

This document was developed as a list of *some* of the key items that should be considered when developing an operational plan for a company or business operation (department, division, location, etc.). It is formatted as a checklist to make it easier to add items to and delete items from it.

This checklist is by no means an exhaustive list of every possible item that might need to be considered when developing an operational plan. Every company will have planning considerations that are unique to its business and current situation. This checklist also assumes that your organization is already doing some basic planning / budgeting.

We ask that you help us improve this checklist by sending us an e-mail when you find things we've forgotten...update the checklist to include those items you need.

And please, if you find this checklist useful, please let your colleagues know where they can find it on the web (http://www.spinningdisc.com/RefLibrary/Tools/Checklist_Planning_EOY.pdf).

BUSINESS PLANNING CHECKLIST	
Complete	
Marketing & Sales Operations	
	How many products or services were sold last year?
	How close did last year's sales projections match actual sales?
	How many products or services do you expect to sell in the next 12 months? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have these projections been reviewed by and agreed with the organizations within the company who will be responsible for building and delivering these products and services? • Has executive management approved the sales projections?
	Are there any changes in the Marketing / Sales organization (<i>e.g. new people, new territories, taking on additional responsibilities within the company, etc.</i>) planned during the next 12 months? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the current organization be sufficient to handle these changes or will it need to grow (<i>or shrink</i>)?
	For each product and service the company offers, how many sales do you expect to make during the next 12 months? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does this year's estimate compare with actual sales over the last 12 months? • How did actual sales during the last year compare with projected sales from last year's plan? Has this been factored into sales estimates for the next 12 months?
	Does the sales team have the "sales support materials" (<i>e.g. brochures, sales checklists, order forms or - online access to your ordering system. "leave-</i>

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	<i>behinds”, etc.)</i> they need in order to meet or exceed sales projections?
	Does your advertising draw sufficient number of prospects to help sales meet sales goals...and to justify its cost?
	What “information voids” about your market(s), customer(s), competitor(s), technology, laws / regulations, etc. need to be filled in the next 12 months (i.e. What market research activities need to be done)?
	Are there any plans to offer new products or services or make changes to your existing offerings during the next 12 months? Have these changes been agreed with other organizations within the company?
	Are there any extraordinary marketing, advertising or sales campaigns planned for the next 12 months? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If so, will these campaigns require additional people, equipment, facilities, or increased purchasing of services or materials
Product & Service Operations (Design, Build / Delivery)	
	Did you meet or exceed last year's production goals? Was your planned production last year sufficient to meet last year's actual demand? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How much product do you currently have on hand? • How does this compare with last year's starting inventory? •
	Have you reviewed and agreed with Marketing's sales projections for the next 12 months? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has executive management reviewed and approved the sales projections? • Have they heard and considered any concerns or objections your organization might have? • If not, does this issue need to be re-visited with them and Marketing?
	Is your current design / build / deliver organization (<i>including people, facilities, equipment, tools, etc.</i>) sized and structured to efficiently build & deliver sufficient products & services to meet sales projections? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many more products / services could your current organization deliver without changes if actual sales during the next 12 months were to exceed marketing's estimates? • What and how long would it take to expand production beyond your current maximum levels?
	Are there any plans to offer new products or services, or to make changes to

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	<p>your existing offerings during the next 12 months?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If so, will these new / changed products require any additional people, equipment, facilities, or increased purchasing of services or materials. • Will they require re-engineering production or delivery processes?
	<p>What production / delivery equipment (e.g. machines, tools, information systems, trucks, etc.) is will need major overhaul or replacement during the next 12 months?</p>
	<p>Compared to last year, will you need to increase or decrease the amount of raw materials, parts, sub-assemblies, supplies, etc. to meet sales projections during the next 12 months?</p>
Finance & Cash Flow	
	<p>What did you spend during the last 12 months? How did last year's financial projections compare with actual financial activities over the last 12 months?</p>
	<p>What do you expect to spend during the next 12 months?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have the people responsible for performing the work been involved in developing this estimate? • Were actual expenditures from the past 12 months used to develop these estimates? • Will the company add any new facilities / activities during the next 12 months? Are estimates of these additional costs included in the budget? •
	<p>Will you have sufficient revenues during the next 12 months to cover costs?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If not, how will you cover those costs? • Is this shortfall expected to continue beyond 12 months? • If your revenue will exceed your costs, what will you do with the "extra" money?
	<p>Has the increased cost of travel / mileage been included in the financial projections?</p>
	<p>Have the increased costs of utilities and services for new facilities (or the decrease if you are cutting back on facilities) been appropriately estimated and factored into the budget(s)?</p>
Human Resources: People, Compliance, Training & Employee Benefits	
	<p>Do you have <i>enough</i> people to complete the next 12 months' work?</p>

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	<p>Do you have the <i>right</i> people to complete the next 12 months' work?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If not, what new positions will need people to filled them in the next 12 months? • Have the requirements of these jobs been decided and job descriptions developed? • Will these positions be filled by permanent hires or temporary employees? • Are the costs associated with adding these people included in financial plans you've made for the next 12 months?
	<p>Are all your current people properly trained and sufficiently skilled to do their job?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which people will need training during the next 12 months? • What training do they need? • How will they be trained (<i>e.g. external seminars, internal seminars, computer-based training, etc.</i>)
	<p>Are your current personnel practices compliant with all current laws, government regulations, company policies and other regulatory requirements?</p>
	<p>Have there been any changes in laws, government regulations, company policies, or other areas over the last 12 months that necessitate changes in your personnel policies, personnel activities, benefits or other areas in order for you to be compliant with the changes?</p>
	<p>Are there be any changes in laws, government regulations, company policies, or other areas expected during the next 12 months that will require changes in your personnel policies, personnel activities, benefits or other areas in order for you to be compliant with the changes?</p>
	<p>Will changes to the insurance benefits the company offers to employees (<i>e.g. health, life, dental, etc.</i>) be needed during the next 12 months?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If so, will these changes necessitate re-negotiating with current insurance providers or finding new providers? • Who will be in charge of ensuring these changes are made? • How will these changes affect employee morale and loyalty? How do you know? • How will these changes be communicated to the employees.
	<p>Are any changes needed in time off policies (<i>e.g. vacation, holidays, sick leave, etc.</i>) needed during the next 12 months?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who will be in charge of ensuring these changes are made? • How will these changes affect employee morale and loyalty? How do you know? • How will these changes be communicated to the employees.

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	Is the company sufficiently insured to cover any on-the-job injuries that can be reasonably expected to occur during the next 12 months?
Facilities & Maintenance	
	Are your current facilities (buildings) sufficient for the next 12 months' expected work?
	Will any major repairs or upgrades to your facilities be needed during the next 12 months?
	If your facilities are leased / rented, is the owner planning any improvements / changes in or around your facilities that could negatively affect your work (e.g. new construction on near-by properties; parking lot work, traffic flow changes, lobby or "common area" re-modeling efforts; changes in utilities, etc.)?
	Do your financial plans include sufficient funds for planned facilities changes, expansion, and regular maintenance?
	Do your financial plans include sufficient funds to cover a reasonable number of unexpected facilities-related "emergencies"?
	Are your facilities and contents sufficiently insured?
Information Systems (software, computers, networks, etc.)	
	<p>Will the systems you currently have in place be sufficient for the volume of business expected over the next 12 months?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If not, what improvements, upgrades or changes are needed? • Who will be in charge of ensuring these improvements, upgrades or changes are sufficient and made in a timely manner? • If these changes require the efforts of outside vendors to complete, can the vendors make the necessary changes within your time and cost limits? Have you gotten a quote or estimate from the vendors?
	Do your current systems generate the information management needs in order to successfully operate the business?
	Are current the Service Level Agreements (SLA) you have established with vendors sufficient to meet your projected operational needs for the remainder of the contact's duration?
	<p>Will any software / system licenses will expire in the next 12 months?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a decision whether to renew, replace or drop the software been made? If not, when must these decisions be made in order for the company to have

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	<p>sufficient time to properly implement the decision?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have costs for renewing or replacing these licenses been included in your financial plans? • Who will be in charge of ensuring these changes are made?
	<p>Are there new products or technologies that could dramatically improve IT performance and/or reduce costs?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is responsible for identifying and tracking these technologies / products and for developing a plan to incorporate them into the company's IT infrastructure?