

Writing a Business Plan

Week 13



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What Is a Business Plan?

- Business Plan
 - A business plan is a written document that outlines the goals, strategies, and operational details of a business.
 - It serves as a roadmap for starting, managing, and growing a business and helps secure funding from investors or lenders by demonstrating the viability of the business idea.
 - A business plan is typically 25 to 35 pages long and is a dual-purpose document used both inside and outside the firm.

Who Reads the Business Plan—And What Are They Looking For?

There are two primary audiences for a firm's business plan

Audience	What They are Looking For
A Firm's Employees	A clearly written business plan helps the employees of a firm operate in sync and move forward in a consistent and purposeful manner.
Investors and other external stakeholders	A firm's business plan must make the case that the firm is a good use of an investor's funds or the attention of others.

Guidelines for Writing a Business Plan

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- Content of the Business Plan
 - The business plan should give clear and concise information on all the important aspects of the proposed venture.
 - It must be long enough to provide sufficient information yet short enough to maintain reader interest.
 - For most plans, 25 to 35 pages is sufficient.
- Types of Business Plans
 - There are three types of business plans, which are shown on the next slide.

Guidelines for Writing a Business Plan

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Types of Business Plans

Summary Business Plan

10–15 pages

Works best for new ventures in the early stages of development that want to “test the waters” to see if investors are interested in their idea

Full Business Plan

25–35 pages

Works best for new ventures who are at the point where they need funding or financing; serves as a “blueprint” for the company’s operations

Operational Business Plan

40–100 pages

Is meant primarily for an internal audience; works best as a tool for creating a blueprint for a new venture’s operations and providing guidance to operational managers

Guidelines for Writing a Business Plan

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- Recognizing the Elements of the Plan May Change
 - It's important to recognize that the plan will usually change while written.
 - New insights invariably emerge when an entrepreneur or a team of entrepreneurs immerse themselves in writing the plan and start getting feedback from others.

Outline of Business Plan

- Outline of Business Plan
 - Most business plans do not include all the elements introduced in the sample plan; we include them here for the purpose of completeness.
 - Each entrepreneur must decide which elements to include in his or her plan.
- 1. Executive Summary
- 2. Industry Analysis
- 3. Company/Business Description
- 4. Market Analysis
- 5. The Economics of the Business
- 6. Marketing Plan
- 7. Design and Development Plan
- 8. Operations Plan
- 9. Management Team and Company Structure
- 10. Overall Schedule
- 11. Financial Projections

Section 1: Executive Summary

1 of 2

- Executive Summary
 - The executive summary is a short overview of the entire business plan
 - It provides a busy reader with everything that needs to be known about the new venture's distinctive nature.
 - An executive summary shouldn't exceed two single-spaced pages.

Section 1: Executive Summary

2 of 2

Executive Summary

Key Insights

- In many instances an investor will ask for a copy of a firm's executive summary and will ask for a copy of the entire plan only if the executive summary is sufficiently convincing.
- The executive summary, then, is arguably **the most important section of a business plan.**

Section 2: Industry Analysis

1 of 2

- Industry Analysis
 - This section should begin by describing the industry the business will enter in terms of its size, growth rate, and sales projections.
 - Items to include in this section:
 - Industry size, growth rate, and sales projections
 - Industry structure
 - Key success factors
 - Industry trends
 - Long-term prospects

Section 2: Industry Analysis

2 of 2

Industry Analysis

Key Insights

- Before a business selects a target market it should have a good grasp of its industry—including where its promising areas are and where its points of vulnerability are.
- The industry that a company participates in largely defines the playing field that a firm will participate in.

Section 3: Company Description

- Company Description
 - This section begins with a general description of the company.
 - Items to include in this section:
 - Company description
 - Company history
 - Mission statement
 - Products and services
 - Current status
 - Legal status and ownership
 - Key partnerships (if any)

Section 4: Market Analysis

1 of 2

- Market Analysis
 - The market analysis breaks the industry into segments and zeros in on the specific segment (or target market) to which the firm will try to appeal.
 - Items to include in this section:
 - Market segmentation and target market selection
 - Buyer behavior
 - Competitor analysis

Section 4: Market Analysis

2 of 2

Market Analysis

Key Insights

- Most start-ups do not service their entire industry. Instead, they focus on servicing a specific (target) market within the industry.
- It's important to include a section in the market analysis that deals with the behavior of the consumers in the market. The more a start-up knows about the consumers in its target market, the more it can tailor its products or services appropriately.

Section 5: The Economics of the Business

1 of 2

- The Economics of the Business

- This section addresses the basic logic of how profits are earned in the business and how many units of a business's profits must be sold for the business to "break even" and then start earning a profit.
- Items to include in this section:
 - Revenue drivers and profit margins
 - Fixed and variable costs
 - Start-up costs
 - Break-even chart and calculations

Section 5: The Economics of the Business

2 of 2

The Economics of the Business

Key Insights

- Two companies in the same industry may make profits in different ways. One may be a high-margin, low-volume business, while the other may be a low-margin, high-volume business. It's important to check to make sure the approach you select is sound.
- Computing a break-even analysis is an extremely useful exercise for any proposed or existing business.

Section 6: Marketing Plan

1 of 2

- Marketing Plan
 - The marketing plan focuses on how the business will market and sell its product or service.
 - Items to include in this section:
 - Overall marketing strategy
 - Product, price, promotions, and distribution
 - Sales process (or Cycle)
 - Sales tactics

Section 6: Marketing Plan

2 of 2

Marketing Plan

Key Insights

- The best way to describe a start-up's marketing plan is to start by articulating its marketing strategy, positioning, and points of differentiation, and then talk about how these overall aspects of the plan will be supported by price, promotional mix, and distribution strategy.
- It's also important to discuss the company sales process.

Section 7: Design and Development Plan

1 of 2

- **Design and Development Plan**

- If you're developing a completely new product or service, you need to include a section in your business plan that focuses on the status of your development efforts.
- Items to include in this section:
 - Development status and tasks
 - Challenges and risks
 - Projected development costs
 - Proprietary issues (patents, trademarks, copyrights, licenses, brand names)

Section 7: Design and Development Plan

2 of 2

Design and Development Plan

Key Insights

- Many seemingly promising start-ups never get off the ground because their product development efforts stall or the actual development of the product or service turns out to be more difficult than thought.
- As a result, this is a very important section for businesses developing a completely new product or service.

Section 8: Operations Plan

- Operations Plan
 - Outlines how your business will be run and how your product or service will be produced.
 - A useful way to illustrate how your business will be run is to describe it in terms of “back stage” (unseen to the customer) and “front stage” (seen by the customer) activities.
 - Items to include in this section:
 - General approach to operations
 - Business location
 - Facilities and equipment

Section 9: Management Team and Company Structure

1 of 2

- Management Team and Company Structure
 - The management team of a new venture typically consists of the founder or founders and a handful of key management personnel.
 - Items to include in this section:
 - Management team
 - Board of directors
 - Board of advisers
 - Company structure

Section 9: Management Team and Company Structure

2 of 2

Management Team and Company Structure

Key Insights

- This is a critical section of a business plan.
- Many investors and others who read the business plan look first at the executive summary and then go directly to the management team section to assess the strength of the people starting the firm.

Section 10: Overall Schedule

1 of 2

- Overall Schedule

- A schedule should be prepared that shows the major events required to launch the business.
- The schedule should be in the format of milestones critical to the business's success.
- Examples of milestones:
 - Incorporating the venture
 - Completion of prototypes
 - Rental of facilities
 - Obtaining critical financing
 - Starting production
 - Obtaining the first sale

Section 10: Overall Schedule

2 of 2

Overall Schedule

Key Insight

- An effectively prepared and presented schedule can be extremely helpful in convincing potential investors that the management team is aware of what needs to take place to launch the venture and has a plan in place to get there.

Section 11: Financial Projections

1 of 2

- **Financial Projections**

- The final section of a business plan presents a firm's pro forma (or projected) financial projections.
- Items to include in this section:
 - Sources and uses of funds statement
 - Assumptions sheet
 - Pro forma income statements
 - Pro forma balance sheets
 - Pro forma cash flows

Section 11: Financial Projections

2 of 2

Financial Projections

Key Insights

- Having completed the earlier sections of the plan, it's easy to see why the financial projections come last.
- They take the plans you've developed and express them in financial terms.

Presenting the Business Plan to Investors

1 of 2

- The Oral Presentation
 - The first rule in making an oral presentation is to follow directions. If you're told you have 15 minutes, don't talk for more than the allotted time.
 - The presentation should be smooth and well-rehearsed.
 - The slides should be sharp and not cluttered.
- Questions and Feedback to Expect from Investors
 - The smart entrepreneur has a good idea of the questions that will be asked, and will be prepared for those queries.

Presenting the Business Plan to Investors

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Twelve PowerPoint Slides to Include in an Investor Presentation

1. Title Slide
2. Problem
3. Solution
4. Opportunity and target market
5. Technology
6. Competition
7. Marketing and sales
8. Management team
9. Financial projections
10. Current status
11. Financing sought
12. Summary



THANK
YOU