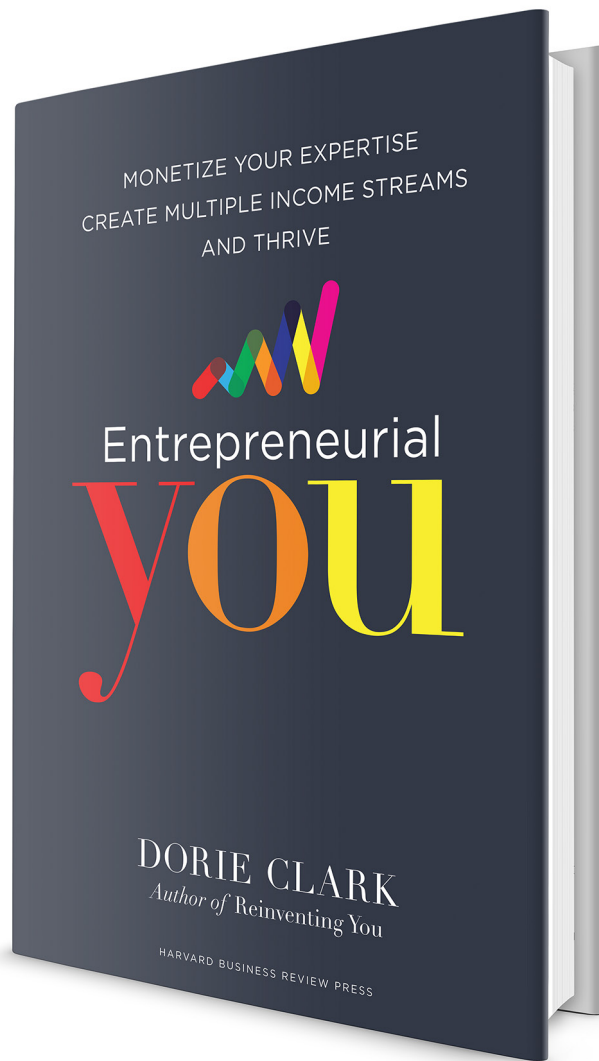


Your
Entrepreneurial You
Self-Assessment



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Your

Entrepreneurial
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Eighty-Eight Questions and Ideas
to Help You Monetize Your Expertise, Create
Multiple Income Streams, and Thrive

It's no secret that we're shifting toward an ever more entrepreneurial economy. Whether your goal is to grow a new venture or simply develop a lucrative sideline, there are more opportunities than ever. The ability to chart your own professional destiny is a liberating force, but only if you can monetize your ideas successfully.

The following eighty-eight questions and ideas, drawn from my book [*Entrepreneurial You*](#), are intended to help you develop a concrete strategy to grow your entrepreneurial ideas, establish multiple revenue streams, and build the career and lifestyle you want. You can also access more information and more than four hundred free articles at dorieclark.com.

You should consider the ideas and strategies here a smorgasbord; you don't need to do all of them to be successful. Instead, find the ones that seem most appealing and go deep there. Regardless of the approach you choose, the most important part is taking the first step. Let's get started.

—Dorie Clark

Income Stream Audit

Before we begin strategizing about how to monetize your expertise, it's important to understand how you're currently bringing in revenue and what your income mix looks like now. Here are some questions to consider.

1. List out your current income streams. What are the ways in which you currently make money (for instance, consulting, coaching, sale of a product, providing a service such as legal work, blogging, running an online community, professional speaking, podcasting, affiliate marketing, online courses, live events, etc.)?

2. For each income stream, what percentage of your overall income does it comprise? (For instance, consulting = 80%, coaching = 10%, and your online community = 10%).

3. How can you work to diversify your revenue? For instance, you could spend more time growing nascent income streams, or create new ones. Take a moment to brainstorm possibilities for where you might expand strategically, and identify the top one or two most promising ideas.

Build Your Brand

The first step toward monetization is cultivating an audience that values your insights—in other words, developing a strong brand. Here are some questions to consider:

4. What media outlets do your target audience members regularly read, watch, or listen to?

5. Which of these accept pieces from outside contributors?

6. Can you create a list of three to five ideas, targeted to their style and focus area, to pitch to them?

7. Do you know anyone who contributes to these outlets? Are they willing to introduce you?

8. In the next week, write a short pitch email to at least three outlets and offer your services. Write down when you plan to do this.

9. Which of your blog posts, podcasts, or videos have been particularly popular? That may reveal emerging trends or book topics that your audience would respond to.

10. What books have been written about the topic or topics you care most about? What angle did they take? How is your perspective on the issue different or unique?

11. “Social proof”—signals of credibility—helps ensure that others listen to your message and take you seriously. What forms of social proof can you leverage (such as affiliations with prominent companies, educational institutions, membership organizations, media outlets, or individuals)?

12. What influencers would make the biggest difference for you to connect with?

13. What skills or resources can you offer to help more experienced people in your field?

14. Do you have an email list? If so, did everyone on it proactively opt in and ask to be added? If yes, great. If not, remove them. It's fine to send a one-time email to all your contacts to ask if they'd like to join your mailing list, but you should make them click to proactively opt in to receive further mailings; you can let everyone else know it will be the only mailing you send.

15. Take at least 30 percent of the time you currently spend on social media each week and shift it toward building your email list. This is the best way to reach your biggest fans. Write down when, specifically, you'll spend time strategizing about growing your email list.

16. What knowledge or information do you have that people ask you about frequently (anything from how to become a better table tennis player to how to negotiate a better salary)?

17. How could you package this into a desirable "lead magnet" (a free giveaway in exchange for someone opting in to your email list) and what form would it take (workbook, video series, tip sheets, resource guide, etc.)?

18. How will you advertise your lead magnet (appear on podcasts, write a detailed article, create Facebook ads, etc.)?

19. Have you set a consistent content creation schedule for yourself? Whether you're blogging or creating videos or podcasts, having a regular schedule, such as "weekly" or "Tuesdays and Thursdays," helps your readers know what to expect. Write down your proposed initial schedule.

20. Audit your website and bio. Do you have multiple calls to action ("subscribe to my YouTube channel" and "follow me on Twitter" and "connect on LinkedIn")? Purge these and focus your message on what's most important: getting people to sign up for your email list. Write down exactly when you'll do this.

21. Analyze the headlines of the content you create. Which past titles have gotten the biggest readership? What patterns do you see? Are there certain words or phrases people seem attracted to? Do your readers like long or short titles? Do they respond well to "list" posts (for example, "Four Ways to Improve Your Marketing Today")? Note below what works best and adapt.

Monetize Your Expertise

Once you've begun to build trust with your audience, you can begin to monetize your ideas. This could take the form of one-on-one activities, like coaching or consulting, or one-to-many, like public speaking or podcasting, blogging, or vlogging. Here are some questions and possibilities to keep in mind:

22. How much time per week, or per day, are you spending on social media? What's the return you hope to get, and how are you quantifying it? Is it worth it?

23. What are you doing to build “mind share” (general awareness of you and your brand) and “market share” (revenue-generating activities)? Make a list of each. How are you allocating your time, and does this feel like the right balance?

24. What's the going rate that others in your field are charging? If you don't know, start researching online and asking friends and colleagues. You can't price yourself fairly if you don't know what the range is.

25. Based on your knowledge and skills, how do you want to position yourself? Are you a beginner, eager to get clients and experience? Or are you a seasoned pro looking to expand a new income stream? Once you understand the market, you can price yourself according to the brand you want to create in the marketplace.

26. Think about various pricing models for your products and services. Can you continue to offer some material for free, for those who genuinely can't pay, while offering exclusive paid content to your super-fans? What would that look like?

27. Practice stating your rate, whether in mock interviews with your friends or in the mirror. You won't get others to accept your fees unless you believe you're worth it yourself.

28. Have you directly reached out—individually, not via blast email—to all your friends and colleagues, telling them about your work and asking if they know anyone who might need your services? If not, do it now.

29. Think about people you've worked with in the past who may have migrated to new companies, or old colleagues or contacts from college, grad school, sports teams, professional associations, or the like. Are any in a position where they could conceivably hire you?

30. Have you reached out to your friends and colleagues to ask if they know people in your target city and/or industry? See if they're willing to introduce you.

31. Make a list of nonprofit, civic, or professional associations where you could volunteer to speak. If the audience members themselves aren't potential buyers of your service, be clear on how you can bridge the gap to reach buyers (such as requiring that a buyer be present). Reach out to at least three this week.

32. Do you specifically *ask* for referrals? If not, reach out to at least one satisfied customer this week and ask if they know of other people or organizations that might benefit from your help.

33. Looking at your existing clients, are there other departments or field offices that might need your services? Talk to your existing clients and see if they would be willing to make an introduction.

34. Do you have existing offerings that you feel may have grown stale over the years? Is there something you should think about retiring?

35. What one or two new offerings or events could you launch this year? How will you determine whether your audience is interested (email survey, focus group discussion, offer a pilot, etc.)?

36. What high-ticket service could you realistically offer? Write a description that includes all the specifics. Who is your ideal client? What is the price point of your offering? What will they get in return? What is the duration? Why will it appeal to them? Why should they choose to work with you, rather than someone else? Answering these questions—and seeing where there are holes—can be enormously helpful in clarifying your value proposition and understanding your target audience.

37. Do you have skills that you could leverage to help influencers in your industry? Write down one to three people you could realistically assist in some way.

38. If you coach or consult, what are the steps in your process? Break them down into small, discrete modules, preferably with unique and memorable names that will become associated with you and your approach.

Speaking

39. Make a list of clients who love your work. Ask them if they're involved in professional associations they could refer you to, or if they attend conferences where they know the organizers. They may be willing to put in a good word on your behalf.

40. If you have friends or colleagues who are speakers, ask them if they've spoken at any events lately for which they think you might be a good fit. Approach this judiciously, because they're putting their reputation on the line for you. Only reach out to people with whom you're close, and be prepared to share a sample video with them so they can vet your speaking skills if they haven't already seen you onstage.

41. Make a list of blogs you could write that tie in to your speeches. The goal is to create a marketing pipeline in which your content attracts interested customers who will reach out and ask, "Could you speak to our group about that?"

42. When someone invites you to give a speech, *always* ask, "What's your speaker budget?" They may not have one, but you'll at least know the answer and can make an informed decision about whether you'd like to accept.

43. Have a preferred fee in mind, based on your level of experience and the prominence of your brand. As you get to know other speakers (consider checking out groups like the National Speakers Association), you can see what others are charging and calibrate accordingly. So—what's your number?

44. If a given event doesn't have a budget, what would make it worthwhile for you to speak at an event for free? Write a list of at least five benefits you could get out of it (connecting with influencers, testimonial quotes, etc.).

45. What techniques will you use to get conference organizers to come to you (blogging, appearing on podcasts, referrals from colleagues, etc.)? List at least two specific tactics you plan to implement in the next three months.

46. Identify your targets. Create a list of at least five conferences where you'd like to speak. Look up the program chair's contact information online, and in the next week, send a short email inquiry to each. Repeat weekly.

47. What products, such as books or audio learning kits, could you create to supplement your speeches? What aspects of your talk most interest your audience, and where could they benefit by going deeper?

48. Start to do preliminary research. If you were going to self-publish a workbook or create a video training course, what resources (including time, money, and equipment) would you need to accomplish that? Ask colleagues and look for reference articles online. Research is useful for understanding what might be possible in the future, so you can start taking initial steps, such as recording talks for later use in training modules.

Blogging

49. If you're interested in blogging, list the publications you'd like to write for. Think big—national outlets—but also small. Where could you start out? Are there local publications or smaller niche sites in your field? Start to map out a ladder strategy in which you'll plan to write for lower-profile outlets and steadily work your way up.

50. If you're blogging on your own site, think about ways to monetize it. For example: Which forms of monetization might work for you? Display ads? Sponsored posts? Affiliate income? Selling ebooks? Pick at least one to start with.

51. Do some research on other sites to see which companies in your space already pay for sponsored posts; perhaps they'd be good targets to approach if your monthly page views are sufficient.

52. Start to think about which products (that you believe in) would be good to promote as an affiliate. Can you create content that would highlight the product's virtues and link to a site where people can buy it?

53. What topics would appeal to your readers in ebook form? Can you do something that's technical, or otherwise fairly involved, that is simply too complex to explain in a regular blog post? If so, perhaps an ebook might be the right format.

56. What does the ideal, ongoing mastermind group that you'd like to create look like? How many (and what kind of) people, meeting with what frequency, at what price point? Would it be entirely virtual or would you also include an in-person component?

57. Think about where you can find your initial members. Who else do you know with connections in the community you want to serve? Can they send you referrals?

Conference Organizing

58. What topics are people constantly asking you for help with? Are those topics amenable to being taught through a live event?

59. List the best and worst conferences you've attended. What did you like most or least? Why? How could you create an event that reflects your own preferences and values? What would make your conference distinctive in the marketplace?

60. If you're interested in organizing a conference, start mapping out the specifics of your future vision. Where would you hold it? What time of year? How large would it be? What speakers would you host? Would the conference have an overall theme? What would attendees get out of it? How is it different from other conferences currently on the market?

61. In a general sense—and well before committing to any course of action—start scoping out the pricing. It’s useful to know more details so you can make an informed decision. What are conference center rental fees? How about food and drink? What does it take to reserve a block of rooms at the hotel? How far in advance do you need to book? What are cancellation policies? What is the keynote rate for the speakers you most want to land? A few phone calls can help you establish a ballpark estimate, and that allows you to determine whether and when you should launch.

Podcasts

62. Make a list of ten “shoo-in” guests that you could have on your initial episodes as you get the hang of the medium. You don’t want to start out by approaching world-famous people you don’t know well. Instead, focus on people in the field you’d like to target for your podcast, but with whom you already have a good relationship. That way, they’ll be more likely to say yes to you and more tolerant of any rookie mistakes you might make.

63. Schedule your first interviews and launch with three or more episodes at once. That shows that you're serious and also juices your initial download numbers, so you're more likely to gain traction on iTunes. When will you start scheduling your interviews?

64. Now make a list of your top-twenty *ideal* guests, for when you're further along. Who are they (entrepreneurs, fitness experts, top architects)? Look them up online and find their contact information. In many cases, they'll have their own website with contact forms or email addresses provided; in other cases, you may only be able to locate their social media profiles. Make a spreadsheet.

65. For each potential guest, write down your connections with them. If you know the individual personally, that's great. If not, could a mutual friend introduce you? Have they already been a guest on the podcast of someone you know? When the time is right, ask them if they'd be willing to connect you. You'll be surprised how many people will say yes.

Video Blogging (Vlogging)

66. List at least five other video bloggers (aka “vloggers”) who focus on your space. Watch at least three to four of their most popular videos to get a feel for their style, approach, and what works. Decide what elements you want to emulate and what you’d like to do differently.

67. If you decide you’re interested in creating your own videos, write up an editorial calendar with at least twenty entries (a list of topics you’ll be covering in future videos). Consistency is key; you’ll need to produce content regularly to build a following and gain the experience you need to excel.

68. Think through how to make your videos stand out, and write down your ideas. It’s not terrible to be a “talking head” explaining the same points that you would in a blog post, but it’s even better if you can also express your points visually by doing a demonstration, showing an object, or using graphics to emphasize your point.

Extend Your Reach and Impact Online

When monetizing expertise, many professionals haven't fully harnessed the power of online opportunities. Whether through online courses or communities, virtual summits, or affiliate marketing, there are a variety of options to unlock new revenue streams. Here are some factors to consider:

Online Courses

69. What do others consistently ask your advice about (how to guest blog for other people's websites, or how to dress more fashionably, or how to be a better parent)? Would it be possible to systematize that knowledge and teach it as an online course?

70. Write a short description of a potential course (a half page to a page in length). Now list fifty people you think might be interested. Send the course description to them and ask for their thoughts and feedback, and ask if they'd be willing to buy it at the price point you've set. If at least 10 percent say yes, strongly consider offering the course.

71. Write down in detail what the most effective course you could offer would look like. What will you teach, when, and how?

72. What price point would make this a win from your perspective? Do you know people, or could you activate a referral stream of people, who could afford to pay? Even if the price is high, some will opt in if they trust you and perceive sufficient value.

Virtual Summits

73. Register for at least two to three virtual summits to see what they're like, how they're promoted, how the interviews are conducted, and how sales on the back end are run. (If you subscribe to the email lists of influencers in your field, you'll likely find out about various virtual summits they're involved in organically, but if not, simply Google the term and you'll find a variety for which you can sign up.)

74. If you'd like to create a virtual summit, identify your topic of choice. I've participated in virtual summits focused on everything from peak personal performance to self-publishing to how to become an authority in your field.

Online Communities

78. Where will you get the initial members of your online community (at least fifty) from? Will you advertise it to members of your email list? Position it as the logical extension of a course or workshop that you've offered?

79. What's your plan to stimulate conversation in the online community? What questions will you ask, and how often will you personally monitor exchanges? Plan a schedule for yourself in advance that reflects when you'll check in and what topics you'll ask questions about, so that community maintenance doesn't fall off your radar.

80. Start thinking now about how you'll scale the community. After a certain point, you can't manage all the conversation and interactions yourself. Do you have someone who can help? Will you need to hire someone? Where will you find them? Promoting someone who is already a dedicated community member is often a good plan, but think now about your expectations of the role and compensation.

Affiliate and Joint Venture Marketing

81. Think about relevant products you can highlight on your blog and link to through a program such as Amazon Affiliates. What content can you create that will give you organic opportunities to present that item? To maintain trust with your readers, be sure to disclose when you're receiving affiliate income for recommending a product.

82. Are there influencers you admire who market products, such as online courses? Email them directly to inquire if they have an affiliate program, and ask how you might become part of it.

83. If you have a course or offering, list potential joint venture partners who might like to have you present to their audiences. Ideal partners should be people you respect and have a good relationship with, and who speak to complementary audiences.

84. Start with one to two partners with whom you have particularly strong relationships and agree to do reciprocal webinars (they present to your list, and vice versa). You won't always need to be reciprocal—sometimes their audience is a fit for you, but not vice versa—but it's a good way to start, and you can deepen your connection and work out the kinks with a trusted partner.

Living the Life You Want

Entrepreneurship means different things to different people. For some, it's a chance to earn life-changing money. For others, it's the freedom to work from anywhere and travel the world, or to spend more time with their spouse or kids. Creating a successful life means being clear about your priorities and taking action. Think about the following:

85. What aspects of your business—not just administrative tasks, but core business functions—do you dislike the most? What would it take for you to move out of that business and transition into new revenue streams instead?

86. What expenses can you cut without too much hardship? (The goal isn't to live an ascetic life, but to give you more flexibility in your business.)

87. When thinking about the level of freedom you want in your life and work, start by being clear about your priorities—not what you think you should be aiming for, but what actually matters most to you. Is your top priority spending time with your kids? Freedom to travel the world? Growing a seven-figure business? Doing yoga every afternoon?
