

Steve Cummins talks about starting his own business

I'd worked for the company for almost ten years. They were good employers and the money wasn't that bad. They trusted in my ability and always left me to get on with my work. And I shared an office and met some lovely people, so I certainly wasn't unhappy there. But I just couldn't stop wondering how better my life would be if I had my own business and could make my own decisions. And so one year ago this week I left my job.

We don't have a spare room at home, so the kitchen table has been my office. It was difficult to begin with, but I soon got used to working in this way. I started by visiting small businesses in the area to see if I could interest them in my services. My proudest moment was making my first sale, a website for a local cake shop. Soon after, I started getting calls from other people asking for help with websites of their own and I found myself getting quite busy. Of course, there have been challenges. I'm not earning quite as much as before but it's enough. I don't have to pay for transport to work anymore so that means I'm not spending quite so much. My biggest problem has been managing my time. There's no boss to tell me what to do and I'm sometimes a little lazy. I have this rule that work stops on a Friday afternoon so I can spend time with the family at weekends, so I need to pay more attention to this.

So, I wouldn't say it's been easy, but I don't regret my decision at all. I've enjoyed being my own boss and I'm quite hopeful about the future. During the next 12 months I plan to rent some office space as I'd like to be able to separate work from my home life. I'm going to need to earn more money to pay for it but I think it will help me to focus on my work.

1 Why did Steve leave his job?

A He didn't like attending meetings.

B He wanted more control of his work.
c He had a great idea for a product.
D He wanted to earn more money.

2 Steve's greatest pleasure so far has been
A getting his first customer.
B not having to drive to work.
c having his own office.
D not having to answer the telephone.

3 What does Steve say is the most difficult about working for himself?
A working hard enough
B not having a regular salary
c feeling lonely
D working at the weekend

4 In the next year, Steve thinks
A he will get an office job.
B he will earn less money.
c he might not need to work in his kitchen.
D there will be much more competition.

5 What would be a good introduction to this article?
A In this article, Steve Cummins explains the problems of starting your own business and dealing with difficult customers.
B Thinking of starting your own business? Steve Cummins did just that and now wishes he had done it sooner.
c Steve Cummins made a big decision last year to leave his job. Read on to find out about the ups and downs of being your own boss.
D Steve Cummins explains below how he dealt with not enjoying his job by leaving his employer and starting his own business.