

SELF-ASSESSMENT

You may already be on the right path and well on your way to developing the attitudes, skills, and characteristics of successful entrepreneurs. Find out how you measure up, and learn where you have to improve and how you can build on your strengths.

Is Entrepreneurship for Me?

Is entrepreneurship for you? It can be, since almost anyone can become an entrepreneur. Most successful entrepreneurs have learned to do what they do, and so can you. Of course, not everyone will want to start their own business. However, increasingly, the competitive marketplace is pressuring everyone to become more entrepreneurial. So, instead of asking, "Am I cut out to be an entrepreneur?" you should ask, "How entrepreneurial am I now, and what can I do to become more entrepreneurial?" The following exercise will help you determine approximately how entrepreneurial you tend to be now. It can help you to determine how you can become more entrepreneurial—by working toward "Wow! That's me exactly!"

Check the extent to which each statement below applies to you.

Does this sound like you?	That is definitely not me.	Sometimes that's me.	That's me most of the time.	Wow! That's me exactly!
Nobody has to tell me to get to work. I figure out what has to be done and do it before I'm asked.	—	—	—	—
I like to be in control of whatever jobs I'm doing.	—	—	—	—
I'm rarely satisfied with the way things are. I want to change them, make them better.	—	—	—	—
I'm good with people. I enjoy creating teams of people to tackle a challenging task.	—	—	—	—
I rarely take no for an answer. I am known to be very persistent because I know I can't accomplish much on the first try. I just keep on trying.	—	—	—	—
If I'm told something is impossible to do, I often can't resist seeing if it's true. I don't mind failing if I learn something in the process.	—	—	—	—
Whatever job I have, I need to feel that I'm accomplishing something, not just putting in time.	—	—	—	—

More than anything else, I love to earn money. It gives me freedom and power.	—	—	—	—
When I'm working for someone else, I'm always thinking of how I'd change things if it were my business.	—	—	—	—
I'm willing to accept responsibility and take the heat if my decisions are wrong, but I want the credit (or rewards) when I make decisions that produce the right results.	—	—	—	—
When I'm doing work I really like, I don't mind working hard for long hours. In fact, it doesn't even seem like work.	—	—	—	—
I have dreams I want to pursue, and I won't be satisfied until I find out whether or not I can achieve them.	—	—	—	—

Assess Your Entrepreneurial Characteristics

Every entrepreneur is unique, but they all tend to share certain characteristics. It's important that you learn which characteristics you have already developed and which ones you need to develop more. Try the self-assessment exercise below to find out how well you've developed the characteristics that successful entrepreneurs tend to share. Remember, this isn't a clinical assessment, but it will give you an idea of where your strengths are and which characteristics you need to work on.

Check the column that best describes you.

	Not yet.	Sometimes.	Most of the time.	Always
I am passionate about my goals	—	—	—	—
I have a spirit of adventure	—	—	—	—
I have a strong need to achieve	—	—	—	—
I am self-confident and self-reliant	—	—	—	—
I am goal-oriented	—	—	—	—
I am innovative, creative, and versatile	—	—	—	—
I am persistent; I don't give up easily	—	—	—	—
I am hardworking and energetic	—	—	—	—

I am a positive thinker	—	—	—	—
I am willing to take initiative	—	—	—	—
I am able and willing to commit myself	—	—	—	—

Assess Your Entrepreneurial Skills

Entrepreneurs tend to start ventures that build on specific skills they've already developed and knowledge they've already acquired in a certain occupation or industry, for example, auto repair. But all entrepreneurs tend to share other, more general, skills such as communication, team-building, and creative-thinking skills. Try the assessment exercise below to find out how well you've developed the skills that successful entrepreneurs tend to use to start and grow their ventures.

Remember, this isn't a clinical assessment, but it will give you an idea of where your strengths are and which skills you need to work on. Unlike characteristics, which you need yourself, skills can be acquired by hiring people who have the ones you lack. So don't feel too bad if you don't score well in every category.

Check the column that best describes your skill level.

Skill	Not Developed	Beginner	Quite Capable	Very Capable
creative thinking <i>(I find new ways to solve problems)</i>	—	—	—	—
planning and research <i>(I know how and where to find information and how to use it.)</i>	—	—	—	—
decision making <i>(I study my option, then decide)</i>	—	—	—	—
organization <i>(I set priorities and organize to achieve them)</i>	—	—	—	—
communication (oral) <i>(I speak and present clearly and effectively)</i>	—	—	—	—
communication (writing) <i>(I produce accurate, clear, error-free writing)</i>	—	—	—	—
team building <i>(I know how to assemble, motivate, and empower an effective team)</i>	—	—	—	—

marketing (selling) <i>(I know how to sell and can describe what selling involves)</i>	—	—	—	—
financial management <i>(I know how to manage cash flow and how to read a bottom line)</i>	—	—	—	—
record keeping <i>(I can identify and use business forms; file and record financial transactions)</i>	—	—	—	—
goal setting <i>(I set and work toward short-, medium-, and long-term goals)</i>	—	—	—	—
business management <i>(I can manage people effectively, delegate responsibility, and answer for the bottom line)</i>	—	—	—	—