



Chartered Accountants

A simple business plan template

Please note that a business plan isn't an action plan. A business plan might be needed if you are seeking an outside investor, bank finance or perhaps applying for Investors in People status (a framework for a business's improvement through its people).

Here is a list of suggested contents for such a business plan:-

Business Profile	
Business Overview and Mission Statement	Provide a general outline of your business, so that outsiders will understand what your business is all about.
Unique Features	Discuss the advantage that gives you the edge in the market. What are you doing that others aren't ?
Sales Overview	Show in tabular form your recent sales figures.
Sales Forecast	Show projected sales and profits for the next three years.
Proof of Sales	Show some evidence that your projections will come to fruition.

Competitive Profile	
Market Size	What is the total market and is it growing ?
Market Segments	Try to break the market down into smaller segments and show how your product fits into that segment.
Market Trends	Show what is happening to your market that will affect your business.
Competitive Analysis	How do you compare with your competitors ?

Strategic Direction	
SWOT Analysis	Write down in four tables your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.
Vision Statement	This is a concise statement of where you want to be in three, five and ten years' time.
Target Market	Give examples of to whom exactly you will be selling your products and services.
Positioning	How will you position your products ? Is there a gap in the market ? What benefits will you be selling ?
Strategy Highlights	What are the major things you will need in order to achieve your financial targets ?
Investor Information	What do you want to borrow and what return on their investment can your investor expect ?

The Actual Plan	
Business Objectives	You simply state, “we want to sell £x,000 per year at a gross profit of Y per cent, resulting in a net profit of Z per cent”.
Marketing Plan	In detail, with costs and timescale, how are you going to market your products ?
Financial Plan	In summary, how and when is the money going to come in and out ? Use a simple spreadsheet including the details in the next section.
Organisational Plan	In detail, who is going to do what and when ?
Any Other Plans	Include any other relevant plans you have (including your current action plan).

Financials	
First Year Budget	This is where your accountant can really help.
First Year Cash-flow	See above.
Five Year Budget	See above.
Five Year Sales Forecast	See above.
Five Year Balance Sheet	See above.

Implementation	
This section is only completed when the business has something to report. It can be ignored if the business has yet to start.	
Milestones	A list of who is going to do what and when and, importantly, a record of whether this has been done.
Actual	A comparison of budgets with actual performance.

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Disclaimer:

The contents of this factsheet are intended to inform, not offer specific advice on your individual circumstances. If you think the points covered may be to your benefit, please contact us for further advice. We cannot accept any responsibility for any financial loss incurred as a result of reading and acting on this factsheet without receiving individual advice and our written endorsement