



Module 3 – Chapter 3.1.3

Activity 3. e-EXERCISE (self-test): Are you good for a cooperative?

Time estimated: 10 minutes

Type of work: individual work

Type of activity: self-test

If you think that this is your idea, your business and you want to keep control, then maybe a co-op is not for you.

However, if you are open to involving others with the same level of ownership and control then a quick run through this section should reassure you that you're on the right track.

Some believe that capital gains should not be the focus of their decisions and that the important thing is the people who join the project. This is the philosophy of start-ups that adopt the cooperative as a legal form.

Many choose the cooperative for a matter of personal criteria, because they are clear about the type of relationship they like to have between people, work and capital, because they want to start a company in which each member of the team has the same voice.

In a cooperative it is important to meet the needs and that each person has the same rights as the rest, regardless of their role and contributed capital. The founders of a cooperative do not seek to constantly scale or obtain a high return on investment.

If you feel that a cooperative is right for your start-up you should start to understand who should be involved in your cooperative. One of the first things recommended is an exercise to understand what your collective vision is.

These are the main questions that you should answer:

1. Are you willing to listen to all those involved?
2. Are you willing to accept a participatory development of the vision?
3. Would you rather impose your own idea?
4. Do you want members to own and control the business or organisation?
5. Can your business work to cooperative values and principles?
6. Have you got a viable business idea? A cooperative must be a viable business.

If you are not willing to listen to all those involved, then a cooperative may not be for you.

If you are not willing to accept a participatory development of the vision, then a cooperative may not be for you.

If you want to impose your own idea, then a cooperative may not be for you.

If you want to limit ownership to a few people, even when the cooperative grows, then a cooperative may not be for you.

If your business cannot work to cooperative values and principles, then a cooperative may not be for your business.