

In the early stages of thinking about your business idea, you should make a rough estimate of how much you'll need to keep the business open. You can do this with a few simple calculations. The **Cost Evaluation Exercise** is a quick check to help you figure out if your business idea will work before you spend too much time on planning.

Step 1: Estimates

Write down your estimates for these four categories:

- Monthly personal living expenses
(such as rent, utilities, food, insurance)

A =

- Monthly fixed costs for your business
(such as rent, utilities, insurance, advertising)

B =

- Cost to buy one unit of a similar product or service

C =

- Cost of materials to make one unit of a similar product or service

D =

Step 2: Calculations

Plug your estimates from Step 1 into these calculations:

- Total monthly expenses

A+B = total monthly expenses

$$\underline{\hspace{2cm}} \quad + \quad \underline{\hspace{2cm}} \quad = \quad \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$$

A **B** **total monthly expenses**

- Gross profit per unit sales

C - D = gross profit per unit sales

$$\underline{\hspace{2cm}} \quad - \quad \underline{\hspace{2cm}} \quad = \quad \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$$

C **D** **gross profit per unit sales**

Next, take these two values and plug them into the equation on the next page to figure out how many units you have to sell each month.

Step 2: Calculations, continued

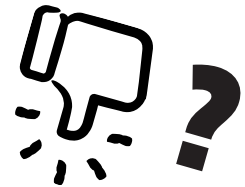
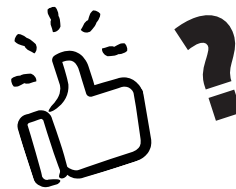
- How many units you need to sell each month
total monthly expenses ÷ gross profit per unit = how many units you need to sell each month

$$\frac{\text{total monthly expenses}}{\text{gross profit per unit}} = \text{how many units you need to sell per month}$$

Step 3: Thumbs Up or Thumbs Down?

Now that you have figured out how many units you'll need to sell each month to cover your total monthly expenses, think about these questions:

- How long will it take you to make and sell this many units each month?
- Does this seem possible?
- Do you want to work this hard?
- Can you work this much with your disability?



If you answered “no” to any of these questions, talk them over with your counselor.

- Do you want to change your business idea to make it more feasible?
- Are there accommodations that could help?
- Would getting a job working for an established business be a better plan?