

UNIT VII: PLANNING



Good plans shape good decisions. That's why good planning helps to make elusive dreams come true.

-Lester R. Bittel

UNIT VII Section 1

OBJECTIVE: To recognize the importance of planning and give examples of how planning can overcome problems.

Instructional Notes

Planning for a venture is a key to success. Planning begins after the careful selection and evaluation of opportunities and ideas. Actually, the research conducted in Foundational Objective 5 is part of planning. The resources and information collected in Foundational Objective 5 will be used throughout the venture planning process.

Planning is a process that can be accomplished by following a general step-by-step guide. A general planning framework helps answer the following questions:

What is to be done?

Why is it being done?

Where will this be done?

When will this be done?

Who will do it?

How will it be done?

Using this basic, general outline, students may complete their first planning exercise. A student's objective may be to increase her or his marks next term. Using the planning guide, students may describe the plan, procedures, and standards that can help to accomplish this goal. A simpler plan may involve planning what the student may do for the rest of the day or week. A simple application is the first step in planning.

Why is planning important? What problems and pitfalls can planning avoid? What unpleasant occurrence in your recent past could have been avoided by planning? "Failing to plan is planning to fail." One of the key purposes of planning is to help to determine when changes are necessary and allow time to make them.

It is strongly recommended that students be reminded that the decision not to proceed with a venture or to adjust goals and objectives for a venture can be made at any time.

**Suggested Instructional Approaches
and Assessment Techniques**

**Resources/Teacher
Notes**

Advance Organizer. Refer to the entrepreneurial cycle outlined in Unit I, Section 1. While the sequence of steps 1-5 of the cycle may be completed in varying ways, step 6 always follows steps 1-5. Rationale: planning cannot help make opportunities and ideas successful if the need or want is not there.

Students may reflect on their support network and the support it may provide through the venture planning process.

Invite an entrepreneur (or have students invite an entrepreneur) to the classroom to reinforce for the students the importance of planning for entrepreneurial success. The guest may be asked to discuss experiences with planning/lack of planning in his/her entrepreneurial process. Students may be encouraged to clarify the planning process by participating in a question and answer period with the guest, following the presentation. Students may record information gained from the speaker as an entry into their entrepreneurial log for future reference. The information entered may be assessed for accuracy.

A general framework for planning may be posted somewhere in the classroom for easy reference. As well, the framework may be used as an advance organizer for the students as they proceed through their venture plans.

UNIT VII Section 2

OBJECTIVE: To organize and explain a general planning framework to be used before the completion of a venture plan.

Instructional Notes

Venture plans, although unique to each venture, follow a general framework. The students may take the six questions listed in Unit VII , Section 1 and expand upon them to derive a general planning framework suitable for the development of their venture, whether it be commercial or non-commercial. The end result, however, should be a generic framework suitable for the entire class to use in planning any venture.

Students should be aware of the general rules for preparing a venture plan:

- honesty: be honest with yourself and your teammates, investors, and others involved in your plan.
- good writing skills: use clear language, accentuating the positive.
- make the plan legible and neat: use appropriate print and paper.
- use charts, tables, illustrations and photographs when applicable
- avoid stereotyping: racial, gender, rural/urban.
- do not exaggerate.

Another framework could include items similar to a strategic planning sequence often described in management processes. For example:

1. State the mission or purpose for the venture. It should be clear to all persons involved.
2. Evaluate the present strengths and weaknesses. Analyze the resources available at the present time. Encourage the planners to be more realistic in their expectations.

3. Forecast the environment. What anticipated opportunities and threats can be seen both internally and externally (inside or outside the school; or inside or outside the business)? Trends and forecasts may be helpful.
4. Develop goals for the venture including timelines. Both long-term and short-term goals may be identified that will be developed in light of the strengths, weaknesses, and environment issues identified above.
5. Develop operating objectives. The objectives may be an assignment of duties to individuals or departments or they may be procedural objectives such as the training of a person to complete a task.
6. Develop operating plans and a program. This will be completed in the following venture/business plan objective.

Students should realize that even at this point, their venture may never work. They must understand that they may choose to proceed, cancel, or modify their venture after the planning framework has been completed. Everyone makes mistakes and we build upon those mistakes!

Suggested Instructional Approaches and Assessment Techniques

The student may create a planning checklist to be used in all venture planning. A sample organizer may be given to the students as an example to use when determining a suitable generic framework for their venture planning. Teachers may assess the accuracy of the criteria the student identified on the created checklist.

Students may work in pairs or small groups to discuss the planning and development of a general framework for venture planning. The information obtained from the groups should be shared with the entire class to synthesize a common understanding of planning as well as to identify a common general framework that may be used by all students in planning. A reflective discussion may be held to discuss how planning and the use of a planning framework may help overcome problems.

It is recommended that the skills and processes acquired in Units III and IV be reviewed with the students to reinforce the importance of entrepreneurial characteristics and how the development of entrepreneurial skills assist in venture planning.

A review of Unit VI, Sections 2, 3, and 4 would be useful for students to reinforce how conditions (trends, forecasts) and market research are important to the venture planning process.

Resources/Teacher Notes

Students may reflect on the venture planning information they may have received from guest speakers or case studies they have examined in the course.

If an entrepreneurial log has been kept, students may use it as a reference.

Refer to the sample venture planning checklist in this section.

Flexibility in venture planning will be required to accommodate the uniqueness of individual pursuits. The teachers, students and others in the "support network" may provide valuable assistance throughout this process.

UNIT VII Section 3

OBJECTIVE: To define a venture plan and explain its function and importance.

Instructional Notes

What is a venture plan? How does it fit into the venture creation cycle?
Why was a general planning framework developed before the venture plan?
Why is the venture plan so important? Who needs to see the venture plan?
These and other questions may guide the classroom planning around this unit.

The venture plan is a basic planning tool, but it also bridges the gap between thinking and doing. The general planning framework described in the last section essentially forces the entrepreneur to ask and clarify specific questions before starting a venture. The venture plan will contain some of the same questions as asked in the framework, but a **decision, action, or statement** will be made on each.

Suggested Instructional Approaches and Assessment Techniques

The parts of a venture plan could be planned as a jigsaw activity. In small groups, each student may examine one section of a venture plan and share his/her learning with the others in the group. Teachers may orally assess students' knowledge of the venture plan, and their ability to apply this knowledge to the plan's function and its importance to potential success.

Sample venture plans may be distributed to students to examine. A reading guide may be distributed to individual students or a small group, outlining questions with respect to the parts of the venture plan, its function, and its importance. The written answers on the reading guide may be assessed for accuracy. An extended open-ended test item may be used to assess whether students are able to define a venture plan and explain its function and importance.

Resources/Teacher Notes

Collect a variety of sample venture plans for future distribution.

A sample business plan may be available from various organizations.

Refer to the sample business plan in Section 4 of this unit.

Note: Venture plans are often not shared as they contain information that an entrepreneur may not wish to share openly with the public.

Teachers could keep a file of venture plans prepared by students to share as examples in the classroom.

Creating a Business Plan

Entrepreneurs often ask, "How can I increase my business?" The answer is usually easier than they think. But before figuring out how, they must decide where they want to take their business. This is why everyone in business should have a business plan, not just those seeking venture capital.

Your business plan will be the "road map" of your enterprise. It will show you how to get where you want to go. To develop a good plan, you need to write down the answers to quite a few questions.

To get you thinking, let's jump 20 years into the future. Describe your life. Are you still working or are you retired? Are you worth a lot of money? If so, is your wealth distributed? Are you an independent consultant or do you have a company? How large is your practice/company? What is your annual revenue? How many hours per week do you work? Do you work on weekends? Do you travel? And most importantly, are you happy? Tough questions? Maybe. But, they need to be answered honestly and realistically, as they will help in the creation of your vision and goals.

After defining your long-range goals, break them down into ten year and five year goals. Make sure they are consistent with your long-term plan. The next step is to determine what you need to do to achieve your goals.

Here are some short-term questions you should think about: Do you want more customers or steady customers? What is your competition doing? Will advertising help increase your profit? If so, what kind of advertising and what media should be used? Think of your own questions.

Your specific marketing strategies will depend on your individual goals once you have an idea of where you want to take your business. Put your answers down on paper! Organize your thoughts, questions, and concerns.

Business plans often follow a general format. You can modify this one to suit your exact needs.

1. Executive Summary
2. Company Profile including mission statement that describes your business and why you're in it.
3. Competitive Analysis
4. Marketing Strategy
5. Staff Qualifications
6. Financial Information
7. Appendices containing any additional information you would like to include

Review your plan for consistency. Is it coherent? Realistic? This is your guide to your business. It will help you get what you want. Keep it updated. Change it as your goals change or as the market changes. Remember, a little planning will take you a long way.

UNIT VII Section 4

OBJECTIVE: To outline a venture plan using a suggested step-by-step approach and apply it to a venture of the student's choice.

Instructional Notes

There are many venture plan frameworks in the resources. **The format below is suggested for secondary students.** After studying the purpose and methods involved in preparing each step of the venture plan, the students should prepare their own venture plan individually or in a small group situation.

1. **Summary or Description of the Venture:** This is the executive summary of the venture and should be one to three pages in length. The summary should state the purpose of the venture and may include a covering letter. The quality of writing is very important: clarity and preciseness are desirable. It is recommended that the reader clearly understand the content of the plan to decide if she or he wishes to proceed with reading the venture plan.
2. **Table of Contents:** This is a list of the appropriate titles and sections within the document, formatted in a clear and organized manner.
3. **Market Research, Analysis and Plan:** This section of the venture plan is perhaps the most important.

The marketing plan defines the marketing mix and should answer questions such as:

- What precise service/product will be sold/produced?
- At what price? What are projected sales (forecasting)?
- How will the service/product be marketed/advertised?
- Who will sell the product/provide the service and how?
- How does the service/product benefit a customer?

- Is the business/organization expected to grow?
- In what location(s) will the service/product be marketed (market segment)?

Remind students that each service/product goes through a life cycle. This life cycle includes: introduction, growth, maturity, and decline. An existing service/product may be in any one of the four stages. The students should identify the stage their proposed service/product is currently at, and adjust their marketing strategy and perhaps their venture plan, to accommodate the life cycle.

An example of an existing product that will require adjustments to the life cycle (if someone is proposing a new use for it) is the computer chip.

4. **Resource Analysis:** Many resources may have been explored in Foundational Objective 5. Items to include in resource analysis may be capital requirements, human resources (internal and external), and financial resources (dealt with in detail in step 6, below). More specific items to be analyzed or considered may include: suppliers, equipment, property and facilities, costs, geographical location, warehousing, machinery and equipment, and others.
5. **Operating Schedule:** Earlier in the course of study, students were asked to set goals and keep a journal as to whether those goals have been or will be met. This skill is useful in determining the operating schedule for the venture plan. Goals/strategies may be identified for the following: operations strategy, major events, risks, strategic plan and timetable, immediate objectives, intermediate objectives, and long-term objectives and timelines.
6. **Financial Program:** The students should be able to address the following issues: reason for financing; sources of financing; financial package; timing and stages of financing; previous financial information; current financial position; contracts for rent, office equipment, sales agreements, and waste removal; other income; legal restrictions/requirements; present financial position; and, how short-term and long-term income will be used.

Risk factors: Investors should be made aware of risks: How will changes in government policy affect a risk? Technical problems? and others.

The budget: The budget may be prepared by external human resources although the students should have some knowledge of financial assessment. The students may: prepare financial objectives; prepare a budget for their venture; estimate revenue and expenses; describe the key people and their expected compensation; prepare a cash flow forecast; calculate startup costs and operating expenses; and, prepare a current balance sheet.

Suggested Instructional Approaches and Assessment Techniques

Resources/Teacher Notes

Students may complete a learning contract for their venture planning project. Assessment information may be collected from the content, process, skills, and attitude components of the curriculum.

As students work through their venture plans, the teacher may provide "coaching" assistance.

Students may examine copies of annual reports from several organizations to compare the relationship between marketing expenditures and sales (ratios). This experience may help students gain a sense of the costs needed to obtain revenue for those organizations. Teachers may provide the documents or students may be required to research and obtain the reports.

Continue to encourage students to use a variety of resources in their research. Samples of completed venture plans may be available and local entrepreneurs may be willing to assist.

Invite a guest from a local advertising firm to the classroom to discuss the agency's or person's role in the marketing mix. A list of questions to be answered should be prepared by the students (with guidance of the teacher) prior to the visit. Following the presentation, students may write the answers to the prepared questions. The answers may be assessed to determine the accuracy of the information (content).

Have students reflect on their personal network of entrepreneurial resources.

Students may need to obtain and review informational brochures, loan applications, contracts, or other documents that might be required to proceed with individual venture plans, dependent on the nature of the plan.

Consider obtaining annual reports from Latino organizations and others to be examined.

A member of a financial institution may be contacted to discuss financial plans for a venture with the students in the classroom or students may take their proposals to the financial institution. The resource person may be asked to determine if the financial plans of the students are realistic and viable.

Is there an entrepreneur in the community or in a nearby community that is currently developing or has

The student or teacher may determine from the financial institution what criteria the institution uses to determine the

viability of a financial plan for a venture. Students may self-assess their financial plan, comparing and contrasting their plans to the financial institution's criteria. (A checklist may be used to list the criteria for comparing.) Students may adjust their financial plan based on their self-assessment.

Students may complete a cash-flow analysis including costs of taxes and licenses. This is an opportunity to collect information on process skills for assessment purposes

just developed a venture plan and is willing to share the experience?

To facilitate the processing of information for their venture plans, encourage students to use their keyboarding, computer applications, and other information processing skills. When considering the human resources component, students should consider and discuss equity. Students may consult the support networks for assistance. Obtain prior approval from the financial institution before sending students for a visit. This opportunity provides a real-life role play for students and can be very motivational. Different financial institutions may have different

criteria for assessing a financial plan of a venture. Obtaining criteria from a variety of institutions will give teachers and students the opportunity to judge financial plans against different institutions requirements and to adjust financial plans as desired. Spreadsheet software may be used.

When preparing a venture plan for a Latino community, considerations of third level government legislation, licensing, tax exemptions, and others may be necessary.

WHY WRITE A BUSINESS PLAN?

A business plan is a road map for the development of your company. It includes a written description of your business and corresponding financial data. The goals of a business plan are:

1. To assist you to obtain money from lenders (get a loan) or investors (sell some ownership in your company to someone else).
2. To develop and implement your ideas into actual business practices, products or services.
3. To identify the strengths and weaknesses of your company and its competitors, and to provide a strategy to further your company's growth.
4. To develop guidelines for the operation of your company.

BUSINESS PLAN OUTLINE

1. **COVER:** Your business plan should be typed and bound for presentation. The name, address, and phone number of your business should be on the cover. Also show the date of issue of the plan and type "Copy Number _____" so you can number and control copies of the document.
2. **TABLE OF CONTENTS:** One page showing the topics and page references.
3. **STATEMENT OF FUNDING PROCEEDS:** A brief review of the use to be made of the funding sought, followed by a detailed listing of each expenditure.
4. **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:** Do this last! Summarize key facts and figures from sections 5 through 13. It should be a maximum of three pages.
 - A. What is the purpose of this plan?
 - an operating guide
 - a loan request
 - a prospectus for investors
 - B. Who requests the funds?
 - C. For what purpose are the funds being requested? What are the expected benefits to your company?
 - D. How will the funds be repaid?
 - E. How much are you investing in the venture?

- F. What collateral will be used to secure a loan (ie. inventory, equipment, building, etc.)?
- G. Summarize financial projections (Yearly Gross Profits, Net Profits, Break-Even, Return On Investment and Cash Flows) Indicate major financial milestones (Note when cash flow turns positive, when break even is achieved, etc.).

5. DESCRIPTION OF THE BUSINESS:

- A. What is the status of the venture: start-up, expansion of a going concern, purchase of an existing business?
- B. Describe your product(s)/service(s).
- C. What is your mission statement?
- D. Who are the principals and what are their proportions of ownership?
- E. What is the legal structure of your business? Is it a sole proprietorship, partnership, limited liability company, S corporation, C corporation? Include copies of supporting document(s) in the appendix.
- F. If you will be doing contract work, what are the terms? Reference any firm contracts and include copies as supporting documents in the appendix.
- G. Do you have letters of intent from prospective suppliers? What support will they give your company? Include copies as supporting documents in the appendix. For an existing business, address the following questions:
- H. What is the history of the business?
- I. How will your management make the business more profitable? What changes do you plan to make in the business?
- J. If you want to buy an existing business, what is the purchase price? Identify the selling price of: building, improvements, equipment, inventory, and goodwill.
Note: If yours is a seasonal business, make sure the seasonality is reflected in your financial projections with appropriate footnotes.

6. THE MARKET:

- A. What is the geographical area that you intend to serve?
- B. How many potential customers are in that area? Document the sources of your estimates.

- C. What percent of the market do you have now? How much do you think you will have in the future? How quickly will you reach that percentage? Document the sources of your estimates.
- D. Describe your target customer (age, sex, occupation, lifestyle, income, geography, reading and viewing habits likes, dislikes, etc.).
- E. Who are your competitors? What are their strengths and weaknesses?
- F. Identify competitive or substitute products/services.
- G. Is your business seasonal? Explain.
- H. What is the trend in the business and industry? (Are revenues growing, stable, or in decline?) Include copies of supporting documents in the appendix.

7. MARKETING STRATEGY

- A. What makes your product/service unique?
- B. What features or services will you offer that will justify your price compared to competitors prices?
- C. How will you attract and keep your segment of this market? Explain all that apply.
 - customer service
 - product quality
 - price
 - location
 - promotion
 - persuasion--personal selling
 - satisfaction guarantee/product warranty
 - distribution
 - extend credit (If so, what is your credit policy and payment terms?)
 - accept credit cards
 - accept checks

8. BUSINESS LOCATION:

- A. What is your business address and why did you choose that location?
- B. Will the building be rented, leased, or owned?

- C. What are the terms of the contract? Include copies of supporting documents in the appendix.
- D. What renovations will be needed and at what cost? How will they impact your lease?
- E. Describe the neighborhood (ie: stable, changing, improving, deteriorating). What is the traffic count, parking, accessibility for customers/suppliers?
- F. What other kinds of businesses are in the neighborhood?
- G. How much can your business expand before you will be forced to move or add on to the present building?
- H. Will your building pass an ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) inspection? If not, what modifications must be done, and at what cost?

9. LICENSES/PERMITS/REGISTRATIONS:

- A. What licenses or permits are you required to obtain? How long does it take to get the needed licenses/permits?
- B. Do you have a registered trademark for the name of your company to protect it against being used by another company? Include copies of supporting documents in the appendix.
- C. Is your business affected by zoning regulations?

10. INSURANCE/BONDING/EMPLOYEE BENEFITS:

- A. Describe the insurance coverage (ie. liability, property, workers compensation, etc.) you have to protect both the company and yourself.
- B. Will you/your employees need to be bonded?
- C. Will your company provide employee benefits for you and/or your employees? Explain, and include copies of supporting documents in the appendix.

11. MANAGEMENT: This is the most important section of your Business Plan. The best source for this section is a resume that explains the business managers background in detail.

- A. Who will have day-to-day responsibility to manage the business?
- B. What is your business background?
- C. Do you have business management experience?

- D. What formal and informal training have you had that contributes to your managerial abilities?
- E. Are you physically suited to the job?

12. PERSONNEL:

- A. Describe your organizational structure and include a brief description of who does what. I include an organizational chart if necessary.
- B. List proposed salaries and wages. Are they consistent with industry norms?
- C. What management assistance resources are available to you (eg: accountant, lawyer, outside consultant, SBA, SBDC, SCORE)? List by name.
- D. What are your anticipated personnel needs for the next three years?
- E. What skills must your employees have? Will you train the people, or will you hire an outside trainer? Will you hire only already skilled workers?
- F. Can you use part-time help to meet changing sales volume?
- G. If you will be using independent contractors, have you discussed this with the Kansas Department of Revenue and/or the IRS to make sure they are not considered employees?

13. FINANCIAL DATA:

- A. Projected income statement
 - detail by month, first year
 - yearly summaries for second and third years
 - notes of explanation and assumptions
- B. Cash flow projections
 - detail by month, first year
 - yearly summaries for second and third years
 - notes of explanation and assumptions
- C. Projected balance sheet
 - notes of explanation and assumptions
 - key financial ratios (quick ratio, inventory turns, etc.)
- D. Break-even analysis (the level of sales where your gross profit equals your operational costs).

For an existing business, you should supply:

- A. Current balance sheet and income statement (less than 60 days old)
- B. Year end Profit & Loss statements for the past three years
- C. Balance Sheets and/or tax returns for past three years
- D. A Capital Equipment list, complete with purchase price and depreciated values
- E. A detailed Inventory listing with unit prices included
- F. Aged accounts receivable and accounts payable

14. APPENDIX OF SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS:

- A. Personal resumes for all principals, partners, officers
- B. Personal financial statements for all principals, partners, and anyone owning 15% or more of the company
- C. Letters of intent from prospective suppliers or customers.
- D. Copies of all leases, contracts, or agreements, deeds, certificates, or other legal documents
- E. Any visuals of your product that may help (ie. photos of your product, exterior/interior of store or plant)

APPENDIX OF SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS The Wichita State University SBDC recognizes the support of the U.S. Small Business Administration (Cooperative Agreement #3- 7770-0017-10) and the Kansas Department of Commerce & Housing in making this publication possible. Any opinions, findings and conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Small Business Administration or the Kansas Department of Commerce & Housing. August 1993, Wichita State University Small Business Development Center. All rights reserved.

UNIT VII Section 5

OBJECTIVE: To analyze the venture plan process and select the important tools that may assist in future venture creations.

Instructional Notes

Students should realize that their own personal skills, practical skills, and their decision making abilities are the most important determinants when planning a venture. Making decisions is based on the availability and reliability of a number of "tools".

Students should be able to reflect on the process of creating a venture plan and describe what proved to be of most value to them. It will be obvious that the tools identified will differ between groups or among individuals because of differences in learning styles and the nature of the ventures. By the end of the process, the entire class should be able to prepare a generic list of the most helpful tools.

Some of the "tools" that could be identified include:

- good organizational and communication skills;
- use of the computer and software to facilitate information processing;
- comparative balance sheets;
- comparative income statements;
- cash flow projections;
- investment simulations; and,
- a network of human resources.

Suggested Instructional Approaches and Assessment Techniques

In cooperative learning groups, students may prepare a concept map of the entire venture planning process they have completed. The "mapping" of information could be placed onto flipchart paper and then posted onto the wall. Similarities between the charts could be circled in colored ink and noted as the generic list of important "tools". Teachers may assess cooperative group skills perhaps focusing on the group's ability to come to a consensus.

In review, ask the students: How is the venture planning process like the process of cooking? Students could individually analyze and reflect on each of the processes, listing their ideas of how they are similar. In a large group discussion, each student may be asked to orally provide one explanation of how the two processes are similar. Following this activity, students may be asked to determine their own analogy of the venture planning process. What else is the venture planning process like? Why? Students may provide answers as a written assignment. Teachers may assess students' knowledge of the venture planning process by the accuracy of their analogy, and assess students' process skills such as their ability to synthesize information, formulate and express a suitable solution, and justify their answers.

Resources/Teacher Notes

See [Appendix A](#) for a map that may be used.

UNIT VII Section 6

OBJECTIVE: To explain the benefits of a venture plan after working through the process of preparing a plan.

Instructional Notes

Who will the plan be presented to? How will the plan be presented to the class? to the local community? to those concerned with the proposal (financial institutions, interested investors, community officials, and others)?

What are possible benefits of preparing a venture plan? Some items that students may discuss include:

- effective teamwork;
- learning from mistakes and failures;
- the process of reassessing and realigning objectives and goals as the venture progresses; and,
- getting effective support, advice, and assistance.

Another benefit students should realize through the process of preparing a venture plan is the awareness of the ethics and rules of conduct of an entrepreneur. These may include:

- health/safety/environmental issues in the workplace/community/country;
- respect of others' property and rights;
- importance of maintaining quality of the service/product;
- awareness of the laws and regulations to be obeyed;
- importance of transacting business without deception;
- obligations of timelines/contracts to be met;
- willingness and commitment to get the job done;
- importance of being trustworthy;
- willingness to keep customers satisfied; and,
- creating an atmosphere of excellence, integrity, and strong ethical performance.

Suggested Instructional Approaches and Assessment Techniques

The students may make a presentation of their completed venture plans to the class. In the presentation, students would be expected to discuss the purpose and development of the plan, identifying the benefits of the planning including the benefits of making use of their entrepreneurial skills. As each venture plan is unique to the nature of the venture, students in the class may be asked to focus on the similarities and differences between their venture plan to the one(s) presented and provide their comments during a reflective discussion.

Students may role play ethical and unethical entrepreneurial situations; for example, conducting retail business during regulated store-closing hours. The situations depicted in the role plays may be developed by students in small groups or the teacher may select the situations.

If a discussion is used to summarize a role play activity, teachers may use anecdotal notes to collect data on students' attitudes like cooperation and ability to understand and synthesize acceptable solutions to the role play situations.

A journal writing or a group discussion may take place to raise relevant issues. Teachers may record data on students who completed the journal writing with a rating on technical skills criteria such as neatness, spelling, and the use of appropriate sentence structure. The content written in the journal writing is not assessed.

Resources/Teacher Notes

The venture plan may be presented to the targeted organization(s) at the discretion of the teachers and other school officials. Students may be encouraged to discuss the venture planning process and its importance with their "support network" and be reminded to reflect on and use the entrepreneurial knowledge gained in previous objectives of the course.

UNIT VII Section 7

OBJECTIVE: To organize information into a cohesive and prepared presentation using PowerPoint.

Instructional Notes

Presenting your Plan

The final stage of creating a business plan is presenting it. This is the moment where you must convince others to follow your plan and support your venture. Therefore, be sure to organize well before the presentation date. The most effective way to present your plan is to use PowerPoint, part of the Microsoft Office package. PowerPoint helps you create, manage and display the visuals -- usually, a slide show -- that might accompany any sort of presentation. The use of slides and graphics will clearly convey your message to the audience. As the facilitator, go over the following presentation tips with the students.

Importance of Content:

◆ **Why Your Audience Should Hear It: Create Interest with Information**

Your successful introduction to a presentation tells the audience **what** you will talk about and **why** audience members should care. Sometimes your job title can give this information, but you will probably want to add a little more tie-in to your topic. You can usually assume that everyone in the presentation room might not know who you are. This doesn't mean a lengthy introduction (and if someone else is introducing you, write your own introduction for him or her if at all feasible).

- **What to Cover: Using your Beginning to Organize Your Short Presentation** The best beginning for a business presentation is **content**: get to your point directly.

This means you don't need an elaborate story or a joke (which may make you sound like an amateur). Your information should get audience attention because it is information the audience members need or want. If you are using PowerPoint or another presentation program to present your visuals, choose a **title** that clearly indicates your content. It doesn't have to be long, or clever, but it DOES need to be clear. A title slide needs a title (of your proposed plan), your name and job title (probably), and your company or organizational affiliation (usually).

One way to arrive at your title and your opening statement is to think of a one-sentence summary of what you plan to talk about. Think **elevator speech**: what would you tell the CEO of your company if you were in the elevator for a couple of floors and he or she asked, "What is your presentation at Friday's meeting about, Jane?" You don't have time to give details, or think through the whole topic— what is the essence of what you want to get across in your presentation?

This one-sentence summary could become your opening statement, or give you an idea for a clear title aimed at your audience's needs, or quite possibly give you a starting point for your first slide after your title slide. Beginning with your main idea leads you naturally to think of the several subparts of that main point: and that sounds a lot like an outline slide, doesn't it? Give this slide a "title" that is a main point, not generic words like *outline*, *agenda*, *topics to cover*.

A quick way to proceed from this outline slide is to think of several points you would like to use to develop each subpoint on this slide. And at the end of this quick process you will have at least five slides, which is probably enough bullet slides for your short presentation. You might want to add graphic slides as appropriate for your topic, but remember that YOU are the star of your presentation, not your slide show. If you want the audience to see screen after screen of visuals, just send them a disk!

Even if you need to glance at written notes for the later, more technical parts of your presentation, be sure to talk to your audience

in your opening- reading to your audience is a sure attention-loser. Sell yourself and your topic to this audience-the members are ready and waiting for you to tell them something they are interested in. They want you to succeed.

How to Hold Audience Attention: Be Clear, Be Quick, Be Gone

As you use this introduction to build your presentation further, think of your worst listening experiences, and don't use them as models!

Avoid:

Wordiness— don't delay by saying, "I would like to begin by"; just begin with your main idea.

Fad Phrases— don't use jargon, abbreviations, or buzz words of the day (remember how tired we got of stakeholders, growing a company, bottom line?)

Overload— don't go on too long or in too much detail. How much does your audience need to know about your topic? Don't tell more than your specific audience needs to hear.

Each audience needs a different amount of information: the boss needs an overview, perhaps, and an idea of how much your project will cost; your staff needs to know the schedule and each person's specific involvement in the project, as well as motivation to deliver what you have in mind; a client need to know benefits from the project and why it's worth the money you are charging for it.

Your opening should tell enough about what you plan to cover to set your audience up for your presentation. Then cover your three or four points, using specifics to bring the material alive for your audience, and use your planned closing statement, asking for questions.

Slide design tips

Avoid distractions. All modern presentation applications will animate on-screen components. You can make entire slides sail in from the outer reaches, make text fly about on screen, or get graph elements to pop out of nowhere. Doing this once or twice will help you to underscore a point. Exercising these options with every slide will slow your presentation down and bore your audience to tears. Be especially cautious using these enhancements on slow notebooks (i.e., 486-based systems or less).

Design for people at the back of the room. Gimicky typefaces in your presentation text may look fine close-up, but if your text is hard to read at the back of the room, you're in trouble. Stay away from artistic, hard-to-read fonts and stick to mildly serifed fonts such as Times, Times New Roman, and Garamond, or sans serif fonts such as Helvetica and Arial.

If you're preparing a show that will appear on someone else's computer, keep in mind that unless they also have the fonts you've used, the presentation won't look the same as when you prepared it -- yet another good reason to stick with fonts that ship with Windows by default.

While we're at it, text in both upper and lower case is easier to read than all caps and also won't make it appear you're *shouting*.

High contrast between text and background. Most templates in presentation applications use a dark, usually blue, background and either white or bright yellow text. If your presentation environment is normal (i.e., less than optimum), colors with similar luminosity (i.e., dark red on a blue background) will be unreadable and dark text on a light background will fade from view.

Keep it simple. Try to keep the number of points on any one slide to a maximum of four, with simple sub-points. Not only does it let you use font sizes visible from a long distance, but it allows you to keep the audience's attention narrowly focussed.

Make it easy to remember. Two broadly stated rules for information flow will help your audience to understand, then remember your points.

Tell them what you're going to tell them. Tell them. Then, tell them what you told them.

Keep it consistent. Templates and slide masters allow you to keep the same typefaces throughout the presentation for headings and bulleted points. They will also present balanced and consistent spacing of slide elements as well as a coordinated color scheme from slide to slide. All of these things are good because it keeps the audience from being jarred, however briefly, from slide to slide, as well as allowing you to break the pattern sparingly to focus attention on a specific point.

Keep it professional. Nothing will undermine your credibility faster than a spelling error. Use the application's built-in spell checker, proofread again and again, then have someone else do it for you. The same applies to any handout material accompanying your presentation.

Color it carefully. Graduated color fills take processing time to render and may slow your system down. They are also less effective at 256 colors than you might like and if your effect is too subtle you may be in for a surprise when you discover what the projector you're using does to it (it may not be calibrated the same as your monitor).

Drop shadows will highlight text and, if you keep the orientation consistent (i.e., bottom right), won't jar the audience. If using *PowerPoint's* technique to build slide text and dim the previous point, they lose all their charm because the program changes both foreground and drop shadow to the same color, making the result unreadable.

Always rehearse. Check your show in full-screen mode at least once to judge the effectiveness of transitions and animations, as well as how long you have to wait for the next slide. For example, animating the last point of a slide immediately prior to one with a large graphic, sound, or video object may leave you standing, staring eggily at the audience, while your computer struggles to get the next slide ready.

For more information, visit <http://www.angel2.com/angel/>

Optional Activity

To familiarize students with PowerPoint, have them create a few slides based on their internship site. Start out with a title slide with the name of the organization they are working at, along with their own name and the date. Then follow with slides outlining their tasks at the site, current projects, and the learning objectives they hope to gain from their experience. Time permitting, have the students present their slides to the class. Students should take no more than five minutes to present all of their material.

For help in using PowerPoint, go to www.bitbetter.com/powertips.htm which details useful PowerPoint tips and tricks.