

Become Your Own Boss!

8 Pillars to Kick Start Your Successful Transition

PERSONALIZE **Your Client Profiles.**

1

Get laser sharp in segmenting 1-2 ideal buyers among current or prior work connections. They make ideal 1st client prospects or influencers because they trust your capabilities. Show how you can solve a real problem for them as a self-employed professional.

POSITION **Your Unique Value.**

2

Understand the value you bring overall, not just the skills gap or expertise the client wants. If you didn't exist, who else will they turn to? What alternative options do they have and what possible cost or trade-offs will they grapple with?

PRICE **Competitively But Fairly.**

3

Figure out what you want to earn, and what clients are willing to pay and why. Build out 2-3 different price points to anticipate where negotiation scenarios put you. How are you pricing your services - time-based, project-based, value-based, etc.? What are the pros & cons of each vis-a-vis the market? Validate against market or industry benchmarks and place the cursor according to your unique differentiation. Remember to account for invisible costs e.g. work charges, health insurance, subscriptions, association memberships, online tools, professional coverage, etc.

PROSPECTION **And All That Goes With It.**

4

Build your value proposition manifesto to answer the 6Ps of marketing. Complete with key messages, conversation hook, re-purposed communication materials & versions for different outreach channels e.g. emails, LinkedIn profile, online bio, presentation, social media, etc. AND network. Then, network again, connecting with new people as much as reconnecting with the old. Test your message, refine, reiterate and test again. BUT don't ever go into a conversation trying to "sell". Look to give value first, paying it forward.

5

PROVISION For "Dry & Rainy Spells".

Working alone brings its own risks. Ramping up takes time. You may not sign your 1st client before 6 months. So be prepared to ride it out without income. Even if you are super good, you will want to put aside some cash for when things fall through unexpectedly. Maybe you can't work. Maybe you need time out to care for family. Whatever it is, not depending fully on one stream of income is essential to mitigate unknown risks. Separate your personal from your business account to track spend & ROI. General rule of thumb: don't spend on frills before you earn on thrills. The ability to measure some kind of ROI is a good indicator for a strategic spend. And if possible, avoid paying yourself a full salary just yet.

7

PAYING CLIENTS Multiply Credibility.

The most important thing that will kick start your solopreneur business to a fast track is securing your 1st paying client. It's the multiplier effect that says your services are worth paying for; they have real industry value and you have been proven to deliver. You can speak to a real case example that also gives you an authentic source of reference and testimony. You can piggy-back on it if you use it timely and boldly in developing your next client target. Don't wait till you deliver before acting on it. This is a chance to validate your approach, methods and delivery to get better in your client dealings. Best of all, you start to build your cashflow to afford more strategic investments to grow and scale.

6

PUT YOURSELF Forward Boldly.

As a 1st time solopreneur, it's totally normal to feel like an imposter. You may never have "sold" yourself or your own business before but you have real capabilities, experience and track record that create value for your client. Focus and build on that to inspire confidence in yourself and in others. At the beginning and for awhile, you may need to "fake it till you make it". What this means is listen to the imposter syndrome you're feeling and work doubly hard to mentally own your business, not lie about it. Thinking, acting and showing up as a business leader requires practice and nurturing of the right attitude, posture and behavior.

8

PROFESSIONALIZE Everything You Can, From Day One.

Your ability to transact must be above board and free of risks for your clients, respecting their procurement standards. It may mean subcontracting under a partner of theirs or billing via a recognized umbrella company. Professionalism is also in the way you interact, work and deliver. Every client touchpoint is an opportunity to show up as a business leader and partner par excellence. Take the time to write and document everything. Turn them into operating templates to save you time on the next assignment. Track how much time you spend, doing what. It will help prioritize value on different deliverables and decide what you can outsource. By creating a legacy of your work methods and practices over time, you will also get better in building on what works and what doesn't. They are assets you'll want to build on or monetize in future.