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## **Business Plan Template**

A business plan is a vital document for any successful enterprise. Effective communication and implementation of strategy in a systematic manner, moves those bright business ideas to actual fruition. A comprehensive, written document that outlines ideas and notes specific responsibility to individuals and/or teams within a business provides the map for the whole organization to follow. This written plan serves as the functioning foundational roadmap to optimize operational success.

The business plan should be treated as a living document. As circumstances change, an enterprise's objectives shift to stay relevant, manage expectations, and measure impacts. Visiting regularly with the plan for revisions based on internal/external trends within your industry, reporting in from your team, and guidance from your business and technical assistance advisors presents an opportunity for and owner/operator's knowledge and expertise to mature. A participative, inclusive approach for developing a business plan is encouraged, which could include employees (responsible for the implementation), and other appropriate stakeholders.

Recommended components of the business plan include:

### **1. Executive Summary**

- a. Describe what your overall business does, and your mission statement and/or goals for the business as a whole
- b. Briefly describe your products and the market channels where products are sold
- c. Briefly describe the history of the business

### **2. Situational Analysis**

The situational analysis evaluates the external environment within which the business operates. This analysis identifies the opportunities and the threats faced by your enterprise and in combination with the organizational objectives above, determines the business's marketing direction. An intuitive and rational synthesis of past, current, and future position of the business is the key to successfully determining overall business strategy. Two commonly used situational analysis tools are:

#### **A. SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats for/to the business)**

- Describe the strengths and weakness of the business (internal), as well as opportunities and threats (external) the business is facing at this time
- Explain how you intend to address the weaknesses and challenges you identify

***B. 5 C analysis (situation analysis tool helps assess the organizational environment from 5 different areas that may affect your marketing decisions)***

- **Customers;** market segments, customer requirements and demands, market size and growth, retail channel and information sources, buying process, consumer trends, etc.
- **Competitors;** current and potential customers, customer products and positioning, their strengths and weaknesses, market share etc.
- **Company;** products or services, brand image, goals, company culture, strengths and weaknesses, technology, and experience etc.
- **Collaborators;** distribution channels/ distributors, suppliers, alliances etc.
- **Climate;** political factors, economic factors, socio-cultural factors, technological factors, environmental factors, and legal factors

**3. Products and Markets Description**

- a. Describe the products you produce
- b. Describe how and where products are produced and distributed
- c. Describe the market channels through which you work (direct, wholesale, retail, export, etc.) and how they are geographically distributed

**4. Organization and People**

- a. Explain the roles of key owners and management team involved in the business
- b. Describe their individual skills and experience they bring to the management team
- c. Describe organizational structure (type of entity, board of advisors/directors, etc.)

**5. Market Analysis and Plan** Marketing activities of the plan should align with organizational objectives. Opportunities for the marketing plan are often found by synthesizing information from the situational environments. Once an opportunity is identified, an appropriate strategy must be created to take advantage of it by:

- a. Describe the existing competition (i.e., Who else is doing this already? What advantages or disadvantages do you have compared to your competitors?)
- b. Describe the marketing plan for any new products or new markets outlined in the business plan and/or proposed enterprise/activity, including the indicators you have that there is a demand and market for any new products or sales proposed.

**Any additional applicable analyses performed, such as enterprise analysis, sensitivity analysis, breakeven analysis, etc.**

**6. Implementation plan: list of proposed business ideas and strategies with a timeline for implementation and details on how each step will be implemented**

- a. Describe business ideas and strategies planned over the next 1-3 years
- b. Ensure that the proposed activity the WLEB fund would support is clearly outlined in the implementation plan, along with other activities the business is about to implement
- c. The implementation plan should build on the strengths and opportunities outlined in the SWOT analysis, and address weaknesses or threats

## **7. Financial Plan**

A budget on a business plan is often reflected in three scenarios, each scenario is representative of three different outcomes. The first purpose of a budget is to set measurable targets or performance standards for the organization and could be the operations motivating factor. The second purpose of the budget is to provide a basis for financial control and management decision-making. A monthly comparison of actual results to the budget will demonstrate an idea about what needs to be done next. A third purpose may be providing the financial arguments required to raise start-up or growth capital.

- Describe, in narrative form, financial history and past performance of the business, analysis of the proposed project and projections
- Developed pro forma, as applicable

### **7a. Attached financial statements**

- Provide a current Balance Sheet that demonstrates assets and liabilities
- Provide a Profit and Loss (or Income Statement) showing revenues/income and expenses (and COGS where applicable) for current year (may also supply statements for two years prior if possible)
- Provide corresponding projections of revenue/income and expenses for the business for the coming 1-3 years
- If applicable, provide financial projections for the proposed enterprise or activity
- Include explanation of assumptions for all business/enterprise projection