

**<Customer Name>**

**<Project Name>**

**<Idea Proposal Guideline>**

**<Version No.>**

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|  | **Prepared By / Last Updated By** | **Reviewed By** | **Approved By** |
| **Name** |  |  |  |
| **Role** |  |  |  |
| **Signature** |  |  |  |
| **Date** |  |  |  |

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# Purpose

* Communicate to your audience what to expect from your document.
* List each section of your presentation.

# Executive Summary

* Purpose: Grab your audience’s attention by telling the story of your business case.
* Briefly state the problem or opportunity.
* Describe how you plan to address it. You might describe one option or include up to three, depending on your stakeholders’ preferences.
* State the return on investment (ROI)—it’s the satisfying end to your story.

## Business Need—Opportunity Statement

* Purpose: Establish a sense of urgency for the opportunity or solution.
* Describe why you’re proposing the project—what is the business need?
* Share data that conveys urgency.
* Articulate your understanding of the underlying issue using data and analysis. If your stakeholders don’t understand or don’t agree with your articulation of the problem, they’re going to take issue with everything else in your business case.

## Business Need—Fit with Strategy

* Purpose: Explain how the project is connected to the company’s objectives.
* Explicitly connect the need to the company’s strategic goals.
* Whenever possible, a list specific goal using the company’s agreed-upon language.

# Project Overview

* Purpose: Help stakeholders understand the scope of your proposed project.
* Provide a high-level description of the solution(s).
* If it’s a new product or an upgrade to an existing product, lay out the general concept, and explain how it fits in with existing offerings.
* For a facility project, describe its magnitude, and name the systems affected.
* For a productivity initiative (such as an IT project that allows customer service to handle incoming calls faster), specify which business processes it will affect and which costs it will eliminate or reduce.
* If you’re including more than one option, highlight key differences so that stakeholders can quickly compare.

# Schedule

* Purpose: Lay out a high-level plan for implementing the project
* Explain how long the project will take, and list any key milestones or major deliverables.
* There are almost always risks to a project schedule. You can include them here and/or in your “Risks” section.

# Team

* Purpose: Identify the team required to make the project a success.
* List the total number of necessary full-time employees (FTEs) and core team members   
  (by name or function).
* Include subject matter experts (SMEs) who will need to contribute to the project.

# Other Resources

* Purpose: Identify any additional resources the project will need.
* Explain any special resources—technology, equipment, facilities, access to locations—required   
  for the project.
* Whenever possible, include how long you’ll need the resources for (and be sure to account for any costs in your calculations).

# Impact

* Purpose: Highlight the benefits of the project.
* Describe the benefits. Benefits mainly consist of revenue and productivity savings (benefits you’ll achieve through greater efficiency).
* In this section, you only present the benefits. You’ll address costs below. Your final ROI calculation will take both costs and benefits into account.
* Only include benefits that you can quantify. Define the impact as precisely as you can. You may mention additional intangible benefits, such as improved morale or increased customer satisfaction, but stakeholders will want to know the financial impact.
* Be clear about where these numbers come from—did you get them from colleagues in Finance, Sales and Marketing, Engineering? Stakeholders care about the sources for these assumptions and are more likely to trust your numbers if the information comes from people they trust.

# Risks

* Purpose: Highlight the key risks to the project.
* Explain what might not go as planned—whether positive or negative. Most people focus on threats (e.g., What if the vendor doesn’t deliver on time? What if the cost of raw materials goes through the roof?). But you need to consider opportunities as well (How can you get a higher NPV or a faster payback? Can you complete the project sooner?).
* Identify the likelihood of the risks: high, moderate, low.
* If there are no major risks, say so. But make clear that you’ve thought through the possibilities.
* The primary risks you’ll want to consider are to costs and schedule. But you may also want to think about the following:
* *Personnel:* What if the person running this project leaves the company? What if you don’t get all the team members you requested?
* *Technology:* What if you encounter bugs when testing? What if employees struggle to adapt to the new system?
* *Scope:* What if the project needs to include more (or fewer) geographic regions, employees, or customers? What if the stakeholders change requirements?
* *Quality/performance:* What if the product doesn’t perform as you expect it to—for better or worse? What if quality suffers because of a tight schedule?

# Financials

* Purpose: Lay out the financials of your project, highlighting the ROI, summarize
* Include the total costs and benefits of your project. It’s not necessary to go into detail on specific figures unless there are unusual expenses that require explanation.
* If you are presenting multiple options, explain the cost differences.
* If one of the major risks to your project is cost overrun, and you have already addressed that on your “Risks” slide, you may want to repeat those risks here, too.

This is your last word, and what stakeholders are likely to remember, so include the critical elements of your presentation.

* Restate the business need.
* Identify the pros and cons of your solution or options.
* Include your ROI number(s) again.
* End with your recommendation.

# Signature approval to initiate

Originator:

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|  | | | | |
| Print Name |  |  | Signature | Date |

Project Review Approval:

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| Print Name |  |  | Signature | Date |

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| Print Name |  |  | Signature | Date |

Project Sponsor:

|  |  |  |  |  |
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|  | | | | |
| Print Name |  |  | Signature | Date |

# Change Log

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| **Version Number** | **Changes Made** | | | |
| V1.0.0 | Initial baseline created on <dd-Mmm-yyyy> by <Name of Author> | | | |
| V X.Y.Z | <Please refer the configuration control tool / change item status form if the details of changes are maintained separately. If not, the template given below needs to be followed> | | | |
| **Section No.** | **Changed By** | **Effective Date** | **Changes Effected** |
| NA | NA | NA | NA |