**Daily Work**

1. What skills are required for a small studio operator?

So there are so many types of leaders but it’s so important to have a strong business sense, Compassion, constant need for learning, a focus on inclusivity and diversity

2. What parts of running a studio are most challenging?

For me, it’s definitely making sure all the legal, accounting, structure is the toughest. I am a very creative and communication type person so having to spend a large amount of time on admin is very challenging! Although bringing on services to help has been really beneficial just takes time to find the right partners

3. What do people find most enjoyable?

Owning a company allows you to create your own schedule and freedom to make decisions and bring on your own team.

4. Are there any negatives to operating a small studio?

YES!! It’s all in your hands, success and failures. 9-5 goes out the window and it can be more stressful especially having people that relay on you for their livlihood

5. How many hours is a typical week?

This depends, 4 years ago it was probably 70-80 per week. After years of experience and finding the right team and balance of work have been able to reduce that to 50-60

6. How would you describe the typical corporate culture?

I don’t believe there is a typical corporate culture. Every studio has their own unique culture even in the gaming industry, there is very corporate to very informal, and with the move toward remote working often there aren’t even office spaces

**Industry and Opportunities**

7. Is the gaming industry growing enough for a new studio?

Absolutely! But taking advantage of government funding, incentives, and doing a ton of analyzing the local market is super important. Often studios bring on a lot of overhead in the beginning so growing slowly is typically important

8. Are too many or too few people entering this profession? In Canada definitely not enough, there is for sure a talent shortage however many studios do need experience so it can be challenging for students or juniors. To combat this I always recommend side projects and industry events and game jams to sharpen skills before graduating. School is not enough

9. What developments on the horizon could affect future opportunities? Stadia, apple arcade, talent shortage, tax and Government incentives

10. What are some of the industry changes you have seen over the last 5 years?

11. What changes do you think there will be in the next 5 years?

Strong initiates for indies to market globally, better revenue and distribution for VR games,

12. Why do people close their studios? Many reasons, funding, not marketing their game well enough and can’t afford to stay open, bad leadership

**Success and Prospects**

13. What is a reasonable earnings progression for a new studio? What is the long-term potential? This is so broad, I have worked with studios that barely survived and ones that made 5 million a year, really depends on so many factors (the content and game obviously, using a publisher or not, funding, marketing, talent)

14. How do most people start a new studio? Usually its’s an incorporation and then deciding if they want an office space or remote team, hopefully funding and tax credits are approved. Typically this usually comes based on a successful

15. What is the background of most development studio directors? Usually they are coming from a bigger studio and want to start their own indie studio, this happens a lot

**Skills and Culture**

16. What further education would you recommend for a successful studio director? Leadership training is definitely key

17. What qualifications do you seek in new employees? Creative, ambitious, willing to make mistakes and fail and try new things,

18. How do most people enter the indie game community? Jumping right in! Side projects, game jams, going to industry events, networking as much as possible

19. Do you think I have the background to manage a game studio? I actually don’t know your background enough to answer but believe if anyone has the desire and is passionate anyone can, either a tech or creative or production way but there are lots of avenues!

20. What personal attributes are essential for success? Being humble, constant desire to learn and grow

21. What professional journals and organizations should I be aware of?

22. Is there anything else you think I need to know?

23. Who else would you recommend I speak with? When I contact them, may I use your name? I always recommend people reach out to Kate Edwards, former head of IGDA and hands down the best mentor I have ever had. For sure you can reach out and use my name, let me know if you’d like an intro