



February 2012

**Self-Employment is Like a River**  
*...it's all about the flow.*



**H**ave you ever floated in a canoe or kayak down a gently flowing river?

Perhaps you recall the peacefulness of riding with the current. What about the different sounds, smells, textures and colors? Collectively, these things make for a fun day and get you somewhere!

This analogy is similar to self-employment. Think of the canoe as your products/services, the river is the market and your surroundings are the details that collectively combine to support your ultimate objective of making the sale. Along the way...

**Mile #1**, imagine what your products/services are. It could be something you've done as a hobby, at a past job, or volunteer work.

**Mile #2**, picture "**WHO**" your customers are. Are they men, women, young, old, a business, group or nonprofit agency?

**Mile #3**, "**WHAT**" is involved in the sale? Do you need a price list, equipment, a contract, brochure, transportation, web site, business card and special facilities?

**Mile #4**, "**HOW**" do you see yourself connecting with prospective customers? What kinds of advertising and promotional practices will you use? Keep in mind that tools like social media and publicity can be very useful where they don't cost anything other than your time and a little ingenuity!

**Mile #5**, "**WHERE**" can you get help? Don't go it alone. You don't have to. There are many no-cost and low-cost [sources of help](#) in your community and on the [web](#). Check out [SCORE](#) and [SBDs](#). Google search for free training webinars. Ask your friendly NH Vocational Rehabilitation counselor for some suggestions.

**Mile #6** (...and the best part!), "**WHEN**" will you know that you succeeded? Think about it. Are you looking to make "X" amount of money each month from this activity? How much would you have to make or hours would you have to sell to generate this much? Do you like what you're doing? Do you like who you're selling to? Who is there to help you? Are your family and friends a part of your success? How many new and enjoyable relationships are possible in this self-employment adventure?

Celebrate all of the good things that come about as you take this journey down the river. The possibilities are endless and you can count on having a great boss - **YOU!**

[Click Here](#) to download a fun worksheet that will help you get started. *...and enjoy the ride!*

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