



WIT MENA

الشرق الاوسط و شمال افريقيا

Women in Technology :

Middle East and North Africa

Business Planning For Sustainability

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Community Technology Center Planning & Implementation Handbook



INSTITUTE OF
INTERNATIONAL
EDUCATION

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The “Women in Technology” (WIT) Program

WIT Program Overview

Women in Technology (WIT) for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Region is funded by the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) of the U.S. Department of State, managed by the Institute of International Education (IIE) West Coast Center, and implemented in collaboration with local partners in seven countries: Egypt, Iraq, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.

Program Components

The WIT MENA program delivers five core activities to WIT Partner Organizations and participants: Soft Skills Training, Business Planning for Sustainability, IT Training through Microsoft’s Unlimited Potential (UP) Curriculum, Women’s IT Clubs, and Professional Exchange and Capacity Building.

By partnering with a range of organizations - such as Chambers of Commerce, NGOs, women’s associations, universities and colleges - the program will explore multiple avenues through which women can gain access to new training opportunities and resources. This partnership between the United States and seven countries in the MENA region will escalate the pace of women’s participation in the workforce and strengthen women’s organizations by providing tools to help them achieve their goals.

Acquiring hard skills, especially in the field of Information Technology (IT), is a powerful building block for individuals and organizations. From strengthened positions, both the Partner Organizations and participants will be empowered to play an integral role in shaping their country’s future. The primary goals of WIT MENA are:

- ▶ To create a strong base of women with the ability to use IT skills, which allow them to gain access to new careers and to influence policies for democratic change
- ▶ To provide substantial capacity building to Partner Organizations to expand their reach, sustainability and ability to serve women



Women In Technology Mission Statement

The Women in Technology (WIT) program provides Partner Organizations cutting-edge curricula and training opportunities in Business Planning, Soft Skills and Information Technology (IT). WIT Partner Organizations' ability to offer women in their communities IT courses, professional development activities, and participation in Women's IT Clubs, ensures the organizations' avenues to growth and sustainability, and empowers WIT participants to take a more active role in shaping their country's future.

Community Technology Center (CTC) Initiative

The CTC project is intended to assist organizations in:

- ▶ Providing access and opportunity to women in an effort to enhance their marketable skills, gain economic independence and increase the power of the private sector in building a democratic society.
- ▶ Increasing the level of women's participation in building pluralistic societies through civil society strengthening

Additional outcomes for partner organizations would include:

- ▶ Achieving a sustainable business model for delivering IT and soft skills training to women
- ▶ Increasing the number of low- middle income women who are trained and entering the workforce
- ▶ Providing a professional development network to a diverse group of women who actively participate

Developing Your Business Plan

Setting Your Direction

This business planning curriculum is a tool being provided by MEPI and IIE to assist your organization in achieving the CTC Project outcomes. It is important to understand that this particular business planning tool is designed specifically to assist your organization with the development of a sustainable CTC and to achieve the outcomes specific to the MEPI and IIE project goals.

Elements of the curriculum include this handbook, as well as the:

- ▶ CTC Action Plan Template
- ▶ CTC Business Plan Template
- ▶ CTC Cost Recovery Financial Tracking Tool
- ▶ CTC Implementation Guide Template
- ▶ Recovery Statement

Each of these tools is defined and explained throughout the curriculum.

Before you begin the process of business plan development, let's review the components of the plan, and how to get the most from the templates and tools provided with this curriculum.

The Goal of Your Business Plan

In order to be successful with a CTC plan, it is important to recognize that even though your organization exists, you are adding a new element (service) that needs to provide for itself. It cannot be allowed to rely on existing funds to succeed. You need a plan that outlines how your CTC can independently sustain itself.

The business model you will develop for the CTC is based on what is known as the cost recovery model. The cost recovery model implies that your CTC will extend upfront funding and recover the operational costs as participants pay fees for training services.

This presents several unique factors for consideration. As you prepare your business plan, consider:

- ▶ The estimated length of time it will take the CTC to begin generating income
- ▶ The amount of start up "cash" needed to sustain the CTC, until income is generated
- ▶ The actual expenses that will be generated by the program
- ▶ The appropriate fee(s) you will need to charge in order to recover the expenses that are generated by the program

- ▶ How many participants you can realistically serve at any one time.
- ▶ What the hours of operation will be for the CTC and how many classes can be offered during those hours.
- ▶ How much staff will be required to service those classes, prepare schedules and maintain the operation of the CTC.

Consider how your new service relates to the mission of the overall organization and how the CTC can grow successfully and independently of the organization.

The planning processes you will use to create your CTC plan is divided into several components. The Action Plan Template and Implementation Guide Template are tools to assist you in planning and implementing the plan you write. The Business Plan Template itself is divided into 6 parts and an optional 7th. The specific parts are listed below.

1. Action Plan
2. Business Plan Template
 - ▶ Contact Information Page and Executive Summary
 - ▶ Organization Description
 - ▶ The Market
 - ▶ Operations
 - ▶ Sales & Marketing
 - ▶ Financials
 - ▶ Optional Add-Ons
3. Implementation Guide

Once you complete your business plan document, it will be presented in the order you see above, however you will develop one of the components in a different order, saving the *Executive Summary* for last.

In addition to the elements listed above, you will also have a Cost Recovery Financial Tracking Tool designed to assist you in tracking the dollars you will receive and spend for your CTC. This tool has been set up to automatically calculate your “recovery” process.

Finally there is a Recovery Statement that will assist you in identifying how you can reinvest surplus revenue generated by your CTC back into the program.

As you move through this guide, we will explore each area in detail to assist in the development process.

Benefits of the Development Process

So you ask, why spend time creating a business plan? Isn't it just easier to set up the CTC, open the doors and begin providing services? It's true that having a business plan does not necessarily guarantee a successful CTC implementation. However, without a plan, your CTC can sputter and fold before you get started. Planning at the beginning can save you time and money during operations. Specific benefits of the development process include:

- ▶ Considering all the elements that will need support in order for the CTC to be sustainable
- ▶ Fully understanding how much revenue is required to sustain the program
- ▶ Preparing a marketing approach to insure that participants know about the services available through the CTC

Using the Action Plan Template

The first tool in the business plan development curriculum is called the Action Plan Template. The Action Plan Template provides worksheets to outline goals and monitor progress as you develop your CTC Business Plan. The worksheets highlight seven major milestones that involve various elements of the business plan development process. These milestone goals are targeted for specific weeks during a 12 week period. Instructions on how to use the template are included in the Action Plan Template document provided with this curriculum.

Using the Business Plan Template

The Business Plan Template is designed to guide you through the writing and development process. Again, remember that your plan is focused on the CTC portion of your organization and not the organization itself. Once you populate the template with content, you may print it and use it for presentation purposes. It has been formatted to provide a professional looking plan that can be used with funders, bankers and other resources as you initiate and build your CTC.

Like many of the other tools in this package, the Business Plan Template is set up as a form. Some of the form areas are locked to protect the integrity of the layout and to make it easier to add content. You will see directions in the areas that allow input. The statement [Enter content here] appears in gray where you are able to type. Place your cursor over these gray areas and type in the content you desire.

The Table of Contents section of the Business Plan Template is also set up as a form, and the page numbers will need to be entered once you have completed development of your business plan.

This curriculum guide will present each area of the Business Plan Template and provide direction on how to complete the template.

Using the Microsoft Excel Cost Recovery Financial Tracking Tool

The CTC Cost Recovery Financial Tracking Tool is provided as a way to track income and expenses specific to the CTC and the “break even” point of your cost recovery structure. The tracking tool is created in Microsoft Excel.

Similar to the Word files, the Microsoft Excel file is a template. The template provides a format for entering your specific CTC data. Areas of the template are locked to preserve the layout of the form, but you will use many of the blank cells to input data. Where appropriate, the Excel file will calculate values based on the numbers that have been entered. You will be able to see where those calculations occur. Many times the calculated values will be sums of a series of numbers. Specific instructions for how to use this template can be found under the financial module of this curriculum.

Recovery Statement

The Recovery Statement is a Microsoft Word template and is provided as a way for you to plan for how to reinvest any recovery revenues that are generated from your CTC. Specific instructions on how to complete this statement are included in the Financials section of this handbook.

Using the Implementation Guide Template

Once you have completed your Business Plan Template, it will be necessary to implement the plan. This is perhaps the most critical part of a business development initiative. Developing a good plan is half the work. The second half is using the plan you develop to create progress and success. The Implementation Guide Template provides a way to track your progress and goals on a quarterly basis and to build in accountability for the members of the team who are responsible for implementing the plan.

The Implementation Guide is a good tool to use to track and monitor progress. It also allows you to change and update your business plan as needed. Specific instructions on how to use the Implementation Guide Template are included in the template document.

Using Your Completed Business Plan

Many businesses and organizations spend hours, days and months preparing a business plan. And then, it goes directly into a file drawer or a notebook, along with the author's great intentions of using it.

Let's think of the business plan as a roadmap and consider this analogy. Pretend for a moment you want to take a trip. The place you are going is not somewhere you have ever been, nor has anyone around you. No one can explain really how to get there; they just know that if you arrive successfully, it will be wonderful.

You have a choice to make. Choice one is to take time at the beginning to research and analyze the trip. You can search for some of the best routes to take before you begin driving. With that research you can determine how much food or water you might need before you get there, and how much gas the car will require. You can also pinpoint the best places to rest along the way so that everyone with you won't be too exhausted once you arrive.

Choice two is to throw everyone in the car; fill it up with as much fuel and supplies as you have and drive. There is a sense of adventure in this choice, but chances are as you travel you will begin to see the benefits that a little planning would provide. Perhaps you will not have a great place to rest along the way, or the appropriate food or water to enjoy. You might even discover you have gone many miles out of your way, using too much fuel.

The point is, think of the plan you are about to create as a roadmap. Allow it to guide you through the process of thinking about your CTC, how it relates to the overall organization, what resources it requires, what benefits it can bring participants and how to achieve its mission. By the time you have completed the document you will have answered these questions and much more.

These answers can save you in the long run from going out of your way, from using too many resources on unnecessary things and from getting totally lost in the direction you want to go.

A business plan must be used, sometimes daily, to keep everyone on track. If you spend time creating it upfront, and follow what you create, you can achieve the goals you set and successfully arrive at that wonderful place, where the Mission is fulfilled. If you spend time creating the plan and file it away, then you have spent time and money on a trip that may or may not work out.

Business plans are tools to be used internally as guide posts and compasses, but they can also be used externally. Externally they can be shared with current or potential funders to

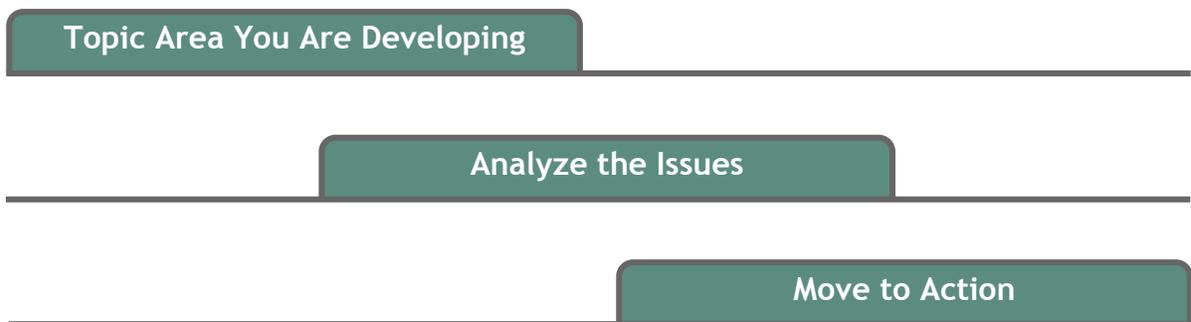
assist them in understanding what you are trying to achieve and what is required to achieve it.

If you have banking relationships, bankers appreciate a good business plan because it shows them you have given thought to what you are attempting to achieve. Bankers like to know how many miles it is from point A to Z and what resources you intend to use to get you there.

A good business plan is an excellent tool to provide a consistent approach to the goals you are trying to achieve. As you continue moving through this curriculum you will be asked to consider many questions. The questions are intended to spark thought about what you will encounter along the pathway as you build your CTC.

Think of the time used to complete your business plan document as an opportunity to craft a first class CTC. Even if you don't hit all the goals, at least the intention will be set to take the most positive trip you can.

You will be guided through the process by tabs (see examples below). The left cut tab indicates the topic area you are creating, the center cut tab provides questions and time for analysis and the right cut tab moves you to action to write that portion of the plan.



In addition to these tabs you will occasionally see icons or boxes such as these:



BullsEye

The BullsEye icon indicates a tip or tool for your consideration as you think through your plan.

Best Practice:

The Best Practices box provides insights into industry standards or ways to organize your tools that have proven to be successful for others.

Description of CTC

This section is Milestone #1 of the Development Action Plan. The timeframe for completing this section is one week.

At the end of this section you will have written the:

- ▶ Overview of the IT Training Sector
- ▶ Mission Statement for the Organization
- ▶ Mission Statement for the CTC
- ▶ Relationship of CTC to the Organization
- ▶ CTC Organizational Chart
- ▶ Description of CTC Training Programs



BullsEye

You will write your Executive Summary last, so move to the section of the Business Plan Template called “Description of CTC” to begin developing your plan.

Before you begin . . .

To begin constructing your plan, consider the important elements of the CTC itself. Build a description of your CTC that fits your available funding and your allocated human resources. In other words, don’t overestimate your projections of how many participants you will be able to attain until you have history with the CTC. History will provide a view of what actually happened (within a year or two) and will also provide trends of busy times versus slower times of the year.

Be clear and concise about what you can offer. Take a long look at others in this sector to determine what seems to be working and what is not working. Learning through someone else’s experience can often save you time, resources and frustration.

In completing this section you will need to consider:

- ▶ What opportunities exist in the IT Training Sector
- ▶ How many other organizations are addressing those training needs
- ▶ The mission of your CTC
- ▶ How the CTC relates to the overall organization
- ▶ How the CTC mission aligns to the mission of the organization
- ▶ How your CTC stands out in the IT Training Sector

⇒ *Let's Begin*

Overview of IT Training Sector

When a new product or service is introduced to a marketplace, it is critical to understand the trends and potential within that marketplace. Whether non-profit or for-profit, identifying your “competitive advantage” provides insights on which you can base both internal and external strategies and essentially creates a foundation for good decision making.

As a non-profit organization, your biggest goal is not to “make money” but rather to fulfill your organization’s mission. Still you do not want to be in the position of being unable to sustain the CTC if it does not generate enough revenue to meet expenses.

By understanding the IT Training Sector you can see more clearly:

- ▶ Trends that drive participation in your CTC
- ▶ Numbers of participants who may be interested in your CTC services
- ▶ Numbers of IT Training Centers already serving your target population
- ▶ What sets your CTC apart from others providing the service
- ▶ How you can better serve the participants you seek

Analyze the Issues

To prepare to write this section, you will need information. Begin by researching companies or other organizations in your region who are offering the same or similar services. In your research be sure to identify:

- ▶ The services being offered
- ▶ The target populations being served
- ▶ How successful they are with their service
- ▶ Any unique technology or innovation they provide



BullsEye

Throughout the business planning process remember that you can search for information by using resources available through the Internet, libraries, other organizations in your sector, universities and colleges who have successfully implemented a business plan.

✓	In addition to your research answer the following questions:
1.	How long (period of time) have IT centers been offering services in this region?
2.	What populations (target markets) have been the major focus of the other organizations?
3.	Are the other organizations providing exactly the same type of service as your CTC? If no, how do they differ?
4.	What are some of the major issues the other organizations experience when delivering this service?
5.	Is the need for similar services growing or slowing?

Move to Action

After you have gathered information from various sources and answered the questions above, turn to your Business Plan Template and write the **Overview of the IT Training Sector** portion of your plan.

Describe the current state of the IT Training Sector, and give as much detail as you can with regard to other organizations providing these services, what trends exist for providing these services, and what you identified as the real opportunity for IT training.

Mission of the Organization

A Mission Statement, by definition, reflects the purpose of any organization. It guides your day to day activities and provides a rudder from which to sail the ship. Those reading your Mission Statement should be able to grasp the nature of your organization and what products and or services you provide. It may even include a reference to the values that the organization holds.

Mission statements allow organizations to stay on track and to remember ***not*** to be all things to all people.

Analyze the Issues

If your overall organization does not have a formal “Mission” statement, now is the time to stop and develop one. Though this curriculum is not designed to walk you through that process, a good organization consultant can help you achieve a solid Mission statement from which to work. You will need a Mission Statement focused on the overall organization before you can develop an effective one for your CTC.

Move to Action

Once you have identified the formal Mission Statement for your organization, turn to your Business Plan Template and write the ***Mission Statement of the Organization*** portion of your plan. State the mission as it reads in an official capacity for your organization.

Mission of the CTC

With an organization Mission Statement in place, you can proceed to develop the Mission Statement of the CTC. To get to a precise statement for your CTC, you want to craft a statement that is:

- ▶ Brief yet describes the purpose of the CTC
- ▶ Connected to the overall organization’s mission
- ▶ Inspiring to those who work in the CTC and to participants who seek your service
- ▶ No more than 4 sentences in length
- ▶ Easy to understand and speak by employees and participants

Analyze the Issues

The best Mission Statement evolves when everyone in the organization participates in the process of developing it. Gather the CTC team. Ask the team to brainstorm ideas for the CTC Mission. Allow ideas to flow and write down every idea on a white board or flip chart. Even if the idea doesn’t seem to fit, write it down because sometimes two “OK” ideas come together to form one good one.

✓	To get ideas started answer the following questions:
1.	What is the purpose of our CTC?
2.	How do we achieve our purpose? What do we do?
3.	What are our values? What do we stand for?

Research Mission Statements of organizations that you admire or who are successful to understand their approach. The Internet is a great resource because organizations typically have Mission Statements posted on their websites.

Move to Action

Once you have drafted the statement that everyone, or most everyone can agree on, turn to your Business Plan Template and write the ***Mission Statement of the CTC*** portion of your plan. State the mission as it reads in an official capacity for your CTC. Include in this portion of the plan any additional content that fully describes the values and goals you have for your CTC.

Relationship of CTC to Organization

Having an IT Center housed within an umbrella organization is almost like having two organizations in one. There are specific services available from each entity, but in the case of the CTC, it must proactively sustain itself, while being guided by the overall organization.

On one hand, this is a positive thing. The CTC provides access to new channels of service opportunities and allows the organization to reach more people with broader offerings. It diversifies what you can bring to participants and who you can serve. From the standpoint of making positive contributions to the lives of the participants it has great potential.

On the other hand, there may be a tendency for the CTC to rely on the overall organization for its life. After all it is a service within a service. It is at this point one must pay special attention to the relationship of the CTC to the organization and make sure that the day-to-day goals, outcomes and expectations of each entity remains separate.

It is also here that the Cost Recovery Model comes to the forefront of planning.

Analyze the Issues

As you define the services of the CTC, remain clear on the objectives of what the CTC can accomplish and what is beyond its scope to do. Be wary of the temptation to borrow resources from the greater organization to make up for any lack of CTC activity. You will need to consider this “relationship” carefully. Focus on the Mission Statement for each entity in order to keep operations separated.



BullsEye

Organizations have a tendency to believe they can be all things to all people, but in reality there is neither financial nor human resource enough to deliver on this promise.

Be targeted and specific about your goals. By continually going back to the CTC Mission, you better insure that the goals you make in your plan are realistic and attainable.

✓	Consider these questions:
1.	What is the organizational structure of the CTC with regard to personnel? Who will oversee the day-to-day operations of the CTC and how many employees will be needed to support the services?
2.	How will you define the CTC so that its daily business remains separate from the overall organization?
3.	How do you expand services through the CTC without draining resources (financial or human) from the overall organization?
4.	What systems, tools and/or applications do you need to have in place to allow the CTC to run as its own entity?

Move to Action

Once you have drafted an organizational structure and defined the role of each entity clearly, turn to your Business Plan Template and write the ***Relationship of the CTC to the Organization*** portion of your plan. State how the CTC will be structured, what resources will be utilized, how you will find those resources and by when. Include in this

portion of the plan any additional content or comments that clarify the objectives of the CTC as it relates to the overall organization.

CTC Organizational Chart

Using the content structure defined above, create a graphic depiction of the proposed organizational chart for the CTC. Be sure to show how the CTC is related to the overall organization in your chart.



BullsEye

If you need additional input on what an organizational chart looks like, try searching the Internet for possible formats to use. Microsoft tools such as MS Word, MS Visio, and MS Excel are excellent tools in which to build your chart.

Description of CTC Training Program

To further define the CTC scope, it's time to provide a detailed understanding of the programs to be offered. Hopefully from the information you gained in your research on the IT Training Sector, you were able to determine programs that the market is responding to and where current trends of employment are leaning.



BullsEye

Remember to:

- ▶ Blend that information with the knowledge you now have about the CTC structure
- ▶ Observe the personnel capacities you have for your CTC
- ▶ Determine what programs your CTC can realistically offer

Keep in mind that your initial offerings may not be as robust as you would like, but you can always add to your menu of services as your CTC grows. Once again, it is easy to over commit where service offerings are concerned so be careful not to add too much too soon. An important rule is that it's always easier to grow slowly than to try to reduce rapidly.

In the for-profit business world, there's an old adage that says, "Don't grow too fast." Many organizations don't really understand the message. Even though it seems clear and simple, what does this really mean?

In essence, the advice is saying it is better to do a few things really well than many things in a mediocre way. Every business, whether non-profit or for-profit, has limited amounts of time, financial and human resources. This makes it impossible to provide too many services simultaneously. In trying to do too much, your results will be less than a quality experience for the participants and may lead to a team of employees who are over extended.

By realistically identifying the appropriate number of programs you can initially support, you focus what resources you do have, provide better service to the participants and begin to develop a “good name” for your CTC. Your focus on a few good programs will benefit both the CTC and the participants you serve.

Analyze the Issues

√	To determine the programs your CTC can initially offer, consider these questions:
1.	What are the current trends for IT Training Centers?
2.	What programs do you have that are the least expensive to offer and most appropriate for your participants?
3.	What programs are ready to launch today?
4.	What programs need time to develop before you can offer them to participants?
5.	How many programs can you effectively offer and support in the initial menu of services?
6.	What will that initial offering be?

Move to Action

Once you have answered these questions and defined the initial menu of programs to offer, turn to your Business Plan Template and write the **Description of CTC Training Programs** portion of your plan. Program objectives and outcomes should be stated clearly in order for potential participants to understand their commitment.

IT Training Market

This section is Milestone #2 of the Development Action Plan. The timeframe for completing this section is two weeks.

At the end of this section you will have identified the:

- ▶ Target Participants
- ▶ Competition
- ▶ Organization Positioning
- ▶ Estimated Number of Participants
- ▶ SWOT Analysis

Before you begin . . .

So far, you've explored the IT Training Sector at a high level to determine some basic trends and how other organizations are experiencing success. Now, it's time to zoom in a bit tighter to more detail as it relates to what your CTC can offer and to whom.

Also, you will need to consider what makes your CTC stand out in the crowd. What are your specific strengths and weaknesses and what threatens your success. Are there particular opportunities that exist in the marketplace that you think your CTC can fill?

Keep in mind that as a cost recovery organization, your mission of providing a service is important but as a non-profit organization with a CTC that must sustain itself, your CTC has some characteristics similar in nature to a small business. Your sustainable success will be based on your ability to generate interest in your programs and to continue to bring participants through the doors. It is critical that you continue to offer new programs so that participants have additional services they can buy from you. You must also look for ways to partner with other organizations to get the most out of your relationships, to get the word out about your programs and to keep a steady flow of participants wanting your services.

In completing this section you will need to consider:

- ▶ Who is your target market (ideal participant)?
- ▶ What avenues will you use to connect with them?
- ▶ What organizations/businesses are offering similar services in your area?
- ▶ How can you position your CTC and programs to compete with others already in the marketplace?
- ▶ How many participants can you realistically expect the first year?
- ▶ What are your CTC's specific internal strengths and weaknesses?
- ▶ What are some of the specific external threats and opportunities?

⇒ *Let's Begin*

Target Participants

Before you can position your CTC and your program offerings in the marketplace it is important to identify who you will target as your “customer.” The word customer is generally a for-profit term, but keep in mind that it is possible to have a socially oriented mission and still see opportunity in the marketplace. This is especially important if your CTC is to be a self-sustaining entity.

As you look at the potential participants be specific in identifying your real “customer.” Perhaps the examples that follow are appropriate to your CTC. If not, you can change them to meet your needs.

Analyze the Issues

✓	To determine the specific participant you will target for your CTC programs, answer the following questions:
1.	What is the basic demographic of the “ideal” participant for your CTC programs?
2.	<p>Are there specific “qualifying” criteria you will use to target participants?</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Women who are able to pay full price ▶ Women who can pay fees on a sliding scale ▶ Women who receive scholarships <p>If your answer is yes, you will need detailed descriptions for each of these types of participants.</p>
3.	If the qualifying criteria in #2 don’t apply, are there other criteria you will focus on? If yes, include detailed descriptions for each of those types of participants.

4.	<p>Where will you seek the participants that you identify as being ideal?</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Are they at University? ▶ Are they already working? ▶ Are they unemployed seeking work? ▶ Are they associated with other social programs? If so, which ones?
5.	<p>What target participant is your competition seeking?</p>

Move to Action

Once you have answered these questions and defined the ideal participant you want to market your programs to, turn to your Business Plan Template and write the **Target Participants** portion of your plan. Be extremely detailed in describing who the ideal participant is, how you will identify them as ideal, where you will look for them, why you believe they are ideal.

NOTE:

Be sure to list each type of participant you wish to target and include specific demographic details for each type.

Competition

The word competition again denotes the world of commerce, where companies offering similar products and services compete for trade. For your CTC, the word competition is simply focused on those in your area offering similar programs for women.

It is always important to know your competition. It gives you good information to base decisions on, such as which programs you will offer. The market will only bare so many choices, and if there are too many organizations offering the same services, competition can fracture your chances for sustainable success.

Competition also provides an inside look as to what the market wants.

If your competitors are selling similar services, then your CTC must determine how to be unique in what you are offering.

Knowing your competition provides insights into pricing structures. By knowing what your competitors are charging for similar services, it allows your CTC to be competitive and yet still make enough revenue to recover the expenses you will incur in running the CTC. Remember, though we have not addressed the financial aspect of your business plan yet, we will, and your CTC is counting on the ability to recover the cash that is spent to set it up and keep it running. If you under price your program just to beat the competition, you may under price your ability to recover your costs in an acceptable timeframe.

Analyze the Issues

√	To assist you in analyzing the competition, answer the following questions:
1.	Who are the major companies or organizations offering similar programs in your area?
2.	What are they offering?
3.	Do they target the same “customers” (participants) as your CTC?
4.	What are the major elements of their programs?
5.	Do they have a good reputation with their “customers?”

6.	Has anyone on your team ever experienced the programs your major competitors offer? If yes, what was the experience like and how could it be improved?
7.	How do your programs differ from your major competitors? How are they the same?
8.	Have you visited or observed others' programs?

Move to Action

Once you have answered these questions and defined your major competitors, turn to your Business Plan Template and write the **Competition** portion of your plan. Be extremely detailed in describing how the programs your CTC offers are similar to or different from your competitors. List the individual organizations that are most like your CTC and describe in detail what market they target, how successful they are, what their reputation is, if the experience is a good one and so forth.

Organization Positioning

So, how does knowing more about your competition assist your CTC? The details you learned in researching those organizations will allow you to better position your own CTC for today and the future. Staying close to your competitors can give you insights into new trends happening in the market or provide you with ideas about how to strengthen your own programs.

It is not enough to have good products or services. That's just part of what it takes to bring someone to the door. You must offer good customer service, a clean and inviting environment, and access to unique ideas that a participant cannot find elsewhere. On top of all of that, you will need to continually review your programs to upgrade them as the market changes.

To set your CTC apart it will be important to strategically identify your own features and benefits that can be communicated outside of your organization. A feature is a

characteristic that is part of your program. For example, maybe one of the features of your program is that you offer scholarships or that for every program someone completes they receive a certificate that they can share with potential employers. These features become items you can use on your marketing materials as you begin to develop promotional brochures and items to raise interest in your CTC.

Benefits are the reasons that participants come to your CTC and enroll in your programs. For example, benefits to participants who use your CTC might include access to high quality training, a network of potential employers who seek participants from your CTC and access to a variety of training or scholarships.

When you begin to compare your CTC with your competitors, you will quickly see that it is important to position your programs in a unique way that sets you apart from the others. So then, features and benefits become critical to helping you proactively encourage participants to choose your programs over others that are available. There are many training programs, but the features and benefits you choose to highlight will assist you in your determination to create a sustainable CTC.

Emphasize your features and benefits when you go out to seek participants. You will also want to understand if the features and benefits you have chosen are important to your potential market. In other words, if you choose features and benefits that the market is not all that interested in, then they may not help you pull participants into your program.

Often times, organizations go out and ask people for an opinion on whether the features and benefits of their products and services would interest them. This is called a focus group.

The focus group must represent the same “demographic” of the market you are targeting and can provide great feedback as to what the market is really looking for and what features you can emphasize successfully.

Best Practice:

If you decide to use a focus group, try to stay detached from the outcome of the process. In other words, don't get caught up in what you think the answers should be, but allow the group to give you their true insights and feelings about your program.

It may seem difficult to do but if you can put together a diverse group that represents the “ideal” participant you seek, chances are they will represent the larger population's opinion. This can serve as a tool to get you closer to your “customer” in less time.



BullsEye

It might be helpful to ask your focus group some questions about your competition. Take some of the information you gathered from your research and ask questions that will provide insights into what your focus group thinks about the other programs.

Analyze the Issues

✓	To assist you in positioning your organization, answer the following questions:
1.	What do you believe are the best features of your programs?
2.	What features are just like others offering the same programs?
3.	What are the major benefits of your programs?
4.	Why do you believe a participant should choose your CTC? What unique features and benefits do they get with you that they cannot get elsewhere?

Move to Action

Once you have answered these questions and defined the features and benefits of your program, turn to your Business Plan Template and write the **Organization Positioning** portion of your plan. Be sure to compare your offerings with those of your major competitors and give a detailed explanation of how you intend to set your program apart from the others. Clearly identify the features and benefits statements you will use to market your CTC.

Estimating Number of Participants

By now you should have a clear idea of the marketplace, your competitors and what you intend to offer. You are now getting to what is known as the “nuts and bolts” of the planning process. It may be the most difficult part as well; because you are going to begin projecting what you think will happen. Without complete historical data, it is difficult to know what may happen.

Of course you can base your decisions on limited background information. For example, how many participants do your competitors serve in a particular length of time? Or what percentage of participants that you seek do you realistically think you can bring into your program? Avoid opinions or “maybes” when possible. Base decisions on facts!

Some of your thoughts may be based on what you know to be true about the opportunities in your region and on other organizations that have done some marketing analysis.

From a cost recovery perspective you will have to determine your costs (which will be addressed in the next section) and then analyze whether the number of participants you NEED in the program in order to break even each month will equate to the number of participants you feel you can attract to the program.

For now, focus on the number you feel you can attract to the program. As you move through the process you can make adjustments.

Analyze the Issues

√	To assist you in estimating the number of participants you will have your first year, answer the following questions:
1.	Based on the resources (financial and human) you currently have, how many participants do you realistically believe you will have come through your CTC programs on a monthly basis?
2.	What is the total annual number of participants you want during the first year operation of your CTC?
3.	What information are you basing these projections on? (In other words, what makes this estimate realistic?)

Move to Action

Once you have answered these questions and projected a number of participants for your first year, turn to your Business Plan Template and write the **Number of Participants** portion of your plan. Keep in mind that this number may change as you work through the financial portion of the plan, but identify at least an initial estimate of what you believe is realistic and detail how you came to that number.

SWOT Analysis

The SWOT Analysis is a tool that companies and organizations have been using for years. The idea of the SWOT is to provide an objective chance to look at your organization both internally and externally. The word SWOT stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.

In this case, instead of conducting a SWOT analysis on the entire organization, you will think about the CTC when forming your thoughts.



BullsEye

It is **CRITICAL** to be as objective as possible with this exercise. When you think about each category, explore it as a group. Brainstorm about all the angles for each of the four areas and write a realistic picture of what exists today. This information can be used to prepare for the future and make your CTC stronger.

The SWOT is divided into internal and external perspectives. The S & W of SWOT (which stands for Strengths and Weaknesses) is written from an internal perspective. The O & T (which stands for Opportunities and Threats) is written from an external perspective.

As you begin the SWOT Analysis, you will look at the internal workings of the CTC. What are its greatest strengths and its biggest weaknesses? Those items are then recorded in the appropriate quadrant of the matrix provided.

Next you will look at the external influences on the CTC. What are the biggest opportunities that exist for the CTC and what are the greatest threats.

Keep in mind; all of these things are a perception. Even though there is a perception of a threat, it doesn't necessarily mean it will happen, but it is important to be prepared for as much as possible. This gives you greater flexibility as an organization to change and shift if the market changes or something impacts your ability to serve participants.

Analyze the Issues

Strengths	Opportunities
Weaknesses	Threats

✓	<p>Using the matrix provided on the previous page complete the SWOT analysis by working through the following questions:</p>
1.	<p>Think about the internal workings and programs of the CTC. What are its greatest strengths, assets and offerings?</p> <p>Examples may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ We offer programs that no one else offers ▶ We serve a particular participant that no one else serves <p>Once you have determined some CTC strengths, write them in the space provided on the SWOT Analysis Matrix.</p>
2.	<p>Continuing to think about the internal workings and programs of the CTC. What are its biggest weaknesses and challenges?</p> <p>Examples may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ We don't have a large budget for marketing our program ▶ We can't fund as many employee salaries as are required <p>Once you have determined some CTC weaknesses, write them in the space provided on the SWOT Analysis Matrix.</p>
3.	<p>Now, change your thinking to an external perspective. Think about influences outside the CTC and determine the biggest opportunities you see available to the CTC and the services it provides.</p> <p>Examples may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The market is really large and ready for these services ▶ Participants already know and use our services so the CTC will open up new opportunities to market to existing participants in the program <p>Once you have determined some external opportunities, write them in the space provided on the SWOT Analysis Matrix.</p>
4.	<p>Now think about what threatens your CTC from an external perspective.</p> <p>Examples may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ We may not be able to get as much grant funding in a slow economic environment ▶ We may have more and more competition as programs similar to ours gain interest <p>Once you have determined some CTC threats, write them in the space provided on the SWOT Analysis Matrix.</p>

Review your completed SWOT Analysis matrix and make sure the points you list for each area are relevant and valid. These points can be used as a reference for a variety of the tools moving forward.

For instance:

- ▶ You may be able to turn the strengths into positive marketing statements for your brochures or advertising
- ▶ You can look at the weaknesses to determine where your internal focus needs to be to overcome the challenges you are facing. If hiring more staff is on the list, then maybe that can be addressed in greater detail as you continue to develop your plan
- ▶ You may have identified a wonderful opportunity in the marketplace going through this exercise. If so, think about folding that opportunity into your plan where appropriate to take advantage of the situation
- ▶ Sometimes, threats are beyond our control; however, if you know they exist or can exist, plan ahead for “just in case” and take a preventative stand

Move to Action

Once you have completed the SWOT Analysis Matrix turn to your Business Plan Template and write the **SWOT Analysis** portion of your plan. Be sure to include all of the four areas of information. Include your specific points for each area, but also include perspectives on how to address those points. This will include thoughts about how to use the information to your greatest advantage. You can even incorporate some action items to make sure items get addressed.

For instance, if one of the goals is to take the strengths and create positive marketing statements, then be sure whoever handles marketing for the CTC receives a list of the strengths and understands the best way to convert them from internal statements to external marketing.

The SWOT Analysis exercise is an effective tool to stay ahead of external positioning for your CTC. It also ensures the inner workings of the CTC are being well managed.

Operations of CTC

This section is Milestone #3 of the Development Action Plan. The timeframe for completing this section is two weeks.

At the end of this section you will complete the analysis of:

- ▶ Facility & Maintenance
- ▶ Equipment & Hardware
- ▶ Furniture & Fixtures
- ▶ Labor & Salary Requirements
- ▶ Expenses & Capital Requirements

Before you begin . . .

The operational aspects of the CTC are feeders to the expense portion of your budgeting and planning. Everything in the realm of operations is typically a cost. By analyzing these costs you will be better able to project the total expenses that exist for your CTC and thereby you can better project what the fees for your services must be in order to recover those costs.

Additionally you will be able to determine how much “upfront cash” you will need until your CTC starts generating income. This is critical to the overall success and sustainability of the programs you offer.

Without the necessary cash to pay the expenses, your CTC will find it difficult to maintain itself. By understanding your expenses you can project needed expense money, manage the resources you have in a more efficient way, control your cash flow and determine if you will need to seek outside funding sources.

In completing this section you will need to consider:

- ▶ How much of the facility and maintenance costs currently associated with the overall organization should be associated with the CTC?
- ▶ Do you have the necessary equipment and hardware to run your programs or will procurements be needed?
- ▶ Do you have the necessary furniture and fixtures to adequately provide for the CTC or will procurements be needed?
- ▶ How many employees are needed to support the program activities you anticipate?
- ▶ What are the salaries you will need to be prepared to pay?
- ▶ What are the other expenses that will be paid directly by CTC activity?

⇒ *Let's Begin*

Facility & Maintenance

When considering facility and maintenance for your CTC, you will want to look at two perspectives; first, the obvious costs (also referred to here as operational expenses), and second whether you currently have or do not have the appropriate facility for your CTC.

In order to adequately determine your expenses, you will need to determine what portion of the facility and maintenance of your overall organization should be portioned to the CTC. This might equate to expenses such as:

- ▶ Rent
- ▶ Utilities
- ▶ Telephone
- ▶ Internet
- ▶ Insurance
- ▶ Office Supplies
- ▶ Postage
- ▶ Bank Expenses
- ▶ Marketing & Advertising
- ▶ Equipment Leases

You will want to include any miscellaneous expenses that are specific to the operation of your CTC as well.

Analyze the Issues

✓	To assist you in determining your operational expenses, answer the following questions:
1.	Make a list of the operational expenses for which the CTC is responsible. Include the amount of monthly expense for each item.

2.	Do you have a facility for your CTC? If yes, have you made necessary arrangements for all of the items on your operational expense list? For example, do you already have Internet access, utilities, insurance, etc.?
3.	If you do not have access to these things, what expenses will you incur to set up those services?
4.	How many participants can your CTC accommodate at one time?
5.	Is the space adequate for the number of programs you plan to offer at one time?
6.	Do you have room to grow at your current facility? If yes, how much growth can occur before you are at capacity?
7.	If you reach your capacity, what is your plan to accommodate that growth?

Move to Action

Once you have answered these questions and analyzed your facility expenses and accommodations, turn to your Business Plan Template and write the **Facilities & Maintenance** portion of your plan. Include all the details of the expense list and costs; how you plan to accommodate growth and provide adequate capacity, the number of participants you can serve today, etc.

Much of this information will be transferred to the Cost Recovery Financial Tracking Tool later in the curriculum so try to be as precise as possible with your projections and numbers.

Equipment & Hardware

Just as you have reviewed your operational expenses and facility needs, you also must determine if you have adequate equipment and hardware to provide for your programs. If your CTC has already made arrangements for hardware and equipment, then this portion may just be an opportunity to review whether what you have is adequate.

If you do not already have your equipment in place, take some time to determine what you will need to provide services when you open your CTC.

Analyze the Issues

✓	To assist you in determining your equipment and hardware needs, answer the following questions:
1.	How many workstations will you provide in your facility?
2.	Is the hardware and equipment in place today?
3.	If yes, is there an equipment lease or loan attached to the hardware?
4.	If yes, what are the total investment dollars for that equipment?
5.	If you need to acquire hardware, will you lease or purchase that equipment?
6.	What are the total investment dollars you will need to spend to acquire the equipment?
7.	If you need to acquire equipment and hardware, what are the items that you need? (Create a list of items and specific costs.)

Move to Action

Once you have answered these questions and analyzed your equipment and hardware needs, turn to your Business Plan Template and write the **Equipment & Hardware** portion of your plan. If you have a lease or purchase associated with acquiring the equipment include all the details of the costs for this equipment.

This information will be transferred to the Cost Recovery Financial Tracking Tool later in the curriculum so try to be as precise as possible with your projections and numbers.

Furniture & Fixtures

As with equipment and hardware, you need to analyze your furniture and fixture needs to insure your training center is sufficiently equipped for participants. If your CTC has already made arrangements for furniture and fixtures, then this portion of the plan may just be an opportunity to review and document what you have.

If you do not already have your furniture and fixtures in place, take some time to determine what you will need to provide services when you open your CTC.

Analyze the Issues

√	To assist you in determining your furniture and fixture needs, answer the following questions:
1.	Do you have adequate furniture and fixtures to accommodate participants and hardware?
2.	Is that furniture in place today?
3.	If yes, is there a lease or loan attached to the furniture?
4.	If yes, what are the total investment dollars for that furniture?

5.	If you need to acquire furniture or fixtures, will you lease or purchase them?
6.	What are the total investment dollars you will need to spend to acquire these items?
7.	If you need to acquire furniture and fixtures, what are those items that you need? (Create a list of items and specific costs.)

Move to Action

Once you have answered these questions and analyzed your furniture and fixture needs, turn to your Business Plan Template and write the ***Furniture & Fixtures*** portion of your plan. Include all the details of the costs for these items if you have a lease or purchase associated with acquiring the equipment.

This information will be transferred to the Cost Recovery Financial Tracking Tool later in the curriculum so try to be as precise as possible with your projections and numbers.

Labor & Salary Requirements

Salaries are most often any organization's largest on-going expense. They must be considered carefully when you are looking at the expenses that will be generated by your CTC. Knowing how many people you will need to support the number of participants you will have is difficult too, because until you see a pattern of activity you are in the position to estimate. The challenge becomes estimating the number of participants and the number of employees it will take to adequately support those participants.

Eventually, the number of participants you anticipate also plays a part in setting your fee structure, but that will be addressed in the financial section of this guide.

Analyze the Issues

✓	To assist you in determining your labor and salary requirements, answer the following questions:
1.	Based on the number of participants you believe you can attract to your CTC the first year, how many people will you need to employ at your CTC to successfully serve those participants?
2.	What is the rate of pay or salary range you will offer CTC employees?
3.	Do you need a manager or supervisor to oversee all CTC activity?
4.	If yes, what is the rate of pay or salary range you will offer a manager or supervisor?
5.	Are there employee taxes that must be paid on wages? If yes, what is the percentage rate of taxes for each employee salary?
6.	Are there other benefits that employees will receive that will translate to costs for the CTC? If yes, what are those benefits and their associated costs?

Move to Action

Once you have answered these questions and analyzed your labor and salary requirements, turn to your Business Plan Template and write the **Labor & Salary** portion of your plan. Include all the details of the costs for all employees, taxes and other benefits that will require money from the CTC.

This information will be transferred to the Cost Recovery Financial Tracking Tool later in the curriculum so try to be as precise as possible with your projections and numbers.

Expenses & Capital Requirements

For-profit entities often refer to capital requirements as the amount of cash that is required to finance and sustain a business for a particular length of time. This becomes important when you are trying to determine how long it will take you to spend the capital resources you currently have available.

For example, if your monthly budget expense is \$5,000, and your CTC is starting out with \$12,000 of capital, you may have barely enough cash to finance your CTC for two months. This is assuming there are no emergency expenses that occur.

Many organizations believe that it is important to have 3, 6 or even 12 months worth of capital in place. This is called “working” capital. It becomes the money you use to pay your expenses until the services you are offering begin to generate income.

Before you begin providing services through your CTC, you must determine if you have working capital and if you do, how long you believe it will take your CTC to use your available working capital.

Let’s explore an example. Let’s say your CTC has \$12,000 and a funder provided a grant of \$15,000. This means that your CTC has working capital of \$27,000. If we go back to the original example where monthly expenses for your CTC are \$5,000, you would have roughly 5 months to allow your CTC to begin to generate income.

First, you need to determine the annual budget required to sustain your CTC. Then determine how many months you realistically think it will take your CTC to begin to generate income.

Analyze the Issues

✓	To assist you in determining your capital requirements, answer the following questions:
1.	What is the total annual budget amount for your CTC? (Total the number of expenses it takes to run your CTC for one month and multiply that number by 12.)

2.	How much, if any, working capital does your CTC currently have? (SEE BULLSEYE BELOW).
3.	How many months do you believe it will take for your CTC to begin to generate income?
4.	Will the working capital you currently have sustain the CTC until it begins to generate income?
5.	If no, how will you acquire additional working capital to meet the capital requirement? (Grants, funders, bank, etc.)



If your CTC has no working capital, you will need to determine what avenues you can use to acquire enough capital up front to meet your expenses until the CTC begins to generate income.

DO NOT START YOUR CTC WITHOUT SOME FORM OF WORKING CAPITAL.

Move to Action

Once you have answered these questions and analyzed your capital requirements, turn to your Business Plan Template and write the **Expenses & Capital Requirements** portion of your plan. Include all details of the annual budget needed and the number of months of working capital it will take to cover your CTC costs until the center begins to generate its own income.

DO NOT BE OVER CONFIDENT IN THE AMOUNT OF TIME IT MAY TAKE YOUR CTC TO GENERATE INCOME. ALLOW ROOM IN YOUR PLAN FOR UNPLANNED EXPENSES AND EVENTS THAT MAY DELAY THE PROCESS.

This information will be transferred to the Cost Recovery Financial Tracking Tool later in the curriculum so try to be as precise as possible with your projections and numbers.

Promotion & Marketing for CTC

This section is Milestone #4 of the Development Action Plan. The timeframe for completing this section is two weeks.

At the end of this section you will complete the:

- ▶ Marketing Strategy
- ▶ Method of Recruitment
- ▶ Advertising & Promotion

Before you begin . . .

At this point in the planning process, you have thought about your CTC and its structure, your competition, the IT Training sector, your operations and the equipment you will need to be successful. All of those decisions are invaluable to the outcome of your sustainable success.

The next piece of the puzzle is to create a plan to make sure participants know what services you are offering and how they can find you.

There is a big difference between the terms “marketing” and “advertising.” Marketing really encompasses a broad range of networking opportunities, including advertising, publicity and other promotions but it also includes:

- ▶ Networking with others to help them understand what the Mission of your CTC is and how participants can benefit from your services
- ▶ Branding your CTC to make it distinctive or unique in the marketplace
- ▶ Creating a plan to reach the target audience you want to attract

In completing this section you will need to consider:

- ▶ How will our CTC be branded?
- ▶ How can I maintain visibility and awareness with potential participants?
- ▶ What are the best strategies (given budget and personnel limitations) that we can take to effectively attract participants to our CTC?
- ▶ What are ways we can create the best experiences for the participants we serve so that they will either want to continue coming back or will refer us to others?

⇒ *Let's Begin*

Marketing Strategy

When considering a strategy for marketing activities, the first step is to realize the importance of being consistent with both your “look” and your “messages.” The “look” is what is known as branding. When you brand your CTC, you create a consistent graphic message so that people reading your literature or seeing your name immediately connect with your CTC and the services you provide.

Understand that your CTC can build its brand on a local level that is strong and easily identifiable. As you begin to build a brand, consider a logo that speaks directly about your CTC services. Think about colors you will use and then use them consistently. Are there specific graphics that you can use to help people instantly connect to your CTC?

Analyze the Issues

√	To assist you in determining appropriate branding elements for your CTC, answer the following questions:
1.	What is the message you want your CTC logo to present? Does it include words, graphics or a combination of both?
2.	Are there particular colors that will reflect your image and help you build a brand?
3.	If yes, what are the colors and why have you chosen them?
4.	Will the logo you are discussing be expensive or difficult to reproduce, or will it print easily in a variety of mediums. For example, will it look good if you print it in black and white, in newspapers, magazines, on pens or other promotional items, etc.?
5.	How will you insure that the brand remains consistent when people in the organization and outside the organization are using it?

The second important aspect to a marketing strategy is to understand that not all strategies work for all entities. For example, a restaurant might not be in business too long if it opened down a dark alley, away from the main street. It might do better if it opened in a visible location where customers felt safe. Some organizations, like professional service firms, often get most of their business from referrals. Understanding which strategies will work best for your CTC is critical for success.

In addition to this, consider what forms of marketing activities make the most sense for your CTC. For example, if you believe advertising will work well, what form of advertising will create the most return for the dollars you spend? Will it be print ads, television or radio ads? Another way to advertise that is generally free is publicity. Publicity consists of press releases, written stories, interviews, etc.

Many organizations use promotions as a way to increase awareness of their services. Many times promotional activities don't cost a lot, but can create interest in trying your services. Promotional activities can include networking events, trade shows, telemarketing, demonstrations, etc. Which strategies do you think will work for your CTC?

Analyze the Issues

✓	To assist you in determining appropriate marketing strategy for your CTC, answer the following questions:
1.	Does location play a big factor in the success of your CTC? If yes, what kind of location do you think will attract the most participants?
2.	Will the look and feel of the CTC play a role in its overall success? If yes, what can you do to enhance the physical presence of your CTC?
3.	Do you think that most participants will find your CTC through referrals from others or through other means of advertising and promotions?
4.	<p>If you need to advertise, what methods will work best for your CTC and connect with the most potential participants? (Remember that your CTC budget plays a significant role in what you can afford to do with advertising, but there are a lot of ways to get publicity that are free.)</p> <p>What forms of advertising will you use?</p> <p>What forms of publicity will you use?</p> <p>What forms of promotion will you use?</p>

Move to Action

Once you have answered these questions and analyzed the strategies you think will work best, turn to your Business Plan Template and write the **Marketing Strategy** portion of your plan. Be sure to include significant detail about your brand by describing it or even including the logo and look in the plan. Also, determine what strategies you think will assist you the most in attracting participants to your CTC. If you are going to advertise, include the costs involved and how you will accommodate those costs with your CTC budget.

Also, include a timeline and plan for how you will roll out your marketing strategies. For instance, maybe you come up with a strategy that combines some advertising, some publicity and some promotional activities. What will these be and when will you act upon them? What is the combination of activities that you will attempt?

Be as detailed as possible with this strategy and remember that once you begin you may find that some parts of it will need to be adjusted or abandoned all together. That's fine. Make the adjustments and try something else until you find the combination of activities that work best for your CTC, your budget and your target market.

Method of Recruitment

In this section, you will need to consider how you attract participants to your CTC and what kind of experience you want to provide them once they decide to use your services.

Your participants need to know they are valued and appreciated. Think about how you will get participants in the door and then think about how you will keep them coming back and referring others.

Methods of recruitment obviously go hand in hand with marketing activities, but they must be considered carefully for your location, and your target audience. Do potential participants read newspapers? Do they get their information from flyers? Will broadcast media be best? Are there other organizations in your area that would be willing to disseminate your message? Are there schools and universities that could assist in the recruiting process?

Ultimately you want to provide a participant experience that is so good participants voluntarily refer your CTC to others and even return themselves for additional services.

Analyze the Issues

√	To assist you in determining appropriate methods of recruitment for your CTC, answer the following questions:
1.	What strategies will you use to get participants to try the services offered through your CTC?
2.	Who in the CTC will be responsible for recruitment activities?
3.	What measurements will you use to know you are successful with the activities you try?
4.	How will you create an excellent experience for participants when they use your CTC services?

Move to Action

Once you have answered these questions and analyzed the method of recruitment you think will work best, turn to your Business Plan Template and write the **Methods of Recruitment** portion of your plan. Be sure to include significant detail about how you will measure success of the activities you choose so that if your recruitment activities are not generating enough activity you can evaluate your plan and adjust your activities.

Advertising & Promotion

Previously you looked at a variety of mediums from which to build your marketing campaign. You identified what combination of activities you would employ to attract and keep participants interested in your CTC services. If advertising and promotion were a part of your strategic plans, then use this time to provide more detail for what types of advertising you will do, what mediums you will choose, what costs will be associated with your choices, etc.

You may even want to think about a campaign. A campaign is a series of events or activities that consistently provide a message or messages that are unique to your offerings and move people to act.

Organizations often invent slogans or tag lines that go with their campaign.

Think about a critical message you want people to associate with your CTC. What would make people feel good about your organization and its services and what might move them to come to your CTC to participate in your program?

Analyze the Issues

√	To assist you in determining appropriate advertising and promotional activities or a campaign, answer the following questions:
1.	Is there an overall message or tag line you want to use with your CTC logo?
2.	Is there a specific campaign you want to run for a period of time? For example if you are just getting started, what type of advertising and promotional activities would best introduce your CTC to the market?
3.	How will you measure the success or lack of success of the campaign?

4.	If the campaign is successful, how many participants will you be able to accommodate at one time? If it is a limited number, how will you time the advertising and promotional activities so your CTC is not overwhelmed with participants?
5.	What is the timeline you will use for your advertising and marketing strategies?



BullsEye

Make a timeline that includes details of each activity. By showing how they overlap, you can better coordinate the activities to make the biggest impact.

If your budget is limited, a timeline can assist your CTC in balancing its marketing activities so they do not create financial burdens.

Move to Action

Once you have answered these questions and analyzed the strategies you think will work best, turn to your Business Plan Template and write the **Advertising & Promotions** portion of your plan. Be sure to include significant detail about your timeline and the specific mediums you will use to target your messages.

Financials

This section is Milestone #5 of the Development Action Plan. The timeframe for completing this section is two weeks.

At the end of this section you will understand the:

- ▶ Cost Recovery Model
- ▶ Pricing Strategies
- ▶ Cost Recovery Financial Tracking Tool
- ▶ Recovery Statement

Before you begin . . .

There are really two levels of learning for this module. First you will be given insights into what the Cost Recovery Model is and how it relates to your CTC. Background information is provided on the model to assist you in creating a reasonable approach to budgeting and projecting how you will cover the expenses of your CTC. Remember the ultimate goal of the plan is to put the CTC in a position to be able to sustain itself financially.

The second level of learning is to understand how to use the Cost Recovery Financial Tracking Tool and Recovery Statement that are part of this package.

Additionally you will set your pricing strategies based on what you have learned and researched.

In completing this section you will need to consider:

- ▶ How will you provide upfront funding to launch your CTC programs?
- ▶ If you have already launched the programs, you will need to analyze where you are with regard to cost recovery. In other words, are you making enough to recover the costs you have incurred so far?
- ▶ What fees will you need to charge participants in order to recover the costs you incur?
- ▶ How will you reinvest surplus dollars back in to the CTC, should they exist?
- ▶ What kinds of programs will you offer with these surplus dollars?

⇒ *Let's Begin*

Cost Recovery Model/Pricing Strategies

In the simplest form, the cost recovery model assumes that it is the responsibility of the organization to recover the costs of expenses through the assignment of fees in exchange for providing a service. The fees help offset the expenses incurred to deliver the service.

This means that your CTC must determine how to charge a reasonable fee to participants, while at the same time recovering the costs to deliver that service. To do this you will need to consider the following elements:

- ▶ Total estimated number of participants who will attend the CTC each month
- ▶ What categories of fees you will set for participants (remember the “qualifying” criteria you developed for your target participants in your analysis of the IT Training Market?
- ▶ What your total projected expenses will be including facility and maintenance, furniture and fixtures, labor and salary requirements?
- ▶ What your capital requirements will be?

The elements listed above also effect your pricing strategy, because you will have to base your fees on the total amount of the expenses you will incur each month divided by the number of participants you realistically think will pay your CTC for the services you offer.

Analyze the Issues

√	To assist you in your financial process, answer the following questions:
1.	What is a realistic number of participants you believe will come to your CTC each month and pay fees in exchange for services?
2.	Does your CTC offer a sliding scale for fees? If yes, estimate the number of participants for each level on your fee scale.

3.	<p>What are the total projected expenses you believe your CTC will incur each month? Include numbers from the work you completed in the operations portion of this curriculum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facility & Maintenance Equipment & Hardware Furniture & Fixtures Labor & Salary Requirements Expenses & Capital Requirements 						
4.	<p>Calculate the projected fees by completing the following:</p> <p>Take the total amount of the expenses your CTC will incur and divide it by the number of monthly paying participants.</p> <p>As an example, let's say there is an organization called "The Best CTC." They have projected that their total monthly CTC expenses are \$12,000.00. They have also determined that they can realistically serve about 70 participants per month.</p> <p>When calculated, this means that "The Best CTC" will have to charge each participant \$171.42, just to break even. This is assuming that everyone is charged the same fee.</p>						
5.	<p>Does the fee amount fit with what you know your target participants can afford? If no, then how will you restructure your pricing fees to accommodate your market? Examples might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Scholarships available ▶ Grant money available to reduce the participant fee ▶ Cut your monthly expenses to accommodate a more applicable fee <p>As an example, let's say "The Best CTC" knows that its target participants cannot afford to pay \$171.42. One option it has is to seek grant funding to help offset the costs for participants.</p> <table data-bbox="365 1585 998 1690"> <tr> <td>Total Expenses</td> <td>\$12,000.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Grant Funding</td> <td>(\$5,000.00)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Amount of Recovery Required</td> <td>\$7,000.00</td> </tr> </table> <p>\$7,000 divided by 70 participants is \$100.00 per participant.</p>	Total Expenses	\$12,000.00	Grant Funding	(\$5,000.00)	Amount of Recovery Required	\$7,000.00
Total Expenses	\$12,000.00						
Grant Funding	(\$5,000.00)						
Amount of Recovery Required	\$7,000.00						

5. continued	<p>Another example of reducing fees for participants is to reduce expenses. Let's say "The Best CTC" cannot find a grant opportunity. In their operations planning they decided to hire 3 employees to serve participant programs. The salaries of these participants equal \$1,000 per month.</p> <p>One option they may need to consider is whether they truly need all 3 resources to be successful or if they can bring on one person and then add additional employees as the programs grow.</p>
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Cost Recovery Financial Tracking Tool

It is extremely important in a cost recovery model to track the inflow and outflow of dollars each month and to be able to see how quickly your CTC is recovering its costs.

To assist you in this endeavor this curriculum provides you with a Cost Recovery Financial Tracking Tool. There are two ways you can use this tool to effectively control and monitor your revenue and expenses.

The first is to use it to create a budget specific to your CTC. This budget will be a projection of what you believe your CTC will generate in revenue, what you believe your expenses will be, etc.

The second way to use the tool is to actually track what happens each month at your CTC. This is what is known as an "actual."

By comparing your actual (what really happens) to your budget (what you think will happen) you begin to get a better understanding for what to expect and what kind of revenue is really required to run your CTC.

On the pages that follow is an example of the Cost Recovery Financial Tracking Tool and directions on how to use it.

WIT MENA		Statements of Forecasted Cash Flow From Operations							
		1 The Best Community Technology Center FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31-12-06							
DESCRIPTION	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL		
REVENUE									
Training Fees	2,500	450	4,000	4,000	5,000	6,500			
[Enter item here]									
[Enter item here]									
[Enter item here]									
TOTAL REVENUE	2,500	450	4,000	4,000	5,000	6,500	0		
OPERATING EXPENSES									
Payroll	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000			
Payroll Taxes	300	300	300	300	300	300			
Employee Benefits	0	0	0	0	0	0			
Technology Equipment Leases	0	0	0	0	0	0			
Internet Expense	100	100	100	100	100	100			
Rent - Office/Storage	500	500	500	500	500	500			
Utilities	75	75	75	75	75	75			
Marketing Expense - Local	200	200	200	200	200	200			
Telephone	400	400	400	400	400	400			
Insurance	250	250	250	250	250	250			
Office Supplies	25	25	25	25	25	25			
Postage	50	50	50	50	50	50			
Miscellaneous Expenses	0	0	0	0	0	0			
Bank Charges	0	0	0	0	0	0			
[Enter item here]									
[Enter item here]									
[Enter item here]									
[Enter item here]									
[Enter item here]									
[Enter item here]									
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	2,900	2,900	2,900	2,900	2,900	2,900	2,900	0	
OPERATING INCOME	(400)	(2,450)	1,100	1,100	2,100	3,600	0		
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES									
Purchase of Equipment	7,000	0	0	0	0	0			
[Enter item here]									
[Enter item here]									
NET CASH USED BY INVESTING ACTIVITIES	7,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
CASH FLOWS FROM OTHER ACTIVITIES									
Grants	0	0	0	0	0	0			
Donations	0	0	0	0	0	0			
[Enter item here]									
[Enter item here]									
NET CASH PROVIDED BY OTHER ACTIVITIES	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
NET CHANGE IN CASH	(7,400)	(2,450)	1,100	1,100	2,100	3,600	0		
BEGINNING CASH BALANCE	2,000	(5,400)	(7,850)	(6,750)	(5,650)	(3,550)	50		
ENDING CASH BALANCE	(5,400)	(7,850)	(6,750)	(5,650)	(3,550)	50	50		

The graphic shown on the previous page is a six-month example of the fictitious organization called “The Best CTC.”

As you begin to explore the Cost Recovery Financial Tracking Tool, keep in mind that you are using this tool as a way to track progress. In doing that you will monitor:

- ▶ Operational revenue generated by services
- ▶ Operational expenses incurred by delivering those services
- ▶ Monies spent on capital purchases
- ▶ Monies received through other activities
- ▶ Overall cost recovery for your CTC

The tool is designed to assist your CTC in tracking cash flow from operations. It is not intended to be used as a financial statement that is in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). However, the Cost Recovery Financial Tracking Tool can be used to provide data to your accountant or accounting personnel as they prepare financial statements for the overall organization. It requires the appropriate interpretation of that data to create an accurate financial picture.

Similar to other templates in this curriculum, the Cost Recovery Financial Tracking Tool is a template with fields that allow you to input data, and other fields that are locked.

✓	<p>To get started with the Cost Recovery Financial Tracking Tool, let’s review the elements of the tool and what information is required for each element.</p> <p>On the graphic you will see circled numbers; those numbers correspond to the instructions below:</p>
1.	CTC Name Field. Enter the name of your CTC.
2.	Beginning Cash Balance. Enter the amount of “cash on hand” your CTC is starting with, if any. If you have none, enter \$0. Cash on hand may also equate to your amount of working capital.
3.	<p>Revenue. Enter the types of revenue your CTC will generate. The example shows one listing called Training Fees. Click on the additional lines to enter more. If you do not require more than one line, delete the text “Enter item here”. (The format of the tool is protected and will not allow you to delete rows.)</p> <p>Revenue is defined here as operational revenue generated from participant fees and collected on a monthly basis. It is your first goal to grow these revenue numbers to sustain the CTC, and second that you may have surplus recovery dollars to reinvest in additional programs.</p>

4.	<p>Operating Expenses. Enter the types of operating expenses your CTC will incur. The example shows a variety of expenses listed. Click on the additional lines to enter more. If you do not require more than one line, delete the text “Enter item here”. (The format of the tool is protected and will not allow you to delete rows.)</p> <p>Expenses are defined as recurring monthly costs that are incurred from providing the programs and services of the CTC. They do not include capital expenditures such as purchases of equipment.</p> <p>Total Operating Expenses. The tool automatically calculates the total expenses for each month that you enter into the data fields. The example shows a total of \$2,900 for January through June. This field does not require input.</p>
5.	<p>Operating Income. The tool automatically calculates the total amount of operating income based on the data you provide. The example shows that “The Best CTC” received \$2,500 in revenue for January, but had \$2,900 of expenses, leaving a negative balance of (\$400) in operating income.</p> <p>The negative amount is denoted by the parentheses around the number.</p>
6.	<p>Cash Flows from Investing Activities. Enter the amount of money used for long term purchases such as equipment. The example shows a total of \$7,000. Let’s say this is for a copier needed specifically for the delivery of a program service.</p> <p>If you do not require large, long term equipment purchases, delete the text “Enter item here”. (The format of the tool is protected and will not allow you to delete rows.)</p> <p>In the template, this amount is added to the Net Change in Cash (#8) because it is considered an asset to the CTC, not an expense. The \$7,000 does not represent an expense payment.</p>
7.	<p>Cash Flows from Other Activities. Enter the amount of money received from grants or other donations. The example does not show any cash flows from these sources.</p> <p>If you do not require these line items, it is not recommended that you delete them from the template since donations and grants or other income generating activities may become available at any time during the fiscal year.</p>

8.	<p>Cash Totals. At the bottom of the tool, you see “Net Change in Cash.”</p> <p>Net Change in Cash is the calculation of all the inputs you have entered into the tool, starting with the revenue and moving down the form to the field called Net Change in Cash. The tool has calculated each transaction (adding and subtracting where appropriate).</p>
9.	<p>Ending Cash Balance. If you had a Beginning Cash Balance (from Step 2) that amount is added to the Net Change in Cash (Step 8) and the total shows up in the last row called Ending Cash Balance.</p> <p>If this amount is in parentheses, it denotes a negative number. If this amount is without parenthesis it means you have a positive cash flow, indicating you have reached the break even point of your initial investment. As long as your expenses don’t out pace your revenues, you should continue to recover your costs from that point forward.</p>



The last statement in Step 9 is **CRITICAL** to understand.

Once you move from a negative ending balance to a positive one, it is true you have made progress. However don’t assume that you can increase your expenses immediately. You want to allow your recovery dollars to grow before you add additional personnel or programs to your expense items.

It is often the case that organizations try to grow too quickly and end up overspending to the point that they cannot recover. A more conservative financial approach will allow your CTC to be more flexible.

If you look at the example of “The Best CTC,” the company started with \$2,000 as a beginning cash balance (#2). In January they stated an inflow of \$2,500 in training fees (#3) and a total of \$2,400 in expenses (#4).

This left a negative balance of (\$400) (#5). “The Best CTC” ended up purchasing a new copier for their program for \$7,000 (#6). This transaction shows up as a deduction in cash, but would be considered an asset (not an expense) to the CTC.

“The Best CTC” did not have cash flow from other activities such as grants or donations, so they entered a \$0 in that field (#7).

The Net Change in Cash for January is a negative (\$7,400) (#8). Adding their \$2,000 beginning cash balance (#2) to their Net Change in Cash leaves their CTC with a negative balance of (\$5,400) in January.

Move to Action

Now it's your turn to try the Cost Recovery Financial Tracking Tool.

If your CTC has already started, use the tool to enter the data you have so far. Don't forget to enter the beginning cash balance you started with, and add revenues, expenses, purchases for equipment (if any), and gains from grants or donations (if any). Complete the form for as many months of data as you have and see where your CTC is in its cost recovery process.

If your CTC is just getting started, perhaps the best approach would be to complete the Cost Recovery Financial Tracking Tool first, as a way to formulate a budget, and second, as a tool to track your actual numbers.

Best Practice:

Save the Cost Recovery Financial Tracking Tool as many times as you need to by giving each version a new file name.

Example: Save it once as a budget tracking tool and save it once as an actual cost recovery tool.

Choose File > Save As > Rename the file (CTC_Budget 2006)

Choose File > Save As > Rename the file (CTC_Actuals 2006)

Look once more at "The Best CTC" example. If they determine they can charge participants \$100 for a program, and they intend to service 70 participants per month, their CTC will generate \$7,000 in revenue per month. This will be in addition to their \$5,000 grant which allowed them to lower the per participant cost. If they watch their expenses wisely it won't take them long to see their CTC in a positive cash flow position.

The best way to get comfortable with the Cost Recovery Financial Tracking Tool is to use it. Experiment with numbers to see how it calculates up and down and how your pricing model and level of expenses will affect the speed at which you can recover your costs.

Recovery Statement

The Recovery Statement provides your CTC with a way to account for any surplus revenue that is generated by the CTC and to give possible recommendations about how that surplus can be allocated for additional programs and services that correlate to the WIT Program.

The Recovery Statement is a Microsoft Word form. It allows you to enter the numbers calculated in the Cost Recovery Financial Tracking Tool that will generate a report showing either a surplus or deficit ending cash balance. An example of the Recover Statement is provided on the following page.

To use this tool, tab to the fields denoted in gray and enter the appropriate information. At the top, enter the name of your CTC and the beginning and ending dates for the timeframe you are reporting your surplus or deficit.

Enter the total revenue your CTC received during the period you are reporting (#3).

Enter the total operating expenses (#4). Subtract the total operating expenses from the total revenue to show the amount of operating income you had during the reporting period.

Transfer the operating income total from the first section of the statement down to the Operating Income field in the second section. Enter the amount of cash used by investing activities and the amount of cash provided by other activities (#6 & #7).

Subtract the amount of cash used by investing activities from the operating income, and then add the amount of cash provided by other activities. Enter that amount in the line called Net Change in Cash (#8). This amount should equal the last entry amount listed on the far right side of the Cost Recovery Financial Tracking Tool in the totals column.

Transfer the Net Change in Cash amount down to the third section in the Net Change in Cash field. Add in your beginning cash balance (#2) if you had one. Enter the total Ending Cash Balance number in the last field (#9).

If you have a positive ending balance, this is a recovered amount called surplus. If you have a negative ending balance, denote that amount using parentheses and understand that this is deficit.

The final step is to provide a statement of intent for how any surplus revenue will be reinvested into the CTC programs.

[Enter Name of CTC Here]		
For the Period [Enter begin and end dates]		
<hr/>		
Revenue Total	+	
Operating Expenses Total	-	
Operating Income	=	\$
<hr/>		
Operating Income	+	
Net Cash Used By Investing Activities	-	
Net Cash Provided By Other Activities	+	
Net Change in Cash	=	\$
<hr/>		
Net Change in Cash	+	
Beginning Cash Balance	+	
Ending Cash Balance	=	\$
<hr/>		
Statement of Intent for Recovery Revenue		
<hr/>		
[Enter description of how excess revenue will be used.]		

Introductory Elements

The introductory elements of the plan include the Executive Summary, a contact page and the table of contents.

We suggest you develop this piece last due to the summary nature of the Executive Summary content.

CTC Contact Page

The Business Plan Template has been designed to provide a Contact Page specific for your CTC.

It is the first page of the template, directly behind the cover. Enter your organization name and the contact information in the appropriate fields. If you have a logo, insert that graphic on the lower right portion of the page. If you do not have a logo, remove the text placeholder.

This information will be helpful for anyone who is reading or reviewing your plan, such as potential funders, so they will have a contact person for questions and comments.

Table of Contents

The structure of the Table of Contents and the main headings are already in place. Once you have completed your business plan, you will need to return to the Table of Contents section of the template and enter the appropriate page numbers for each topic.

Executive Summary

The Executive Summary is the last piece of the main business plan to be written. It is intended to “summarize” all the plans and goals you have developed along the way. When a reader sees the Executive Summary it should look and read more like a letter that explains, at a high-level, the overall goals of your CTC and briefly how you intend to reach them. **Do not** explain the plan in great length. If the reader wants more detail, he or she can read the content of the document.



BullsEye

The Executive Summary should be just what the name implies...a summary. In this context the word Executive implies that the reader may not be interested in understanding all the detail you have included in your plan, but wants to understand your plan from a high level perspective. You want to summarize what your CTC is trying to accomplish, how you intend to accomplish your goals, etc.

Take the overall message from each section you have written and summarize it for the reader.

Move to Action

Use a blank word document to create a rough draft of the Executive Summary. Allow others to provide input to make sure you have captured the most important aspects of the plan and managed to remain brief in your writing. Remember, an Executive Summary should only be 1-2 pages in total length. Once you have the letter completed, turn to your Business Plan Template and write the ***Executive Summary*** portion of your plan.

Business Plan Glossary

If there are terms and definitions that you feel readers of your plan may not understand, it is recommended that you include a glossary as part of your business plan document.

Pattern your business plan glossary after the one that is included with this curriculum. Include the word and a clear definition.

Analyze the Issues

✓	Capture the words and definitions you want to include in your business plan glossary:
1.	Make a list of words you believe should be a part of the glossary in your business plan.
2.	Define each word with a 1 or 2 sentence definition.

Move to Action

Once you have defined your glossary, turn to your Business Plan Template and write the **Glossary** words and definitions you want to include.

Optional Add-Ons

Though you have now completed the majority of your business plan, the following information is provided as “good to know” information.

Advisory Boards

Is your CTC considering an Advisory Board?

An Advisory Board is a powerful management tool from which organizations can gain great insights. Advisory Boards are made up of people that share the ideas and concerns of the organization and who are willing to donate their time to assist the organization as it moves forward. More times than not, the Advisory Board is a formal group, meeting at regularly scheduled times, with an agenda of topics to discuss.

Advisory Board members should be objective in their approach and have a desire to see the organization succeed. Members can serve as a sounding board, a resource for management expertise and provide honest feedback.

When considering advisory board members, choose:

- ▶ People you admire
- ▶ People with whom you can develop an open, honest and trustworthy relationship
- ▶ People who have experience managing organizations or at least have managerial experience
- ▶ People who are able to devote the time for scheduled meetings

For small organizations, two or three people are usually adequate for an Advisory Board. Their roles and responsibilities will be to meet with you (quarterly basis is standard), discuss and advise you and provide honest feedback as the organization moves forward.

Your responsibility to them will include providing a written agenda for each meeting (which you should distribute to your board members prior to the meeting), talking openly and honestly, sharing both hopes and fears. Advisory Board members cannot advise you well if you hold back.

Fundraising

By definition, fundraising is an effort to solicit contributions from individuals or organizations for non-profit organizations having educational, medical, religious, political, charitable, or other stated purposes. Fundraising is particularly well suited to direct-marketing techniques because efforts can be concentrated on individuals who have contributed before, and who tend to be willing to give again, or who have some demonstrated interest in the purpose of the organization.

Other means of fundraising include but are not limited to:

- ▶ Grant Writing
- ▶ Hosting Events
- ▶ Telemarketing or Direct Mail Campaigns

Grant Writing

Grants are available from a myriad of organizations and government entities. A typical grant will require that the requesting organization provide a detailed proposal of how they intend to use the grant funding, including budgets, goals and objectives. Many grants require organizations to use the money in specific ways or for a specific purpose. It is important to understand the parameters of the grant before you accept the funding.

Let's say a grant is awarded to your CTC but it states that you must spend the money by awarding scholarships to women who have incomes below a certain amount. If you accepted the grant funding, your CTC would have to spend the money in that way and could not choose other types of scholarship awardees for that particular resource.

Hosting Events

Organizations often host events or fundraisers (sometimes called benefits). The typical event would be organized to charge attendees a fee for tickets to attend. The idea behind this type of fundraiser is to get as much as possible donated so that the proceeds from the ticket sales create dollars for the organization. Many non-profits also look for ways to get for-profit companies to underwrite expenses so that all the money raised by the hosted event can go to the organization.

Telemarketing or Direct Mail Campaigns

Asking others for donations is one of the oldest fundraising techniques, and it is quite often the most successful. Donations provide a way for people to feel good about giving when they believe in the organization to which they give. Campaigns that reach out to targeted groups who have the means to give often create a great return.

Fundraising can be an excellent avenue to provide your CTC with additional revenue that can be earmarked for specific programs or strategies. Typical fundraising activities do not specify what those dollars have to be spent on, which frees the organization to look at their greatest needs. You may find some individual funders that prefer to ask the organization to spend their donations on something particular, but that is not necessarily typical.

Presenting a Business Plan

Your Business Plan Template is designed to provide you with a “packaged product” without having to create the layout and design. If you complete each section and then print the document, you will have a completed business plan suitable for presentation.

A business plan is often presented to individuals or organizations who are considering funding your efforts. Think of the business plan as your representative. When you give it to someone to read, it should provide a clear, accurate and easily understandable picture of your CTC, your goals and objectives and how you intend to successfully deliver your services. The best approach is to make sure the plan itself is appropriate and reflects a realistic view of your CTC.

Make sure your copies are clean and neat and put your plan in a professional looking notebook or cover. This can be the finishing touch of your business plan and can create a professional approach to your presentation.

If you are presenting your business plan in person, you will need to remember that you and the business plan are representing your CTC. Dress appropriately for your audience. For example, if you are meeting with bankers, they tend to dress in business attire. You would do well to meet that expectation by dressing as nicely as you can.

Prior to your presentation, make sure you seek answers to the following questions:

How many people will be attending the meeting?

This will help you know how many copies of the plan to provide and how many questions you may need to be prepared to answer. Always bring an extra copy or two to a meeting in case someone joins unexpectedly.

Who are the people who will attend the meeting?

If you are seeking support from a funder, you want to know if you are meeting with the person who will make the decision to fund your programs or if they will be sending a representative. Many times it is better to meet directly with the person who can make the decision.

How can you follow up with the person with whom you are meeting?

Before you leave the meeting, make sure you understand how to follow up with the person with whom you are meeting. Ask them if you may call them and include a specific timeframe. For example, say “May I follow up with you on Wednesday of next week?”

If they require more time, they will tell you. But you don’t want to leave the meeting without some kind of action step, either for you or for them.

Be sure you know how to follow up as well. In other words, what is the best way to contact them?

Do you understand the plan?

Nothing can destroy an opportunity faster than someone who is presenting a plan but has not taken the time to understand the plan they are presenting. Have you read it? Do you understand the goals and objectives? Have you studied the financials and understand how they were determined? Your ability to answer questions will have an effect on whether you will receive funding.

Putting attention to these details can greatly enhance your presentation and how others respond to your plan.

Editing Your Business Plan Document

Before you distribute your business plan to anyone, either inside or outside your organization, it is critical that you edit your document. Editing will allow you to make your document as accurate as possible and to eliminate mistakes before they are published.

Editing is best accomplished when it is read for both content and grammar. This may mean that multiple people will read the document, according to their abilities. Some people can read for content and see that things may not be worded in the best way, or there may be a more accurate way to state something.

Others have an “eye for detail” and can see items that are misspelled or are grammatically incorrect.

Remember that this document is going to be used by your internal team to drive your success and by external readers who may ultimately want to provide you with funding. The details of your plan include good editing.

This is one suggested process for editing your business plan.

Step 1: Once the plan is complete, provide the first draft to someone who can read it for content. It is best if it is someone who was NOT a part of the development process. They can provide a fresh perspective. Ask them to look at the following:

- ▶ Do the messages and statements make sense?
- ▶ Are the messages and statements accurate?
- ▶ Are the messages and statements consistent throughout the document?
- ▶ Are there thoughts and ideas missing that could make things more clear?
- ▶ Is there too much detail that will confuse the reader?

Step 2: Review with the content editor their suggestions and recommendations. Ask questions to clarify their perspective.

Step 3: Determine if you will accept or reject their suggestions and recommendations. For those you accept, make those changes in the document.

Step 4: Print a fresh copy of the document that includes the content changes, and ask someone else to read the document, this time from a detailed and grammar perspective. At this point your plan should be pretty “clean,” but there will probably be some additional edits.

Step 5: Review the additional comments with the second reviewer. Determine if you will accept or reject their suggestions and recommendations. For those you accept, make those changes in the document.

Step 6: Print a fresh copy of the document that includes the detail changes and read the document yourself, one more time, to make sure that all of the changes have made sense and are complete.

Step 7: If there any last changes, make them in the document.

Step 8: Discard all drafts of the document, both hard copies and files copies on your computer. This will ensure that your document is the most up-to-date and current plan and is the version you intend to publish.

Though it may sound like a long process, it will allow you to make your business plan the best it can be.

Terms & Definitions

Below is a list of definitions for terms you may encounter while using this guide during the development of your business plan.

Benefits	Reasons that participants come to your CTC and enroll in your programs.
Brainstorm	An activity involving two or more individuals working together to generate creative ideas and solutions.
Branding	The marketing message that represents an organization. Examples would include logos, colors, statements, etc.
Break Even	The point at which expenses are covered and revenue becomes surplus.
Community Technology Center (CTC)	An IT Training Center that is part of the WIT-MENA project designed to provide access and opportunity to women in an effort to enhance their marketable skills, gain economic independence, and increase the power of the private sector.
Competition	With respect to WIT, organizations that offer like or similar services as a CTC.
Cost Recovery Model	A business model whereby organizations extend upfront funding and recover the operational costs as participants pay fees for services. Specific to the CTC, participants will pay training fees for services.
Demographic	A term used to describe a target market. For example, women between ages 17 and 30 who are currently attending University.
Executive Summary	A high-level description, written in letter format, which summarizes the goals and objectives of a business plan. Typically, not more than two pages in length.
Feature	A characteristic that is part of your program.
Focus Group	A carefully selected group of people, that represents similar demographics as those of a target market, which provides objective feedback regarding services being offered.

GAAP	In the United States: Generally Accepted Accounting Principles. The rules used to standardize accounting records and practices.
Mediums	The various avenues employed to deliver messages. For example, print, broadcast and Internet.
Mission Statement	Typically a two to three sentence statement that reflects the purpose of an organization and guides day-to-day activities. A mission statement often reflects the nature of the organization and what it provides.
Networking	A supportive system of sharing information and services among individuals and groups having a common interest.
NGO	Nongovernmental organizations.
Surplus Dollars	Revenue generated above operational expenses.
SWOT Analysis	Stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. An analysis tool used by organizations to consider their internal strengths and weaknesses and the external opportunities or threats that may exist for a particular business sector.
Target Participant	A person entering the CTC program.
Template	A software form designed to allow input while maintaining layout integrity.
Umbrella Organization	With respect to WIT, the larger organization to which a CTC is attached.
WIT MENA	Women in Technology Middle East and North Africa region. A program that delivers five core activities to WIT partner organization and participants.
Working Capital	Cash on hand that an organization uses to pay operational expenses.