



# Lights, Camera, Action: Taking a Director's View in the Business Plan Development Process



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Assistant Professor of Entrepreneurship  
<http://mtsu.edu/~rlahm>





# **This Purpose of this Presentation is to Teach Participants How to Effectively Use Movie Production as a Metaphor for Teaching the Business Planning Process to Students**



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# Movie Production Entails Three Distinct Phases:

**Preproduction**  
**Filming**  
**Postproduction**



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# **Starting a Business Can Be Likened to Movie Production Phases:**

**Preproduction (Planning Phase)**

**Filming (Creation of the Actual Product/Service)**

**Postproduction (Delivery to the Marketplace Facilitated  
by Promotion and Distribution Efforts)**





# Parallels Between Movie Making and Business Planning

## Research

**Whatever the Type of Film, the More a Filmmaker Knows About the Subject, the Better.**

**Likewise, the Business Planning Process Requires Extensive Research.**





# Research Methods Used by Filmmakers

- A Filmmaker Should Read Everything That He or She Possibly Can About a Subject.
- Interviewing Subject Matter Experts and Retaining These Individuals as Consultants is Common in the Motion Picture Industry.
- Some Filmmakers Immerse Themselves in a Subject Much Like an Ethnographer Would Approach the Study of a Culture.
- Field Research is Typically Employed in Scouting Locations.
- Actors and Actresses Also Sometimes Study Characters Intensively. This May Include “Shadowing” Individuals Who are Real-Life Role Models.





# Parallels Between Movie Making and Business Planning

## Story Construction and Sequencing

**The Same Creative Processes That are Used to Imagine and Then Tell a Story to an Audience are Useful in Business Planning.**

**A Business Plan is, in Effect, an Entrepreneur's Depiction of What a Business Will Look Like, How it Will Operate, and How it Will Grow.**





# Story Construction and Sequencing

• **Filmmakers Use Images to Depict an Event or a Sequence of Events. A Business Plan Presenter Should Help an Audience Construct Similar Imagery:**

• **Where Does the Entrepreneur’s “Story” Start?**

• **What Happens in the Story’s Sequence of Events?**

• **How Does the Story End? For Instance, in Writing a Business Plan, One Should Account for the Full Life Cycle of the Business; Does the Entrepreneur Heroically “Ride Off Into the Sunset?” (A Corporation Lives on, a Sole Proprietorship Dies When its Owner Dies.)**





# Story Construction and Sequencing

- What is the Location Like? Is it in a Warehouse District; is it a Home-Based Business; is it Retail; is it Online? How is the Location Laid Out and Appointed With Fixtures, Furnishings, or Equipment?
- Who are the Principle Actors? Describe the Employees—What do They Look Like; How do They “Act”? Who are the Customers?
- What Happens in the Course of the Entrepreneur’s Story as it Develops? Does the Business Grow? How?
- What Other “Characters” Enter into the Story Line? How Did These Characters Become Involved in the Plot?





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# Story Construction and Sequencing

## The Storyboard Exercise

**Every Story Has a Beginning, a Middle, and an End.**



**Students—Create a “Story”  
About Your Business Idea,  
Working Either Individually,  
or in Groups.**



<http://www.adobe.com/education/digkids/lessons/storyboards.html>

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# Parallels Between Movie Making and Business Planning

## Production Schedule

**In Filmmaking, Once a Storyboard and Script Breakdown Are Created, a Production Schedule Can be Prepared.**

**Similarly, a Business Plan Should Include a Set of Specific Steps and a Timetable for the Efficient Implementation of Those Steps.**





# Parallels Between Movie Making and Business Planning

## Budgeting

**Every Creative and Technical Decision in Filmmaking is Associated With Costs; they also Impact Potential Revenues. Therefore, These Decisions Must be Factored into a Budget.**

**Business Plans Should Provide a Detailed Breakdown of Budgetary Requirements for an Entrepreneurial Enterprise.**





# Budgeting

## Cost Summary Items for a Film

Film & Laboratory  
Optical Work  
Script Costs  
Still Shots  
Research  
Production Staff  
Music  
Equipment Rental

Animation  
Sound Recording  
Talent  
Camera & Sound Crew  
Sets  
Cutting & Editing  
Studio Rental  
Purchases & Services

Miscellaneous  
Travel & Subsistence  
General Supplies  
Payroll Taxes  
Insurance  
Union Funds  
Overhead  
TOTALS





# Parallels Between Movie Making and Business Planning

## Casting & Crew

**Filmmakers Cast Individuals to Play Various Roles in Front of the Camera. They Also Make Hiring Decisions for Crew Members Who Will Work Behind the Scenes.**

**Every Business Needs to Fill Operational Roles With Qualified Individuals.**





# Casting & Crew

**Professional Actors Play Leading Roles and Influence a Film's Box Office Draw; Extras Fill Scenes With People Who Add Life and Realism to a Film.**

**What Role Will the Entrepreneur Play? Who Will Fulfill the Supporting Roles? What are Their Qualifications? How Will They be Paid? How Will They be Motivated to “Play Their Respective Parts”?**





# Parallels Between Movie Making and Business Planning

## Selection of Sets, Studios, and Locations

**Filmmakers Must Secure Locations That Meet Creative and Technical Criteria, and Also Meet Budget Criteria. Factors Include Community Cooperation, Availability, Convenience, Price, Transportation (Accessibility), Regulations, Housing, Food, and Weather Conditions.**

**Location Can be a Critical Decision for a Business as Well. Would-be Entrepreneurs Should Ask Many of the Same Questions Above, in Addition to Addressing the Needs of Customers Who May be Impacted by Where a Business Chooses to Locate Itself.**





# Parallels Between Movie Making and Business Planning

## Selection of Equipment and Supplies

**Filmmakers Employ Highly Specialized Equipment and Utilize Numerous Supplies in the Execution of Their Craft.**

**Entrepreneurs Must Decide Exactly What Equipment They Will Need to Accomplish Necessary Tasks. How Will the Needed Equipment be Acquired, Operated, and Maintained? What Provisions Have Been Made in the Event That the Use of Certain Equipment is Lost? What Supplies are Needed? Who Will Operate the Equipment?**





# Parallels Between Movie Making and Business Planning

## Filming (Creation of the Actual Product or Service)

**Actual Filming Follows Preproduction Planning. This is the Phase in Which the Movie is Actually Made; Filming is Conducted Under the Supervision of a Director.**

**Entrepreneurs Must Direct the Implementation of Their Business Plans in Order to Actually Launch and Operate Their Businesses. While There Are no Guarantees, it is Usually the Case That Better Planning Leads to Smoother Operations.**





# Parallels Between Movie Making and Business Planning

**Postproduction (Delivery to the Marketplace Facilitated by Promotion and Distribution Efforts)**

**Once a Film is Made, it Must be Distributed into the Marketplace and Shown to Audiences.**

**Entrepreneurs Must Promote Their Product or Service to Their Customers and Have Access to Necessary Distribution Channels.**





# **Postproduction (Delivery to the Marketplace Facilitated by Promotion and Distribution Efforts)**

**Successful Films are Often Heavily Promoted and Benefit From Revenue Streams Such as Licensing, Product Placements, and the Sale of a Variety of Rights.**

**Entrepreneurs Should Have Well Developed and Executable Plans to Promote Their Business and Ensure the Distribution of Their Product or Service. What is the Promotional Plan? How Will the Product be Positioned Against Other Competitive Offerings in the Marketplace (Obviously, This Question Should be Asked Continuously)? How Can Market Penetration and Profitability be Maximized?**





# Parallels Between Movie Making and Business Planning

## Additional Parallels

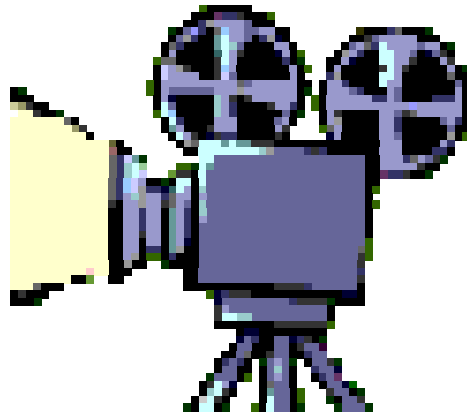
**Filmmaking is an Intensely Team-Oriented Business.  
The Motion Picture Production and Distribution Process Employs  
Numerous Contracts and Agreements.  
Film Financing is Well Known as a High Risk Endeavor.  
Production is Subject to Set-backs, Delays, and Uncertainties.**





## Lights, Camera, Action: Taking a Director's View in the Business Plan Development Process

# Conclusion



**Movie Production Can Serve as an Excellent Metaphor for Teaching the Business Planning Process to Students. It Allows Them to Draw Numerous Parallels, and is Also Entertaining.**

**Filmmakers are Communicators Who Set Out to Meet the Needs of an Audience. Likewise, Successful Entrepreneurs Must Plan and Execute Their Own Vision and Fulfill Needs.**

**Successful Filmmakers are Entrepreneurs**

