



Entrepreneurial Career Assessment Form *

Entrepreneurs apply their talents in a wide variety of ways, but many seem to have some characteristics in common. The Entrepreneurial Career Assessment Form can help you learn more about entrepreneurs and more about yourself. By taking the assessment, you can gain insight into the differences between being self-employed and working for an employer. When you rate your response to each statement, you may understand why self-employment appeals to you. You may also learn about areas where you need to improve.

The assessment form is not a test and does not predict business success. There is no single set of characteristics that accurately describes all entrepreneurs. You may score low on the assessment and still succeed as an entrepreneur. Use the scale on the right to rate your feelings about each statement. Total the numbers you placed before the statements and enter the total in the space provided. Then refer to the chart on the next page to determine a general assessment of your suitability for self-employment.



- ___ 1. I am willing to work 50 hours or more per week regularly.
- ___ 2. My family will support my going into business.
- ___ 3. I am willing to accept both financial and career risks when necessary.
- ___ 4. I don't need all the fringe benefits provided by conventional employment.
- ___ 5. I would like to take full responsibility for the successes and failures of my business.
- ___ 6. I would experience more financial success by operating my own business.
- ___ 7. I feel a great deal of pride when I complete a project successfully.
- ___ 8. I have a high energy level that can be maintained over a long time.
- ___ 9. I enjoy controlling my own work assignments and making all decisions that affect my work.
- ___ 10. I believe that I am primarily responsible for my own successes and failures.
- ___ 11. I have a strong desire to achieve positive results even when it requires a great deal of additional effort.
- ___ 12. I have a good understanding of how to manage a business.
- ___ 13. I can function in ambiguous situations.
- ___ 14. One or both of my parents were entrepreneurs.
- ___ 15. I believe that my abilities and skills are greater than those of most of my coworkers.
- ___ 16. People trust me and consider me honest and reliable.
- ___ 17. I always try to complete every project I start, regardless of obstacles and difficulties.
- ___ 18. I am willing to do something even when other people laugh or belittle me for doing it.
- ___ 19. I can make decisions quickly.
- ___ 20. I have a good network of friends, professionals, and business acquaintances.
- ___ Total

<u>Score</u>	<u>Assessment</u>
80 - 100	You have outstanding ability to be an entrepreneur.
60 - 79	You have satisfactory ability to be an entrepreneur.
40 - 59	Self-employment may not be an appropriate career for you.
0 - 39	Probably you should avoid an entrepreneur career.

* The "Entrepreneurial Career Assessment Form" is reprinted from Mind Your Own Business, by LaVerne Ludden, Ed.D. and Bonnie Maitlen, Ed.D., with permission of the authors. Copyright 1994 by JIST, Indianapolis, Indiana.

Analysis for the Entrepreneurial Career Assessment

The following list describes some common characteristics of an entrepreneur. The number(s) before each characteristic indicates the related statement(s) in the assessment form. This list interprets the form qualitatively. Note that arriving at a conclusive portrait of a typical entrepreneur is very difficult. Therefore, you may score low on the assessment and still succeed as an entrepreneur.

Works hard

This characteristic applies to statements 1 and 8.

Self-employment requires a great deal of time and effort. The entrepreneur must perform a wide variety of time-consuming tasks. Seventy-seven percent of all entrepreneurs report working 50 or more hours per week, and 54% say that they work more than 60 hours per week. Such a time commitment requires that you have a high energy level.

Has family support

This characteristic applies to statement 2.

A successful entrepreneur needs family support. If you are married, your spouse must believe in your business because it will require that both of you sacrifice time and money. The stress may create disruptions in family relationships. If you have children, they will need encouragement in understanding your need to spend so much time away from the family. The more positive support you receive from your family, the more you can concentrate on making the business a success.

Takes risks

This characteristic applies to statement 3.

Entrepreneurs are risk takers. They risk their careers, time, and money in order to make a success of their businesses. A review of the research on this subject finds that most entrepreneurs perceive risks differently than other people. What others see as a risk, the entrepreneur sees as a controllable situation. Entrepreneurs will try to organize a risky situation by identifying resources, ordering them for a purpose, and scheduling their use appropriately. To be successful in self-employment, you should feel comfortable taking reasonable risks.

Sacrifices employment benefits

This characteristic applies to statement 4.

One of the major realities of self-employment is that you won't receive a regular paycheck. You pay for your own fringe benefits. A nice office, secretarial assistance, equipment, and other features of employment you have grown to expect are no longer available unless you provide these for yourself.

Is independent

This characteristic applies to statements 5 and 9.

Entrepreneurs like being independent and in control of situations. Many people who become self-employed consider the opportunity to be their own boss as one of the major benefits of self-employment. Although being independent may not be a major concern for you, it is certainly an aspect of self-employment that you need to feel comfortable with. If you cannot afford to hire other employees when you begin your business, you may at first be lonely as a self-employed person.

Wants financial success

This characteristic applies to statement 6.

A primary reason that most entrepreneurs have for going into business is to achieve financial success. The desire for financial success provides motivational drive for the self-employed person. If you want to be an entrepreneur, you need to establish a reasonable financial goal that you want to achieve through self-employment. This goal will help you measure how well you are doing in fulfilling your personal needs through an entrepreneurial career.

Is energetic

This characteristic applies to statements 1 and 8.

Self-employment requires long work hours. You will frequently be unable to control the number of hours required to fulfill all the necessary tasks. The entrepreneur must have a high energy level to respond to the job's demands. In fact, an entrepreneur will often be energized by the work that is demanded and find an energy loss when "relaxing." You will need stamina that allows you to work 12- to 16-hour days, 6- to 7-day weeks, and 52-week years.

Has an internal “locus of control”**This characteristic applies to statement 10.**

Successful entrepreneurs have an internal locus of control, or inner sense of responsibility for the outcome of a venture. Research evidence shows that an internal locus of control increases creativity and activity. To be an entrepreneur, you should have a strong sense of being a “victor” who is responsible for your actions. If, however, you frequently consider yourself a “victim” and blame other people, bad luck, or difficult circumstances for your failures, entrepreneurship might not be the right career move for you.

Has a need to achieve**This characteristic applies to statements 7 and 11.**

Entrepreneurs have a strong need for achievement. They strive to excel and accomplish objectives that are quite high. If you want to become an entrepreneur, you should be willing to set high goals for yourself and enjoy striving to achieve these goals.

Has business experience**This characteristic applies to statement 12.**

An entrepreneur should have extensive business experience to be successful. General management experience is beneficial because an entrepreneur should know something about all types of management. Formal training and education in management also are helpful.

Has a self-employed parent as a role model**This characteristic applies to statement 14.**

Research has shown that entrepreneurs are more likely to have a parent--especially a father--who is self-employed. A parent’s inspiration and knowledge about operating a business can contribute to an entrepreneur’s success. If you have a parent who is self-employed, consider this a plus for your own success as an entrepreneur.

Has self-confidence**This characteristic applies to statements 10, 15, and 18.**

An important characteristic of entrepreneurs is self-confidence. This factor is particularly important when you face major challenges and difficulties with your business. You need to believe in yourself. Your belief will help you overcome the problems that inevitably affect all self-employed persons at some point in their careers.

Has integrity**This characteristic applies to statement 16.**

People often cite honesty and integrity as characteristics of entrepreneurs. Customers do not want to deal with business owners who are dishonest and unethical. You should feel positive about your ethical treatment of people and be committed to conducting your business with the utmost integrity.

Has determination**This characteristic applies to statement 17.**

One of the most important characteristics of entrepreneurs is determination. This trait is closely related to self-confidence. The more you believe in yourself, the more likely you are to continue to struggle for success when faced with tremendous obstacles. You need determination in order to overcome the problems that beset every new venture.

Adapts to change**This characteristic applies to statements 13 and 19.**

A new business changes rapidly, so an entrepreneur must be able to adapt to change. Two primary skills are required for adaptation to change: the capacity to solve problems, and the ability to make quick decisions. Another skill is the ability to learn from your experiences and to seek formal learning that will help solve your problems. To be a successful entrepreneur, you will need all of these capabilities.

Has a good network of professionals**This characteristic applies to statement 20.**

An entrepreneur has a good network of professionals. This network provides access to those who can be consulted for advice, information, and referrals. You should have an extensive network of professionals to whom you can turn for assistance.