

Every Business Should Have a Business Plan

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The old saying- “If you aim at nothing you’re guaranteed to hit what you’re aiming at”- applies directly to why every business should have a business plan. Another one-“If you don’t know where you’re going, how are you going to know when you get there” - also works.

If you are building or running a business, or living your life for that matter, without a plan, where is the business, or your life, going and how are you going to know when it gets there? There’s absolutely no way to know if you don’t intentionally choose a direction or have something to aim for... and have a plan.

Simply put, a business plan is a vision of what you want your business to become and how to make that vision a reality. It’s a blueprint, or a roadmap, for your business.

Most people think a business plan is something you write when you’re starting a business, which is true, but existing businesses need a business plan too. Every business is headed somewhere, and only by intention does it head uphill. If left to run itself, a business will only run downhill like a car without a motor.

Everything, including your business, is changing all the time either positively or negatively. Do nothing and the change is negative. Positive change only comes from intention.

Humans are like that too. If we sit around and do nothing all the time atrophy sets in and we deteriorate. Just to maintain our physical level we have to intentionally expend energy. To improve our physical level, we have to expend more energy. A business is no different.

In studies of successful people, there is always one trait they share: they are goal oriented. In everything they succeed at they set a goal for themselves and work toward that goal. They have something to aim for. So, if you want a successful business, one trait or skill that will help is to become goal oriented and develop a business plan.

Building a business is no different than building anything else; just more complicated and there are no standards or instructions to follow. If you are going to build a house you don’t go down to the lumber yard and buy a bunch of 2x4’s and start nailing the boards together. No, you first get a blueprint, determine everything you need, gather it up, and then start putting your house together following the blueprint... the plan!

There’s more benefit to having a plan than just having something to aim at too. The process forces you to think and re-think about things you haven’t thought about yet and learn about things you didn’t know. It forces you to learn, and knowledge is one of the most valuable assets you can have. Developing your plan also forces you to consider different possibilities or eventualities- both good and bad.

So, whether you’re starting a business or already have one, write yourself a picture of how you want your business to look, then write the steps and the resources it will take to make that vision a reality. In other words, write yourself a business plan.