



MENTOR•HER

MAKING A PLAN

HOW TO GET TO YOUR NEXT
STEP

PUBLISHED ON
WEEK THREE

FOR
FREELANCING

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Week Three of the Mentor Her programme. Last week, we explored the things that might make you stand out in your freelancing career. Hopefully, this gave you a better idea of what you can do, moving forward, to advance your position and develop your personal and professional persona.

On Week Three, we want to help you get a better understanding of the next steps you need to take in achieving your dream career. Whether it's something you can start working on straight away, or something that you need to think about and consider, talk to your Mentor about how they moved their creative career forward (or have met people who have) and take advantage of the fact that they have a wealth of knowledge on climbing upwards.

We want to give you some inspiration and ideas so that you can construct a plan to get yourself excited and motivated about your creative career. You might be a recent college graduate, a woman returning to the workforce, considering a change in your lifestyle or career plan or already on the way to getting your next gig. So, what's the next step?

Once you've decided on where you are on the creative ladder from our list below, open up a word document and consider the things you need to do next. Making a list can be extremely instrumental in getting yourself in the right head space. Once you decide on what your next step is, consider the questions that you need solutions to. The answers may be a google search away, or you could need a personal understanding or a real life experience that you'll be able to get from your Mentor.

THINGS TO REMEMBER

Google is your friend, every question and every doubt you've ever had has been answered online, and most of the time- it's free!

YOUR MENTOR has real life experience and will have ideas and advice for you. If you don't ask the questions, you'll never know the answers!

YOU are a talented, hard-working and passionate woman who deserves every opportunity that you're given.

LET'S BEGIN

If you're just starting out your creative career journey or looking to change paths into a new line of work, start at this first creative ladder to figure out the next steps to gaining that perfect career!

PERFECT MY CRAFT

If you want to start out strong in your creative career- consider how far along you are to perfecting your craft. Do you need to have more experience or knowledge to write about a broader range of subjects? Do you need to take up a class or learn a skill in order to ensure your talent and abilities are ready to go? Do you need more time, more exposure, to your industry in order to understand what works and what doesn't work? If you feel you aren't "good" enough at your craft yet, that could be your inner Imposter speaking. But if you're new to this field of work, it might be worth investing in some time for yourself to ensure you are proud of your work and your abilities. Taking some time to perfect your craft will also encourage you to take pride in your work in the knowledge of how hard you have worked on and for your creative career.



RESEARCH

Now that you feel proud in who you are and what you do, you may need to do a bit more research on your industry before you can find your footing. Researching your industry will help you figure out the things you need to know so that you're ready to take that next step when the opportunity arises. This can be like understanding where you stand against possible competitors, how the interview/hiring process works, what's expected of you and how you should engage with your possible customers/employers. You can do this by talking to people, learning from your Mentor, or researching job listings on the likes of Indeed, Upwork, Fiverr etc.



THE NEXT STEP

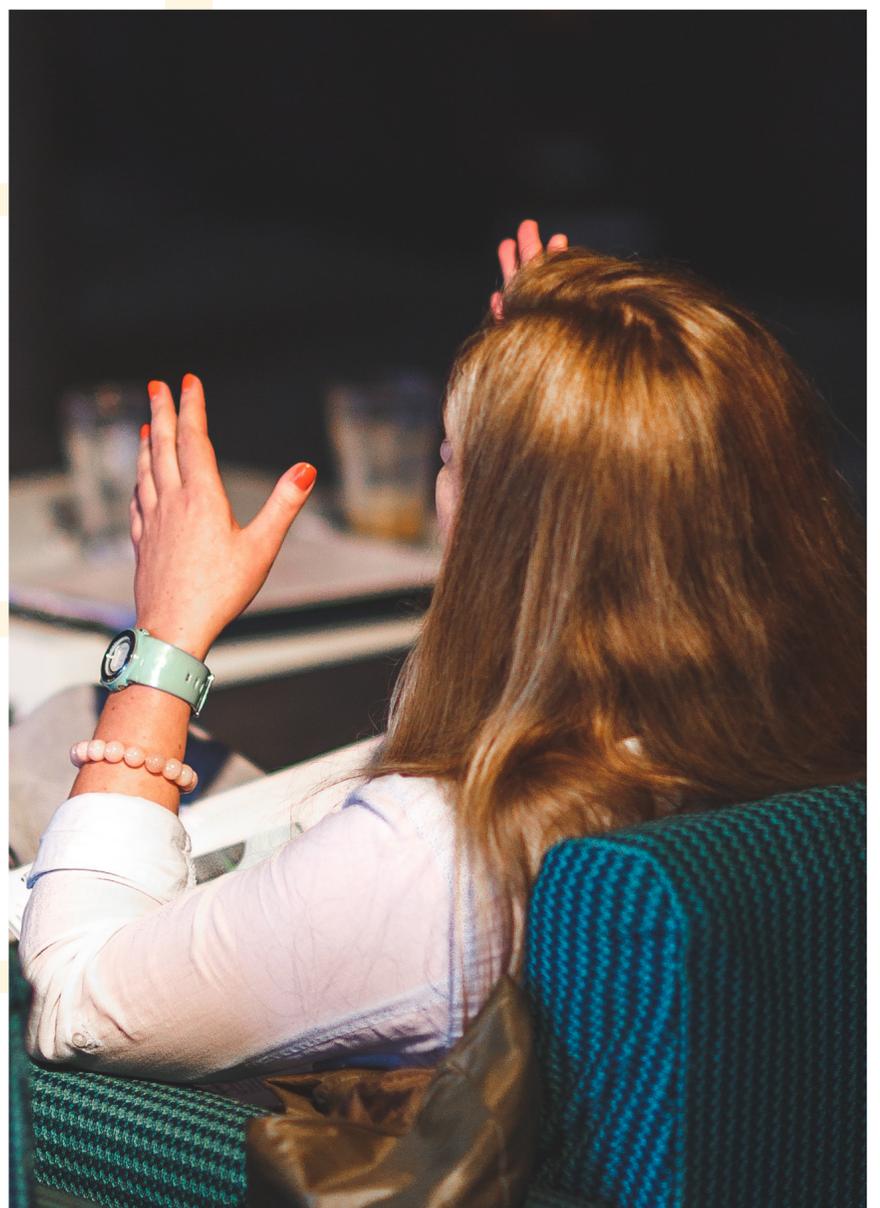


GET EXPERIENCE

Now that you understand the industry a bit more and have seen some possible job specs of your dream career, are you missing out on anything that might put you ahead of other applicants? Do you need to be able to drive? Do you need to have experience writing for a college magazine or playing in a late night bar previously? Should you possibly know more about marketing or sales? Do you need to know how to set up equipment? Maybe it's as simple as a qualification, a reference required or an internship under your belt. Whatever it is, your goal might be to figure out those next aspects so that you can plump up your resume and set yourself apart from other applicants at the interview stage. If you feel like you have all the experience that's necessary or possible to have at this stage, keep reading!

WORK ON YOUR PITCH

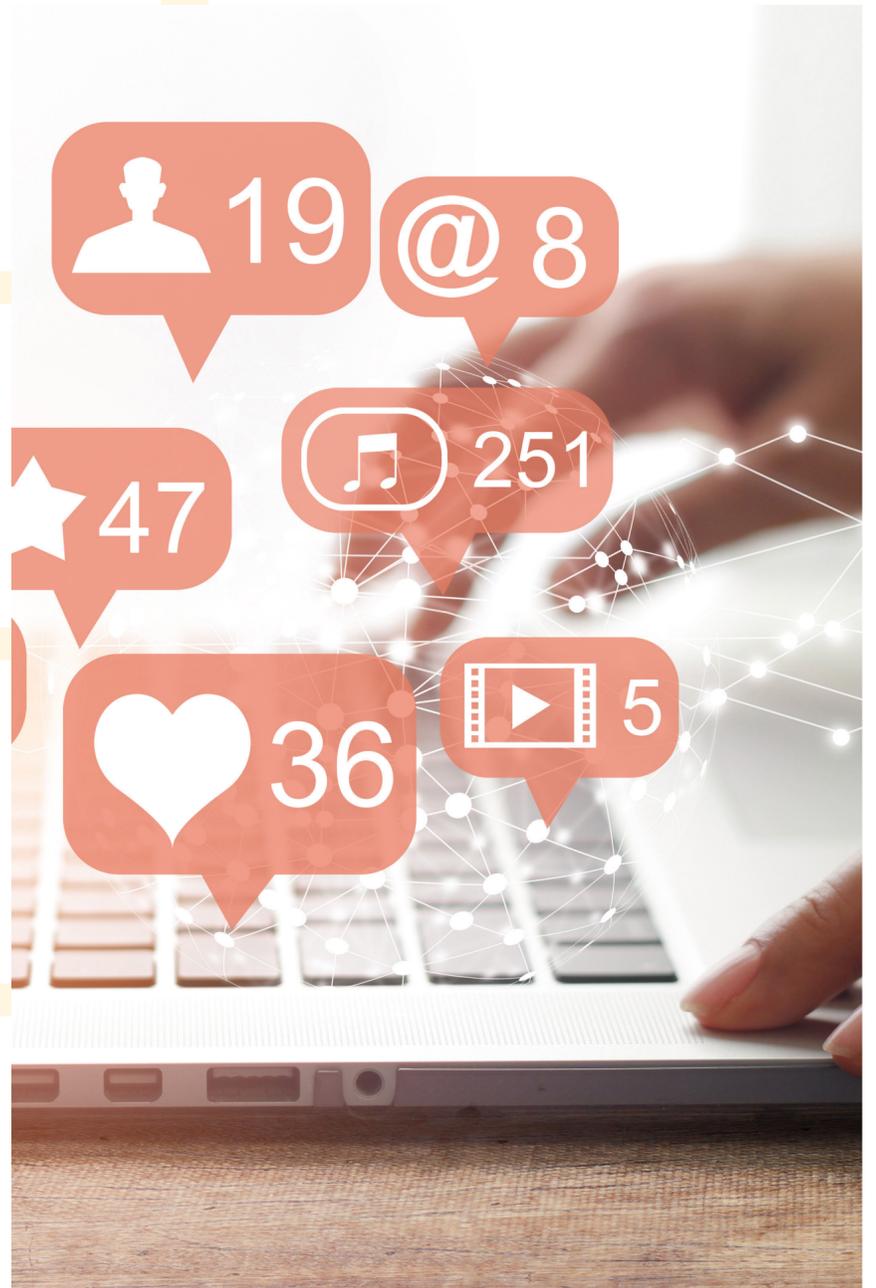
Ready to apply for your dream creative career? Your next step might be to work on your pitch. Taking into account last week's manual on How to Stand Out- you might figure out that this week you need to work on your personal/professional pitch so that you are ready to apply for the job. We'll be going through this in more detail in Week Five. Your Freelancer pitch may be a written cover letter, an in-person or on-Zoom interviewee technique, a cold call or an outdoor meeting. If you feel like you need to work on how you present yourself and your work in any one of these scenarios, consider taking some time and making some goals that will help you gain the confidence to figure out your pitch and how you can best present yourself whether online or in person.



THE NEXT STEP

MARKET MYSELF

For a lot of freelancing careers, building your online image can be integral to getting the job. People see your engagement with others online proof that you have a following that is interested in what you do and fans that support you in your journey. Beginning an online persona and growing it can be an arduous and difficult task for any freelancer. Next week on Week Four, we'll be going through some ways you can build your online image and market yourself online. We recommend choosing a platform to focus on where you'll find your possible customers/employers. This will vary from industry to industry, and from person to person. It might mean you need to work on your LinkedIn profile, build your Twitter following, engage more on Facebook and Instagram or get stuck into the Pinterest. As you build your following online, your name will become more and more established until you can be the go-to woman for your field of work.



APPLY

If you've done all that, the next step is to apply for the job! If you have worked on your freelancer pitch, have begun or started to grow your exposure online, and have done the necessary research- your next step may be to apply for your next job! Then, the next step is to begin cataloging all the jobs that you'd love to have, personalizing emails and cover letters to reference individuals within the company and the company itself. Give yourself time to apply to jobs, don't rush it! Applying for the perfect role may take a couple of days, especially if you've found a lot of companies you would be delighted to work for. When you take your time, the opportunity for errors lessen. You'll have offers coming in in no time!

THE NEXT STEP

CONNECT

Whatever job you have, the company you're in or the industry at large, nearly every Mentor on our programme who has a creative career will tell you a similar thing: it's about who you know. Although it might feel unfair and a bit like favoritism, people in every industry will support and promote people who they feel they have a connection to. To get ahead, you want to position yourself in a positive light for the decision makers to take notice of you. In the days of Covid, we're all missing the networking opportunities that made these connections far more natural (nobody will ever want to miss out on a coffee morning or seminar again after all this is over!). In order to get connections at a networking event, we would be telling you to look your best, be friendly and sincere, mature and thoughtful, have a good handshake and try to ease your way into conversations as best you can. Unfortunately, we can't do that right now so the online sphere is the next best thing.

The first thing to do is to identify the people who you feel will be able to change your creative career. Whether it's someone that has the right job title on LinkedIn, is well known in your industry, maybe they are known for their openness and willingness to help, or you just know that *they* know the right people who can help you get ahead. If you already have a rapport with them, you should try and send them an email directly, but maybe try the below first.

The same way you might be known in an office for always having her hair tied back and a power suit on, we represent ourselves in certain ways to allow people to get the best image of us. In lieu of that opportunity in person, your online presence can be beneficial to making you stand out from the crowd. If you need to connect with someone in a specific company who you don't know, the two most important profiles in your creative career (bar the in-person version of you) is LinkedIn and Twitter.

For obvious reasons, LinkedIn is the place that corporate people like to frequent, read updates and connect with their peers. Twitter is another platform that allows for conversations, discussions, news, updates and an opportunity for **you** to put forward the best version of yourself.

If you don't know the decision maker that you want to connect with well enough to randomly request a Zoom call out of the blue, it's worth connecting with them on these platforms. The first thing you'll need to do is to ensure **your** profile is the best that it can be. We'll be going through this in greater detail next week, to ensure that your online persona matches the fun, opinionated, creative or talented freelancing image that you want to put forward for jobs!

Next Week



MENTOR•HER

MARKETING YOURSELF

USING SOCIAL MEDIA TO BUILD
YOUR IMAGE

PUBLISHED ON
WEEK FOUR

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