

## Dialogue 3

(Alice and Victor; in his office)



**A:** I hope I'm not taking up your precious time, Mr Very Important Senior Consultant. *(laughs)*

**V:** Less important than you'd think. So it's interior design, right?

**A:** That's the idea. And what I need now is a **killer business plan**.

**V:** You've come to the right person. *(laughs)* I'm sure you're aware that a business plan is a kind of map. A good one will help you **keep track of** your **business goals** and **deal with** problems efficiently. Remember that whatever goals you set for your business, they have to show a high degree of **attainability**, realism and **specificity**. Any business plan has to begin with listing your **objectives**; also it should offer a brief description of your company and the services you want to provide. Banks or any potential investors want to know what type of business you are starting up and how it will be **structured**.

**A:** Or how it's going to make money.

**V:** Absolutely. It's called **growth potential**. **Back up** what you present with solid facts – quoting some **market figures** always makes a good impression on potential readers. And you have to analyse the strengths and weaknesses of your idea.

**A:** As far as weaknesses are concerned, I'll simply repeat what my mum says about the whole idea – “My daughter? Running a business?”. I think she'd rather I got a husband. *(laughs)*

**V:** Well, if your company makes loads of money, I'll propose to you myself. *(laughs)* Come to think of it, imagine you're writing the plan for someone like your mum – **leery** of investing money in any **startups**. One more thing – do some research. Show that you know your potential customers and their needs; you should be able to prove that what your company offers will address them.

**A:** What about **competitors**?

**V:** That too. List them by name and location, mention their weaknesses and strengths as well. Describe your **competitive strategy** – that is how you are going to succeed against them.

**A:** It sounds like a whole lot of work.

**V:** 'Cause it is. It takes a lot of time and effort. That's why **professionals**, like myself, are doing so well these days... What? Why are you smiling? Oh, forget it!

**A:** Why not?

**V:** Because I don't have time!

**A:** I'll pay you!

**V:** I won't take money from you!

**A:** I'll buy you dinner! Please, Vic, please.

abc

## Glossary

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>killer business plan</b> ( <i>n</i> ) | well-conceived, persuasive business plan  |
| <b>keep track of</b> ( <i>col</i> )      | follow, monitor   |
| <b>business goal</b> ( <i>n</i> )        | target of a company's activity  |
| <b>deal with</b> ( <i>v</i> )            | manage  |
| <b>attainability</b> ( <i>n</i> )        | achievability, viability  |
| <b>specificity</b> ( <i>n</i> )          | condition of being particular rather than general   |
| <b>business objective</b> ( <i>n</i> )   | target of a company's activity  |
| <b>structured</b> ( <i>adj</i> )         | organized or arranged according to particular principles                                    |
| <b>growth potential</b> ( <i>n</i> )     | estimation of a company's ability to expand and make more profits                           |
| <b>back up</b> ( <i>v</i> )              | support   |
| <b>market figures</b> ( <i>n</i> )       | estimation of the financial condition of a company, group of companies, or the whole sector |
| <b>leery (of)</b> ( <i>adj</i> )         | distrustful, sceptical  |
| <b>startup</b> ( <i>n</i> )              | newly established company   |
| <b>competitor</b> ( <i>n</i> )           | company offering similar products or services as your own                                   |

**competitive strategy** (n) plan to attract more clients and expand quicker than the competitors

**professional** (n) highly-qualified specialist

## Exercise 1



**Listen to the Dialogue again. Write the missing information – a word, two words, or a number – in the gaps.**

1. A good business plan helps entrepreneurs \_\_\_\_\_ of their goals.
2. Any business goal should be characterized by \_\_\_\_\_, realism and specificity.
3. It should start with listing your \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Information about the type of business you are starting up is vital for banks or \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Something that makes a good impression on the readers of a business plan is \_\_\_\_\_ market figures.
6. If you do some \_\_\_\_\_, you may learn something about your potential clients.
7. When you describe your competitors, include information about their name, \_\_\_\_\_, strengths and weaknesses.
8. A competitive strategy shows how you can \_\_\_\_\_ against your competitors.



## Exercise 2



**What do the underlined expressions mean?**

1. The way this company is structured, nobody knows who is responsible for what.
  - a) managed
  - b) organized
  - c) backed up

2. We didn't want to invent the company name ourselves; we hired professionals to do that.

- a) somebody else
- b) businesspeople
- c) specialists

3. Initially, I was leery of investing money in their enterprise, but I changed my mind when I saw their business plan.

- a) distrustful
- b) indifferent
- c) excited

4. I am most impressed with your goals, yet I'm not so sure about their attainability.

- a) legality
- b) viability
- c) sense

5. This business plan is missing facts and specificity. I've read it and I have no idea how they're actually going to make money.

- a) good style
- b) precise information
- c) logic

6. I wouldn't worry about our competitor; it's a fledging business set up by some students.

- a) businesses supported by a business incubator
- b) students living next-door
- c) company performing a similar business activity

7. With such a killer business plan as this one, anything is possible.

- a) risky business plan
- b) feasible business plan
- c) great business plan

8. I haven't been keeping track of the market figures for a few days. So what's up?

- a) dealing with
- b) calculating
- c) checking

9. For a startup, they have won quite a few clients.

- a) fledging business
- b) growth potential
- c) beginning

10. What this plan lacks are clearly defined business objectives.

- a) competitive strategies
- b) market figures
- c) targets



## Exercise 3



**Fill the gaps in the sentences with suitable phrases from the box.**

growth

competitive

back

deal

goal

figures

1. Have you seen the latest market \_\_\_\_\_? We are doing very well on the stock market.
2. Our \_\_\_\_\_ strategy relies on reaching potential clients with bulk emails.
3. I think you are being too optimistic about your \_\_\_\_\_ potential.
4. Our main business \_\_\_\_\_ for the next year is a very simple one. We want to see twice as much profit!
5. Could you \_\_\_\_\_ up the points you mentioned with some data?
6. I'm afraid I don't have the time to \_\_\_\_\_ with this problem right now.



## Exam practice

You are preparing a presentation about your company. Write an email (**40 - 50 words**) to Ann Perkins, a specialist in the Marketing Department:

- ask her for some information about the company's competitors (names and locations),
- ask her if she has any materials that could be helpful,
- explain why you need this information.

