

5 reasons you need to work for yourself

Not everyone is cut out to stake their own claim and never draw a paycheck from someone else's company. But your bucket list may not truly be complete until you spend a year making money strictly from your own resourcefulness. Here's why you should take that entrepreneurial spirit for a spin:

1. **You're in for a heaping helping of pride.** There are few more lasting jolts of self-esteem than the one you get when you break off from bosses and organizations and head off on your own. Every day you survive as an independent contractor or self-employed business owner is another day you get to look in the mirror and say, "The world I live in is one I made." Calling your own shots is the healthiest ego boost you can get.
2. **You'll plug into a lot of voltage.** Don't quite have the energy you used to? You may find that quickly changing when you wake up in the morning focused on staying self-employed. You'll be making more decisions, learning more new skills, attacking problems harder and more creatively. All that is going to keep you naturally wired.
3. **You may just realize what life is all about.** We become quickly used to working for others in life, and unfortunately that often means telling ourselves we enjoy what we do. The fact is, our expectations may be slowly getting smaller and smaller because we've consigned ourselves to the reality we've made. But people who even briefly chase a passion intensely because their livelihood depends on it often come to see that what they *thought* they liked in a career falls far short. And sometimes they think, "No way will I ever go back to that little life."
4. **You'll gain that "awe factor" we all crave.** Telling people you work for yourself is a guaranteed way of making them see you as a leader, someone who's unafraid to take chances while so many of us are mired in quiet desperation. Plus, your résumé will be bolstered by mention of the time you ran the show yourself, no matter how briefly. Future employers are not likely to hold it against you that you decided to return to the workforce; they'll almost certainly be impressed by your will to self-determine instead.
5. **Because you can.** Chances are you're frightened of financial catastrophe if you work for yourself, or maybe you've just become very comfortable and reliant on a paycheck with certain numbers on it. But don't underestimate your earning potential and its ability to bounce back from adversity—it has before, hasn't it? Study after study has shown that once people have earned enough money to take care of their basic needs, acquiring more cash doesn't carry the benefits we assume. Earning a very nice living and being happy are, as we know, two very different things. And you have to wonder if anyone who truly chased a dream ever lay on their deathbed thinking, "I so regret doing that—think of the money I missed out on!"