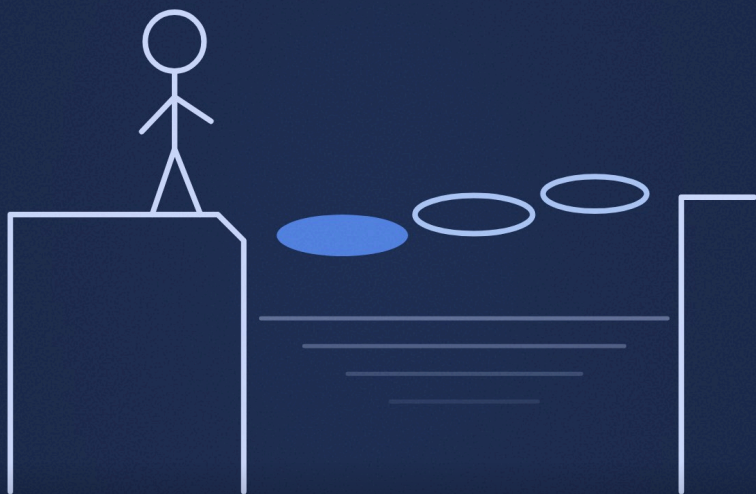


THE STARTUP SHELF · BOOK 1 OF 11

Ready to Leap

From a good salary to your own business



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How every chapter works

The idea → Why it matters → The method → An example
→ Your worksheet → 3-line summary

Included with this book

Printable worksheets: **one for each chapter, the runway calculator, the leap decision scorecard**. Excel files: **Runway calculator**. All in your download.

1

Why start, and why you: the honest reasons

People start businesses for good and bad reasons. Knowing yours tells you whether a business is the answer, and what kind of business to build.

IN THIS CHAPTER

- Pull reasons and push reasons
- Example: Kavita's list
- When a business is not the answer
- What kind of founder are you?
- What “success” means to you
- The family view
- Your worksheet: your reasons, tested

By the end, you will be able to

- Separate pull reasons from push reasons
- Check whether a business is the right answer
- Write down what success means for you

THE IDEA

Pull reasons and push reasons

Every plan to start a business mixes two kinds of reason. **Pull reasons** draw you towards something: a problem you want to solve, an opportunity you can see, the wish to build. **Push reasons** drive you away from something: a bad boss, a stalled promotion, boredom, a reorganisation.

Pull reasons (towards)	Push reasons (away from)
"I can see customers nobody serves well."	"My new boss makes every day miserable."
"I want to build something of my own."	"I was passed over for promotion again."
"I want to decide how my time is spent."	"The bank is restructuring my team."
"I want income that grows with my effort."	"I'm bored and the work feels pointless."
"I know this industry better than most."	"Everyone on LinkedIn seems to be a founder."

Push reasons are real, but they fade

A bad boss can leave next quarter. A promotion can come next year. If your plan rests mostly on push reasons, the urge to start may disappear when the problem does, and you may be halfway through building something you no longer want.

The test: if your job became pleasant tomorrow, would you still want to start? If yes, the pull is real.

EXAMPLE

Kavita's list

Example (invented): Kavita Rao, HR business partner, Bengaluru

Kavita has spent five years filling jobs at the bank: branch managers, relationship managers, technology teams. Friends who run small companies keep calling her for help. “Can you find me a good operations head? The agencies send me thirty CVs and none of them fit.”

One Sunday she wrote down every reason she had for starting her own recruitment firm, and marked each one P for pull or X for push.

Her reason	Pull or push?
Small companies can't find good people, and I know how to find them	Pull
I enjoy hiring more than the rest of HR work	Pull
My fees would grow with my results, not a pay band	Pull
The bank is merging two HR teams and my role may change	Push
I want more time for Aarav in the evenings	Pull, but check
I'm tired of approval chains	Push

Four pulls, two pushes. Kavita circled “more time for Aarav” to check later: in the first two years, most founders work longer hours than they did in a job, not shorter.

CHECK YOURSELF

When a business is not the answer

Some problems that make people want to start a business are better solved another way. Starting is expensive and slow; a change of job, team or arrangement may give you most of what you want at a fraction of the risk.

What you really want	Often a better first step
Escape a bad boss	Move team, or move company
More money	A role change, a switch, or a skill that pays more
More flexible hours	Ask for it; many employers now agree to flexible or part-time work
To do the part of the job you enjoy	A specialist role that does only that part
Respect and a bigger title	A smaller company or a start-up as a senior hire
To try being your own boss	A side project or a 90-day trial (Chapters 4 and 6)

Why it matters

A business started to escape something has to carry the weight of that escape. A business started to build something has energy of its own. Make sure you are starting the second kind.

This is not a reason to give up. It is a reason to be clear. Many people do this check and find the pull is strong. Then they start with more conviction, not less.

THE METHOD

What kind of founder are you?

Businesses come in very different shapes. The right one for you depends on how much risk you can take, how fast you want to grow and how you like to work.

Shape	What it looks like	Suits people who...
Practice	You and your skill: a consultant, clinic, design studio, CA firm	Want control and steady income; enjoy the craft
Small firm	A team of 5–50 doing one thing well: an agency, a training firm, a recruitment firm	Like building a team and serving clients
Product business	Making or selling goods: a food brand, a factory, a shop	Can handle stock, suppliers and working capital
Fast-growth start-up	Technology, outside investors, aim to be very large	Accept high risk and pressure for a chance at a large outcome
Franchise	A proven brand run by you in your area	Prefer a tested system to a blank page (Book 9)

Most people should start with the first two shapes. They need less money, can be tested on the side and pay their founders sooner. A small firm can always grow into something larger.

Kavita's choice: a small firm. A practice of one at first, adding a coordinator and then recruiters as clients grow.

THE METHOD

What “success” means to you

Write down what success looks like in three years before you start. If you don't, the business will decide for you, usually by growing in whatever direction is busiest.

Money

- What must the business pay you each month, at the latest by when?
- What would be a good outcome? A great one?

Life

- How many hours a week will you work?
- Which evenings and weekends are protected?

Work

- What do you want to spend your days doing?
- What will you refuse to do?

Size

- Do you want a team? How big?
- Would you ever sell the business?

Example (invented): Kavita's three-year picture

Pay myself at least ₹31,000 a month by month 6, ₹1 lakh by month 12, and my old take-home of ₹1.85 lakh by year 2 or 3. Work 50 hours a week at most, never on Sunday. A team of three recruiters. Spend most of my time with clients and candidates, not on admin. Not interested in selling the firm.

Why the first money target matters: ₹31,000 is the gap between her family's spending and her husband's salary. Chapter 3 shows how she found it.

WHY IT MATTERS

The family view

Starting a business is a family decision even if only one person starts it. Your spouse, children and sometimes parents share the risk, the lost income and the long hours. They deserve a say, and you need their support when things are hard.

- 1 **Tell them early.** Before you have decided, not after you have resigned. “I’m thinking about this, and I want us to work it out together.”
- 2 **Share the numbers.** Show the runway sums in Chapter 3. Fear grows in the dark; numbers calm it.
- 3 **Agree the limits.** How much money can be used? How long before you go back to a job if it isn’t working?
- 4 **Name the worries.** Ask each person what worries them most. Write the answers down and plan for each.

The parents' question

In many Indian families, leaving a secure job with a well-known company worries parents more than anyone. Show them the plan, not just the dream: the savings kept aside, the trial, the date you will review it. A plan answers worry better than enthusiasm does.

Kavita and Suresh spent two evenings on this. His biggest worry was the home loan. Her answer was the emergency reserve in Chapter 3, which they agreed would never be touched for the business.

APPLY IT · YOUR REASONS

Your reasons, tested

Be honest. Nobody else needs to see this page.

1 List every reason you have for starting. Mark each P (pull) or X (push).

2 If your job became pleasant tomorrow, would you still want to start? Why?

3 Is there a cheaper way to get what you want (a new job, a new team, flexible work)?

4 Which shape of business suits you: practice, small firm, product, start-up or franchise?

5 Success in three years: money, life, work and size.

6 Who in your family needs to be part of this decision, and when will you talk to them?

CHAPTER 1 IN 3 LINES

What to remember

- 1** Pull reasons draw you towards building something; push reasons drive you away from a job. A strong plan rests mostly on pull.
- 2** Check whether a new job, team or arrangement would give you what you want with far less risk.
- 3** Decide the shape of business and what success means before you start, and bring your family in early.

KEY WORDS**Pull reason**

A reason that draws you towards starting a business.

Push reason

A reason that drives you away from your job.

Practice

A business built around one person's skill.

Common mistakes

- Starting mainly to escape a boss or a reorganisation
- Expecting fewer working hours in the first years
- Telling the family after resigning

Try this week

- List and mark your reasons
- Write your three-year picture of success
- Book a money conversation at home

Quick self-check: A sales manager wants to start a business because a new boss has taken away her best accounts. She has no particular business in mind. What would you advise? Model answers are in the toolkit.

Next: **Chapter 2 · What you really give up**

You've just read Chapter 1 of Ready to Leap.

The full book has 8 chapters, 10 worksheets and 88 pages. It is Book 1 of The Startup Shelf: 11 short, practical books on one subject, sold together.

STILL TO COME IN READY TO LEAP

2 What you really give up

3 Your runway

4 Start on the side

5 Your edge

6 A 90-day trial

7 The leap decision

8 Your first 100 days

THE 11 BOOKS IN THE STARTUP SHELF

1 Ready to Leap

2 The Idea Worth Building

3 Proof Before You Spend

4 A Model That Pays

5 Set Up Right

6 First Customers

7 Launch Small

8 Partners and First Hires

9 Franchise or Buy In

10 Money to Begin

11 Pivot, Persist or Stop

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