

## Cooperative Business Plan Detailed Outline

- A. Executive Summary
- B. Company Overview
  - a. Name
  - b. Location
  - c. Legal Structure and Date Formed
  - d. Industry (e.g., service, retail, manufacturing, construction, etc.)
  - e. Size (e.g., sales, number of employees, etc.)
  - f. History highlights
  - g. Mission
  - h. Vision
  - i. Important company features (e.g., customers, employees, value proposition, etc.)
- C. Nature of the Business
  - a. What product/service does the business sell?
  - b. For what need/problem/opportunity?
  - c. For what market area and target audience?
  - d. What are the alternatives to this product/service?
  - e. What is the business's competitive advantage?
  - f. Key Industry Characteristics
    - i. Brief summary of the industry size, trends, critical issues, etc.
- D. Strategic Management
  - a. How are the internal strengths/weaknesses and external opportunities/threats being addressed?
  - b. Summary of short and long term goals
  - c. Market-driven reason this business will succeed
- E. Governance, Management, and Human Resources
  - a. Key experiences and skills
    - i. Experiences and key skills of steering committee
    - ii. Experiences and key skills of directors and/or manager(s)
  - b. Employee policies and procedures
    - i. Job analysis and job descriptions
    - ii. Hiring strategy, compensation, performance evaluation process
    - iii. Employee training and retention
  - c. Consultants and advisors (e.g., attorney, accountant, insurance agent, etc.)
  - d. Organizational structure
    - i. Who does what and reports to whom, including directors, management, employees, and members?
    - ii. What are the rights and responsibilities of directors, members, and management?
  - e. Management strategies
    - i. How will the business make the most of the people involved?
    - ii. What help and support is needed?
    - iii. Describe the organizational culture



**F. Operations****a. Location, Equipment, and Inventory**

- i. Where is the business located and conducted?
- ii. What equipment and inventory items are required to start and operate the business?
  1. What is currently owned? What will be leased? What will be purchased?
- iii. How does the business design, source, purchase, produce, and/distribute products or services?
- iv. How will the business make the most of its location, purchasing, and production processes?
- v. When does the business operate? (e.g., regular hours, seasonal/special events, etc.)
- vi. Describe the business's cycles in production, inventory, sales, delivery and finances.

**b. Data and Risk Management**

- i. How does the business manage data? (e.g., data entry, processing, back-up, contacts, correspondence, bookkeeping, digital files, etc.)
- ii. How does the business protect designs, copyrights, and other intellectual property?
- iii. How does the business manage risk? Consider financial, legal, environmental, safety, data, market, and other types of risk.
- iv. What has the business learned from an insurance broker about costs and types of insurance needed?

**c. Business Taxation**

- i. Which local, state, and federal regulations and taxes apply to the business?
- ii. Does the business have special tax considerations? (e.g., exemptions, excludable income, etc.)

**d. Licensing**

- i. What permits and licenses will the business need to operate?

**G. Marketing****a. Business, industry, and situation overview**

- i. Industry history and background
- ii. Life cycle of the industry (e.g., expanding, stable, declining, etc.)
- iii. Current and future trends (e.g., products/services, marketing, operations, finance, legal, political, environmental, etc.)
- iv. Economic impacts (e.g., interest rates, consumer spending, business investment, housing, labor, trade, etc.)
- v. Types and size of businesses in the industry compared to this business
- vi. Key associations, publications, events, contacts, and other resources



- b. Target Market and Trade Area
  - i. Customer demographics (E.g., who are your customers and how do they behave?)
  - ii. Business-to-business sales
  - iii. Consumer market (e.g., end-user)
  - iv. Where are customers located?
- c. Products/Services, Packaging and Pricing
  - i. Describe product(s) and benefits as well as product mix
  - ii. Describe product packaging
  - iii. Pricing and payments (How will you price product(s) and services? Will these products give an adequate profit? Are prices competitive? Will credit be offered to customers? How will collections be handled?)
- d. Distribution
  - i. How does the business make products/services available and convenient to customers?
- e. Customer Relationship Management
  - i. Policies and procedures for customer service
  - ii. How does the business attract, create interaction with, and call customers to action?
  - iii. How will the business develop customer satisfaction, loyalty, and commitment?
- f. Competitive Advantage
  - i. Who are the business's competitors? What are their strengths and weaknesses?
  - ii. What is the business's competitive advantage? (e.g., key resources, capabilities, or contacts, etc.)
- g. Overall industry attractiveness (e.g., consider industry competitors, potential entrants, threat of substitutes, supplier power, buyer power, etc.)
- h. Marketing and sales strategies
  - i. Sales and marketing mix, positioning, and strategic alliances
  - ii. Current level of sales and profits
  - iii. What is the business's market share?
- i. Describe the who, what, when, where, how much money, and how of the business's marketing.
  - i. Who: Customer profile/target market
  - ii. What: Message elements including offer, benefit, and call to action
  - iii. When: Time, frequency, and consistency of marketing
  - iv. Where: Media choices and channels as well as product positioning
  - v. How much money: Marketing budget justification
  - vi. How: Tactics for marketing/communications



**H. Money**

- a. Sales forecast
- b. Breakeven analysis
- c. Key measurable “drivers” that impact costs, revenue, and business goals (e.g., number of clients or projects per year, average revenue per client, return on investment, number of employees compared to sales, inventory turns, etc.)
- d. Financial assumptions
  - i. Discuss assumptions made to arrive at financial projections (e.g., How were costs, prices, and sales forecasts determined?)
  - ii. Ratio analysis (e.g., liquidity, leverage, profitability, etc.)
- e. Financing
  - i. Discuss how much money is needed to start and how funds will be used.
  - ii. How will the money be acquired? (e.g., equity financing, debt financing, alternative gap financing, etc.)
  - iii. Discuss factors such as character, capacity, collateral, credit, cash flow, and commitment.

