hand, you probably have at least one employee who is a **MUST-HAVE**. You depend upon her because she's uniquely skilled with tremendous insight. She brings huge value to the table. Your business would suffer a massive hit if she left. People like this are so valuable, so critical that they are not a **NICE-TO-HAVE**. These precious few are a **MUST-HAVE**.

Now, let's talk about you.

DO YOUR CUSTOMERS CONSIDER YOU A NICE-TO-HAVE? OR, ARE YOU A MUST-HAVE?



◀ If you are only a **NICE-TO-HAVE**, you are putting yourself at risk. There is always someone else willing to become the **MUST-HAVE** solution.

Your customer has choices. *A lot* of choices. If you and your company seem like a **NICE-TO-HAVE**, you are expendable. Worse, you are at risk of becoming superfluous.

We all must find new ways to deliver value to our customers, our employees, and everyone else we work with.

If you're not a MUST-HAVE, you're a NICE-TO-HAVE. And if you're a NICE-TO-HAVE, you're vulnerable.

To become a must-have, you need to find new ways to deliver value. Here are 6 principles of adding so much value that you are a **MUST-HAVE**.



◀ For many people, a Starbucks is no longer a "must-have" during tough economic times.

MUST-HAVE PRINCIPLE #1: FIND NEW WAYS TO ADD VALUE

1. INSIGHTS – HOW CAN YOU SOLVE PROBLEMS?

When you add insights to a conversation, you're not just talking—you're contributing your own unique observations, experiences and take-aways. You're showcasing your unique perceptions. This makes you more valuable to the listener, because you connect the dots for him in a new way. Insight goes beyond just repeating what you've heard; by generating new thinking, you're increasing the relevance of your discussion, and yourself.

Name one specific way in which you can add more value to your customer, and become more essential, through your own personal INSIGHT:

2. IDEAS – HOW CAN YOU CREATE OPPORTUNITY?

Even if you're not a so-called "creative" person, odds are, you have ideas. Ideas for how to tweak a standard procedure, and make it better. Ideas for improving, growing, changing. You might not take your ideas seriously, but if you can bring those ideas into reality, your customer will. If you introduce a possibility that not everyone else can see (or articulate), you add unique value to others.

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Name one specific way in which you can add more value to your customer, and become more essential, through your own personal IDEAS:

3. INSPIRATION – RAISING RESULTS FOR THE BIGGER PICTURE

The odds are quite good that if you're a recognized leader, you can envision a future for your customers. You can envision how your company could improve ways of doing business, and how it can improve your customers' lives. You have the ability to show them something they cannot see for themselves. Share those ideas. Don't hold them back. If you give people a different way to think about their needs, you give them a different way to think about their relationship with you.

Name one specific way in which you can add more value to your customer, and become more essential, through your own personal INSPIRATION:

MUST-HAVE PRINCIPLE #2: BUILD A MORE TANGIBLE PRESENCE

Don't make your prospect have to guess at why they should work with you. Make it explicitly clear, and then reinforce it over and over.

CONSTANTLY STRIVE TO ILLUSTRATE A VERY CLEAR PICTURE OF WHO YOU ARE, WHAT YOU DELIVER, AND WHY IT MATTERS TO THEM.

1. COMMUNICATE WHO YOU ARE

What's the benefit of working with you, versus your competition? Are you more experienced in specific areas? Are you more connected to a network of experts? Do you have a certain aspect of training that few others can offer? Do you constantly outwit problems with boundless enthusiasm for your customers' needs?

Yes?

Tell them. Tell them very clearly, and then tell them again.

Brainstorm a way in which you can build a more MUST-HAVE presence for your customer by BUILDING A MORE TANGIBLE PRESENCE:

2. COMMUNICATE WHAT YOU DELIVER

A lot of people can sell. In what way do you make the transaction something different, something better, than anyone else can offer? What precisely is the value you bring to the table, from that very first introduction to every single interaction thereafter? Define what you deliver consistently.

How would you explain why you are a more MUST-HAVE partner to your customer than your competition, because of WHAT YOU DELIVER?

3. COMMUNICATE WHY IT MATTERS

Okay, so by this point you've outlined who you are, and what you deliver. Now for the part that might seem obvious to you (but isn't to your prospect).

Why does all this matter to them?

For example, if you have the most experience in serving their needs, why does this matter for them? Will they have a smoother experience getting started? Will their questions get answered more quickly? Will they be less likely to have something fall through the cracks? Figure out what your benefit is, and then, explicitly state why this matters to them.

HOW TO BECOME THE MUST-HAVE SOLUTION

Starting today, what's one step your business could take with customers to communicate **WHY ALL THIS MATTERS** more than anything your competitors can offer?

“Adding value” isn’t sexy. Often, it’s unpleasant, difficult and painful. So is dental work. Neither are wise to skip.

If you want to become a must-have, then this list is your must-have:

- 1. WHO YOU ARE**
- 2. WHAT YOU DELIVER**
- 3. WHY IT MATTERS**

MUST-HAVE PRINCIPLE #3: PINPOINT YOUR ASSETS, IDENTIFY WHICH ONES ARE WITHIN YOUR CONTROL, AND MAXIMIZE THE HELL OUT OF THEM

You probably already have extraordinary assets. So does your team. If your customer doesn't know, it won't add to your perceived value. Below are 5 ways to clarify your value in a more tangible way.

1. SKILLSET – WHAT CAN YOUR TEAM DO?

What skillsets does your team possess, both as a whole and on an individual level? List them clearly. Think through which ones can differentiate you from your competition. Now do the same for yourself, **PERSONALLY**.

2. EXPERIENCE – WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?

What experience does your team possess, both as a whole and on an individual level? List them clearly. Think through which can differentiate you from your competition. Now do the same for yourself, **PERSONALLY**.

3. REPUTATION—WHAT ARE YOU KNOWN FOR DOING?

Think about your reputation. “We are known for being more _____.” Or, “we’re famous for always doing _____.” What kind of reputation has your business earned? How about you personally? List them clearly. Think through which can differentiate you from your competition.

4. ATTITUDE—HOW DO YOU DO IT?

What is the attitude you use in approaching each task? Do you approach it differently, and better, than your competition? You might be quite surprised just how much these “soft skills” can influence a customer’s final decision to sign up with you. If you’ve got a great mindset as a company, flaunt it.

5. NETWORK—WHO KNOWS YOU’RE DOING IT?

Your personal network includes your whole Rolodex. But what about your company? What can you tap into, learn from, support, endorse, and champion? How can you strengthen these relationships? (Keep reading for more tips on this!)

HOW TO BECOME THE MUST-HAVE SOLUTION

Now it's your turn to profit from your feedback to yourself, and start to apply it today.

Starting today, what's one step you could take to use your company's collective SKILLSET to earn more from each customer?

Starting today, what's one step you could take to use your company's collective EXPERIENCE to earn more from each customer?

Starting today, what's one step you could take to use your company's collective REPUTATION to earn more from each customer?

HOW TO BECOME THE MUST-HAVE SOLUTION

Starting today, what's one step you could take to use your own and your employees' ATTITUDE to earn more from each customer?

Starting today, what's one step you could take to use your company's combined customer NETWORK to earn more from each customer?

*Your team probably has glorious assets.
Are you getting mileage out of them?
If your customer doesn't know, it won't
add to your perceived value.*

MUST-HAVE PRINCIPLE #4: EXPAND YOUR RELATIONSHIP NETWORK

Like a shark, your business must constantly be moving forward. You must be introducing yourself constantly to new potential customers. Introducing yourself to new prospects is a lifeblood of your revenue.

But how, exactly? Below, 4 very modern ways to re-think introductions.

1. GO BEYOND THE BUSINESS CARD

“Old networking” was about introducing yourself from scratch, or getting your business card into their hand. Today, it’s about getting involved where your customer is (especially online), and becoming part of *their* world.

How can you go *beyond* the business card to introduce yourself to new prospects? List one example:

2. FIND OUT THEIR NEEDS

Today: find out what *their* needs might be. Become part of what people are already doing and saying and interested in.

HOW TO BECOME THE MUST-HAVE SOLUTION

How can you **FIND OUT THEIR NEEDS** to introduce yourself to new prospects? List one example:

3. GET INVOLVED IN CONVERSATIONS

Don't wait to start building relationships until you need them. Find out what your customers are talking about (their fears, needs, and aspirations), and then get involved in those conversations wherever they're happening.

How can you **GET INVOLVED IN CONVERSATIONS** to introduce yourself to new prospects? List one example:

4. EXPAND YOUR REACH WITH STRATEGIC SOCIAL MEDIA

Find out what's going on in someone's world, what they're thinking about, and build a connection by supporting them.

How can you **EXPAND YOUR REACH** in social media to introduce yourself to new prospects? List one example:

MUST-HAVE PRINCIPLE #5: DECREASE UNCERTAINTY

You're not the only one feeling uncertain these days. Your customer is too. If you can decrease that uncertainty, you become a must-have.

The more certainty you can bring to the table, the greater your value.

1. SPECIFICITY

State very clearly: *"Here is what I am going to do."*

How can you **INCREASE SPECIFICITY** to decrease uncertainty?

List one example:

Like a shark, your business must constantly be moving forward.

2. ACCOUNTABILITY

State very clearly: *“Here is what I did.”*

How can you INCREASE ACCOUNTABILITY to decrease uncertainty? List one example:

3. TANGIBILITY

State very clearly: *“Here is what it means.”*

How can you INCREASE TANGIBILITY to decrease uncertainty? List one example:

THE TRUST ADVANTAGE IS FOUNDED UPON FAMILIARITY AND STABILITY. IF YOU CAN DECREASE UNCERTAINTY, YOU WILL INCREASE TRUST.

MUST-HAVE PRINCIPLE #6: JUMPSTART INNOVATION

1. REDUCE RISK

Innovation is the heart of your growth. How can you reduce perceived risk so it's easier to say yes, and so you can get on delivering – and over-delivering?

How can you REDUCE RISK to increase innovation?

List one example:

2. THE RIGHT GUARANTEE

Not every guarantee is created equal. Find the “pain points” of your prospect—those things that are most scary or fearful for them, the thing that keeps them from getting started with you, and focus on ways to stabilize risk in that.

How can you ADD GUARANTEES to increase innovation?

List one example:

3. DEFINE DELIVERABLES:

The biggest mistake I see in selling service-oriented products is intangible evidence and ephemeral claims. Abstractions aren't enough by themselves. By removing as many variables as possible, and eliminating unknowns, you demonstrate control. Surround yourself with as much information as possible, including timelines, anticipated costs, potential next steps. Hypothetical is okay at this stage, but be as specific as possible.

How can you DEFINE DELIVERABLES to increase innovation?

List one example:

4. GET CREDIT FOR FOLLOW-THROUGH:

Demonstrate to your customers what they are getting, why it's distinct from what they currently expect. Don't just meet expectations. Your sale depends on your ability to get credit for your follow-through on exceeding expectations. No—scratch that. Not exceeding expectations, but defying them.

How can you DEMONSTRATE FOLLOW-THROUGH to increase innovation? List one example:

MUST-HAVE PRINCIPLE #7: OVERDELIVER AND OUTPERFORM

1. EXECUTE EXCEPTIONALLY

Your customer wants a compelling experience and a sense that they're doing business with someone who performs better, cares more, and works harder. Do you? Yes, demonstrate this constantly.

Here's the secret: You don't have to execute exceptionally in every single aspect of your work. But you do need to find a few details in which you can perform a little "shock and awe" in your marketing.

How can you EXECUTE EXCEPTIONALLY to over-deliver and outperform?

**YOUR CUSTOMER WANTS A COMPELLING EXPERIENCE,
AND A SENSE THAT THEY'RE DOING BUSINESS WITH
SOMEONE WHO PERFORMS BETTER, CARES MORE
AND WORKS HARDER. DO YOU?**

2. ACT URGENTLY

Urgency means that a task “requires immediate attention or action.” Your customer feels urgent about every part of the process: making sure that prices are fair, and that questions are answered immediately.

How could you give the sense to your customer that you care as much about this as they do? Where else could you bring urgency into your marketing? Practice “agency urgency.”

How can you ACT URGENTLY to overdeliver and outperform?

3. INVEST STRATEGICALLY

It’s not enough to be great. You must defy expectations.

How can you INVEST STRATEGICALLY to overdeliver and outperform?

MUST-HAVE PRINCIPLE #8: RESTART YOUR ENGINE

We're all interviewing for a new job every day, because our jobs keep changing. Our long-term success depends on our ability to solve new kinds of problems, use new technology, work with new kinds of circumstances.

1. GET READY TO BECOME OBSOLETE

Bad things happen when people don't upgrade their skills. Borrowing an example from advertising: About 15 years ago, when computers entered the creative department, most art directors quickly adopted them. But some resisted, especially senior ones who continued to rely on handcrafted work. Their argument—quite noble in theory, actually—was that they should be hired for their brains, not their typing skills. Unfortunately, nobility doesn't live long in ad agencies. Within a few years, most had been replaced by younger (and cheaper) workers who'd never dream of art directing from the back seat. Ouch. Don't let that be you.

Name an area in which you should restart your engine by getting ready to become obsolete.

2. STOCKPILE NEW ASSETS

The emphasis here is on *new*. Don't just keep chasing the same routine goals; instead, go outside your area of expertise. Don't rely on the same old formulas for success to find ways to excel.

Name an area in which you should restart your engine by **STOCKPILING NEW ASSETS**.

3. ASPIRE TO BE THE DUMBEST PERSON IN THE ROOM

Hire people that scare you (a little). People who are smarter than you, and can one day exceed you. Working with smart people is the single most important way for you personally to improve, and for your organization to raise its own bar. If you're smart, you'll get dumb.

Name an area in which you should **RESTART YOUR ENGINE** by aspiring to be the dumbest person in the room.

MUST-HAVE PRINCIPLE #9: PICK YOUR OWN LIFE'S MUST-HAVES

What is the **MUST-HAVE** in your own life?

Being a must-have is not about keeping your job, or getting just one more customer.

It's about expanding your career.

Not just putting your head down and getting through a chapter of time, but about keeping your eye on what's possible in your life.

Do not slog through it.

Do not waste your life focusing only on your career.

Do not get so fixated on survival mode that you lose sight of what's possible.

Starting tomorrow, name 3 steps you could take to become a MUST-HAVE in your customers' lives.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

What is the MUST-HAVE in your job, your career, and your life?

Okay, let's review:

BECOME THE “MUST-HAVE” SOLUTION FOR YOUR CUSTOMERS AND YOUR COMPANY

Must-Have Principle #1:

Find New Ways to Add Value

1. Insights
2. Ideas
3. Inspiration

Must-Have Principle #2:

Build a More Tangible Presence

1. Who You Are
2. What You Deliver
3. Why It Matters

Must-Have Principle #3:

Pinpoint Your Team's Assets, Identify Which Are Within Your Control, Then Maximize the Hell Out of Them

1. Skillset
2. Experience
3. Reputation
4. Mindset
5. Network

Must-Have Principle #4:

Expand Your Relationship Reach

1. Go beyond the business card
2. Next, find out their needs
3. Then get involved in their conversations
4. Expand your reach with strategic social media

Must-Have Principle #5:

Decrease Uncertainty

1. Specificity
2. Accountability
3. Tangibility

Must-Have Principle #6:

Jumpstart Innovation

1. Reduce risk
2. The right guarantee
3. Define deliverables
4. Get credit for follow-through

Must-Have Principle #7:

Overdeliver and Outperform

1. Execute exceptionally
2. Act urgently
3. Invest strategically

Must-Have Principle #8:

Restart Your Engine

1. Get ready to become obsolete
2. Stockpile new assets
3. Aspire to be to be the dumbest person in the room

Must-Have Principle #9:

Pick Your Own Life's “Must-Haves”

DISCOVER YOUR FASCINATION ADVANTAGE

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WE'D LOVE TO HEAR HOW YOU'VE BECOME THE MUST HAVE SOLUTION! TWEET @SALLYHOGSHEAD AND TELL US HOW YOU'RE THE #MUSTHAVESOLUTION

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