

Writing file 4 | Teacher's notes

Learning objectives in this lesson

Designing a basic business plan; focusing on the framework of business plans and the general principles. This is one of two lessons on writing a business plan. This lesson looks at the general layout of a business plan and what needs to be included in one. In Writing file 7 we will look at the structure and function of the Executive Summary. The files can be used together or as stand-alone lessons.

- 1 Without mentioning the aim of the lesson ask the students to discuss the questions in pairs. After a few minutes take feedback from the whole class. If your students all work for the same company then either get them to talk about companies they have worked for or ask them to see if they all agree on the answers.
- 2 Ask the students to look at the steps in 1–9 and then discuss with a partner what they would expect the 'advice' to be. Then get them to read the advice in the text and complete the gaps with a heading. Once they have finished get them to discuss their answers before checking with the class.

Answers

1 f 2 c 3 h 4 e 5 g
6 i 7 b 8 a 9 d

- 3 Get students in pairs to discuss the advice and decide if they should be prefixed with *do* or *don't*. Remind them they can refer back to exercise 2 if they want. Instruct them that they need to be able to justify their answers. They might come up with different answers than those given so be prepared to deal with queries.

Answers

- 1 **Don't** – Be realistic in your planning.
- 2 **Don't** – Make sure you test it first.
- 3 **Do** – Situations change, exchange rates change, you need to be flexible.
- 4 **Do** – Have a look at other business plans to give you an idea of what to put in yours.
- 5 **Do** – Be factual and avoid hype, if your team lacks the ability to do something include it and say how you will address this.
- 6 **Do** – You could even approach government agencies that specialize in helping to set up small businesses.
- 7 **Do** – It is important to show you have thought through the financing details.
- 8 **Don't** – They are essential both for the business person and an investor to see how the project is going to work.

- 4 Tell students about Nancy who wants to open a sandwich shop. Ask them to read the start of her business plan and see if they would invest money in her venture. After they have read it get them to discuss in pairs before taking feedback.

Answer

The answer should be 'no'. The language is too vague and there are no firm facts.

- 5 Ask students to read the advice and answer the question. Then ask them to highlight areas in Nancy's business plan where she has not heeded the advice. Then ask the students to rewrite it following the advice.

Answer

This business plan describes the need for a sandwich shop in the city centre. A number of people have suggested that the centre is missing such a shop and we are now conducting market research to support our claim. The opening of the shop demands a lot of time and money but all parties are determined to make the project a success.

- 6 Ask students to write an introduction for their own company trying to be concise, to the point and positive and confident.

Evaluation tips

When marking, look for relevant information, logical ordering and positive language. Don't forget to comment on content as well as accurate use of language.

Sample answer

Nancy's sandwiches (NS) is a speciality food retailer. NS offers its customers the very finest in hot and cold sandwiches, specialising in home-made breads and custom made products. Additionally, NS offers other baked dishes such as quiches and pies along with a range of hot and cold drinks.