Module 6

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Module 6 Overview

Module six was developed for entrepreneurs seeking to establish career coaching practices. In this module, you will learn about your skill sets as a business owner, and the fundamentals of building a business plan. Important to this module whether a business owner or HR specialist or career coach working in an established company is maximizing customer service and retention. Due to popular demand, Module 6 Section 2 now includes a section for HR Professionals, College Counselors, Employment Readiness Counselors, Business Managers, Outplacement/Career Services providers, Military Transition Specialists, Corporate Coaches, and others. Section two also includes tips for you as a coach to manage and care for yourself no matter if you are self-employed or working for a company.

Certified Professional Career Coach
Career Coach Training & Certification Program
Purpose • Direction & Development • Success

**Disclaimer:** The business development section provided overview information for creating a business plan. Consultation with a certified accountant, attorney, business developer, and/or financial planner is highly recommended.
| SCRIPTING BUSINESS SUCCESS: THE OVERVIEW |

“Tentative efforts lead to tentative outcomes. Therefore, give yourself fully to your endeavors and determine to pay the price of a worthy goal. The trials you encounter will introduce you to your strengths. Remain steadfast...and one day you will build something that endures; something worthy of your potential.”

—Epictetus, Roman Teacher/Philosopher, 55-135 A.D.

I spoke with a Career Coach / Career Services Director who manages Talent Management and Succession Planning for a company with 300,000 employees globally. He said to me, “I want my team of career coaches to operate like a business. I want them to market our career coaching services, draw in the employees, and continually upgrade and expand our career coaching services.”

Business is evolving with social media and how Millennials interact in the workplace. He also stated that it is harder to engage the Millennials as they don’t often explain their needs or desires for upward growth or promotions. Instead, turnover is much higher than in the past. He is engaging his staff to analyze the new trends of the younger workforce, their desires, work patterns, communication skills, and guiding his staff to focus on targeting them and helping them to understand the value of career coaching and succession planning.

The information in the module can be modified and applied to Career Coaches working in companies and organizations including workforce development, outplacement, military, universities, and more. Even if you do not plan to operate a business, the concepts can be transferable to your organizational development.

The Thrill of Victory

Almost nothing can be more exciting than owning and operating a business enterprise. The thrill of freedom, independence, control, and the abundance of self-reward and financial riches are the innate dreams of the human spirit. In today’s “never a job-for-life again” labor market, many people are thinking about and opting for their own business enterprise. The life of a successful entrepreneur can be a rewarding one indeed.

And The Agony of Defeat

If you are considering entrepreneurialism as a career option, you obviously understand that your business enterprise will exist within the methodical nature of a ‘capitalist’ philosophy based on the free market system. Interestingly enough, the free market system is not free; it has its costs. The high price we pay for the free market system is that it
provides an environment susceptible more for failure than success. Surveys confirm that 80% of businesses fail within the first four years. The majority fail in the first 12 months, and the remaining 20% fail within the next four years. Out of 25 businesses that open doors today, only one will be in business six years from now.

**Hard Work**

Scripting a business plan and constructing a business is hard, long work. It requires perseverance and diligence.

Everyone asks, “How do I get started?” Well, surveys reveal that 75% of all business owners start their business while working a full-time job. So, if you are currently employed, capitalize on starting your business while you are drawing a paycheck and offer special services and coaching sessions for individuals who are also currently employed after hours. Create a special niche and offer Career Coaching services on evenings and weekends to ensure client confidentiality and so they do not have to take off work for sessions. Plan an e-mail campaign to introduce your new services and highlight “Comprehensive Career Coaching Services—available after regular work hours” so you do not compromise your current position.

Or, you may want to offer your new Career Coaching services as a promotional engagement, i.e., “Buy a Résumé and Receive Assessment Testing at half off during December.” Once your client base is established and referrals start to roll in, you can change your marketing campaign (see marketing in business plan below).

**The Fundamentals**

Building a Career Coach practice is a system that provides the “fundamentals” for building and growing a successful business enterprise. An entrepreneur is defined as “**somebody who sets up and finances a new commercial enterprise to make a profit.**” As you build your practice to coach clients to career success, you may not think about “building a commercial enterprise which results in profit.” Not only do Career Coaches provide coaching and résumé writing services for their clients, but as a sole proprietor, you manage a company and a commercial enterprise.

**Note to those who are employed by a company:** Business plans and the fundamentals of entrepreneurism apply to those who are already employed by a company. You may be able to use this material to work better and smarter in your current position. Or, you may be able to help your boss build his business which in turn should benefit you or position yourself for growth as an entrepreneur in the future.

No one source alone can furnish the plethora of information, data, and materials needed to start, purchase, grow, and/or manage a highly profitable and successful organization. As one studies the thousands of successful entrepreneurs from Hewlett and Packard to the
Wright Brothers; from Henry Ford to Bill Gates; or Michael Jordan to Madonna – success can be measured in the small differences known as fundamentals that make the big difference between profits and bankruptcy. The particulars are different for everyone and every enterprise. The particulars for operating a McDonalds franchise are different from the particulars for running a Subway or Starbucks franchise. But, the fundamentals are the same for a sole proprietor operation or a major company with many employees. And, you never know when your business may cause you to consider hiring personnel or expanding to a storefront, for example.

Fundamental 1: FOCUS ON: The Business and its Purpose
Fundamental 2: FOCUS ON: The Owners and their Philosophy
Fundamental 3: FOCUS ON: The Market, Customers, their Expectations, and Desires
Fundamental 4: FOCUS ON: The Employees and their Needs
Fundamental 5: FOCUS ON: The Partners and their Needs
  - Contractors / Vendors
  - Professional (Legal, Accounting, Banking, etc.)
Fundamental 6: FOCUS ON: Systems
Fundamental 7: FOCUS ON: Growth and Innovation
Fundamental 8: FOCUS ON: Creating a Functional, Action-Oriented Business Plan
Fundamental 9: FOCUS ON: Implementation and Measurement of the Plan
Fundamental 10: FOCUS ON: Growth and Innovation
Fundamental 11: FOCUS ON: Implementation and Measurement of the Plan
Fundamental 12: FOCUS ON: Growth and Innovation
HOW MANY HATS DO YOU WEAR?

As a Career Coach, you may wear many hats:
- Career Coach
- Group Coach
- Lifestyle Coach
- Succession Coach
- Retirement Coach
- Trainer
- Résumé Writer
- Assessment Tester
- Interview and Salary Negotiation Coach
- Dress for Success Coach
- Business or Career Coach
- HR Professional
- Career Transition Specialist
- Other/specific to your business

As a sole proprietor, entrepreneur, or corporate employee, you may wear many other hats:
- Business Manager
- Marketing/Advertising Manager
- Copy Writer/Editor
- Web Master
- Sales Manager
- Bookkeeper/Tax Accountant
- Personnel Supervisor
- Public Speaker
- Administration / Office Management
- HR Specialist
- Other/Specific to your business

During the course of a regular workday, you may switch hats frequently. If you are self-employed, you will not only be a career coach, but a business manager—an entrepreneur. You, now, have the added task of constructing and maintaining a business in addition to using your coaching skills.

You are now responsible for marketing and selling your services and retaining customers to ensure income.
Review the ‘hats’ listed above and place the ‘hats’ in order of your abilities (highest skill level in a ‘hat’ as #1):

Order your ‘hats’ according to your ability as a Career Coach:
1) 
2) 
3) 
4) 
5) 
6) 
7) 
8) 
9) 

Order your ‘hats’ according to your ability in Business Management:
1) 
2) 
3) 
4) 
5) 
6) 
7) 
8) 
9)
Now, order your ‘hats’ according to what you enjoy doing the most in Career Coaching:

1) 
2) 
3) 
4) 
5) 
6) 
7) 
8) 
9) 

Now, order your ‘hats’ according to what you enjoy doing the most in Business Management:

1) 
2) 
3) 
4) 
5) 
6) 
7) 
8) 
9)
When you are finished with the above two exercises, go back and match the sections. Make a list of those items that you are skilled at and those items that you enjoy the most in order:

**Career Coaching**

1) 

2) 

3) 

4) 

5) 

6) 

7) 

8) 

**Business Management**

1) 

2) 

3) 

4) 

5) 

6) 

7) 

8)
The top two or three items on each list indicate what you are skilled at and what you enjoy doing. The items further down on each list indicate that you are not as skilled and you may not enjoy it as much. To prevent wearing too many ‘hats’ or becoming burned-out, you may consider obtaining outside help for those ‘hats’ that you do not enjoy or you may not be as skilled at. For example, if you don’t enjoy bookkeeping, you may want to hire a bookkeeper to manage your books. The time and frustration it saves you may well be worth the money invested.

If you are not as skilled as an interview trainer or assessment tester, you may either want to obtain specific training and education to boost your skill sets and receive specific credentialing. Another option would be to partner with another Career Coach who can provide those services to your clients for a referral fee or reciprocal arrangement.
Entrepreneur or Technician Evaluation

“The hard things are put in our way, not to stop us, but to call out our courage and strength”. –Anonymous

The following is a list of competencies and traits that successful entrepreneurs seem to possess consistently. If you are considering becoming self-employed, this is a good start to evaluate whether you have these competencies and traits. Though all are important characteristics, 26 through 37 are critical for achieving personal and financial fulfillment.

1. I AM OPTIMISTIC  YES  NO
2. I AM A DREAMER    YES  NO
3. I AM A CONTRARIAN YES  NO
4. I AM NOT AFRAID TO FAIL YES  NO
5. I AM RESOURCEFUL - A GOOD PROBLEM SOLVER YES  NO
6. I AM A VISIONARY   YES  NO
7. I AM A LEADER OF PEOPLE YES  NO
8. I ENJOY SELLING AND PROMOTING YES  NO
9. I AM A RISK TAKER   YES  NO
10. I DEAL EFFECTIVELY WITH STRESS YES  NO
11. I AM HIGHLY MOTIVATED YES  NO
12. I AM DETAILED ORIENTED YES  NO
13. I AM GOOD WITH NUMBERS/FINANCE YES  NO
14. I AM HIGHLY ENERGETIC YES  NO
15. I HAVE ENTREPRENEURIAL TENDENCIES YES  NO
16. I AM A HIGHLY FOCUSED INDIVIDUAL YES  NO
17. I AM HIGHLY COMPETITIVE YES  NO
18. I READ NON-FICTION MATERIAL YES  NO
19. I DELEGATE WELL  YES  NO
20. I AM DRIVEN BY SUCCESS YES  NO
21. I AM NOT A WORKAHOLIC – I WORK TO LIVE YES  NO
22. I AM A POSITIVE PERSON (People like being around me) YES  NO
23. I AM STREET SMART   YES  NO
24. I AM ABLE TO SEE BIG PICTURE AND SMALL DETAILS YES  NO
25. I WORK EFFECTIVELY WITH COMPUTERS / INTERNET YES  NO
26. I LIKE SYSTEMS – METHODS OF OPERATION YES  NO
27. I ENJOY OVERCOMING ADVERSITY / NO FEAR YES  NO
28. I FINISH WHAT I BEGIN / GOAL ORIENTED YES  NO
29. I LOVE TO LEARN AND GROW YES  NO
30. I AM IN GOOD HEALTH YES  NO
31. I AM WELL DISCIPLINED / ACTION ORIENTED YES  NO
32. I PARTNER WELL WITH OTHERS YES  NO
33. I HAVE A LOVING AND SUPPORTING SPOUSE/SIG.OTHER YES  NO
Building a Business or a Job?

Most successful businesses or programs start with an idea, goal, dream, and plan. Then you need motivation and perseverance to guide the ideas to fruition. These exercises are just as important for you and your business or your employer/office, as they are for your clients who seek to become self-employed entrepreneurs.

Why do I want to go into business for myself? Or, why do I want to create a new program in my office?
(One to two short sentences – Be sharp, clear, and concise)

My purpose for starting a business or program:

1) To inspire my life:
(How will a business venture inspire my life?)

2) For wealth-building:
(How will a business venture reward me financially?)

3) What is my definition of success?
(Financial, quality of life, spiritual?)

| 34. I AM A HIGHLY EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATOR | YES | NO |
| 35. I TAKE PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY | YES | NO |
| 36. I HAVE FAITH IN MYSELF | YES | NO |
| 37. I HAVE FAITH IN MY CREATOR | YES | NO |
Identify my 10 greatest strengths / assets:

1) 
2) 
3) 
4) 
5) 
6) 
7) 
8) 
9) 
10) 

Identify 5 strengths and assets that others say about me:

1) 
2) 
3) 
4) 
5) 

What strengths do I need to build my business?

1) 
2) 
3) 
4) 
5)
How can I use my strengths to become successful in business or build career coaching services for my employer/current clients?

1) __________________________________________________________

2) __________________________________________________________

3) __________________________________________________________

4) __________________________________________________________

5) __________________________________________________________

Identify 5 areas I need to improve upon:

1) __________________________________________________________

2) __________________________________________________________

3) __________________________________________________________

4) __________________________________________________________

5) __________________________________________________________

Identifying and Defining the Practice

Career Values
(What is the most important to me in the business enterprise? Making lots of money, helping people land jobs, lots of family time, autonomy, writing, speaking, etc.?)

1) __________________________________________________________

2) __________________________________________________________

3) __________________________________________________________

4) __________________________________________________________

5) __________________________________________________________
What environments would I enjoy working in?
(At home, outdoors, in a busy office)

Research Requirements
(What do I need to research to build my business?)

Understanding the 15 Major Killers to Business Success:
- Poor planning
- Insufficient capital
- Lack of experience
- Inventory mismanagement
- Taking too much salary
- Poor customer service
- Poor record keeping
- Inadequate marketing efforts
- Doing it alone
- Not addressing the “unexpected”
- Poor location
- A/R mismanagement
- Partnership challenges
- Entrepreneur v. technician
- Lack of commitment
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<th>List the Pros of going into business for myself</th>
<th>List the Cons of going into business for myself</th>
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**My Business Goal – Be Concise:**

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

**Company Mission Statement**
(What is the mission <undertaking or operation> of the company?)

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

**Feasibility Evaluation**
1. Do your goals meet your values?  Yes  No
2. Do you have a long-term vision?  Yes  No
3. Evaluate potential obstacles?  Yes  No
4. Meet your financial needs (long- or short term)?  Yes  No
5. Shared ideas with other “open-minded” advisors?  Yes  No
6. Are you excited and enthusiastic about your idea(s)?  Yes  No
7. Have you reviewed and addressed the “15 Killers” above  Yes  No
8. Have you completed a “T-Bar” or “Pro / Con” assessment analysis?  Yes  No
9. Are you ready to write a business plan?  Yes  No
10. Are you prepared to move forward with passion and commitment?  Yes  No

Determining Market Conditions
What are the market conditions - now and in the future - that lead you to believe your business enterprise will be successful and thrive?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
Initial Assessment of Financial and Capital Resources
Have you performed the initial due diligence with regard to financial and capital resources needed now and in the future to ensure success? Write down the results of your research. What are your safety nets and exit strategies?
See the Outcome at the Outset

“Begin with the End in Mind” – Stephen Covey

On the following page, take time and visualize how your business enterprise will look when you have achieved success. Be clear, concise, accurate, and highly detailed. In 1, 3, 5, or 10 years from now when you are done constructing your business, how will it look? This may also serve as the summary for your formal written business plan.

Name of the Company

Type of Company

Details
Systems — The Success Behind All Success

Systems and processes ensure performance. Discretion and deviation ensures chaos. Review the business opportunity that you are considering. In the space below, identify the system or process you will incorporate in your business that will guide you to success.

- McDonalds uses a high-impact success system
- Federal Express uses a high-impact success process
- Disney uses a high-impact success system
- The Ritz Carlton uses a high-impact success process
- Nordstrom’s uses a high-impact success system

Let’s look at McDonald’s high-impact system. Whether you like the burgers or not, its golden arches are among the most recognizable brand icons in the U.S. and in many other countries. Behind the golden arches is the methodical and distinguished learning and development that supports that brand. The training begins by preparing employees to serve customers at the counter and extends to programs that help individuals launch their own franchise. The training and high-impact system processes include restaurant leadership training, Capstone Coursework, sharpened people selection and processes, and refined coaching and mentoring practices. The ongoing focus is Training, Learning and Development, and the standardization of systems and branding. Each burger sold in America has the same ingredients right down to the number of pickles for each specific type of burger.

McDonalds also focuses on a performance development system based on performance drivers considered key to leadership. Training and performance reviews are aligned around eight leadership competencies and expected behaviors for each level. Individual development plans are created in collaboration with the supervisor and map out leadership training in support of the employee’s performance and career goals. There is also a McD mentoring program and talent management initiatives that include career guidance for crew and managers; executive coaching; succession planning; and a college degree connection program, among other high-impact system operations.
Name of Your Company / Type of Company

The System (Describe the system(s) you plan to use and implement)

Components of the System
BLUE PRINT FOR SUCCESS: THE BUSINESS PLAN

Developing a Practical Mini Business Plan

Hopefully, you have spent countless hours thinking, dreaming, and visualizing your business idea / business enterprise. You have done your initial due diligence including the Feasibility Evaluation, understand the 12 Fundamentals, and have the full complement of resources. This includes a master team of advisors at your disposal to provide you an above average chance of achieving the success you aspire to. Now is the time to take your ideas, notes, and all preliminary material and develop a mini business plan to further determine the viability of your idea / business enterprise. Once the plan is completed, it will provide you with the basic roadmap to success. The purpose of putting a business plan together is to develop a comprehensive and targeted plan on which to act. A plan without action and an abundance of energy and drive behind it is nothing more than a “mirage of the mind,” and an illusion of the spirit.

The plan will be a short one in terms of written material. However, it will require a tremendous amount of concentration, focus, discipline, and introspection. It will take creativity, persistence, expert research, and analysis. And in the end, it will require your close attention to detail in terms of running conservative numbers to ensure financial feasibility.

Follow the outline below and take no short-cuts. Quick fixes are seductive and treacherous. A towering skyscraper can only be constructed with thoughtful blueprints. A towering career business enterprise also needs a thoughtful blueprint. Your mini business plan is the start of your blueprint for business success achievement.
Mini Business Plan
The BLUEPRINT for Scripting Business Success

Mission Statement

What is the mission of your business?
(How will your purpose unfold?)

What will clients say about your services or products if you are successful at meeting your mission statement?
The Purpose Statement section provides the reader with a compelling reason to read the entire business plan. The Purpose Statement should be emotionally charged, well-written, and in a powerful and effective way, answer the all-important two “key questions:”

1) “Why am I reading this?”

2) “What’s in it for me?”

If you are seeking to gain something specific from the plan such as capital funding be sure to address this in those specific terms. For instance, if you are writing the plan to raise $100,000 in capital or specifically, an SBA loan for $100,000, state this clearly in the Purpose Statement.
What is the nature of the company?
(Provide a brief history and general overview.)

What are the products and/or services that you are offering?
(Create a detailed list of products and services. Also, think about how you can expand that list to include “add-on” items. Products and services may include résumés, federal résumés, cover letters, assessment testing, Career Coaching, interview training, and passive services including résumé circulation and speaking engagements.)
What is the proposed business if new or present status of the existing business?

What is the industry size and growth rate? (Look at O*Net and the Department of Labor websites)

What are the strategic opportunities that exist? What makes you think this is a financially feasible and responsible business venture?
What are the markets and who are the customers you plan to target?
(Do you have a niche clientele? Do you have a specific expertise within Career Coaching, i.e., medical professionals, military, sales and marketing professionals, executives, internal corporate coaching, or students?)

Where or what is the location of the business? What part does location play?
(Will you work at home or maintain a store front or executive suite? Will you meet with clients F-2-F or offer virtual services?) (I once lived in Anaheim, California, and worked at Disneyland. I longed to create a restaurant on the corner of Beach Boulevard and Ball Street, and call it “The Beach Ball.” Location would have been key in this enterprise!)

What is the “technology position?”
(How does technology integrate and support the enterprise? LinkedIn, Website, Paperless operation, other)
What particular “resources” are required to operate your successful enterprise?

For instance:

- Labor resources (for an employee-intensive business like a lawn maintenance company)
- High-cost insurance premiums (coverage for a high-risk enterprise <parachute jumping>)
- Computer technology (for high-tech driven enterprise like a medical billing business)
This section addresses your competition so you can position your business to successfully compete in the marketplace.

**Who or what constitutes your competition? How do you plan to successfully compete for market share in your market?**

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Describe your typical customer and prospective customer:
(Age, financial bracket, gender, niche clientele, etc.)

Describe your typical customer’s needs / buying patterns:
(A “must” or a “should?” – economic factors, seasonal, etc.)

Describe your pricing strategy:
(Highball / lowball, per hour, per package, a la carte, etc.)
Describe your financial resources and how they will affect your marketing strategy:
(Abundance of resources such as TV, radio, Google, website, SEO, and print media or Limited resources such as referrals, networking, and PR)

What do you do that would entice a prospective or current customer to use your product/service over the competition? In other words, what makes your product/service unique in the eyes of the consumer?

Advertise and High-impact Marketing

Think positive and motivate the reader or listener to action. Define your niche clientele and brand your characteristic or distinctive kind. Indelibly impress your message and stigmatize your clients and potential clients with your work. Branding means a mark made by burning with a hot iron. The mark remains forever. Make your Mark as a Career Coach and own your niche clientele.

Branding creates an image in the mind with a complete and cohesive message. Early branding of products started with Coca-Cola which presents the image of feeling good, and Quaker Oats which brings comfort. The labels are easily recognizable, and we quickly reach into our brains when we see these images and “just know” who the products belong to. We
can even visualize the logo or product if we see even a small part of the logo—these products are etched in our minds.

Branding is both subliminal and obvious. Research suggests that we need to see or hear something seven times before it sinks in. So merchandisers who brand their products get their message and content across to us in many ways: shopping bags, carpeting embedded with a logo, wallpaper with a logo, gift cards, receipts, signs, radio and special in-store announcements, special coupons for fliers (short list), webpages, subtitles, Google and cookies ads, etc. Over time, we are “stigmatized” by the branding efforts and it becomes natural for us to recognize some logos.

**How can you Brand your Career Coaching/Résumé Writing business? How can you make yourself stand out above the crowd?**

What questions can you pose to your clients to educate them about Career Coaching and market your services without “selling” them through a lecture?
Potential Questions

- How long did you manage your career search campaign last time?
- What were the results?
- How many avenues will you use to circulate your résumé?
- What is the greatest value you offer to an employer?
- Do you have a professionally prepared cover letter?
- Do you have an electronic résumé? Where do you use it?
- Are you aware of the competitive salaries in your industry? Tell me about it.
- What are your long- and short-term career goals?
- Are you succeeding in meeting your goals?
- Who is assisting you in meeting your goals?
- What does your network grid look like?
- If an interviewer asks you about your greatest strengths and weaknesses, how will you reply?

The AIDA Formula for Advertising

To help you Brand your Career Coaching business message, use the AIDA formula:

1) Grab the prospect’s ATTENTION

2) Deepen the prospect’s INTEREST

3) Increase the prospect’s DESIRE

4) Motivate the prospect to ACTION

Write a headline like a commercial advertisement that will incorporate all aspects of the AIDA formula to brand your message:
Write a telephone voicemail script or email script that will incorporate all aspects of the AIDA formula:

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What do you perceive as “obstacles” to effective marketing? How do you propose to overcome them?  
(Limited financial resources, poor networking skills, etc.)

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**Three Ways to Build and Expand a Business**

**How will you market and invest your marketing dollars?**

1)  **New Customers**

- Direct marketing: U.S. mail or E-mail, Constant contact, or Mail Chimp

- Advertising: Print media / TV / Radio / Internet / Website / Billboards /Google, Click-throughs, Job Boards, Blogs, etc. How will you ensure your written marketing materials are professional with an excellent graphic design...branding your company, services, and self?

- Special promotions and events

- Referral networks

- Networking forums: In person and via Social Media – relationship building
• Public relations: Don’t forget to use press releases for every achievement, new idea, or opportunity to get your name across the desk of a public relations official or editor. Will you use a Blog or Twitter to promote achievements?

• Telemarketing

• Public speaking

• Professional positioning: How will you position your company as THE industry leader?

• Articles, blogs, and interviews

• Creative marketing techniques: e-newsletters, coupons, free seminars, building alliances, and others that are specific to your company

What are the best methods for increasing your client base?

2) Increase the Amount of the Average Sale

• Up-sell or cross-sell products/services

• Bundling products/services

• Reposition products/services as “up-scale” products/services

• Increase price

• Expand product/service line

• Offer larger quantities
What are the best methods for increasing the amount of the average sale for your business?

3) Increase Frequency of Purchase

- Increase frequency of email and direct mail marketing efforts, use an email drip, constant contact campaign, integrate an email newsletter, or membership page on your website
- Increase overall telemarketing/phone efforts/texting campaigns
- Building strategic partnership and alliances
- Special promotions
- Expand product/service line
- Use price incentives
- Google ads/click-throughs

What are the best methods for increasing the frequency of purchase for your business?

Don’t forget that you are marketing every time someone hears your voice on the phone, on your voice mail, in public, or when they read about you on the Internet or in print media. Use every opportunity to Brand your business message! 
Apply the Six Sigma principles and receive feedback from your clients so you can deliver superior products and services that are consistent for each client.

Six Sigma says that clients value consistent and predictable business processes that deliver world-class levels of quality. According to Six Sigma philosophy, the idea is to seek quality for the customer, where the customer can expect performance, reliability, competitive processes and on-time delivery...every time...to delight the customer. **If you don’t do it...someone else will.** You need to look at your business from the customer’s perspective. Look at your processes, ask for feedback, refine your processes, and deliver consistent, quality products, and services. Design your processes, services, and products to meet your clients’ needs.

**Building Client Confidence**
As you work one-on-one with clients, professionalism and thoughtfulness will gain their confidence in the process. Professionalism in customer service includes high ethical standards, solid character, cordiality, and respectability.

- **Marry your customers (Make them feel important)**
  (Are you available to answer phone calls, are you able to return phone calls promptly, do you answer emails promptly, do you speak their career language, do you listen to them more than you speak?)

- **The Pursuit of WOW (What causes your clients to say, “WOW! I love your company/product/service?”)**

- **Surveys and feedback (Survey Monkey)**

- **Innovation (What makes you stand out from the crowd in business?)**

- **Continuing education and credentials (List your credentials and goals for continuing education)**

- **Make doing business with you fun and exciting. (Indicate how you can make this happen for your clients)**

What methods will you use to build customer confidence and loyalty?
How much value do you add to your clients’ needs?

How do you add that value?
(What does your client gain by working with you?)

What is your number one customer-service technique that keeps clients returning?
(How do you know? What system do you have in place to monitor the number of referrals you receive? How do you determine why clients come to you for service or return to you for service?)
Surveys and Feedback

It is essential to glean specific information from clients regarding their estimation of your services—good or bad. Whether you are self-employed or work for a company, surveys will help refine services and products. Again, this feedback allows practitioners to make changes to better accommodate clients, modify, add, or delete services to better meet client needs. Feedback will help to improve or expand advertising to target specific niche clientele or make other changes as necessary to increase profits, boost productivity, or improve client relations.

Asking clients to complete a post-service feedback form may provide guidance in making appropriate changes or modifications to business practices that can enhance your business operations. You may, for example, decide to partner with a résumé writer if you are primarily a Career Coach to better suit your client’s needs. Or, you may decide to delete assessment testing from your service list as you can outsource that service to someone certified in specific assessment testing specialties.

At the conclusion of a résumé or Career Coaching project, you may want to send the following feedback form to your client to use as an evaluation tool for your business. Use a scale of 1 to 5. One: did not like, not very good, or disagree. Five: like a lot, very good, or agree):

I was pleased with my résumé and written materials. 1 2 3 4 5
I applied the career search campaign techniques you taught me. 1 2 3 4 5
My written documents were completed on time. 1 2 3 4 5
My new employer was impressed with the résumé. 1 2 3 4 5
I circulated _____ résumés. 1 2 3 4 5
Overall, I was satisfied with the services I received. 1 2 3 4 5
Would you recommend the services of this company? 1 2 3 4 5
How did you find this company? LinkedIn Referral Website Google Ad
Did you use a cover letter: Y N
What percentage of the time 10 20 30 40 50 60 70+
What was the most important aspect of your career search that we helped you with? Career search, research, dress for success, interview coaching, goal planning, assessment testing, résumé writing, career search campaign strategy, salary negotiations, résumé circulation, other ______?):

How long was your career search?  Weeks:  Months:

How many interviews did you receive? ____

How many offers did you receive? ____

What company did you accept a position with? _______________________________

What industry is the company/new position in? _______________________________

What is your job title? ________________________________

What is your new salary? __________________________________________

Did you make a career change? (From what industry to what industry):

Before you contacted our company, how many months/weeks did you circulate your résumé?

SUCCESS VALIDATION

The above information is an excellent source of feedback to adjust business practices and determine the direction of business operations. When the above questions are answered with a positive response, the information can be used as Success Validation Stories for websites, brochures, and other advertising including in-office portfolios. You may want to consider creating “Success Validations” that can be formatted and used in promotional materials and returned to the client so they can view their success.

The “Success Validation” page may only include certain questions and answers highlighting success in the process of the career search:

Original Career Search (in months):  8 months
Industry:  Manufacturing
Position Title:  Production Supervisor
Salary:  $51,000 (no benefits)
Number of Résumés Circulated:  150
Number of Interviews:  0
Number of Job Offers:  0
After working with our company including Career Coaching, a new résumé and career search documents (cover letter, recruiter letter, T-letter, thank you letter, salary history, and salary requirements letter), here are the following results:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career Search with Company:</th>
<th>4.5 Months</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Résumés Circulated:</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of LinkedIn Contacts</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Interviews:</td>
<td>4 (plus 3 telephone interviews)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of Job Offers:</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry:</td>
<td>Logistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position Title</td>
<td>Director of Logistics and Production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salary Increase:</td>
<td>+ $11,000 (plus full benefits)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Organization and systems are critical to any business enterprise. Listed below are areas of business concerns that must be addressed for your business to be successful. There may be other areas of concern that are not listed that you will want to include as well.

If you operate your practice as a business even if you are the only employee, you will have a business plan and operating manual (Standard Operating Procedures) that anyone could read and refer to run your business in your absence. If your colleague was asked to operate your business while you took an extended vacation, would they know their way around your office? Where would they find your client files? Where would they locate receipts and financials? How would they send out an introduction letter or service agreement? A well-written manual/standard operating procedure with templates for résumés, cover letters, marketing letters, welcome letters, service agreements, worksheets, and any other documentation that is frequently circulated should be identified in the standard operating procedures.

**What standard operating procedures would someone reading your operating manual need to follow to effectively run your business for a month?**

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10)
What are your company policies that can’t be broken?
(For example, never start a project without a client’s signature, charge clients who are no shows as stated in service agreement, conduct an annual ROI assessment)

1)

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Team Operations

As your business grows, you may require the assistance of other experts. Use these forms and exercises to develop team members and support systems:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Name of Person to Fill Spot</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Operations Manager</td>
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<td>Finance Manager (Accountant / Bookkeeper)</td>
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<td>Technology Manager (SEO / Web Master)</td>
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<td>Sales and Marketing Manager</td>
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<td>HR Manager</td>
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<td>Research and Development Manager</td>
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<td>Customer Service Manager</td>
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<td>Other ( )</td>
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<td>Other ( )</td>
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</table>

Management Team
(List your executive management team / board of directors)

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<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
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Personnel / Team Members
(List your staffing and personnel requirements.) (As a Career Coach, you may want to hire subcontractors to write résumés or conduct assessment testing. Or perhaps you need a bookkeeper to assist part-time with your finances. Look at the ‘hats’ list to determine where can you delegate assignments? Virtual Assistant, LinkedIn / Social Media Expert, other)

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<th>Name</th>
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**Record Keeping** (A most important aspect of a successful business enterprise). You may want to engage the advice of a bookkeeper, tax accountant, or financial planner. You may consider using financial software to manage your books.

1) **Financial / MIS** (G/L; A/R; A/P; expense receipts; payroll; cash control; payroll/sales taxes, etc.):

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2) **Sales / Marketing** (Business tracking; commissions; customer service records; etc.):

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3) **Operational** (Purchases, inventory requirements, quality control records, customer tracking, etc.):

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4) **Other**

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</table>
Operations - Other

Legal

LLC or DBA (Doing Business As)

Accounting

Insurance

Security Issues (theft – employee/customer)
The best business plans are supported by strong and viable financial statistics that when projected indicate that the business has the financial strength to grow and meet profit objectives. There are three main financial components/reports that will be addressed in this section.

1) Pro-forma – 3 year income projection with breakeven analysis
2) Cash flow analysis – 3 year projection
3) Capital needs assessment – start-up costs

**1) Pro Forma – 3-year income projection (with breakeven analysis)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INCOME</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gross sales</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cost of goods sold</td>
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<td>Gross profit margin</td>
<td>(Gross sales less CGS)</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXPENSES</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
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<td>Total expenses</td>
<td>(Variable + Fixed Expenses)</td>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>Year 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net income before taxes</td>
<td>(Gross profit margin Less Total expenses)</td>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>Year 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net income after taxes</td>
<td>(Net income less taxes)</td>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>Year 2</td>
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</table>
(This abbreviated report should be supported by three, one-year projection reports that depict activity over 36 months with each year showing 12 individual months of activity. This is a sample. You need to create these reports according to your business requirements.

### Year 1

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### Year 2

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### Year 3

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<td>Gross sales</td>
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<td>Gross profit margin</td>
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<th>EXPENSES</th>
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<td>Variable</td>
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</table>
**Break-even Analysis**

Officially, break-even status is when a company’s total expenses equal the gross profit margin where the company has neither made a profit nor incurred a loss. In other words, the break-even point is when total revenue equals total expenses. In the case below, it is during the 2nd and 3rd months.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INCOME</th>
<th>Jan</th>
<th>Feb</th>
<th>Mar</th>
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<th>Total</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gross sales</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>300</td>
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<td>300</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>3800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of goods sold</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
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<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gross profit margin (Gross sales less CGS)</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>400</td>
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<td>400</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>3800</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXPENSES</th>
<th>Jan</th>
<th>Feb</th>
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<th>May</th>
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<th>Jul</th>
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<th>Total</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Variable</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td>Fixed</td>
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<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total expenses (Variable + Fixed)</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>250</td>
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<td>300</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>3100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Net income before taxes (Gross profit margin less Total expenses)</th>
<th>Jan</th>
<th>Feb</th>
<th>Mar</th>
<th>Apr</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>Jun</th>
<th>Jul</th>
<th>Aug</th>
<th>Sep</th>
<th>Oct</th>
<th>Nov</th>
<th>Dec</th>
<th>Total</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(-50)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>+50</td>
<td>+50</td>
<td>+50</td>
<td>+50</td>
<td>+100</td>
<td>+100</td>
<td>+100</td>
<td>+100</td>
<td>+150</td>
<td>+700</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Net income after taxes (Net income less taxes)</th>
<th>Jan</th>
<th>Feb</th>
<th>Mar</th>
<th>Apr</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>Jun</th>
<th>Jul</th>
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<th>Nov</th>
<th>Dec</th>
<th>Total</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(-10)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>+45</td>
<td>+45</td>
<td>+45</td>
<td>+45</td>
<td>+80</td>
<td>+80</td>
<td>+80</td>
<td>+80</td>
<td>+110</td>
<td>+600</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2) Cash Flow Analysis – 3-year Projection

Cash is king! And usually, it is this aspect of the business that determines its value. It is possible for a company to consistently turn a profit, but operate as a cash-poor entity constantly struggling to meet its financial obligations thus limiting its growth potential. If cash from sales are not collected in a timely fashion (Accounts Receivable), then the company will struggle or underachieve.

So, there are two fundamental things you need to address in your business plan:
1) Profit and loss reports depicted in the form of the 3-year pro forma report
2) Cash flow reports as depicted in the cash flow analysis reports.

There are two basic types of accounting practices you can use in your business:
1) The cash accounting system
2) The accrual accounting system

1) The cash accounting system does not recognize accounts payable or accounts receivable. In other words, what you pay out each month and what you receive in the form of income (sales) is accurately reflected on the financial report. If you show income, you actually received it; if you show an expense, you actually paid it. This accounting format assumes that you have no accounts payable or accounts receivable. Therefore, when using the cash accounting system – your actual pro forma report IS also your cash flow analysis.

2) The accrual accounting system takes into consideration the fact that you will both make sales without receiving immediate payment for those sales (extending credit) and that you will make purchases and incur expenses without immediately paying for them (buying on credit). In this case, you will show all sales even those sales you haven’t been paid as an ASSET. You will show all expenses even though you haven’t paid for all the expenses you incurred as a LIABILITY in your financial report.

### Cash Flow Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INCOME</th>
<th>Jan</th>
<th>Feb</th>
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<th>Nov</th>
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<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gross sales</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>300</td>
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<td>300</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>3800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of goods sold</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Less A/R</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>90</td>
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<td>120</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>1140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Total Cash Available)</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>2660</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXPENSES</th>
<th>Jan</th>
<th>Feb</th>
<th>Mar</th>
<th>Apr</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>Jun</th>
<th>Jul</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Variable</td>
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<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This is the same report as the break-even report. Even though the company made a year-end profit of $700 (see break-even report above), their CASH position is only $40! Granted there are no collections (accounts receivable) included in this report as this report has been created to exaggerate a point. In the end, a cash flow analysis report is a document that takes into consideration accounts payable and receivable to address the all-important “cash requirements” of an enterprise.

3) Capital Needs Assessment – start-up costs

It is important to know what your start-up costs will be and what your initial operating expenses will be needed to grow your business. One of the “expense categories” you will need to address is the category of “loan repayment” or “debt service.” If you purchase a house and your monthly payment for the house is $1,000, then you have a debt service of $1,000 a month for that house. If you borrow $50,000 to start your business and you have to pay that back over a period of time where your monthly payment is $750 a month, then you have to BUDGET for this expense.

There are two major components to capital needs or start-up costs:

1) Those costs associated with getting the business ready to open its doors
2) Those costs associated with actually operating the business once its doors are opened for business.

Based on the “cash flow analysis” report, you will know how much “capital” or “cash” you’ll need to successfully build/grow the business once you open your doors.

Use of a qualified accountant is recommended!
Below is a Capital Needs Assessment report for a small start-up florist:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Refrigerators</td>
<td>$150,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Point-of-Sale System</td>
<td>$40,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leasehold improvements</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 months advance payroll</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 months operating expenses</td>
<td>$22,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contingency expenses</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Start–up costs (capital needs)** $144,000

If the owner puts in $44,000 of his own money and borrows $100,000, he will have to BUDGET a monthly expense to cover this loan.

**What are your anticipated capital needs or start-up costs?**
(For a Career Coaching business, you may need office space, computer, specialized software, website development, SEO, scanner, color printer or copier)

---

**What are your anticipated recurring or irregular expenses?**
(For a Career Coaching business, you may need a website and web hosting, bookkeeping services, telephone lines or smartphone, credit card processing system (PayPal, bank, or Square) internet service, business cards and brochures, continuing education and certifications, legal assistance, insurance, or subcontractors)
A few suggestions about creating a financial reports section of your business plan.

1) Use a qualified accountant or CPA
2) When budgeting your sales and expenses, BE CONSERVATIVE and REALISTIC
3) Do your homework and be sure you understand all components of these reports
4) If you are purchasing an on-going business, you will want to include the last 3 years P&L
5) If it is an established business, you will want to include a balance sheet (assets/liabilities)

**Balance Sheet**

A balance sheet is a financial statement that indicates the financial integrity and strength of the business as of a fixed or pre-determined date. A balance sheet is an INVENTORY of what your business owns and owes at any given moment in time. Like the net worth of an individual, a balance sheet shows the net worth of the business:

\[
\text{Assets} \quad \text{minus} \quad \text{liabilities} \quad \text{equals} \quad \text{net worth} \quad \text{(also known as owner equity)}
\]

A balance sheet must be prepared in an “accepted accounting format”

**Other Considerations**

Listed below is a check list of requirements you may need to consider to build your business:

- Define success for your business
- Define 2-year business goals
- Define 3-year business goals
- Define 5-year business goals
- Develop a business mission/purpose statement
- Create a plan of action including accountability and commitment by creating a website within 90 days, writing and circulating xx blogs via LinkedIn and other social media sites.
- Secure a strong accountability partner who will check your Action Plan and ask you about progress and completion dates
- Make list of potential initial expenses
  - Coaching for you
  - Hardware
  - Software
  - Company Registration (DBA / LLC)
  - Website (Development and Hosting)
✓ Phone Lines (How Many/Fax/Internet/Cable/ Smartphone)
✓ Office Space (Rent/Lease/Buy)
✓ Office Furniture
✓ Electricity
✓ Advertising (Journals, Radio, Google Ads,
✓ Office Supplies
✓ Travel/Mileage
✓ Conferences
✓ Certifications
✓ Professional Memberships
✓ Other (specific to business)

Compare the pros and cons of a home-based business office versus a storefront office or executive suite:

A Home Office deters walk-in clients and sometimes deters clients to enter at all. You also risk that clients may show up unannounced for an appointment. Home offices are excellent for coaches who are primarily virtual and very self-disciplined and organized.

☐ Home Office
- Do you have a designated office space?
- Will clients need to enter your home or will you be virtual?
- What provisions are available for clients who bring children?
- What provisions do you have for your children, pets, and family members?
- Do you have parking spaces for clients? Do you live in an association that regulates home businesses or parking?
- Do you need to secure a post office box?
- Do you have a drop box at your home for clients who “drop by?”
- What security measures do you have in place if you are home alone?
- Are you well-disciplined to “arrive” in your office daily and leave the house and family behind while you are working?
- How will you manage clients who show up unannounced?

Store Front Offices offer greater visibility and the potential for more income from walk-ins, but there is greater initial overhead due to the rent or lease contracts.

☐ Storefront or Executive Suite
- Do you need to secure an office space?
- Do you need to secure a loan?
- Will you own or rent?
- Have you selected a prime location?
- Can you share space with another business?
- Will you purchase an existing résumé or Career Coaching business?
- Have you implemented security measures?

In the office whether home or storefront, each of the following requirements needs to be researched and analyzed for convenience and cost-effectiveness:

**Telephone and Internet Services**
- International long-distance or stateside long-distance. Where will you conduct business and how far are you willing to call?
- 800 number (An extra expense, but the number is yours to keep for life anywhere you move or travel to. Many cell numbers transfer with new contracts, but not always)
- Voice Mail
- Answering Machine
- Answering Service
- Call Waiting
- Multiple Phone Lines: Are they even needed for your business?
- Bridge Lines / Adobe Connect / Skype / Go-to-Meeting
- Earphones
- How many lines: (Phone, fax, credit card machine/Square/Website shopping cart)
- Internet Service (High speed)

**Computer Requirements**
- Word compatible software: MS Word is the preferred word-processing program for 99% of businesses and online résumé builders
- Storage
- Color Printer/Copier
- Scanner
- Video Camera: Long-distance coaching and interview role playing can be on computer, smartphone, or tablet

**Equipment and Office Supplies**
- Will you provide résumés or other coaching materials hard copy or only via email / Word or PDF? Hard copy mailed packages can be good use of marketing.
- Stationery and Envelopes for any hard copy mailings
- Presentation Folders
- USB drives, Stapler, Calculator
- File Folders
- Job Fair Posters and Table Cloths
- Printer Cartridges
- Storage Containers
- Address Labels, Disk Labels
- Business Cards
- Notebooks
- Video Camera or Smartphone and TV/Computer Screen or Tablet for Career Coaching and interview role-playing

Mail
- U.S. Postal, Federal Express, UPS, Airborne
- Mail Account with UPS or similar shop if you open an account with such a shop, just walk in and drop off your mail
- Postage machine in the office

Website
- Do you need a website? Why or why not?
- Is your business long-distance or local?
- Will you develop your website or do you need to hire someone to build it?
- Will you host your site, or will you hire a web master?
- How extensive do you want your website to be, i.e., will it contain a service agreement, fees, and articles?

Payment Methods
- Checks
- Money Orders
- Visa/MC/Discover/American Express/Pay Pal / Other – via your bank
- Cash
- Credit Card Machine/ Square/PayPal/Fresh

Investment Structures and Service List
- A la Carte services
- Package Pricing
- Niche Services and Products
- Broad Services and Products
- Hourly
Final Comments

The final component or chapter of your business plan is a section for miscellaneous documents, data, records, and/or material that will complete the plan. The addendum includes information that backs up and supports the plan. Listed below is a sample of material that might be incorporated into your business plan:

1) Legal information  
2) Accounting material  
3) Insurance-related information  
4) Banking/lender information  
5) Credit reports  
6) Contracts  
7) Résumés and biographies  
8) Letters of reference and testimonials  
9) Owner’s financial statements  
10) Location data and information (leases, etc.)  
11) Demographic studies  
12) Newspaper articles or other relevant media data or information  
13) Partnership agreements or articles of incorporation  
14) Copyrights, trademarks, patents, etc.  
15) Logo, pictures, etc.

The Review Process

Are you effective at what you are doing with little excess? At the completion of each year, or upon completion of specific goals, you should conduct annual or periodic reviews. Your business plan should include a review system to evaluate ROI for marketing, services offered, difficult clients, and so forth. If something did not work or provide a profit during the previous cycle, you may want to remove it from your plan.

Only focus on those things that work and boost your income, credentials, company name in the marketplace, as well as bring you pleasure on the job. Keep business plans moving forward and adapt them to meet the changing needs of your clients and the changing requirements in the careers industry.
| POINT-OF-SALE AND CUSTOMER SERVICE |

At a fast food restaurant the Point-of-Sale is at the cash register. The customer has reviewed the menu board and is ready to order food items for sale. The cashier makes the sale and collects the cash. If there are more workers in the kitchen making burgers and no one is at the cash register, no sales are made. The cashier also has the ability to increase a sale by asking questions,

- “Would you like cheese with that burger?”
- “We are having a special promotion today; would you like to upgrade your meal to a larger size for only 99 cents?”
- “Would you like to try our brand new steak sandwich? You will receive a coupon for a free sandwich on your next visit.”

The appearance, voice, cleanliness, politeness, and courtesy of the cashier will impact the sale.

In your business, where is your point-of-sale?
(On the phone, via your website, in person?)

1) 

2) 

3) 

4) 

5) 

6) 

7) 

8) 

9)
How will you make the sale?
(On the phone, in person, in writing, after a consultation, immediately upon request?)

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)

6)

7)

The coaching skill “listening” is also an excellent sales tool. Clients want to feel important, and they would rather “feel” like you care about them and their circumstances than listen to you “sell” them on your services.

In a Career Coaching business, the moment of Point-of-Sale is understanding your client’s career needs and building rapport with the client. And the best way to understand your client’s needs is to ask them about their situation. Here are sample phone calls with a prospective client:

Call #1:
Hello, my name is Tom and I need a résumé. What does it cost?

Well, you called the right place. I am an expert résumé writer. I have 15 years of experience in Career Coaching and writing résumés. I carry six industry credentials as well as awards and articles. Your cost is $250 for a résumé, and we can start today. If you just give me your résumé, I’ll email over the worksheets you need to get started.

Call #2:
Hello, my name is Tom and I need a résumé. What does it cost?

Hi Tom. Résumés are unique to each client based on your career field, areas of expertise, the type of résumé you need, i.e., corporate or federal, and the length of time that may be involved in the project. May I ask you a few questions to get a better idea of what you need?
• What do you do right now?
• Are you currently employed?
• Why are you seeking new employment?
• What type of position are you seeking?
• What industry are you targeting?
• Where will you circulate your résumé (which companies/job boards)?
• How will you conduct your job search?

This basic line of questioning will provide a wealth of information about the client that may lead the client to realize they need much more than just a résumé. For example, they may not be familiar with conducting a career search campaign, and they may begin to ask questions about developing a career management program for themselves.

The more you connect with a potential client, the more he will trust and believe in you to help him find new employment.

*Dale Carnegie reminds us that the sweetest word we will ever hear is our own name. So, when a client calls, write their name on a piece of paper and use it often in the conversation.*

If you manage a niche clientele, you may also incorporate some very specific questions that will make your clients feel at ease:

• If your clients are retiring military officers, you may want to speak their language and ask about their military occupational specialty, advanced training, or ranks.

• If your clients are medical professionals you may ask about education, private practice or medical centers, or their specialty areas.

• If the client is laid-off you may ask about insurance, COBRA (Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act) health benefit provisions which provides continuation of group health coverage that otherwise would be terminated. It is available to some employees in companies with 20 employees or more. For more information see [http://www.cobrainsurance.com/COBRA_Law.htm](http://www.cobrainsurance.com/COBRA_Law.htm), unemployment, and budget requirements.

All these questions are the beginning of the coaching process which also helps land sales.

If you are uncomfortable making sales, write scripts using some of the above questions and some questions specific to your niche clientele that will help your clients believe that you already know a little about them.
Make a list of basic questions you can ask potential clients at the outset of every initial phone interaction to help you ‘know’ them quickly and help them build confidence and trust in you:
1)

2)

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6)

Make a list of specific questions for niche clientele which lead them to believe you “speak their language.”
(Medical, education, military, federal, law, stay-at-home mom, accounting, finance, executives, students)

1)

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Write a sales script that you can practice:
Make the Sale

Once you gain the client’s confidence, they will pursue the investment. “How much do your services cost?” they will ask. You must determine how you will price your services and how you will present the fee schedule/investment proposal to your clients.

There are several main methods for delivering the fee information to the client:
1. Deliver the message verbally over the phone or verbally in person
2. Deliver the message in an informal/response type email
3. Deliver the message in a formal written investment proposal as a Word attachment

Clients who secure Career Coaches need to know that they are making an investment in their careers and their career futures. If you do your job right, your clients will be able to effectively conduct a career search campaign at any future time in life without you.

Ask your client to calculate how much money they are losing by being unemployed for a week, month, or year. If your client was making $48,000 annually and becomes unemployed for 3 months, he loses $12,000 in wages as well as loses money from savings, interest, investments and potential income. If he pays you $2,000 for a résumé and Career Coaching package and is employed in one to one and a half months, he only loses $6,000. But that $6,000 is important as it also applies to retirement, social security, and other benefits. So the actual numbers are exponential in what the client gains by investing money to cut the search in half.

If a client asks about fees over the phone, and you feel as though you have adequately gained the client’s trust, you may deliver the investment at that time and follow up with a written service agreement. Some clients are just ‘fishing’ to compare fees. In that case, you may want to provide a fee over the phone to automatically screen-out a “price shopper.”

When you purchase something of value, you often have to ask to see the price tag. Even at the mall or grocery market the items have written prices. If the car breaks down, you get a written estimate. If your client gets a job offer, you encourage him to obtain the offer in writing. So, you may want to deliver an investment proposal to your clients in writing. After an initial five- or 10-minute consultation over the phone, you can send your client an investment proposal with a list of services that the client requested or that you believe will best suit the client. This method allows the client to review the investment and services and call with questions. Once the investment proposal/service agreement is returned, the coaching program may move forward.

Another approach is to charge for the consultation. Many of our colleagues charge anywhere from $50 to $200 for an hour consultation which will then include a written proposal and initial recommended road map for engaging in a career coaching program. This approach ensures that you are compensated for your time. If you were to offer free 30-minute consultations and you hold 10 a week – that is three hours of work that you could have made income. What if you held five free sessions a day? You do the math!
INVESTMENT STRUCTURES AND SERVICES

“People do not necessarily pay for credentials or degrees, but rather they pay for expertise.” – Thomas J. Leonard

Thomas J. Leonard, founder of the International Coach Federation charged $450 per hour for coaching services. Fees for Career Coaching run from $50 per hour to $500 per hour and up. You need to determine an appropriate hourly rate for the services you offer and decide if you will charge by the hour or by the package.

Attach Value to Your Coaching Services

A la carte
Hourly Rate: Determine an hourly rate based on the value you provide your clients and the amount of money you know you need to run your business (refer to business plan). Combine this with the dollar figure you marked as a goal for profits and quote the hourly rate to your clients. If a client wants an hour or two of specific coaching perhaps just interview training, then you may simply quote an hourly investment and charge accordingly.

Bundle Up
Package Investment: If a client elects a full-service Career Coaching package that includes a résumé, weekly coaching sessions to determine values, direction, motivations, career choices and development of a career search campaign, interview training and salary negotiation review, and guidance with online résumé placement you can determine your hourly rate for coaching and research.

Then determine how many hours it will take you to work with a client on a full-package program, and calculate the number of hours required to complete a full package of services times your hourly rate.

Sample # 1:
- 1 hour initial consultation and sending intake forms and homework (1 hour)
- 3 months of Career Coaching with one 30-minute session weekly (6 hours plus 20 minutes each week to send documents, respond to emails and follow-up after telephone calls with tips, suggestions, etc., 4 hours, (total of 10 hours))
- Assessment testing and review of assessment instruments (2 hours)
- 2 hours of interview coaching (2 hours)
- 3 hours to write and edit a résumé and cover letters (3 hours)
- Research on behalf of the client (6 hours)

Total package in hours worked: 24.
If your hourly rate is $100, then your client’s investment is $2,400.

After you work with clients for a while and you refine your packages, you will have a much better grasp of the number of hours you spend on certain aspects of each package. For example, a federal résumé may require many more hours to prepare than a corporate résumé.

Sample #2:
Your client may request only certain services:
- Goal Planning (4 hours of coaching in 4 one-hour sessions plus an additional 1.5 hours of preparing and sending homework assignments and evaluating assessment testing for a total of 5.5 hours)
- Résumé including 1 hour résumé interview session (3 hours)

Total Package in hours worked: 8.5.
If your hourly rate is $100, then the client’s investment is $850.

Additional services may include
- Marketing letters
- Network Card Design
- Endorsement List
- Salary History and/or Salary Requirements
- Federal Résumés with Knowledge, Skills and Abilities Statements
- Detailed/Targeted Company Research
- Mailing Campaign
- Online Résumé Transmission Services: How long does it take you to post a client’s résumé into a menu driven online form?
- Online Job Board and Career Search Training
- Review / development of LinkedIn or other Social Media profile
- Career Search Campaign Strategy
- Goal Planning
- 60-second Infomercial
- Networking
- Blogs
- LinkedIn profile
- Social Media
### BUSINESS PLAN (SHORT FORM)

When you have completed the exercises in Scripting Business Success, use the short form Business Plan below to fill in the main requirements for your business and post it in an easy-to-find and refer-to-daily location. As you complete your goals, check them off and indicate date of completion. Add to your business plan to keep your practice moving forward. Also, use this short-form business plan for your clients who are seeking entrepreneurial ventures.

**MINI BUSINESS PLAN**

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**COMPANY MISSION STATEMENT**

**COMPANY OBJECTIVES (WHAT WILL MAKE YOUR BUSINESS CREDIBLE AND VISIBLE)**

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**COMPANY GOALS**

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**WHAT WILL CLIENTS SAY ABOUT YOUR SERVICES/PRODUCTS IF YOU ARE SUCCESSFUL AT MEETING YOUR MISSION STATEMENT?**

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### Action Plan (What steps will you implement to meet your goals?)

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