Roadmap to Starting a Small Business

1. Determine Business Concept & Draft Business Plan
2. Select Business Structure
   - Before you register your business, you must determine your: **LEGAL OWNERSHIP STRUCTURE**.
   - **SOLE PROPRIETORSHIP**
     - Most common structure.
     - One individual or married couple.
   - **PARTNERSHIP**
     - Two or more persons.
     - Personal liability for debts.
   - **LIMITED LIABILITY CORP. (LLC)**
     - One or more members.
     - Limited liability of debts.
     - Not eligible for banking and insurance businesses.
     - Must register with Oklahoma Secretary of State.
   - **CORPORATION**
     - Complex structure that includes shareholders.
     - Tax and financial benefits.
     - More permits and licensing fees required.
     - Must register with Oklahoma Secretary of State.
3. Register Business
   - To register your business with the State of Oklahoma:
     - Perform an entity name search on Oklahoma Secretary of State Website: https://www.sos.ok.gov/corp/corpquery-find.aspx
     - Register your business with SOS using the form that corresponds to your business's structure: Downloadable Business Forms https://www.sos.ok.gov/business/forms.aspx
     - Register your business with Oklahoma Tax Commission https://oktax.ok.gov/OKTAP/web/_/#/13
4. Licenses, Permits & Certifications
   - It is likely your business requires a business license or other documentation to operate legally. Find out what you need by following the helpful links below:
     - Oklahoma Tax Commission: http://www.ok.gov/tax/Online_Services/Online_Business_Registration.html
     - Business Sales Tax Permit: http://www.ok.gov/tax/Businesses/Tax_Types/Business_Sales_Tax/
5. Obtain EIN
   - An EIN (Employer Identification Number) is obtained from the IRS.
   - **USES:** Business bank accounts, hiring employees, and tax reporting.
   - Do you need one? Visit this link to find out: https://www.irs.gov/businesses/small-businesses-self-employed/apply-for-an-employer-identification-number-ein-online
6. Contact Regulatory Agencies
   - Environmental (pollution, water discharge, waste, etc.) Concerns? Visit: https://www.deq.ok.gov/
   - Opening a restaurant or bar? Visit: https://www.tulsa-health.org/food-safety/food-service-industry/how-open-restaurant
   - For safety inspections and licensing, visit: https://www.ok.gov/food/safety_inspections_licensing/index.html

SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT
Meet with a research librarian to research business concepts, refine your plan, find industry-specific business information, develop a marketing plan and more. The library is here to help you start and stay in business!

RCAskUs@TulsaLibrary.org
918-549-7323
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Q? How Do I Write My Business Plan?
Lenders, potential investors, and other business professionals will want to see your business plan. Even if you are not seeking financing, a business plan is your blueprint to success.

HOW CAN THE LIBRARY HELP?
Individual Consultations
Schedule an appointment with one of our Research Librarians and learn how to write a business plan.

Online Resources
You can find much of the content needed for your business plan and more by logging into the Business Center with your TCLC card: https://www.tulsalibrary.org/research/business-center

Print Collection
Check out books from our circulating business collection at Central Library.

Q? What Are My Funding Options?
Oklahoma Business Funding
https://www.ok.gov/state-business/oklahoma
Find information on various Oklahoma loan and grant programs at the link above.

SBA
Through local lending institutions the SBA provides government-backed guaranteed loans. See TEDC (https://tednet.com/) and SBDC (https://www.oksbdc.org/) for assistance with SBA loans.

Banks
Local banks can work with you to secure a commercial or SBA loan.

Bootstrap and Crowdfunding
Use savings, credit cards, home equity and personal loans. In Tulsa, see Kiva Tulsa Lending Team for business crowdfunding. Learn more at https://www.kiva.org/team/tulsa_lending_team

Q? How Do I Protect My Intellectual Property?
Patents
Patents protect the inventor by conferring the right to “exclude others from making, using, offering for sale or selling” the registered invention within the U.S. Learn more at www.uspto.gov

Trademark
A trademark is the use of any word, name, symbol, device or combination thereof to identify and distinguish the goods of one manufacturer to another. Learn more at: www.uspto.gov

Copyright
Copyright protects original works of authorship fixed in a tangible medium of expression, such as writing, music, photos, and more. For more info, visit www.copyright.gov

Q? Does My Business Need Insurance?
Business insurance can help protect against property damage, liability, and more. Each business is unique, so it is important to investigate specialty insurance policies for your particular business.

WHERE SHOULD I START?
Contact the Oklahoma Insurance Department:
https://www oid.ok.gov/consumers/

Q? Where Can I Find Local Business Resources
The following resources provide FREE assistance

- Tulsa Score
  https://tulsa.score.org/
- Workforce Tulsa
  https://workforcetulsa.com/
- Tulsa Regional Chamber
  https://tulsachamber.com/
- Oklahoma Small Business Development Center
  https://www.oksbdc.org/