



HOW TO BE A STRATEGIC FREELANCER

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Sara Putt Associates**

An ever shifting landscape?

- Commissioning slow down and strikes have revealed the fragility of the workforce
- Upsurge of grassroots activity (Coalition for Change, Share My Job in Telly etc)
- Rapid change in organisations such as BAFTA
- Potential for significant restructuring of work eg: remote work, job sharing, AI
- Routes into and through the industry are changing
- A strengthened civil rights movement casting fresh light on inequalities; racism; sexism; ableism; classism. Widespread industry response.
- Employment practices/databases
- Potential for large-scale reorganisation of industry roles and responsibilities (BFI's workforce strategy work) breaking down of silos – virtual production, different ways of creating content.
- New roles on set – ICs, Access Co-ordinators, Wellbeing and Mental Health Facilitators
- Where do you fit into this world?

Who am I?

- **What are my transferrable skills?**
- **Where else might they fit into the creative landscape?**
- **How do I best package them?**



Imagine where you want to go

Break big ambitions into small steps

Focus on going in the right direction



1: BUILDING THE BRAND OR REBRANDING



What is your brand?

How is it communicated?

To whom is it communicated?

Your brand is communicated by....

- How you present yourself
- What you say and how you listen
- What you do
- How you act under pressure
- What others say about you

...both offline and online

What does your online poster say?

- *Passionate Hardworking/Team Player*
- *Attention to detail*
- *Motivated*
- *Excellent communication skills*
- *Time management*
- *Reliable*
- *Problem solving*

What is your online fingerprint?

- Website
- Social Media: Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn etc....
- Showreel – Vimeo, YouTube etc...
- Is the message consistent?
- Does it highlight your skills?
- What does it say about you as a person?



What Story Are You are Telling?

- Google yourself! How do others see you?
- How do people you admire present themselves?
- How do your competitors present themselves? (who are your competitors?)
- Have you built a bio that will work across all platforms at different lengths
- Across all social media platforms and in the real world what makes you stand out, what is your USP?



2: BUILDING YOUR COMMUNITY

Help others

ANY INFORMATION WILL HELP?



- Pay it forward
- Collaborate
- Take it slowly
- Don't expect anything back

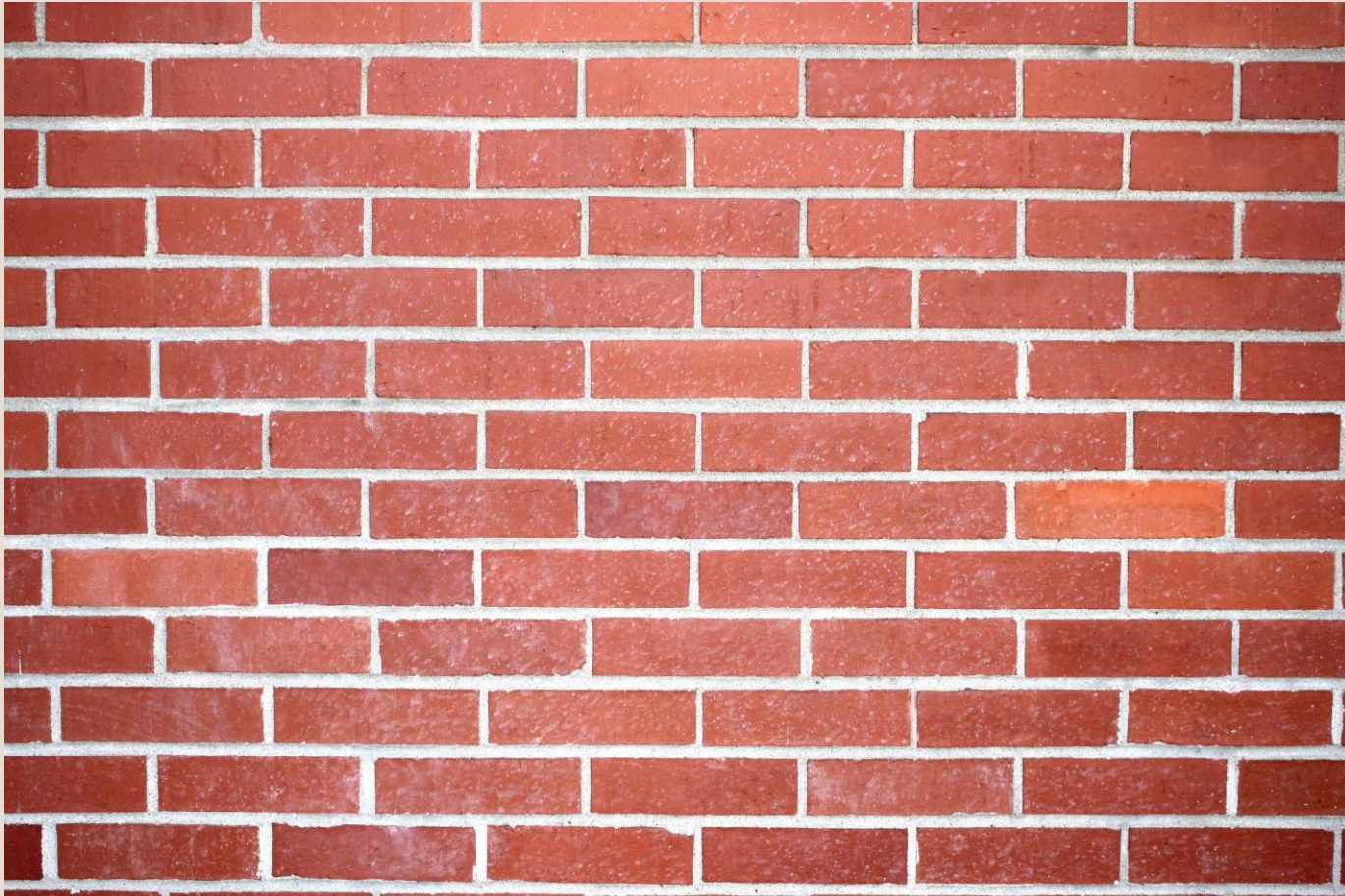
To create opportunity you have to be present

- Webinars/Online panels
- Screenings/Events
- Virtual Film Festivals/Real World Festivals
- Mentoring (Screen Skills/BAFTA etc)
- Coaching
- (Virtual)Coffee/Tea/Wine
- *Initiative* – BAFTA Employability Survey highest ranking soft skill

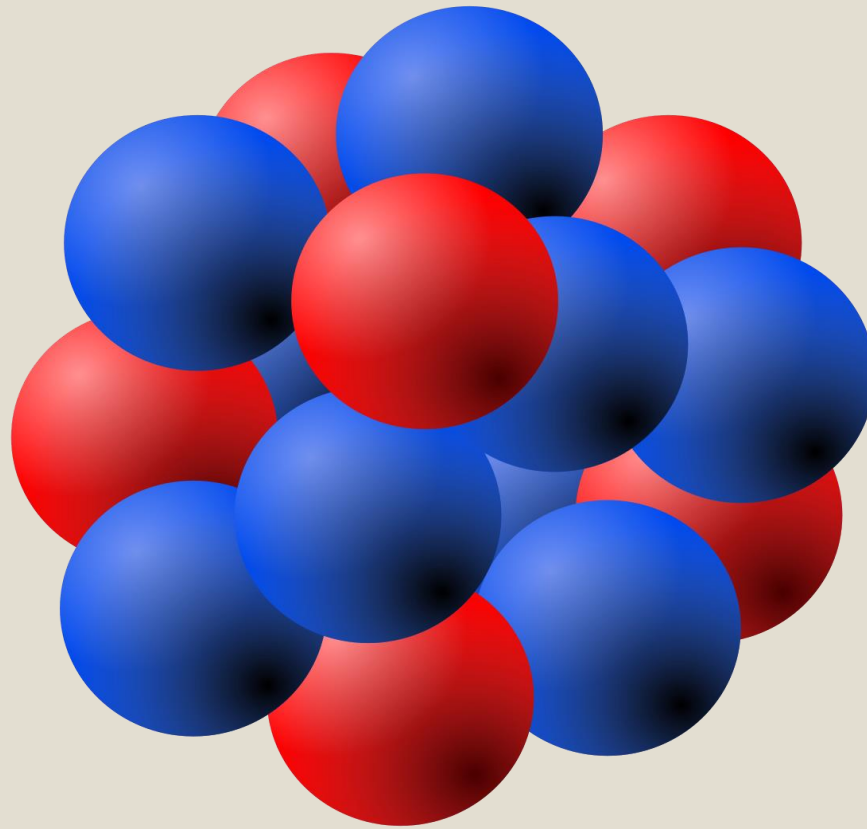
Getting in Touch and Staying in Contact

- What is the title of your email?
- What is your email signature?
- What is your email address?
- Be clear in your ask
- Ask for advice rather than work
- Build a database that works for you
- Follow those you want to work with on social media
- Comment on their achievements
- How often?

Small bricks build strong walls




Keep Splitting the Atom



In summary....

- Take the initiative and make opportunities
- Be organised and have your master CV and online profiles up to date
- Make sure that your social media is working hard for you not against you.
- Build relationships don't just create contacts
- Create a database that works for you and keep it up to date
- Be generous
- Give in order to receive
- Nurture your community – at all levels
- Keep on learning



3: MOVING FORWARD

Career Strategy

Moving Forward and Upward:

- Set goals – 90 day, one year, five year. Write them down.
- Moving between grades
- Changing departments/sectors
- Could an agent help?
- Freelance or inhouse?
- Where are you heading – what skills do you need to do to get there?
- Training/Coaching/CPD
- How do you develop those skills?

Each Job Opportunity

- What informs your decision to take/turn down a job?
- Your career may be defined as much by the jobs you *don't* take as the ones you *do* take
- What will you be giving and what will you be gaining?
- Money, prestige, contacts, enjoyment?
- Freebies
- Know your walk away point. Value yourself and others will value you

Managing: the underrated skill

- Accept it's not easy and perfection is not possible
- Listen at least twice as much as you speak
- Empower others
- Lead more than manage and don't micro-manage
- Check in regularly: 1-2-1s
- Conflict: ask questions. Don't jump to conclusions
- Who can you talk to for a sense check/second opinion?
- Manage Down and Empathise Up
- Watch: Amy Edmondson "How to Turn a Group of Strangers into a Team"
- Read:
 - Fierce Conversations** by Susan Scott
 - Daring Greatly** by Brene Brown
 - The Glass Wall** by Sue Unerman/Kathryn Jacob

The Job: how to handle difficult situations

- Walk away from difficult situations. Sleep on it.
- Where is your safe space?
- Anti-Bullying and Harassment Guidelines:
<http://www.bfi.org.uk/about-bfi/policy-strategy/set-principles-screen-industry>
- BECTU
- CIISA
- The Film and TV Charity Helpline: 0800 054 00 00
- Is it ever OK to leave a job before the end?
- Getting feedback - +ve and –ve. What you did well/could do better

Future Gazing....

- What might the industry look like in 5 years time?
- How do you best prepare yourself for that?
- What do you want to achieve?



What makes for a successful career?

- Technical talent?
- Creative Ability?
- Determination?
- Resilience?
- Relationships?
- Learning?

What makes for an *enjoyable* career?

- Being part of a community?
- Having choices and control?
- Making a difference?
- Belonging?
- Giving back?
- Having a life?



THANK YOU

QUESTIONS?

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