

The OPV (Other Point of View)

In general, the purpose of a business is to satisfy a need “out there.” This “out there” is in fact the set of targeted customers that are assumed to benefit from whatever products or services the organization is striving to design, implement and offer to its intended market.

On the other hand, the targeted customers have their own ideas about what they want, what they do not want and what they are ready to pay for. They know better than anybody else what are the types of problems they are struggling with and what solutions would satisfy them.

However, customers also proceed from a set of realities that is totally their own, acquired from their analysis of the problem, from their past experiences, from their past successes and failures with certain products or suppliers.

In short, customer decisions involve more than economic rationalization and more than a strictly objective evaluation of the cost benefits. Those are important, but they rarely represent the total picture. Even the notions of “cost” or “benefits” can be surprisingly different from one customer to another, from one industry to another.

Unfortunately those notions are also often conceived very differently from what the manufacturers and suppliers think they are.

The values that customers associate with a business proposition often include factors difficult to track and comprehend.

Yet, this value is exactly what needs to be understood by the decision-maker in order to create success.

Reaching “out there” to understand the OPV will dramatically increase the chance of success and consistently reduce risks.