

# What To Do When Starting A New Business Checklist

The checklist below shows some of the many things that have to be done when starting a new business -- before the start-up, once the business is in operation and on an ongoing basis thereafter.\*

## BEFORE START-UP

- Choose management advisers - a certified public accountant, an attorney and a banker.
- Develop a business plan, including cash flow projections.
- Using the business plan, establish a relationship with banker. Possible bank services include:
  1. Credit-card merchant account
  2. Business checking account
  3. Working capital loan
  4. Equipment loan
  5. Lock-box services
- Select the legal entity and yearend
- Find a location for the business
- Negotiate a lease
- Design the layout of the facility
- Prepare all the necessary legal documents, as applicable:
  1. Partnership agreements
  2. Articles of incorporation and first organizational minutes
  3. Bylaws
  4. Federal identification number (SS-4)
  5. State and local license applications
  6. Sales tax identification
  7. State unemployment number
  8. Industry-specific license
- Obtain quotes for and then order office furniture and equipment
- Order office supplies
- Order business cards and business stationary
- Order office telephone number
- Purchase adequate insurance
  1. Health
  2. Malpractice
  3. Liability
  4. Worker's compensation
  5. Life
  6. Fidelity bond
  7. Computer equipment
  8. Umbrella
  9. Employee dishonesty
- Register the business name with local and state authorities

## START-UP

- Establish prices for your goods and services
- Promote the business's opening through
  1. Press releases
  2. Advertising
  3. Direct-mail announcement
  4. Other (This depends on the target market defined in the business plan. For example, a restaurant or store might send special coupons for discount to local residents or present a grand opening event and send invitations to prospective customers, or a manufacturer or supplier of office supplies might offer special discounts to local businesses.)
- Seek, interview and make offers to job candidates
- Select and implement a financial recordkeeping system. (while this can be either manual or computerized, it must be implemented consistently. If the business records a particular type of transaction one way at the start, such transactions must continue to be recorded in a similar manner to avoid confusion.)

Aspects of recordkeeping include:

  1. Accounts payable
  2. Accounts receivable
  3. Inventory tracking
  4. Order entry

## ONGOING OPERATIONS

- Develop personnel policies and procedures
- Prepare quarterly payroll returns and verify timely tax deposits
- Prepare quarterly or monthly financial statements
- Perform yearend tax planning, at least one month before the yearend
- Prepare annual federal, state, and payroll returns.
- Develop employee job descriptions
- Review existing insurance coverage at least once a year
- Prepare and maintain personnel files
- Establish a petty cash fund and policy
- Establish answering mechanism for after hours
- Join industry associations and groups
- Verify listing in the yellow pages of area phone directories.
- Register trademarks (word, name, symbol or device) that indicate a unique identity on which your business is building.

\* The list is just a guidance, however, and no final conclusions should be reached by completing it without further review and consultation.