

My Personalized Roadmap

Here's an exercise to help you create your road map or to find a new and better route:

- ✓ **Clarify your vision.** Ask yourself what you are building. Is it a service or product you'd like to offer? The answers to this question will help create a structure for achieving your Living Dream.

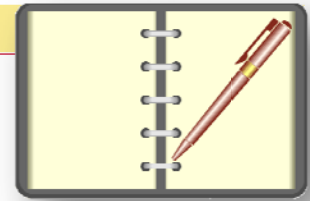
For example, if your living dream is to build a life-changing business that combines your love of gardening and creative solutions, it may look something like this: "Build a successful gardening company that specializes in providing competitively priced garden tools specifically designed and decorated for women gardeners".

My vision is to...

- ✓ **Develop your mission.** Why does this product or business exist? What does it aim to accomplish? When you have answered these questions, you have stated your mission. If you follow the gardening tool example, the mission might be, "Fulfill the growing demand from women in the gardening market by developing the most attractive, and gender specific tools available at a broadly affordable price-point.

Another example of a multi-part mission is that of my own company, Mom Inventors, Inc. (1) manufactures and distributes Mom Invented® products worldwide, (2) helps women entrepreneurs by offering an online community and educational tools, and (3) validates and magnifies the Mom Invented® brand as a trusted source of excellence and innovation and supports our concept of "moms helping moms.")

My mission is to...



- ✓ **State your goals.** What are your specific short- and long-term goals? Note, your long term goals should also relate to the outcomes of your “Living Dream.” Once you write them down, you will have a list of objectives that you can later measure.

For example: By August 2008, I will sell 5,000 units of my gardening tools to hardware stores like Ace Hardware in my area. In my second year, I will sell 25,000 units to 100 stores nationwide.

My short- and long-term goals are to... (be specific!)

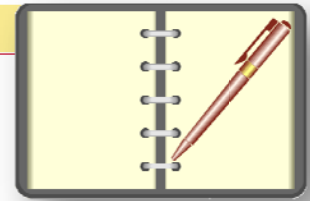
- ✓ **Set your strategies.** By what measures will you specifically build your company over time? These will become your strategies.

For example: I am initially going to sell my product to small independent stores and then move into bigger chain stores by leveraging the sales in the smaller stores. I will then expand into other markets, such as Wal-Mart and drug and grocery chain stores that offer garden centers to their customers. For now, don't worry if you can't get too specific. Your marketing plan, related to this section, will undoubtedly be further refined as you read the next chapter.)

My strategies are to...

- ✓ **Create a plan.** What is the work to be done? Create an action plan with specific tasks to be accomplished with due dates. If you miss the due date, don't feel like a failure, just re-assign a date. Suggestion: tackle the “easy” tasks first and try to check off one task per day. But even for the “dreaded” ones, usually the anticipation of the task and the story you've created around doing the task (story: the store owner will say “no”) is worse than actually doing it.

For example: I recently walked into a local craft store to pitch our Tidy Table Covers®. Sales still aren't one of my favorite tasks, but it needs to be done. The “story” that I told to myself was that the owner would not be interested initially and put me off for months. The outcome of the sales meeting came as a pleasant surprise, however. The retailer loved the product so much that they offered to display it at an upcoming tradeshow where they were exhibiting. I asked the cost. They said, “We love the product and want to see you do well. We won't charge you anything.”



Wow! That was a surprise. A dreaded task became an exciting business coup thanks to the generosity of the lovely business owner and a wish to pass on good fortune!

Now, to remind yourself *why* you are going to be doing all these things, rewrite your "Living Dream" here.

I will do these things because my "Living Dream" is to...

My plan is to... (Answer questions from section above "Create a Plan")

What is the work to be done...

I am grateful to my friend, Jim Horan, for making this process easier for me with his book, *The One Page Business Plan*. For more help creating your road map, visit www.onepagebusinessplan.com – an excellent tool for entrepreneurs.