



FOUR QUESTIONS TO ASK IF YOU WANT TO WORK FOR YOURSELF

How do you turn your dreams of working for yourself into reality? Here are four questions dealing with self-analysis, which will help you discover whether you have what it takes to work for yourself.

Your answers will need to be positive before you go to the next step.

Question 1: Why do you want to work for yourself?

Are you frustrated in your present job? Want to earn more money? Be independent? Do something different? Or you think you'll be good at it?

Don't take this question lightly; it could make the difference between success and failure.

If your answer is "Because a girl/guy I know works from a home-based office and it doesn't seem that hard," then you may be in for a surprise.

Brian, a friend and neighbour of mine, is a good example. He knew I worked for myself and had done so for some time. When he'd had enough working for someone else, he decided to go it alone. He'd worked for many years in human relations and thought he could use these skills selling real estate. He passed his qualifications and made an alliance with an agent. But it wasn't that simple.

Each day he had to motivate himself to get property listings, after all, no listings: no houses to sell. The agent gave him leads, but a lead and a listing are two very different things.

His telephone rang hot during the evenings and weekends because that's the free time most people have to discuss purchasing and selling homes. He hadn't thought of this aspect of his work.

One morning I saw him watering his garden, he was unshaven, wore an old pair of shorts, his hair was in a mess. I stopped and asked how his business was going? In a nutshell it wasn't and he was looking for another job. He realised there was more to working for himself than simply not commuting every day.

Question 2: Are you disciplined enough to work for yourself?

Liking the idea of becoming a solo enterprise and actually making it happen takes discipline. You need to be prepared for long hours in the beginning, be excited about learning new skills, such as how to sell your services or products, or simply getting out of bed early enough to make it work.

You may have to educate your friends and family so they understand that working for yourself is a real job and they can't just pop in when they like.

Question 3: Are you a good money manager?

It's one thing to earn heaps of money and another to know how to make it last through the leaner times. If money burns a hole in your pocket, you may need to take a course in managing money.

Question 4: Do you have staying power?

This last question is very important.

Staying power means having the ability to keep going, even when times are tough. I've taken the following paragraph from one of my favourite books *Believe and Achieve!* by Paul Hanna:

"Think back to the last time you planted a seed in your garden. When you plant a seed, you keep giving it as much water as it needs to grow into a beautiful flower or shrub, and wait for it to grow. You wouldn't dream of going outside the next day and expecting to see the flower as it appeared on the seed packet, would you? You wouldn't go back to the plant nursery and demand your money back because the flower didn't grow overnight."

Your business will need time to grow from a seed to success. You will have to nurture it and this takes staying power.

About the Author:

Barb has been a successful business writer/editor/communicator since 1989. She writes in plain language and believes material for print and the web should be clear, concise and user-friendly. Please visit her website at www.barbclews.com to find out more.