

# Employ Yourself -- Be An Entrepreneur

Entrepreneurs are people who own and operate their own businesses. They may apply their talents in a wide variety of ways; however, successful entrepreneurs seem to have certain characteristics in common. The following questions may help you learn more about entrepreneurs and about yourself. This is not a scientific evaluation and cannot predict business success, but it can at least be used as a starting point in exploring whether entrepreneurship may be an option for you.

## yes no

- 1. Are you able to get a point across in a conversation?
- 2. Are you willing to put off short-term rewards for greater potential down the road?
- 3. Have you taken training in public speaking, debating, sales techniques, or Toastmasters?
- 4. Are you comfortable approaching friends and colleagues about services and products beneficial to their present and future needs?
- 5. Do you enjoy the challenge of introducing yourself to new contacts who may also have need of your service or product?
- 6. Have you invested in your own future by developing a modest nest egg to finance a career change?
- 7. Are you the first person to introduce yourself in a group of new people?
- 8. Would you describe yourself as having an enthusiastic personality?
- 9. Do you feel comfortable asking for the names of friends and colleagues to contact?
- 10. Do most people consider you outgoing and self-confident?

## yes no

- 11. Are you comfortable with a career in which income may vary from week to week or month to month? (for example - no steady paycheck)
- 12. Have you developed a financial plan for retirement?
- 13. Are you planning for early retirement?
- 14. Do you prefer not having goals and objectives set for you by a supervisor?
- 15. Are you plugged in to networking groups and civic organizations in your community?
- 16. Do you consider sales a part of your current position?
- 17. Are you uncomfortable working a traditional 8-5 schedule?
- 18. Do you consider yourself assertive?
- 19. Are you comfortable calling strangers for appointments?
- 20. Do you generally step forward and ask for what you want?

## Your entrepreneurial quotient:

Give yourself one point for each "yes" answer. If you scored between 14 and 20, you probably have the necessary qualities to create your own business opportunity and competently handle the challenge involved. If you scored between 10 and 13, you may have the makings of an entrepreneur but may need more experience before taking the plunge. If you scored below 10, at this point in your life you are probably better suited to traditional employment.

### Some additional factors to consider for self-employment or entrepreneurship:

#### Bonuses

Satisfaction of creating my own job  
Able to follow my own interests  
Variety, because no day is predictable  
Feeling of control over my schedule and working conditions  
Opportunity to be creative and test my ideas  
More tax deductions  
Flexible work hours  
No dress code

#### Challenges

Potential for financial loss if business doesn't succeed  
Isolation if I work alone  
Constant pressure to keep sales up and work coming in  
Loss of a workplace structure  
The need to do paperwork and record keeping  
No benefits such as health, dental, and disability  
Long hours  
Unpredictable income

### What are some examples of occupations and skills to consider for self-employment?

Accountant	Machine Shop Operator
Auctioneer	Mail Order Entrepreneur
Bricklayer	Medical Illustrator
Business Plan Writer	Personal Fitness Trainer
Car Buying Agent	Personal Improvement Coach
Carpenter	Personal Shopper
Carpet Cleaner	Recycling Consultant
Children's Party Planner	Information Researcher
Computer Consultant	Rock Climbing Gym Owner
Computer Game Designer	Security Engineer
Computer Tutor	Specialty Optical Equip. Manufacturer
Day Care Provider	Sports Scout
Day Spa Operator	Taxidermist
Desktop Publisher	Tax Preparer
Disc Jockey	Travel Writer
Greeting Card Writer	Vending Machine Operator
Grounds Maintainer	Web Designer
Home Inspector	
Hunting Guide Outfitter	
Internet Trainer	

### Where can you get information and assistance on entrepreneurship?

- High school or college career and technical education programs.
- High school or college career centers or career counselors. (See if they subscribe to *Career Explorer*, a daily career magazine on the web. If they do, search on the word "Entrepreneur" and you'll discover many great articles, ideas, and suggested steps for starting your own business!)
- Marketplace for Entrepreneurs & Career Marketplace: [www.marketplaceofideas.org](http://www.marketplaceofideas.org)
- North Dakota Department of Commerce website: [www.growingnd.com](http://www.growingnd.com)
- Small Business Administration: [www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov)
- Counselors to America's Small Business: [www.score.org](http://www.score.org)
- Read the article "Considering Self-Employment: What to Think About Before Starting A Business," in the Summer 1999, Occupational Outlook Quarterly, pages 15-23, <http://stats.bls.gov/opub/ooq/1999/Summer/art02.pdf>