



BIDNESS®

The game of bidding and business

Rules of Play

You are the visionary founder of a revolutionary tech startup. With high hopes and a hefty loan from some shady investors, your journey begins.

You will recruit a team of the brightest minds, develop dazzling new technologies, and deliver groundbreaking products to a market ripe for disruption. Your endgame? Amass enough profit to pay off your debts and win back your company's freedom.

Manage your resources wisely, outwit the competition, and overcome unexpected setbacks. Will your company soar to the heights of success, or will it buckle under the pressure of loans and legal battles?

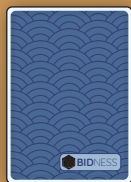
Welcome to the world of Bidness.



Equipment



Cash Cards
(72)



Event Cards
(82)



Payback Cards
(18)



IOUs
(30)



Tech Points
(59)



Market Leader Award
(1)



Tech Leader Award
(1)



First Player Token
(1)



Dice
(6)

Game Overview

You are the founder of a tech startup trying to pay off your debts.

Object of the Game

The first player to pay back all of their IOUs wins.

Gameplay

You play the game in multiple rounds. Each round has a Setup Phase, a Card Play Phase, and a Business Phase. Continue playing rounds until there is a winner.

Cards

You start each round with cards in your hand. There are a variety of cards including Payback cards, Employee cards, Contract cards, Lawsuit cards, Headhunting cards, and various Bonus cards.

Employees

Employees are represented by cards placed in your workplace. **Marketers** give you marketing points—the more you have, the more products you sell. **Engineers** create tech points—the more you have, the more your products sell for. **Lawyers** improve your odds of winning cases in court.

Employees strengthen your company, but remember, the larger your team, the more salaries you will need to pay.

Earnings

You can earn money in a variety of ways: auctions, card sales, legal victories, government contracts, and product sales. The amount you earn from product sales depends on both the marketing points and tech points you have.

IOUs, Borrowing, and Paying Back

Debts are represented by IOUs.

At **any time**, you can **borrow** money in \$100 increments. Take one \$100 IOU along with \$100 cash from the bank and place them in your workplace. **The maximum amount of debt you can have is \$600.**

During Card Play, you can **pay back** IOUs by playing **Payback** cards. When you pay back your last IOU, you win and the game ends immediately.

Preparing to Play

Choose one player to be the **banker**. The bank holds all cash, IOUs, and tech points. Organize these and keep them apart from players' assets.

Choose one player to be the **dealer**. Separate the cards into two decks: the **Payback** deck and the **Event** deck. Be sure to remove any **Reference** cards.



Starting Workplace



Player Workplace

The area directly in front of each player is their **workplace**. This is where they keep their company's assets—cash, employees, contracts, IOUs, tech points, as well as any bonus cards they may have acquired.

Players must keep the items in their workspace face up and visible.

Starting Assets

Each player starts the game with:

- **One Engineer** and **one Marketer** card.
- **Three \$100** IOUs.
- **\$100** in cash.
- **Twenty** tech points.

You are now ready to start the first round.

Playing the Game

You play the game over multiple rounds, each with three phases.

Setup Phase

1. Roll for First Player
2. Add *Payback* Cards
(starting with round 2)
3. Shuffle and Deal
4. Discard One Card

Card Play Phase

- Play a Card
- Sell a Card
OR
- Pass

Business Phase

1. Pay Employees
2. Collect Earnings
3. Add Tech Points
4. Return Bonus Cards

Setup Phase

Prepare to play a new round.

1. Roll for First Player: Each player *rolls one die for each IOU* they have. The player with the highest total becomes the new First Player. In the event of a tie, the tying players roll again.

2. Add *Payback* Cards: Starting with the second round, each player adds one *Payback* card to their hand.

3. Shuffle and Deal: The dealer gathers the event cards, shuffles them, and then deals them out until each player has a total of six cards in their hand, including any *Payback* cards.

4. Discard One Card: Each player selects one card from their hand and, without revealing it, discards it. Proceed to the Card Play Phase.

Card Play Phase

Starting with the First Player, players take turns in clockwise order. In your turn, choose *one* of the following actions:

• Play a Card

If you have more than two cards in your hand, you can play one of them.

For *auction* cards, hold an auction; the winner adds the card to their workplace. Discard the card if there are no bids.

For other cards, pay the indicated amount (if any) to the bank and follow the card's instructions. If the card is a bonus card, place it in your workplace for the remainder of the round. Return played *Payback* cards to their deck. Discard other played cards.

You cannot play any lawsuit or headhunting cards in the first round.

• Sell a Card

If you have more than two cards in your hand, you may sell one of them. Discard the card and collect \$10 from the bank.

• Pass

Skip your turn. You may play on your next turn if at least one other player takes their turn. *You must pass if your hand has two or fewer cards.*

End of Card Play

Card Play ends when all players have passed consecutively. Keep any remaining cards in your hand for the next round. You are allowed to end up with more than two cards in your hand.

Proceed to the Business Phase.

Business Phase

All players follow these steps:

1. Pay Salaries: All players pay or, if necessary, lay off their employees.

2. Collect Earnings: After salaries have been paid, players collect earnings from product sales and contracts.

3. Add Tech Points: The banker gives two new tech points to each player for every engineer they have.

4. Return Bonus Cards: The dealer collects all bonus cards from players' workplaces and returns them to the deck.

Bonus cards have a solid bonus indicator in their upper left corner.



Proceed to the Setup Phase of the next round.

Auctions

You hold **auctions** to hire employees or award government contracts.

When you play an auction card, place it in the center of the table and announce that you are holding an auction. You may make an opening bid or drop out. All bids must be in multiples of \$5. Bidding proceeds in clockwise order. Each player, in turn, makes a higher bid or drops out. Once a player drops out, they may no longer participate in the auction.

You may bid more than the cash you have on hand. If you win, however, you must immediately pay in full, even if you

have to borrow money from the bank. You cannot make a bid that would cause you to exceed the debt limit.

The last remaining bidder wins the auction and pays you (the seller) the amount they bid. If you win, you must pay the bank.

The winner adds the card to their workplace. Discard the card if no bids were made.

Auction

Lawsuits



You can sue another player for damages by playing a **lawsuit card**. There is no cost to play a lawsuit card.

When you sue another player (*the defendant*), you can either negotiate an out-of-court **settlement** or go to **trial**.

If a lawsuit goes to trial, then *the loser must pay damages*. The damages depend on the type of lawsuit card you play.

You do not need lawyers in order to sue someone. However, your odds of winning are significantly better if you have more lawyers than your opponent.

Settling Out of Court

You may try to settle out of court by proposing an amount of cash you are willing to accept. The defendant can either accept your offer, make a counter-offer, or reject the offer. The two of you continue to make counter-offers until either (a) both sides agree on a settlement, in which case the defendant pays the settlement to you and the case is dropped, or, (b) either side rejects the offer and the case goes to trial. **Only cash settlements are allowed.**

When you play a **Negligence** card, you must announce the amount you are suing for before discussing a settlement.

Going to Trial

Trials are resolved by rolling dice. You roll two dice plus one additional die for each lawyer or legal intern you have. The defendant then rolls two dice plus one additional die for each lawyer or legal intern they have.



The highest total wins. In the event of a tie, the defendant wins.

If you win, the defendant must immediately pay the damages to you. If the defendant wins, then you must immediately pay the damages to the bank.



Example—Alice plays the **Libel 3M** card and sues Bob for three of his marketers. Alice offers to settle out of court for \$120. Bob replies with a counter-offer of \$40. Alice rejects this and the lawsuit goes to trial.

Alice has two lawyers, so she is entitled to roll four dice. She rolls a total of 14. Bob has no lawyers, but he has a legal intern so he rolls three dice. He also rolls a total of 14. The result is a tie so the defendant, Bob, wins. Alice must return three marketers to the bank. She, however, has only one marketer. She takes the marketer card from her workplace and places it in the discard pile.

Leadership Awards

Players compete for leadership awards.

Market Leader Award

The player with the most marketing points holds the *Market Leader Award*.

During the Business Phase, this player adds *two bonus marketing points*.

As soon as you have the most marketing points, take the *Market Leader Award* token and place it in your workplace. If there is a tie, return the award to the bank.



Tech Leader Award

The player with the most tech points holds the *Tech Leader Award*.

During the Business Phase, this player adds a *ten point bonus* to their tech point total.

As soon as you have the most tech points, take the *Tech Leader Award* token and place it in your workplace. If there is a tie, return the award to the bank.



Salaries and Layoffs

At the *start* of every Business Phase, you must pay your employee salaries.

Salaries

Pay \$10, to the bank, for each marketer and engineer you have. For lawyers, the total amount you pay depends on how many lawyers you have.

Salary by number of lawyers

| | | | | | | | |
|------|----|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| \$10 | 40 | 90 | 160 | 250 | 360 | 490 | 640 |

You must pay salaries before collecting any earnings or gaining tech points.

If you have enough cash to do so, you must pay all your employees.

Layoffs

If you do not have enough cash for salaries, *you may lay off any number of employees*. Take the laid-off employee cards from your workplace and return them to the deck.

You may borrow money from the bank to avoid or lessen the layoff. You may lay off more employees than you need to.

A layoff is the only way you can remove employees.

Earnings

After paying salaries, players receive their earnings from sales and contract payments. To figure out your earnings:

1. Round *down* your tech points to the nearest *multiple of ten*. Add ten points if you hold the *Tech Leader Award*. The result is your *unit price*.

2. Take one point for each marketer you have, then adjust for any marketing bonuses or penalties. Add two points if you hold the *Market Leader Award*. The result is your *units sold*. If the result is less than zero, use zero.

3. Multiply your *unit price* by your *units sold*. These are your *sales earnings*.

4. Add \$25 for each *contract* you hold.

5. Collect the total from the bank.

Example—Alice has 3 marketers, 26 tech points, and 2 contracts. She holds the *Market Leader Award*. Her unit price is \$20 (26 tech points rounded down to 20) and she sells 5 units (3 for her 3 marketers plus 2 from the award). She collects \$150 (sales of \$100 (20 times 5) plus \$50 for her 2 contracts).

Additional Rules

All private transactions such as side deals, gifts, loans, or selling assets between players are prohibited.

Players must not disclose the cards in their hands or instruct others on card play.

Players must keep their cash, IOUs, tech points, employees, contracts, and *Payback* cards visible to everyone.

The bank never runs out of money, tokens, or *Payback* cards. If supplies run low, use an agreed-upon substitute.

Personnel Cards

These cards let you hire or steal marketers, engineers, and lawyers.

Marketer, Engineer, and Lawyer

When you play one of these cards, you hold an auction to determine the recruiting fee for hiring the new employee. The winning bidder pays the fee, hires the new employee, and moves the card to their workplace. If there are no bids, discard the card.



Example—Alice plays a Marketer card and makes a starting bid of \$30. Bob bids \$50. Chloe bids \$65. Dirk (the last of the four players) drops out. Alice drops out and so does Bob. Chloe wins the auction. Chloe gives \$65 to Alice, and moves the Marketer card to her workplace.

Headhunting

Headhunting cards let you take either a lawyer, marketer, or engineer from another player. Pay the bank the amount indicated on the card, select an opponent, and take one employee card of the indicated type from their workplace and move it to yours. You cannot play these cards in the first round.



Legal Intern

Use these cards to engage a legal intern for the current round. Pay \$30 to the bank and place the Legal Intern card in your workplace. If you go to trial, the legal intern gives you an extra die to roll (the same as a lawyer). You do not pay a salary for the intern. It cannot be taken by a Headhunting card. Return all played Legal Intern cards to the event deck at the end of the Business Phase.



Government Contracts

Government Contract cards provide you with a guaranteed series of payments for the remainder of the game.

When you play a contract card, hold an auction. The winning bidder takes the card and places it in their workplace. If there are no bidders, discard the card.

During the Business Phase, you collect \$25, from the bank, for each contract you possess.



Payback Cards

Payback cards let you pay back one or two \$100 IOUs.

When you play a Payback card, you pay \$100 and return one of your IOUs to the bank. Alternatively, you can pay \$300 and return two IOUs. Return the card to the Payback deck after playing it.

If you pay back your last IOU, you win and the game ends immediately.

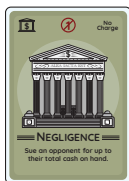
Starting with the second round, each player is given a Payback card in the Setup Phase of every round.

All players are entitled to know how many Payback cards the other players have in their hands.



Lawsuit Cards

Use a lawsuit card to sue another player for damages. It costs nothing to play a lawsuit card. The damages that the loser pays depend on the type of suit. You cannot play these cards in the first round.



Negligence

These four cards let you sue an opponent for money. You can sue for any amount up to the amount of cash they have on hand.

If you win the suit, the defendant pays you. If you lose, you pay a fine, equal to the amount of the suit, to the bank.

You cannot sue another player for more money than you can pay if you lose. For example, if you have \$50 in cash and \$500 in IOUs, then you cannot sue for more than \$150 as a loss would put you over the debt limit.

Libel (1, 2, 3)

These cards let you sue an opponent for one, two, or three of their marketers.

If you win the suit, the defendant must give you *Marketer* cards from their workplace. If they do not have enough, they give you what they have.



If you lose, you must take the indicated number of *Marketer* cards from your workplace and discard them (no matter how many marketers the other player has). If you do not have enough, you give up what you have. The discarded *Marketer* cards are shuffled back into the deck at the start of the next round.

Patent Infringement (8T, 10T, 12T)

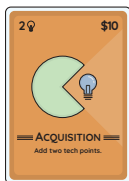
These cards let you sue an opponent for eight, ten, or twelve of their tech points.

If you win the suit, the defendant must give the tech points to you. If they do not have enough, they give you what they have. If you lose, you must take the indicated number of tech points from your workspace and return them to the bank (regardless of how many tech points the other player has). If you do not have enough, you give up what you have.



Tech Cards

These cards add or remove tech points.



Acquisition

These two cards give you two new tech points. Pay \$10 to the bank and add two tech points to your workplace.

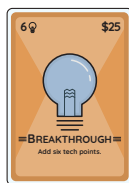


Joint Development

This card gives you and another player two new tech points each. Pay \$5 to the bank and select another player to partner with. You and the other player both add two tech points to your respective workplaces.

Breakthrough

This card gives you six new tech points. Pay \$25 to the bank and add six tech points to your workplace.



Espionage

These two cards let you steal two tech points from another player. Pay \$10 to the bank, select another player, and take two of their tech points and move them to your workplace.



Sabotage

This card lets you destroy two tech points belonging to an opponent. Pay \$10 to the bank, select another player, and take two of their tech points and return them to the bank.



Marketing Cards

The marketing bonus cards modify the number of marketing points in the current round.

Ad Blitz

This card gives you a three point marketing bonus for the current round.



Pay \$30 to the bank and place the *Ad Blitz* card in your workplace. During the Business Phase, add three points to your marketing points. Return the card to the deck at the end of the round.

Co-op Marketing

These two cards give you a one point marketing bonus for the current round.

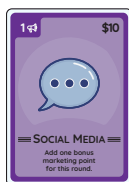


Select a player to partner with, pay them \$10 (instead of the bank), and place the *Co-op Marketing* card in your workplace. During the Business Phase, add one point to your marketing points. Return

the card to the deck at the end of the round.

Social Media

These three cards give you a one point marketing bonus for the current round.



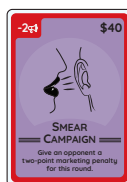
Pay \$10 to the bank and place the *Social Media* card in your workplace. During the Business Phase, add one point to your marketing points. Return the card to the deck at the end of the round.

Smear Campaign

Use this card to give an opponent a two-point marketing penalty for the current round.

Pay \$40 to the bank, select another player, and place the *Smear Campaign* card in their workplace.

During the Business Phase, the targeted player reduces their marketing points by two. If this results in a negative number, their marketing points become zero. They are still responsible for paying any marketer salaries they owe. Return the card to the deck at the end of the round.



Market Research

This card lets you steal a card from another player.

Pay \$30 to the bank, select another player, take one of the cards from their hand at random, and add it to your hand. In your subsequent turns, you can use the stolen card as you would any other card.

After you play this card, discard it.

You cannot use this card to steal a *Payback* card.



Credits

Bidness is a card and table-top game invented in October 2020.

Game and graphic design: Giuseppe Maldoni

Thanks to family and friends for play-testing, reviewing, and contributing countless great ideas.

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