

The Business Plan

When starting up any business it is important that you set out a business plan. This will provide a focus for your ideas and objectives, setting out how your business will operate. To begin with a straightforward plan will be sufficient, as you may not need to consider all the areas yet (premises, staff etc). You can focus upon key areas such as, management, product or service, market and pricing.

By this stage you will have decided on a product/service for your business and have management in place, even if its just you. Therefore, a good place to start is by outlining the details of your business and your product/service. Make sure you include CV.s for your management, focusing on their skills, experience and education. When including your own emphasise any skills you may have which are suited to running your own business. Make sure you describe, in detail, your product/service. Here it is important you include enough information so those who don't know your business can gain an understanding of what it is that you are going to do.

Once you have begun your market research you have to be able to identify a need/demand for what it is that you are offering. What is it that sets you apart from your competitors? Why should the consumer choose your company over the others that are already available? This is why there is the need for market research. Once you know where you are and what you are doing, the marketing process can begin. Another benefit of market research to your business plan is pricing. In order to price your product/service competitively you need to have an awareness of the prices your competitors are already offering. Knowledge of what is already being provided and how much it costs will allow you to appreciate your place within the market. You will also need to include these findings in your business plan. This will demonstrate how you have conducted your research and have paid attention to the market place you are in. Armed with all this information you are now ready to write up your business plan. The business plan allows you to develop your business aims and objectives by bringing together your marketing research and financial resources. This plan will provide you with a statement of your predicted costs and sales expected over the next year, three years and five years to produce what profit your new business will make.

Remember it is the profit that will provide you with your income for the future. Further advice and information on starting up a business can be provided by:

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