

BUSINESS PLAN FORMAT:

- I. **Executive Summary** (not to exceed two pages)
 - a. Company name, address, and phone numbers
 - b. Name(s), addresses, and phone number(s) of all key people
 - c. Brief description of the business, its products and services, and the customer problems they solve
 - d. Brief overview of the market for your products and services
 - e. Brief overview of the strategies that will make your firm a success
 - f. Brief description of the managerial and technical experience of key people
 - g. Brief statement of the financial request and how the money will be used
 - h. Charts or tables showing highlights of financial forecast

- II. **Vision and Mission statement**
 - a. Entrepreneur's vision for the company
 - b. "What business are we in?"
 - c. Values and principles on which the business stands
 - d. What makes the business unique? What is the source of its competitive advantage?

- III. **Company History** (for existing businesses only)
 - a. Company founding
 - b. Financial and operational highlights
 - c. Significant achievements

- IV. **Business and Industry Profile**
 - a. Industry Analysis
 1. Industry background and overview
 2. Significant trends
 3. Growth rate
 4. Key success factors in the industry
 - b. Outlook for the future
 - c. Stage of growth (start-up, growth, maturity)
 - d. Company goals and objectives
 1. Operational
 2. Financial
 3. Other

- V. **Business Strategy**
 - a. Desired image and position in market
 - b. SWOT analysis
 1. Strengths
 2. Weaknesses

3. Opportunities
4. Threats
- c. Competitive strategy
 1. Cost-leadership
 2. Differentiation
 3. Focus

VI. Company Products and Services

- a. Description
 1. Product or service features
 2. Customer benefits
 3. Warranties and guarantees
 4. Unique Selling Proposition (USP)
- b. Patent or trademark protection
- c. Description of production process (if applicable)
 1. Raw materials
 2. Costs
 3. Key suppliers
- d. Future product or service offerings

VII. Marketing Strategy

- a. Target market
 1. Complete demographic profile
 2. Other significant customer characteristics
- b. Customers' motivation to buy
- c. Market size and trends
 1. How large is the market?
 2. Is it growing or shrinking? How fast?
- d. Advertising and promotion
 1. Media used- reader, viewer, listener profiles
 2. Media costs
 3. Frequency or usage
 4. Plans for generating publicity
- e. Pricing
 1. Cost structure
 - A. Fixed
 - B. Variable
 2. Desired image in market
 3. Comparison against competitors' prices
- f. Distributions strategy
 1. Channels of distribution used
 2. Sales techniques and incentives

VIII. Location and Layout

- a. Location
 - 1. Demographic analysis of location vs. target customer profile
 - 2. Traffic count
 - 3. Lease/rental rates
 - 4. Labor needs and supply
 - 5. Wage rates
- b. Layout
 - 1. Size requirements
 - 2. Americans with Disabilities compliance
 - 3. Ergonomic issues
 - 4. Layout plan (suitable for an appendix)

IX. Competitor Analysis

- a. Existing competitors
 - 1. Who are they? Create a competitive profile matrix.
 - 2. Strengths
 - 3. Weaknesses
- b. Potential competitors: Companies that might enter the market
 - 1. Who are they?
 - 2. Impact on your business if they enter

X. Description of management team

- a. Key managers and employees
 - 1. Their backgrounds
 - 2. Experience, skills, and know-how they bring to the company
- b. Resumes of key managers and employees (suitable for an appendix)

XI. Plan of operation

- a. Form of ownership chosen and reasoning
- b. Company structure (organization chart)
- c. Decision making authority
- d. Compensation and benefits packages

XII. Financial Forecasts (suitable for an appendix)

- a. Financial statements
 - 1. Income statements
 - 2. Balance sheet
 - 3. Cash flow statement
- b. Break-even analysis
- c. Ratio analysis with comparison to industry standards (most applicable to existing businesses)

XIII. Loan or Investment Proposal

- a. Amount requested
- b. Purpose and uses of funds
- c. Repayment or “cash out” schedule (exit strategy)
- d. Timetable for implementing plan and launching the business

XIV. Appendices- Supporting documentation, including market research, financial statements, organizational charts, resumes, and other items.