**A concept plan is a short overview of a new business venture. It can be used to expand on an initial business idea; guide more detailed planning, and communicate essential information. The concept plan signals a commitment to a diligent planning effort by organizing and documenting the intentions of the founders. The concept plan precedes the writing of a business plan and establishes the foundation for its development. This information will be useful to your Florida SBDC Network consultant as we work with you and your business.**

**Idea.** Each business begins with an idea. But, this idea must be expanded into a full business concept, identification of the idea should be both descriptive and restrictive in order to bring focus to the effort. Unique features of the idea must be adequately described to identify the inspiration of the founder and the motivation to pursue the venture. At the same time, boundaries must be established and the idea restricted in scope in order to make the effort realistic and commercially viable.

**Market.** A realistic assessment of market size and scope should follow from a clear description of the market environment. Explain the economic and industry factors that influence demand along with the behavioral and demographic features of intended consumers. What need do you fill or problem do you solve? How is your product/service different from the competition? Detailed market research can be performed later, in preparing the business plan to identify the relevant areas of market research and to report on preliminary results. Positive market indications should show that a clear potential market exists.

**Profit** The concept plan must demonstrate adequate profit potential under realistic assumptions. The magnitude and timing of profits helps to determine appropriate funding sources. Investors and lenders use expected profit to measure of performance and growth. Founders should also assess their own expectations of returns.

**Actions.** Key actions and primary activities should be identified to alert those involved of critical milestones. In some cases, important actions are organizational, such as forming a corporation, providing for funding, the timing of opening day, etc. For others, key actions may be associated with operational activities such as controlling production or establishing a distribution system.

**Capital.** The total capital requirements and planned resources should be established. Capital require- ments should address initial startup capital, working capital and capital required to sustain growth beyond the first year. The level of profit, above that needed to satisfy owner requirements and sustain growth, establishes the amount available to service debt and provide a return to investment. A frank discussion of capital requirements at an early stage is important to developing a realistic perspective on funding and gain consensus among founders on their approach to capital formation.

**Team.** A team adds a diversity of skills, division of labor and reduces risk. The concept plan serves the team’s early efforts. If the founder is committed to go it alone, then some discussion is necessary to address the depth of experience and skills. Building a team is preferred. By early engagement in the planning process, each participant can make their own contribution and develop a commitment to the venture.



**Use this the answers to this questionnaire to start your Concept Plan. Your Florida SBDC Network consultant will also use the information to help you determine your next steps.**

**Idea - Write three sentences outlining your basic idea.**

**1)**

**2)**

**3)**

**Market - Write 2-3 sentences describing your market environment, your target market and your competitive advantage.**

1.
2.
3.

**Profit** - **What income do you expect to earn from profits or salary?**

**1)**

**Actions - List three action steps that need to be taken during start-up**

1.

1.
2.

**Capital** - **What capital do you need and where will it come from?**

1.
2.

**Team** - **Who will assist or partner with you in your company?**

1.

**2)**

**3)**

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