

LIVE YOUR *Brilliance*

I think that the thing I most want you to remember is that research is a ceremony. And so is life. Everything that we do shares in the ongoing creation of our universe.

~ Shawn Wilson

Research and Refinements

We have spent the last few modules developing your Signature Solution and crafting your Spiral Business Matrix. Now it is time to research your niche and test your solution out in the world!

This is going to be a two-part process in which you will first leverage the Internet to learn as much about your niche and audience as possible, and then perform what is called “Active Research” where you will take your Signature Solution out to the world so you can get the feedback you need to succeed!

Leveraging the Internet for your Research

Your first goal is to find people or businesses who are already out there with their own Signature Solutions that might be similar to yours. Although you might call them competitors, it's more effective to see and engage them as if they were peers or mentors. There is plenty of room for everyone's Signature Solution, so no need to look at this as a competition. In fact, many competitors, with trust, become allies; and as a result, together you can help each other grow your respective businesses through powerful joint venture partnerships.

Your second goal is to then discover where the people whom you most want to serve, that is your strategic audience hangs out. Where do they go to learn about what matters most to them. Where do they look for solutions like yours and people just like you. The Internet is perfect place for this kind of research – finding **your** people and the places they go to get what they want!

Activity 1: Finding Like Minds

Step #1 - Identify who else serves your strategic audience.

Specifically you are looking for who is out there already doing what you want to do, doing something similar to it OR doing something altogether different but is working with the same strategic audience as you. Those closest to what you want to do are likely addressing the problems you solve and/or creating the same kinds of opportunities you are.

The best way to do this is to create a keyword and phrase list and then use our dear friend Google (www.google.com) to perform a key word search. Here are three different ways you might search for other professionals just like you – that is other like minds.

For example, if you are looking to find people who serve non-profit leaders who struggle to speak confidently, here are three ways you can search:

1. Google: Name of your Strategic Audience + Type of Support

For example, if this were your Strategic Audience and the kind of support you offered you could search using these words or phrases:

- Non-Profit Leader + Speaker

- Non-Profit Leader + Coach
- Non-Profit Leader + Author
- Non-Profit Leader + Advisor or Consultant

2. Google: **The Desired Result (What they want)**

Or for example, you might search using these words or phrases:

- Speaking skills for Non-Profit Leaders (*strategic audience with the desired result*)
- Confidence in Speaking
- Fearless Speaking for Non-Profit Leaders
- Communication Skills for Non-Profit Leaders
- Learn to Speak (same principles will apply for Non-Profit Leaders)
- Confidence in Speaking (adding in the end result)

3. Google: **The Problem (What they don't want)**

Another example is you might search using these words or phrases:

- Fear of Speaking Solved for Non-Profit Leaders
- Speaking for Non-Profit Fundraising
- Fearless Speaking

The best way to approach this is to be as specific as possible and search for both the strategic audience type + either the problem to be solved or

the opportunity/end result desired. The tighter and more defined your search string the better your results will be.

If you are not getting enough results returned, be more general with your terms or remove the strategic audience from your search query. In the example above, broadening your search to anyone needing to be more confident in their speaking skills and not just non-profit leaders may get you the results you seek.

Your goal is to find 8-10 websites of people or businesses that do something similar to you and/or serve the same strategic audience.

Step #2 - Write down the names of 5-10 people/businesses that you have discovered and their website urls:

For example:

Tony Robbins: *www.tonyrobbins.com/*

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Step #3 - Carefully study their materials including websites, videos, info, and marketing materials. *This means signing up for their e-newsletters and free gifts, watching their videos, reading their blogs, etc. The best way to do this is create a new email using Google, Yahoo, etc. so that you have one place to receive all their materials without filling your regular email. Although you are researching them to learn from them, what you are not doing is researching them to copy them. You want to be you and stay unique to your Signature Solution.*

Use the following questions as a baseline for reviewing how they are marketing to their audience. Answer these questions for each of the people you listed in Step 2:

- What are the primary problem(s) they are addressing?
- Do these problems plague your audience as well?

- What is their solution?
- How is your solution different then theirs?
- What distinguishes your personality or approach from theirs?

The idea now is to see what is already out there as a way to help you understand how you will start to shine your light, *your way*. Remember this is research and from it you'll be able to refine your Signature Solution in ways that help you to stand out more. This research is about seeing what might be even more effective as you take your own Signature Solution out into the world. And be thorough. It will save you countless hours and dollars knowing what is out there already and how to shine your light uniquely.

Once you have collected this research, how does it inform you around your own offering? Do you feel the need to further refine your Signature Solution? If so, how?

This may mean going back into previous modules and making your adjustments accordingly – and that is to be expected. Even seasoned marketing experts invest heavily in market research and refinement. It makes all the difference!

Activity 2: Locating Your Strategic Audience

Now that you've found others who serve your audience, let's explore ways to find your strategic audience itself, **locally** and **online**, using the Internet.

What you are looking for are places to meet these people so you can test out your Signature Solution and have real conversations with them. To do this you'll want to think of search words and phrases that will help you discover places they hang online and, especially important, locally. The key is to put in the name of your Strategic Audience and the TYPE of location you are looking for.

For Type of Location, what you are looking for is where people go to network and learn (both online and off) – essentially any professional organizations or associations, workshops or other places where they'd go.

Google: Name of your Strategic Audience + Venue Type

For example if you were looking for Non-Profit Leaders you might search for these words or phrases:

- Non-Profit Leadership + Associations
- Non-Profit Leadership + Courses

- Non-Profit Leader + Professional Organizations
- Non-Profit Leadership
- Non-Profit Leadership Directories
- Non-Profit Leader Workshops
- Non-Profit Leadership Conferences
- Non-Profit Speaking Events
- Non-Profit Leadership Trade Shows
- Non-Profit Leadership Interest Groups

Also, if you aren't finding the results you need, try a different name for your strategic audience, such as any names your competitors might have used to describe your audience. Instead of Non-Profit, what might be other terms for non-profit? Depending on your audience it might include Ngo's, luminaries, thought leaders, etc.

Once you've identified these resources...

Write down the names of 5-10 local organizations or groups that serve your strategic audience:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Additional Resources for your research may include print or online trade publications, directories, magazines, blogs, websites – anywhere someone has collected data on your target audience's needs, desires, struggles, etc.

Write down the names of 5-10 organizations online that serve your strategic audience but are not on your local list:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

Write down the names of 5-10 online or print publications, online directories, etc. that serve your strategic audience:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

The beautiful thing here is you can do this research any time of the day. And this can also be easily delegated to a virtual assistant or other person if you feel you are not good at researching online or lack the time. But the truth is you must complete these steps or have them completed to make sure that you are on the right track for success.

Some Helpful Tips:

Attend Workshops, Seminars, Events

It's very helpful to attend other people's workshops, seminars or events that serve the same audience as you – you'll be right in the middle of your strategic audience and well positioned to learn from them. If you are attending these workshops or events in-person, you'll get a rich experience and volumes of information. Just do it. You aren't going there to market yourself but to learn about the audience and learn from someone who is already out there doing what you'd love to be doing.

Leverage Social Media

See if you can find someone who fits your prospective audience in your existing network. If you are a social media fan, post on Facebook, LinkedIn or other social sites and call them (your audience) by name. As an example if you are looking at new business owners or start-ups:

“Hello Friends! I'm looking for anyone who is considering starting their own business or has just started a business and is wanting to get more clients. If that is you please let me know: I'm doing a short research project for my marketing class.”

Or even ask your questions right in the post:

“Hello Friends! I’m looking for the places new business owners and start-ups go to meet other business owners. Ideas anyone?”

Here are some additional questions to get your thinking about where to find your strategic audience.

Think about the problem you solve:

- Where would someone look for a solution?
- Where would the people that have those kinds of problems hang out?
- What might they read – this can be helpful to see what publications, podcasts or videos are speaking to them.

Typically it just takes finding one or two people who meet your target audience and then asking them to introduce you to their friends or like-minded associates. This can work the same for finding like-minded people

who are already offering a similar solution to yours or working with the same strategic audience.

Part II is coming up next, so get crackin’

In our next module we will discuss your next step – which is to actively meet and learn from other “like minds” and your strategic audience. We’ll be going through interview scripts and how to feel comfortable asking the powerful questions that will get you the answers you need to be strategic in every move. Know that your ability to listen and learn will make all the difference!