
Overview

This unit is important as the processes, procedures and systems of your business together make up your business infrastructure. The right infrastructure in your business will help you achieve your business goals and improve your competitiveness by:

1. improving efficiency
2. allowing staff to work effectively
3. managing running costs
4. helping you offer a high quality integrated service
5. supporting internal and external communications

You might do this if you are:

1. setting up a new business or social enterprise
2. reviewing the current infrastructure
3. expanding your business or social enterprise
4. changing or adapting the products or services offered by your business or a social enterprise

This involves creating the infrastructure your business needs:

1. defining what infrastructure your business needs
2. consulting with others including staff and customers
3. evaluating infrastructure options
4. implementing infrastructure plans
5. making sure the infrastructure is working for your business and is not overly complex or costly

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Create the infrastructure your business needs

Performance criteria

You must be able to:

- P1 define how you would like your business infrastructure to help you meet your business goals
- P2 find out what your customers need from your business infrastructure
- P3 define what you and your staff need your business infrastructure to achieve
- P4 decide who needs to be consulted with or informed when planning infrastructure requirements
- P5 seek any necessary advice from experts on the technical solutions that will help meet your needs
- P6 research the options available that will help you create your business infrastructure
- P7 decide how much resource you can commit to developing your business infrastructure
- P8 assess the different infrastructure options
- P9 decide on a suitable infrastructure that serves and supports your needs, your customer's needs and helps meet the goals of your business
- P10 test the new infrastructure
- P11 plan and monitor implementation
- P12 keep your staff informed of progress while planning, developing and implementing the infrastructure
- P13 organise appropriate training for your staff so they are able to work effectively with the new infrastructure
- P14 seek and evaluate feedback from relevant people about your business infrastructure and use it to inform future developments

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Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

Business focus

- K1 what your business goals are and how your business infrastructure could help you meet them (for example effective internal communication, efficient administration systems, and managing costs)
- K2 what the needs of your staff are and how your business infrastructure could help meet them (for example improved communication, integrated IT system across different departments, ability to have up-to-date information on clients)
- K3 what the needs of your customers are and how your business infrastructure could help you meet them and improve customer service

Information and advice

- K4 where to find professional advice on helping you develop a plan and appropriate technical solutions (for example Business Link adviser, IT & communications specialist, or consultants)

Consultation

- K5 who you need to consult with in creating your business infrastructure, and how you will keep them informed of progress (for example staff, customers, directors, suppliers, or investors)

Infrastructure

- K6 what resources you can commit to planning and implementation (for example capital investment and on-going costs, staff time and expertise to manage the infrastructure)
- K7 how to develop an infrastructure plan, describing what you want to achieve, what resources are available, and what your priorities are
- K8 what technical solutions are available, affordable and suitable for your business (for example mobile phones, networked computers, integrated IT and communication systems)
- K9 how to evaluate the different infrastructure options taking into account suitability, staff skills, budget, and timescale of implementation
- K10 how to develop an implementation plan including roles and responsibilities, timescales, budgets, and contingency planning
- K11 how to effectively monitor progress of the plan (for example regular project meetings, and clear reporting responsibilities)
- K12 how to get regular feedback from customers, staff and relevant other people on how they feel the infrastructure is benefiting your business and the service you provide
- K13 how to use the feedback on the infrastructure to help you improve plans for future development

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Development needs

K14 what training is required to enable staff to get the most out of your business infrastructure

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Additional Information

Links to other NOS

1. EE1 Achieve the goals for your business
2. EE4 Find innovative ways to improve your business
3. WB1 Check what customers need from your business
4. BD3 Plan where your business is going
5. BD4 Carry out a review of your business
6. BD6 Make changes to improve your business
7. MN6 Invest capital in your business

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