

STOP SELLING YOURSELF SHORT

WITH EMMA SELBY

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Stop
Selling
Yourself
Short!



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SIGNAL

BIZHUB

A stylized orange lightbulb icon with a white filament, positioned above the letter 'U' in the BizHub logo.

Key Content

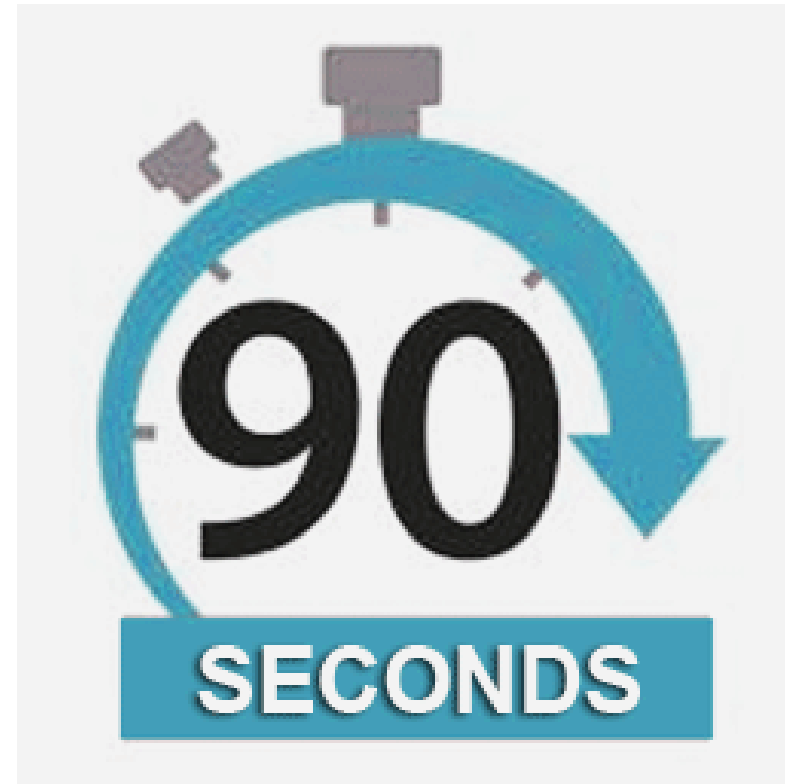
- Create a value proposition that your prospects will buy into
- Take your value proposition to the next level
- Create multiple pitches



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Group Warm Up



45 seconds to tell
each other what you
do



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Group Warm Up

Who was listening?
Feedback....



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Who am I?

Emma Selby

Founder of SiGNAL

- BBC journalist
- Petroleum Argus journalist
- Competitive Skydiver
- Exotic Sky Adventures
- Parachute packer
- Longrigg Sportswear



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2012

Business mums launch their Hub brainchild

THE Farnham Hub is a community venture designed to give small business owners the chance to access quality training and networking opportunities within a timeframe they can manage and at a price they can afford.

It is the brainchild of Farnham business mums Emma Selby and Jane Woodyer, who piloted the idea last year with great success and then went on to conduct an extensive market

Banko of Dave Banko solutions, psychology expert Nic Malcolmson and life coach Annie Pritchard from The Way Forward, plus blogging and social media expert and co-founder of The Farnham Hub, Jane Woodyer of I Love 2 Blog 4 You.

Courses and workshops will be on business-related subjects such as blogging, marketing, finance and confidence training. Emma Selby explained:



of The Farnham Hub. FD11-21-13.

Herald proprietor Sir Ray Tindle speaking at the launch



thing to do." Suzanne will be teaching assertiveness techniques and negotiating skills which she describes as being "essential for any entrepreneur". Angus Lyon, also of Johnson Fellowes, has years of start-up coaching behind him and is also excited about sharing his knowledge with relatively inexperienced entrepreneurs. "For me, the Farnham Hub is a great way to give something back to my community. Who knows, the

next Anita Roddick may just come through the door. Start ups and young businesses are exciting. It's all about giving them the tools to grow their business and then watching the results!" Angus is leading the 'Business Builder', a course of three two-hour sessions that will empower small businesses to really take charge of their business and get great results. Annie Pritchard is running goal-setting and results exercises at The Hub Her

first workshop is today (Friday). Dave Banko Solutions is booked to run a time-management workshop in June and there are plans to hold workshops on 'writing attention-grabbing copy' with an ex-Sun headline journalist and overcoming barriers to public speaking with Nic Malcolmson, a London-based psychologist. Emma commented: "The launch went so smoothly. I feel all our hard work has paid off. All the entrepre-

neurs loved our take on networking which allowed entrepreneurs one on one time with everyone else in the room. "Sir Ray gave a really inspiring speech and people came away feeling part of something new and exciting. Those who brought kids were very impressed with the service in the creche. The response on our social media platforms in the hours since the event has been overwhelming, we are selling lots of membership

packages!" All courses can all booked through Farnham Hub Facebook page which can be found at www.facebook.com/farnhamhub or the website www.thefarnhamhub.com. Full membership is £14 a month, which includes free networking sessions with talk or workshop a month and all courses half price, plus other counts and freeties.



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2014

- Downing St
- Regional Enterprise Champion for Surrey and Hampshire
- Won 'X- Citing New Business award

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The Country Market

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Finding and Keeping
Customers!

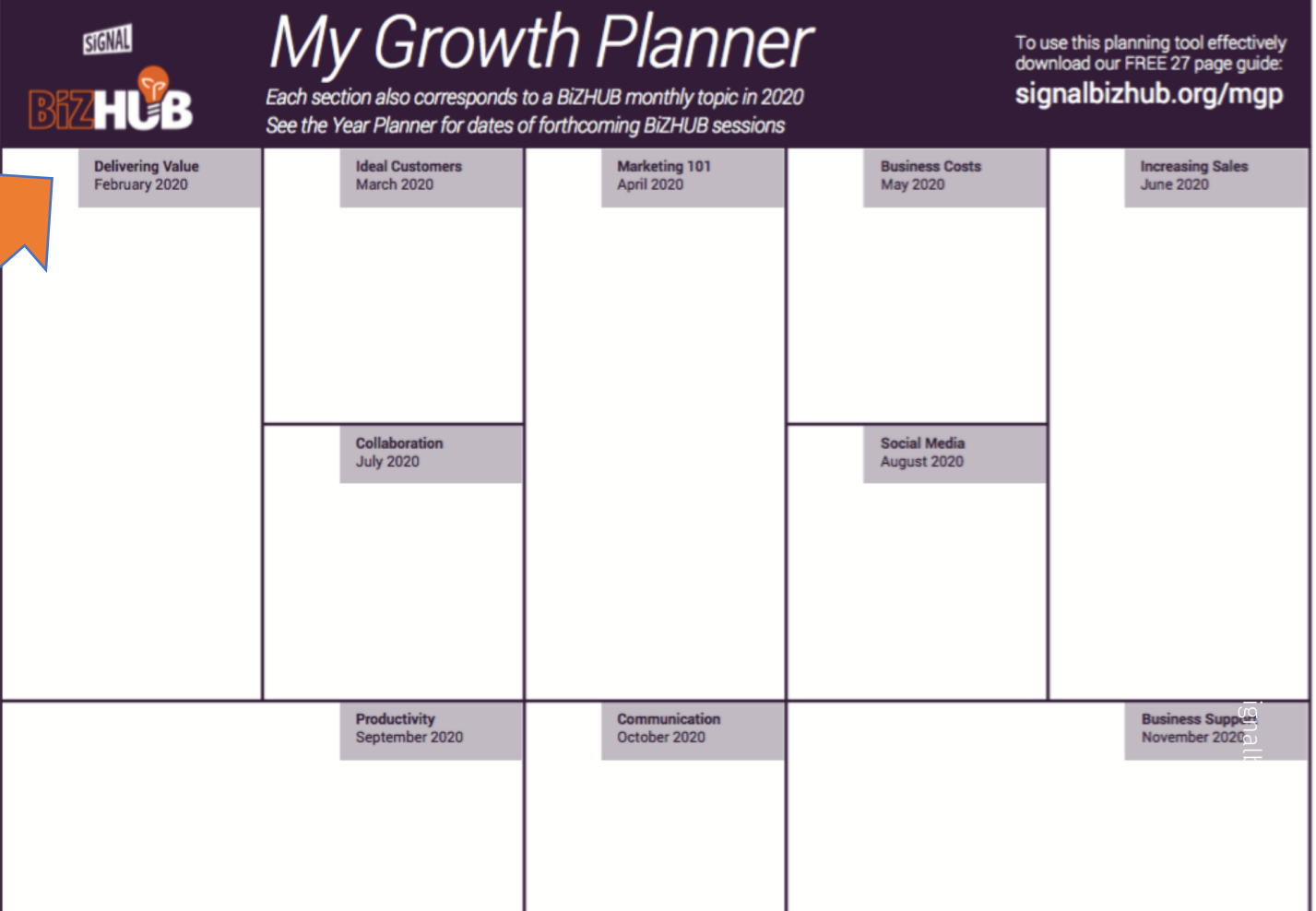
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Today's learning

February's Theme:
Delivering Value

- My Growth Planner



The image shows a grid titled "My Growth Planner" with the Signal BizHub logo. The grid is divided into 12 cells, each representing a month and a topic. An orange arrow points from the text "February's Theme: Delivering Value" to the first cell of the grid.

SIGNAL BIZHUB		My Growth Planner			To use this planning tool effectively download our FREE 27 page guide: signalbizhub.org/mgp	
Delivering Value February 2020	Ideal Customers March 2020	Marketing 101 April 2020	Business Costs May 2020	Increasing Sales June 2020		
	Collaboration July 2020		Social Media August 2020			
	Productivity September 2020	Communication October 2020	Business Support November 2020			



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Have you got
your
BizHub Guide?

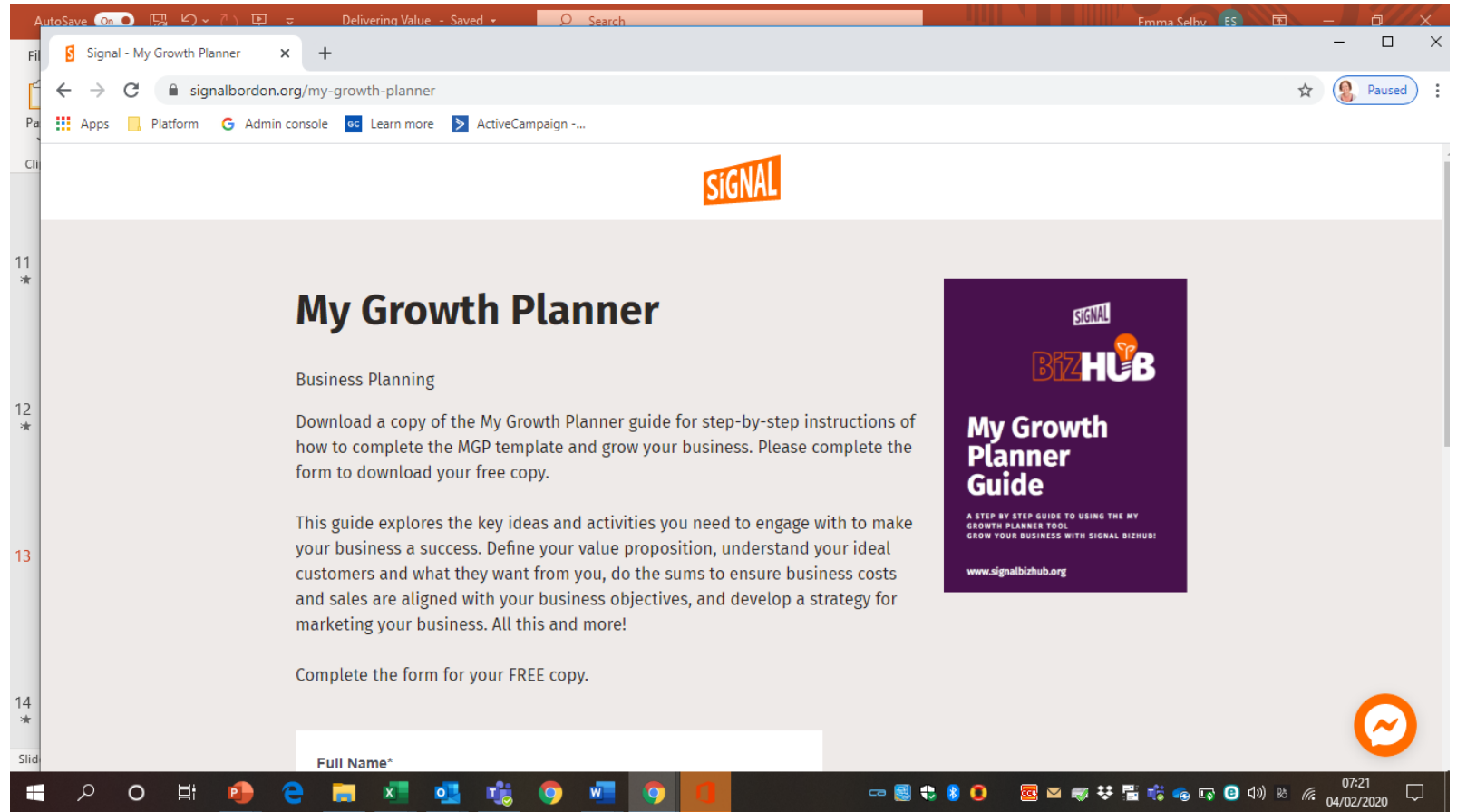


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If you want to know more...



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Value Proposition??

Customer
Proposal!!

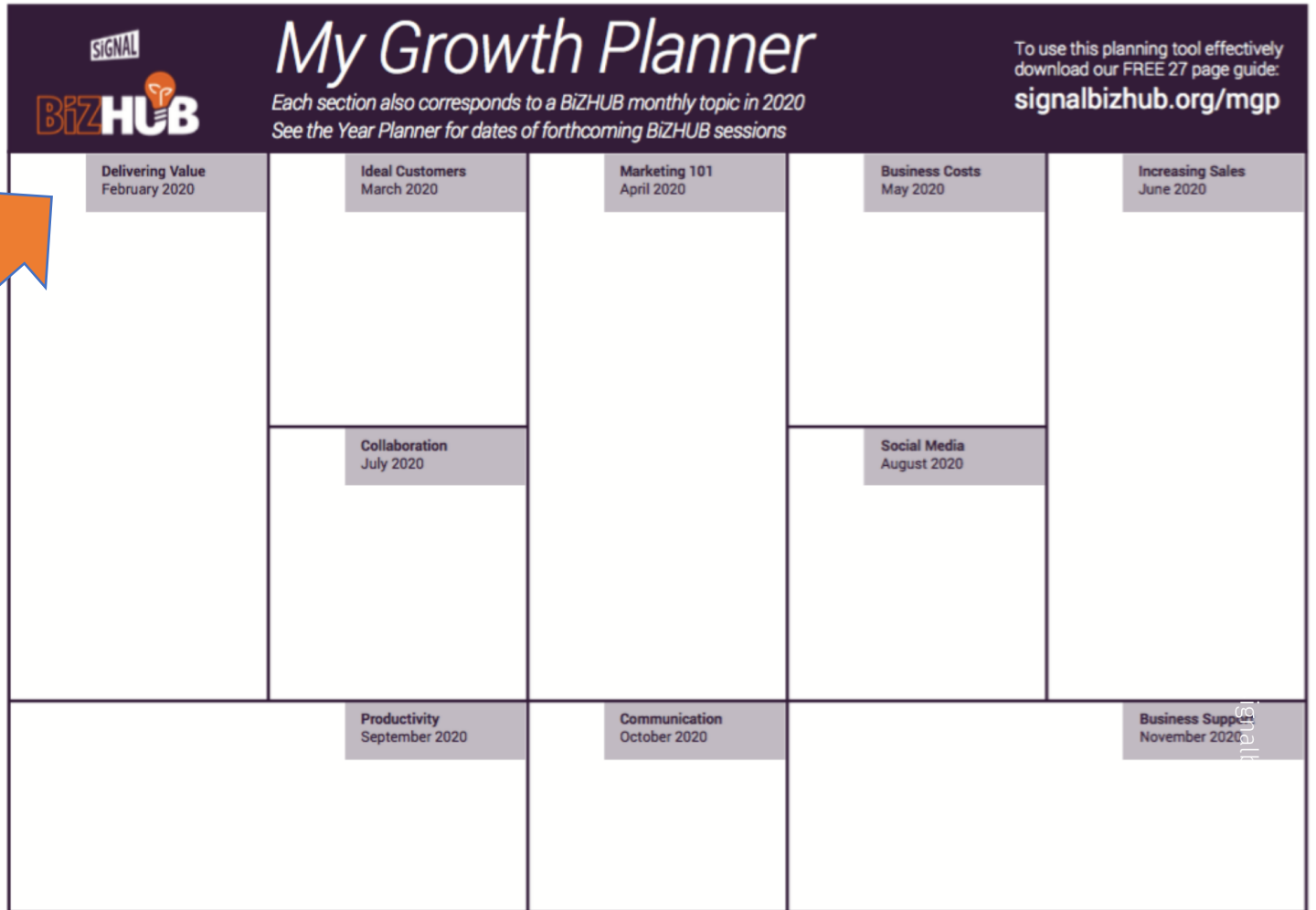
Not to be confused
with:

- A value statement
 - core beliefs
- The value OF your company
 - (£££ - exit)
- A mission statement
 - (why you exist)
- A vision statement
 - (where you are headed)

Today's learning

The Value Proposition

- My Growth Planner



The image shows a grid titled "My Growth Planner" from SIGNAL BIZHUB. The grid is divided into 10 sections, each with a topic and a corresponding month in 2020. An orange arrow points from the text "The Value Proposition" to the "Delivering Value" section.

SIGNAL BIZHUB		My Growth Planner			To use this planning tool effectively download our FREE 27 page guide: signalbizhub.org/mgp	
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	Collaboration July 2020		Social Media August 2020			
	Productivity September 2020	Communication October 2020		Business Support November 2020		



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Peter Messervy
60 Minute MBA

“A Business is a
Value Delivery
System. And yet
most business
owners cannot
articulate their



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value”

Can you?



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Today's learning

Your Value
Proposition
tells your
customers why
they want to
buy from you



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What problem are you solving?

Who are you solving it for?

What result will you deliver?

What makes you different or unique?

What is the wider or deeper impact ?



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A proposal?



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Accountant :

I manage the accounts of freelance consultants

I work with consultants earning over £500 a day

I know I can save them over £9000 a year

And help them regain three hours of time each week

Which means that they have more time with their family and more money to spend



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Cleaning Company :

We specialise in local surgery cleaning – dental ,
medical and vets

We have 20 fully trained teams cleaning across
10 towns

We deliver exceptional cleanliness and hygiene
standards

Maintaining our reputation is incredibly important
to us as we have won multiple awards for
outstanding attention to detail AND customer
satisfaction

Which means that when you book us you know you
can enjoy complete peace of mind



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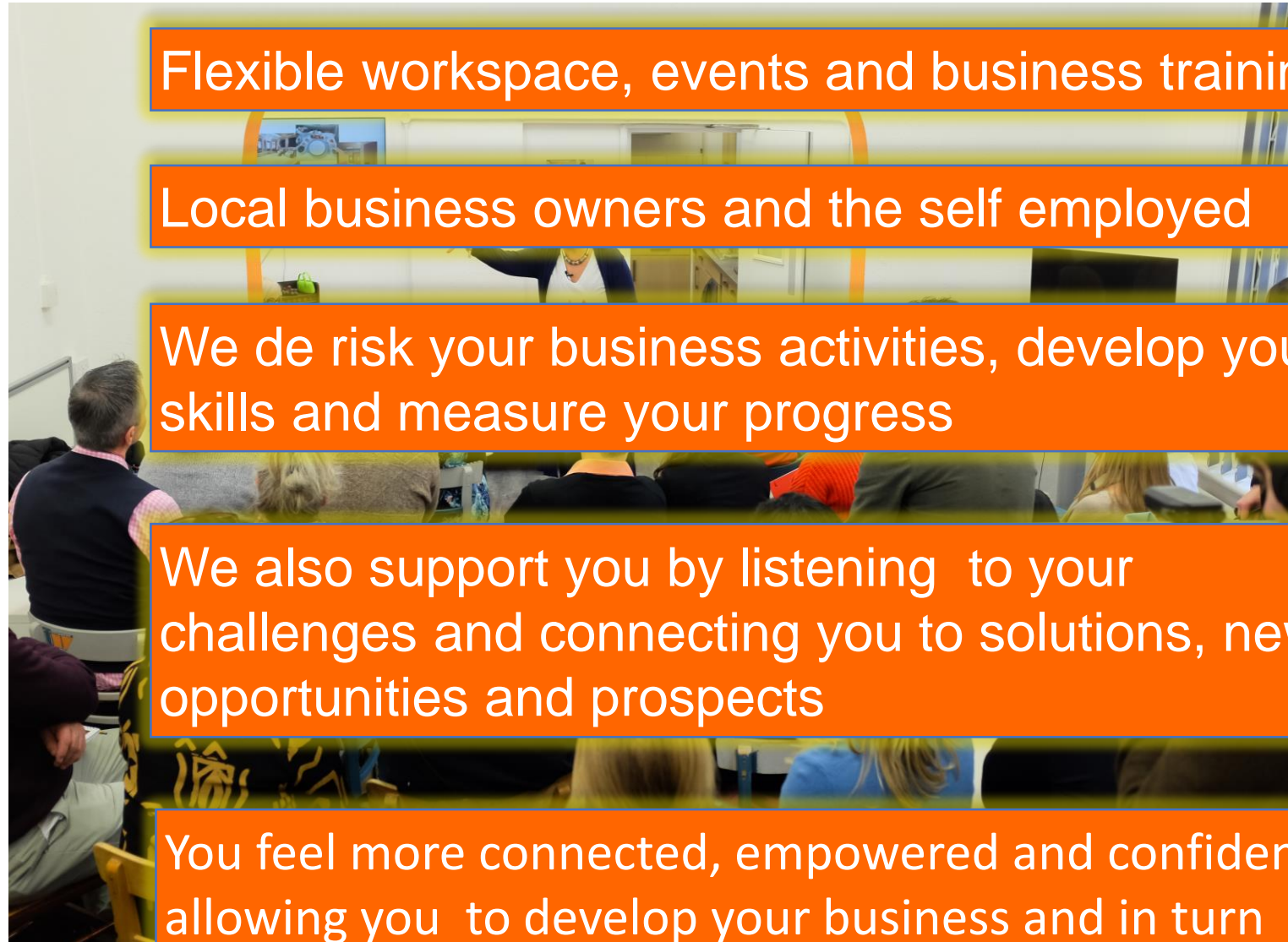
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Business Training Provider:



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Flexible workspace, events and business training

Local business owners and the self employed

We de risk your business activities, develop your skills and measure your progress

We also support you by listening to your challenges and connecting you to solutions, new opportunities and prospects

You feel more connected, empowered and confident, allowing you to develop your business and in turn help others grow and succeed

What problem are you solving?

Who are you solving it for?

What result will you deliver?

What makes you different or unique?

What is the wider or deeper impact ?



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Adding Value

– 3 ways

Listen to your customers

Improve your customer
service

Become a trusted
authority



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BizHub Tip:

Use Survey Monkey to create a free online survey of up to ten questions



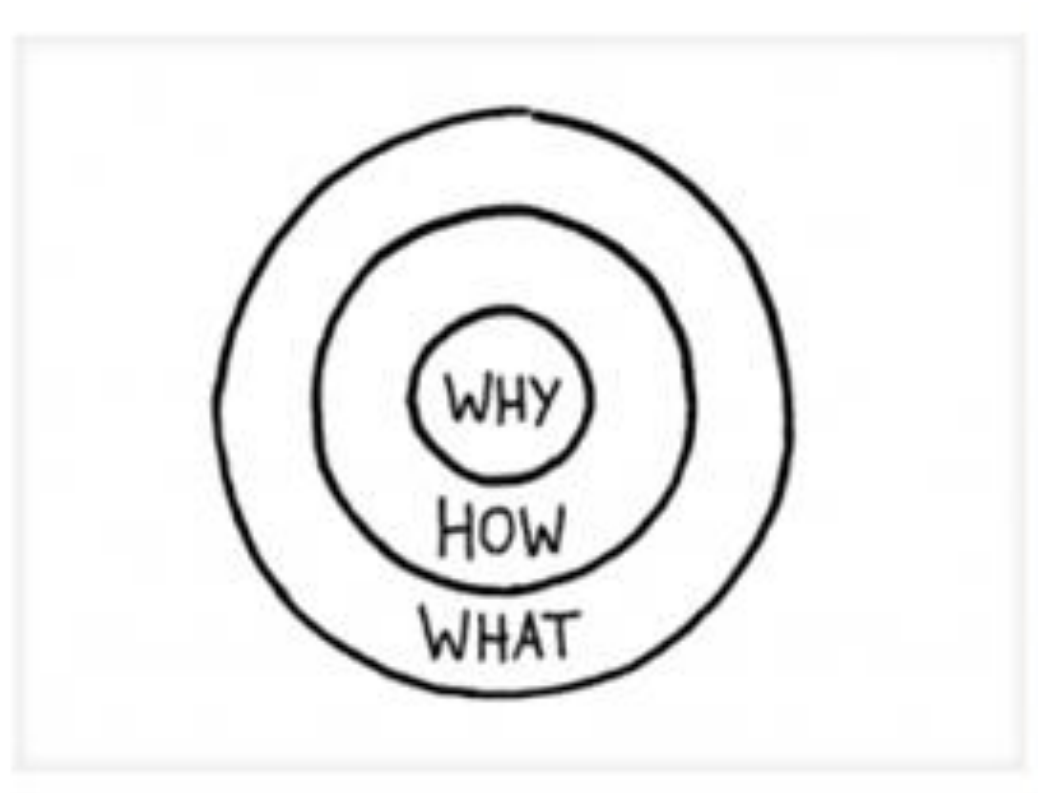
SurveyMonkey®



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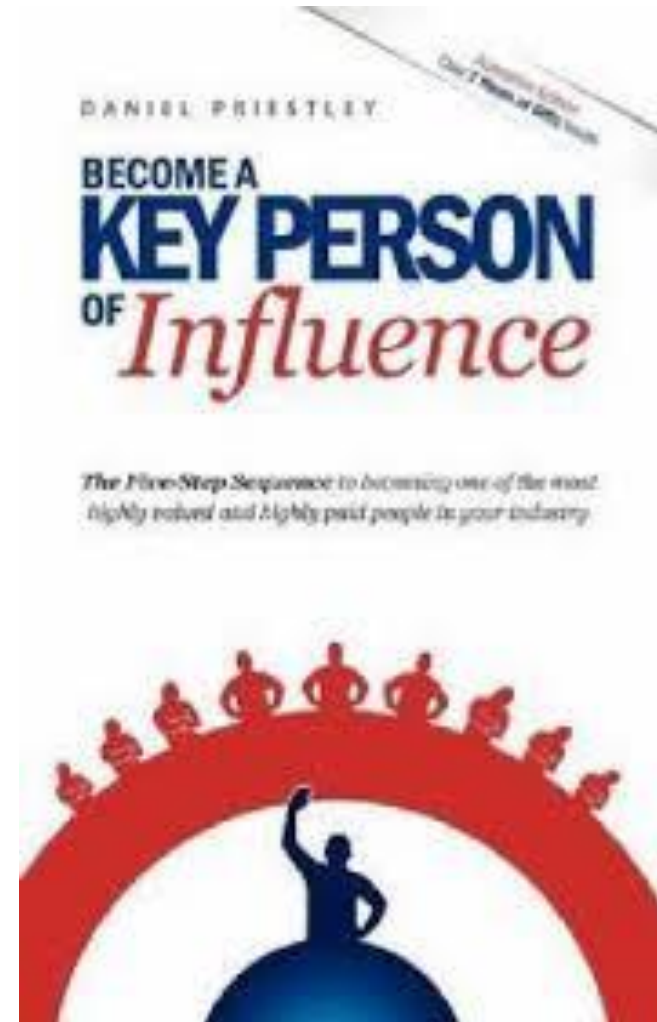
**BizHub Recommended
Watch:
Simon Sinek
Start with Why**



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BizHub Recommended Read:



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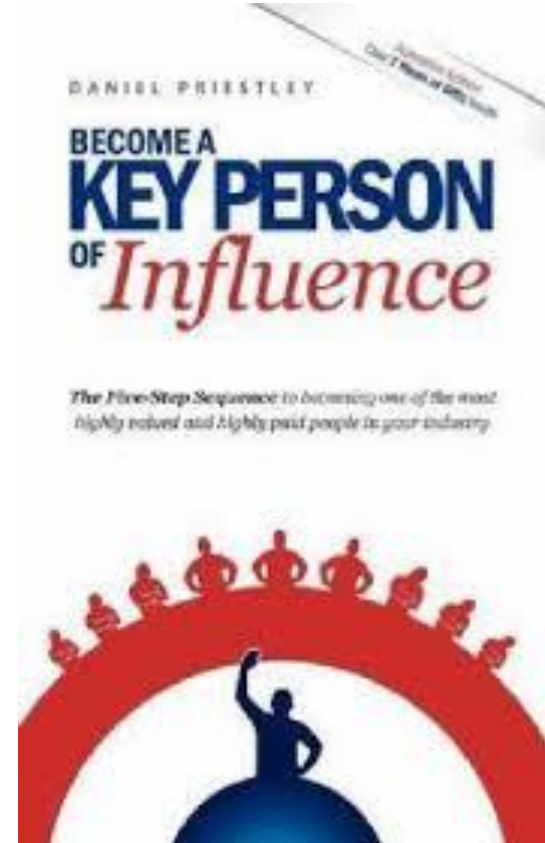
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‘No one should build a business alone’

Emma Selby

‘You would be completely MAD to try and build a business alone’

Daniel Priestley



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Who are you solving it for?

SIGNAL

**BUYER
PERSONA
TEMPLATE**

UNDERSTAND YOUR CUSTOMERS SO YOU CAN
COMMUNICATE WITH THEM EFFECTIVELY

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What result will you deliver?



Maslow's hierarchy of needs



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What makes you uniquely valuable?



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What is the wider impact for society?



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Your Value Proposition

The most effective value propositions are clear. When you read them, you understand exactly what the brand does and whether their products or services are for you: even when they don't specifically mention a product or service name.

Answer the following 5 questions and keep these in mind as you develop your VP:

1. What problem are you solving?
2. Who is it (your brand and products / services) for?
3. What result will you deliver?
4. What makes it unique?
5. What is the wider impact?

Now create a word cloud of phrases and words that best describe your brand's value:

Using the ideas above start crafting a short paragraph that explains clearly and concisely what you do, the key benefits to customers and the added value that helps differentiate you from your competitors:

Take your value proposition to the next level

<i>Brand Strapline</i>				
<i>Storyline</i>				
<i>Boiler plate / Elevator pitch (100 words)</i>				
<i>50 words</i>				
<i>20 words</i>				

<i>How we deliver</i>				
<i>How we add value</i>				
<i>Our promise</i>				
<i>Tone of voice</i>				

SIGNAL



My Growth Planner Guide

A STEP BY STEP GUIDE TO USING THE MY
GROWTH PLANNER TOOL
GROW YOUR BUSINESS WITH SIGNAL BIZHUB!

www.signalbizhub.org

CONTENTS

- **Introduction**
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- **Ideal Customers**
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- **Business Costs & Increasing Sales**
- **Collaboration**
- **Social Media**
- **Productivity & Business Support**
- **Communication**

INTRODUCTION

There are many templates for business plans available to help you plan your future business growth. You may already have written a few business plans in your time! If so, you will know that the templates are a bit tedious to fill out, often over lengthy, complex and dull.

So you will be glad to discover a much easier alternative. It's a one-page business planning tool and it's called the My Growth Planner.

There's a printable version at the back of this guide!

The BMC is a more agile document than the traditional business plan and because it's so quick to use it can be returned to again and again. Crucially, the results of your thinking can be seen on one page which is fantastic for helping you to visualize the big picture.

The BMC is most often used at the start of a business journey to scope out new ideas but it is also extremely useful to return to during periods of growth. Growth always necessitates change, as you grow you will need to consider the merits of new products, new premises and new team members. All these changes can be planned and sense checked using the Business Model Canvas.

In this planning book I take a look at all 9 sections of the canvas one by one. You will learn:

- What information to add into each section
- How to cross reference between sections
- How to use the insights to grow your business

As you go through each section jot down any notes in the 'Insights' section at the end of each chapter, then transfer the key points on to the actual My Growth Planner template once you have got to the end. You will see as we go through that various sections crossover with others and you will soon start to gain valuable insights into your business.

Using the MGP is not a linear process like traditional business planning, it is a circular process that allows for the sections to run into each other and impact each other. Therefore there is really no definitive place to start. I have chosen to start with the delivering value (value proposition) because I believe for small businesses this is the key to getting everything else right. But you don't have to start here!

Business growth can be confusing and exhausting as there are so many different directions you can take. If you want to stay focused and head directly to your goal this is just a great tool to get to grips with. Learn to sense check your ideas and decisions this way, always aligning your thinking to the value your business provides and you will use less energy, make fewer mistakes and get there faster.

Good luck! And of course don't forget to make good use of all of our resources at SiGNAL.



Emma Selby

Emma Selby, SiGNAL BizHUB Founder





DELIVERING VALUE

Your Value Proposition

In it's simplest terms, a value proposition is a positioning statement that explains what benefit you provide for who and how you do it uniquely well. It describes your target buyer, the problem you solve and why you're distinctly better than the alternatives.

A value proposition doesn't explain how you plan to make money. It's all about why your idea will work. The marketplace is crowded with busy self-interested individuals who probably don't know or care about you. Why should they? Do you know? Can you explain the value of your business?

As business owners we have to understand what value we offer in context. It's not enough to say that you are going to open a gift shop that will offer hundreds of beautiful handmade gifts. You need to really understand who is going to shop with you and why they are going to come to your shop rather than browse Etsy. It's not enough to say that you are going to set up a private hire cab company and drive people to the airport - you have to understand who might use you, and why they should use you rather than existing solutions like Uber, other local competitors or even the train.

Ideally your business will already be solving a critical or urgent problem for a specific group of people. If you are already here then you shouldn't have any problem understanding your value proposition or indeed finding customers. If that's you - Great!

If you aren't sure yet - carry on!



DELIVERING VALUE

Your Value Proposition

How do you work out your value proposition?

It's useful to think of value in terms of the people you are helping and the exact nature of the problem you are solving for them.

Once you have identified your target market you will see that their problems come in all shapes and sizes and generally the more pressing the problem you are solving for them the higher the value you will be providing. If you are solving a business critical problem your solution will be perceived as exceptionally high value. If the problem you are solving is low priority or even latent, i.e. they aren't even looking for a solution - good luck selling it!

When you have identified the problem and the solution you then have to decide how to solve this in a way that is likely to make your prospects choose you over your competitors.

To do this you need to be solving the problem or a number of problems in a uniquely attractive way.

Richard Branson famously said that being the best is always a good business plan. Are you the best? The fastest? The most convenient? The cheapest? The most expensive? The easiest to use? The most reliable?

If you get your value proposition right lots of other things will fall into place.



DELIVERING VALUE

Your Value Proposition

Our Value Proposition

At the SiGNAL BiZHUB our market is small business owners in the local area. Several pain points exist for this group (as you know!) but two key problems that usually go hand in hand are isolation and ignorance. These things are business critical because if they are not addressed the small business will fail.

Of course there are literally thousands of other people out there helping small businesses connect and learn so we had to set ourselves apart. We decided to create the most genuinely valuable small business community by focussing on developing meaningful and lasting relationships between business owners instead of superficial ones.

What problem are you solving, and for who? How do you make your value proposition uniquely attractive for your buyers?

MY INSIGHTS





IDEAL CUSTOMERS

Customer Segments

When training small business owners at the BiZHUB I find that the issue of defining customer segments comes up at almost every one of our meetings. It is an absolutely fundamental piece of the business jigsaw to have in place. All marketing and business strategy should come from a place of total understanding of your customers. Who are they, where are they and what defines them as likely customers for your product or service? Does your business have one customer segment or several?

You really need to think hard about your customer segments. DON'T think "Well, OK but I don't need to do this as EVERYONE is a potential customer for me!" This is the most common mistake that business owners make - the assumption that the wider the customer net the better.

The reverse is usually true.

Small niches with very well defined customer segments work really well. When the niche becomes successful you can expand out into another niche if you need to.

An example: My first business was in sports underwear for female skydivers. It was designed to be slimline enough to be worn under jumpsuits but be robust and attractive enough to be worn alone when the hot nylon jumpsuits come off in between jumps. I sourced Lycra mixes in colourful designs then had the underwear made in a factory in Cornwall and sold it directly to the end user at festivals and events. The niche was so well defined - and I knew it so well - it pretty much sold itself. As the business grew I looked for other markets where women would want the same kind of funky looking yet robust sporty underwear and moved out into the equestrian and then tennis markets. We put ball pockets in the pants for the tennis market and this line went on to be by far the most successful. So if you are one of those many business owners that thinks their product or service is for 'everyone', think again!



IDEAL CUSTOMERS

Customer Segments

MY INSIGHTS





MARKETING

101

Marketing Channels

Marketing channels are what you use to communicate your value proposition to the relevant markets. Done intelligently and consistently this will create sales opportunities and generate revenues.

But marketing can be expensive. How many marketing channels do you need to reach your market? And how do you know which ones to choose? Should you pay someone to do it? These are big questions and most early stage businesses don't know the answers. Yet focusing on the wrong channels with no strategy in place can use up a lot of resource in your business without adding to the revenue streams.

Understanding the right channels to use - and how to use them - is absolutely key. There are now over 400 digital channels to choose from in addition to the more traditional routes to market such as telemarketing, leafleting, training events, keynote speaking, networking events, billboards, TV, Radio, sales letters, brochures and good old referrals. How do you settle on a mix that will be effective?

Using the MGP take a look at your customer segment and customer relationships. Which channels will allow you to have the most successful relationships with these audiences? Have you got the resources to manage these channels? How much will that cost?



MARKETING

101

Marketing Channels

If you are a start up or early stage business you may well elect to use the most accessible resource you have at your disposal, your time. Email, blogging and social media are still 'free' in their most basic forms so this can look like a really cost effective solution. But is it?

By going down this DIY route you set quite severe limits on what can be achieved and therefore limit your chances of success.

You are limited by:

- The time you have available - which may keep being deflected into other more 'urgent' activities
- Your skill level - even if you are relatively skilled at marketing are you able to keep up with the changes in the algorithms and the different digital options available to you?
- Your network - have you a real plan in place to reach outside of you existing network* This usually either takes time or costs money.
- Your self perception - this is the part where you as business owner can easily get in the way of your own success. everything you do yourself will be limited by your own perception of your ability to succeed and grow. Someone else can often be better placed to widen your horizons and increase expectations.
- Your experience - previous experience can often be very helpful but previous negative experiences can stop you trying things that might really work for your business. Lack of experience - like lack of skill may also stop you trying things that would be great for your business because you simply don't know they exist.

For all these reasons I would strongly recommend getting some outside help when it comes to designing a marketing strategy that will really deliver for your business. You may want to then implement it yourself or you may want to pay someone to do that for you, but either way an initial conversation with a recommended marketing expert is a great place to start.



MARKETING

101

Marketing Channels

MY INSIGHTS





BUSINESS COSTS & Increasing Sales

These two sections of the My Growth Planner are vital to understand correctly. It may all seem fairly self-explanatory - we all understand that overall the activity you undertake in your small business needs to deliver revenues that exceed costs. But the relationship between cost and revenue is not always immediately obvious across all areas of the business. Understanding these relationships can mean the difference between success and failure.

There is an old saying in accounting circles:

- Turnover (another word for revenue) is vanity
- Profit (revenue - costs) is sanity
- But cash flow is king (even profitable businesses can go bust if the cash doesn't come in fast enough)

You may already have a detailed business plan in place that pays attention to the finances of your business. Hopefully you have a cashflow forecast in place too. However the business plan will need to flex as you grow and develop. My Growth Planner is great way to look at change in the business whether it's planning for growth or dealing with failures.

If you don't already have these documents in place the MGP can really help you get started. Fill out the MGP and then draw on these insights to develop your in-depth business plan and financial documents.



BUSINESS COSTS & Increasing Sales

If your business works on a simple model with just one or two revenue streams - for example if you are a consultant delivering one or two services then understanding the relationship between cost and revenue is straightforward. You will only need to look at one My Growth Planner to see the big picture.

If you have a wide product mix with several revenue streams then you may find it useful to break each revenue stream down on a separate My Growth Planners. Compare them. What are the relative relationships between cost and revenue for each stream? Where is the growth and where is the stagnation or decline?

The MGP really comes into its own as a financial tool when experiencing change - growth or shrinkage. So if you realise that revenues are down in relation to costs and fear that the company is not delivering in some areas, sit down with the MGP for a while and map out what different revenue streams are using in terms of resources. The MGP will give you a quick visual insight into where things may be going wrong. Perhaps one activity is costing a lot and using a lot of resource but not generating the revenues you hoped. Maybe it's time to let that revenue stream go and focus your resources in a more profitable area.

Alternatively if your business is growing fast and you are experiencing growing pains - not enough time, not enough resource, lack of cashflow - use the My Growth Planner to see what resources you need to bring in to keep increasing revenues, or where costs can be cut.

If the business is growing really fast you may not have enough resource to allocate to activities in the short term. A session with the MGP can give you perspective on what new resource you need and where to allocate resource to first.

Try it and see!



**BUSINESS
COSTS**
& Increasing Sales

MY INSIGHTS





COLLABORATION

Your Key Partners

The next building block of the My Growth Planner that we are going to look at is Collaboration and your key partners..

All small businesses have key partners - these are the other businesses or individuals that are critical to your business.

Key Partners are not limited to formal business partnerships, they can also be a key part of your supply chain, an investor, a key advisor or a joint venture partner. They might supply some resource that you lack for example know how, land or technology.

Key partnerships will usually be based on shared goals and visible mutual benefit, usually securing a 'win win' situation for all concerned. They can be a very useful answer to many business critical problems. However they need to be entered into very carefully with expectations on both sides clearly set out from the outset.

If there is a critical resource you lack in your business it's good to keep your ear to the ground for potential new partner opportunities. They can crop up when you least expect them! LinkedIn expert, Allen Ruddock, also owns motorhome hire company Motorhome Heaven. A business critical problem for him from the outset was finding a place to keep the motorhomes. He found a partner quite by chance when a networking contact recommended that he speak to Rob Monteiro, owner of Retro Camper Van in Liphook. At first glance Rob might have appeared to be a competitor but Allen overcame that fear and went to have a chat to him. "We got on like a house on fire," says Allen "and I came away with the plan to share Rob's own yard. It's more than just a commercial arrangement, we also turn to each other for advice and support." Allen is now looking to formalise the arrangement with a lease of an office on the premises.



COLLABORATION

Your Key Partners

Partnerships - even apparently informal ones that benefit everyone - do need to be wrapped up in the correct legal and financial framework even, perhaps especially, if you are friends. In an earlier business Allen made the mistake of going into a partnership without the necessary documentation in place and when eventually the partnership went south and needed to be terminated both parties had very different recollections of the terms that had been agreed. It got very messy. "When you are going in to a new partnership. start with the end in mind" he advises.

Jonathan Howkins, owner of Bismosis, agrees. "All partnerships have a life span" he warns. It's best to understand and accept that from the outset and put a definite time limit on your joint activities with a plan to review and either continue or exit at that stage. "Sometimes you can meet someone whose business goals and values are completely aligned with yours," says Jonathan "but if they have personal, financial or relationship pressures that are going to affect business decisions you need to be aware of that too. Make sure you understand the personal as well as the business agenda of anyone you go in to business with. And you do need to get on well with them too!"

Are there critical concerns in your business? Are you trying to solve them all yourself? Perhaps there is a solution for you in the shape of a key partner and a mutually beneficial arrangement. Its certainly worth a thought!



COLLABORATION

Your Key Partners

MY INSIGHTS





SOCIAL MEDIA

Digital Channels

Few small businesses and self-employed business owners can ignore social media. Whether your customers are B2B or B2C, the vast majority will be using social media. It is also a highly affordable way of reaching and engaging with your customers, levelling the playing field to some extent if you compete with larger companies.

Organic social media posts only cost you the time it takes to craft a sentence or two, source an image or video to grab people's attention and post it to your profile or page. Of course, that time could be spent on other activities so it's essential that you focus on the right channels and target your audience with the right messages.

Social media advertising is relatively inexpensive and can be very effective if you have a niche audience such as customers who live in your area or with specific interests. You can be highly targeted using the demographics available on each channel, including age, gender, location, interests and, on LinkedIn, job titles and even the company they work for.

However, as you may know from personal experience, social media can be a bit of a black hole. You plan to just check your notifications for a few minutes and 2 hours later you're still there!

To use social media for your business it's vital that you understand where your customers hang out, what they engage with on that channel, and what they want from you. For example, sales messages are generally not appropriate as users prefer their newsfeed to be full of social interactions. However, an invitation to an event, a link to a useful blog article, or an exclusive offer for social media followers could be much more effective.



SOCIAL MEDIA

Digital Channels

To start using social media effectively, have a look at your customer avatars and your existing customers. What social media channels do they use? And do they use social media groups on Facebook or LinkedIn, such as a local interest group or industry forum? Do they use hashtags that are relevant to your business?

What do they engage with? Do they follow brands and other small businesses? Do they comment, like or share posts from those companies? If they do, can you spot a trend in the type of content they engage with?

If you need to be on several different social media channels, what's the difference between them? For example, Instagram is a very visual channel where people share images, memes and videos. While LinkedIn is focussed on business and work, if your audience is on this channel you should be thinking about what you can share that will help this audience be more successful at work.

Drawing up a content schedule is an excellent way to plan your social media posts and link the your campaigns.

MY INSIGHTS





PRODUCTIVITY

& Business Support

Activities and Resources

The activities are the things you have to do to create the value you talk about in your value proposition. In Delivering Value I used my own business as an example and mentioned that the value proposition for the BiZHUB lies in helping business owners to create genuinely supportive and meaningful business relationships that help them develop personally and drive their businesses forwards.

What key activities have to happen to deliver the BiZHUB value proposition? We hold weekly events to bring business people together to exchange skills and support. It is at these weekly events that the relationships between business people are forged. Our key activities focus on making these events the very best they can possibly be so that we drive value to our prospects and customers. If we perform these activities well, we will attract and retain customers and revenues will build.

Your key activities will be very similar to those of your competitors. To win a competitive advantage you will need to think of a unique angle. How can your activities deliver more value than others operating in the same market?



PRODUCTIVITY & Business Support

BluCanDo are a local IT firm. Their key activity is fixing things that have gone wrong and setting up new, better, safer systems. Their value proposition is people first, technology second. This addresses the key pain point of their customers that IT is something to be fearful of. The BluCanDo brand with its friendly uniform, reassuring 'We can do that for you' approach and calming blue brand colouring speaks straight to that fear.

Key activities include sending the team out to businesses and homes where things have gone wrong with tech and putting them right with a smile, and a plan to stop things going wrong in the future. The friendly, smiling, reassuring nature of the response activity is not common to all IT companies but BluCanDo have identified it as a unique strategy for their brand.

Resources are the things you need to perform your key activities. Human resource is still essential in most cases, other resources can be physical, financial or intellectual. Your resources will need to compete with those of competitors so they need to be at least as good if not better! In the case of BluCanDo they will need staff and competent well trained staff at that. The staff need vehicles and equipment to do their job. Software will be needed to track jobs and customers and on office with staff will be needed to manage the back office functions. Marketing and financial functions will need to be undertaken by someone either in house or outsourced.

Resources mean overhead so they need to be carefully managed. Not enough resource will mean the business underperforms and fails to deliver its value proposition. Too much resource and the business will quickly run out of money.

The My Growth Plan template can be used to understand and correct the relationship between resources and activities. Try sketching out resources and activities in relation to each separate revenue stream that you have or intend to have in your business.

As you grow you will want to deliver more value and add new revenue streams. Use the My Growth Plan to test new ideas. What new activities will need to take place and what is the likely relationship between the cost of the extra resource needed and the revenues? Is the idea worth pursuing? What is the MVP (minimum viable product) that you could test, and how much will it cost?



PRODUCTIVITY
& Business Support

MY INSIGHTS





COMMUNICATION

Customer Relationships

Businesses are no more than the sum of the relationships they are built on. When you start out in business you will most likely directly manage all relationships with customers, whether this is via email, face-to-face, in print or online. You will be present on every part of your customer journey and you will be personally responsible for each customer's satisfaction. Although this places a lot of responsibility and stress on the business owner, this situation does have the advantage of being a relatively simple structure to manage.

So for example Hayley Bystram, owner of elite dating business Bowes Lyon Partnership, started out in business personally meeting every one of her clients and maintaining a personal relationship with all of them via email and telephone. While it was comforting to know that every customer in the business was being professionally dealt with to Hayley's own very high standards, as the business grew Hayley found it increasingly difficult to keep up. Finding herself on the phone 20 hours a day listening to clients Hayley decided something had to change. She needed staff.

As your business grows, like Hayley, you will find yourself managing a whole different set of relationships. No longer will it just be between you and your customers. You will need to let other people in – with all the risk that brings with it. Now the relationships you manage will be more complex - those between you and your staff and those between your staff and your customers.

So it's very important as you grow to have a clear idea of the customer journey and the various processes involved. Use the My Growth Planner to jot down the key areas where your customers are going to interact with you. What do these look like* Who will be responsible for them? How much resource do they need?



COMMUNICATION

Customer Relationships

It's worth looking at this in greater detail if you haven't mapped out a detailed customer journey already. The customer journey is every point at which a prospect connects with your business before buying. Everything that happens to them as they buy and any connections you continue to make with them after they buy. These points of interaction are known as 'touches' and it is often said that it takes 7 - 12 'touches' before a person trusts a company enough to buy from them.

In Hayley's case a typical customer journey might look like this:

- See full page ad in glossy magazine
- Google 'dating agency'
- Go to Bowes Lyon website
- Phone Bowes Lyon Partnership
- Speak to a Hayley or — increasingly — a member of her staff
- A follow up email explaining the service
- A face-to-face meeting ending in a sale
- A card payment or direct debit transaction
- A welcome letter with questionnaire
- An interview
- Another phone call
- A date
- A follow up call
- A follow up emailand so on to a repeat financial transaction or the end of the relationship.

To assess your customer journey think through all the different 'touch points' a customer has on their journey with you. If yours is an established business, think like a customer, go through the buying process and try scoring yourself out of 5 on each point where 5 is amazing and 1 is terrible. Or ask someone to act as a 'mystery shopper' for you. Where should you be focusing your resources?



COMMUNICATION

Customer Relationships

If yours is a new business think through the customer journey carefully as it will give you a clear idea of the resources you will need. If customers are going to spend a lot of the journey on your website then you need to invest in that. If your customers are all starting their journey by searching on Google then you need to really focus resource on your SEO and paid advertising through Adwords. If you are expecting customers to connect with you at business events consider spending more money on your stand or becoming a keynote speaker. If, as in Hayley's case, and all businesses that rely on subscriptions, customers spend a lot of time with you after buying and then you need to focus a lot of resource on the ongoing customer experience.

In Hayley's case she realised that a lot of the customer experience was chatting on the phone to her about dates and that she needed to train staff to do that job successfully for her or she wouldn't be able to grow. She now has two employees answering phones to customers all day long, and doing a fantastic job, leaving her free to develop the business. Hayley's job is now not to support the customers but to support her staff while they support her customers. It's a more complex structure than in the early days, but it will allow for rapid growth.

Hayley says:

"Customer service is at the heart of my business and my clients expect a consistent, dedicated and slick service. I want my company to be represented in a certain way, and for the customer service to be impeccable throughout the duration of membership, not just at the beginning. I have scripted conversations, for when clients enquire about our services, that are tailored towards certain criteria, such as gender, age and relationship status. We have a list of scenarios that regularly occur with our clientele - questions that often arise or reservations that clients may have. All scenarios have a solution, or a way of managing the situation, that my team can follow. This ensures there is consistency across the board and gives me confidence that my entire team are delivering the same message to all of our clients."



COMMUNICATION

Customer Relationships

Who will be managing your customer relationships? You or a member of staff? If staff are doing it do you have the process properly mapped out so that new staff can give a consistent service?

Think about the different journeys you have been on as a customer. Where were you 'wow'ed, and where were you left disappointed? Have you ever left a shop without buying, or abandoned on online cart? When did you last cancel a subscription? What was wrong with your customer journey there? These insights will allow you to think more clearly about the journey your own customers undertake.

What insights can you gain from this section of the My Growth Planner? Here you can think about what resources you need - and where - to satisfy your customer needs at each part of the journey, which will in turn help you estimate costs. You can also spend a bit of extra time thinking about how to make sure that the customer journey is set up to generate maximum revenues

MY INSIGHTS





GET STARTED

My Growth Planner Template

On the next page is your copy of the My Growth Planner template, which you can print out or annotate digitally. As suggested in this guide you may want several versions of the template for different revenue streams, or perhaps one will be enough to get started with!

Using the insights you've jotted down as you've read through this guide, you can now start filling in each section of the template to develop a plan for your business's growth and success.

You don't have to complete My Growth Planner alone!

You will notice that there is a date against each section in the My Growth Planner template. This corresponds to a month of education, inspiration and skills development at the SiGNAL BiZHUB. Our programme of weekly training and business support is aligned with the My Growth Planner, so you get all the support needed to develop a robust and effective plan for your business.

By joining the SiGNAL BiZHUB you'll get learn practical skills and valuable insights that will help you grow your business. With the support of our business experts and community, you'll be on the fast track to success!

If you haven't visited the BiZHUB before, there's a free pass at the back of this guide. Come along to experience the Hub for yourself, and start filling in your My Growth Planner too.

To find out more about the SiGNAL BiZHUB, visit our website. www.SignalBizHub.org

SIGNAL



My Growth Planner

Each section also corresponds to a BizHUB monthly topic in 2020
See the Year Planner for dates of forthcoming BizHUB sessions

To use this planning tool effectively
download our FREE 27 page guide:
signalbizhub.org/mgp

Delivering Value
February 2020

Ideal Customers
March 2020

Marketing 101
April 2020

Business Costs
May 2020

Increasing Sales
June 2020

Collaboration
July 2020

Social Media
August 2020

Productivity
September 2020

Communication
October 2020

Business Support
November 2020

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We hope to see you at the BiZHUB soon!



The voucher features the Signal Bizhub logo on the left, which includes a lightbulb icon. The main text reads 'SiGNAL BiZHUB FREE PASS!' in large, bold letters. Below this, it says 'Print this voucher off, or save it on your device, then show it to the Hub team when you attend your free event.' The bottom right corner has a dark purple background with a diagonal orange and teal line, and the value '£30' in large white font. A small disclaimer at the bottom right states: 'This voucher is worth £29.71 and entitles the holder to one free visit to the SiGNAL BiZHUB. It cannot be redeemed against any other course or event, or be transferred to another party. Can only be used once.'

SiGNAL

BiZHUB

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Print this voucher off, or save it on your device, then show it to the Hub team when you attend your free event.

The SiGNAL BiZHUB weekly meeting is held every Wednesday from 9:30 to 12pm

Please visit our event page to check what's on - www.signalbordon.org/events

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