

Business Plan Workbook #5	
Course	Making Your Dream
Topics Addressed	What Do I Need to Think About? The “What” Questions

Key Points

Types of Businesses

There are three different types of businesses:

- Product-based businesses
- Service-based businesses
- Combined product and service-based businesses

Product-Based Businesses

If you make something that someone can buy and take home with them, then you can think of your business as a **product-based business**.

Service-Based Businesses

If your customers are paying you to do things for them, then you are providing a service and you can think of your business as a **service-based business**.

Combined Product and Service-Based Businesses

If you make some products, but you also provide a service, then your business is a **combined product and service-based business**.

Think Through Each Step in Your Production or Delivery Process

Once you’ve identified the type of business you have, you can start thinking through the steps and activities that go into making your product or providing your service.

For a **product-based business**, you’ll need to think about the steps needed to make your product, the materials or ingredients that go into it, and whether you need help making your product. You’ll also need to think about any regulations that apply to your product.

For a **service-based business**, you’ll need to think about the different parts of the service and whether or not you’ll need help performing certain tasks.

You will also need to identify any certifications or licenses related to your service.

For a **combined product and service-based business**, you’ll need to think about the steps needed to make your product and the materials or ingredients that go into it.

You'll also need to think about the different parts of the service and any laws that are related to it. When you're considering whether or not you'll need help, you'll need to think about the product side of your business, and the service side.

“What” Questions for Product-Based Businesses

If you have a product-based business, you'll want to define the **type** of product or products that you make and sell. This is a two-step process. You'll start by listing all of your products. Then, you'll identify and describe the characteristics of each product in your list. The characteristics are the features that identify the product and make it unique.

Defining your product offering could be a case of defining a single product OR it could be a case of defining a variety of related products.

“What” Questions for Service-Based Businesses

If your business is a service-based business, you'll still need to define your products. The only difference is that your “products” won't be physical. Your products will be the services that you provide to customers.

You'll start by listing your services. Then, you'll define the characteristics of the service.

“What” Questions for Combined Product and Service-Based Businesses

If your business offers a **combination** of products and services, you'll use the same process to define the characteristics of your product and service offerings.

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: In as much detail as you can, describe your current products or services. Be sure to identify the features that make your products or services unique. If you will be providing more than one product or service, describe the different kinds of products or services that you will be selling.

Q: Describe the need that you see your products or services addressing for your customer.

Q: Describe any ideas you have for new products or services that you might offer in the future and the need they address.