

Basics of a 2-Page Business Plan

PAGE 1: VISION, VALUES, & HOW TO PITCH

The first page of the plan describes your vision for the business. Where do you want to take your business, and what are the steps to get there? It is suggested that you think about where you want your business and your life to be in 10 years, then back up to today from there. Then plan on how to properly execute that best helps you create that vision. Also, please take the time to work it all out, even it takes up more than two pages.

The why:

A critical component to the vision of your business, is an **understanding of your why**. It may sound basic, however, understanding why you're in business is an essential part of the process.

- *Write a statement of your WHY in a concise and direct manner to convey your true intention.*

Business values:

You should view business values as a target.



○ *At the center, and most important, are your Core Values. These are the defining principles determined by your why. They are the values that are fundamental to everything you do as a professional.*

○ *The next layer of the target is made up of what we call minimal expected values. These are the minimum values you want to see in employees and partners before they are fully integrated into your business. Ask questions to see if a prospective employee or partner matches up with both your core and minimal expected values.*

○ *The outer circle is your goal-based values. These are what you want to make core values but are not yet embedded into your culture. How do you envision your business in its ideal state?*

3 Marketing pillars:

The three marketing pillars include a brand positioning statement, a marketing persona, and an elevator pitch. These elements act as a guide for any marketing campaign or promotional plan.

- *A brand positioning statement is a concise document that describes your brand's (business') identity or image as compared to your competitors. Use this simple three step process to create your own brand positioning statement.*
 - *STEP ONE: Pick a brand you admire. Study how it conducts business, is regarded in the community or by its customer base and decide how your business can mimic those traits.*
 - *STEP TWO: Consider the following before the final draft:*
 - *How you want your business to be perceived?*
 - *What are the values you want to share?*

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- *How do you want the customer experience to go when they are working with your business?*
- **STEP THREE:** *Then condense those concepts down into a statement that you can use as a guide.*
- **NOTE:** *Your business may need more than one Brand Position Statement if you have multiple market segments, buyer types (aka: personas), or products / services. If this is the case for your business, just simply repeat the three-step process for each.*

Marketing Personas:

- *“Don’t try to satisfy every type of person,” says We. “You can’t. Instead focus on identifying your ideal client and create a persona that describes the person.”*
- *Marketing personas representations of what your perfect customers are like. With the following criteria laid out:*
 - *demographics*
 - *income info*
 - *personality traits*
 - *gender*
 - *location*
 - *buying habits*
 - *interests/hobbies*
- *Defining these Marketing Personas will enable you to direct the concise marketing messages that will target or have appeal to the customers that your business wants to connect with.*

Elevator Pitch:

- *Develop an elevator pitch that simply defines these three things: customer Problems, your Solution, and your Value Proposition, in a short and concise manner. Typically, an elevator pitch is about 20 to 30 seconds max.*
- *Consider the following when developing your pitch:*
 - *Define a Problem: What problems do your customers have?*

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- *Define your Solution: How does your business propose to address those problems?*
- *Define your Value Proposition: How does your customer benefit by utilizing your business?*

PAGE 2: PLAN-OF-ACTION

Ok, most of the preface is now complete! Hooray! You have done it! Now it's time for the plan-of-action:

Your business plan-of-action details how you'll make things happen. This is where you will figure out the next steps in creating the business you truly desire.

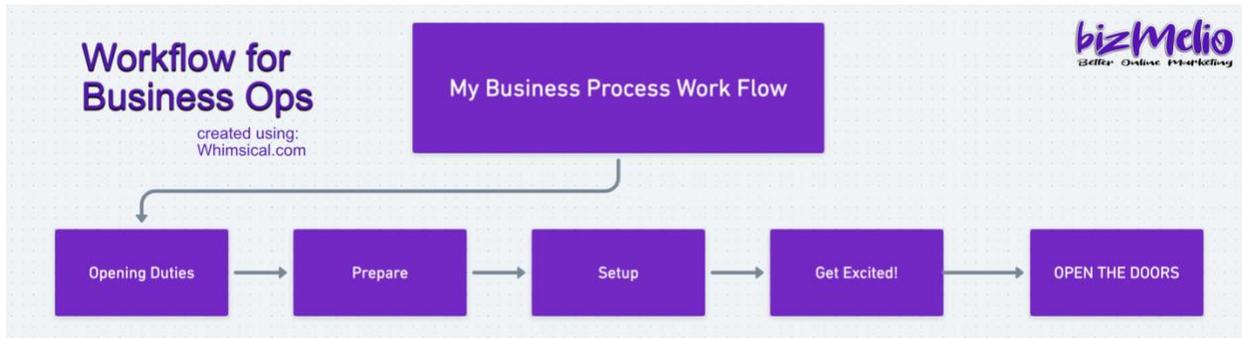


10,000-foot view:

- What are your defined timeline goals? (Remember, work backwards from the end you define)
 - 10-year mark
 - This is the vision for where your business horizon will be set
 - 5-year mark
 - Define Milestones or Metrics (Goals) for where your business will be in this time frame, and include steps still needed to clarify the 10-year goal.
 - 2-year mark
 - Define Milestones or Metrics (Goals) for where your business will be in this time frame, and include steps still needed to clarify the 5-year goal.
 - 1 year mark
 - Define Milestones or Metrics (Goals) for where your business will be in this time frame, and include steps still needed to clarify the 2-year goal.
- **12 weeks at a time** (Quarterly Goals help create bite sized chunks to aim for, to keep the overwhelming feelings at bay) **A great resource is a book called 'The 12 Week Year' by Brian Moran and Michael Lennington (This is not a paid testimonial)*
 - Quarter 4
 - Define Milestones or Metrics (Goals) for where your business will be in this time frame, and include steps still needed to clarify the 1-year goal.
 - Quarter 3
 - Define Milestones or Metrics (Goals) for where your business will be in this time frame, and include steps still needed to clarify the 4th-Quarter goal.
 - Quarter 2
 - Define Milestones or Metrics (Goals) for where your business will be in this time frame, and include steps still needed to clarify the 3rd-Quarter goal.
 - Quarter 1
 - Define Milestones or Metrics (Goals) for where your business will be in this time frame, and include steps still needed to clarify the 2nd-Quarter goal.

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Operations:



- Daily / Weekly / Quarterly / Yearly
 - Design your idea of how the business ops should be conducted during different intervals. Include some of the following: (a great resource is [Whimsical.com](https://www.whimsical.com) to create process flow charts quickly)
 - Scheduling
 - Marketing
 - Paperwork
 - Taxes and Filings
 - Duties for Employees
 - Opening the business
 - Conducting the business
 - Etc.

Catastrophe Planning:

- Yikes! This may sound severe, however if you do not decide how to mitigate losses due to eventualities or unplanned events, your business may not survive. (a great resource is [Whimsical.com](https://www.whimsical.com) to create process flow charts quickly)

Some ideas are as follows:

- **Service Interruptions:** How will your business handle a service interruption to your customers? What is your game plan?
 - Employee sick, hurt on job, or absent
 - Weather related incident
 - Cancellations
- **Emergent Situations:**
 - Health related occurrences during service hours
 - Workman's comp?
 - Who to notify? Do you notify?
 - Weather related during service hours
 - How do you notify employees, customers, etc.
 - Active Shooter
 - Procedures for before, during, after
 - Other
 - Define things specific to your industry that make sense
- **Financial Imperatives:**
 - Equipment failure/replacement

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- Insurance policy claims
 - Workman's comp?
- Cash Flow problems
 - This can be a big one to overcome depending on your business model. Be sure to plan for cash on hand or lines of credit to mitigate down times. (Examples: Vendors, Payroll, Leases, Insurance Payments, and other time-based expenses.)
- Lawsuits/Legal Fees
 - **Legal Issues**
 - Claims against the business
 - Lawsuits/Legal Fees
 - Licensing discrepancies
 - Other
 - NOTE: *Be sure to plan and write out procedures for things in your industry that could cause potential pitfalls in your daily, monthly, quarterly, and yearly operations plan.*

Some Final Thoughts

BE FLEXIBLE IN YOUR PLAN: Be sure to provide alternatives and give yourself some flexibility in conducting your business and in writing this plan. Things change, you need to expect that and make flexibility a part of your plan!

Remember: This is your business plan, you can get as granular as you like, a word of advice though, this document can be overly complicated. Remember the KISS (Keep in Simple, Silly) method when completing this task, and refer the above statement about being flexible as you go. Your business plan should be considered a living document. It, like your business needs, will change as time passes. Set time aside to review it at least yearly.

Good luck!