

THE PATH AHEAD

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IN THIS ISSUE:

- 2 Taking Care of Business: How To Be Your Own Boss
- 4 In Their Own Words: How Owning a Business Helps Me Self-Direct My Life
- 6 Resources For Starting a Microenterprise
- 7 Keeping Your Benefits While Starting Your Business
- 7 Upcoming Events



tmg[®]
Let's clear the path ahead.

TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS: HOW TO BE YOUR OWN BOSS



Sometimes, the best job you'll ever have is the one you create for yourself.

Most of us know the importance of work: It can help get us out into our communities. It can be a meaningful part of our day. And it lets us earn money that we can spend on things

we need or enjoy having. But what happens when the right job just hasn't come along? Perhaps you might want to start your own microenterprise.

A microenterprise is a very small business that typically doesn't take a lot of money to start. It could be selling arts and crafts. Or it could be

having people pay you to regularly walk their dog or take care of their garden. Shannon Webb, an independent consultant who has worked with the Wisconsin Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, says that creating your own microenterprise can be a great way to overcome the barriers you might have when trying to work at someone else's business.

Maybe transportation isn't reliable in your part of the state, or a business's hours don't fit into your schedule. Perhaps you love creating YouTube videos or painting pictures, and you want to earn money doing those things. These are all great reasons to think about starting your own small business.

“People of all abilities start microenterprises,” says Shannon. “These businesses are made to fit within the other parts of your life.”

So how do you start a microenterprise? First, think about the things that you like doing, and what you're good at. Then think about how you can use your talents and skills to earn money. For example, Shannon knows of one gentleman who is a musician. Along with playing in bands, he also has a small business tuning people's pianos so that they sound good.

Once you've decided what you want your microenterprise to be, Shannon says it's a good idea to create a plan for your business. That means writing down all of the things you'll need to do to get your business started, and what you have to do to make it successful. You'll want to figure out what your business goals are, and what steps you'll have to take to reach those goals.

You'll also need to figure out how you'll find your customers.

Sometimes it will be the people in your community that you already know. Other times, you'll have to do marketing to get customers – like posting about your business online or exhibiting your business at a community event. No matter what, you'll have to find a way to let people know about your microenterprise.

There are other details that you'll need to think about, and it might feel a bit overwhelming to figure all of these things out. The good news is that you don't have to do it by yourself. Shannon says that there are resources available that can help you with your microenterprise. Organizations like the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Wisconsin Small Business Development Center can help teach you job skills and how to grow your business. You can also get a job coach if you need support doing your work. And if there's a part of your

business you need help with, like accounting or marketing, you can pay someone to do those tasks for you. Shannon, for example, hires a person to do her business taxes.

“There’s a myth about business owners: That they can do everything all at once, and all on their own,” says Shannon. “But that’s not really true.”

Starting your own microenterprise takes a lot of hard work and dedication. It's also not the right fit for everyone. But Shannon says that owning your own business can be a wonderful experience. Not only can it help you overcome employment barriers and help you make money, but it's something that you can take pride in. So ask yourself – are you ready to be a boss?

IN THEIR OWN WORDS: HOW OWNING A BUSINESS HELPS ME SELF-DIRECT MY LIFE

Owning your own business can be an exciting way to gain more financial independence and personal fulfillment. Hear from some of the people who partner with TMG who have created jobs they love that fit their lives!



Henry Weidert

Find Henry at intowishinarts.com

Henry loves creating art and sharing his passion with others. Not only is Henry a talented artist, but he and his family also started IntoWishin' Arts. This nonprofit organization helps artists with disabilities earn money by printing the artists' artwork onto tee shirts. Henry and his family then market and sell these tee shirts on the IntoWishin' Arts website, and the artists are paid when one of their shirts is sold. Henry is happy that he gets to keep making art, and that he's helping other artists gain more income and independence.

Henry's Words of Wisdom:

"I think anybody can do anything if they dream it and get a little help making it happen. Just pick the things you enjoy doing and ask people how you might be able to do it more often, or even turn it into a business."



Dayton Jones

Find Dayton at [@WheelsFGC](https://twitter.com/WheelsFGC) on Twitter/Twitch/Youtube/TikTok

When Dayton was 13, he discovered his passion: online video games. Even though it was challenging, Dayton kept practicing his skills because he saw how good other gamers with disabilities could be. After years of hard work, Dayton has become a professional gamer. He's played in several major professional gaming tournaments across the county and has been one of the top eight finalists at four different tournaments. He is also an ambassador for Warner Bros. Games and is helping the company with their upcoming game, MultiVersus. Dayton is grateful for the support from his family and his fans and appreciates that he can earn money doing something he loves.

Dayton's Words of Wisdom:

"Think about your options [before trying to earn money with your hobby]. If you are in school or already have a job, I wouldn't recommend just giving that up. However, I took my risk [to become a professional gamer], and I wouldn't trade the experiences I've had and the friends I've made along the way for anything."



Jaden Schubert

Find Jaden at [fox_river_blades](#) on Instagram

Jaden is a creative young man who used YouTube videos to learn how to make custom knives – which feature Jaden’s art on the handles and blades. His friend’s dad encouraged Jaden to start an Instagram business page so that he could sell his beautiful knives online. Today, he has customers from all over the world. Jaden says owning his own business has let him create what he wants and live a more fulfilling life.

Jaden’s Words of Wisdom:

“Never listen to people trying to discourage you. In the beginning, my mom thought I couldn’t make real money from selling knives. Eventually, though, she realized that this was more than just a hobby.”



Steve Kettenhoven

Find Steve at [againstthegrainwi.com](#)

In 2017, Steve couldn’t find the right job. So, he used his talents as a woodworker to start his own business – Against the Grain Woodcraft.

With the help of Fox Valley Technical College’s Venture Center, he put together a business plan and got a grant from the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. This grant let him purchase equipment and turn his garage into a wheelchair - accessible workshop. Today he sells his woodworking online and at craft shows. Steve loves working from his home at his own pace and creating things that bring smiles to his customers’ faces.

Steve’s Words of Wisdom:

“Don’t give up. Things can be rough at first. But if you’ve done your homework and know your business could succeed, then stay determined to make it happen.”



Amy Oemichen

Find Amy at [wannadoherbs.weebly.com](#)

Amy turned her love of lavender into an awesome business called Wanna Do Herbs. Ten years ago, she worked with her teacher, her speech therapist and Madison Area Rehabilitation Center to figure out what she would like to do after high school. Amy decided to grow herbs and turn them into great-smelling products – like lavender soaps and bath bombs. Today she sells her products both online and in her community. She also loves seeing people’s reactions when they smell her products. Amy says everyone should have the chance to do something they enjoy.

Amy’s Words of Wisdom:

“Think about what you like to do. Find people and organizations that share your enthusiasm and are willing to take a chance on you.”





RESOURCES FOR STARTING A MICROENTERPRISE

So you're interested in owning your own business, but not sure what to do next? Check out these fantastic resources that can help get your microenterprise started off right, and discover tools to help you grow your business along the way.

The Wisconsin Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR)

For people with disabilities who are ready to work but need a bit of support making that happen, DVR can help you reach your employment goals. DVR offers a wide variety of services for jobseekers throughout Wisconsin, including career guidance and counseling, job skill training and much more. Counselors can also help you develop your small business plan. **Visit the website to apply for DVR services. Learn more: dwd.wisconsin.gov/dvr**

DWD's Resources for Self-Employment

The Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) has a fantastic list of local, statewide and national programs and organizations that help small business owners find great resources. Several of the organizations listed are specifically for low-income individuals so that they can get the resources and financial assistance they need for their business to succeed. **Learn more: dwd.wisconsin.gov/dvr/policy-guidance/ipe/self-employment-resource-guide.htm**

Wisconsin Small Business Development Center (SBDC)

The Wisconsin SBDC offers no-cost consulting that can help you figure out the best ways to start, grow and finance your business. They also offer business learning events across the state and online resources that can help take your business to the next level. There are 14 SBDC locations throughout Wisconsin, so be sure to find the one nearest you. **Learn more: wisconsinsbdc.org**



KEEPING YOUR BENEFITS WHILE STARTING YOUR BUSINESS

The thought of making money with your own business is exciting! However, it is important to know how to keep your long-term care benefits once you begin earning some extra cash.

Before you start your business, we encourage you to visit a work incentives benefit specialist, particularly one who has experience consulting people who are self-employed. They can let you know how much you can earn before it affects your benefits.

To learn where you can find a work incentives benefit specialist, visit dhs.wisconsin.gov/benefit-specialists/work-incentives.htm.



UPCOMING EVENTS

14th Annual Black Women's Wellness Day

September 23-24, 2022 | Virtual Event

The Foundation for Black Women's Wellness is excited to host the 14th Annual Black Women's Wellness Day. This two-day virtual event provides inspiration, education, and empowerment to live a healthy life. TMG is proud to sponsor this event.

Wisconsin Self-Determination Conference

October 17-19, 2022 | Kalahari Resort - Wisconsin Dells, WI & Virtual

Join TMG this October at the Wisconsin Self-Determination Conference, the largest self-determination event in the state! The theme of this year's event is Everyone Has a Story; Your Voice Matters. This conference is a great way to meet other self-advocates, learn the importance of sharing your story and celebrate all the amazing things that make a great life possible. This year, you can attend either in-person at the Kalahari Resort, or virtually! TMG is proud to sponsor and present at this conference.

To learn more about these events and where to register for them, visit tmgwisconsin.com/tmg-events.



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FIND US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

A lot has been happening on TMG's Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter pages! Have you visited them lately?

There, you can read up on important news and events, learn about others who are living self-determined lives and see what TMG has been up to all across the state. Be sure to share your favorite posts and become part of the broader self-determination community in Wisconsin!



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