



How to Write a One-Page Business Plan

Outlined below are two different options to consider when writing a one page Business Plan.

Business plans can be long and complex, but they don't have to be. A one-page business plan can often be better and more powerful than a traditional plan. Writing a one-page plan is also a useful exercise because it forces you to think critically about your business and get right to the point of what you're doing.

A one-page business plan is a clear and concise way to spur your audience into action—and to force yourself to think critically about your business.

The first option for a one page business plan is, *adapt the outline for a standard business plan*, and you'll have a single-page plan that's crisp and effective.

A one-page plan does have some advantages a standard plan doesn't have.

The one-page business plan:

–Serves as a type of pitch document for your business, much like a beefed-up elevator pitch.

– Forces you to condense your thoughts and explain yourself clearly. There's no room to fudge or hide behind a torrent of words and numbers.

So, what do you need in your one-page plan? It'll follow the same basic structure as a standard business plan but with certain aspects highlighted and others either shortened or omitted. The elements you should include in a one-page plan.



Summary – Option 1

Write one or two sentences about ONE of the following:

- Business concept
- Current situation
- Key success factors
- Financial situation/needs

In a one-page plan, you want to pick just one of those areas to discuss. Focus on the area that matters for your situation.

For example, If you are writing an internal business plan, concentrate on the situation that is most critical, needs the most attention or cries out for change. Is your business model truly disruptive? Demonstrate why it is and how your audience will benefit from it. In a standard business plan, you'd move from the summary to a "vision" section, but skip that in the one-pager and move to market analysis.

Market Analysis

Include a couple of sentences about:

- Primary target market segment
- Customers in target market
- Customer needs in target market

In your one-page plan, you need to focus almost exclusively on the segment of the market you plan to target. Describe your market niche, keeping in mind that the more specific the target market, the better.

Also, save a few words for how you plan to differentiate your product when going after your target customer base (and note for the record that price is rarely an effective differentiator on its own).



Competitive Analysis

Write no more than two or three sentences about:

- Competitive products/services
- Opportunities
- Threats and risks

In your shorter plan, zero in on answering a few questions: Which products and services are most competitive to yours? Where will your product or service have the greatest opportunities? Where will you face the most serious threat? Remember to keep your answers short and to the point.

Strategy

Focus a couple of sentences on:

- Key competitive capabilities
- Key competitive weaknesses

This where the brevity of a one-page plan becomes both difficult and useful. What you need to do here is crystalize why your business is going to be different from that of your competitors. It will be difficult to shave this section down into just a few sentences, but by doing so you'll not only have a clearer idea of what you're doing (and whether or not it makes sense.

Remember to focus on why your differentiation will matter to customers and to your audience. This has to be painfully clear and succinct. If it isn't, rethink and do it again—or rethink your whole business model.



Products and Services

Write a sentence or two on:

- Positioning of products/services
- Competitive evaluation of products/services

Here again, you'll want to lay off detailed descriptions and focus on differentiation. (That's really a combination of "positioning" and "competitive evaluation.") The point here is not to get into deep technical detail—there's no room for that—but to talk about what you're bringing to market that nobody else is.

Marketing and Sales

Write a sentence or two on ONE of these, whichever is stronger:

- Marketing strategy
- Sales tactics

In your shorter plan, you'll need to practice some discipline and focus on the one marketing or sales method that'll be your calling card. Don't scatter-shoot too much, even if you're planning a multi-pronged approach; focus the bread-and-butter effort that's going to drive the most results. Is it publicity? Inbound marketing via the Internet? Describe what you're going to do and—more importantly—how it's going to generate revenue.

Operations

Write one or two sentences about ONE or TWO of the following, whichever is strongest or most relevant:

- Organizational structure
- Product/service delivery
- Customer service/support



Take a look here at what might not necessarily be obvious. What are one or two things about your operations that will give you a competitive advantage? Talk about those things. Again, play to your strengths, and stay focused. Just make sure that whatever it is will be a genuine differentiator for your business.

Financials

Keep this section tightly focused on:

- Profit and loss projection

And only include if absolutely necessary (possibly in a different document):

- Starting balance sheet
- Cash flow projection
- Balance sheet projection

Highlights here should include profit and loss (P&L) projections, including gross sales; gross profit margin; selling, general and administrative (SG&A) expenses; and net profit. If you feel confident, include sales targets.

A lot of what you include in this section will depend on your situation. If you're running a service business, for instance, and you're not looking to borrow from a bank, you probably won't need a balance sheet or cash flow information.

The main takeaway here is to hit the high points relevant to your business.



Example One-Page Business Plan:

Summary:

Bobby's Boat Yard

Our business concept is to opportunistically buy used boats that are clearly underpriced, clean them up and perform minor repairs as needed, then quickly resell them for a fair price. We will focus on brand-name used outboard powerboats, especially smaller Boston Whalers that we can confidently determine the fair market value for and also quickly resell.

Market Analysis:

Our target market will be boaters who likely have previously owned an outboard powerboat and understand the premium value of a better-built boat such as a Boston Whaler. Our market will be moderate-income people who don't want to pay the high price of new boat and live within 50 miles of our yard so that they can easily drive to see and buy a boat.

Competitive Analysis:

Our primary competitors include official dealers of the boat brands that we are aiming to sell. These dealers get their used boats into top shape before selling them but charge a premium price. Our other competitors are the general public, who often price their used boats erratically and sometimes try to sell the used boat while it still needs repairs and/or cleaning.

Strategy:

Our key competitive capabilities are that we have an excellent understanding of the likely resale value of the brands of used boats we are focusing on, we can move instantly to buy an underpriced used boat, and

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we can quickly and for very low cost do minor repairs and clean-up of used boats in our inventory.

Products and Services:

We are highly specialized in that we focus only on several very well-known and respected brands of used outboard powerboats. We are pricing and positioning our boats to sell quickly by underpricing the official new boat dealers. We are also offering the public a more desirable and consistent quality of inventory than buying from the general public because we have done needed repairs to our boats and cleaned them up.

Marketing and Sales:

We will primarily advertise our boats online and in the classified section of the local newspaper. We will display all boats in our boatyard with “for sale” signs visible from the road.

Operations:

Bob will do most work personally, with the exception of cleaning the boats which will be performed by hourly workers whom we will hire only as needed. Repair work will be done in the old garage on the property or, weather permitting, in the open yard.

Financials:

Projected Profit and Loss, First Summer

Number of Used Boats Sold: 20

Average Sales Price: \$3,500

Total Sales Projection: \$70,000

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Average Purchase Price: \$2,800
Average Other Cost of Goods: \$100
Total Cost of Goods Sold: \$58,000

Gross Profit Margin: \$12,000

Marketing Costs: \$2,500
All Other Operating Costs: \$1500
Total Operating Costs: \$4,000

Profit Projection: \$8,000



Option 2 - One page Business Action Plan

One page action plan for (insert business name and date here)

A one-page plan is a simple tool where you can set goals for your business and note down actions you will need to take in your business to achieve these goals. The plan is simple to use. Once you have completed it, post it up somewhere where you and your staff can see it regularly (the fridge in the kitchen or on the notice board). The goals and actions should be front of mind for everyone involved in the business.

Fill in your business details and then remove all the blue instructional text and examples.

Big picture plan

The profitability of the business will double as we improve our customer service culture and increase staffing to service the increase in business.

Timeline	Description
Where our business is now	Annual profit of \$ 150,000, 4 staff and minimum vacancies filled
Where our business will be in six months' time	All staff trained in customer service and profitability improving
Where our business will be in 12 months' time	Annual profit of \$ 300,000, 6 staff, no vacancies, customer service culture
Where our business will be in three years' time	In top 20% of market share for our industry



How we will get there?

Strategy	Action plan (how)	Timing – Completion Date	Person responsible
Training	Customer Service training for all staff	June 2023	Sales Manager
Recruitment plan	Identify skill set required for additional staff and commission recruitment agency to assist with employment	March 2023	Sales Manager
Improve customer services	Update website and keep current	Initially September 2023 and then ongoing	IT Manager
Increase sales	Meet with top 20% customers and identify ways to increase sales per customer	November 2023	Customer Sales Manager
	Produce product and services brochure	February 2023	Marketing Manager
Improve cash flow to reduce costs	Introduce easy payment plan for customers	October 2023	Finance Manager
Increase customer base	Identify regional selling events and book where relevant	March 2023	Sales Manager
	Review competitor offer and target weakness in their offer	July 2023	Sales Manager



What your business plan will cover?

A clearly written business plan will include:

- set the vision and direction of your business
- carry out a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis
- map out a one-page action plan for your next steps.

What's the one page action plan?

The one page action plan allows you to prepare a summarised overview of the current situation, and assists you to implement the right solutions at the right time to achieve your vision/targets. It's also a practical way to record the outcomes of the planning process.

Elements of the one page action plan

Now analysis: In this section summarise your current situation. You should be able to fit up to five points. Which four or five accurately describe your issue right now?

Where analysis: What is your vision? What is your competitive advantage? What are your key objectives? Summarise these elements in this section.

Strategies: What are the three or four key strategies you need to work on over the next twelve months? These can be drawn from your SWOT analysis that you have done earlier.

Action plans: In this section, list what is to be done. Normally you have about three or four actions. There's no need to put every step into the action plan. Only list the strategically important ones. These actions can be drawn from the outcomes of your Force Field you completed on your key issues/strategy.

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Timing: Lists when you aim to achieve the result and who is responsible for it. These should be in priority order and are critical for accountability.