

The Senior Project

Written Report



Abstract



Mission Statement:

I plan on writing a business plan, Dance Again that will sell high quality pre-owned formals for reasonable prices.

Every year women in and out of high school spend a substantial amount of money on fancy dresses for formal dances, and every year new dresses get put into the closet collecting dust for who knows how long. Not only do the dresses get a one time use they are also very expensive. Being a student at Edison High School I have the opportunity to go to all these expensive dances, however, over that past few years having to buy a dress with new accessories three times a year gets pretty costly for my parents. Parents for example, come up with a lot of money to just let their child experience the thrill of a fancy dance, there should be away to be able to save money and still have fun. In result of this problem I have decided to come up with a business plan for a business that would be close by, and that would sell dresses for a cheaper price. This way parents get a little bit of a break, and people who are less fortunate and cannot afford them will have the opportunity to go to the dances. My business, Dance Again & Club Wear will buy and sell formal dresses. In other words it will be a consignment shop. This way people can make money and save money. It will be like a recycle center, but instead of cans we have dresses.

Identify the Problem



Every year young girls and their parents spend a ridiculous amount of money on formal evening dresses that are only going to be worn once. The costs of formal dresses are just too

expensive to only be worn one time. Imagine all of the dresses that are just collecting dust in thousands of young women's closets. Every school year there are three formal dances, times four years spent in high school that comes out to be twelve dresses per girl at a high school where women dominate the population. Imagine that one girl spent an average of one hundred and fifty dollars on every dress she bought for a dance. That's twelve dresses times one hundred and fifty dollars, which equals eighteen hundred dollars, spent on just one girl for dresses that are only going to be worn once.

Analyze the Problem

The cost of a formal evening gown can range from fifty to five hundred dollars depending on where you shop, and what you want to wear. Every girl has a choice on where she goes. She can go to Fashion Island and probably spend anywhere from three hundred to five hundred dollars or she could go to South Cost plaza and spend probably the same amount, and last but not least she could go to the Westminster Mail and spend anywhere from fifty to three hundred dollars. No matter the mall, where the dress is bought from needs to be taken onto consideration. Did she go to Bloomingdale's, or Sears? There are so many different ways anyone can look at the situation. No one can tell someone where to shop or how much to spend, unless of course you're the parents, but then again another dress is being bought for a good sum of money that is only going to get used once,

If only there was a way to recycle the dress and the money you spend. Maybe there could be a place where you can give your dress, and someone else could get to wear it; also known as the Goodwill. But who is getting the money for a gown you spent your paycheck on? The Goodwill. There needs to be a place where your dress can still be recycled, but instead of only the Goodwill get the money you would get a profit as well.

How many girls spend their time searching for the perfect gown in Goodwill? None. I would not be caught dead shopping for my prom dress at an old hand me down shop like the Goodwill. This new type of business not only will help the producer, but the consumer as well. The location and atmosphere of the store would need to be classy, but not too classy that the prices would have to be raised to ridiculous amounts, then we would be back in the vicious cycle that we were in before. The store would need to be nice and well respected, not treated as an old beaten up toy like the Goodwill.

Identify the Alternatives

There are many ways a person can save money when it comes to shopping for expensive dresses. There are sometimes sales in stores, you could make your own dress, you could borrow a friend's dress, and if worst comes to worst just wear one that you have worn in the past. You can accessorize in an old dress with different things to make the dress look new. You could add something to an old dress, wear a shawl instead of a sweater, wear red lipstick instead of pink. There are many different ways to make what you have, look better.

Identify the Criteria

What are the criteria when shopping for a new dress? When someone leaves their house with the intention of buying a new dress they probably already have an idea of where they want to shop, how much they want to spend, how much they actually have to spend.

Criterion #1 - How much time? Say you have only two hours to shop for a dress. That means time is scarce and needs to be managed properly. That is only one hundred and twenty minutes to try and find a dress. Time is a big factor in shopping.

Criterion #2- Location. Do you want to spend half of your valuable time driving or shopping?

Shopping. So the decision on where to shop makes a big decision on where to shop. Also, the amount of time spent driving to where you want to shop will take a way from the time needed for shopping.

Criterion #3- Money. How much do you have to spend? A lot or a little. Maybe money is tight so resources are scarce. Someone with fifty dollars might choose to shop at Westminster Mall, or someone with five hundred dollars might choose to shop at South Coast plaza. Whether you are rich or poor money will ultimately decide where you are going to shop.

Criterion #4- Fashion. Anyone going to a High School dance is going to want a dress that is up to date. No one wants to show up in a fluffy dress from the eighties. What store they chose indicates style and fashion For example, the Good Will is cheap yet out of date

Evaluate the Alternatives

When deciding where to shop there are many questions asked. Time, for insistance, is a valuable thing for most people. Before doing anything the question, Do I have enough time? Always seems to break the surface. Shopping can be a very time consuming process. Not every one can just walk into a store and find something they like right away. For most people it takes time. If there is not enough time then choices of where to shop are limited. An alternative to this dilemma would be choosing some place close to shop at, Somewhere close minimizing the time spent on travel and maximizing the time spent of shopping. Location is also a very important factor when determining a designated place. The location must be close and have a variety of clothing. The shop must also be in a respected price range. All these factors figure into the decision of where people are going to their business. The best solution for all of these criteria is to have a shop where all is evident. Of course, no one can please everyone, so the main idea is to please as many as possible. If there was a place that was close, not too expensive, and in a

popular area then the success of this business would be great.

Implementation

"Man I wish I would of thought of that" This seems to be a popular statement most of us ask ourselves when we see some off-the-wall store make it big. Even if it seems like it's the simplest idea, how come we all don't think of great ideas? Even though it might sound simple there's a lot to back up a successful business. When starting a business there are many important things to do, first establish an idea, second research, third take action, and fourth find away to finance your project. It might not be as easy as one might think. There is a lot of research and evaluations that go along with it. It is a very complex process.

Before you can create a business you have to have an idea. A solid idea that seems plausible to obtain. Once there is an idea than you have to have the drive to get the job done. With most successful businesses, the creator develops a well thought out plan. A plan of financial needs, with predictions of a fiscal year. The first step of the plan is research. You need to have good knowledge of what you are going into. That means not only of your idea and self developed knowledge of the business, but knowledge of the business world itself. Putting yourself in the environment that you want to start is very important Talking to people that already have done the research and are successful is very important. They will I have a lot of answers to some pending questions. Knowing whether or not you even like your business can affect the success of a business, If you are not happy with this than right off you know you shouldn't even start. It would waste a lot of time, money, and energy.

Thinking is a big part of success. All fine detail needs to be thought of. Even if it is as little as what color are you going to paint the walls of the store. Everything costs money. Which means everything needs to be calculated to the exact dollar. First, finding a location. The success

of a business is location, location, and location! Drive around town, or the area you wish to start. Make sure that you keep in mind the cost. This might sound cheap, but money is scarce and every penny of it needs to be spent wisely. After you have found the right spot, then figure out the costs. First ask yourself what size you think you will need to fulfill the needs of your business. The monthly price would depend on the size of the space you choose and its location.

Crunching numbers!! Is the biggest and probably hardest part of the plan. Figure out the cost of everything, this way you'll know if everything is feasible. The costs will include everything need to start the business which is: rent, furniture, paint, electricity, cash register, shelves, hangers, water supply, stock of product, and everything else that is necessary for your business. There should not be any pebbles unturned. This will give a grand total of the initial cost of the business (see appendix I Sa). From here you can figure out your budget. The budget is important because money will not be flowing for the first couple of years. In other words do not expect a paycheck for a while. To be able to keep a monthly budget will save the most amount of money. On top of the initial cost you m calculate, and predict the future of you business. A one-year plan and a three-year plan are necessary to really plan the progress of the company. This is the only way to actually know if the business will be successful

After the financial portion of the plan is finished then you can start taking immediate action. Go to your local Chamber of Commerce and they "I supply you with most of the basic necessities to actually start the business (see appendix 5). First you will have to fill out the application of occupancy. This enables you to buy, or lease, the space you want, however, depending on how many employees you will have "I determine how much this permit will cost. Once have filled out this application then the next step is to apply for a business license. The business license is the most important necessity. it is like having a Driver License. You cannot

have a business without a license, in comparison; you cannot drive without a valid Drivers License, Once you have applied for the business license, then you have to get a sellers permit: this will let you sell whatever it is you are planning to sell.

Now you m go to the bank (see appendix 6). Some banks will be more generous than others. Remember, don't go to the Credit Union because they will not lend out small business loans. Wells Fargo, Bank of America, Washington Mutual, are all good examples of banks that have small business loans available. Bring your plan with you to the bank and make sure everything is written in an explanatory fashion, The people at the banks will not be impressed with bugs, only clarity and big numbers. Hopefully, they will award you with amount of money that you will need to get the business started. Now you are set. You've got the money, location, product, and a plan. The puzzle is complete.

The steps of a business might seem simple, but it is a very complex process Nothing should be taken lightly. The most important part of the plan is the financial process. The financial portion will set a good base for your predictions of success. Every aspect of a business is important. Do not assume the process is easy. To have success their must be a sacrifice, and to be successful their must be effort.

Evaluate The Outcome

What is a business plan? That is a question I seemed to ask myself plenty of times through out the year. Deciding to create my own business, Dance Again & Club Wear, was the smartest thing I could have ever done my senior year. I went into this project not knowing a single thing about businesses, or how they work, or most importantly, how they are started. My senior project was successful for reasons beyond simply completing it. I was able to improve my

research skills and my ability to solve problems. Most of all, my senior project has been the most challenging assignment I have faced my entire high school career.

Completion of my project was long and eventful (see appendix 17). I jumped many hurdles to complete my senior project. When I first choose to write a business plan I had intentions of completing my project in January, and actually trying to start my business. However, once I truly understood everything that needed to be in a business plan I realized that completing this project in January was a goal far beyond my reach (see appendix 3). When I had first started what I thought was a business plan, I realized that I had been on the wrong path. My work was going nowhere and I was falling behind. The months seemed to fly by faster than I could even live them. Completing my project on time and successful became a daily weight on my shoulders. However, with a lot of hard work my completion was successful.

When I first thought of the idea of a business plan I thought to myself, how hard could it really be? However, the tables turned when I opened my first book of how to write a successful business plan, Preparing a Successful Business Plan by Rodger D. Tochie. A business plan is not written from only one idea. Of course, a business originates from an idea, but there is a lot of research that is involved with preparing a successful plan (see appendix 14). Without research there is no proof for your company. My research skills improved tremendously due to the fact that I had to do so much research to create a successful plan. I read countless brochures of what a business plan is and most importantly, how to write a business plan (see appendix 10). I started, not knowing a single thing about a business plan and now I can honestly say that not only did I improve my research skills but also I learned the rights and wrongs of business. I had to research the business I was getting myself into. I spent countless hours on the Internet researching retail, what the new fashions were, and prices of them. Not only did I just research fashion but I also

had to research consignment. Opening a consignment shop seems virtually harmless, and successful. However, many obstacles stood in my way. My business was solely going to run on the idea of pure consignment, but how was I going to make enough money to afford monthly expenses? So I had to make a few exceptions and expansions.

How did this project improve my ability to problem solve? One of the most important aspects of this project was putting together the figures, and making the right decisions (see appendix 17). I had to ask myself where would be a good place to open a business? How big should it be? What should the name be? There were a million and one decisions and problems I had to solve all on my own. For example, one problem I had to solve was the money situation. Everything cost money, and the more things that I figured out I needed the more money I was spending. A person can fall into debt real fast. I didn't realize that opening a business was going to be so costly. I mentioned before that I didn't know how I was going to afford monthly expenses running on only consignment. Well, after a lot of calculating I figured that I would not survive. The probability that I was going to meet my monthly overhead was slim. So, I decided that I would expand my store. Not only would my store make a profit on consignment, but also on new merchandise. Dance Again would become Dance Again & Club Wear. Not only will my store be diverse, but also it is a great marketing strategy. Problem solving played a big role in the success of my senior project.

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Now that I look back on the year I realize that this project not only helped me to be a better student, but it has also helped in preparing myself for the future. People say that high school is supposed to prepare you for the future but when in reality it does not. However, this project truly made me realize the hardships you go through as an adult. In college people are not going to care about you, or how you are doing. It is going to be up to you to get things done. This project has proven every aspect of what life is going to be like next year. That is what makes this project the most challenging project of my high school career. I had to finish a project that had no guidelines. It was up to me to find the right path and to complete this project successfully. There was no one there to tell me where to go, or even when to do it I had to discipline myself to successfully complete this project. I learned so much about myself and about the future that I can say that I am prepared for what lies ahead of me. The learning stretch that accumulated throughout the year was tremendous. I went from not having a clue to what a business was to knowing every little detail about it. I did not even know there were business plans. I just thought I had to think of some idea and everything was just going to follow. The legal aspect was probably the

hardest part of the business plan for me to understand. Huntington Beach has is probably the hardest place to try and open a business in. Huntington Beach has permits for everything. It al was a true learning stretch.

My senior project was successful because I made it successful. The entire project was based on my capabilities and the way that I was going to handle them. Being that it was the hardest project I have ever had; I feel that I handled to the best of my capabilities. Completing this project has enhanced my abilities to research, problem solve, and time management, therefore, making me more prepared for the future and for life.