VIRTUAL BUSINESS

The Quiz Every Entrepreneur Should Take Before Going Virtual

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The allure of running a virtual company is quickly winning over even the most traditional business owners. There are a plethora of benefits to doing so, but not every entrepreneur can or *should* run a remote workforce.

Below is a mini quiz that can help determine if a virtual company is the right structure for you. If you answer "yes" to any of the following questions, you may

want to stick with a brick–and-mortar business.

Do you love a non-structured environment?

While some may say that a virtual environment lacks structure and discipline, that couldn't be further from the truth. Without proper structure, you quickly lose control over the productivity and communication of your team. You must be diligent about creating systems to closely track the status of your projects, the team's tasks and overall performance to ensure you are hitting all of your goals. In addition, working hours simply can't be all over the map because team members need to work together collaboratively. Some team members may tell you that they work best at say, midnight, but if they aren't online at the same time as anyone else, communication -- and productivity -- may suffer.

Related: [5 Tips and Tools to Create a Company Culture When You Run a Virtual Business](#)

Do you have difficulty trusting your team members?

This is a big one, as not every employer has complete trust in their team. Whether you were burned before and remain cautious or are just slow to trust in general, trust is critical in a virtual environment. You can put dozens of systems in place to keep track of daily activities and processes (as noted above), but if you are constantly stressed about what's happening that you aren't physically seeing, you will never feel at ease. Virtual owners must release the reins a bit and trust that the team is doing the job they were hired to do. If they aren't, the proof will be in the results (or lack thereof).

Do you resist technology?

Plain and simple, virtual organizations run on technology, and if you aren't tech-savvy, you won't succeed. If your computer goes down during an important client meeting, you don't have an IT team to swoop in and save the day. It's imperative that virtual owners have a reasonable IT comfort level, at the very least. In addition,

virtual entrepreneurs are charged with the responsibility of choosing the technology that enables the company to function seamlessly. If you choose a project-management system but don't really take the time or effort to understand how it works, the investment is useless. If you choose an online-meeting software but don't have the technical know-how to navigate potential issues, it erodes your credibility with clients when problems arise. The bottom line: If you avoid technology whenever possible, virtual working is not for you.

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Are your communication skills questionable?

Communication is always a key to success in business, but it may be *the* key to managing a remote workforce. Without actual team proximity, proactive, clear and consistent communication is vital. Email is convenient and certainly essential in a remote workplace, but if you aren't especially skilled at communicating your thoughts or the company direction and vision, your business will suffer.

Do you thrive on face-to-face meetings?

Sure, Skype and other online-meeting software programs can bring faces together in one virtual room. But for some, it isn't a 100 percent replacement for a good ole' fashion sit-down meeting. Do you think a rousing, in-person brainstorming session is the only way to spark the creative juices and think big? Think carefully about how you like your team to meet and discuss projects and ideas. If the collaboration of the in-person team excites and drives you, an online meeting may leave you flat and uninspired.

How did you do? If you answered yes to any of the questions, you may want to steer clear of the virtual world. (This structure is definitely not for everyone!) If you answered no more often than yes, then go forth and be virtual!

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