



Mel Curwood

BUSINESS AND LIFE ON YOUR TERMS

The Business Owner's Quick Guide to Securing Payments & Reducing Risk

A Practical Starting Point Before We Dive in Properly Together

Business owners today face more payment delays, client disputes, and financial risks than ever before. While a deep dive strategy session will give you the best, tailored solutions for your business, here are a few key areas to start thinking about right now.

This quick guide will help you:

- ✓ Identify gaps in your payment process.
- ✓ Spot financial risks before they become a problem.
- ✓ Understand where to strengthen your legal protections.

This is not a replacement for proper strategy and implementation—it's a first step toward getting paid faster and securing your business against financial risk.

1. Review Your Terms of Trade – Are They Actually Protecting You?

Your Terms of Trade are your first line of defence when it comes to getting paid and protecting your cash flow—but only if they're up to date and legally enforceable.

What to Think About Right Now:

- ✓ Who wrote your Terms of Trade? Were they drafted by a professional with legal expertise, or are they a template you pulled together years ago?
- ✓ When were they last updated? Business laws and financial risks change—are your terms still relevant?
- ✓ Do they protect you in real-world disputes? If a client challenged your terms in court, would they actually hold up?

✓ Are they industry-specific? Different industries face different risks. If your terms aren't tailored, you could be exposed.

💡 **Your Next Step:** If your Terms of Trade are outdated or unclear, it's time for a strategic review to make sure they're doing their job and protecting your business properly.

2. Strengthen Your Invoice & Payment Process

Even the best Terms of Trade won't help if your invoicing and payment processes aren't set up to work in your favour.

What to Think About Right Now:

- ✓ Are you invoicing immediately after completing work? (Delays on your end create delays in getting paid.)
- ✓ Do your invoices clearly state:

A fixed due date (e.g., "Due on April 15") rather than "Due in 14 days" (which creates confusion).

Late payment consequences (interest charges, collection fees).

Your preferred payment methods (the easier you make it, the faster you'll get paid).

- ✓ Are you sending proactive payment reminders? (Most overdue invoices are caused by forgetfulness, not bad intent.)

💡 **Your Next Step:** Small tweaks in your invoicing process can make a huge difference in cash flow stability. Let's review your invoicing structure together to optimize it for faster payments.

3. Assess How You Handle New Clients & Jobs

Most payment problems start before the job even begins. Setting the right expectations from day one can prevent non-payment issues down the track.

What to Think About Right Now:

- ✓ Do you run credit checks before taking on new clients?
- ✓ Do you require deposits or progress payments for larger jobs?
- ✓ Do you have clients sign your Terms of Trade BEFORE starting work? (Or are you explaining payment terms only when things go wrong?)
- ✓ Are your payment terms non-negotiable, or are clients dictating them to you? (Bigger businesses often push smaller suppliers into unfair terms—don't let that happen.)

💡 **Your Next Step:** A better onboarding process will help you avoid risky clients and set strong expectations from the start.

4. Know Your Options if a Client Doesn't Pay

No matter how strong your systems are, some clients will still delay or refuse to pay. The difference between a business that struggles and a business that thrives is having multiple ways to recover what you're owed.

What to Think About Right Now:

- ✓ Do you have a structured follow-up process for overdue payments? (Or do you only follow up when cash flow gets tight?)
- ✓ Can you legally charge interest, admin fees, and collection costs? (If not, you're absorbing those costs yourself.)
- ✓ If a client goes into liquidation, do you understand your rights? (Or would you be left hoping for scraps after the tax office, banks, and secured creditors take their share?)
- ✓ Do you have multiple recovery options? (Or are you relying on just one approach, hoping it works?)

💡 **Your Next Step:** If you don't have a structured process in place, you're leaving money on the table. Let's review your recovery pathways to make sure you have real leverage when clients don't pay.

5. Protect Yourself with the PPSR (So You're First in Line to Get Paid)

If a client goes under, unsecured creditors (like suppliers) are last to be paid—if they get paid at all. The Personal Property Securities Register (PPSR) can legally secure your payments, ensuring you're at the front of the queue.

What to Think About Right Now:

- ✓ Are you registered on the PPSR? (If not, you're automatically at the back of the line.)
- ✓ Do your Terms of Trade include PPSR clauses? (If not, you may not be able to enforce your security rights.)
- ✓ Do you understand how to register your interests correctly? (A wrong registration can make it invalid.)

💡 **Your Next Step:** If you're not using the PPSR properly, you're exposed. A strategic review can ensure you're legally protected and in the strongest position to recover your money.

Next Steps: Let's Secure Your Business & Cash Flow

This guide gives you a starting point, but real financial protection requires a deeper, strategic review of your specific situation.

I offer one-on-one strategy sessions, where we spend quality time diagnosing exactly what's happening in your business—either:

- ✓ In person at your business (for local businesses)
- ✓ Online via video call (for convenience and flexibility)

This is NOT a generic consultation—it's a tailored session designed to give you clear answers and actionable solutions.



Book a strategy session with Mel today:



[Book here!](#)

Your business deserves to be in the best position to get paid—no matter what comes your way. Let's make sure you're protected.

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