

Module: Understanding the Workplace

Topic: Employ yourself . . . Be an Entrepreneur

Competency: Describe the influences that societal, economic, and technological changes have on employment trends and future training.

Length: One class period

Objective: Students will be able to describe the benefits and challenges of being self employed and the qualities a person needs to be self employed.

Materials:

- “Do You Want to Own Your Business?” Checklist
- 3X5 Cards with Benefits and Challenges to consider for self-employment

Description of Activity:

Procedures:

1. Discuss with students that 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.
2. Students take the “Do You Want to Own Your Business?” checklist. These questions will help them to learn more about entrepreneurs and themselves. None of this can predict business success, but at least it can be used as a starting point in exploring if a student is interested in being self-employed.
3. Discuss student scores on the checklist.
4. Discuss the benefits and challenges of being self employed. These could be written on 3X5 cards and divide the class into benefits and challenges. Create a fictitious business such as starting up a tee shirt, computer repair, or a lawn maintenance company.

Additional benefits or challenges could be added according to the business being considered.

BENEFITS:

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
Hiring competent employees

5. Keep a list of students interested in being self-employed posted on the wall. At the end of the course, revisit this list to see if these students have changed their mind after exploring careers or if they feel they still want to go in this direction.

Evaluation: Students will be able to describe the characteristics of an entrepreneur and relate to their personal characteristics and the benefits and challenges of being self-employed.

Employ Yourself – Be An Entrepreneur

Yes	No	
_____	_____	1. Are you able to get a point across in a conversation?
_____	_____	2. Do you have family and family friends who work for themselves?
_____	_____	3. Are you good at giving oral presentations in class?
_____	_____	4. Do you think you would like talking to friends and others about services and products that could benefit them?
_____	_____	5. Do you like being in charge of school events or just planning your weekend?
_____	_____	6. Is it important that you decide what you will do each day rather than someone else?
_____	_____	7. Are you usually the first person to introduce yourself in a group of new people?
_____	_____	8. Do you stick with things rather than give up?
_____	_____	9. Would you feel comfortable asking for the names of friends and colleagues to contact?
_____	_____	10. Do most people consider you outgoing and self-confident?
_____	_____	11. Would you be comfortable with a career in which income may vary from week to week or month to month? (for example – no steady paycheck)
_____	_____	12. Do you expect to fulfill your dreams for the future?
_____	_____	13. If you get lost, would you ask for directions?
_____	_____	14. Do you prefer to set your own goals rather than someone else doing it?
_____	_____	15. If you fail at something, do you bounce right back?
_____	_____	16. Do you consider yourself a good sales person?
_____	_____	17. Do you want a work schedule that doesn't fit into the traditional 8-5 schedule?
_____	_____	18. Do you look for different ways of doing things?
_____	_____	19. Would you be comfortable calling strangers for appointments?
_____	_____	20. Do you generally step forward and ask for what you want?

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.

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

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