

Test your assumptions before you build anything.

Background

Steve Blank · *The Four Steps to the Epiphany* · 2005

Customer Discovery is the discipline of testing your riskiest assumptions before writing a line of code or committing to a plan. You don't discover customers — you discover whether your current assumptions about them are real.

How to Run This

- 1 State the idea and assumed customer clearly and specifically.
- 2 List 5–8 assumptions embedded in that belief.
- 3 Rank assumptions by confidence × consequence.
- 4 Design the cheapest test for your riskiest assumption.
- 5 Run tests with real people — not surveys of people who already like you.

Facilitator Tips

Common mistake

Interviewing people who already agree with you. Talk to strangers who match your target.

What good looks like

At least one assumption that got challenged — ideally one you were confident in.

When to move on

When you can name the single riskiest assumption, you've tested it, and you know whether it held or broke.

About Wade Institute

Wade Institute of Entrepreneurship is Australia's leading centre for entrepreneurial education, based at the University of Melbourne. The Studio is Wade's free, AI-powered innovation workshop platform — making 24 structured frameworks available to anyone, each one facilitated by Pete, an AI coach trained in Wade's methodology.

Try this interactively in The Studio

Pete will help you surface your assumptions, rank them by risk, and design your discovery approach. You'll leave with a structured discovery plan and a session report.

studio.wadeinstitute.org.au →

1 THE IDEA

What is the core concept you are exploring?

2 ASSUMED CUSTOMER

Who do you think wants this? Why them?

3 KEY ASSUMPTIONS

List the biggest assumptions behind your idea. What must be true for this to work?

4 VALIDATED

Which assumptions held up after talking to real customers?

5 CHALLENGED

Which assumptions were wrong, weak, or need rethinking?

6 KEY INSIGHT

What surprised you? What will you change based on what you learned?