

Can you be your own boss?

By: Tracey Porpora

With all the changes in the economy, you may find yourself making less money than you did a year ago, and earning an even smaller paycheck than you made two years ago. Is this a time for a career move? Should you jump in and start the business you've always dreamed of owning? Or should you simply seek a better job opportunity at a larger company? Take our quiz to learn if you have what it takes to start your own business or if you should stay with a secure job!



1. You have a great idea for your own business, so you:
 - A. Write up a business plan, and apply for loans and grants to fund the business.
 - B. Dream about it often, and think that one day you'd like to come up with a business plan when you aren't so busy at your job.
2. When you wake up in the morning, you:
 - A. Think about all the things you want to get accomplished at work that day. Whether it's obtaining new clients or increasing revenue, you want to get started on making your goals a reality.
 - B. You wonder what assignments or projects your boss has in mind for you today, and hope it won't be too cumbersome.
3. You've always dreamed of:
 - A. Owning your own business so you could do what you love, and make money doing it.
 - B. Owning your own business so you could be your own boss, and not have anyone to answer to.
4. When you hear the words "self-starter," you think of:

- A. People who take charge, and lead a work team towards success.
 - B. People who just like to show off because they think they are better than everyone else.
5. When it comes to taking risks, you:
 - A. Weigh the pros and cons. If the pros outweigh the cons, you go for it.
 - B. Shy away from any type of risk even if it could make you wealthier, and happier in the future.
 6. When you were a kid and your parents told you to be anything you wanted to be, you:
 - A. Were inspired to become someone who made a difference in other people's lives.
 - B. Thought they were being nice, and just hoped you'd be successful doing something one day.
 7. When given a project to complete by your boss, you:
 - A. Try to get it done to the best of your ability, and as quickly as possible.
 - B. Do what you can in the time allotted to you.

Give yourself five points for every "A," and three points for each "B."

Results

If your score is 25 or above, you're ready to start your own business. "A self starter is a person who does not need anyone's permission to follow their entrepreneurial dream," says Elizabeth Wilson, of EW & Associates, Inc.

(www.elizabethwwilson.com), a small business expert. You are likely a person with a "high degree of motivation to keep working when others may not be; i.e., evenings and weekends," says Shari L Frisinger, keynote speaker, facilitator and consultant for Corner-Stone Strategies LLC in Friendswood, TX. The key to success for any business owner is to be honest with yourself, and about your capabilities. In fact, you need to recognize your strengths and your weaknesses. "Know what you are good at, and what you are not good at," she says.

If you scored 24 or below you are better off as an employee rather than an employer, due to your inability to take charge and risks in a given situation. "Being a good employee involves some of the same traits as being self-employed," says Dick Barnes, a founder and consultant with The Freeland Group, a management consulting firm based in Gig Harbor, WA. "But overall, if a person needs structure in his or her work life, and can't provide his or her own, he or she will be happier as an employee. If a person is easily stressed out, panics, falls apart emotionally, or reacts too negatively when things get hot, he or she will likely be happier as an employee where you're mostly exempt from those issues."