

Creating Buyer or Marketing Personas?



Photo by Helloquence

Here are 70 Questions to Get You Started

**COLLING
MEDIA**

Personal Background

1. Describe your personal demographics.

Collecting demographic information is a suitable place to begin drafting your personas because it's easy to obtain and starts to paint a clearer, more personal picture of your customer. Are they married? What's their annual household income? Where do they live? Are they male or female? How old are they? Do they have children?

2. Describe your educational background.

What level of education did they complete? Which schools did they attend, and what did they study? Get specific here. "Arizona State University" is better than "liberal arts college."

3. Describe your career path.

How did they end up where they are today? Did they major in a subject that's very similar to or very different from their current role? Has their career track been traditional, or did they switch from another industry?

Company

4. In which industry or industries does your company work?

5. What is the size of your company (revenue, employees)?

Knowing details about your persona's company like industry, size, number of employees, and other details will especially help you when you're building the fields for your landing page forms.

Role

6. What is your job role? Your title?

How long have they had this role and title? Are they an individual contributor, or do they manage other people?

7. Whom do you report to? Who reports to you?

The importance with which you should regard your buyer persona's job and seniority level certainly depends on the product or service you're selling.

If you're a B2C company, you may simply consider this information as another way to better understand nuances of your persona's life.

If you're a B2B company, this piece of information becomes more crucial. Is your persona at a managerial or director level, and well versed in the intricacies of your industry? They'll need less education than someone at an introductory level, who may need to loop in other decision makers before making purchasing decisions.

8. How is your job measured?

Which metric(s) is your persona responsible for? Which numbers or charts or waterfall graphs do they look at every day? This will help you determine what makes them successful, and what they might be worried about when it comes to "hitting their numbers." Describe your educational background.

9. What does a typical day look like?

What time do they get to work and what time do they leave? What do they do when they're most productive? What's their "busy work" look like?

This should include both the tasks they do for their job, as well as what happens during the day outside their job. Are they spending more time at work or at home? Where would they rather be? What do they like to do for fun? Who are the people in their life that matter most? What kind of car do they drive? Which TV shows do they watch? Heck, what outfit are they wearing? Get personal here.

10. Which skills are required to do your job?

If they were hiring someone to replace them and had to write a job description of what's required, what would it say? What are the ideal skills for this job, and how good is your persona at each of them? Where did they learn these skills? Did they learn them on the job, at a previous job, or by taking a course?

11. What knowledge and which tools do you use in your job?

Which applications and tools do they use every single day? Every week? Understanding what products they love (and hate) to use can help you identify commonalities in your own product (and adjust your positioning accordingly).

Challenges

12. What are your biggest challenges?

You're in business because you're solving a problem for your target audience. How does that problem affect their day-to-day life? Go into detail and focus on the nuances that illustrate how that problem makes them feel.

For example, let's say your company sells personal tax software directly to consumers. One of your personas may be a first-time tax preparer. What are the pain points of first-time tax preparers? They're probably intimidated by the prospect of doing their taxes by themselves for the first time, overwhelmed by a tax code they don't understand, and confused about where to start. These pain points differ from those of a seasoned tax preparer, whose pain points may be not knowing how to maximize the amount of their return and find creative loopholes for deductions.

Try coming up with real quotes to refer to these challenges. For example, "It's been difficult getting company-wide adoption of innovative technologies in the past;" or "I don't have time to train new employees on a million different databases and platforms."

13. What are you responsible for?

This goes beyond the metric(s) they're measured on. What's their primary goal at work? What about their secondary goal? Knowing these will help you learn what you can do to help your persona achieve their goals and overcome their challenges.

14. What does it mean to be successful in your role?

What can you do to make your personas look good? Companies that take the time to understand what makes their personas successful will likely enjoy more effective communications from both the sales and marketing teams.

Continuing Education

15. How do you learn about the latest information for your job?

If you're going to market and sell to these personas, you need to understand how they consume information. Do they go online, prefer to learn in-person, or pick up newspapers and magazines? If they're online learners, do they visit social networks? To Google? Which sources do they trust the most -- friends, family, coworkers, or industry experts?

16. Which publications or blogs do you read?

To piece together how a typical day in their life runs, figure out where they regularly go to stay informed. If you know how they prefer to gather information, you can make yourself present in those spots and work on establishing credibility in those communities.

17. Which associations and social networks do you participate in?

You should be investing time and resources on social media marketing, but the question is: Which social networks should you be investing more time and resources than others? Identify the associations and social networks your buyers spend their time. Then, you can prioritize which accounts to create and which conversations to participate in.

Shopping Preferences

18. How do you prefer to interact with vendors?

The experience of purchasing your product should align with your persona's expectations. What should their sales experience feel like? Is it consultative? How much time do they expect to spend with a sales person? Do they anticipate an in-person meeting, or would they rather conduct the sales process online or over the phone?

19. Do you use the internet to research vendors or products? If yes, how do you search for information?

Again, which avenues are they using to find the latest information? Do they search online, look at review websites, ask their friends and family, or something else?

20. Describe a recent purchase.

Why did you consider a purchase, what was the evaluation process, and how did you decide to purchase that product or service?

If you can anticipate the objections your persona will have, you can be prepared for them in the sales process and perhaps even educate them in your marketing collateral to help allay fears right away. What might make them reticent to buy from you or any other provider in your industry? Is this their first time purchasing a product or service of your kind? If not, what caused them to switch products or services?

If you have questions about how to create buyer personas for your business, reach out to info@collingmedia.com.

Get started building your buyer personas now by downloading our [**How to Create Buyer Personas for Your Business Guide**](#).