

Business Plan Outline

1. Cover Sheet
 - a. Company name and/or logo
 - b. Business plan and year
 - c. Names (perhaps with phone numbers)
2. Sign-up Page
3. Executive Summary
 - a. Two pages
 - b. What's in it for the reader?
 - c. How many different readers?
4. Table of Contents
 - a. Make it detailed enough to be useful
 - b. Should be about one heading per page of text
5. Major Assumptions
 - a. Economy
 - b. Suppliers
 - c. Consumers
 - d. Competition
6. History Section
 - a. Two pages maximum
 - b. Focus on relationship to plans
 - c. Major events
7. Philosophy
8. Definition of the Business
 - a. Usually less than one page
 - b. What business(es) are we in?
 - c. What is the glue holding us together?

9. Definition of the Market
 - a. Consider buyers and sellers
 - b. Can use strategic factors analysis to help describe sellers (competitive analysis)
 - c. Describe buyers demographically, psychographically, and by distribution channel
10. Description of Products or Services
 - a. Most emphasis on new ones
 - b. Advertising information sometimes helpful
 - c. No catalogs
11. Management Structure
 - a. Show that you have the right people
 - b. Quarter-page résumés
 - c. Relate résumés to goals
12. Strategies, Objectives, Goals, and Tactics
 - a. Longest section of the plan
 - b. Strategies lead to objectives
 - c. Do not forget operational objectives
 - d. Objectives lead to goals
 - e. Format to reduce writing and ease reading
13. Financial Data
 - a. This is the plan translated to dollars
 - b. Budgets
 - Capital items
 - Cash flow
 - Revenue and expense
 - c. Cost-volume-profit analysis
14. Appendices
 - a. Supporting detail
 - b. Making it work
 - c. Not a dumping ground for superfluous pages