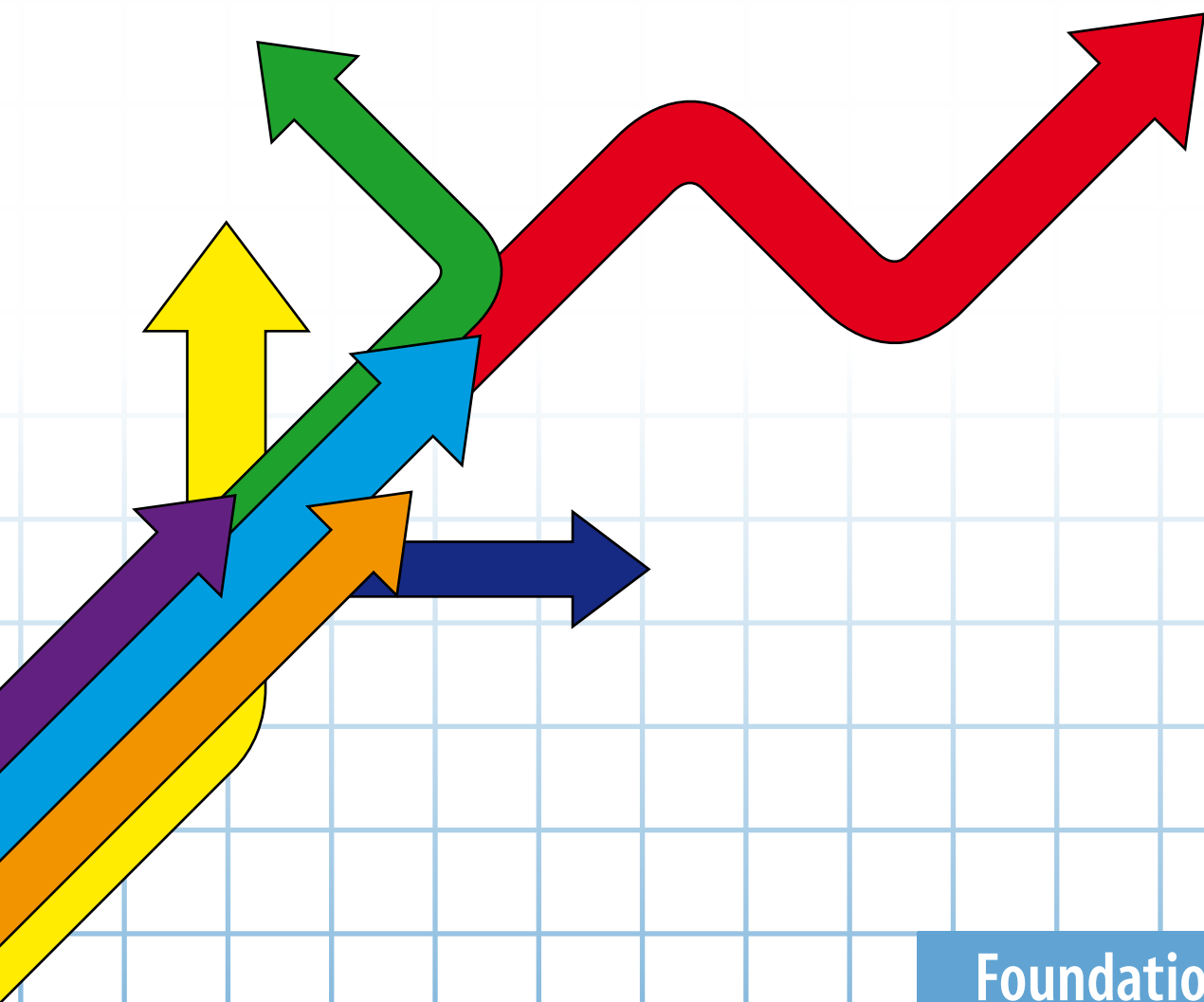
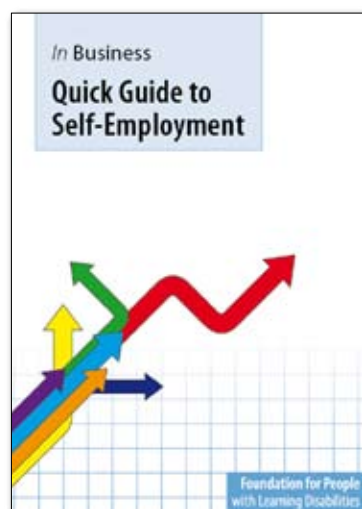


In Business

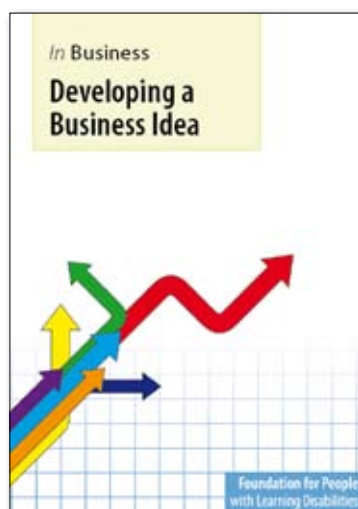
Developing a Business Idea



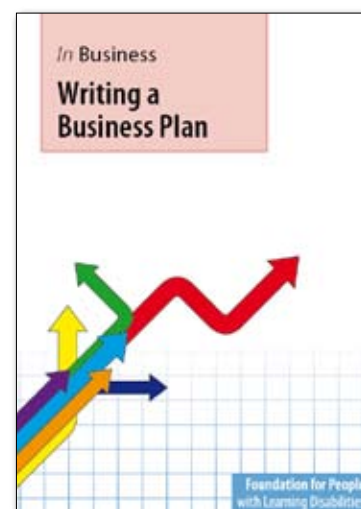
This publication is part of the In Business Easy Business Planning series, which includes:



Quick Guide to Self-Employment



Developing a Business Idea



Writing a Business Plan

To download copies of these and other helpful resources, tools and guides please visit our website at <http://www.learningdisabilities.org.uk/in-business/>

Our thanks go to the individuals and organisations that have helped us to create this guide. These have included people, their families and those that support them in exploring self employment as well as the Valuing People Support Team, Development Services, Business West and The Brandon Trust for their support in developing this guide.

Keith Bates is the project manager. The following Foundation staff have directly supported the development of this guide; Barbara McIntosh, Justin Pearce-Neudorf and Lucy Smith. All other staff team members have provided enormously useful contributions.

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Developing a business idea



The Business Planning Workbook gives you a chance to think very carefully about the business you want to start.

The aim of this workbook is to help you think about some of the issues that a business advisor would talk about with you. It can be used as a way of preparing for a meeting with a business advisor.

The workbook is about planning your business idea. Any worries about things like money and benefits can be dealt with later.

This workbook is written in plain English. You may not want to read the workbook all at once. You may want to read one part at a time, and only answer some of the questions.

At the end of each part of the quick guide there is a question box. Answering these questions will help you to think about your business idea in more detail. If you need some extra help you could look at the workbook and the questions with someone from your family, a friend or a supporter.

This is the start of your journey to setting up your own business. Enjoy it and good luck!

Step 1: My business idea

This is where you think about what type of business you want to set up. You will need to think about things like:

- What you want to sell.
- Who your customers will be – will they be people or companies, young or old people, men or women? It is important to know this as you will need to let them know what you have to offer.
- Where will you sell it? Do you need to sell your product or service from a building or can you sell it without being based in one place?



What are you selling?



This is where you describe what you want to sell. You will need to think about things like:

- Is it something you make (a product) or something you do for other people (a service)?
- What does it look like?
- How long does it take to make or do?

1. Describe what you want to sell.

2. What does it look like?

3. How long does it take to make or do?

4. Where will you sell it?

Who are your customers?



This is where you think about who would want to buy your product or service. You will need to think about things like:

- Who are your customers likely to be? To start with they may be people you already know but it is useful to think about who else may want to buy from you.
- Are they individuals or businesses? Is it for a group of people or is it for one person only? For example, a training course would be for a group of people. A dog walking service would be for one person only.

1. Who are your customers likely to be?

2. Will your customers be individual people or groups of people?

3. Is there anything else that you think is important to write down about your customers?

What are the features and benefits of your business?

This is where you think about why your business idea is a good one and why people will want to buy from you. You will need to think about things like:

- What is it about your business that will make people want to buy from you? Try to think about what the customers will like from their point of view. For example if you offer a dog walking service the customer will like it because they will get more time in the evening if the dog has already been walked.

Make a list of the good things about your service or product.

Step 2: The market

In this section, you need to think about the market for your idea. This is so you can work out how likely it is to be a good business. You will need to think about things like:

- Who else is selling the same thing (competition)?
- How much should I charge my customers (pricing)?
- What information do I already have about my business idea (research)?



Competition



This is where you get information about who else is doing the same thing as you. You will need to think about things like:

- Who else is running the same type of business as you?
- Are they big companies or small?
- Where are they based?
- Are they in the town you live in, or somewhere else?

1. Who else is running the same type of business as you?
2. Are they big or small companies?
3. Where are they based?
4. Is it in the town you live in or somewhere else?
5. Is there anything else that you think is important to write down about your competition?

Pricing



This is where you think about what other people charge for the same type of business as yours. You will need to think about things like:

- How much do other people charge for their product or service? You may be able to find this out by asking other people or phoning up people who are doing the same thing as you (your competitors). You may be able to use the internet or even an agency set up to help people in your field of business called a trade body.

Write down what you find out about how much other people are charging for their product or service.

Research



It is important to find out as much as you can (research) about your business idea. This is where you can write down all the other things you have found out to see if this business will work.

This may include things like thinking if this is the sort of business that works all the year round or if it is best for just the summer.

Write down what you have found out to see if your business will work.

Step 3: Money



This is where you need to think more carefully about how much it will cost to start your business. You will need to think about things like:

- All businesses need some money to start with. How much do you need to get started?
- Try to think of all the things you need. Try not to add things that are not very important.
- What tools will you need?

What are the start up costs?

This is where you need to think more carefully about how much it will cost to start your business. All businesses need some money to get started. In the box below list all the things you need. This may include things like a computer, a desk or a tool kit.

Write down all the things you need to get your business started and how much they will cost.

What premises do you need?



This is where you need to think about where your business will be. You will need to think about things like:

- Does it need a special building or could you work from home?
- Is it a noisy business or can it be done quietly?
- Does it need to be in a warm or cold place?
- What access requirements does your work place need to meet?

1. Does your business need a special building or could you work from home?

2. What things do you need to have in your work place?

3. Does your work place need to be accessible in any way?

4. Write down anything else that is important when thinking about where your business will be.

What can you do in a day?



To help with working out how much money you will need, it is important to work out what you can do in one day. This is sometimes called productivity. Sometimes things take longer than a day to do so you will need to work out how long each job takes.

Remember that running a business means that you sometimes have to do things like banking and paperwork. These other tasks may mean you cannot work all day every day for the customer.

1. If it is a service, how many people can you offer the service to in one day?
2. If it is a product, how many can you make in one day?
3. Write down any other information that you think will be important when you work out how much you can do in one day.

Step 4: Sales and marketing



This is where you think about how to tell other people about your business. You may start off by working for people who know you but you may need to think about how to let other people know about it. You will need to think about things like:

- How will you tell your customers about your product or service?
- How much will it cost to do the job?
- How much will you charge?

How will you market your business?



This is where you can think about all the different ways of telling people about your business. This may include:

- leaflets
- a website
- telling people (word of mouth)
- letters to people
- adverts.

Write down the ways that you can tell people about your business. Decide which ways will work best for you and your business.

How much will it cost to do the job?



This is where you can think about how much it will cost to make your product or offer your service.

When you offer a product or service, it costs money to make the product or run the service. This is often called cost of sales. Try to think carefully about how much it would cost you to do your business.

Write down the information you have about how much it will cost to make your product or offer your service.

How much will you charge?



This is where you can use your information (collected on page 13) about what other people charge for their service or product.

You can either work out what the customers pay for the service or you can work out how much it costs you to do it and then add money on top. The money you add on top is your profit.

Use this space to work out how much you will charge your customers.

Step 5: About me



This section is all about you. Who you are, where you live and any other details about you that you think will be important. This may be about college courses or other activities you do in the week.

In this section add details of your name and address, phone number and any other way to contact you. This may include an email address, mobile number or the details of someone who you would like to be contacted about your business.

Name:

Address:

Phone number:

Email:

Is there another person people should contact?

Support

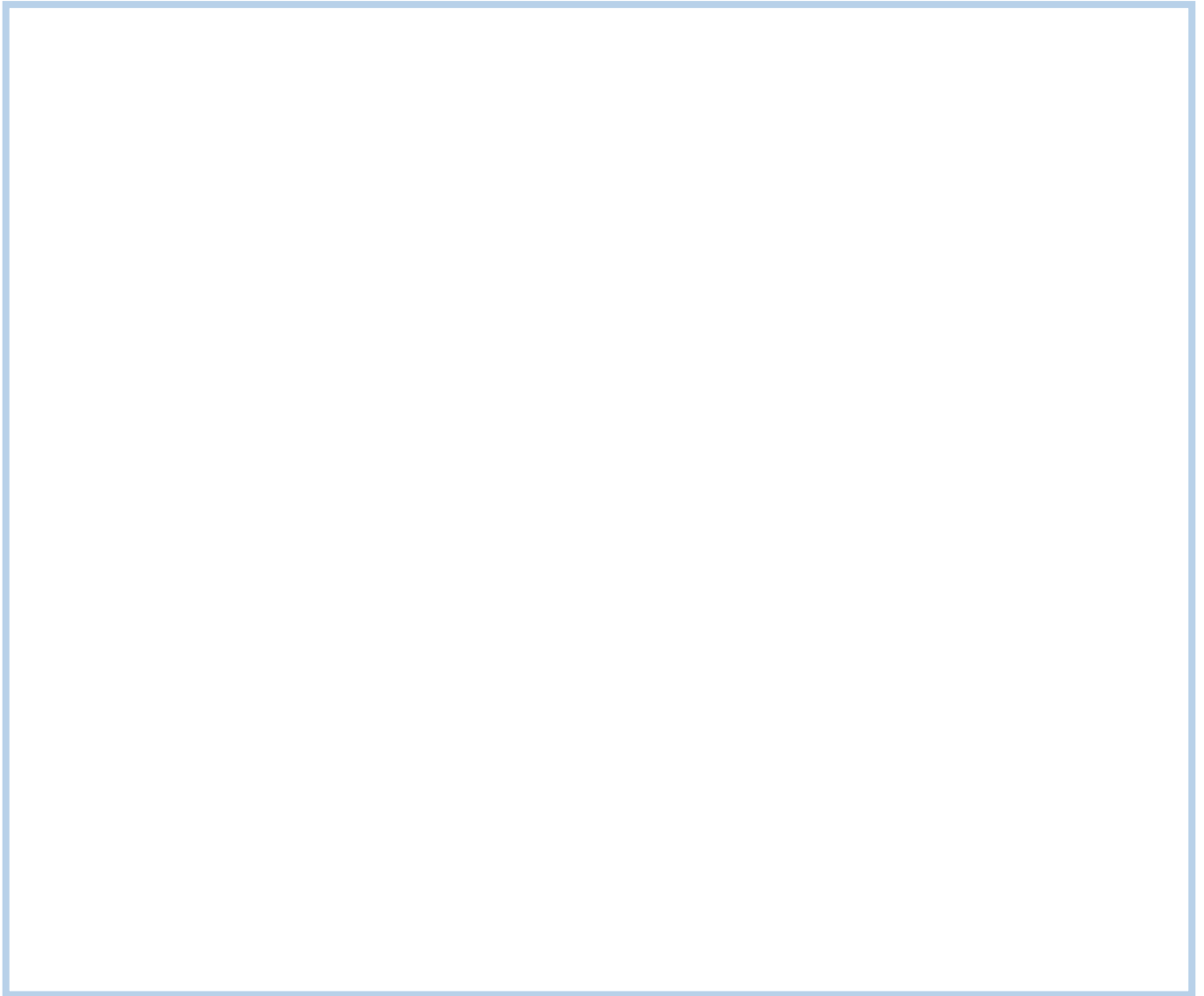


In this section you need to describe the support you need to do the job. This includes transport, support doing the work and any personal care that might affect your ability to do the job.

1. What type of transport do you need to offer your product or service?
2. Do you have a supporter that you will need to help you with your business?
3. Write down anything else that you think may be important to you starting your own business.

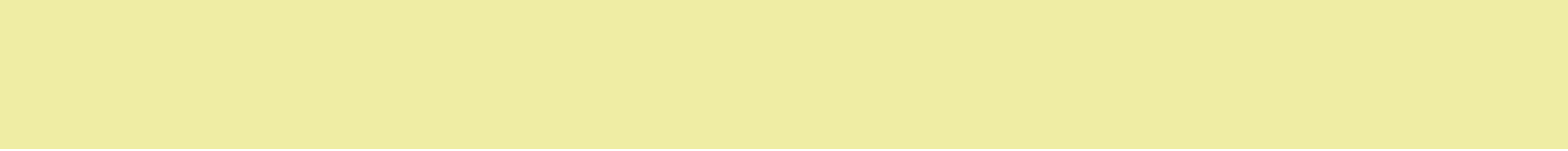
Any other information

Write down anything else that you think is important about your business.



Once you have completed the workbook and gathered all the information, it's time to get some help and support. There are many organisations that offer business support but it is often different depending on where you live. You can find out how to contact these organisations in the Business Planning Quick Guide.

If you would like to get a copy of the Business Planning Quick Guide please call 020 7803 1101 or email fpld@fpld.org.uk



About the Foundation for People with Learning Disabilities

We promote the rights, quality of life and opportunities of people with learning disabilities and their families. We do this by working with people with learning disabilities, their families and those who support them to:

- do research and develop projects that promote social inclusion and citizenship
- support local communities and services to include people with learning disabilities
- make practical improvements in services for people with learning disabilities
- spread knowledge and information.

If you would like to find out more about our work, please contact us:

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