

Business Planning Process Guide

This guide has been designed to help you position Business Planning with your clients.

Ideally, every business should have a Business Plan because it's best business practice.

The Business Plan is set out on one page, with a 90 Day Action Plan on the reverse side. To ensure it remains a one page Business Plan, utilise the Meeting Minutes during the session to record any notes, actions and comments that are not needed in the Plan.

The opportunity to sell

The opportunity to 'sell' may come at any time.

Face to face is by far the best way to sell. When selling to clients, remember that you're coming from the position of expert and you must have the client's best interests at heart. If you're simply trying to sell them something, the client is likely to disengage.

There are four likely opportunities to sell a Business Planning session:

1. At a CCR or Annual Accounts Review Meeting.

It may become evident to the client during a CCR or Annual Accounts Review Meeting that they need a Business Plan if they don't already have one. The questions in the business and lifestyle goals section of the CCR Delivery Notes are set out to position a Business Planning session.

2. Your client requests a Business Plan.

Your client may see your Business Planning service advertised on your website or in your office, or they may have been referred to you by another client.

3. During a coaching session.

Some clients will undertake coaching without having a Business Plan. It's likely to become apparent to the client that they need a Business Plan during the coaching programme. Discuss the specific benefits the client will receive from a Business Plan, then send a proposal once you've gained conceptual agreement.

4. Following an event e.g. 7 Ways to Grow Your Business.

An educational seminar is an effective way of generating Business Planning sales. At the end of the seminar, attendees will tick a box on their evaluation form requesting the service. You'll discuss pricing during the seminar, but you may wish to call to ensure you've gained conceptual agreement prior to sending out the proposal. Be sure to follow up with a tailored proposal within 48 hours of the seminar.

Selling the value

Below are some great points to make when softly selling Business Planning.

Creating your Business Plan is important as you'll:

- Review and set the direction of the business
- Identify, develop and prioritise your key goals
- Develop methods to communicate your business goals and vision with your team
- Develop a template to review actual performance against targets
- Eliminate procrastination

Ask don't tell.

If the client has gone cold or isn't convinced of the value, ask the right questions to re-engage them and show the value. While the questions you ask will depend on the nature of your client's situation, some relevant questions include:

- Do you have a clear set of realistic and measurable goals for your business?
- Do you have clear strategies to achieve your goals?
- Do you review your goals regularly as circumstances change?
- Do you have a clear vision of what you need to do to unlock your potential?
- Do you have a document to measure your progress against?

Identify your client's problems and opportunities.

To help solve your client's problems, you first need to understand what they are. Be certain of what problems will be solved by implementing a Business Plan so you can convey the value to the client. What opportunities could the client harness and what would be the opportunity cost of inaction?

Demonstrate the impact of not having a clear plan for their business. How can they stay ahead of the competition if they don't plan effectively? How can they make decisions for the future when they don't know where they're going?

Close the sale.

Be sure to send the proposal within 48 hours of the discussion at which you agreed to work together.

Attendee & venue selection

At the Marketing / Selling phase, discuss who will be attending the Business Planning session. All owners of the business should attend. Each attendee should complete their own pre-work prior to the session.

The Business Planning session should be conducted in your office or at the client's premises. The session can also be delivered online.

Essential mindsets

Prior to delivering a Business Planning session, ensure that you've watched the following mindset videos, available in the Mindset Tools tab of the portal.

1. Rules of the Game.
2. OARBED.
3. The Identity Iceberg.
4. The Golden Circle.
5. The Partner Alignment Circle.
6. Be Do Have.
7. The Planning Hierarchy.
8. SMART Goals.
9. The Achiever Matrix.

Pre-work

It's essential that all attendees complete their pre-work prior to the session. This will identify potential alignment issues and help the clients prepare for the session.

Follow up any attendees who haven't submitted their pre-work on time, and re-schedule the meeting if they're unable to submit it prior to the session.

The Business Plan

There are 13 key components of the Business Plan. Use the Delivery Notes to work through each component, using the flipchart to brainstorm ideas, then record the agreed text in the Business Plan.

The Business Plan is designed to fit on one page, with the goals section on the back. Utilise the Meeting Minutes to record additional information to ensure the Business Plan only contains concise information.

1. **Purpose.** Why does the business exist?
2. **Vision.** What will the business look like in five years' time?
3. **What we want to achieve.** What do you want the business to provide to you?
4. **Values.** What values do your team members need to hold?
5. **Budget.** How much revenue you need to achieve your goals?
6. **Key Performance Indicators.** What are your relevant KPIs and how should they be measured?
7. **Our ideal client.** Who do you want to work with?
8. **Value proposition (for ideal clients).** Why should your clients choose you over your competitors?
9. **Opportunities.** What areas of opportunity exist in your business and market?
10. **Vulnerabilities.** What vulnerabilities do you need to manage?
11. **Most critical challenge.** How can you best manage this?
12. **Goals / key projects.** What are your 12 month and 90 day goals and key projects?
13. **Actions to achieve goals.** What actions need to be completed to achieve your goals?

The four hour Business Planning session

Session preparation:

1. Review the following in preparation for the Business Planning session with your client:
 - Client's completed pre-work
 - Business Planning Delivery Notes
 - Latest financial statements and/or management reports
 - Minutes from client's last meeting
2. Note any common themes in each attendee's pre work.

The process:

1. Welcome the attendees, discuss the Thought for the Day, Rules of the Game and expected outcomes from the Business Planning session, then review the agenda.

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1. Review the client's pre-work, discussing any issues they've identified.
2. Refer to the client's completed pre-work throughout the session, using their answers as a starting point to brainstorm each component of the Business Plan.
3. Update the Business Plan with the finalised text for each component.
4. Remember to ensure the goals are SMART and that the client has no more than five 12 month goals.
5. Break the 12 month goals down into 90 day goals and actions to achieve those goals, identifying who is responsible and when they must be completed by.
6. Use the Meeting Minutes to record additional notes and actions throughout the session.
7. Ask attendees to identify three things of value and ask for permission to use these for marketing.
8. After the session, send attendees a copy of:
 - The completed Business Plan
 - Meeting Minutes from the session
 - OARBED mindset
 - Proposal for additional services (if requested)

Advisory, made easy.

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