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“A New Plan: Methodology for Business Development” By Joanna Ptolomey

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"A New Plan: Methodology for Business Development"

By Joanna Ptolomey

About the Author

Joanna Ptolomey will be presenting at Online 2007.

You can hear her talk 'Footloose and fancy free - success in business and personal development for the independent worker' on Thursday 6th December in Track 3 14.00-1530.

[The following is the basis for a talk Joanna Ptolomey is presenting at the Online Information conference. A full version of this article will appear in the next issue of FreePint.]

When you start out as an independent worker, every day that you are not working on a fee-paying project is a zero income day.

That's why over the last couple of years I have been using the following methodology to help drive myself and my business forward. It is heartening to see how far I have come in a relatively short space of time.

Follow this 4-step methodology to build a bespoke plan for yourself and your business.

Step 1

Consider what is 'your glue' to hold things together.

Develop your 'personal constitution'. This is a draft of what's important in your life, what drives you to work in your sector, how committed you are to your endeavours and what gets you out of bed in the morning. It's one of the most important processes that you can do for your business and yourself.

Re-assess this every year or each time you go through this process.

Step 2

Consider the three key areas of your business and look for personal development associated with these activities:

- Audit/analysis of your market
- Audit/analysis of the services you offer
- Marketing/awareness techniques.

-- Continues --

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Step 3

Consider when you would like to start your business development plan and for how long. I use the start of a new financial year to set the wheels in motion, but you can start it at any time.

Make it bespoke to you, just like your services are to your clients. Most of my projects need to be billed by financial year-end and that's usually when they are finished. There is usually a little lull as new budgets start and people start thinking about summer holidays so I take this chance for a workload slowdown.

Step 4

Embrace reflective practice.

One of the sheer joys and luxuries of independent working is 'reflective practice'. However I must admit that it took a few years to really trust my own hunches and feelings, and to accept and live with some 'bad choices and mistakes'.

It's so easy to say 'the buck stops with me', but it can be difficult to actually accept this, take it on board and move forward.

Try and find a mentor to help you with this process. It is good to have someone to discuss things with and bounce ideas around.

Above all, don't be a slave to a plan and become upset when things don't work out exactly as you'd hoped. You know yourself and your business better than anyone so use the methodology to make it fit you and your situation.

-- Ends



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