


How to Leverage Project Management as Your Competitive Edge in Business

with Beth Livingston


Setting Yourself **ABOVE**
the Competition



What You Will Learn Today

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I'm going to show you exactly WHY being a super-talented designer or technically-brilliant developer is no longer enough in the exploding world of website development competitors and why **YOU** don't need to worry about that.

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What You Will Learn Today



As a bonus, I will also let you in on my single most effective (and super-secret) technique for positioning yourself as the obvious “provider of choice” when potential clients are shopping for a website solution.



My Past

- M. Ed. in Instructional Design
- Training Specialist
- Technical Writer
- IT Business Analyst
- Project Manager



My Present

- WordPress Solution Provider

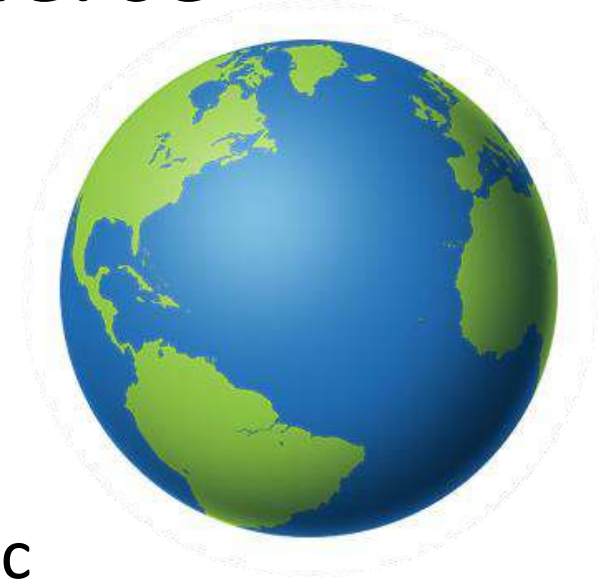


- WordCamp Speaker
- WordPress Meetup Organizer
- Local Educator
- Online Educator



The Competition is Getting More Fierce

- Increased demand
- Low barrier to entry
- DIY web development tools
- Technology advancements (e.g., page builders)
- Growing freelance economy due to the pandemic
- Globalization
- Demand for customized solutions
- IT and Internet company layoffs



The Stats

- There are about 70 million freelance workers in the United States. (was 57m in 2020)
- As of 2020, Upwork has 18,000,000 registered freelancers.
- As of today, there are approximately 15,000 website jobs listed on Freelancer.com

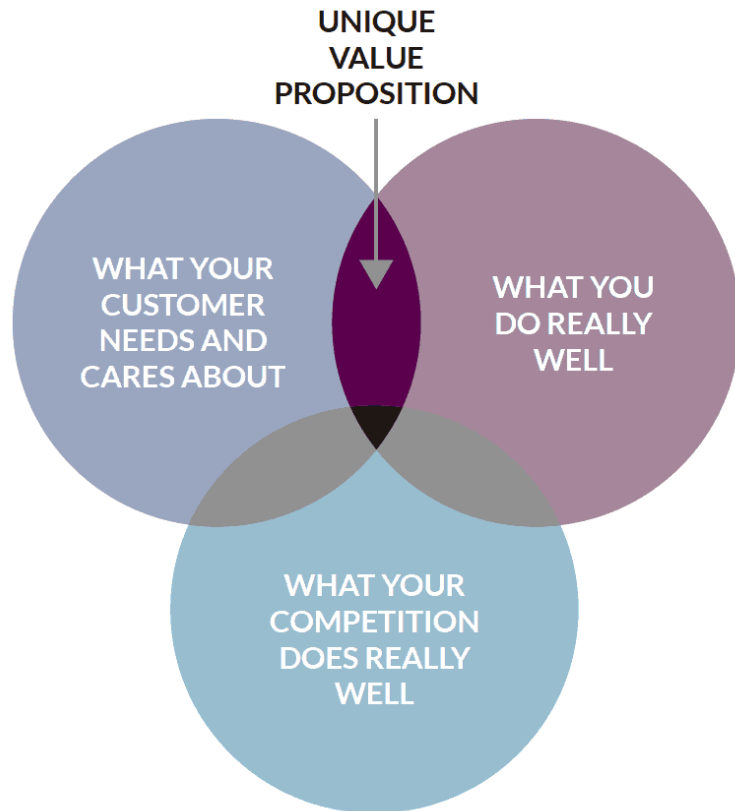


You Need A...

Unique Value Proposition



A Unique Value Proposition is...



One or more statements that communicate the...

UNIQUE VALUE

provided by your business to your

TARGET CUSTOMERS

What Your Unique Value Proposition is NOT

- NOT an explanation of your product or service
- NOT a rundown of every possible benefit your product or service can provide



What Clients Care About Most

1. Cost/Investment

2. Timeline

3. Solution

*“Sorry to say, but you’re far from the only company who can solve this client’s particular problem. Your competitive advantage is in **how** you solve it.”*

<https://www.score.org/>

Competing on the Solution

Your solution



Your competitor's solution



Competing on Price

- There is no point.
- Globalization means there is always somebody with a lower price
- Newbies tend to lowball



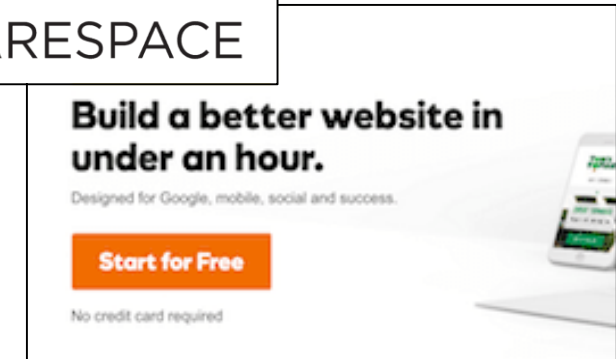
Competing on Technical Skill

- Clients more technically savvy,
- Platform becomes easier to use
- Plethora of WordPress online training
- Clients don't care about your technical skills



Competing on Technical Skill

How hard can it be?



Competing on Design Talent

- Page builders
- Gutenberg block development
- Design is totally subjective



What is Your Unique Value Proposition?

1. SEO
2. Maintenance Plans
3. Marketing/Social Media
4. Etc., etc...



What Clients Care About Most

1. Cost/Investment 

How can you keep project costs down?


2. Timeline

How can you prevent cost overruns?

3. Solution

What Clients Care About Most

1. Cost/Investment

2. Timeline  How can you prevent scope creep?
How can you control project delays?
How will you guarantee the project will be completed on time?

3. Solution

What Clients Care About Most

1. Cost/Investment

2. Timeline

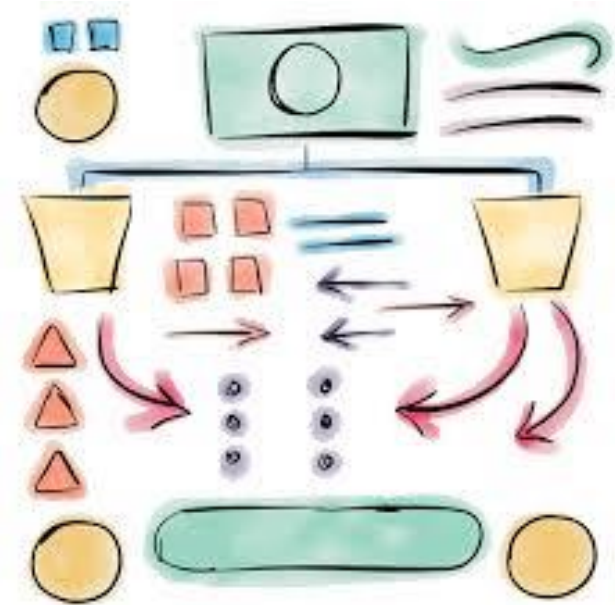
3. Solution



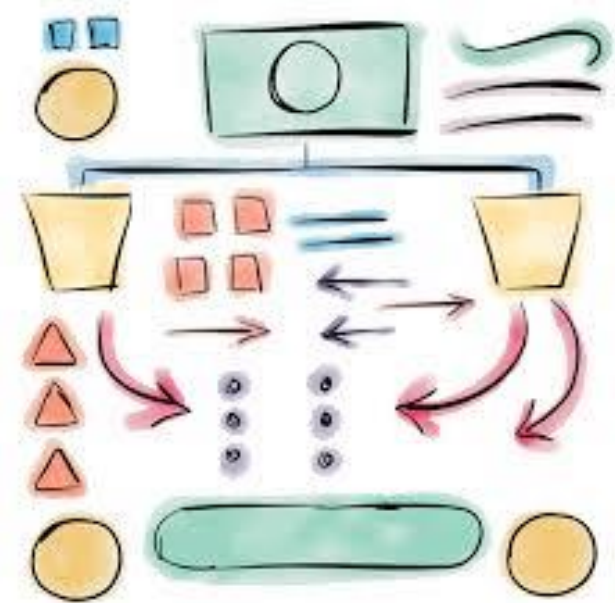
What business problems will your solution solve?

How can you ensure you'll get ALL the requirements and get them right?

What if you could
GUARANTEE the project
will be completed on
time, within budget, with
features that meet the
client's business
requirements?

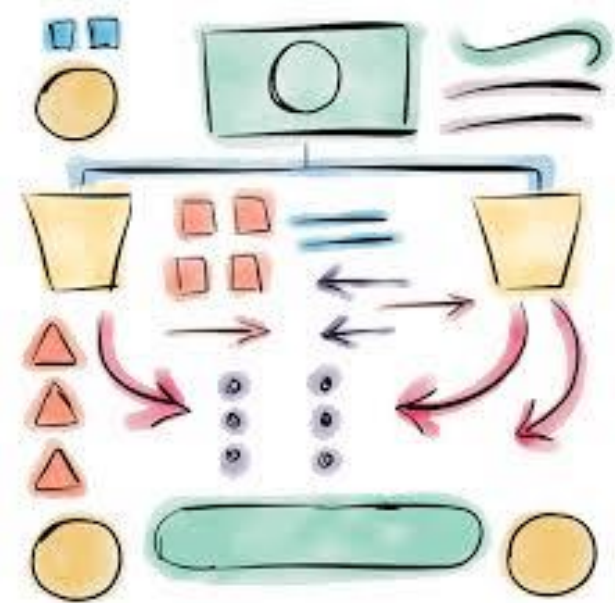



What if you could
GUARANTEE those
things **WITHOUT**
sacrificing your planned
profit?




GOOD NEWS!

All of this can be
addressed by
implementing a proven
Project Management
methodology!





The single best strategy for setting yourself apart from the competition is showing the client how **YOUR** project will not succumb to common project obstacles, delays, and cost overruns.



In order to leverage your Project Management Methodology, first you **MUST**...



1. A set of guiding principles and processes
2. Defines how you work and communicate

Because...

1. Random Processes = project overruns



Because...

2. Repeatable Processes =

- increased efficiency
- more precise estimating
- better informed client
- clearer understanding of the tasks ahead
- higher quality clients
- sets you apart from the competition



Essential Repeatable Processes

1. Proper Estimating
2. Client Management and Communication
3. Requirements Definition (Discovery)
4. Resource Management
5. Approach to Content Collection
6. Change Management
7. Acceptance Management



Proper Estimating

1. Abandon the crystal ball approach
2. Don't try and estimate what you don't know
3. Get rid of the “pad” as “change control”
4. Never provide a precise estimate in your proposal



Client Management and Communication

1. Spells out expected client behavior
2. Sets boundaries and expectations
3. Includes incentives and penalties
4. Describes how you will manage client-related content activities



Requirements Definition (Discovery)

1. Defines “business requirements”
2. Defines “functional requirements”
3. Describes how functional requirements are derived from the business requirements
4. Defines how the job will be “broken down”



Resource Management

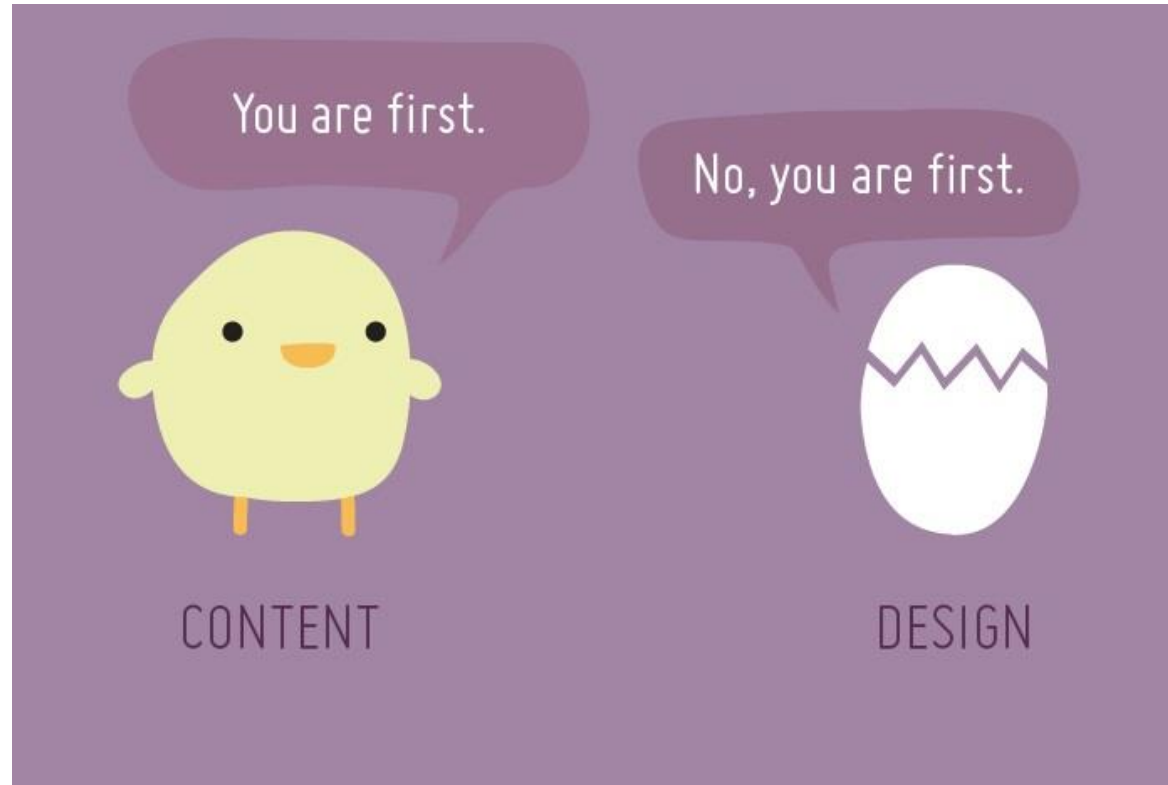
Define your approach to get the RIGHT:

1. People involved
2. Plugins involved
3. Hosting involved
4. Blocks involved
5. Other resources involved



Approach to Content Collection

1. Content first?



Approach to Content Collection

2. Define how you will:

- Determine content requirements
- Estimate content
- Set client expectations regarding content
- Manage content collection activities



Change Management

1. Acknowledge change as inevitable
2. Plan for change
3. Manage change
4. Use a change budget
5. Implement change control without exception



Acceptance Management

1. Formal process of acceptance
2. Incremental
3. Define acceptance criteria




8 Questions You Need to Answer




1. How did you arrive at this estimate?
2. How do you discover and document the requirements for the website?
3. How do you manage the content activities?
4. How do you plan for and manage changes?
5. How do you handle missed deadlines?
6. What are the criteria for approval of the project?
7. How do you ensure the project will be completed on time, within budget, and that it has all the features we requested?
8. What is your unique value proposition? What makes you the best solution provider?

And now... the secret!





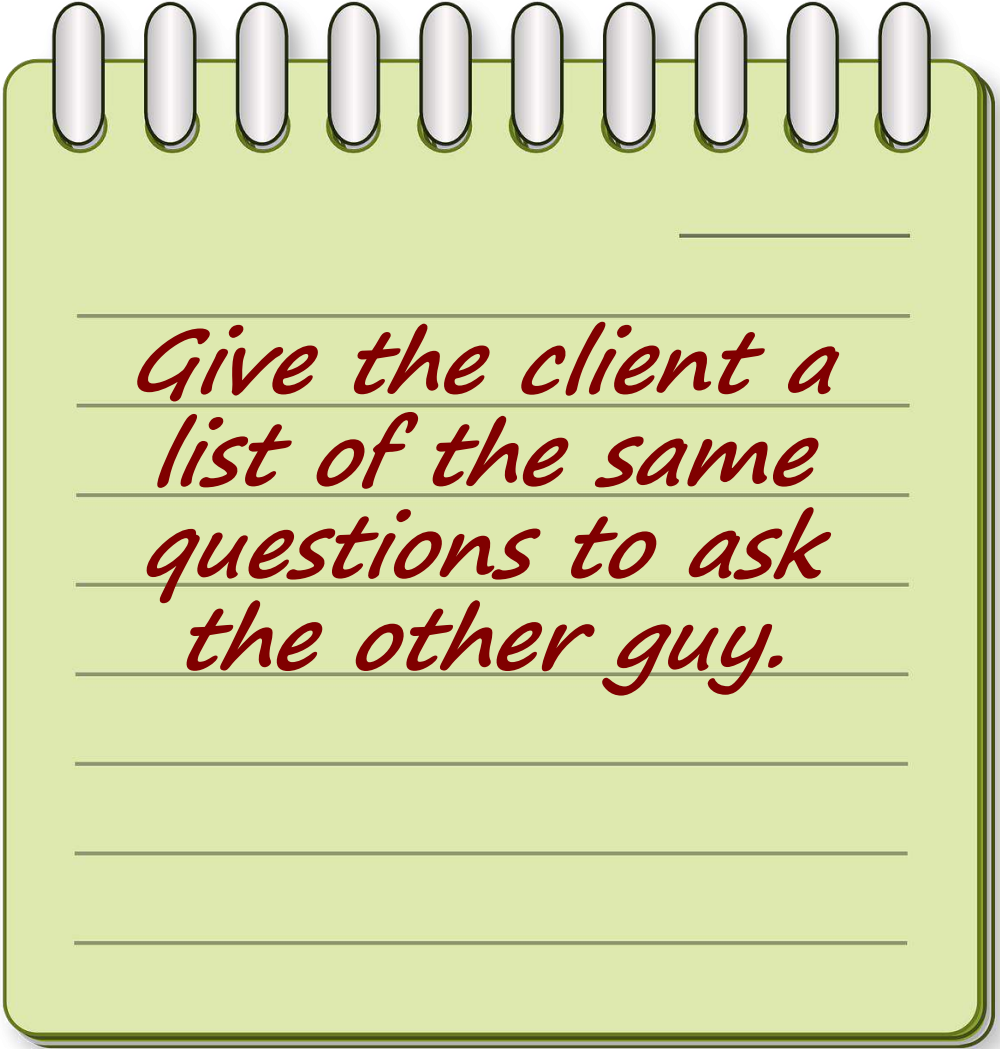
Once you have established
the processes and have
answers to the 8 questions...



Weave your answers
into your proposal
documents,



Address them during the proposal
walkthrough and...



*Give the client a
list of the same
questions to ask
the other guy.*

How to Establish the Essential Processes



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Thank You!

Beth Livingston

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