

# A *Small Business* Haunted House



Lessons for Business Owners  
as they navigate into and  
through the unknown.

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***Fletcher-Cross & Associates***

- Land Use & Permit Assistance
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A cartoon illustration of a pig's head and front legs. The pig is holding a large, rolled-up document or scroll with its front paws. The pig has a friendly expression with small eyes and a slight smile. The drawing is done in a simple, bold line-art style.

# Introduction

*It is exciting* when someone decides to start a new business. There was once a time when it seemed to be simpler, with a lot fewer regulations and taxes. If you had a product or service to offer, you could hang up a sign, open your doors, and work as hard as you could for your business to grow.

Well, operating a business today can be complicated and, shall we say, even scary! What kind of twists and turns and haunts await today's entrepreneur?

Let's continue this haunting, seasonal theme and follow the uncharted path these business owners take as they summon their confidence and determination. They fill their pockets with the funds they think they'll need and head bravely down an uncharted road toward their business future.

Some proceed down a fortuitous, well-lit street toward prosperity. However, far too many stray onto a dark, barely-lit path. The fact is, most new businesses fail, according to the Small Business Administration. *We don't want these entrepreneurs to be one of them!*

What mysterious house is this that they are approaching? Let's join them as they approach the creaky porch and open the doors to enter this possessed house of business haunts!

Don't worry, we'll find a way out for them so that they will succeed... ***Or WILL we...?***

# 1. The Way of the Entrepreneur and Business Owner



The path they choose is lined with warning signs:

“Don’t enter”, “Proceed at your own risk”, “Go Back!”, “Stay with the old job and steady paycheck!”

And yet, they move onward, determined to forge ahead.

Small business owners need to have unwavering confidence and determination in themselves. To go along with that, it is important that we arm them with the best possible information and business knowledge.

Our entrepreneurs reach the door of this mysterious house of business. They provide a strong knock, but there is no answer, and the door does not swing open.

***Lesson #1: The door to opportunity does not just open on its own, YOU have to open it.***

They turn the knob, the door creaks open, and they enter.

They may be hit by a tinge of hesitation and doubt, but before they can react, **the door swings shut!**

***Lesson #2: You cannot run a successful business halfway. Once you are in, you are in! It is a commitment of hard work and dedication.***

## 2. LOST in the House!



As they move through the house, they go to take the stairs, but can't! The zoning won't allow it. They need to find a path to open and continue their business, but everywhere they turn they are confronted with a process that has them spinning.

Doors open and close, the rug gets pulled from under them. Permits, processes and procedures have our small business owners frustrated and confused.

Business owners can sometimes find themselves in a situation where you don't know where to turn!

***Lesson #3: Get zoning and licensing information before you start! Talk to an experienced advisor and consultant like Fletcher-Cross & Associates to help you find the way out. You do not have to be trapped! No matter where you are in the process, call for assistance!***

### 3. Watch for Vanishing MONEY



Our business owners are frustrated to see that the money in their pockets is starting to disappear, as if some strange and determined force is taking it from them.

Everywhere they go, every permit, every piece of equipment, every contract, every business expense is creating a trail of money.

They are hit with the realization that they are on the clock. They have to get through the hazards and corridors of the business haunted house and still maintain an adequate amount of money.

***Lesson #4: Don't start a business on a shoestring budget. Make sure you have enough to get your business to the point of being profitable!***

## 4. The GHOSTS of Poor Customer Service



The first encounter comes with a complaint that barely catches the eye. But some entrepreneurs might decide to ignore it.

Was it really an issue? It *has* to be the circumstances or the customer. They might be in denial.

Soon, the haunting escalates into loud groans and shrieking. Then, everywhere they turn they are taunted and pestered by more and more bad spirits and reviews.

Who can maintain their confidence when confronted by these endless demons? They have to face their problems head on and implement the required changes.

***Lesson #5: Routinely implement steps to improve customer service and quality! Your business depends on it!***

## 5. Attack of the Business Tax & Regulation ZOMBIES



Regulations and taxes won't go away. They are always lurking and they won't back down!

Sometimes they are merely an inconvenience, but then they start to really add up. Government agencies can be unforgiving when it comes to dealing with businesses and taxes.

If business owners let their guard down, they may suddenly discover that they are vulnerable, surrounded and are at risk of being overwhelmed by taxes, regulations and other local, state and federal requirements.

These zombies are relentless!

***Lesson #6: Always stay up on taxes, payroll, fees and regulations. Don't overlook them.***



## 6. DON'T go in the basement!



Being chased and overwhelmed by challenging situations, our entrepreneurs and business owners may be tempted to avoid the situation by escaping to the cellar.

If they go down those steps, they may mistakenly think they are temporarily safe, but they are not. There is no escape once they give up. Their business will never get out of it alive.

Avoidance is not an option!

***Lesson #7: Don't go into the Basement! Stay engaged. Face your challenges. Make the decision to do what it takes to get control and come out on top.***

## 7. A SUSPENSEFUL Climax!

Faced With a tough situation and difficult decisions, the entrepreneurs summon the power to stand up and face their challenges head on. It is time to take charge!

They lay out a thoughtful plan to forge ahead successfully. They seek proper advice, whether it is financially, operationally, or if they have issues with permits and licensing.

Suddenly, something amazing happens.

The haunted house evaporates around them. The swirling cloud of doubt is replaced by welcome ray of sunshine.

In its place is a strong, modern structure of strength and success. Our entrepreneurs and business owners have prevailed and are driven, more than ever, toward accomplishment and triumph!

***Lesson #8: Success comes by controlling your environment, not by letting it control you!***



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