

# CHECKLIST FOR STARTING A BUSINESS

The following is a list of items to consider before opening any business. It is not a complete list but identifies important aspects that should be evaluated prior to starting a new company.

- Do you have a business plan for the business you are planning to start?
- Do you know and understand the components of a business plan?
- Do you know what form of legal ownership (sole proprietor, partnership or corporation) is best for your business?
- Do you know why some consider business planning to be the most important factor determining business success?
- Do you know if your business will require a special license or permit and how to obtain it?
- Do you know where to find demographic data and information about your customers?
- Do you know how to compute the financial “breakeven point” for your business?
- Do you know how to compute the start-up costs for your business?
- Do you know about the various loan programs that are available from banks in your area and the SBA?
- Do you understand how a business loan can impact your credit?
- Do you know how to prepare and/or interpret a balance sheet, income statement and cash flow statement?
- Do you know why small business loans are considered more risky than loans made to large businesses?
- Are you sure your planned business fills a specific market need?
- Do you know your target market?
- Do you understand the tax requirements associated with your business?
- Do you know how to prepare a marketing strategy for your business?
- Do you know how to learn about your business competitors?
- Do you understand marketing trends in your business industry?
- Do you feel comfortable using a computer or other technology to improve business operations?
- Do you have a payroll process planned for your business?
- Do you have a customer service strategy in mind or in place?
- Do you know how to obtain an EIN (Employer Identification Number) for your business?
- Do you know if your business should have some form of intellectual property protection?
- Do you know where to obtain information about regulations and compliance requirements that impact your business?