

Characteristics of an Entrepreneur

The following list describes some common characteristics of an entrepreneur. The number(s) after each characteristic indicates the related statement(s) in the assessment form (i.e. **Entrepreneurial Self-Assessment Survey**).

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.

*(The words in **bold** and with an asterisk* are explained at the bottom of the article)*

Works Hard (Statements 1 & 8)

Self-employment requires a great deal of time and effort. The entrepreneur must perform a wide variety of time-consuming tasks. 77% of all entrepreneurs report working 50 hours or more 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.

Wants Financial Success (Statement 6)

A primary reason that most entrepreneurs have for going into business is to achieve financial success. 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.

Has Family Support (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.

Is Energetic (Statements 1 & 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.

Has an Internal "Locus of Control", (Statement 10)

Successful entrepreneurs have an internal *locus of control* or inner sense of responsibility for the outcome of a **venture***. To be an entrepreneur, you should have a strong sense of being a "**victor****" who is responsible for your actions. If, however, you often 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.

Takes Risks (Statement 3)

Entrepreneurs are risk takers. They risk their careers, time and money in order to make a success of their businesses. To be successful in self-employment, you should feel comfortable taking reasonable risks.

Sacrifices Employment Benefits (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 them for yourself.

Has a Need to Achieve (Statements 7 & 11)

Entrepreneurs have a strong need for achievement. They **strive*** to excel and accomplish objectives that are quite high. You should be willing to set high goals for yourself and enjoy striving to achieve those goals.

Has Business Experience (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.

Is Independent (Statements 5 & 9)

Entrepreneurs like to be 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.

Has a Self-employed Parent as a Role Model (Statement 14)

Research has shown that entrepreneurs are more likely to have a parent who is self-employed. A parent's inspiration and knowledge about operating a business can contribute to an entrepreneur's success.

Has Self-confidence (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 (Statement 16)

People often mention 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 (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 (Statement 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 mistakes.

Has a Good Network of Professionals (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.

Adapted from: <https://s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/>

A spouse - a person's husband or wife

To sacrifice – to give up something valuable to you

A venture – a new activity, usually in business, which involves risk or uncertainty

A victor – winner

To strive – to try hard

Inevitably - in a way that cannot be avoided

To Beset – affect, trouble