

Checklist - Am I Ready to Start a Business?

Below are a list of questions and statements to help you see if you are prepared to start a business. This list is not comprehensive and not every question or statement will apply to every type of business. However, it is a reasonable guide to help you decide if you are ready to move forward.

GENERAL QUESTIONS

- I can clearly state what product or service my business provides.
- Is my product or service new and exciting?
- I know who will buy my product or service.
- I know how to price my products/services.
- I know who my suppliers will be.
- I understand the amount of time and money needed to succeed.
- Where will my business be located?

CUSTOMERS AND THE MARKET

- I know who my potential customers are and why they will buy my product or service.
- I know the demographics of my current or prospective customers.
- I know how to reach potential customers.
- I am addressing unmet customer needs.
- I know the price customers would be willing to pay for my products or services.
- I know how I will sell my product or service.
- Will my customers prefer my product (or service) over the alternatives?

THE INDUSTRY AND COMPETITORS

- I know my industry.
- I know the competitors in my industry and how my business will compare to them.
- I know the advantages and/or disadvantages I have over my competitors.
- I have identified my market segment.
- I know the market segments or groups that are more likely to buy my product.
- Have I identified new markets that I can successfully target?

LEGAL, FINANCIAL, AND PERSONAL MATTERS

- I know what licenses and/or permits my company will need
- I know what regulations apply to my industry.
- I know how many employees I will need, what they will do, and what they will be paid.
- I know my current and future funding requirements.
- Where will I get the financial resources to start or grow my business?
- I can support my personal expenses for at least 6 months until my business becomes profitable.
- Is my family supportive of my new endeavor and do they understand the ramifications of such?