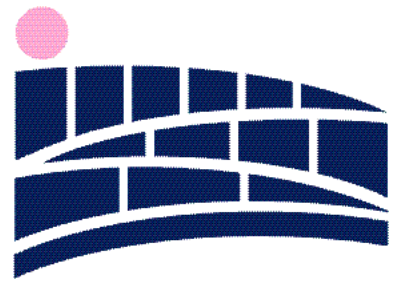


Introduction

1 Introduction



The GST and Business Skills – an Action Guide

All businesses working in a GST environment will need to:

- decide how to get ready for GST
- identify the impact of GST on their business
- put GST into their business context.

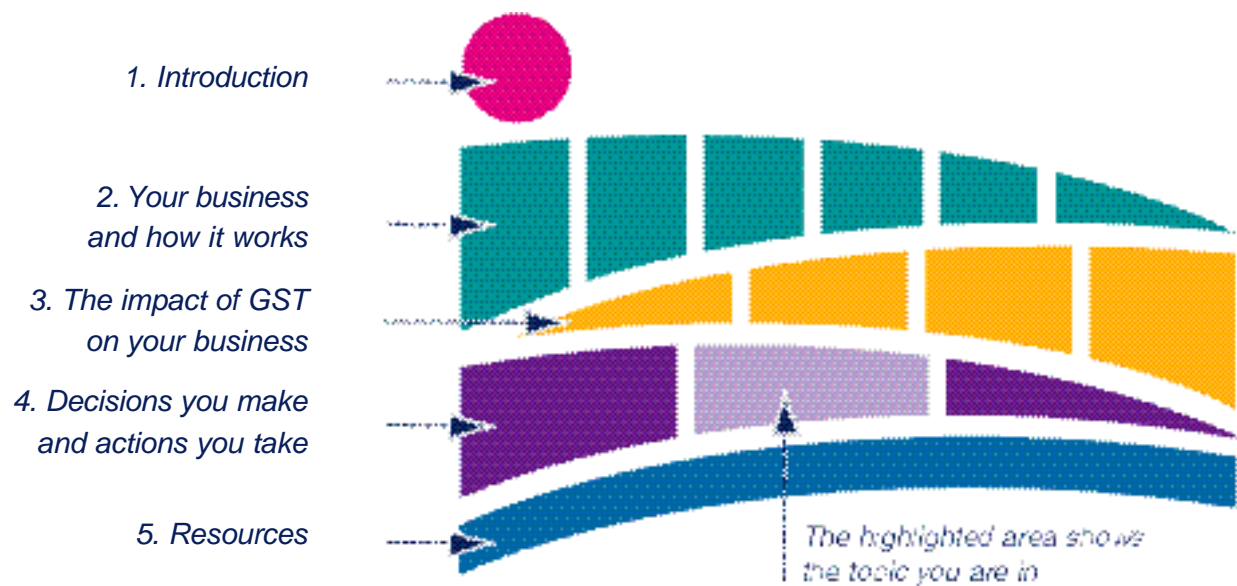
This Action Guide is structured to address the specific needs of small and medium enterprises, charitable organisations and educational bodies in Australia. These businesses operate with support ranging from a single person to complex structures. Managing in a GST environment makes different demands depending on the business.

How to use the Action Guide

The Action Guide is a resource for you to use in your business. The way you use the guide will depend on your business priorities and the time and resources you have available.

You choose when to use the guide and which part to use:

- to decide what you need to do and when
- for information or education.



Key to icons and colours

The logo, icons and the use of colour help you to find your way around the guide. The logo is presented on the first page of each new topic – the highlighted area shows you where you are.

The colours for each section are repeated in a strip along the edge of each page.

A key to the icons:



flags to bring attention to issues you need to consider



checklists to make it easier for you to make informed decisions



actions you need to take



tools you can use and adapt to your own business



links to sections and topics shown in the colour of the relevant section.

Section summaries

There are five sections which can be referred to in any order:

Introduction

You discover who the Action Guide is for, why you might find it useful and how it can be used.

Your business and how it works

Experience in other countries shows that you need strong business skills to operate in a GST environment. The six topics in this section encourage you to refresh or continue building these skills so you are ready for the impacts of GST.

The impact of GST on your business

Minimise disruptions to your cashflow and possible slowdown of your business operations by understanding the impact of GST. The topics in this section help you build familiarity with GST and its terms together with a knowledge of how it affects your business transactions.

Decisions you make and actions you take

Focus on the five areas of impact – selling, buying, recording, survival and legal – and get your business ready by taking action. Working through this section you will find checklists to help make well-informed decisions about what you can, and need, to do. You create a focus for how your business will manage in the GST environment.

Resources

These include a Toolkit of templates, checklists and planning devices; Terms and Concepts for you to refer to; and a list of Information Sources which you can contact.

*You can contact the GST
Start-Up Assistance Office
through their website -
www.gststartup.gov.au
Or phone the Helpline: 133088*

The GST Start-Up Assistance Program

The Australian Government is funding four key initiatives to assist small and medium enterprises, charitable organisations and educational bodies to manage the change to a GST environment:

1. This GST and Business Skills Action Guide provides information and support materials which are freely available.
2. GST advisers: 8,000 GST advisers will use the material in the Action Guide to conduct seminars, individual consultancies and courses throughout Australia.
3. Sector-specific bodies and associations will adapt the Action Guide to suit the needs of their own members.
4. Direct assistance has been made available to businesses in a range of ways. Contact the GST Start-Up Assistance Office Helpline or website for more details.

This guide was prepared by KPMG for the GST Start-Up Assistance Office. We encourage you to talk to people in your community and tap into other resources available which can support your business needs.

The GST Start-Up Assistance Office is managing the implementation of these initiatives.