



### **Starting a business on 10 hours a week? Yes! Military spouses it can be done.**

For the 8% of military spouses who decide to start a business, the certainty of frequent relocation and the uncertainty of business ownership creates a balancing act needing attention. Part of this entails understanding that combining the demands of military life and the demands of entrepreneurship aren't mutually exclusive. It is possible to structure your life obligations and business dreams to be successful and feel successful doing both.

Many successful life-long entrepreneurs began their businesses on a part-time basis to see how this new lifestyle, new demands on time, new skills required fit for them.

So how does one begin a business on 10 hours per week? Here are five key tips that will help get you started:

1. To get anything to grow you need to give it some dedicated time. Four hours a week is the minimum you should commit to and the closer you get to ten hours per week the better. Set regular time slots in your schedule. Try to make one of the slots a networking event, or a lunch and learn. It's time to start growing your entrepreneurial network.
2. Do not worry about perfecting your product before you sell it – you can't. Your real target here is to try selling your product/service as soon as you can, listen to the feedback, adjust your offering and then repeat this cycle.
3. Be creative in your market research. Compose one question about your product and ask everyone you meet (grocery store clerks, your children's teacher). Carry two necklaces and ask everyone which one they'd pay more money for. Tip: Don't ask which one they like better. As an entrepreneur your looking to make money, so this is an easy way to start getting comfortable selling – without actually selling.
4. Resist buying the new items such as computers, equipment, etc. until you know it makes financial sense in the long term. Buy used or rent to start. Time and time again we see new entrepreneurs spend thousands of dollars on new equipment, computers, and travel without having gone through the steps in the point above. Take home message - conserve your cash.
5. You may get busy fast by having more clients than you want. Nice problem to have but if you are truly dedicated to staying part-time then choose the clients that are longer term and who will pay you regularly. It is better to have three clients that are delighted with your offering than six who you can't properly take care of.