



Rule No. 2 —Fall in love with the problem, not the solution.

Solutions come and go, but a deep understanding of the real problem creates lasting value. Focus on the true needs and challenges of your customers—not your preconceived ideas. By anchoring yourself to the problem, you remain flexible, innovative, and better positioned to deliver meaningful solutions.

The Hard Truth

Your product is not special. The problem is.

Founders who fall in love with their solution spend years polishing something nobody asked for. Founders who fall in love with the problem iterate until they find what actually works.

Ask yourself —

Are we defending our solution, or are we actually solving our customer's real need?

When was the last time I observed a customer struggling with the problem we claim to solve?

What do customers consistently complain about, even when it has nothing to do with our product?

Action Steps —

This Week's Task: Spend this week learning instead of pitching

Identify one customer, prospect, or former customer each day and ask thoughtful questions about their experience.

Resist the urge to explain your product, defend your approach, or steer the conversation toward your solution. Your only goal is to understand the problem more deeply than you did yesterday.

By the end of the week, write a one-page summary answering these three questions:

- What problem are people actually trying to solve?
- What assumptions about our solution turned out to be wrong?
- What surprised us enough to change our thinking?

If your understanding of the problem hasn't changed by the end of the week, you probably didn't ask enough questions.

Protecting your idea and solving the right problem aren't the same thing. If you find yourself explaining to your team why customers should care, instead of proving that they already do, that's a warning sign.

The discipline is to stay attached to the problem, not the solution you've already invented.

That means asking customers about their lives, their frustrations, their workarounds—not about whether they'd buy what you're about to pitch them.

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Practice the principles.



Recommended Reading —



The Mom Test, by Rob Fitzpatrick

"You're not allowed to tell them what their problem is. They have to tell you."

Each day, set 2 specific actions
that move this week's Rule into practice
and help complete the Action Step by week's end.

TOP 3 priorities this week:

WEEK 2

monday

tuesday

wednesday

thursday

friday

saturday

sunday

notes —

this week...