

20 steps to writing a winning business case

To give your initiative the best chance of approval, tick off the following items as you prepare, write and get ready to submit your business case:



Before writing a business case

1. Are you clear who your audience is? (When preparing your business case you need to address the reviewer's perspective.)
2. Have you defined the business problem or opportunity that the business case hopes to address?
3. Can you identify the drivers for change e.g. changing market dynamics, compliance regulations?
4. Is there a strong link between the proposed initiative and the organisation's strategic objectives?
5. Have all stakeholders relevant to writing the business case been identified?
6. Do you understand what key metrics the decision-makers are looking for when they review business cases?
7. Are there any formal business case approval processes and/or project selection and evaluation criteria that you need to take into account?

When writing a business case

8. Have you defined the value of the initiative to your organisation based on financial and non-financial benefits?
9. Are all stated outcomes and benefits measurable and are those measures included?
10. Are the costs, including one-off project costs and on-going operational costs, adequately detailed and verified?
11. Have you presented the assumptions on which your costs and benefits are based?
12. Is there a clearly articulated and documented justification for the recommended option, supported by facts and evidence?
13. Has the viability of realistic alternative options been examined?
14. Have major risks been called out and quantified, including the impacts of not investing (the 'do-nothing' option)?
15. Is it clear what the proposed project will deliver (inclusions) and have you set expectations around what will not be delivered (exclusions)?
16. Have you outlined the implementation approach for the proposal, including key project phases, milestones and resource requirements?

Before submitting a business case

17. Have you captured all related opportunities or problems that could be addressed by this potential project?
18. Have you kept, cleaned and maintained all data used to calculate costs and benefits for future audit purposes?
19. Are you clear on whose approval is required for this business case and by which date and are they listed in the sign-off section?
20. Have you included all necessary attachments, for example cost-benefit analysis, risk log, high-level schedule, resource plan?

It can take a significant amount of time to prepare a compelling, well-supported business case, but it's well worth the effort. Presenting a thorough justification for why a project should proceed gives your initiative the best chance of approval and ensures decisions are being made in the best interests of your organisation.

To learn more, book our one-day [Developing an Effective Business Case](#) course, and for tips you can action right now don't miss [6 tips for building a winning business case](#). You can also call one of our professional development consultants on 1300 70 13 14 to discuss your training needs in more detail.