

Business Computer Applications

Course Syllabus-Focus: Writing a Business Plan

Materials needed for this course:

\$10 lab fee- which will purchase supplies for consumption through the duration of the course (i.e., ink, paper, cardstock, etc.)

1- 3 prong folder with pockets (labeled BCA, which will be left in class)

1- 2" WHITE 3 ring binder with the clear front pocket.

Pack of 50 clear sheet protectors.

1-512mb auxiliary storage device **-to be provided through the school**

Writing utensil for the occasional note taking

Course overview:

In an effort to foster the pioneer spirit in all people this course will use all available software, such as Word, PowerPoint, Excel and Publisher to teach students about the importance of owning their own business. Upon completion of this course, in **26 short weeks**, each student will have a binder containing a complete business plan which will be ready for submission to any lender if the student chooses. The flow of the course will be as follows:

Week by week course planner:

Week 1 and 2- The class will study the 8 steps to writing a business plan, using teacher created handouts and presentations . Each day 1-2 steps will be discussed, students should take notes and be prepared to define and explain each step.

Students will also explore reasons for starting your own business along with the pros and cons of such a venture. There will be a short quiz on the last day to test for clarity and retention.

Week 3- Students will answer several questionnaires in order to discover where their talents and interests are focused. During this week students will be encouraged to begin to decide what they would like to do if they could do anything they dreamed for a living. Participation points will be given as a grade for this week based upon the submission of assigned questionnaires.

Week 4- Students will research the area in which they would like to open their business to determine the viability of that business. Upon completion of their research, students will submit a **COMPANY DESCRIPTION**, 1-2 page report stating their findings, which should include the **PRODUCT/SERVICE** and the name or focus of their business.

Week 5- Students will compile information to construct the **MANAGEMENT TEAM** part of the business plan. Here students will focus on the necessary schooling, credentials, and experience they currently have or plan to achieve in order to properly oversee this business venture. If the student does not plan to manage the business they need to construct a management team and prove their training and/or credentials. A 1-2 page report, using the Word program, should be submitted by the end of the week.

Week 6 and 7- Students will be introduced to the **MARKET ANALYSIS** report. Students should address the market that their product or service is going to reach. Students should show that they have knowledge of that market in their business plan. Using Excel and or Word, the students will show the need for their particular product in that particular area. Students should include pictures and diagrams to make it clear what their product is and how it works. Also, include upgrades their product could take.

Week 8 and 9- Students will be introduced to the **FINANCIAL PLAN**: Include profit and loss, cash flow, balance sheet, break-even analysis, assumptions, business ratios, etc. This information should be illustrated using the Excel program, including colorful charts.

Week 10 and 11- Students will be introduced to the **STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION** part of the business plan. Students should be specific and include management responsibilities with dates and a budget. The Word and/or Excel program may be used to demonstrate this part of the plan.

Week 12 and 13- Students will use the Word program to touch on the highlights of the business. Students should submit a 1-2 page report depicting the business' highlights. Also, students should create a PowerPoint presentation to illustrate their **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**. This can be used for the "pitch" which will be presented to the class at the conclusion of the course.

Week 14- Students will create business cards for their business, using the Word program. They must include colorful graphics which will become the company's logo. Business cards will be printed on the last day and submitted for a grade.

Week 15- Students will create business flyers, using the Word program. They must include the company's logo. Flyers will be printed on the last day and submitted for a grade.

Week 16 and 17- Students will create brochures to market their business, using the Publisher program. They must include the company's logo, mission statement, location and contact information, an overview of the company. Brochures will be printed on the last day and submitted for a grade.

Week 18- Students will create business letterhead, using the Word program. They must include the company's logo. Letterheads will be printed on the last day and submitted for a grade.

Week 19- Students will create thank you cards for their business. These cards can be used to thank local companies for extended credit, and/or to thank loyal customers for patronizing their business, etc. This assignment will be done using either the Publisher or Word program, student's choice.

Week 20- This week we will host a local business owner per day. The guest speaker will give the students exposure to their business plans, start up issues, pitfalls they have had to overcome, etc. in starting up their own businesses. Students will be encouraged to ask questions for participation points.

Week 21 and 22- Students will be introduced to the "Dress for Success" portion of the syllabus. Here students will learn about appropriate business attire, accessories, grooming, and behavior. A guest speaker will come for 1 or 2 days to help expose the students to "the real world of work expectations".

Week 23- Students will be allowed this time to finalize their business plan. During this week students may make necessary changes and ask final questions for clarity.

Week 24- Students will present their Business Plans to the class, along with available teachers, and community leaders as if they were presenting to a bank or a team of investors. Students will also "dress for success", in order to get a true feel for the effort it takes to truly sell their business idea.

Week 25- Each student will create an invitation to be used to invite back guest speakers to thank them for coming to share their knowledge. The entire high school faculty will vote for the most attractive and inclusive invitation. The winning student will be recognized at the “Thank You” party.

Week 26- Students will be asked to reflect on the course and suggest necessary changes in an effort to make the course even better for future students to come. Students will complete a questionnaire requesting their favorite part of the project, their least favorite part, necessary improvements to the project, etc. Finally the course will be brought to a close with a celebratory pizza party, hosted by the students. All of our past guests speakers will be invited back to attend our “thank you” party. Students will be encouraged to network and show off their finished business plans.