

Business Plan Workbook

Developed by the staff of the

Niagara Small Business
Development Center @
SUNY Niagara

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Call today for assistance with your business plan



Funded in part through a Cooperative Agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration. All opinions, conclusions or recommendations expressed are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the SBA.

SWOT Analysis – Planning exercise

Writing a business plan is an excellent opportunity to look at your business warts and all. It is not typically included in a formal loan proposal but is an important exercise to complete. The SWOT should be specific. Avoid grey areas.

Strengths: Internal Assets

- ✓ What does your business do better than your competitors? What is it known for?
- ✓ What resources have you accumulated?
- ✓ Do you have key employees? Suppliers? Distributors? Are they HAPPY with you?
- ✓ What is your reputation? Is it positive and trustworthy?
- ✓ How do your strengths differentiate you from your competitors?

Weaknesses: Internal issues

- ✓ What are the business' faults? How are you addressing these problems?
- ✓ What mistakes have you made so far? How did you correct them?
- ✓ Is your brand name weak?
- ✓ Are your distribution channels limited?
- ✓ Are your expenses running higher than expected?
- ✓ Are your competitors aware of your weaknesses and taking advantage of them?

Opportunities: External prospects

- ✓ How can the business capitalize on the strengths and improve the weaknesses?
- ✓ What are the external opportunities for business growth?
- ✓ How can you better serve existing customers?
- ✓ Are there any technologies you need to tap into?
- ✓ Are you capitalizing on your competitors' weaknesses?

Threats: External forces

- ✓ What issues / problems does the business face now and in the future? How will you address them?
- ✓ What is going on in the industry that could help or harm your business?
- ✓ What is going on in the marketplace that could help or harm your business?
- ✓ Are your products / services vulnerable to changing consumer tastes?
- ✓ Are the regulations governing your industry subject to change?
- ✓ Can threats be turned into opportunities?
- ✓ Are you aware of what your competitors are doing in the marketplace?

**Sample
Table of Contents**
[Completed when the full plan is completed]

Page Nos.

Statement of Cash Sources and Uses	
Executive Summary	
Business Description.....	
Personal History	
Personal Finances.....	
Management Structure/ Professional Advisors.....	
Marketing Plan.....	
SWOT Analysis (<i>optional</i>)	
Financial Statements and Income Tax Returns (applicable to existing businesses)	

Pro Forma Financial Statements - *The Niagara SBDC has a spreadsheet to help complete this section.*

Pro Forma Income Statement – Year One	
Pro Forma Cash Flow Statement – Year One	
Pro Forma Income Statement - Three Years.....	
Pro Forma Cash Flow Statement – Three Years.....	
Pro Forma Balance Sheet – Three Years	
Assumptions to Pro Forma Statements	

Exhibits: *Supplemental materials (asset list, resumes, marketing items, diagrams, business certificate...)*

Exhibit 1:	
Exhibit 2:	
Exhibit 3:	

Statement of Cash Sources and Uses

Start-Up (Expansion) Expenses

- This is also known as the Funding Request. It spells out how much money you need, where it will be coming from, and how you will be spending it.
- This is a good time to determine exactly how much money you will need to get the business off on the right foot or to take it to the next level. You also need to determine how much of your own money will be invested and what you'll need to finance.

Sources and uses of the funding are as follows:

Cash Sources

Owner Investment	_____
Loan	_____
Total	_____

Please note that grants were not included in the above section as a source. There is very little FREE MONEY for For-Profit businesses. Beware of scams!

Cash Uses

Security Deposit	_____
Decorating Remodeling	_____
Fixtures, Equipment	_____
Installing Fixtures, Equip	_____
Services, Supplies	_____
Beginning Inventory Cost	_____
Legal/Professional Fees	_____
Licenses/Permits	_____
Advertising for Opening	_____
Sign	_____
Misc. Expenses	_____
Website development	_____
Working Capital	_____
Total	_____

These two Totals must be equal. You must have enough cash to be able to meet your start-up (expansion) needs.

We hope you have enjoyed this introduction to our Business Plan Workbook.

The complete version of this guide is provided to clients of the Niagara Small Business Development Center at no charge.

To become a client at our Niagara center, we ask that you complete this form at the following link:

<https://nysbdc.ecenterdirect.com//signup?centerid=21>

An advisor will contact you to set up an appointment to help you complete your Business Plan.

We can also be reached at 716-210-2515 or email: sbdc@niagaracc.suny.edu

We look forward to working with you.