Successful business development means giving your organization an advantage over the competition. Sales can develop new business by selling to new clients or opening a new territory or finding a more efficient way to reach a new customer base. But the truth is they can only sell what the organization has to offer.

Take 30 minutes and review these concepts for how you can identify new ideas, new services, or new products that would grow the business. Then consider how you would start. Who could help you? What data do you need? Why is this important to you? There are no right or wrong answers and no right or wrong way. Just start and see what happens.

**Analyze the market**
- Complete a competitive analysis—who’s your competition?
- Scan the environment—what is the market demand?
- Current and potential customers—who can you talk to for ideas?
- Google your organization’s image—what do people say about your organization’s image online?

**Review customers**
- Review customer complaints—what could the company offer to eliminate the complaints?
- Current customer locations—do customers in different locations require different products or services?
- Potential customers—what niches are we missing?

**Consider the future**
- Review trends—what will customers of the future need/want?
- Look to the future—what wild and crazy ideas are on the horizon?
- Reduce cost—how can a less expensive version of an existing product or service be created?
- Improve quality—what value can be added to current services and products that would make current offerings even better?
- What we can’t do—if you look beyond what the organization is capable of now, what possibilities exist?

**Check your sanity**
- Check out the competition—what are your competitors doing now? Thinking about doing in the future?
- Obtain confirmation—how can you create a fast market validation plan?