

## *About the book*

This book is a reflection of the hard lessons I have learned about starting a business in Australia. Although they are possibly the same lessons anyone in the world would have to learn, I did my learning in my homeland of New Zealand as I followed my father around his plaster works, and later in Australia as part of a family business. From there I moved to my own businesses, first in Adelaide, then in Coonabarabran and now in Sydney. So you see, I learned how business is 'in the real world' as opposed to how the books say it will be.

Over the last twelve years I have been passing this knowledge on to business students at NSW TAFE, those starting their businesses under the NEIS programme, as well as those going it alone. I have taught all aspects of the business course and as a result have learned easy ways to explain complex concepts. Many students have remained in touch and, for some a mentoring program has been set up to help them through difficult patches. I bring to you a book with a strong touch of reality, a touch of humour, as well as a step by step program for completing a business plan so essential in today's business environment.

This book is divided into six main sections: Getting the Idea, Opportunity, Possibility, Viability and Reality, and Staying There. The Opportunity covers looking at the idea and assessing whether it could work in the market place; the Possibility assesses your skills in relation to the Opportunity. Until those two are matched you do not have a business idea that could work for you.

There are many ideas but if you do not have the skills or resources to match them you need to let it go and look for another idea. Once you pass that point it is advisable to do a viability test before you march on into reality. Throughout the book I have set up exercises to help you absorb the information. They are also the bones of your business plan

When you get to the end of the book write them into the outline and you will have your business plan complete with no pain at all. All it takes is one step at a time. Many people believe that to be in business is the ultimate job, they can work the hours they want for the pay they want. This is not necessarily true. Business can be hard work if you don't

get it right. The aim of this book is to lighten the load of business start up and to create the opportunity for you to get it right; enjoy life and enjoy staying in business.

Finally, I hope you enjoy reading the book as much as I enjoyed writing it. Please feel free to send me your comments.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Maggie". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

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