



Business Plan Guidelines and Format

Date: July 2017

This document provides guidelines for submitting your business plan. Please read.

Business Plan Format for Reference

1. General formatting guidance
 - a. Plans cannot exceed 11 pages
 - b. Plans cannot exceed 2,000 words
 - c. Please limit file sizes. Please keep plans to less than 20 Mb, we sometimes email plans around and this is a limit for most email programs.
2. Put your company name and page number on each page.
3. Submit your plan as in Adobe PDF format. This will ensure that judges will see your document as you intended.
4. Use of charts, tables and diagrams is highly encouraged.

Tips to consider

The following are suggestions for you. These are not prescriptions. Remember you are ultimately in control of how you build your plan, your business and your life.

1. Really understand your customer. Demonstrate that you truly have a good understanding of your customer, particularly through testimonials, interviews, or other real life evidence.
2. Teams should estimate the current and potential size of the whole market and their target market (if different). Generally speaking, a total market smaller than \$100 million and bigger than \$100 billion are causes for concern.
3. Teams should also provide details regarding how they intend to enter the market and ramp-up production.
4. The quality of the management team is key in early stage companies. Therefore, teams should spend time highlighting their management team and the value they provide.
5. Be sure to address your company's competitive advantages and how it is defensible from current and future competitors and imitators. Defensibility means Intellectual Property and/or "Know-how" and could include:
 - a. Patents, Trademarks, Copyrights (if applicable)
 - b. Expert Knowledge and Trade Secrets (if applicable)
 - c. Competitive Advantage such as high barriers to entry

6. Teams should address how capital efficient their business is and how they will use the prize money if awarded. This is important not only for ALP but also for your business as a whole.
7. The 11 page limit prevents the team from submitting a full set of financial statements and projections. Highlight the financial information that you believe is most important and incorporate this into your plan where you see fit.
8. Here are some concepts to consider in your plan:
 - a. Provide an executive summary including the overview of idea/ business, your mission/ objectives, and your keys to success
 - b. Describe your products/ services and key problem to solve
 - c. Demonstrate an expert grasp of your market including a the current size, growth rate, etc. as well as your target customer, competitors (Present and future), and plans around market entry

Questions?

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