

Small business owner survey

Answer for the business you own or run. We only ever report totals.

Street or district

Date

For each statement, tick one box from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

1 Compared with 12 months ago, your revenue is:

☐ Much higher ☐ Higher ☐ About the same ☐ Lower ☐ Much lower

2 Over the next 12 months, you expect revenue to go:

☐ Up a lot ☐ Up a little ☐ Flat ☐ Down a little ☐ Down a lot

3 Over the coming year, what are your staffing plans?

☐ Hire more ☐ Stay the same ☐ Reduce staff ☐ Not sure

4 Which of these were real problems for the business in the past 12 months? (tick all that apply)

☐ Finding customers ☐ Staffing ☐ Supply chain ☐ Technology ☐ Regulations ☐ None

5 Which money problems did the business face in the past 12 months? (tick all that apply)

☐ Rising costs ☐ Running costs ☐ Cash flow ☐ Weak sales ☐ Tariffs ☐ Debt ☐ Credit
☐ None

6 Your top priority for the next 12 months is to:

☐ Grow sales ☐ Cut costs ☐ Cash flow ☐ Hire or train ☐ New equipment ☐ Hold steady

STATEMENT	STRONGLY DISAGREE					STRONGLY AGREE				
7 We could cover three months of costs from cash.	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5					
8 I can get finance when I need it, at a cost I can manage.	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5					
9 Permits and local rules are simple to deal with here.	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5					
10 I know where to go for advice when a problem comes up.	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5					
11 This is a good place to run a business like mine.	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5					

12 What one change would make the biggest difference to your business next year?

Optional questions (1 of 4)

Add any of these to the core questions. Keep the numbering running on from page one.

Money and financial management

13 How often do you look at your profit and cash position?

- ☐ Weekly ☐ Monthly ☐ Every quarter ☐ Once a year ☐ Rarely

14 How do you keep the books? (tick all that apply)

- ☐ Accounting software ☐ Spreadsheets ☐ A bookkeeper or accountant ☐ Paper records
☐ Nothing formal

15 In the past 12 months, did you apply for any business finance?

- ☐ Yes, and got the full amount ☐ Yes, and got part of it ☐ Yes, and got none ☐ Did not apply

16 If you did not apply, why not? (tick all that apply)

- ☐ Had enough funding ☐ Did not want debt ☐ Expected a no ☐ Cost too high
☐ Too much paperwork

17 When costs rose, what did the business do? (tick all that apply)

- ☐ Used personal funds ☐ Raised prices ☐ Used cash reserves ☐ Cut other costs ☐ Took on debt
☐ Reduced hours or staff ☐ Paid a bill late ☐ Nothing needed

STATEMENT	NOT AT ALL CONFIDENT				EXTREMELY CONFIDENT
18 How confident are you in your cash forecast for the next three months?	1	2	3	4	5

19 Which money topic would you most like help with?

- ☐ Cash flow planning ☐ Pricing ☐ Tax ☐ Getting finance ☐ Cutting costs ☐ Bookkeeping

Customers and sales

20 Where are most of your customers based?

- ☐ This town or city ☐ Elsewhere in the region ☐ Across the country ☐ Outside the country

Optional questions (2 of 4)

Add any of these to the core questions. Keep the numbering running on from page one.

Customers and sales (continued)

21 How do most new customers find you? (tick all that apply)

- ☐ Word of mouth ☐ Social media ☐ Search and our website ☐ Walking past ☐ Online marketplaces
☐ Directories or ads

22 About how much of your sales come from online orders?

- ☐ None ☐ Under 10% ☐ 10 to 25% ☐ 26 to 50% ☐ Over half

23 Who do you lose customers to, and why?

Staff and hiring

STATEMENT

VERY
DIFFICULT

VERY
EASY

24 How easy has it been to fill open roles in the past year?

1

2

3

4

5

25 What makes hiring hard for you? (tick all that apply)

- ☐ Too few applicants ☐ Missing skills ☐ Wage expectations ☐ Transport or location
☐ Housing costs ☐ Not hiring

26 Which training would help your team most? (tick all that apply)

- ☐ Customer service ☐ Digital skills ☐ Trade or technical ☐ Managing people ☐ Health and safety
☐ None needed

Technology and AI

27 Does the business use AI tools today?

- ☐ Yes, part of how we work ☐ Yes, trying them out ☐ Plan to within 12 months ☐ No plans

28 What do you use AI for, or plan to? (tick all that apply)

- ☐ Writing and marketing ☐ Everyday admin ☐ Planning and analysis ☐ Customer questions
☐ Bookkeeping ☐ Not using it

Optional questions (3 of 4)

Add any of these to the core questions. Keep the numbering running on from page one.

Technology and AI (continued)

29 What holds you back most from using more technology?

- ☐ Cost ☐ Time to learn it ☐ Finding the right tool ☐ Worries about accuracy ☐ Slow internet
☐ Nothing

Local support (for chambers and councils)

30 Which local improvements would help your business most? (tick all that apply)

- ☐ Parking ☐ More events ☐ Cleaner streets ☐ Safety ☐ Better broadband
☐ Signs and wayfinding

31 Which kinds of support would you use in the next year? (tick all that apply)

- ☐ One-to-one advice ☐ Marketing help ☐ Short workshops ☐ Grants ☐ Networking events
☐ Help with permits

32 How would you like us to keep in touch?

- ☐ Email ☐ Text message ☐ Printed newsletter ☐ A visit ☐ Social media

33 What should local leaders understand about running a business here?

About the business (optional)

34 How many people work in the business, including you?

- ☐ Just me ☐ 2 to 4 ☐ 5 to 9 ☐ 10 to 49 ☐ 50 or more

35 How long has the business been trading?

- ☐ Under 2 years ☐ 2 to 5 years ☐ 6 to 10 years ☐ Over 10 years

Optional questions (4 of 4)

Add any of these to the core questions. Keep the numbering running on from page one.

About the business (optional) (continued)

36 Which sector fits the business best?

- ☐ Retail ☐ Food and hospitality ☐ Professional services ☐ Trades and construction
☐ Health and personal care ☐ Manufacturing ☐ Other
-

37 Is the business your main source of income?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No, one of several ☐ Not yet
-

Thank you for your time. We will share what owners told us.

poll-maker.com/small-business