



How to Tell if you Should turn your Passion into a Project

You make the absolute best apple pies, or winter sweaters, or love love love yoga. No doubt then that someone has told you that you should open your own bakery, knitting store, or yoga studio. You may have even thought about it yourself or be going back and forth about whether or not to do it at this very moment. This can be a very hard decision and one that you should decide with care.

Here are four questions to ask yourself before you decide. (These questions also work if you are deciding between which passion you want to turn into a career.)

1. Am I an expert?

So many people take a couple classes and suddenly want to teach, write about, or create a business about what they know. It's premature and will come back around to haunt you. Consistent study and long time experience can not be faked and are crucial to the success of whatever you decide to do. Be real with yourself about your experience level. Take some time to be a student and even an apprentice in your field before rushing to become a teacher or owner. If you skip those steps you'll end up wishing you could go back and just learn instead of being the person everyone expects to have the answers.



2. Is there a need for what I provide?

Before starting your own business, it's important to ask yourself if there is a true market. I've seen so many people convinced in their product or idea, but they've never taken the time to research. The best businesses work because they are answering a very real need.

The best way to find out what those needs are is to ask and to listen. Interview the people you believe you'd be selling to about the problems that are most troubling them. Find out what the products or services are that they can't believe don't yet exist. If you plan to open a shop in a certain neighborhood get to know that area inside and out. Use all your senses. Listen to what people are talking about. Look around to see what exists, who's around, and how traffic flows. Look at what they already have and be an addition instead of a competition with your offering.

3. Do I have the resources?

It's the most important thing in the world to make sure you have the resources or else you'll end up taking on a project you can't complete and exhausting your time, energy, and reserves. Make yourself a list of everything you'll need for your business including space, website, staffing, utilities, banking, etc etc. Look through your contacts and think about your contacts' contacts. Get it all written down and get prepared first with a step by step financial and execution plan. You may not be able to approach your dream team a second time, so lineup as much as you can before asking the support of your superstars.

You can't prepare too much when starting a business because you really don't know what you don't know. Those unexpecteds will hit hard, so budget out financially for a year with a worst case sales and expense scenario. You'll be so glad you have a buffer when the time comes you need it.



. 4. Will I be okay working on, not in my business?

There comes a time in almost every business owner's growth when they will have to stop doing the creative tasks that they so love and hire other's to do those jobs while they work on, not in, their business. That means no more baking those cookies, sewing those sweaters, or teaching those classes. Instead, you'll be hiring, managing growth, handling insurance, and overseeing repairs. Are you ready for this kind of work? Will you be in the next three to five years? If not, you may want to consider keeping your passion as a passion and not turning it into work.

Not every passion needs to be or should be reformatted into a business. Sometimes it's wonderful to leave them as they are and enjoy them for what they are. Only you know.

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