

25 TIPS FOR DEVELOPING YOUR BUSINESS PLAN

E-Book

actionCOACH[®]
BUSINESS COACHING

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Introduction



Having a fully developed business plan is crucial for the success of any business. A business plan provides a roadmap for the future of the business, outlining goals, strategies, and objectives. It helps to identify potential challenges and provides a plan to overcome them.

A well-constructed business plan also ensures that all areas of the business are considered, from marketing and sales to operations and finance. By developing a comprehensive business plan, entrepreneurs can clarify their vision and goals for the business and develop a clear understanding of the steps necessary to achieve them. With the guidance and expertise of a business coach like Mark Dilks and ActionCOACH, entrepreneurs can create a solid foundation for their business and ensure they are on the path to success.



Set Clear Goals and Objectives

Developing a business plan is essential for the success of any business, but setting clear goals and objectives is key to achieving that success. A business plan that lacks specific and measurable goals is simply a collection of ideas and aspirations. To create a solid foundation for your business, it's important to set clear goals and objectives that align with your vision for the company.

Make Your Goals Specific and Measurable

The first step in setting clear goals and objectives is to make them specific and measurable. This means that your goals should be well-defined and detailed, and there should be a clear way to measure progress and success. For example, a general goal like "increase revenue" is not specific enough. A more specific goal might be "increase revenue by 10% in the next quarter." This goal is specific, measurable, and gives a clear target to work towards. Brad Sugars, the founder and CEO of ActionCOACH, stresses the importance of setting specific and measurable goals. According to Brad, specific goals give businesses something to aim for and allow them to measure their progress towards achieving that goal. This helps businesses stay on track and motivates employees to work towards a common objective.

Align Your Goals with Your Business Strategy

The second tip for setting clear goals and objectives is to ensure they align with your business strategy. Your goals should support your overall vision for the business and should be in line with the strategies you have developed to achieve that vision. For example, if your business strategy is to increase market share, your goals should reflect this strategy, such as increasing sales or expanding into new markets.

Involve Your Team in Goal Setting

The third tip for setting clear goals and objectives is to involve your team in the goal-setting process. By involving your team, you create a sense of ownership and accountability for achieving the goals. Additionally, your team members may have valuable insights and perspectives that can help you set more effective goals. When employees feel like they have a say in the goals of the business, they are more likely to be invested in achieving them.

Set Realistic and Achievable Goals

The fourth tip for setting clear goals and objectives is to set realistic and achievable goals. Goals that are too ambitious or unrealistic can be demotivating, while goals that are too easy may not challenge your team enough. When setting goals, consider your resources, capabilities, and external factors such as market conditions. Goals should be challenging, yet achievable. This creates a sense of accomplishment and builds momentum towards achieving more significant objectives.

Develop An Action Plan for Achieving Your Goals

The fifth and final tip for setting clear goals and objectives is to develop an action plan for achieving your goals. Your action plan should outline the specific steps you will take to achieve your goals and the timeline for completing those steps. It should also identify any potential obstacles and how you will overcome them. According to Brad, developing an action plan is essential for achieving your goals. This plan provides a roadmap for how you will achieve your objectives and ensures that you are taking the necessary steps to reach them. Additionally, an action plan helps to identify any potential issues early on, allowing you to address them before they become major roadblocks to success.



Know Your Target Market

Knowing your target market is a crucial aspect of developing a successful business plan. Understanding the needs, desires, and preferences of your ideal customers allows you to tailor your products, services, and marketing strategies to meet their specific needs.

Define Your Ideal Customer

The first step in knowing your target market is to define your ideal customer. This means creating a detailed profile of the person or group of people who are most likely to buy your products or services. To develop a customer persona, consider factors such as age, gender, income, interests, and geographic location. Brad emphasizes the importance of creating a customer avatar. This is a detailed profile of your ideal customer that includes information such as their demographics, psychographics, behavior patterns, and purchasing habits. By creating a customer avatar, you can better understand your target market and develop targeted marketing strategies to reach them.

Conduct Market Research

The second tip for knowing your target market is to conduct market research. Market research involves gathering information about your industry, competitors, and target market. This can include analyzing industry trends, conducting surveys, and monitoring social media and online reviews. By understanding what your customers are looking for, you can develop products and services that meet their needs and differentiate yourself from your competitors.

Understanding the needs, desires, and preferences of your ideal customers allows you to tailor your products, services, and marketing strategies to meet their specific needs.

Analyze Your Competition

The third tip for knowing your target market is to analyze your competition. This involves identifying your competitors and analyzing their products, services, marketing strategies, and pricing. By understanding your competition, you can identify gaps in the market and develop strategies to differentiate yourself from your competitors. Brad recommends conducting a SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) to identify your competitors' strengths and weaknesses. This analysis can help you to identify areas where you can differentiate yourself and capitalize on opportunities in the market.

Use Customer Feedback

The fourth tip for knowing your target market is to use customer feedback. Gathering feedback from your customers can provide valuable insights into their needs, preferences, and experiences with your products or services. This feedback can be obtained through surveys, focus groups, or customer reviews. By listening to your customers, you can gain a deeper understanding of their needs and develop strategies to meet those needs.

Monitor and Measure Results

The fifth and final tip for knowing your target market is to monitor and measure your results. This involves tracking key metrics such as sales, customer acquisition, and customer retention. By monitoring your results, you can identify areas of opportunity and make adjustments to your marketing strategies and products or services. By measuring your results, you can identify what is working and what is not, and make adjustments accordingly



Develop A Strong Value Proposition

A strong value proposition is a critical component of any successful business plan. A value proposition is a clear statement that communicates the unique benefits and value that your products or services provide to your target market.

Focus On The Benefits, Not The Features

The first tip for developing a strong value proposition is to focus on the benefits, not the features. While features are important, it is the benefits that customers are ultimately interested in. Benefits are the specific outcomes that customers will experience from using your products or services. This means identifying the specific problems that your target market is facing and explaining how your product or service solves those problems.

Identify Your Unique Selling Proposition

The second tip for developing a strong value proposition is to identify your unique selling proposition (USP). Your USP is what sets your products or services apart from your competitors. It is the specific aspect of your business that makes it unique and desirable to your target market. Brad emphasizes the importance of identifying your USP. By identifying what sets you apart from your competitors, you can develop a value proposition that communicates your unique value to your target market.

Use Clear And Concise Language

The third tip for developing a strong value proposition is to use clear and concise language. Your value proposition should be easy to understand and communicate the specific benefits of your products or services in a clear and concise manner. Avoid using jargon or technical language in your value proposition. This can make it difficult for customers to understand the specific benefits of your products or services. Instead, businesses should use simple and straightforward language that is easy for customers to understand.

Make It Customer-Focused

The fourth tip for developing a strong value proposition is to make it customer-focused. Your value proposition should be designed to appeal to your target market and communicate the specific benefits that they will experience from using your products or services. Brad recommends focusing on the customer's needs and desires when developing your value proposition. By doing so, you can communicate the specific benefits that your products or services provide in a way that resonates with your target market.

Test and Refine Your Value Proposition

The fifth and final tip for developing a strong value proposition is to test and refine it over time. Your value proposition should be a living document that is continually evaluated and refined based on customer feedback and market changes. You should test your value proposition by gathering feedback from customers and make adjustments as necessary. This can help to ensure that your value proposition is effective and resonates with the target market.



Create A Realistic Financial Plan

Creating a realistic financial plan is an essential aspect of developing a successful business plan. A financial plan outlines the costs, revenue projections, and cash flow for your business, helping you to determine the feasibility of your business idea and identify any potential challenges.

Develop A Budget

The first tip for creating a realistic financial plan is to develop a budget. A budget is a financial plan that outlines the expected income and expenses for your business over a specific period. A budget can help you to identify potential financial challenges and ensure that you are allocating your resources effectively. You should create a budget that is realistic and based on accurate financial data. This means gathering information about your startup costs, ongoing expenses, and revenue projections.

Your budget should also include a contingency plan in case of unexpected expenses or changes in the market.

Identify Your Funding Needs

The second tip for creating a realistic financial plan is to identify your funding needs. Depending on the size and scope of your business, you may need to secure funding from investors, lenders, or other sources. To identify your funding needs, you should determine your startup costs and ongoing expenses. Brad recommends identifying your funding needs early on in the business planning process. By doing so, you can ensure that you have the necessary resources to get your business off the ground and achieve your goals.

Creating a realistic financial plan is an essential aspect of developing a successful business plan.

Create Realistic Revenue Projections

The third tip for creating a realistic financial plan is to create realistic revenue projections. Revenue projections are estimates of the income that your business will generate over a specific period. Revenue projections should be based on market research, industry trends, and your business's unique value proposition. Overly optimistic revenue projections can lead to financial challenges down the line and undermine the success of your business.

Monitor Your Cash Flow

The fourth tip for creating a realistic financial plan is to monitor your cash flow. Cash flow is the amount of cash that your business has on hand at any given time. Monitoring your cash flow can help you to identify potential challenges and ensure that you have the necessary resources to meet your expenses. Brad emphasizes the importance of monitoring your cash flow regularly. This can help businesses to identify potential cash flow challenges early on and take steps to address them before they become major issues.

Revise Your Financial Plan Regularly

The fifth and final tip for creating a realistic financial plan is to revise it regularly. A financial plan is a living document that should be updated regularly as your business evolves. As you gather more data about your expenses, revenue, and cash flow, you can adjust your financial plan accordingly. Revising your financial plan regularly can help businesses to stay on track and adjust to changes in the market. It can also help to identify areas of opportunity and take advantage of new revenue streams.

Continuously Review And Revise Your Plan

Developing a comprehensive business plan is a crucial component of launching a successful business. However, a business plan is not a static document. As your business evolves, you will need to continuously review and revise your plan to ensure that it remains relevant and effective.



Set Milestones

The first tip for continuously reviewing and revising your plan is to set milestones. Milestones are specific goals that you set for your business to achieve over a specific period. Milestones can help you to track progress and identify any areas that may need additional attention. Brad recommends setting milestones that are achievable and measurable. This means breaking down larger goals into smaller, more manageable steps. By doing so, you can monitor progress and adjust your plan as needed.

Monitor Your Progress

The second tip for continuously reviewing and revising your plan is to monitor your progress regularly. This involves tracking key performance indicators (KPIs) such as revenue, customer acquisition, and customer retention. By monitoring your progress, you can identify areas that are performing well and areas that may need improvement. According to Brad, businesses that monitor their progress and make adjustments as needed are more likely to achieve their goals and remain competitive in their industry.

Gather Feedback

The third tip for continuously reviewing and revising your plan is to gather feedback. Feedback can come from a variety of sources, including customers, employees, and industry experts. Feedback can help you to identify potential challenges and areas that may need improvement. Gathering feedback is essential for businesses that want to remain competitive and innovative. By listening to feedback from customers and other stakeholders, you can identify areas of opportunity and develop strategies to address any issues.

Identify Emerging Trends

The fourth tip for continuously reviewing and revising your plan is to identify emerging trends. The business landscape is constantly evolving, and staying up-to-date on emerging trends can help you to remain competitive and relevant. This can include trends in technology, customer preferences, and market conditions. Make sure you're keeping up-to-date on industry news and attending industry events and conferences to stay informed about emerging trends. By identifying emerging trends, you can make adjustments to your plan and take advantage of new opportunities.

Revisit Your Plan Regularly

The fifth and final tip for continuously reviewing and revising your plan is to revisit it regularly. Your business plan is a living document that should be updated regularly as your business evolves. Revisiting your plan regularly can help you to identify potential challenges and adjust your strategy as needed. According to Brad, businesses that revise their plan regularly are more likely to remain competitive and achieve their goals. Revisiting your plan can also help you to identify areas that may need additional attention and take corrective action before they become major issues.

A Bit About Us

Our History

Founded by Brad Sugars in 1993, ActionCOACH has served thousands of businesses and their owners worldwide and in every category imaginable. By showing owners how to get more time, better company teams, and more money on their bottom line.

Vision and Purpose

We want you to succeed. At ActionCOACH, every individual within our team commits to our vision of “World Abundance through Business Re-education, purpose “A Coach in Every Business,” so together we can make a difference.



Making Business Ownership Easy

It is time to make a change... With 98% of clients saying they would recommend ActionCOACH, this will be a change we are certain you will be proud of when looking back at your business growth.

A Commitment to C.A.R.E

ActionCOACH clients, whether they be small, medium, or large, will have a desire to have us help them achieve their goals and be able to take on our commitment to them by returning their commitment to ActionCOACH. They will be forward-thinking, willing to learn and grow, and willing to work as a team player in the development of an organization of “people.”

Our clients will be selected more on attitude than size and they will want to deal with us because we understand people are important, systems should run a company, we offer the most practical, most applicable, and fastest strategies on growth, and most importantly, because we mean what we say. We will give people back their spirit and freedom through business development.

Finding a Coach

If you would like to act now and start your business coaching journey with our committed team, simply reach out to us at actioncoach.com.