

New Business Decision Guide

Turn your business idea into confident next steps

Is this guide right for you

Are you seriously considering starting a business - but want a reality check before committing time, money, or energy?

You might have:

- One idea you can't stop thinking about
- A few different ideas and no way to choose
- A sense that your idea could work, but no proof yet

You don't need more inspiration.

You need help deciding whether this idea is worth pursuing.

Why this guide exists

Coming up with ideas is easy. Deciding whether an idea is actually viable is much harder.

Most new founders get stuck asking:

- Is this idea good enough?
- Will anyone actually pay for this?
- Am I missing something obvious?
- Am I about to waste time and money?

This guide helps you move out of that uncertainty into confident next steps.

It will take you through a series of structured reality-check questions designed to help you assess:

- demand
- willingness to pay
- competition
- effort versus reward
- personal fit and constraints

By the end, you'll have a clear direction — whether that's to move forward, pause and validate further, or let the idea go.

What you'll get from this guide:

- Gain clarity on whether your idea is worth pursuing right now
- Identify the weakest parts of your idea before they cost you money
- Know exactly what needs validating next
- Stop going in circles and start making progress

What this guide won't do:

- Tell you what business to start
- Guarantee success or profitability
- Do the research or analysis for you

This guide is designed to help you make a decision, not overthink one.

How to use this guide

Use this guide as a thinking tool. Print it off and scribble on the pages. This is your document to help you get to a decision only you can make.

Each of the five sections will prompt you to score certain statements between 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). For each section:

- Answer based on evidence, not hope
- If you're unsure, score lower
- This is not a test to pass - it's a tool to reveal risk early

At the end of the scoring sections add up your total and view the decision on the last page.

The good news is - once you have this document you can use it to re-test again in the future or use it for multiple business ideas.

In just 30 minutes you can confidently proceed or pause on your business idea.

Common doubts this guide helps you work through

If you're feeling:

- overwhelmed by where to start
- unsure what actually matters right now
- worried about wasting time or money
- excited but hesitant to commit

That's normal.

This guide helps you slow down, focus on what matters, and make a calm, informed decision - without killing your motivation or momentum.

The Idea Snapshot

5 minutes

Purpose: Get the idea out of your head and onto a page.

1. Describe your idea in one sentence:

I help:

to:

by:

Example: *I help entrepreneurs to validate their ideas before they spend time or money on a new business by offering them a simple decision framework.*

2. Who is this for: (be specific)

Job/life stage:

Location:

Situation they're in right now:

3. What problem does this solve:

What's frustrating, costly, or time-consuming?

What happens if they don't solve it?

4. What are you assuming is true:

People will pay for this: Yes/No

This problem is common: Yes/No

I can reach these people: Yes/No

If you can't confidently say "yes" to these, that's not failure - it's a signal.

Demand Reality Check

5 minutes

Purpose: Kill “nice idea, no demand” early.

Score each statement from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

	Disagree			Agree	
	1	2	3	4	5
I can name at least 10 real people who have this problem.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I know where these people already hang out (online or offline).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
People are already paying for some solution to this problem.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If this solution disappeared tomorrow, people would actively look for a replacement.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have spoken to 10+ people that have this problem and are seeking a solution.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Pro tip:

Search for evidence, not gut feelings or vibes.

Evidence examples: conversations, DMs, forum posts, search trends, existing products.

Total score: /25

Willingness to Pay

5 minutes

Purpose: Stop underpricing and wishful thinking.

Score each statement from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

	Disagree			Agree	
	1	2	3	4	5
I have calculated how much it would cost me to produce or serve the solution.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
People are already paying for solutions at this price point.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The cost of these people doing nothing is higher than my cost to serve.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have spoken to 10 people who would be willing to pay this amount to solve their problem.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would pay this amount if I had this problem.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Pro tip:

A profitable business must have paying customers, but how much is the question.

If you're guessing the price, score lower.

If you've tested or pre-sold, score higher.

Total score: /25

Competitive Reality

5 minutes

Purpose: Reframe competition as validation, not fear.

Score each statement from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

	Disagree			Agree	
	1	2	3	4	5
I have researched 5+ competing solutions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I know what is important to my customers, eg; price, quality, speed.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I know how my solution would compete with these competitors.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I know what I will need to build or improve to gain competitive advantage.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I understand why customers choose existing options.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Pro tip:

Lots of competition? Just because there are lots of businesses already offering a solution to the same problem doesn't mean you shouldn't start your business. More competition often means the idea is valid - what you need to consider is how your solution can compete and stand out from the competition.

Total score: /25

Effort vs Reward

5 minutes

Purpose: Prevent burnout before it starts.

Score each statement from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

	Disagree			Agree	
	1	2	3	4	5
I would be comfortable if it took me over 2 months to get my first sale.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I know my skillset and where I'll need to up-skill or outsource parts of the business.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have assessed the start up costs required to launch this business.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If I only made a small profit from this business I would still be motivated to do it.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have the support systems in place to help me build this business, eg: family, mentor, online resources.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Pro tip:

Be honest here. If this business can only succeed with perfect motivation or unlimited energy, score lower.

Total score: /25

Personal Fit & Constraints

5 minutes

Purpose: Align with real life, not fantasy.

Score each statement from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

	Disagree			Agree	
	1	2	3	4	5
I have set aside time each week to work on this new business.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have set aside a realistic financial investment to get this business off the ground.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have the motivation and passion to build this business for as long as it takes.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have the time and capacity to pursue this in my stage of life.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have revisited this idea after initial excitement and it still makes sense.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Total score: /25

The Scorecard

Write your total score from each section into the scorecard below.
This will highlight your weakest and strongest areas.

Section	Score
Demand Reality Check	/25
Willingness to Pay	/25
Competitive Reality	/25
Effort vs Reward	/25
Personal Fit & Constraints	/25
Total score:	/125

A single weak section can stop an otherwise strong idea.
Take your final score on to the next page to see your decision.

**“A good decision now
is better than a perfect
decision later.”
— General George S. Patton**

The Decision

75-125 → Proceed

Build & validate immediately

- Talk to 10 potential customers
- Test pricing with a pre-sell
- Build the smallest possible version

55- 74 → Validate before committing

Fix weak areas first

- Identify the weakest scoring section
- Run one focused experiment
- Re-score after 2 weeks

Below 55 → Do not pursue right now

Don't pursue right now

- What did you learn?
- What would need to change for this to work later?
- Walking away early is a win - it saves future regret.

Pro tip:

No matter what your final score is, focus on your weakest areas first.

This can save you future time and money by addressing key areas that need further validation or testing. Good news is - you can use this guide again and again to re-test and turn a 'not right now' idea into a clear decision to proceed.

Take your next step

Find your first 10 customers with the Pre-sell Guide

Growth Guide Series by Mood Marketing