



How To Make A Business Proposal

Many business starters regard the 'writing the business proposal' task merely as a time-consuming daunting task. That is far from the truth. Your proposal represents your business identity, your company, your team, your expertise and your reputation.

For that, you need to do your best to represent your business in the optimal image that it deserves. You should aim to write a business proposal that is elegantly-designed and persuasively-written in order to get anyone who reads it excited to join your team, become a partner or even invest in your business.

Steps to follow prior to writing your business proposal

Before sitting down and writing your awesome proposal, you need to go through some points and structure some vital elements to be able to efficiently write your business proposal.

1. Thorough research

Research your product, the market to which you are introducing your product and thoroughly analyze your findings. You need to spend twice as much time researching and evaluating all aspects about your business and the industry you are entering compared to the time you will actually spend on writing your plan. You need to have complete understanding not only about the current standing of your business in the market but also how much room it has for progress in the future.

2. The purpose of the proposal

From being a road map guiding your business in the future, to attracting investors and clients –which calls for an extra catchy and attractive proposal that is clear and concise- , your business proposal can serve many different purposes. The business proposal is basically a document that describes your business, its sales and marketing strategy, the finances and a projected profit and loss statement. Still, you need to determine the purpose of your plan and tailor it according to the targeted audience.

3. Create your company's profile

The company profile shows at a glance what your business is all about. It includes the background story of your business, the products/services you offer, your target audience, the resources used, how you intent on delivering the client's needs, and what makes your business stand out from others in the same industry.

The company profile is also often found on the company's official website, which helps in attracting possible clients or talents to join the team.

4. Documentation

You would have to document all aspects relating to your business. Document the market research that you conducted, the license agreements, and most importantly, document all financial aspects and details including your expenses, cash flow, and industry projections.

5. Set a marketing plan

You need to plan out a bold and strategic marketing technique that would accomplish the following objectives;

- Introducing your product/service to the market
- Extending the market for your product
- Boosting sales
- Cross-selling (bundling) more than one product together
- Establishing long-term contracts with certain clients
- Enhancing product delivery
- Strategically raising prices without negatively affecting the rate of sales

6. Make your proposal adaptable

As we said before, the business proposal can serve many purposes and be targeted to different people from investors to potential partners to employees and others. You need to know the specific interests of each type of reader and take this into account when writing your proposal for that specific audience.

Therefore, make sure that your plan is adaptable and can be easily modified to suit the different types of reader who will be viewing your plan.

7. The 'Passion' aspect of your plan

A potential investor, client, team member or partner will appreciate the sentimental value of your business. Explain why you care about it and what it means to you. You can discuss things that you learned, problems that you tackled, and your values and aspirations for the business. This shows how much you are passionate and dedicated about your business, and these feelings will in turn be transferred to your audience and will positively affect their decision in supporting your business.

The structure of your business proposal

Now we get down to business and go through how to actually create your business proposal. Anything might seem overwhelming if you don't know how to do it, writing your proposal is no exception. The key to making it a simple process though, is by breaking down your proposal into sections, and knowing exactly the objective of each section to be able to deliver it in the best way.

By working on one section at a time, you'll find yourself at the end the proud owner of a well-written proposal with great content that delivers the intended message.

So let's get started!



1. Cover page

The cover, the entrance, the first thing that is seen by your audience, therefore, it needs to make a good impression. It should ideally be simple, edgy and professionally-designed.

Information to include on the cover:

- Name of the business
- Business reference number(s)
- Name of client and contact to whom you're submitting
- Name of your business and contact information
- Date of the submission of your proposal

2. Table of contents

It helps your reader navigate through the proposal easier, and locate their main points of interest. It also gives your proposal a more structured organized look. If you are creating a digital proposal, make the table of contents clickable so that it would be easier for the reader to visit and revisit certain sections.

3. Executive summary

The executive summary's main objective is to sell your idea or venture. It is a summary of why your product/service is the right one to go for. It basically outlines why prospect clients or investors should choose your business over the competition. Thus, it should highlight the benefits of your business, focus on the features and be persuasive.

4. Approach

How do you and your team propose to approach the client's challenges and solve a given problem? Here, you should be describing your approach and the process involved in details. You would also need to be client/project-specific and not use a generic approach. The client wants to feel that they are truly addressed by reading a proposal that is specifically customized to them and their needs.

5. Deliverables

List what is included in the proposal and what the client would expect to receive from you. Detail your descriptions of your deliverables as much as you can so that your client can see the full picture. Avoid assuming that your client already knows the scope of your services. Providing clear details will help in avoiding any future misunderstandings.

6. Milestones

Never present your project as a bulk, instead, break it down into phases. Outline the events and deliverables of each phase including the time frame, and who is responsible for what, and what will be the outcome after the completion of each milestone.

7. Budget

The most important thing when including the budget is not to sell yourself short. Focus on finding the pricing method that works best for you and your own profitability. Lowest-price businesses rarely find stable clients who would assist them in turning into valuable long-term establishments. Build trust with your new client and convince them of the value that you deliver, and show them that it is all profitable.

8. About Us

This is the heart of your business. Here, you explain who you are, what you do, why you do it, your expertise and your uniqueness. Outline all the services that you offer and not just the one(s) relevant to your client. This might be a chance to cross-sell or open up unexpected opportunities for your business.

Display your team highlighting their experience and strengths as members who will be tackling your client's project with a core value. The values and message of your business makes the client know that you are more reliable and trustworthy.

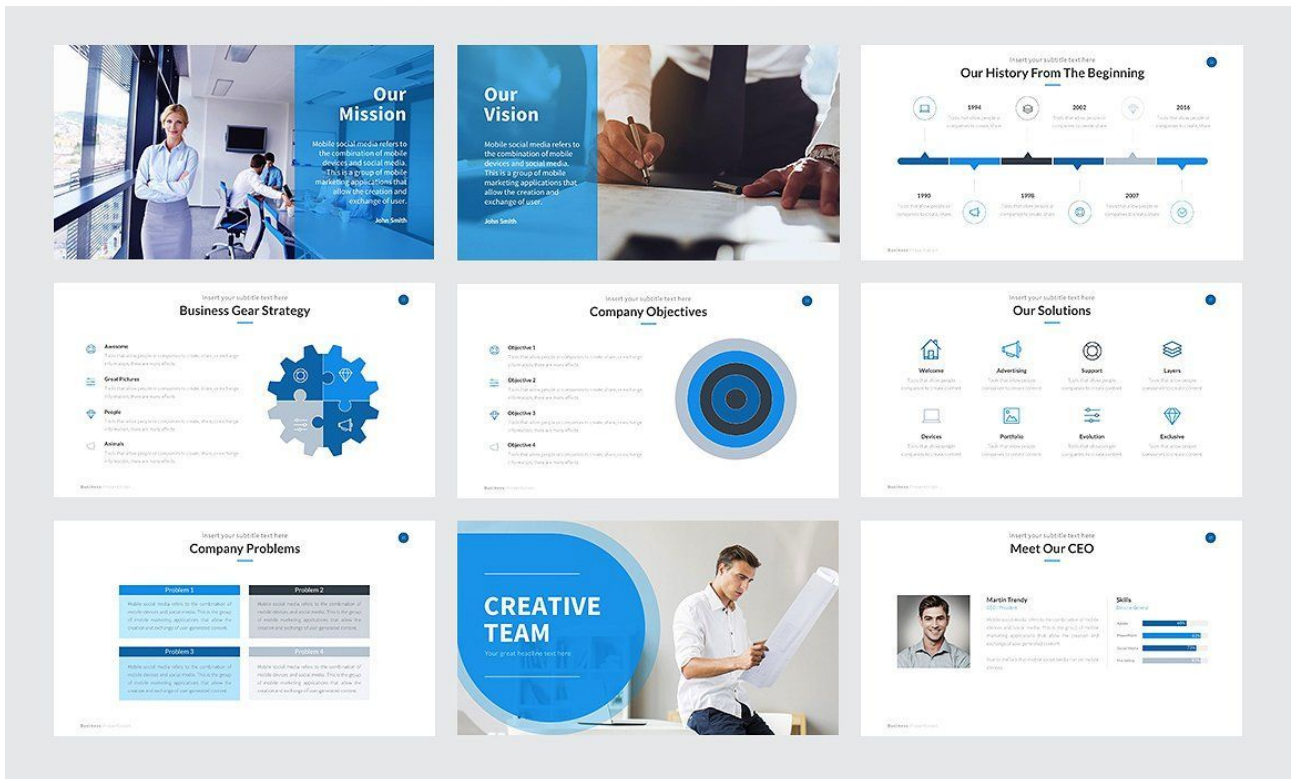
9. Case studies and/or Testimonials

No matter how many times you state that your team is 'experienced' and regardless of stating the previous accomplishments that your business achieved, nothing proves your words and gives you more credibility than a well-written case study to back you up.

It might seem like including case studies and testimonials means more work, but it is work that will pay off. It defines the fine line where on one side your client would be looking at your proposal cautiously and hesitant about your authenticity, while on the other side, upon seeing that you provided genuine proof, he would want to dive all in right away. Case studies and testimonials are basically essential selling tools that separate you from your competition.

Extra add-ins

- People are drawn to **visuals** like magnets! Include pictures of your product or services in your proposal to jazz it up. If you don't have your product 'on hands' yet, then create mock up designs of what it will look like. If your business proposal is a digital one, you can even incorporate videos that show your work. Include graphs and charts whenever you can.



- If you want to make the process easier for your client to get things started once they decide on working with you, consider adding a **"To Get Started"** section. This section gives them specific instructions on what they need to do in order to start working with you. You can add an initial agreement for your client to sign in, either on paper or an e-signature.
- If you need certain items to work on the project, add a section for the **required setup** to ensure that you have the necessary tools to perform the project.

Finally, remember that being given the opportunity to submit your proposal only means that your potential client, investor or partner is genuinely interested in what your business offers. So, have confidence in your business proposal, and bring on your A-game!