



Checklist for Starting Your Business

About your customers:

- Do most businesses in your community seem to be doing well? _____
- Have you tried to find out whether businesses like the one you want to start are doing well in your community and in the rest of the country? _____
- Do you know what kind of people will want to buy what you plan to sell? _____
- Do people like that live in the area where you want to start your business? _____
- Do they need a business like yours? _____
- If not, have you thought about opening a different kind of business or going to another neighborhood? _____

GETTING STARTED-

Your Building:

- Your building Have you found a good building for your business? _____
- Will you have enough room when your business gets bigger? _____
- Can you fix the building the way you want it without spending too much money? _____
- Can people get to it easily from parking spaces, bus stops, or their homes? _____
- Have you had a lawyer check the lease and zoning? _____

Equipment and supplies:

- Do you know just what equipment and supplies you need and how much they will cost? _____
- Can you save some money by buying secondhand equipment? _____



Your merchandise:

Have you decided what things you want to sell? _____

Do you know how much or how many of each you will buy to open your business with? _____

Have you found suppliers who will sell you what you need at a good price? _____

Have you compared the prices and credit terms of different suppliers? _____

Your records:

Have you planned a system of records that will keep track of your income and expenses, what you owe other people, and what other people owe you? _____

Have you worked out a way to keep track of your inventory so that you will always have enough on hand for your customers but not more than you can sell? _____

Have you figured out how to keep your payroll records and take care of tax reports and payments? _____

Do you know what financial statements you should prepare? _____

Do you know an accountant you can go to for advice and help with taxes? _____

Your business and the law:

Do you know what licenses and permits you need? _____

Do you know what business laws you have to obey? _____

Do you know a lawyer you can go to for advice and for help with legal papers? _____

Protecting your business:

Have you made plans for protecting your business against thefts of all kinds? Shoplifting, robbery, burglary, employee stealing? _____

Have you talked to an insurance agent about what kinds of insurance you need? _____



Buying a business someone else has started:

Have you made a list of what you like and don't like about buying a business someone else has started? _____

Are you sure you know the real reason why the owner wants to sell the business? _____

Have you compared the cost of buying the business with the cost of starting a new business? _____

Is the inventory up to date and in good condition? _____

Is the building in good condition? _____

Will the owner of the building transfer the lease to you? _____

Have you talked to other business people in the area to see what they think of the business? _____

Have you talked with the company's suppliers? _____

Have you talked with a lawyer about the purchase? _____

MAKING IT GO

Advertising:

Have you decided how you will advertise (newspapers, posters, handbills, radio, TV, mail)? _____

Do you know where to get help with your ads? _____

Have you watched what other businesses do to get people to buy? _____

The prices you charge:

Do you know how to figure what you should charge for each item you sell? _____

Do you know what other businesses like yours charge? _____

Buying:

Do you have a plan for finding out what your customers want? _____



Will your plan for keeping track of your inventory tell you when it is time to order more and how much to order? _____

Do you plan to buy most of your stock from a few suppliers rather than small quantities from many suppliers, so that those you buy from will want to help you succeed? _____

Selling:

Have you decided whether you will have sales clerks or self-service? _____

Do you know how to get customers to buy? _____

Have you thought about why you like to buy from some salespeople while others turn you off? _____

Your employees:

If you need to hire someone to help you, do you know where to look? _____

Do you know what kind of person you need? _____

Do you know how much to pay? _____

Do you have a plan for training your employees? _____

Credit for your customers:

Have you decided whether to let your customers buy on credit? _____

Do you know the good and bad points about joining a credit-card plan? _____

Can you tell a deadbeat from a good credit customer? _____

A FEW EXTRA QUESTIONS:

Have you figured out whether you could make more money working for someone else? _____

Does your family go along with your plan to start a business of your own? _____

Do you know where to find out about new ideas and new products?

Do you have a work plan for yourself and your employees?
