**Top 10 Reasons for Self-employment**

In a very “employment-centric” economy where people are, on average, far more concerned about keeping the jobs they have or finding a job, the idea of going solo seems scarier than ever. But the truth is, self-employment can be a wonderful solution to dealing with a job loss or suffering economy! It’s sometimes strange to see people cling desperately to their jobs when there really is a better way of making things work. I know I sound brash – but there are many benefits to living the life of an entrepreneur. Read below for more…

**1. Your Work is Flexible**

A surprising part of self-employment that many new people who have decided to “take the plunge” have found is that their work lends room to a lot more variety. If you are selling garbanzo beans and doing well, you might add lima beans to your inventory to see if you can increase your sales.

Try convincing your boss to add lima beans to the company inventory.

The point is – if you feel like “shaking it up” and going in a different direction with your business, you don’t have to report to some faceless HR person to do it. You just do it.

**2. Your Earnings are Unlimited**

I’m going to risk being mercilessly attacked by some of my “employee friends” when I say this:

The only way you can really make a lot of money before you get old and grey is through a self-employed or business venture. (Or winning the lottery, I guess.)

Sure, you can invest in a retirement portfolio, but that’s defeated by my “old and grey” statement (not that I plan on acting old and grey when I’m in my sixties!) Most careers have this terrible blockade in the way of earnings. This blockade is almost impossible to work around once you are under it’s clutches. It gives you a false sense of security and prevents you from financial growth. It’s called a salary.

If you are self-employed, you don’t need a salary. You don’t need to ask for a raise. You can just go sell more garbanzo beans, or expand your business, or start another business venture.

**3. Entrepreneurs Usually Love Their Lives and Their Work**

Don’t believe me? Check out [this article](http://www.inc.com/news/articles/200710/survey.html). Or [this one](http://www.royalhollowayentrepreneurs.com/2009/10/entrepreneurs-are-happier/). It’s true – most of us are happier than the average 9-to-5er. I can tell you from experience that my quality of life has increased dramatically since I started my own business.

And yes, I am busier. But I’d certainly rather be busier on a challenging, exciting venture that I enjoy doing than sitting in an office with fixed hours and no power to take my business where I’d like it to go. The truth is, professional happiness is often a product of the feeling of being in control combined with productivity. Most people don’t have that much autonomy in a 9-to-5 job, even if they think they do. There is always someone higher-up that they need to report to, or some company loophole that they need to work through.

**4. Your Social Life isn’t Dictated by Your Job**

This one might surprise you a bit.

I’ve spoken with quite a few friends over the years who have told me that the idea of working for themselves sounds attractive, but that one thing they would miss is the office comraderie. Fair enough. But I can tell you from experience that many office relationships are just relationships of convenience and sanity. Sanity to keep you going through the day, so you aren’t alone. And just as misery loves company, joy thrives on independence.

The point is, I can be happy not being around co-workers all day because I love what I am doing. On top of this, some of the relationships I have formed in the past few years have been with other entrepreneurs – like-minded spirits who I have a lot in common with. Most business-owners are passionate, fascinating people. And we can meet at a coffee shop or the park at 3:00pm on a Wednesday without having to ask for time off :)

Office relationships can actually be stressful and demanding. Because you are forced into a tight space with others who might not share your interests or way of doing work, conflict is bound to arise. Normally, when personalities mis-match after meeting someone for the first time, both parties can say “nice to meet you” and go on their merry ways. Not in the office. At work, you are stuck together worse than the glue-stick is stuck to the inside of your drawer.

To make matters worse…



**5. Being Employed Means Being Part of a Hierarchy**

Have you ever been to Sweden?

I actually haven’t either – but I would love to go. [Did you know that Swede office social environments are known to be “flat playing fields”](http://www.communicaid.com/access/pdf/library/culture/doing-business-in/Doing%20Business%20in%20Sweden.pdf)? What does that mean? Well, it means that most managers don’t act like managers. There are very few “hierarchies” in a Swedish company.

This is a wonderful system where workers are recognized that no matter what work they do, it is equally valuable to a company. Employers recognize that a janitor is just as valuable as an administrative assistant, who is just as valuable as a web designer…

It’s a lovely system. Too bad we don’t have it over here (and in probably most other countries.) Until the day we do, right now being employed means being part of a hierarchy. It means saying “Yes, boss” and sitting down, shutting up, and doing what you are told. It means that when the all-important company shareholders plan to come into the office, everyone must be on their best behavior, feel intimidated and dress to the tens.

What a load of **avskrade**. (Swedish for garbage)

If you are self-employed, you are on your own level, and if that’s good enough for your customers/clients, then it’s good enough.

**6. You Don’t Have to Struggle Just to See the Dentist**

While you can insert an obvious comeback here about health insurance, I always marvel at how silly it is that so many businesses are open during the exact hours most people work. Why is it only possible to make a dental appointment from 9 to 5 Monday through Friday? How come the \*\*\*\*ing DMV closes at 4:30 on weekdays? I have no idea either.

But if you work for yourself, your time is your own. Nobody you work with can tell you that they’d rather you didn’t go in for your Gynecology exam on Tuesday (and instead, could you push it to next week? We have a company meeting.) None of that nonsense. If it’s a beautiful spring day outside (these seem to always happen on weekdays, don’t they?) then get out and enjoy it for a bit! Sure, some business owners keep regular business hours. But they can still put someone else in charge while they take their dog for a walk if they feel like it. Why? Well, because they **own** the business!

**7. It is More Secure**

What? Doesn’t this totally fly in the face of conventional wisdom? Of course it does. But when you really think about it, self-employment is more secure than traditional employment. Why? Because instead of working for a company, you work in an industry.

If you are a great plumber and your work is freelance/contract, you can’t really be “fired.” If one of your customers ends up with a flooded basement because you installed the L-pipe instead of the N-clog and they don’t want to speak with you again, you can just find more customers. Of course, I’m making it sound easier than it is – but if you become well-established, you’ll be able to find more work pretty easily. Your income resource pool is your entire city, or maybe even your entire state… or, in my case, the entire world (the internet is a marvelous thing.)

When you are working for Jake’s plumbing doing a specific type of repair over and over and Jake decides to close shop, what are you going to do?

Being your own boss is, when looking at the big picture, more secure. It may be less secure at first, but taking the brave initial leap to entrepreneurship is possibly the last professional risk you’ll have to take, if that’s your game.

**8. If You Grow, you can Hire Others**

And this will save you a lot of time. As an entrepreneur, if you find yourself saddled with work that you lack the skills to perform (or don’t have the time/your daughter is getting married/name your excuse) you can always hire someone else to do it for you. And, if you are clever, you can make a profit doing so. This is the beginning of the principals by which the basic idea of “business profit” is founded.

If you really want a hands-off business, just hire everyone to do everything for you, remove yourself from the equation entirely, and do what you would like. Also, this sounds easier than it is, but there are intelligent business owners who abide by this philosophy and have [essentially created automatic income streams where they no longer have to trade their time for their money](http://thegreatofficeescape.com/untying-your-work-from-your-income/).

Try doing that at your job. See how long you last.

**9. You Can Customize Your Own Routine**

Adapt. Get in line. Do what it takes to make Mr. Whipple happy.

You’ve been hearing these words your entire life. Always making sacrifices, bending over backwards, acting the part for your superiors. Don’t like waking up at 7:00am to get to your job (which is an hour away)? Tough. Need to move to rural Kansas away from your hometown to find work? Oh well. You’ll get to see your family once a year during your annual allotted vacation time.

If you work for yourself, your wake-up time, where you live, how you dress and even your work habits are dictated by one person. You. It’s your life. It’s also your work. If you are not a morning person, feel free to sleep in until 11:00am every day and go to bed late. Like working with all the windows open in your “home office?” Be my guest.

You aren’t a child. Sometimes in the 9-to-5 world you are treated like one.



**10. It is the Wave of the Future (and Present!)**

Something interesting has begun to happen, and it isn’t just in the US, or the UK, or one country alone. People are starting to do things on their own that they formerly relied on a company, or middle man to do.

Do you remember 15 years ago when you used to call a travel agent to help you plan a vacation? Remember how you had them “map out” your road trip for you and find your hotels? Today, it’s as easy as going to [Travelocity](http://travelocity/) or some other website.

In the United States, people are struggling with an abominable healthcare system because a political party in power is unable to make significant headway because people in the other political party refuse to join the 21st century. This has made it very difficult on employers, who are struggling to pay healthcare benefits to many of their employees. It’s become much easier (and cheaper) for them to hire freelance contractors to do the same work.

There are signs all over the place that the opportunity for people to work for themselves are increasing. It’s the beginning of an era where the individual takes responsibility for his income, relying on an employer to do it for him/her less and less. It seems that everyone has his/her own website with a “side business” these days. Some of these side business are doing quite well.

This doesn’t mean that traditional employment will go away entirely. But don’t be surprised to find a 25-30% self-employment rate in ten years. You might find that companies will be more likely to hire your services for increasingly popular “project based work” in the near future than full-time where they are wising up to the fact that you can sit at your desk all day, work an hour and 20 minutes and collect a paycheck.

These days, it’s about the work – not about the company you work for.