

You're It!

SEW

SHORT READ

**Your Way
to Home Business
Success Now & After
COVID-19**

**HOW TO DEAL WITH
COMPETITION**

Thanks, Competition - If You Can, I Can



Phyllis Smith

The \$100 Startup for Super-Hero Sewists



ALTERATIONS BY PHYLLIS
with
DANCING FABRICS

If you sew and sew well, you don't need to despair a lost job because you can grab just \$100 from somewhere and get going providing alterations and sewing services including fabric artistry that people are still seeking from the comfort of your home.

The time is now. Get going!

**Home Sewing Business
Success *During & After*
COVID-19**

Created by Phyllis Smith
Stillwater, MN, USA

<http://www.alterationsbyphyllis.com/video-tutorials>

**The 7 Steps To PREVAILING Alongside The
Competition In A Home-Based
Sewing & Alterations Business**

Imagine that you're sitting in your dedicated sewing room just a year from now surveying all that you've created with great satisfaction.

In one corner of the room is your attractive, eclectic and maybe even quirky collection of sewing machines and tools that customers admire.

Across one of the walls you display your emerging brand of women's designer clothing line consisting of pullover hoodie, leggings, tank or tee, flared skirt short dress for over leggings and skort/shorts. Just 5 hot items that clients can't leave without.

And what's a wardrobe without its designer handbag that you've acquired the perfect machine to stitch up and clients go gaga over.

Folded neatly on display in another area is your emerging brand of children's clothing, baby layettes, adorable toys, simple and irresistible designs.

Available on shelves are DIY kits of various types – hand embroidery, beginner sewing for kids, fabric painting, fabric marker coloring, cut and sew – you conjure it, you create it!

Unforgotten are other fab items you've created that perhaps are not fabric artistry yet are complementary such as paper creations, bead art, ceramics – honestly, don't let me overwhelm you with YOUR.OWN.TALENT.

How can you achieve your new REAL normal?

Let me show you.

ALTERATIONS BY PHYLLIS with DANCING FABRICS

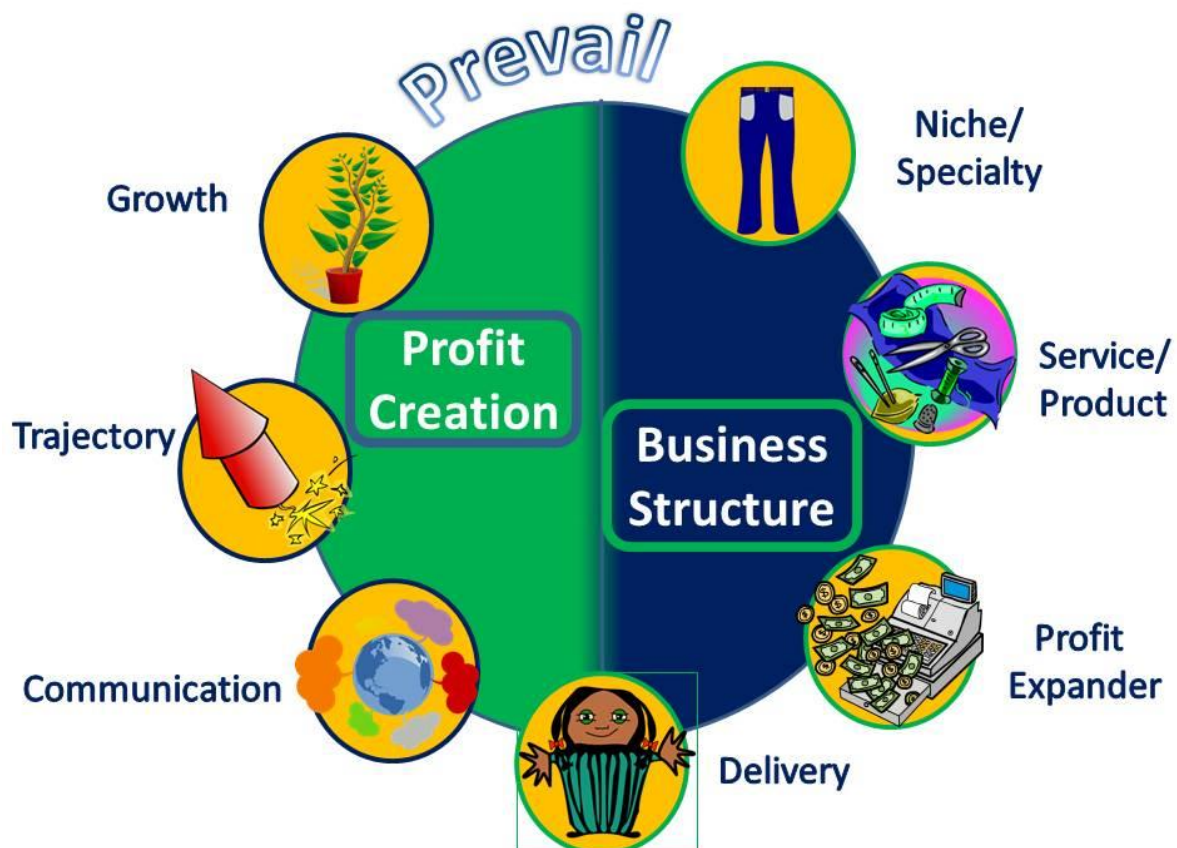
All about running your own alterations & sewing business from home!

Created by Phyllis Smith - Alterations by Phyllis with Dancing Fabrics - Stillwater, MN, USA

<http://www.alterationsbyphyllis.com/video-tutorials>

**Are You Ready To Explore How To Prevail Alongside Competition?
This Section Is For New As Well As For Existing Sewing Business
Specialists **Specifically During and Post COVID-19** – because your
intent is to **DIVERSIFY****

Here's a system diagram I've created that illustrates the steps to rapidly start and grow your own home-based alterations and sewing business.



STEP 1: NICHE(S)



Find Your Perfect Niche(s). Have fun imagining all sorts of specialties, and then the one(s) that makes you feel the best, as in a joyful heart, at least to begin with – well, now you’ve arrived at your first important decision!

You can make money in any niche: Whether it’s curtains, bed coverings (I get requests for duvet covers) that marry beautifully with quilting, product prototyping, all-things-denim, everything-suits and business attire, sky’s-the-limit bridal/formal wear plus bridal accessories/bridal party gifts, pants only including hems-waists-leg tapering, T-shirt adjustments that partner with your silk screening artistry, custom sewing with custom fabrics that you design utilizing on-demand fabric printing like Spoonflower, baby – oh baby! – items and list your own designs on a crafting platform like Etsy, wardrobe consultation including redesign of existing garments and creation of custom garments, bulk mending to include buttons-rips-general maintenance. You get the idea. Brainstorm. No idea is too silly. You can practical-ize (like that coined word?) any ideas later.

Then round out your brainstorming with these considerations: Again – what do you enjoy sewing and altering best? What task are you the most capable at accomplishing? What is the service your friends and family are always approaching you about?

This is how you arrive at the answer to your niche/specialty.

If your thoughts divert to worrying about competition in any of your ideas – stop worrying. Competition is good. Good-good-good. While alterations specialists are becoming fewer in number, the

demand is still great, and I believe there would be less instance of “disposable inexpensive clothing” societal outlook if there were more younger generation specialists coming onto the scene.

STEP 2: SERVICE/PRODUCT



It's alive! Your service or product lives here. This is the time to be proud of what you have to offer. Be so very proud and grin from ear to ear. Your clients can hardly wait to find you. Your clients can hardly believe they've found you once they do. You will make every effort to reach out to potential clients, yet believe me, they will find you and they're the ones who will explode your outreach by word of mouth. Don't hesitate to start with the friends and relatives you've already been serving and tell them exactly what it is you need from them – share on social media, make a home video about the results you lavished upon them, mention at church, work, events, if they have a blog of their own ask them to feature you. Ask for what you want. Never assume people know what they should be doing for you after all these years. Ask and you will receive, they'll be thrilled to reciprocate all your free service. Especially ask this favor of those whom you won't ever charge, those who are closest to you, and they, too, will be thrilled to help you. But you must ask. This is a great exercise in asking for help.

Still, having said all that to stimulate your thoughts about self-confidence, the common objections I hear from people, “I don't want to be responsible for other people's stuff,” “I'm afraid I'll mess up on somebody's clothes,” “I'm not that good,” “what if I get really stuck, where would I turn?”

The answer is you set up easy safety nets for what to do in the event of messing up or getting stuck. As far as not wanting to be responsible or feeling not good enough, those are issues with underlying emotions to examine and resolve to the point where you can do this and experience the joy of your clients' wonderment that you possess this mystery of a skill, and your mastery of it.

Those safety nets are outlined in one of your program eBooks, *"How To Run A Successful Alterations Business From Home."*

With your safety nets in mind, here are the 5 steps needed to create your valuable service:

1. Research the niche you decided you would love to do above. For instance, if you love the all-things-denim idea, but you already know Franny, the seamstress at the dry cleaners, is very good with jeans issues – be glad not sad – make certain you are as good technically as you believe she is and then be proud of the personalized service a home-based business can offer over the dry cleaners, and it is up to you to discover the potential for ***prevailing!***
2. Which leads us to discovering your unique angle. It's there within you. Dig deep. Otherwise the answer may be right at the surface. Grab it. For instance, let's say your prices are going to be higher than the local competing dry cleaners – can you offer bonuses, whether little handmade items, coffee and scones, do giveaways, coupon codes. The answer is within! So is your best price list. Make your prices as high as is

comfortable, having done your research of the local competition, and then stick with that price list proudly; you can always offer discounts and those coupon codes mentioned.

3. Decide! Then get going. Further down the road, be willing and proud to change your mind. You are not tied to your niche specialty; really, the idea is to expand as is comfortable for you.
4. A service/product outline will serve you well. Imagine you're the client, or get someone to act out a client role with you from the time s/he enters your front door to the time of departure. This should cover initial phone call, greeting, explanation of what will happen, discovering the task at hand (which can be far different than the client described), expectations (including your policies), due dates, payment policies, and most importantly a friendly assurance upon departure that you are their solution so that they feel like they've made the best possible decision by coming to you. And they have!
5. Appoint responsibilities and create a timeline. Naturally you'll be doing a great deal of the responsibilities yourself, however, a simple website may be outsourced, for example.

STEP 3: PROFIT EXPANDER



Many times, one garment problem leads to others in the same garment – that the client isn't aware of. For instance: Pants too long? Great, hem them up AFTER you take in that massively loose waist! Or, bridesmaid dress too long? Great, hem it up AFTER taking in the bodice and straps a smidge (which may solve the hem problem) and now your client absolutely loves you and throws the rehearsal dinner dress and ITS problems into the mix! How about this one: Suitcoat too big? Great, the pants probably are, too. Or, need another lint roller? Try this – would you like me to create a custom garment/travel bag for you? Is your newly crafted duvet cover lonesome for a pillow sham?

When clients are so pleased they mention wanting to bring in other stuff soon, devise a friendly email/phone call follow-up reminder system. That means gathering email addresses besides phone numbers. An email list proves valuable as time marches on.

This is how you expand profit. Always (honestly) identify as many problems/potentials with a service/product as possible for the client. This results in a very satisfied customer who feels like you really invested in perfect fit/best outcome of all aspects of the service you offer.

STEP 4: DELIVERY



Now that everything about your product and service and how you will bring it to the world is in place, it's time to actually do it, actually be this technical artist you've been training for all your life! You will get your first phone call in short order, and it will be thrilling to watch your first customer come in the door! Go and create the career lifestyle of your dreams! Trust that the right customers will come to you...because remember, you won't get them all...and thankfully, that's the way it should be. You'll see!

STEP 5: COMMUNICATION



There are 3 very important communication points in your experience with clients.

1. Initial phone/email inquiry.

You will become so adept at handling initial phone and email inquiries that you will hardly recognize yourself. You will learn what to do when callers are just fishing, are insincere, are scattered, rude, undecided, irresponsible, wishing, decided, determined, eager, understanding, compliant, humorous, lovable – you name the personality, and you will hear from it either over the phone or in email.

During that all-important initial inquiry, you will learn to reel them in like a trophy fish on the line AND you'll learn how to get them off the line and throw them back without regret.

Always allow a caller several seconds to state the problem, and then I encourage you to take control and direct the call when people aren't succinct or clear. People don't know how to describe their problems fully or accurately. You will draw them out and largely they'll be so relieved that you understand that you'll get the appointment and they'll show up for it.

2. In-person consultation.

When a client arrives, you must – and I emphasize – must be in charge. Handle reserved people gently but firmly; handle overbearing personalities pleasantly but firmly; adjust your handling to the personality types you'll learn to quickly assess and *be in charge*. For example, when a new client shows up without the half payment down that is your policy, firmly but kindly state that that is okay, you'll start the job when you receive half payment. Believe me, compliance will be forthcoming. Some personalities perceive a home business as a less serious endeavor than a storefront; whether they are aware of that perception or not is not as important as your awareness of presenting behavior that gives away that perception.

When you are in charge, everybody ends up appreciating it. For instance, when clients try to tell you how to sew it, again you will learn to patiently hear them out, then clearly and simply state how you will actually sew it if it differs from their idea, and that they can choose to leave the job with you or take it elsewhere. You do not have to explain every technical detail to clients. I'll tell you why. Once in a great while someone will come along to my shop who is

fishing for how to do it herself/himself. Give away too much about the process and you'll lose the job, and maybe you want them to get lost if that's what they're doing. Rather, leave it enough of a mystery or mildly confront them that you're happy to consult with them about how they can do it themselves but that, of course, there is a charge for that.

One last example for now: When a client states emotionally that your charge is more than the purchase price of the garment, there is an effective response I've concocted to help the client see that one price has nothing to do with the other price. Simply state, "Clever you! Getting this item on sale means you're better able to afford the alterations. Good for you!" While it may sound a bit patronizing, this statement usually shifts the client away from subjective reasoning to more objective reasoning.

3. Service/product completion.

Again, emphatically I stress to you – be in charge. Put on your boldest, liveliest, most assured self and you'll be irresistible and people less likely to take advantage of you. Most people throw on the garment, are so thrilled with the not better but BEST fit and will toss the money at you and leave all smiles. As you close the door behind you, you're going to realize you just love this well-built business of yours!

STEP 6: TRAJECTORY



Will loads of business come your way from the get-go? You better hope not. What I mean by that is, *steady as she goes*. You'll be eager, guaranteed. Yet the rate at which the experience opens up for you I can guarantee will be the best it is supposed to be. Trust the Universe – it's cheering for you. Destiny is trying to provide you as stress-free an experience as possible. Allow this wonderful thing you've created to find its way. Learn to go with the ebb and flow because depending on where you live there may be slow and crush times of the year. When it's slow is when you use your positivity and creative energy towards other endeavors because, for most of you, the idea is to be sewing/creating in other ways that are bringing you streams of income as well.

STEP 7: GROWTH



As this wonderful thing you've created finds its way, something will happen. You'll acquire true fans and followers! Imagine that! Fans who will despair if you go on vacation. Or if you move. Followers who will bring you oodles of their clothing. These people will tell their people who will become your people. You may not always remember all of these people, but they remember you and don't mind when you need your memory refreshed when they call for an appointment.

It's a great feeling to be needed. It's great to be preferred over someone else's competitive service/product. Yes, sometimes you will be whimsically dropped by a client. Let them go and simply acquire others.

If you keep an email list and promote stuff to it, or if you maintain a blog or vlog, expect to gather more converts to your proven successful method of performing sewing wizardry on their clothing *while* uplifting their spirits. People may not even be aware of why they keep coming to you, but they do because you make them feel so good – about *themselves*. That brings you vertical and horizontal expansion. Do you begin to see the value of such a service, your service? I hope so.

Remember, all this will not happen overnight, but you'll get lots of early tastes of success while you commit to your:

1. Customer base.
2. Customer relationships.
3. Self-confidence.
4. Pride of workmanship.
5. Sales.
6. Profits.

BUT WAIT – THERE’S MORE!

Be glad – be thankful – for competition that proves your ideas are valid and profitable.

But how do you actually become a leader ahead of the competition?

D I V E R S I F Y

Here’s how.

Naturally, you’re going to offer alterations as your bread and butter service, at least at first, and if you want to graduate from that service because of established clientele clamoring for your fabric artistry, then feel free.

Also as regards alterations, you could set up a drop box for dropping off and picking up, which is very appealing to a lot of people in this COVID world. The *Remote Client Home Sewing Ideas* section covers that subject in more detail.

Now - how about diversifying in some or all of the following:

Design an easy line of clothing including online home pop-up shops doing Facebook live shopping including alterations of that clothing. See these YouTube channels: Coolirpa, With Wendy, Rosery. Start with these and don’t stop there!

Sew designer bags. See these YouTube channels: Lauren Mormino, Easy to Sew. Start with these two and explore the multitude of others.

Offer designer face masks and other health-related products.

Trick out an RV and go mobile to regularly scheduled parking lot alterations and pop-up shop events.

Do business hub contract alterations pick up and drop off.

Do neighborhood contract alterations pick up and drop off.

Become the adjunct or main alterations specialist for dry cleaners – you pick up and drop off alterations completed at your home.

Get involved in promotional products contract sewing. Reach out to companies and inquire what promotional items you can sew in bulk for their trade shows, etc.

Sew for local designers and their clothing or product lines.

Sew wholesale to local boutiques. Check out Indie Retail Academy online – this retailer’s sense of humor can’t be beat!

Better yet – run your own online boutique on your own website utilizing Facebook Live or go live on YouTube.

Offer virtual sewing classes from home for groups or one-to-one. Or do community ed classes. Think how the world has gone wild about home gardening – isn’t it time folks got more self-sufficient around sewing? You’re the one, darling!

Fill your studio with fab items for online Christmas in July and December boutiques.

Make your home really work for you providing what people want.

Again, be glad – be thankful – for competition that proves your basic ideas about offering alterations services are valid and profitable, then explore other ideas and add them in. Who knew a little home-based sewing and alterations business could become in such demand for services and product lines!

CONCLUSION

My goal is to teach you about a life-enriching potential within reach because of the skill set you already possess. Are you going to keep your sewing talent all to yourself or are you going to share it and become sought after and paid your worth? Are you going to advocate against the disposable clothing lifestyle the western world has adopted and show it a better way of creative solutions to existing wardrobes? Have you ever thought about a stitchery legacy? While this section leans toward the subject of alterations as your bread and butter service - at least to start with - keep the diagram above in mind for all your diversification plans.

I did it. So can you!

Take a look in the mirror, the one your potential customers would stand in front of. Who do you see? You may be looking at the type of person who is able to really run with a home-based alterations and sewing business. If this report has left you buzzing with ideas and on fire with a passion to investigate the subject further, then I have done my job to inspire you to assess your situation and then spring into action -- because you are needed.

Once you've done the homework on the demand for alterations in your area, it will become easier to figure all this out for your custom

handbag line, or your designer line of clothing, or your DIY kits, your patterns and tutorials, home décor, not to mention other non-fabric artistry talents you may be able to capitalize upon.

Make your home really work for you by creating depth and breadth to your service and product offerings and a place that feels like a stress escape to your customers.

Setting up this simple business of getting started with just alterations is fairly easy. Developing the rest will take time. But, oh, the rewards! You just wait and see.

Meanwhile, it may make sense then to visit my Amazon [author page](#) and investigate the following subject matter to round out your clever business:

Or visit my website for an even better short reads deal [here](#).

Skills Assessment – Do You Have What It Takes?

14 Essential Business Setup Tasks, Step-by-Step, In Exact Order

How Much Money Can I Expect To Make?

How To Prevail Alongside Competition

How To Write A One-Page Easy Business Plan

How To Deal with Invoicing, Bookkeeping & Taxes

Tools of the Trade

How To Write Store Policies To Save Your Butt

Don't Want People In Your House? Loads of Alternatives, Darling!