

SMALL BUSINESS COVID-19 RECOVERY TOOLKIT

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BUSINESS RECOVERY FROM COVID-19

The COVID-19 outbreak has impacted, and continues to impact, businesses in different ways, ranging from minimal to existential threat. Global efforts to contain the outbreak through mobility restrictions caused drastic shifts in consumer demand and behaviour, supply-chain shocks and operational disruptions.

Governments are easing restrictions in stages and therefore businesses will recover at varied paces based on geography and industry.

Several scenarios exist for what the post-COVID19 “normal” will look like. The current experience has no doubt reshaped business practices and consumer behaviour, many of which will lead to some permanent changes. What those changes will be, time will tell.

Evaluating how you believe your market will operate post-COVID 19 will help you determine what products and services you should be offering – whether you continue with the same offerings, or need to adapt or pivot in line with expected changes in consumer preferences and behaviours.

An evaluation of how your business was operating before the crisis will help you take stock and understand your operations to give you a clear picture of where to start in the recovery process.

BUSINESS RECOVERY OVERVIEW

During the recovery phase, many questions will be asked of the business.
Uncertainties will remain but less so than during the initial phase of the crisis.
The status of supply chains, customer demand and operational capacity will be less vague.
Companies will need to continuously monitor their financial performance – much more so than prior to the crisis.
Cash flow forecasts should continue to be produce at least weekly and their must be a continued focus on cost control and cash collections.
The recovery is the perfect time for the business to pivot and create alternative revenue streams, or look to focus on core business.

AREA	RECOVERY
Finances	Determine your financial position and health
Cash flow	Do you have the resources to meet your immediate cash flow commitments?
Performance	Evaluate the effectiveness of your business operations and make changes
Customers	Evaluate how your market has changed and consider how it may change further
Suppliers	Reconsider your suppliers to reduce supply chain risk
Strategy	Explore options for the business to change its business model
	What do you want your business to be like after COVID-19? Do a SWOT analysis
	Identify restructuring, disposal, and merger and acquisition opportunities
	Establish a new corporate plan
	Update budgets for the new corporate plan
	Build lessons learned from the crisis into your business
Funding	Negotiate debt facilities and covenants
Staff	Re-evaluate your staff arrangements to match your new business
Technology	Identify your technology needs to meet your new corporate plan and invest

1. DETERMINE YOUR FINANCIAL POSITION AND FINANCIAL HEALTH

Before you can begin planning for business recovery, you first need to determine your financial position. To do this, make sure your financial statements are up to date.

This is important as:

- you may need to pay substantial outgoings before you can restart. You will need to assess how to fund these outgoings and whether you can afford it
- there may be a significant period before you can restart trading or trading remains limited and therefore you may have to rely on existing cash reserves until that time
- it will be a key factor in determining which direction you can take your business in the future.

Once you have prepared your financials, you can begin analysing the financial health of your business.

Go here for **suggested questions to help you determine the financial health of your business.**

We strongly suggest that you undertake a 'ratio analysis' to compare the information in your financial statements against other similar businesses to get a more complete understanding of the financial health of your business before you begin your recovery efforts. Such an understanding will influence what actions you can take and should not take in the recovery.

Benchmark data is provided by several commercial providers. Basic benchmarking data for many Australian industries can be found on the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) website at ato.gov.au and searching "small business benchmarks".

CPA Australia's **Small Business Disaster Recovery Toolkit** includes a list of common financial ratios and how to calculate them (see page 31).

2. DETERMINE YOUR IMMEDIATE CASH FLOW COMMITMENTS

To support business cash flow during COVID-19, governments, financial institutions and some suppliers allowed moratoriums or deferral on payments of taxes, levies, loan instalments, insurance premiums and other payments for a certain period. Creditors and landlords may have also agreed to extended payment terms or deferred some rental payments.

These deferrals will need to be paid at some point, so if you have taken up this type of relief, then you should list those commitments and include them in your cash flow forecasts for the recovery.

Direct government payments to business, such as wage subsidies will also end. This will also need to be factored into your cash flow forecasts.

Go here for an **example of a list of deferred obligations you can use.**

If your business is likely to have difficulties meeting these commitments, your options include:

- Negotiate with the relevant parties to stagger the payments to manage your cash outflow
- Review your debtors ageing report and chase up all outstanding payments
- Check if you are entitled to government grants
- Sell obsolete and old stock
- Sell non-productive assets
- Liquidate some investments
- Channel some personal funds into the business
- Contact your banker to learn about loan refinancing options (sometimes you may be able to obtain a lower interest rate or lower the monthly payment).

You may have also offered payment deferrals to your customers. Ensure you have a list of those deferrals and begin contacting those customers to see if they are in a position to begin repaying you.

*Note: If you are in financial distress seek professional help immediately. Refer to our guide on **Managing Through COVID-19** on the implications of continuing as an insolvent business.*

3. EVALUATE THE STATE OF YOUR BUSINESS OPERATIONS

Following the financial health check, you should evaluate the effectiveness of your current and future business operations more broadly. In evaluating your business, you should consider:

- whether your customers are ready to spend again
- whether you have the right staffing levels to support your business in the recovery
- whether your online presence is strong
- how to improve the efficiency of your business
- the ability of your suppliers to meet your requirements in the recovery.

Go here for **further examples of questions to help you evaluate your business.**

For more detailed information on evaluating your business, see CPA Australia's **Business Evaluation Guide.**

DEREK LAI FCPA – VICE CHAIRMAN DELOITTE CHINA

Derek Lai FCPA the Vice Chairman of Deloitte China assisted his cliental in dealing with changed market conditions as many industries have faced significant challenges caused by the COVID-19 outbreak. Derek offered the following tips for businesses when struggling financially:

- Review cash flow forecasts and stress-test your assumptions.
- Identify and implement actions to mitigate your risks and stay vigilant for signs of distress.
- Regularly communicate with lenders and suppliers to maintain confidence and support.

4. EVALUATE HOW YOUR MARKET HAS CHANGED

In addition to looking internally, you should also evaluate how your market has changed. For many businesses, COVID-19 may have triggered or accelerated changes in your market and many of those changes will be permanent.

In evaluating your market, you should consider:

- how your customers, suppliers and competitors are going, as the recovery will not be uniform

- what changes have there been in what customers demand and how they purchase
- opportunities to change your business to meet the new environment.

Go here for **further examples of questions to assist you evaluate how your market has changed.**

5. RECONSIDER YOUR SUPPLIERS

The COVID-19 crisis may have highlighted risks in your supply chain. Your suppliers may not have been able to supply what you wanted when you wanted. They may have asked for early payment, or even threatened to cut off supply. Alternatively, they may have been very accommodating and helped your business respond to the crisis. You may have tried out alternative suppliers.

Are your suppliers able to meet the future requirements of your business?

Go here for **examples of questions to assist you evaluate your suppliers and future supply risks.**

6. REVIEW YOUR BUSINESS MODEL AND LONG-TERM GOALS

Ask 'What do you want your business to be after COVID-19?'

Before answering that question, consider whether:

- your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats have shifted
- your current business model is still sustainable and the business goals are realistic
- your current customer base is intact and your target market is realistic
- you can improve how your business performs
- you need to change your business model altogether to survive and thrive.

What do you want your business to be after COVID-19? The same as before the crisis, or bigger, smaller or something very different?

Before answering that question, look at your strengths and weaknesses; and assess your opportunities and threats against external factors such as political, economic, social, technological, legal and environmental.

To assist you with this process, go here for a **SWOT analysis template**.

THOMAS WONG FCPA – PARTNER CW CPA

Thomas Wong FCPA, Partner at CW CPA increased efficiency and staff motivation when COVID-19 struck through a combination of prudent business measures, targeted investment in technology, and flexible working arrangements. Thomas saw early warning signs and took precautions to prepare his business for the impacts of COVID-19. Thomas notes it is important to focus on early warning signs and strategies such as cash flow dropping, managing anxiety and the implementation of contingency plans as soon as possible.

Thomas anticipated the negative impact of COVID-19 on many of his clients and understood how this would potentially affect their ability to pay for services. To address this, Thomas undertook an analysis determining the impact on billing revenue and based on the results, offered a certain percentage fee cut to all clients. Thomas hopes that these moves will translate to increased client loyalty, and be beneficial for his business in the long run

Thomas also introduced an incentive scheme for staff, encouraging finding new customers and business opportunities to counter the expected decline in revenue.

Thomas has noted that due to the support measures that were put in place for staff and cliental, business efficiency was unaffected and billing in February 2020 actually increased year-on-year.

7. RECONSIDER YOUR MOTIVATIONS FOR BEING IN BUSINESS

REALITY CHECK!

At this point you should check in with yourself on whether you really want to continue your business. Options to divest yourself from your business are discussed in the CPA Australia Guide on **Exiting your business**. If you are considering closing your business, speak to your accountant or lawyer for guidance.

MENTAL HEALTH

The situation can have an overwhelming effect on individuals. CPA Australia has a number of **resources** available to support you.

Reconsidering your motivations for being in business is important. The recovery process will be difficult for many and it will not be for everyone.

Go here for **examples of questions you may want to ask yourself before committing to recovering your business**.

8. IDENTIFY RESTRUCTURING, DISPOSAL, AND MERGER AND ACQUISITION OPPORTUNITIES

Never waste a crisis. Ask yourself:

- Do you have an overly complicated corporate structure?
- Do you have underperforming areas of your business that you believe will continue to underperform? Can you sell those areas of the business?
- Are there opportunities that you haven't taken advantage of in the past?
- Are there opportunities to merge or acquire a key supplier to minimise supply chain risks?
- Are there opportunities to acquire a struggling competitor to gain market share and economies of scale?
- Are there any 'outside the box' short-term opportunities?

9. REVIEW YOUR BUSINESS STRATEGIES AND ESTABLISH A NEW BUSINESS PLAN

You should have identified your customer base/target market and what it is that they value at this point. Now consider how you will deliver that value.

Use your SWOT analysis to develop or revise your business strategy and plan. Keep in mind how COVID-19 impacted the way we live, work and use technology and re-set your assumptions that underpin key areas such as:

- customer (return or stay away)
- supply chain (efficiency or resilience)
- technology (transformation or enhancement)
- workforce (size and competency)
- processes (automated or manual)

Some aspects of your operations may take longer to recover from COVID-19 related disruptions, particularly where those operations are reliant on factors in other geographical locations or segments that were harder hit by the pandemic. For example, if your accounts payable function is outsourced to a service provider in a different location for which movement restrictions have yet to be lifted. Factor this into your assumptions for the business plan.

Document these assumptions.

Some examples of post-COVID 19 business strategies to consider include:

- shifting the business or a segment of the business onto an e-commerce platform and using advertising on social media to reach a wider customer base
- focus on strengthening customer engagement
- adoption of digital and analytical tools to provide intelligence to sales and marketing, as well as product development
- automating production functions to reduce exposure to risk of reduced access to human labour
- maintaining remote or virtual ways of working to reduce the use of commercial space and therefore rental costs, as well as to access a wider pool of human capital
- hiring more technology-trained personnel to better leverage technology.

Go here for **examples of questions that can assist you revise or write your post-COVID-19 business plan.**

EDDIE CHEW CPA – CEO & FOUNDER OF POTBOY GROCERIES

When COVID-19 hit, Eddie Chew CPA, Founder and CEO of Potboy Groceries had to review his expansionary business strategy. Changes were happening so frequently that Eddie's approach was to be alert and reactive as best as possible, to changing customer demand. Eddie found he was able to generate repeat orders from new customers and is optimistic about the long-term prospects of Potboy Groceries.

Eddie's tips for other businesses are to:

- Look at your business and consider its prospects after COVID-19 and reassess where you want to be.
- Explore your business' need to negotiate with stakeholders (such as suppliers, banks, landlords) to put the business on "life support" or make decisions about standing down staff and resources to survive.
- If during this period of 'life support' the business is still able to continue operations and generate revenue then it is important to review resource plans and consider the need for capacity building when things get better.

10. CAN YOU AFFORD YOUR POST-COVID-19 BUSINESS PLAN?

Once your business strategies and plans are developed, prepare budgets that implement your plans and corresponding cash flow forecasts. The budgets will show if you need additional money to fund your plan and when you are likely to need that money, or if the plans need to be modified to be more affordable.

Take advantage of government initiatives aimed to help small businesses build capacity and capability, for example in building an online presence, or marketing to overseas customers.

Go here for **examples of questions that can assist you decide whether you can afford your post-COVID-19 business plan.**

11. BUILD ON LESSONS LEARNED DURING THE COVID-19 CRISIS TO IMPROVE BUSINESS PERFORMANCE

Reflect on the business lessons you learned from the COVID-19 crisis. Some examples include:

- Do you need to improve your technology adoption? For example, automating finance processes to free your time and the time of your accountant to focus on improving financial management.
- Are you issuing invoices immediately and are you staying on top of what is owed to you?
- Are you continuously reviewing and updating your IT infrastructure, including cybersecurity?
- Do you need to invest more into building good and trusting relationships with your customers, suppliers, employees and other parties in your business's ecosystem?
- Did flexible working arrangements work for your business? It can offer some cost saving opportunities, so how can it be improved for you and staff?
- How was your communication at all stages of the crisis to key stakeholders such as employees, shareholders, customers and lenders?

12. IDENTIFY YOUR TECHNOLOGY NEEDS TO MEET YOUR NEW BUSINESS PLAN

It cannot be overstated how important technology will be to the future of business. Work with independent advisers to identify your technology needs to meet your new business plan. Consider:

- What technology and other resources are needed to shift your business or a segment of the business onto an e-commerce platform, including customer fulfilment. Consider CPA Australia's **Tips to building customer trust online**

- What digital and analytical technologies will give you a deeper and quicker insight into customer behaviour
- What processes can be automated
- The strength of your cybersecurity.

See CPA Australia's **IT Checklist for SMEs** for some additional information.

"From now on 'digital' will play an important role," says Mark Hucklesby partner and national technical director, audit, at Grant Thornton New Zealand. "At Grant Thornton, we were in the process of fully deploying Office 365 and all COVID-19 has done is accelerate the deployment of that software in a way that, upon reflection, has been quite impressive."

"There will be a significant shift [as a result of COVID-19]. Business will realise that they must accelerate the development and employment of digital solutions. Now that COVID-19 forces customers, clients and employees into the digital world, organisations should ask themselves what digital actions to take," says Shaun Steenkamp finance partner at National Bank of Australia (NAB).

West Australian-based director of **Wise Accounting**, Tyler Wise CPA, runs a lean accounting business with one employee and was already [working remotely](#) before social distancing came into effect.

"The main challenges have been getting clients to use the [\[videoconferencing\] technology](#), and for it to not be an inconvenience for them," Wise says. "We need to accept that people are distracted, and to make it as easy as possible."

13. RETHINK AND RECONFIGURE YOUR WORKPLACE

Whether you expect your workplace to return to business-as-usual or not, it is essential that you re-think and reconfigure your workplace and operations to ensure a safe and effective transition to recovery.

Some questions you may like to consider are:

- Plans for your staff to return to the workplace – what measures can you put in place to maintain social distancing?
- Do staff need training or knowledge of new cleaning, safety or emergency procedures?
- How will you let your customers or stakeholders know what to expect or what has changed when they interact with you?
- Do you have processes and procedures in place to respond to future incidents?
- What improvements can you make to your workplace structure and design to be more resilient and nimble?

GRACE NG CPA – DIRECTOR OF SF EXPRESS

Grace Ng CPA, Director of SF Express dealt with a unique circumstance following the COVID-19 outbreak having to manage a sudden surge in demand for their transportation and delivery services. In addition, the changing environment meant that SF Express also had to focus on providing extra resources to help staff work from home and to ensure the safety of their couriers through new processes and procedures.

Some of the support networks for staff that Grace helped implement were:

- Collaborating with the IT department to leverage internal communication tools and setting up a virtual private network (VPN)
- Increasing cybersecurity protection
- Expanding the business insurance to cover new arrangements and scenarios

For staff returning to the office, Grace said that multiple control and preventive measures were introduced to reduce the risks of the spread of COVID-19. They included completing mandatory health forms, keeping a safe physical distance and monitoring the number of staff in the office in-line with government advice. Grace foresees that SF Express will utilise more online resources for staff training in the future as well as changes to the management of staff through remote monitoring and task-based milestones.

14. OTHER IMPORTANT STEPS TO BUSINESS RECOVERY

Negotiate or renegotiate your debt facilities and covenants with your lenders – Your funding arrangements need to match where you want your business to go.

Re-evaluate your staff arrangement to match your new business – Do your staff have the skills required for your new business? Can they be those skills be acquired through training or do you need to employ new staff?

COMMUNICATION IS KEY

Director of Absolute Accounting Services on the central coast of New South Wales, Gavin Swan FCPA says one of the biggest lessons from COVID-19 so far is the importance of communication.

“These are uncertain times, so any certainty you can give people is much appreciated,” Gavin notes.

‘Frequent and direct communication has built a lot of trust among employees and makes them feel more connected. The trust built throughout the crisis will go a long way towards building and protecting strong relationships between employer and employee, which will be important in navigating the challenges arising from the crisis’. Shaun Steenkamp, finance partner at National Bank of Australia (NAB).

Managing director of Generate Accounting Group in Auckland, New Zealand, Angus Ogilvie FCPA believes now is the time to engage with clients regularly via phone calls, email, and newsletters. However, above all, first look after your personal wellbeing.

“It’s a stressful and uncertain time for everyone and practitioners [and businesses] need to take care of themselves,” Ogilvie says.

APPENDIX – CHECKLISTS FOR THE RECOVERY

EXAMPLES OF QUESTIONS TO HELP YOU DETERMINE THE FINANCIAL HEALTH OF YOUR BUSINESS

Financial health check questions	Yes	No	Comments / Notes
Do you have adequate cash (such as cash at bank, recoverable money owing from customers and stock) to cover debts due and payable in the next few months?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is your stock easily converted to cash, if needed, to pay debts?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Does your business have adequate assets to cover all commitments including long term debts?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you know what your gross margin is?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you know what your net margin is?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you know how your margins compare to benchmarks in your industry?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you know what your break-even amount or volume is?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do your customers pay on time?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are your suppliers paid on time?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you know how effective the assets of the business are in generating profits?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you know what the return on investment for your business is?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Go back to **“Determine your financial position and financial health”** in checklist.

Go on to **“Determine your immediate cash flow commitments”** in checklist.

EXAMPLE OF A LIST OF DEFERRED OBLIGATIONS THAT YOU WILL NEED TO REPAY

Obligation	How much was deferred	Date when the deferral period ends	What are your payment obligations when the deferral ends
Loan Repayment			E.g. the term of the loan is extended, or payments are increased after the deferral period
Rent			
Tax			
Insurance Premiums			

Go back to **“Determine your immediate cash flow commitments”** in the checklist.

Go on to **“Evaluate the state of your business operations”** in the checklist.

EXAMPLES OF QUESTIONS TO EVALUATE YOUR BUSINESS

Evaluating your business questions	Yes	No	Comments / Notes
Questions on customers			
Are your key customers recovering?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Questions on your workforce			
Do your staff have the skill set required to complete their jobs post the crisis?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you have the right level of staffing for your business post the crisis?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you have the right mix of staffing for your business post the crisis e.g. permanent, part-time, and casual; can staff move to different teams?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Questions on your technology			
Is your online presence sufficiently strong to meet increased online demand?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you have the right technology in place to service customers in the post COVID-19 environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you and/or your staff need to improve their knowledge of your existing technology to make the most from such technology?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you and/or your staff have sufficient knowledge of emerging technology to assist you make the right business decisions on that technology?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Questions on your operational efficiency			
Are all your assets operating to maximum efficiency?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Can you identify process improvements for improvements? Speak to staff and key suppliers for ideas.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Was the business holding excess or aged stock?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Go back to **“Evaluate the state of your business operations”** in the checklist.

Go on to **“Evaluate how your market has changed”** in the checklist.

EXAMPLES OF QUESTIONS TO EVALUATE HOW YOUR MARKET HAS CHANGED

Evaluating the market	Yes	No	Comments / Notes
Environmental scan			
Are your customers recovering?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are your competitors recovering?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are your neighbours recovering?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is your industry recovering? Your industry association may have some information.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Questions on if customer behaviours have changed			
Are you noticing changes in the products or services your consumers are purchasing? Check that against industry trends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are you noticing changes in how your customers are consuming your products or services? For example, purchasing more online. Check that against industry trends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are you seeing changes in your customer base?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Questions on if your product or service offering needs to change			
Do you expect your current product or service offerings to remain relevant post COVID-19? Check against industry trends and competitors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are there new products or services that you would like to offer? Check against industry trends and competitors. Ask key customers and staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Can you see any emerging opportunities for your business following the crisis?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are there opportunities to diversify your business?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are there opportunities to consolidate your business through a restructure?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you know of any emerging threats to your business, such as new competitors, changing consumer behaviour and inadequate online presence?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Go back to **“Evaluate how your market has changed”** in the checklist.

Go on to **“Reconsider your suppliers”** in the checklist.

EXAMPLES OF QUESTIONS TO EVALUATE YOUR SUPPLIERS AND SUPPLY CHAIN RISKS

Evaluating your suppliers	Yes	No	Comments / Notes
Are your suppliers recovering?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Did your suppliers support you throughout the crisis?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Did your suppliers meet all your needs when you needed them to before the crisis?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are your current suppliers able to satisfy your future requirements?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Have you identified and checked the ability of alternative suppliers to meet your needs?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Have you renegotiated supply arrangements with current suppliers?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Go back to **“Reconsider your suppliers”** in the checklist.

Go on to **“Review your business model and long-term goals”** in the checklist.

TEMPLATE – SWOT ANALYSIS

	Strengths	Leverage	Weaknesses	Address
Internal	E.g. Loyal customer-base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make it known to existing customers that you are open for business. • Provide incentives for existing customers to bring their friends into your business. 	E.g. insufficient online presence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in platforms to sell your products or services online. • Investigate delivery options.
	Opportunities	Leverage	Threats	Address
External	E.g. Major competitor struggling to reopen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make it known to potential customers that you are open for business. • Approach that competitor to see if there is an opportunity for a merger or acquisition. 	E.g. customers continue to purchase online from larger competitors rather than return to your business.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in platforms to sell your products or services online. • Look at differentiating from that competitor on something such as speciality products or services.

Go back to **“Review your business model and long-term goals”** in the checklist.

Go on to **“Reconsider your motivations for being in business”** in the checklist.

EXAMPLES OF QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER BEFORE YOU START ON BUSINESS RECOVERY

Questions to ask yourself	Yes	No	Comments / Notes
Were you happy running your business before COVID-19?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Were you making the profit you wanted?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you prefer being your own boss?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Have you considered other opportunities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are you prepared for the potential extra demands that recovering your business will place on you, both personally and financially?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Can you afford to continue to run the business while your business is recovering?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Go back to **“Reconsider your motivations for being in business”** in the checklist.

Go on to **“Review your business strategies and plans”** in the checklist.

EXAMPLES OF QUESTIONS TO ASSIST IN REVISING YOUR POST-COVID-19 BUSINESS PLAN

High-level strategic questions	Yes	No	Comments / Notes
Have you considered and written down your business and personal objectives, actions and priorities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Have you considered your key targets you wish your business to achieve over the next one to three years (for example, the return on investment you want to achieve)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Have you considered who will be responsible for implementing each section of the business plan and by when?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you have adequate resources (staff, finances, etc.) to bring the business up to the level you want?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Have you incorporated the lessons learnt from running your business prior to COVID-19 into your business plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Have you incorporated your analysis of the market conditions post-COVID-19 in your business plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Have any of your key customers and/or suppliers been affected by the COVID-19? If yes, have you considered how this may impact your business and developed responses to minimise such an impact?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Has COVID-19 led to other businesses in your area closing? If so, have you determined how this may impact your business?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Questions on business operations	Yes	No	Comments / Notes
Should you add new products or services and/or removing existing products or services?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Should you look to reduce operating costs?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Should you make investments in new technologies and processes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Have you had discussions with other businesses in your area and industry?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Questions on business location, including online	Yes	No	Comments / Notes
Given the potential changed market conditions, is your business in the right location/does it have a sufficient online presence?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Does the business have the right support to deliver products or services ordered online?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Have other businesses reopened, or planning on reopening, in your area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is the size of your premises too large or small given the future potential of your business?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Questions on staffing	Yes	No	Comments / Notes
Do your staff have the right skills needed to implement your new business plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Have the potential changed market conditions impacted on your ability to retain existing staff, and on the hours they previously worked?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you need to recruit new staff?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Questions on your investment needs	Yes	No	Comments / Notes
Do you still have the plant and equipment your business needs?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
If you need to acquire equipment, have you analysed whether it is better to pay for, lease or hire purchase the equipment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is the acquisition of the equipment (including maintenance costs, other running costs and insurance) justified given the possible changed market conditions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is the necessary expertise readily available to install and operate such equipment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Have you considered adopting new equipment and technologies that will help your business be more efficient and effective than it was prior to COVID-19?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Questions on your inventory needs	Yes	No	Comments / Notes
Have you reviewed historical information to see which stock is slow-moving and/or has a low profit margin? If it is, have you considered removing it from your product range?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Have you assessed whether the changed market conditions will impact the buying patterns of your customers?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Questions on your pricing policy	Yes	No	Comments / Notes
Have you undertaken an analysis to determine whether the prices you charge are making the profit you want to achieve?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Have you prepared a pricing strategy under the new conditions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Questions on marketing	Yes	No	Comments / Notes
Have you prepared a marketing strategy to incorporate into your new or revised business plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Have you included the marketing costs in your budget?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Go back to **“Reconsider your motivations for being in business”** in the checklist.

Go on to **“Review your business strategies and plans”** in the checklist.

EXAMPLES OF QUESTIONS TO ASSIST YOU DETERMINE WHETHER YOU CAN AFFORD YOUR POST-COVID-19 BUSINESS PLAN

Can you afford your post-COVID-19 business plan?	Yes	No	Comments / Notes
Have you put a cost next to each element of your new or revised business plan? If so, can you afford such a plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
If you cannot afford your new or revised business plan, have you considered adjusting your plan to something that is affordable, or even exiting your business?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Have you completed a cash flow forecast and a profit and loss budget? Do such forecasts and budgets include additional post-COVID-19 outlays that may be required to restart the business?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Have you included "what if" scenarios in your forecasts to measure how your cash flows will be impacted by unexpected events or your assumptions not coming to fruition?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do the forecasts show that the business can afford to access debt finance to implement the new or revised business plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Where the business has existing debt financing arrangements, have these been reviewed to ensure that this finance facility fits the new needs of the business?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is your existing debt finance still available?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Sources of finance to fund your recovery efforts	Yes	No	Comments / Notes
Even if you can fund the reopening of the business from internal sources, have you analysed whether it is better to use external sources of finance, such as from a bank?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
If you are seeking debt finance, have you spoken to your lender about your new or revised business plan and your funding needs?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
What existing lines of credit does the business have access to and can these lines of credit be accessed to fund your business post-COVID-19?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
If you do seek debt finance, what security does the business have available?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
If you are seeking debt finance, have you determined for what reason you are seeking the money (e.g. to fund stock purchases or the buy equipment), over what term you are borrowing for and how much?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Have you considered financing your post-COVID-19 business from your own personal resources or from other investors?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Have you considered whether it is better to acquire new equipment on a short-term hire, hire purchase or leasing arrangement, and obtaining stock on consignment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Go on to **"Can you afford your post-COVID-19 business plan"** in the checklist.

Go on to **"Build on lessons learned in the COVID-19 crisis to improve business performance"** in the checklist.

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