Dog daycare startup manual pdf

Starting a daycare requires more than a love of children or experience in the child care field. A great deal of planning and organization goes into the start-up and operation of a daycare. The preparation for a daycare follows a similar pattern, whether the daycare is based out of a home or is a separate building in a commercially zoned area. The specific laws governing different types of daycare vary, but the basics apply to any daycare center. A daycare requires several forms of paperwork before the first child is enrolled. Local and state laws dictate the licensing and permits needed to start the daycare. Ensure you understand the laws governing the specific type of daycare center you plan to start. Insurance coverage and paperwork provide protection for both the daycare and the children who attend the center. A daycare also needs established policies, procedures and rules for handling any situation that may arise. This paperwork establishes the philosophy and operation of the center. It gives parents an understanding of what to expect from the daycare and is essential to avoid conflicts in the future. Daycare centers should have parents fill out paperwork on each child, and keep these documents on file. A daycare center needs to be spacious enough to accommodate the kids comfortably. Children need to spread out, run and play throughout the day to stimulate growth and development. The daycare center should have dedicated space for the kids that allows them to easily complete activities. Areas for eating, playing and napping are essential to a daycare. Outdoor play areas enhance the experience for the children. The physical space of the daycare should be organized in a logical way that allows for easy movement throughout the center. A daycare that accommodates infants requires baby gear for proper care of the youngest kids. Cribs, baby swings, bouncer seats and high chairs represent the standard range of baby gear. These items provide safety and entertainment for young children. Ensure the baby gear meets current safety standards and isn't part of a safety recall. Toys provide the children in the daycare a source of imaginative play throughout the day. Select toys that provide educational value and fit the ages of the kids at the daycare. Toys should be in good condition and cleaned frequently to prevent the spread of illness. Establish a toy organizational system to keep the toys in order. Add a selection of books and art supplies to round out the educational entertainment supply. Safety supplies are vital, whether the daycare is home-based or located in a commercial building. First-aid centers should be located in every area of the daycare center for easy access. Keep at least one copy of a first-aid manual on hand as a reference for emergencies. Use child-proofing safety tools to ensure that chemicals and other potential hazards are kept away from the children. A record-keeping system maintains organization for a daycare. Well-organized records facilitate easier tax preparation. The record system allows for easy access during an inspection for licensing purposes. It also allows you to access the records quickly when parents have questions or inquiries. Records for a daycare center include individual paperwork for the children in the daycare, expenses for the daycare, income received, licensing paperwork and supporting materials, attendance records and documents detailing any accidents that occurred on the premises. Create a system that works for you, incorporating a backup system to ensure no important documents are lost. With 77.5 million dogs now living in busy American households, dog daycare has grown in popularity. Entrepreneurs hoping to get a slice of the billions of dollars owners spend annually on dog services can start a dog daycare, but start-up costs must be estimated carefully in order to launch a viable business. New daycare business owners can spend anywhere from $2,000 to $50,000, according to Pet Business Opportunity, with average costs running approximately $10,000. Launching a dog daycare begins with a start-up budget that can be maintained on simple software purchased from an office supplies store. In addition to site permits, rental fees, insurance, payroll and advertising fees, a start-up budget should include costs for food, toys, bedding, crates and other supplies. Figures for these supplies items will depend on how many dogs will be allowed in the daycare. Many dog daycares are run on owner property. This approach can save a lot of money over time, as the other option is to rent space that is zoned for animals. Launching your business at home requires permits from your local municipality, which include a basic business license, and health and fire department permits, according to Doggie Daycare Tips. Licenses and permits will incur charges that vary depending on your city and county. If you can't launch your business on your own property, you'll need to scout for animal-zoned rental buildings that provide both indoor and outdoor space to accommodate multiple dogs. Rental charges for this space will take a large chunk out of monthly revenue, which is why many dog daycare owners start their businesses on their own land. You'll likely spend several hundred dollars the first year to insure your dog daycare. Liability coverage will protect your business if a dog is injured or dies while in your daycare, and if a dog escapes and bites someone you'll also be covered. You can shop for dog daycare insurance online. Another area to consider is hiring. If you can handle dog daycare duties on your own, you'll save on employee costs. However, if you plan to take in more dogs than one person can reasonably supervise alone, expect to pay at least minimum wage for any employees you hire. If you bring in employees with previous dog daycare or dog services experience, expect to pay a higher hourly wage. Advertising your new dog daycare via social media will cost nothing, and local signage posted in community areas will set you back only what it costs to make flyers at a copy shop. You can consider print advertising once your business has a stable revenue stream. Dogs are like children for many people. Many pet owners who work full-time will place their dogs in daycare or even leave them overnight for special care. Opening a dog kennel and daycare will provide your clients with a safe place to turn when their pets need care. Consider where your facility will be located. Look at commercial warehouses and large commercial buildings spacious enough for kennels, runs and storage of supplies and that can be fenced so dogs can run around. Your start-up budget will likely include the cost of kennels, dog food, treats, bowls, leashes and pooper-scoopers. You'll need a computer with a database program for scheduling and holding client profiles, and accounting software to track income and expenses, employee wages and liability insurance. You'll need to pay fees for registering and licensing your business, as well as those for joining professional organizations, such as the Pet Care Services Association. Offer other services, such as dog grooming, obedience training, pet sitting for small animals like birds and hamsters, pet portraits and photography, and classes on dog education and first aid, as well as those that teach dog owners how to properly administer medication to their pets. Write a business plan that outlines the specifics of your business, including how you plan to raise money. For help drafting your business plan, contact the Small Business Administration. Consult with a business lawyer to draft a contract for clients who need their dogs to stay overnight at the kennel or who want to enroll them in your daycare. Your contract should include eligibility criteria--including that dogs must be up to date on their shots and altered--as well as payment terms, rates, drop-off and pickup times, and the terms of administering required medications. Research your competition so you can set competitive rates. Decide on your hours of operation. Ensure that all outside and inside areas are secure. Consider setting up a storefront in your dog kennel and daycare where you can sell dog products like dog shampoo and toys. Place a help-wanted ad in your local newspaper and hang fliers in offices of veterinarians, groomers and pet stores stating your need for qualified workers. Advertise your business by placing ads in local pet magazines and posting fliers around your community. Host an open house that allows prospective clients and their dogs to check out your facilities and meet your staff. Tips Offer discounts for clients who board their dogs for an extended period and for regular doggy daycare clients. Forge joint ventures with other professionals in your area. For example, you may want to partner with dog groomers by recommending their services and vice-versa. Correct Answer: The sustainable footwear and activewear retailer is applying its carbon-neutral practices to its new line of leggings, shorts, tanks, and T-shirts. Editor's note: This is an excerpt from the recently published book, The Startup Owner's Manual, written by entrepreneurs-turned-educators Steve Blank and Bob Dorf. Come back each week for more how-tos from this 608-page guide. Whether your venture is a new pizza parlor or the hottest new software product, beware: These nine flawed assumptions are toxic. First and deadliest of all is a founder's unwavering belief that he or she understands who the customers will be, what they need, and how to sell it to them. Any dispassionate observer would recognize that on Day One, a start-up has no customers, and unless the founder is a true domain expert, he or she can only guess about the customer, problem, and business model. On Day One, a start-up is a faith-based initiative built on guesses. To succeed, founders need to turn these guesses into facts as soon as possible by getting out of the building, asking customers if the hypotheses are correct, and quickly changing those that are wrong. The second flawed assumption is implicitly driven by the first. Founders, presuming they know their customers, assume they know all the features customers need.These founders specify, design, and build a fully featured product using classic product development methods without ever leaving their building. Yet without direct and continuous customer contact, it's unknown whether the features will hold any appeal to customers.Traditionally, engineering, sales, and marketing have all focused on the immovable launch date. Marketing tries to pick an "event" (trade show, conference, blog, etc.) where they can "launch" the product. Executives look at that date and the calendar, working backward to ignite fireworks on the day the product is launched. Neither management nor investors tolerate "wrong turns" that result in delays. The product launch and first customer ship dates are merely the dates when a product development team thinks the product's first release is "finished." It doesn't mean the company understands its customers or how to market or sell to them, yet in almost every start-up, ready or not, departmental clocks are set irrevocably to "first customer ship." Even worse, a start-up's investors are managing their financial expectations by this date as well. Established companies execute business models where customers, problems, and necessary product features are all knowns; start-ups, on the other hand, need to operate in a "search" mode as they test and prove every one of their initial hypotheses. They learn from the results of each test, refine the hypothesis, and test again—all in search of a repeatable, scalable, and profitable business model. In practice, start-ups begin with a set of initial guesses, most of which will end up being wrong. Therefore, focusing on execution and delivering a product or service based on those initial, untested hypotheses is a going-out-of-business strategy. Traditional business plans and product development models have one great advantage: They provide boards and founders an unambiguous path with clearly defined milestones the board presumes will be achieved. Financial progress is tracked using metrics like income statement, balance sheet, and cash flow. The problem is, none of these metrics are very useful because they don't track progress against your start-up's only goal: to find a repeatable and scalable business model. Most startups simply borrow job titles from established companies. But remember, these are jobs in an organization that's executing a known business model. The term "Sales" at an existing company refers to a team that repeatedly sells a known product to a well-understood group of customers with standard presentations, prices, terms, and conditions. Start-ups by definition have few, if any, of these. In fact, they're out searching for them! The demands of customer discovery require people who are comfortable with change, chaos, and learning from failure and are at ease working in risky, unstable situations without a roadmap. Hiring VPs and execs with the right titles but the wrong skills leads to further trouble as high-powered sales and marketing people arrive on the payroll to execute the "plan." Executives and board members accustomed to measurable signs of progress will focus on these execution activities because this is what they know how to do (and what they believe they were hired to do). Of course, in established companies with known customers and markets, this focus makes sense.And even in some start-ups in "existing markets," where customers and markets are known, it might work. But in a majority of startups, measuring progress against a product launch or revenue plan is simply false progress, since it transpires in a vacuum absent real customer feedback and rife with assumptions that might be wrong. The business plan, its revenue forecast, and the product introduction model assume that every step a start-up takes proceeds flawlessly and smoothly to the next.The model leaves little room for error, learning, iteration, or customer feedback.Even the most experienced executives are pressured to hire and staff per the plan regardless of progress. This leads to the next startup disaster: premature scaling. The consequences of most start-up mistakes begin to show by the time of first customer ship, when sales aren't happening according to "the plan." Shortly thereafter, the sales VP is probably terminated as part of the "solution." A new sales VP is hired and quickly concludes that the company just didn't understand its customers or how to sell them. Since the new sales VP was hired to "fix" sales, the marketing department must now respond to a sales manager who believes that whatever was created earlier in the company was wrong. (After all, it got the old VP fired, right?) Here's the real problem: No business plan survives first contact with customers. The assumptions in a business plan are simply a series of untested hypotheses. When real results come in, the smart startups pivot or change their business model based on the results. It's not a crisis, it's part of the road to success.

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