**Why is Planning so important?**

Most endeavours or enterprises already have a plan of sorts. These range from some vague sense of desires of the owner to massive, sophisticated plans. The question is therefore, not whether a business needs a PLAN but whether the PLAN needs to be well thought out, appropriate and do-able. The answer to this question is an overwhelming "YES"!

Planning is a pain. Let's face it, all of us avoid **planning**. However, if we are honest with ourselves, things always turn out better when they are planned. So why is **planning** so important? The process of **planning** forces you to look at the future of your business and anticipate what is likely to happen. This process also better prepares you for the future, or what actually happens, and makes you more knowledgeable about your business. **Planning** also ensures a way to measure success.

Companies and small businesses often procrastinate **planning** because they feel they are not ready and that a delay will result in better **planning**. Nobody is ever really ready and "better" **planning** next year is seldom really "better". Companies often discovered things in the first cycle of **planning** that would have remained undiscovered in the absence of the **planning** process and would have caused great damage in that event. Secondly, the world is not going to stop and wait for you while windows of opportunity open and close.

Success is strong evidence that a business has had a sound and appropriate plan. You will notice the past tense, since there is absolutely no guarantee that yesterday's sound and appropriate strategy will continue to be successful in the future. Indeed, there is great danger in assuming so without adequate study. There are many examples of once successful strategies that had become inappropriate. The IBM company being a good example, where they concentrated on providing computer hardware and mainframes, thinking that the personal computer would never be key product. They had no ammunition against Microsoft, who realised computer software and personal computers were the way of the future.

Often smaller businesses feel that they are small and do not need to PLAN. It should be pointed out that smaller companies have less tolerance for misapplying their limited resources than larger companies, thus they have an even greater need for **planning**. It is important to remember that a smaller, simpler business requires a smaller, simpler plan.