

# Business Studies for Me the People



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By

Jamey M. Long and Joseph A. Pisani

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**Sextant:**

Noun. An instrument with a graduated arc of  $60^\circ$  and a sighting mechanism, used for measuring the angular distances between objects and especially for taking altitudes in navigation. Example: The sailor used the sextant to chart their course on the open sea.

- Oxford Dictionary

**Business Sextant:**

Verb: A tool that is used to measure the distance between the “Me” and the “People” in navigating the field of business and its distance as it relates to the current industrial environment. Example: Me the people committed to business sextant their strategy to improve its relationship in the corporate world.

- Dr. Jamey M. Long and Dr. Joseph A. Pisani





# CHAPTER 1

## ME THE PEOPLE: BUSINESS STUDIES

### **The Scenario: Giving Me the People the Business**

Monsters of Merchandise: Hello, welcome to Monsters of Merchandise. How may we assist you today?

Miss Patron: Hi, my name is Miss Patron with Building Buddies, and I would like to...

Monsters of Merchandise: Please listen carefully as our menu options have changed.

- Press 1 for customer service
- Press 2 for technical support
- Press 3 for billing inquiries
- Press 4 for sales or new account inquiries
- Press 5 for service coverage or availability
- Press 6 for account or membership information
- Press 7 for troubleshooting or common issues
- Press 8 for general information
- Press 9 to speak to a representative
- Press 0 to disconnect the call

Miss Patron: Great, another automated company call center. Nothing is personal, it's just business as usual apparently. My query is not listed here so let me try customer service.

Monsters of Merchandise: If you selected Customer Service, please say "Yes" or press 1

Miss Patron: Yes.

Monsters of Merchandise: Thank you. We will be with you shortly.

*Elevator music plays endlessly*

Monsters of Merchandise: Thank you for your call. It is very important to us. Please tell us what your problem is so that we may service you in the best way possible.

Miss Patron: I am the owner of Building Buddies that helps children to learn to build and construct things in the classroom. I ordered a set of plastic bricks and tools for the students to use. However, your company sent me real bricks and contractor tools. I need to return these items and receive the right ones.

Monsters of Merchandise: Thank you for the information. It appears that you have a problem with your order. All of our representatives are currently busy. You will be placed on a short hold for the next available agent.

*Elevator music plays endlessly*

Miss Patron: This is monkey business...

Mr. Bigwig: Welcome to Monsters of Merchandise. My name is Mr. Big Wig. I could not help but overhear you. We are not in the business of monkeys. We are, however, a big business. If you would like to buy a monkey, you will need to hang up and contact another company.

Miss Patron: No, I do not want to buy monkeys. What I meant was...

Mr. Bigwig: Great to hear. You have reached the right place. How may I assist you today? Please tell me in detail what the problem is.

Miss Patron: Didn't you get my problem when I had to give through the automated system before I was transferred to you?

Mr. Bigwig: No, we do not have access to information that is provided through the system before the call is transferred.

Miss Patron: Then why did I have to provide that information?

Mr. Bigwig: Because our policy is business is business and business as usual. Now, what is your problem?

Miss Patron: Then let me repeat myself. I am the owner of Building Buddies that helps children to learn to build and construct things in the classroom. I

ordered a set of plastic bricks and tools for the students to use. However, your company sent me real bricks and contractor tools. I need to return these items and receive the right ones.

Mr. Bigwig: So, you did not receive an order?

Miss Patron: I did receive an order.

Mr. Bigwig: That is fantastic! Monsters of Merchandise is always happy to serve its clients.

Miss Patron: You don't understand. I mean I didn't receive my order.

Mr. Bigwig: Your order did not arrive? I show delivery was made last Tuesday.

Miss Patron: Yes, the order arrived last Tuesday but...

Mr. Bigwig: Excellent. It's all in a day's work. We at Monsters of Merchandise always strive to have our orders arrive on time. What else may we help you with today? Did you call to place another order?

Miss Patron: No...I mean...yes. I don't know anymore!

Mr. Bigwig: Did you receive bricks to build with?

Miss Patron: Yes, I suppose I did.

Mr. Bigwig: Did you receive tools to work with?

Miss Patron: Yes, I suppose I did.

Mr. Bigwig: Your order stated that you purchased bricks and tools. Both bricks and tools were delivered last Tuesday?

Miss Patron: Yes, an order of bricks and tools was delivered last Tuesday but...

Mr. Bigwig: It sounds like you do not know how to mind your own business like we know how to mind ours. Would you like us to help you with that?

Miss Patron: I don't think you can mind YOUR own business.

Mr. Bigwig: What do you mean? We at Monsters of Merchandise always put business before pleasure.

Miss Patron: That is the first thing you said that makes sense.

Monsters of Merchandise: Fantastic news. We at Monsters of Merchandise love to hear that our customers are highly satisfied. It's all in a day's work. Let me place you on a brief hold. Please remain on the line so we can wrap things up when I return.

Miss Patron: No, Wai...

*Elevator music plays endlessly*

Mr. Bigwig: Now Miss Patron, is there anything else we can do for you here at Monsters of Merchandise or have you been completely satisfied with your order and our world-class customer service?

Miss Patron: Wait! Let me try this one more time.

Yes, I placed an order.

Yes, my order number was ordered.

Yes, my order was delivered last Tuesday.

No, I did not get what was on my original order form.

No, I do not want to keep what was sent.

Yes, I want to return my items.

Yes, I need the correct items sent to me.

This will get me back in business.

Mr. Bigwig. Well...that seems easy enough. Why didn't you just say so in the beginning? If you do not tell us what is wrong, it can be risky business. Now, let me take care of that for you.

Miss Patron: So, this is what business as usual has become for me the people these days. Welcome to the future for the people by the people. Sigh....

## **Introduction to Me the People**

Welcome to the world of industry where:

- Business is for Me
- Business is for the People

- Business is for Me, the People
- Me, the People is for Business

You may ask yourself, are these things not the same? The answer is NO. Should they be the same? The answer is YES. So, the real question becomes, WHY NOT? In this book, we explain the cause for the difference between the “me” and the “people” in the field of business. The scenario you just read will seem very familiar to you. While it is comical in nature, it is something that has happened to us all. On an individual level, the “me”, it can be frustrating to deal with this situation and ask, why is this happening to me personally?

The same situation also happens on an individual basis to other individuals and customers that we do not know or think about, the “people”, since each person is only concerned with their own situation. The business, who is trying to equally serve both “me” and the “people”, has created a generic process that treats everyone the same. From the business’ standpoint, the company believes that have found a fair way of treating everyone giving everyone their version of a “personal” and “equal” treatment while at the same time eliminating any “individual” or “equitable” service. This situation causes a divide between the individual (me), all customers (the people), and defines how business is conducted and impacts everyone differently the same all at the same time (me, the people).

As you read in the previous scenario *Giving Me the People the Business*, the expectations and perceptions of each side of the parties conducting business are different. The expectation and differences can lead the individual, group, and the business to act based on their perception, understanding, or what they have defined to be considered successful. While each entity has their own perceived idea of value, the reality is that each of these three groups has complaints about the other groups that cause them to work against each other, instead of with one another.

**Table 1-1** Common Complaints of the Business Process

Me (Individual)	The People (Market)	Business
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complicated Return Policies and Practices</li> <li>• Hidden Costs and Fees</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data Privacy and Consumer Protection</li> <li>• Discrimination and Lack of Service to Consumer Groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abusive Behavior</li> <li>• Failure to Follow Direction of Business Product or Service</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• False or Inaccurate Advertising</li> <li>• Long Wait Times for Service or Response</li> <li>• Overpricing, Price Gouging, and Inflation</li> <li>• Poor Customer Service and Failure to Listen or Respond</li> <li>• Product or Service Quality Issues</li> <li>• Privacy Concerns</li> <li>• Slow Response Times to Immediate Issues</li> <li>• Unprofessionalism, Rudeness, and Condescension to the “Little Man”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental Practices</li> <li>• Ethical Issues</li> <li>• Lack of Accessibility</li> <li>• Lack of Involvement with Community</li> <li>• Lack of Response to Issues</li> <li>• Price Gouging and Inflation</li> <li>• Negative Impact on Economies</li> <li>• Social Media Issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fake or Fraudulent Returns</li> <li>• False or Miscommunication</li> <li>• Frequent Cancellations of Orders of Products or Services Causing Financial Issues</li> <li>• Lack of Respect or Support of Business Policies and Practices</li> <li>• Late Payments of Contractual Financial Obligations</li> <li>• Unfair or Negative Reviews on Social Me</li> <li>• Unrealistic Expectations Based on Perceived Value Instead of Actual Value</li> <li>• Unreasonable Demands of Product or Service made by Consumer(s)</li> </ul>
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How does business, me, and the people begin to make forward progress and to work as one? This may sound like a new question but in truth, it is not. Since people have sailed the waters trying to get to new uncharted destinations, they needed a form of navigation. Sailors used a sextant to help them from getting lost on their journey. A sextant is a special instrument that measures that angles between an object and the horizon point. For sailors, the object being measured was either the stars or the sun to the horizon line.

The design of the sextant involves the use of a frame, arc, turning arm, and a telescope. The arc is measured in degrees that can be rotated allowing the sailor to see shorter or longer distances. To change the view of distance, the sailor looks through the telescope at either the stars or the sun. Once the

object is in view, the sailor will then rotate the arm until the object is reflected or overlayed on top of the horizon line. The angle between the object and horizon line is then determined and gives the sailor the correct coordinates through a mirrored image on how to reach their location based on the altitude. When the altitude is known, the sailor can then use a chronometer to establish the latitude and longitudinal coordinates to follow safely across the land or the open sea.

In the business world, the sextant can be used as a symbol of navigation. The business sextant is a tool that is used to measure the distance between the “Me” and the “People” in navigating the field of business and its distance as it relates to the current industrial environment. With the horizon being the business world, both the “me” and the “people” are objects that need to be overlaid to determine the right course of action to equality and equity to create a me, the people philosophy. The goal is to not have the sextant lead you to only focus on the me. While the me is important since each individual customer has their unique needs that need to be met, those needs also go into the greater market of the people. What is good for one should also be good for everyone. Also, what everyone decides should also support the needs of the singular person. There should never be a negative tradeoff in this relationship. Instead, there should be mutual support and understanding of both “me” and the “people” to properly create “me, the people” for businesses to succeed. Using the business sextant will help each person, the public, and businesses accurately navigate the many windy and treacherous paths in the current and future global business environments ensuring that no one loses their way.



**Fig. 1-1** The Business Sextant

The sextant is a good metaphor for me, the people in business. Since the time of early navigation, the sextant has long been a crucial tool that has allowed sailors and travelers to determine their position by measuring the angle between specific objects and the horizon. This historic navigation tool is an important metaphor to describe the various aspects of business and how they relate to customers, business leadership, management, and strategy. A sextant provides precision and a clear path in unknown land or water, all businesses striving for success can also gain a beneficial understanding from the principles of this navigation tool to help traverse their own path.

Since the sextant operates on the three main principles. These principles are precision, clarity, and alignment. Next, the sextant expects the navigator to understand both the tools at hand and their external environments. This situation creates a distinctive correlation to the processes of customer engagement and customers along with business leadership, management, and strategy. First, the sextant provides precision of measurement. The main purpose is to provide precise measurements to guarantee accurate navigation to the traveler. Like early navigators, businesses must collect precise data about their customers, market trends, and internal controls and operations. This situation involves a complex approach that relies on consumer feedback, market research, and performance metrics of the business.

Second, the sextant was used to align with the sun, moon, planet, or stars with the horizon. The success of the sextant relies on aligning the navigational instrument with specific planetary entity. For businesses, this process can be compared to aligning organizational goals with the various needs and wants of customers. Next, leadership must guarantee that the company's mission statement and vision must be clearly communicated and understood with the target market. If successfully aligned, the business will be able to create a shared path with the customer in all business functions.

Third, the sextant requires constant adjustment to remain on course. When attempting to navigate, the conditions are never fixed. The weather, tides, and other unpredictable elements will work to take you off course. The navigator will need to use the sextant to make regular adjustments to properly recalibrate their course. In business, market dynamics, customer preferences, and competitive environments are endlessly changing. As a result, businesses will need to rely on their leadership model to remain focused while also becoming adaptable to change.

Like a sextant chooses an object, the world of business organizations must see customers as their celestial body. Customers are the stars that will lead a business through the difficulties and complexities of the market. The needs, preferences, and behaviors of the customer will provide the navigational coordinates that direct the strategic decisions of the company. It is



important for a business to understand this relationship so that the organization can make a stronger connection with their customers. As a result, this situation will enable the business to provide more adaptable product offerings to customers.

Fifth, the sextant can represent a customer-focused business strategy. Similar to how sailors must position their sextants to assess the stars, businesses must develop and implement a customer-focused business approach that highlights the valued voices of consumers in strategic planning. This situation will involve collecting and integrating customer feedback into product development, marketing strategies, and overall business operations and functions.

Sixth, business will need to identify customer value from their products and services. While stars help navigators identify their location on an uncharted land or sea, businesses must understand customer value. This situation is critical for establishing a competitive advantage. A business must engage in overall evaluation of worth to determine what their customers value most followed by how the company can best deliver on those needs more effectively and efficiently than their competitors. Next is trust and loyalty. The navigator must trust the stars to guide them safely home. The same is with customers who must trust businesses to deliver a reliable value. Developing customer loyalty is the main component in sustaining long-term business success. This situation involves the use of transparent communication, product and service quality, and maintaining a strong brand name reputation.

Eighth, the leadership of the business is the navigator. Leadership in an organization can be compared to the navigator who holds the sextant since both are required to take responsibility for their journey and the decision-making process along the way. As a result, effective leaders represent a combination of vision, decisiveness, and adaptability as the navigator. Ninth, there is visionary leadership. Navigators must envision the final destination, while effective leaders must be able to clearly articulate a convincing vision and mission that aligns the whole organization toward the stated shared or common goals. This situation involves establishing clear objectives and ensuring these objectives and goals resonate with customers and stakeholders.

Tenth, decisive action must be taken. The navigator must make timely decisions based on the readings gathered from the sextant. Likewise, business leaders must be decisive and act on data-driven decision analysis to implement strategies that promote organizational growth and customer satisfaction. Finally, there must be adaptation and agility in the navigation pro-

cess. The capability to navigate through turbulence is important for a navigator the same way that it is for a business leader. A receptive leadership team remains accustomed to market changes and internal challenges that makes it necessary adjustments to sustain alignment with customer needs and organizational strategic goals.

If the leader is the navigator, then management can be viewed as the supporting crew. Management is the crew working next to the navigator. Their job is to execute plans and to ensure that all business operations run effectively and efficiently. Every crew member plays an important role in the navigation process and each member of the business management team contributes to achieving the organizational goals and objectives. Second, there must be collaboration and teamwork between leadership and management. The sextant is effective since it relies on a well-coordinated crew, the similar way that management teams must establish collaboration and effective channels of communication. Each department within the organizational alignment works to create a unified flow of information that ultimately is used to enhance the business' ability to respond to customer demands and satisfaction.

Third, management works with leadership on the execution of strategy. While leadership sets the navigational direction, management then implements the strategy through careful planning and execution. Management assists the process to ensure the moves of the organization are all synchronized towards the defined objectives and goals. This coordination is important for improving customer experiences and maximizing operational efficiency. Next, there is empowerment and development. A well-trained and skilled crew will enhance the capabilities of a navigator by investing in the development of management teams and empowering the followers to lead effectively. Training and skill development is necessary to establish a strong foundation of competencies that are then translated into exceptional customer service and operational superiority.

Fourth, there must be strategic navigation to help safely prepare you for the journey ahead. The strategic planning process demonstrates the necessity of precision, alignment, and adaptability in crossing the complicated business environment. Organizations must embrace a comprehensive approach where customers, leadership, management, and strategy interact pleasantly and affably together. A feedback loop must also be part of the process. Creating a continuous feedback loop is fundamental for developing a strong business strategy. Regular encounters with customers and stakeholders can provide the necessary insights for both immediate changes and long-term planning.

Next, strategic alignment is necessary for leadership, management, and consumer markets. When corporate strategy is aligned with customer needs it requires integrating the knowledge gathered from customer interactions into all levels of the organizational hierarchy. This situation ensures that every decision contributes to the underlying vision and properly aligns with the values of the customer target market. Finally, there must be continuous learning and improvements. Reaching the destination does not end the navigator's journey. Instead, they must constantly grow and expand their horizon to a new destination. This situation involves constant exploration and learning development. Finally, business leaders should focus on a culture of continuous improvement while also encouraging innovation and adaptability in response to constantly changing consumer demands and competitive forces.

As a result, the sextant is an influential metaphor for navigating the interconnected domains of customers, business leadership, management, and strategy within the industrial environment. By accepting the sextant's principles of precision, alignment, and adjustment, businesses can develop stronger relationships with customers, empower their leadership and management, and implement strategies that support sustained success. The goal is to change from seeing the sextant as only an object used as a tool and to make it into something more that is used every day as part of both the business and customer philosophy. The new Business Sextant is used to measure the distance between the "Me" and the "People" in navigating the field of business and its distance as it relates to the current industrial environment. Do not just describe it. Take action. Actually embrace it and do it. This is what the business studies of Me, the People is about.

## **The Duality of the Philosophy of Me the People**

*"It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own interest."*

- Adam Smith

*"The price of greatness is responsibility."*

- Winston Churchill

*"We need to work together for the people across the world."*

- Angela Merkel

*"We will not be defined by the things that divide us, but by the things that unite us."*

- Jacinda Arden

*"The happiness of the people is the happiness of the country, it is the index of development."*

- Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum

*"Democracy is a rule of the people, for the people and by the people."*

- Abraham Lincoln

*"We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union... promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity..."*

- Preamble of the U.S. Constitution

The idea of Me the People is found in many countries around the world. Not only when leaders are trying form nations for themselves and the people, this concept is also found in their business environments and markets. The goal of many nations is to increase the capital of the individual while also creating a wealth of nations. In the free world, this is known as capitalism. The underlying theme of capitalism is to serve as the guiding principle for the individual (Me) the collective actions shared by them and the community of people (We). To be successful, the self-interest and ambition of a person were the driving forces for innovation and progress in the business environment. During the Industrial Revolution, rapid changes were happening all over the world through the genius of entrepreneurs creating new economic growth.

Over the course of history, the question has been asked; What came first? The "me" or the "we"? To answer this question, we must first understand the concepts of individualism (me) and collectivism (we). First, individualism focuses on the independence and self-reliance of a person. Next, individualism enables the individual to make and experience their own freedoms in their society and world. As a result, the main goal of individualism is to place the individual over the needs of the group. However, collectivism places a greater emphasis on the entire group over the individual. In this situation, the goal is to experience a cooperative environment that promotes cohesion and mutual benefits to the community.

In ancient times, individualism and collectivism could be seen in many different cultures. In Egypt and Mesopotamia, people worked hard to support themselves while also supporting their communities. Both individualism and collectivism were needed to survive. These individual and collective activities included agriculture, home and city infrastructure, and managing all resources. While a person would rely on individualism to help themselves survive, there was also a need to support others to establish trade and a business infrastructure that was used to help bring shared wealth to the community.

Next, the Greeks and Romans relied on individualism and collectivism. During this time, there was a focus on personal virtue and development along with the need for each person to contribute to the common good based on a shared code of ethics by the Greeks. To support the rights of both the individual and collective communities, Rome created a legal system based on the use of laws that provided the groundwork for trade and all economic procedures. Contracts, liability, and ownership were established using contracts to help promote both individual endeavors and communal business practices within the business market.

During the Middle Ages and the Gilded Age, there was a greater focus on collectivism. In Europe, there was an increase in artisans and guilds. More merchants also appeared to sell products and services to the public based on their wants and needs. Each artisan, guild, or merchant used their individual skills and showcased them collectively to the town where they resided. This situation helped to provide regulated and controlled trade. Next, this situation created fair trade practices, provided a certain level of quality control, and worked to eliminate any potential economic difficulties to improve stability for the community.

In the Age of Enlightenment experienced another change. Unlike the Middle Ages and Gilded Age, the Age of Enlightenment relied on individualism to bring about new philosophical and economic practices. John Lock and Adam Smith supported the idea of self-interest and liberty for each person. Both ideas became the driving forces for economic prosperity through a new economic system called capitalism. In the United States, Adam Smith became known as the father of economics and supported the self-interest of each person not only to benefit themselves, but also to provide an advantage for the people in their shared society.

Factories and mechanical advancements were developed to help mass produce products to support the needs of large groups of people. This idea was also supported by other countries around the world. These countries recognized the duality of supporting both the individual and the person in the business environment. When the individual is allowed to pursue their

own self-interests, they will also improve the entire population by creating competition that will promote a positive outcome through increased demand. This situation will lead to enhanced economic growth for both the individual and for the nation without having to be solely controlled by the government.

The 20<sup>th</sup> century experienced large shifts between individualism and collectivism. During this time, both individuals and communities experienced a downturn in their economic environments. The Great Depression caused the change from individualism to collectivism to help save the United States from experience a worse economic downturn. The government created new economic policies such as The New Deal and federally insured banks to provide economic safety and stability equally to all citizens. Labor rights and unions were established to protect all workers. However, individual entrepreneurship provided the new ideas and methods that would be used to benefit the entire population. While a person could become a self-made success, their success also benefits the community at large.

Currently, there is a dynamic relationship between individualism and collectivism in the culturally diverse global environment. Today, there are global and multinational organizations who have supply chains and distribution channels that can support either a person or a community. Next, digital currency also provides a way for people and companies to support not just the local markets or consumers, but also all consumers across the world. Microsoft, Apple, Google, Walmart, Amazon, and eBay are examples of companies who have used entrepreneurial innovation by one individual to capitalize on teamwork, collaboration, and collectivism in the corporate world.

Finally, there is a growing need for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Through CSR, collectivism once again became a priority for all those involved in the business market. All businesses, individually and collectively, must work to support the well-being of society and the environment. Individuals and businesses must adopt a collective approach to social responsibility to help provide cooperation and collaboration to prevent issues from destroying the economy such as COVID-19 and other pandemic-like issues within the global economy. Collectivism, or collective actions, are necessary when facing global incidents or catastrophes for survival. As a result, you cannot have individualism or collectivism alone. Instead, you will need both paradigms to support each other to help vitalize and revolutionize business practices for both the individual and collective good. To be successful, there must be a balance between “me the people” and “we the people” to help demonstrate the direction of the economic and social development in the business environment.