# Crafting Value Propositions for Vertical Networks: Step-by-Step

## Self-Assess

* 1. Be honest about your niche.
     1. What is the competition? What value do they provide? What will set you apart?
     2. Maybe the competition isn’t another entity but their work with or without you.
  2. Understand how you are currently perceived.
     1. This requires asking in-depth questions.
  3. What do you do well?
  4. Acknowledge your weaknesses.
  5. Let go of Status Quo, be open to new and different things.

## Focus on your audience and their needs and priorities.

* 1. Understand your audience’s current needs and preferences.
  2. Use your audience’s language, no jargon.
  3. Be realistic about what you can actually deliver and to whom.

What are you offering them?

How is it different or special?

What is the impact for them, how are you making them succeed?

How will you help them perform at a higher level?

What relationships and opportunities do you bring?

How do you improve on their current situation?

What have you got that will allow them to win business, serve clients or communities, gain grants or recognition, support employees, improve efficiency?

Will you help them perform at a higher level and at a lower cost for   
their customers or communities?

How will you make them stand out?

## And Create “A concise appeal in the audience's language, that focuses on their needs, problems, and issues” (Bradt).

* 1. Define audiences and tailor it to each one specifically.
  2. Be inclusive during the process, all employees can contribute.
  3. Don’t discount the intangibles*.* 
     1. Think about your own experiences as a customer, respect, empathy, thoughtfulness, listening, and gratitude matter.
  4. Frame your value in terms of what it means for the audience.
     1. We Support ... you
     2. We Solve … problems for you
     3. We Develop ... for you
     4. We Provide ... what you're looking for
  5. Show proof: substantiate with case studies or compelling stories

## Use it!

* 1. Implementation and Maintenance are critical.
  2. Review it regularly.

## Then measure it

* 1. “Don’t think you can judge if your value prop is good enough, your members/customers will tell you” (Cebrowski).
  2. Sales, repeat business, capacity utilization, customer feedback, analyst inquiries, press interviews, website hits, requests, market trends. Some of your measures may be unique (Bradt).

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