

Georgia Seed Capital Fund. That amendment passed at least in part because of their support!

The word “seed” today is widely used to describe the first investment or “planting” of venture money into a start-up enterprise. While some venture funds make seed investments, business angels are the largest investors in start-up companies. Angel investors are typically high net worth individuals or groups of individuals who have been successful in past enterprises and are willing to offer both their money and their expertise to young enterprises.

Have a Breakfast with Champions

Every new enterprise needs one or more champions to provide it with motivational support. These champions can be outside investors or board members, successful entrepreneurs or corporate leaders, retirees and others. They are not paid for their support and advice, except it is a good gesture to take them to breakfast, lunch, or dinner from time to time.

These individuals have often experienced themselves many of the personnel, operational, financial, and marketing problems that your enterprise is encountering. Their guidance can be invaluable in helping you solve your most trying problems; and all for only a cocktail, a steak or fish dinner, and a glass of wine.

Is a Business Plan Really Necessary?

Absolutely! How will you, your employees, or your investors know that you are on target to reach your growth goals if you have not planned the evolution of your enterprise. I can tell you straight out that you will not get beyond your first telephone conversation with an investor, particularly VCs, without a written business plan.

A business plan is like a map to a far-off place to which you have never been before. It tells you where you are along the way, how far to the next milestone, what the cost will be to go that next distance, what type of equipment you need to bridge the next divide, and who might be coming up from behind attempting to pass you, etc.

The business plan is a living document. It must be revised and kept up to date at least once a year. So many factors of market opportunity, competition, and world economics can and do change in a year’s time that your business plan—your map to success—can readily become outdated and off target.

The original vision for the enterprise should hold fast and not be side tracked in the yearly updates of the business plan, unless of course some drastic circumstances have occurred which clearly require some alteration of the original vision and mission statement.