

Keep Working – creating work continuity

Working in the creative fields doing a variety of jobs and getting paid for it can be a truly exciting way to earn a living. But creating work continuity means being able to work the ‘cycle of freelancing’ – that continuous round of:

- looking for work
- getting the work
- keeping an eye out for the future and getting more work.

Tips for creating work continuity

If you get to grips with how best to work that cycle, the chances of you keeping in work can be significantly higher than if you don't. There are some fundamentals to be aware of:

Know your markets

- Ensure that you keep up with existing contacts/clients at regular intervals.
- To avoid work drying up, regularly look for new people to pitch your ideas to.
- Start thinking laterally. Where might there be new markets/clients? If you are thinking about diversifying your range of work, (e.g., if you are an actor, you may want to offer yourself for corporate role play work), where would you begin to open up these new opportunities?

Showcase what you have to offer

To help improve your marketing methods, try auditing your current activities to see what you can do better and what you need to do more or less of:

- Do an honest appraisal of how you currently market your work. Look at how successful each marketing tool is – be it CVs, agents, websites, networking events, word of mouth/contacts. Can these be improved? For example, is your website or web presence up to date?
- What additional tools can you use to market yourself? E.g., social media.



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Finance

Managing finances is an important part of your freelance work and done well will save you money, time and worry. Think about:

- **Invoices** – ensure that your invoicing is up-to-date and that you are being paid on time.
- **Tax** – be aware of your tax obligations. Are you regularly putting money aside to meet these? If you don't employ an accountant, tax advice can be found through your union or HMRC.
- **Budgeting** – work out the income you require to cover your expenditure (personal and business).
- **Receipts** – keep track of what you spend in the line of business.
- **What you can claim for?** – check to ensure that you are claiming for everything you can, e.g., training and business equipment can be set off against tax.

Time Management and organisation

While your core creative work is paramount, managing your time efficiently and organising your work effectively so that you cover both creative and support work will help your career run more smoothly and be less stressful.

Skill up

To ensure that your work remains marketable, it's important to always think about what new skills/training/learning you will need. Once you've established this, you can then decide on the best way to go about getting the new skills you need, e.g., it might be on the job, online or via a training course.

However, training can be expensive so make sure you do the research to find out what type is most suitable for you to achieve the required results. Also, find out if there is any funding around to help you get the skills development opportunities you need.

