

A Girl Entrepreneur's Guide to *The Teashop Girls*

Annie and the Teashop Girls learned a lot about running a local business. The things they learned can help you start or run your own business selling cupcakes, lemonade, crafts...anything!

Look for Different Business Strategies in Your Neighborhood:

There are a lot of different ways to run a business (another way to say that is that there are a lot of different business strategies or different business models). Annie, Louisa, and Jonathan all had different ideas about how to run the tea shop. Think about two different but similar businesses in your town (for example, two different restaurants). How are the business models different? The restaurants may seem very different but both are in the business of selling food. Fill in this chart for both restaurants (you could also pick two ice cream stores, supermarkets, anything!) to compare the two business models.

	Restaurant #1	Restaurant #2
Type of food (is it fast food, Italian, Chinese, etc.?)		
Number of choices on the menu (how many different things can you get to eat?)		
Prices (how do the prices compare? Is one priced higher? Lower?)		
Number of people that work there (are there waiters? Counter staff?)		
Decoration of the store (is one fancier than the other? Look nicer?)		
Location (Is one in a quiet area? On a main street? In a shopping center?)		

Look at the answers you wrote in the chart and think about the different business strategies. Does the business that has more staff charge more? Does the one in the busier location look nicer than the other?

Find Examples of Great Customer Service:

The Steeping Leaf survived for over thirty years because Louisa made people feel special which made them more likely to shop at the tea shop. Search the book for examples of Louisa making her customers feel good. Here are some examples to start you off, see if you can find them in the book:

- Louisa put a small cookie into a child's eager hand at no charge.
- When a regular customer's child was teething, Louisa explained how to prepare a sweet herb paste to rub on his sore gums.
- Hardly a month went by that Louisa wasn't buying piles of Girl Scout cookies from someone's niece in the neighborhood or giving someone a little short of change a free scone.

Think about businesses that have treated you nicely and made you feel special. Did that make you more likely to want to shop there in the future? How can you make your customers feel special and be more likely to shop at your business?

Think of Ways to Market Your Business:

Below is a list of ways the Teashop Girls tried to get customers for The Steeping Leaf. How many of these can you do to get customers for your business?

- **Promotions With Other Stores** - Zoe and Genna spoke to local businesses about promoting each other's businesses (Zoe got the Samadhi Spa to hand out tea samples and include an afternoon tea at The Steeping Leaf as part of some of its packages; Genna spoke to the people at her theater to see if they would advertise the tea shop and the spa in her play's playbills).
- **Coupons** - Zoe and Annie handed out coupons at school.
- **Free Samples** - Genna poured free samples at school.
- **Newspapers and the Media** - The local newspaper did a feature story on The Steeping Leaf and Annie wrote an editorial for the student paper.
- **Fliers** - Annie made a fat stack of bright orange fliers advertising the shop and its upcoming events and she and Jonathan stapled the fliers to every phone pole they saw.
- **Parties** - The girls threw a party at The Steeping Leaf and e-mailed newspapers, put up fliers, and invited all the longtime customers and their neighbors.
- **Giveaways** - Annie had buttons, stickers, special cups, and t-shirts made for all the little girls that came to the shop during its last week.