

Unconventional Business Planning Tool

Designing a business should be one of the most exciting activities in the life of an agripreneur. Start with a few blank sheets of paper, and don't quit until you've written a description for creating the business of your dreams. Your explanations should be clear and concise. The instructions should be so basic anyone could read your plan and help you implement the steps. Planning also allows you to envision and then test your theories in writing. If they don't work on paper, they won't work in the real world.

A complete business plan should include at least five separate elements:

I. Vision – Don't confuse this with a 'vision statement' from a pop culture business book. Your vision is a word picture description of the finished product. It may be an essay with enough detail and specificity that anyone can read it, and understand what your ideal business looks, acts, feels and sounds like.

Your vision may include descriptions about:

Crops/Products	Expertise	Processing Operation	
Customers	Income	Retail Operation	
Employees	Integration	Size	
Entity Structure	Locations/Countries	Specialty	
Equipment	Market	Value Proposition	
Exit Strategy	Packing Operation	Wholesale Operation	

Short-range goals should include things that you will achieve over the next 36 months. An intermediate time frame may run from 37 to 60 months, and long-term goals may include 61 to 120 months. A complete plan should include at least three goals for each time frame. Goals should be specific, measurable and timely.			
Sho	ort-range:	Responsibility of:	Date:
Into	ermediate:	Responsibility of:	Date:
Lor	ng-term:	Responsibility of:	Date:
thir	Action plans – There should be an action plan t nk of an action plan as a to-do list for achieveme		
Exa	ecuted in a logical (start to finish) order. simple – ort-range:		
1.	(Step one to achieve a short-range goal) Who is r	responsible? Completed	by what date?

II. Specific goals – A plan should include short-range, intermediate and long-term goals.

IV. Other activities and business systems – Business functions including leadership, management, record keeping, complex processes and finances. Each of these functions should be addressed in the plan. A business plan is not a receptacle for everything related to the operation, but it does require references to certain functions, including:

Leadership structure and decision-making process

Management structure and work flow

Record keeping systems and communication

Complex systems, unique functions and/or strategic alliance relationships

Capital expenditures and a complete explanation of projected revenue and expenses

V. Performance specifications – Budgets, capital expenses, investments and income projections will help in the decision-making process. A business will only function well and improve in the areas where owners and managers keep score. Evaluating progress and adjusting to actual results will help to better manage the operation.

Financial projections [actual/projected]:

Revenue/expenses

Income statement

Cash flow summary

Balance sheet

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