

### ***Stahl Center BUSINESS PLAN OUTLINE***

***The Business Plan should use the following outline and address the nine sections as relevant to your business. Not every item may be applicable to your business. Provide information specific to each topic; try not to repeat data from one section in another.***

#### **FORMAT – THE BUSINESS PLAN SHALL FIT THE FOLLOWING GUIDELINES:**

- The narrative of the plan should be at least 10 pages but not longer than 25 pages with no less than 1.5 line spacing.
  - The appendixes, containing supporting documents, should be saved in a PDF with your business plan but does not count toward the 25 page limit.
  - The financials – Start Up Costs and Cash Flow Statements – should be saved in a PDF with your business plan
  - Font size must be a minimum of 10pt. You may use any font you like; however, for ease of readability recommended fonts include: Times New Roman, Arial and Helvetica.
  - Margins must be a minimum of 1 inch not including the header or footer.
  - All pages must have either a header or footer stating the name of the business (note: please do not include team member’s names here).
- Submit your plan in one PDF format the business plan including financials and appendixes.

**Submitting Your Plan** – Include the names of all team members and email addresses in the body of the email. Also include the business name, and if applicable, a web address. Please submit your plan to Kristin Nance, [nancekr@lewisu.edu](mailto:nancekr@lewisu.edu)

**TABLE OF CONTENTS** – List page numbers for each section. All pages must be numbered after the cover page.

#### **1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (ONE TO TWO PAGES)**

- Engages the reader and encourages them to read and learn more about your business.
- Summary of all elements, best written after the plan is complete.

#### **2. BUSINESS DESCRIPTION**

- Business concept and opportunity; why are you likely to be profitable?
- Description of product or service; what exactly will you be paid for?
- Legal structure and legal name; trademarks or copyrights if applicable.
- Major accomplishments to date and/or timeline for future development.
- Financing requirements; startup costs plus an explanation of how you will use the \$5,000 prize.

#### **3. MARKET ANALYSIS AND TARGET MARKET**

Demonstrate that there is a market or opportunity and that your business can capture a share of the market.

- Fully describe your target audience; where are they located, what are their characteristics, are they individuals and/or businesses? If individuals, include demographic information.
- How large is this market, how much money do they spend, what are their buying habits and what is the potential for growth?

#### **4. INDUSTRY ANALYSIS AND TRENDS**

Your business is part of an industry; for instance a clothing store is in the retail apparel industry (make sure not to name a career, but a type of business.)

- Identify and describe your industry, its size and potential for growth
- Identify the opportunities in this industry and identify any barriers to entry
- What are the trends for your industry or type of business? Are there new developments or other forces that will impact your business, such as technology, seasonal factors, regulatory or economic issues?

#### **5. COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS & YOUR STRATEGIC POSITION**

Your competition consists of other businesses that sell similar products or services. They can be small and local or large and nationwide.

- Identify companies serving your potential customers, and their strengths and weaknesses.
- Identify your company's strengths and how you will differentiate your company.
- SWOT Chart (internal Strengths & Weaknesses, external Opportunities & Threats).

#### **6. MARKETING STRATEGY**

- Describe your unique selling proposition - your product's or service's benefits, such as quality, price and customer service.
- How will you promote your product to your target audience – what is your mix of marketing media, public relations, advertising? What will each cost?
- Describe your sales force and structure; describe any strategic partnerships.
- Pricing – what is your policy based on costs, your competition and your target market? This section must tie into Cash Flow statements.

#### **7. OPERATIONS**

This section will vary greatly depending on the type of business, but it must demonstrate you understand the day to day implementation of your business. Provide costs for each item and tie them into your financial statements.

- How will you manufacture your product or provide your service?
- What are the personnel or labor requirements?
- Special equipment or key suppliers, if applicable.

- Space requirements (e.g.: office, factory, retail, home) and associated costs, including renovations.
- Location – description of your desired location and its key features, including zoning requirements.
- How will you get your product or service to your customer; order fulfillment & distribution process.
- Quality controls and/or health and safety controls you will put in place.

## **8. MANAGEMENT AND ORGANIZATION**

- Owner(s): Job descriptions or duties, experience, skills, salaries, and resume(s). What does the owner bring to the business?
- Key personnel, consultants: Job descriptions, salaries, and training requirements.
- List advisors, board of directors, professional relationships (accountant, lawyer) if appropriate.
- Resumes, organization charts may be included in the appendix.

## **9. FINANCIAL PROJECTIONS**

Translate the above details into TWO SETS of realistic financial projections.

### **1. START UP COSTS & FUNDS**

- What are the costs before you open? Include any expenses you have incurred already.
- Source of funds, including prize money, personal savings, family & friends, loans.

### **2. CASH FLOW STATEMENTS for the first two years:**

Year One - Every month for year one.

Year Two - A summary of every quarter.

- Include notes and assumptions explaining financial projections in the SPECS page of the template.
- The mechanics of an excel cash flow spreadsheet will be explained in the Financial Projections class – the class is mandatory. The spreadsheet will be available online after the class takes place.

**APPENDIX** - Supporting documents, resumes, brochures, organizational chart, etc. Be judicious about what to include, the appendix should not exceed an additional 10 pages.

**SUBMIT YOUR PLAN** - Business Plans must be submitted via email to Kristin Nance, [nancekr@lewisu.edu](mailto:nancekr@lewisu.edu) by the deadline.