

WRITING TIPS FOR BUSINESS PLANS

- Consider your audience: Banker, Investor and (always) Self
- Outline, Outline, Outline...
- Always write in the third person
- Focus on positive themes, discriminators and benefits to your customers/clients
- Don't repeat statement content or duplicate sentences
- Avoid unsupportable claims – use numbers and source claims
- Write to reduce risks – do not use words such as “all,” “every,” “most,” “guarantee”
- Use graphics and charts or tables that provide a visually clear message
- Write to inform and explain, not to impress
- Avoid technical jargon as most reviewers will not be technical professionals
- Write most of the narrative in an active voice without using adjectives and adverbs
- Do not use redundant words (e.g., a qualified expert, absolutely essential)
- Unless you have a patented invention, your business is not “unique.” There are always other businesses doing or producing what you do – show how your business sets itself apart from its core competition
- Don't be pompous, e.g., call, write, meet instead of “interface”
- Review and edit each draft several times before it is read by an evaluator to eliminate errors in grammar and spelling
- General rules to improve evaluator readability:
 - Use less than 20 words per sentence; three lines maximum
 - Limit Paragraphs to four or five sentences
 - Avoid passive voice – makes your plan more readable and saves words
 - Avoid four or five syllable words