



## **The Comprehensive Business Plan**

A business plan will have two general uses: (1) to obtain financing, and (2) to be used as a road map by the employees and managers of the organization. As you read this section, you may notice the similarities between a *standard business plan* and a *turnaround business plan*. The primary difference is that a turnaround business plan addresses everything from the perspective of a failed business. Below are some key components of a standard business plan.

- Executive Summary
- Mission Statement
- Vision
- Services and Products
- Company Description
- Marketing Plan
- Business Operations
- Financials

### *Executive Summary*

In a page or two, give a brief overview of the entire business plan. It is best to write this section last, and summarize each section by giving several sentences describing the contents of the section. The executive summary should not appear like a table of contents. Include a general description of your business as you envision it, the key players and their qualifications and backgrounds. Include the name of your business, its location, and the purpose of the business plan.

### *Mission Statement*

The mission statement should define those things your company intends to accomplish and what the business philosophies are.

### Mission Statement Exercises:

- Get on the Internet and read other mission statements.
- Identify those mission statements that resonate with your goals.
- Rephrase the sentences and include them in your own statement.
- Keep it simple (about one paragraph) and at a very high level.

### *Services and Products*

Provide a listing of all services and products offered by the business. Rather than discussing the particular advantages of these services and products, and the strategies you will employ with each item, or any discussion of the niches for these services/products, defer this discussion to the Products and Services section of your Marketing Plan, where you can discuss these topics in detail.

### *Company Description*

This section can start with name, address, history, and a general statement about the services you provide.

Include an overview of the management team, with a description of the people, one or more, who are key leaders in the business. Describe their roles, their backgrounds, and any experience or education they may have, and any connections or affiliations they bring that may facilitate the operations of the company.

Include an organizational chart showing all the management layers and job descriptions for each position.

### *Marketing Plan*

Due to complexity, marketing plans are often quite extensive. They should be constructed as a standalone unit that can be removed from the overall business plan and distributed separately to those focusing on marketing. As with your business plan, include a brief introduction (again, write this last) to the marketing plan that includes the highlights of the plan. Describe the industry trends and any opportunities you see. Include any possible threats to the success of your plan.

The projections in your marketing plan should span one or two years and include the following sections:

- *Services and Products* – Unlike in the section of the same name in the general business plan, which simply describes the products and services, describe the competitive advantages of the services and products.
- *Customers* – Include a complete description of the customer base.
- *Pricing* – Include the various pricing strategies and logic.
- *Competition* – This section should identify and describe all competitors to the business.
- *Advertising* – Outline the periodic and ongoing advertising methods.
- *Marketing Objectives and Projections* – This should be comprehensive enough to allow for performance measurements.

### *Business Operations*

This section will describe the basic business processes, and for this reason it is one of the most critical components of the business plan. This is the nuts and bolts of the road map. Describe each process (such as services, product deliveries, or product groups), the time it involves and the projected revenues to be derived from each service or product. There are several ways to organize this section. One way is to break it into three parts:

1. *Daily Processes* – Those activities you perform on a daily basis. Describe how you perform these activities.
2. *Periodic Processes* – These descriptions include any periodic events you may attend and derive revenue from.
3. *Special Processes* – These descriptions include any special events that provide revenue to your company.

You don't have to, but you may include the operations manual here so that it has a well-defined location for the business.

### *Financials*

You should include a high-level budget in the plan. This should be derived directly from the data you compiled for the general business budget. This will form the basis for some of the performance measurements in the future.