

# The Non-Planners Business Plan

## #5 Render your competition irrelevant

### Know thy brand

You render your competitors irrelevant when you embrace all that you are, turning up the volume on the unique value at the heart of your brand. Whether you have a personal brand or not, your point-of-difference needs to be visible and prominent.

You may not necessarily recognise your real competitors: these are businesses that don't necessarily offer what your business offers but appeal to the same type of people that you do (otherwise known as your ideal clients) and solve the same problems as your business solves.

1. What aspects of your work do you most enjoy?
2. What else do you really enjoy that's not part of your business? Can you bring aspects of this into your business?
3. What do people compliment you on? (Doesn't have to be work-related.)
4. What do your clients consistently comment on in relation to what makes your business different?
5. If your business could be known for one thing, what would you like that to be?

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### – Notes –

When I ask groups of people that I train what makes their businesses unique, I'm oftentimes met with an embarrassed silence. We frequently struggle to articulate what makes our business unique. But our point-of-difference doesn't have to be grand or glamorous and it isn't likely to be 100% original – it's the combination of many small things that, together, make up your brand. These might include your turns of phrase, your brand story, and the details of how you do what you do.

Part of rendering your competition irrelevant involves truly owning your point-of-difference. We don't stand out by being agreeable. Our business's uniqueness is not what people expect to receive – it's the way we make them feel, the words they use when they recommend our businesses to others, and the kind of personality they assume of our business.

If you're still at a loss, I highly recommend sending out an anonymous survey (try Survey Monkey) to 10 of your nearest and dearest. Ask them what they think your number one strength is – any patterns that occur are what you may consider implementing into your branding.