

Start Your Business Using This Guide

By Maria Marsala

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How do you start to plan your business? What is required? What should you research? Where do you start? Use the checklist below to guide you as you build a strong, solid business foundation.

Check your Personal Foundation. Make sure you are ready mentally, emotionally and financially to begin your new venture.

- Make the time.
- Budget your income.
- Create balance in your life.
- Know your strengths, weaknesses, top 5 values and needs.
- Order a copy of your credit report.
- Choose your ideal business.

Get organized. Any new business venture will go more smoothly if you know right from the start what you have to offer, who you want to offer it to, and how you want your business to be organized.

- Read a few books on business start-ups and marketing <http://www.coachmaria.com/businessbooks.html> .
- Check the need for your services.
- Prepare a business plan and ideal client profile.
- Price your service or product.
- Develop a customer service policy.
- Create an Operations Manual.
- Plan for your office - location, supplies, utilities, and set-up fees.

Develop a strong network and referral base. From support to legal advice, starting your own business is never something you do all by yourself.

- Look for assistance: employee, independent contractor.
- Legal: licensing, business type, contracts, trademarks, copyrights, patent, service marks.
- Build support: family, friends, business coach, consultant,

advisors, business and social networking.

-- Insurance: health, home, car, income, liability, risk, disability, loss of pay.

-- Money: taxes, accounting, banking, billing, cash flow, loans.

-- Marketing: copywriter, proofreaders, website designer, graphic designer, an assistant, Toastmasters, etc.

Create a Marketing Plan. A new business often doesn't have a huge budget for marketing and a plan you help you save money.

-- Design your marketing plan with your integrity in mind.

-- Develop print media (business cards, stationary, forms, advertisements, newsletter, etc.).

-- Decide if online marketing will be part of your plan (website, newsletter, ad's, etc.).

-- Practice describing the benefits of what you do in 30 seconds and 2 minutes (called verbal logo, USP, elevator speech).

-- Re-evaluate your plan every 3 months.

Start your research with the business, marketing and personal development articles at

<http://www.coachmaria.com/articles.html> .

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