

What is an entrepreneur?

An entrepreneur is simply a person who takes the risk of starting a new business. The word derives from the French "entre" (to enter) and "prendre" (to take), and in a general sense applies to any person starting a new project or trying a new opportunity.

In South Africa there are many people who will not find jobs. Starting a business is an alternative way of making a living. Can you start your own business?

People often ask the question – am I an entrepreneur? How do you know if you are an entrepreneur? Is an entrepreneur born or can a person learn to become an entrepreneur?

Many people who start their own business fail! However, there are those who start and fail but they eventually succeed if they do not give up. For this reason one of the key aspects of success in starting a business is *PERSISTANCE*.

If you are determined to succeed you will eventually make a success of your future.



Activity 1: Am I an entrepreneur? (Rate yourself).

Rank yourself on a scale of 1 to 5 for each of the following dimensions. Place an "X" in the appropriate column. Some areas you might score low whereas others you may score high. Be honest and realistic in your assessment of how you measure in each of these dimensions.

Dimensions	1 Very low	2 Low	3 Avg	4 High	5 Very high
1. Persistent: Intense and determined desire to complete a task or solve a problem; a strong determination to get the job done. I don't give up once I have set my mind to doing something.					
2. Self-Belief: Belief in yourself and your ability to achieve your goals. A sense that events in your life are self-determined.					
3. Long-Term Involvement: Commitment to long-term, future projects and to working towards goals that may be quite distant in the future.					
4. Money As A Measure: Money is a measure of what you have accomplished – it is a way of keeping score - rather than achievement of power.					
5. Drive and Energy Level: Able to work actively for long hours with less than normal sleep.					
6. Goal Setting: Desire and tendency to establish your own standard of performance. Do you have your own goals? Do you have the ability to set clear goals and objectives?					
7. Risk Taking: You have a preference for taking moderate, calculated risks. Not so small as to be a "gamble", nor so large as to be a "sure thing".					
8. Dealing with Failure: You may be disappointed by failure but you use failures as learning experiences. When you fail you try to understand your role in causing the failure in order to avoid similar problems in the future.					
9. Taking Initiative: You have a desire to seek and take initiative. You try to put yourself in situations where you are personally responsible for the success or failure. You are a doer (self-reliant).					
10. Internal locus of Control: The belief that one's accomplishment as well as failures lie within one's personal control and influence rather than determined by luck or outside circumstances.					
11. Tolerance of Ambiguity: You are able to live with modest uncertainty concerning your job and career security, on a continuous basis.					
12. Creative: You like coming up with new ideas and concepts. You think out the box. You are always coming up with new ideas based on the opportunities that you see around you.					
Total					

Scoring: The results of the self-assessment are scored out of a total of 60. Rate yourself.

0 – 25 low	25- 35 medium	35 – 45 high	45 – 60 very high
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Activity 1: Can I learn to become an entrepreneur? Can I learn to become a better entrepreneur?

The answer to these questions is YES!

There is no-one who possesses all the entrepreneurial traits and skills. Some people possess more than others, but, most definitely you can learn entrepreneurial traits and skills. If you consider yourself to be an entrepreneur then you can learn to become a better entrepreneur. Some people become entrepreneurs because they are ambitious and want to better themselves, for instance, they may have been working for an organization in a specialized field for many years and decide that they would like to open their own business in this field. Other people are forced to set up their own business because they have lost their jobs or cannot find work.

In the exercise below, learn to become a better entrepreneur by first identifying some of your strengths and weaknesses:

1. Write down your entrepreneurial strengths:

2. Your entrepreneurial weaknesses:

3. How do you think you will perform as an entrepreneur?

4. Have you ever started your own business before (no matter how small)?
For instance, you may have bought and sold sweets, traded cards or even
done odd jobs to make money.

Activity 2: Your dream business

What is your dream business? If you could do any kind of business in the world
what would it be? Think about things that you are good at or things that you would
like to do. In 10 lines or more, describe what this business would be.

Activity 3: Brainstorming business ideas (in groups)

Brainstorming is a technique people use to generate ideas. Brainstorming is a method of overcoming a problem. Test a few brainstorming principles within your group.

Brainstorm Human Needs

Select a clean sheet of paper. At the top of this sheet of paper write the heading, "Human needs". In the left hand column make a list of all the different types of human needs that you can possibly think of, i.e. need for "Food", "Shelter" etc. In the right hand column write down a number of business ideas that you can associate with this need. Select the most original idea.

Human need

Business opportunities (list as many as you can think of)

Food

Sandwich take-away, mobile pop corn vendor etc.

Shelter

Security

Learning Area: Life Orientation
Learning Outcome: Careers and career choices
Additional Resources: Job Hunting Skills

Entertainment

etc. ..