

Writing a Basic Business Plan

This information sheet gives a brief overview of Business Planning for more detailed information please contact the Development Support Officer.

"If you don't know where you're going you are sure to end up somewhere else"

Mark Twain.

Mark Twain is right particularly as an organisation you need to know what your goal is if you hope to reach it. This is where the business plan come in.

What is a Business Plan?

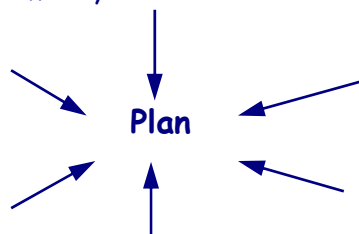
It is a document that sets out the activities of an organisation and explains how and when it's various objectives will be reached. It will contain key aspects of the organisation and it's aspirations and is often supported by financial information.

Tips for Sanity and Survival

- Ask questions
- Leave trails
- Think before throwing
- Review Process
- Backup information

What is the process for making a Business Plan?

Management Committee and senior manager set out the organisational mission statement, values and direction.



Staff, volunteers and users contribute to the direction and draft objectives for their work in line with the overall direction.

Why have a Business Plan?

- To raise finance
- To encourage assistance
- To improve performance
- To have sense of direction

Sources for a Business Plan

- What has been done before
- Colleagues
- Records
- Policies/Industry Standards
- Other organisations
- Books, Training Courses
-

What makes a good Business Plan?

- Well researched
- Attractive
- Understandable
- Realistic
- Well Supported
- Convincing

Structure

Aims

What is the overall goal of the project? This is the mission statement of the project! It is the vision and purpose of the project.

Objectives

What is it that you hope to achieve? This differs from the aims in that you objectives are more specified they need to be SMART

- Specific - For example, relating to a precise target group.
- Measurable - Linked to clear targets or milestones.
- Achievable - Well-matched to the time, skills and money available to the partners who will deliver it.
- Realistic - Well-matched to the capacity of the target group and the environment .
- Time-based - Including a clear timetable, which states when each target will be met.

Evidence of need

- Summarise the relevant facts and evidence. This should be kept brief and should be as localised as possible. May be useful to link it to statutory

responsibilities and how the project will work alongside other agencies

Detailed Budget

- Looking at Cost Centre Management
- Forecasting

Strategies

- What resources need to be applied to achieve the objectives. A strategy should;-
- Link the projects overall vision and what it does in practice
- Setting priorities - strategy should answer the question - How can we best use our resources to make the greatest impact?
- Set out a clear direction for the project to follow

Tactics

- (Plan, time and events). Which elements of the plan are the most appropriate? Set out a detailed plan including a time frame for all elements.

Summary of Objectives for a Business Plan

- To clarify long term aims
- To relate all activities to aims
- To develop realistic future strategies
- To make measurable plans
- To link future developments to internal change
- To convince financial backers that the organisation is credible.

This is one in a series of *Information Sheets* produced by the Development Support Service. For more information about any of the topics covered in this *Information Sheet*, or to find out how the Development Support Officer can help your group, please contact:

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