



Generate Your Business Idea

Module 3: Personal Assessment

March 2023

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Zwolle, the Netherlands
March 2023

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Module overview

Objectives

- To assess the extent to which students possess qualities of a business person.
- To assess specific personal skills, abilities and knowledge of students that will help them to develop business ideas.
- To learn about which business types match best with the students' preferences.
- To identify the interest directions of the students.

Materials

- Flipcharts and markers
- Graph of 3 elements of a good business idea
- Personal assessment sheet and score card sheet (attached)
- Laptop(s) or tablet(s) with Interest directions program in Excel
- Interest directions booklet

Duration

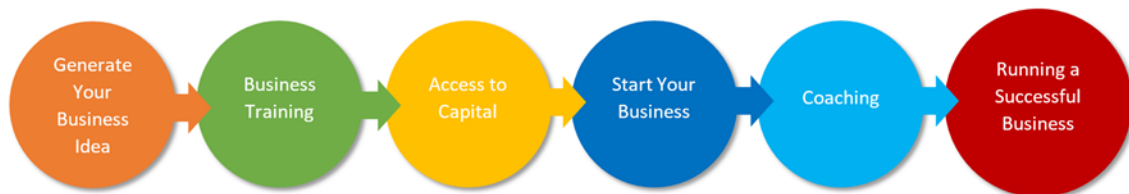
Element	Duration
Introduction	15 minutes
10. Personal Assessment	60 minutes
11. Abilities, Experiences and Interests	45 minutes
12. Types of Businesses	45 minutes
13. Interest Directions	60 minutes
Closure	15 minutes
Total	4 hours



Introduction

- Welcome the participants and make sure everybody feels at ease.
- Introduce the session of today to the participants and go through the objectives of this module.
- Show them schedule of the day, including the breaks.
- Explain the ground rules of the training.
- Make sure that everybody understands how the current module fits within the total picture of the Generate Your Business Idea training (make reference to the below roadmap towards a successful business).
- Go back to the previous module and shortly discuss the main learning points.

Roadmap to a Successful Business



10. Personal Assessment

Introduction

Read the theory 'Personal Assessment'. Tell the students that in the following exercise they will find out to what extent they have the skills, experience and personal characteristics to successfully run a business. Refer back to the figure of the 3 elements of a good business idea (module 1) and point to the relevant circles (Needs, Abilities & Resources, and Motivation).

Exercise

- Give each student a personal assessment sheet (see annex) and a pen.
- There are 10 topics and each topic contains 5 pairs of statements. Give students the following instructions: "Encircle only one letter (A or B) corresponding to the statement from each pair that applies to you. Be honest in your assessment."
- When finished with all statements, give the students the scorecard sheet (see annex). Have students transfer the answers from the Assessment sheet to the Score card sheet. Provide help where needed.
- Let the students count the total number of points per topic and let them transfer these total amounts to the final table on the scorecard sheet.
- Let participants count their total points over the 10 topics.



Reflection

Tell students that if their score is 50 or higher, they have many of the personal characteristics of a good business person. If the score is lower than 50, they need to work on their weaknesses and turn them into strengths. Participants can look at each topic and see what their areas for improvement are. Go through each of the topics and ask the students in a plenary to come up with ways to counter a weakness in that area.

Theory: Personal Assessment



Previously we have seen that a good business idea focuses on 3 important elements: 1) Needs, 2) Abilities and resources and 3) Motivation. In the past module, the focus was on Needs. The current module focuses on your personal abilities and skills and on your personal interests.

Before you begin to think about business ideas you need to find out if you are suited to run a business of your own. There are certain qualities of successful business people. Some people possess more of these qualities, whereas others have less of these qualities. This doesn't mean they can't start a business, but they will probably need to work on some of their weaknesses and turn them into strengths.

Some possible ways to improve on your weaknesses include:

- Talk to people in business so you can learn from them.
- Get some training, attend a course, or do a study.
- Become an assistant or apprentice to a successful business person.
- Read books that will help you develop your business skills.

You may also want to think about finding a business partner who complements your strengths and weaknesses, instead of going into business entirely on your own.



11. Abilities, Experiences and Interests

Introduction

Read and explain the theory 'Abilities, Experiences and Interests'. Tell the students that many people often underestimate their skills, abilities, experiences and knowledge. Explain that everything they have done in their lives so far can be a possible opportunity for a business.

Exercise

- Give each student a piece of paper and a pen.
- Ask the students to make pairs of two.
- Tell each student to ask the other student about his/her **skills**. What are they good at? (e.g. growing vegetables, painting, repairing mobile phones, sewing, etc.). Let the interviewer write down the skills on the paper. When finished, they switch roles.
- Tell each student to ask the other student about his/her **work experience and education**. This includes jobs, trainings, other work experience. It is a bit more formal than just the skills (e.g. computer course, welding course, office clerk, driver). Let the interviewer write down the work experience and education on the paper. When finished, they switch roles.
- Tell each student to ask the other student about his/her **interests & hobbies**. What do they do in their free time? (e.g. playing guitar, playing football, singing in a choir, chatting with friends on the phone, hiking). Let the interviewer write down the interests and hobbies on the paper. When finished, they switch roles.
- Tell the students (still in pairs) to look at each other's paper and let them discuss about possible business ideas that could come up from the results. Write these business ideas on the paper.



Reflection

Ask the participants if they were able to identify any business ideas on basis of the scan. Ask the students, in a plenary session, if it is sufficient to identify your abilities and your interests to start a business. Refer back to the 3 elements of a good business idea (Module 1) and stress the importance of always focusing also on the need for the product or service.

Theory: Abilities, Experiences and Interests



In the previous section we looked at personal characteristics that make a good business person. Many of those characteristics have to do with life skills and character traits that you have developed along your life. These have become part of who you are.

In this section we are going to look more closely at your technical abilities, your education and work experience and your hobbies & interests. Many things that you have been doing in your life have equipped you with specific skills, abilities and knowledge. Most people start a business in something that they already have some experience with, something that they learned to do. For example: someone may have been helping family members to fix their cars. They can use this knowledge to start a car mechanic business.

Often people start a small business using their limited skills and knowledge in a certain area, and as the business grows, they increase their skills and knowledge so that they become real experts. So don't worry if you aren't an expert in a certain area: you may become one as your business flourishes.

The most successful businesses are businesses in which people enjoy what they are doing. These people are more motivated to invest time and resources in their business, and they are less inclined to give up on their dreams. Therefore it is always very important to ask yourself: which things do I really enjoy doing? Which things give me positive energy? Where would I like to see myself in 5 years from now?



12. Types of Businesses

Introduction

Read and explain the theory ‘Types of Businesses’. Tell the students that this exercise will help them to better define their business idea. Make reference to the figure of 3 important elements to determine a good business idea.

Exercise



- Give each student a piece of paper and a pen.
- Ask the students to group into pairs.
- Ask the students in each pair to discuss the following questions:
 - Are you good with your hands or do you prefer talking to people?
 - Are you an active outdoor person or are you happy working from an office or store?
 - Would you like to be in direct contact with many different clients, or would you prefer to make limited number of deals with bigger buying companies?
- Ask students to write down which type of business they prefer. Then ask them to write down the main reasons why they chose that type of business.

Reflection

Ask the students if the choice for a certain business type was easy or difficult. Tell them that sometimes it can be difficult to choose, and that sometimes combinations are possible. Tell them that this choice is not definite; they can rethink their choice at any time and make different decisions later on. The exercise can also confirm the type of business that you definitely **don't** like.

Theory: Types of Businesses



There are different types of businesses depending on what you do and who you sell to. For example: some businesses require that you make products, some businesses offer certain services, and some businesses just buy and re-sell products. Some businesses sell to many smaller clients, while other businesses sell to a limited number of bigger clients.

One way of classifying businesses is the following:

- **Retailing:** retailers purchase ready-made goods from wholesalers or suppliers for resale at a profit.
- **Wholesaling:** larger dealers, who buy very large quantities of products from producers, break them into smaller quantities and resell to the retailers.
- **Manufacturing:** entrepreneurs who use raw materials (leather, wood, cloth, metal etc.) and make new products out of these materials.
- **Service providing:** service providers are people who sell a particular service.
- **Agriculture, forestry or fishing:** primarily involves extracting raw materials by farming, logging, and harvesting of land and water resources and selling it.

Some businesses are a combination of these types. For example: if you own a garage you are repairing cars (service providing) while at the same time selling oil, tires, spare parts and other supplies (retailing).



13. Interest Directions

Introduction

Tell the students that they are going to fill out a personal test. The test is meant to identify their priority interests. This will help them to find out what type of business they like. The various interest or skill directions – seven in total – are described in the theory, but to make sure the participants make the test with an open mind, let them make the test before reading the theory.

(For the facilitator: each student should have access to a laptop or tablet in order to do the test. If there is a limited number of laptops, then students can take turns during the course of the training. Another option is to let the students write the answers on a piece of paper and data can be processed later in the excel format).



Exercise

- Give each student a laptop and start the interest directions program in Excel.
- Give each student a booklet with the 42 interest direction questions. Per question ask them to choose between picture A and picture B, according to what they would prefer doing. Tell them not to think it over too much.
- Ask them to fill in their answers in the Excel sheet.
- Ask them to go to the results tab and look at the outcome of the test. For which interest directions do they have a Low interest, Average interest and High interest?
- If possible, print out the results table for them.

Reflection

Read the theory 'Interest Directions'. Based on the results, let the students think about self-employment opportunities and possible business ideas. Make some time available to discuss the results of the test with them personally.

Theory: Interest Directions



Each type of business requires specific skills and knowledge from you. But the choice for a certain type of business also depends on your personal preference: do you like to manufacture things? Do you like to be in direct contact with many different clients? Do you like to make deals with bigger buying companies? Do you like to work in an office or do you prefer to be in the field? Nowadays there are many different tools (often digital) that can help you to identify where your natural motivation and interest for certain interest directions lies. A common classification in interest directions is the following:

- a. Work with animals and plants (AP)**
Work in the nature: farmer but also selling fruit and bricklayer
- b. Work as technician (Te)**
Work with machines: cars, electrician, wood, metal, driver
- c. Work with processes (Pro)**
Work in pharmacy, cook, research institute
- d. Creative work (Cr)**
Not only art, also hairdresser, printing
- e. Work with people (PP)**
Nurse, children care, elderly care
- f. Trade (Tr)**
Shop, market place, sales representative, entrepreneur
- g. Administration (Adm)**
Secretary, data typist, post office, work with computers

If you know which interest directions appeal to you, it can help you to think about business ideas that can be associated with these particular interest directions.



Closure

Evaluation

Discuss the lesson with the students. What went well, what could have gone better, and what have they learned?

Annexes

On the next pages, you find the annexes for this module:

- Personal Assessment Exercise
- Personal Assessment Scorecard (how to use -example)
- Personal Assessment Scorecard (template)
- Personal Assessment Scorecard Part II

Follow-up

This is the end of module 3 of the 'Generate Your Business Idea' training. Continue with module 4: 'Business Concepts.'



Annex: Personal Assessment Exercise

Are you the right kind of person to start a business?

Before you begin thinking up business ideas you need to find out if you are suited to running a business of your own. On the following pages is an exercise for you to do. It will help you understand the qualities of a successful entrepreneur and enable you to assess your ability and your potential to run your own business.

Personal assessment exercise

Each topic contains 5 pairs of statements. Encircle only one letter (A or B) corresponding to the statement from each pair that applies to you. Be honest in your assessment. These exercises are for your benefit and will help you find out if you have the skills, experience, and personal characteristics to successfully run your own business.

TOPIC 1		
1.	A B	I have a job. I do not have a job.
2.	A B	I did not have a good job before I decided to start a business. I had a good job before I decided to start my business.
3.	A B	I only work to earn money. There is not much enjoyable or interesting in work. I learn something from every job that I have. I find work interesting.
4.	A B	I want to own a business so that I can provide a better lifestyle for my family. I want to be in business because I want to be successful. Rich people own their businesses.
5.	A B	A person needs lots of favors from others to succeed in whatever they do. I am convinced that my success or failure depends mostly on my own efforts.

TOPIC 2		
1.	A B	I do not like taking risks, even when there is a chance of big rewards. I am convinced that to advance further in life, I must take risks.
2.	A B	I think there are opportunities in taking risks. If I have a choice, I prefer to do things the safest way.
3.	A B	If I like an idea, I take risks without thinking of the advantages and disadvantages. I take risks only after evaluating the advantages and disadvantages.
4.	A B	I am willing to accept that I may lose the money I invest in my business. I find it difficult to accept that I may lose the money I invest in my business.
5.	A B	I like to be in total control of whatever I do. In doing anything, I do not always look for complete control over a situation as long as I have enough control over it.



TOPIC 3		
1.	A	I do not give up easily even if I am faced with terrible difficulties.
	B	If there are many difficulties, it is not really worth fighting for something.
2.	A	Setbacks and failures affect me badly.
	B	Setbacks and failures do not discourage me for long.
3.	A	I believe in my ability to turn the tide of events.
	B	There is only so much a person can do himself or herself. Fate and luck play a big part.
4.	A	If people say no to me, I usually feel bad and drop the issue.
	B	If people say no to me, I take it lightly. I try my best to change their minds.
5.	A	I keep calm in a crisis situation and work out the best response.
	B	I get confused and nervous when a crisis situation develops.

TOPIC 4		
1.	A	I will not involve my family in business decisions which will affect them.
	B	I will involve my family in business decisions which will affect them.
2.	A	My family will understand that I am not able to spend so much time with them because of my business commitments.
	B	My family will be upset if I am not able to spend so much time with them because of my business commitments.
3.	A	If my business is not very successful, my family will be very angry about the hardships it may cause them.
	B	If my business is not very successful, my family will be willing to put up with financial hardships it may cause them.
4.	A	My family will be willing to help in my business difficulties.
	B	My family will probably not be willing or able to help in my business difficulties.
5.	A	My family is worried about me starting a business.
	B	My family thinks it is a good idea for me to start a business.

TOPIC 5		
1.	A	I find it difficult to deal with problems. I worry about them or I avoid thinking of them.
	B	I am not afraid of problems. I accept problems as a part of life. I try to find a solution for every problem.
2.	A	When I have difficulties I tackle them with all my energy. Difficulties are challenges to me and I almost enjoy them.
	B	If I have difficulties, I try to forget about them or wait until they go away.
3.	A	I like to go with the flow and wait for good things to happen.
	B	I do not wait for things to happen. I try to make them happen.
4.	A	I always try to find something different to do.
	B	I like to do only the things which I know I am good at.
5.	A	I think all ideas can be helpful. I pursue as many ideas as I can to see if they will work.
	B	



		People get many ideas but you can't do everything. I prefer to stick to the ideas I have.
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TOPIC 6		
1.	A	I will take from my business only as much money as my business can afford to pay me and my family.
	B	I will take from my business whatever money my family needs.
2.	A	If my friend or family is in financial difficulty, I will help them even though it may hurt my business.
	B	If my friend or family is in financial difficulty, I will help only to the amount I have set aside for my personal expenses. I can't take money away from the business.
3.	A	I cannot neglect my business by using a lot of business time for family and social obligations.
	B	My family and social obligations have a high priority – they have to come before the business.
4.	A	My family and friends will get special benefits and services from my business.
	B	My family and friends will have to pay for my products, services, or use of my business assets, just like any customer.
5.	A	I will not give people credit just because they are my friends or family members.
	B	I will usually give credit to my friends or family members.

TOPIC 7		
1.	A	I can make decisions easily. I enjoy making decisions.
	B	I find it hard to make decisions.
2.	A	I can make difficult decisions on my own.
	B	I get advice from many other people before I make difficult decisions.
3.	A	I put off making decisions for as long as I can.
	B	I usually decide what to do as soon as a decision is needed.
4.	A	I think carefully before making a decision and consider all the options.
	B	My decisions are based on my feelings and intuition. I just know what to do immediately.
5.	A	I often worry about making mistakes.
	B	I am not afraid of making mistakes because I can learn from them.



TOPIC 8		
1.	A	I will produce only those goods and services which I enjoy producing.
	B	I will produce only those goods and services which customers want.
2.	A	If customers want cheaper products or services, I will examine how I can meet their requirements.
	B	If customers want cheaper products or services, they will have to go to another business.
3.	A	If my customers want credit, I must examine the ways to provide them with credit at minimum risk to the business.
	B	I will not sell my products or services on credit to anybody.
4.	A	If by relocating my business elsewhere I can get more business, I am prepared to do it.
	B	I am not prepared to relocate my business. Customers and suppliers must come to me wherever I am.
5.	A	By studying trends in the market, I will try to change my attitudes and ways of working to keep up with the times.
	B	It is best to work the way I already know. It is difficult to keep up with how the world changes.

TOPIC 9		
1.	A	I like to keep calm and easy. I do not work well under pressure.
	B	I work well under pressure. I enjoy challenges.
2.	A	I like to put in many hours of work each day and don't mind using spare time to work.
	B	I think it is important to have time away from work. One should not have to work too much.
3.	A	I am not willing to spend less time with my family and friends because of my business.
	B	I am willing to spend less time with my family and friends because of my business.
4.	A	I can put off my social commitments, leisure, and hobbies if necessary.
	B	I think it is important to have lots of time for socializing and hobbies, and plenty of time to relax.
5.	A	I am willing to work very hard.
	B	I am willing to work and do what is necessary.



TOPIC 10		
1.	A	I do not like to negotiate. It is easier to do what other people suggest.
	B	I enjoy negotiating and often get my way without offending anyone.
2.	A	I communicate well with others.
	B	I have difficulty in communicating with others.
3.	A	I am generally not very interested in other people's views and opinions.
	B	I like to listen to other people's views and opinions.
4.	A	If I negotiate, I prefer to play it by ear and see what happens.
	B	If I negotiate, I think about what is in my favor and what is in the other person's favor.
5.	A	I believe the best way to get what I want in a negotiation is to try to find a way for both parties to get what they want.
	B	It will be my business so my opinion is the most important Someone always loses out.



Annex: Personal Assessment Scorecard (how to use – example)

- Put a circle *around your choices*
- Count on the numbers with a circle around it: total is 8.

Topic 1	A	B	Topic 2	A	B	Topic 3	A	B	Topic 4	A	B	Topic 5	A	B
1	2	0	1	0	2	1	2	0	1	0	2	1	0	2
2	0	2	2	2	0	2	0	2	2	2	0	2	2	0
3	0	2	3	0	2	3	2	0	3	0	2	3	0	2
4	2	0	4	2	0	4	0	2	4	2	0	4	2	0
5	0	2	5	0	2	5	2	0	5	0	2	5	2	0
Total 1	8		Total 2	8		Total 3			Total 4			Total 5		

$2+2+0+2+2=8$

$2+0+2+2+2=8$



Annex: Personal Assessment Scorecard (template)

Topic 1	A	B	Topic 2	A	B	Topic 3	A	B	Topic 4	A	B	Topic 5	A	B	
1	2	0	1	0	2	1	2	0	1	0	2	1	0	2	
2	0	2	2	2	0	2	0	2	2	2	0	2	2	0	
3	0	2	3	0	2	3	2	0	3	0	2	3	0	2	
4	2	0	4	2	0	4	0	2	4	2	0	4	2	0	
5	0	2	5	0	2	5	2	0	5	0	2	5	2	0	
Total 1			Total 2			Total 3			Total 4			Total 5			

Topic 6	A	B	Topic 7	A	B	Topic 8	A	B	Topic 9	A	B	Topic 10	A	B	
1	2	0	1	2	0	1	0	2	1	0	2	1	0	2	
2	0	2	2	2	0	2	2	0	2	2	0	2	2	0	
3	2	0	3	0	2	3	2	0	3	0	2	3	0	2	
4	0	2	4	2	0	4	2	0	4	2	0	4	0	2	
5	2	0	5	0	2	5	2	0	5	2	0	5	2	0	
Total 6			Total 7			Total 8			Total 9			Total 10			



Annex: Personal Assessment Scorecard, Part II

(give this to the students after they filled out the scorecard)

Topic	Score
1. Motivation for starting a business	
2. Risk-taking abilities	
3. Perseverance and ability to deal with crisis	
4. Family support	
5. Initiative	
6. Ability to reconcile family, culture, and business	
7. Decision-making abilities	
8. Ability to adapt to business' needs	
9. Commitment to business activities	
10. Negotiation skills	
TOTAL SCORE:	

