9

Kill Your Company

💡 *Potential of the Idea*

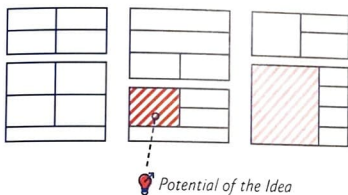## 1. WHAT AND WHY?

We do not know who invented the Kill Your Company method, but our experiences with this method have always been good. We allow a time frame of four hours at maximum to answer the following question: If we were a start-up, how would we attack our own company in order to snatch its market shares? The playful approach of this method helps us to ignore all barriers inside our company. There are no politics, no compliance rules, no legal hurdles, no objectors or other departments that interfere with our work. We are completely at liberty.

This also means that we as a start-up do not have any access to our supporting company ressources, e.g. for marketing or distribution. Since we would like to have the know-how of these departments, we incorporate some of the representatives in our team. In the playful context and without the barriers between departments we can work together without having to respect any sensitivities.

MODUS OPERANDI

1__We look for weaknesses

In the first step we specifically look for vulnerabilities. What do customers complain about? Ideally we have already used the methods of the EXPLORE module and know the needs of our customers very well. This step might be a little dangerous because the people responsible for the deficiencies are in the same room. We thus have to highlight the playful nature of this method. After all, it is entirely normal that there are deficiencies and that they are not rectified immediately. In any company, the rule »urgent before important« applies. We use template 7.3.5 to gather the weaknesses.

2__We select

In the next step, we create a list (see Fig. 7.3.5). We prioritize the identified weaknesses and sort them intuitively according to the room for improvement that we perceive. Some points will be discarded because they are not implementable or not interesting for a start-up.

3__We create a killer service or a killer product

Based on our insights, we now create a competitive offer for our customers. For this we need a customer profile[*1] and the statement which problem we want to solve for the customers, expressed in the form of a how-might-we question[*2]. After having defined the offer, we use one of the intuitive methods of the CREATE module, e.g. brainstorming (method 1), to quickly come up with many solution ideas. We preselect the ideas and translate them into a comprehension

LIST OF PRIORITIES

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

Fig. 7.3.5

prototype[*3] to be able to communicate the solution. Note: Using this method, we rush through many other methods at a breakneck pace. The time pressure is there for a reason as it forces us to focus on the essentials.

4__We transfer our insights

We consider how we could use the comprehension prototype of our start-up successfully in the context of our own company. Maybe it contains some components that we can implement? Remember: The smart thing is to include the objectors and inhibitors in creating the comprehension prototype. This can cause some light bulb moments and make things possible that were deemed impossible before.

1 Ideally we use the data from the interviews in the EXPLORE module. However, assumptions about the possible customers made according to our gut feeling are also sufficient for this method.

2 See section 6.4.

3 See section 7.4.

HOW DOES IT FEEL?

Hopefully easy! It also is a lot of fun. In joint projects with companies, we sometimes use Kill Your Company to kick of the proper project. This method is also suited as an overture to the work in the EXPLORE module. All this does not change the value of this method in the CREATE module. This role-playing game helps us at a team to get easily into a mode of wild thinking without adhering too much to the often obstructing realities. This is also a good opportunity to invite external participants for a few hours, e.g. trainees who not yet have much expert knowledge and have a different view on the problems at hand.

GOOD TO KNOW

When you are interested in the topic of »killing your company«, you can find some inspiration in the book *How to Kill Your Company* by Ken Kirsh[1]. It is entertaining, and at a mere 80 pages, it does not demand much of your life time.

1 Ken Kirsh: *How to Kill Your Company: 50 Ways You're Bleeding Your Organization and Damaging Your Career*, Bloomington 2012.

VULNERABILITIES

Template 7.3.5: digital-innovation-playbook.com/templates/create