

Thinking about

Self employment?

An easier read guide to starting your own business

1. Your business idea





Rapid Enterprise Development (RED) operates across the health, employment, disability and social care sectors to offer interactive and accessible approaches to the development of enterprise opportunities with and for disabled people. For more information about the RED business guides, training resources and strategic support packages, visit our website:

www.rapid-enterprise.co.uk

RED is part of Mutually Inclusive Partnerships:

www.mutuallyinclusive.co.uk

(For RED Australia visit www.redbiz.com.au)



Introduction

The recent health crisis is changing the way we work. As a result, many people with learning difficulties are worried about their job or wonder if they will be able to get one in the future.

For some, the answer may lie in setting up their own business.

Self-employment can provide opportunities for people to use their skills and talents, create their own employment opportunities and have more control over how and where they work.



Thinking about self-employment? is a series of guides developed by Mutually Inclusive Partnerships as part of it's RED programme to help more disabled people explore self employment and small business ownership.

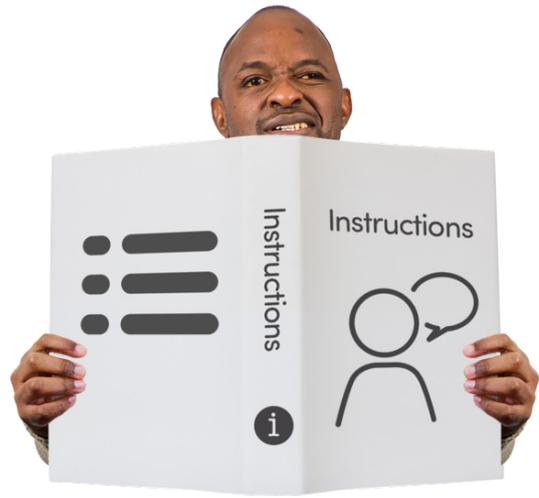
Of course, these short guides cannot cover everything and there may be more to think about if you decide that self-employment is something you want to explore further. More tools and resources are available on the RED website:

www.rapid-enterprise.co.uk.

All business ideas take time to develop, but by making the journey to enterprise a more straightforward and enjoyable experience, we hope that the guides go some way to support more people consider this route to work.

How to use these guides

These guides are designed to help you think about your business idea so you can see if it's likely to be a success.



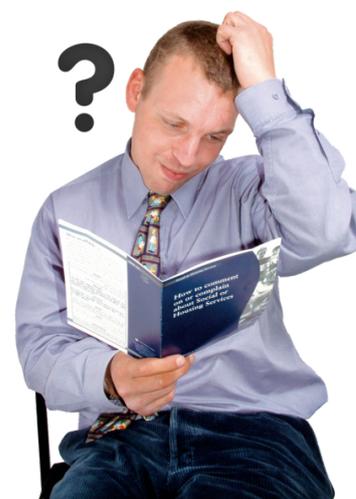
There are five guides in the series. Each one looks at an important aspect of running an enterprise:

- 1. Your business idea**
2. Getting productive
3. Money
4. Customers
5. Support



At the end of each section there is a worksheet to complete and questions to help you think about different aspects of your business idea. Later, these can be used as part of a business plan.

We have included pictures and tried to write in plain English. However, some business words might still be difficult to understand.



We have written these words in red. You can find out what these words mean at the end of the guide.

If you need some extra help you could look at the guides with someone from your family, a friend or a support worker.

Let's get started...



Section 1. Your business idea



One of the most important things when you are thinking about self-employment is to make sure you have a good business idea.

There are lots of different ways to get a good business idea. Some people spot an opportunity or have an idea out of the blue. Others have a particular skill, interest or talent that they want to use. It might also be possible to develop a hobby or pastime.

Your idea may be a new **product** or **service** or it might be a different way of doing something that other people already do.

However it is important to make sure that the idea fits your skills and interests.



- You might want to think about what you are good at and develop your idea from there. How can you use your skills to do something?
- Look at what's going on around you and think about what everyday problem your business could solve. For example more and more people are keen on living healthily - is there a new way to help them? Are there particular people who might need extra help?

- Can you think about the **products** or **services** you would find useful? You can then find out if other people would find them useful too.
- You may want to try making or doing a few things to see what works.





Talk to other people, see what they suggest. If you have a job coach, they should be able to help.

Remember, good ideas take time and are more likely to come when you start looking at what other businesses do and talking to people who could be your **customers.**

It is very rare that a business idea comes from nowhere. Most of the time it is about looking for opportunities and perhaps trying a few ideas. Your best business idea might not be your first!



What will you sell?

On the next page, try to describe your idea and what you might sell.

Think about where you will sell it, if each sale will be the same or whether every one will be different. Will you need other people or help with transport?

Even if your idea is not fully formed, try to think about how you would tell other people what your idea is.

You might want to come back to this page as your ideas develop.

Top tip
Many people start by thinking about what they are good at or what they are interested in



Worksheet 1 - What will you sell?

Describe what you want to sell



Is your idea something you make (a **product**) or something you do for other people (a **service**)?



Can you make or do it now or will you need practise?



Is the idea just for you or are others involved?



If so, who are they?



Worksheet 1 - continued

Will each sale be exactly the same or will it change depending on the **customer**, the day or the time?



Is this something you can do from home or would you need to go somewhere else?



How will you sell it? Face to face, online or some other way?

ebay



Is there anything else important about your business that you'd like to add?



Great!

Now you have started to describe your business idea, practise telling a family member or friend so you get used to explaining what you want to do!



Don't forget, although your idea can change, you are now on your way to having your own business. Next, we have a look at making or doing your idea.



The rest of the guides are all about bringing your idea to life - in the next section, we think about some of the practicalities

Business words used in this guide

Customers - the people who pay for your product or service.

Product - something you make to sell.

Service - something you do for other people.



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