

INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR BRAINSTORMING WORKSHEET

You can engage in independent contracting by participating in the gig economy or offering professional services in a specific area of expertise. Use this worksheet to help you think through the type of work you can do as an independent contractor.

THE GIG ECONOMY refers to a growing segment of the labor market, in which clients contract with workers, often via apps, for specific tasks and activities. The gig economy has endless options and often does not require high educational attainment. Learn more about the gig economy and the types of work it encompasses at gigworker.com/start-here.

In addition to participating in the gig economy, individuals may choose to leverage their expertise, skills, abilities, certification, and professional and academic training to offer **professional services** to the public. These professional services exist in a variety of industries, however, the ability to provide them requires experience, passion for a specific type of work, and in some instances, licensing or educational attainment.

There are many different types of independent contract work you can do, allowing you to leverage all the skills, experience and knowledge that you have accumulated over time both inside and outside of school. You can start in the gig economy and work toward offering specialized professional services.

INSTRUCTIONS

Once you have a better idea of what independent contracting is all about, go through the different parts of this worksheet. You can work on parts at a time and come back to it; there is no need to complete the entire worksheet in one seating.

Need help? Please complete our [Entrepreneurship Intake Form](#) to speak to one of our Entrepreneurship Specialists. We suggest completing this worksheet prior to scheduling a time for a call.

Gig opportunities include:

- Driving for car services such as Uber or Lyft
- Selling products or services on sites such as Etsy or eBay
- Performing music at paid gigs and concerts
- Working for freelance labor apps such as TaskRabbit
- Renting space in your personal home with sites such as Airbnb
- Any one-time, task-based job

Professional services include:

- Accounting
- Advertising
- Legal
- Medical
- Engineering
- Computer programming
- Graphic design
- Website design
- Payroll management
- Taxes
- Writing and editing
- Fine art
- Photography
- Landscaping
- Construction
- Real estate
- Cosmetology

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PART 1: SELF ASSESSMENT

Think about the types of services you might be able to offer. What skills, experience, or other assets do you have that you can share? Consider that some gigs are for general tasks and others require a specific skill set.

What is your current field of study?

What skills have you acquired within your field from the classes you've taken?

What skills have you acquired within your field outside the classroom?

What type of services do independent contractors in your field offer? Try doing a Google search "Independent contracting for XXX majors"

What type of work experience do you have (paid or unpaid)?

What do you enjoy doing for fun?

What are you passionate about?

Based on these responses, think about the type of services you might be able to offer in the gig economy. Write down your ideas below.

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PART II: WORK EXPLORATION

Based on the questions you answered in Part I, do a search on the Internet to identify 5 areas of independent contract work that you think are a good fit and write them down.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

For each type of work write down the skills, education, training, certification, or licensing that is needed to engage in this type of work. You may have to do additional research for each type of work.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

For each type of work note the marketplaces (i.e. [upwork.com](https://www.upwork.com)) where you can sign up to find clients.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

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PART III: CREATING A PROFILE

Choose one of the marketplaces (i.e. [upwork.com](https://www.upwork.com)) and review a profile of a consultant and answer the following questions:

What do you like about the profile?

What characteristics stand out the most in the profile?

Would you contract that person?

→ *Review a few more profiles and answer the same questions as above.*

Once you have a better idea about what a good profile looks like, answer the questions below.

What type of services would you like to provide?

What makes you different from anyone else doing the same type of work? (Think about previous experience or personality traits)

How long have you been doing this type of work (Include experience in school and outside of school)

Why do you enjoy doing this activity?

Once you have answered these questions, create an "About Me" section that can be used in online platforms. **Add it below.**

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PART IV: MARKETING AND PROMOTION

Now that you have an idea of the type of work you would like to do as an independent contractor, you will need to start thinking about marketing your services. You can begin by creating a profile in several marketplaces, but you will likely have to do additional marketing.

Below are a few ways to promote and market yourself:

- Create business cards and add a QR code to link to your website or LinkedIn profile.
 - Purchase inexpensive business cards: www.vistaprint.com
 - Create your free website: www.wix.com
 - Create free QR codes: www.qr-code-generator.com
- Consider creating a flyer/brochure to promote your services.
 - Use free Microsoft Office templates: templates.office.com/en-us/brochures
- Reach out to friends and family to see if they need the service. If not, ask if they can help spread the word. Hand them your business card and flyer/brochure.
- Reach out to professional connections to promote your services. Be specific about the type of services you offer and how they may fill a need.
- Post an ad on social media promoting your services.
 - Learn about FB ads: www.facebook.com/business/ads

Write down the action steps you plan to take to promote your services below.