

Complete Guide To Import/Export

How To Start Your Own Import/Export Business

Week #1

Getting Started

“Beginning is not only a kind of action. It is also a frame of mind, a kind of work, an attitude, a consciousness.”

— Edward Said

Before you get started read Chapter One of *How To Start Your Own Import/Export Business*.

Global trade has been described as the hot new enterprise of the 21st century. In reality, it’s not a new industry at all. Not when you think about the ancient caravans of the desert, where camels travelled bearing cargoes of salt, silk, and exotic spices...or the Phoenicians, who exported their precious purple dye all across the Roman Empire...or Captain Bligh and his South Sea breadfruits...or Sir Walter Raleigh and tobacco. When it comes to trade, the world went global a long, long time ago.

Task 1: Have you got what it takes?

The main aim of this week’s course is to get you thinking seriously about where in the world you most want to go and what you most want to sell. Before we discuss this, please take the time to complete the following questionnaire. It is designed to see if you have the qualities to thrive in the import/export world.

Turn to page 6 of *How To Start Your Own Import/Export Business* to review the 11 keys to success, prior to completing this task. Score yourself on each one from 1 to 10 (10 being the highest score) in each of the following areas:

1. Schmoozability _____
2. Ability to “close the deal” _____
3. Disciplined work habits _____
4. Business know-how _____
5. Seed capital _____
6. Ability to work unsupervised _____
7. Knowledge of world politics, economics, local customs, and language _____
8. Gritty persistence _____
9. Willingness to change tack when necessary _____
10. Market awareness _____
11. Expertise _____

For areas where your score is under seven, you should get people you trust (who are strong in these particular traits) to help you get up to speed with the skills you will need to succeed. Take a moment to jot down some notes on ways to boost your lower scores, and celebrate the high ones.

Task 2: Decide where you most want to go, and what you want to sell

Now that you know what skills you already have that will help you to succeed (as well as the ones you need to work at), it’s time to start dreaming. One of the best advantages, and there are many, of starting up an import/export business is that the world is your oyster.

There are still relatively few import/export entrepreneurs worldwide. So no matter what your interests are, you’re bound to find opportunities in every corner of the world.

Take note of where you most want to go in the space below. Take the opportunity at this stage to do a bit of research on your chosen destination. The *IL* homepage (www.InternationalLiving.com) is a good place to start.

You should also contact a travel agent and request information packs about two or three of the countries you wish to import from or export to.

Task 3: What product would you like to sell?

At this stage you should also be thinking about the product you might like to sell. This will be covered in greater detail in Weeks 4 and 5. However, it is never too early to start thinking of the type of product you think you could successfully import or export.

Make sure to run your ideas past family and friends—they may be able to provide you with valuable insights. Once you have researched potential products, record your ideas in the space below.

If you are finding this task difficult, take a look at the success stories that abound throughout *How To Start Your Own Import/Export Business* for inspiration. You'll hear about Merri Scott in Ecuador, Susanna Starr in Mexico, Barry Oliver in Costa Rica, Steve Miller in Bali...

Seem like too much hard work? Stick with me, because this online course, in conjunction with *How To Start Your Own Import/Export Business*, is designed to help you transform your dream into a reality in just 10 weeks. I'll end this week's lesson by reminding you once again of some of the benefits of owning an import/export business. (To read about the advantages in more depth see pages 4 to 6 in *How To Start Your Own Import/Export Business*.)

Benefits of owning an import/export business

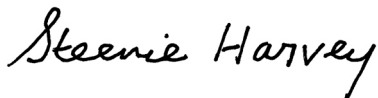
- A recession-proof business
- You're the boss
- Minimal start-up requirements
- A career that's open to all

Don't forget that the import/export business allows you to escape the boredom of a nine-to-five job, travel the world, and meet new people. Not to mention the incredible profits...

Next week, I'll walk you through the steps you need to take to organize your business.

Read Chapter Two in *How To Start Your Own Import/Export Business* to prepare for next week's tasks. You should also make sure you are aware of your strengths and weaknesses, have a good idea of what you want to sell and where you want to go...and, most importantly, that you are still excited about the difference that an import/export business could make to your life.

Sincerely,



Steenie Harvey
Import/Export Correspondent, *International Living*