

**Marketing Essentials Café Overview**

The Marketing Essentials Café is a short blended learning experience oriented around the concepts and skills found in the Harvard ManageMentor Marketing Essentials topic. The Marketing Essentials topic will help managers:

* *Foster a marketing orientation within your team*
* *Research and identify target customers*
* *Develop a marketing strategy*
* *Develop and implement a marketing plan*
* *Market to global customers*

The learning experience has three components:

*60 to 90 minutes 60 minutes Ongoing*

Part 1: Pre-work (self-paced, individual)

Before the live Café session, participants are expected to complete the following assignments:

* Review the following online lessons from the Harvard ManageMentor Marketing Essentials topic:
  + Cultivate a Marketing Orientation
  + Understand Your Customer
  + Create a Marketing Strategy
  + Create and Implement a Marketing Plan
  + Global Marketing
* Complete the online assessment from the Harvard ManageMentor Marketing Essentials topic
* Complete the “Worksheet for Developing a Marketing Orientation” in the “Cultivate a Marketing Orientation” lesson of the Harvard ManageMentor Marketing Essentials topic
* Complete the practice activity “Understand Customer Needs” in the “Understand Your Customer” lesson of the Harvard ManageMentor Marketing Essentials topic

Part 2: Café session (live, group)

The Café session represents the core element of the learning experience. The session provides an opportunity for managers to:

* Exchange ideas and questions with others
* Discuss the context of how concepts and skills apply in the workplace
* Practice and begin application of those concepts and skills
* Build momentum and support for applying the concepts and skills in the workplace

The Café session focuses specifically on the following concepts and tasks from the Marketing Essentials topic:

* Develop a marketing orientation
* Understand what influences buying
* Create strategies to attract and serve customers

Facilitating the Café session as outlined should take approximately 60 minutes. If the facilitator prefers a shorter session or wishes to spend more time on a specific concept or activity, he or she may want to cover only those concepts and activities that are most relevant to the group.

| SECTION | ACTIVITY | TIME |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Introduction** | Show icebreaker question while participants are arriving to the session. (**MARKETING FAILURES ARE LEGENDARY IN THE ANNALS OF BUSINESS. WHO OR WHAT DETERMINES IF A COMPANY’S MARKETING IS “GOOD” OR “BAD”?** *Answer: The customer ultimately decides if a company’s marketing is “good” or “bad.” If your marketing speaks to and motivates your target, it’s a win; if it doesn’t, you have some work to do.* )   * Introduce facilitators. * Review tips for using technology during the session. * Debrief icebreaker question. * Set context: How much do you really know about your customers? Do you study their habits, pay attention to their needs, and work to communicate with them? Do you know what speaks to them and what sends them packing? Marketing effectively starts with knowing your customers and what they really want, then giving it to them in a way that they'll appreciate, makes them feel valued, and at the same time, differentiates you from your competition. Marketing helps create and sustain the customer relationships that are vital to your organization’s success. It is everyone’s job—not just the responsibility of one department or a group of experts. This café is designed to help you to cultivate key skills to help your company win in the markets you serve. * Review session objectives. | 10 minutes |
| **Skill focus: Develop a marketing orientation** | * Facilitate discussion activity. Participants:   + Debrief key facets of the “Worksheet for Developing a Marketing Orientation”: * Share their assessments of the internal and external customers they have identified. * Consider the positive impact of systematically assessing customers’ wants and needs rather than focusing solely on what the company has to sell to them. * Evaluate their current level of effectiveness in understanding customer wants and needs. * Brainstorm strategies to get to know customers better. | 12 minutes |
| **Skill focus: Understand what influences buying** | * Facilitate discussion activity. Participants: * Review the “Buying Journey” infographic. * Consider the factors that influence customer buying decisions by exploring the factors that influence their own buying decisions. * Consider the factors that differentiate a product or service in the minds of their customers. * Think about their closest competitor and consider one new way to differentiate their offering from what that competitor sells. * Facilitate practice activity. Participants:   + Review a short "What would you do?" scenario that involves brainstorming the ways in which a business can differentiate itself from the competition in a mature and commoditized industry.   + Discuss the responses and any differences in participants’ views.   + Apply insights to their own business and industry. | 18 minutes |
| **Skill focus: Create strategies to attract and serve customers** | * Facilitate reflection activity. Participants:   + Apply the classic “4 Ps” framework to build on their understanding of their customers and define the optimal marketing mix in their business or industry.   + Consider key aspects of the competitive landscape (share of market, mind, and heart) and suggest one strategy to make a positive impact on their business. | 15 minutes |
| **Applying what you’ve learned** | * Review session objectives and skill areas discussed. * Review directions for completing the On-the-Job section of the online Harvard ManageMentor topic, including the action plan. * Close the session. | 5 minutes |

Part 3: Application (self-paced, individual)

After the live Café session, participants are expected to complete the following assignments:

* Complete the online On-the-Job section in the Harvard ManageMentor Marketing Essentials topic. The section provides learners with an opportunity to choose a skill to focus on and create an action plan for applying and developing the skill. *Note:* If your organization does not include the On-the-Job section in your configuration of Harvard ManageMentor, ask participants to think of two things they can do over the next 90 days to further apply and develop their skills in this area.
* Execute their action plan over a specified time frame (e.g., 60 or 90 days).
* After the specified time frame (e.g., 60 or 90 days), access the online On-the-Job section in the Harvard ManageMentor Marketing Essentials topic to update the action plan and reflect on the experience.