

The background of the entire page is a collage of Euro banknotes and coins. Visible banknotes include 2000, 20, 5, 10, 50, and 100 Euro notes. Visible coins include 1, 2, 5, 10, and 20 Euro coins. The text is overlaid on this background.

STARTING A BUSINESS

Writing a Business Plan

STUDENT'S WORKSHEETS

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unit 1: the idea

Lesson 1: Deciding what is best.

ACTIVITY 1:

Before starting to write a business plan you must have an idea.

1. You can plan your own business even if you haven't the resources to start one. The practice of thinking for yourself may help you when you start work.
2. Decide on a business idea. This could be a product (something you sell) or a service (a skill you offer).
3. Try to choose an idea which allows you all to have something to do that interests you.

Work in groups (maximum 3) and try to use these expressions:

1. *I think that...*
2. *It would be better if we do....*
3. *I agree with you/with the idea/with this...*
4. *I disagree with you/with the idea/with this.....*
5. *In my opinion this will be....*
6. *.....*

Check the supplementary material for more expressions.

Use a grid to decide which one is better. If you don't reach an agreement, then use a voting system.

IDEA	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
IDEA 1	Example: Cost, experience, competitors, environment, innovation....	Example: Price, location, difficult to manufacture.....

Lesson 2: Writing down what you are planning.



ACTIVITY 2:

Write a draft about your idea:

1. About me: background, skills, studies, experience, motivation, aims and objectives.

You can use some of this vocabulary:

Describing yourself:

accurate active adaptable adept broad-minded competent conscientious creative dependable determined	diplomatic discreet efficient energetic enterprising enthusiastic experienced fair firm genuine	honest innovative logical loyal mature methodical motivated objective outgoing personable pleasant positive	practical productive reliable resourceful self disciplined sense of humor sensitive sincere successful tactful trustworthy
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Describing your skills:

Communication	Application of Number	Information Communication Technology	Working with others	Improving own learning and performance	Problem solving
speaking, listening, reading and writing skills	interpreting information involving numbers, carrying out calculations, interpreting results and presenting findings.	finding, exploring, developing and presenting information including text, images and numbers.	includes process and interpersonal skills to support working cooperatively with others to achieve shared objectives, work cooperatively and have regard for others.	target-setting, planning, learning, reviewing and interpersonal skills, e.g., communicating own needs, accepting constructive feedback, negotiating learning opportunities and support.	ability to tackle problems systematically.

Complete this writing frame.

Background	<p>I was born in..... in.....</p> <p>My family is from.....My parents/I have lived here since.....My father/mother work as a.....My brother/sister.....</p> <p>As for my town it is situated..... It has (Population). It is (area). The main economic wealth comes from (industry- services-agriculture...)</p>
Studies	<p>I have been studying at (school) till now. My favourite subjects are..... I am planning to study..... in order to become.....</p>
Skills	<p>My principal skills are....</p> <p>I think that my weaknesses are..... But I can deal with them by.....</p>
Motivation	<p>My idea of business is..... and I chosen it because..... I believe I can succeed because..... This project is important for me because.....</p>
Aims, objective	<p>In the future I want to.....</p>

2. The product or service: describe the product and justify your choice.

a) Describe your product:

- **Performance:** e.g. the speed of a car, the power of a microwave.
- **Features:** the extras, e.g. air conditioning or sunroof on a car-
- **Ease of servicing:** How easy is it to fix?
- **Reliability:** How likely is it to go wrong in, say, the first year?
- **Durability:** how long will it last?
- **Aesthetics:** What does it look like?
- **Economics:** What does it cost to produce? Can it be sold at a profit?

- **Ease of manufacture**
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You can also use these expressions to describe your product:

<p>This is our (newest) product. This is one of our latest designs. It is made of . . . It can be used for . . . You can use it to . . . You can . . . with it This has/contains . . .</p>	<p>This one features . . . This comes with . . . This is equipped with . . . This particular model . . . This is priced at . . . This costs . . .</p>
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b) Justify your choice:

- Why? Identify the opportunities.
- How? Explain the process necessary to make your product or to offer your service.
- Where? Describe the location of your business.
- Target market: describe the customers your product or service is targeting.

Use the following writing frame:

The product or service	Our product/service is..... with these features..... It is.....
How?	<p>The process of manufacturing has the following stages:</p> <p>First:</p> <p>Second:</p> <p>.....</p>
Where?	<p>We are going to sell through the internet or through a location, or both.</p> <p>It is located in a (central, peripheral), and well/badly connected, main/non-main street</p>

Market target	Our product or service is designed for people (customers, consumers) who are: age, income, sex, studies, hobbies....
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3. What do you need (assets) and where do you think you can find financial support?

Try to make a list of all the items you need to start your business, from the building to the stock. Think of how much money you will need to pay for all of this and try to search for financial support.

Assets	For starting our business we need: A place Furniture Equipment Supplies
Financial support	We think we can ask for a loan, our savings are enough, our parents could help us, we can find a shareholder.....

4. Why do you think it is going to be a success?

Try to underline the opportunities and advantages that will let you achieve success.

Why?	We think it will be a successful business because: Opportunities (related with the circumstances: market, location, economic situation...) Advantages (related with the product: innovation, cost, process of manufacture...)
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Lesson 3: Explaining your idea.



ACTIVITY 3

1. Revise your notes.
2. Explain your idea to the rest of the class. You can use a PowerPoint presentation; it must last only 10 minutes and be no more than 15 slides long. *Check the supplementary material to find out how to make an effective presentation.*
3. The class has to evaluate the viability of the idea.
4. Each group must have 2 representatives. One to explain the ideas, and the other to discuss the viability.

Use this grid to justify your arguments:

ARGUMENTS FOR LAUNCHING THE NEW BUSINESS	ARGUMENTS FOR NOT LAUNCHING THE NEW BUSINESS
Example: cost, experience, competitors, location, economic situation.....	(Empty space for arguments)

And write down some recommendations:

It will be better to...

We think we should.....

We think that.....

From our point of view it has.....

Why do businesses fail?

- Poor marketing research
- Poorly developed (service or product)
- Inappropriate price
- Competitors' action
- External environment
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unit 2: market research



Lesson 1: Get ready for research!

In order to start market research, first you have to think about and try to complete these activities:

ACTIVITY 1:

Where will your business operate from?

Explain whether it is a physical location (address and small map location), virtual location (internet), both, and say something about the facilities (communication, connections, suppliers).

ACTIVITY 2:

Who will be your customers? What is the pattern of demand?

If you know who your customers are, your business will be more successful, because you won't waste time trying to sell to the wrong people. You have to define your customers and consumers, and then you have to draw up a customer profile.

To help you with the customer profile, try to answer these questions:

- 1) How old?
- 2) Men or women?
- 3) Adults, teenagers, children, older people?
- 4) Live where?
- 5) Shop where?
- 6) Own a car?
- 7) Read which newspapers?
- 8) Listens to which radio programs?
- 9) Like which TV programs?
- 10) Go where on holiday?

- 11) Hobbies?
- 12) Studies?
- 13) Income?

When you finish your customer profile make a little questionnaire and ask some of your potential customers (at least 15) about what they usually buy and consume, and about what they would like. Then evaluate if the customers profile is accurate or not, and make a list of things you can do to improve the product or service they are using so far.

Why do you buy?

Would you like to?

Where do you shop?

Why do you choose this product/outlet?

How much do you spend on?

How many times do you use or buy....?

Would you prefer to...?

Which improvements you would make in.....?

What do you need that you don't find in.....?

.....

Remember that a questionnaire must be clear, preferably with short questions and closed answers, and not too long in order not to lose the interviewee's attention.

Lesson 2: Investigating your competitors.

ACTIVITY 3

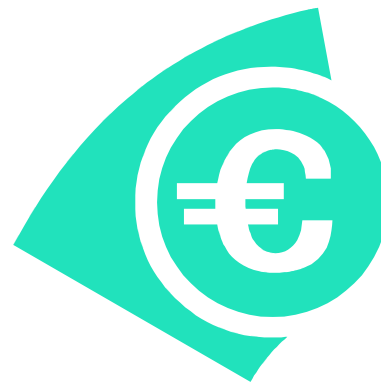
Who are your competitors?

Identify your competitors; try to find out how many businesses are offering the same product or service as yours. Classify them by proximity and analyze the products' prices and their features.

Competitor	Proximity	Product/Service	Special Features	Price

Also try to define their 'position' in the market place compared with your own.
Check the supplementary material to revise what 'position' means.

Lesson 3: Pricing methodologies.



ACTIVITY 4

What are your prices and why?

In this activity first you have to identify the stage of the product life cycle and justify this. *Consult the supplementary material to do so.*

Secondly you have to consider the different pricing methodologies and choose one or more considering the advantages and disadvantages of all of them. You need to justify your choices too.

METHODOLOGY	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
Price skimming		
Penetration pricing		
Competitor based pricing		
Demand based or perceived value pricing		
Cost plus pricing		
Predatory pricing		
Price discrimination		
Loss leader		
Psychological pricing		

To do this second activity, each group will be handed a handout explaining three of these strategies, you will have to summarize the definitions to explain them

to the rest of the groups. Once you get all the definitions you will be able to complete this table.



Lesson 4: Differentiating your product and identifying your audience.

ACTIVITY 5

How will you reach these customers and what interest do you think they have in your product or service?

How can you make your service or product different? Define it offering something new:

1. **Pricing.** Is your product a luxury item, somewhere in the middle, or cheap, cheap, cheap.
2. **Quality.** Total quality is a much used and abused phrase. But is your product well produced? What controls are in place to assure consistency? Do you back your quality claim with customer-friendly guarantees, warranties, and return policies?
3. **Service.** Do you offer the added value of customer service and support? Is your product customized and personalized?
4. **Distribution.** How do customers obtain your product? The channel or distribution is part of positioning.
5. **Packaging.** Packaging makes a strong statement. Make sure it's delivering the message you intend.
6.

(Try to use the information you collected from the questionnaire you made before)

Find out how to contact your potential customers:

- Identify your audience.
- Choose the message and the answer you want to obtain. (Write different messages and explain the answer you want to obtain)
- Choose the media (mailing, local or national press, magazines, specialist publications, TV, flyers, brochures)

Lesson 5: Starting a promotional campaign.



ACTIVITY 6:

- Design a logo and a brochure.
- Design a promotional video (5 minutes maximum). Do research through the internet about promotional videos in order to make the video appealing to the audience. (Also you can look at the supplementary material)
- And finally design a promotional plan based on prices, gifts, parties...
- Try to find out what will be the cost of everything.

unit 3: practising business



Lesson 1: Are you able to sell your product or service?

ACTIVITY 1

How good would you be at selling your business? Read the list of phrases. What do they all mean? In your group, put the phrases in the correct, logical order.

CLOSE THE SALE

HELP THE CUSTOMER TO CHOOSE

OPEN THE SALE (GREET THE CUSTOMER)

THANK THE CUSTOMER

SHOW THE GOODS

SUGGEST ADDITIONAL SERVICES

HELP THE CUSTOMER TO CHOOSE

DISCUSS THE OBJECTIONS

ACTIVITY 2

Match all these expressions with the stages of the selling process you made up in activity 1.

You should/ you shouldn't....

I think/ I don't think you should....

I'd advise you to....

What about ...?

How about?

Why don't you try... ?

That's a good idea.

That's a possibility.

That's out of the question.

I don't think that's the answer.

I'm not sure about that.
How much are they?
That's expensive!
I'm surprised the discount isn't higher
What discount did you expect?
You can't have 9 per cent.
I'm sorry but we always do this.
We offer an extra warranty period, an early delivery, a good support documentation (a full set of manuals, free of charge)
Hello! Can I help you?
The product/service has no need to be introduced: everybody knows how good it is.
First with this p/s you can...Secondly...And finally...
You can rely on...
You can be sure you are not going to have problems
I can offer you a long guarantee
Believe me I have tried it
It has been proved
Everybody who has it is very satisfied
If you buy it you will realise that..
If you buy it you will be able to...
If you buy it you will have...
If you have any problem we can solve it: technical assistance (warranty), home delivery, payment facilities...
If you are not satisfied we will refund your money.

ACTIVITY 3

In pairs, one of you is the seller and the other the buyer. Using the list to help you, make the sale. Then swap over.

Here are some useful tips for a successful sale.

1. Be charming and act honestly.
2. Be confident about your product.
3. Communicate enthusiasm.
4. Straight to the heart: Mankind is governed more by their feelings than by reason.
5. Don't sell the feature, sell the benefit.
6. Explain yourself correctly and clearly.
7. Be succinct.

ACTIVITY 4

In pairs do your selling roleplay in front of the rest of the students, then they have to assess the seven points. Finally they must say what they think about your performance, will they buy your product?

Lesson 2: Business roles.

In deciding how you will handle different situations that may occur when you have your own business, it can be very useful to try them out beforehand. This will help you to discover the best way of doing something.

ACTIVITY 5

Role play: try it with these situations. Divide into groups (each group has to deal with one of these situations), and decide who will play each part. Take some time to decide what sort of thing the person you are playing will be concerned about.

- a) One of your suppliers keeps letting you down. However, there is no one else you can use. You go to visit your supplier to make sure that the supplies are more regular in future. The supplier, though, wants to start charging you more money.
- b) You have gone to the bank manager to try to borrow £10.000. This is your first meeting with the bank manager. She/he knows nothing at all about your business.
- c) You are trying to sell your product or service to a customer. This customer could be very good for you and could provide you with a lot of useful contacts. So it's important that you create a good impression. The customer wants to keep the price as low as possible.



NOTE: you can do it first in Catalan or Spanish and then try to translate it.

ACTIVITY 6

Perform your role play in front of the rest of the groups, so they have to discuss what happened and how you could have handled each situation better.

ACTIVITY 7

In business problems can happen. When you are working on your own, it can be difficult to find a solution. When you get together with other people, it can be easier to find a way out.

Get together with a group of other people, and write down all the solutions (at least 5 for each) you can think of –no matter how silly they may seem– to solve these problems.

- a) You are on your way to deliver a vital consignment of goods to a very valuable customer. Your van breaks down on the motorway. What can you do?
(Remember that the most important thing is not to let our customer down).
- b) You have recently hired someone to work for you, she or he is good at the job, but keeps arriving late in the mornings and after lunch. What do you do?
- c) All your time is taken up making the business pay. You have no time to plan or to expand. What can you do?

ACTIVITY 8

Discuss what solution is best, and range them from 1 to 5. Explain your solutions to the rest of the class.

Lesson 3: Solving problems.

Accidents do happen. Sometimes things are not as good as we want them to be. Clients complain, suppliers are not on time, workers have problems, machines don't work properly, the organization fails...You have to deal with all of this.



ACTIVITY 9

Write a letter of complaint. Imagine you are a dissatisfied client, and you want your problem to be solved or your money to be refunded. If you don't know how to write it follow the instructions below:

ACTIVITY 10

Answer the letter of complaint, accepting or rejecting it. Use the supplementary material if you don't know how to do it.

ACTIVITY 11

Role play: make the same complaint but now using the telephone. Here you have some useful expressions.

ANSWERING THE TELEPHONE

How can I help?
Can I speak to ..., please?
Who's calling, please?
Please hold
I'll just put you through
Could I speak to.....please?
Who shall I say is calling?
Just a second
I'll see if he's in
I've goton the phone for you
Hang on a moment

EXPLAINING THE PROBLEM

I want to make a complaint about...
I asked for... and I received...
You promised/assured me that...
It doesn't work properly...
First...second...and finally...
This is not what you told me...
The amount is not correct...
I have been having problems since...
I haven't received the product yet
There is a mistake in the invoice
The color is not the correct one
I felt sick after eating your menu
My hair is falling down after you put me color
The internet connection is not working since yesterday
You didn't told me that I need an extra product to make this works

DEALING WITH THE PROBLEM

You can explain to me what actually is the problem...
Can I take your name?
I understand you are having a few problems
Would you like to just explain from the beginning what's happened?
I'm sorry for that wait
I don't know what the problem was
As you can imagine...
I'm sorry about this, Mr Anderson
I can actually look into that for you ...
I'm sorry for the inconvenience
I can assure you
Let me check for you

GIVING BAD NEWS

I'm sorry, but we found the missing item here in our factory.
I'm afraid we can't send them immediately.

SAYING SORRY

I'm very sorry about that.
I apologize for the mistake.

PROMISING TO DO SOMETHING

I'll look into the problem.
I'll ship the missing items today.

OFFERING TO DO SOMETHING

Would you like me to send it by express mail?
I'll send it today

Lesson 4: Hiring employees (the CV)



ACTIVITY 12

Write your CV related to the job needed in your business. (You can also check the supplementary material).

Lesson 5: Hiring employees (the interview)

ACTIVITY 13

Role play: one or two of you must be the interviewers and the other the interviewee, each of you have to prepare the questions and the answers. After rehearsing you must perform in front of the whole class and the rest of the students must decide if the candidate is suitable or not, and also if the interviewer's questions are suitable or not.

Here you have some useful tips for a successful job interview, these 10 points will be assessed in order to decide if you are the best candidate.

To perform well at an interview you must convey the following in your descriptions of your character and ability:

1. **Motivation:** Take the opportunity to ask questions of your interviewer. This will convey enthusiasm and motivation, a thirst for knowledge coupled with a desire to get things done.
2. **Energy and Drive:** Someone who is prepared to put in the extra effort required to get the job done.
3. **Confidence:** Display confidence and poise in your interactions with individuals at all levels in the organization.
4. **Determination:** Not to be confused with stubbornness. Convey a desire to overcome problems despite difficult situations.
5. **Attitude:** Someone who is open and friendly but professional always, a team player.
6. **Reliable:** Self-motivated with an ability to work independently with a minimum of supervision.
7. **Honesty and Integrity:** Each company has its own code of conduct. Display an ethical responsibility for all actions undertaken by you both positive and negative.
8. **Listening Skills:** Be an active listener. Take time to listen, assimilate the information and respond.
9. **Analytical Skills:** Ever more important, weigh up each problem and find a balanced solution.
10. **Dedication:** Display pride in your work and the dedication to see each task through to completion in a timely manner.

But first look at the questions and answers you have below and try to match them.

JOB INTERVIEW: POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

Why did you choose this company?
What are your strengths/weaknesses?
How would your friends describe you?
What is your greatest achievement?
How well do you work in a team?
Where will you be in 5 years' time?
Have you ever had a difficult boss?
Have you worked abroad in the last five years?
Have you ever managed a team?
Have you studied any other languages apart from English?

JOB INTERVIEW: POSSIBLE ANSWERS

People say I'm sociable, organized, and decisive
Because I think I will find the work environment both challenging and rewarding
I have excellent time management, but I can be impatient for results
I always support my colleagues and believe we should work towards a common goal
Leading the University football team to the national Championships
My aim is to have a position in the Management Team.
No, I haven't. But I've lived in Spain for a year, so I can speak Spanish pretty well.
Yes, In fact that's why I resigned from my first job after only six months.
Yes, I have. I was in charge of ten technicians when I worked for Olivetti.

Secondly make a brief description of yourself and be ready to answer about your skills (you can use the one you made in unit 1, and the examples you have below).

WAYS OF DESCRIBING YOURSELF

Thoughtful, outgoing, independent, attentive to detail, energetic, ambitious, adaptable, patient, creative, persuasive...

Finally design your interview, try to use some of the questions and answers you have above, and also use the supplementary material.