

Chapter

1

Your Business Starts with You

In This Chapter

- ◆ Understand the relationship between you and your company
- ◆ Do you have what it takes to start a business?
- ◆ A look at your personal goals
- ◆ A look at your financial goals
- ◆ Transitioning from corporate employee to business owner

“Aren’t you supposed to go into the office today?” asked Judy’s husband Mike, nudging her shoulder from his side of the bed.

“Just let me sleep a little while longer. It’s Saturday and I’ve had a long week,” grumbled Judy.

Mike sat for a moment waiting to see if she would say more. She didn’t.

“Okay. What’s up? You have a big contract proposal due on Monday and I think you said that it will take you all day to prepare it. So what’s the deal?”

Judy rolled over to face him. He was right and she knew it. But she just wanted a day off, even if it was a Saturday. On the other hand, she stood a reasonable shot at winning this proposal and it would set her up for at least three months of work. Not a bad deal in a slow economy.

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“I’m just missing being home with you and the kids,” she said. “I get tired of working alone all the time and the thought of working all day on a weekend by myself while you guys are off playing bums me out.”

Mike had seen her like this before and had a proposal for her:

“Tell you what. You get your butt out of bed and head into the office for the morning. Get as much done as you can by 1 o’clock and the kids and I will bring you in some sandwiches. We’ll do a picnic at work on that little lawn area.”

Judy looked resolute in her lethargy so Mike pulled out the big negotiation guns. He knew that once she started she would finish.

“Okay. I’ll sweeten the pot a little. If you win this job, we’ll plan a vacation to spend some of the money you will earn. How does a week in Paris sound?”

Judy brightened up with the thought of a vacation. It had been well over a year since they just took some time off and she would need it if she won this project.

“Throw in lunch today with Paris and you have a deal,” she replied, feet already on the floor and heading toward the shower.

Every journey has its beginning, and your journey to becoming a successful small business owner starts with this chapter and you. Here we discuss your interests, your personality traits, and your goals as they relate to starting your own business. Simply stated, it is just silly for you to start a business that you will grow to resent or to create a lifestyle for yourself that you wouldn’t wish on someone you didn’t like. Your business must support your personal goals, including those that are financial, family, lifestyle, and intangible in nature.

Believe it or not, not everyone is meant to be an *entrepreneur*. There are plenty of people who prefer working for someone else. (In fact, some people are better off working for someone else.) Understanding your own motivations is critical to deciding

whether starting your own business will bring you happiness or grief.



Talking Business

An **entrepreneur** is an individual who starts and runs his or her own business rather than remaining an employee of someone else’s company. You can start an antique store and be an entrepreneur.

You’ll quickly learn that it’s really easy to start a business. All you have to do is sell something or fill out a few forms, and you’re in business. However, starting a business that generates adequate and consistent income while providing personal reward is more difficult. This chapter provides the help you will need to make decisions that will be both fulfilling and profitable.

Understand That You Are the Company— at First Anyway

Perhaps the one characteristic that differentiates a startup business from all others is the dramatic impact that the founders/owners have on the operation of the company. There is simply no way to separate the owners from the company in the early stages. Customers write checks to the company name but they think of themselves as doing business with the founder/owner. After all, when a company is small, there is really only one major decision maker: the owner. Owners set the ethics, quality, and value standards of their company, and those who think otherwise are kidding themselves. You create the public reputation and operational standards by which your future, larger, company will function. Make them ones that not only make you money but are also those that you can personally live with.

Startups are usually cash poor and must make due with as few employees as possible to stretch out the initial funding as long as possible. Keeping the employee overhead low is best accomplished with the founders doing as much of the work as possible until the cash flow becomes predictable enough to justify adding employees along with their associated expenses.



Listen Up

The founders should have a clear handle on their respective personality strengths and weaknesses along with a comprehensive inventory of each founder's specific skills. In this way, they can use themselves to best advantage keeping employee expenses low. As the company grows, founders struggle with another difficult skill: letting go of all of those things they did when the company was small.

Do You Have What It Takes?

There is a lot of folklore out there about startups and their founders. It is often difficult to separate fact from fantasy when evaluating founders, their startups, and their successes or failures.

Here are a few things that I have learned from entrepreneurs, about entrepreneurs:

- ◆ Most have started multiple businesses with the first few not really doing very well. Many have gone bankrupt multiple times and keep coming back to try again.
- ◆ Most resent bureaucracy and tend to fall behind in maintaining the administrative sides of their businesses.

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- ◆ Most get restless when things are going smoothly and are always looking for that next growth opportunity.
- ◆ They have a difficult time balancing the need for personal control with the need to trust employees to act on their behalf. Holding on too tightly to the reins often limits their business's growth opportunities in the process.
- ◆ Most treat the business like it is a child at first and later as a family member. Don't laugh. It will likely happen to you as well. Think about it: You will likely spend more time with your business than with your family, all the while knowing that this time is improving your family's financial security.
- ◆ Most will complain about the level of personal risk they live with and then risk it all again on what they believe is their next great idea.
- ◆ Most earn a decent income but very few earn the Bill Gates billions that make such great publicity.
- ◆ Most are normal people with a strong work ethic and commitment to providing the best quality to their customers.
- ◆ Most enjoy the freedom that comes with running their own show and paying their own bills, and are willing to accept the responsibilities that come with having that freedom.
- ◆ Many run their own businesses for a few years and then return to work as employees, no longer wanting to have the headaches associated with running their own shops. These people often make great employees as they have a more senior-level perspective of what is required to make a business run.

Do any of these points sound attractive to you? Do you have the intense desire to exercise your own judgment, take your own risks, and create something from nothing? Do you want the financial independence that provides you with the freedom to do things with your life that you couldn't do otherwise? Do you have an idea that nobody at work supports or thinks is a good idea? Do you believe strongly enough in the idea that you have to try it yourself, or you will always wonder how it would have turned out?

If this is the case, then you have the passion, the "right stuff," for becoming a successful entrepreneur. Now it is time to see if you have the personality traits and skills needed to turn your business passion and idea into a profitable reality.

What Makes a Great Entrepreneur?

Whether an entrepreneur is born or made is a topic for scholars and philosophers. Suffice it to say that entrepreneurs come in all shapes, sizes, races, genders, and nationalities. Also suffice it to say that they have a few common characteristics that tend to differentiate the entrepreneur from those folks who work as an employee. These differences are not themselves a criteria for success. They are required to deal with the typical demands of the entrepreneurial life.

Here are a few “truths” about the typical entrepreneurial situations:

- ◆ Money is usually in short supply.
- ◆ Ideas are not fully developed and indeed are often developed while simultaneously introducing the product.
- ◆ There is never enough time to fully research or plan an idea or strategy.
- ◆ Things rarely turn out as you expected, which is really related to the prior point. The less research done, the more uncertainty there is with respect to future occurrences.
- ◆ Entrepreneurs must move forward in the face of uncertainty or ambiguity.

In summary, dealing with these typical startup situations, entrepreneurs must ...

- ◆ Have the ability to move forward in the face of large uncertainty.
- ◆ Be willing to start—to get going when others might wait.
- ◆ Be highly self-motivated.
- ◆ Be willing to adapt along the way as things change from the expected.
- ◆ Believe in their ability to do what must be done to fulfill their customer commitments and business obligations.
- ◆ Make the image of success secondary to functioning on a shoestring.
- ◆ Have faith in their idea when others are not sure, while also not holding on too long to a bad idea to the extent that the financial health of the company comes into jeopardy.



Listen Up

I have entrepreneurs come in to speak to my university classes. The students regularly tell me that they acquire a higher level of respect for entrepreneurs after learning the daily realities that come with starting your own business. Some feel that entrepreneurship is not for them after better understanding the realities that come with opportunities and return more happily to their normal “day job.”

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- ◆ Be able to sell their products or services to prospective customers—be perceptive enough to determine how to create a fit between the customer needs and their company’s offering. Creating this fit might involve a complete redesign of their offering, but it may be worth it to secure the business.
- ◆ Be able to quickly understand the important aspects of a situation and then act appropriately to those important aspects. This is particularly important in the early selling phase of the company, when reputation is limited and customer-perceived risk is at an all-time high.

What Are Your Strengths and Abilities?

Before you start your business, you’ll want to be sure that you have a solid foundation in the major aspects of business management, or make friends with good people who do. You also want to know where your personal strengths lie and where you will need help.

Answer the following questions as honestly as possible by placing a number between 1 and 10 in the blank. Use a 1 when you feel that the statement least applies to you and a 10 when it very strongly applies to you.

This is important: Don’t look at the paragraphs following this table before completing the personal assessment. Make it as honest as you can.

Personal Assessment Procedure

Assessment (1 = LOW 10 = HIGH)	Statement
_____	I am comfortable with moving forward and making decisions when I don’t have all the answers to important questions.
_____	I am typically the one initiating things for my family, friends, or at work.
_____	I can keep myself on track even when nobody else is watching or monitoring my performance or activities.
_____	I can adapt my thinking and focus along the way as events change.
_____	I trust my current capability level and also believe that I can learn what is needed to meet future demands.
_____	I care more about getting the job done than how good I look doing that job. Performance is more important than image.
_____	I trust my business judgement and am willing to move forward on what I believe to be a good business idea even if others are not supportive of that idea.

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Assessment (1 = LOW 10 = HIGH)	Statement
_____	I trust my sales ability and know that I can sell my business along with its products and/or services as well as anyone.
_____	I tend to see the truth of a situation before others and can take the most effective actions for a given situation.
_____	I have enough money in savings, or access to enough money, to pay my personal and business bills for at least 6 months.
_____	Sum Total of All Rows (Between 10 and 100)

Make sure that you add up the total of all the table rows and write that total in the space allocated.

No doubt you will be higher in some areas and lower in others. That is normal for all people, including entrepreneurs. This process gives you a general guideline as to where you fit on the overall successful entrepreneurship scale and also tells you something about your areas of strength and areas where you could use some improvement.

If you scored less than 50, you may not be cut out for starting your own business. You may be better suited as an employee instead of being the personal responsible for all of the pressure and uncertainty of running your own show. You might want to keep your “day job” and spend more time talking in depth with entrepreneurs to get a better sense of what their day really looks like. You may have shortchanged yourself on your initial answers, but if your initial answers were accurate, then you need to surround yourself with people who will help you in your lower-rated assessment traits.

If you scored between 51 and 70, you show some entrepreneurship tendencies but might be better served working for a small business for a while first to get a better idea of what is involved. I would call this group a transition group.

If you scored over 71, you are likely champing at the bit to get started on your own business. You are probably beyond thinking about whether you “should or shouldn’t” and are on to when, how, how many, and for how much. This will be particularly true for those of you who score higher and have fairly routine jobs with little excitement or uncertainty. This group should beware jumping on the first idea that comes along and should spend the time preparing the plan outlined in Chapter 3 and its supporting chapters.

No simple test like this can possibly evaluate all of the skill and personality aspects that make you who you are. And no generalization could possibly tell you *with absolute certainty* whether you will or won’t make it starting your own business. Ultimately, the decision is yours.

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If you are interested in a more detailed assessment procedure, stop by my website (www.edpaulson.com) and take the Detailed Entrepreneur Assessment Questionnaire.

Do yourself a favor. Don't skimp or delude yourself on this portion of your evaluation process. All small business entrepreneurs quickly learn that they are their companies' most important assets. They also learn that they will spend an immense amount of time doing what is required to make their businesses succeed. Doing what you want improves your chances of success. Doing what you like improves the quality of life as you work toward that success. Not ensuring a match in both of these important areas plants the seeds of failure before you even start. Before you commit money, energy, and time to your venture, make sure that it is something you really want to do.

Been There ... Done That

All business owners fantasize about giving up the administrative hassles of running a business from time to time. I'll even admit to fantasizing about taking a job counting screws in a hardware store every once in a while!

A few years ago, when things were on a downturn with my business, I was talking with a fellow entrepreneur. When she asked how things were going, I said, "They are pretty bad right now, and I think some radical changes are due." She asked, "Are you thinking of getting a job?" I smiled and said, "No," to which she replied, "Then things aren't that bad."

What Are Your Needs?

When determining the viability of a startup business idea, you must consider the compliment between the business you plan to start and how well it fits with your financial, family, and personal (spiritual) requirements. Otherwise, a few years down the road, you may find yourself resenting the company right at the point where it is poised to become the financial success you intended it to be. If your company does not make any money, it is a hobby. It helps to know how much you need to make ends meet.

This section prompts you to evaluate your own needs so that you can later map them against the requirements of your intended business. The overall intention is to best ensure that what your intended business will ask of you will be just what you are willing to give. Now that is business success if I ever heard it.

Financial Needs and Goals

How much money do you *want* to make, and how much money do you *need* to make? Understand that these two amounts are not the same. I've never met anyone who made as much money as they wanted, but most people make as much money as they need. It all comes down to how well they manage the money they make.

Wealth is a relative term. If you make \$100,000 per year and spend \$110,000, you are living beyond your means. Most people would consider you poor. However, if you make \$65,000 and spend \$50,000, then you're saving or investing \$15,000 a year. Over the course of just a few years, you would be considered wealthy.



Talking Business

Wealth means consistently having money left over after you pay all of your bills.

In short, don't just calculate how much money you want to bring in; look also at what it costs to live your current lifestyle. Calculate how much money you need to cover all your living expenses. You'll also have to account for the expenses associated with your business—federal taxes, state taxes, health insurance, life insurance, tuition assistance programs, vacation time, and so on. Don't guess at these amounts. Find out what you spent in each area over the last 12 months and use that as your baseline measurement for monthly financial survival. Let's face this issue head on—if you do not have a reasonable chance of making this amount of money in a short period of time, you should likely not start the business you intend. You simply cannot support yourself for a long period of time if the business cannot pay you enough salary to cover your monthly living expenses.

The total of your minimum living costs and fixed business expenses is the amount you need to earn to live as comfortably as you are living now. You have to make at least this amount of money, or one of the following three things must happen:

1. You decrease your expenses.
2. You figure out a way to make more money from your venture.
3. You stay with your current job until your finances are in order.

Look at your finances both on a short-term (12 months) and long-term (2 to 5 years) basis. First, you need to get through the short term to make it to the long term. If you do not have the money to support yourself for at least 12 months (some say 18 to 24 months), then you should hold off starting your venture until you have the needed savings. Or you can look for outside sources to provide the money you need, such as family members, friends, or banks and government agencies. (See Chapter 4 for more

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details.) You need to be able to support yourself during those initial lean months when your business probably will not be making enough to pay your rent or your mortgage. So start saving those pennies now.

You should also consider how much money you're willing to invest before you pull the plug on a business that is a cash drain. You may go to Las Vegas determined to stop gambling after you lose \$500. Likewise, you should set a limit on how much you're willing to invest in a new business before it must pay for itself. Your odds of success at entrepreneurship are much better than at the gambling tables, but it is still a risk and must be treated as such.

Setting your limit in writing up front can help you make the decision to shut your business down if and when the time comes. That is one reason for writing a business plan. It's hard to set limits, but doing it up front can save you a lot of time and money. The "Funding Needs" section of your business plan should detail these up-front needs with a high degree of confidence, or you have done yourself a disservice.



Listen Up

Most people dream of running their own businesses because they believe that it's the only way they'll become wealthy. For some, this is true. Most of the extremely wealthy members of our society obtained their money by owning a business, either one they started or one that they were given. In many cases, they saw an opportunity to introduce a new product or service to the market and jumped in quickly. Some have succeeded and made millions—even billions. How about Larry Ellison of Oracle, Debbie Fields of Mrs. Fields' cookies, or even Henry Ford?

In their book *The Millionaire Next Door*, authors Thomas Stanley and William Danko suggest that owning a business is one strategy for becoming wealthy. Only 20 percent of American workers are self-employed, but they comprise two-thirds of American millionaires.

Not everyone who starts a business becomes wealthy. Statistics suggest that only 20 percent of all new businesses will be around in five years. When a business fails, the owner rarely makes a lot of money on the deal. The average 1998 self-employed household makes around \$65,000, and the 1998 average business owner/manager household income is around \$124,000 according to a 2001 Small Business Administration report.

That may not sound bad to some of you, but just keep in mind the number of hours entrepreneurs have to put in to make that money. It's hard work! If you are already making that amount of money at a job you like, why would you take the chance? Many won't.

Also look at the total amount of money you will need to invest in order to get the business up and running. That total investment includes not only the amount of *cumulative cash requirement* of the business, but also the high likelihood that you may have to work for a significant length of time without taking a personal salary. If you reach the point where your projected cash supply is spent and you still can't afford to pay yourself a reasonable wage, it's time to decide whether this particular business is right for you. Your enthusiasm might be pointed in the wrong direction. Shifting your focus to a new business may be the key that opens the door to your financial success!



Talking Business

Cumulative cash requirement is the sum of all cash put into a company from the initial investment, including the total of all monthly cash provided to cover monthly net income shortfalls. The largest projected value represents the total amount of cash needed to fund the startup phase of your business.

Family Motivations and Goals

If you are the type of person who cannot leave your family alone for the evening or weekend without having intense feelings of guilt, then you should examine your startup intentions and your family's needs before you begin a new business venture. Without your family's support, it will be difficult for you to succeed. There will be times when you will need to work at night, on weekends, and on holidays. At these times, you will have to choose between family involvement and business commitments. Your family needs to accept your commitment to your business without being hurt or angry.

Communicate openly with your spouse, children, parents, and friends about what you want to do and what kind of a time and energy commitment it will take. It's a good idea to prepare them in advance for some of the sacrifices that you and they may have to make. And make sure they're willing to make those sacrifices!

If you sense from initial discussions that your family may resent your directing attention away from them and toward a business, think about ways that you can involve them in the company. Instead of thinking that you have to choose between business and family, talk with them about what you can all do together to run a business.

Been There ... Done That

People often don't understand that your startup business is like your boss. You might have to work after hours in a "normal" job. Why should you not have to do the same for your own business? You should have to, and your family must understand that this is true. Working for yourself doesn't mean that you take off whenever you, or they, like.

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Putting your children on the payroll may be a savvy tax strategy to consider. In addition, making your spouse an employee may enable you to pay for your family's health insurance through the company. It's definitely something to look into. The more they have invested in the success of the business, the more they will support you to do the work needed to make it succeed.

Many divorces have resulted from the feeling that the business is more important than everything else in the business owner's life. Be sure your family knows that this is not the case. Typically, just telling them won't do it; you have to show them by setting aside time to be with them.

Spend the time to get your family involved from the beginning. Set their expectations properly to best avoid having recurring ugly scenes later. Your family can become a source of strength if they understand the importance of their support in your and the business's success. Nobody is an island, and you may end up alone snuggling your checkbook if you don't handle your family situation with respect.

What Are Your Spiritual Goals?

Spirituality has more to do with what makes us feel good as human beings than with formal religion. For some of us, a business helps us achieve spiritual goals through the belief that by providing a valued service to our clients, we are improving their lives. Spiritual goals can also be reached by creating an organization to perform social service work, such as a food kitchen or a halfway house. Some entrepreneurs want to create an organization where their employees can realize their full potential. In a world of compromised corporate ethics, some people start their own business to ensure that they can always work in an ethical environment of their own creation. This is motivation enough for them.

One of my clients is determined to start her own business, but not for any of the personal financial reasons we've discussed so far. She has enough money to support herself and has started businesses before. But she now wants to start one to bring new attention to the plight of people in recovery for alcohol or substance abuse. Her belief is that by creating products to better meet the needs of this group, she can draw attention to and help support them, donating the bulk of the profits to related charities and human service agencies. Like many other entrepreneurs, she is dedicated to her business idea; she just happens to be doing it for spiritual reasons.

In essence, don't neglect the nonbusiness side of your soul when deciding to start your own business. In fact, there are many people who believe that you should look here first.

Escaping the Big House—Leaving Corporate America

This section is for those of you who are now working for someone else and are interested in branching off into your own business. It may be that you have seen many of your fellow employees be “right-sized,” and you are wondering when your turn will come. It may be that you now don’t trust corporate life as the secure lifetime investment you previously assumed it to be and want to have more control over your employment destiny.

I contend that employees are really contract workers in today’s work environment. I don’t mean that from a legal perspective but more from a practical perspective. Very few people I talk to today believe that they will still be working for their current employer when they retire.

Employees work for their employer by choice. If a better job offer comes along, many will likely take it. Most publicly held companies have now shown themselves prone to laying people off if needed, even if the cash reserves to suffer a downturn is on-hand. This is the essence of a contracting relationship: The contractor chooses the client and the client selects the contractor, both knowing that the relationship will end at some future date. They negotiate the financial and responsibility details that apply during the contracting period, but both know that the relationship is temporary and not one for life.

Once you realize that you are essentially a contractor, your approach to work changes. You start to manage your time differently, always looking over your shoulder for your next engagement, knowing that the steady paycheck will at some point come to an end. You start to increase your savings, knowing that you might have a period of no income between engagements. You start to set up your medical and other personal benefits so that you, and not the client, has primary control over them.

I speak quite often on this topic and provide the following advice to those aspiring entrepreneurs who are currently employed:

- ◆ Start building your savings so that you have the financial resources to weather an unexpected job termination. This should be a minimum of 6 months of living expenses (12 months preferred), but don’t stop there—keep saving. It will always pay off.
- ◆ Start the personal evaluation and business planning process while you are still employed. This way, you already have a running start should you be terminated.
- ◆ Knowing that you have someplace else to go (your own business) may make you more effective in your current job. You lose nothing by planning out your personal business while still employed.

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- ◆ You may come to appreciate your current job more as you realize what is involved in going it alone. It will likely give you a more mature look at what happens at your employer, letting you treat work as a “lab” of sorts. Consider going to night school to take business-oriented classes. They will make you a better manager for your employer and for your own business, and your employer may pay the tuition to boot!
- ◆ Keep it to yourself that you are planning to go off on your own. You may never take the entrepreneurship plunge, and nothing is gained in letting others know about your aspirations early in the planning process.
- ◆ Keep your entrepreneur’s eye open at work for opportunities that could make your employer your first startup customer. But don’t bring it up at work until you really are ready to go it alone since they may fire you on the spot if they know you are planning to leave. You just never know. Have a lot of your plan finished, and proven viable, before talking about it in public.
- ◆ Don’t set yourself up to resent your current job if it is one that allows you to do what you enjoy, to do what you are good at, to make a good income with solid benefits, and provides a sense of personal satisfaction. If you are already happy with what you are doing, there may be little motivation to change jobs; but it is always a good idea to have a contingency plan in place should your job suddenly disappear.



Listen Up

Just as you might occasionally envy the entrepreneurial lifestyle, the entrepreneur occasionally envies those of you who have a job you love working for someone else. More than one entrepreneur has returned to corporate life after selling their own business simply to not have the headaches that come with that “enviable” entrepreneurial lifestyle.

If you already have a job, great! If it is a job you love, even better! There is little in professional life more satisfying than working within a group of dedicated people doing what they love while making a positive difference in the world. Larger companies can provide this opportunity where, by contrast, starting your own business is usually a very solitary experience, especially in the early days. Just know that a shifting of the economic times at your company could cost you your job through no fault of your own. At that point, you want to have taken the steps outlined in this section to make sure that you are ready for the change, perhaps using it as a starting point for becoming a successful entrepreneur.

What Is Your Personal Bottom Line?

Ultimately, it all comes down to you. What do you want, and why do you want it? Do you think that running your own business will give you the fulfillment that's been missing in your current job? Are you willing to earn less money for a while as you try to establish your company? How far are you willing to go to make your business work? Are you willing to get up and go to work even when nobody is going to yell at you if you stay home and watch soap operas?

If you like the stability of working 9 to 5, wake up! Owning your own business means that you don't have set hours because you'll be working long hours in the early stages. If this paragraph alone is enough to talk you out of pursuing your own business, then send me a thank you card. You are not ready yet to make that kind of commitment. It doesn't mean that you never will, just that right now is not your time.

On the other hand, if after reading this chapter you not only feel that starting your own business is the right thing to do but also have a better idea of what you bring to its success, then congratulations! You have just crossed a first major hurdle toward not only thinking and acting like an entrepreneur but also trusting that you are the right person to start your business. Some feel that these may be the most important decisions you will ever make in creating a successful business.

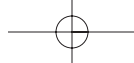


On the CD

When you start your own business, you *are* the business. People may think that they are working with a "company," but underneath it all, they know that they are working with a person: you. Your word and your integrity are all you have in the early days since you really don't have a track record. Take a few minutes to read the special bonus section I put on the CD entitled "Your Ethics and Your Business" (CD01-1). Make sure you keep this very important issue in the front of your thinking. You can usually recover from a mistake, but it is really difficult to recover from a breach of integrity.

The Least You Need to Know

- ◆ Understanding your personal needs, goals, skills, and personality before you start your own business is critical to later success.
- ◆ Setting a limit on your losses and time investment is a valuable step before you start your own business and one important reason for writing a business plan.



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- ◆ Make sure you have enough money saved to support yourself for at least 12 months in addition to the money needed to fund and establish your new business.
- ◆ Getting your family's support and acceptance for starting a business is a necessary step, or you might find yourself choosing between the two, which is a no-win for everyone.
- ◆ Planning to start your own business while still employed is a good move that protects you and your family from an unexpected job termination.

