

8.1 DEFINING MEANING WITH THE PURPOSEGRAM

If what you do brings **meaning** to your life, you're harder to compete with, because it's more than work to you. That's why you'll define your offer to the market *before* you know who and where your customers are; you want to find the activity that *matters*. The **Purposegram** is a handy tool for doing it.

It's a diagram of four overlapping circles combining **Four Big Questions** about life and work. The intersection of all four is your **purpose**: the activity that makes you feel complete and fulfilled, the ideal offer to your market. These questions define what you can do that others can't: your **value proposition**.



Figure 33: The Purposegram. After Bencale and Shapland

You'll answer the 4BQs as a series of lists over Days **9-12**. First, let's see how the "petals" at the intersection of each pair of circles work . . . and the risks of not having all four in play.

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8.2 FOUR CIRCLES, FOUR INTERSECTIONS

The "petals" are your **passion** (what you love and do best) **profession** (what you do best that customers will pay for) **mission** (what you love that the market needs) and **vocation** (what customers pay for that the market needs).

8.2.1 Your passion: what you do for fun

Your **passion** is what you'd do *if money wasn't a factor*. Jungle explorer? Chocolatemaker? Bodybuilder? It can be as selfish or expansive as you like.

Together, your passion and your **mission** add up to **what you love doing**, the first of the **4 Big Questions** you'll answer on Days 9-12: enthusiasm for the subject, plus the desire to make a difference. The flipside: these two, without the others, mean you'll be happy and fulfilled—but penniless.

8.2.2 Your profession: what you do for money

Your **profession** is *what you do for a living*, the skills you're trained for. Consultant? Accountant? Comedian? It's *what you do with what you know*, and may include what's on your academic certificates and degrees.

Combining your profession with your **passion**—the job you're trained to do, plus your enjoyment of a subject for its own sake—adds up to **what you do best**, since you've got the smarts to do it *and* the enthusiasm to keep going. Again, there's a caveat: this pair alone leads to feeling satisfied, but useless.

8.2.3 Your mission: your calling in life

Your **mission** is *what you yearn for*. It's an expression of your values: that thing you want to make happen that changes the world in some way. Human rights advocate? Green entrepreneur? Political activist? It's what you believe society or business **needs**—although it may not know it yet.

The combination of your mission and **vocation**—what you burn to do, combined with your natural aptitude for it—is how you become first choice for a customer in need. But again, without a balance of all *four* intersections, these two will make you feel something's missing: entertained, yet unfulfilled.

8.2.4 Your vocation: the activity you're suited to

Your **vocation** isn't your job; rather, it's *what you're a perfect match for*, from helping others at a soup kitchen to daubing graffiti. If your profession happens with what's in your head, your vocation is what you do with your hands, like building treehouses or playing volleyball. An activity you feel is worth doing.

The mix of vocation and **profession** is what **customers pay for**. You're suited to the work, and are able to deliver it with aplomb. But if these two are *all* you have, you'll be economically secure, yet emotionally empty.

8.2.5 All four combine as your purpose

The small grey area at the centre of the Purposegram is your **purpose**. The activity you're great at *and* enjoy doing, where you can deliver results with natural aptitude and the sense you're making a positive difference. **That's the**

Purposegram. The questions *sound* like something out of a floaty'n'flighty self-help manual, but the takeouts are practical pitches that'll connect you to the customers you want in **Part 3** and beyond.

You may not know what your purpose is yet, but you probably have an idea of what gives you a buzz. The rest of **Part 2** is about formalising that feeling, so you can take it to the market in **Part 3** and beyond.

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8.3 FOUR BIG QUESTIONS . . .

You'll see the Purposegram asks **four big questions**—about what you love, what you're best at, what the market needs, and what customers will pay for. Let's look at each, with notes on what you'll do with them.

8.3.1 What do you love?

Everyone loves something—and most people love more than one. Your list isn't limited to the biggies, like children and sports teams; it includes smaller loves like wallpaper patterns, buildings, and flavours of tea. Because in those smaller loves are clues to the companies and sectors you'll enjoy working with.

When writing this list and others, the hardest part is Pirsig's Brick: getting started. Once you're over the hump, you'll find it hard to stop. When you write it tomorrow on **Day 9**, a useful method called the **Spidergram** will help organise your ideas into a connected picture of what gives you a buzz.

To get those findings into your 100-day plan, you'll then add them to your spreadsheet as a formal set of structured sentences.

8.3.2 What do you do best?

The skills you offer as a professional are more varied than you think. No job is about technical proficiency alone. Perhaps you're also fluent in a foreign language, play a rare sport, or understand a branch of philosophy. Those other skills can add value to your work, making your offer to the market unique.

Unlike your answers to what you love, you'll **categorise** and **rank** these areas of expertise. Seeing the difference between what you're best at and where you need to train further plays a big role in defining what you'll offer to the market.

You'll answer this question with another diagram—a four-box grid called the **Learning Matrix**—on **Day 10**. Once again, you'll add your learnings to your spreadsheet as a list of sentences to compare and contrast.

8.3.3 What does the market need?

Like life as a whole, six-figure freelancing comes down to solving a few basic problems for customers. Making sales; boosting profits; improving quality—

the list isn't long. Every six-figure freelancer wins customers by working out which of these issues his/her offer best applies to.

So this question is about pinning down where the market most needs your help. On **Day 11**, working with some preset questions, you'll assess opportunities with another back-of-envelope tool called a **SWOT**. Thinking in terms of these basic business problems makes sure your offer is worded in language your target market will understand.

Again, you'll add your discoveries to your spreadsheet in a structured way.

8.3.4 What will customers pay for?

Business customers want one thing: competitive advantage that helps them thrive. What they pay freelancers for are the actions that move the company from a less competitive situation to a more competitive one—whether that's an engineering innovation that disrupts the industry, or a better way of feeding employees in the cafeteria.

So the last of these Big Questions involves building the business case for customers to use you—with a tool called a **gap analysis**. (You'll meet business cases again on **Day 71**.) A gap analysis looks at the less-competitive and more-competitive situations (call them A and B) and pinpoints the actions needed to move from the first to the second.

What you're looking for are the gaps where a company will benefit greatly from using you *and* you're in a position to deliver great work. Of course, you'll add these ideas to your spreadsheet too.

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8.4 . . . AND FOUR BIG HONKIN' LISTS

100 Days, 100 Grand uses a lot of lists. Numbered lists in the informational and instructional content; checklists at the end of each day. And, of course, your **List** of prospective customers, the subject of **Part 6**.

But lists can also guide you to answers that aren't obvious. Writing possible answers as a list *gets you started*; you're giving structure and sequence to your information straightaway. (Remember—Pirsig's Brick.)

Such a list is called a **BHL (Big Honkin' List)** because it runs to many items, ready for you to cross out, swap around, and put in groups. When answering Big Questions, think BHLs, not single sentences.

Listmaking is a useful skill for six-figure freelancers to practice anyway, because lists are a great way to organise work. In time, you start looking at life in terms of lists. The BHLs in **Part 2** help turn listmaking into a *habit*.

8.4.1 Using BHLs to answer the 4BQs

In the Tasks you'll prepare some worksheets for *four* Big Honkin' Lists: your answers to the 4 Big Questions, each a list. You'll decide these answers on Days 9-12, then play around until you find where they overlap as your **purpose**.

8.4.2 Why the answers go on your spreadsheet

Your answers to the 4BQs will feed into the personalisation slots in your **Letter** to customers later on, as part of the **marketing campaign** that'll connect what you do to the people who'll pay for it. Those skills and hobbies also decide the **search strings** that track down the cold suspects you add to your **List**. (Everything joins up in **100 Days, 100 Grand**.)

That's also why you write your answers on your spreadsheet—by referencing cells, the information can be used and reused, giving maximum gain for minimum effort. Next, see how the structure of your answers matter, with **gap-fill sentences**.

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8.5 USING GAP-FILL SENTENCES TO ANSWER THE 4BQS

Questions are easier when you know the shape of the answer. A useful cheat for finding that shape is **gap-fill sentences**, also known as the teacher's friend.

Gap-fill sentences provide a structure for your thinking to focus your mind. (You'll also use gap-fills to build your **Letter** in **Part 6**. Mailmerge, after all, is just gap-filling.)

You've already met one gap-fill sentence: the **sales headline** you wrote in **Day 1**'s tasks. (Remember [job title] [what I do] + preposition + [who I do it for]?) Here's how the examples break down into gap-fill sentences:

- *[Sales trainer] [guiding clinicians] for [tier-1 pharma MNCs]*
- *[Pay-per-day artworking outsource] [creating infographics] for [NYC ad agencies]*
- *[Freelance sysadmin] [providing burst capacity] to [datacentres]*
- *[Marketer-for-hire] [smoothing brand plans] at [finance boutiques]*
- *[Freelance WSET Cert] [driving down wine costs] for [top restaurants]*
- *[Proposal writer] [winning public sector RFPs] for [small builders]*

Let's see how gap-fills can help you write the next part of the **LinkedIn Profile** you'll start putting to use to find Connections today.

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8.6 USING GAP-FILLS TO WRITE YOUR PROFILE SUMMARY

The Purposegram, its four Big Questions, and the Big Honkin' Lists you'll use to answer them come together as your offer to the market—and that offer's first point of contact with your market is your LinkedIn **Profile Summary**. You'll draft it (using a gap-fill exercise) in the Tasks. First, learn these tips.

Your Summary is up to 2,000 characters long. It's unlikely you'll need so many. Pay most attention to your first paragraph: it needs to be as near 220 characters as possible, since that keeps it visible without clicking **See more**.

Don't imagine your audience as a faceless mass; when someone reads your LinkedIn Profile, they are reading it alone. Accordingly, always write as if to a single person, as much in your Summary as in your **Letter** in **Part 6**.

8.6.1 Write your Summary using AIDA

While most LinkedIn Profiles address a potential **employer**, the budding six-figure freelancer needs to address a potential **customer**. You've already met the sequence for attracting a customer: it's **AIDA** from **Day 5**. Your headline captures **attention**; accordingly, your Profile continues the sale with **interest**, **desire**, and **action**. An ideal structure is three paragraphs.

8.6.1.1 Build interest by introducing yourself

The first paragraph is the most important, and probably the shortest. As an individual freelancer on LinkedIn, the focus of your reader is on **you**—so capture their interest with a few words about yourself. Be personal and friendly; you're selling the whole you, not just your area of expertise. Here's a useful gap-fill sentence for your opening paragraph.

I work with [customer type] and [customer type], doing [activity] for [organisation type] in the [A, B, and C] sectors backed up by [number] years in the [City] market. I've done it for [number] businesses in [market] leading to [percentage] gains in [metric]—and I'm ready to do the same for you.

8.6.1.2 Drive desire by putting in the numbers

The second paragraph can be longer: it's a series of proof points backing up your sales headline and first paragraph. So don't put down what you *can do*—put down what you *have done*. And be *specific*. Calculate figures where you need to. One concise sentence summarising an achievement in succinct detail is worth any number of abstract platitudes.

It's also where you can note qualifications and certificates if they aided those accomplishments. You're giving your reader a reason to want you. Two checks: make sure everything's about the *achievement*—not about you—and give *narrative*, showing your progress over time, not a laundry list.

Here's a gap-fill model to give you an idea. Note the numbers—whatever your expertise, businesses in your market are mainly interested in money, and if you show you understand that, you're ahead of most freelancers already.

After delivering [number] [type of project] projects for [organisation] with an average return above [%], I used [qualification] to complete [£number]+ projects for [sector] with a team of [number]. This led to [change] and a [%] increase in revenues. Positive changes included [process change], [market change], [mindset change]. As a result, [change in me].

With [number] projects of [£number] completed, the next level was [size], needing [change in me] to reach [change in project] over [number] years. Adding a [qualification] let me increase [metric] by [%] and work with a great team of [number] across [number] [departments / companies / countries].

Today I work with [organisations] of [size] to [size] to increase [metric], improve [metric], and effect [change] in [business process]. Returns for my clients average [%].

8.6.1.3 Drive action by telling readers what you want them to do

The last paragraph in your Summary drives **action**. What do you want your prospective customer to do next? It's fine to add humour in the last part; you're asking your reader to make a decision to contact you, so keep it friendly. Here's a basic model:

In between times, I enjoy [hobby] and [interest]—and they make my [business activity] more effective by [reason]. For an initial [15-minute chat], contact me on [phone] or [email] between [time] and [time] any [weekday] and tell me what you want to achieve in the next [timescale].

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All this psychology—'grams, 4BQs, BHLs, gap-fill sentences—will make your offer to the market solid and meaningful. With that in mind, let's move on to today's Tasks and start completing them.