

Preparing Your Business Plan

Cover Page should contain:

- Name of the Business
- Logo, if one exists
- Name or Names of Owners
- Mailing Address
- Telephone Number
- Email Address

Executive Summary

An executive summary is prepared to make it easy for bankers or investors to get the big picture of what your business needs are and your plans to accomplish your goals. **It should be written last.** It then should be placed in front of the longer, written plan.

This is the most critical part of the business plan because it must catch the reader's interest. The Executive Summary should be short and to-the-point. One page is sufficient and no more than three are recommended. It should include the following:

- Company name
- Address
- Contact person
- Brief history of the company, including objectives.
- Management summary – include names, specialties, and commitment to company.
- Brief description of product/service and its strengths and weaknesses.
- Short description of existing and projected market.
- Expected growth and rationale for projections.
- Milestones – past, present, and future.
- How much financing is needed? When? For what?
- Suggested terms of borrowing and repayment, along with a description of available collateral should be included.

Description of The Business

Provide an overview of the company and its history. Identify its ownership structure, and the principals and what they do for the business. Describe the products or services offered. No need for details, just identify them.

Marketing

What are the national trends in the industry?

Target Markets - Who are the primary target markets, where are they located, and how many of them are there? What is the total potential of the markets?

Competition - Who are your major competitors and what are their strengths and weaknesses?

Marketing Strategy - What are you going to do in terms of advertising and promotion to sell your products?

Operations

Company Location and Facilities - Address of the business and a description of the facilities

How will the business operate? Days of the week, hours, seasonality, etc. What personnel requirements are necessary for successful operations and how will you pay for them (wages, salaries, commissions, etc.)?

Management Team

Who is involved in the business and what expertise does each person bring to the team? Short paragraph, not a resume

Outside Resources – who will provide key services when needed?

- Lawyer
- Accountant
- Insurance Agent
- Banker
- Consultant
- Mentor

Financial Analysis

- Detailed list of startup costs
- 2-year projection of revenue and expenses
- Cash Flow projection – recommend two years by month
- Breakeven Analysis