



What's Preventing You from Succeeding

March 7th 2012

As you may have noticed we have been writing a series of articles on business planning. This leads to discussions when we meet people in the non-internet world.

Recently I sat down with a couple of smart, experienced guys. One of them was completely a near year long course in a highly specialized trade.

This person wanted to start his own business.

The course gave them some "training" in doing so. In fact, over coffee, he pulled out several workbooks that he was expected to fill in so that they could help him with his business plan. "Great" I thought, as starting to jot down your ideas makes business planning easier, for you or whomever you hire to put one together for you.

The problem was that the books were blank. Yes there were words on the pages but where the individual was to start...they were blank.

That reminded me of a prior article on the "size and scope" of the business plan. When you work in a field and/or are writing on a topic, you do not often start with a blank piece of paper. What we mean by that is that you come with your thoughts, and analysis; your beliefs and prejudices; your experience and your background. Each of these things impacts on your process and on your Business Plan.

We acquired a well regarded planning kit* that we were considering for a client and whether we would offer to the public. The kit was very good (even excellent for the price) BUT the kit assumed:

1. You knew where to start
2. You knew Word
3. You knew Excel
4. You knew PowerPoint
5. You knew Marketing
6. You knew Accounting
7. And of course you knew YOUR BUSINESS and how to copy write to express your business

That is a lot of knowledge.

That is a lot of assumption.

That is a lot of hope.

The reality is that if you go to anyone who is strong in Product Development, Marketing, Accounting, Finance, Human Resources, Legal issues or Computer applications - you are likely to get a Business Plan that is strong in *Product Development, Marketing, Accounting, Finance, Human Resources, Legal issues or Computer applications*.

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In our experience, you would be best served by hiring a copywriter (unless you have a gift there) - but will they have the knowledge of the above topics? Probably not, but they, like us Business Analysts, learn to ASK questions and LISTEN to the answers. Many of the other professional types that we mentioned are busy thinking about what they KNOW and what they think that you should do that they are not listening.

Our experience is that it is best to ask a few questions and listen for a while.

The business person is an expert in their field (or has the passion to overcome the lack of expertise) AND the smart ones will admit to what they need...if you let them talk.

They will then need some help in making mistakes!

From the desk of Andre M.

At Andion Business Solutions, Shaping Visions into Reality

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