

5 Steps to Starting a Business in Spokane

Steps 1 & 2 – Get start-up and business planning assistance

Step 3 – Find out about possible incentives

Step 4 – Find out “if” your business can be run in a particular building or area – before you sign a lease or make a purchase

Step 5 – Get a business license

Steps 1 & 2 Business Assistance (Startup Assistance and Business Plan Advice)

Most start-ups tell us they “don’t know what they do not know.” Many of our Economic Development Partners specialize in start-up assistance and can help you put together your business plan. Many people believe they don’t need a plan if they don’t need start-up capital. Unfortunately, that is a misconception – your business plan will help you understand when your business is profitable, when you can afford to take time off for a vacation, tell you when it’s time to hire an employee, help you weather price fluctuations (for example the current price increase in coffee has been very hard on small coffee houses). A business plan will help you get the answers to the questions you didn’t even know you had.

Start-up Assistance providers:

- [Washington Small Business Development Center](http://www.wsfdc.org/) - <http://www.wsfdc.org/>
- [SNAP Financial Access](http://www.snapwa.org/services/neighborhood/business-development) - <http://www.snapwa.org/services/neighborhood/business-development>
- [AHANA](http://www.ahana.org/) (African-American, Hispanic, Asian, and Native Americans) - <http://www.ahana.org/>

The 4 Key Elements of a Business Plan : The key elements for any business plan are geared to the 4 basic elements of a successful business.

- an economically & viable product or service with attractive markets.
- an established attack plan that can be replicated.
- a seasoned management team that has demonstrated it can carry out the attack plan!
- a tool for identifying major "go!", "no-go!" decisions for use of funds.

A business plan must express how the firm already has, or will, obtain these 4 elements. You see, it is an important management tool, and it is used by others to judge the attractiveness of an investment, should you need capital.

To view sample plans – use an internet search engine such as www.google.com and search for “Sample Business Plans.” Here are a couple of examples we found; however, your search will find many more - <http://www.bplans.com/> offers many examples by different types of plans by industry and <http://www.bizplancorner.com/samples/health-club-business-plan.pdf> is a pdf example of one type of plan.

Step 3: Contact Business and Development Services Department

There are incentives offered for which your new venture may qualify.

Business and Development Services Department 3rd Floor, City Hall 808 W. Spokane Falls Blvd Spokane, WA 99201 Phone: (509)625-6983 Fax: (509)625-6013 Email: bdinfo@spokanecity.org

Step 4: Please remember to always check with the City Building and Planning Departments on the building’s use, the zoning and current land use of the site and the building you are looking at locating within – preferably prior to entering into a lease or purchase of a site – and what permits will be needed.

Building & Planning Services 3rd Floor, City Hall 808 W. Spokane Falls Blvd Spokane, WA 99201, (509)625-6300, (509)625-6013 fax

Step 5: Lastly, you should follow up by contacting the City of Spokane Taxes & Licensing Office, they not only provide Business Licensing but they will help direct you on your next steps.

Taxes & Licenses 1st Floor, City Hall 808 W. Spokane Falls Spokane, WA 99201, (509)625-6070 (509)625-6990 fax