

How to Write The Dreaded Business Plan

Toolbox Teleclass Transcription

By Debra Russell



Professional Program

**Track 1: See Your Future: Create Your Business
Vision, Career Goals and Plan**



TABLE OF CONTENTS

What is a business plan	4
The overview of your business	5
Answers the 5 questions: Who, What, Where, When, How and Why.....	5
A tool to clarify your thinking	5
Organizing your inspirations into an actionable concept	5
Training, leading and motivating your team	5
Why do I need a business plan.....	6
It provides the "sketch, the vision, the road map for your ideas"	6
It will simplify your decision making when evaluating new opportunities and new ideas	6
It gives structure and direction	6
What are the parts of a business plan.....	7
The Vision Statement	7
Differentiate from Create Your Vision process.....	7
What are you building?	7
Tone = expansive and idealistic	7
Characteristics:.....	8
The Mission Statement.....	8
What is the purpose of your business? What's in it for you AND your customer?	8
Why will your customers buy this product or service?.....	8
What are you committed to providing?	9
Tone = short, powerful, memorable and customer oriented.....	9
The Objectives.....	9
What results will you accomplish and by when?	9
These are the goals of your company and can include:	9
Make them meaningful, specific, measureable and critical to your success	9
The Strategies - 4-6 core strategies.....	10
How will you grow your business?	10
Strategies set the direction, philosophy, values and methodology for building and managing your company.	10



Artists Marketing & Business Academy: Professional Program

Track 1: See Your Future: Create Your Business Vision, Goals and Plan

How to Write the Dreaded Business Plan

Establish your guidelines and boundaries that you use to evaluate your choices and opportunities.....	11
Tone = easy to understand and relatively constant over time.....	11
Internal and external	11
The Plans – Business Building Projects	12
Each objective is a project.....	12
Use PRD's to create the plan for achieving the objective.....	12
Include a budget, time estimate and internal/external resources needed	12
What do I do with it now that I've written it?	15
Get feedback and support.....	15
Show it to your Team for feedback and alignment.....	15
Get feedback from your accountant, lawyer, business coach	15
Use it to get alignment from your key relationships (spouse, family,etc.)	16
Convert the plan into action through your time map and PRD's	16
Create short term milepost goals for this week, this month, this quarter.....	16
Create time blocks specifically for working on the projects.....	17
Schedule time every month to review your progress and reassess your goals.....	17
At the end of each fiscal year, assess, update, edit and expand your business plan and create your objectives for the coming year.	17



WHAT IS A BUSINESS PLAN

Welcome to the Toolbox Teleclass: How To Write The Dreaded Business Plan. I'm your host Debra Russell, and I'll be guiding you through kind of the basics, the fundamentals of the business plan.

Now, I want to put this in context from the outset. The business plan that I am going to be talking about is not your standard, looking for venture capitalist, 60 pages business plan that takes 6 months and 5 consultants to write.

This is based on the *One Page Business Plan* book by Jim Horan, someone who I met several years ago. And what...what I want to talk about today is really kind of the fundamentals, and then let you use the book to actually write the business plan.

He's got a lot of specific questions and ideas and ways to go about kind of generating the content. And I'm not going to try and fit, you know, that into an hour class because it's just not possible.

And so I recommend that after you listen to this class, the first thing you do is go online and grab the book, which is, there's a link to it on the page and start working through the process. I did hear someone beep in. You want to say hello?

Guy 1: Hi! This is Chuck Hughes.

Debra: Hey Chuck! How are you doing?

Chuck: Doing great, thanks.

Debra: Good. Do me a favor and go ahead and put yourself on mute, Star 6, so we can have a nice, clean recording, and then I'll periodically take a pause to answer any questions.

Alright, so first of all, what is a business plan? A business plan is the overview of your business. Now, the other thing that I want to...the other context that I want to put this in right at the outset is that if you are, um, if you are looking to work with your art, your music, your visual arts, whatever it is, strictly from an amateur perspective, meaning you are doing it for the love of it, never expecting to make any money and really you're just making the art because it fills you with joy, then you don't need this class.

If you are looking to make a part time or full time income from your art or your art business, you **MUST** do what I'm about to teach you. Okay? So, I'm starting from the...with the caveat that you are a business owner, and you were looking to actually have success in your business.



THE OVERVIEW OF YOUR BUSINESS

So what a business plan gives you as a business owner is an overview of your business. The answers, the 5 key questions: Who, What, Where, When, How and Why. It's a tool to clarify your thinking. I recommend you do this in writing, because putting the words down on paper makes it real. Okay?

ANSWERS THE 5 QUESTIONS: WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN, HOW AND WHY

It's a tool to clarify your thinking, whether you're starting a new business, whether you're thinking about a new product line or a new kind of segment or department for your business.

A TOOL TO CLARIFY YOUR THINKING

Starting a new business

When you're thinking about a new product line or business

Looking at taking your business to the next level, expanding to new territory

Energizing a stagnant or listless business

If you're looking at taking your business to the next level, expanding it to a new territory, for example. If you are looking at your business and you're saying, you know, it's kind of useless and stagnant, there's not much growth going on here, and you want to energize it.

ORGANIZING YOUR INSPIRATIONS INTO AN ACTIONABLE CONCEPT

All of these things can be served by creating a business plan. A business plan will also help you organize your inspirations into actionable concepts. I've worked with a lot of clients who are absolutely inspired. They have amazing ideas, and they wonder why none of them ever actually come to fruition.

And very often, it's because they're great ideas, but they haven't actually flushed them out enough to know what actions to take. So they live in the realm of fantasy, because there's no plan backing them up. So this allows you to take your inspirations, your ideas, your concepts, your... I don't know...juicy tidbits, and create an actual, actionable plan from them.

TRAINING, LEADING AND MOTIVATING YOUR TEAM

Also, your business plan is hugely useful in training, leading, and motivating your team. I remember having this conversation with a fairly well-known musician, an international touring musician. And he was, he was shall we say, fetching about his agent booking him in gigs that really he shouldn't have been booked into.



How to Write the Dreaded Business Plan

And I asked him, well, does she know your vision of your career? Does she know your plan? And she didn't. It never even occurred to him that that's the conversation he needed to have. So sitting down with your team and using the business plan to train them in how to pursue business, to lead them by aligning them with your vision, and to motivate them too with specific, actionable, concrete plans. So that's what a business plan is.

WHY DO I NEED A BUSINESS PLAN

Why do you need a business plan? I started out this call saying it's critical. It's key. You must have one.

IT PROVIDES THE "SKETCH, THE VISION, THE ROAD MAP FOR YOUR IDEAS"

Your business plan is the sketch, the vision, the road map for your ideas. It's, um...it will simplify your decision making when evaluating new opportunities, new ideas.

One of the interesting things that happens when you really start getting busy in building your business and writing visions and goals is that the universe starts throwing opportunities your way. "Oh really, you want this? Here, let me throw some opportunities your way".

IT WILL SIMPLIFY YOUR DECISION MAKING WHEN EVALUATING NEW OPPORTUNITIES AND NEW IDEAS

Well, you need to be able to evaluate these opportunities to decide if they're your opportunities. I hear a lot of people complaining about Sonicbids, because there's all kinds of...kind of garbage opportunities. Opportunities that really aren't good opportunities, and my perspective is, well yeah, some of them are just scams, and that's beside the point, but some of them just aren't your opportunities.

They may be great, perfect, ideal opportunities for someone else, but they're not yours. One of the ways to evaluate whether an opportunity is yours is by putting it into the context of your business plan. And seeing does it forward you towards the things you want to create or is it a distraction?

Is it a delay? Okay? Does it shortcut something that you thought would take longer? So, using your business plan as an evaluative tool when looking at opportunities, decisions, um, all of those kinds of things.

IT GIVES STRUCTURE AND DIRECTION

And it's going to give you structure and direction, because you're going to come out at the end with specific projects and plans and all of that. That's the point.



WHAT ARE THE PARTS OF A BUSINESS PLAN

So I want to go through the parts of a business plan, and these are...there are 5 parts that we're going to include in our business plan. Now, if you're looking at a standard kind of corporate-style business plan, there are sections in that plan that we're not going to include in this.

There are sections, like your team and your competition and all of those kinds of things, which are, can be valuable analysis, but I would recommend that you add those things later. What I'm going to give you are really the...these are the bones. These are the things that are going to give the structure for your business.

THE VISION STATEMENT

So the first part is the vision statement. Now, for those of you who've been playing with me for a while, you're aware that I have a CD called [Create Your Vision](#). And I would differentiate between the kind of vision statement that I teach you to do in that class and the kind of vision statement you want to make for your one page business plan.

The one page business plan is, um...is much more strictly, specifically about your business, about what your business does, who your business is in the world. Okay? As oppose to what it's like living inside your business day to day, which is really what the [Create Your Vision](#) process gives you.

DIFFERENTIATE FROM CREATE YOUR VISION PROCESS

WHAT ARE YOU BUILDING?

Okay? So the create your vision process is about your visceral experience of having your goals realized. The vision for your business plan is really the guide post for how you're building your business.

It's about what you are building. What are you building? What is this thing?

TONE = EXPANSIVE AND IDEALISTIC

The tone for the vision should be expansive and idealistic. Your vision isn't where you get pragmatic. There are other places in the business plan where you get pragmatic, but what you want to do is create something exciting, inspiring, visionary, ha, if you will, in the vision statement.



CHARACTERISTICS:

Capture the passion you are feeling

Clear

Concise

Specific

This is also your BOP

The characteristic you want in your vision statement is that it captures the passion your feeling. You want it to be clear, concise, specific, direct. Very often your vision statement will include your BOPs. If you're building your [Multiple Streams of Income](#) business model, you're using that business model, the BOP: the bold, outrageous, provocative statement about who you are, who your business is in the world, that belongs in the vision. Okay?

So that's the first section. You're probably looking for about a paragraph as far as length. A paragraph, maybe two, perhaps 3-8 sentences. So fairly short, concise, clear, specific.

THE MISSION STATEMENT

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF YOUR BUSINESS? WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU AND YOUR CUSTOMER?

The second section is the mission statement. The mission statement states what the purpose of your business is. What's in it for you? And what's in it for your customer? Why will your customers buy this? Why will your customers buy your products, your services?

WHY WILL YOUR CUSTOMERS BUY THIS PRODUCT OR SERVICE?

Why are they doing business with you? The vision statement can absolutely include your money goals, your financial goals. The kind of the size you want your business to be. Your mission statement should not. Okay?

Because the mission statement is why you're doing this. What's your purpose and if why you're doing it is for the money, you're going to end up having...building a business that is unsatisfying to you. Okay?

Ideally, the business you're creating is something that taps into your core mission, your core goals, your purpose in life. So what is the purpose of your business? Why will...why do your customers want to do business with you? What...why do they want your products and services?



Artists Marketing & Business Academy: Professional Program

Track 1: See Your Future: Create Your Business Vision, Goals and Plan

How to Write the Dreaded Business Plan

WHAT ARE YOU COMMITTED TO PROVIDING?

What are you committed to providing with your business? And the tone of the mission statement, again: short, powerful, memorable and customer-oriented. If your mission statement could describe any business, it's not describing yours. Okay?

So you want to get a very specific, powerful, clear message for your mission statement. And again, a sentence, maybe two for your mission statement.

TONE = SHORT, POWERFUL, MEMORABLE AND CUSTOMER ORIENTED

THE OBJECTIVES

The third section of your business plan are the objectives. This is where you have your goals.

WHAT RESULTS WILL YOU ACCOMPLISH AND BY WHEN?

What results will you accomplish and by when? The way you want to use the criteria that I lay out in the [Goals that Get Results](#) class: clear, specific, measurable with a specific end date. These goals can be short term and long company term.

THESE ARE THE GOALS OF YOUR AND CAN INCLUDE:

Product production

Marketing objectives

Financial Income

These are the goals of your company, and they can include goals around the areas of your product production, your marketing objectives, and your financial income. And again, you want them to be meaningful, specific, measurable, and the objectives that are critical to your success.

MAKE THEM MEANINGFUL, SPECIFIC, MEASUREABLE AND CRITICAL TO YOUR SUCCESS

In the vision and the mission, you've defined what success means to you, why you want that success, what it looks like. In the objectives, you're defining the outcomes that will lead you to creating that success. Okay?

So you can see that each section of this business plan is like an interlocking piece. So before I go on to the next section, are there any...do you have any questions about anything that I've described so far?

Okay. Um...in the one page business plan, in order to create each of these sections, Jim has created pages and pages of exercises. And so if you feel like, "Oh, that sounds great, but I don't even know how to start writing it." That's okay. By the time you finish doing the exercise, you will have a really solid sense of it.



How to Write the Dreaded Business Plan

You can also use the "Ask Coach Debra" calls. You can use the Yahoo group. If you're in the [Multiple Streams or Multiple Streams Work Group](#) levels of the Academy, you can use the email coaching or the laser coaching segments to get feedback on each section, or if you get stuck, to help you work through them.

So, don't worry about not knowing how to do this. If you work the process, it will become a lot clearer to you. I really just want to give you in this class the overview of the process, so that hopefully, you will feel a little less overwhelmed by it and feel like it's a bit more approachable, okay?

THE STRATEGIES - 4-6 CORE STRATEGIES

Um...in the fourth section, so far we got the Vision Statement, the Mission Statement, the Objectives. In the fourth section are the Strategies. Now, these...you want to end up with 4-6 core strategies. And you may do a lot of brainstorming before you kind of...and then kind of call that...that brainstorming down to the underlying principles.

HOW WILL YOU GROW YOUR BUSINESS?

These strategies really are about how you'll grow your business. In, you know, so the vision is what your business is. The mission is why your business is. The objectives are, you know, what results will lead you to success in that. The strategies are really how are you going to approach pursuing those objectives.

STRATEGIES SET THE DIRECTION, PHILOSOPHY, VALUES AND METHODOLOGY FOR BUILDING AND MANAGING YOUR COMPANY.

The strategies set your direction, your philosophy, your values, and your methodology. This is where you have your ethical statements. Okay?

These are the values that are important to you for building and managing your company. This section is really important when you start working with your team. Whether they're assistants or outside consultants like agents, managers, coaches, you know, PR, you know...If you sit down with a PR person and their values don't match the values that you've laid out in your strategies or they're recommending strategies to you that fly in the face of what you've decided you want to do, you want to think twice about hiring that person, because you want someone who aligns with these business strategies.

You want to be thinking in terms of towards strategies, not away from strategies, and what I mean by that is that it's not about what you're not going to do. It's about what you are going to do. It's not about the pitfalls and the dangers and the things you're going to avoid, as much as it's about how you'll manage, how you'll handle those issues.



How to Write the Dreaded Business Plan

What is your...what is your positive forward thinking strategy when faced with those obstacles, because every business has obstacles. Every business has people that don't act ethically. Right? So you want to be thinking about how do you handle that.

ESTABLISH YOUR GUIDELINES AND BOUNDARIES THAT YOU USE TO EVALUATE YOUR CHOICES AND OPPORTUNITIES.

So, always be thinking in, you know, going forward, not moving away from. You want to establish your guidelines and boundaries. This is what you're going to use to evaluate your choices and opportunities. Okay?

For example, if you decide that your business is a touring business, you want to lay out what are your boundaries in this touring business? What are your minimum fees? How far will you travel? What, you know, what are the requirements? What are the boundaries and the guidelines for accepting gigs? Okay?

What are the guidelines? If you're in the freelance business, what are the guidelines for accepting clients and customers? Okay? What are your approaches to working with your fans? How do you want your relationships with your fans to be? Okay?

TONE = EASY TO UNDERSTAND AND RELATIVELY CONSTANT OVER TIME.

All of these things go into your strategies. The tone for the strategies needs to be easy to understand and something that can be consistent over time. So this isn't about your...how you're going to get a short term objective. This is about how you run your business. Okay?

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL

External – how you capitalize on opportunities and deal with external challenges and obstacles

Internal – culture, capabilities, efficiency and profitability

You want to be thinking both internal and external when it comes to your strategies. By external, we're talking about how do you capitalize on opportunities and how do you deal with external challenges and obstacles.

You know, if you look at...a lot of people are complaining about how the music business is dying. If you look at the strategies, the overarching strategies of most of the large record companies, it was to close ranks against competition.

As opposed to looking at new opportunity and new ways of doing things and competition as new opportunities. So as a result, they missed a lot of opportunities that other companies have taken advantage of. Okay?



How to Write the Dreaded Business Plan

So how do you capitalize on opportunities and how do you do with...how do you deal with external challenges and obstacles? From an internal perspective, we're talking about the culture of your company. What are your capabilities? How do you create efficiency and profitability within your company? Okay? So that's the fourth piece of your business plan.

THE PLANS – BUSINESS BUILDING PROJECTS

The fifth piece are the actual plans. These are your business building projects. Now each objective that you wrote in Section 3 needs a plan in order to bring it into fruition.

EACH OBJECTIVE IS A PROJECT

It's an objective. Each objective is a project, and each project needs a plan. In [Project Management: The Key to Getting Stuff Done](#) and the advanced class, [Project Management: The Performance Results Description Tool](#), I teach you how to manage projects. And you want to take all of those concepts and apply it to this section. Okay?

USE PRD'S TO CREATE THE PLAN FOR ACHIEVING THE OBJECTIVE

So you can create a PRD, a [Performance Results Description](#) for each one of these objectives, and in that way, really break it down to its sub-objectives. What are the pieces of the project, and what are the action steps you need to take for each piece? And then you need to actually build that into your day to day, week to week, and month to month plan.

INCLUDE A BUDGET, TIME ESTIMATE AND INTERNAL/EXTERNAL RESOURCES NEEDED

You want to include a budget for each project. You want to include a time estimate. How long do you think it would take you to achieve each section of the project, so that you can plan accordingly?

And it may be that once you break it down into its component pieces and look at really how long will it take you to accomplishment...accomplish it and how much money is it going to take, you may need to revise the date that you'll have it done by.

You may need to look at how many projects are you carrying at the same time and decide whether or not that's realistic, based on how much time you have to spend in your business. Okay?

If you're working your business part time while holding down a full time job, this may look overwhelming, but the key to doing it is breaking it down into small, bite size pieces and being realistic with really how much time do you have to give it every week. Okay?

In addition to all of that, you want to think about what are the internal and external resources that you're going to need. So for example, if one of the pieces of the project,



Artists Marketing & Business Academy: Professional Program

Track 1: See Your Future: Create Your Business Vision, Goals and Plan

How to Write the Dreaded Business Plan

Let's say one of your projects is about your social media and web presence. Well, you're going to need to create a budget for building that social media and web presence.

You're going to need, you know, designers, right? Web designers, and you're going to need the web host and the URL, and you know, all of those things. There may be a learning curve for you involved in this process.

What are the resources that you're going to need, both internal and external, in order to achieve these projects? And build that into your plan. Because if you're looking, for example, for a web designer you need to do some research.

You need to create a request for proposal to submit to different web designers that basically lays out what you're looking to create. Okay?

So, all of these things go into creating your plan, and you want to have a plan for each objective. So, the 5 sections of your business plan are the Vision Statement, the Mission Statement, the Objectives, the Strategies, and the Plans.

The order in which you write this business plan. It may be that you are a big picture thinker, in which case I recommend that you write it in the order that I've laid it out, which is the Vision Statement, the Mission Statement, the Objectives, the Strategies, and the Plans, because that's the big picture narrowing down to the details. Right?

Because the plan is all about the details. If, however, all you think about are details, and you don't really have a big picture, you can build it in the other direction as well. If these are your...these are the ideas you have, these are your plans, then what is the strategy you're using?

And is that the strategy you want to be using? If you pursue those plans, what objectives will you be creating? What is the outcome of those action steps? Okay? And if you get all of those objectives, what kind of business have you created? What kind of products? Who's going to want those products? Why do they want those products? Who are you in the world?

So in other words, you don't need to necessarily do this in any particular order. What you may find, however, is that if you start from the details and build up to the overview, you may end up going back and revamping those details.

Because you may discover that the things that you thought were important didn't lead you to the career you want to have, which might be why you have trouble getting into action, if you do.



How to Write the Dreaded Business Plan

It may be that you've been keeping yourself really busy, and you've been working really hard, and you've been doing all this stuff, but when you look at it, in the context of your business plan, you may discover why you're not living your vision.

Because the stuff that you've been doing, the busyness that you've been filling your days with aren't really moving you towards the life you want to have. And that's why really putting this stuff on paper can be very clarifying. I've had more than one client come to me with, "I have had the greatest business plan idea! Oh man, I've got the best business idea. I think this is going to rock!"

And I have them work through Jim Horan's one page business plan process with that business idea. And at the end, they come back to me with all of the things that I thought might not work about that business idea.

I've learned not to tell them why I don't think their business idea is going to work. I let them figure that out by really creating a plan, you know. And that's not all. Obviously, that's not always the result. Sometimes the result is, "Oh, this is a great business plan. Let me get into action with it," you know.

But it's always really fascinating to me that if they take their inspiration and work it through this process, it shakes all the fairy dust out of it without shaking the inspiration out of it. So, it puts...it takes off the rose-colored glasses, if I can mix my metaphor. It takes off the rose-colored glasses and puts on really the binoculars, so that you can get a really good sense of what the journey will hold if you pursue this business idea. Okay?

So, whatever direction you end up writing your business plan in, if it's from the details to the over-arching vision or from the overarching vision down to the details or maybe you want to start with the strategies first and work outwards from there, it doesn't really matter. Just be aware that one area may change what you're thinking for another area. And very often what really works is after you've written your business plan, set it aside for about a week. Leave it alone for a week, and then come back and read it in detail and edit it, because you will get clarity about it by letting it sit for a week. Because you know, you've given your brain commands just in the writing of it. You've given your brain commands, and it will be chewing over these things, you know, while you sleep.

So the next time you come back to look at your business plan, it will look differently. And that's good. You'll have perspective on it. So before I move on, any questions? Go ahead and hit Star 6 to come off mute...Okay.

So, how long should it take? Well, everybody's different obviously, and if you're already pretty clear or you think you're pretty clear, it might not take you more than a couple of



How to Write the Dreaded Business Plan

hours. It might take you longer if you've never written a goal in your life, and you need to go listen to [Goals that Get Results](#) class before you can sit down and write those objectives.

It might take you longer if you tend to think in kind of vast, general language in order to really hone it and get specific and concrete. It might take you longer if you think that this is a writing exercise. If you take the attitude and the approach that this is really about manifesting, and by the way, I use the definition of manifesting, bringing your dreams into reality out of nothing. You are showing, you are bringing them into reality. You are creating them in the future.

If you think of writing your business plan as telling the universe, if you will, what your order is, what you want, I think you will find it easier and faster to write. Okay?

WHAT DO I DO WITH IT NOW THAT I'VE WRITTEN IT?

So, once you've written this plan, what do you do with it? Do you just shove it in a drawer and let it mold? No. Do you show it to your most critical family member? The person who downplays and nay says all of your dreams? No!

But there are some people you do want to show it to. You do want to...you get feedback and support with your business plan. The people I recommend showing it to is your team. So, the people that you are specifically working with towards creating your career.

GET FEEDBACK AND SUPPORT

Whether that's your coach, your agent manager, A&R rep, whether it's your assistant and interns, your PR person, you know, the people that you're working with, your street team leaders, you know, the people that you are specifically working with to create your business.

SHOW IT TO YOUR TEAM FOR FEEDBACK AND ALIGNMENT

You want to show it to them for feedback and to get their alignment. Because fundamentally, if they are not aligned with your business plan, there's going to be problems as you go forward.

GET FEEDBACK FROM YOUR ACCOUNTANT, LAWYER, BUSINESS COACH

I recommend you get feedback from your accountant and your lawyer and your business coach.

Now, your lawyer...if you've got a lawyer who you called twice a year to look at a contract, that's not really who you would show it to. But if you work with your lawyer in



Artists Marketing & Business Academy: Professional Program

Track 1: See Your Future: Create Your Business Vision, Goals and Plan

How to Write the Dreaded Business Plan

negotiating you know, week to week and month to month, negotiating contracts, if you work with your lawyer to help you pitch, you know. I know a lot of film makers, for example, who work with lawyers in the entertainment industry and help them pitch projects to executive producers to get financing.

If that's your relationship with your lawyer, if your lawyer is helping you pitch to publishers and that kind of thing, that's the kind of lawyer you want to show your business plan to.

If you're looking for financing, angel financiers, venture capitalists, and you're working with a consultant or a lawyer in that approach, you definitely want to show this business plan. Because you're going to use this business plan and expand it into that 60 page business plan you're going to need in order to get those angel investors, venture capitalists excited about what you're doing.

But this coming to a meeting with a business plan consultant, with this 1 page business plan already written, puts you miles ahead where most people are when they walk in the door with those consultants. Because you have a really clear idea what your project is. Okay?

USE IT TO GET ALIGNMENT FROM YOUR KEY RELATIONSHIPS (SPOUSE, FAMILY, ETC.)

You may also want to use it to get alignment from your key relationships, in other words, your spouse, your family. If for example, you've decided that on top of your 40 hours a week job, you're going to be putting in 15-20 hours a week building this business, and you've got a wife and kids or a husband and kids, and as a result, you're going to be much less available to them, I recommend you sit them down and show them this business plan. So that they know why you're not available, and they can support you in staying focused and staying on track.

I will tell you that it's great training for young adults and tween kids to look at this kind of thing. And you can play with them to write their own business plans for their careers in school, for example. Or for their business ideas, okay? So, you can learn it...you can use it, both, also as training in leadership with your kids.

CONVERT THE PLAN INTO ACTION THROUGH YOUR TIME MAP AND PRD'S

Now you also want to take this plan and specifically convert this plan into action using your time map and your PRDs. Now I talk about this in [Time Management 101](#) quite a bit more and also the [Project Management](#) class.

CREATE SHORT TERM MILEPOST GOALS FOR THIS WEEK, THIS MONTH, THIS QUARTER

But (coughing) excuse me, you want to create short term milepost goals for this week, this month, this quarter based on your objectives. So that you are taking actions towards your objectives every week.



How to Write the Dreaded Business Plan

CREATE TIME BLOCKS SPECIFICALLY FOR WORKING ON THE PROJECTS

You want to carve out time blocks specifically for working on these projects. And treat them as if they are appointments for someone else. So if you're working on Project 1 on your project, on your plan, and you say you're going to work on it on Mondays from 3-5 and on Wednesdays from 6-10, and so and so asks you to go out for drinks on Wednesday night at 6 o'clock, you say to them, "You know, I'm not available. I have a conflict for that time. Can we do it Friday instead?" Okay? So you treat it as if it's an appointment with someone else that you can't break.

SCHEDULE TIME EVERY MONTH TO REVIEW YOUR PROGRESS AND REASSESS YOUR GOALS

You also want to schedule time every month to review your progress and re-assess your goals. So for example, if at the end of the month, you realize that there was a project, and in order to achieve that project by the date that you set for it, you needed to get X, Y and Z objectives done towards it, and you didn't.

AT THE END OF EACH FISCAL YEAR, ASSESS, UPDATE, EDIT AND EXPAND YOUR BUSINESS PLAN AND CREATE YOUR OBJECTIVES FOR THE COMING YEAR.

Then you need to re-assess the due date for that project, the level of importance. You know, it may be that you're not quite ready to dive into that project. You thought that you would be, but you're not, because you need to do...you need to complete another project first before that project makes sense.

And sometimes we don't find that stuff out until we try to dive into a project. And then we realize, wow, for example, you want to build your social media, but really you want to build your social media and drive the people there to your website, but you don't have a website yet.

It may be that you need to put the project for building your website first and then bringing in the social media. Does that makes sense? So sometimes, you know, until we're really working on something, we can't actually see which is the cart and which is the horse.

As you get clearer on stuff, as you work on stuff, you're going to assess, update, edit, and expand your business plan. Okay? You're going to edit, update, and expand your goals. It may be that you thought a particular goal was going to take you 75 hours, and it only took you 15. Great! Expand it. Make it bigger. Right? Or vice versa. You may have thought that it would only take you 15 hours to do a project and instead ended up being 75.

So, a lot of this stuff will come clear to you as you start working in the projects. And I want you to come to all of this with the context of there is not failure, only feedback. So



Artists Marketing & Business Academy: Professional Program

Track 1: See Your Future: Create Your Business Vision, Goals and Plan

How to Write the Dreaded Business Plan

if you look at a goal, you look at an objective, and you see that you haven't achieved it, that's just feedback.

Your job is to figure out what that feedback means. Why haven't you achieved it? What stopped you? What obstacles did you hit? Oh, you hit this obstacle? What does your strategy that you wrote as part 4 of your 5 piece...what does your strategy tell you about how to approach that obstacle? Okay?

So these are the kind...the ways that you use your business plan. Also, day to day, moment to moment, week to week, you're going to have opportunities coming your way. That's just what happens. Once you start getting busy, once you start creating your business, opportunities are going start showing up all around you.

The truth is those opportunities were always there. You just weren't filtering for them, so you didn't see them. Okay?

Now that you've got a business plan, you're going to start seeing them, because the creation, the very act of writing this plan changes your filters, changes how you see the world and how you interact with the world.

And as a result, opportunities are going to come your way. I recommend that every time you look at an opportunity, you read your strategies. You think about your mission and your vision, and then decide whether or not that opportunity is in line with your mission, your vision.

And allow... and how you would apply your strategies to that opportunity, and then decide whether or not that opportunity is yours or someone else's. Okay?

So we've got a few more minutes. That's the content that I had to give you about creating your business plan, but I liked to open it up. Chuck, if you're still there, you want to come off mute Star 6. If you have any questions or specifically how this applies to you? Feel free, you know, to ask that...hit star 6 to come off mute.

Chuck: Hello, hello.

Debra: Yes, I hear you now.

Chuck: Okay. Well, don't really have many questions, but I think I would like to ask your comment on what I thought was a humorous quote that was present in the last Derek Sivers presentation that circulated around the web about a 45-minute video.

Debra: Yeah, I haven't had the chance to watch that yet. I've got it starred in my inbox to take a look at like, but I haven't seen it yet. So what's the comment that he said?



Artists Marketing & Business Academy: Professional Program

Track 1: See Your Future: Create Your Business Vision, Goals and Plan

How to Write the Dreaded Business Plan

Chuck: Well, he quotes something from somebody else if you probably heard. And I'm going to paraphrase it. I can't remember the exact comment, but it's a little saying that's going around that goes something like the..."any business plan rarely survives first contact with a customer".

Debra: Hmm...

Chuck: Have you heard that before?

Debra: I have heard that, and I think that is referring to that 60 page business plan.

Chuck: Okay.

Debra: That's the cool thing about this one page business plan, because it's flexible. Now, you want to be writing, for example, your mission with your customer in mind. If you interact with a customer and the feedback you get on thinking about that interaction is, "Wow, my mission statement is off," you go back and change it.

However, one of the things that I see happening is that people try to contort themselves or contort their business to please everybody. And that doesn't work either. So part of knowing what your strategies are will help you to identify is that person your target market? Because they may not be.

That opportunity might not be yours. So that's not to say that the customer is wrong. They might be completely right, and you want to listen for that, and you also want to stay true to yourself. Does that make sense?

Chuck: It sure does. Uh-huh...thanks for addressing that.

Debra: Yeah, absolutely. Anything else? You've got sole few. You're the one who registered to be on the class live, so I know that you're entering into a new time in your business, so this could be a great time to be thinking about this.

Chuck: Yes, since we don't have anybody else waiting in line right now, and you have allocated more time, would you mind if I asked something that might be a little bit off topic or would you prefer that I save it for one of the Multiple Question Weekly Calls?

Debra: Go ahead and ask it, and I reserve the right to refer it.

Chuck: Okay, that's fine. Okay, recently, you have revised your website, and you might say, your content delivery platform. And after taking Sarah Gaffigan's 30 day class, the very first one she took, one of the things that fascinated me about the class was the fact that she decided to utilize the Kajabi platform. She only mentioned it in passing,



Artists Marketing & Business Academy: Professional Program

Track 1: See Your Future: Create Your Business Vision, Goals and Plan

How to Write the Dreaded Business Plan

but I tracked it back to the website, and that set me on a search of Kajabi competitors and alternatives.

Debra: Could you spell Kajabi because I never heard of it?

Chuck: Okay sure, that's KAJABI.com...Kajabi.

Debra: Okay.

Chuck: KAJABI. That is what Sarah Gaffigan uses, and you know, and I was just thinking that okay, if you're in business to make some money, and you're an artist, you know, your website needs to be more than a billboard in the wilderness, as what most people's website start out being.

Debra: Yes...

Chuck: It needs to be an integrated marketing machine...

Debra: We call them...we call them "cobwebs" actually.

Chuck: "Cobwebs." Okay. There you go. That's a good name too. I haven't heard that. But at any in any event, I was fascinated by her, you know, her whole program there, and I did a lot of research on Kajabi and its competitors yesterday, and the main argument out there on the internet seems to be, should you go with something like Kajabi, which is fully integrated, or do you get down to a Wordpress...Wordpress with plugins, such as you're using. And in some point in the future, just an idea for a future call, I would be interested in knowing how you decided to abandon your last content delivery program and replace it with what you're using now, and what plugins you decided that you would use with Wordpress, and did you look at any other alternatives or simply go with that consultant, that Wordpress expert, I forget his name, that you interviewed on the call, and decided well, you like him, and you like his track record, so you're going to do what he says. I'd be interested maybe in a call detailing content delivery platforms and what you think about yours...

Debra: Okay...I'm going to stop you, because that's really way off the thing...definitely submit that, and I'm happy to address it in an Ask Coach Debra call. But what's interesting to me from the perspective of the business plan concept is that one of my...one of my strategies is to look for things that do not leave me dependent on the success or failure of a single company.

So that's why I ended up going with Wordpress, because Wordpress is just...is a...is a tool, is a platform, and it's open source. So, you know, it's not...it's not...if someone for example, builds their website on Bandzoogle or builds their website on, you know, this is my argument against using Myspace as your primary web page or Facebook fan page



Artists Marketing & Business Academy: Professional Program

Track 1: See Your Future: Create Your Business Vision, Goals and Plan

How to Write the Dreaded Business Plan

as your primary webpage. Because you are completely dependent on that company's health, and you have no control over that.

You know, that's my primary concern, and so I always tend to look for things that are...like I buy the product, and then once I buy the product that company can go out of business. I still own the product. You know, like people have Flip Cams. The company that makes Flip Cams decided no longer make them, but if you bought a Flip Cam, that Flip Cam is not going to stop working just because that company has decided to not make them anymore. Does that makes sense?

Chuck: Sure. I understand that.

Debra: Yeah, so that's kind of, you know...so I use, for example, I use a web host. The web host that I went with stopped, really serving my needs. I just went to a new web host. I took my website and I left. I went to play somewhere else, you know. That affordability is part of my strategy. So that the health and well-being of my business isn't taken down by somebody else's. And that's one of my strategies for dealing with external obstacles and opportunities.

Chuck: Okay.

Debra: Is that gives you kind of...so you see how my strategy actually greatly affected my decision making process in going with Wordpress and a Wordpress plugin.

Chuck: Uh huh...

Debra: There's something to be said for a turnkey operation, and it really just depends, again...it's a question of what is your strategy? Because your strategy is going to help determine how you go about doing something. So that's, you know...

Chuck: Okay.

Debra: Is that helpful?

Chuck: I appreciate your insight. It is, and I'll have a follow up to that in the weekly call.

Debra: Yup.

Chuck: In one of the Ask Debra calls, I'll have a follow up to add.

Debra: It might also be a really...a really interesting question to post on the Yahoo group for feedback about what different...what are the decisions that different people are making? You know, what tools are you using? How are you going about this? You know, why did you decide to go with that? You know, because there's probably as



Artists Marketing & Business Academy: Professional Program

Track 1: See Your Future: Create Your Business Vision, Goals and Plan

How to Write the Dreaded Business Plan

many different answers to that question as there are artists in the world. So that could be useful. And could make for an interesting and lively conversation.

Chuck: Sure.

Debra: Cool. Any other questions specifically with regard to the business plan concept, how to implement it for yourself, anything like that? And if not, do you have any takeaways from this class that you like to share?

Chuck: I'll share a takeaway, and that is that this type of business plan does not seem to be nearly as intimidating as the idea of 60 page plan that sounds like a whole lot of work, that you will someday try and carve some time out of your schedule to do, but maybe not this week, and you may not ever get it done, that foreboding 60 page business plan. So this is nice, and that it does not take so much time, and it's much better than nothing.

Debra: Yup. Good. Give me a favor and put that as a comment on the call. That's great. That's a great takeaway. That was one of the goals that I had as a result of this call was that people feel like, "Oh, a business plan. That's something I can do," and "Oh, a business plan. That's probably a good idea."

So, and just so you guys know, I'm thinking that I may use my...my time being locked up with a hurricane this weekend to, you know, write...rewrite my business plan because I haven't looked at it in a while. I looked at it you know, back in 2007 when I bought out my business partner. So it's time for it to be revamped.

And then, yeah, and I may depending...I actually probably will post it up as a download just so you guys can get a sense of what it might look like. Okay. Very good! Thanks for joining me! Our next call is Step 7 of the [Multiple Streams Concept](#), which is [Deepening Your Relationships](#), and I look forward to that. I will be announcing the September calls soon. One of my projects for the next day or two is to set up my schedule for September, and I look forward to hearing you guys on the next call.

Thanks very much for joining me, Chuck, and have a great night!

Chuck: Thank you. You bet, bye!