



Creating Your Target Personas

A printable worksheet to help you identify and understand your target market.

Are You Talking To Me?

In order to create great content that is useful, relevant and timely, firstly you will have to understand the people you are targeting.

Your school's stakeholders can be segmented into 6 separate groups:

- **Prospective Parents**
- **Prospective Pupils**
- **Prospective Staff**
- **Existing Parents**
- **Existing Pupils**
- **Existing Staff**

Each segment will possess their own individual wants, concerns and challenges, whilst looking toward your school for assurance. It is up to you to **identify those pain points and respond to them accordingly.**

Effective segmentation means identifying key distinctions among your different personas. By analysing who you're talking to, where they are in their customer journey, and what your school can offer them, you can be sure to **approach them at the right time, provide them with useful content or information, and be quick to do so** (before your competitors get their foot in the door).

Yes, we did just say customers; because that is precisely what they are; regardless of whether they are paying for their child to attend your school or not. They are your customers, clients, and stakeholders, but more importantly **they are normal people;** sometimes that can be easy to forget.



"In an attempt to appeal to everyone, you'll appeal to no one."

A vertical image on the left side of the page shows the silhouettes of three children jumping joyfully against a vibrant sunset sky with streaks of orange, pink, and purple. The children are in mid-air, their arms and legs outstretched.

Persona Profiling

When it comes to defining your target audience you will have to understand the wants and needs of a variety of people, in order to **build accurate profiles of each segment.**

By creating personas you will be able to fully **understand the nature and culture of your client segments and how they differ from one another.** This will inform your content strategy, ensuring all content you create is tailored to suit and respond to the interests of your customer base; specific to which stage in the decision process they are in.

Customer personas provide us with an insight into the goals, motivations, and behaviours of your wider school community. They are also helpful when it comes to defining your ideal client; because, at the end of the day, **your target market can't be everyone.**

“Don't just step into the shoes of your personas... walk around in them for a while.”



Keeping Prospective
Parents 'In The Loop'

Prospective Parents

<p>▶ Name, Age, Location:</p>	<p>▶ Marital Status, & Education:</p>	<p>▶ Occupation & Title:</p>	<p>▶ Key Search Terms:</p> <p>What are they searching for? How are they using search engines to make their decision?</p>
<p>▶ Role:</p> <p>How is their role measured? What does a typical day look like? What skills are required? What knowledge and tools do they need and use? What are they responsible for?</p>			
<p>▶ Gains:</p> <p>What do they want to achieve? What are their goals and aspirations? What do they look to your school for?</p>	<p>▶ Pains:</p> <p>What are their challenges, concerns and deliberations?</p>		<p>▶ Key Considerations:</p> <p>What questions are they asking themselves at each stage in the decision making process? What is important to them? (e.g Location, Facilities, Price)</p>
<p>▶ Watering holes:</p> <p>How do they learn about new information? What do they read? Which news providers do they follow? How tech are they? Which social networks do they use and what do they use them for? How do they prefer to interact with vendors? Which brands do they affiliate with?</p>			

Prospective Pupils

▶ Name, Age, Location:	▶ Marital Status, & Education:	▶ Previous School:	▶ Key Search Terms: <small>What are they searching for? How are they using search engines to make their decision?</small>
▶ Role: <small>How is their role measured? What does a typical day look like? What skills are required? What knowledge and tools do they need and use? What are they responsible for?</small>			▶ Key Considerations: <small>What questions are they asking themselves at each stage in the decision making process? What is important to them? (e.g Location, Facilities, Price)</small>
▶ Gains: <small>What do they want to achieve? What are their goals and aspirations? What do they look to your school for?</small>	▶ Pains: <small>What are their challenges, concerns and deliberations?</small>		
▶ Watering holes: <small>How do they learn about new information? What do they read? Which news providers do they follow? How tech are they? Which social networks do they use and what do they use them for? How do they prefer to interact with vendors? Which brands do they affiliate with?</small>			

Prospective Staff

<p>▶ Name, Age, Location:</p>	<p>▶ Marital Status, & Education:</p>	<p>▶ Previous School & Position:</p>	<p>▶ Key Search Terms:</p> <p>What are they searching for? How are they using search engines to make their decision?</p>
<p>▶ Role:</p> <p>How is their role measured? What does a typical day look like? What skills are required? What knowledge and tools do they need and use? What are they responsible for?</p>			
<p>▶ Gains:</p> <p>What do they want to achieve? What are their goals and aspirations? What do they look to your school for?</p>	<p>▶ Pains:</p> <p>What are their challenges, concerns and deliberations?</p>		<p>▶ Key Considerations:</p> <p>What questions are they asking themselves at each stage in the decision making process? What is important to them? (e.g Location, Facilities, Price)</p>
<p>▶ Watering holes:</p> <p>How do they learn about new information? What do they read? Which news providers do they follow? How tech are they? Which social networks do they use and what do they use them for? How do they prefer to interact with vendors? Which brands do they affiliate with?</p>			

Existing Parents

<p>▶ Name, Age, Location:</p>	<p>▶ Marital Status, & Education:</p>	<p>▶ Occupation & Title:</p>	<p>▶ Key Search Terms:</p> <p>What are they searching for? How are they using search engines to make their decision?</p>
<p>▶ Role:</p> <p>How is their role measured? What does a typical day look like? What skills are required? What knowledge and tools do they need and use? What are they responsible for?</p>			
<p>▶ Gains:</p> <p>What do they want to achieve? What are their goals and aspirations? What do they look to your school for?</p>	<p>▶ Pains:</p> <p>What are their challenges, concerns and deliberations?</p>		<p>▶ Key Considerations:</p> <p>What questions are they asking themselves? What is important to them? <i>(e.g Location, Facilities, Price, Communication)</i></p>
<p>▶ Watering holes:</p> <p>How do they learn about new information? What do they read? Which news providers do they follow? How tech are they? Which social networks do they use and what do they use them for? How do they prefer to interact with vendors? Which brands do they affiliate with?</p>			

Existing Pupils

<p>▶ Name, Age, Location:</p>	<p>▶ Marital Status, & Education:</p>	<p>▶ Year Group:</p>	<p>▶ Key Search Terms:</p> <p>What are they searching for? How are they using search engines to make their decision?</p>
<p>▶ Role:</p> <p>How is their role measured? What does a typical day look like? What skills are required? What knowledge and tools do they need and use? What are they responsible for?</p>			
<p>▶ Gains:</p> <p>What do they want to achieve? What are their goals and aspirations? What do they look to your school for?</p>	<p>▶ Pains:</p> <p>What are their challenges, concerns and deliberations?</p>		<p>▶ Key Considerations:</p> <p>What questions are they asking themselves at each stage in the decision making process? What is important to them? (e.g Location, Facilities, Price)</p>
<p>▶ Watering holes:</p> <p>How do they learn about new information? What do they read? Which news providers do they follow? How tech-savvy are they? Which social networks do they use and what do they use them for? How do they prefer to interact with vendors? Which brands do they affiliate with?</p>			

Existing Staff

<div>▶ Name, Age, Location:</div>	<div>▶ Marital Status, & Education:</div>	<div>▶ Position:</div>	<div>▶ Key Search Terms: <small>What are they searching for? How are they using search engines to make their decision?</small></div>
<div>▶ Role: <small>How is their role measured? What does a typical day look like? What skills are required? What knowledge and tools do they need and use? What are they responsible for?</small></div>			
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Focus On Your 5%

► Your very own “Why we’re worth it.”

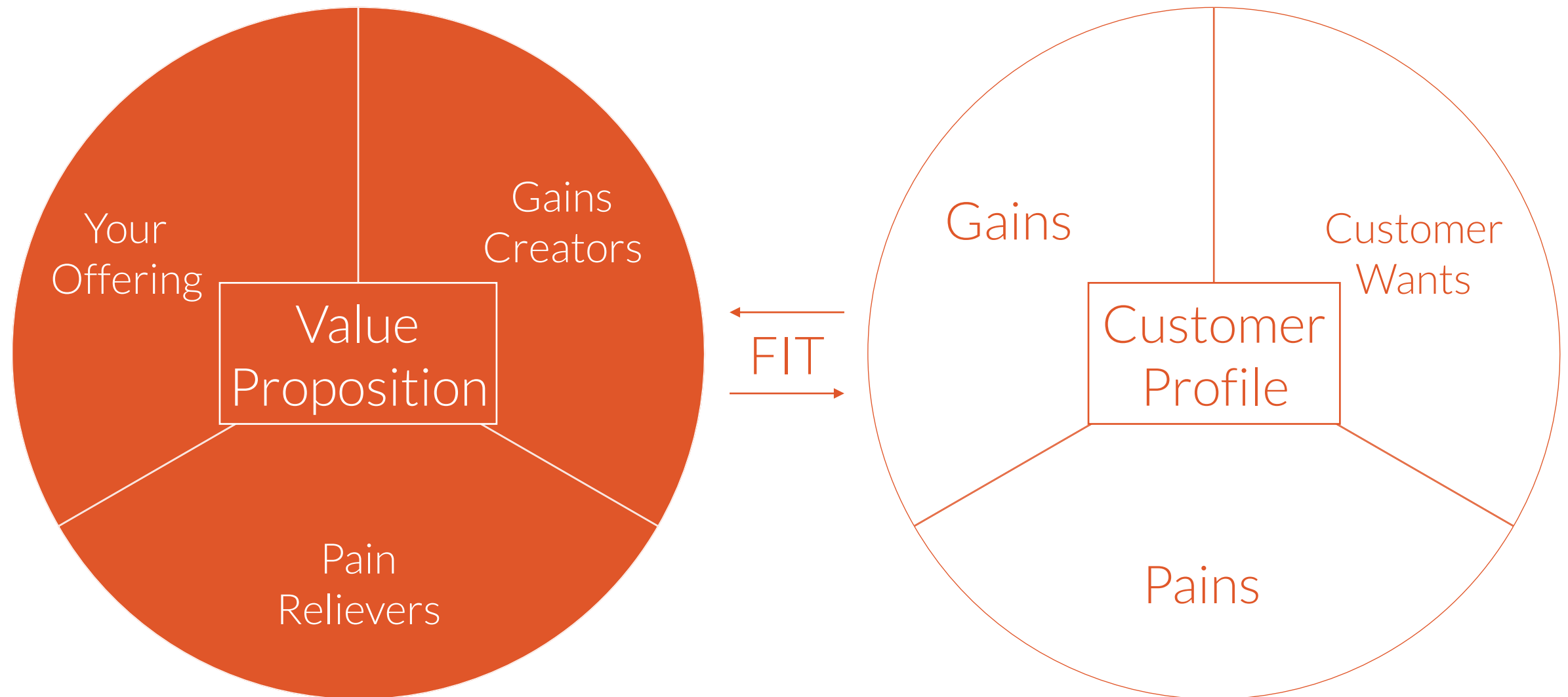
Once you understand your audience, you can **tailor your value proposition** to respond to their specific pains & desires, such as; application frustrations, tuition costs, travel distance, social challenges & school matriculation. This will help you to create a genuine connection with each of your audience segments and **defining how your school is different from any other**; without just saying “unique”.

It is not a slogan, positioning statement, or a list of offerings. **Your school’s value proposition should pull together exactly why customers should choose you above any of your competitors.** This is usually accompanied with corresponding imagery, videos and testimonials to provide evidence and authenticity to support your claim.

You will probably have more than one - specific to each target audience. When you are crafting them, make sure you **focus on the 5% that makes you truly special** and appealing to that audience. What do you do *really* well? Could any other school say the same thing? How are you doing it better than everyone else?



Is Your Independent School
Prospectus A Thing Of The Past



▶ Your Offering

Everything your school has to offer. Everything your value proposition is built around.

▶ Pain Relievers

How your offering responds to & alleviates customer concerns.

▶ Gain Creators

How your offering will help your customers achieve their wants.

▶ Customer Wants

What your parents, pupils and staff want from your school to achieve their desires.

▶ Pains

Undesired outcomes or risks related to customer wants.

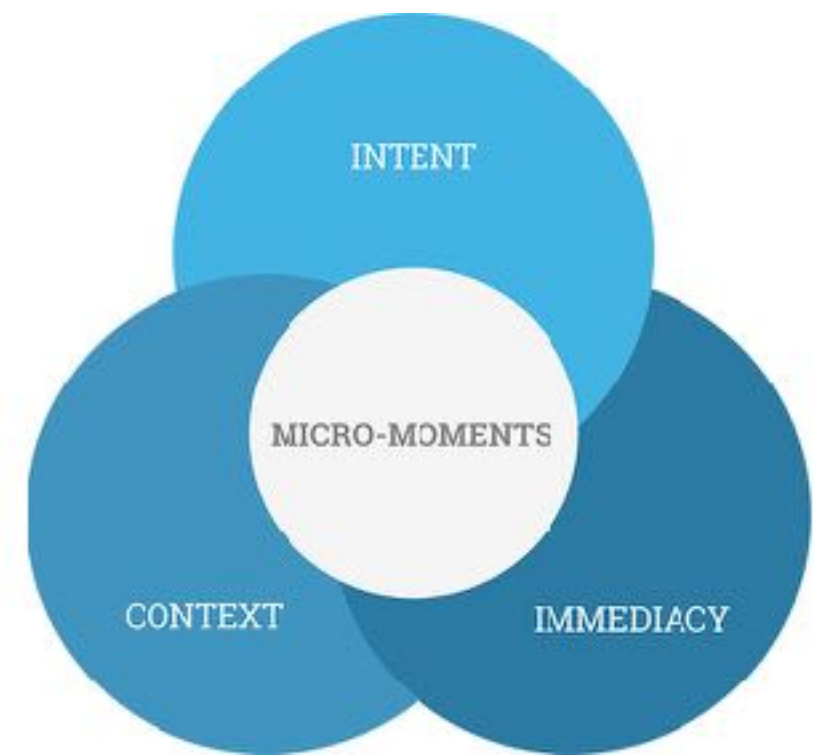
▶ Gains

What your customers are seeking and want to achieve.

- ▶ FIT: Fit is achieved when your value proposition meets your customer profile - matching and responding to what is important to your customers. The closer the fit, the more likely they will be to choose your school.



How A School Can Engage With Parents



Micro Moments

Micro moments relate to the **individual intent-driven questions or queries that shape an audiences' decisions and preferences**. Mobile has forever changed the way we live; how we digest content and what leads us to make decisions.

In order to identify your customers' micro-moments, **you will have to make a moments map**. By examining all of the key phases of their conversion journey, you will be able to **map the moments when people are looking to find information, learn about specific areas of your school and, eventually lead them to conversion**.

Put yourself in your client's shoes to understand their needs in-the-moment. **How could you make things easier or faster? What's useful and what's irrelevant?** This is particularly useful when it comes to designing your website, prospectuses and other supporting marketing materials.

People move seamlessly across screens and channels, so to stay relevant, you have to deliver seamlessly in return. The fractured conversion journeys of people today means your school will have to be present and active in the 'watering holes' your stakeholders belong to, so you never miss a moment!

Your Moments Map

You will find it beneficial to create a moments map to outline all of the points your customers might look to you for information or advice, in achieving their individual goals.

1 Be There

What are they searching for in Google?

Examine all of the phases in the customer journey and identify a set of moments you want to win or can't afford to lose. Optimise across screens and channels in order to reach your existing and potential customers in the moment.

2 Be Useful

How can you make their job easier?

Understand your customers needs by putting yourself in your client's shoes; ask the questions they might be asking and then ask yourself how you can make this stage in their journey even easier, faster and more enjoyable.

3 Be Quick

How can you connect most efficiently?

Use content to deliver the right messages at the right times - know when it's appropriate to approach and engage with your audience. If they enquire - reply ASAP! If they show interest, introduce them to more useful content.

Your Customer Journey

Thoroughly understanding the different phases of the conversion process, your stakeholders go through, will help you to determine how to respond to their needs accordingly.

1 Awareness

"I have a problem and I need to solve it."

"I need to decide which school my child should go to."

"I need to find the right school for my child."

"What do I need to consider when deciding on which school to choose?"

2 Consideration

"I know my problem, what's the solution?"

"I have been researching into a variety of different schools in the area and looking at all viable options."

"I have been visiting a variety of schools with my child, to get an idea what daily school life looks like."

3 Decision

"I know what the solution is - I'm now deciding on who to go with."

After conducting in-depth research, your customer will know what they want from a school along with a few options.

Now is the time for narrowing down options and making the final decision.

Creating Perfect Content

Once you have identified each persona's wants and needs, outlined your value proposition, drawn out a moments map, and understood the key points in the customer journey, you will be in the perfect position to start planning out the kind of content you should be creating. Here are a few ideas for the kind of content you should be creating for each stage in each personas journey.

1 Awareness

Ebooks
Tip sheets
Educational white papers
How-to posts
Infographics
FAQ pages

Goals:
Introduce yourself
Build rapport
Form a relationship
Build authenticity/credibility
Don't push sale/enrolment

E.G
"Printable school comparison sheet":
- Including Ofsted rating
- Number of students
- Location
- Special comments, etc.

Perfect for potential parents to use when deciding on a school to send their child to - making the process easier for them.

Fill in all of the information for your school to provide your prospective parents with a head start.

2 Consideration

Email marketing
Subscriptions/Newsletters
In depth blog content
Buying guides
Open days
Case studies/Testimonials

Goals:
Educate about solution to problem
Answer the questions they are asking
Provide enough information to help them make a decision more easily

E.G
"How to help your child choose the perfect school for them":
- Printable decision guide
- Stating the importance of this decision (next 5/6 years of your life)
- Help to understand and identify what is important to your child; i.e spots, clubs, social, etc.

E.G
"School Stats IG":
- Statistics of school stats over time
- Demonstrate the school's impressive results
- Show incremental improvements

3 Decision

Free trials
Open days
Follow up marketing
Email marketing
Newsletters
Current pupil & parent testimonials

Goals:
Prove that your school is the best option to provide each persona with that solution

E.G
"Taster days":
- Current students show visitors around the school
- Talk about favourite thing about the school
- What are they currently working on?
- To show students are proud of the work they create
- Have exhibitions of project work on show
- Turn your school into an active museum



To Conclude

- ▶ Craft your personas

Your target market can't be everyone. Identify your key audience segments - based on research findings - along with what their goals and challenges are.

- ▶ Design your value proposition

Once you truly understand your personas, you will be in a better position to evaluate how closely your brand aligns with each of their individual wants and needs in an attempt to achieve the perfect *'fit'*.

- ▶ Identify your moments

Nurture your personas throughout the various buying stages by being there, being useful and being quick in every moment.

- ▶ Plot the customer journey

Your target market can't be everyone. Identify your key audience segments, what their goals and challenges are and then you can appropriately respond to them with the perfect content.

- ▶ Create perfect content

Get creative with your content and don't be afraid to try something new. Mix it up with a variety of content types and create content that will help each persona achieve their goals.

- ▶ Evaluate the results

Be sure to re-visit and evaluate how your content is performing. Try asking your stakeholders for their opinions; what would they like to see more or less of? What do they find the most useful/engaging?

Introducing The e4education Academy

We are always looking for ways we can help our clients. That's why we launched the e4education Academy. Packed full of free resources for schools and trusts, the e4education Academy covers some of the most pressing marketing and communication matters of the day, from Social Media, to e-Safety, Marketing Strategy and SEO. New resources are added each month and include infographics, printable templates, e-books and info packs.

Some of our top resources include...

- Building Your Trust's Brand
- Social Media In Schools: What you need to know
- How To Prepare For Your Photography Visit: Checklist
- The Ultimate Rebranding Guidelines
- What To Include In Your School's Digital Marketing Strategy
- The Importance Of SEO For Your School Website
- Safeguarding And Your School Website
- Blogging: Getting started



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