

How to Write a Business Plan - Checklist

Compiled by Brian Flanagan CMC FIMCA. Director, PlanWare.Org

Links within the checklist relate to PlanWare's [Business Plan Guide](#)

How to Write a Business Plan	
Preliminary Tasks	Done
1. Complete market research and analyses	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Clarify key matters relating to products/services and technology	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Form the basis of the management team	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Prepare a strategic plan as framework for detailed plan	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Decide the central purpose of the plan and its target audience	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Locate professional advisers to assist with the planning	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Acquire any software tools needed to help prepare the plan	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Research and compile a list of possible recipients of the plan	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Ascertain any specific needs of likely key recipients	<input type="checkbox"/>
Writing the Plan	Done
1. Create a framework for the plan e.g. table of contents	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Identify possible appendices , attachments etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Estimate page lengths for each key section	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. List main issues and topics to be covered within key sections	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Assign work programs based on the framework and lists	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Draft preliminary sections (excluding summary) within the front of the plan	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Draft all key sections in the plan's body in a logical sequence	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Compile financial projections , funding proposals and related appendices	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Check the preliminary draft for completeness and plug gaps	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Stand back and take a detached overview of the draft	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Let an outsider or adviser critique the latest draft	<input type="checkbox"/>

12.	Redraft, fine tune and spell check	<input type="checkbox"/>
13.	Write the executive summary and plan's conclusion	<input type="checkbox"/>
14.	Get an independent assessment of the final draft	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reviewing the Plan		OK
1.	Is the plan nicely presented - bound, page numbered etc.?	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	Has the plan been spell checked in its final form?	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	Is the plan's length appropriate to its purpose ?	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	Have the business's (funding) needs been clearly stated ?	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	Does the plan's summary stimulate interest ?	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.	Have all key questions been anticipated ?	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.	What likely objections remain unresolved ?	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.	Will the plan provoke the desired responses?	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other free sources of business planning assistance at PlanWare include:

- A Word-based template, [Free-Plan](#), which includes an 90+ topic help file and a 100+ page PDF manual.
- White papers about [Writing a Business Plan](#) and [Insights into Business Planning](#).
- A checklist on [How NOT to Write a Business Plan](#).
- A section-by-section [Business Plan Guide](#).

Brian Flanagan is a director of Invest-Tech Limited. Its main trading arm is PlanWare.Org which specialises in business planning matters. [PlanWare](#) offers an extensive range of tools for preparing business plans, making financial projections, cashflow forecasting and strategic planning along with extensive white papers and other free resources. It has customers in over a [hundred countries](#).

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