

CHAPTER I

THE BACKGROUND

1.1. INTRODUCTION

Everyone knows this quote: “don’t judge the book by its cover.” Unfortunately, this quote is contradictory with the fact, appearance does matter. As an example, the importance of appearance can be seen from an example of people getting a job. Harry Urschel, an experienced recruiter from Minnesota states that in getting job, not only skills, attitude, and professionalism that matter, but appearance does matter (2).

As it is seen from the example above, appearance is important. Before writing this business plan, I was curious whether appearance is important or not for all women, therefore I did an informal survey through Blackberry to 30 numbers of women on my contact list. Those women come from three sectors: 10 students, 10 wives and 10 employees. Two questions are asked: 1. According to you is appearance important? 2. If yes, why? If not, why? The result shows that 100% of them agree that appearance is important, and 90% gives answer the reason of saying this. This is because people judge others first from their appearance.

Unfortunately not all women have the same size of body. Some are naturally born with small bones, others with big bones. The many sizes of body can be caused by many reasons, however, not all stores offer clothes with big sizes. Therefore it is hard to find the appropriate clothes for women with big bodies. However, it does not mean that such women will neglect their appearance. Moreover appearance matters and relates to the way people dress themselves. Nathan C. Popkins from Northwestern University has done research about the connection between choosing clothes and appearance, and he states that the way people dress affects the way people see the appearance. It can be concluded from this statement that choosing the right clothes for the body is important.

Nevertheless, finding suitable clothes is a problem because based on the interview I did with a number of women who have big size bodies, I found out that in Bandung it is still not easy to find stores that sell large-size clothes for them. I consider this as an opportunity for me to open InsideOut Clothing, a boutique where women with big size body can find suitable large-size clothes.

1.2. UNIQUE SELLING PREPOSITION

InsideOut Clothing, (henceforth, I.C) is designed especially for women who have big size body. The products are designed properly to make big sized women look slimmer when they wear them. The pattern, motifs, and colors are strictly chosen to make big sized women look slimmer when they wear I.C products. The other uniqueness of I.C products is the customers can request the model based on their personal taste. They can choose the color, pattern, and motifs they like, helped by I.C's designer.

1.3. SWOT ANALYSIS

1.3.1. STRENGTHS

The strengths of I.C products are the patterns, the colors, and the motifs which are carefully chosen. When women wear I.C products, they will look slimmer because of these aspects.

BTEC Art and Design, an institution in Fashion Design in America, states that pattern is the most important thing in making clothes (3). Therefore I.C designer is very careful in making the patterns. The patterns are properly designed for those having big size bodies, a V-Neck pattern, for example.

The color is also well-chosen. The colors are mostly black, brown, dark blue, and other dark colors. Diana Fashion, an online clothing company from USA that sells large-size clothing, says that dark colors such as olive, black, charcoal grey, and navy help make the body appear smaller (7).

Last but not least, the motifs of I.C products will always be fashionable and adjusted to the pattern and color. Thus, the combination of the patterns, colors, and motifs, and the design of I.C products will surely make women who wear them look slimmer.

1.3.2 WEAKNESS

The weakness of I.C products is I.C cannot provide new designs in a short period of time. The reason is I.C only has one designer, whereas other competitors have more designers. Therefore, they can provide new models faster than us. To

deal with the situation, I.C is looking for other designers to help the company in designing clothes.

1.3.3. OPPORTUNITY

Nowadays there are many female teenagers and women who have big size bodies and need large size clothes. Here I see an opportunity. Moreover, majoring stores in Bandung only sell regular sizes (S-M) and only a few stores sell large size clothes. For examples, at Istana Plaza, there are some boutiques such as FP, Orange, Bianglala, which sell clothes in regular size only. Another boutique, which is Carla boutique at Istana Plaza offers large clothes but only in limited amount of numbers. However, there is an online boutique named My Size which offers big size clothes, and this boutique also has stores in Jakarta, Medan, and Surabaya. Unfortunately, it does not have any branch in Bandung. Considering this, I am sure that this is the opportunity for me to open a large-size clothing store.

1.3.4. THREATS

Besides the opportunity, this business also has a threat. The threat is from the factory outlets and some stores which sell large size clothes. Moreover, their price is cheaper than the price that I.C offers. Mostly their prices are between 60.000 IDR

until 150.000 IDR. Unfortunately, I.C products will be more expensive, about 120.000 IDR until 300.000 IDR. It is because I.C products are made from selective fabrics, accessories, and also good quality.