

Prepare a UX portfolio for job applications


Prepare for UX interviews

Answer interview questions


Develop an elevator pitch


Ace whiteboarding and panel interviews


Pursue freelance UX design work


 **Video:** Introduction to freelancing
2 min


 **Video:** Jennifer - My journey as a freelance UX designer
4 min


 **Video:** Create a business plan
4 min


 **Reading:** Learn more about business plans
20 min


 **Practice Quiz:** Test your knowledge on creating a business plan
3 questions


 **Video:** Find clients as a freelance UX designer
4 min

 **Reading:** Learn more about finding clients as a freelance UX designer
20 min

 **Video:** Landing the first client
4 min

 **Practice Quiz:** Test your knowledge on working as a freelancer
5 questions

 **Practice Quiz:** Self-Reflection: Potential clients for your freelance design work
1 question

 **Reading:** Review templates for proposals
20 min

Week 6 review

Course review

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Learn more about business plans

As a freelancer, you're running your own business! It can be intimidating to think about your freelancing work as a business. Still, it's important to create that distinction so that you don't undervalue the importance of the work that you do, and you can correctly explain that value to your clients.

But before you start taking on clients, it's important to take a step back and to focus on the basics of building a business. To effectively run a business, start by creating a business plan that clearly defines what you can and can't offer your clients. A **business plan** is an internal-facing document that outlines the work your business will be completing. It's the most important compilation of information for your business.

The process of creating a business plan can help you to decide whether launching a business is a good idea. It can also provide you with some of the assets you'll need when you start to pitch your clients.

As you start to write your business plan, there are a few key steps to take to determine the structure for the business you're creating.

Building your business

Building a freelance business follows a very similar process as the one you follow in designing products. First, you *empathize* with clients to understand what their needs are. Then, you *define* how your services will fit those needs.

Below you'll find a list of the potential sections of your new business plan. You may find yourself going back and changing these as you continue to build your plan. That's good! You always want to be asking yourself how you can build a more efficient business. To start, begin thinking about what your business is.

1 Executive summary

The **executive summary** outlines the main takeaways about your organization. This section is no longer than two pages and covers everything that your business plan will include. It's a short and succinct way of capturing the attention of your reader before the dive into the details. It also gives busy readers the information they need in one place. Although the executive summary comes at the beginning of your business plan, it's a good idea to write it last, after you've completed the rest of the sections. It's much easier to summarize your business plan after you've written it.

2 Brand identity

Your **brand identity** should be a description of what your business will do. This is your business overview and includes details about what your company does and where it fits within the industry. What type of design will your business focus on? Will you partner with app developers or web developers to make products come to life? Think of this as the summary of everything that your business does in a few engaging paragraphs.

3 Problem

The **problem** to solve explains what led you to create your business idea. You've learned a lot about UX research through this course; apply what you've learned to analyze others' design decisions. What have you noticed other designers are missing when it comes to their users? Use this information to describe what you see as the problem to solve. Painting this picture is important for your clients to understand why you have the ideal solution.

4 Solution

Now that you've outlined the problem that led to the creation of your business idea, offer up a **solution**. If other designers are getting it wrong, you can start to think about how you can make it right. How are you going to create a specialized solution to the problems you've identified? How will you fill the gap in the market that you've discovered? This is where you sell your solution to the problem you've outlined for your clients.

5 Target market

Who are you targeting as your preferred clientele? Explain why your **target market** needs what you're creating and what will keep them interested in the work you're providing. Who will buy your product or service, and why? Think of this section as validating why your business is important.

6 Competition

In this section of the plan, you should explain who you feel are the direct **competitors** to your business and how you think your business offers a unique value. This focus on your distinctiveness is particularly important since there are many other designers that your clients can choose from. Understand who you're up against and how you will provide something they aren't.

7 Marketing

Once you understand your target market and their needs, the next step is to craft a way to reach. People won't know that you and your services exist if you don't tell them! From flyers and digital ads to social media, there are many ways you can get creative in getting the word out about your business and services, so plan ahead to develop a **marketing** strategy. Finally, don't forget about your social connections; many times a business's first few customers are people you know or direct referrals from acquaintances. Think about how you will explain to people who you are. You can look to the elevator pitch you've created and expand on that. It's important to think about your marketing strategy early so you can factor the costs into the next section: business expenses.

8 Business expenses

The **business expenses** section of your plan is a breakdown of everything it costs for you to run your business. Costs might include anything from the cost of internet access to the cost of materials or programs you purchase to become a more effective designer, like a laptop, a subscription to a design tool, or a membership to a UX design organization in your area. You may also need to account for the initial investment you'll need to make to start up your business. Remember, if you're building a freelance business, you might not have as much time for a regular paid job.

9 Cost of services

An integral part of your business plan is determining your **cost of services**. How much are you going to charge for your services? Be prepared to explain the reasoning for this price point to clients. This will require a lot of research on your part. Your fees need to account for the market rate for similar services and your expenses. Your rate should be fair but competitive, and still cover your expenses. If you know other freelancers, it's okay to ask how they determined their fees, as a starting point.

10 Financial projections

Your **financial projections** describe the expenses and fees you anticipate when you launch your business. What will your finances look like in the first month, first 6 months, or first year? Develop a projection of what your income and outflows will look like to measure your success and figure out what's feasible. If this business will be your sole source of income, you'll need to determine what you'll do to maintain financial stability.

11 Goal

Every freelance business needs **goals**. These are the benchmarks you want to meet to feel successful. It's important to set goals and milestones for your business in order to keep your organization afloat. You might set a goal for your first six months, your first year, for your first five years, and beyond. How will you know you've met that goal? How do those goals apply to the work you complete for clients? Make sure the goal is attainable; consider outlining why you think the goal is feasible based on your financial projects, your marketing strategy, and other research. But, it's great to be aspirational too. After all, you want your business to grow over time.

Organizing your business plan

Before you build a business plan, think about how you plan to present this information to potential clients. There are two options for presenting a business plan to potential clients: a slide deck and a document. Once you've figured out the details of your business plan, consider which format will suit your needs.

Slide deck

A **slide deck**, or presentation deck, is a great way to walk through your business plan for potential business partners and employees, especially if you're presenting in person. This document will be heavy on graphics and metrics that show how your design process can improve a product or service. Before you present, you'll need to create an outline of talking points that you want to touch on as you present this document, so make notes! Information that you compile for this slide deck can be used to create a client-facing pitch document that speaks to your capabilities later on.

Document

If there isn't time for you to present your materials to a new client or partner, it's useful for you to have a **document** that you can share with them about your business. A business plan in a document is less graphics-heavy but still focuses on describing your approach to your business, just as you would be when presenting a slide deck.

Drafting your plan

Now that you know what to include in your business plan, it's time to get started. Remember: The goal of a business plan is to provide a realistic picture of what your business does and outline what the client should expect from you.

Using a template is one way to begin right away. Here are two templates that provide a general overview of what your business plan could look like.

To use the slide deck template, click the link below and select "Use Template."

Link to template: [Business Plan Presentation template](#) 

OR

If you don't have a Google account, you can download the template directly from the attachment below.

 **Google UX Certificate - Business Plan Presentation [Template]**
PPTX File

To use the document template for this course item, click the link below and select "Use Template."

Link to template: [Business Plan Document template](#) 

OR

If you don't have a Google account, you can download the template directly from the attachment below.

 **Google UX Certificate - Business Plan Document [Template]**
DOCK File

These business plans are geared toward how to explain your business to potential clients or partners.

Now you're ready to start working on your business plan! Good luck.

