



Business Plan Preparation

This documents asks TEN questions that will help you to complete a Business Plan.

Preamble

It is important to use a template when developing a business plan. Each business is unique. As such judgment will be used in terms of how much detail to put into each section and indeed if particular sections are included in a business plan.

The following is a Sample Contents Template for a business plan:

Cover Page

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Company Details	3
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1.2 Current status	
1.3 Target Market	
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3.1 The Solution	
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3.4	Unique Value Proposition	
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6.3	Cash flow projections	
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7.3	Team	
7.4	Finance	
7.5	Potential for future growth	
7.6	Risk Management	
7.7	Exit Strategy	
Appendix A: Financial Projections		
Appendix B: CVs of Owner Managers		
Appendix C: Weighted Sales Pipeline		

Rather than complete each section from start to finish, it is suggested that ten questions be answered about your business.



Questions to answer to complete your business plan

1. Background of the promoter(s)
 - Work history, skills and qualification
 - Focus particularly on relevance to current opportunity
2. Product/Services offered
 - One line to summarise the range of services offered
 - A bullet point list of products /services
3. Pricing
 - Pricing Strategy could be based on a Price List or by negotiation or formula ie dependent on how many hours will be involved
 - Consider how much people will be prepared to pay and what the price points say about your business to your customer
 - Are you going to charge VAT?
4. Ideal profile of Customer
 - Who is going to buy your product/service?
 - What market is going to be served (geographic and sector if B2B)
 - If consumer product use a Bio to describe (general assumptions)
5. Operations
 - Do you need to buy equipment?
 - Do you need premises?
 - Will staff be hired
 - Who will be the suppliers?
6. Sales per week or month
 - Total figure that is a target per month [please factor if this is a seasonal business]
 - For each week or month break down the Target Sales by product/service line [use a table]
7. Cost per week or month
 - Will be determined by:
 - o Fixed costs e.g. mobile phone, rental, insurance, office space,
 - o Specific costs related to each job
 - List all costs and estimate on either Monthly or Annual Basis [use a table]
8. Route(s) to Market
 - Normal options are Direct Sales, Online or via a 3rd party: distributor, agent, or Retail
9. Competition



- Quick overview of competition ... any big players (if yes profile the biggest one in a paragraph or two)
 - Number of Direct Competitors in the market
10. Why are you writing this plan?
- Do you need Finance?

Business Model Canvas

A powerpoint presentation is a great way to communicate your business plan. It can also be used in preparing your business plan. Answer each of the ten questions above in one slide each with 5 or 6 bullet points. This will be easier to review by a business mentor or advisor.

A Business Model Canvas is a brilliant alternative to a full Business Plan. Ash Maurya's Lean Canvas as outlined in 'Running Lean' outlines 9 building blocks for your business model. For more see <http://leanstack.com/>



Source : p.27 Running Lean, Ash Maurya

Further Reading:

Guide to Self Employment in Ireland – Pdf by Donncha Hughes available from Startuphughes.com
Starting a Business in Ireland – A Workbook from Oak Tree Press
InterTrade Ireland [Business Cube Methodology](#) - pdf