

What's the plan?

With the first of The CAM Coach/Nutri Advanced seminars coming up, we should, as they will, start at the beginning where it counts the most – with the Business Plan. CAM Coach **Mark Shields** explains.

I've coached many businesses in my time and each time I begin with a new client, I am usually staggered to find they don't have a business plan.

I shouldn't be surprised really, as I can't remember the last time I coached a practitioner who came in with a business plan of any substance.

It's not just a problem in the CAM world; it's pretty much the same in all small and medium-sized businesses.

This is despite the fact that if we are going to achieve our goals and objectives we must write them down. It has been proved many times over that if you write down what you want to achieve, you have a much better chance of achieving it: some sources put this as high as 75% .

Keeping your ideas in your head, or on random notes somewhere, simply doesn't work.

A business plan drives the foundations, values and vision of your business, so the good news is if you haven't got one in place at the moment, things will improve dramatically once you do.

Writing your business plan

I believe in keeping this simple, but focused. You should get on with this before you start your business, but if you are reading this and haven't got one organised, it's never too late.

When to do the plan

I believe you should wait for the right moment to put your plan together. When you are feeling creative, resourceful, passionate and motivated by your business – that's the time to let all your great ideas flow into the pot and help form your business plan.

What to include

The Power SWOT:
You should include your business philosophy,



identity and vision together with what I call Power SWOT, which is simply a helicopter's perspective and objective view of your business that identifies potential Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.

It's also paramount to include your USP – your unique selling point: whatever it is that makes your business different and special.

Business goals and action plan

After completing the SWOT it's time to list and prioritise your business goals. The SWOT will give you the foundation for your goals and actions you will need to ensure your business is successful. It should include a list of aims and objectives gleaned from your SWOT exercise.

Ensure they are SMART: specific, measurable, achievable and realistic with timescales. Group and prioritise your top five goals and then list a series of actions which form your business actions to ensure you focus and meet the business goals you have set for your business.

Short, medium AND long-term planning

Typically this means one, three and five years. You will need to be flexible and able to adapt as the business world and market changes. You should commit to forecasting

your business results in line with your short, medium and long-term plan. You should include anticipated appointment levels, income levels, activity, your different income streams and costs.

You and your team, or your mentor or coach can use the GROW model (Goal, Reality, Options and Agreed way forward) to review your business plan monthly, re-planning where appropriate.

Be flexible and don't be afraid to reset your goals to more realistic levels if you are struggling. It is far better to achieve a little improvement a bit at a time than fail to hit totally unachievable goals.

No excuses! Every business, old or new, big or small, failing or successful, should not only have a business plan but a set of business goals and action plan accompanying it.

It will ensure you have a set of evolving strategies and actions taking your business forward. DETTI



About the author

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