

Kiss My Aster

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Yes, We Have No Bananas (or Anything Else, for That Matter)

Amanda Thomsen



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As a constant overthinker, I always have a plan (as well as a Plan B, C, D and E). All the while, I simultaneously believe there's no point in making plans since things are undoubtedly going to go cattywampus in the fourth quarter.

I love finding old "to-do lists" in which most never got done because things just ... shifted ... and what was once crucial became dust in the wind. I do make thorough plans, but they live in my head and it seems a waste of time to make them all official, especially since I'm at my best when I do have to pivot when things go haywire. My ridiculous brain knows how to win when things go wrong, so why put things down on paper?

Of course, I had to make a business plan to open this shop and up until recently, it was just for me (and because people kept asking me if I had one). Now, before I let you read a completely made-up-for-entertainment version of

it, I want to let you know I finally see the light.

Being me, though, I did it my way. Instead of an actual business plan, when I should have been writing one, I made a mind map of all the things this business would be (with a Post-It stuck to the bottom that says "NO MUGS, KEYCHAINS OR PATCHES" that keeps me from buying patches constantly). A mind map is sort of a brainstorming on paper where you write objectives in bubbles and then all the things that pertain to that action item get bubbles that go around the main circle. It seems complicated. but it really is not. I refer to this mind map DAILY to keep me on track.

I get it now—the business plan is what keeps you moving north when the swamp gets a bit ... thick. I refer to this mind map nonstop and it's hanging right next to my desk right now.

But if I tried to write a normal business plan, this is what it might look like:

- What does your business do? My business leverages my 25 years as a horticulturist to do and make whatever I feel like doing that day. My main inspo is that episode of "Dharma & Greg" where Dharma opens a shop that doesn't sell anything and it drives Greg crazy, but to her it's a success because it gives the community a place to interact. ["Yes, We Have No Bananas (or Anything Else for That Matter)"; November 25, 1998.]
- Who is your target customer? My target customers are cool moms with good tattoos (not just any moms with

tattoos, they must be good tattoos). Also, tween girls that aren't mean yet. I plan on playing loud music that alienates anyone not in those demographics.

- How will you make money? Considering there's no ethical consumption under capitalism, I'm just going to go out there and try my best.
- What niche are you filling? The Lemont area is devoid of proper horticultural advice, and I'm afraid the whole township is going to go belly up buying those seeds for blue Japanese maples, so I'm here to stop that from happening while wearing cute outfits.

The punchline is that I did have to show my business plan to the village hall trustee meeting when I applied for a BYOB license* and I just scribbled some nonsense and they said it was well done so of course that not only gets me a BYOB license, but also a license to continue to be like this all the time and win at it.

*Has anyone else gone through this BYOB thing and found it absolutely harrowing? I thought I was made of tougher stuff, but all it took was a thick layer of bureaucracy to completely break me. I had to get fingerprinted at the police station and explain how a chunk of my finger doesn't show up due to constant hot glue burns. **GP**

Amanda Thomsen is a funky, punky garden writer and author. Her blog is planted at KissMyAster.com and you can follow her on Facebook, Twitter AND Instagram @KissMyAster.