

B. Case & Draft Plan Checklist

How to Use This Document

Use this checklist to help you refine your drafts before final submission. Checkpoints are divided into content and style.

Content

Use these points to check the content of your business case document. These will help ensure that you write what is required for your topic.

- Have you said *what* your project is? Have you said *why* it is important?
- Is there enough context given for the audience to understand the problem being addressed?
- Is there enough context give an audience an intuitive understanding of your solution/goals?
- Is the content accurate?
- Is your solution feasible? Can it be done in one semester?
- If your project can be extended have you defined how it can be extended?
- Does your draft plan have a first milestone clearly described in the text?
- Does your plan have a schedule - in the form of a Gantt chart that clearly defines your list of activities and dependencies.
- Does your schedule clearly relate to your first milestone?
- It your team organization succinctly described?
- Do your team have a communication plan in place?
- Are all the non-obvious assertions that you make backed up with references, or illustrative examples?

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Style

Use these points to check the style of your business case.

- Does your document adhere to the page limit (you risk losing marks if it doesn't).
- Is the language direct and accessible. Does it make use of the reader's experience or prior knowledge.
- Do you define the problem you want to solve near the start of the talk?
- Do you, at some stage, clearly define how your solution solves the problem? Do you clearly define the benefit?
- Do you have a short and clear theme that you introduce early and recapitulate toward the end. It is really good if you can capture the essence of your product in a sentence.
- Is your document clearly structured. Does the reader know where they are and where they are going?
- Are your sentences structured to be as short, direct and meaningful as they can be?¹
- Does your document have a narrative flow? Does each part follow on from the other? A first draft rarely has good narrative flow but this can be fixed as the document is refined.
- Do you use active rather than passive voice in your writing? For this type of presentation the active voice is better because it is more direct. For a quick summary of the difference between active and passive voice see: <http://www.englishclub.com/grammar/verbs-voice.htm>.
- Are you careful with your use of the word "this". The word "this" is a pointer to a previously defined object and is often ambiguous. It is very often better to name the object directly than to use "this".
- Are the technical explanations easy enough for someone not familiar with this work to follow?

¹Short sentences can be taken too far. If you find you have lots of sentences containing references to the same object e.g. "The YYYY" then your sentences may be too short.