

Finding Your Own Business Options

When a student asks “What Kind of Business Could I Start” the answer will be different for each person. Start with some questions...

What Types of Aptitudes Might You Have? **Aptitudes are natural talents or inclinations for certain activities.** People have a broad range of aptitudes. For instance, Karia may have a very high aptitude for artistic activities. She draws and then paints the sets used in the school plays. These activities just seem to come naturally. At the same time, Karia has very little aptitude in numerical activities. The study of mathematics is very difficult for this student. Often, people will enjoy doing those things in which they have a strong or high aptitude much more than something that takes greater effort. Some examples of aptitudes include the following:

- **Verbal or nonverbal communications** (written or spoken words or actions that communicate ideas, emotions or events). Giving a speech in class, acting in a school play, and hugging a friend are all methods of communication.
- **Verbal comprehension** (understanding the meanings of ideas or emotions in verbal or nonverbal communication). Listening and reacting to a friend’s problem, discussing politics, and trying to sell neighbors on your abilities to mow their lawns are examples of verbal comprehension.
- **Logical** (applying reason or logic to problems). Solving a math problem or measuring the fabric available and deciding if there is enough to make a skirt are examples of logical abilities.
- **Artistic** (creativity, using artistic talents, using musical talents, using dramatic talents). Being able to draw, write poetry, arrange flowers, play a musical instrument, take photographs, sing, or design an outfit are all uses of artistic talents.
- **Mechanical** (understanding relationships between parts of machines, making things work). Fixing the motor of an automobile, putting a radio back together, unjamming a sewing machine, and even driving a car all use mechanical strengths.
- **Numerical** (working with numbers). Solving math problems, determining how many miles a car travels per gallon of gasoline, or doubling a recipe to feed eight instead of four are examples of numerical abilities.
- **Clerical** (arranging and recording number and letter combinations). Alphabetizing or putting items in a special order, filling, and typing are all clerical skills.
- **Spatial** (understanding how parts of things fit together, multidimensional). Being able to put together a jigsaw puzzle, rearranging furniture attractively in a room, and putting together a model airplane all use spatial understanding.
- **Physical** (bodily strength and coordination, manual dexterity). Lifting weights, enjoying aerobic exercise, pushing furniture, and hanging up pictures in a straight line all use physical skills.
- **Organizational** (planning, implementing, evaluating). Planning a party or conducting a meeting makes use of organizational abilities.
- **Intellectual** (original thinking, seeking knowledge, thinking ahead). Reading a mystery novel and deciding “the butler did it,” studying for an exam, and analyzing the problem in making a car repair are examples of using intellectual skills.

Entrepreneurs use their aptitudes to help them develop their business ideas into business realities. They may use mechanical aptitudes to open a radio repair shop, organizational talents to decide which customer's radio to fix first, and artistic aptitudes to design a sign for their business. However, entrepreneurs usually select a business area in which they have an interest.

What Are Your Interests?

An interest is a subject that you like to read about, hear about, or find exciting. Often, a person will develop an interest into a hobby. He or she will spend his or her spare time doing an activity that is enjoyable and relaxing. Generally, interests fit a person's personality, knowledge/skills, life-style, and values. You may be very interested in some things or have little or no interest in other things.

Interests can be general but included within broad categories such as cooking, farming, construction, athletics, reading, or cars. Or, interests can be specific, with examples such as the following: dessert making, dairy farming, furniture refinishing, jogging, reading spy thrillers, or collecting old car parts. Interests or hobbies often develop because of a person's aptitude for such activities. An individual with a strong artistic aptitude may greatly enjoy cake decorating.

Because of a natural talent, this person may become interested in knowing as much as possible about the activity. He or she may make a lot of cakes for many occasions while developing the interest into a hobby. Often, a hobby can become a full-fledged business. Paul Newman is a famous actor known for his blue eyes, but he also enjoys cooking. Now, he is well-known for his salad dressing, which can be found on many grocery store shelves. In addition, actress Jane Fonda, well known for many of her movie roles, is an avid exerciser. Many recognize her face on workout clothing, records, videos, and books. She turned her exercise and aerobics hobby into a well-paying business. Certainly, the number of ideas future entrepreneurs can develop is limited only by the limits of their imagination.

STUDENT ACTIVITY:

Review the list of aptitudes. Select at least three that you feel you have. List at least two reasons/activities you do that support your claim. Try to be detailed in providing an explanation for why you feel you have a certain aptitude.

APTITUDES

Example: Artistic

1.

2.

3.

REASONS or INTERESTS

- * I like to draw pictures of people I know.
- * I enjoy playing the piano whenever I can.

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Based on your interests and aptitudes, **think of as many types of businesses as possible** that you might enjoy starting. This is the place to start in your search for business startup ideas.
