

Planning Your Musikgarten – Define Your Goals!

You have many questions as you begin planning your Musikgarten program. Most experienced teachers will admit that they would rather “just teach”, but they understand that careful planning is key to a successful business.

Yes, you read correctly – you are in essence planning a Musikgarten business! Even if you are planning to only teach a class or two in your home or in a school setting, your program is your **business**. Initially, it is vital to identify your business GOALS.

Few businesses succeed accidentally. Most are the result of careful planning and execution. When writing a business plan, anything you leave out of the picture in the early stages is likely to cost you time and money later on. So, thoughtfully and carefully consider each goal you would like to achieve. There are many benefits to writing a Business Plan:

- A plan gives you a map to follow throughout the growth of your business.
- A plan helps you to see where you want to go and how long it will take.
- A plan allows you to compare results of your business to the planned results.
- When shared with others, a plan can help you make sure that essential elements are not overlooked.
- A plan can help you develop your role as a competitive business owner in today's market.

Musikgarten teacher Robin Knorr, of Columbus, IN, agrees. “Just remember to make a plan, prioritize it, and begin the attack!”

The first and most important element in defining your goals is to decide where you would like to see yourself in a few years (Long-Range Goals) and what you would like to accomplish in a short time (Annual Goals). These operational goals may change at any time. There is space provided at the end of this chapter for you to make notes as you initially explore your goals.

To help in brainstorming, you may wish to visit the Small Business Administration website (www.sba.gov) which provides valuable information for those wishing to start businesses in the U.S. and abroad. In the pages that follow, we will explore these goals, providing advice and examples specific to beginning a Musikgarten program.

A word of caution ... Building a solid early childhood music and movement program from the ground up is a slow, steady process. Our experience shows that it takes approximately **3 years** for a program to begin blossoming. So, if your initial enrollment does not meet your expectations, don't give up! Remember that ***planting seeds takes time***.

As you establish your goals, there are a few important considerations to keep in mind from the very beginning:

- How much time are you willing to commit to teaching classes?
- How much time can you commit to your new business ***in addition to*** class time?
- What other priorities are there that will not go away? (parenting, another job, elderly parent care, hobbies, commitments)
- How is your energy level? health?
- How much money can you easily/safely contribute to beginning this enterprise?

TAKE THE TIME TO LOOK AT A 12-MONTH CALENDAR and be sure you are ready to invest yourself, your money, and your talents for the full year. Consult with other family members -- or anyone else who will be affected by your new schedule and responsibilities -- and confirm that you have their support.