



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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1.2 Current status	
1.3 Target Market	
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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)
 - Are you the right person for this business? (Work history, skills and qualification)
 - Do you have a Team to include Advisors?
Focus particularly on relevance to current opportunity
2. Product/Services offered
 - What is your one/two summary of your product and/or service offered
Repeat for all products /services (bullet list)
 - What pain /problem are you really solving for the customer?
3. Pricing
 - What is your Pricing Strategy. Will you have a price list or custom pricing per project?
 - 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 (see [my blogpost on Marketing personas](#))
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. What will the Cost per week or month be
 - 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. Sales Channels/ Route(s) to Market
 - What is your route to market ... options are Direct Sales, Online or via a 3rd party: distributor, agent, or Retail



9. Competition
 - Are there Direct Competitors in the market, and how many?
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 my FREE online training programme '[Complete a Lean Canvas for your Startup Business](#)'



Source : p.27 Running Lean, Ash Maurya

Further Reading:

Guide to Self-Employment in Ireland – Pdf by Donncha Hughes available from [Startuphughes.com](#)
InterTrade Ireland [Business Cube Methodology](#) - pdf