

Business Planning

Writing your business plan is a lot of hard work, however it is the single most important step you can take toward your business success!

Business Plans, like Résumé's and dozens of templates can be found on-line, however despite the variety of formats a business plan's content is consistently the same. The business plan consists of a narrative and several financial spreadsheets. The narrative template is the body of the business plan. It contains over 150 questions divided into several sections. A good business plan should include a description of your business, background information and trends on your business and the industry it will operate within, how your business will operate, who will manage and work within it, what other businesses operate in the same market/industry, how you will market/ sell your product or service, and finally a summary of it's feasibility.

The real value of doing a business plan is not having the finished product, but the process of research and thinking about your business in a systematic way. The act of planning helps you to think things through thoroughly, study and research when you are not sure of the facts, and look at your ideas critically. It takes time now, but avoids costly mistakes later. This business plan template is designed to be very user friendly and has been used successfully by thousands of aboriginals in BC who have been financed and funded to start their businesses.

It typically takes several weeks to complete a good plan. Most of that time is spent in research and re-thinking your ideas and assumptions. But then, that is the value of the process. So make time to do the job properly. Those who do, never regret the effort.

4 Components of a Business Plan:

1. Business Plan

The first part of a business plan is the body of the business plan, which starts on page 8. You should read through this template, but do not start writing at the beginning. It is much easier to write a number of small essays that form the various aspects that are contained in a business plan.

The first step to writing the body of the business plan is to research, research and research. Take notes on the headings contained in the business plan and start researching on the Internet, at the Library and the local Chamber of Commerce. Include this research in your business plan and quote your source.

Support assumptions with facts, not more assumptions. Then when you are ready to write do so one question at a time in simple, clear language and remember you are not only planning, but also educating your reader. Write one question at a time – 15 to 20 minutes. Then take a break. If you try to plow through it you will only get discouraged and confused.

When you are through writing your first draft, you will have a collection of small essays on the various topics of the business plan. Then you will want to edit them into a smooth flowing narrative.

2. Pro-Forma's or Financials

There are four projected income statements (12 month cash flow projection, 3 year cash flow projection, 3 year projected balance sheet and 3 year projected income statement) that a lender will need and two that you will need to assess the projects viability. The two financial statements that you should know to not only assess the projects viability, but to also manage your businesses income are the 12 month cash flow and the 3 year income statement, and although they may seem daunting we will show you how simple they are to prepare and use.

3. Executive Summary

This is the part of your plan that you complete once you have the body of the business plan completed. Once you have all the research and planning done it is simple to write a few sentences for each question that will allow your reader to quickly assess the projects merits.

4. Supporting Documents

Supporting documents are the résumé's, certificates, diploma's, letters of reference, equipment quotes, letters of intent, BCR's, maps, photo's, samples of work, and other documents that support your plan. This part is simple – keep everything in writing then organize them in the order that you would like to see them in if you were evaluating your plan. First who is this person (resume, diploma's, certificates, letters of reference), then what is the project (maps, photo's, samples of work, equipment quotes, assessments), and continue on in this type of order until you have all your documents organized and listed on your table of contents.

If you are using the help of a consultant or advisor to prepare your plan, make certain you are actively involved in the planning and you fully understand every aspect because it is a well known fact that principals wrote their own business plans have a 45% better chance of succeeding in their business than those who did not.