



# Seek advice and help for your business

There are many instances when you may need to get some advice or support to help you in your business. There are lots of different people, agencies and organisations that can help you in your business. They may provide general advice and information about setting up or running a business or advice and help that is specific to the products or services you produce. You will want to make sure that the advice you receive is

up-to-date, relevant to your business and meets your requirements.

This involves making sure that:

1. you know what help you need
2. you identify how and where to get the help you need
3. you get the help you need
4. you check that it meets your requirements

## What you need to do

- identify your business requirements and the issues or problems you need to resolve
- identify the kind of help you need in order to take your business forward in the way that you would like
- work out where you can get information, advice and help to support your business
- identify the range of people and organisations that is available and select those that are likely to meet your business needs
- work out how to get the help you need and choose the most effective means
- work out the cost and benefits of getting different forms of help and advice
- decide when and how to make contact with those that you think may be able to help
- identify your needs and targets clearly before seek advice or support
- check that the help offered is suitable to your business needs, is well-founded and can be relied upon
- listen carefully to any advice that is offered and discuss any points that you don't understand
- decide if there is any further support that you need and could get
- keep records of the advice and support you have received and make a note of how well it matched your business needs



## What you need to know and understand

### Information and advice

- what your business needs are and what kind of help you might need.,(For example business planning or development, funding, location and premises, staff, ICT or marketing)
- what sources of advice and help are relevant to your business., (For example friends, relations, specialist advisers, business support organisations and government agencies at local, regional or national level)
- the best means of making contact to get the kind of help that you need. (For example telephone, email, internet, meetings or visits)
- what questions you may need to ask to get the advice you require
- what help and support contacts can offer to your business
- how to make best use of contacts and avoid overloading them
- how important it is to get the right kind of advice and help
- how to check that the advice and help you are considering is valid, sufficient, reliable, user-friendly and practical
- how to work out costs and benefits of support and advice
- whether or not there is funding available for any advice and support you need to pay for
- what support services can and cannot do when providing help
- why it is beneficial to keep a record of the information and advice you get and the extent to which it met your business needs