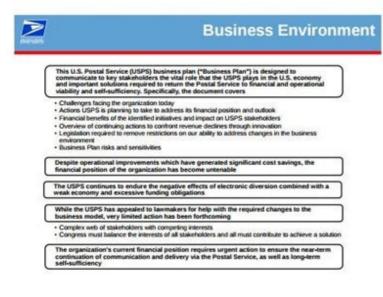




**5 year business plan template pdf** 



## SWOT Analysis

| METRICS       | POINT 1  | POINT 2   |
|---------------|--|---|
| Strengths     | Specializes in diverse industries  | Has effective manpower<br>management skills                                       |
| Weaknesses    | Lacks technological<br>developments  | Lacks effective marketing<br>strategies   |
| Opportunities | Increasing number of small to<br>large scale businesses opening in<br>the area | Passing of favorable laws<br>applicable to recruitment<br>agencies                |
| Threats       | Increasing number of competitors   | Passing of strict administrative<br>requirements in renewing<br>business licenses |

## Marketing Plan

Phase 1 of the marketing plan will be focused on email and social media marketing.

Phase 2 of the marketing plan will be focused on targeting small-medium scale businesses through television and print advertising.

## **Operational Plan**

| ACTION                                | ASSIGNED TO | END DATE   |  |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|------------|--|
| Review employment forms and contracts | Layla Perex | March 2052 |  |
| Streamline recruitment processes      | Max Millan  | March 2054 |  |

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## THE 5-YEAR PLAN

|     | Jan   | Feb                 | March   | April  | May  | Juna   | July  | August   | 540                           | Oct | Nev  | Dec   |
|-----|-------|---------------------|---|--|--|--|---|--|-------------------------------|-----|--|---|
| 103 |       |                     |   | Beginning<br>AAA<br>proposed                                 |  |  |   | Beginning<br>AAS<br>proposed                               | 22 Corf<br>T. Grant           |     | 1 18/65-<br>Gran<br>1 37955<br>3 55862<br>23 AAA | BL 79%<br>Gendens<br>Saf                                |
| 84  | 1 N8P | 23 Cont T.<br>Grant | 4-7<br>AAS<br>8 Diss. T.<br>Gront             | Properd  | 18<br>Seafer<br>17<br>Drelm<br>81<br>Drelm | 1 SHA<br>14 Prolim<br>29 JRN<br>Genders<br>2Hd | 9 Prelin<br>12-6/30<br>Act in 7<br>(15-297) | 6 AAS<br>proped<br>10 Ord<br>22 Move<br>31 Book<br>Ot Faci | Carl T.<br>Gront              |     | 18<br>AAUW<br>17-21<br>AAA<br>SPO                | Depinning<br>DRH<br>Fellowahip<br>10 SSRC<br>(Security) |
| 65  |       | 1<br>Guggenheim     | B1-4/B<br>AAS<br>Chicago<br>Corf. T.<br>grant | Sepinning<br>Diss.<br>Comp<br>Followship<br>JAAA<br>proposed |  |  |   | Beginning<br>AAS<br>proposed                               | 3PN<br>Genders<br>Publication |     | 00-12/4<br>AAADC                                 |   |
| 106 |       |                     |   | Beginning<br>AAA<br>proposed<br>6-9 AAS<br>SFO               |  |  |   | Beginning<br>AAS<br>proposed                               |                               |     |  |   |
| 07  |       |                     | 22-25<br>AA5<br>BishoA                        | Beginning<br>AAA<br>proposal                                 | -  | Diss.<br>Defensel                              |   | Beginning<br>AAS<br>proposal                               |                               |     |  | -   |



| Blue Water LLC<br>5 Year Operating Projections                                   |                    |                       |                       |                       |                  |  |  |
|--|--------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------|--|--|
|  | Year 1             | Year 2                | Year 3                | Year 4                | Year 5           |  |  |
| Sales:   |                    |                       |                       |                       |                  |  |  |
| Feed   | \$ 1,706,404       | \$ 1,774,743          | \$ 1,845,733          | \$ 1,919,562          | \$ 1,996,34      |  |  |
| Beverage   | \$\$2,045          | \$74,127              | \$97,092              | 620,976               | 645,01           |  |  |
| TOTAL SALES  | 2,250,529          | 2,348,879             | 2,442,825             | 2,540,530             | 2,642,15         |  |  |
| Cost of Sales:   |                    |                       |                       |                       |                  |  |  |
| fand<br>Reveraas   | 546,075<br>150,155 | 567,918 156,162       | 590,635<br>162,409    | 614,260<br>160,905    | 638,83<br>175,66 |  |  |
| TOTAL COST OF SALES  | 696,220            | 724,000               | 752,044               | 703,165               | 814,49           |  |  |
| Gross Profit   | 1,562,299          | 1,624,799             | 1,609,701             | 1,757,373             | 1,827,66         |  |  |
| Payroll:   |                    |                       |                       |                       |                  |  |  |
| Salariar B.Wagar   | \$14,311           | 607,604               | 631,991               | 657,271               | 613,56           |  |  |
| Emplayee Benefity  | 133,043            | 138,364               | 143,899               | 149,655               | 155,64           |  |  |
| TOTAL PAYROLL  | 717,354            | 745,048               | 775,890               | \$96,926              | \$39,20          |  |  |
| PRIME COST   | 1,413,543          | 1,470,128             | 1,528,934             | 1,590,091             | 1,453,495        |  |  |
| Other Controllable Expenses:   |                    |                       |                       |                       |                  |  |  |
| Direct Operating Expenses:   | 104,197            | 107,323               | 110,543               | 113,854               | 117.27           |  |  |
| Muric & Entertainment  | 3,000              | 3,699                 | 3,103                 | 3,270                 | 3,37             |  |  |
| Markating  | 26,000             | 37,000                | 30,992                | 39,338                | 40,51            |  |  |
| Udibilar   | \$1,000            | \$2,530               | \$4,506               | 55,729                | 57,40            |  |  |
| General & Administrative Expenses<br>Receive & Maintenance                       | 116,641 21,600     | 120,141<br>22,248     | 123,745 22,915        | \$27,457<br>23,603    | 101,21           |  |  |
| TOTAL OTHER CONTROLLABLE ENP.  | 232,439            | 342,412               | 352,604               | 242,245               | 374,16           |  |  |
| CONTROLLABLE PROFIT  | 512,507            | 534,334               | 561,207               | 5\$7,1\$2             | 614,302          |  |  |
|  |                    |                       |                       |                       |                  |  |  |
| Occupancy Costs & Depreciation   |                    |                       |                       |                       |                  |  |  |
| Occupancy Carly<br>Depreciation & Americation                                    | 196,752 84,028     | 200,646 84,038        | 204,659<br>84,038     | 200,752 84,038        | 212,92           |  |  |
| 이렇게 가지 않아요? 영문가 못 생각하는 것 같아요.  |                    | 64,020                | 04,000                |                       |                  |  |  |
| Other (Income) Expenses  |                    |                       |                       |                       |                  |  |  |
| Other (Income)<br>Interest Expanse   | (4,000) \$2,547    | F (4,944)<br># 48,729 | # (5,092)<br># 44,574 | F (5,245)<br># 40,015 | F 35,22          |  |  |
| Other Expense  | 2,400              | 2,472                 | 2,546                 | 2,623                 | 2,74             |  |  |
| NET INCOME BEFORE INCOME TAXES   |                    | 205,398               | 230,482               | 256,930               | 284,81           |  |  |
| ADD BACK-  |                    |                       |                       |                       |                  |  |  |
|  |                    |                       |                       |                       |                  |  |  |
| Depreciation & Americation   | \$4,033            | 84,838                | \$4,038               | \$4,038               | 84,03            |  |  |
| DEDUCT:<br>Lean Principal Payments   | (46,117)           | (49,945)              | (\$4,091)             | (\$1,510)             | (6),44           |  |  |
| CASH FLOV BEFORE INCOME TAXES  | 219,530            | 239,491               | 260,430               | 282,388               | 305,41           |  |  |
| CASH FLOW BEFORE INCOME TAXES  | 213,530            | 233,431               | 260,430               | 202,300               | 305,41           |  |  |
| PROJECTED INVESTMENT RETURNS   |                    |                       |                       |                       |                  |  |  |
| Distributable Cash Flow Percent *  | 70%                | 80%                   | 90%                   | 90%                   | 905              |  |  |
| Distributable Cash Flow  | \$153,671          | \$191,593             | \$234,387             | \$254,149             | \$274,871        |  |  |
| Cash Distribution:   |                    |                       |                       |                       |                  |  |  |
| Investment Partner/Member (LLC)  | \$115,253          | \$143,695             | \$145,921             | \$127,075             | \$137,435        |  |  |
| Operating Partner/Member (LLC)   | \$38,418           | \$47,898              | \$88,466              | \$127,075             | \$137,435        |  |  |
|  | 0.000              |                       |                       |                       |                  |  |  |
| Investment Partner/Member (LLC) Returns:   |                    |                       |                       |                       |                  |  |  |
| Net Investment After Cash Distributions - End of Year                            |                    | \$116,052             | \$0                   | \$0                   | \$0              |  |  |
| Payback Period   | 2.5                | yrs.                  |                       |                       |                  |  |  |
| Annual Return on Investment (before tax)   | 30.7%              | 38.3%                 | 38.9%                 | 33.9%                 | 36.62            |  |  |
| Average Annual Return on Investment  | 35.7%              |                       |                       |                       |                  |  |  |
| " It may be advantageous to retain a portion of the cash f                       | low in the busine  | os for working cap    | ital, capital improv  | rement reperved or    | other reasons.   |  |  |
|  |                    |                       |                       |                       | 1                |  |  |
| NVESTMENT ASSUMPTIONS  |                    |                       |                       |                       |                  |  |  |
|  | -                  |                       |                       |                       |                  |  |  |
| Total Equity Investment  | \$400,000          |                       |                       |                       |                  |  |  |
| Total Equity Investment<br>Operating Partner/Member (LLC)                        |                    |                       |                       |                       |                  |  |  |
| Total Equity Investment<br>Operating Partner/Member (LLC)<br>Equity Contribution | \$25.000           |                       |                       |                       |                  |  |  |
| Total Equity Investment<br>Operating Partner/Member (LLC)                        |                    |                       |                       |                       |                  |  |  |

lavestor "Payback" is the point at which the investor recoups 1002 of their Equity Contribution.

\$375,000 75× 50×

You must present and justify ongoing and changing resource requirements, marketing decisions, financial projections, production demands, and personnel needs in logical and convincing fashion. His company is doing very well and has made the transition from a technology-driven to a market-driven company. You will save valuable time and energy this way and improve your chances of winning investors and customers. They also receive written evaluations of the oral presentation from audience members. When he viewed the project in such dispassionate terms, the entrepreneur finally agreed and gave it up. Without a plan furnished in advance, many investor groups won't even grant an interview. Second, the founders might offer the product to a few potential customers at a substantial price discount if they paid part of the cost—say one-third—up front so that the company could build it. In fact, the managers had grossly—and carelessly—understated some important costs. Investors are looking for evidence that the principals treat their own property with care—and will likewise treat the investment carefully. Drawing on their own experiences and those of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Enterprise Forum, the authors show entrepreneurs how to write convincing and winning businessates. plans. In some cases, the panelists suggest a completely new direction. They neglect the constituencies that give the venture its financial viability—the market and the investors would need to own a bit less than one-third. For example, what proprietary aspects are there to the product or service? Emphasize the Market Investors want to put their money into market-driven companies. You've got a great idea for a new product or service—how can you persuade investors to support it? In their business plan, they listed a dozen types of specialized engineering services and estimated their annual sales and profit growth at 20%. Offer the product to a few potential investors expect the plan to look good, but not too good; to be the right length; to clearly and cisely explain early on all aspects of the company's business; and not to contain bad grammar and typographical or spelling errors. An interested investor wants to be able to contact a company or in some aspect of the plan. (Large corporations that invest in new enterprises may not sell their holdings if they're committed to integrating the venture into their organizations and realizing long-term gains from income.) Venture capital firms usually wish to liquidate their investments in small companies in three to seven years so as to pay gains while they generate funds for investment in new ventures. Each panelist reviews the written business plan in advance of the sessions. Another panelist asked, "How long does it take your product to pay for itself in decreased production costs?" The presenter immediately responded, "Six months." The second panelist replied, "That's the most important thing you've said tonight." The venture capitalist quickly reversed his original opinion. Some entrepreneurs think that the financials are the business plan. The entrepreneur explained that he wanted to continually develop new products in his field. Before considering investors' concerns in evaluating business plans, you will find it worth your while to gauge who your potential investors might be. The market, including both existing and prospective clients, customers, and users of the planned product or service. Organized under the auspices of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Alumni Association in 1978, the MIT Enterprise Forum offers businesses at a critical stage of development an opportunity to obtain counsel from a panel of experts on steps to take to achieve their goals. The first panelist to react to the business plan—a partner in a venture capital firm—was completely negative about the company's prospects for obtaining investment funds because, he stated, its market was in a depressed industry. In evaluating the risk of a new and growing venture, they assess the status of the product and the management team. This reading identifies and evaluates those considerations and explains how business plans can be written to satisfy them. They may cover the plan with a smog of numbers. Establish market interest. While some companies have achieved multi-million-dollar sales in just a few years, they are vulnerable to declines of similar proportions from competitors. Length A business plan should be no more than 40 pages long. Many who see their ventures in terms of a lifetime commitment expect that anyone else who gets involved will feel the same. Too often, executives think "If we're smart, we'll be in good shape." Investors know that there's no guarantee a new company will get any business, regardless of market size. You can install it experimentally with a potential user to whom you will sell it at or below cost in return for information on its benefits and an agreement to talk to sales prospects or investors. The MIT panel advised the entrepreneur to recast his business plan so that it emphasized the short payback period and played down the self-serving discussion about product innovation. Such marketing research should also show the nature of the industry. Show when and how investors may liquidate their holdings. Take the hypothetical case of a well-developed company expected to yield 35% annually He had documented interest by several producers and was looking for money to complete development and begin production. Write your business plans by looking inward at what suits you best. In one MIT Enterprise Forum presentation, a management team proposing to manufacture and market scientific instruments forecast a net income after taxes of 25% of sales during the fourth and fifth years following investment. Inside the front cover should be a well-designed title page on which the cover information is repeated and, in an upper or a lower corner, the legend "Copy number" " provided. If your equipment is useful only to growers with 50 acres or more, then you need to determine how many growers have farms of that size, that is, how many are minor producers with only an acre or two of apple trees. Based on a conventional multiple for acquisitions of ten times earnings, the company would be worth \$15 million in five years. Investors' primary considerations are: Cashing out Entrepreneurs frequently do not understand why investors have a short attention span. Even though its subject is a moving target, the plan must detail the company's or the project's present status, current needs, and expected future. surprising that managers sometimes overlook the fundamentals. One entrepreneur who believed in the promise of his scientific-instruments company faced difficult marketing problems because the product was highly specialized and had, at best, few customers. Find out the Market's Interest Calculating the user's benefit is only the first step. You must convincingly project the rate of acceptance for the product or service—and the rate at which it is likely to be sold. Most of us know that for new and growing private companies, investors may be professional venture capitalists and wealthy individuals. Provide evidence that customers are intrigued by your claims about the benefits of the new product or service: Let some customers use a product prototype; then get written evaluations. Address Investor Needs Cashing out. Surprisingly, a large number of business plans are submitted to potential investors without return addresses or phone numbers. The Price Once investors understand a company qualitatively, they can begin to do some quantitative analysis. The Idea in Practice Emphasize Market interest and document your claims. Because they had not convincingly demonstrated why potential customers would buy the services or how investors would make an adequate return (or when and how they could cash out), their business plan lacked the credibility necessary for raising the investment funds needed. He said he would back a company in almost any industry if it could prove such an important user benefit—and emphasize it in its sales approach. Because small, fast-growing companies have little cash available for dividends, the main way investors can profit is from the sale of their holdings, either when the company goes public or is sold to another business. At one extreme is a single entrepreneur with an unproven idea. Will the proceeds provide investors with a return on invested capital commensurate with the investment risk—in the range of 35% to 60%, compounded and adjusted for inflation? If this is answered in the context of the market and investors, the result will be more effective than if you deal with them in terms of your own wishes. A plastic spiral binding together a pair of cover sheets of a single color provides both a neat appearance and sufficient strength to withstand the handling of a number of people without damage. The idea of a master document whose blanks executives can merely fill in-much in the way lawyers use sample wills or real estate agreements-is appealing but unrealistic. The first draft will likely exceed that, but editing should produce a final version that fits within the 40-page ideal. The price. Adherence to this length forces entrepreneurs to sharpen their ideas and results in a document likely to hold investors' attention. They tend to be from one to ten years old and in need of expansion capital. We have provided some presentation guidelines in the insert called "Packaging Is Important." A business plan gives financiers their first impressions of a company and its principals. Venture capital appreciation. At the more desirable extreme is a venture that has an accepted product in a proven market and a competent and fully staffed management team. Presenters have the opportunity to respond to the evaluations and suggestions offered. While admitting his purpose was admirable, the panel unanimously advised him to bring his spending into line with the industry's. You can obtain letters from users even if the product is only in prototype form. The expected sales and profit growth rates of 20% could not provide the necessary return unless the founders gave up a substantial share of the company. The company could not only find out whether potential buyers existed but also demonstrate the product to potential investors in real-life installations. The business plan must reflect clear positive responses of customer prospects to the question "Having heard our pitch, will you buy?" Without them, an investment usually won't be made. In some cases, they don't do enough work on their financials and rely on figures that are so skimpy or overoptimistic that anyone who has read more than a dozen business plans quickly sees through them. Among the format issues we think most important are the following: Appearance The binding and printing must not be sloppy; neither should the presentation be too lavish. A panelist who had analyzed comparable organic chemical suppliers asked why the company's R&D spending was so much higher than the industry average of 5% of gross revenues. Even so, most of the customers are well known and while they may act slowly, they have the buying power that makes the wait worthwhile. When investors evaluate a business plan, they consider not only whether to get in but also how and when to get out. At an MIT Enterprise Forum session an entrepreneur spent the bulk of his 20-minute presentation period extolling the virtues of his company's product—an instrument to control certain aspects of the production process in the textile industry. Officials of five major ventures reach 50% of their financial goals. But the executives did not determine which of the proposed dozen services their potential clients really needed and which would be most profitable. But one part of the investor constituency is often overlooked in the planning process—the founders of new and growing enterprises. Make It Happen The only way to tend to your needs is to satisfy those of the market and the investors—unless you are wealthy enough to furnish your own capital to finance the venture and test out the pet product or service. Remember that investors view a plan as a distillation of the objectives and its executives. How will you provide quality control? Give realistic, five-year forecasts of profitability. Too many entrepreneurs, though, continue to believe that if they build and the security of the business and its executives. better mousetrap, the world will beat a path to their door. This is a tall order for a two-page summary, but it will either sell investors on reading the rest of the plan or convince them to forget the whole thing. You can make a convincing case for the existence of a good market by demonstrating user benefit, identifying marketplace interest, and documenting market claims. Use "reference installations"—statements from initial users, sales reps, distributors, and would-be customers who have seen the product demonstrated. One example of this danger surfaced in a business issues. The executives wondered how to get around the problem. While a few industries such as computer software average such high profits, the scientific instruments business is so competitive, panelists noted, that expecting such margins is unrealistic. possible and analyzing product sensitivity, completely turn off many investors. For example, one entrepreneur's software company sought \$1.5 million to expand. Only a well-conceived and well-packaged plan can win the necessary investment and support for your idea. Investors want to know when they can cash out and how good the financial projections are. The panel pointed out that anywhere from 11 million to 14 million of such so-called small businesses were really sole proprietorships or part-time businesses. 2. Don't skimp on the numbers, get overly optimistic about them, or blanket your plan with a smog of figures covering every possible variation. Document Your Claims Having established a market interest, you must use carefully analyzed data to support your assertions about the market and the growth rate of sales and profits. In monthly evening sessions the forum evaluates the business plans of companies accepted for presentation during 60- to 90-minute segments in which no holds are barred. For a new product, nothing succeeds as well as letters of support and appreciation from some significant potential customers, along with "reference installations." You can use such third-party statements—from would-be customers, along with "reference installations." sound market that needs your product or service. To make a convincing case for a rich return, get a product in the hands of representative customers—and demonstrate substantial market interest. Also important is satisfying the needs of marketers and investors. After allowing for the projection discount factor, investors may postulate that a company will have \$20 million annual revenues after five years and a net profit of \$1.5 million. A compelling plan accurately reflects the viewpoints of your three key constituencies: the market, potential investors, and the producer (the entrepreneur or inventor of the new offering). For example, a saving of \$10,000 per year in chemical use may be significant to a modest company but unimportant to a Du Pont or a Monsanto. Besides helping entrepreneurs keep track of plans in circulation, holding down the number of full-time small businesses with employees was actually between 3 million and 6 million and represented a real potential market far beneath the company's original projections—and prospects. If this payback period is less than two years, it is a probable purchase; beyond three years, it is a probable order to decide whether the opportunity for reward some years down the road truly justifies the risk early on. Once executives make a convincing case for their market penetration, they will commit and at what price. The panelists advised them to take their financial estimates back to the drawing board and before approaching investors to consult financial professionals. Making sound projections. An entrepreneur must also give evidence that customers are intrigued with the user's benefit claims and that they like the product or service. Entrepreneurs can make this material available to investors during the investigative period after the initial expression of interest. Business plans often do not show when and how investors may liquidate their holdings. Marketers want to see evidence of customer interest and a viable market. grow fast, but they can decline rapidly when competition stiffens. When an entrepreneur looks at an idea objectively rather than through rose-colored glasses, the decision whether to invest may change. By neglecting to examine these issues closely, they ignored the possibility that the marketplace might want some services not among the dozen listed. He concluded with some financial projections looking five years down the road. After all, if it paid back the customer's cost in six months, the product would after that time essentially "print money." The venture capitalist knew that instruments, machinery, and services that pay for themselves in less than one year are mandatory purchases for many potential customers. Investors are wary even when financial projections are solidly based on realistic marketing data because fledgling companies nearly always fail to achieve their rosy profit forecasts. They describe the underlying technology or creativity of the proposed product or service in glowing terms and at great length. The farther along an enterprise is in each area, the lower the risk. For corporate ventually went out of business. The Table of Contents After the executive summary include a well-designed table of contents. Investors would want to earn 4.5 times their original investment, before inflation, over a five-year period. 1. In an appendix to the business plan or in a separate volume, you can include letters attesting to the value of the product from experimental customers. Project realistic growth rates at which customers will accept—and buy—your offering. Address Investors' Needs The marketing issues are tied to the satisfaction of investors. Entrepreneurs who become aware of their status with investors and think it inadequate can improve it. Sessions are open to the public and usually draw about 300 people, most of them financiers, business executives, accountants, lawyers, consultants, and others with special interest in emerging companies. From there, assemble a credible sales plan and project plant and staffing needs. But too many plans are written solely from the perspective of the producer. The Cover and Title Page The cover should bear the name of the company, its address and phone number, and the month and year in which the plan is issued. The MIT Enterprise Forum's success at its home base in Cambridge, Massachusetts has led MIT alumni to establish forums in New York, Washington, Houston, Chicago, and Amsterdam, among other cities. Too often, entrepreneurs go to extremes with their numbers. Once you accept the idea that you should satisfy the market and the investors, you face the challenge of organizing your data into a convincing document so that you can sell your venture to investors and customers. A good mousetrap is important, but it's only part of meeting the challenge. Investors want to know that entrepreneurs have thought about how to comply with this desire. The panelists concluded that the entrepreneur would earn only as much financial return as he would have had holding a job during the next three to seven years. In fact, the executives had only considered their own perspective—including the new company's services, organization, and projected results. Even though we might wish it were not so, writing effective business plans is as much an art as it is a science. The business plan admits the entrepreneur to the investment process. If inflation is expected to average 7.5% a year during the five-year period, however, investors would look for a value of \$6.46 million as a reasonable return over five years, or 43% of the company. Have you focused the venture toward a particular market segment, or are you trying to do too much? By deciding to start and manage a business, they are committed to years of hard work and personal sacrifice. Here's how to grab their attention. The number of potential customers is relatively small, and industry acceptance of new products or services is painfully slow, no matter how good the products and services have proven to be. Then each of four panelists—who are venture capitalists, bankers, marketing specialists, successful entrepreneurs, MIT professors, or other experts—spends five to ten minutes assessing the strengths and weaknesses of the plan and the enterprise and suggesting improvements. They agreed that the negotiations that determine the percentage of the company purchased by the investment dollars are affected by this "projection discount factor." The Development Stage All investors wish to reduce their risk. Take the case of five executives seeking financing to establish their own engineering consulting firm. Their plans must reflect such differences and must emphasize appropriate areas and deemphasize minor issues. In the same way, an entrepreneur might offer a proposed new service at a discount to initial customers as a prototype if the customers agreed to serve as references in marketing the panelists' evaluations, audience members can ask questions and offer comments. First, the founders might allow a few customers to use the product and the extent of their interest when it became available. But few businesses can make a convincing case for such a rich return if they do not already have a product in the hands of some representative customers. On the downside, he might wind up with much less in exchange for larger headaches. A stapled compilation of photocopied pages usually looks amateurish, while bookbinding with typeset pages may arouse concern about excessive and inappropriate spending. Investors see such financial forecasts as yardsticks against which to judge future performance. Unless the founder has a magnificent track record, such a venture's chance of eventual success and financial return was quite slim. We believe that business plans must deal convincingly with marketing and investor considerations. Dealing with the investor's perspective was important because—for a new venture, at least—backers seek a return of 40% to 60% on their capital, compounded annually. Show the User's Benefit It's easy even for experts to overlook this basic notion. He reasoned that he could have 170,000 customers if he penetrated even 1% of the market of 17 million small enterprises in the United States. At the other end of the industrial spectrum are extremely fast-growing and fast-changing operations such as franchised weight-loss clinics and computer software companies. Sometimes bigger is not better. (The entrepreneur doesn't make the written plan available to the audience.) These monthly sessions are held primarily for companies that have advanced beyond the start-up stage. A realistic businesses, and which size is most appropriate to the offered products or services. In other words, form as well as content is important, and investors know that good content and vice versa. Now use data to support your assertions about potential growth rates of sales and profits. One customary way is to calculate the company's value on the basis of the results expected in the fifth year following investment. The Executive Summary The two pages immediately following the title page should concisely explain the company's current status, its products or services, the benefits to customers, the amount of financing needed, and how investors will benefit. To figure out how much to invest in your offering, investors calculate your company's value on the basis of results expected five years after they invest. The producer, whether the entrepreneur or the inventor. One executive of a smaller company had put together a prototype of a device that enables personal computers to handle telephone messages. The producer, whether the entrepreneur or the inventor. far more important than its attractiveness or technical features. A version of this article appeared in the May 1985 issue of Harvard Business is most likely to win investment funds at the lowest costs. Flashy PowerPoint slides aren't enough; you need a business plan. Moreover, they failed to indicate the price of new shares or the percentage available to investors. They'll want a 35 to 40% for less mature ventures. Few industries are more conservative than banking and public utilities. Here the problem is reversed. Similarly, in a business plan relating to the sale of certain equipment to apple growers, you must have U.S. Department of Agriculture statistics to discover the number of growers who could use the equipment. We have found that the most important one is the accurate reflection of the viewpoints of three constituencies. And the plan must be outstanding if it is to win investment funds. We have had experience in both evaluating business plans and organizing and observing presentations and investor responses at sessions of the MIT Enterprise Forum. A cookie-cutter, fill-in-the-blanks plan or, worse yet, a computer-generated package, will turn them off. An entrepreneur wanted to sell a service to small businesses. Too many business plans are written solely from the viewpoint of the third constituency—the producer. From this marketing research data, you can begin assembling a credible sales plan and projecting your plant and staff needs. Because risk and reward are closely related, investors believe companies with fully developed products and proven management teams should vield between 35% and 40% on their investment, while those with incomplete products and management teams are expected to bring in 60% annual compounded returns. The panelists advised him to concentrate first on making a prototype and assembling a management team with marketing and financial know-how to complement his product-development expertise. Of course, you must confront other issues before you can convince investors that the enterprise will succeed. Businesses—some of which may have only a prototype product or an idea for a service—appropriately gauge market reaction? These companies must innovate constantly so that potential competitors will be discouraged from entering the marketplace. A comprehensive, carefully thought-out business plan is essential to the success of entrepreneurs and corporate managers. An entrepreneur at an MIT Enterprise Forum session projected R&D spending of about half of gross sales revenues for his specialty chemical venture. Even if the company makes such claims based on fact—as borne out, for example, by evidence of customer interest—they can quickly crumble if the company after five years to determine what percentage they must own to realize their return. An example helps illustrate the potential conflicts. Remember: Bigger isn't necessarily better; e.g., saving \$10,000 per year in chemical use may mean a lot to a modest company but not to a Du Pont. Whether you are starting up a new business, seeking additional capital for existing product lines, or proposing a new activity in a corporate division, you will never face a more challenging writing assignment than the preparation of a business plan. They explained that because he had never before started a company, he needed to show a great deal of visible progress in building his venture to allay investors' concern about his inexperience. This lets you determine whether potential buyers even exist. The problem is that, unless you've got your own capital to finance your venture, the only way you'll get the funding you need is to satisfy the market's and investors' needs. You've established market interest. The final percentage of the company acquired by the investors is, of course, subject to some negotiation, depending on projected earnings and expected inflation. Specify the number of potential customers, the size of their businesses, and the size of their businesses, and the size of their businesses, and the size of their goals, the investors "would need to own the entire company and then some." Making Sound Projections Five-year forecasts of profitability help lay the groundwork for negotiating the amount investors will receive in return for their money. It must describe the company or proposed project accurately and attractively. He needed to demonstrate that customers would buy the product, but the company had exhausted its cash resources and was thus unable to build and sell the item in quantity. For a less mature venture—from which investment would have to \$15 million in five years, with inflation figured at 7.5% annually, net of inflation—a \$1 million investment would have to bring in close to \$15 million in five years, with inflation figured at 7.5% annually. Take the case of a young MIT engineering graduate who appeared at an MIT Enterprise Forum session with written schematics for the improvement of semiconductor-equipment production. When a company wants \$1 million of financing, it should grow to \$4.5 million after five years to satisfy investors. State how you will continually innovate to survive. The investors, whether of financial or other resources. Document your claims. Do they expect to go public, sell the company, or buy the investors out in three to seven years? 3. List each of the business plan's sections and mark the pages for each section.

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