

Business Plan Format

The following format should provide a good overview of a prospective investment. It usually works best when limited to around 15-20 pages:

1. Business
 - Company's business (description short enough to fit on a business card)
 - Mission statement
2. Products
 - Product description
 - Development schedule
 - Differentiation
 - Price point
3. Market
 - Trends
 - Historic and projected sizes in dollars()
 - Product match to market definition
4. Distribution
 - Sales channels
 - Partnerships
 - Customers
5. Competition
 - Competitors
 - Competitive advantages
6. Team
 - Background of management
 - Board composition
7. Financials
 - Historic and projected Profit & Loss (first two years by quarters)
 - Projected cash flow (first two years by quarters)
 - Current balance sheet
 - Projected head count by functional area (R&D, sales, marketing, G&A)
 - Capitalization schedule
8. Deal
 - Amount rose
 - Valuation asked
 - Use of proceeds

What information needs to be in your business plan? What is the order of information that will make the most sense to lenders and investors? You can answer these questions with the business plan outlines provided below.

What are the standard elements of a business plan? If you do need a standard business plan to seek funding — as opposed to a plan-as-you-go approach for running your business, which I describe below — there are predictable contents of a standard business plan outline.

For example, a [business plan](#) normally starts with an Executive Summary, which should be concise and interesting. People almost always expect to see sections covering the Company, the Market, the Product, the Management Team, Strategy, Implementation, and Financial Analysis. The precise business plan format can vary.