

Getting Started

Once you have determined that you are ready and able to take on identified viable business opportunities, there are many practical things you need to put in place right at the start, to establish your business on a sound footing.

Our *Getting Started* checklist covers:

- ❑ Legal considerations.
- ❑ Setting up your finances.
- ❑ Operating your business.
- ❑ Promoting your business.
- ❑ Keeping pace.

Some tips on how to avoid business failure:

- ▶ *Don't underestimate the capital you need to start up the business.*
 - ▶ *Understand and keep control of your finances - income earned is not the same as cash in hand!*
 - ▶ *More volume does not automatically mean more profit - you need to get your pricing right.*
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Legal considerations

- ❑ Decide how your business will be legally structured. See the **Business Structure** fact sheet for more detail.
- ❑ If you choose to be a sole trader, you can trade using your own name or register a business name with the Office of Fair Trading at www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au
- ❑ If your business is a company, your company name needs to be registered with the Australian Securities and Investment Commission (ASIC) at www.asic.gov.au
- ❑ Register for an Australian Business Number (ABN) with the Australian Taxation Office. You can register on-line for an ABN at the Business Entry Point at www.business.gov.au.
- ❑ Register for the relevant taxes, including GST and PAYG. See the **Taxation** fact sheet for further information on what relevant taxes apply to your business. You may also do this via the Business Entry Point at www.business.gov.au
- ❑ If you intend to employ, obtain information on awards, superannuation policies, workers compensation, PAYG taxes as well as other relevant employment information. Have a look at the **NSW Employment Conditions** fact sheet.
- ❑ Check on what licenses/registrations may be required for your business through the Office of Fair Trading.
- ❑ Check with your local council regarding zoning, health regulations and whether you need to lodge a Development Application or Building Application.
- ❑ Develop an Intellectual Property register for logos, trade marks, patents, copyright, and designs. Contact IP Australia for more information at www.ipaustralia.gov.au.
- ❑ Register your Website domain name if you want a strong Internet presence. You need a legitimate business or company name eg through the Office of Fair Trading, to get a .com.au address. You can search for and register a domain name at www.melbourneit.com.au.
- ❑ Draw up your Will, especially if you are a sole shareholder/director.

Setting up your finances

- ❑ Set up a business bank account (if you have registered a business name, you will need to have your Certificate of Registration of Business Name).
- ❑ Discuss your financial position and any loan arrangements with your lender. The **Raising Finance** fact sheet will help you think through what type of finance you should be seeking.
- ❑ Consider credit arrangements (for instance EFTPOS and credit facilities for your customers).
- ❑ Choose your accountant and set up your financial record keeping system.
- ❑ Set up a system to monitor financial performance of your business eg cash flow budget. Consider benchmarking your business against profiles available from your local Business Advisory Service.

Getting Started

Operating your business

- ❑ Identify the benefits and disadvantages of purchasing property versus leasing property versus working from home. See the **Commercial Leases** fact sheet on what to take into account when negotiating leased premises.
- ❑ Negotiate and sign any lease/purchase documentation in consultation with your Solicitor.
- ❑ Arrange for business insurance, including public liability, vehicle, fire, burglary, professional indemnity and sickness. See the **Insurance** fact sheet for further detail.
- ❑ Arrange for connection of utility services, such as electricity, water, telephone and gas.
- ❑ Purchase business equipment, fittings and furniture.
- ❑ Develop an asset register.
- ❑ Order and purchase stationery, tax invoices, letterheads, business cards and record keeping book.
- ❑ Arrange for a suitable filing and accounting system.
- ❑ Order and purchase trading stock and determine terms of payment, delivery and freight.

More Information

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Visit the NSW Department of State and Regional Development small business website for more information on how to start a business, including business planning tools, and more general business information:
www.smallbiz.nsw.gov.au

Office of Fair Trading:
Call 13 32 20 or log on to:
www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au

The Australian Securities and Investment Commission can be contacted on: 1300 300 630 or
www.asic.gov.au

Industry Associations and your local Chamber of Commerce and Industry offer advice and services to members. Click on *resources* and *weblinks* on the DSRD small business site for contact details.

WHO SHOULD I TALK TO?

Your local Business Advisory Service can offer you one on one advice on the practicalities of setting up your business. It also offers low cost business workshops such as business planning, marketing and financial management.
Call 1300 650 058

Promoting your business

- ❑ Make sure you identify and promote your business at every opportunity eg through your stationery, and other promotional material.
- ❑ Determine your advertising and marketing needs. Decide on the cost/benefit of using an advertising agency.
- ❑ Think about how you could network with other businesses to promote your products or services.
- ❑ Determine how eBusiness could work for you.
- ❑ Develop a marketing plan that will not only sell your products, but also promote your business. The **Marketing, Advertising & Promotion** and **Customer Service** fact sheets should assist.

Keeping pace

- ❑ Make sure you have a well-prepared business plan, one that you review over time as your business develops. See the **Business Planning** fact sheet to help kick this off.
- ❑ Join a trade association/Chamber of Commerce.
- ❑ If you are in a partnership, consider obtaining a Power of Attorney for you and/or partners.
- ❑ Review your will from time to time to ensure it reflects any change in your circumstances.
- ❑ Stay up to date with changes in your industry, customer preferences and business regulation system.
- ❑ Undertake further training and build professional relationships to build your business capability.
- ❑ Refer to other fact sheets covering different aspects of running a business including useful contacts.