

**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
- 2007-2008 Career Cruiser – centerfold on entrepreneurs that got started in middle school
- 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. Discuss profiles of entrepreneurs described in the Career Cruiser.
3. 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.
4. Discuss student scores on the checklist.
5. 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

6. 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                       |   |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1. Are you able to get a point across in a conversation?  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2. Do you have family and family friends who work for themselves?   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3. Are you good at giving oral presentations in class?  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4. Do you think you would like talking to friends and others about services and products that could benefit them?                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5. Do you like being in charge of school events or just planning your weekend?  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6. Is it important that you decide what you will do each day rather than someone else?  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 7. Are you usually the first person to introduce yourself in a group of new people?   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 8. Do you stick with things rather than give up?  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 9. Would you feel comfortable asking for the names of friends and colleagues to contact?  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 10. Do most people consider you outgoing and self-confident?  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 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) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 12. Do you expect to fulfill your dreams for the future?  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 13. If you get lost, would you get directions?  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 14. Do you prefer to set your own goals rather than someone else doing it?  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 15. If you fail at something, do you bounce right back?   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 16. Do you consider yourself a good sales person?   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 17. Do you want a work schedule that doesn't fit into the traditional 8-5 schedule?   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 18. Do you look for different ways of doing things?   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 19. Would you be comfortable calling strangers for appointments?  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 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	