

A well-crafted plan is important for any business, whether you're just getting started or if you have an established business. A plan provides the opportunity to reflect on your business, your goals, and your motivations as a business owner. A plan helps to outline: who (is the business), what (does it provide), when (times, dates), where (market, location), why (you created the business), how (do you provide your products/services) and how much (revenue you hope to bring, and investment funding you might need).

An informal plan is 1-3 pages long and can be used to help support your case when requesting a LiftFund loan. Please provide answers to the questions below:

1. Introduction

Describe who you are, your business name, how much funding you might need, and how the funding will be used to help start or grow your business.

Example: Angela and Jim Beal are owners of Delight, Delight! and are requesting a business loan for \$10,000 from LiftFund that will help purchase a mixer and stovetop for their restaurant.

2. Business Description

- (a) What is the name of your business? Do you have a logo, mission, vision, and/or tagline? If so, please provide.
- (b) What date was the business established? If start-up, what is your projected date?
- (c) Where are you located? Provide the address of your residency and business.
- (d) What legal structure is your business? (DBA, LLC, Sole Proprietor)

Example: Delight, Delight! is a unique confectionary store that brings local candy makers and bakers of sweets together under one space so customers can purchase their products in a single location. Delight, Delight! utilizes a pink and brown color palette, has a logo designed in-house, and their tagline is "Sweets that Satisfy." Their business was established in November 2003 as a DBA in Bexar County and is located at 225 W. Poplar (commercial).

3. Management and Operations

- (a) Who are the owners?
- (b) Who manages/will manage the business?
- (c) Provide any other key information (advisory board, number of employees, etc.)
- (d) Provide the days/times the location(s) are open, along with any other sales opportunities.

Example: Delight, Delight! is owned by Angela (51%) and Jim Beal (49%). The two manage the inventory and sales equally on a daily basis. Delight, Delight! also has a regional sales team with one employee and an advisory board made up of experts, supporters, and friends to help grow the business. The business has one retail location open Monday-Saturday 9-11 a.m. and an active website where customers can order their treats online. Delight, Delight! also attends farmer markets and trade shows for sales.

4. Products and Services

- (a) List your products and services (attach your menu, brochure, etc.) and include the price for each product and service.
 (b) Provide information or packages that will help determine the cost of goods or services sold.

Example: Delight, Delight! offers a variety of candy items and baked goods created by local artisans. The baked goods include cakes, pies, and small cupcakes sold individually or by the dozen. The cupcakes range in price from \$1.00 to \$2.50. The cakes range in price from \$25 to \$100. The pies range in price from \$8 to \$20.

Example: Delight, Delight! Menu

| Product | Description | Price Range |
|----------|--|------------------|
| Cupcakes | Variety of flavors including traditional (vanilla, chocolate, strawberry, etc.) and deluxe (piña colada, red velvet, etc.) | \$1.00 to \$2.50 |

5. Industry and Competition

- (a) Describe your business's industry (restaurant, entertainment, fitness, cleaning, etc.) and any trends (is there high demand/saturation)?
 (b) Describe what market your business serves (city, region, state, online)
 (c) List your competition.
 (d) Based on the industry and competition, describe how your business is unique and competitive.

Example: Delight, Delight! competes in the baking industry. The peak months for the industry are November, December, and February, although sweets are purchased year round. Delight, Delight! competes in San Antonio's downtown area. Delight, Delight! has direct competitors in the market including Ultimate Cupcake and Sunny Desserts, both located within a 2 mile radius. Delight, Delight! will enter the market as the only business in the area to offer a variety of confectionery sweets, all in one location.

Example: Competition Table

| Business | Location | Products / Services | Price Range |
|-----------------|--------------|--|---|
| Competitor Name | Full Address | List the products and services the business offers | List price ranges for the products and services offered |

6. Customers

- (a) Does your business serve business clients, consumers, or both?
- (b) What does your current customers / potential customers look like (create a profile of who your business serves including lifestyle, disposable income, education level, types of purchases, etc.)

Example: Delight, Delight! appeals to those customers who want to enjoy a sweet treat for themselves or to give as a gift. Their ideal customer base consists of families with children, professionals, and other individuals who have disposable income to spend on unique edible treats. These ideal customers purchase about once a month for different occasions like birthdays, holidays, anniversaries, etc.

7. Marketing and Sales Strategies

- (a) How do you/will you promote your products/services to generate sales?
- (b) What type of advertising/marketing strategies are you using?
- (c) How much do you/will you spend on marketing and sales?

Example: Delight, Delight! creates awareness through Facebook and Twitter by posting pictures and events on a daily basis. Their website displays the variety of products offered, prices, and business hours. They also print flyers that are distributed to local shops and households around the neighborhood. The marketing budget is \$150 per month.

8. Financial Plan

- (a) Provide your business's monthly budget (fixed and variable costs).
- (b) Provide your profits/losses (earnings) for the past 3 years on your income taxes.
- (c) What are your current and past sales and projected monthly sales/revenue? Attach a table with a proper breakdown.
- (d) Provide an example of how you will use any loan funds.

Example: Delight, Delight! spends around \$2,300/month including rent, utilities, insurance, bookkeeping, cost of goods, website maintenance, marketing, and office expenses. The average monthly revenue is \$3,000. The loan amount will help Delight, Delight! purchase a mixer valued at \$4,000 and a stovetop valued at \$6,000.



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