

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.

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 delivery models (subscription, project-based, retainer)
- Create a compelling value proposition for your cybersecurity and cloud services offerings

- Learn to use AI tools to streamline the business planning process and enhance market research

Running a Business

- Understand the operational requirements specific to a tech service firm in Estonia
- Identify key performance indicators (KPIs) for monitoring the health of an IT service business
- Develop strategies for scaling IT services while maintaining quality and customer satisfaction
- Learn how to implement AI-powered automation for business operations and client management

Branding and Marketing

- Create a distinctive brand identity for a tech service firm targeting small businesses
- Develop a content marketing strategy that demonstrates your IT expertise to potential clients
- Learn techniques for communicating complex technical services to non-technical business owners
- Understand how to leverage AI for targeted marketing campaigns and lead generation

3. Your study plan

Making a Business Plan

Step 1: Download HubSpot's Business Plan Template and review its structure, paying special attention to sections relevant to service-based businesses.

Step 2: Complete LinkedIn Learning's "Writing a Business Plan" course (approximately 1-2 hours), focusing on how each section applies to your tech service firm idea.

Step 3: Research 3-5 successful IT service companies similar to your vision. Use ChatGPT to help analyze their business models with a prompt like: "Analyze the business model of [company name], an IT service provider for small businesses. What are their key revenue streams, value propositions, and customer segments?"

Step 4: Draft your business vision and mission statements, focusing on the specific IT solutions you'll provide to small businesses. Use Claude or GPT to refine these statements.

Step 5: Create a detailed service offering list with pricing models (subscription, project-based, hourly) for your cybersecurity, cloud services, and custom software development.

Step 6: Develop financial projections using templates from SCORE.org, adapting them to IT service business metrics like customer acquisition cost, lifetime value, and churn rate.

Step 7: Compile all elements into a draft business plan, then use GPT-4 to review and suggest improvements with a prompt like: "Review this business plan for an IT service firm targeting small

businesses. Identify any gaps or areas that need strengthening."

Running a Business

Step 1: Visit SBA.gov and complete their free "How to Start a Business" course, taking notes on aspects specific to service-based businesses.

Step 2: Research Estonian business regulations and requirements for tech companies. Use ChatGPT to summarize key points with a prompt like: "What are the key legal and regulatory requirements for starting and running an IT service business in Estonia?"

Step 3: Study 3 case studies of IT service businesses on Harvard Business Review or similar platforms. For each, identify their operational processes, challenges, and success factors.

Step 4: Create an operational workflow diagram for your business covering client onboarding, service delivery, support, and billing. Use Miro or Lucidchart for visualization.

Step 5: Develop a resource planning document outlining the tools, software, and human resources you'll need at different stages of business growth.

Step 6: Research and list potential AI tools that could automate aspects of your business operations. Use Claude to help with a prompt like: "What AI tools could help automate operations in a small IT service business focusing on cybersecurity and cloud services?"

Step 7: Create a risk management plan identifying potential challenges in running your tech service business and strategies to mitigate them.

Branding and Marketing

Step 1: Enroll in Coursera's "Marketing in a Digital World" course, focusing on modules most relevant to B2B service marketing.

Step 2: Complete Google's free Digital Marketing Fundamentals course to understand the basics of online marketing channels.

Step 3: Research branding elements of 5 successful tech service companies. Analyze their websites, messaging, and visual identity to understand how they communicate technical services.

Step 4: Create a brand identity document for your business including name options, color palette, typography, and key messaging points. Use Midjourney or DALL-E to generate visual inspiration.

Step 5: Develop a content marketing plan with 10 potential blog topics that demonstrate your expertise in cybersecurity, cloud services, and custom software development.

Step 6: Create a simple landing page for your business idea using Wix, Squarespace, or WordPress, implementing the branding elements you've developed.

Step 7: Design a basic digital marketing funnel specific to acquiring small business clients for IT services, including lead magnets, email sequences, and conversion points.

4. Extra assignments

Making a Business Plan

Assignment 1: AI-Enhanced Competitor Analysis Use ChatGPT to analyze 3-5 competitors in the Estonian IT services market. Create a prompt that asks for detailed analysis of their service offerings, pricing models, target customers, and unique selling propositions. Then use the AI to help you identify gaps in the market that your business could fill. Document the process, including the prompts you used and how you refined them to get better results.

Assignment 2: Financial Projection Scenario Planning Use GPT-4 to help you create three different financial scenarios for your business: conservative, realistic, and optimistic. Start with a prompt like: "Help me create financial projections for a tech service firm offering cybersecurity and cloud services to small businesses. I need three scenarios..." Document how you iteratively refined your prompts to get more detailed and realistic projections, and how you combined AI suggestions with your own knowledge of the IT service industry.

Running a Business

Assignment 1: AI Operations Assistant Design Design a concept for an AI assistant that would help you run your IT service business. Use ChatGPT to brainstorm features this assistant would have, such as client communication automation, service ticket prioritization, or resource allocation. Create a mockup of how this assistant would work in your business. Document your process, including the prompts you used to refine the concept and how you evaluated which features would be most valuable.

Assignment 2: Crisis Simulation Exercise Use Claude or GPT-4 to simulate a business crisis scenario for your IT service firm (e.g., a security breach, service outage, or sudden loss of a key client). Create a prompt that asks the AI to play the role of different stakeholders (clients, employees, partners) during this crisis. Document how you used the AI to explore different response strategies and develop a crisis management plan, including the specific prompts that yielded the most helpful insights.

Branding and Marketing

Assignment 1: AI-Generated Marketing Copy Testing Use GPT-4 to generate 5 different versions of marketing copy for one of your core IT services (e.g., cybersecurity for small businesses). Create variations targeting different pain points and using different tones. Then use Claude to evaluate each version and predict which might be most effective for your target audience. Document your process, including your initial prompts, how you refined them, and your analysis of the different outputs.

Assignment 2: Visual Brand Identity Exploration Use DALL-E or Midjourney to generate visual branding concepts for your IT service business. Create a series of prompts that explore different visual styles, color schemes, and imagery that would appeal to small business owners while conveying technical expertise and trustworthiness. Select your favorite concepts and explain why they align with your brand values. Document your prompt engineering process, including how you refined your prompts to get more targeted results.

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: 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>

4: 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/>

5: AI for Business Success - AI Applications in Marketing: Core Concepts and Data-Driven Strategies: A free Coursera course by University of Virginia from 2023 covering AI in marketing. Includes 10 hours of content with 38 videos, beginner level.

<https://www.coursera.org/learn/uva-darden-artificial-intelligence-marketing>

6: An MBO Partners blog post from March 2024 listing five practical ways small businesses can use generative AI, such as automating tasks and creating content, to boost productivity.

<https://www.mbopartners.com/blog/how-grow-small-business/5-ways-to-use-generative-ai-for-your-small-bu>

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