# How to make your business more `resilient`

It's never too late to start taking risk seriously. As the business community continues its collective recovery from COVID-19 and gets to grip with the after-effects of Brexit, it's impossible to know exactly what challenges await. But preparation, rather than reaction, is the best way to stay strong and resilient in the coming months and years.

## Here's the Business Builder checklist to help you get started:

**1. Look back at the challenges you've faced since starting as a business.**

Some of these obstacles could well come up again in the future, so consider how you dealt with them, what the results were, and how your response could improve next time.

**2. Consider the other risks your business faces.**

Every business and every industry has its own set of risks to contend with; what are yours? Only when you've identified potential causes of disruption can you start putting measures in place to avoid or mitigate the negative impacts.

**3. Talk to peers about their risk management strategies.**

If someone in your industry is further in their business journey than you, there's a good chance they've dealt with more disruption – find opportunities to learn from their experiences. You should find new risks to consider and tested ways of managing them.

**4. Identify the essential areas of your business.**

What does your business need to run smoothly? Some areas - like personnel, cash flow and technology - are relevant to most companies, but there may also be functions that are unique to your business. The areas you identify here should be your priority when creating mitigation and response strategies.

**5. Then look at non-critical functions.**

These should still be part of your continuity plan, even if they're not vital in the short term. Take marketing, for example: your business may be able to survive for a short period without it, but in the long term you need to be reaching new customers.

**6.** **Take steps to minimise the risk of disruption.**

Some types of disruption are in your control, and a bit of short-term investment – whether time-based or financial – could save you stress and money in the long-term. Some basics to start with are enhancing your level of business insurance and installing the latest security updates on your computer system.

**7.** **Avoid taking shortcuts.**

Cutting operational corners will leave you more open to risk. Cleaning is a great example: if it's not done properly, the chances of an employee or customer slipping and becoming injured will increase – you're then at risk of closure and even legal action. This is just one area where professional support is easily justified; others are marketing, accounting and property maintenance.

**8.** **Keep up with regulation and legislation.**

In the age of Brexit, climate change and Coronavirus, business regulations and legislation are constantly changing. If you're to minimise the risk of fines and fees, you'll need to stay up to date with the rules affecting your business.

**9.** **Make step-by-step plans for unavoidable disruption.**

As the pandemic proves, some obstacles are out of your control. What you can control, though, is your reaction. Having real, actionable 'what if' steps written down before something big happens will help you react and recover faster when it does. Work with your team (and a business continuity expert if feasible) to create and test a disaster plan that focuses on the essential areas you identified earlier.

**10.** **Revisit and revise your strategy regularly**.

The risks your business faces will evolve – some will ease, others will grow and new ones will develop. Your approach to risk management must evolve to account for these changes, so make it part of your plan to audit and revise your strategy at regular points of the coming months and years, so that you're always prepared.