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Neville Atkinson

Musician

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the glove and a friend now called Emma Charles helped me create it. This idea was so new I decided it was worth getting a patent for it. This in itself was an education.

The Patent office asks so many challenging questions - you have to be really clear and specific about what exactly your product is and does. This was a brand new idea, but without financial backing to protect it, or to take it into production, creating a patent really just allowed it to be copied. However, the patent proves I got there first!

I also had a spell in the academic world where I learned the discipline of writing. The restraints in this world felt like a straight jacket at times but has been useful in helping me to formulate and structure my creative writing now.

What is the biggest challenge of learning the skills that you need?

Getting access to good training to help me develop my creative work. Generally, relevant courses are just not out there so FEU Training has been the perfect organisation to help me with this.

Good courses are so expensive, and often they are just someone downloading information, rather than giving hands on advice. FEU Training tutors take time to explain complicated topics. There is no assumption that everyone knows everything and all questions are welcome. It is such a caring approach. The courses leave you feeling, "I can do that now." I've benefited tremendously from them.

What FEU Training courses have you attended?

- Several including:
- Mobile Video Sharpshooter
- Getting started on Instagram
- How to run a social media campaign
- Building strong working relationships
- Write that book and get it published.

What are the most important things that you've learned?

The workshops have accelerated my learning of new skills especially regarding media and internet engagement. I now have an active website and Facebook page for the band as well as starting to use Instagram.

I am currently in the process of preparing a season of podcasts, where I can share the short stories I write. I've learned to create short videos to share extracts of performances.

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"The tutors understand your craft and provide a great working environment."

The crowd funding day was great, and I have followed up with the trainer to develop this more. The FEU Training courses have opened up a world of opportunities which I thought were well beyond my reach and I wonder where else someone like me could learn so much and progress so well.

Shortly after attending the negotiation skills workshop I was negotiating with the record label about an album. Instead of accepting their suggestions, I stood up for what I wanted regarding the artwork. I also said I wanted to write the sleeve notes. Not only did they agree to this, they paid me to do it. This transformed the whole nature of the conversation and relationship, to one of mutual respect. What I learned on the Negotiating Skills day was critical to my success there.

What has encouraged you to attend FEU training sessions?

The quality and focus of each individual course especially the great way that the trainers care, share and take time to explain what are sometimes complicated topics so that no one is left behind. The training is perfectly designed and executed for creative people and has benefitted me greatly. I enjoy meeting and sharing with people at these courses and always enjoy the interaction within each session

It's not just information but hands-on and detailed learning too. The tutors understand your craft and provide a great working environment. It is encouraging to actually see the progress I have made as a result of the FEU Training workshops I have attended. They have opened up a world of opportunities I thought were out of reach.

FEU Training is a first class, precious resource, which has been an essential and unique component in my personal creative journey. It has equipped me to develop creatively, artistically and financially. Preparing for this conversation has made me realise just how much they have helped me.

Do you know any other organisation that offers business skills courses for creatives?

No.

