

Instructions



MERCURY

Consulting Firm & Agencies Business Plan Template

Your consulting blueprint,
from first proposal to trusted advisor.

How to use this template

You can edit this template in two ways. For the best experience, we recommend customizing your template on desktop:

1. Continue in Google Docs and make a copy by clicking [here](#)
2. Download and edit in Microsoft Word:
 - "File" > "Download"
 - Click "Microsoft Word (.docx)"

This fully customizable template includes 10 carefully structured sections designed to help you and your team create a successful consulting business.

Each section provides prompts on what to include, along with tips on where to find that information and how to research it effectively. You'll also find links to helpful resources throughout.

If a section doesn't feel relevant, or if you notice something missing, you're encouraged to adapt it. You can add, remove, or modify any part of the plan to reflect your company's unique goals, structure, and stage of growth.

To get started, begin by adding your own custom cover on page 3. Remember to delete pages 1 and 2 (our title page and these instructions) before distribution.

About Mercury

[Mercury](#) was founded with the idea of making banking* better for ambitious endeavors. We spent our first five years turning the banking experience into less of an obstacle and more of a catalyst. Now, we're building software that transforms banking into the nucleus of your [financial operations](#) — the source of truth for all your money movements, where you can quickly and easily make payments, send invoices, pay bills, monitor spend, and understand your cash flow, all from one place. It's [banking](#) as it should be.

*Mercury is a fintech company, not an FDIC-insured bank. Banking services provided through Choice Financial Group, Column N.A., and Evolve Bank & Trust, Members FDIC. Deposit insurance covers the failure of an insured bank.



[Company Name]

[Company Address & Contact Details]

[Tagline/One-Line Value Proposition]

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Executive Summary

*[Give readers a high-level overview of your business. This is typically written last once all other sections are complete. Complete each line item, and **delete** the examples and resources we've left for you.]*

Company Overview: *Summarize what your business is, what you provide, and how your company is structured, including your business model and stage of growth.*

Service Snapshot (Key Offerings): *Briefly outline your core consulting services and engagement models (e.g., strategy workshops, process optimization, retainer advisory), highlighting how they create value for clients.*

Target Clients & Industries: *Summarize the types of clients you serve (by size, sector, or stage) and the industries you specialize in, so readers quickly understand your ideal market focus.*

Differentiators: *Highlight what makes your consulting firm stand out from competitors.*

Short-Term Vision: *Outline where you want the business to go over the next 3–5 years. Include expansion plans, service roadmap, and/or broader brand aspirations.*

Story & Vision

Motivation For Starting The Consulting Business or Agency: *Explain the insight, experience, or frustration that led you to launch your firm, and connect it to the problem you aim to solve for clients.*

Long-Term Mission & Vision: *Describe the bigger impact you're working toward. Include points about how your consultancy will grow, evolve, and create lasting value for your clients and industry over time.*

- **Resources:** [How \(and why\) to craft a vision and mission for your startup](#)
[How to start a consulting or agency business: Initial building blocks](#)

Business Model: *Define how your consulting firm/agency delivers services and generates revenue, such as ongoing retainers, project engagements, or advisory packages.*

- **Resource:** [How to start a consulting or agency business: Choose a business model](#)

Company History, Stage, and Positioning: *Give a short overview of where your firm is today—how it started, your current stage of growth, and how you want it to be positioned in the market.*

Values & Guiding Principles: *List the core values and principles that shape how you work with clients and run your firm, making your culture and approach clear to prospective partners.*

Legal Structure & Ownership

Legal Business Structure: *Outline who owns the business, including co-founders, equity breakdown, and/or key stakeholders, as well as how the company is structured (e.g., LLC, S-corp, C-corp, sole proprietorship).*

- **Resources:** [Mercury's Business Formation Resources](#)
[How to split equity in a startup](#)

Location(s) & Work Model: *List your primary business address and note whether your team works remotely, from an office, or in a hybrid setup. Include any key physical locations, such as your headquarters.*

Timeline of Key Milestones: *Share a brief timeline of major achievements to date, along with upcoming goals and projected milestones over the next 6–12 months.*

Team/Org Chart With Bios & Roles: *Introduce your founding team and key hires. Include a short bio for each member, focusing on relevant experience, and summarize who is responsible for what. You may also include a basic organizational chart, if helpful.*

Service Offering & Engagement Models

Core Services: *List the main consulting services you provide (e.g., operations improvement, HR strategy, IT advisory, marketing campaigns, etc.) and explain how they solve client challenges.*

Pricing Models: *Outline how you charge for your services—whether by the hour, by project, or through ongoing retainers—and why that model fits your firm and clients.*

- **Resource:** [What are the four main pricing strategies for companies?](#)

Methodologies & Frameworks: *Outline the key processes, models, or frameworks that shape your consulting approach. Include both proprietary and licensed methods.*

Differentiators: *Highlight the core strengths of your service delivery—for example, faster turnaround, industry specialization, or specialized expertise. Add relevant notes on client experience and demonstrated results.*

Intellectual Property: *Note any proprietary tools, templates, reports, or processes your firm owns that strengthen your expertise and protect your competitive edge.*

- **Resource:** [How to trademark a company name](#)

Market Analysis

Industry Overview & Trends: *Summarize the current state of the consulting industry—e.g., size, growth, trajectories— using relevant stats, forecasts, and reports. Highlight key trends, such as the growth of digital transformation services, the rise of AI-driven business models, and hybrid/remote service delivery.*

Market Gaps & Opportunities: *Identify areas where client needs are underserved or evolving—for example, lack of affordable strategy support for small businesses, emerging demand for AI/automation advisory, or specialized expertise in highly regulated industries.*

Competitive Landscape & Positioning: *Assess the types of competitors in your space—large global firms, mid-tier agencies, and solo consultants—and explain how your firm stacks up. Position yourself clearly so potential clients understand why you're the right fit compared to alternatives.*

- **Resource:** [How to do a SWOT analysis](#)

Client Segments & Pain Points

- **Target Client Segments:** *Define the specific groups of clients you serve—such as startups needing structure, mid-sized firms scaling operations, or enterprise clients with transformation needs. Break down by industry (e.g., healthcare, finance, tech), company size, or revenue stage, and describe the pain points that drive them to seek consulting.*
- **Common Client Challenges:** *Outline the recurring issues your clients face that create demand for consulting services—for example, operational inefficiencies, lack of clear growth strategy, regulatory or compliance hurdles, talent retention and leadership gaps, or technology adoption struggles. Frame these as pain points that consulting directly solves.*
- **How Your Services Address These Needs:** *Explain how your service offering helps solve client problems and deliver measurable outcomes (e.g., reduced costs, improved compliance, streamlined operations, stronger leadership pipelines).*
- **Sample Personas or Segment Profiles:** *Create short client archetypes to illustrate who you serve—such as “The Scaling Founder” (a startup CEO needing structure), “The Overextended COO” (a mid-market exec bogged down by operations), or “The Compliance-Driven CFO” (an enterprise leader focused on regulatory requirements). This helps make your target clients tangible and relatable.*

Marketing & Growth Strategy

Brand Narrative & Positioning: *Describe your brand identity—what it stands for, who it's for, and how you want it to be perceived. Explain how your positioning is different from others in the market and how that difference will attract your ideal client.*

Client Acquisition Channels: *List the main ways you'll attract new clients—such as referrals, networking, requests for proposals (RFPs), partnerships, digital marketing, or industry events—and explain why they fit your target market.*

- **Resource:** [How to start a consulting or agency business: Growing your client base](#)

Content & Authority-Building: *Explain how you'll establish thought leadership and credibility—for example, through case studies, white papers, original research, published articles, or speaking engagements.*

Client Retention & Relationship Management Strategy: *Explain how you'll keep clients engaged long-term—through regular check-ins, reporting, added-value services, or loyalty programs—and how you'll turn satisfied clients into repeat business and referral sources.*

Sales Strategy

Business Development Approach: *Describe how you'll win new business by diagnosing client needs first and offering tailored, consultative solutions rather than one-size-fits-all pitches.*

Relationship-Building Methods: *Explain how you'll grow trust and credibility through referral networks, strategic partnerships, or advisory boards that connect you with target clients.*

Pipeline Management & Sales Team Roles: *Outline how you'll track opportunities, manage proposals, and assign responsibilities across your sales and/or business development team.*

Operations Plan

Delivery Model: *Specify how you'll deliver services—whether in-person, remotely, or through a hybrid model—and why that works best for your clients. Consider including a note about the scalability of your model—i.e., how it might adapt as client needs grow.*

Project Management Processes: *Detail how projects will be managed from kickoff to completion, including tools (e.g., Asana, Monday), methodologies (Agile, Lean), as well as how (and how often) progress will be reported to clients.*

Client Onboarding & Communication Process: *Describe the steps for bringing on new clients, setting expectations, and establishing communication rhythms (status calls, dashboards, reports).*

Quality Assurance & Feedback Loops: *Explain how you'll maintain service quality through reviews, performance metrics, client surveys, or after-action debriefs.*

Tech Stack: *List the systems you'll use to manage relationships and projects (e.g., Salesforce, HubSpot, Slack, Google Workspace, Power BI) and why they support efficiency and transparency.*

Teams & Management

Organizational Structure & Key Roles: *Provide a snapshot of your firm's structure, including leadership roles, delivery teams, and support staff.*

Principals & Consultants: *Include short bios for key team members that highlight their backgrounds, relevant expertise, and client-facing roles.*

Certifications & Expertise: *Showcase formal credentials (PMP, CPA, Six Sigma, etc.), specialized training, and domain expertise that add credibility to your consulting services.*

Hiring & Subcontractor Strategy: *Explain how you'll scale your team—whether by hiring full-time staff, using subcontractors, or partnering with other firms for specialized needs.*

Financial Plan

Startup Costs & Overhead: *List the upfront and ongoing expenses required to launch and run your firm—such as liability insurance, CRM/project tools, website, marketing, and legal fees.*

- **Resources:** [*Navigating the costs of launching a startup*](#)
[*How to start a consulting or agency business: Financial fundamentals*](#)

Revenue Projections: *Forecast revenue by estimating billable hours per consultant, expected utilization rates, average hourly rates or project fees, and recurring retainer contracts.*

Projected Profit & Loss: *Provide a simple P&L statement that shows expected income from consulting engagements against operating expenses, giving a clear view of profitability.*

Break-Even Analysis: *Calculate how many billable hours, projects, or retainers are needed to cover your firm's fixed costs, and estimate how long it will take to reach profitability.*

Cash Flow Projection: *Show how money will move in and out of the firm each month, accounting for payment delays, retainers, and expenses, to demonstrate financial sustainability.*

- **Resource:** [*How to create a cash flow forecast for your startup*](#)

Funding Requirements & Use Of Funds: *If you're seeking external financing, specify how much you need and how it will be used (e.g., marketing, hiring consultants, building IP, technology investments).*

Cap Table (Startup Specific): *If applicable, include a basic capitalization table showing current equity ownership (founders, investors, advisors) and any convertible notes or any simple agreements for future equity (SAFEs). This helps potential investors understand dilution and your funding history.*

Key Risks & Mitigation Strategies: *List the major risks that could impact your consulting firm's stability—such as overreliance on one or two big clients, loss of key consultants, aggressive competitors, or economic downturns that reduce discretionary spend. Explain how you'll reduce these risks through strategies like diversifying your client base, building strong client contracts, planning for leadership succession, and developing contingency budgets or alternative revenue streams.*

Appendix

Sample Case Studies & Testimonials: *Include examples of past work or anonymized case studies that showcase results, plus client testimonials that build credibility and trust.*

Service Line Rate Card: *Provide a clear summary of your pricing structure—hourly rates, project fees, or retainer packages—broken down by role or service type if applicable.*

Project Plan or Deliverable Examples: *Attach sample timelines, frameworks, or deliverables (like workshop agendas, process maps, or reports) to illustrate how you work with clients.*

Additional Market Research or Resources: *Add supporting materials such as industry trend reports, survey data, or benchmark studies that reinforce your market opportunity and expertise.*