

Business Plan Workbook #7	
Course	Making Your Dream
Topics Addressed	The “Who” Questions

Key Points

Who Will Supply Your Raw Materials, Supplier, or Equipment?

The people who supply you with raw materials, supplies, or equipment are called “suppliers”. Suppliers have a big impact on your business because they help you find materials and supplies that have the special characteristics you need.

You need to find suppliers who can provide the **specific** materials or supplies you need to run your business. Once you find reliable suppliers, it’s in your best interest to develop a good working relationship with them.

Developing Supplier Relationships

A strong supplier relationship benefits you and your supplier. Your suppliers benefit from the relationship, because they gain a reliable, repeat customer. You benefit, because you know you can depend on your suppliers to provide quality materials and supplies in a timely fashion.

Ideas for Developing Supplier Relationships

Here are some ideas that you can use to develop strong relationships with your suppliers:

1. Pay your bills on time – like you, your suppliers want to get paid for the products or services they provide
2. Personalize the relationship – visit their offices or places of business and get to know them
3. Share information – keep your suppliers aware of what’s going on in your business so that they’re not caught off guard by any changes
4. Provide training opportunities – reduce their costs and yours by ensuring they have up-to-date training on your products and processes

Who Will Sell Your Product or Service?

You can sell your products or services **directly**, or you can sell them **indirectly** with the help of a **distribution partner**.

When you sell your products or services directly, you are selling to the end consumer – in other words, you are selling directly to the person who is going to use the product or service.

When you sell your products or services indirectly, you are selling to another company – the company buys your product or service with the intention of selling it to an end user for a higher price. Companies that resell other people's products are sometimes referred to as "distribution partners".

Related Business Plan Questions

Below, you will see a list of business plan questions related to the topics noted above. If you print this worksheet, you can use the space below each question to write down some initial thoughts and ideas.

When you're ready to start working on your business plan, return to the course, and select "Open My Business Plan".

Q: ANSWER ONE OF THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

If you are selling to the end-user, where will your business be located?

OR

If you are selling to a business that will resell your products or services, write down a list of the partners that will be selling your product/service, and explain where they are located.

Q: Who are the vendors that you will buy your raw materials/supplies from, and where are they located?