

Tips for writing a readable business plan

Use the following techniques to help create a clear, readable business plan that covers all essential points.

Paragraphs, headings and subheadings

- Paragraphs should be short and focus on a single point
- Use the headings to organize the information
- Use bold-type and content-specific subheadings to give the reader a quick overview of the content and structure

FOR EXAMPLE:

Heading: **Financial Analysis**

Subheading: **Projection**

Numbers

Consistency is key when using numbers in your business plan.

- List numbers from largest to smallest
- Use “M” for millions and “K” for thousands
- Only compare numbers that need to be compared and that are like for like
- Keep any numbers that are being compared physically close to each other on the page
- Use round numbers to make them easier to understand and work with
- Use averages to provide a summary, totals to give the big picture and percentages to give a sense of proportion, but avoid using all three at once



Checklist

Make time to re-read your business plan. Use the following checklist when you do a final read-through:

- Use straightforward language and short sentences
- Avoid vague terms like “significant,” “considerable,” and “a lot”
- Skip redundancies
- Make sure numbers and words agree
- Is it complete?
- Include all critical information under the correct headings
- Include facts and analysis
- Look for contradictions in your analysis and conclusions
- Complete your analysis first, considering all stages of the comprehensive risk assessment
- Prioritize the risks and mitigants so that you focus on the most important issues
- Edit your document to cut out unnecessary information
- The executive summary is the last element to write. Pull in information from all sections to create it.

