

Wanting to run your own business is a popular dream among many young people. So how can you make it a reality?

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'WORKING FOR MYSELF HAS IMPROVED MY QUALITY OF LIFE - I'M IN CONTROL OF MY HOURS'

365electrics.com

BE YOUR OWN BOSS

RICHARD GATES Electrician

➔ In September last year, Richard Gates left his job as a music researcher for the BBC to retrain as an electrician and set up his own business, 365electrics.com. It was a bold move as it involved a £4,000 investment in retraining. But Richard had become fed up with his job and poor salary. "I had been working at the BBC for six years. But I wasn't happy in what I was doing," he recalls.

After applying for a government-backed Career Development Loan to fund his course, Richard embarked on an intensive three-month course at Technique Training in Derbyshire. The Total Electrical course led to several City & Guilds qualifications. Here, he realised that starting his own business might be the best option. "While studying on the course, I decided to set up on my own as I was warned I might find it difficult to find apprenticeships because of my age." (He is 31 years old.)

Richard believes that setting up his own business has improved his life. "I'm in control of my hours," he says. There is also the satisfaction of being able to see what you've worked on, he adds. Most of his work comes through word of mouth. "A lot of my friends are getting onto the property ladder and wanted work done. It was a bonus knowing a friend who could do that." He adds that to succeed in your own business you have to seize opportunities. "If I'm walking past properties and there is work being done, I'll ask if any electrical work is needed," he says. "I've had to use more initiative since starting up my own business." ➔

BOSCH