

How to Use The Means-End Chain Tool

Economic principles can be used in business through applications that we refer to as *tools*. [The Means-End Chain Tool](#) is an example.

- Customers and consumers act with a purpose. They are trying to attain Ends.
- When they buy a product or service from an entrepreneur, they are choosing a Means that they believe can help them attain their chosen End.
- The Ends are subjective, so entrepreneurs aim to understand the motivations behind the purchasing behavior.
- The immediate End of the purchase is the Benefit provided by the features and attributes of the product or service.
- That is an intermediate End — the first link in the Means-End chain. Once the functional benefit is chosen by the consumer, they experience an emotional benefit — they feel better as a result of the functional benefit.
- The emotional benefit is a contributory benefit — another link in the chain — to the ultimate benefit, the Highest Value that the consumer is seeking to attain in this category of activity.
- If we know, or can deduce, the highest value, we can construct for the consumer a “strongest route” to get there: by buying our product or service, experiencing the functional benefit it provides, enjoying the emotional benefit, and feeling good about making progress towards their highest value.
- Highest values include ideas such as Family Security, or A World Of Beauty, or A Sense Of Achievement. We will examine highest values in a future episode.

