**How to Write a Sales Business Plan**

Having a solid business plan is essential for the success of any company. It outlines your goals for the future and the tactics you'll use to achieve those goals. A sales business plan is much the same as a regular business plan except its focus is on sales and marketing — specifically, what your target market is and how you'll market and sell your product or service.

**Step 1**

Describe your target market, and be specific. Include information such as gender, age and location — whether you intend to market your product or service to local residents, residents throughout the state or nation, or through the Internet, for example. Describe why your product or service is important to your target market and how they will benefit from it. If you work for a large company, break down your target market by territory and include information about prospective customers in each territory.

**Step 2**

Discuss your marketing strategy. Include details about what your marketing budget will be, exactly how you plan to market your product or service and the sequence of the steps in your plan. This section should include information related to the promotion of the product or service — advertising and direct mail, for example. If your company is large and covers many territories, break down the marketing strategy section by territory.

**Step 3**

Explain your sales strategy and tactics. The strategy is your overall plan, and the tactics are the specific actions you'll take in order to achieve your strategy. For example, a strategy might be to increase new customers in a certain territory by 20 percent during the first quarter of the fiscal year, and one of the tactics to accomplish that might be to add an additional salesperson to that territory in order to more effectively identify prospective customers.

**Step 4**

Define your timeline in which you plan to implement your sales strategy and tactics. Break it down in whatever way makes most sense for your company and your plan. List, for example, what goals you plan to accomplish in the first 30 days, 60 days, 90 days and 180 days of the new fiscal year. Remember that these goals comprise your sales strategy.

**Step 5**

Provide an analysis of your competition. Explain the advantages of your product or service above theirs. If the competition offers benefits to the target market that you do not, it's important to identify those benefits and plan how to either change your product or service accordingly or devise a marketing and sales strategy that will rise above those challenges.

**Step 6**

Develop a sales forecast. Include sales projections month by month for at least one year, and preferably for two or three. Use historical data as a basis to project sales of an existing product or service. If you're trying to project sales for a new product or service, look at sales of a similar existing product or service sold by another company to give you some idea of the potential.