

The Quest to be Market-driven

How to become acknowledged and valued as the customers' advocate

<http://marketinghighground.wordpress.com>

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A seat at the table



**What happens when companies
don't have a *customer advocate*
at the leadership table?**

A gallery walk



**“Time’s up!
Or is it?”**

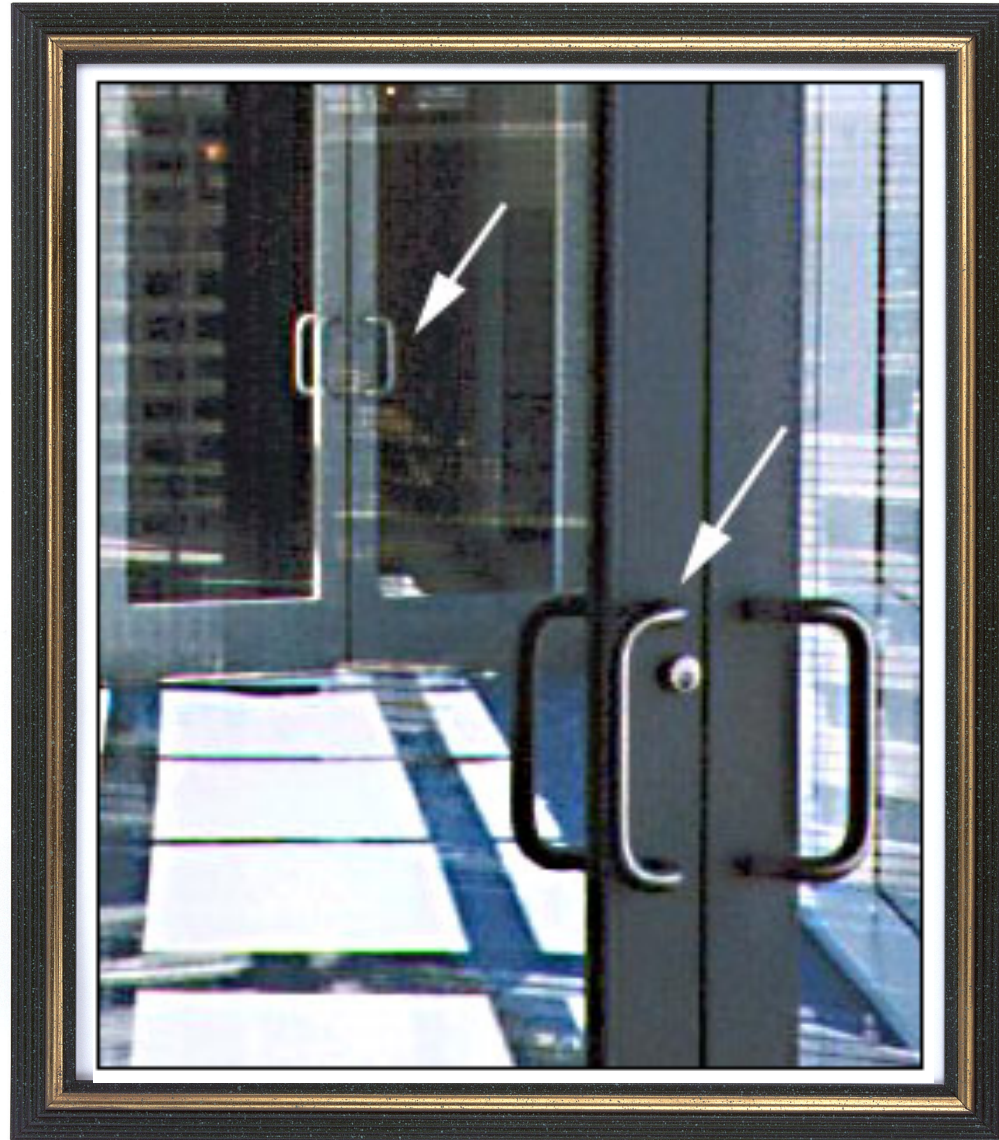
A gallery walk



**“Um, you
have
coffee on
your
nose”**

A gallery walk

**“Trapped
in a
walkway”**



A gallery walk

**“Don’t
press
that
button!”**



Unfortunate customer use cases are the result when there is no customer advocate at the table



- Market opportunities will be missed
- Product designs will suffer
- Customer loyalty will be at risk

A company that cannot fully empathize with its customers can never be market driven.

Empathy

. . . requires having a better, broader view of the customer and the market. For that, we need a higher vantage point.



The view is better from the *High Ground*



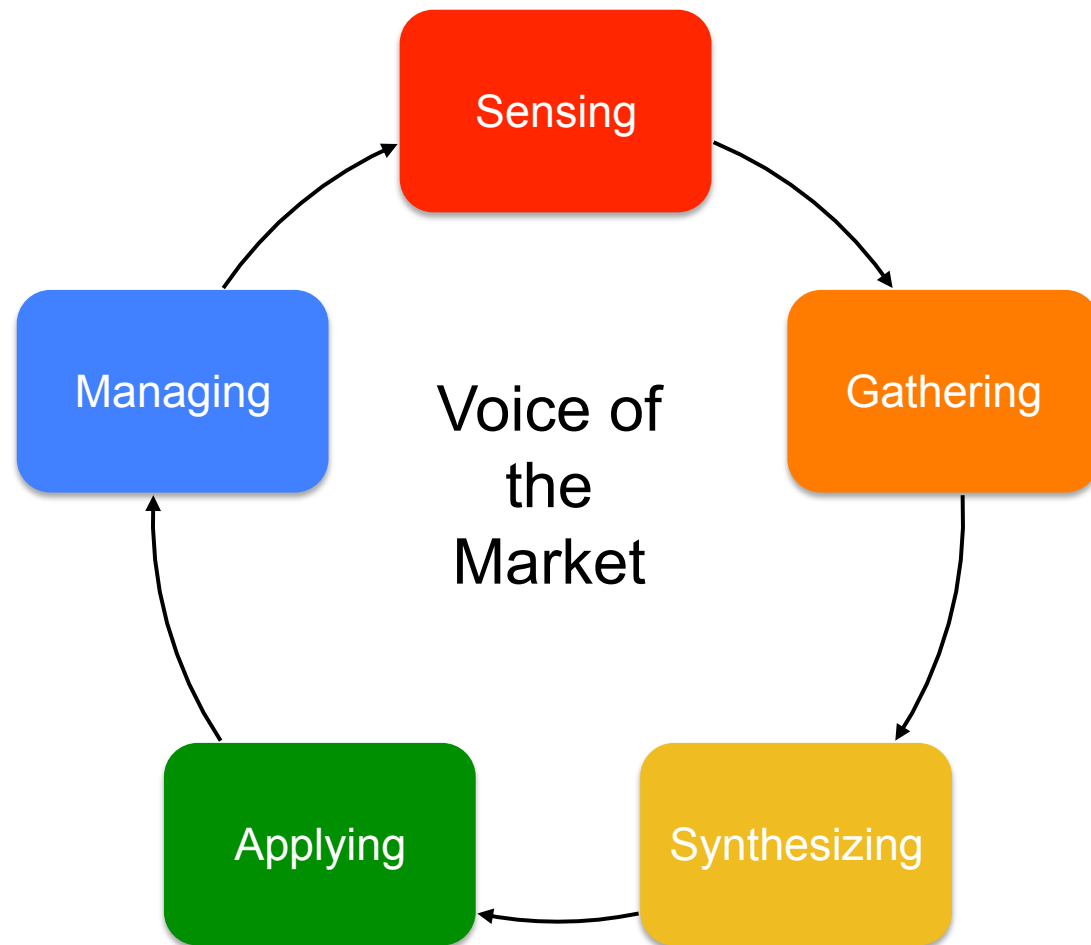
- *(noun)*: that special place where you understand the market so well that you become acknowledged and valued internally as the customers' advocate.

When no one owns the high ground . . .

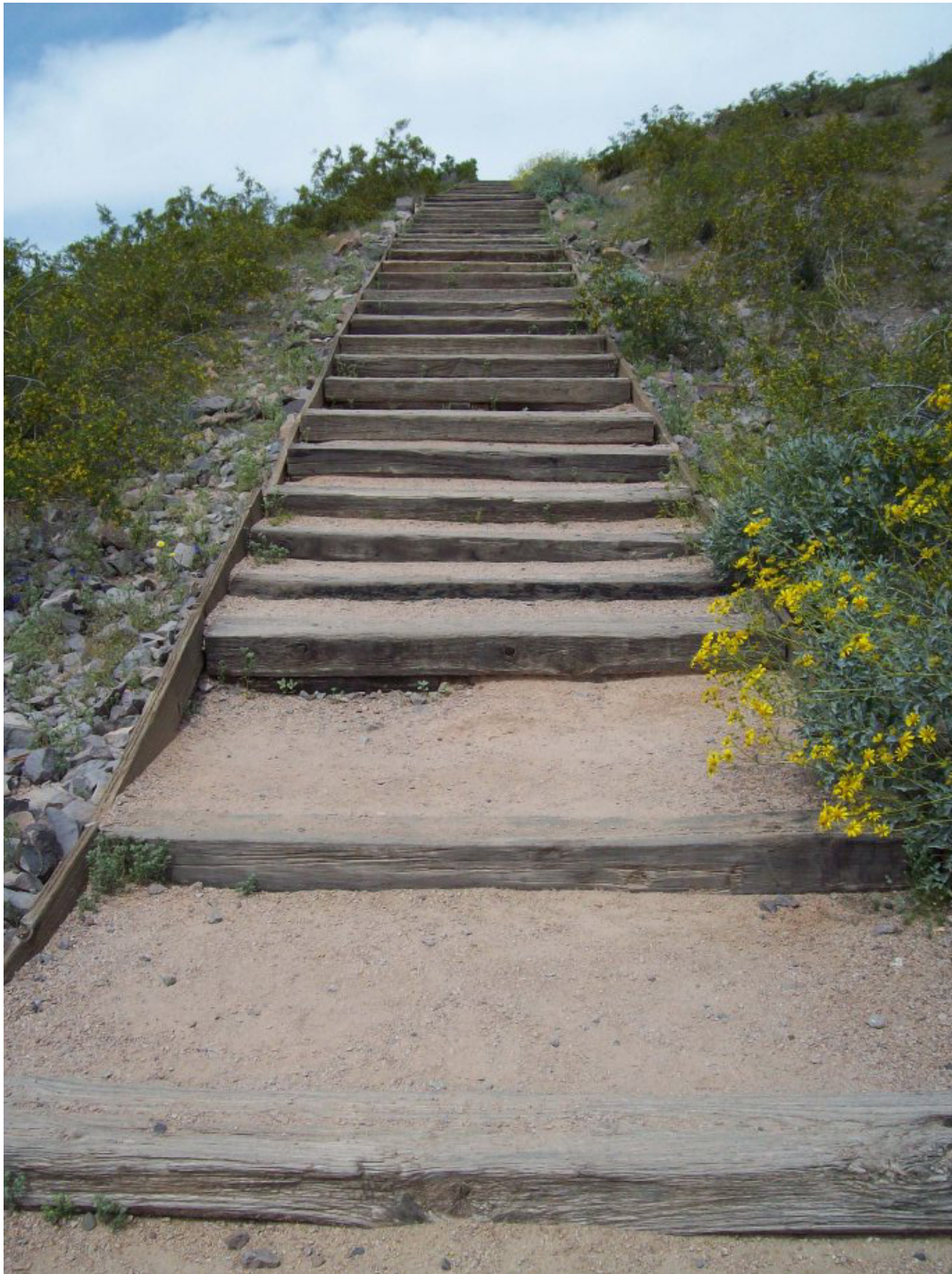
- Unaligned marketing and sales departments
- Engineering and product management teams working in silos
- Frustrated marketers who struggle to get the messaging right
- Poorly executed marketing campaigns that produce poor leads
- Decisions based on “whoever yells the loudest”



Owning the High Ground means . . .



becoming the definitive source of voice-of-the-market knowledge



5 Steps to the High Ground

5. How will we execute our vision?
4. What's our story?
3. Why is our solution best?
2. What are they trying to do?
1. Who are we targeting?

Question: who are we targeting?

***Answer: we want
CIOs of the global
5000!***

Step 1: Who are we targeting?

A shortcut to traditional segmentation

Who they are:

Identify a target segment

- Focus on responsibilities
- What problems do they have?
- What goals, objectives do they share?

Where they work:

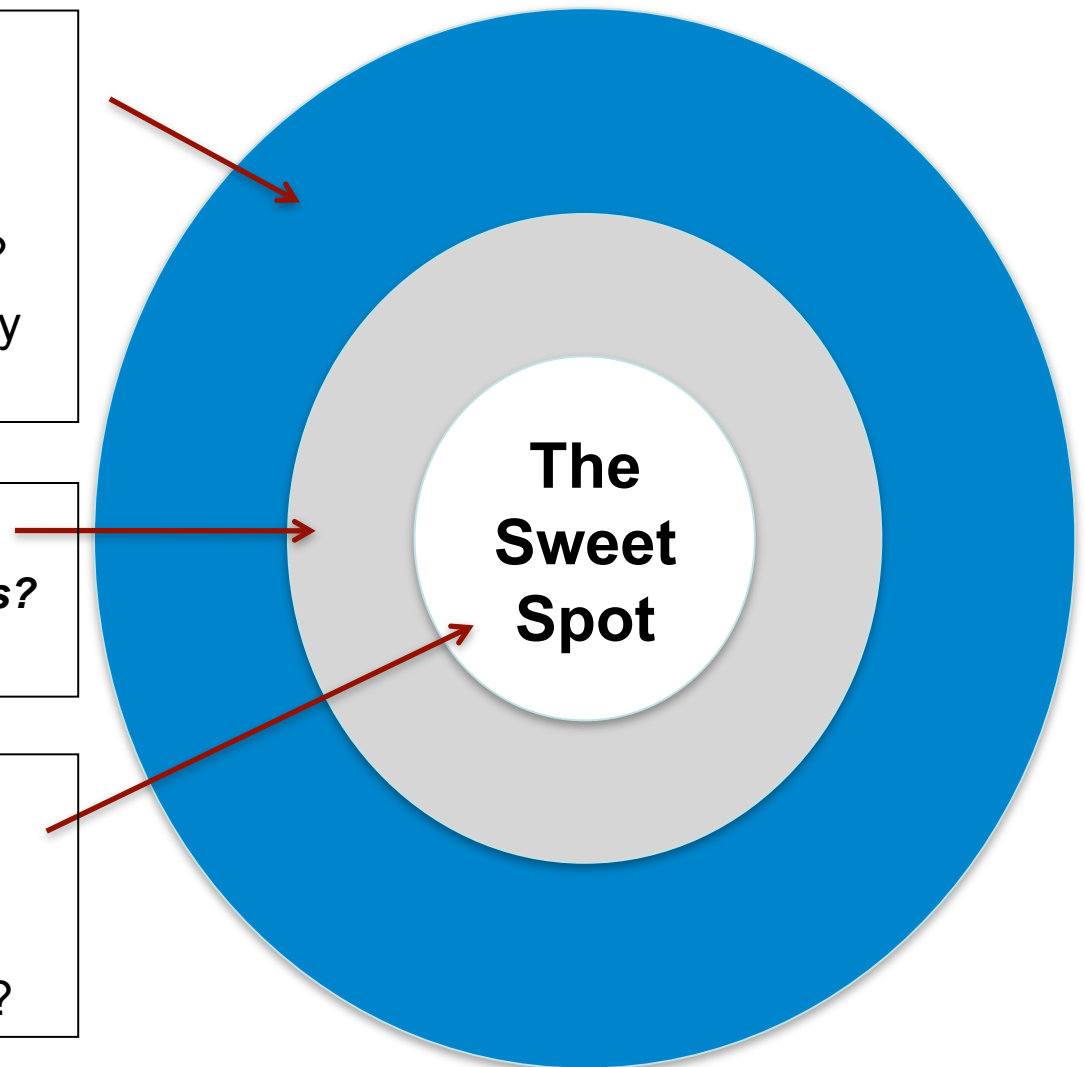
New prospects or current customers?

- Classify the ideal company

Why they are a good target:

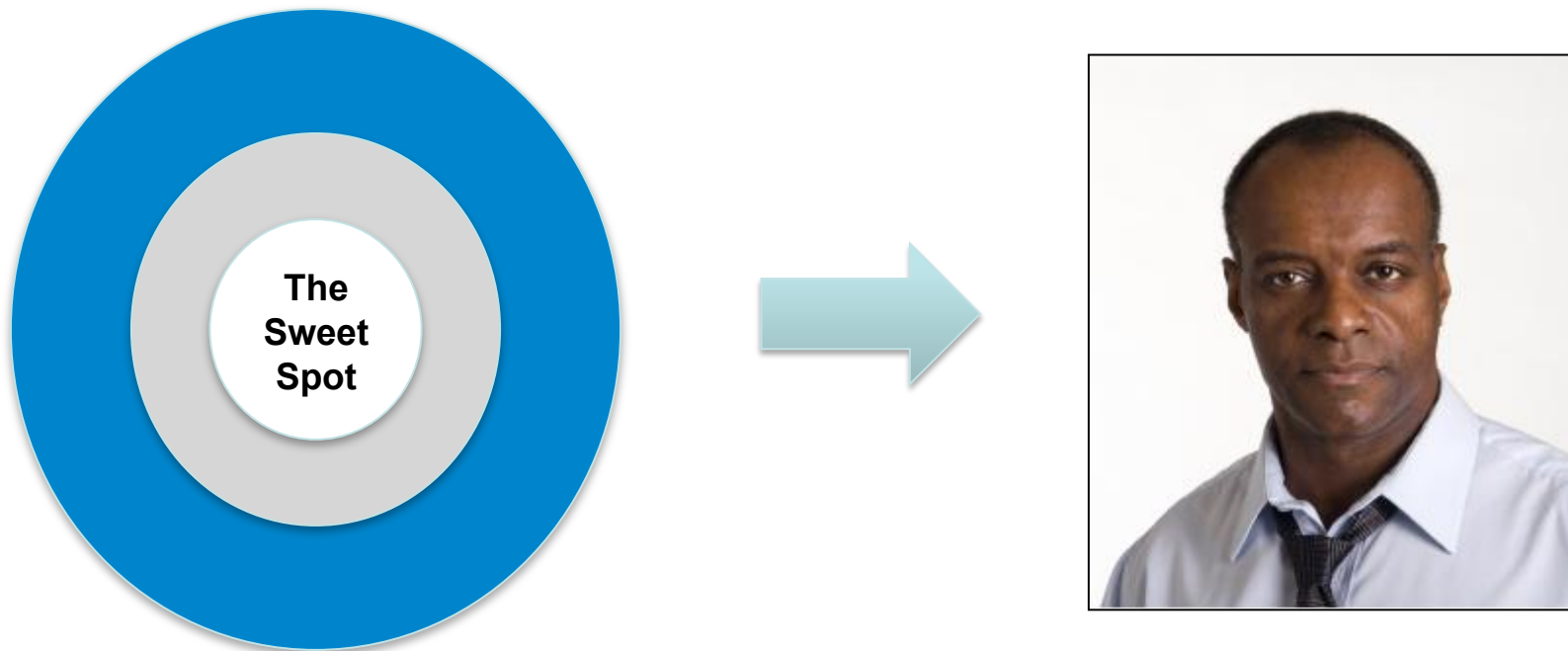
Add psychographics

- What are they thinking?
- Do they need to be educated?



The Persona

A persona is a personalized extension of the bull's eye.



A Persona answers these questions

- Who are they?
 - Name, age, gender
 - Title/responsibilities
 - Role in the purchase process
 - Attitude
 - Reputation
- Where do they work?
 - Ideal company profile
- Why are they are a good target?
 - Values
 - Fears
 - Pet peeves
 - Information sources

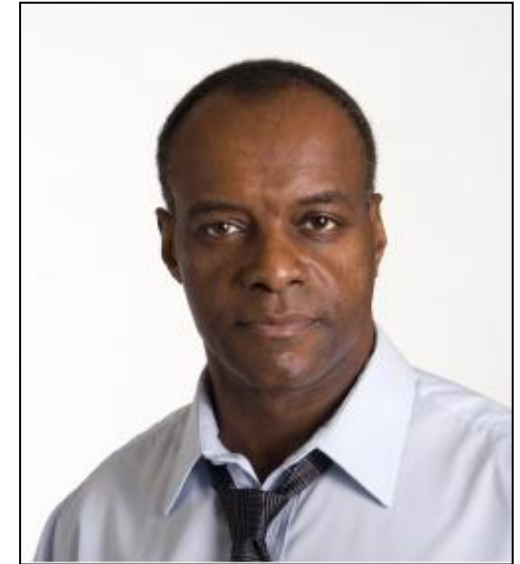
Meet Bob, *the conflicted procrastinator*

■ Who is he?

- Manages an internal call center or contact center
- Responsible for meeting SLAs and minimizing op cost
- A gatekeeper and influencer
- Skeptical, frugal – keeping the status quo is a safe bet
- Risk averse

■ Where does he work?

- Divisions in major enterprises in the US
- Runs multiple call centers with more than 75 seats
- Staffed internally (not outsourced)



■ Why is he a good target?

- He knows he should upgrade, but he fears making a bad purchase decision
- Other divisional and HQ call center managers will follow his lead
- Hates vendors that don't understand his business
- Requires proof before making a purchase
- Talks to peers; listens to analysts; relies on Google searches

Empathizing with a persona produces insights

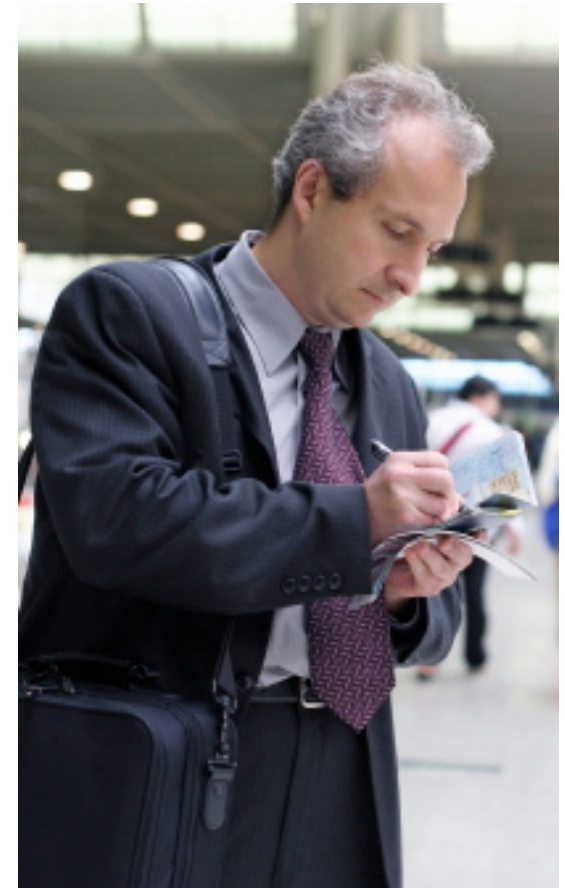
More CIOs



The Skeptical
Futurist



The Corporate
Radical



The Globetrotter

Step 2: What are they trying to do?

Illustrate customer use cases that focus on the experience, not the product

- What problem do they have?
- How do they respond
- “Day in the life” scenarios
- What steps, actions do they take
- How are they addressing the problem today without your solution?

Customer use cases vs product use cases



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Customer use cases

- Tell a story
- Focus on experiences
- Explore behaviors



Product use cases

- Capture functional requirements, processes
- Operational focus
- Educational or tutorial
- Expand the customer use case with more details

Customer Use Cases focus on experiences

Example: 3 generations with differing expectations

- By illustrating multiple personas and their most common or likely “experiential” use case, a product management team was able to easily decide which use personas should be prioritized



✓ Brooke

tinghighground.wordpress.com



✓ Carly



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Step 3: Why is our solution best?

- If I asked 5 sales people to explain why customers buy your product, would they know?
- If I asked 5 executives to describe the core value of your product, would they give me a consistent answer? Could they do so in 50 words or less?

*If the answer is **no**, then you don't have a clear and focused understanding of the product's value. You run the risk of confusing internal and external audiences.*

Positioning Statement Format

To:

(Target Persona)

is the one

(Product Name)

that

(Category)

unlike

(Key Customer Benefit)

(Nearest Competitive Alternative)

Positioning Statement Format

To: Joe, the Penny-pinching, Multi-tasking Field Support Manager

(Target Persona)

The Widget 8920

is the one

(Product Name)

communications test set designed to work
both in the lab and in the field

that

(Category)

makes you **more productive** while dramatically
lowing **total cost of ownership**

unlike

(Key Customer Benefit)

the Gizmo XYQ that conducts only half as many
tests and costs twice as much

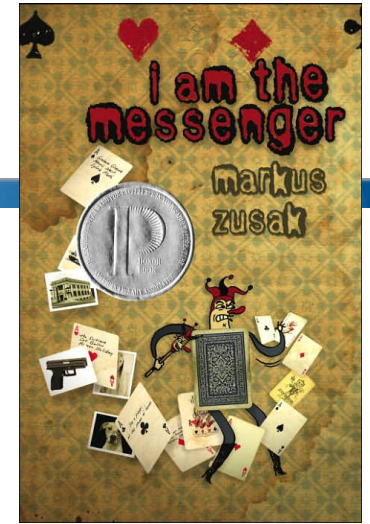
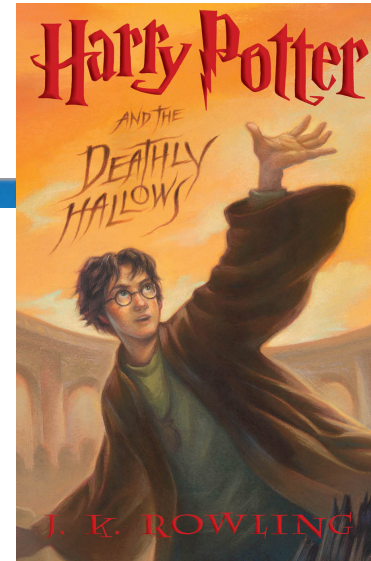
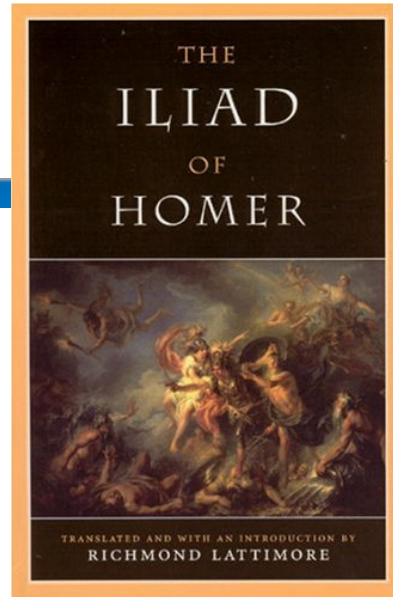
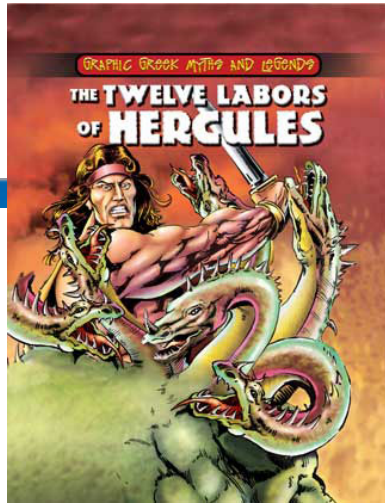
(Nearest Competitive Alternative)

Step 4: What's our story?

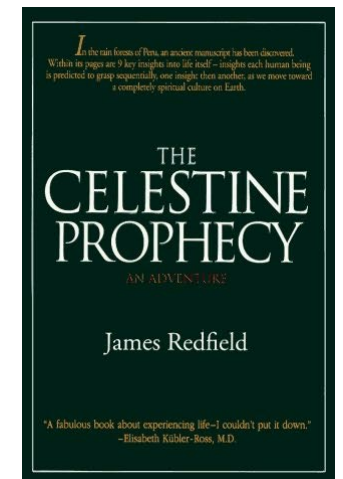
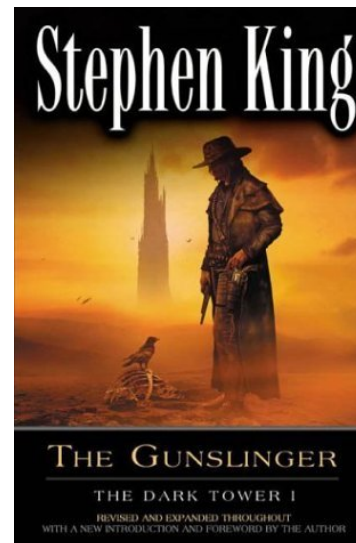
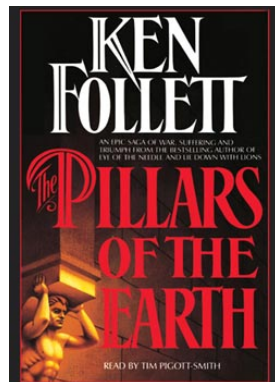
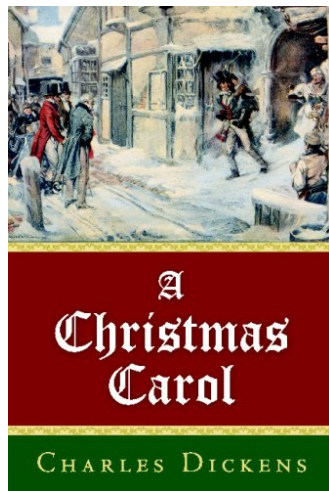


**Because nobody likes
to be sold to,
messaging must have
relevance.**

**Messaging must tell a
story.**



What do all of these books have in common?



What makes a good story?



1. Something happens to upset the status quo, creating dramatic tension and provoking an emotional response
2. Our hero works to restore balance
3. Ultimately he or she prevails
4. Life returns to normal or better than normal

What makes a good *business* story?

1. Engage the persona with a problem or opportunity they care about
2. Offer some thought leadership on how the hero can restore balance
3. Tell how and why your solution will help them prevail
4. Highlight the value and rewards they'll receive from using your products or services



*Tell the customer
use case story*

The Message Box:

a tool for telling your story

Target Persona

1 - Engagement Message

- What *issue* of theirs will get their attention?
- What *problem* of theirs can you solve?

2 - Solution Message

- What is the *criteria* that must be met to best address the persona's problem?

Your Offering

3 - Reinforcement Message

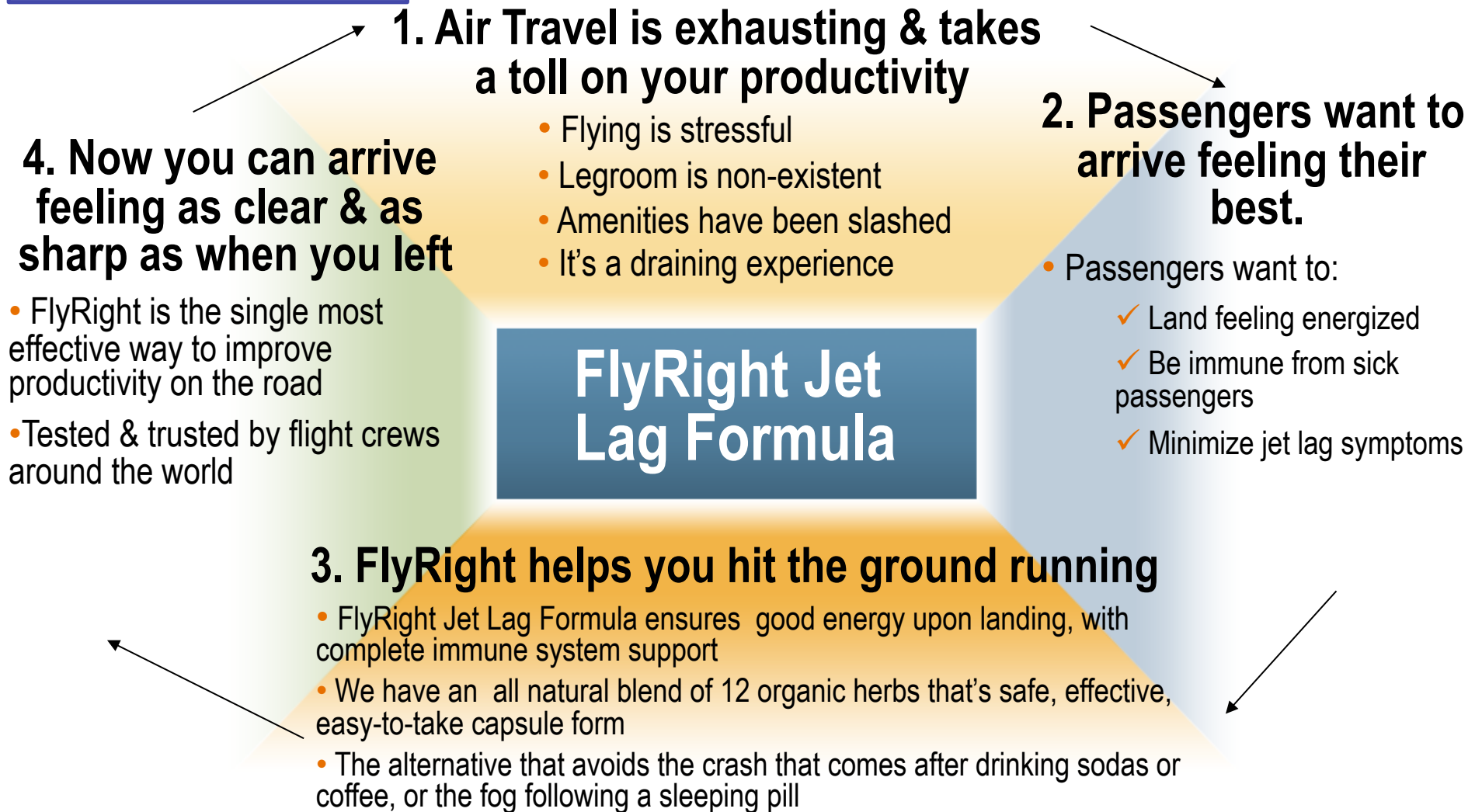
- Describe your solution and how and why it is the best option for addressing the solution criteria.
- Highlight key points of *differentiation* (as it relates to the nearest competitive alternatives).

4 - Value Message

- As a result of implementing your offering, *how will their life be better than before?*
- What *metrics* can the customer use to prove the value of your offering?

It's Miserable to Fly and You Know It!

The Globetrotter



Many marketers stop here . . .

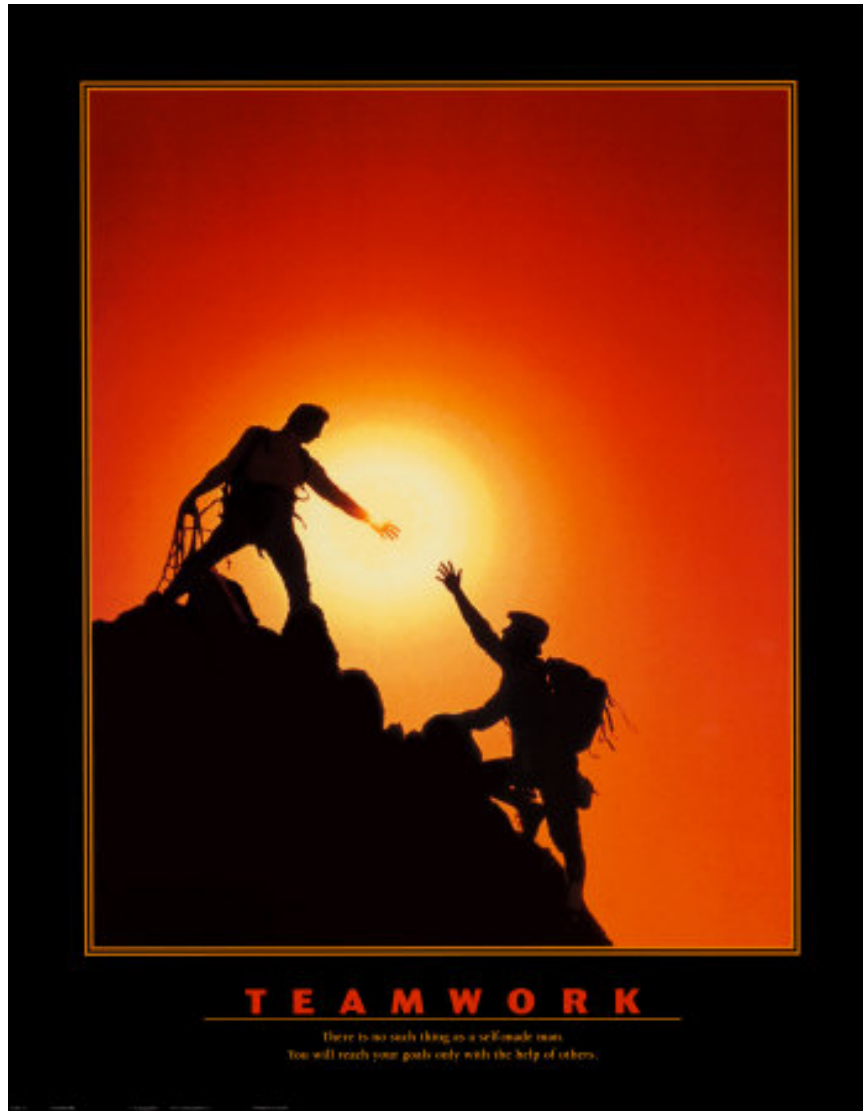
Don't stop!

Your job is just beginning

Step 5: How will we execute our vision?

Socialize the output &
Align the organization

Market-driven does not mean marketing-driven



The high ground must not be limited to just marketers and product managers

“But, it’s not my job!”

or

***“They won’t
let me!”***



It comes back to this

The journey to the high ground begins by helping the team get comfortable with these initial steps

Socialize the output & Align the organization

Persona

To better understand and empathize with the target audience

Positioning Statement

To better understand your value and differentiation from competitive alternatives

Message Box

To better communicate your value and relevance of your use cases to the target audiences

Engage these best practices

Evangelize their use

Encourage others to participate

Tips on how to begin

1. Become the customers' advocate by knowing what questions to ask
2. Help colleagues by guiding them through these best practice exercises
3. Challenge assumptions, but diplomatically and constructively
4. Don't frame your recommendations on personal opinion
5. Lead by example

Businesses need marketing leaders at every level

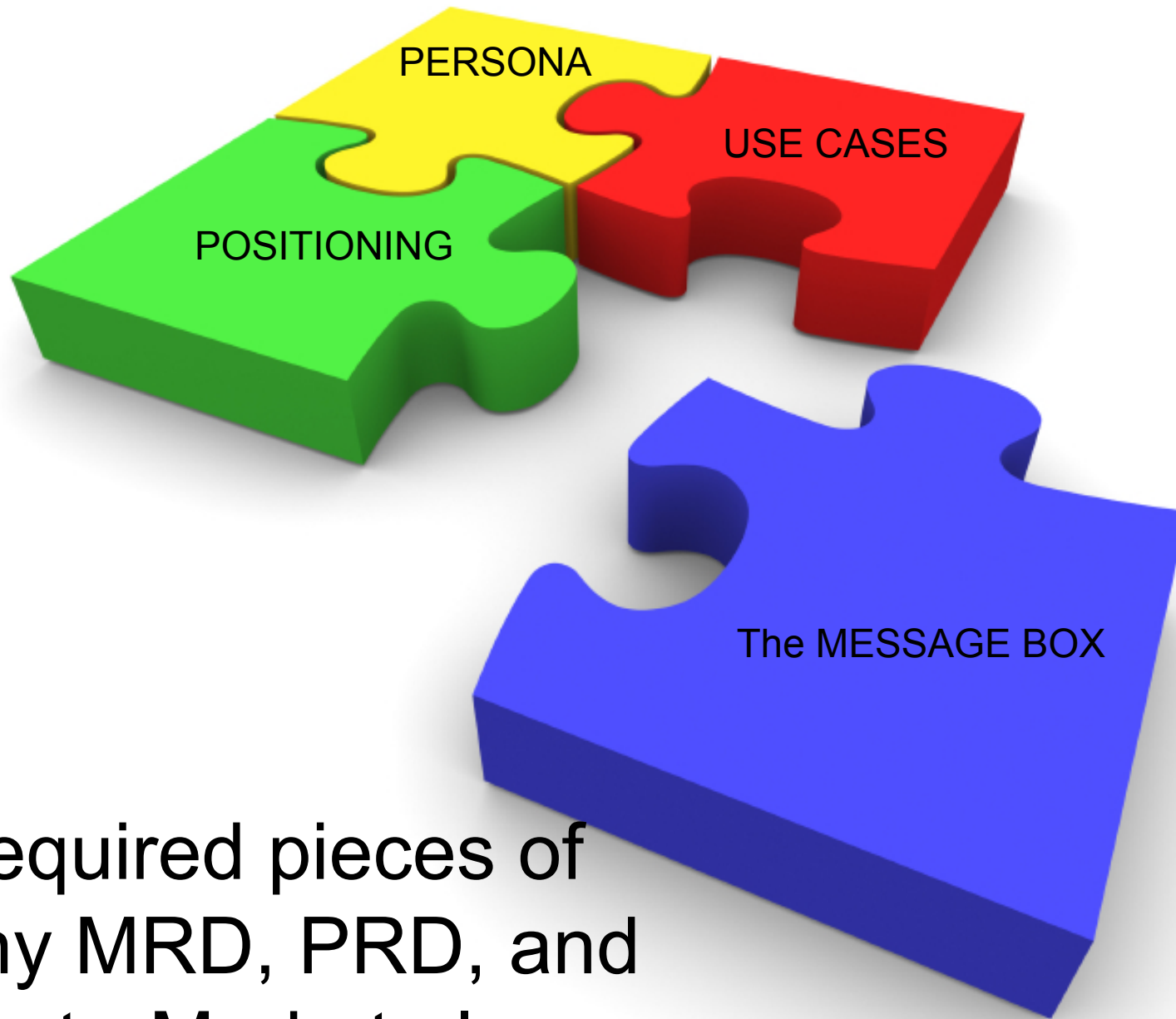
Become the customer advocate

From these exercises, develop a core set of slides to broadly share the marketing strategy

- Be a guest speaker
- Facilitate a marketing-sales summit twice a year
- Facilitate a marketing/product management/engineering summit twice a year
- Set up a repository of customer and market data that can be accessed and shared by everyone

5 Steps to the High Ground

5. Share, communicate, evangelize
4. The Message Box
3. Positioning Statement
2. Customer & Product Use Cases
1. Personas



Required pieces of
any MRD, PRD, and
Go-to-Market plan

**If you follow these steps, consistently,
with patience and sensitivity, you will get
closer to the high ground.**

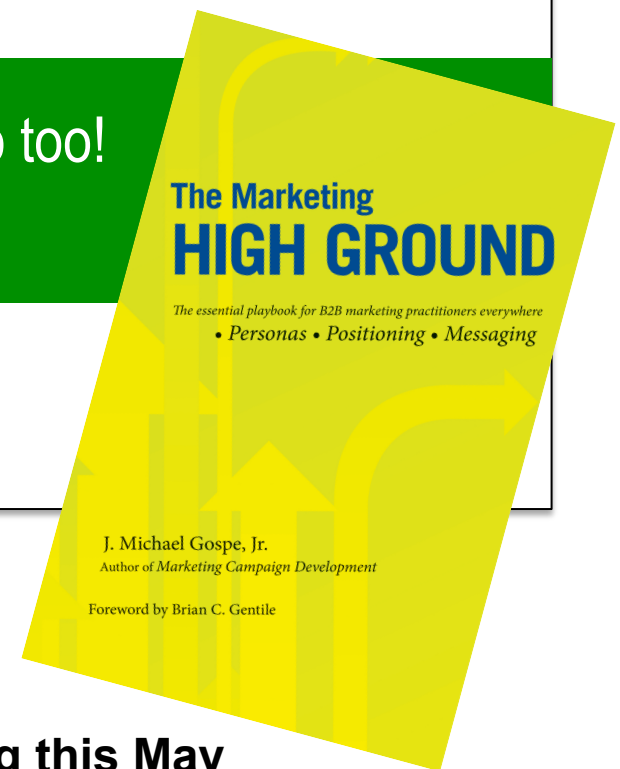
**Over time, you will own, then command,
a seat at the leadership table**

For more information . . .

Technology marketing best practices

<http://marketinghighground.wordpress.com>

Sales has their playbook. Now B2B marketers do too!
Personas. Positioning. Messaging. And more!



Coming this May
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