**Project Proposal**

**Template**

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Document Information

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Information** |
| Document Id | *[Document Management System #]* |
| Document Owner | *[Owner Name]* |
| Issue Date | *[Date]* |
| Last Saved Date | *[Date]* |
| File Name | *[Name]* |

Document History

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Version** | **Issue Date** | **Changes** |
| *[1.0]* | *[Date]* | *[Section, Page(s) and Text Revised]* |
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# Template Guide

***What is a Project Proposal?***

*A project proposal is a formal document prepared to launch a new project. The purpose of the proposal is to convincingly persuade the sponsor that the project is necessary to address a specific problem or seize an opportunity within the business.*

*The proposal clearly explains why the project is important, thus helping the sponsor understand how it would be critical for the success of the organization. Its objectives, scope, and benefits are detailed for the purpose of making the sponsor fully informed about the project's relevance and impact.*

*This proposal also goes ahead to outline the consequences of not approving the project; hence, giving the sponsor a clear decision to either approve or reject the proposal. This allows for an emphasis on the urgency and critical nature that the project will undertake for the business.*

***When do I use a Project Proposal?***

*Whenever you need to coordinate resources, tasks, equipment, and materials within a set timeframe to achieve a specific business objective, it’s important to treat this as part of a formal project.*

*The first step in initiating a project is to create a* ***Project Proposal****. This document helps to formalize the project by defining a clear vision and outlining the specific goals that need to be achieved to measure its success.*

*Typically, the* ***Project Proposal*** *is written by the person who will manage the project. However, if the project leader has not yet been selected, the business manager may take on this responsibility. The proposal is then presented to senior management for approval.*

*Once the proposal is approved, the next step is usually to develop a* ***Business Case*** *that justifies the project’s financial feasibility. Following this, a* ***Project Charter*** *is created based on the proposal to clearly define the project’s scope and ensure alignment among all team members regarding their roles and responsibilities.*

***How to use this template***

*This document provides an outline of the sections required to complete a Project Proposal. You will need to replace the placeholder content in each section with your own information. Each section comes with specific instructions to guide you through the process, ensuring you know what to write in order to complete the document from start to finish. Be sure to remove these instructions as you progress, leaving behind a fully customized Project Charter tailored to your business.*

# Executive Summary

The first step in creating a Project Proposal is writing the Executive Summary. This section provides a concise overview of the entire document, highlighting the project’s background, proposed vision, goals, and timelines. Essentially, it sets the stage for the project and aims to capture the reader’s attention, making the proposal compelling enough to gain approval and initiate the project. The Executive Summary should briefly cover:

• The project’s history, requirements, and the proposed solution

• The project’s vision, goals, deliverables, and timelines

• The resources, budget, and criteria for success.

[Write your content here]

# Background

## History

Before diving into the specifics of the proposal, it's important to provide a brief background on the company to establish context for the project. This historical overview helps the reader understand the foundation upon which the project is being proposed. It’s essential to outline all relevant events and decisions that have led to this point.

For example, if the proposal is about implementing a new software system for the business, this section should detail the software solutions previously used, highlighting which ones were successful and which ones failed. Additionally, it should mention the timeline for replacing the current software and identify the key software vendors involved.

Without this historical context, there may be delays in document approval, as the Project Sponsor might want to understand the rationale behind initiating the project and the history that led to this point.

[Write your content here]

## Requirements

Most projects are initiated to address a business problem or capitalize on a market opportunity. These underlying issues or opportunities are the driving force behind the project, and it’s essential to thoroughly describe them in this section.

**Business Problem**  
If the project is aimed at solving a business problem, provide a detailed explanation of the issue. Identify the specific problem and the symptoms that are affecting the business as a result. For instance, the business may be facing financial difficulties, communication breakdowns, or declining customer satisfaction, all of which could require a project to resolve.

**Business Opportunity**  
If the project is designed to seize a business opportunity, explain it in depth here. Discuss the context within which the opportunity exists, the timeframe for seizing it, and the approach needed to take full advantage of it. An example of an opportunity could be a market gap for a particular product or service, the emergence of a new technology that can enhance the business, or a regulatory change that allows the business to offer a new product or service that wasn’t previously possible.

[Write your content here]

## Solution

The next step is to clearly define the solution that addresses the problem or opportunity the project aims to resolve. When outlining the solution, ensure you cover the following key points:

* **Purpose of the Solution**: Clearly explain the goal of the solution.
* **Scope of the Solution**: Specify what is included and what is excluded from the solution.
* **Delivery Approach**: Detail how the solution will be implemented (i.e., the approach to be taken).

Keep in mind, the primary objective of the project is singular: **to deliver the solution to the problem or opportunity within the established timeframes**. The more thoroughly you describe the solution, the easier it will be for the project team to understand exactly what needs to be accomplished and by when.

[Write your content here]

# Proposal

In the background section above, you have outlined the foundational context for the project, including the business problem or opportunity that exists, as well as the solution that the project aims to deliver. Now, in this section, it’s time to describe the proposed project itself—how it will be initiated and what key steps will be taken to address the identified problem or opportunity.

## Vision and Goals

Define the vision and goals of the project using the SMART framework: Specific, Measurable, Action-oriented, Realistic, and Time-bound. Where possible, align these goals with the business problem or opportunity to clearly show what the project aims to resolve. Here's an example of a well-defined project vision:

"Our vision is to enhance customer satisfaction by 25% by January 1, 2025, by introducing new services targeted at our high-value clients."

[Write your Vision here]

Here are three rewritten SMART goals aligned with the vision:

1. "Launch a customer satisfaction survey by March 1, 2025, to gather actionable feedback."
2. "Implement an upgraded Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system by September 1, 2025, to streamline client interactions."
3. "Establish personalized communication with all high-value customers by December 31, 2025, to enhance relationships and loyalty."

These goals are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound, making them clear and actionable.

[Write your Goals here]

## Deliverables

Every project generates specific deliverables that contribute to solving a business problem or addressing an opportunity. These deliverables are critical to the project's success and clearly define the scope of what needs to be produced. For this reason, it is essential to identify and describe all key deliverables in as much detail as possible.

Use the table below to outline the deliverables that the project will produce. Note: A deliverable refers to an output that is provided to the customer upon project completion as part of the solution. Examples of deliverables include a new product, a service, or a system.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Project Deliverables** | | |
| **Title** | **Description** | **Notes** |
| [list here] | [list here] | [list here] |
| [list here] | [list here] | [list here] |
| [list here] | [list here] | [list here] |

## Timeframe

All projects must adhere to a specific timeframe to ensure their objectives are met effectively. Addressing a business problem or capitalizing on an opportunity within the defined timeframe maximizes the project’s value to the organization. Delivering the solution beyond the specified period can diminish its intended impact, leading to missed opportunities or reduced benefits.

Defining and adhering to the project’s timeframe is critical to its success. Clearly outline the duration allocated for project delivery and explain why meeting this deadline is essential for achieving the desired business outcomes.

**[Specify the timeframe here]**

Additionally, it is highly recommended to provide an initial project plan at this stage. While it may be a preliminary version, an early project plan demonstrates to the Project Sponsor that the timeline has been carefully considered and that the project is feasible within the defined parameters.

Including a project plan at this stage not only inspires confidence but also serves as a roadmap for delivering the solution efficiently and effectively within the established timeframe.

## Resources

To gain approval for your Project Proposal, the sponsor will need a clear understanding of the resources required to execute the project. Complete the table below to outline the general resources, including personnel, equipment, and materials, necessary for the project's completion. These estimates are intended to provide the Project Sponsor with an overview of the resource levels required to successfully complete the project.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Project Resources** | | |
| **Type** | **Quantity** | **Notes** |
| [list here] | [list here] | [list here] |
| [list here] | [list here] | [list here] |
| [list here] | [list here] | [list here] |

## Budget

Once you’ve outlined the type and quantity of resources required to complete the project, you should have a general sense of the budget needed. The **Project Sponsor** will always want to understand the financial implications, so it’s essential to provide a clear and accurate estimate.

Start by calculating the total budget based on the resource costs outlined earlier. Include not only direct costs like materials, labor, and equipment but also add a contingency amount to account for unexpected expenses. Don’t forget to factor in any additional costs, such as training, implementation, or external consultations. It’s also important to consider intangible costs, such as potential downtime during implementation or the impact of cultural or process changes within the organization.

**[Insert the Project Budget here]**

If possible, include a calculation of the **Return on Investment (ROI)** for the project. ROI provides a clear picture of the financial benefits the project will bring compared to its cost. It’s a straightforward formula that highlights the additional revenue or value generated versus the project’s total cost, typically over a set period.

For instance, if the total project cost is $100,000, but the business expects to gain $300,000 in benefits in the first 12 months post-implementation, the ROI would be $200,000 in the first year.

**[Insert and describe the ROI calculation here]**

Providing these details not only strengthens your proposal but also demonstrates the potential value and strategic importance of the project to stakeholders.

## Ownership

In this document, it’s essential to clearly define the following roles and responsibilities to ensure a smooth project lifecycle:

* **Project Sponsor**: The individual responsible for overseeing and ensuring the successful delivery of the project. The Project leader will report directly to this person.
* **Customer**: The recipient of the project’s deliverables upon completion, typically also the person or entity funding the project.
* **Project leader**: If a Project leader has already been appointed, their details should be included in the table below. However, in many cases, the Project leader is not assigned until after this document is approved.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Project Ownership** | | |
| **Role** | **Name** | **Contact Details** |
| Project Sponsor | [list here] | [list here] |
| Project Customer | [list here] | [list here] |
| Project Manager | [list here] | [list here] |

## Reporting

Every project sponsor prioritizes receiving timely and accurate updates to stay informed about progress. Use this section to outline how you plan to keep all project stakeholders—including the sponsor, customer, team, and other invested parties—regularly updated on the project's status.

Detail your communication approach, whether it involves scheduling weekly team meetings, maintaining a project blog, distributing detailed project reports, or leveraging project management software with a centralized dashboard that allows stakeholders to log in and view real-time project updates. By clearly defining your communication strategy, you can ensure transparency, alignment, and proactive issue resolution throughout the project's lifecycle.

[Write your content here]

## Risks & Issues

Risks and issues can hinder the timely delivery of project deliverables. To ensure proactive management, the following tables outline identified risks and current issues upfront:

* **Risk:** A risk is defined as *“any potential future event that could prevent the project from delivering its objectives on time.”* For each risk, the likelihood of occurrence is assessed as high, medium, or low.
* **Issues*:*** An issue is defined as *“an existing condition that is currently impacting the project’s progress.”* By identifying and addressing these risks and issues early, the project team can take preventive and corrective actions to minimize delays and maintain progress toward delivering on time.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Project Risks** | | |
| **Risk** | **Details** | **Likelihood** |
| [list here] | [list here] | [list here] |
| [list here] | [list here] | [list here] |
| [list here] | [list here] | [list here] |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Project Issues** | | |
| **Issue** | **Details** | **Impact** |
| [list here] | [list here] | [list here] |
| [list here] | [list here] | [list here] |
| [list here] | [list here] | [list here] |

## Implications

It is important to communicate to your Project Sponsor the potential consequences of not moving forward with this project. Since the project is addressing a real business problem or opportunity, failing to initiate it could lead to significant repercussions for the organization.

Describe the specific implications of not addressing this issue. If possible, quantify the financial impact or other costs to the business if the project is not undertaken. This will help highlight the urgency and necessity of proceeding with the project to avoid these negative outcomes.

[Write your content here]

## Success Criteria

Every project leader aims for success, but what exactly defines it? Is success determined by delivering the project on time and within budget, or by meeting the expected quality standards for the deliverables? Is it about keeping the client informed throughout the project and ensuring their satisfaction with the final outcome? Or is it simply about resolving the business problem or achieving the anticipated opportunity?

It’s important to carefully consider and define the success criteria for your project. We recommend identifying five key success factors that will serve as the benchmarks for measuring the project's success.

[Write your Success Criteria here]

## Authorization

This section serves as the final step where the Project Sponsor decides whether to approve and authorize the project. If the project is approved, it signifies that you’ve successfully crafted an outstanding Project Proposal!

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Project Sponsor**    *Name:*  *Position:*  *Date: \_\_ / \_\_ / \_\_* | **Customer**    *Name:*  *Position:*  *Date: \_\_ / \_\_ / \_\_* |  |

# Appendix

## Supporting Documentation

Include any supporting documentation that strengthens your Project Proposal, such as:

* **Company Background**: A brief history and overview of your organization.
* **Research Data**: Studies, reports, or other materials that validate your approach.
* **Key Statistics or Projections**: Relevant metrics or estimates to demonstrate feasibility or impact.
* **External Quotes or Tenders**: Competitive bids or supplier estimates for transparency.
* **Detailed Financials**: Cost-benefit analyses or comprehensive spreadsheets.
* **Other Relevant Materials**: Correspondence, testimonials, or additional information that enhances credibility.

[Include your content here]