

PROFITEDGE SELF-CHECK · LOSS PREVENTION

Small-Office Controls Self-Check

Controls are not a judgment about anyone. They are a judgment about whether one person could move money and hide it. Use this to find the gaps and close the most dangerous ones first.

WHO IT IS FOR

Owners and office managers of businesses where two or three people handle all of the money.

HOW TO USE IT

Answer as the office runs now, on a busy week. Write real names, not job titles.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Any line where the same name appears twice is a place an error and a theft would look the same.

1 Who does what on a payment

Write the name of the person who actually does each step.

STEP	WHO DOES IT NOW	SAME PERSON AS ANOTHER STEP?
Approve a new vendor		☐
Enter the bill		☐
Prepare the payment		☐
Release the payment		☐
Open and review the bank statement		☐
Take customer deposits		☐
Reconcile customer deposits		☐

2 The five control activities

Each covers a gap the others leave open.

ACTIVITY	YES	PARTLY	NO
Separating duties — no one person controls a transaction end to end	☐	☐	☐
Authorization — transactions are approved by someone with the authority to approve them	☐	☐	☐
Reconciliation — records are checked independently against the bank, the vendor or the shelf	☐	☐	☐
Safeguarding — cash, inventory, parts and units are physically protected and periodically counted	☐	☐	☐
Access — system and physical access match each person's role, and no more	☐	☐	☐

The most dangerous combination is anyone who can both approve a transaction and record it. Circle any name above that does both. That is where to start.

3 First fixes for a two-person office

Owner review stands in where staff cannot be separated.

ITEM	OWNER	DONE
The owner releases payments above a set amount. Amount: _____	_____	☐
The owner opens and reviews the bank statement first, before it reaches the bookkeeper	_____	☐
The owner approves every new vendor before the first payment	_____	☐
Someone other than the person taking deposits reconciles them	_____	☐
A written list of who can approve what, and up to what amount	_____	☐
Preparing a payment and releasing it are done by two different people	_____	☐

4 Login review

List every login to the business system. Remove anyone who no longer works there, and any shared accounts.

LOGIN NAME	PERSON	STILL WORKS HERE?	ACCESS MATCHES ROLE?	ACTION

5 Keep it real

A control that gets skipped is not a control.

- ☐ Reconciliations done on schedule
- ☐ Second approvals genuine, not a formality
- ☐ Approval list matches who actually approves
- ☐ Access reviewed when roles change
- ☐ Cash and high-value items counted against records
- ☐ Next review date set: _____

Start with the conversation, not the paperwork. The message is not “we suspect you.” It is “we are protecting the business, and protecting you if anything ever goes wrong.”

Controls protect the trusted employee as much as they protect the business.

WANT A SECOND SET OF EYES?
Start a conversation at profitedgesystems.com about setting up controls that fit a small office.