

Business Plan Outline

Every business needs a business plan

- “If you fail to plan ... you are planning to fail”
- Allows the entrepreneur to fully examine market, competition and various operating alternatives
- Proves to the entrepreneur the business should be profitable
- Allows the entrepreneur to plan for “what ifs”
- Gives entrepreneur a “road map” to monitor success
- Required for any kind of start-up financing

To start

- Is there a real need for my product or service?
- Is there a market for my product and service?
- Is there room in the competitive environment for my company?

Description of the business or executive summary

- Name of business
- Names of principals
- Address and phone number of business and/or principals
- Business structure: sole proprietorship, partnership, LLC, LLP, corporation, (“S”)
- Status of business: start up, expansion, acquisition, other
- Type of business: What do you do? What product or service do you provide?
- If you have an existing business: brief history of the business including financial performance
- If a product based business: Where will you get your products from? Will you be manufacturing?
- Market: Who will your customers be?
- Location and hours

Market

- Is there a real need for your product or service? How do you know – what industry data do you have that supports your assessment?
- What are the important trends in your business and how will they impact you? (Sales growth, market segmentation, productivity, etc.)
- What is unique about your product or service?
- How will you price your product or service? Will it be competitive – why or why not?
- Who will your target customers be: geographic, demographic, psychographic, other?
- What is the potential size of your market? What market share can you attain?
- Will your company grow over the next 3 – 5 years? Will the customers be the same?

Sales

- How will you reach your potential customers?
- What sales and distribution channels will you use?
- What will your marketing and sales efforts cost?
- Will you need in-house sales support or outside reps.?
- How will you retain your customers?

Economic Environment

- What is happening in the local economy?
- Will you be affected by the national or global economy?
- What are the trends?
- Are there regulatory or environment issues that the company needs to deal with?
- How do you view future economic conditions?

Competition

- Who are your competitors?
- Where are they located?
- Is their business steady, increasing or decreasing? Why?
- Will they react to your entry in the market?
- What are their strengths?
- What are their weaknesses?
- How do you compare to the competition: price, quality, service, etc.?
- How will you differentiate yourself from the competition?
- Who do you think the competition will be over the next 3 -5 years?

Suppliers

- Who will your suppliers be?
- What payment terms will they give you?
- Will your suppliers be in business as your business grows?
- Are there alternative suppliers?

Location, Facility, Equipment

- How much space do you need? Is there enough space for expansion? What will it cost?
- What renovations are required? How much will it cost? (Include actual quotes.)
- How much parking do you need?
- Do you need to be visible from a main street?
- Is the zoning appropriate?
- What type of area do you need to be in?
- What type of equipment do you need?
- Will you lease or buy the space and/or equipment?
- If you will be manufacturing: describe the manufacturing process and physical requirements.
- Describe the distribution process.

Production (Manufacturing)

- How will you manufacturer your product?
- What are the technology requirements?

- Are there any environmental, zoning or other restrictions?
- Would outsourcing be a viable alternative?

Management

- Who will manage the business?
- What experience, training and education do the managers have? Experience may be in a different, but related, business. Attach resumes or personal histories.
- What outside resources are available to management? Accountant, lawyer, insurance agent, other.
- Is there any back for the manager(s) if the primary manager is incapacitated?

Personnel

- Who will you need to hire?
- What will you need to pay?
- Will you need to provide benefits? And, at what cost?
- Are the people you need to hire available in your local area?
- Will you provide training or education?

Business Acquisition (if applicable)

- Who are the current owners and operators?
- Will anyone remain with the business?
- Is training available or necessary?
- Why is the owner selling?
- What is the purchase price?
- What specific assets are being purchased and at what valuation? (If it's a stock purchase it should be noted.)
- What has been the financial performance of the business over the last three years?
- Will the performance be the same under new management?
- If not, what changes will be made and what are the anticipated results?

Financing Requirements (if applicable)

- How much money does the company need?
- What will the money be used for? Be specific.
- How much money will the owner(s) invest?
- What type of financing does the company need: term loan, line of credit, or equity?
- If a loan or line of credit is requested are personal guarantees and personal collateral available to pledge in addition to the business collateral?

REQUIRED FINANCIAL INFORMATION

If a start-up company

- Schedule of financing need and purpose
- Schedule of sources and uses of start up funding (include quotes for service and/or purchases)
- 3 years projected Profit & Loss (Income Statement or P & L)
- 1st year projected Profit & Loss Statement by month
- 1st year projected monthly cash flow
- Detailed assumptions used to create pro-formas

- Opening day balance sheet
- Owners' personal financial statements
- Owners' personal tax returns (3 Years)

If an existing company

- Schedule of financing need and purpose
- Schedule of sources and uses of funding (include quotes for service and/or purchases)
- 3 years projected Profit & Loss (Income Statement or P & L)
- Next year projected Profit & Loss Statement by month
- Next year projected monthly cash flow
- Detailed assumptions used to create pro-formas
- Three years of company financial statements: P & L, Cash Flow, Balance Sheet
- Three years company tax returns
- A/R agings
- A/P agings
- Equipment lists
- Owners' personal financial statements
- Owners' personal tax returns (three years)