

Is it time to start your own company?

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Starting a new venture and being your own boss might be quite enticing, but don't do it if you haven't done the following

It's hard to be 100% ready to give up the security of a full-time job for the unknown of running your own company. Being an entrepreneur requires you to navigate an inconsistent take-home salary, long hours, high risk and a lot of pressure. Executive coach [Penny Holburn](#) says there are, however, definite signs that indicate that it's worth going on your own.

- You have a business idea that is right for both you and your potential clients.
- You are a self-starter, are self-disciplined and work well on your own.
- You can visualise your business succeeding. You need to have a detailed picture of what your business is going to be like once it is up and running before you get going. If you cannot picture your business in action and yourself succeeding, then don't quit your day job until you can.
- You have done your research. You have investigated the market, talked to potential customers, checked out potential competitors and have the outline of a business plan.
- You are good at setting and achieving goals. You persevere when striving for goals and don't quit easily.

Holburn adds that before you quit, there are things you should do and have in place before you give up steady employment.

Research and validate your idea

To secure a market share you need to do a thorough competitor analysis. Research the market to determine all the similar products or businesses on offer, what their market share is, who their customer-base is and how they attract customers.

Then validate your idea by determining if there's a potential demand by selling your idea to your inner circle and professional contacts to establish your businesses potential weaknesses or threats. Try to reach your potential target market by hosting a survey on cost-effective platforms such as [Survey Monkey](#).

Pen your business plan

Don't just wing it. Give your business plan the time and effort it requires. Ensure that it includes an executive summary (this includes a description of your products or services, your unique selling proposition and your short- and long-term goals), your target market, marketing and sales plan, financial forecast, management and company overview.

Be in the right frame of mind

You need to be confident and emotionally stable. Ensure that you are able to manage the stress and pressure that comes with the demands and uncertainty of running your own company.

Have a strong support system

Starting your own company often comes with long hours and financial uncertainty. You need to have a positive outlook on life and people who will support you during challenging times.

Have financing

Be it your own savings, a retrenchment payout or a loan, you need capital to start your company and a nest egg to support yourself. Almost no one makes profits immediately so you have to have something to live on while your business gets going.

Find a mentor

Find mentors or advisors that have succeeded in your industry and/or entrepreneurship. In the early days you may need to do the marketing, financials, HR and run the company. For this reason, it's important to seek help when you aren't knowledgeable about a specific area of the business. Also bounce your idea off your mentor and ask them for the potential downfalls or risks to your idea so you can improve it.

Better your skills

Do whatever training, studying, reading or qualifying necessary to obtain the necessary skills and experience to start your business. The more you know, the more likely you are to succeed.

Get legal advice

Setting up a company, knowing your tax requirements or employing someone all requires legal know-how. To ensure that everything is above board from the onset, seek the advice of a legal professional in areas that you are uncertain of.