



Checklist from www.planware.org

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Checklist: How **NOT** to Write a Business Plan

See also [How to Write a Business Plan](#)

	How NOT to Write a Business Plan	Check *	Get Help **
1.	Don't include a contents list, don't number any pages and don't follow any consistent approach for section heading etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	See this table of contents and explore the Free-Plan template.
2.	Do write the plan's summary before you write the plan, or, better still, don't include any summary.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Check advice at summary of plan .
3.	Do develop your business strategies and ideas progressively as you write the plan. It will draw readers into the process and make the ending more unexpected !	<input type="checkbox"/>	See developing a business strategy , look at mission, strategies and use the Online Strategic Planner .
4.	Do start the plan with your financial projections - the more detail and tables the better !	<input type="checkbox"/>	Review planning to plan and then decide the length of your plan .
5.	Don't summarize the projections - let readers figure out the full-year totals, profits, cash flows and so on for themselves.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Use PlanWare's Excel-based templates for financial projections to address these problems.
6.	If you include projected balance sheets, make sure that they don't balance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	- ditto -
7.	Don't produce any separate cash flow forecasts, just rename the P&L or income projections.	<input type="checkbox"/>	- ditto -
8.	Do ensure that your financial projections indicate 40% profit margins in the third year. If raising external capital, do explain that the projected return to investors will exceed 100% per annum within three years.	<input type="checkbox"/>	See making financial projections and then look into financial projections and funding . Use Exl-Plan to bring realism to projections.
9.	Do mention in the marketing section that your proposed offering has no competition. This will save you having to do any market analysis.	<input type="checkbox"/>	See how to develop profiles of target market .
10.	Do base the plan's marketing section around a few quotes from research reports that you found on the web.	<input type="checkbox"/>	- ditto -
11.	Don't consider customer behavior, needs or trends unless you wish to present a series of supportive (unresearched) theories that will support your plans.	<input type="checkbox"/>	- ditto -
12.	Do base your sales projections on the presumption that you will gain, at least, a 1%	<input type="checkbox"/>	Take guidance from marketing strategies, sales plans &

	share of the total market and don't bother with any market segmentation.		projections .
13.	Do pad out your sales plan with lots of buzz words like <i>customer-driven, first-to-market, market-led</i> . Do underpin it with a disproportionately small (or large) marketing budget but don't be too explicit as to how, where and when it will be spent.	<input type="checkbox"/>	- ditto -
14.	Don't include any background to your business idea/invention, progress to date or current status.	<input type="checkbox"/>	See how to present background and present status .
15.	Do spend at least ten pages describing your offering - do make this as detailed and technical as possible to impress your readers. Don't mention any benefits as these should be obvious !	<input type="checkbox"/>	Get help describing products/services .
16.	Do anticipate technical breakthroughs and new offerings but don't discuss related costs or risks.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Review technology & R&D .
17.	Do include a 6-8 page CV for yourself but don't worry about building a management team or sorting out operational issues like production, delivery etc. Do make some heroic assumptions about these matters and do pledge to address them at a later date.	<input type="checkbox"/>	See how to present operational plans and describe management & administration issues.
18.	Do spend as little time as possible on the plan but do make sure that it runs to at least sixty pages even if this entails lots of padding and inclusion of superfluous or irrelevant material.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Review the length of a plan and preparing a basic/short plan and check the insights into business planning .
19.	Do use as wide a variety of font types, sizes and colors as possible to add style to your plan and don't bother using a spell checker.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Use the business plan checklist and review the Free-Plan template.
20.	Don't let a qualified outsider see your emerging plan and don't bother with reading over or redrafting.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Use the business plan checklist .

* If you reverse each **Do** and **Don't**, you'll have a useful checklist for preparing a sound business plan. See also the checklist on [How to Write a Business Plan](#).

** See the online [Business Plan Guide](#) and/or download [Free-Plan](#) with its 100-page printable guide and 48-page template for Word.

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