JAMES MCCULLOCH

3D ARCHITECTURE & PRODUCT VISUALISER

MY JOURNEY (BRIEF VERSION)

- Studied 3D Computer Animation with Multimedia

- Graduated with 1st Class Honours degree

- Gen Up industry immersion experience

- Demonstrating and Lecturing at UWS, while developing online presence and portfolio material

- Working as a 3D freelance artist

PERSONAL PORTFOLIO HISTORY

- First started out with a blog of work during University

- Created my own website with personal URL and University work

- Kept the personal URL, nuked the website, started from scratch incorporating personal work only!

FREELANCE WORK ©

Please note it is illegal to create copies of the following images.

This includes, but is not restricted to, the use of cameras (video or photograph), mobile phones and tablets.

LOOKING FOR CLIENTS

- What sort of freelance work?

- Various freelance websites:

  - www.peopleperhour.com

  - www.elance.com

  - www.animationbase.com

- Search on Google – Companies, Studios, Job sites, People

GET BUSINESS ADVICE

- As a freelancer your product is only 2/3rds of your job, the other third is business, so get busyness on your business!

- Contact Business Gateway

- www.gov.uk

- Contact an Accountant

- Do research on things such as:
  - Tax
  - Invoicing
  - Payment Terms
  - Pricing
  - Networking Events

WHAT IS AN INVOICE?

- An invoice is the socially acceptable way to ask someone for money

- It is a legal document that must be supplied by law for business to business transactions (www.gov.uk)

- It is not the same as a receipt!

HOW MUCH SHOULD I CHARGE?

- Working as a freelancer is no different to any other job.

- If you are a sole trader (i.e. work for yourself not a studio) then the only difference is you choose how you get paid.

- You have the choice of –
    - Hourly rate
    - Day rate
    - Project rate

- Other choices include – Working from Estimate, or Fixed price

HOW TO COME UP WITH RATES

- Research jobs in your field
- Find salaries of a few listings and create an average
- Do some math and downsize this to your rate type (hourly, day etc.) this can be your starting point
- Remember self employed people generally earn more than employed due to the fact that they have their own overheads to cover as well. Consider this when establishing your rates.

- Go online and ask people – Check forums / use reddit
- BECTU – The Media and Entertainment Union
- Google it!

LOG YOUR HOURS

STAY ORGANISED

- Excel is your friend
    - Track invoices and business receipts
    - Keep log books
    - Calculate personal outgoings

Best Advice

- Automate everything!

- Back up regularly and to multiple drives!

- Number everything, and always save incrementally! (Never use Save, always use Save As!)

TIME SAVERS

- Time is money, find ways to save time and get more money!

- Reuse resources

- Create an empty job folder structure that is always the same and can be copied and simply renamed and numbered for the next job

- Organise your resources correctly

- Create a library of your assets
  - Shaders
  - Textures
  - Models

- Create default starting environments, lighting setups, templates

REFLECTION - UNI

- *When I was a student I always thought that being self employed / freelancer was a scary thing, and that I would need a lot of money or I would go in to debt.*

- *I thought that I didn't have the right mentality for it.*

- *I was under the impression that there was a lot involved in 'owning' your own business.*

- *I felt that I didn't have the right skills or confidence to be able to go it 'on my own'.*

REFLECTION - REALITY

- *Being self employed is not a scary thing. It is as simple as going on a website and creating an account, not too dissimilar to Facebook!*

- *There is no debt, unless you take out a loan with a bank, but you could do that right now if you want, you don't need to be a freelancer!*

- *If you don't want to be a freelancer you just contact the 'website' and cancel your 'account' at any time, no strings attached.*

- *You don't need to quit your day job! You can still work and be self employed.*

- *Since there is no risk involved in the statements above, why would you need to be confident, or have a certain mentality?*

CONCLUSION

- Becoming self employed is as easy as making a Facebook account, if you can do that then you can become self employed.

- The hard part is not creating your own business, it's developing it to a level that you no longer need your day job.

- It's not as scary as it sounds, so if your interested just do it!

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