

## Lessons in Business

Warning: This worksheet contains a video which includes sensitive topics such as sex, drugs, and prison which may be uncomfortable or offensive for some people. If these topics are not suitable for you, please tell your teacher.



### 1. Read the dialogue and answer the following questions.

Marco: Hey, Luana, have you thought any more about that business plan you were working on?

Luana: Yeah, I've been doing some research and I think I have a solid idea. But I'm struggling with putting it all together.

Marco: Have you considered reaching out to a business coach or mentor for some guidance?

Luana: I have, but I'm not sure if it's worth the investment. I'm trying to save as much money as possible.

Marco: I understand, but sometimes you have to spend money to make money. A business coach could help you avoid costly mistakes and set you on the right path.

Luana: That's a good point. I guess I just don't know where to start.

Marco: Well, first you need to figure out your target market and competition. Then, you can start developing your product or service and creating a marketing strategy.

Luana: I've been working on those things, but I'm still not sure if it's enough.

Marco: It's important to remember that creating a business plan is an ongoing process. You can always refine and improve it as you go.

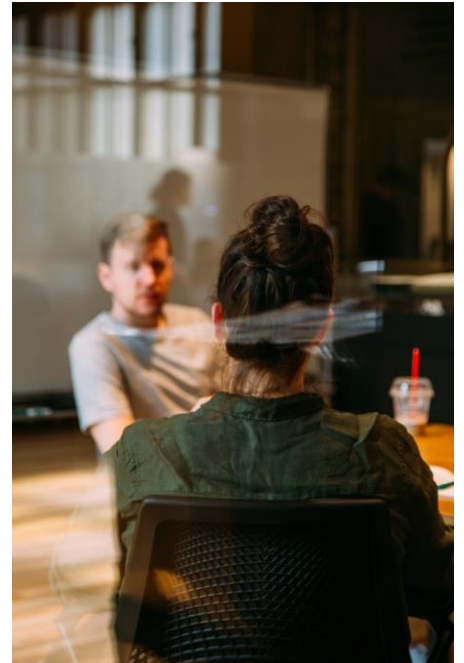
Luana: That's true. I just feel like there's so much I don't know.

Marco: That's where a business coach or mentor can really help. They can provide you with valuable insights and advice, and help you avoid common pitfalls.

Luana: Okay, you've convinced me. I'm going to start looking for a business coach.

Marco: That's great to hear. Remember, investing in your own education and skills is never a waste of money.

1. What is the main topic of the dialogue? *Creating a business plan.*
2. What is Luana struggling with? *Putting the business plan together.*
3. Why does Luana hesitate to hire a business coach? *Luana is trying to save money.*
4. What are some important steps to consider when creating a business plan? *Identify target market and competition, develop product or service, and create marketing strategy.*
5. Why does Marco recommend seeking the help of a business coach? *To avoid costly mistakes and get valuable insights and advice-*



## Gerunds and Infinitives

A *gerund* is a verb form that ends in "-ing" and functions as a noun. For example, "Working hard is important in a professional environment." In this sentence, "working" is a gerund that functions as the subject of the sentence. *Gerunds* are often used to talk about activities or actions.

An *infinitive* is "to verb" and also functions as a noun. For example, "To succeed in business, you need to be able to communicate effectively." In this sentence, "to succeed" is an infinitive that functions as the subject of the sentence. Infinitives are often used to talk about goals, purposes, or intentions.

When verbs are followed by another verb, we treat the second verb as a noun and put it in gerund or infinitive form.



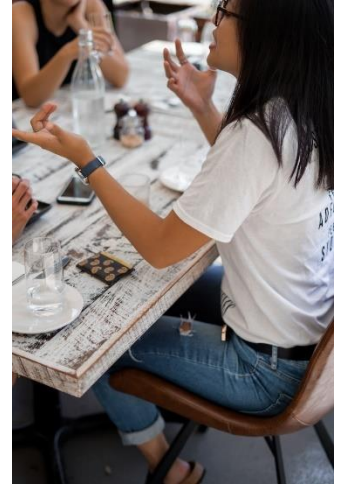
### 2. Fill in the blanks with the gerund or infinitive form.

1. Our company is planning \_\_\_to feature\_\_\_\_\_ (feature) a new product line at the trade show next month.
2. I'm sorry, but I'm not sure I'm capable of \_\_figuring out\_\_\_\_\_ (figure out) this problem on my own.
3. We need to focus on \_\_\_learning\_\_\_\_\_ (learn) new skills to stay competitive in today's market.
4. The CEO tends \_\_\_to pay\_\_\_\_\_ (pay) a higher bonus to employees who meet their sales targets.
5. The marketing team is responsible for \_\_promoting\_\_\_\_\_ (promote) our brand to potential customers.
6. The finance department is in charge of \_\_\_cleaning\_\_\_\_\_ (clean) up the company's financial records.
7. The HR department is responsible for \_\_nurturing\_\_\_\_\_ (nurture) a positive work environment for employees.
8. I offered \_\_\_\_\_to spend\_\_\_\_\_ (spend) some time with our new clients next week.
9. I don't want \_\_\_to leave\_\_\_\_\_ (leave) the company, but I feel it's time to pursue other opportunities.
10. We need someone who manages \_\_\_to work\_\_\_\_\_ (work) in a fast paced environment.



### 3. Discuss the following with your partner

1. What do you think are some of the most important skills or traits for success in business?
2. How could the traits from question 1 be applicable to life in prison?
3. What business traits would be useful in prison?
4. What challenges might someone transitioning from prison to the outside world have? What about someone entering prison from the outside world?
5. What do you think are some of the biggest misconceptions people have about life in prison?
6. What skills do you think someone might learn in prison that could be applied to the business world?



### 4. Match the vocabulary and phrases with their definitions.

1. dope game	<i>f</i>
2. fly straight	L
3. teeming	D
4. promotional incentives	B
5. focus-group testing	G
6. territorial expansion	E
7. reliving the glory days	H
8. marked up	J
9. risk-reward trade-off	K
10. ex-offenders	A
11. re-offend	C
12. hustle	I

- a. People who have been released from prison after serving a sentence
- b. Rewards offered to encourage people to buy a product or a service.
- c. To commit a crime again after being released from prison
- d. Full of
- e. Increasing the area or market that business operates in
- f. A slang term for the illegal drug trade.
- g. Testing a product or a services with a group of people to get feedback.
- h. A slang term referring to thinking/reminiscing about past success
- i. Ways to make money, often through unconventional or illegal means
- j. Increased in price
- k. The idea that a potential reward should be weighed against the risk involved
- l. A slang term referring to living a law-abiding life.



5. Discuss the following questions in a group or with your partner.

1. Can you explain the concept of the *dope game*? How is it similar to or different from other businesses? Is it an issue in your country?
2. How do companies use *promotional incentives* to attract customers? Can you think of an example?
3. How do companies use *focus group testing* it to improve their products or services?
4. Can you think of a company or brand that has successfully *expanded its territory*?
5. Can you think of a product or service that you have seen *marked up* significantly?
6. Why do you think many *ex-offenders re-offend* within five years of leaving prison? What can be done to try to reduce the *re-offending* rate?



6. You are going to watch a video called *Lessons in business... from prison*. Before watching the video discuss the following question.

1. What do you think is meant by the title of the talk?



7. Watch the video *Lessons in business... from prison* and answer the following.

1. Who is B.J. and what was his vision for the future? *B.J. was a fellow inmate in federal prison who had big plans for the future. He had a vision of leaving the drug game for good and merging his two passions into one vision by buying a website that exclusively featured women having sex on top of or inside luxury sports cars.*
2. What business concepts did the inmates in prison talk about that were similar to those taught in a first-year MBA class? *The inmates in prison talked about business concepts such as promotional incentives, not charging a first-time user, focus-grouping new product launches, and territorial expansion, which were similar to those taught in a first-year MBA class at Wharton.*
3. How do prisoners pay for their own life in prison and why is it hard? *Prisoners have to pay for their own life in prison, including soap, deodorant, toothbrush, toothpaste, and more, which are marked up 30 to 50 percent from what they'd pay on the street. They don't make a lot of money, with a full-time job paying only \$5.25 per month.*

4. What are some of the hustles prisoners use to survive in prison? *Prisoners use legal hustles like paying everything in stamps, charging another inmate to clean his cell, running a barbershop out of their cell, and constructing weights from boulders in laundry bags. They also use illegal hustles such as running a tattoo parlor out of their cell and smuggling in drugs, pornography, and cell phones. The more risky the enterprise, the more profitable it can potentially be.*



8. Discuss the following with your partner.

1. What is the *shared value* approach that Porter describes?
2. Give an example of a company that has implemented this approach and what impact it had.
3. What are some of the challenges and criticisms of this approach?
4. Do you agree with Porter that businesses can be a force for social good? Why or why not?
5. Can you think of any other examples of businesses contributing to social progress?
6. On the other hand, can you think of any high-profile cases of entrepreneurs who have been sentenced to prison for white-collar crimes like fraud or embezzlement? What were the circumstances?



9. Extra task: Practice more gerund and infinitives.

1. The company is committed to \_\_\_ *helping* \_\_\_ (help) local communities through charitable donations.
2. The IT department is responsible for \_\_\_ *running* \_\_\_ (run) our company's computer systems smoothly.
3. The logistics team is seeking \_\_\_ *to buy* \_\_\_ (buy) goods from Japan.
4. The CEO is interested in \_\_\_ *merging* \_\_\_ (merge) with a similar company to expand our market share.
5. The company is hoping \_\_\_ *to make* \_\_\_ (make) a profit, even during difficult economic times.
6. The legal department strives \_\_\_ *to fight* \_\_\_ (fight) against any form of discrimination in the workplace.
7. The company has promised \_\_\_ *to learn* \_\_\_ (learn) from its mistakes and improving its processes.
8. The pilot is capable of \_\_\_ *flying* \_\_\_ (flying) the plane in all kinds of weather conditions.