

Business Plan Overview



What is a business plan?

A business plan is a document that can be shared with other people that explains the **Who, What, Where, When, Why, How,** and **How Much** of your business. A business plan discusses not only where your business is now, but also where your business is headed for the next several years.

If you have completed the other chapters in this training series, writing a business plan will be easy for you. You have done most of the hard work and thinking already. If you have not yet completed the other chapters in this training series, you may want to review them now.

Who should have a business plan?

- ❖ Homes and Centers
- ❖ Anyone who is thinking of starting-up, improving the quality of, or expanding her child care

Why should you have a business plan?

- ❖ To act as a map that tells you where your business is headed
- ❖ To help you see your strengths and weaknesses
- ❖ To communicate to others the plan for your business
- ❖ To obtain a loan

Writing a business plan can be a great opportunity for you to learn more about your business. When writing your business plan, keep in mind that the thinking that goes behind the plan is even more important than the final presentation of your plan.

Business plans generally consist of:

Section	Purpose
Cover Page	
Table of Contents	Helps reader navigate your plan
Executive Summary	Summarizes each major heading of your plan
Business Description	Explains why you are in business, what you are trying to achieve, the structure your business will take, and where you will be located
Product or Services	Describes what the services are that your business will offer
Marketing Research & Analysis	Describes what the child care industry, your target market, your target customers, and your competition are like
Marketing Plan	Explains how you will reach your target customers
Operational Plan	Describes how you will run your business (your policies, hours, etc.)
Management Plan	Describes who will be involved in the business and what expertise they have
Financial Plan	Shows how much money you need, how much income you will earn, and when you will be profitable
Appendix	Provides documents that support the information that you provided in the rest of your business plan

Business Plan Overview

Checklist



Sometimes all the details that go into a business plan can start to feel overwhelming or confusing. Don't worry, just follow this checklist and you will be in good shape. If you don't remember where to get the information that is included in each section, refer to the chapter that covered that topic. The final format of your business plan does not have to follow the format of the checklist exactly, but should contain all of the information.


Item	Done?
Cover Page	
▪ Your business name	
▪ Your name	
▪ The contact details of your business and/or your contact details (and any other owners)	
▪ The date you finished the plan	
▪ Your logo (if you have one)	
▪ That the plan is confidential	
▪ Other _____	
Table of Contents	
▪ A list of the major and minor headings in your business plan with page numbers	
Executive Summary	
▪ Summary of your business description, product or service, market research and analysis, marketing plan, operational plan, and financial plan	
Business Description	
▪ Your mission statement	
▪ Your short and long terms goals	
▪ Strategies for achieving those goals	
▪ A description of your legal structure and why you chose that structure	
▪ When your business was or will be founded. If it is an existing business, the history of the business	
▪ Other _____	
Product and Services	
▪ Describe the services that your business will offer	
▪ Explain what makes your services unique	
▪ Detail your pricing policy	
▪ Other _____	
Market Research and Analysis	
▪ Describe industry trends	
▪ Define your target market (what is the demand for child care, # of children in your area, etc.)	
▪ Describe your target customer	
▪ Describe your competition. Explain why your business is needed despite the competition	
▪ Explain why you selected your location	
▪ Other _____	
Marketing Plan	
▪ Detail your plan for marketing your business through word-of-mouth, direct marketing, advertising, and public relations	
▪ Explain how you will provide excellent customer service	
▪ Other _____	

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Checklist



Item	Done?
Operational Plan	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain the policies that will be included in your parent handbook (Include parent handbook in appendix, if you have one) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain the terms of your Enrollment Packet (Include enrollment packet in appendix, if you have one) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify your vendors and suppliers 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define your equipment, insurance, and space needs and how you are going to address these needs 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other _____ 	
Management Plan	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define your management team (including yourself, your board, your employees, your partners, and your entrepreneurial team – accountant, lawyer, etc.) Describe their personal histories and experience levels as it relates to your business 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define your employee policies and strategies for selecting, training, and compensation (If applicable) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other _____ 	
Financial Plan	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing business (Profit & Loss Statement and Balance Sheet) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start-up business (Start-up Costs) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Costs (If applicable) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cash Flow Projections 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Break-Even Analysis 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summary of your short-term and long-term financial assumptions 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview of how you plan to handle your bookkeeping 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funds needed 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other _____ 	
Appendix	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resumes of key management, blurbs of other management members 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Job descriptions 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Copies of forms 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Copies of licenses (child care, business, etc.) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Estimates 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you are applying for a loan: Personal and Business Tax Returns 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marketing materials (brochures, pictures, etc.) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other _____ 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other _____ 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other _____ 	



Idea!
 Even though the Executive Summary comes at the beginning of the business plan, you should write it last, after you have finished all the other pieces of your plan.