

Fact Sheet 8 – Writing a Business Plan

If you are a new organisation or you are considering expanding your organisation then having a business plan in place is vital, as this will give you a clear direction of where you are going and how you will get there. In short; if there is a business, there is the need for a business plan.

An organisation can never be sure of what may be around the corner, and developing a strong business plan helps plan for the future. A business plan will also enable you to have a strategy in place that will allow you to work towards financial sustainability. It is also beneficial in terms of securing funding and convincing others that they should give support to an organisation or project.

What is a Business Plan?

A business plan is a strategic document that provides a 'route map' for running an organisation or a specific project, helping to clarify the main business idea, define short and long-term objectives, and set an overall direction. Broadly speaking, a business plan will demonstrate three important facts:

1. Where an organisation is currently
2. Where the organisation needs to get to
3. How it is going to get there

Benefits of Writing a Business Plan

Writing a business plan has a number of benefits, including:

- Enables an organisation to establish where it is and why it has got there
- Enables an organisation to get back on track when things go wrong
- Allows an organisation to look ahead and plan for the future
- Assists in working towards a position of financial sustainability
- Can help to develop a strong business case
- Provides the opportunity to secure funding and gain support for an organisation or project
- Allows benefits of a business to be demonstrated to potential partners, funders or commissioners

What Should a Business Plan Include?

The precise content of a business plan will depend on your objective and your intended audience. However as a guide a general business plan may include:

- An executive summary of the content of the business plan
- Background information such as location and current activities
- Purpose of the organisation such as strategic objectives
- Detail of the services and products that are to be delivered
- An overview of the external environment, for example, links with policies or local initiatives
- Information regarding which partners may assist in delivering the services and products
- A clear business strategy or plan for the services
- Detail of the staffing and management structure in place needed to deliver the services
- Premises and equipment that is needed to deliver the services
- The legal structure that is required to enable operation of the organisation
- An overview of how marketing and promotion will occur

For further details about how Pulse Regeneration can help, please contact us.

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Fact Sheet 8 – Writing a Business Plan (Continued)

- Strong financial projections, for example forecasts for three or five years
- Assessment of the key risks and the actions required to reduce them
- The key actions needed to progress the organisation
- Appendices containing supplementary information to help underpin the business plan

Avoiding Common Mistakes

Organisations make a number of mistakes in developing and presenting business plans. Common mistakes often include:

- The language is incorrect for the target audience
- Text is too long with too much waffle
- Lack of hard facts or operational detail to deliver the plan
- Financial projections are overly optimistic or simplistic

Acknowledging these in advance can save time and effort in the long-term, and can also provide greater clarity and focus during the process of developing a business plan.

Finishing The Business Plan

Once the business plan is completed, it is useful to consider how it will be presented, how it will be reviewed and updated, and how it will be communicated to others, both internally and externally.

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