# Market Landscape Analysis and Strategic Positioning Process

1. **List players in your competitive space:** Who else works in this area? Identify 5-10 other organizations that are competitors, partners, or related services. Examples: ATD National, other professional associations, local chamber of commerce, other HR/training companies, other networking associations; see rows on slide 2.
2. **Select key attributes:** List 5-10 attribute criteria to compare the players. Examples: focused on talent development vs generic career focus, geographic focus or not, marketed towards individuals vs marketed towards organizations; see columns on slide 2.
3. **Score the players:** Create a grid with each player on a row and each attribute in a column. Start by working horizontally, giving each player a ranking 1-5 on each attribute. There’s no value judgment about high or low (i.e., high is not necessarily better); the purpose is just to map out the spread of attributes across the players. See the grid on slide 2. You can choose to score your own organization’s current state, or you may leave your organization out at the moment.
4. **Look for patterns:** Now, work vertically by looking down each attribute’s scores. You are looking for patterns to help clarify your options for market positioning. If every player scores high or low on a specific attribute, that attribute might be “table stakes” for being a viable player in the space—or if could be an opportunity to differentiate yourself. If there is a range of values, there’s an opportunity to make a strategic choice about where to position yourself; you may discover that the current players are weighted towards one end, creating market space at the other end. See the color coding on slide 2.
5. **Distinguish your position:** Using this data, make decisions about how to position your organization so that you fill a unique niche. At this step, you may change values from your current state to create competitive contrasts. Slides 3-5 demonstrate an end state of this differentiation. Again, being high or low in particular values is not good or bad; the key is that the shape of your organization’s line needs to differ in an intentional way from the shape of the other lines of your fellow market players.
6. **Consolidate your value proposition:** What are the key “pillars” that define your organization in this competitive space? Your decisions here will define how you speak to three audiences: your members or potential members, your sponsors or other partners, and your board in your internal discussions. See slide 6.
7. **Develop your language:** Brainstorm phrases that clarify what these pillars mean. Use questions like, “What would the headlines look like if we did this?”, “How would we describe this to a potential member?”, “What would members say that would tell us we achieved this goal?”, etc. See slide 7 for examples.