

You Could Be An Entrepreneur If . . .

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Abstract

Occupational therapy practitioners have access to many resources about the multi-faceted process of starting a private practice, covering aspects such as skills, strategies, marketing, building a client base, and offering detailed, concrete, step by step approaches. These presenters, however, will propose to share their own experiences and what they have learned throughout their sundry careers as **entrepreneurs** (those who organize, manage, and assume the risks of a business or enterprise), and **intrapreneurs** (defined as corporate executives who develop new enterprises within their corporations).

Objectives

1. Participants will be able to describe a variety of contexts for becoming an entrepreneur or intrapreneur.
2. Participants will be able to recognize opportunities for career risk-taking.
3. Participants will be able to identify specific personal and professional skills that would assist in future career planning.

Characteristics of Entrepreneurs/Intrapreneurs

1. An unwavering passion. The advice to do what you love has become a bit of a cliché. Everyone says, "Find your passion." But that's easier said than done. Being an entrepreneur demands commitment and dedication -- more than most jobs do, I'd argue. If you're ambivalent or mildly enthused about your product or service, that's not going to sustain you through the highs and lows that will inevitably occur. If you find something you love enough to want to share it with others, that love will fuel and give you purpose.

2. Open-mindedness. The most successful entrepreneurs I know never forget how much they can learn from others. They ask for advice. They're flexible. They soak up the best practices around them like a sponge. Fear of failure can make it easy to grip onto your vision with an iron fist, but rigidity won't serve you.

3. The desire to be an expert. Entrepreneurs like a challenge. If they didn't, they'd probably have chosen another line of work. But as exciting as it is to consider a new field, high-achieving entrepreneurs know the benefits of staying in the same industry for a while are immense. When you spend years in the same industry, you learn its history. Knowing what's been done before can help you identify how it can and should move forward. In the meantime, you'll build a network of relationships to support you in future endeavors, especially when times are lean. Those relationships are invaluable.

4. A forward-looking approach. Successful entrepreneurs are always thinking ahead. They may stray from their roadmap, and that's okay, but they have one in mind. Having a clearly established set of goals will keep you from getting stuck. Your goals may be constantly evolving, but if you don't know where you want to go, chances are, you won't get anywhere.

5. A constant flow of ideas. Having one project that's doing well is great. But the successful entrepreneurs I know don't rest on their laurels. Instead, they're constantly asking themselves, "What's next?" They understand that being a successful entrepreneur is a lifestyle choice, not a destination.

References

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