



Introduction to Working Backwards

Amazon's primary mechanism for innovation

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Our mission:

to be Earth's most
customer-centric
company





“There are many advantages to a customer-centric approach, but here’s the big one: **customers are always beautifully, wonderfully dissatisfied**, even when they report being happy and business is great. Even when they don’t yet know it, customers want something better, and your desire to delight customers will drive you to invent on their behalf.”

- Jeff Bezos, Founder and Executive Chair, Amazon.com, Inc.
- 2016 letter to shareholders

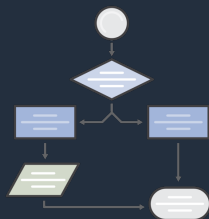
Creating a culture of innovation



Generate ideas: We hire innovators, and we encourage new, disruptive ideas from across our organization



Culture: Hire builders and manage against our 16 Leadership Principles, Think Big and invest early – and accept failure as a critical part of the innovation process



Organization: We decentralize authority to single-threaded owners leading small, empowered 'two pizza' teams that own what they create



Architecture: Empower innovators through self-service tools; utilize AWS cloud platform to build quickly, scale fast, and minimize costs of failure



Mechanisms: Encoded behaviors that turn ideas into meaningful innovations – Working Backwards methodology, PR-FAQs, and detailed narratives

Let's work backwards!



Activity - Listen

Who is the customer and what insights do we have about them?

Write down several of your customers and think about their needs

- Think about external customers
- Think about internal customers
- Choose one and give them a description like the below from Amazon Go:

EXAMPLE:

busy, on-the-go, tech savvy, urban dwellers



Activity - Listen

Who is the customer and what insights do we have about them?

- Build the persona:
 - Name, age, profession, education, location
 - Tell us about them
 - What are their pain points and how do they feel about them?
 - What goals do they have?
- Share your persona with a neighbor



What is the prevailing customer problem or opportunity?



What is the prevailing customer problem or opportunity?

EXAMPLE:

Today busy, on-the-go, tech savvy, urban dwellers

Have to fight crowds and wait in long lines

When they simply want to grab only a few things at the corner convenience store while on the go during a busy day.

Customers need a way to get in and out of the store quickly.



Activity - Define

What is the prevailing customer problem or opportunity?

Work with your customer team to fill in the blanks

Today_____

(customer type)

has to_____

(describe problem/opportunity)

when_____

(situation)

Present the problem statement to a neighbor



How might we ... ?

Improve their retail experience? (too broad)

Use tap-to-pay credit card check out? (too narrow)

Use automated checkout stations? (not thinking big enough)

Eliminate the checkout process all together? (YES!)

THINK BIG

Thinking small is a self-fulfilling prophecy. Leaders create and communicate **a bold direction that inspires results**. They think differently and look around corners for ways to serve customers.

Activity - Invent

What is the solution and the most important customer benefit?

Reflecting on the customer problem, brainstorm different ways to create the benefit necessary to achieve the customers' goals

- What if...no barriers, no limits
- Each person creates eight ideas in eight minutes, listen for prompts
- Use your workbook, post-its, etc.

Review ideas and decide on best idea (combine as necessary)

<i>Idea #1</i>	<i>Idea #2</i>
<i>Idea #3</i>	<i>Idea #4</i>

What is the most important customer benefit?

Workbook page 6:

Now you have the big Idea!

Complete page 6 of your workbook. Clearly articulate the idea and the customer benefit.

PRESS RELEASE



- Leap into the future: think BIG
- Focus on the customer need
- The customer quote is key
- Avoid jargon
- Say it simply and clearly



Acme Inc. announces Lavadora, a new machine to automatically clean dirty dishes

Under-the-counter machine cleans and dries dirty dishes in 90 minutes without any physical labor

SEATTLE--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Mar. 12, 2019-- (AINC) — Homemakers and hosts now have more time to spend with family and friends as dirty dishes can be washed by machine. Gone are the days of lost hours spent scrubbing and rinsing dirty dishes. Yesterday Acme Inc. announced a new household appliance designed to wash dishes without any physical effort required. The basic wash cycle takes ninety minutes from start to finish. Dirty dishes go in, and clean dried dishes come out. The standard model is priced at \$399.

Dirty dishes are a painful task for most people, especially those who like to cook, entertain, or host large groups. A 2006 study revealed the average time spent washing dishes in the US is estimated in surplus of four hours a week. Whether it be an individual meal, family meal, or hosting friends, each mealtime adds to a never ending pile of dirty dishes. When left in the sink or on the counter, dishes begin to smell and crust. If you wash dishes immediately after a meal is finished, this distracts from family or guests resulting in a suboptimal mealtime experience.

The Lavadora is a mechanical dishwasher that fits under counter, occupying the space of two standard kitchen cabinets. It takes an average of twelve minutes to fill the machine with plates, glasses, cutlery, and pans using two large dish racks stacked one atop the other. When the machine is full, or when you are ready for clean dishes, initiate the cleaning cycle by pressing a small button and closing the front panel. The machine uses hot water and approximately four tablespoons of dishwasher safe soap to scrub and rinse dishes. After the rinse cycle, the dishes dry in place. If dishes are particularly dirty, longer more intense cycles are available.

"We are excited to add this product to our line of appliances aimed to decrease the time needed to manage a household," said Jack Smith, VP of Domestic Machines at Acme Inc.. "The Lavadora dishwasher joins our suite of everyday household appliances alongside the refrigerator. Customers can now store food in our refrigerators and clean dishes automatically. Time with family and friends is precious and we will continue to develop solutions which help our customers spend more time doing what they love with their loved ones."

Most adults can load or unload dishes from the machine in ten to fifteen minutes, no special skills are required. The current machine has capacity for the daily dishes of an average family of four (considering three meals a day and an afternoon snack). After initiating a wash cycle, the dishes are clean and dry in 90 minutes (depending upon the setting). There is no need for sponges, gloves, expensive dish soap or hand cream to repair dried skin from hours of hand-washing dishes.

"I used to avoid having people over for dinner as it led to long hours in the evening scrubbing and drying plates," shared Alla Manchatanto, 32, Chicago, IL, one of the Lavadora beta testers. "Now I gladly host friends at the weekend. I also started a monthly supper club. Each night, I place dirty dishes in the machine. In the morning, the dishes are washed, dried, and ready to be reused. It has completely changed my approach to hosting and cooking."

To find out more about the Lavadora visit www.lavadora.com or visit your local Casadora retailer.

Structure of a press release

1. **Headline and subheading**
2. **Date and summary**
3. Problem or opportunity
4. Solution
5. Leader quote
6. Customer experience
7. **Customer testimonial**
8. Call to action
9. Footer

Press Release

Activity - Refine

Press release version 0.1

In customer-centric language, write your idea summary for your big idea. Remember, this is the elevator pitch for your idea.

Write your customer testimonial for your big idea. Use the testimonial to reinforce why the customer cares about your solution.

Write the headline that introduces your solution to the world. Aim to both explain and leave the reader wanting more.





Thank you!

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Please take our survey:

Track: Getting started with AWS
Session: Working Backwards
workshop