



*Rural Women's  
Network*

# **START YOUR OWN BUSINESS**

## **WORK BOOK 1a**

### **LIFE STYLE & PERSONAL INFORMATION**

## LIFESTYLE AND PERSONAL INFORMATION

### Lifestyle

If you are considering setting up in business, one of the first (and in many ways the most important) question you will need to ask yourself is whether your lifestyle will support your decision, or whether changing your lifestyle is a realistic possibility. Many women are responsible for children and running the household as well as having various other commitments. It is therefore extremely important to establish from the offset how much time the business could potentially take up and to identify what changes will be required if you are going to progress with the business idea.

This Workbook will help you to gather information on:

- Current work/family commitments
- Main aspirations in setting up the business
- Time available to put into development of business idea
- Possible changes to make more time (and the reality of these happening)
- Current financial situation
- Any transport constraints (e.g. one family car)
- Support available from family and friends

### Skills

Running a successful business requires a host of skills, some of the most important of these being:

- Market research techniques
- Marketing awareness
- Organisational skills
- Financial management
- Awareness of the legal aspects e.g. planning permission, health & safety, food hygiene etc.

In addition, you will need many of the following characteristics:

- Self-motivation – no-one is going to make the business succeed for you; can you do it for yourself?
- Determination – how much do you want the business to succeed? Businesses are not started without a great deal of determination.
- Self-discipline – can you work on your own, without someone else telling you what needs doing?
- Accountability – blaming others is no longer possible and responsibility should be enjoyed, not feared!
- Enthusiasm – you will need bags of this if you are going to make others enthusiastic about your ideas.
- Assertiveness – you will have to stand your ground at times and adopt the right tone in order to get the best out of people.
- Innovation – there is no place for complacency in the business world of today.
- The ability to work well under pressure – do you get stressed easily and how do you cope with stress in other areas of your life?

It is useful to consider each of these points in turn and to be entirely honest with yourself in doing so. You may feel that you are well equipped in certain areas but

hopelessly lacking in other areas ..... don't despair! Not everyone who sets out in business has all of the above to start with.

There are ways of bridging the gap between what you know or have already and what you need to know or have. However, don't be afraid to say "I've realised that this is not for me". It is far better to come to that decision before investing too much time, effort and possibly money in your venture!

### **Business Skills**

One of the ways in which it may be possible for you to acquire some of the skills you are lacking is by attending a series of Business Skills Seminars or a 'Business Start Up' Course. These will cover areas such as:

- Developing your business idea
- Market research
- Marketing
- Assessing financial viability
- Finance – Cash Flow, Profit and Loss etc
- Practical and legal aspects of setting up a business

Information on how to access these is available from the training and development section of the Rural Women's Network website.

### **Personal Development**

It may be that it would be helpful at this stage for you to attend some Personal Development Workshops, designed to build your confidence and equip you to deal with the situations you are likely to face in setting up your business – or even if you decide not to set up a business!

Workshops are available at venues throughout the county on subjects such as:

- Confidence Building and assertiveness
- Personal Effectiveness
- Transferable Skills
- Negotiation Skills
- Dealing with Conflict

... and many others. For more information on any of these and to find out when there is a workshop near you, investigate some of the links provided on the training and development page of the Rural Women's Network website.

## LIFESTYLE NOTES

Current work/family commitments

Main aspirations in setting up the business

1

2

3

Time available to put into development of business idea

Possible changes to make more time (and the reality of these happening)

1

2

3

Current financial situation

Any transport constraints (e.g. one family car)

Support available from family and friends



Finally, you will need to identify what specific skills you may need to operate within your chosen area. Hopefully you will already possess some of these skills but there may be areas where further development would be useful:

Answer the questions below:

	Yes	No	Have	Don't have
Do you need to be a member of a professional body?				
Do you need certain qualifications? If so what?				
Do you need a licence?				
Do you need to be computer literate?				
Do you need more specific computer skills?				
Do you need planning permission?				
Do you need certification by any authority?				
Do you need other training or technical skill development? If so what?				

If you have answered 'yes' and 'don't have' to any of the questions above you will need to make a plan for how you get what you need:

Make a list of actions required below:

You may find it useful to return to this workbook at regular intervals to check on your progress. Now on to workbook 1b!