

## Failing to Plan is planning to fail

Category: Risk Assessment

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When tough economic times arrive, there are so many different actions that business owners need to take that it can become bewildering. What is needed is a road map and here is a checklist of 50 important items for surviving and prospering in a challenging economy.

1. Do not overreact— take action based only on data.
2. Get key employees' input in planning strategies.
3. Do a revised business/strategic plan for the next six months.
4. Revise cash flow for the next six-month period.
5. Revise a pro-forma statement for the next six months based on a revised business plan.
6. Explain your plan to the entire staff and ask for their input.
7. Evaluate personnel needs across the board.
8. Hold off replacing personnel that have resigned, retired or been terminated.
9. Make cuts in personnel (quickly if necessary), starting at the top of the organization.
10. Maintain larger cash position to take advantage of sale prices.
11. Do a monthly aging of accounts receivable.
12. Enforce collection terms.
13. Be flexible in looking for new solutions.
14. Review inventory for slow moving items— turn into cash.
15. Do an analysis of inventory. Only re-order those items that sell, but don't over order inventory.
16. Do a monthly aging of accounts payable.
17. Make sure your customers acknowledge your company's excellent customer service.
18. Owner should sign all checks for 60 days to get a feel of cost areas of company.
19. Establish a temporary line of credit through your bank.
20. Re-evaluate timing of capital expenditures.

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21. When capital expenditures are necessary, cost-justify and shop for prices.
22. Use bartering to reduce cash needs.
23. Maintain close contact with existing customers.
24. Review all former clients to see who you can sell to again.
25. Look at related type products or services that you could sell to your same market niche.
26. Don't decrease advertising or marketing budget. Instead, increase budget to take advantage of competition cut-backs.
27. Don't cut off training for employees.
28. When it becomes necessary to replace personnel, look for the most experienced candidates.
29. Analyze your mailing costs, i.e. post office vs. UPS 2- and 3-day
30. Be very careful to **not** cut back on your marketing, this will create a double problem in your sales.
31. Look at independent sales representatives to increase sales effort.
32. Review postage expense and look for ways to cut down.
33. Review and justify travel expenses. Replace unnecessary travel with video conferencing, Webinars, and teleconferencing.
34. Review and justify any entertainment expenses.
35. Review and justify any office supply expenses.
36. Refigure your break-even analysis based on new business plan.
37. Review recent monthly P & L statements for percentage trends.
38. Reuse office supplies, folders, paper clips, etc. when possible.
39. Save poor quality or misprinted copies and use them for scratch paper as well as any outdated stationery.
40. Tighten up credit checks for new customers.
41. Do a monthly check of P & L statement against revised pro forma statement.
42. Do a monthly current ratio and take steps to strengthen the ratio.

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43. Keep your bank informed of your company's progress. Bankers hate surprises!!!
44. Do a monthly inventory of turn ratio.
45. Offer settlement on receivables before turning it over to collection agency or attorney.
46. Use a small claims court to collect a certain amount of account receivables.
47. Join a monthly meeting group of other companies to exchange ideas and learn new techniques.
48. Review your insurance program and consider increasing deductibles.
49. Don't manage for the moment. Consider long-term goals of the company before taking any action that could affect the future of the company.
50. Take time to plan and review operations against plans.