**Customer Discovery Best Practices**

**Introduction:**

Customer Discovery is one of the most important activities an early stage company will complete. For most seed-stage investors, successful completion of this step is a requirement to even consider an investment. This allows startups that are pre-revenue to show a clear path to market. It is also something that can be confusing or intimidating to those who’ve never done it before. Below is a collection of curated resources that we’ve found to be helpful. Hopefully, you will find them instructive and can use the information to complete a rigorous and thoughtful discovery process.

**Building Your Lean Canvas:**

A good place to start before testing your approach is to create a Business Canvas. We like this video from Ash Maurya that takes you through the canvas and provides some excellent context for each section of the canvas. Starting here should be very helpful.

[Capture Your Lean Canvas in 20 Minutes](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7o8uYdUaFR4)

**Steve Blank Customer Discovery Videos:**

Steve Blank is one of the foremost experts in customer discovery. The following videos are relatively short and cover specific aspects of what Steve commonly refers to as “getting out of the building.” This is code for getting out in front of potential customers, users, etc and testing your approach. The order of these videos is intentional and may be most helpful watching them in the order in which they are listed.

This first set of videos serve as cautionary notes about what to avoid as you plan and complete this process. Normally, you would review these toward the end but knowing these pitfalls to avoid provides excellent context for the remaining material. Watch these first.

Death by Powerpoint: <https://vimeo.com/76171146>

Death by Demo: <https://vimeo.com/76390080>

Assuming You Know: <https://vimeo.com/76175907>

Customers Lie: <https://vimeo.com/76176674>

Getting MVP Right: <https://vimeo.com/73713162>

Now that you know some common mistakes to avoid, it’s time to start planning and completing your customer discovery approach.

Pre-Planning Part I: <https://vimeo.com/75308828>

Pre-Planning Part II: <https://vimeo.com/75184102>

Pre-Planning Part III: <https://vimeo.com/75603393>

Interviews Part I: <https://vimeo.com/75535337>

Interviews Part II: <https://vimeo.com/75536337>

Asking Correct Questions: <https://vimeo.com/74338298>

**Books on Interviewing & Testing:**

Asking the right questions and conducting good customer interviews is crucial for success. The “Mom Test” is a great book that helps you craft the approach and understand the outcomes you’re trying to drive.

[The Mom Test: How to talk to customers & learn if your business is a good idea when everyone is lying to you](https://tinyurl.com/ydebrjrz)

“Talking to Humans” provides the tactics and methods to design, plan and execute your discovery process. This is a comprehensive resource.

[Talking to Humans](https://www.talkingtohumans.com/)

Ash Maurya’s book provides a deeper dive into the concepts he shares in his video we posted above. This will help you draft a business canvas which can be a cornerstone for your startup.

[Running Lean, Ash Maurya](https://tinyurl.com/y87bqazh)