A business plan allows you to set forth your goals on paper. It creates a map for your future and provides focus for your career. A business plan for a creative can be a very personal document. Conversely, you can adapt this format to a more business-like format if you are creating your plan for the sole purpose of securing funding to expand your business.

**All Business Plans Address Several Key Issues**

What are my goals, both concrete and personal?
How will I achieve those goals?
What do I need to achieve those goals?

**Traditional Business Plan:**
The simplest way to start your business plan is to create an outline and fill it in based on your own particular needs. For an creative, a business plan might include the following sections:

**Executive Summary**
A quick overview of your plan! Write this section after you are finished the entire plan. Describe who you are and how your background will support your business’s success.

**Business Profile**
Who are you and why do you create what you make? Describe your business history and current activities. Describe your market, your customers, and your history.

**Management Experience**
Describe the experience, qualification and skills of each key member of your team, even if it’s just you.

**Goal Statement**
Where do you want to go with your work? This can be personal (ie. I want to create a series of fiction…I want to expand into cast pieces vs. blown glass) or concrete (ie. I want to see my work in 3 new spaces this year…I want to sell 10 works)

**Action Statement**
How will you reach your goals?

**Financial Statement**
What kind of financial resources do you have and what do you need to reach your goals? If making additional money is a goal, how much? This might include both personal and business finances. Balance sheets, income statement of past and future projections are helpful to develop for this section.

**Marketing Plan**
How are you going to let people know about your work? What techniques are you going to use to promote yourself?


"Launching a new enterprise—whether it’s a tech start-up, a small business, or an initiative within a large corporation—has always been a hit-or-miss proposition. According to the decades-old formula, you write a business plan, pitch it to investors, assemble a team, introduce a product, and start selling as hard as you can. And somewhere in this sequence of events, you’ll probably suffer a fatal setback. But recently an important countervailing force has emerged, one that can make the process of starting a company less risky. It’s a methodology called the “lean start-up,” and it favors experimentation over elaborate planning, customer feedback over intuition, and iterative design over traditional “big design up front” development. Although the methodology is just a few years old, its concepts—such as “minimum viable product” and “pivoting”—have quickly taken root in the start-up world, and business schools have already begun adapting their curricula to teach them. “ Steve Blank

**HOW TO START:** Begin by making a canvas of your own on a piece of paper. As you progress, simply add another business canvas model it is very adaptable to your changes. This can be used of course in conjunction with the traditional business plan.

**Who will help you?**

**Key Partners**

- Who are our key suppliers and partners?
- What key resources are we acquiring and what services do they perform?

**How do you do it?**

**Key Activities**

- What activities do our value propositions require?
- How about distribution channels?
- Customer relationships?
- Revenue Streams?

**What do you need?**

**Key Resources**

- What do you do?
- Value Proposition
  - What do we deliver to the customer?
  - Which one of our customer’s problems are we helping to solve?
  - What bundles of products are we offering?
  - What customer needs are we satisfying?

**Who do you help?**

**Customer Segment**

- For whom are we creating value?

**How do you interact?**

**Customer Relationships**

- What types of relationships do our customers expect us to established and maintain with them?

**How will you reach them?**

**Distribution Channels**

**What will it cost?**

**Cost Structure**

- What are the most important costs inherent in our business model? Which activities and/or resources are most expensive?

**How much will you make?**

**Revenue Stream**

- For what value are our customers really willing to pay? What do they currently pay? How would they prefer to pay? If there are multiple revenue streams, how do they fit within the big picture?

**A MULTITUDE OF RESOURCES EXIST FOR BUILDING A BUSINESS PLAN AND FOR THINKING ABOUT YOUR CAREER AS A CREATIVE. FOR A START, YOU MAY WANT TO VISIT THESE SITES:**

The US Government Small Business Administration site:  
http://www.sbaonline.sba.gov/

NYFA source business of art articles focusing on careers:  
http://www.nyfa.org/level3.asp?id=197&fid=1&sid=51

The Wall Street Journal’s Startup Journal Center for Entrepreneurs:  
http://www.startupjournal.com/  
http://www.midatlanticarts.org/resources/artist_toolkit/business_plans.html

More about the Lean Launchpad and Business Canvas Model:  
https://hbr.org/2013/05/why-the-lean-start-up-changes-everything