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*Quitting a job to open a business*

## **Starting a Natural Foods Company**

*Life is too short to be unhappy. With that in mind, Seth Mendelsohn decided to turn his passion for cooking into a new business. He left the life and being an employee and, so far, has enjoyed the transition to owning a business of his own.*

Seth Mendelsohn is founder of Simply Boulder Foods, based in Boulder, Colorado.

(article continues below)

He jumped from the healthcare industry to being an entrepreneur in the foods industry, and his , **Simply Boulder Culinary Sauces** is doing great

We asked him to offer some insights on his transition from employee to entrepreneur and he kindly obliged.

### **Seth, what type of firm were you working at before deciding to start a company of your own?**

The company I worked for implements clinical application systems at hospitals.

I decided to leave in order to start my own company in the natural foods industry.

Although I was in the IT industry for 7 years, I was at the current position for about a year. I left in December of 2007.

### **You've got your own company now, right? What is it and what do you do there?**

My company produces culinary sauces. All of our sauces are made with olive oil, sweetened with organic agave nectar, gluten free, and 100% natural. Plus they taste amazing.

My job title is President and I pretty much do everything. Some of my responsibilities are marketing, sales, operations management, and working with brokers.

### **Why did you decide to become an entrepreneur instead of simply looking for another job?**

Even though I had a good job, my real passion has always been cooking.

In particular I've always loved creating new sauces that not only taste great, but are as healthy as possible. I decided that life is too short to not do what I truly love, and decided to make the switch.

**Did you buy a business or start a business from scratch? Why did you do one instead of the other? Which do you think is the best approach?**

My business was started from scratch. I did this because I did a lot of research and knew exactly what needed to be done. So far it's paying off. Next month my product will be in over 100 retail outlets!

The best approach really depends on both the business and the entrepreneur. Starting a business from scratch made the best sense in my situation since I didn't have the finances to purchase a business with potential and I knew exactly how I wanted the blueprint for the business to look.

**Getting a product into retail outlets can be tough. Sounds like you are making great progress on that front. Congrats. So, I'm curious, how did you decide what kind of business to go into?**

I've always loved cooking and live a healthy, active lifestyle. I knew that the natural foods industry is where I belong.

**Having a business is very different from being an employee, isn't it? What are some of the biggest differences you've noticed? What do you miss? What don't you miss?**

I've actually found that there are several skills that I picked up in the IT industry that are applicable in any industry.

The thing I miss most right now is interaction with other employees. Luckily it won't be long until I hire employees to help me out.

I don't miss having a supervisor. It's great having the authority to make all the strategic decisions.

**What advice would you give to somebody who is leaving the life of working for a company to go out on their own?**

Go for it! Life is too short to not have your career of choice. Do a diligent job on research and creating a good business plan and you'll be fine.

**The economy is tough out there right now, and unemployment is high. Anything you'd care to share with us regarding the transition from being laid off to starting a business?**

I was fortunate that I left the industry on my own and wasn't laid off. But, I think the transition isn't that hard as long as you're prepared. Do a good job on the business plan and it will pay off.

**Excellent advice. To excel as a new entrepreneur, you really do need a good plan. Thanks so much for participating in this interview, Seth.**