

B2



LET'S LEARN ENGLISH!

Lesson 02 :
Self-employed or
employee?

START

Title of the lesson

1rst Part

Titre de la leçon
1ère partie

Self-employed or employee?

In this lesson, you will compare self-employment and salaried work, argue advantages and risks, and make informed professional choices.

Duration : 45 minutes

Competences covered:

All B1 skills plus Expression,
Interaction, Opinion





Specific objectives of the lesson

- ▶ Understand and exchange complex information and advice related to professional life
- ▶ Discuss advantages and disadvantages in a structured way
- ▶ Express hypotheses and deductions using evidence
- ▶ Argue and justify career choices in formal contexts

Warm-up & Activation 1



1. Do you agree that being self-employed offers more freedom than being an employee?
Why?

+ MY OPINION

Yes, because self-employed people often manage their own schedules, although income may be unstable.



Warm-up & Activation 2



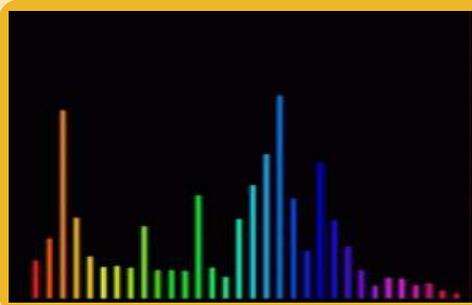
2. Would you rather take risks or have job security?

+ MY OPINION

I would prefer job security
at first, then consider self-
employment later.



LISTEN TO THE AUDIO



Radio interview from :
Business Radio
(United Kingdom)

Key elements :

- Income stability
- Freedom
- Responsibility



What is the main idea of the podcast extract?

+ INFO



Podcast extract from :
Career Path Podcast.
(Canada)

Key elements :

- security, benefits, income potential



What is the main idea of the podcast extract?

+ INFO

Daniel has a fixed monthly salary.

True

False

Send



Self-employed workers manage their own taxes.

True

False

Send



←

Employees have no job security.

True

False

Send

→



←

Salaried jobs always pay more than freelance work.

True

False

Send



←

Benefits are a key advantage of employment.

True

False

Send



←

Career choice depends on personality.

True

False

Send



Listen



Magazine article
(France)

Travail indépendant ou salarié : quel choix professionnel?

Entre indépendance et sécurité, choisir entre travail indépendant et emploi salarié est une décision importante. Chacune de ces options présente des avantages et des défis, influençant les professionnels à différents moments de leur carrière.

Autonomie et incertitude

Les indépendants, de manager à un vendeur, ont des activités et des clients, usuellement, jusqu'à un revenu peut être imprévisible, protégé leurs revenus peut être imprévisible.



Daniel Moore, consultant freelance, apprécie l'autonomie mais reconnaît que le revenu peut être imprévisible.

Sécurité et stabilité

Les salariés, dans des organisations bien structurées, bénéficient généralement d'un salaire fixe et d'avantages sociaux, tels que des congés payés, une retraite, une assurance-maladie, etc.



Sophie Laurent, analyste RH, souligne l'importance de la stabilité et des avantages sociaux des emplois salariés.

Choosing Between Self-Employment and Salaried Work

Choosing between self-employment and salaried work is a decision that many professionals face at different stages of their careers. This choice, which may seem simple at first, is often influenced by personal priorities, financial expectations, and lifestyle preferences. Professionals who value independence are frequently attracted to self-employment, while those who prefer stability often choose traditional employment.

Self-employed workers, who manage their own activities and clients, usually enjoy a high level of autonomy. This freedom, which allows them to organise their schedules and select projects, can lead to greater job satisfaction. However, freelancers must also accept uncertainty.

Their income may fluctuate, and they are responsible for tasks that employees rarely handle, such as accounting, taxation, and social security contributions. These responsibilities, which require discipline and planning, may discourage individuals who dislike risk.

Employees, who work within structured organisations, benefit from regular salaries and legal protection. A salaried position, which often includes paid leave, health insurance, and retirement plans, provides financial security. Experts suggest that people who have families or long-term financial commitments may be more inclined to choose this option. This deduction is based on evidence such as permanent contracts and predictable monthly income, which reduce stress and allow long-term planning.

Nevertheless, the distinction between these two statuses is becoming less clear. Some employees, who work remotely or on flexible contracts, enjoy conditions that were traditionally associated with self-employment. At the same time, successful freelancers, who have established a strong client base, may earn more than salaried workers. This situation suggests that income level alone cannot determine the best choice.

Career advisors argue that personality plays a crucial role in this decision. Someone who is adaptable and comfortable with uncertainty might thrive as a self-employed professional. By contrast, a person who prefers clear guidelines and teamwork may perform better as an employee. In both cases, individuals should analyse their skills, expectations, and personal circumstances before making a decision.

Ultimately, neither option is universally superior. The best professional path is one that matches an individual's values, abilities, and life goals, which may evolve over time.

Read the text



Choosing Between Self-Employment and Salaried Work

Choosing between self-employment and salaried work is a decision that many professionals face at different stages of their careers. This choice, which may seem simple at first, is often influenced by personal priorities, financial expectations, and lifestyle preferences. Professionals who value independence are frequently attracted to self-employment, while those who prefer stability often choose traditional employment.

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Key vocabulary

English Word / Expression	Explanation	French Translation	Icon
candidate profile	Summary of a job applicant's skills and experience	profil de candidat	
key achievement	Notable success or accomplishment	réalisation clé	
technical skills	Job-specific abilities	compétences techniques	
soft skills	Interpersonal abilities like communication	compétences comportementales	
behavioural interview	Interview focused on past actions	entretien comportemental	
cultural fit	Alignment with company values	adéquation culturelle	
accuracy	Correctness in presenting information	exactitude	
professional story	Cohesive career narrative	parcours professionnel	



Comprehension Short questions

Read these questions and quickly write the answers in your notebook, then compare with the hidden answers (+INFO).



Question 1

Why do some people choose freelancing?

+ INFO



Question 2

Who prefers salaried work?

+ INFO



Question 3

What evidence supports this?

+ INFO



Question 4

What influences the choice?

+ INFO





For autonomy and
flexibility.





People who value
security.





Contracts and benefits.





Personality and
lifestyle.



What mainly influences the choice between self-employment and salaried work?

Personal priorities and lifestyle preferences

Government regulations

Age and education only

Send



What advantage of self-employment is highlighted in the text?

High level of autonomy

Legal protection

Guaranteed income

Send



Why might self-employment discourage some individuals?

Excessive teamwork

Lack of professional recognition

Administrative and financial responsibilities

Send



Which group is more likely to prefer salaried work?

People with long-term financial commitments

Creative professionals

People who enjoy financial risk

Send



What does the text suggest about income levels?

Employees always earn more

Income alone cannot determine the best choice

Freelancers always earn more

Send



What change in the job market is mentioned?

Employees no longer have contracts

Freelancers are disappearing

The distinction between statuses is becoming less clear

Send



**According to career advisors,
what is essential before
choosing a status?**

Following trends

Analysing personal skills and
expectations

Comparing salaries only

Send



Ordering Exercise 1

The sentences below form a coherent paragraph about the pros and cons of self-employment and salaried work, but they are in the wrong order. Rearrange them to create a logical paragraph.

Each option has advantages and drawbacks that should be carefully considered. ⋮

Freelancers often enjoy flexibility and control over their schedules. ⋮

Some people prefer security, while others value independence and creative freedom. ⋮

Choosing between self-employment and salaried work depends on personal goals and circumstances. ⋮

Employees benefit from stability, regular income, and legal protections. ⋮

SEND

Ordering Exercise 2

The sentences below present arguments for and against self-employment. Reorder the sentences to reconstruct the author's argument, paying attention to linking words and logical progression.

Freelancing encourages independence and creativity, attracting many professionals. ⋮

However, it involves financial uncertainty and additional administrative responsibilities. ⋮

Therefore, the best career choice depends on personality, risk tolerance, and long-term goals. ⋮

Salaried work provides stability, predictable income, and social benefits. ⋮

Some professionals combine freelancing with salaried work to enjoy flexibility and security. ⋮

SEND

Let's exercise your speech.

Listen and repeat



Being self-employed can be highly rewarding, as it offers flexibility and independence; however, this freedom often comes with financial uncertainty and increased responsibility.



Although salaried employment provides stability and benefits, professionals who feel restricted may solve this issue by choosing flexible contracts or combining employment with freelance work.



The image suggests a contrast between independence and security: while freelancers manage their time freely, employees benefit from structured environments and predictable income.



Some argue that self-employment encourages creativity and motivation, whereas others believe that salaried work is safer, especially for those with families and long-term financial commitments.



Idiomatic Expressions

Discover these idiomatic expressions and imagine the meaning before discovering the hidden informations

01

Wear many hats



Avoir plusieurs casquettes

Freelancers often wear many hats, managing marketing, finance, and client relations..

02

Burn the midnight oil



Travailler tard le soir

Self-employed workers sometimes burn the midnight oil to meet deadlines.

03

Break the glass ceiling



Briser le plafond de verre

Employees may work hard to break the glass ceiling in large companies.

04

Call the shots



Mener le jeu / Décider

As a freelancer, you can call the shots and choose your clients.

05

Climb the corporate ladder



Gravir les échelons

Employees often aim to climb the corporate ladder to reach managerial roles.

06

Keep your nose to the grindstone



Travailler dur et rester concentré

To succeed as an employee, you must keep your nose to the grindstone.

07

Jump on the bandwagon



Faire comme tout le monde

Many young professionals jump on the bandwagon and become freelancers without planning.

08

Go the extra mile



Faire un effort supplémentaire

Employees who go the extra mile are often rewarded with promotions.

09

Take the plunge



Se lancer

Deciding to become self-employed is a big decision; some take the plunge quickly.

10

The ball is in your court



La balle est dans ton camp

Whether to stay employed or become self-employed is a personal decision; the ball is in your court.

Vocabulary in context

Choose the correct sentence according to the context.

Key elements: autonomy, salary, contract.

Freelancers often enjoy high levels of contract, which allows them to manage their own schedules.

Freelancers often enjoy high levels of autonomy, which allows them to manage their own schedules.

Freelancers often enjoy high levels of salary, which allows them to manage their own schedules.

Key elements: protection, workload, freedom

Employees benefit from stable income and legal protection

Employees benefit from stable income and legal workload

Employees benefit from stable income and legal freedom

Key elements: employed , volunteer, salaried

Someone who accepts uncertainty might succeed as a employed professional.

Someone who accepts uncertainty might succeed as a salaried professional.

Someone who accepts uncertainty might succeed as a volunteer professional.

Key elements: flexibility, stability, creativity

Permanent contracts reduce stress and ensure flexibility for employees.

Permanent contracts reduce stress and ensure creativity for employees.

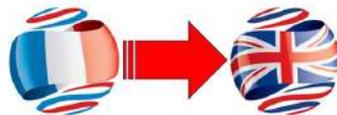
Permanent contracts reduce stress and ensure stability for employees.

Translation exercise 1

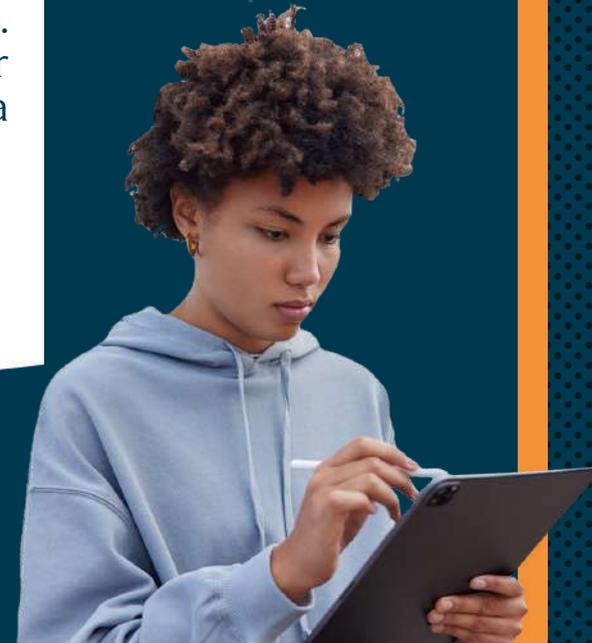
(French to English)

Translate the following French sentences into simple, correct English :

De plus en plus de professionnels hésitent entre devenir travailleurs indépendants ou rester salariés. Chacun doit évaluer ses priorités, son appétence pour le risque, et sa situation financière avant de choisir la meilleure option pour sa carrière à long terme.



*Click here and compare
with yours*





Text:

De plus en plus de professionnels hésitent entre devenir travailleurs indépendants ou rester salariés. Chacun doit évaluer ses priorités, son appétence pour le risque, et sa situation financière avant de choisir la meilleure option pour sa carrière à long terme.

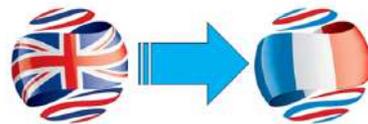
Proposed English Translation:

More and more professionals hesitate between becoming self-employed or remaining salaried. Everyone must assess their priorities, willingness to take risks, and financial situation before choosing the best option for their long-term career.

Translation exercise 2 (English to French)

Translate the following English sentences into simple, correct French :

Recruiters analyse candidate profiles carefully in order to select applicants whose skills and values match the company's expectations.



[Click here and compare
with yours](#)





Text:

Recruiters analyse candidate profiles carefully in order to select applicants whose skills and values match the company's expectations.

Proposed answer:

Les recruteurs analysent attentivement les profils des candidats afin de sélectionner ceux dont les compétences et les valeurs correspondent aux attentes de l'entreprise.

Let's go writing



Opinion Essay (Formal)

Word Count: 180–200 words

Instructions: You are asked to write an essay discussing the advantages and disadvantages of being self-employed versus being a salaried employee.

- Present a clear introduction and conclusion.
- Use linking words to structure your arguments (however, on the other hand, in addition).
- Include examples or reasoning to justify your points.



Sample solution : 

*Click here and compare
with yours*



Model Solution – Opinion Essay



Title: Self-Employment or Salaried Work: Which Is Better?

Choosing between self-employment and salaried work is a significant career decision. Both options have advantages and drawbacks, which depend on personal priorities, financial needs, and professional goals.

Self-employment provides autonomy and flexibility. Freelancers can choose projects, manage their schedules, and explore creative opportunities. This independence is highly rewarding for those who enjoy controlling their work environment. However, it also comes with financial uncertainty and administrative responsibilities, such as managing taxes and social contributions. For some, these risks can be stressful and discouraging.

On the other hand, salaried employment offers stability, predictable income, and benefits such as paid leave and health insurance. Employees also benefit from structured career paths, mentorship, and teamwork. Nevertheless, some may feel limited by rigid schedules and less autonomy, which can reduce job satisfaction.

Ultimately, the best choice depends on individual preferences, personality, and life circumstances. People who value security and steady income may prefer salaried positions, while those who prioritize freedom and flexibility may thrive as self-employed professionals. By carefully evaluating their priorities, professionals can make an informed decision that suits their long-term goals.

Word count: 193

Title of the lesson

Part 2

Titre de la leçon

Deuxième partie

LANGUAGE STRUCTURE



Making logical guesses about situations
based on evidence
(Modals of deduction)



Contextualization :

Let's observe these sentences from the text !



1. Their income **may fluctuate**, and they are responsible for tasks that employees rarely handle.
2. People who have families or long-term financial commitments **may be more inclined** to choose this option.
3. Successful freelancers **may earn more** than salaried workers.

Inductive guiding questions.



1. Are these sentences describing facts or logical guesses?
2. What kind of evidence supports these ideas?
3. Why does the speaker use may instead of will or do?

Observation and manipulation :

1. "Their income **may fluctuate** due to irregular work."
2. "People with families **may be more inclined** to choose salaried work."

e work, their

ilities, they **might**

Other sentences

- "People with families may be more inclined to choose salaried work."
→ People with families must prefer stability.
- "Freelancers may earn more than salaried workers."
→ Freelancers can't always earn more than employees.
- "Someone who is adaptable might thrive as a self-employed professional."
→ Someone adaptable must find self-employment rewarding.



✓ Grammar Summary

Modals of deduction are used to **make logical** guesses about a situation based on evidence, not certainty.

Degree	Modal	Meaning	Example
Very certain	must	logical conclusion	He has a permanent contract; he must feel secure.
Possible	may / might / could	uncertain but possible	Freelancers may earn more.
Impossible	can't	logical impossibility	He works full-time; he can't be unemployed.



✓ Grammar Summary

Structure : Modal of deduction + base verb

- ✓ They must value stability.
- ✗ They must to value stability.

Key Rule :

- These modals are used when we do not know the truth, but we interpret evidence
- The choice of modal depends on how strong the evidence is

Visual Summary Table

Evidence Strength	Modal Used
Strong evidence	must
Medium evidence	may / might / could
Negative evidence	can't

Interactive Quiz (Choose the correct answer)

1. He works remotely and chooses his clients. He ___ be self-employed.

must

can't

might

3. He has paid leave and health insurance. He ___ be an employee.

may

must

can't

2. Her income changes every month. She ___ be a freelancer.

can't

might

must

4. She hates uncertainty. She ___ enjoy freelance work.

might

must

can't





Practice Exercise 1 :

Complete each sentence using a modal of deduction.

1. He has no fixed schedule; he ___ work independently.
2. She values teamwork; she ___ prefer salaried work.
3. His income is unpredictable; he ___ be self-employed.
4. They have permanent contracts; they ___ feel secure.
5. She avoids risk; she ___ enjoy uncertainty.



Correction



- 
1. He might work independently.
 2. She may prefer salaried work.
 3. He must be self-employed.
 4. They must feel secure.
 5. She can't enjoy uncertainty.



 Practice Exercise 2 :
Reuse in Context (Production Phase)

Write a 7-sentence text about your own routine or work habits, using modals of deduction to make logical guesses.



Correction

Sample solution:

I work flexible hours, so I might be more productive in the evening. My job involves planning and organisation, so I must enjoy structure. I rarely work in teams, which means I may prefer independence. My income is stable, so I can't be a freelancer. I value security, so I must appreciate predictability. I sometimes work remotely, so I could enjoy autonomy. Overall, my routine must reflect my personality and priorities.

Common Mistakes with Relative Clauses

Category	✘ Incorrect	✓ Correct
Wrong verb form	He must to work alone	He must work alone
Using will	He will be stressed	He must be stressed
Too much certainty	He is self-employed	He might be self-employed
Modal + -ing	He must working	He must be working
Wrong negative	He mustn't be tired	He can't be tired
Missing evidence	He must like it (no reason)	He must like it because...
Overuse of must	He must choose freelancing	He may choose freelancing
Informal guess	I think maybe he is	He might be
Literal translation	He can be freelancer	He might be a freelancer
Tense confusion	He must worked	He must have worked

CONCLUSION

Write one or two things you can do after this lesson.

Example : "After this lesson, I can discuss professional choices, argue logically, understand complex texts, and express deductions clearly."



THANK YOU !



THE END !

Let's move to the next lesson

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