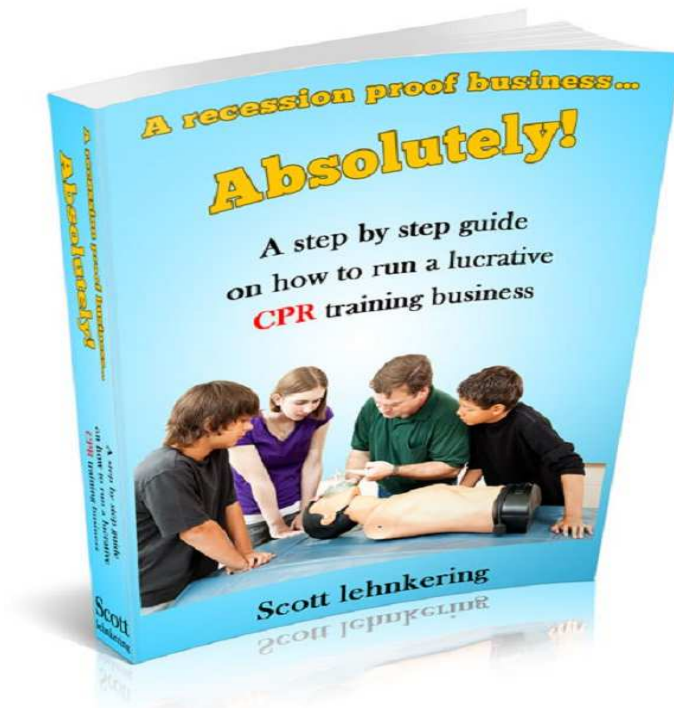


# You are now a CPR instructor.... Now What?

A clear road map on how to run a successful **CPR** training business, the  
**SMART** way!

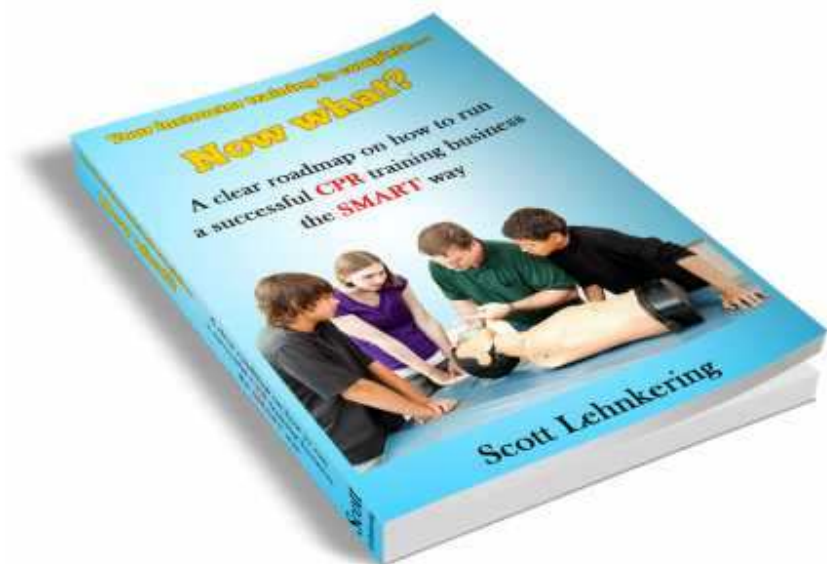


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*Disclaimer: Nothing in this E-Business guide is to be construed as legal advice or a guarantee of any result. The advice contained herein is based upon the experience of the author. Conditions in the business and legal environment are constantly changing, so the author cannot be responsible for information here which may become out of date due to an unanticipated change in a law or the business climate.*

by Scott Lehnkering, A Hero for Life · [www.aheroforlife.com](http://www.aheroforlife.com) · Scott@aheroforlife.com



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Let's get moving!



## A Little about Me

My name is Scott Lehnkering. For the past 20 years, I have had several businesses. Personal training company, employed as a medic, a health coaching business and finally, a CPR training company that is doing quite well for the past four years. Recently, from a suggestion by a friend, I decided to put what I have learned into an E-Business guide to help future or seasoned CPR Instructors start their own business as I have done. What is important to know is, it is far more lucrative to start your own business than to teach classes for someone else. It's a no brainer.

*Your success does not rely on who you are, what you have done in your life, or what level of education you have attained. To follow are the attributes you will need to succeed in the CPR and safety training business.*

- Decent cognitive skills (read, write, basic math, ability to learn)
- Basic public speaking/teaching skills. You need to find the confidence to stand in front of a small group of people and teach a class.
- Basic common sense
- Good work ethic
- Honesty and integrity
- Reliable transportation
- Basic internet skills
- Basic physical ability, the ability to lift 40 pounds and perform the skills of CPR yourself
- Desire to run your own business

## Why This Business Is Recession Proof

Unlike many other types of businesses, this industry is pretty much immune to the economy no matter what direction it is going. Think about it, from occupations within the medical industry, teachers, personal trainers and so forth, these groups of individuals must have a current CPR or first aid certification in order to be employed. There is no way around it for them. This is, of course, a great opportunity for you and your new business to make money instantly.

With my company, I focus on the medical community. In the last 4 years, I have rarely heard the response, “We do not require that training.” The only objections that I have heard are: ‘we already have someone, my pricing, or we just had it done for us.’ That’s about it. That means if I hit the office on the right day and my prices are fair, I’m in.

## **Are You with Me So Far? Let’s Forge On**

If you are reading this, you already know that starting and running a CPR and Safety business is a great idea. You are ready to get started on the process. Congratulations! You will not be sorry you made this choice.

When I started my business, I was just like you, fresh out of instructor training and ready to start working right away. With that in mind, I did what I thought were the right things to do. I asked an acquaintance in the San Francisco Bay Area that was already in the business how to get started. What I didn’t know was this; his way of doing things was not necessarily the most economical way or smartest way to approach it. It was just the way he did it.

Thru a lot of trial and error on my part, I figured out more improved approaches that have proved to be much more economical and smarter methods of getting my business going. I began to make money very quickly. I realized my friends’ approach really was not the best way to do things, but he didn’t have anyone to show him! He spent too much money with startup costs, and he really did not have concrete marketing plan. I found this out later unfortunately. What I did after the first year was to develop a no-nonsense approach to my business that seemed logical to me. It included a smart and effective marketing plan and a way to minimize my start-up costs.

Ahead is the proven system that has worked for me. The best part of all of this is, I am going to outline it for you step by step. Beginning with what to do and some helpful tools and how to get on the fast track to making money right away! Why not learn from someone that knows, right?

## **Introduction: How to Use This Guide**

I have written this guide in “Steps” instead of chapters. The tasks are best accomplished in the order specified. You will note a few “Insider Tips” throughout the book. These are valuable tidbits of information that you should pay attention to, so they are written in **bold** and in **Red** so they will catch your attention and be hard to miss!

Starting a business is never easy. In my years of experience as an entrepreneur and business person, I have rarely seen a business opportunity with such low start-up costs and such minimal time investment needed to become profitable almost immediately. Plus, the initial investment can be paid off so quickly and that will give you autonomy and freedom. Even better, once you have it up and running and have learned the ropes, it is quite simple to maintain. It is all about REPEAT business for you.

I hope you enjoy reading this guide, and I wish you great success in your endeavor of starting and profitably operating a CPR and Safety Training business. If you are like me, you will find it extremely rewarding. It is up to you to either make it a part or full-time income, teaching people how to save lives. Always remember it is an important responsibility to teach this subject matter responsibly and thoroughly. You would never want someone performing CPR on you, or a loved one, in an incorrect way because they attended a shoddy or incomplete class! Neither would I. For this reason, we, as CPR instructors, need to be committed to being thorough, accurate and professional. All the while creating a terrific income for yourself.

## **Certification Organizations**

As of this writing, the American Heart Association and the Red Cross are the primary ones. American Safety and Health Institute (ASHI) and Medic First Aid (MFA) are also large entities. The good thing about these certifying bodies is that they are the cream of the crop when it comes to state requirements. They also offer what they call “Reciprocity”, which means that just by being an AHA Instructor or Red Cross Instructor; you can also become an ASHI or MFA

Instructor. You can simultaneously operate as an AHA and ASHI (American Safety and Health Institute) or MFA (Medic first aid) instructor. It is highly advisable to get and maintain AHA Instructor Certification status at all times. There are many organizations that will only accept the AHA certification, especially in the medical field. ASHI and MFA have some advantages, the primary one being that you are your own training center, so although you still need to keep records, you will not necessarily need to mail them into a training center.

---

## **First things first:**

**Log onto this website if you do not have a current certification:**

<https://ahainstructornetwork.americanheart.org/AHA/ECC/classConnector.jsp> or just search for AHA Classes (Your City Name) on Google or on the AHA website. Once you are there, click on “Find A Class”. You will want to select, CPR/BLS (Basic Life Support). This will take you to local classes in your area to which you can choose from. Considering you have never taken this course before (unless you are already in the medical profession to begin with) you will be exposed to a few things that you will likely have never used before. Inclusive of masks, Ambu bags (Breathing ventilators), and AED’s (Automated External Defibrillators). Do not be intimidated or afraid; there is nothing particularly complex that you cannot learn here, and a good instructor will be patient with you and understand that you have not used these items. Typical price for a certification is \$45 to \$65. If you are already in the medical profession, you are a step ahead of the process here. You already have your CPR/BLS (Basic Life Support) certification through your profession so you are ready to go, you can skip this part. As a CPR/BLS instructor this will enable you to teach and certify medical professionals as well as teachers, coaches, hospitality staff, life guards etc.

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**Log on to this website if currently have your CPR/BLS certification.**

**Your instructor course:**

<https://ahainstructornetwork.americanheart.org/AHA/ECC/classConnector.jsp?> Once you are there, you are going to click “Find a Course”\_and select “BLS Core Instructor”, this will take you to the Instructor courses thru AHA that are in your area. Typical cost for this weekend course normally runs around \$250. to \$350. USD. The course teaches you everything on how to run and set up your class along with all the proper forms, videos, etc.

**NOTE:** I had zero healthcare experience when I attended my first CPR course and BLS Instructor Course. I did just fine. You will too.

The one topic, Instructor training does not spend too much time on is, how to run your own business, **this is where I step in.** You would think Instructor training courses would cover this because it is critical to your success in this business, but unfortunately, they do not. Thus, one of the main reasons I developed and composed this guide. I wanted to make it much easier for you and the success you wish to achieve this business.

Once you have completed your Instructor training, the only task left for you to do is be monitored by another instructor while you are teaching a class. This class can be as small as 2 people that you brought together, just as long as you are instructing it. After that, you will be ready to venture out on your own. No need to become nervous. I am going to guide you every step of the way.

*I have the confidence that this will be one of the easiest and most lucrative businesses you will ever start and continue!*

**Let's get started!**





## **STEP 1:**

### **Your Instructor Training & Certification Is Done...Now What?**

**Your Training Center:** The first thing that MUST be done is to align yourself with a Training Center, possibly the one where you just completed your instructor training. Or, try out the one I personally use which is listed in the section, **Preferred Training Centers**. Alignment equals accountability in sending your paperwork to them regularly. Typically, that includes class rosters, student evaluation forms, skill check forms, tests, and sometimes other forms or paperwork.

Some training centers tend to require for more paperwork than others. It is imperative to ask a lot of questions of your potential training center before you align with them. It is also very important that you have a good relationship with your training center. They do have the ability to audit your paperwork. If you were to send in a lot of improper paperwork and documentation, or worse, no paperwork at all. Or, even if they hear from students you were not teaching well, your center can pull your Instructor Card away from you. Therefore, they have power over you as far as your Instructor Certification. As long as you are teaching according to Training Center Standards, including diligently keeping your records and submitting your paperwork consistently, you will have no problems with your training center.

Currently, the American Heart Association and the Red Cross require their instructors to issue books to all students. These books typically sell for \$11.00 to \$15.00 each. As you can imagine, this can potentially cut into your bottom line. It is advisable to build that cost into your pricing. ASHI and MFA (which are also large certification organizations), also require you to buy these books. These books are a little less expensive.

#### **Notes about Training Centers:**

- You can re-align with a different training center at any time. Each training center determines if they will allow you to align with them. They are not required to do so. Because the training centers make money from those aligned with them, it shouldn't be too hard to find more than one choice. I have personally had the same training

center for two years and am completely happy with them, as they are with me. They provide a fast turnaround with cards and are very reasonable what they charge for cards. As a note: If you are having problems with your training center, or they go out of business, you just regroup and align with another center.

- You rely on the training centers to provide you with the certification cards you will issue. In the past, organizations have had a few issues with trainers being irresponsible about cards, and even black-market sales of these cards, so they are strict about the tracking of these cards. Most training centers will reconcile the number of cards they sell you with your class records.
- While we are discussing the cards, two important questions to ask a potential training center are:

**A:) Can I buy the cards from you in advance?** If you can get them in advance you can give your customers the cards at the end of the actual class vs. having to mail the customers their cards. In general, students always prefer this.

**B:) How much do your certification cards cost?** This can affect your Profit margin big time. Look, of course, for the lowest cost per card you can find, anything less than seven bucks per card is a pretty good price. I have seen training centers charge as little as \$2.50 a card, to as much as \$15.00 a card. Do your homework to find the right training center that fits your needs. It all affects your bottom line.

**Getting Monitored** – Just about every Instructor Certification course requires that you be monitored teaching before you instruct your first course, or at least part of a course. This is to make sure that you are a competent instructor and have learned from your training, and can stand in front of a student or group of students and actually be an effective teacher. Depending on your Training Center, they may allow you to teach part or all of one of their courses. Some training centers might require you to line up your own first course for them to monitor. This just depends on the center.

After the monitoring is successfully completed, they will issue your two-year Instructor card. You will be ready to go! Every two years after this, you must be re-monitored for one class by your training center. Again, this is to ensure that you are still able to teach quality classes, at which point they will re-issue the card for another two years.

**On to your home office**



## **STEP 2: Setting Up Your Home Office & Training Area**

You do not need an entire dedicated room for your home office to run this business. Although, if you have enough space, that's even better. As I write this, I am sitting in the corner of our guest bedroom, where I have set up a small computer hutch, p.c., printer, and two small plastic filing cabinets. Other than the actual training equipment, which is kept in one of our closets, this is the entire business operation infrastructure! One of the things that I love about this business is that is so simple.

It is critical to have a good organizational system for this business. The way you organize things at home and on your computer, will have a significant effect on the amount of time and effort you will expend in running this business.

Assuming your Instructor certification is through AHA or the Red Cross, there are a few requirements you must maintain when it comes to paperwork. The good news is there is not a huge amount of it, and if you print things in advance and are organized, you can run your business efficiently.

My preference for filing is an inexpensive plastic drawer pull-out organizer available at any Wal-Mart, Target, etc. I have two of these in my office, they cost about \$25.00 each, and this is all I need for my paperwork, plus one small filing box. It takes up very little room. The dimensions for these organizers are approximately 3 feet high, and 16 inches square, to give you an idea of the space you will need. Each of mine, have five pull-out drawers, two skinny ones at the top, and three larger ones towards the bottom.

I have labelled each drawer as follows; this is the simplest and best system I have found so far:

- ***Blank Cards and Forms Drawer***

This includes all of your precious blank CPR certification cards (if they are purchased that way), as well as the various blank forms that you will need to teach your certification classes.

I have a separate folder in this drawer for each of the following items:

BLS Certification Cards,	Skills Testing Forms, CPR skills
CPR/AED Certification Cards,	Testing Forms, First Aid Skills
First Aid certification cards, BLS	Testing Forms, and Waivers
Rosters, CPR Rosters, BLS	(more on these later)

- ***Exam Drawer***

With the American Heart Association and the Red Cross, written tests are required for (Healthcare Provider) Classes, but are optional for standard Classes. Note: Make sure you write “DO NOT WRITE ON THIS TEST” and highlight it with a yellow or pink highlighter; otherwise you will waste a lot of time and effort printing new tests out. This drawer has separate folders for BLS Tests and Heartsaver tests, assuming you are teaching AHA. Obviously, the answer keys are for your eyes only and are used to grade the tests

- ***Class Records to be Sent to Training Center Drawer***

This drawer is critical. Your Training Center will require you to send in certain paperwork at a given frequency. They vary, some require it monthly, or more or less frequently, but it is a job that must be done. Again, this critical. I cannot emphasize this enough. You need to be prompt and maintain paperwork. Be certain it is accurate and MAKE COPIES of all paperwork you send into your training center before you send them the originals.

With AHA or the Red Cross, you are expected to keep all student paperwork for at least three years back. There are liability reasons to discuss later as to why you are wise to do what they ask you do in this regard.

Consult with your training center as to if there is a particular method on how they want these sent. You want to keep them happy. In our case, we keep a separate folder for each class, with the date and type of class on it. By the way, the training center is very likely to reconcile your rosters with how many cards they have sold you. Do not consider playing games or manipulating the rosters or the cards, it will not fly.

Additionally, AHA has requirements of how long classes should generally take. If you teach a class that's supposed to take 4.5 hours per AHA guidelines, and your start time is 11:00 am and the end time is 12 Noon, there is a problem they will likely to identify right away.

- ***Copies of Records Drawer***

These are your copies of the records you sent to the training center. This is essential for you to keep them here. In the event you need reference on a certain class you taught, you can easily access them. If they do not require you to send a particular form, (some training centers do not require you to submit Evaluation forms for example), then just put the originals here.

- ***Receipts Related to The Business Drawer***

Can you say, "Tax write-off"? Keep ALL receipts and records related to your business here, including your training, education, mileage and gas, etc. It is wise to get a mileage log, and log the miles you drive to any classes you teach. You will thank me come tax-time.

- ***Business Cards and Marketing Materials Drawer***

For now, this drawer will be empty, but we will discuss this subject in the next section.

- ***DVD's, CD's, and Credential Cards Drawer***

This is for your training and instructor CD's and DVD's etc...you will have from your instructor package as well as your Instructor Card. Keeping your certification cards in a drawer minimizes the chance of losing them. Interestingly, I have yet to have somebody ask me to show them my instructor certification card, but it's a good idea to bring it with you when you go to teach a class at a client location.

- ***Miscellaneous Hand-outs and Materials Drawer***

You may choose to purchase your own hand-outs, or use your training center hand-outs, or whatever else. In our case, we have obtained free materials such as, Poison Control "1-800..." magnets for people to put in their homes, and a variety of other free approved

informational brochures, which are never a bad thing to offer to your clients. There are also CPR-face shield key chains available. Some CPR instructors will buy a bunch and then sell them to make a few extra bucks. I've found a source on E-bay, where I pay .40 cents each for my CPR key chains and sell them for \$5 all day long. Another no brainer source of extra income dollars!

- ***Laminator and Laminator Sheets Drawer***

A decent laminator can be purchased at Costco for \$19.95. The plastic pockets can be purchased online. We laminate our client's cards for free as a value-add, but you could always charge a buck or two for the service. You make the call.

- ***Business Licenses and Documentation Drawer***

This drawer is for all required business licenses. Typically, but not always, you will need a City and a State License. You will need to check in your local area for the requirements. The actual licenses are required to be displayed in a 'prominent' area. I framed ours and have them in our living room.

Beyond having a good paper filing system, you should have a reliable and reasonably powerful computer for e-mail and document management. You will need capable and reliable Internet access, and the latest versions of Word and Excel.

Additionally, you need a place to store your CPR training gear. Half of a normal-sized closet would be enough. There is not a large amount of equipment, but you do need a bit of space. When storing your equipment, keep in mind temperature and cleanliness. You don't want to be putting your items in a garage in Anchorage Alaska where wintertime temps could be 30 below zero; nor do you want to keep it in a garage in Phoenix, where the equipment could melt in summer. Indoors, where you live is best. The way you arrange things is up to you, we suggest having things ready to go for your classes in advance. More will be discussed on this later.

A question has likely formed in your mind by now, “If I am not teaching mobile classes, where do I teach them?” The answer is, “It depends”. How much space do you have in your home? Do you have a good clean area that is private with enough square footage to teach these classes? Minimum requirements should be an 8 foot by 8-foot area for each student to learn in. Common sense should rule. You need enough room so the students don’t feel cramped.

Zoning is also a consideration. If your house or apartment is not zoned to operate a home-based-business, avoid any problems by only doing classes at your clients’ location. It’s best to check your zoning. If you are going to risk anything in terms of violating the zoning where you live, just be aware of the consequences if you get caught and be prepared to accept them. A bunch of cars parked on the street in front of your house may or may not be noticed and/or, well received by your neighbors.

Someone could potentially call in a complaint. I operated our business at one point out of a rented townhouse that was not zoned for at-home-business, but we were discreet and asked customers to park out on a busy street, so we had no issues. However, we were risking getting in trouble, so I am not necessarily recommending this either. If you are not going to teach classes from your home, this is all a moot point. Now, most of my business is all done mobile. I travel to the location of the job, teach the class, pack my bags and I am out the door. Onsite classes at the client’s location, is by far the easiest way to teach a class with minimal set up.

### **Insider Tip # 1:**

**If teaching at your home or at a clients’ site is not an option but you have an opportunity to teach a large class, check with local churches, libraries, and hotels to see if they have a decent sized room with electricity, lights, heating/ac, and preferably a carpet. They may provide it to you at no charge, or for a very small charge. It is worth checking and asking. A friend of mine has taught numerous classes in an extra room at a local church, for free.**



It is important to make sure the room where the classes are being taught looks as clean as possible, and as much like a business, not a home, as possible, and there should be a nice clean bathroom and privacy. If you have got children crying and dogs barking and cat pee on the rug, you are not going to make a very good impression for your customers. They may make note of this on their evaluations of you, the instructor. Make a point of having the place shiny and sparkly, and be sure anybody else who lives with you knows when you will be teaching a class, and that it is 'do not disturb' time in the room you are in. We have asked our clients before they come over if they have any physical limitations we need to accommodate, as well as whether they have any pet allergies, as we have a dog and a cat who we put in the back room when teaching classes.

With the American Heart Association, they want instructors teaching from a DVD they issue, so you will need a decent sized television screen with a DVD player to teach full classes. With AHA you also have the option teaching straight from your instructor manual, but that is only if your audio is malfunctioning.

Skills tests do not require the DVD. If you are not going to teach from your home, you will probably need a portable TV with DVD player. Considerations for choosing your portable television are weight (you will need to roll or carry it into any class you go to), screen size as previously mentioned, and cost. I would suggest a screen no smaller than 32 inches. Huddling six or eight people around a laptop or tiny screen TV is not good practice, or fair to your students, and again, they are likely to comment on their evaluations of such challenges/inconveniences in their training.

The good news is that there are good portable DVD/TV combos on the market now with 32-inch screens for a couple hundred dollars. Also, for your home set up, you will want to have sufficient comfortable seating for your students to watch the DVD.

## **STEP**

### **3:**

#### **Business Decisions: What Name, What Entity, What Licenses?**

It is totally up to you to name your business. With my company name, A Hero for Life, people can remember it easily. To tell you the truth, many times people will forget my name but remember the company name. Get creative and put some thought into the name. You want to be memorable to others.

If you plan to work with a partner, be sure you both have fully bought into the business name before you start doing paperwork and filing for licenses, etc. Changing the name after the business has been established is going to be a real pain (especially with bank accounts, etc...), and also you are trying to brand your business and establish your reputation and your name in your local area. If the business name changes, it will be a setback being recognized, and will require changes for all marketing materials such as business cards, etc., not to mention your web site and search engine results.

Regarding the type of business entity to choose, you may want to consult an accountant or a tax attorney. You can also do your own research online. For us, LLC was the best option, but for some people Sole Proprietor makes sense, so just do your homework in deciding what's best for you. Legalzoom.com is an inexpensive way to set this all up.

Obtaining all required business licenses should be a relatively simple process. Just go online and search for the instructions for your local area. You may need multiple licenses including state and local, it really depends in the city you live in. Dealing with government bureaucracy is as

fun and exciting as watching paint peel off your walls, but you must be sure that your business has fulfilled all legal requirements to operate in your area.

## Obtaining your DBA, Doing Business As

If you're serious about setting up your business as a professional, I would highly recommend you get your DBA. Once you receive your DBA you will then be able to set up your business checking account at the bank you usually do business with. Plain and simple, it just looks a lot more professional to others when they're writing you out a check to your company name vs. making it out to your name. It definitely makes a difference with your credibility and will set you apart from others.

Obtaining your DBA (Doing Business As) is a fairly simple process. Here is the easiest way to do this. Go onto [www.legalzoom.com/dba](http://www.legalzoom.com/dba). You can do everything that you need to do in setting up your DBA right there and is very quick and painless. This is the service that I used in the beginning and was extremely easy to understand.

## Business Cards

I am going to make it easy here. My preferred business card company is: [www.vistaprint.com](http://www.vistaprint.com). Their telephone number is 1-866- 614-8002.

I have been using them for years. They are very affordable, professional, and time efficient at getting the work done. The good part about Vistaprint.com is that they can design the card for you in case you do not have a particular look in mind. They have a wide array of templates to choose from that should suit your needs. Make sure when you are designing your cards, you have all the critical info on there.

- \* Business name
- \* Business email address
- \* Business phone #
- \* Your website URL
- \* A compelling statement that is a call to action on your card.
- \* Optional (A head shot of yourself)

And.... It even gets better. For new customers, dependent on the size and style or design you chose, usually the first order of 250 cards is free. I highly recommend using them.

## **Liability Insurance**

You are probably thinking, wow.... Where do I start? I will make it simple. There are many companies to choose from ranging good to bad. About two years ago I found an Insurance company that has great coverage and at a very affordable price. Here's their info:

Company Name: Lockton Insurance Company

Website: [www.lockton.com](http://www.lockton.com)

Phone number: 913-652-7500

My required coverage per year costs about \$175.00. They have a policy that is specific for CPR trainers. This company is the best bet for the dollar and believe me; I have extensively searched them all.

**Consider giving them a call** 🙌

## **STEP 4: Researching Your Competition, Positioning Your Business, and Setting Your Prices**

Like every service, there is a market for CPR instruction and certification. The first step to determining and creating your pricing for your new business. You to research and learn the what your competition is charging. Using the Internet, it is super easy. Simply enter your queries into Google (or whatever search engine you use) the words “CPR Instruction” followed by the name of your town or city you will be doing business in. For example, if you live in Phoenix, it will be “CPR Instruction Phoenix”. Also try different terms such as “CPR Certification Phoenix”. These searches will produce a variety of results, including some existing for-profit CPR training schools.

Some will have their prices listed on their websites. If they do not have prices, call and ask. You can quickly get a good idea for the prices in your area. Note that prices vary significantly from city to city, and sometimes within the same city. Investigating your competition thoroughly will be important to your success.

There are likely some large established training facilities in your area. Do not be intimidated by them. Many of these outfits are so busy that they cannot handle all the business that comes at them. Others are simply not very good, for a variety of reasons. Remember that you are in a SERVICE business. The more courteous, professional, polished, upbeat and knowledgeable you are, along with the fact that you are offering a service of great value at a reasonable price, the more business you will get and the better reputation you will achieve. Everything, from your website, to your phone message, to the way you speak to your customers and reply to their e-mails...all aspects of your business should gleam with excellence. This is how you will get a reputation for being the best in your area, by consistently delivering an excellent image and an excellent service.

As you investigate the various websites of your competition, you may find that some of them focus on group classes, and others focus on individuals. Some may focus on teaching classes at client sites, and others may focus on doing classes at their own location. Some may focus on skills tests, and others may focus on full classes. Some may focus on healthcare providers, and

others may focus more on ‘civilians’. Ideally, you want to discover a gap in your market.

What is it that people might want in terms of CPR classes that are currently not being offered, or for which there is little competition? Perhaps there is a market for travelling to more remote areas to teach classes? You can typically charge your travel expenses and a premium in such a case, if they have no local instructor. My wife once flew from Anchorage to the Arctic Circle to teach CPR to the employees of Prudhoe Bay and Deadhorse. She managed to charge a hefty premium for these trainings, which illustrates my point. Small remote towns are unlikely to have certified CPR trainers, but they may have a need to have some of their residents’ or employees certified and they will pay top price for it.

One of the more recent developments in CPR training and certification are “Hybrid Courses”. AHA offers an online course (currently \$22.00), which allows the student to learn online, and upon completion, print a certificate. Once the certificate is printed, the student still must come see a certified CPR instructor such as you to do a “Skills Test”, where the student gets down on the floor with a mannequin, and demonstrates the actual skills which they learned online.

There is a Healthcare Provider version of this test, as well as a Heartsaver (Civilian) version, and they also offer First Aid, either independently or as an add-on. The advantage to the student is this. They do not have to sit through an actual class that may take 3-5 hours. Once they complete the online course all they must do is meet up with the instructor for the skills assessment. For people who have time constraints, this is an alternative.

In terms of positioning your business, take any approach you choose. However, it would be wise again to consider the competition and fill a gap. As for your company’s image, you can be as conservative, or get as crazy as you like, whatever works for you and sells in the marketplace. I will give you one hint; people who are seeking CPR training, like everybody else, are typically quite busy.

Many of them have completed a CPR class before that were long and drawn out. Too many bathroom breaks, lunch breaks, etc..... I have found that striking a balance between time efficiency and thoroughness are the keys to pleasing your students and creating repeat business.

As for pricing, again, this is a matter of choice. We choose not to position ourselves as the cheapest, but instead, I position myself as the *best* in my local market, which I define as the most thorough, clear, time efficient, fun, courteous, convenient, and professional. We choose to only publish our prices on my website, but not on any written marketing materials. By doing this, we can adjust prices as needed without having to worry about printed materials with old prices on them.

Pricing is a subject you should revisit and think about at least every six months, as market conditions change, and your own experience may change. Following are my recommendations for pricing

- 1.) **Research at least five local competitors.** Ask for their pricing for all of their classes they offer before setting your own.
- 2.) **Decide on your own pricing** and post them on your website. Make sure to consider taxes, insurance, telephone costs etc.
- 3.) **See if you are losing sales** because your prices are higher than most. Do you receive a lot of phone calls, but then when they ask the price and you state it, they say “I am going to call around” and you never hear back? That is a sign you are priced too high! Similarly, if you operate for six months at a given price and customers seem to be lining up at your door, and nobody is balking or ‘calling around’, then you may want to consider slightly raising your prices.
- 4.) **Consider having “add-ons” to your prices**, or incorporate them into the total price. Some CPR trainers charge extra for the actual card for example. My recommendation is to include everything in one price, including laminating the card, which is a nice extra add-on. This way the students won’t feel like they are being nickel and dimed. With that said, I haven’t tried it the other way, so maybe that’s OK as well.

Now let's get into class minimums more in-depth. This is a very important subject in terms of how it relates to how much money you will make per hour for your time. Consider the following scenario.

**A possible client scenario:** *A potential customer calls you and asks you to drive to her house to teach a full CPR class and provide her a certification card. Your price as posted on your website is \$65.00 for the class, including the card and lamination. The client lives about twenty minutes away from you, and the class she wants typically takes four hours to teach. It is just her, nobody else.*

Do you want to teach this class under these conditions for this price? Let's break down your time and costs.

#### **YOUR TIME INVESTMENT:**

- 10 minutes packing up your car
- 20 minutes driving to the class
- 4 hours teaching the class
- 20 minutes driving home
- 10 minutes unpacking your car

**TOTAL TIME SPENT = 5 Hours**

#### **EXPENSES**

- \$5 for gasoline
- \$2 wear and tear on vehicle
- \$3 your cost for certification card

**TOTAL EXPENSES = \$10.00**

#### **NET PROFIT FOR CLASS**

\$65.00 (Client Payment) - \$10.00 (Expense) = \$55.00 net profit

#### **YOUR HOURLY PAY**

\$55.00 divided by five hours = \$11.00 per hour

- In addition, take into account the cost of consumables. ex: face shields \$12, training valves \$20, CPR cards, and CPR books. On the off chance, you do not have manikins, the cost of renting them. When it comes down to it, these items will eat into your bottom line.



For some, it may be worth it and acceptable to make \$11.00 per hour, and that is fine, especially at the beginning if you are just trying to get your business established. For me, it is not even close to what I am looking for, so I would not teach this class. Therefore, we need to establish a minimum of how many students we will teach.

To arrive at this minimum, you should calculate scenarios like described above, decide what the minimum per hour that you are willing to accept is, and adjust your minimum students accordingly. Yes, you will lose some business by having a minimum student policy, and when you are first getting started, if you are very eager for business, you may choose to accept this scenario.

The point is that you should think through what you are doing and adjust your policies accordingly. We normally have a six-person minimum for classes we travel to, and we require all moneys to be prepaid and non-refundable for that minimum. I cannot tell you how many times my wife and I have had a class where we were told there would be nine or ten students, and only three or four showed up. Do not set yourself up for disappointment and frustration, unless you are ready to handle it well with the customers, and within yourself.

## **STEP 5: Purchasing Equipment: What You'll Need to Get Started**

Purchasing equipment for your CPR Business is a matter of determining the minimum of what you need to get started and purchasing it, most likely online.

### **Insider Tip #2:**

**It is wise to have an INVENTORY CHECKLIST for each of your classes, so you do not leave the house without an item and end up at a client site unprepared.**

There are a quite few options for purchasing required equipment. **Channing Bete** ([www.channing-bete.com](http://www.channing-bete.com)), **CPR Savers & First Aid** ([www.cpr-savers.com](http://www.cpr-savers.com)), are currently my two favorite sources of everything you will need to run your CPR business. They carry everything that is mentioned below.

You also have an option to buy equipment (especially manikins) on sites like Amazon, E-bay, or Craigslist at a significant savings. At times, you will see this type of equipment listed and other times you may not. It all depends on your timing.

### **Required Equipment**

**CPR Training Mannequins:** For starters, you will need a minimum of three adult and one infant mannequin. Note that there are typically guidelines with AHA and other certifying bodies as to a maximum number of students per mannequin. There are good reasons for this.

I like to have one student per mannequin now, but when I started, I could not afford buying so many mannequins. Depending upon your budget, you can always easily purchase new mannequins. Shipping typically will take about a week or less for them to arrive at your house from the time you order them online.

Research your local resources for companies that “rent” mannequins until your income allows you to purchase all that you will need.

There are a wide variety of mannequins on the market; some are very fancy and elaborate (and very expensive). My choice is the “Basic Buddy” or “Prompt” mannequins. These are durable and very affordable mannequins, and work well with inflatable lung bags. So, when your students are giving breaths, they can actually see the chest of the mannequin rise. This is a great indicator that they are giving good breaths and invaluable in training.

Another good choice for mannequins is, the “**Little Annes**”. They are a bit more expensive but they can last you a lifetime if you take care of them. It is best to keep a carrying case for your to mannequins.to keep them clean. Typical pricing on either the **Basic Buddy** or the **Prompt** is typically in between \$65. - \$100. a piece (new). The **Little Anne** will normally be priced at approximately \$200. - \$250. a piece (new) **Note:** If you cannot afford the mannequins in the beginning, check with your local training company or another one close by and see if you can rent them for the day. They might cost you \$40 for the day.

- **Trainer AED (s):** When you start out, you can get by with one trainer AED. The least expensive I have seen are from the American Red Cross, and through **CPR Savers**. You should not spend much more than \$75.00 - \$100.00 for a trainer unit. In time, you can spend a bit more and get one that is a little more sophisticated, but for now, this will do just fine.
- **Kneepads:** You should have enough kneepads for each student in your class and yourself. Note: these are floor kneepads, not pads that attach to the student’s knees. I found some nice compact and inexpensive rectangular kneepads that are pack in packages of four at [www.CPRSavers.com](http://www.CPRSavers.com) online.
- **Manikin Disposable Face Shields** – 4 boxes. Average cost is \$12. per box. Where I have found the best prices for the shields is on E-bay. In the search bar just put in ‘mannequin face shields’ and they will pop right up.
- **Disposable Lung Bags:** I have found that best pricing on these are typically on E-bay and roughly about \$25 for a 30 pack.
- **Ventilator Bags** (Ambu bags) for adult and child, which you will need for your BLS by Scott Lehnkering, A Hero for Life · [www.aheroforlife.com](http://www.aheroforlife.com) · Scott@aheroforlife.com

classes. You can normally pick up a couple of these at your local fire department for free. They have a large supply of these on hand usually. Why spend money on them!

- **Stopwatch:** This is used to time compressions during testing of students. This item is approximately \$30.00 or less.
- **Portable Television with Built in DVD Player** – You will want one that is large enough to where a class can see it, but small enough to where you can carry it reasonably in and out of your classes.

I believe a 32-inch screen is optimal, I found a Magnavox TV/DVD combo with LCD screen online for just a couple hundred dollars. In the beginning, it usually works best if you use the AHA DVD's in your trainings. After you are more comfortable with it, and sometimes what I do, is teach right out of the Instructors AHA binder.

- **First Aid Training Supplies:** I suggest buying ten trainer epi-pens (they are cheap), two boxes of 100 latex gloves each, several rolls of gauze and dressings, and a couple of the eighteen inches "Sam Splint Kits" if you are going to be teaching First Aid classes.

### **Sample Startup Costs for Your New Business**

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• <b>Manikins</b>	<b>\$500.00</b> (high side or \$200 low side)
• <b>Portable TV w/ dvd player</b>	<b>\$250.00</b>
• <b>Trainer AED</b>	<b>\$75.00</b>
• <b>Kneepads</b>	<b>\$30.00</b>
• <b>Ambu bags</b>	<b>Free at firehouse</b>
• <b>Face shields</b>	<b>\$55.00</b>
• <b>Stopwatch</b>	<b>\$30.00</b>
• <b>Disposable lung bags</b>	<b>\$25.00</b>
• <b>First Aid supplies</b>	<b>\$100.00</b>

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**Total Estimate: \$765.00 - \$1000.00**

## STEP 6: Marketing

# The Heart of This e-Business Guide!

### Medical office plazas

This is where I got my start when I opened my business four years ago and it did not take any time at all to start receiving calls. Depending upon where you live, just about every town or city has a variety of large medical centers (plazas) you can target with fliers. Where I live in Southern California, there are several medical plazas close to me that might have 75-100 private practice physicians in each building. Talk about a captive audience! I might spend an hour or so going office to office handing out my flier for my CPR business and start receiving calls later that day. Now that's a quick response.

**Your personal presentation.** Be certain to dress in appropriate business attire, including nice clean shoes. You will only get one opportunity to make a positive introduction of yourself and your business. Professional appearance is essential while doing face to face marketing

When entering the offices, I recommend that you always want to get the flier into the office manager's hands.

### Drug and Alcohol Treatment Facilities

You might be thinking here...What? This is a HUGE market for you.

Most major cities literally have hundreds to thousands of these facilities. Unfortunately, drug and alcohol is big business these days. The one shining star in all of this is that every one of these facilities requires their staff to be trained in CPR/first aid to even work there. It is mandated by the State. This can be a goldmine for you.

Due to the nature of this business, there is usually a pretty high turnover rate with staff, which translates into new employees that need their certification. Getting the picture here? I have one facility in my area that I travel to every couple of months to hold classes for them. The reason...turnover. Staff turnover is not great for them, but it sure is for me, and hopefully for you too.

## **Large Hotel Chains... Hyatt's, Marriott's, & More**

With the larger chain hotels such as Hyatt Regency, Marriott, Holiday Inn and so forth, corporate has policies in place that mandate a portion of their staff has to be trained in CPR/First Aid, all the way from engineers to the wait staff. This can translate into large classes for you considering the number of employees these large hotels have.

I am at a Hyatt Regency at least twice a year holding classes for them with an average of 20 people in each class. These are some great numbers for you and your bank account. The people you want to target are the decision makers. It is either going to be the head of Security/Loss Prevention, or the General Manager of the hotel. Almost always, these are the people responsible for making these types of decisions.

### **Insider Tip # 3:**

**As with any of the places you visit to do some marketing, keep in mind if you personally know someone connected to this facility (facilities), that is a great advantage for you. What better way could you have than to personally know someone that is connected? Remember... it is all about those connections you have.**

## **School Districts**

If you can get into a school district or multiple school districts, this can be a gem to mine for your business. A friend of mine who teaches with me, secured a district up in Long Beach, CA where I was helping do a class for 110 teachers and coaching staff. At the end of the day after he paid the instructors helping him out, can you imagine the paycheck he received after this class? \$\$\$\$\$. It turned out he had connections at the school district that got him in there. So, you can easily see the importance of using all of your connections, everywhere.

I also have secured classes at local high schools in my area taking care of their teaching staff and coaches all at once. I had a class this last year where there were 32 people in attendance for my CPR/First Aid class. These large classes really pay off. Find those opportunities in your area!

## **Costco Stores**

Considering how many Costco's are around these days, this is prime ground for you setting up classes. This is the reason. For the most part, all Costco locations statewide are required from Corporate to have a percentage of their staff trained in CPR/First Aid at their stores. As you can imagine, another great opportunity!

It even gets better than this. As of a year ago, all Costco's statewide are required to have AED's in every single store. You can go into any Costco and see one usually somewhere near the Administration Office. The AED most Costco's have now is the Zoll AED, the lime green colored one. The person you want to contact at any Costco is the Administrative Manager. They are always the person in charge for setting up these kinds of trainings. Depending on which Costco you visit, some of their stores have a higher turnover rate with their employees than others, which is normally due to the store location. Again, this is great for you for having you back more often.

## **Day Care Centers**

Another great target market for you are day care centers, the larger the better. Just about every large town or city, there are numerous day care centers, and guess what, you guessed it; they all require their staff to be certified in CPR/First Aid.

From my experiences, it is to your advantage to attach yourself with a center that has multiple locations such as KinderCare or Tutor time. Those are the large ones where I live. The nice thing about the centers with multiple locations is that if you can get in with one and do a fantastic job, there are many others that they can refer you to. They are basically doing the work for you. Personally, I sure like those odds! The person you are going to be talking to is most likely the Center Director. **Note:** During the summer is when a lot of these centers do their trainings so it is advisable to approach them a few months ahead of time before anyone else does.

## **Churches**

Regarding Churches, the larger the better. It is all about volume. For most decent size churches, they all have departments within their Church that will want certified in CPR/First Aid. Just about every large church has Preschools or Day Care Centers located on their property, and you guessed it, they all require their staff to be trained in both.

As for the rest of the church and related departments, many churches want a large portion of their staff trained for emergencies that might arise on their property. Regarding the Preschool or Day Care. It will usually going to be the Children's Ministry Director that you will be going to be contacting. Just about any church I have held classes for, these people are the nicest people you will ever encounter, probably due to the nature of the business. As for the rest of the church and its staff, I would probably start with the Head Pastor/Ministry Director and work your way down the chain.

Just for an example, I recently landed a job at a large church where I live in southern CA. I had two separate classes. One was for the preschool where we had 30-day care workers attend the class, and the other one was for the church staff itself. Total people in attendance for that class were 48. That's a grand total of 78 students! Do you think my bank account liked that gig?

I can't emphasize enough about going after these large churches. Sure, makes sense to secure these high number classes versus a class of 6 or so. It's a no brainer. With these kinds of numbers, you could probably make a living on churches alone, so go get them.



## CREATING YOUR WEBSITE

There two major features of your website:



- 1.) Your website should neat clean and simple
- 2.) The verbiage should be clear and concise
- 3.) It should have a clear 'Call to Action' on it for customers to book classes, either by calling you, or via an online schedule, and a way for them to pay online.

### **Insider Tip #4:**

**Regarding websites, you can spend a whole lot of money paying someone to create one for you and literally spend thousands of dollars doing so. I had a business acquaintance that paid \$3000 for his website and it did not look nearly as professional as mine. Here is what I recommend for you. ClassByte.com has a package for \$199.00 a year exclusively for CPR Training businesses that is professional looking and most of all, reasonable, try them out.**

## SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION

Marketing the business starts with your website and web presence. Many people search for CPR classes online; they will enter terms such as "BLS Instruction", "CPR Certification", "CPR Instruction", and "CPR Classes" into the major search engines such as Google and Bing. How high up in the rankings your website shows up can have a big impact on how much business you attract. Search Engine Optimization (S.E.O.) is a huge topic of its own. Suffice to say that you want to have your website optimized to the maximum extent.

The two websites that I have mentioned above also have people that do SEO optimization for very reasonable prices. “The Ultimate Guide to Search Optimization” by Jon Rognerud is a good place to start if you are going to manage your website yourself. Otherwise, consider hiring a competent professional to tweak your website to your needs and to the local market. Your goal is to be on page one of Google, Bing, and the other most popular search engines.

In addition to Search Engine Optimization, it is very important for you to have your Training Site listed on the AHA “ECC Class Connector” (assuming your with AHA), which can be a very significant source of business for you. If you are with another Training company, almost always they have a place on their website you can put your information in. It is imperative that the information here is accurate so people searching are not confused.

Following are the basics of Search Engine Optimization that you should follow:

- 1.) You should link your website to as many free online marketing services (such as “Yelp”) as possible, and then every day, you, and if possible, your family and friends, should click on these links.
- 2.) Additionally, you should do a search for your website daily, and click on it, and then click on each page within the website. Popularity breeds more popularity on the web, so the more you click on sites linking to your site, and your site itself, the better.

- 3.) Be sure to embed the words “CPR”, “CPR Certification Classes”, “CPR Training”, etc., are used numerous times in the text on your website and embedded in the html, of your website for the best search engine optimization. This is a must do.
- 4.) Include the name of your town in text. Use the name of your city, and all towns and neighborhoods where you would like to get business from, used in the text also, and embedded in the html.

## **FLYER CAMPAIGNS**

Flyer campaigns can be done either by stopping by the offices personally as mentioned earlier, or by mailing the flyers. This is how I originally got my start. By doing flyer runs and mailings, I was able to get business right away. One thing we have learned about mailings; although it is a lot of manual work, it pays to handwrite every address and return address on every envelope you send, (which is also mentioned in the next paragraph) and to address the envelope “Attention: Office Manager” for Medical Offices, and “Attention: H.R. or Security/Loss Prevention” for hotels.

When we did mailings that were not handwritten, we got very little response, mainly because they were thrown out as junk mail. When something is handwritten, the decision maker is not going to identify it as junk mail, and in fact, trigger the recipient that the envelope as to something they need to read. Additionally, they will be impressed on some level that you took the time to handwrite it. I cannot emphasize this point enough.

If your handwriting is not very neat, get a friend or family member to do it, or hire a High School Student, College Student, or inexpensive Administrative Assistant to do the handwriting.

The only limit to flyer campaigns is your imagination. If you have purchased this EBook, then you have access to the “Forms Kit” which contains some flyers you can customize and use. In

general, there are a few types of flyers that we’ve seen success with:

- **“Lunch and Learn”** - This is where you offer to come into a Medical Office or other place of business on an extended lunch time, and conduct a CPR class with a nice lunch. Convenience and free food, most everyone likes that.
- **Hotel Flyer** – You can pick up some decent sized classes at local hotels and lodges
- **Medical Office Flyer** – Specifically targets medical offices. Ex: dental, plastic surgeons, cardiovascular, OB-GYN offices, orthodontists, etc.

## MAILINGS

**There are two keys to success here:**

- 1.) **Standing Out from the Crowd:** To insure the highest possible level of responsiveness to your mailings will involve a little bit of work on your part. To differentiate your mailings from the mailings of so many other companies who hammer your potential customers with junk mail, you need to neatly handwrite every address and return address on every envelope you send. Please re-read the previous sentence and burn it into your consciousness. Why is this so important? Because in almost all cases, even the busiest of all office managers will take the time to open an envelope which somebody has handwritten. They will assume it is something worthy of their attention, and not a piece of junk mail.
- 2.) **KISS Theory:** Keep it simple. Keep your flyers and/or letters that you place into your mailings clean, concise, and to the point, and with a call-to-action. This has certainly worked for me!

## CUSTOMER SERVICE

Never forget that you are in a service business. One of the ways you can differentiate yourself from your competition is by offering a high level of Customer Service. This means being responsive. Customer Service means being friendly, and polite. It also requires you being professional.

Do not think because you are the teacher and ‘they’ are the students that you are somehow above ‘them’. “Thanks” and “Please” are very important words in business and in life; they show respect and they acknowledge the fact that somebody with options of who to take their business to is paying you for a service you are providing. So, if you do not have customer service experience, be sure to practice treating your students as what they are...paying customers.

### **Insider Tip # 5:**

**Your voice mail should be very clear, professional, and brief. Ours says:**

*“Thank you for calling (Your Business), the best in the west for CPR training and certification. Please leave a message and we will return your call promptly. If you like, you can also reach me on my cell phone at: XXX- XXX-XXXX.”*

**If possible, find somebody who has a clear, professional voice and have them record the message for you or make sure you sound great and record it yourself.**

## **STEP 7: Hiring Employees & Renting Space**

I do not offer any recommendations on either of these subject's other than to be very cautious and careful before you rent a place or hire (or sub-contract) any employees for your business. The thing I love about our CPR training business is that it is small and there are no employees to manage, and the expenses are almost zero. We have never rented space, and if it is a class over a dozen people, we have several other instructors we hire as sub-contractors to teach with us.

As soon as you take on employees or rent a place, your responsibility increases significantly. You will be taking on the role of Employer. An Employer must have excellent bookkeeping skills, timely paychecks, taxes withheld and submitted to IRS and State. W-2's at the end of the year. Or, you have people working for you that would rather be a self-employed contractor, you will also need to keep accurate records of their income so that you will be able to submit the 1099 form to them for tax reporting. Note: I am not an Accountant nor a CPA of whom is able to give advice on this matter. If you decide to hire employees, do your research and due diligence with the proper people.

We are not advising you to avoid these things necessarily, but we are suggesting that you be very cautious before you do them and be sure that you know what you are getting into.

If you want to expand your business to teach disciplines such as PALS, Advanced Life Support, Wilderness First Aid, etc., and you have the business, reputation, and inclination to do so, then it might make sense to expand and potentially even consider becoming your own Training Center.

In summary, think long and hard, and analyze the facts and numbers realistically before taking the leap to renting space or hiring an employee or employees.

## **BONUS SECTION: Avoiding the Pitfalls of the CPR Training Business**

This section may be the most important and valuable information you will read in this e-book. The following are some costly and time-consuming mistakes to avoid like the plague! (Although plague has not been going around for quite a while, you get the point).

### **Pitfall # 1:**

#### **Renting a Space for Teaching before Your Business Can Support It**

Unless you have a lot of cash stockpiled, this is a sure-fire way to put a large amount of pressure on yourself, lose money and fail in your business. Rented space is a fixed monthly expense, and should ONLY be done when you are 100% sure that you have more than enough business coming in to pay the rent, along with all of the costs associated with a rental. Consult with a Real Estate Agent. In addition to those expenses you will want monies to provide you with a profit that you are comfortable with.

There is no reason to be just 'breaking even'. That is nothing but pain, working for free and defeats the whole aspect of being gainfully self-employed. The idea of having a 'storefront' to teach from is very appealing, but unless you are independently wealthy, and money is no object, I highly recommend avoiding that in the beginning, and possibly forever.

### **Pitfall # 2:**

#### **Not Taking the Proper Measures to Minimize Your Legal Liability**

Unfortunately, accidents happen, and so do lawsuits. There are many scenarios within the CPR training business that you need to be aware of to keep yourself from becoming a statistic of the civil and criminal lawsuits that abound in our society.

With the E-book Forms Pack, you will have a copy of the waiver, which I insist each and every student initial and sign before we begin every CPR class. I keep these waivers forever.

The waiver indicates that the student does not have some physical condition that will put them in danger while practicing the skills of CPR and that they will not hold you liable for any accident or injury or illness that results from taking the class.

You can either use our waiver form, or one you create. Ours is very short and simple, it has three terms that the student initials, and then they sign at the bottom. The liability waiver protects you, the instructor, from being the target of an unfair or frivolous lawsuit, by having the student agree that they are in good enough physical shape to assume the risks of the CPR training (doing compressions, getting on their knees, etc.), and that they will not hold you, the instructor liable, if some accident occurs that is not the result of negligence. You may choose to consult an attorney.

**Insider Tip #6: Even the best waiver will not likely protect you from your own negligence. If you have a vicious pit bull in your house that charges into the room where you are teaching students and bites one of the students, or you notice a student turning white and huffing and puffing while doing compressions on a manikin, you ignore the signs, and they go into cardiac arrest, you have been negligent and may be found so in a court of law.**

Following are a few other liability related issues to consider.

**Identifying Any Medical Issues for Every Student in Advance of Each Class and Either Accommodating or Excluding**

Before you book students for your classes and before you start each class, you need to ask if anybody is pregnant or has any limiting medical or physical condition which might endanger



them while doing the vigorous compressions and breaths and other skills that must be demonstrated for CPR certification.

If students do identify such conditions, it is up to you as a certified instructor, in accordance with your certifying bodies' guidelines, to responsibly either accommodate the condition, or to exclude the student from the training if the danger is too much or if they are completely incapable of doing the skills. Note that it is important to try to accommodate whenever reasonably possible. This might be a time when a "waiver" comes in handy.

### **Keeping Your Equipment, Your Training Area, Sterile, Sanitized Neat, Clean and Tidy**

To help with keeping and maintaining your equipment consistently clean and sterile, sanitized and in good working order, I recommend that you have a supply of items like hand sterilizing lotion, hand wipes, face shields and cleaning supplies around so they are visible to clients. Along with ensuring that your training areas are clean. All are an important part of minimizing your liability. Imagine if a student came to one of your classes, put his lips on a mouth breathing valve that you told him was sterile, and a couple days later came down with life-threatening pneumonia and decided that he caught it from your valve, which he decides 'looked dirty' and was not sterilized.

Imagine if, when you taught this class, the impression other students got of your operation was that things were not clean? Perhaps they observed that the manikins looked dirty, the training areas were messy, there was a cat hanging around the area, etc. Perhaps another student or two would testify on behalf of the first student that the training facility was unclean, and the next thing you know you are being sued for the student's medical expenses.

I am not describing this made-up scenario to disturb you, but to impress upon you what could happen if you do not run a good clean and sterile operation. In years of doing business, we have never had any problem with a student being injured during a class, or, of anyone making a comment in our evaluations that equipment seemed unclean, or that the training area was messy. The reason for this is because we are proactive to avoid these issues.

## **Examples of good hygienic behavior in this business are as follows:**

- A:** At the end of each class, while the students are filling out their evaluation forms, wipe the mannequins thoroughly down with either Clorox wipes, or Rubbing Alcohol and a Cloth.
- B.** Clean and sterilize masks and valves after each class; store in plastic bags.
- C.** Pull out and discard the replaceable lung bags at end of each class and place new ones in.
- D:** Offer hands wipes and hand sterilizing lotion to your students, and keep them handy.
- E:** Keep your cleaning materials handy.
- F:** Assure all students before the class that all equipment they will physically touch has been sterilized.

## **Pitfall # 3: Cutting Corners and or ‘Cheating’**

Unfortunately, some may be tempted to cut corners and cheat in this business. If you are that type of person, this business is not for you. In addition to the ethical issues, which should be obvious, there are also legal and business implications to this sort of behavior. Following are some of the behaviors that have gotten CPR trainers into trouble.

1. **Falsifying Records:** Falsifying any document can result in your training certification being rescinded, and possibly legal action against you.
2. **Not Teaching a Thorough Class:** Here is a scenario for you to consider. An instructor arranges for sixteen people to attend a CPR certification class for Healthcare Providers. The class is taught hastily and only takes an hour, even though the training organization recommends a much longer period of time for this class to be taught. Certification cards are handed out to everybody at the end of class, and many of the students, including several doctors, leave with the impression that important details were omitted.

Several months later, one of the attendees of the class, an Registered Nurse (R.N.), whom works in the Intensive Care Unit, is called upon to assist in performing CPR on a patient who has suffered cardiac arrest. The R.N. is grossly negligent in their administration of the CPR, and the patient dies. The Head Nurse requests the R.N. to show him/her CPR Certification card. An internal investigation is conducted, and it is determined from the testimony of numerous people who attended the CPR class that it was NOT taught within the sanctioned guidelines; in fact, it was not even close. There were far too many people in the class, and the class was way too short.

Do you think you, as the instructor, you could be held legally liable in such a situation? Quite possibly and not worth the risk to your business, nor, that of person that may die because of improper training. More importantly, do you think you might feel very bad knowing that somebody died because you were cutting corners? I sure hope so! The CPR 'business' is about SAVING LIVES! Cheating and Cutting Corners is not tolerated.

As you can see, the consequences of cutting corners are more than threatening to your business, they are literally life and death. Teach a good, thorough class (which still can be time efficient), and you will sleep well at night knowing that if one of your students ever acted with gross negligence administering CPR of First Aid, that it was not due to your own negligence.

#### **Pitfall # 4: Not Handing Out Business Cards and Asking for Referrals Consistently**

Over time, a large portion of your business should come from referrals. If you do not ask for referrals or tell people you are looking for new business, you are much less likely to get them. Do not be afraid to ask your students. Word of mouth can be one of your best ways to gain new business.

## **Pitfall # 5: Chasing Business That Doesn't Exist**

When I started in the CPR training business, I started contacting large hospitals and other large organizations, having no idea that many of these have their own in-house trainer.

Before you waste any time contacting a large organization, find out if they have an in-house trainer. Some of them will have in-house trainers, and no use for your service.

## **Pitfall # 6: Not Paying Attention to Feedback on Your Evaluation Forms**

Evaluation forms are not only a valuable tool for your Certifying Body, but they are also a valuable tool for you. If you are getting all “Fives” (Highest rating in each category), then keep up the great work. If you are receiving less than stellar feedback, then you need to consider why this is.

Like all businesses, this is a customer service business. If you get consistent comments such as “Instructor talked too fast”, make the adjustment and slow down your speech.

Additionally, you will likely be turning your evaluation forms into your Training Center, and they will be reading them. They will not be pleased if they are repeatedly reading negative feedback such as “Instructor was sloppy and unprepared.”

## **Pitfall # 7: Indulging Long-Winded Stories (Yours or Students)**

I do not care if you are a seasoned EMT or an Iraqi war veteran. Your class is unlikely to want to spend twenty minutes hearing about your own heroics and stories. This is a common mistake by many instructors, thinking that their students want to hear a lot of their stories. Do not get me wrong, it is fine to share with your class a short anecdote or two as it applies to a certain section of the course, but it is unwise to go on for a long period of time about your own experiences, as fascinating as they may be. Nor, allow a student to take over.

Do not overly indulge students who may want to repeatedly interrupt your class with their own stories of CPR or First Aid. Again, it's fine if somebody wants to share something with the class if it is a teachable moment and if the 'sharing' does not evolve into a fifteen-minute story or B.S. session. You are the teacher / instructor. Stay in charge and be the leader.

For every student in that class who might not mind hearing the story, there is likely another one looking at their watch and thinking about that appointment that they are now going to be late for later in the day. Keep your own, and the students' stories brief!

## **Pitfall # 8: Allowing a Disruptive Student to Ruin Your Class**

Occasionally you will get a disruptive student in one of your classes. Following are a few of the types you might encounter, and how to handle them.

### **The Know-It-All Student**

The Know-It-All Student will randomly interrupt the class with their own "teaching" of information. Some of which may or may not be accurate. It is your job to control this student and to be sure to correct any information they may have shared, if it is incorrect. There is nothing wrong with class participation, but it needs to be kept in check.

### **The Interrogator**

Questions are good and healthy during a CPR class – to a point. The scope of the class is limited, and if students are asking questions that are far out of the scope of the class, then they do not need to be answered, and there is a good chance you do not know the right answer anyway. There is nothing wrong with admitting if you do not know something that is outside the scope of the class, and there is also nothing wrong with asking a student to save 'fringe' type questions until you are ready to take them, which may be one-on-one after the class.

## **Pitfall # 9: Not Taking a Break (or Two) During Your Classes**

Have you ever sat in a four-hour class with no break? Ever felt your eyes getting heavy? It is wise to take a break or two during your classes. Depending on the circumstances, you probably want to allow a 5-10-minute break every 1.5 to 2 hours, unless all the members of your class are insistent on forging forward, and assuming you are up to the task as well. Overall, it's best for you as the instructor and your class to take at least one short break per class.

## **Pitfall # 10: Not Asking If the Facility Has A TV with DVD Player**

There is no sense lugging your combo TV/DVD player to a site only to find out that the client has a nice big screen that you could have used with a DVD Player. Ask first!

## **Pitfall # 11: Not Being Prepared to Teach Without the DVD**

What if your TV burns out just before a big class or you forget to bring it? Your training center will likely tolerate your proceeding to teach the class without the DVD in such a case, but you must know the material. Be ready, just in case!

## Preferred Training Centers:

### In California

Superior Life Support

[www.superiorlifesupport.com](http://www.superiorlifesupport.com)

661-607-0344

### Multi state training center

Always CPR Training Center

[www.alwayscpr.com](http://www.alwayscpr.com)

1-855-277-4339

## Training Center Software:

**www.Classbyte.com** is a web based training management software designed specifically for CPR instructors that makes everything you do streamlined. They are a few more dollars but helps make your job real easy. Make sure to use promo code **SLK1113**

## CONCLUSION

As you can see, this business is simple. I trust you will take this knowledge and apply it towards creating your own successful CPR business. I anticipate that you will use your own ingenuity and creativity to make your business even more successful than ours. I hope you have enjoyed reading this book as much as I did writing it. You now have all the tools and knowledge you need to successfully start and profitably operate your CPR Training Business. My goal in writing this book was to spare you the trial-and-error pain, wasted time, and wasted expense that I endured when we were learning the ropes in this business. I hope that I have succeeded. Wishing you much success! Scott Lehnkering

If you have any feedback or questions or new ideas that have worked for your business, I would love to hear from you. Please write to my email address: [Scott@aheroforlife.com](mailto:Scott@aheroforlife.com)