



■ BUSINESS TOOL: BUSINESS PLAN SUMMARY SECTIONS

■ RATIONALE AND APPLICATION:

This outlines the main stages in the business planning cycle. The list is not exhaustive and is much a focus on the key stages and issues involved, and is not necessarily a rigid framework.

■ SECTIONS

1. *Assessment of any existing/current plan.*

It will be necessary to audit and review any existing plan. This will include an assessment of what aims and objectives have been achieved, change in environmental and operating circumstances, and what evaluation and monitoring systems are in place.

2. *Organisational profile.*

This will include details of what it currently does, unique features, major clients, description of current services, management experience, client profile and financial analysis.

3. *Revenue and financial analysis.*

This will look at trends, a breakdown between self generated income and grants, fluctuations in income and cost analysis.

4. *Market analysis.*

Organisations need to establish what current and future client needs are, trends, gaps in need provision, and potential services. It will be necessary to identify local and central government priorities and objectives.

5. *Competitor analysis.*

Identify which organisations are 'competing', assess their strengths and weaknesses, identify any potential duplication of services, and identify any "joint ventures".

6. *Positional analysis.*

Organisational capabilities, internal and external forces are also identified. A number and variety of techniques such as SWOT, PESTLE, resource analysis, can be used.

7. *Organisational objectives.*

This will include any mission statement, internal analysis, strategic and developmental objectives.

8. *Marketing plan.*

This needs to include objectives, service offerings, pricing, promotion and time scale.



9. Implementation plan.

This will detail how the organisation is to meet its stated objectives, with time scales, short term to long term objectives.

10. Financial.

This will include forecast income statements, funding requirements, and forecast balance sheets.

11. Monitoring system.

This will outline how the plan is to be monitored, frequency and lines of reporting, key performance indicators.

12. Executive summary.

This will pull all the above together and summarise the essence of the plan.

13. Appendices.

This will include content that is not in the main body of the plan, for example CVs, diagrams, social and demographic information. The business plan then becomes a more manageable document to navigate round and read.

LIMITATIONS AND ERRORS OF APPLICATION

- Sections seen as unconnected
- Imbalance in the plan in terms of content and coverage

FURTHER POINTS

An element of order has to occur in the planning process, some stages will occur before others can commence. For example, SWOT is a strategic planning tool which summarises the key issues from the business environment and the strategic capability of an organisation most likely to impact on strategy development. This can be used as a basis against which to generate strategic options and assess future courses of action.

Additional sections and areas may need to be included, dependant on the nature and complexity of the plan.

Future trends

Assessment of the future, including the 'external environment' and how they may impact on users etc. Need to predict trends, portfolio analysis is a useful tool.

Strategic direction

The assumptions behind 'chosen' direction, main future focus of organisation's work and main priorities. Any change to the present situation.



Strategic aims

Strategic aims for the medium term, with the stated objectives of each.

Implications

What implications the plan will have on the current organisation, for example on areas of work.