

You Can Learn to be an Entrepreneur

The notion that you have to be born an entrepreneur is just a myth.

Similarly, no time is perfect, nor do you need to be an expert or even have worked in the industry, to be a successful small-business owner.

“Starting and operating a successful business can be achieved by just about anyone,” says Glenn Muske, the North Dakota State University Extension Service’s rural and agribusiness enterprise development specialist. “There is no set of personality or demographic traits that guarantee business success.”

All of the crucial skills are something you can learn. Yes, having certain traits can make things easier, but nothing cannot be learned or overcome. You just need to know your weak areas and determine the best way to move past them. You may need to take training, find a partner or hire someone, for example. How you overcome those weak areas is not important.

“Understanding the areas where you need help is just part of the planning process for the owner,” says (Insert name and title) of (Insert county). “Planning, preparation and strategies can help an owner overcome personality traits, demographics, and lack of background and experience. “

Here are some of the key traits often found among successful business people:

- People-oriented
- Curious
- Passionate
- Open to change
- Networkers
- Willing to learn

You also need to recognize that these are not traits with which you must be born.

At the same time, successful people are not necessarily innovative by developing new products. Taking a good idea to a new market can be a winner, just as making a small tweak on an existing product or service also can pay big dividends.

Nor must the successful business person be an expert in the area. Sometimes knowing too much can just get in the way. On a similar basis, owners do not need prior experience in the business. It helps but it is not required. Nor does a certain age guarantee business success, and neither does gender.

“The bottom line is that anyone can be a successful entrepreneur,” says (Insert last name). “Probably the most important trait is passion or persistence. The amazing thing about passion is that it just appears when you find a really good idea.”

Resources are readily available to help you achieve your goal of being a successful business owner. You can find help in person and online.

One resource is your local Extension Service office at [insert phone number and email address]. Also visit NDSU's small-business support website at www.ag.ndsu.edu/smallbusiness and sign up for the monthly newsletter. More information can be found on Facebook at www.facebook.com/NDSUextsmallbiz and Twitter at @gmuske. Another resource is www.eXtension.org/entrepreneurship.

Your local chamber of commerce also will know of other good resources. Examples include the Small Business Administration and its related organizations, such as the Small Business Development Centers and Service Corps of Retired Executives. USDA Rural Development also has information available, as do many state agencies.

###

For more information, contact glenn.muske@ndsu.edu or call (701) 328-9718. You also can visit our website, www.ag.ndsu.edu/smallbusiness.