



EXAMPLE BUSINESS PLAN

Name:	JOE BLOGS
Business Name:	THE GARDENING EXPERT
Business Idea:	GARDENING SERVICES
Address:	1 GREEN HOUSE, FOREST ROAD, DORSET
Postcode:	XY12 3ZZ
E-mail:	joeblogs@treeserve.co.uk
Mobile:	01234 567891.
Tel. No. (Landline):	05888 111222



Section One – Executive Summary

✓ My Business Idea

Explain your business idea below - A detailed description of your business, it's important to have a clear understanding of what exactly your business will do.
This is an ideal area to explain your business idea in simple terms so that it can be easily understood.

To become a gardener offering my gardening services and expertise, including lawn mowing, hedging and garden design to both residential and business customers throughout Dorset, Hampshire and beyond.

I also have a range of lawn treatment products which I will be promoting to my customers where required.

✓ Business Aims and Objectives (Short, Medium and Long term)

Business aims and objectives - a description of your short term (0 - 6 months), medium term (6 months - 1 year) and longer term (12 months and beyond) vision for the business.

My short term aims and objectives: (0 - 6 months):

To quickly build a good customer base through networking (visiting potential business customers and attending gardening events), marketing and promotion (business cards and flyers).

Medium term (6 months - 1 year):

To build an excellent reputation for quality and service within the local area and beyond enabling me to gain repeat business and customer referrals from happy and satisfied customers.

Longer term (12 months and beyond) vision for the business:

To build a profitable gardening business and increase profits year on year.

To employ an assistant to help me with my general gardening duties and enable me to expand the business.



✓ Personal Profile (About You)

Why are you interested in running your own business? Any previous work experience? Any qualification and education? Training (or short courses)? C.V.

Personal aims and objectives – Year 0-1, Year 2-3 and Year 4-5

After leaving school I had a number of different jobs including working as a waiter in the local pub. I was able to pick up a lot of new skills: interacting with customers and dealing with complaints and working as a team.

One summer I was asked by the owner of the pub to carry out general duties in the garden which included weeding and lawn cutting. Although this wasn't my main role I really enjoyed it and found that being outside and working alone was really productive.

I enrolled at the local college and qualified with a BTEC in gardening which gave me a lot of added skills included plant care and management as well as marketing and promotion.

I didn't have a lot of confidence at school: however as soon as I start work in a garden I feel proud of my achievements and really enjoy the creative side.

I have since had a number of different jobs including working in a biscuit factory and also telesales, both of which have provided me with a number of new skills but I have never felt the sense of achievement that I got from working outdoors.

I now have a son of 6 who love spending time with. Weekends away camping, walking or being by the beach.

Working for myself and starting a business as a gardener will give me back the feeling of self-worth and the ability to re-build and re-shape my life and offer me a more flexible and enjoyable lifestyle where I will be able to spend more quality time with my son as this business will give me both a flexible lifestyle and generate a more financial future.

Within the first year of trading I would like to be able to move away from my current benefits and hopefully within the next 5 years I will have saved enough money to put a deposit together for a small property.

I am really looking to starting and can't wait to turn my dreams into a successful reality.

✓ Key Personnel

Who will be involved in your business and what will their roles be?

To start with it will just be me working in my gardening business. However as the business grows I may look at expanding the business and taking on an assistance / work experience to help me during the busier months.

My father will also be assisting me the general paperwork and answering the telephone as well as taking bookings for me.



✓ My Personal/Business Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Hardworking- Excellent timekeeper- Qualified: BTEC Diploma in Gardening- I really enjoy gardening	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Paperwork has always been a weakness for me, however I have help and assistance from my family in this area and I also intend to employ a book keeper to ensure my business is in safe hands.- I will be a new business so I will have to carry out a lot of targeted marketing to gain new business and establish a good reputation.
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Link up with other garden maintenance companies to offer services which I am unable to carry out myself: such as decking and ponds.- Networking to potential business customers such as estate agents to generate more business (Buy To Let Landlords / tenants).	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Adverse weather conditions (ice and snow).- Other gardeners / competition.- I aim to have a website and will have to ensure that it is properly protected from hackers and scams.- Lack of broadband in the area that I live for picking up emails etc.

Section Two – Marketing

Market Research

✓ Customers

This section is to describe the customers that might buy your product or service. Explain whether your customers are individuals or businesses? Explain your typical customer? Consider possible age range, gender etc. For businesses what sector are they in and what size for example Small Medium Enterprises (SME's) or larger organisations. Where are your typical customers? For example are they local, national or worldwide? Explain how many customers you will have waiting to buy from you? For example do you have any potential customers?

The area that I will be offering my services has a very large population of retired people who own their own home.

Many of these people have a fairly high disposable income and many are unable to carry out gardening themselves on a regular basis and to the standard they would like to achieve.

There is also an opportunity to offer my gardening services to landlords (and tenants) and I have also approached 2 letting agents and made them aware of my gardening services and they are keen to offer me potential work for their clients.



✓ Competition

A competitor is any business that offers a product or service similar or as an alternative to yours. Find out information about your competitors. Do this for the minimum of three competitors. You will need to find their name, contact details, information about what product or services they offer and list 3 of their main strengths and 3 of their main weaknesses.

What is your business unique selling point? What makes your business different from your competition?

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>ABC Gardening Services: Dorset www.abcdefg.co.uk Family business established 15 years offering a full range of gardening services including decking and scaffold hedge cutting service</p> <p>XYZ Green Fingers Gardeners: Hampshire www.zzzzxxxxx.co.uk Franchise business Good online presence with website and testimonials.</p> <p>123 Garden Designers: Dorset www.tttttsssss.co.uk Fleet of branded vehicles. Adverts weekly in local paper</p>	<p>Business is currently slowing down and up for sale due to family relocating out of the area.</p> <p>They only take on medium to large jobs, whereas I will happily take on smaller jobs to get my business established</p> <p>A high turnover of staff and bad customer feedback reviews on their website. I pride myself in offering excellent customer service with a friendly approach to all.</p>

✓ Market Trends

Desk Research (Secondary Research) – Involves researching your industry sector, for example any important facts, statistics or events. Whether your product/service is seasonal or dependent on other factors (for example weather)

Field research (Primary Research) – Have you completed any test trading? Have you completed questionnaires/surveys to any customers to see if they would be happy with your product/services, with your price range etc. and what was the outcome? If no, then what Market Research have you completed?

I have carried out a lot of market research both on and off line to ensure that there is a need for my gardening services.

As well as speaking to local businesses (within a 5 mile radius of my home address) including estate agents who have a lot of properties on their books who require garden maintenance, I have also had a look on Right-Move and notice that there are a lot of local properties for rent which may well require a gardener.

I compiled a short questionnaire which I delivered to 55 households within a mile radius of my home property asking questions regarding pricing: types of garden work customers are mainly looking for and if they would consider my services. I have had a response of 20% from this questionnaire which has been extremely encourage and has also provided me with a number of suitable leads.

Online research (Google searches) has also provided me with the following statistics:



According to research commissioned by sliding door manufacturer Origin, the average homeowner spent the equivalent of 19 working days gardening between March and May 2015. This amounts to an average of 154 hours or 11 hours every week.

According to the Britain at Home report by Lloyds Bank Insurance, homeowners aged between 25 and 34 spent an average of £747 on their outdoor space between May 2013 and April 2014. The national average spend on outdoor spaces across all age categories in the last 12 months was £318.

✓ Legal Considerations for your Business

Are there any legal requirements? Any insurance required for you to operate your business etc.

I will be getting Public Liability insurance which will help protect both me and customers and I will also be updating my current car insurance for business use.

I will also be checking that I am following the General Data Protection Regulations to protect my customers information.

Marketing

The 4P's of Marketing (Product, Price, Place and Promotion)

✓ Product

This section explains what your business is going to sell. Is your business going to sell a product, a service or both? Describe in detail the products or service you are going to sell.

I will be offering the following gardening services to my customers:

Lawn mowing, planting, weeding, all aspects of general garden maintenance.

I also have a range of lawn treatment products which I will be promoting to my customers where required.

✓ Price and costs

Estimate average sales and services. What is the price of your product/service and how much is it going to cost you to deliver this?

I have researched my competition and also worked out my Personal Home Survival Budget to ensure that I am charging enough to remain competitive, but also to enable me ensure a profit.

I will be charging an hourly rate of £14

A daily rate of £100 and a half day rate of £55

Some jobs will unique to customer requirements and will be quoted accordingly and all materials will be agreed with the customer and charged on top.



✓ Place

The routes to market and where you will advertise

I will be carrying out my gardening services across Dorset and Hampshire, ideally my core market will be within 5 miles of where I live, although I will consider going further afield for larger contracts.

✓ Promotion

This section is to describe which marketing methods you will use to promote your business. For example: Word of Mouth, Advertising for example: use of local media in a local newspaper, the internet, or directories such as Yell.com, Business cards, Flyers, Direct marketing, Social Media, Website, Tradeshows and exhibitions, Logos, Company branded clothing

As well as advertising within the local village shops and Parish magazine, I will produce business cards and flyers to promote my business.

The front of my business cards will inform my customers of the services I offer (lawn cutting, planting, weeding and all aspects of garden maintenance).

The backs of my business cards will be printed up with an area where I can include a brief estimate of the job (price) and details of the job. This will hopefully enable me to price up a job whilst with the customer and provide it to them there and then and hopefully secure the work immediately.

I will be producing an A6 leaflet to promote my services and offering a free "back to green" fertilizer lawn product for all new customers during the month of May.

I will have magnetic signage produced (cost of £35), which I will attach to my car. I will also be using one of the magnetic signs by attaching it to a backing whilst at my customers premises and be using it as a work board to promote my business outside their properties to encourage neighbours to use my services.

I will be getting branded clothing produced (tops) to promote my business.

I will also be going on to Right-Move and checking all local properties that are being advertised for rent and sending the landlords / tenants a leaflet offering my services. (I will also make a note of the date the properties are being advertised and rented out to ensure that when the six monthly / yearly tenancy is up for renewal, that I have sent them a leaflet of my services in advance.



Marketing Plan

Showing planned marketing activities over the next 12 months

✔ Short (1-3 months)

Business cards to be produced and flyers: I will carry out door to door distribution of my flyers.

Professional and friendly answer message to be put on my mobile phone.

Adverts: postcards to be placed in village shops and village magazines

Networking to be carried out to local business and potential customers.

Branded uniform with company logo and magnetic signage for my vehicle.

✔ Medium (3-6 months)

Facebook page and social media marketing.

A professional website with details of my services and pricing as well as excellent customer testimonials to showcase my work.

Contact and customer enquiry forms on my website to make it easier for customers to make contact with me.

✔ Long (6 – 12 months)

Press release to local magazines and publications offering advice and tips to readers on gardening.

Marketing to larger organisations and businesses to gain larger contracts.



✓ Other things to think about....

Use this area to include any other information about your business that you feel relevant.

I have a small lock up garage at home, where I will be keeping my tools and equipment. I will be carrying out my gardening services on my customers premises.

I will look at getting 3 comparison quotes for my public liability insurance.

Section Three – Finance and Funding

✓ How are you funding your business?

Please indicate what sources of funding you're planning (loan, family/friends/ self-funded etc.) and how much you need to start up with a detailed list of the items you require funding for.

I do not require any external loans or funding as I will be financing the start- up costs of my business myself. And looking at various grants to assist my business further.

Or

I would like to apply for a loan of £1000

This will be for the following:

Equipment including lawnmower, brush, rake, garden spade and fork: £500

Marketing: Including website, business cards and flyers: £450

Advertising: Advert within local village magazine £50

TOTAL £1000