

Proposals

CH13-L01

A proposal is a written offer to

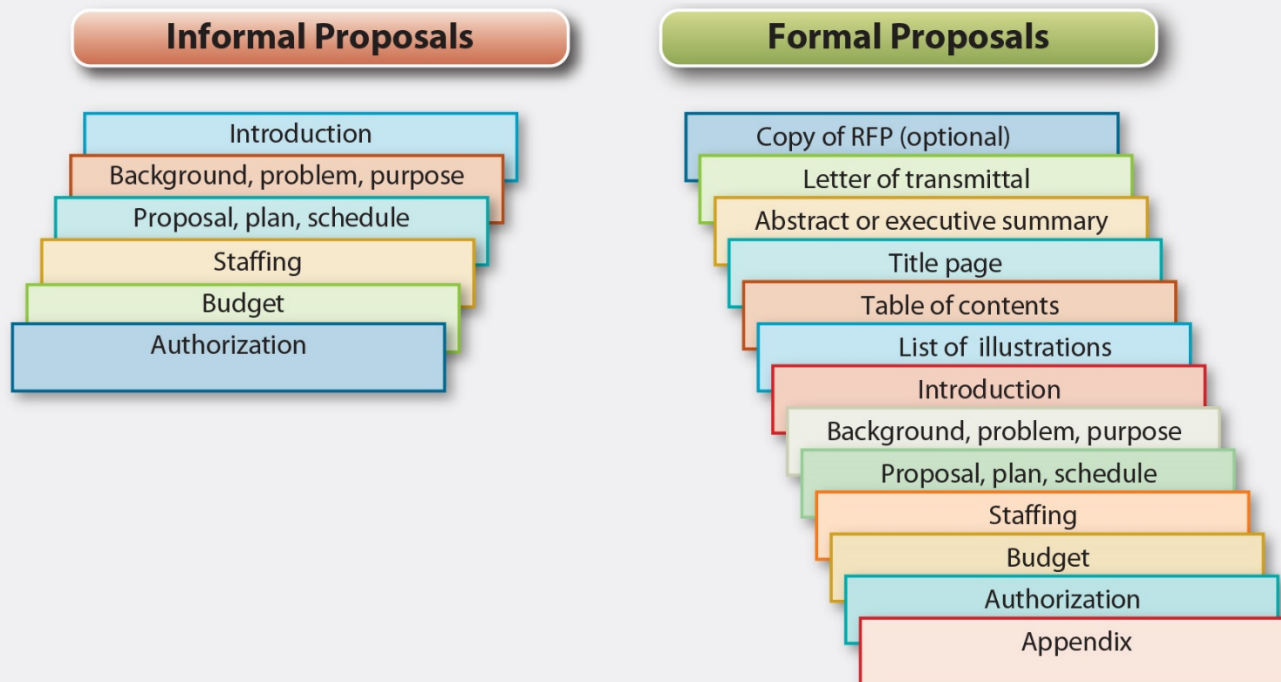
- Solve problems
- Provide services
- Sell equipment

Proposals can generate millions of dollars in income.

Proposals can be solicited or unsolicited.

Components of Informal and Formal Proposals CH13-L01

Figure 13.1 Components of Informal and Formal Proposals



Introduction

CH13-L01

- Explain why the proposal is being made.
- Hint at an extraordinary result.
- Suggest excellent speedy results, low cost, or remarkable resource.
- Identify a serious problem, opportunity or risk and promise a solution.
- Specify the key issue or benefit of significance to the company.
- Preview the document's organisation.
- Including scope and limitations.

Background, Problem, and Purpose

CH13-L01

- Identify the problem and discuss the goals and purpose of the project.
- Describe the environment and industry in which the business or organization operates
- For unsolicited proposals, convince the reader that a problem exists.
- For solicited proposals, persuade the reader that you understand the problem completely.

Proposal, Plan, and Schedule

CH13-L01

- Discuss your plan for solving the problem.
- Explain what you propose to do and how it will benefit the reader.
- Specify how the project will be managed and how its progress will be audited.
- Include a schedule of activities or timetable showing when events will take place.
- Disclose enough of the plan to secure the contract without giving away so much information that the services are not needed.

Staffing

CH13-L01

- Describes the credentials and expertise of the project leaders
- Identifies the size and qualifications of support staff, along with other resources (computer facilities etc).
- May also feature the résumés of the major project participants

Budget

CH13-L01

- List proposed project costs.
- Prepare this section carefully as it represents a contract -You cannot raise the price later
- Protect yourself from rising costs with a deadline for acceptance.

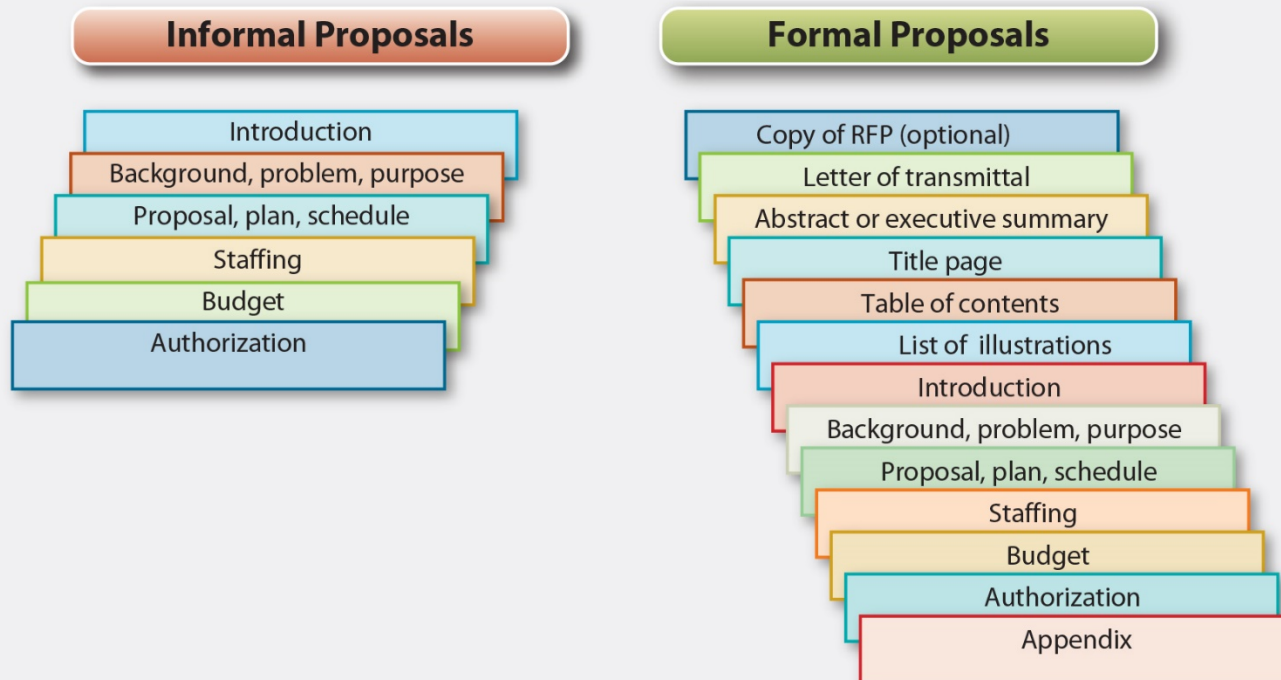
Authorization Request

CH13-L01

- Close with a request for approval or authorization.
- Remind the reader of key benefits and motivate action.
- Include a deadline beyond which the offer is invalid.
- Include a model contract that responds to the RFP (request for proposal).

Components of Informal and Formal Proposals CH13-L01

Figure 13.1 Components of Informal and Formal Proposals



Formal Proposal Components

CH13-L02

Extra Components

- Copy of RFP: included in the front matter of formal proposal
- Letter of transmittal: addresses the decision maker, and presents the major features and benefits of your proposal (almost like a cover letter).
- Abstract or executive summary
 - Abstract: brief technical summary of proposal highlights
 - Executive summary: brief business summary of proposal highlights

Formal Proposal Components

CH13-L02

- Title page: includes the title of proposal, name of client organization, RFP number, date, authors' names, and name of the organization
- Table of contents: includes all headings and their beginning page numbers
- List of illustrations: includes each figure and table and page numbers
- Appendix(es): includes additional material of interest to the reader

Grant Proposals

CH13-L02

- Are submitted to government or civilian organizations
- Explain a project, outline its budget, and request money in the form of a grant
- Require no repayment but must be used for the purposes outlined in the proposal
- Are often made to charities, educational facilities, and nonprofits

Grant Proposal Components

CH13-L02

- An abstract and a needs statement that explains the problem or situation the grant proposes to address
- A body
 - Explains the significance of the problem and how funding can help solve the problem
 - Describes short- and long-term goals, which must be measurable and attainable by a specific time frame, including an action plan that indicates what will be done by whom and when
 - Provides a budget for how money will be spent
 - Presents a plan to measure progress

Creating Effective Business Plans

CH13-L03

A business plan

- Is critical for securing financial support of any kind
- Is a description of a proposed company that explains how it expects to achieve its marketing, financial, and operational goals
- Will likely secure the funds it needs if it is well written
- Can be written using software such as Business Plan Pro or a business app like Enloop

Components of Effective Business Plans

CH13-L03

Letter of transmittal

- Explains your reasons for writing
- Provides contact information for all principals
- Describes your business idea concisely, including benefits for the investor
- Includes a summary of the market, a brief note about the competition, and reasons why the plan is worthy

Mission statement

- Explains the purpose of the business and why it will succeed

Components of Effective Business Plans

CH13-L03

Executive summary

- Is written last and highlights main points of business plan
- Should not exceed two pages
- Introduces the parts of the plan and asks for financial backing

Table of contents and company description

- Lists page numbers and topics included in the plan
- Identifies the form of business (proprietorship, partnership, or corporation) and its type (merchandising, manufacturing, or service).

Components of Effective Business Plans

CH13-L03

Product or service description

- Explain what you are providing and how it will benefit the customers.
- Explain why it is better than existing products or services.
- Explain why the business will be profitable.

Components of Effective Business Plans

CH13-L03

Market analysis

- Discuss market characteristics, trends, and projected growth.
- Describe customer behaviour, complementary products and services, and barriers to entry.
- Identify your customers and how you will attract, hold, and increase your market share.
- Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of direct and indirect competitors.

Components of Effective Business Plans

CH13-L03

Operations and management

- Explain how you will run your business: location, equipment, personnel, and management.
- Highlight experienced and well-trained staff and advisors.
- Many investors consider this the most important factor in assessing a business's potential.

Components of Effective Business Plans

CH13-L03

Financial analysis

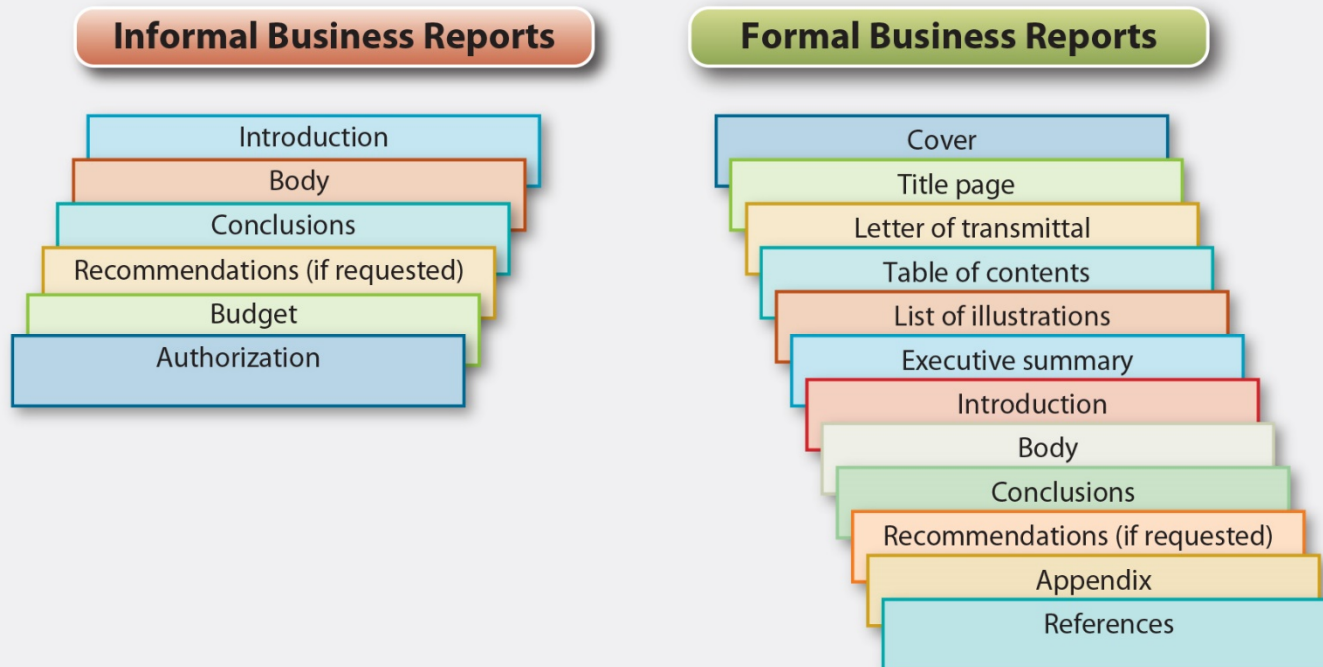
- Outline a realistic start-up budget that includes fees for legal services, occupancy, licences, equipment, insurance, supplies, advertising, salaries and utilities.
- Present an operating budget that projects costs.
- Explain how much money you have and will need to stay in business.

Appendixes

- Provide necessary extras, such as managers' résumés, promotional materials, product photos, tables that exhibit the sales forecast, a personnel plan, anticipated cash flow, profit and loss, and a balance sheet

Component of Informal and Formal Reports CH13-L04

Figure 13.3 Components of Informal and Formal Reports



Writing Formal Business Reports

CH13-L04

Formal report

- May be defined as a document in which a writer analyzes findings, draws conclusions, and makes recommendations intended to solve a problem
- Is similar to a formal proposal in length, organization, and tone

Writing Formal Business Reports:

Front Matter Components CH13-L04

Cover

- Made of vinyl or heavy paper binders to protect the pages and give professional look

Title page

- Include the following lines:
 - Name of the report in all caps
 - Receiver's name, title, and organization
 - Author's name, title, and organization
 - Date submitted
- All items after the title in upper and lowercase

Front Matter Components

CH13-L04

Letter (external) or memo (internal) of transmittal

- Announces the topic and explains who authorized the report
- Briefly describes the project and highlights report findings, conclusions, and recommendations
- Closes with appreciation for the assignment, suggesting follow-up actions, acknowledging the help of others, and offering to answer questions

Front Matter Components

CH13-L04

Table of contents

- Show the beginning page number where each report heading appears in the report
- Connect page numbers and headings with dots.

List of illustrations

- Include a list of tables, illustrations, or figures showing the title of each and its page number.
- Provide separate lists of tables and figures.
- Place the lists on the same page as contents, if possible.

Front Matter Components

CH13-L04

Executive summary

- Provide an overview of the longer report to people who may not have time to read the entire document.
- Gauge the length of the summary by the length of the report and by the organization's practices.

Tips for Preparing an Executive Summary CH13-L04

- Look for strategic words and sentences used in the body of the report.
- Prepare an outline with headings.
- Fill in your outline.
- Begin with the purpose.
- Follow the report sequence.
- Eliminate nonessential details.
- Control the length - An executive summary is usually no longer than 10 percent of the original document.

Front Matter Components

CH13-L04

Introduction

- Describe the problem's background and significance.
- Explain the problem motivating the report.
- Clarify the significance, scope, and limitations of the report.
- Close by previewing the report's organization.

Optional:

- Authorization: Identify who commissioned the report
- Literature review: what other authors have said on this topic.
- Sources and methods of data collecting
- Definition of key terms

Body and Back Matter Components

CH13-L05

Body

- Discusses, analyzes, interprets, and evaluates the research findings or proposed solution to the problem
- Arranges the findings in logical segments that follow your outline
- Contains clear, descriptive headings that may be functional or talking headings and that explain each major section

Body and Back Matter Components

CH13-L05

Conclusions

- Explain what the findings mean in relation to the problem.
- Present conclusions in a numbered or bulleted list.

Recommendations

- Suggest practical, reasonable, feasible, and ethical actions for solving the problem.
- Evolve these from the findings and conclusions.
- Make enumerated recommendations, if requested.
- Phrase as a command.

Body and Back Matter Components

CH13-L05

Appendix(es)

- Include incidental or supporting items for readers, such as survey forms, copies of other reports, tables of data, large graphics, and related correspondence.

Works cited or references

- List all references in “Works Cited” if using MLA or “References” if using APA format.

Final Writing Tips

CH13-L06

- Allow sufficient time to write.
- Finish all data collection before writing.
- Work from a good outline.
- Back up your work often.
- Save difficult sections.

Final Writing Tips

CH13-L06

- Be consistent in verb tense.
- Generally avoid *I* and *we*.
- Let the first draft sit for a day or two.
- Revise for clarity, coherence, and conciseness.
- Proofread the final copy three times.

Summary of Learning Objectives

- Understand the importance and purpose of proposals, and name the basic components of informal proposals. CH13-L01
- Discuss the components of formal and grant proposals. CH13-L02
- Identify the components of typical business plans. CH13-L03
- Describe the components and purpose of the front matter in formal business reports. CH13-L04
- Understand the body and back matter of formal business reports. CH13-L05
- Specify final writing tips that aid writers of formal business reports. CH13-L06

Formal Business Proposal Exercise

- Go to:
<https://www.pandadoc.com/business-proposal-templates/>
- Find two examples of business proposal templates, one good and one bad.
- Compare the strengths and weaknesses of each proposal.
- Which sections are missing in the bad example?
- Which sections are missing in the good example?

Unsolicited Formal Business Proposal Workshop

- Proposals are offers to a specific audience whose business you are soliciting.
- Think of an opportunity or problem with the company you have chosen.
- Create an outline of your unsolicited proposal. Use main bullet points that you would present to the company to show that you can solve this problem or take advantage of this opportunity, through their external communication channels.
- Your target is to convince them to hire you as communication consultants by showing them the benefits of having you as their consultant.
- Keep in mind what methods you will deploy to analyze the external communication channels of your client's business.
- The schedule in this case will be the time over which you will complete your project, from the start of the project until you come up with recommendations on the external communications of your client. Implementation time of your recommendations is not necessary.
- The budget in this case will be the cost of hiring you, which will include any costs that you incur to conduct your work as well as your fees. Implementation fee of your recommendations is not necessary.

Components of Informal and Formal Proposals CH13-L01

Figure 13.1 Components of Informal and Formal Proposals

