

IS BUSINESS EDUCATION RIGHT FOR YOU?

Effective business educators come in all shapes and sizes and from all kinds of backgrounds. Yet they share certain traits that help them succeed in the specific work they do.

For instance, business educators teach, coach, motivate, and inspire. Many classrooms are becoming less structured, more relaxed, as students and teachers work to discuss and solve problems together. Business education, with its emphasis on real-time learning and real-world relevance, can be a great opportunity for someone who:

- Cares about helping young people make career choices.
- Is passionate about working with students and with business professionals to make learning more relevant.
- Likes finding creative ways to teach students what they want and need to know.
- Has lots of energy and patience.
- Likes reading and learning about business topics.
- Wants to teach others what she or he has learned.
- Desires to give something back to the school or community.
- Has or could develop strong technology skills.
- Is a risk taker who thrives on trying new things.
- Can do, and enjoys, multitasking.
- Is organized, committed, and focused, and does not want to sit at a desk all day.
- Sees oneself as a person who invents possibilities and wants to be part of a dynamic, ever-changing environment.
- Values variety and a career that offers multiple job options.
- Wants to join a professional learning community that strives for excellence.

Next Steps

Imagining yourself as a business educator is the first step to becoming one. But where do you go from there?

If you are in high school, visit your business teacher or your guidance counselor and say that you are interested in pursuing a career in business education. Ask for advice about the best courses for you. Seek job opportunities that will give you practical business experience. If your school participates in Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) or Business Professionals of America (BPA), join. Finally, begin learning about which colleges or universities offer accredited business education programs.

If you are in college, seek out a professor of business education and make your intention known. If your school does not have a business teacher education department, contact the National Business Education Association (www.nbea.org) to find out more about what you can do and where you can go to get the credentials that will allow you to become a business educator.

On the practical side, you may qualify for federal financial aid loans and grants, state government loans, college and university-funded aid, or privately funded aid programs to finance your education. If you enter the teaching profession, some states offer "forgivable" loans, depending on where and what you teach after you graduate.