

How Sellable Is Your Business?

A Simple Owner Self-Assessment

You don't need to be planning a sale to ask this question.

A sellable business is one that gives the owner options — to step back, transition, or exit on their terms.

Use the checklist below to assess how sellable *your* business really is.

Score each statement from 1–5

(1 = Not true | 5 = Consistently true)

Owner Dependence

- The business operates effectively without my daily involvement
- Key relationships are not reliant on me alone
- Decision-making authority is clearly defined beyond the owner

Financial Clarity

- I clearly understand margins, profit drivers and costs
- Cash flow is actively managed and forecast
- Financial reports are timely, accurate and meaningful

Systems & Structure

- Core processes are documented and followed
- Roles and responsibilities are clear
- The business operates in a repeatable, scalable way

People & Capability

- Leadership capability exists beyond the owner
- Key roles are not single-point dependencies
- Performance expectations are clear and measurable

Governance & Risk

- Decision rights and accountability are defined
- Key risks are identified and managed
- Critical knowledge is not undocumented or informal

Succession Readiness

- There is a clear succession or transition pathway
 - The business could support a staged or partial exit
 - Ownership and management succession have been considered
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What Your Score Tells You

- **80–100:** Highly sellable — low owner dependency, strong foundations
- **60–79:** Moderately sellable — value exists, risks remain
- **Below 60:** Owner-dependent — value is constrained

A lower score isn't a failure. It highlights where the greatest opportunity to build value sits.

Final Thought

The most sellable businesses are often the best-run businesses. Even if you never sell, improving clarity, structure and financial discipline gives you more control, flexibility and confidence as an owner.
