business
for sale

The First Five Things a Buyer Looks At

What do buyers look at first when considering a business for sale? Discover five key areas sellers should prepare before putting their business on the market.

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Serious buyers are quicker to judge a business than most sellers expect. Within the first few conversations they have usually decided whether it is worth pursuing. Knowing what they look at first lets you prepare, and preparation is what separates a smooth sale from a stalled one. Here are the five things that tend to come first.

1. **Does it make money, and can you prove it.** The first question is whether the profit is real and steady. Clean financial records that match the bank account answer this faster than any sales pitch.
2. **How much does it depend on you.** A buyer wants to know if the business will keep running once you are gone. The more it leans on you personally, the more nervous they become.
3. **Who are the customers.** One or two customers making up most of the income is a risk, because losing one could sink the business. A spread of loyal, returning customers is far more reassuring.
4. **Are the records in order.** Missing paperwork, late accounts, and informal arrangements all slow a deal and raise doubt. Organised records tell a buyer the rest of the business is probably run the same way.
5. **Why are you really selling.** Buyers listen closely to the reason, because it hints at what they might find later. An honest, sensible answer builds trust, while a vague one invites suspicion.

You cannot change some of these overnight, but you can prepare for all of them. Knowing what a buyer studies first means you are answering their real questions instead of being caught off guard.

If you are thinking of selling, it pays to see your business the way a buyer will. Talk to us about getting it

ready before you list.