Context map canvas

The **context map canvas** will help you map trends and look for what is driving change in the world around your business. Discuss your findings with your team and share what you think could shape your business now and in the future.

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Overview

The context map canvas is made up of 8 sections that describe the world around your business.

Your business: Place your business in the centre to ensure you are designing a context for the world around your business.

Demographic trends: Look for data on the demographics and employment of your customers. What are the big changes in these areas of your market?

Rules and regulations: What policies, rules, laws and regulations do you think will be applied in the future?

Economy and environment: What is happening in the economy and the wider environment? Are there economic trends or environmental changes that will impact your business?

Competition: Who is your competition? Do you have new or unexpected competitors?

Technology trends: What new trends in technology do you see emerging that will impact your business?

Customer needs: How will your customers' needs change in the future? Do you see new trends? Do you see any big shifts in customer behaviour? Are there new trends going mainstream?

Uncertainties: Do you see any important uncertainties? Are there things that could have a huge impact, but it is unclear how or when?

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Instructions

1. **Before you start:**
   - Decide on the format that suits you:
     - print a large copy of the template and hang on the wall
     - download the template and complete on your computer or project onto a screen.
   - Have plenty of sticky notes and pens ready.
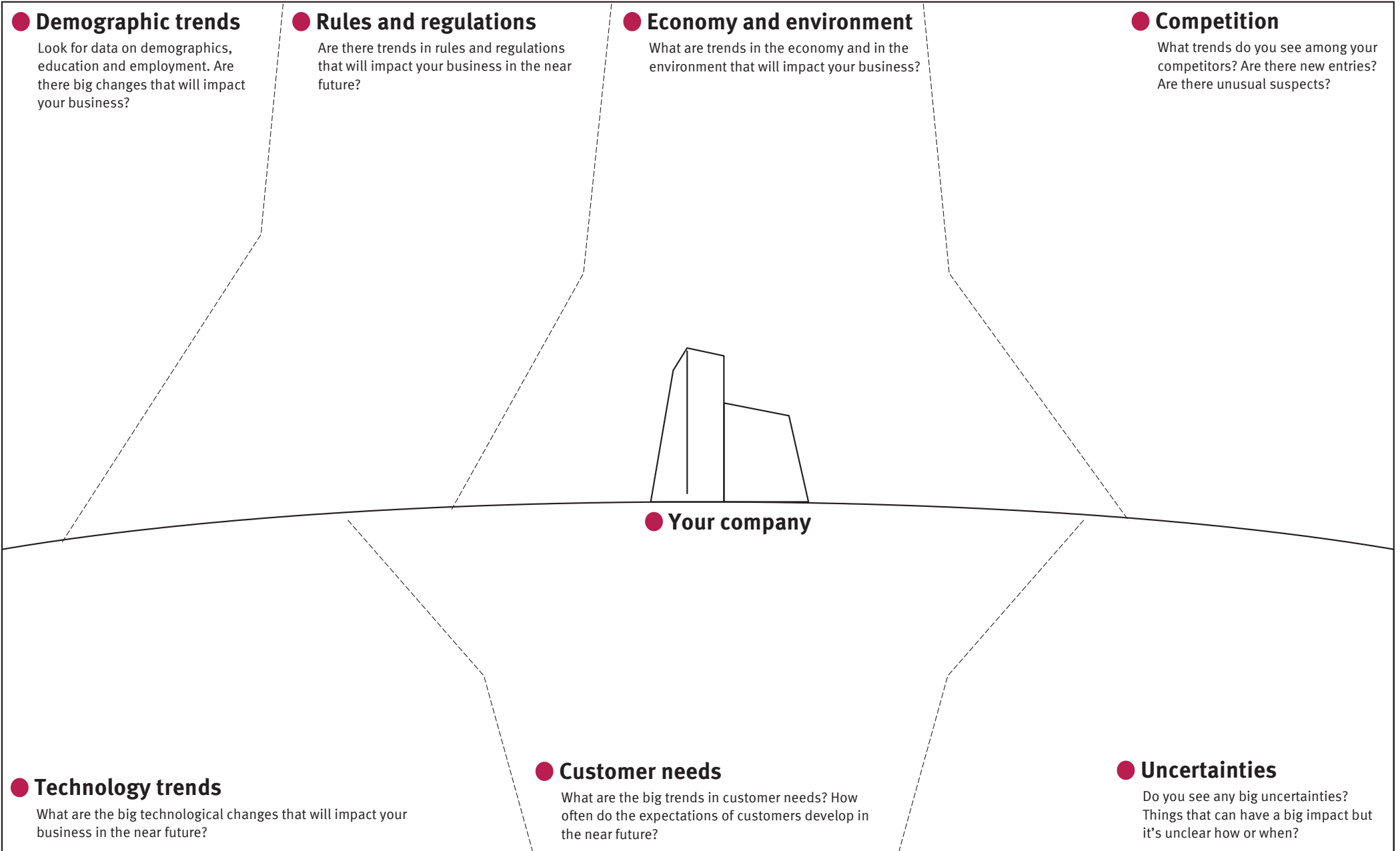   - Allow around 45-60 minutes of undisturbed time.

2. **Add to the canvas:**
   a. Add month or year intervals that best meet your business needs to the sections on the canvas. For example, if you want to plan for the year ahead, you might choose 3 months/6 months/12 months. If you want to plan further into the future, you might choose 1 year/2 years/5 years.
   b. Complete each section of the canvas using sticky notes.
   c. Identify the key drivers in your canvas. What are the things that, positively or negatively, have the biggest potential to impact your business in the near future?

3. **Next steps:**
   - Review the canvas. What areas do you feel are underdeveloped? What parts were more difficult to fill in from your initial ideas? What things did your team disagree on? Where could unknown trends be hiding? What area could you start reading up on? Are you missing anything?
   - Take a photo of the completed canvas to save and review in the future.
   - Discuss with your support network - family, friends and colleagues.

Increase the value of your canvas by revisiting it a second or third time. Once you've captured obvious trends, challenge yourself and your team to add evidence to identified trends, and research other potential additions.

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Context map® canvas

Demographic trends

Look for data on demographics, education and employment. Are there big changes that will impact your business?

Rules and regulations

Are there trends in rules and regulations that will impact your business in the near future?

Economy and environment

What are trends in the economy and in the environment that will impact your business?

Competition

What trends do you see among your competitors? Are there new entries? Are there unusual suspects?

Your company

Technology trends

What are the big technological changes that will impact your business in the near future?

Customer needs

What are the big trends in customer needs? How often do the expectations of customers develop in the near future?

Uncertainties

Do you see any big uncertainties? Things that can have a big impact but it's unclear how or when?

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