From Delina Yasmeh, Esq., DELINA.ESQ

Prepare Before You Scale SOP

Prove it, get one real consultation, then paper it.

This SOP is for general education only. It is not specific legal or business advice, and reading it does not create an attorney-client or advisory relationship. Any genuine legal question should be handled through a retained professional.

THE PLAY (ONE LINE)

Prove the concept, research until you have real questions, take them to one business attorney who works with startups, and do the work in order of budget and risk.

1,000+	3	1	2-3 yrs
consultations with business owners	degrees: accounting, law, master's in tax	consultation with a specialist, at minimum	the direction she plans toward

The 8 steps (Delina's general practice, as she described it)

1. **Decide where the business is going.** Sell, pass on or keep. "You need to understand where you're going so you can get to where you want to be."
2. **Prove the concept before the paperwork.** Her general advice: "give me proof of concept first." For some clients, "it might even be don't start an LLC quite yet." A restaurant is her exception: the capital and structuring come first.
3. **Research until you have thoughtful questions.** She calls online advice "the wild, wild west of information online." Read with a goal: reach real questions, not answers.
4. **Book one consultation with a business attorney.** Someone "that works with startups and small businesses." Leave with a priority list.
5. **Rank the to-do list by budget and by risk.** "I don't need you doing a tax strategy until you actually have money coming in the door." Deferring means knowing you are taking a risk.
6. **Hold the website until the legal pages are ready.** Terms of service, privacy policy, ADA terms. Until then, she suggests platforms like Instagram that don't need that setup.
7. **Structure the entity and write the operating agreement.** With a partner, she wants it to cover a dispute, someone passing away, and someone moving to a different country.
8. **If AI is in the workflow, know the work and disclose it.** Data and privacy first, check its output, and in her view build AI use into your contracts. Have any AI-drafted contract reviewed.

All quotes: Delina Yasmeh, Esq., on Unscripted Small Business. Her general answers to recurring questions: delina.esq/business-law-library

Questions to bring to a qualified professional

1. Given whether I plan to sell, pass on or keep this business, what should be set up differently from the start?

2. Can I test this idea before forming an entity, or does the structure have to come first?

3. Which of the questions my research left me with actually apply to my business?

4. Delina's own elevator question: "What is it that we need to get done right now so that in three years from now we don't have issues with the business?"

5. If I can only afford a few things now, which carry the most risk if I wait?

6. What does my website need in place before it launches?

7. Which entity fits what I am building, and what should our operating agreement say about disputes, death and a partner moving away?

8. How should my client contracts disclose the AI I use, and will you review anything I drafted with AI?

Consultation prep sheet

Item	My question	Budget	Risk if it waits	Now / later
Website legal pages				
Entity + operating agmt				
Tax planning				

Checklist

- ☐ I know whether I am building to sell, pass on or keep
- ☐ My research produced written questions
- ☐ To-do list ranked by budget and risk
- ☐ Website legal pages in place before launch
- ☐ AI use checked, and disclosed in client contracts
- ☐ Concept proven, or I know why structure comes first
- ☐ One consultation booked with a business attorney
- ☐ Deferred items written down as known risks
- ☐ Operating agreement covers dispute, death, relocation
- ☐ Quarterly review on the calendar

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