



# BE YOUR OWN BOSS

**D**OLLY Parton hit the nail on the head when she coined the lyrics for her famous song — *Workin' 9 to 5 — What a way to make a livin*.  
 What a way to make a living indeed. Nowadays, says Sonia Williams, author of *Start Me Up!*, thanks to advancements in technology and the internet, people around the world are finding a better way to make a living.

For many this involves starting their own business and staying at home to do so.

An increasing number of New Zealanders cherish the ambition of becoming their own boss, rather than being bossed.

But often the main hurdle to realising these ambitions is the idea, the very seed which is needed to create a successful and thriving business.

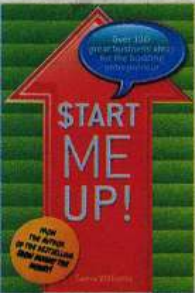
However, just because you don't have an idea, says Sonia, doesn't mean you should give up on the idea of being self-employed. She maintains the real characteristics of a successful entrepreneur are persistence, commitment, and determination; the initial idea is merely the platform on which to demonstrate these qualities.

*Start Me Up!* contains more than 100 great

business ideas for the budding entrepreneur, and encourages would-be entrepreneurs to study their environment for new and exciting business ideas. Identifying the right idea can be as easy as tuning into your surroundings, says Sonia.

There are hundreds of fantastic ideas out there, so don't let this hurdle stop you from discovering the entrepreneur within. For more than 100 more business ideas check out *Start Me Up!*

RIGHT: Author Sonia Williams.



## 5 TOP TIPS

- Ask yourself what you are good at and what you enjoy. Everyone has a skill, talent or ability from which they can make money. If you have a hobby, look at ways to capitalise on this interest.
- Study market trends. There are always new trends influencing the economy. Many discerning consumers seek the individuality and uniqueness that comes with handmade products. If you dabble in craft here is a fantastic opportunity to start your own business.
- Consider your own purchasing experiences and the times you've discovered a product or service that only partially fulfils your needs. Rather than getting upset — get entrepreneurial. If you can see a gap in the market and can provide a new and improved version of the product or service, you have a business idea.
- Look at the various target markets out there and their specific needs, such as baby boomers, first-time parents, kids living at home and so on. By breaking consumers down into target markets and being aware of each specific market's needs you can work backwards to identify a variety of products and services they require.
- Piggyback on the success of another business. Why reinvent the wheel when you can capitalise on the success of those who are already established in the market place? How about starting your own business by introducing products or services which complement an existing successful business. For example, you could introduce a range of products or services that tie in with a top New Zealand furniture outlet, such as selling couch covers that fit their couches.

## GIVEAWAY

Be in to win a copy of Sonia Williams *Start Me Up!*, Exisle Publishing, \$34.99. Send your name and contact details to us by email at [events@age.co.nz](mailto:events@age.co.nz) with Be Your Own Boss in the message window. Entries close at noon on Friday, February 26.