Smart learning plan (onboarding)

Dear Ivan,

Thank you for participating in our Entrepreneurship Training Course! Below is your personalized plan to build the foundational skills you currently rate as beginner, tailored specifically for your tech service business aspirations.

1. Essential learning topics and materials

1 Making a Business Plan

To be able to make an effective business plan, you'll need some basic knowledge and training on them. Learning Resources: Try HubSpot's free "Business Plan Template" and review tutorials on creating business plans on LinkedIn Learning. Practice Tip: Draft a mini-business plan, focusing on basic sections such as vision, goals, target audience, and financial projections. You can use generative AI to assist you.

2 Running a Business

To be able to consider all aspects of running a successful business, you'll need some basic knowledge and training on them. Learning Resources: SBA.gov and Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs) offer beginner resources for business management. Practice Tip: Study case studies on small business operations and identify essential operational processes. You can use generative AI to assist you.

3 Branding and Marketing

To be able to start successfully marketing your business, products and services, you'll need some basic knowledge and training on marketing essentials. Learning Resources: Coursera's "Marketing in a Digital World" or free Google Ads and Facebook Blueprint courses are great starting points. Practice Tip: Develop a simple ad for a hypothetical product and run it on a small budget to understand basics in digital advertising. You can use generative AI to assist you.

2. Learning objectives

Making a Business Plan

- Identify the key components of a tech service business plan tailored for small business clients
- Develop financial projections specific to IT service offerings including cybersecurity, cloud services, and custom software development

- Create a compelling value proposition that differentiates your tech services from competitors
- Learn how to use AI tools to enhance your business planning process

Running a Business

- Understand the operational requirements specific to a tech service firm in Estonia
- Identify key performance indicators (KPIs) relevant to IT service businesses
- Learn effective resource allocation for tech startups with limited initial funding
- Develop strategies for scaling an IT service business while maintaining quality

Branding and Marketing

- Create a tech-focused brand identity that resonates with small business clients
- Develop a digital marketing strategy specifically for B2B tech services
- Learn how to effectively communicate technical value propositions to non-technical business owners
- Understand how to leverage your technical expertise as a marketing advantage

3. Your study plan

Making a Business Plan

Step 1: Understand Business Plan Fundamentals - Download and review HubSpot's Business Plan Template - Complete the LinkedIn Learning course "Writing a Business Plan" (or similar available course) - List the key components that will be essential for your tech service business plan

Step 2: Research Tech Service Business Models - Research at least 3 successful IT service companies similar to your vision - Identify their value propositions, service offerings, and target markets - Note which aspects you might adapt for your business

Step 3: Define Your Service Offerings - Create detailed descriptions of your planned services (cybersecurity, cloud services, custom software) - Research pricing models for each service type - Determine which services will be your primary focus initially

Step 4: Market Analysis - Research small businesses in Estonia that could benefit from your services - Identify their pain points regarding IT services - Analyze competitors in the Estonian market

Step 5: Financial Projections - Create startup cost estimates for your tech service firm - Develop revenue projections based on your service offerings - Calculate break-even analysis for your business

Step 6: Draft Your Business Plan - Use the HubSpot template to create a draft business plan - Incorporate AI tools to help refine and enhance your plan - Review and revise each section for clarity and completeness

Running a Business

Step 1: Understand Business Operations Basics - Visit SBA.gov and review resources on business operations - Research specific operational requirements for tech businesses in Estonia - Create a list of necessary licenses, permits, and legal requirements

Step 2: Study Tech Business Case Studies - Find and analyze at least 3 case studies of successful small tech service firms - Identify common operational challenges and solutions - Note which operational processes would be most relevant to your business

Step 3: Develop Operational Procedures - Create a service delivery workflow for each of your planned offerings - Develop quality assurance procedures for tech services - Design a customer onboarding process

Step 4: Financial Management - Research accounting software suitable for tech service businesses - Learn about cash flow management for service-based businesses - Develop a system for tracking billable hours and project profitability

Step 5: Team and Resource Planning - Determine what roles you'll need to fill as your business grows - Research freelancer and contractor options for specialized services - Create a resource allocation plan for your initial business phase

Step 6: Risk Management - Identify potential operational risks specific to IT service businesses - Develop contingency plans for common tech service issues - Research appropriate business insurance for tech service providers

Branding and Marketing

Step 1: Understand Marketing Fundamentals - Enroll in Coursera's "Marketing in a Digital World" course - Complete Google Ads and Facebook Blueprint basic courses - Take notes on concepts particularly relevant to B2B tech services

Step 2: Develop Your Brand Identity - Define your brand values, mission, and vision - Create a brand name and tagline that reflects your tech expertise - Design a simple logo and visual identity (or outline requirements for one)

Step 3: Identify Your Target Audience - Create detailed profiles of your ideal small business clients - Research where these clients seek information about IT services - Identify their key decision factors when choosing IT service providers

Step 4: Create Your Value Proposition - Develop clear, non-technical explanations of your services' benefits - Create comparison points between your services and alternatives - Craft messaging that addresses specific pain points of small businesses

Step 5: Digital Marketing Planning - Research effective B2B tech service marketing channels - Develop a content plan focused on demonstrating your expertise - Create a basic digital marketing budget allocation plan

Step 6: Measurement and Analytics - Learn about key marketing metrics for B2B services - Set up a simple system to track marketing effectiveness - Develop criteria for evaluating marketing ROI

4. Assignments

Making a Business Plan

Assignment 1: Tech Service Value Proposition Create a one-page value proposition for your tech service business that clearly explains: - The specific IT problems you solve for small businesses - How your services provide unique value compared to alternatives - The measurable benefits clients can expect - Your unique qualifications and approach

Use an AI tool like ChatGPT to help refine your messaging for clarity and impact. Compare the AI-generated suggestions with your original to identify improvements.

Assignment 2: Mini Financial Projection Develop a simplified financial projection spreadsheet for your first year of business that includes: - Startup costs specific to your tech service business - Monthly revenue projections for each service type - Operating expenses including software licenses, hosting, etc. - Break-even analysis - Cash flow projection

Use an AI tool to help identify any expenses or revenue streams you might have overlooked. Document how the AI helped improve your financial planning.

Running a Business

Assignment 1: Service Delivery Blueprint Create a detailed service delivery blueprint for one of your core offerings (cybersecurity, cloud services, or custom software development) that includes: - Initial client consultation process - Assessment and proposal stage - Implementation workflow with quality checkpoints - Client training components - Ongoing support structure - Upselling opportunities

Use an AI tool to help identify potential bottlenecks or inefficiencies in your process. Document how you refined your blueprint based on AI suggestions.

Assignment 2: Tech Business Risk Assessment Develop a risk assessment document for your tech service business that: - Identifies at least 10 potential operational risks (e.g., data breaches,

service outages) - Rates each risk by likelihood and potential impact - Outlines mitigation strategies for each risk - Creates contingency plans for your highest-rated risks

Use an AI tool to brainstorm risks you might not have considered and to help develop comprehensive mitigation strategies.

Branding and Marketing

Assignment 1: Digital Marketing Campaign Design a small-scale digital marketing campaign for your tech services that includes: - A landing page outline with key messaging points - 3 social media post concepts demonstrating your expertise - A simple Google Ads campaign structure with keywords and ad copy - A lead magnet concept (e.g., cybersecurity checklist for small businesses)

Use AI tools to help generate content ideas and refine your messaging for different platforms. Test your ad concepts with a small budget if possible.

Assignment 2: Client Communication Kit Create a communication kit for explaining technical concepts to non-technical business owners: - Develop a glossary of technical terms explained in simple language - Create 3 one-page visual explanations of your core services - Draft email templates for common client scenarios (onboarding, issue resolution) - Design a simple case study template highlighting client success stories

Use AI tools to help simplify technical language and create compelling narratives around your services. Test your explanations with non-technical friends or family.

5. Additional online materials

1: Making a Business Plan – Write Your Business Plan: A step-by-step guide on writing an effective business plan, including both traditional and lean startup approaches.
https://www.sba.gov/business-guide/plan-your-business/write-your-business-plan

2: Making a Business Plan – Small Business: The Business Plan: A free online course that walks you through creating a comprehensive business plan covering mission, market research, and funding options.
https://alison.com/course/small-business-the-business-plan

3: Running a Business – Learn with Start Up Loans: A collection of free short courses covering essential topics in running a small business, including digital skills and bookkeeping.
https://www.open.edu/openlearn/startuploans

4: Branding & Marketing – Inbound Marketing Certification: A free course with certification covering the fundamentals of inbound marketing, including content, SEO, social media, and email marketing.
https://academy.hubspot.com/courses/inbound-marketing

5: AI for Business Planning - Microsoft's AI Business School: Part of Microsoft Learn, this free resource, updated in 2024, helps business leaders plan and strategize AI implementation with case studies and videos. Duration varies, suitable for beginners.
https://learn.microsoft.com/en-us/ai/

6: AI for Business Planning - AI for Business: Generation & Prediction: A free Coursera course from 2023 covering AI applications in business, including generation and prediction techniques. Lasts 3 hours with 16 videos, suitable for beginners.
https://www.coursera.org/learn/ai-for-business-generation-and-prediction

We are glad to have you onboard 🙂 If you have any questions, please contact teachers.