

# Ventures

Enterprising News & Ideas for Nutrition Entrepreneurs

*Beyond Private Practice:  
Outside-the-Box Entrepreneurial  
Paths for Dietitians*

## The Fork in the Road: *Don't Look Sideways at Others; Look at Yourself*



Rosanne Rust, MS, RDN, LD  
Chair

When I look back at my entrepreneurial life, I've taken the beaten path, not the paved one. My business as a sole proprietor and consultant is small compared to the business you may be building, but it works for me. I don't have employees nor partner with anyone, I work part-time to full-time with varied contracts, varied hours and a varied salary. I live in a small town. For me, working on my passion - writing and research - is what naturally led me to where I wanted to be.

As a mother of three, I made the choice early on that I would stay home with my children while they were young, and found work that was flexible to work around their schedules. That was my primary goal. Not money, or status, but having the flexibility to spend time with my children, while still working in my chosen field. During this time, I wrote for my local paper, offered lectures to the local college's health and athletic departments, worked flexible hours in long-term care, and taught online college nutrition classes. All (mostly) from the comfort of my home.

My recommendation is to step "out of the box of competition and comparison," and make decisions based on your values and priorities. Sometimes I see colleagues trying to copy someone else's path, but as an entrepreneur, this strategy doesn't usually work.

Be you. We all have a different set of wants and needs, both in our personal lives and in business. Let the answers to these questions drive your decisions.

- What do I want or need most? Do I need a certain dollar amount to survive? Do I need to spend more time on my home life? Do I need more education or training? Am I willing to sacrifice monetary benefits for flexibility?
- Do I have a timeline? Is there a deadline? Do I have to earn a certain amount of money in a certain time? Can I invest now, cut back on hours later, then come back?
- Will making a sacrifice now lead to more benefits later? Sometimes a change can be scary. It's a risk, and sometimes you can't always see what the end result will be.
- What am I really good at? Just because something is hot or trendy doesn't mean you should do it, especially if it's not natural or easy for you. Stick with what you excel at.

I'm so glad you are here and can enjoy the ride with your fellow entrepreneurs at NEDPG!

*Rosanne Rust, MS, RDN, LDN, is the owner of Rust Nutrition Services, and blogs at Chew the Facts. She's written a few books and works as a nutrition communications consultant. Her passion is fact-finding and translating nutrition data into well-reasoned dietary advice, so people can enjoy eating for good health. As an adventurous mom of three sons, she considers herself a boy expert. She's been there, done that, and is almost done with that. If you call and say "let's go," she's ready, especially if it's to hop a plane to her happy place in Venice, Florida.*

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# Beyond Private Practice: Outside-the-Box, Entrepreneurial Paths for Dietitians



Beverly Price, RD, MA, E-RYT 200, C-IAYT, CERD  
*Guest Article*

Even when I was in high school, I always wanted to open my own private, nutrition practice. In fact, one of my reasons for going into the field of nutrition was the vision I had of myself sitting in a posh office and counseling motivated individuals who could afford my services ... and I did just that. Taking it beyond a basic private practice, I also did additional work in consulting, writing and media.

I hired staff to handle other parts of my business. However, what I did not realize at the time was that I was moving from having a job to “owning a job.” If I or my child was sick, my doors did not open that day. As I became a little smarter and began to step outside of the box, I realized that if I hired other dietitians to work for me - and created spin-off programs that did not require my presence - I could generate “passive income.” However, the thought of giving up counseling patients entirely to “oversee” my business was not what I had in mind ... I could not step fully outside of that box.

## Self-employed or business owner?

A self-employed individual is generally of a service profession (physician, lawyer, dietitian) where the business depends on this person. If the self-employed individual gets sick or dies, so does the business. A business owner hires others to run the day-to-day operation of the business while the owner builds and oversees the business. The business owner may now go on to start several other businesses, as the business does not depend on him or her to “be there.” Going beyond my private practice, I eventually sold it outright to the perfect dietitian – and moved on to my next venture.

The entrepreneurial process involves all the functions, activities and actions associated with perceiving opportunities

and creating organizations to pursue them. An entrepreneur’s business creates jobs for others. An entrepreneur is someone who perceives an opportunity and creates an organization to pursue it.

My next business went beyond a private practice and into a full-service mental health counseling center, along with higher levels of eating-disorder intensive care. This required hiring, personnel management, financial strategizing and insurance battles. Surrounding myself with those who possessed diversified skills, and creating a cream of the crop “A” team, helped us deliver tremendous patient care while collecting the majority of our receivables.

Could I go on vacation, for a length of time, and still generate income? Yes! Did I have more freedom than with my previous business? Yes! Selling this business to a private company gave me more freedom to pursue my other passions.

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*Beverly Price, RD, MA, E-RYT 200, C-IAYT, CEDRD-S, IAEDP, Approved Supervisor, is recognized for her mindfulness, yoga-based, eating-disorder, recovery programs, along with yoga training programs in eating disorders for professionals. She is an author and national presenter. Beverly has created, cultivated and sold various healthcare businesses. In her career, she has also consulted with healthcare entities who wish to maximize their bottom line.*