
Business Description

What do you do?

What is your business name? _____

What is your business structure? _____

What is the product or service you are selling?

What made you want to start a business selling this product or service?

How is your product or service different or better than other businesses offering the same?

What is your unique value proposition?

Business Operations

How do you do it?

Describe how your business operates. Be as detailed as possible, including hours/days of operation. (For example, a catering business may operate by selling at various Farmer's Markets from Tuesday-Thursday and then focus solely on private events such as weddings, etc. from Friday-Sunday.)

How do you get paid for doing it? How soon do you get paid?

What methods of payment will you accept? _____

Will your customer pay you directly or will you receive payments from a third party? (For example, daycare providers may receive payments directly from parents as well as from agencies like the YMCA.) _____

How long does it take for you to receive payment from your customers? (For example, a construction contractor may get paid in 60 days, whereas a retail store owner gets paid at the point of sale.) _____

Management and Staff

Who is going to run your business on a daily basis?

If you have another job, how will you manage your schedule to work at your job and your business? Describe your work schedule (hours/days) and what your schedule will be at your business.

If you are planning on hiring an employee, how many hours will they work/week? _____

How often will you pay them? _____ How much will you pay them? _____

What qualities and skills will you require in an employee?

Do you have experience either owning or managing another business? If so, describe.

Do you have experience working in the same field that you are starting your business in? Describe.

What is it about **you** (your experience, your skills) that will make you successful in this business?

Identify and Analyze your Target Market

Who will be most likely to buy your product or service? If it is another business, what type of business will you sell to? If it is an individual, state the common gender, age, where they live, what they like to do, how much money they make?

Can they afford your product? (If not, you should re-think your target.)

What things are important to your ideal customer? (i.e. family time, leisure activities, animals, etc.)

What exact value will your target customer get from your product or service?

Which newspapers, magazines, community flyers do they read?

Which websites do they frequent most? Are there certain social media that they use?

Are there places where they gather on a regular basis? (Churches, schools, meetings, community events, professional groups, cafes, etc.)

Where do they shop and what do they buy?

Develop a Marketing Strategy

A good place to start when developing your marketing plan is to identify your Marketing Mix otherwise known as the **4 P's of Marketing**:

- **Product** – What is your product and what demand exists for it?
- **Price** – Will reflect the perceived value for you product and will determine your profit.
- **Promotion** – Methods of communication you use to provide information about your product.
- **Place** – How or where you provide the product so it is convenient for consumers to access.

How will your ideal customer find out that your company exists? The most important thing to do is to develop a plan of action. ***Which strategies will you start with? Which ones are free? Which do you have to invest money into? Which ones will be most effective?***

You will need to attach the Marketing Plan that you developed with the business counselor to this Business Plan. It is important to include not only the ways you will market your business but also the costs associated with each strategy. You can include these costs in your Start-up Costs list on Page 9.

Competition Comparison

Research similar businesses as yours in your area and determine their strengths and weaknesses. Having this information will help you differentiate your business from theirs, i.e. What do you do

better than your competitors? What do you do that is different than them? What do they do that works/that doesn't work?

Business Name	1)	2)	3)	Your Business
Location				
Type of product/ service				
Quality of product/ service				
Price Range				
Who is their target client?				
Marketing: How do people find out about them?				
Unique value prop: What do they do to keep their customers coming back?				
Other: What else have you learned that compares/ contrasts with your business?				

Sales Channels

Is your ideal customer an individual or a business? _____

Is it required for you to have a physical location? Why? _____

Having a home-based business or a mobile business can save you from paying a high rent expense. Can your business be home-based or mobile? If mobile, which strategy best fits your business? (i.e. Catering, food truck, Farmers Markets, swap meets, house parties, in-home consultation)

Are there any businesses that you could form a **strategic alliance** with that would help both of your businesses? For example, makeup artists and hairdressers, massage therapists and chiropractors, florists and party planners, etc. List any businesses that you will seek to partner with.

Could you sell your product at wholesale to other retailers? For example, if you make swimsuits can you sell larger quantities at a lower price to retailers such as boutiques or surf or swim shops? If so, which types of businesses could you sell your product to?

Financial Projections

You will need to attach the 1 year Profit & Loss projections that you developed with the business counselor to this Business Plan. It is important to explain which “assumptions” you used in calculating your projections. Assumptions for calculating sales include: amount of average sales ticket per customer, # of customers per day, # of days open for business per month, etc. Assumptions for calculating costs include: cost of a typical unit of sale, # of product ordered or manufactured per month, etc. This should have been reviewed in your business counseling session.

Pricing

If you have a menu or price list of your product or services, you may attach to this Business Plan, otherwise, fill out the chart below.

List the main products/services you will be selling	How much will you charge for each?
1.	\$
2.	\$
3.	\$
4.	\$
5.	\$
6.	\$
7.	\$
8.	\$
9.	\$
10.	

Break-Even Point

The Break-Even Point for your business is the point when your revenue and your expenses are equal. When you make enough sales to pass the break-even point (cover your costs), your business will start turning a profit. Use the #s calculated in your student workbook.

A. Fixed Monthly Business Expenses	B. Sales Price of Typical Unit of Sale	C. Cost of Typical Unit of Sale	$A/(B-C) = \text{Break-Even Point}$
BREAK-EVEN POINT (units):			

A. Break-Even Point (units)	B. Sales Price of Typical Unit of Sale	$A \times B = \text{Break-Even Point (sales)}$
BREAK-EVEN POINT (sales):		\$

Now that you have calculated your break-even points in terms of units and sales, do these numbers look realistic? Consider what the competition sells, your time capacity and what you currently produce. Use table below to calculate the minimum units required to sell per day just to break even.

A. Break-Even Point (units)	B. Total days worked per month	$A/B = \text{Minimum units required to sell per day}$
MINIMUM UNITS TO SELL PER DAY TO BREAK-EVEN:		

Start-up Costs

*Customize the categories based on your business needs.

Category	Item	Qty	Where to buy	Cost
Licenses				
Equipment				
Inventory				
Materials				
Office Supplies				
Marketing				
Employees				
Other				
TOTAL COSTS				\$

AAES Graduation Requirements Checklist

(Required to submit prior to graduation.)

Deliverables	Completed? (Yes/No)	Notes
Attendance at all class sessions		
Completion of 2 business counseling sessions		
Business Presentation		
Business Plan		
Marketing Plan		
Profit & Loss Projections		