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## *“Playing Business” Before Business Planning*

As your VR customers begin to consider self-employment as a possible career path, their first instinct may be to write a business plan. For years, this was in fact the first essential step to successfully starting a business. However today, individuals starting a new business are wise to first test out their ideas by “playing business.”

Thanks to the continued improvements in Internet reach, technology, social media, cloud-based apps, outsourcing and other 21<sup>st</sup> century advancements, the majority of self-employment business models can be easily validated before the business plan is written. This includes service-based businesses such as dog walking and IT consulting, and products such as high end crafts and clothing.

The benefits to your VR Customers in testing out their business concept beforehand are many and powerful. This includes:

- Proving to themselves that they can sell what they have to offer
- Validating that someone wants to buy it
- Working out and fully understanding how to deliver upon what they’re offering
- Proving that someone will pay them money for it
- Revealing how profitable it can be (or not)
- Indicating what they’ll have to do over time to maintain and sustain operations

From this viewpoint, individuals have a lot more insight into what goes into a business plan and what it truly means. They also have some level of real world experience that will help to make the plan more than just an academic exercise of guesswork. Armed with this new insight, VR Customers are now ready to pull together their business plan. In this regard, they’ll be looking at the following essential elements:

**The Executive Summary** | Write this last. This section provides a short and concise summary of what they’re going to sell, to who, how and why. It needs to be clear, compelling and to the point.

**The Body of the Plan** | The heart of the business plan is comprised of two main sections: the specific details about the business operation and the financial data. After testing out the business plan in the real world, completing these sections becomes a lot more relevant and useful for supporting a productive venture launch and long-term sustainability.

**Supporting Documents** | The final section of the plan contains any and all supporting documents that help to reinforce representations in the body of the plan. For more information, read the [Business Planning Format](#).

For more information, visit: <http://www.buzvr.org/>

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