

A photograph of two hands shaking in a firm grip, symbolizing a business agreement. The background is a blurred crowd of people in business attire. A dark blue semi-transparent rectangle is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing the text 'Starting up in business'.

# Starting up in business

**Starting in business**

**Factsheet**

The logo for Rouse Chartered Accountants. It features the word 'rouse' in a bold, lowercase, blue sans-serif font. Above the 'o' and 'u' are three curved lines in blue, red, and yellow. Below the word 'rouse' is the text 'Chartered Accountants' in a smaller, blue, sans-serif font.

**rouse**  
Chartered Accountants

# Starting up in business

It is the ambition of many people to run their own business, however a number of dangers exist. Read on for guidance on some of the factors which need to be considered before trading begins. This factsheet cannot cater for every possibility and any decisions should be supported by professional advice.

If you would like to discuss how we can assist you, please contact us on 01494 675321 or by email at [info@rousepartners.co.uk](mailto:info@rousepartners.co.uk)

## Initial considerations

In order to make your business a success there are a number of key factors which should be considered:

- ▶ commitment - starting a business is demanding. Determination and enthusiasm are essential
- ▶ skills - you will need managerial, financial, technical and marketing skills. If you do not have these skills personally, they can be found in a partner or employee, or acquired through training
- ▶ your product or service should have a proven or tested market, but must not conflict with the patent or rights of an existing business.

In addition to these general considerations there are a number of more specific matters.

## The business plan

The business plan is the key to success. If you need finance, no bank manager will lend money without a sensible plan.

Your plan should provide a thorough examination of the way in which the business will commence and develop. It should describe the business, product or service, market, mode of operation, capital requirements and projected financial results.

## Business structure

There are three common types of business structure:

**Sole trader** - This is the simplest form of business since it can be established without legal formality. However, the business of a sole trader is not distinguished from the proprietor's personal affairs.

**Partnership** - A partnership is similar in nature to a sole trader but because more people are involved it is advisable to draw up a written agreement and for all partners to be aware of the terms of the partnership. Again the business and personal affairs of the partners are not legally separate. A further possibility is to use what is known as a Limited Liability Partnership (LLP).

**Company** - The business affairs are separate from the personal affairs of the owners, but there are legal regulations to comply with.

The appropriate structure will depend on a number of factors, including consideration of taxation implications, the legal entity, ownership and liability.

## Business stationery

There are minimum requirements for the contents of business stationery, both paper and electronic, which will depend on the type of business structure.

## Books and records

All businesses need to keep records. They can be maintained by hand or may be computerised but should contain details of payments, receipts, credit purchases and sales, assets and liabilities. If you are considering purchasing computer software to maintain your records, obtain professional advice.

## Accounts

The books and records are used to produce the accounts. If the records are well kept it will be easier to put together the accounts. Accounts must be prepared for HMRC and if a company is formed there are strict legal requirements as to their layout. The accounts and company tax return must be submitted electronically to HMRC in a specific format.

A company and a LLP may need to have an audit and will need to make the accounts publicly available by filing them at Companies House within a strict time limit.

## Taxation

When starting in business, taxation aspects must be considered.

- ▶ **Taxation on profits** - The type and rate of taxation will depend on the form of business structure. However, the taxable profit will normally differ from the profit shown in the accounts due to certain expenses which are not allowed for tax purposes and the timing of some tax allowances. Payment of corporation tax must be made online.
- ▶ **National insurance (NI)** - The rates of NI contributions are generally lower for a sole trader or partnership than for a director of a company but the entitlements can also differ. In a

company, it may be possible to avoid NI by paying dividends rather than salary.

- ▶ **Value added tax (VAT)** - Correctly accounting for VAT is an essential part of any business and neglect may result in a significant loss.

When starting a business you should consider the need to register for VAT. If the value of your taxable sales or services exceeds the registration limit you will be obliged to register.

## Employing others

For the business to get off the ground or to enable expansion, it may be necessary to employ staff.

It is the employer's responsibility to advise HMRC of the wages due to employees and to deduct income tax and national insurance and to account for student loan deductions under PAYE. The deductions must then be paid over to HMRC. Payroll records should be carefully maintained.

Under Real Time Information an employer must advise HMRC of wages and deductions 'on or before' the time they are paid over to the employee.

You will also need to be familiar with employment law.

## Premises

There are many pitfalls to be avoided in choosing a property. Consideration should be given to the following:

- ▶ suitability for the purpose
- ▶ compliance with legal regulations
- ▶ local by-laws
- ▶ physical restrictions such as access.

## Insurance

Comprehensive insurance for business motor vehicles and employer's liability insurance are a legal requirement. Other types of insurance such as public liability, consequential loss, business assets, Keyman and bad debts should be considered.

## Pensions

Putting money into a pension scheme can be a way of saving for retirement because of the favourable tax rules.

The latest reforms, under Pensions Act 2008, have brought about a requirement on UK employers to automatically enrol all employees in a pension scheme and to make contributions to that scheme on their behalf. Enrolment may be either into an occupational pension scheme or the National Employment Savings Trust (NEST).

Compliance with the new regulations started from 2012 for the largest employers. The deadline for being compliant (an employer's 'staging date') is determined by the number of people in their PAYE scheme and for smaller employers is between 2012 and 2018.

## How we can help

Whilst some generalisation can be made about starting up a business, it is always necessary to tailor the strategy to fit your situation. Any plan must take account of your circumstances and aspirations.

Whilst business success can never be guaranteed, professional advice can help to avoid some of the problems which befall new businesses.

We would welcome the opportunity to assist you in formulating a strategy suitable for your own requirements. We can also provide key services such as bookkeeping, management accounts, VAT return and payroll preparation at an early stage.

Please contact us to find out more.

# Trusted advice, *imaginative solutions.*

It's the old adage that all accountants are the same, but ask yourself this; what kind of service would most add value to your personal or business position? In our opinion, the quality of advice and service is what separates a good accountant from a great one. This is where Rouse Partners can make a difference for you.

Our award-winning team make it their business to get to know you and your specific needs. Whether your goal is to grow your business, increase your personal wealth or improve your work-life balance, by understanding your challenges, we will address them together.

We also know how important it is for you to have a team that you can rely on for timely advice and reassurance. At Rouse, our people are our most important asset and we will select team members who offer an optimum mix of experience, specialism and knowhow. From your Partner, to your Tax Advisor, each team member will be accessible to you or your team and be proactive in seeking solutions.

At the heart of our way of working is a determination to think differently, to challenge the 'status quo' and to ask 'what if?'. Whether you are facing a complex tax, accounting or management situation, we are ready to find a solution.

Contact us today to discuss how we can support your personal or business tax needs:

t: 01494 675321

e: [info@rousepartners.co.uk](mailto:info@rousepartners.co.uk)

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Rouse Partners LLP  
55 Station Road  
Beaconsfield  
Buckinghamshire  
HP9 1QL

t: 01494 675321  
e: [info@rousepartners.co.uk](mailto:info@rousepartners.co.uk)  
[www.rousepartners.co.uk](http://www.rousepartners.co.uk)

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