

9-12 MONTHS PRIOR TO START-UP

- Choose a business based on your skills and interests.
- Choose business name, verify right to use name, register the name. (Not necessary to register business name in Wisconsin).
- Determine the amount of time required to obtain business permits.
- Research the idea.
- Identify helpful membership organizations (e.g. Chamber of Commerce, Builders Association, etc.)
- Visit with others in your network: attorneys, bankers, CPA's, consultants, competition.
- Check out community amenities (real estate, schools, etc.).
- Subscribe to local papers.
- Decide on business location.
- Obtain licenses (city, county, state, industry).
- Prepare preliminary business plan and budget.
- Interview bankers.
- Determine when phone book is printed.

6-9 MONTHS PRIOR TO START-UP

- Check zoning ordinances.
- Check utility requirements.
- Prepare leasehold improvement plan.
- Determine office and plant layout and design.
- Choose advisors: attorney, CPA, consultant, insurance agents and brokers.

- Review leases and contracts with attorney and advisors.
- Obtain bids on major business equipment.
- Arrange delivery of equipment.

4-6 MONTHS PRIOR TO START-UP

- Complete business plan including marketing plan.
- Decide on form of business organization (sole proprietor, corporation, LLC, etc.) and file papers.
- Select Board of Directors for corporation.
- Prepare advertisements.
- Prepare final budget and review with banker. Order business systems: receivables, check disbursements, payroll system.
- Order sign for office.

0-4 MONTHS PRIOR TO START-UP

- Make sure business filings and license applications are complete (trademark, patents, copyright).
- Arrange for insurance (business and health).
- Arrange for telephone service installation.
- Open checking accounts.
- Sign up for credit card systems at local bank.
- Arrange for business announcement ads in local papers.
- Order announcements for office opening.
- Arrange to give talks to community groups.
- Consider membership in civic and church organizations.

- Arrange for movers.
- Contact State Department of Workforce Development.
- Prepare job descriptions for employees.
- Write policy manual for office employees.
- Check local resources for personnel.
- Begin screening process for new personnel.
- Contact IRS for booklets (apply for Federal Employment ID number).
- Apply for state ID number.
- Find out about workers' compensation if you will have employees.
- Apply for seller's permit.
- Contact state for tax forms and employer's requirements.
- Obtain payroll withholding booklets from tax authorities.
- Review tax requirements with your accountant.
- Arrange for janitorial service, waste removal, laundry service, grass mowing.
- Order supplies: appointment cards, business cards, stationery, deposit stamp for checks, telephone message pads.
- Interview and select collection agency.
- Determine business hours.
- Determine pricing schedule.
- Order publications (price lists, brochures, receipt forms, etc.).
- Purchase office equipment and furniture.
- Start setting up office.
- Schedule utilities to be turned on.

- Hire and train office personnel.
- Establish petty cash fund.
- Prepare press release and begin advertisement.
- Mail announcement.
- Plan an open house.
- Call everyone you know and let them know you are in business.