

YOUR BUSINESS STARTS HERE

BUSINESS PLANNING WORKBOOK

*The easy way to visualize and plan
your business idea*



SIMPLE, EASY-TO-FOLLOW FORMAT!

Take your business concept from
the idea stage to opening your doors!

by DAVE CROSS

THIS BOOK IS DESIGNED TO BE PRINTED OUT AND USED AS A WORKBOOK

**Your Business Starts Here
by Dave Cross**

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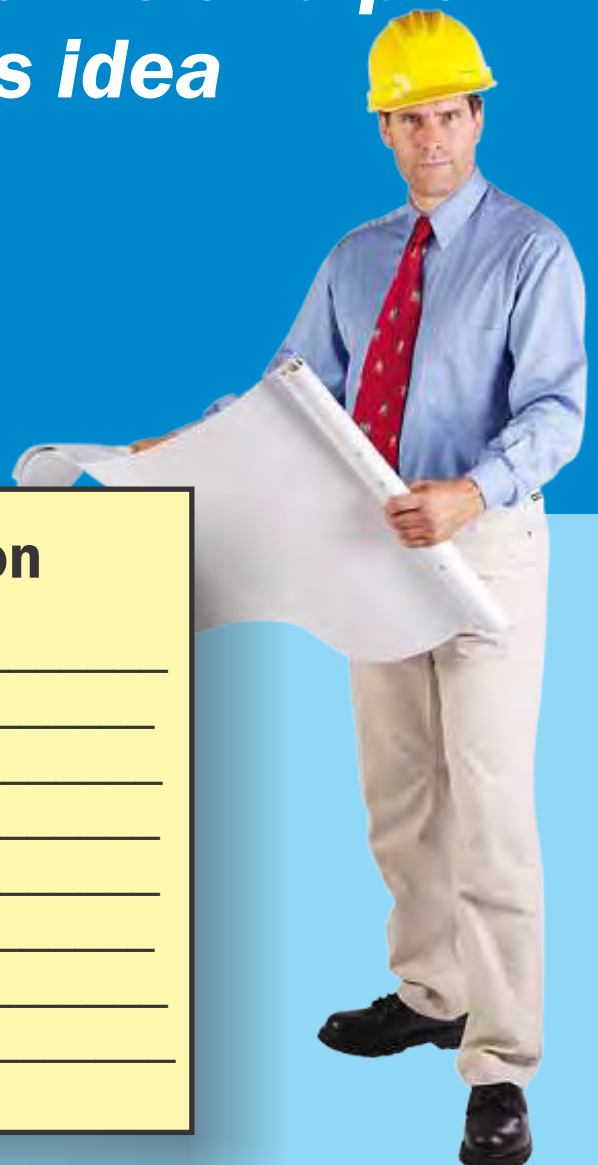
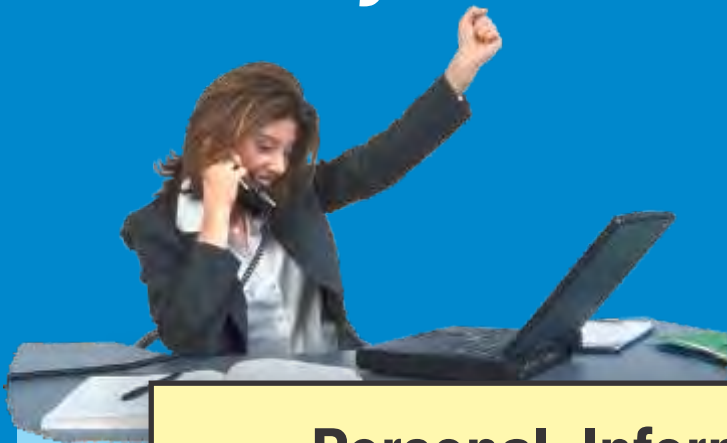
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*The easy way to visualize and plan
your business idea*



Personal Information

Name _____

Course # _____

Address _____

Tel# _____

Cell or other _____

E-mail _____

YOUR BUSINESS STARTS HERE



BUSINESS PLANNING WORKBOOK

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INTRODUCTION

Starting a business can be intimidating, that's why we've broken the process down into worksheets that are easy to understand, yet complete enough for you to really plan out your business idea.

We are going to take you through the planning process step by step. It is important that you do the necessary research as you compile the information required for each worksheet. By the time you are through, you should know what it will take to make your business idea a reality. You can then use the information to assemble your formal business plan for a bank loan, or if you are fully funded, use these plans to help guide your business during start-up.

While there is no guarantee for success, you will be far ahead of most people who want to start their own business. You are doing something about it! The success rate increases dramatically in proportion to planning. You will feel more confident, know what to do, and will have a firm grasp on the costs involved and what kind of profits you can expect.

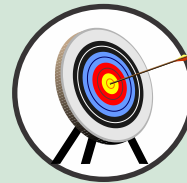
You will be able to answer the bottom line question:
"Is your business viable enough to make a profit?"
If not, it is better to know now than later.

Here is what you can expect in the sections that follow:



SECTION 1 YOUR BUSINESS STARTS HERE

We start with the question: What you want from your business? There is also basic business information to complete and a chance to use your vision to set some goals.



SECTION 4 MARKETING & ADVERTISING

This section will help you to develop a marketing plan and create an advertising budget. You will examine your marketing options and find the best way to market your business.



SECTION 2 BUSINESS STRUCTURE

You will lay the groundwork for operating your business. This section covers information that sets the foundation and operation of your business.



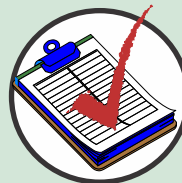
SECTION 5 FINANCIAL DETAILS

The Financial section will help you determine how much money you need to start your business. You will also identify your expenses and see how much income is needed to make a profit.



SECTION 3 INDUSTRY ANALYSIS & COMPETITION

You will analyze the industry your business is in and see how you stack up with your competition. You will find a niche that makes your business stand out.



SECTION 6 START-UP CHECKLIST

Each major step is identified in checklist form. This section will keep you organized and on target while you get your business started. There is also a quick reference list of contacts that you can easily refer to.

SECTION 1 - YOUR BUSINESS STARTS HERE



You and Your Business

Setting Some Goals

All of us have different reasons for going into business, and we need to set personal goals about where we want our business to take us.

“People with goals succeed because they know where they are going. It’s as simple as that.”
- Earl Nightingale

Face it, starting a business is not easy. It takes commitment and a willingness to work long hours if necessary. Goals give you something to reach for and can carry you through some tough times. Achieving goals leads to success.

WHAT ARE YOUR PERSONAL GOALS IN RELATION TO YOUR BUSINESS?

List 6 goals you would like to reach that would make your business a success



1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____



What's in a Name?

The name of your business should be easy to recognize and remember. It can also instantly explain what you do.



Location, Location, Location!

The right location can make or break you. For some businesses it doesn't matter.

Compare all possibilities and visit a Commercial Real Estate office for a list of spaces available.

BUSINESS NAME:

OWNERSHIP (Circle):

Sole Proprietor, Partnership, Corporation

OWNERS: _____

TYPE OF BUSINESS (Circle): Retail, Wholesale, Service,

Other _____

WHAT DOES YOUR BUSINESS DO? _____

PLACE OF BUSINESS

Will you be working out of your home? _____

If Commercial Space is needed, how much room in square footage do you need for your business? _____

What will be the rental cost for a space that size? _____

How much is the required deposit? _____

What OTHER fees will you be required to pay monthly or yearly?

_____ Triple Net (this means you will pay a % of taxes, upkeep, etc)

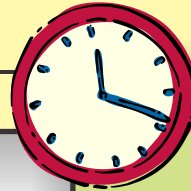
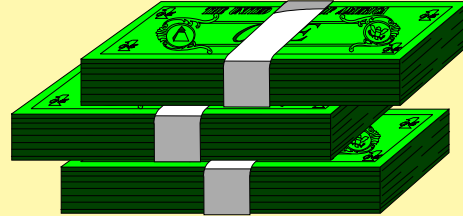
_____ Percentage of profit?

_____ Other fees?

Total Rental and added fees (per month) _____

How Do You Plan to Finance Your Business?

- ___ Personal Loan
- ___ Business Loan
- ___ Line of Credit
- ___ Cash on Hand
- ___ Investors
- ___ Relatives
- ___ Other _____



What will be your
Hours of Operation?

Mon: _____
Tues: _____
Wed: _____
Thurs: _____
Fri: _____
Sat: _____
Sun: _____



Create a "Mission Statement"

A mission statement keeps your business headed in the right direction.

Example: "To provide the highest quality widgets to the medical industry overnight at competitive prices"

YOUR MISSION STATEMENT:

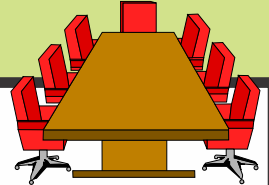


SECTION 2 - BUSINESS STRUCTURE

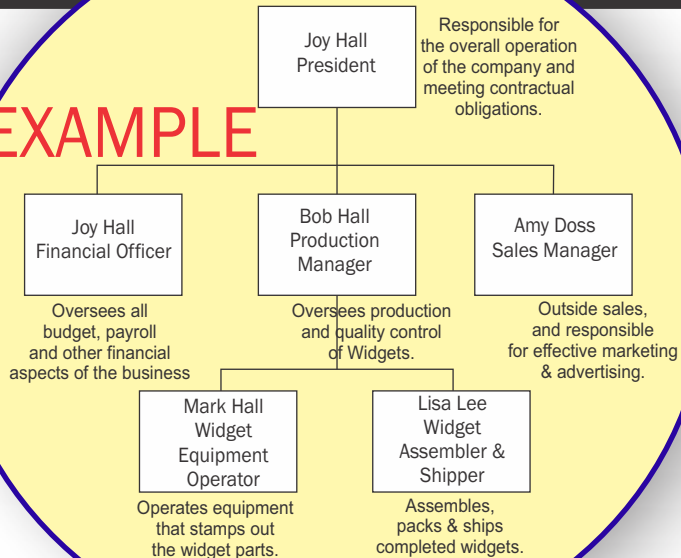


CREATE AN ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

Draw a simple organizational chart that shows key personnel, their titles, and the tasks which they are assigned to.



EXAMPLE



FLOOR PLAN/JOB FLOW CHART

Create a floor plan that shows your office, store or workplace and what is accomplished in each section.
How much space will you need in square footage for your operation?

CUSTOMER ORDER

How will Customers buy or order your product or service?

- ☐ Telephone
- ☐ Internet
- ☐ by Fax
- ☐ In Person

Will you accept Credit Cards? ☐



TIP: Think about the process between taking the order and delivering the product or service

SERVICE RENDERED

How do Customers receive your product or service?

- ☐ Pick-Up
- ☐ Delivery
- ☐ By Shipping
- ☐ By Mail
- ☐ Download via Internet
- ☐ Onsite Service



LET'S TALK ABOUT EMPLOYEES

How many employees will you need to start? _____

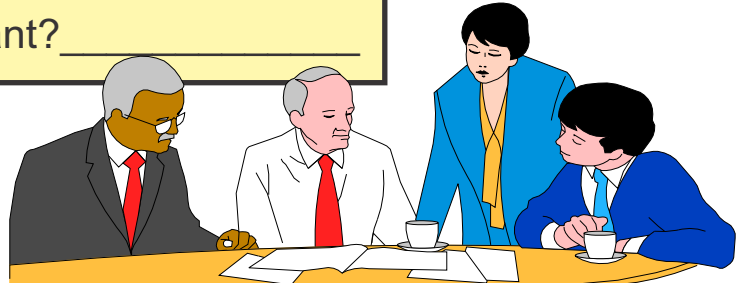
Do you intend to lease them from an agency? _____

If not, are you aware of the regulatory requirements for hiring employees? _____

Have you consulted with your accountant? _____

ADVANTAGES TO LEASING

Unless you are informed and prepared to fulfill the legal obligations for hiring people onto your payroll, it is a good idea to consider leasing an employee from a local employment agency. They will handle the legal requirements for you. In addition, should someone not work out, you can simply ask for a replacement.



TIP!

If you find someone to hire you can still lease them. Just have them register at the employment agency you are working with and hire them through that agency.

EMPLOYEE CHART

JobTitle	Full Time/ Part Time	Hours Per Week	Description Of Duties	Hourly Rate (add \$2-3 per hour to est. Added Fees)

An illustration showing three different types of equipment: a desktop computer with a CRT monitor and keyboard, a yellow forklift with a worker, and a large beige server rack.

Total Cost _____

Total Cost _____

Total Cost

SECTION 3 - INDUSTRY ANALYSIS & COMPETITION



WHO ARE YOUR CUSTOMERS?

Main Type of Customer if it is a Retail
or Service Business



Age _____
Sex _____
Income Range _____
Where they live _____
Own or Rent a home? _____
Other specifics about your customers:

Main Type of Customer if it is a Manufacturing
or Wholesale Business



Type of businesses _____
Where are they? _____
Are they corporations,
or small businesses? _____
Other specifics about your customers:

Summarize who your major
customers are:

YOUR INDUSTRY

1. Your business is: (circle one)
wholesale, retail, service, professional,
Internet, other _____

2. Describe your Industry _____

3. How is location important to your business?

4. Your Industry is:

Growing _____ Steady _____ Declining _____



COMPETITION

Who are your direct competitors? (Businesses just like Yours)

How many are there? _____

Who are your indirect competitors?

(Businesses that do other things but happen to also do what you do)

How many are there? _____

Let's Look at your Top 3 Competitors

Rank them 1,2,3 in the following categories:

Now list each competitors strong and weak points

Name	Quality	Price	Service	Strong Points	Weak Points



DETERMINING YOUR NICHE

A niche is something that makes you stand out from your competitors

TIP

You want repeat customers. Repeat customers respond to service over price.
A price-based customer will leave you for a competitor at the first lower price.

What will YOUR company be known best for:
Quality, Service, Price, Specialty,
or Other _____?

List your company's Strong Points

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

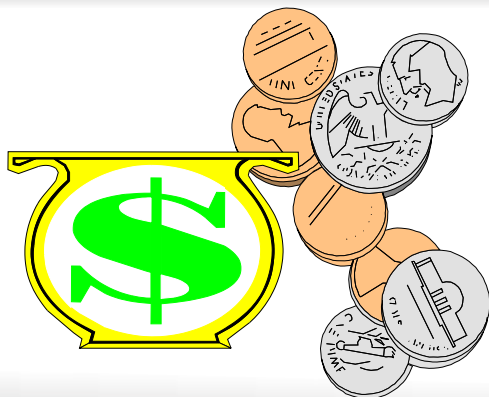
List your company's Weak Points

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What things will you do BETTER than your competitors?

PRICING YOUR PRODUCT OR SERVICE

The price of your product depends upon financial factors and other things that effect to your business.



TIP

Do not underprice your product or service as that cuts directly into your profit margin. Discounts and give-aways also come at the expense of your profit margin.

Compare Your price with your competitors' on 3 items

Competitor	Item #1 & Description	Item #2 & Description	Item #3 & Description
#1			
#2			
#3			
Your Business			

Justify Why YOUR price is Higher or Lower

SECTION 4 - MARKETING & ADVERTISING



Creating Your Image

Design a Logo

You don't need a professionally designed logo right now. Just draw or make a computer rendition of a logo that you like. It should be simple and readable. Use your imagination!

Create a Tag Line or Marketing Statement for your Business

Most businesses and organizations have tag lines or marketing statements that generate interest and further explain what they do.

Examples:

OrganizeNow: "Showing you a new world order"
Clothes for Less : "Money never looked so good"
PrintFast: "When you need printing done NOW."

CREATE YOUR TAG LINE:



Marketing Your Business and Image



Each of these marketing options generally have an associated cost. Research what options YOU would use and write in the cost for each.
(Do your research on this!)

ITEM	ASSOCIATED COST	YOUR Marketing choices for Start-up and the costs	Ongoing per-month cost of YOUR Marketing choices
Brochure			
Better Business Location			
Internet Web Site			
Business cards & Letterhead			
Sponsorships			
Organizational Memberships			
Donated products or service			
Signs and Banners			
Special Events			
Total Marketing Options Costs=		Start-Up	Monthly

Your Internet Web Site

Design an Internet presence that fits your business

Will you sell your product from your web site? _____

Will you sell other products from there? _____

Is your Web Site for information only? _____

Should a customer be able to contact you from your web site via e-mail? _____

TIP

Look at the Web Sites of your Competitors. See what they are doing. Incorporate the parts that you like onto your own Web Site.

Contact 3 Web Site Designers and compare costs and their Web Sites. Circle the one you would use.

Designer	Cost for Web Page Design	Web Site Address
1.		
2.		
3.		

Forms of Advertising and Associated Costs

Research the forms of advertising that would work best for your business AND determine the associated costs.
Do the research and come up with accurate costs.



Learn from Your Competitors' Ads.

A good way to help determine what type of advertising works for your business is by examining the advertising tactics of your competitors.

ADVERTISING COSTS

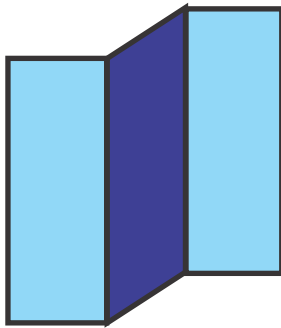
Advertising Method	Size or Qty Option #1	Size or Qty Option #2	Size or Qty Option #3	Size or Qty Option #4	YOUR Advertising choices for Start-up and the costs	Ongoing per-month cost of YOUR Advertising choices
Yellow Pages						
Newspaper Ad						
Radio						
Television						
Signs						
Directories						
Magazines						
Direct mail						
Coupons						
Internet						
Flyers						
Telemarketing						
Other:						
Total Advertising Costs =					Start-up	Monthly

“Many a small thing has been made large by the right kind of advertising.”
- Mark Twain

TIP

For many businesses, Direct Mail can be the best form of advertising.

Create a Brochure



Fold an 8 ½ x 11 sheet of paper into thirds and
DESIGN A BROCHURE about your business.

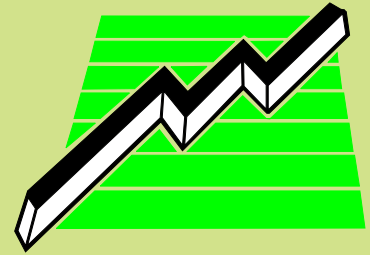
This will help to clarify what you want your customers to know about you.

In exactly 50 words, write an introduction about your business as if you were responding to someone asking you about it.

SECTION 5 - FINANCIAL DETAILS



Start-Up Costs

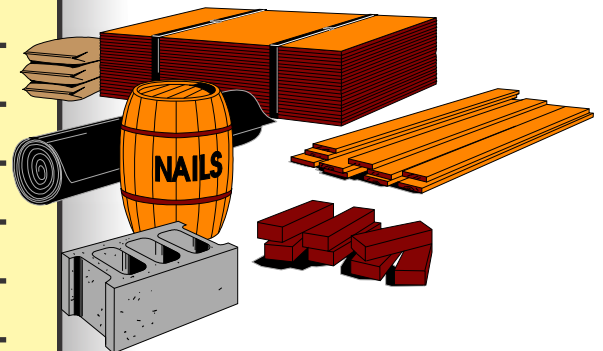


Before we examine your business cash flow over the course of a year, we need to focus on start-up costs. That way you will have a more accurate idea of what it will cost to open the doors of your business.

You have already put together some costs for start-up and monthly items. We will examine additional ones on the following pages and then compile the total start-up cost.

Store Build-Out Costs

Item	Amount
Contractor	
Fixtures	
Counters	
Permit Fees	
Painting	
Shelving	
Windows	
Other:	
Total:	



Utilities

Telephone:

Internet Service:

Electricity:

Water/ Sewer:

Gas:

Trash Pickup:

Other:

TOTAL

Deposit &
Start-up Costs

Monthly
Costs

Start-Up

Monthly



Start-Up Printing Costs

Item

Costs

- Business Cards

- Letterhead

- Flyers

- Brochures

- Mailers

- Catalogs

Total:





Sign Costs

Item	Costs
Sign Contractor	
Sign Permit	
Building Signs	
Monument Sign	
Banners	
Posters	
Inside Signs	
Vehicle Signs	
Total:	

Government Compliance Costs

(Only some may pertain to your business)

Item	Costs
Fictitious Name Statement	
Business Permit	
Fire Dept Inspection	
Fire Extinguishers	
ADA (handicap) items	
Zoning Permit	
Health Permit	
City Permits	
County Permits	
Total:	

**Wondering
which
government
requirements
pertain to
you?
Contact your
city or
county office
and find out!**



Grand Opening Costs	
Item	Amount
Catering	
Invitations	
Signs	
Flyers	
Advertising	
Entertainment	
Balloons	
Tent	
Other:	
Total	

Most People underestimate
the time it will take to finally
open the business doors,
AND how long it will take
before they actually start making a profit.



START-UP COSTS IN DETAIL

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ITEM	COST
Rent & Deposit	
Store Buildout	
Utility Costs	
Equipment Costs	
Material Costs	
Other Inventory	
Advertising	
Other Marketing	
Printing Costs	
Signs	
Government Fees	
Grand Opening	
Furniture	
Wages	
Insurance	
Accountant	
Attorney	
Other Outside Services	
Other:	
TOTAL:	



BUSINESS CASH FLOW WORKSHEET

Item	Start-Up	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Month 5	Month 6	Month 7	Month 8	Month 9	Month 10	Month 11	Month 12	Totals
STARTING CASH (Cash on hand at the beginning of the month)														
CASH RECEIPTS														
Cash Sales														
Collections on Account Receivables														
Other Cash (specify):														
TOTAL CASH AVAILABLE														
CASH PAID OUT														
Merchandise														
Stock Items														
Materials														
Wages														
Taxes														
Outside Services														
Equipment														
Office Supplies														
Advertising														
Rent														
Utilities														
Tools														
Furniture														
Maintenance														
Delivery and Travel														
Other (specify):														
TOTAL CASH PAID OUT														
CASH POSITION Total Cash Available minus Total Cash Paid Out THE BOTTOM LINE														

STEPS IN SECURING CAPITAL

1. Write a formal Business Plan. It is necessary to have for acquiring financing. It also will provide you with a clear vision and direction for your proposed business.
2. Determine the total Capital needed
3. How much Capital can you contribute?
4. How much Capital can Family contribute?
5. Will you take on a partner?
Yes____ No____ How Much?
6. Will you take on an investor?
Yes____ No____ How Much?
7. Capital Needed from Financial Sources
8. Talk to your banker regarding loan options
Including: Business Loan, Line of Credit,
Personal Loan, or
Small Business Association (SBA) loan.

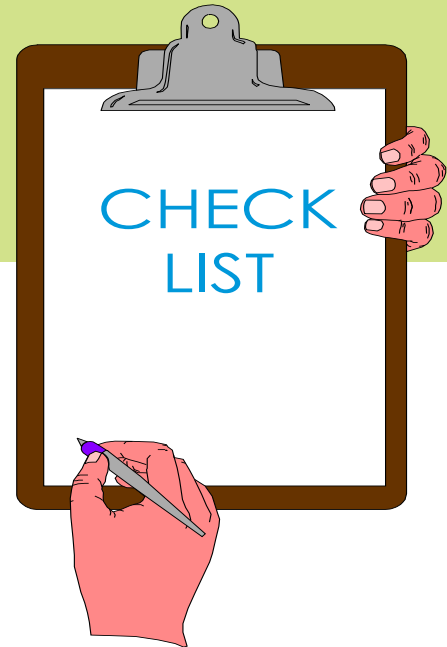
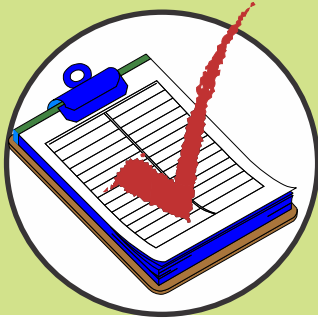


MAINTAINING YOUR CASH FLOW

- Create an Invoicing System for your Business
- Assign someone to follow-up on Accounts
- Do not allow accounts to become past due
- Create a procedure for systematic ordering of materials
- Incorporate Technology into your business:
 - Invoicing Software
 - Bar Coding
 - Point of Sale Software
 - Inventory Control Software



SECTION 6 - START-UP CHECKLIST



1. ___ Do your Research!
2. ___ Create Business Plan
3. ___ Secure Required Finances
4. ___ File Fictitious Name Statement
5. ___ Open Business Bank Account
6. ___ Publish Fictitious Name Statement in Newspaper
7. ___ Create a Relationship with these Business Resources:
Commercial Real Estate Company
(If leasing a space or office): _____

Bookkeeper / Accountant: _____

Insurance Company: _____

Business Attorney: _____

8. ___ Search for, Compare, and Find a Suitable Location:
 - A. _____
 - B. _____
 - C. _____

9. ___ Contact the local Planning & Development Department to verify approval of your Business in the desired location.
10. ___ Negotiate and Secure a Lease Agreement
File for a Business License in your City or County
11. ___ Contact Sign Company for your Business Sign
12. ___ Submit All Required Government Applications
13. ___ Contact Franchise Tax Board for Sales Permit (if applicable)
14. ___ Hire Contractor for Store Build-Out and Improvements
15. ___ Contact and Schedule with Utility Companies:
16. ___ Secure your Vendors and Suppliers:
 - A. _____
 - B. _____
 - C. _____
 - D. _____
 - E. _____
17. ___ Contact Employment Agency for Employees and Staff Requirements
18. ___ Set up your Marketing / Advertising Program
19. ___ Move in Furniture and Office Equipment
20. ___ Join appropriate Groups:
Chamber of Commerce
Other groups _____
21. ___ **Grand Opening!**



Important Contacts

NAME

TELEPHONE

E-MAIL

NOTES

**Good Luck to you with your
New Business!**

We wish you great success.

**Your Business Starts Here
by Dave Cross**

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