

RADICAL

ADMINISTRATION

THE ENTREPRENEUR'S RADICAL GET LEGIT BUSINESS START UP CHECKLIST

(or the #TERGLBSUC, if you're into the brevity thing)

A RADICAL **8-STEP CHECKLIST** TO GET YOUR BUSINESS **LEGIT WITH A QUICKNESS:**

Get a Plan. Get Branded. Get Legit. Get Protected. Get Capitalized.
Get Bossy. Get Automatic. Get Your Team.

GET A **PLAN.**

- “Failing to plan is planning to fail.” It’s a saying for a reason. There are 2 types of business plans: one for you and one for the world. **Start with yourself.** Just do this. Do it first. You will thank me.
- Put your passion on paper. You don’t need graphic design and perfect wording. **An outline is fine.** You’re making a living, growing document *you do for you* every 12-18 months.
- Ask yourself these questions and write down your answers:
 - **Why** are you doing this?
 - **Who** do you want to help?
 - **What** service or product are you selling?
 - **How much** of “it” do you need to sell to meet your goals?
 - **Where** will you find your customers?
 - **Where** will you work – brick & mortar, virtual?
 - **Who** do you need working for you? (Even if we all know you plan to wear all the hats, you need to at least be clear about which hat you’re wearing.)
 - **How will you know** if you’re selling enough of your “it” to the right people?
- Your **initial budget** should be part of your plan. You need a chart of accounts, chart of receivables, value of inventory, financial projections, marketing estimates, etc.



GET BRANDED.

- Pick a **bunch of possible names** that speak to you, your purpose, and your audience.
- Search!** Run your favorite potentials through a search engine. Check the social networks for businesses and groups. Check the URLs. Don't forget to check the USPTO database ([TESS](#)) and your state's Secretary of State, Division of Corporations. Use as many variations as possible (plural, sound-alike).
- Once you find the name that can be 100% yours, **get going**: Logo. Color. Business cards. Website. Social media. Don't do any of this until you've got your name...unless you're OK with a cease & desist letter.

GET FORMAL.

- Choose your entity**: LLC, S-Corp, C-Corp, etc. Do not take this lightly. Talk to a tax expert. If you want to be a sole proprietorship or general partnership, talk to another expert.
- Form your LLC or Corporation by **registering with your state's Secretary of State** and file the right paperwork: Articles of Organization for an LLC and Articles of Incorporation for (you guessed it) Corporations.
- [Apply for an EIN with the IRS](#).
- If you are going to be taxed as an S-Corp, [file Form 2553](#).
- Register a **fictitious name** (aka DBA), if you'll do business under a different name than what you registered...even if you just want to drop the LLC or INC on your business cards & Facebook™ page.
- Once you have your state registration and EIN, get a **business bank account pronto**. It's a big deal to keep your business and personal funds separate.
- Check with your state about special **business and tax registrations** (Department of Revenue, Department of Consumer Services...occupational licenses, fundraising licenses, franchise taxes, etc.)
- Check with your **city and county** to register and pay local **taxes**.
- Get the right **insurance** for your industry and type of business (lawyers need errors and omissions insurance; consultants could benefit from advertising insurance; mechanics need garage liability; if you'll have employees, check on workers' comp and unemployment insurance requirements; and good general liability and umbrella coverage never really hurt anyone.)



GET PROTECTED.

- Get your operating documents on point.** Partnership agreements for partnerships. Operating Agreements for LLCs. Bylaws for Corporations. Spell out the rights, roles, and responsibilities of everyone involved. Protect your property and your investment. (If you don't, you're at the mercy of your co-owners, financiers, the court, and the state if things go wrong.)
 - Protect your brand.** You did so much searching (*so much*) before picking just the right name. Protect it.
 - **Trademark.** Register your name and logo (and other marks you want to protect) with the [USPTO](#) (TEAS).
 - **Copyright.** If you have books, e-books, infographics, super radical get-going-the-right-way checklists and other creative works, consider registering your copyright with the US Copyright Office ([eCO](#)).
 - **Patent.** If you have a unique physical product or invention or improved upon an existing product, apply for a patent with the [USPTO](#).
 - **Trade Secrets.** Keep your trade secrets secret. Have employees and independent contractors sign non-disclosure agreements (NDAs). Password-protect ALL THE THINGS. Stamp CONFIDENTIAL on hard files. Put your stuff in locked cabinets. Limit who gets to know your secrets.
 - Stay out of hot water on the **World Wide Web**. You need Terms & Conditions, a Privacy Policy, and a Copyright statement. Be especially aware of rules specific for people in different states (California) and people under 18 (or 13). Got an email list? Learn about SPAM (don't do it) and safe-keeping of email addresses (do it).
 - You *need* **customer contracts** to formalize terms & conditions and rights & responsibilities. You need warranties, guarantees, disclaimers, how to handle payment and nonpayment, and how to handle emergencies and *force majeure*.
 - Get solid **agreements with suppliers and vendors**; if they bring their own, make sure you watch out for unfair clauses (like forum selection, interest rate, right to assign).
 - Renting or buying office space? Look long and hard at the **commercial lease** before signing on the dotted line or sticking your e-signature in that PDF.
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GET CAPITAL.

- Get a business **line of credit or credit card**.
- You have to **capitalize**. There are so many options out there – know yours:
 - **You**. Try not to hock too much of your own stuff. Become a business creditor by signing a promissory note.
 - **Friends and family**. Get a clear agreement in place to clarify expectations and save the relationship.
 - Small Business Administration **loans**.
 - Government and private-foundation **grants**.
 - **Incubators**, venture **capitalists**, **Angel investors**.
 - Try out for Shark Tank?
- If you need investors, you need a fancy-schmancy business plan (aka **prospectus**). Bust out the DIY plan you made in Step I, and tune it up. Turn your “Why” into a mission statement. Do your market research to better define your market and sales strategies. Refine your budget. Get photos and bios and everything else you need to be presentation worthy. Investors want to see more than your daily affirmations scratched on the back of a napkin.

GET BOSSY.

- Have employees or independent contractors? If you’re gonna be a boss, be a BOSS. Know what you are doing when you **interview/hire/fire**. Don’t ask **illegal questions**. Don’t **discriminate**. Train your folks. Lead them. Don’t be “that boss.”
- Handle your **workforce documentation**: I-9s, W-4s for employees and 1099s for freelancers/contractors.
- Know what distinguishes a contractor from an employee. Learn which is which and who is who; don’t risk the **penalties for misclassification** of employees as contractors.
- Get **strong employment agreements**: one for employees and another specific for independent contractors/freelancers. Include NDAs (to protect trade secrets and your business), non-competes, social media, works for hire...
- Get a decent **payroll & time-keeping** system. Don’t screw up people’s hours and fail to pay overtime.
- Get right** with workers’ comp, unemployment, and the Affordable Care Act.
- Get an **Employee Handbook**.
- Secure** the personnel files.



GET AUTOMATIC.

- You desperately need to **think about systems** – they are much easier to develop at the beginning, and refine them as you mature, than to think you will get to them one day, eventually.
- Are you going to keep **track of your leads, sales, and customers** on a legal pad or in a spreadsheet or in a database built for your industry? Electronic **calendar** or day planner? Make your decision and **document “how”** to do business.
- Reduce your risk by implementing **financial controls** for accounts receivable and accounts payable. Monitor fixed assets, inventory, and depreciation. **Deter embezzlement and fraud** by having 2 sets of eyes on the money coming in and going out.
- Marketing** is a system. Learn it. If you ever want to take a day off, the marketing system needs to work even when you aren't. (Hint: If you're using a legal pad, this is more difficult.) Clients need to be **on-boarded, off-boarded, and re-boarded**. Your systems should handle this for you.
- Every time you do a business task – whether it's opening the mail, making a widget, or firing an employee – **Write. It. Down.**

GET YOUR TEAM.

- You have a lot of work to do. **But you do not have to do everything alone.** Get guidance from **mentors and colleagues** whom you know, like, and trust.
- Get assistance. Build a strong relationship with a **lawyer and accountant or tax advisor** and let them work together – and with you – to get your business rock solid.
- Consider outsourcing or using an independent contractor with **experience in the areas you aren't strong in (yet)**. There are experts (like **Radical Administration**) who can teach you how to write your business plan, make a budget, do market research, build your website, register your trademarks, write your contracts, handle the bookkeeping, interview employees, and basically everything else in this checklist. **You be an expert at your vision – let the experts help you bring it to life.**



GET GOING.

Now **go get yours** and **go do you**. No one can promise following this checklist will get you rich. But it should make the path to “2 comma” business revenues much smoother and help you enjoy the ride.

BE A SMALL BUSINESS BADASS.

Call Radical Administration today about our plans to get you LEGIT WITH A QUICKNESS. We can get you running on a strong foundation in about 90 days.

Then we turn it up to 11 and make you a small business badass.

I'm not a life coach. I'm not a business coach. We talk through your business plan and do the work to get you legally legit and built for speed. We have a 90-day plan that can get you legit with a quickness and secondary “add-on” plans for building your business to be a people-helping, money-making, badass factory of awesome.

Hit up **Radical Administration** for a free consultation: **813.530.6818** or hello@radicaladmin.com.

We love to get into the nitty gritty details.



DISCLAIMER.

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