

Business Plan

Cadette *Cookie* badge 1

When you earn the Financial Literacy badge called Budgeting, you find out how to keep track of your money so that you can use it wisely. Basically, a budget is a plan for using your own money. When you run a business, you need a plan for the overall business, including the money you earn and how you want to use it. Create one in this badge!

Steps

1. Write your mission statement and business goals
2. Increase your customer base
3. Get into the details
4. Make a risk management plan
5. Gather expert feedback on your plan

Purpose

When I've earned this badge, I'll know how to write an effective business plan for my cookie business.

"All the things I love is what my business is all about." -Martha Stewart, businesswoman

Step 1 Write your mission statement and business goals

A mission statement is a short, clear description of your business's purpose or reason for being. For example, Girl Scout Cookies are sold to provide customers with a tasty treat and to help girls do great things through Girl Scouting. You may want to add a sentence about why you and your friends are selling cookies as well. Next, write down your business goals. This includes your own goals and your group goals. Your goals can include both specific sales goals and a goal for using your money (taking a trip, fund a Take Action project, and so on).

Step 2 Increase your customer base

What's the number one reason people say they don't buy Girl Scout Cookies? They were never asked! Spend some time developing ways to reach new customers, as well as coming up with ideas for connecting with last year's customers. For example, you could research events that happen in the community at the time of the cookie sale – you can reach a lot of potential customers at places where people gather!

Step 3 Get into the details

Decide what you want to do with your cookie money, figure out how much that will cost then set some smaller sales goals that will help you reach your team's larger goal. Create a timeline for your cookie sale that includes time for planning before the sale starts. As part of your planning, work out the logistics of the sale. For example, where will you sell? How often? Who will sell at the cookie booth, and when? What supplies do you need to get to decorate your cookie booth? Who will make posers or create clever slogans?

Step 4 Make a risk management plan

A risk management plan gets you thinking about solutions to potential problems, even before they occur! This can be as simple as answering these three questions:

- What can go wrong?
- What can you do to keep this from happening?
- What plans need to be in place if things don't go as you expect?

Make a list of things that can go wrong. For example, you may have to deal with bad weather or several girls could get sick and be unable to sell cookies. You might want to talk to older Girl Scouts about problems with which they've had to deal to get more ideas. Once you have your list of what could go wrong, brainstorm ways to make things right.

Step 5 Get expert feedback on your plan

Once you have your business plan on paper, ask someone who runs her own business to critique it and offer suggestions for improving it.

Add the Badge to Your Journey

You might use your cookie money to fund a Take Action project for one of your Journeys or to fund a trip that will really bring your Journey themes to life. While you're selling cookies to customers is, also, a great time to hear their thoughts and ideas about community needs!

Now that I've earned this badge, I can give service by:

- Helping younger Girl Scouts plan their cookie sale
- Helping plan big projects with other groups I belong to at school or my place of worship
- Creating a tip sheet for other Girl Scouts about places and ways to find new customers

I'm inspired to: