

Starting A Business May Be Less Risky Than Looking For A Job

Many people start a business to "be my own boss" or "find meaning in my work." But increasingly I talk to clients who realize that starting a business also makes good business sense.

1. High Profile. You may be a politician, a senior bank official or a broadcaster. Following your much-publicized firing, you can't just show up on a corporate doorstep to apply for a job. If you're not invited in, you'll be left in the cold.
2. Experience. Some industries simply don't hire at the senior level. You must join at an entry-level position and work your way up. By starting a business, you'll see income faster than if you keep pounding on doors.
3. Maverick. Maybe you're a maverick by personality. Or maybe you've managed to work yourself into a corner. If there are only three jobs in the world like yours, you'll be challenged to build on your experience.
4. Geography. All the "good" jobs exist in places you don't want to live. Or you really, really want to move to a tiny mountain, where you'll have great air and water and all jobs pay minimum wage. Choose a business - and a location - that offers you the life you want.
5. Security. Many businesses fail - but so do many jobs. "Carlene," a fifty-year-old sales manager, lost her job following a merger. She held three jobs in the next five years, all shaky, all a step down, all miserable. She continues to haunt the headhunters, not to mention the therapists and pharmacies.

The days of "a job to fall back on" are long gone. In the twenty-first century, your safety net comes from what you can do on your own. It's a hard lesson, and many resist. Yet nearly everyone says afterward, "I wish I had done this years ago."

You go through a tunnel, but you emerge stronger, firmer in purpose, and ultimately happier. And you wish you could tell everyone how you survived, and let them know that they can, too.

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