Now it is the time for you to build your own product or service strategy. We have created some simple templates from the examples shown in this chapter. As in prior chapters, use these templates to think about your venture. Take out your Venture Concept Template and your Business Model Template. Bring all your customer and competitor research to the table. Then begin.

Step 1: Define Your Beachhead and Growth Strategy

Figure 5.9 provides the template. Your beachhead is your launch focus in your target industry sector by customer and the customer's use or use case.
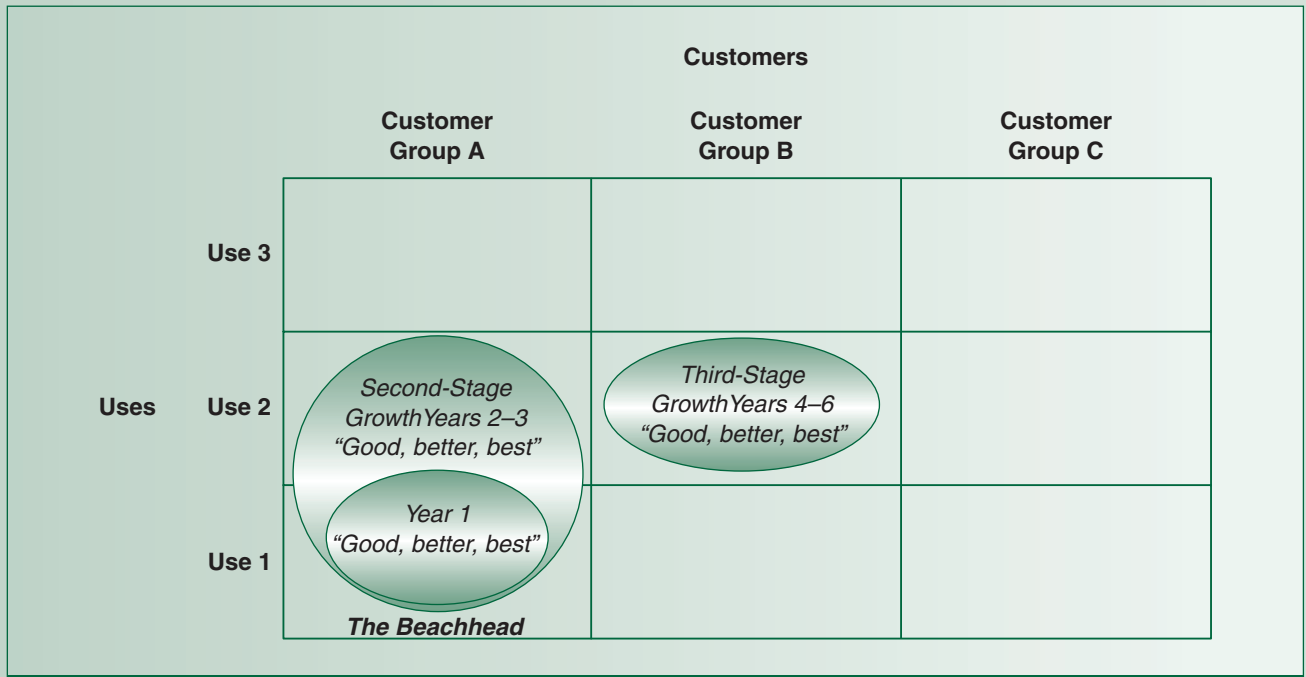

Figure 5.9 The Beachhead and Next-Stage Growth Template

Take the time to write down the clearly different customer groups that you encountered in your field research. We have used age, gender, size of company, type of pet, and other dimensions as customer grouping examples in this book. What are these for your venture? Also, what are the primary use cases? Think of the different types of fishing in our fishing boots example. Or for services, think about the industrial equipment example where downloading machine controls, monitoring tire pressure, and measuring worker productivity were three distinct use cases for large construction and mining companies. What is the analogy for your customers? For certain teams, going to a new offshore market is by itself a new customer group by virtue of the huge differences in customer preferences and buying behaviors in those new markets.

After structuring your template, circle the region on the template that will be your unswerving focus for at least the first two years of your venture. Then, where might you grow for the next stage of growth? What is your reasoning?

Step 2: Define "Good, Better, Best"

This next step is to use the template shown in Figure 5.10 to define your product line or suite of services. Again, all the customer and competitor research you have performed should guide your work. Think about the use cases you have studied. These, too, can drive different types of offerings from your company.
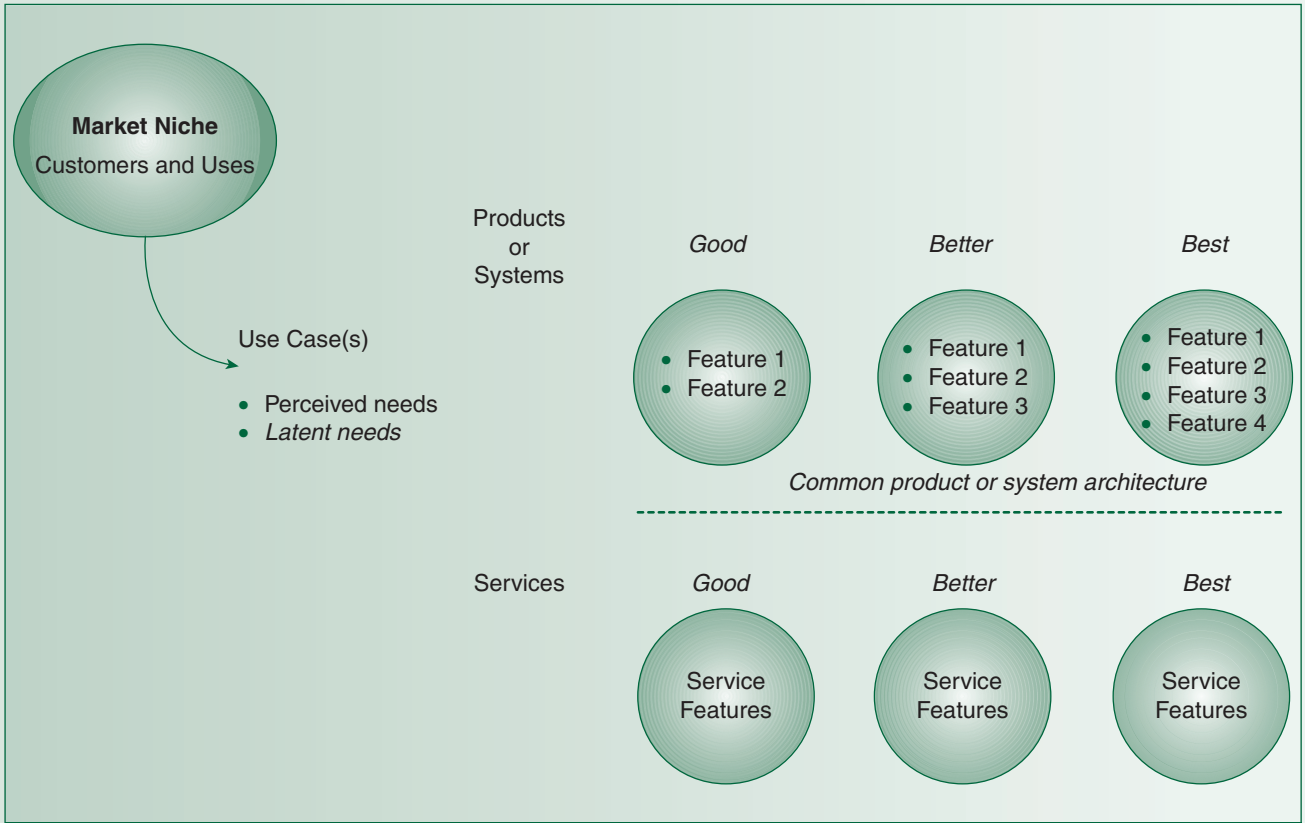

Figure 5.10   The "Good, Better, Best" Template

Then, step back and look at the result. Does the combination of products and services make for a more powerful whole? Lastly, consider the pricing strategy that fits with your "good, better, best" portfolio design.

Step 3: Define an Improved Workflow for Your Customers (optional)

Figure 5.11 shows a template for modeling workflows and identifying needed and unneeded steps. It also shows the metrics or key performance indicators (KPIs) needed to measure efficiency and quality. If you plan to develop a product, system, or service that touches some type of workflow or process within an organization or between organizations, you need to apply this template to the use cases of your typical target customer.

Think of how this template might be applied to the industrial equipment monitoring case. Without the automation, field specialists have to manually insert "cards" into tractors, excavators, and trucks with new machine controls. With the new system, all that labor is completely eliminated: new machine controls download through a wireless connection.

Same goes for the process of checking tire pressure or trying to measure the productivity of workers. Turn on the switch, and these happen without human intervention. The technology makes the process *much simpler and more effective*. Measures (or KPIs) include machine downtime, fuel consumption, and operator productivity.

So if it fits, use this template. It may drive the design of your system or service and be the basis of a compelling sales pitch to your customers.
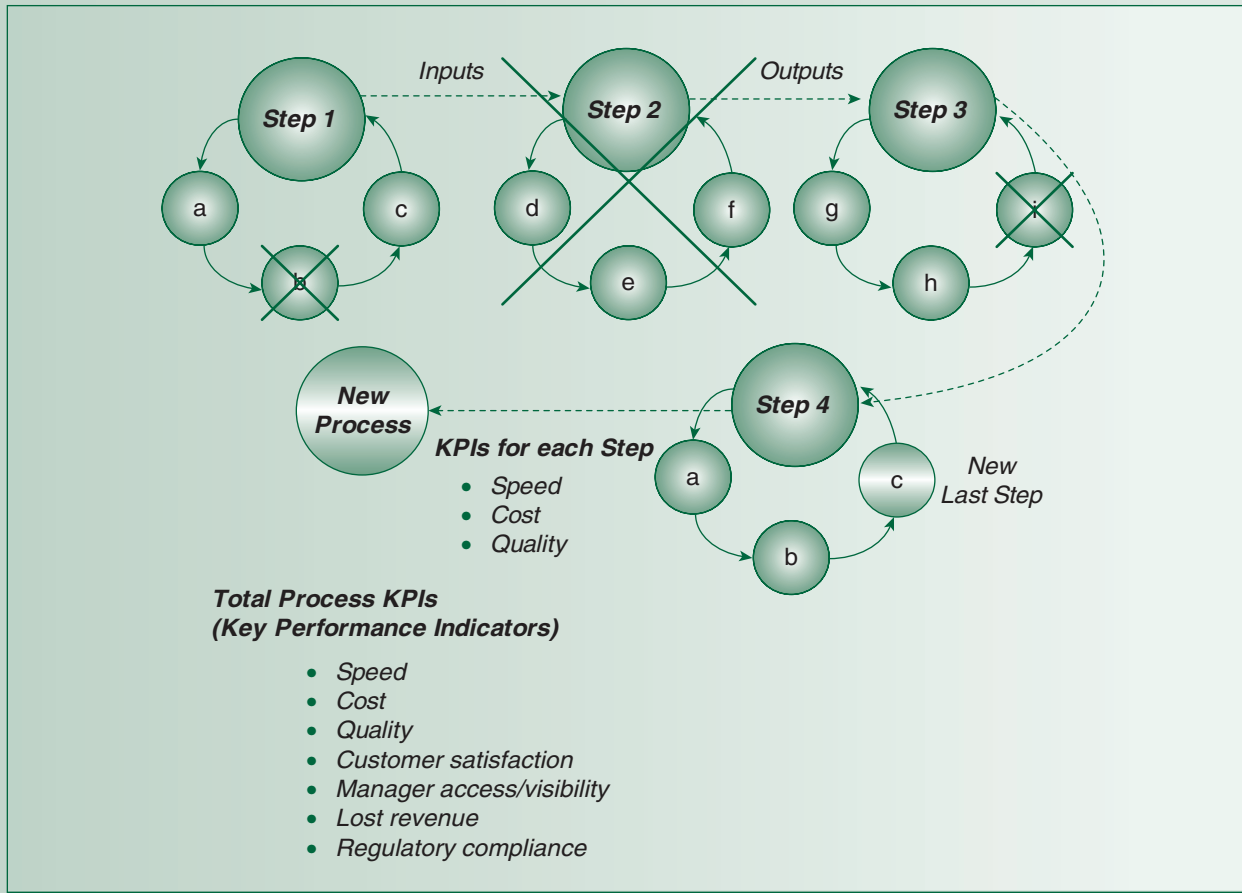

Figure 5.11 The Workflow Redesign and Measurement Template

As you complete the template for your customers, once again, be creative and be bold. Find areas in your customer that need substantial improvement. As always, listen to the user's greatest pain points. Design to those pain points. We have seen many entrepreneurs convince a specific customer to pay for the development of a custom software system to solve these problems. And afterwards, the custom application becomes a prototype that the entrepreneurs take to their venture capitalists for funding, supported with a strong customer testimonial. The system also becomes the basis for a more generalized commercial offering. Bottom line, this template can serve as a powerful tool for your venture. Please take the time to think things through mindful of the context and problems of your target customer.

*** *** ***

As in the prior chapters, it would be foolhardy (and perhaps a little lazy) to design these templates in a vacuum. Show your work to a trusted advisor and then to your professor and your classmates.