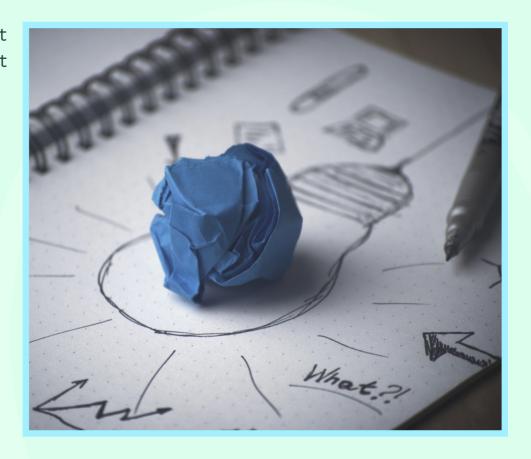
Our business planning 'to do, think and ask' list!

We'll let you into a secret. Business planning isn't a linear process. In fact, we think that the joy of it sometimes is that it's messy, creative work.

Much of it is about trying out different ideas about the future and testing different potential scenarios, before finally landing on the ones that make most sense. Sometimes information you gather later in the process will mean you return to something you did earlier and revise it.



It's iterative, and you should definitely expect to tweak your thinking as you go along. After all, when you think about it, you're basically in the business of trying to invent your future!

It really isn't rocket science, and there isn't a one size-fits-all approach to putting together a business plan. But there are a series of things you need to think about, and questions you need to ask and answer.



Handily, we've made this little illustration to get you inside those key bits of thinking you need to do. Why not print it off and stick it to the wall to help you keep track of your business planning journey?

Clarify what you are for?

What difference do you want to see? Where do you want to be?

Gather information about you & the outside world

Your strengths &
weaknesses? The
opportunities & threats?
What makes you stand out?

Identify your goals

What is it that you want to achieve over the next period?

Making the money work

How much will it cost?

How much will we earn?

Will we always have enough money to pay the bills?

The strategy bit

What's the best way to achieve your aims?
Who will do what & when?
When or why might you tweak those plans?

Think about your market

Who are your target audiences/customers?
What do they want?
Where are they?
How can you reach them?



Belt and braces

What might go wrong, what you'd do if it did, and how you can prevent that from happening.

Ready, steady, go!

What will you do each quarter or each month?
How are you going to schedule this in?
Get started!

How we doing?

How are we doing against our targets?
What's different, and why?
What do we need to do as a result?



