

THE PLAN-AS-YOU-GO BUSINESS PLAN

TIM BERRY

TIM BERRY is founder and president of Palo Alto Software, the founder of bplans.com and a co-founder of Borland International. He is the principal author of *Business Plan Pro*, the country's best-selling business plan software. Mr. Berry is a graduate of the University of Notre Dame, the University of Oregon and Stanford. He worked as a business plan consultant with Apple Computer for thirteen years before taking Palo Alto Software from a start-up to a company with forty employees and a 70 percent market share. He teaches how to write business plans at the University of Oregon and is a frequent keynote speaker at Apple Computer, Autodesk, Progress Software, USASBE, Academy of Management and other places. Mr. Berry is the author of *Hurdle: the Book on Business Planning* and *Business Plan Pro*.

The Web site for this book is at www.planasyougo.com.

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MAIN IDEA

The traditional formal business plan which follows a cookie-cutter template approach is not much use any more. Instead, you need a plan which will grow and evolve with your business. You're much better off if you start with something simple and then plan-as-you-go rather than spending weeks or months developing a formal business plan.

Instead of obsessing over producing a detailed business plan, you should get going and focus on what you need to do to make your business a success. You can add all of the frills later on if you so choose, but when you're first starting off, concentrate on doing what you need to do to survive.

The plan-as-you-go approach is centered around the central paradox of business plans – it's the planning process that's important, not the actual plan that gets written. If you plan well – even if you don't get around to embedding that planning in a formal written document – you position yourself to succeed. You can be quick, flexible and responsive to changes in the marketplace because you know what needs to get done. If you bring in an outside consultant to put a formal business plan together for you, that will not happen.

Do yourself a favor. Forget about writing a traditional business plan. Instead, make your business planning a powerful tool for driving your business forward. To do that:

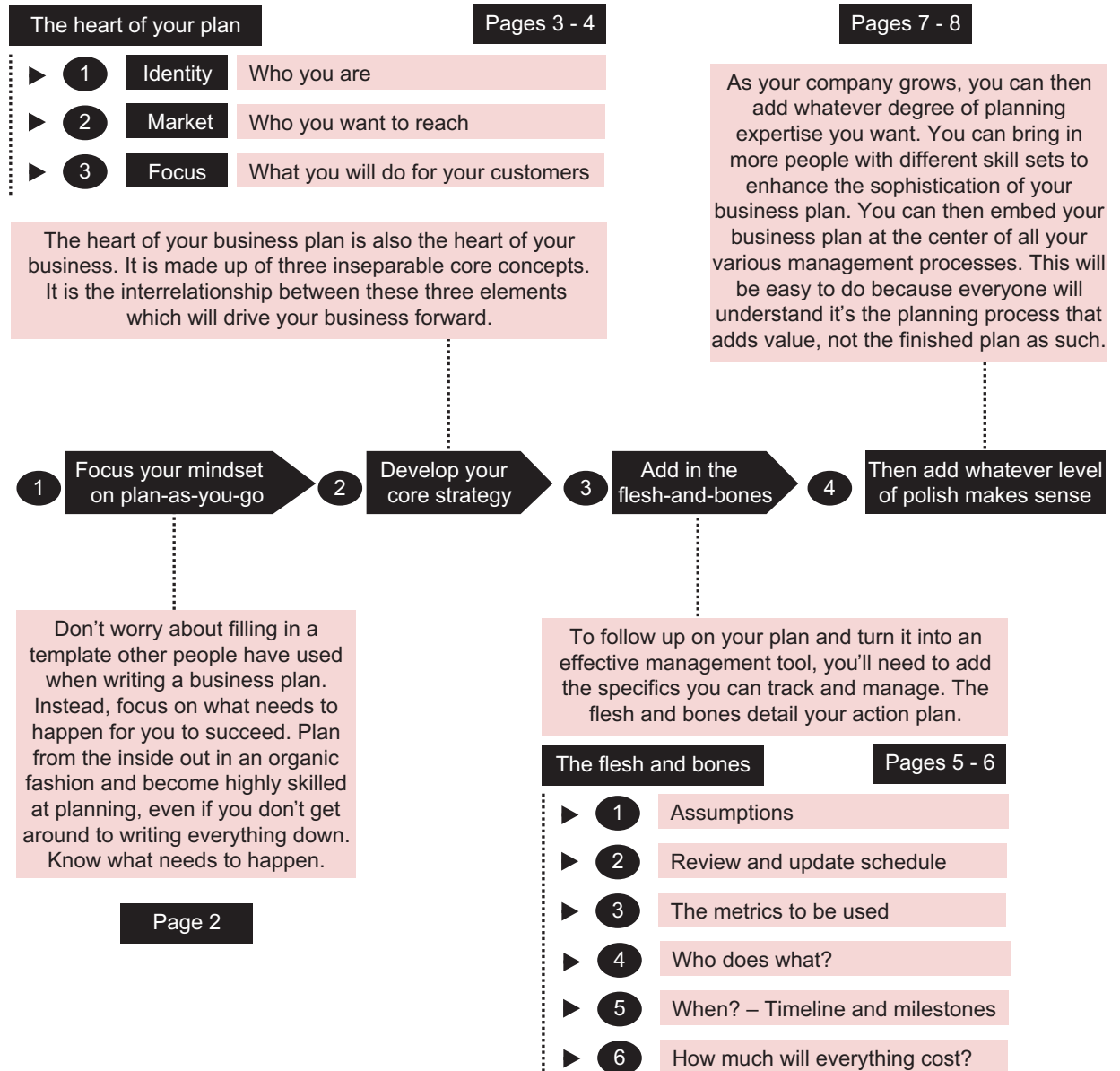
1. Focus your mindset on plan-as-you-go.
2. Develop your core strategy.
3. Add in the flesh and bones.
4. Then add whatever level of polish makes sense.

And that's it.

"Keep it simple and practical. Do as much planning as you'll be able to use. Realize that all plans will change, so think of your plan as ongoing and use it to guide your business. Expect it to change, but use the planning to keep your eyes on the long-term goals even as the details change. It's like planning a trip: having the plan doesn't lock you in, it helps you keep track and revise as needed. Plan as you go."

– Tim Berry

The Plan-As-You-Go Approach to Business Planning



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