

IDEAS FOR YOUR NEW BUSINESS

Every successful business in the world started with someone having an idea which they had the drive, enthusiasm and the ability to turn into profit. Some of those ideas were completely new and many more were tried and tested before by someone else. It does not matter which category your idea falls into as long as its profitable, legal and you can enjoy doing it.

HOW TO GENERATE IDEAS

There are three simple stages to ideas generation.

The first is to look around you and think. Generate as many ideas as possible, quantity rather than quality is what matters at this point. You should suspend judgement until later.

Stage two is to examine your ideas in great detail and identify the ones that have the most potential.

The third is to put your idea into actions.

When you find an idea that looks promising ask yourself the following questions:

1. Is this really what I want to do?
2. Can I make it work?
3. Is it worth the risk.

The preparation of your ideas and plans will be time consuming but it is well worth putting in the effort to do this properly because it will pay dividends later on.

WHERE WILL IDEAS COME FROM?

All around us there are sources of good ideas. Some of them are not immediately obvious.

- What people eat and drink.
- What people wear.
- What products are stocked in shops and supermarkets.
- People's lifestyles.
- Magazines, newspapers, directories, current events, etc.
- Programmes you would not normally watch.
- Particular population groups, e.g. swimmers, drivers, cinema goers, young mothers, etc.
- Problems that you can solve. Most problems which people encounter can present an opportunity for you to develop a solution.
- Examine current products and services for ways that you can "do it better".

WHAT WILL YOU DO WHEN YOU HAVE FOUND IT?

An interesting idea does not always lead to success, so how do you assess whether your idea will be successful

The first step is to assess yourself. It is essential that you have, or can obtain, the necessary knowledge, attitude, skills and work habits to put your future plans into action and make a profit by doing so. It is essential that you can enjoy what you do but remember, you are in a business to make money.

Only when you have assessed yourself can you properly assess your idea. The following bullet points will help you do just that.

- Who will buy your product/service?
- Why will they buy it?
- How much will they pay?
- How much will they buy?
- Who are your competitors?
- How will your competitors react?
- What is your competitive advantage?
- How will you market your product/service?
- What will it cost to supply?
- What other costs are involved in your business.
- Will your business earn enough to cover all of the running costs?
- How much profit will you make?
- How regular will your cash flow be?
- What equipment, materials, premises, skills will you need?
- How will you find it initially?
- Are there any special requirements (e.g. licences, planning permission, health regulations, etc.)?

All of the above will play an important part in setting out your business plan. Business plans are covered in more detail in "PREPARING A BUSINESS PLAN, By Peter Coyne" and also GUIDELINES ON PREPARING A BUSINESS PLAN section of www.galwayenterprise.ie.

WILL PEOPLE BUY YOUR IDEA?

Your customers will only buy from you for one reason:

"They are not fully satisfied with what they have at present".

If they were fully satisfied they would never buy anything. Your product/service must therefore satisfy a desire or need in the marketplace.

On the whole people do not buy what a product is, but rather what the product or service does for them. Decide therefore what your particular idea or product can do for your client and how they will benefit.

