



Rule No. 2 —Fall in love with the problem.

the **principle:** Stay customer-centered and keep your ego in check. Solutions will come and go, but a deep understanding of the real problem is what creates lasting value. Focus on the true needs and challenges of your customers and not your preconceived ideas.

Top 3 priorities this week

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Do 2 things each day that will move this Rule into practice and help to make it a habit.

monday

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tuesday

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wednesday

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thursday

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friday

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saturday

sunday

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?

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

Week 2: Spend the week learning, instead of pitching.

Remember, your customers don't owe you their attention, your product doesn't deserve their loyalty, and your great idea doesn't mean a thing if it doesn't solve a problem that matters.

Too many entrepreneurs fall in love with what they've built and spend their time convincing people they need it.

Every day this week, identify one customer, prospect, or former customer and ask them 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. Get close to it. Ask questions. Listen to the complaints. Watch what people actually do. Don't fall in love with what you want to build. Fall in love with understanding what needs to be fixed.

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. I've learned that entrepreneurs are pretty good at falling in love with their own ideas. I know I have been. The problem is, your customer doesn't care how much you love your solution. They care whether you can solve a problem that matters to them.

So before you spend another dollar, hire another person, or build another feature, make very, very sure you understand the problem.