A ribbon cutting is a ceremonial opening of a brand-new or newly renovated/relocated business. It can inaugurate the first day of business or it can take place after a soft opening. The ceremony gives the business owner/manager a chance to say a few words to those gathered. This time is typically used to thank financial backers, employees, friends, family and business partners. This is also a great time to talk about what your business does.

Who qualifies for a ribbon cutting?
The Winston-Salem Chamber of Commerce is available to assist with your ribbon cutting if your business:

- Has recently opened for business
- Has moved to a new location
- Has been renovated or expanded at the current location
- Is celebrating a milestone anniversary
- Is breaking ground for a new structure

Please note that you must be a current Chamber member in good standing for the Winston-Salem Chamber to participate in your ribbon cutting.

What are the benefits of holding a Chamber ribbon cutting?
By hosting a ribbon cutting you can:

- Introduce both the public and Chamber members to your business
- Announce your ribbon cutting on the Chamber’s Blog
- Publish your ribbon cutting on the Chamber’s Member Event Calendar
- Familiarize the public and Chamber members with your products/services
- Familiarize the public and Chamber members with your location
- Generate leads from attendees

Is the ribbon cutting my business’ event or a Chamber event?
This is your event. The Chamber will gladly assist you with the following:

- Notify the Chamber’s Ambassadors group of your ribbon cutting, encouraging them to attend
- Provide the Chamber scissors and Chamber ribbon
- Place your ribbon cutting announcement on the Chamber blog (NOTE: You are responsible for sending event details to the Chamber marketing department — egood@winstonsalem.com — at least 7 business days prior to the event.)
- Have a member of the Chamber’s leadership team provide congratulatory remarks
- Provide a media list for you to send a press release to local media

We strongly encourage you to conduct your own PR campaign for your ribbon cutting to increase attendance and awareness. You should consider inviting your business partners, financiers, contractors, employees, customers, friends and family. **Please understand that you should not rely solely on the Chamber to attract attendees.**
What do we do?

Your ribbon cutting is totally YOUR event, there are no set rules. To make the event successful, carefully consider the following:

**Schedule your event at least 3 weeks in advance.** Contact Barbette Dunn, 336-728-9245, to schedule your event. We recommend that you do not schedule your event earlier than 8 a.m. and avoid late evening events. The Chamber cannot assist with ribbon cuttings on weekends and/or holidays.

**Determine who will cut the ribbon.** You may have one ribbon cutter or several, depending on the length of the ribbon and the space available. You may opt to have a “high-profile” ribbon cutter to increase exposure. Options include the mayor, a city council member, or a county commissioner.

**Hire/assign a photographer.** If you would like to have photographs taken during the event, it is best to have someone assigned to do that. A Chamber photographer will attend if possible, but there is no guarantee of a Chamber photographer. To find photographers, search the Chamber’s online Business Directory.

**Invite everyone you know!** Is the general public invited? If so, place your event in area community calendars. Download the Chamber Member Listing spreadsheet (found in the Members Only section of our website) to send invitations through bulk mail. Be sure to include detailed information about the location of the event. Be sure to post your event on the Chamber’s Member Event Calendar and on the Chamber Facebook page. You can also consider purchasing advertisements if desired.

**Be creative!** Find creative ways to tie your product into the ceremony. For example: a lawn care service could use hedge clippers instead of scissors, or an auto repair store could use a checkered finish line instead of a ribbon. Ensure that the front door of your business is clear of obstructions like parked cars, etc. which can interfere with the ribbon cutting ceremony and photographs.

**Consider having giveaways.** Logo items that attendees can take back to their office are best.

**Provide food and beverage for your guests.** This is not required, but adds a nice touch. Search the Chamber’s online Business Directory for a list of caterers.

**Prepare a quick speech.** Be sure to have brochures or other business information available.

How do I get media presence at my event?

Send your press release to the media via email. It is helpful to send the release 3-4 days before the event. Please know that it is very difficult to get the media to a ribbon cutting. They may not confirm that they are coming.

How do I get the mayor or other local elected officials to attend?

It will be your responsibility to schedule elected officials to attend your event. In Winston-Salem, contact information for the Mayor’s Office, the City Secretary’s Office, and the City Council members can be found at cityofws.org. If your ribbon cutting is located within another nearby municipality, please visit the appropriate city government website.