

What to do When Starting a Business

A mix of business advice and best tax practices, this checklist will keep your new business on track.

| Step 1: Set the Stage | Complete |
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| Consider Your Product: what do you want to sell, and more importantly, what do you NOT want to sell? Get clear on WHAT you want to deliver every day, with brilliance. | |
| Think About Your Customers: who do you want to sell to, and even more importantly, who do you NOT want to sell to? Decide on your preferred customer group early. | |
| Product/Process Prep: get market ready! Polish your product and plan your services. | |
| Plan for Marketing: don't market to get customers; market to get the <u>right</u> customers. | |
| Step 2: Decide on Your Business Structure | |
| Should You Incorporate: watch our incorporation video series. Making the right choice early can save you administrative pain and thousands of dollars. | |
| Consider Going Solo: business partnerships are really, really hard and rarely work out. Consider if your business venture should be a solo venture. | |
| Get A License: reach out to your municipal government to see if you need a business license. Don't forget about your professional associations – do you need to register? | |
| Protect Yourself: business liability insurance and professional malpractice coverage can save you from lawsuits. Reach out to an insurance broker to see what your options are. | |
| Step 3: Know Your Tax Obligations | |
| Remember To Save: set aside 20 – 30% of your business profits or cash withdrawals in a savings account to prepare for your tax bill. A big tax bill is a nasty surprise and very common for small business owners in Canada. Be prepared. | |
| Keep GST in Mind: GST/HST usually kicks in when your total sales or money earned exceeds \$30,000 in any 12-month period. Check out our GST/HST videos and register with the CRA when needed. Then collect and pay every year. | |
| Consider Provincial Sales Tax (PST): check with your provincial government about PST tax obligations. PST is specific to what you are selling and where you live so reach out to your provincial tax authority to avoid a nasty surprise. | |
| Don't Forget WorkSafe: if you are incorporated, have subcontractors, or have employees you may need to register for WorkSafe. Check with your provincial WorkSafe authority about registration requirements as its specific to your province. | |
| Have Employees? Register with the CRA for a payroll account to remit your taxes monthly. Check out our other videos for more guidance. | |
| Step 4: Prepare for Your Bookkeeping | |
| Keep Your Receipts: either paper or PDF is fine; but you do need detailed information on what you purchased. If audited, the CRA will ask for receipts. Don't forget about home office expenses, motor vehicle receipts, and your personal cell phone bill. | |
| Plan For Your Bookkeeping: decide early how you'll do your monthly bookkeeping, stick to it, or find an awesome bookkeeper to help you out. | |
| Step 5: Keep Growing | |
| Be A Learner: Don't miss the treasure available nearby. Pick up a book or check out our other website resources to start your journey. | |
| Step 6: Just Get Started | |
| Don't Procrastinate: launch your business and learn from your mistakes. Successful business owners make mistakes and then fix or learn from them. You can too. | |

Be sure to check out our other handouts and videos to set yourself up for success 😊 .