

The business leader's guide to financial protection





Contents

3 Foreword

4 Introduction

The Real Obstacles
What's Really at Stake
How This Guide Will Help

10 The 5 essential types of cover for business leaders

1. Relevant Life Insurance for Company Directors
2. Executive Income Protection for Company Directors
3. Key Person Insurance
4. Business Health Insurance
5. Death in Service Insurance

12 5-minute risk assessment: where Do you stand?

14 How do you know if you're protected? 5 mistakes to avoid

16 What proper protection actually looks like

18 Your next steps

26 Our simple 3-step process

27 Common concerns addressed

28 Why act now?



James Stait
Founder, BritishLife

Foreword

Every successful business leader knows they should have proper protection in place. The problem isn't understanding the importance – it's navigating the minefield of confusing options, aggressive sales tactics, and policies written to obscure rather than clarify.

Meanwhile, financial protection sits on your to-do list, drifting further away every month. That nagging voice asks: "What happens to everything I've built if something goes wrong?"

That's why I founded British Life. We understand the importance of protecting your finances from the disruptions life can throw at you, and we're dedicated to helping you secure protection that covers what matters most to you.

This guide gives you the knowledge to make informed decisions about protecting your business, income, and family. Whether you ultimately work with us or someone else, I hope it helps you understand the right questions to ask and the answers to expect.

Financial protection shouldn't be left to chance when you've worked this hard to build something valuable. I hope this helps you find the cover you need.



Introduction

If you're reading this guide, there's a good chance 'financial protection' has been sitting on your to-do list for longer than you'd care to admit.

You're not alone.

We work with hundreds of business leaders every year, and almost all of them tell us the same story: they know they should have proper protection in place, but somehow it never quite happens.

Why is that?

It's not because they don't understand the stakes. You know exactly what could be at risk (your business, your income, your family's financial security, your employees' livelihoods). The problem is that getting proper protection feels like navigating a minefield.



The real obstacles

The financial protection industry has a problem. Instead of making it easy for you to understand your options and make informed decisions, it often does the opposite:

Confusing jargon makes simple concepts sound complicated. Terms like “decreasing term assurance” and “relevant life policies” are thrown around without explanation, leaving you uncertain about what you’re actually buying.

Aggressive sales tactics from commission-driven salespeople who are more interested in hitting their targets than finding the right solution for your situation. You end up feeling pressured rather than supported.

One-size-fits-all approaches that ignore the fact that every business and every family situation is different. What works for a tech startup won’t necessarily work for a manufacturing company or a professional services firm.

Hidden gaps and exclusions that you only discover when you need to make a claim. The policy that seemed comprehensive suddenly has limitations you never knew existed.

No wonder so many successful business leaders get stuck. You’re used to making tough decisions with confidence, but when it comes to financial protection, you’re left feeling uncertain and exposed.



What's really at stake

If you die or can't work due to illness or injury, how long could your business and your family maintain their current lifestyle? Most people overestimate how long their savings would last and underestimate how quickly expenses can mount up.

If something happened to you, would your business survive? Could your family keep their home? Would your employees still have jobs? These aren't comfortable questions, but they're necessary ones.

If a key member of your team became unable to work anymore or indeed dies, how would that affect your ability to serve clients, meet commitments, and generate revenue?

The emotional toll is just as significant as the financial impact. The worry, the sleepless nights, the constant nagging feeling that you should be doing something about this – but not knowing where to start or who to trust.

How this guide will help

This guide cuts through the confusion and gives you the knowledge you need to make informed decisions about protecting your business, income, family, and employees.

You'll discover the five essential types of protection that every business leader should understand – explained in plain English, not industry jargon:

- **Life Insurance** – protecting your family's financial future
- **Income Protection** – maintaining your income when you can't work
- **Key Person Insurance** – safeguarding your business when it depends on specific people
- **Business Health Insurance** – keeping your team healthy and productive
- **Death in Service Insurance** – providing security for your employees and their families.

You'll learn how to assess your current situation with our simple 5-minute risk assessment, so you can identify where you're well-covered and where gaps might exist.

Most importantly, you'll understand how to avoid the common mistakes that leave smart business people under-protected, and what proper protection actually looks like in practice.

By the time you finish reading, you'll have the confidence to ask the right questions and understand the answers – whether you ultimately work with us or choose to go elsewhere.

Because financial protection shouldn't be left to chance when you've worked this hard to build something valuable. This guide will help ensure it isn't.





The 5 essential types of cover for business leaders

Securing the right financial protection doesn't mean buying every policy available. It means understanding which types of cover are most relevant to your situation and ensuring you have the right level of protection where it matters most.

Here are the five essential types of cover every business leader should understand:

Why is that?

It's not because they don't understand the stakes. You know exactly what could be at risk (your business, your income, your family's financial security, your employees' livelihoods). The problem is that getting proper protection feels like navigating a minefield.



1 Relevant life insurance for company directors

What it actually does

Provides a lump sum payment to your beneficiaries when you die. This money can be used to pay off debts, maintain your family's lifestyle, or provide financial security for those you leave behind.

Who typically needs it

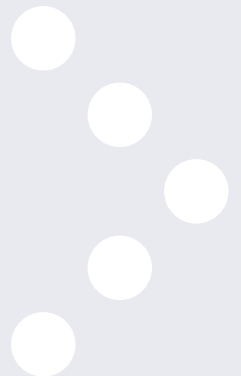
Anyone with financial dependents (or more accurately: the dependents themselves). Family members who rely on your income, business partners who would struggle without your contribution, or employees whose jobs depend on your business continuing.

What happens if you don't have it

Your family may struggle to maintain their current lifestyle, pay the mortgage, or cover everyday expenses. Business debts could become personal liabilities for your surviving partners or family members.

Key things to watch out for

Make sure the cover amount reflects your current financial obligations, not what they were when you first took out the policy. Consider whether you need cover that decreases over time (as your mortgage reduces) or stays level. Understand the difference between policies written in trust (which avoid inheritance tax) and those that aren't. If you're unsure of the difference, we're here to help.





2 Executive income protection for company directors

What it actually does

Replaces up to 80% of income (including typical dividends as well as salary) if you're unable to work due to illness or injury. Payments usually continue until you can return to work, reach retirement age, or the policy term ends.

Who typically needs it

Anyone whose lifestyle depends on their ability to earn. Particularly self-employed business owners and company directors who don't have the safety net of statutory sick pay or employer benefits.

What happens if you don't have it

You'll need to rely on savings to maintain your lifestyle, which can run out faster than you expect. Business expenses continue even when income stops, creating a double financial pressure.

Key things to watch out for

The definition of "unable to work" varies significantly between policies. Some only pay if you can't do any job, others pay if you can't do your specific occupation. Waiting periods before payments start typically range from 4 weeks to a years - (longer waits mean lower premiums but less protection). Check whether the policy covers partial incapacity or just total inability to work.

3 Key person insurance

What it actually does

Provides a lump sum to your business if a key employee (often you, as the business owner) dies or becomes unable to work. The money can be used to recruit and train replacements, cover lost profits, or repay business loans.

Who typically needs it

Any business that would struggle financially if specific individuals couldn't work. This includes businesses where particular people have specialised skills, key client relationships, or are essential to daily operations.

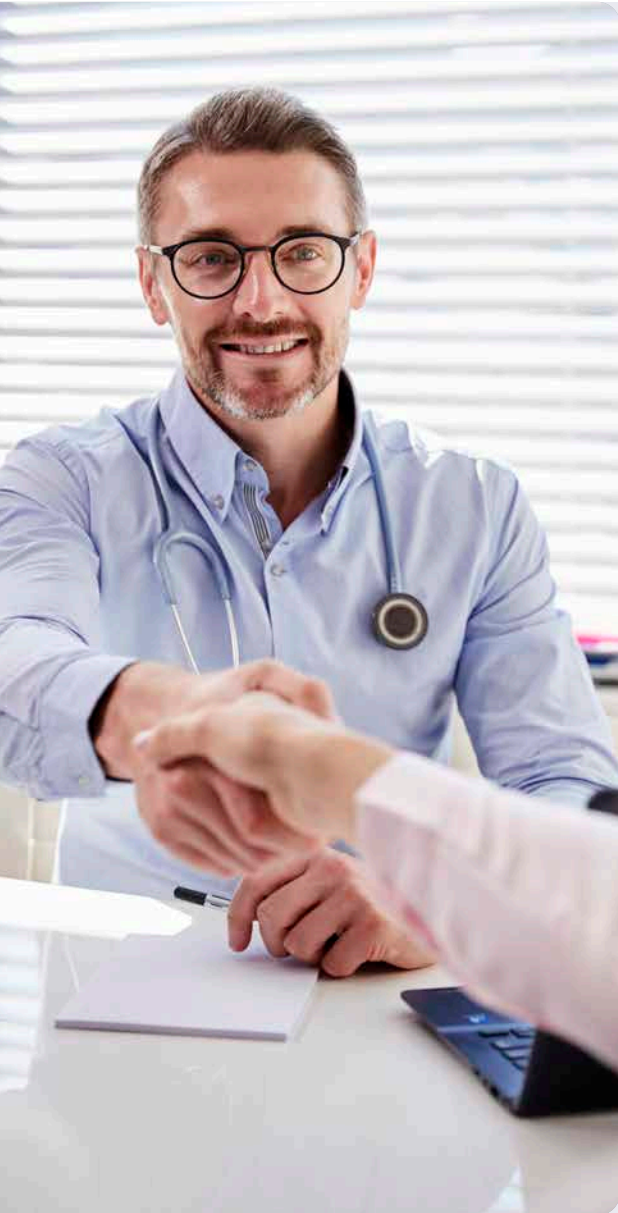
What happens if you don't have it

The business may struggle to maintain revenue, meet loan repayments, or continue operating normally. In worst-case scenarios, the business could fail entirely, affecting all employees and their families.

Key things to watch out for

The cover amount should reflect the actual financial impact of losing that person, not just their salary. Consider both immediate costs (recruitment, training) and longer-term revenue loss. Some policies only cover death, others include long-term illness. Make sure you have the right type for your needs.





4 Business health insurance

What it actually does

Provides private medical insurance for you and potentially your employees, giving faster access to treatment and helping people return to work sooner after illness or injury.

Who typically needs it

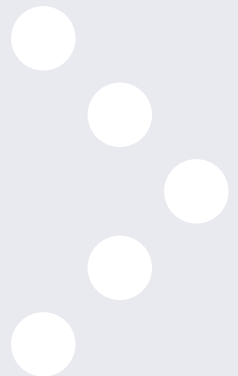
Business owners who want to minimise time away from work due to health issues, and/or companies that want to offer valuable benefits to attract and retain good employees.

What happens if you don't have it

You'll rely on NHS waiting times for non-emergency treatment, which could mean extended periods away from work. Key employees may leave for companies that offer better benefits packages.

Key things to watch out for

Understand what's covered and what isn't. Some policies exclude pre-existing conditions or have waiting periods. Consider whether you want cover just for acute conditions or also for ongoing health management. Check if mental health support is included, as this is increasingly important for workforce wellbeing. Unlike Group Life Insurance, Group Private Health Cover is treated as a benefit-in-kind.



5 Death in service insurance

What it actually does

Provides a tax-free lump sum to an employee's family if they die while working for your company. It's typically a multiple of their annual salary (commonly 2-4 times) and is paid-for by the business.

Who typically needs it

Companies that want to provide valuable benefits to employees and their families, particularly where employees might not have adequate life insurance of their own.

What happens if you don't have it

Employee families have no financial protection beyond any personal life insurance the employee may have arranged. This can make it harder to attract and retain good people, especially those with families to support.

Key things to watch out for

The benefit is usually tax-free to the employee's family, but there may be corporation tax implications for the business. Consider whether to offer the same multiple of salary to all employees or vary it by seniority. Some schemes include additional benefits like counselling support for bereaved families.





Making sense of your options

These five types of protection work together to create a comprehensive safety net for you, your business, and the people who depend on both. You don't necessarily need all five, but understanding what each one does helps you identify where your biggest vulnerabilities lie.

The key is to match your protection to your specific situation rather than trying to buy everything available. A tech startup with young employees might prioritise business health insurance and key person cover, while an established manufacturing business might focus more on income protection and death in service benefits.

- **In the next section,** we'll help you assess where you currently stand and identify which areas might need attention.
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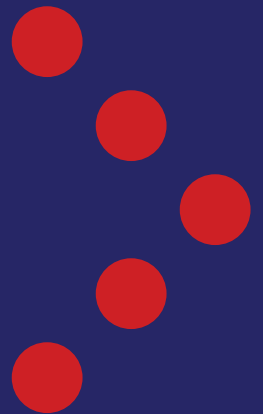


5-minute risk assessment: Where do you stand?

Now that you understand the **five essential types of protection**, it's time to assess your current situation. This quick assessment will help you identify where you're well-covered and where gaps might exist.

Answer each question honestly with a simple **Yes, No** or '**I don't know**'.

Don't overthink it – *your first instinct is usually correct.*





Your protection assessment

1 Your existing cover

Do you currently have protection in place that would provide financial support if you died or couldn't work due to serious illness or accident?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ I don't know

2 What is covered?

Does your existing protection cover all the areas that matter to you: your family's financial security, your business continuity, and your employees' welfare?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ I don't know

3 Timeframes

Would your current protection provide enough money to cover your mortgage and replace your income until your youngest child reaches 21 or your partner reaches retirement age?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ I don't know

4 Your health

Are you confident that any health issues you've had wouldn't prevent you from getting the protection you need or make it prohibitively expensive?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ I don't know

5 Working with an adviser

Have you worked with an independent financial protection adviser to ensure you have the right cover for your specific situation?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ I don't know

6 Business survival

If you couldn't work for six months, would your business be able to continue operating and meet all its financial obligations?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ I don't know

7 Key person dependencies

If your most important employee (other than yourself) couldn't work tomorrow, do you have insurance to cover the financial impact on your business?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ I don't know

8

Employee benefits

Do you provide meaningful protection benefits (like health insurance or death in service cover) that help attract and retain good employees?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ I don't know

9

Recent review

Have you reviewed your protection needs in the last two years to ensure they still match your current financial situation (and you're paying the right amount)?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ I don't know

10

Policy understanding

Do you clearly understand what each of your current policies covers and, more importantly, what they exclude or don't cover?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ I don't know

Your results

Count up your “**Yes**” answers:

Mostly “Yes” answers
(7+ Yes):

Well-prepared

You're in a strong position with most key areas addressed. You likely have comprehensive protection in place and stay on top of your financial planning. **Areas to focus on:**

- Fine-tuning your existing coverage to ensure it's still adequate
- Making sure all your protection works together effectively
- Checking you're getting good value from your current arrangements

Your next step

A brief review with an expert could help you optimise what you have and fill any remaining small gaps.

Mixed answers
(4-6 Yes, or several “I don't know”):
Needs clarity

You've made some progress but either have significant gaps or aren't certain about what you currently have in place. This is actually the most common situation for business leaders.

Your priorities:

- Getting clarity on what protection you currently have and what it actually covers
- Understanding where the biggest risks lie in your situation
- Creating a clear plan to address the gaps systematically

Your next step

A structured review would help you understand your current position and create a roadmap for improving your protection.



Your results continued

Mostly “No” or “I don’t know” answers:
(4-6 Yes, or several “I don’t know”):

Needs immediate attention

You either have significant gaps in your protection or aren’t sure what you have in place – both put you at risk. Don’t feel overwhelmed – this is entirely fixable, and you don’t need to solve everything at once. **Focus on:**

- Getting clarity on your current situation first
- Understanding what basic protection you need most urgently
- Taking one step at a time to build comprehensive protection

Your next step

Start with a conversation to understand your situation and options. We can help you get clarity on where you stand and what your priorities should be.

Want to discuss your results?

If you’d like to explore your results in more detail, we offer a no-obligation consultation where we can:

- Review your specific answers and what they mean for your situation
- Help you prioritize which areas to address first
- Explain how different types of protection work together
- Provide quotes for any areas where you need additional cover



Ready to take the next step?

Email your completed assessment to info@britishlife.co.uk or call us on **0333 987 3960** to discuss your results with one of our FCA-authorised advisers.

There’s no obligation to buy anything – we’re simply here to help you understand your options and make informed decisions.

How do you know if you're protected?

5 mistakes to avoid



Too many business leaders think they're covered, only to discover crucial gaps when it's too late. Here's how to tell the difference between proper protection and the common mistakes that leave you exposed.

The most common protection mistakes

1 Mistake 1: Waiting for the "right time"

What it looks like

Putting off protection decisions because you're too busy, waiting until you have more time to research properly, or thinking you'll sort it out 'next year' when things are less hectic.

Why it's dangerous

Time is the one thing you can't get back. Health changes, circumstances change, and the protection you can get today might not be available tomorrow at the same price (or at all).

The reality

There's never a perfect time, but there's always a right time to get basic protection in place.



2 Mistake 2: Buying on price alone

What it looks like

Choosing the cheapest premium without understanding what you're actually buying, or cutting cover to save money without considering the consequences.

Why it's dangerous

The cheapest policy is often the most expensive when you need to claim. Lower premiums usually mean more exclusions, longer waiting periods, or definitions that make claims harder.

The reality

Protection is one area where you truly get what you pay for. The goal is the best value, not the lowest price.

3 Mistake 3: Not understanding what you're covered for

What it looks like

Having policies but not knowing exactly what they cover, assuming all similar policies are the same, or not reading the small print about exclusions and limitations.

Why it's dangerous

Discovering your policy won't pay out when you need it most is devastating. Many claims are rejected because people didn't understand what they were buying.

The reality

If you can't explain what your policy covers in simple terms, you probably don't understand it well enough.

4 Mistake 4: Leaving gaps between policies

What it looks like

Having some life insurance but no income protection, covering your mortgage but not your family's ongoing expenses, or protecting yourself but not considering key employees.

Why it's dangerous

Gaps in coverage can be just as costly as having no coverage at all. One uncovered area can undermine your entire financial security.

The reality

Protection works best when it's comprehensive and coordinated, not piecemeal.

5 Mistake 5: Never reviewing your coverage

What it looks like

Taking out policies years ago and never checking if they still meet your needs, not updating beneficiaries after major life changes, or assuming that having “some” protection means you’re sorted.

Why it’s dangerous

Your life and financial obligations change over time. Protection that was adequate five years ago might leave you seriously under-covered today.

The reality

Protection needs regular health checks, just like your business finances.





What proper protection actually looks like

You have clarity and confidence

What this means

You understand exactly what each of your policies covers, how much they would pay out, and in what circumstances. You can explain your protection to your family or business partners in simple terms.

How it feels

Instead of that nagging worry about “what if,” you have genuine peace of mind. You know that if something happened, your family and business would be financially secure.

The practical reality

You have documentation that clearly explains your coverage, and you’ve discussed the details with the people who would be affected.

Your protection fits your actual situation

What this means

Your coverage amounts reflect your current financial obligations, not what they were when you first took out policies. The types of protection you have match your actual risks and responsibilities.

How it feels

The protection feels proportionate to your life – not too little that you’re still worried, but not so much that you’re overpaying for coverage you don’t need.

The practical reality

You’ve calculated what your family would actually need to maintain their lifestyle, what your business would require to continue operating, and your policies reflect these real numbers.

All your protection works together

What this means

Your life insurance, income protection, business cover, and employee benefits are coordinated. There are no significant gaps, but also no expensive overlaps where you're paying twice for the same protection.

How it feels

You have confidence that all bases are covered. You're not wondering if there are gaps you haven't thought of, because you've worked through your protection systematically.

The practical reality

You could draw a simple diagram showing how your different policies protect different aspects of your life and business, and there wouldn't be any obvious holes.

You're getting good value

What this means

You're paying a fair price for comprehensive protection. You're not overpaying for features you don't need, but you're also not under-covered to save money.

How it feels

The premiums feel proportionate to the protection you're getting. You see it as an investment in your family and business security, not as dead money.

The practical reality

You've compared options and understand why you're paying what you're paying. The protection gives you more value than the cost causes you concern.

You stay on top of changes

What this means

You review your protection regularly as your life and business evolve. You update beneficiaries when circumstances change, and you know your coverage will still be appropriate in a few years' time.

How it feels

Your protection feels current and relevant, not like something you sorted out years ago and hope is still adequate.

The practical reality

You have a system for reviewing your protection annually, and you know who to contact when your circumstances change.

The bottom line

Proper protection isn't about having every possible policy. It's about having the right protection for your specific situation, understanding exactly what you've got, and knowing it will actually work when you need it.



Your next steps

By now, you understand the five essential types of protection, you've assessed where you currently stand, and you know the difference between proper protection and the common mistakes that leave business leaders exposed.

You're now in a much stronger position than when you started reading this guide. You have the knowledge to ask the right questions, understand the answers, and make informed decisions about protecting your business, income, family, and employees.

But knowledge and action are two different things.

The challenge you still face

Understanding what you need is one thing, but getting the right protection in place is another. Even with all this knowledge, you still face the same challenges that have kept financial protection on your to-do list:

Finding genuinely impartial advice in a market full of commission-driven salespeople who are more interested in hitting their targets than finding the right solution for your situation.

Navigating the complexity of different providers, policy types, and small print variations that can make the difference between a policy that works and one that disappoints when you need it most.

Making time for the process when you're already stretched thin running your business and don't want to spend weeks researching options and comparing quotes.

Getting it right the first time because protection is too important to get wrong, but the consequences of mistakes only become apparent when it's too late to fix them.



That's where British Life comes in

We founded British Life specifically to solve these problems.

Here's how our approach differs from the typical insurance sales experience:

We give advice, not sales pitches

We have access to FCA-authorised independent advisers with over 20 years of experience. The adviser's job is to understand your situation and recommend the protection that's right for you, even if that means suggesting you don't need something that could be sold to you.

Insurance companies pay advisers commission, when you get the right cover. If advisers can't help you get properly protected within your budget, they won't recommend anything at all.

We work with the whole market

We help you access advisers who aren't tied to any particular insurance company, which means they can search the entire UK market to find the best options for your specific situation. They'll compare not just prices, but policy features, exclusions, and claim payment records.

This matters because the best policy for one person might be completely wrong for another, even if their situations look similar on the surface.



BritishLife
Financial Protection
For Less

We focus on understanding, not selling

Our process starts with understanding your situation, not with trying to sell you something. The advisers we recommend take the time to understand your business, your family circumstances, your financial obligations, and your concerns.

Only then will they recommend specific protection options, and they'll explain why they think they're right for you.

We make it simple

The advisers handle the complexity so you don't have to. They'll explain everything in plain English, handle the paperwork, and make sure you understand exactly what you're getting before you commit to anything.

No confusing jargon, no pressure tactics, and no surprises about what you're actually covered for.



Our simple 3-step process

We've refined our approach over 20 years to make getting properly protected as straightforward as possible.

1 Step 1: Start your quote

Fill in some basic details about your situation and what you're looking to protect. This takes just a few minutes and gives us enough information to understand your needs.

One of our FCA-authorised advisers will then call you to discuss your situation in more detail. This isn't a sales call: it's a fact-finding conversation to understand what protection would work best for you.

2 Step 2: Secure your policy

Based on our conversation, we'll search the whole market to find the most suitable policies for your needs and budget. We'll present your options clearly, explaining the pros and cons of each.

You'll be fully informed about what you're buying, supported through the decision-making process, and confident that the policies we recommend are right for your situation.

3 Step 3: Be confident in your coverage

Once your protection is in place, you'll have complete confidence that you've made the best decisions for your business, income, family, and employees.

You'll understand exactly what you're covered for, how to make a claim if you need to, and when to review your protection as your circumstances change.

Common concerns addressed

We know you might have some hesitations about taking the next step. Here are the concerns we hear most often.

“I don’t have time for lengthy sales processes.”

Our initial conversation takes 15-20 minutes. If we can help you, we’ll do most of the work behind the scenes and only involve you when we need decisions or signatures.

“I’m worried about being sold something I don’t need.”

We connect you with independent advisers, not salespeople. Our main focus is on advice, not sales. If you don’t need something, we won’t recommend it.

“I’m concerned about the cost.”

Protection is more affordable than most people think, especially when you consider the cost of not having it. We’ll work within your budget and show you how to prioritize if you can’t do everything at once.

“I’ve had bad experiences with insurance companies before.”

We understand this concern – it’s why many business leaders avoid the subject entirely. Our job is to make sure you get policies that will actually work when you need them, from companies with good claim payment records.

“My situation is complicated.”

Complex situations are exactly where good advice makes the biggest difference. We work with business leaders in all sorts of situations and can help you navigate the complexity.



Why act now?

Every day you delay is another day your family, business, and employees are exposed to unnecessary risk. The protection you can get today might not be available tomorrow at the same price – or at all.

More importantly, you now have the knowledge to make informed decisions and the confidence that comes from understanding your options. That's the hardest part.

Don't let financial protection drift back onto your to-do list. Take action while you have momentum and get this sorted once and for all.

- **Your family, your business, and your employees are counting on you to protect what you've all worked so hard to build.**

The value you've created in your business and life deserves proper protection. Let us help you make sure it has it.





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