



## FOCUS ON FRIDAY 2012

How much coaching can you fit into 140 characters? Every month a member of the Year One Consulting team tweets on a different subject related to personal and organisational development. This year for the first time we have also been lucky enough to have a couple of guest tweeters as well as the regular line up. This booklet brings together a year's worth of tweeted reflections, ideas, tips and questions.

Follow [@yearoneteam](https://twitter.com/yearoneteam) on twitter for more insight and inspiration every week when we **FOCUS ON FRIDAY**.



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Tim is Managing Director of Year One Consulting and heads up our Organisational Strategy and Team Development services. A highly experienced facilitator and coach, he specialises in leadership development, creative thinking and teamwork and has worked with clients in central and local government, higher education and the creative industries.

## MEASURING SUCCESS

**How are you doing?** Business, charity or freelance practitioner - you owe it to yourself to keep an eye on the condition of your enterprise.

**What does good look like?** Take a balanced approach. Include costs, revenue, innovation & happiness (for clients &, as importantly, you).

**Costs can cause unwelcome surprises** if you ignore them: know exactly what it costs to run your enterprise, including what you pay yourself.

**Guessing costs isn't good enough.** What are the actual monthly & weekly numbers? And how do they compare to revenue for the next 12 months?

**What does good look like?** Take a balanced approach. Include costs, revenue, innovation & happiness (for clients &, as importantly, you).

**Revenue is key.** Make sure you track it overall, as well as by product/service and client or client group, all versus last year's figures.

**You may be surprised by the numbers** – the client or product looming in your mind as your most important may only be your most demanding.

**Watch out for seasonal patterns** & use them to anticipate busy times & for space to schedule business development activity & plan holidays.

**Keeping an eye on money is important** but not a guarantee of success; in uncertain times staying ahead means constant innovation.

**Innovation: easy to say, hard to do.** How many times a day do you turn new ideas into lower costs, increased revenue or customer delight?

**Developing yourself,** your products, services or practice will help you stay competitive, spot opportunities and enhance your reputation.

**Keep your thinking fresh.** How many conferences, training courses, new ideas & experiences have you engaged with in the last year?

**Are your clients happy?** Different clients care about different things: are you matching their values or missing their expectations?

**Don't just trust your instinct:** ask for feedback from people who matter: peers, funders, audiences, customers, critics and collaborators.

**Keep an eye on your happiness:** track time out per day, fun per quarter and real (2 week) holidays per year. Zero isn't good enough!

## FREELANCING

**Freelancers: treat yourself as an enterprise of one:** husband your resources & invest yourself wisely. Independent doesn't mean unfocused.

**When finding your next project, think of yourself as your brand,** your sales & marketing department & your own manager.

**Brand is crucial for freelancers** whether working individually or through an agency. A good personal brand is worth its weight in invoices.

**As an enterprise of one your brand is you:** your work & your reputation. What makes you stand out? Why should people call you first?

**As an enterprise of one your brand is your style and your attitude.** What do they say about you? Are they making you easier or harder to hire?

**One day you will be an industry legend** with the brand & rep to ensure They Will Come. In the meantime sales & marketing are down to you.

**Sales = getting out & educating your network:** tell stories about your crucial role on successful projects include facts, figures & feedback.

**Marketing = matching yourself to market needs.** Make time for exploring sector trends & refreshing your pitch and focus accordingly.

**As a freelancer you are your own boss,** so as an enterprise of one you need to deliver brilliant work for clients AND be your own manager.

**Being your own manager means motivating yourself;** set targets, promise rewards & remind yourself how great you are at your job.

**Being your own manager means managing resources;** keep office systems up to date & maintained and ensure important files are backed up.

**Being your own manager means looking after yourself;** remember to take a holiday. Burn out isn't a great business model.



**Possibly the hardest challenge of all for freelancers:** be your own finance department. Boring, maybe: vital, definitely.

**Being your own finance department means being disciplined and aware:** create, update and regularly review your cash flow forecast.

**Being your own finance department means being professional:** agree fees in writing, invoice on time & chase payment promptly (but politely).

### MANAGING STAKEHOLDERS

**It's not just big organisations** or complex projects that can benefit from investing time in stakeholder management; individuals can too.

**Consciously monitoring and managing key relationships will pay dividends,** whether you're freelancing or working in an organisation.

**Who has an interest in you doing your job well?** Who impacts on your work? Who has an influence on your success? These are your stakeholders.

**Don't rely on guesswork:** write a specific list of the people who have an interest in, impact or influence on what you do.

**We often hear or use the term 'key stakeholders'** - who on your list is key? Focus on them when you need to prioritise time and resources.

**Rate each person's influence, interest + potential impact** (out of 5) to help you identify your key stakeholders to help you prioritise.

**With all stakeholders rated** in terms of influence, interest and potential impact, gauge your current relationships with each of them.

**How connected are you to key stakeholders?** When was the last time you met them, spoke to them or let them know what you were up to?

**Social media is a great way to inform** but don't underestimate the usefulness of a face to face meeting for engaging with key stakeholders.

**When you know who your stakeholders are** and a good sense of where you currently stand, it's time for a plan of action: what, who, by when.

**Don't forget: stakeholders are all different.** Make sure you meet your aims but match your methods to your stakeholders' pace & preferences.

**Stakeholder management isn't a one-off task** to be ticked off a list: it's an on-going relationship that deserves time, thought and attention.

**"I'm not a business so I don't have stakeholders."** People you know may disagree. Checking in with them may uncover opportunities & support.

**"Stakeholder management is just jargon."** Use whatever words work: acknowledge allies, reward volunteers, chat to friends, say hi to helpers.

**"I just do it automatically."** An instinctive approach can work well if you know your landscape, but beware of running on assumptions.



Mary Ann heads up our In-sourced Recruitment and People Management services. Combining over 20 years' worth of people management experience with a keen awareness of related policy, legislation and academic theory, Mary Ann specialises in preparing teams and organisations for change and helping them through it. She works mainly with clients in creative industries, heritage, media and higher education.

## MENTORING

**Mentoring to me means advising & guiding** based on experience & support, shining a torch back along the path to highlight the path you trod.

**Your mentee chooses to follow your path** or not; the goal isn't to copy your route but to learn from your experience & find their own way.

**Are you the right mentor for your mentee?** Neither of you have to make a commitment at the outset; it might take a couple of chats to decide.

**Have a clear idea of what subjects you'll cover,** and what you'll refer to others (get ready with some websites and numbers, just in case).

**What kind of record do you need?** Your mentee makes his/her own record, but you should keep a note of what you covered for your own reference.

**How much time can you give?** Be realistic about how often you can meet, for how long & say up front if you're 'on call' in between sessions.

**Is your own ego being served** by playing the 'wise owl' or are you really offering genuine, sound advice and an open mind?

**Set some clear goals** so you can both judge if the mentoring is helping achieve success or if it's just turning into a circular dialogue.

## REGROUPING

**Heading back to uni? Just finished a tour?** Completed a project? Regroup your thoughts, goals, support network & get ready for a fresh start.

**Dot down your main achievements** from the last 12 months, big and small, public and private; allow yourself to be pleased and proud.

**Think about who helped you** achieve so much in the past year; are you still in touch? Drop them a line now, catch up, say thank you.

**As well as jotting down last year's achievements,** list tasks or conversations that you would handle differently if you had a second chance.

**What one thing will you change** about your approach or assumptions to be more successful if you encounter that task or conversation again?

**So, you've taken stock** and thought about what you did well and what you might do differently. Now it's time to put that into action.

**Break your next big step into smaller chunks,** a mini-project plan; find the elements that you've done before and you know you can do again.

**Highlight stuff that's new** but you're going to do anyway, even if it's not done perfectly, and plan a treat for when you've tackled it.

**Anything left that you really don't know how to tackle,** talk through with a friend & book a date now to let them know how it went.

**You've taken stock,** identified the stuff you know and the stuff that's new; time to step forward into the (planned) unknown.

**Embrace any nerves;** use them as a source of energy. Remind yourself why you're taking on a new challenge, take a deep breath, & go get 'em!





Cassy is an experienced arts manager and qualified HR professional who has worked in local government, higher education, arts regeneration and the creative industries. As part of our recruitment and people management team, Cassy works on a project or interim basis for clients, acting as an in-house advisor or project manager. Follow Cassy on Twitter @CassyFry.

## STARTING SOMETHING NEW

**Know your motivation.** Be confident about what you hope to achieve by starting your new venture and know why it is worth doing.

**Recognise doubts,** challenges can be good-scary, remember fear doesn't always mean you shouldn't go for it.

**Starting something new,** including ideas: think Jo March from Little Women and defy expectations.

**Be sparky & excitable!** Challenge your ideas & yourself. Share them with a fearlessly honest friend & be ready to reshape your thinking.

**Don't try to achieve everything at once,** but be ready to take on the less interesting tasks needed to make something fabulous happen.

**If you need inspiration** here's a bit of Jo March ambition "Just wait till I make my fortune, and you shall revel in carriages and ice cream."

**Draw inspiration** from that most resourceful people-person, negotiator & diplomat: Dorothy Gale.

**When it comes to finding help, look beyond the obvious.** As Dorothy found, it can be anywhere: a scarecrow or a pail of water.

**What do you need?** Look to see what resources, advice or funding are out there and don't ever be afraid to ask for help from peers.

**Be lovely & genuine,** learn names & get to know people; you'll discover all sorts of wonderful skills & experience to help you on your way.

**Dorothy on those shoes:** "I wonder if they will fit me... they would be just the thing to take a long walk in, for they could not wear out."

**Staying focused,** inspired by the talented & determined Matilda.

**It's OK to be bored, but don't quit!** Remember why you started, how it felt & what you are going to achieve. Don't wave ambition goodbye.

**Don't overlook how far you've come.** Thank the people who have helped you & don't forget to reward yourself too.

**The last word from Matilda:** "Never do anything by halves if you want to get away with it. Be outrageous."





Esme is our Project Coordinator. A graduate of Arts University Bournemouth, she has since gained a wealth of experience working on a variety of high profile visual and live arts festivals. Esme works across all our activities as well as leading on our highly acclaimed Creative Career Schools Masterclass and "Purposeful Party" FizzBuzzJazz™. CIPD-qualified, Esme is also a key member of our In-sourced Recruitment team.

## PROJECT MANAGEMENT

**Be honest about what you can achieve** with the timescale & resources available. Don't be afraid to change the scale and scope if you have to.

**Don't dive straight into doing things.** Stop, plan & think ahead: know your key dates & deadlines before you start so you aren't caught out.

**Make sure you are friendly to everyone,** no matter who they are. Being nice doesn't take up any extra time & makes life easier in the long run.

**Don't just focus on large, external stakeholders,** take care of smaller contributors too: they may make a huge difference at a crucial point.

**Take care of your team.** Keep them informed & share progress regularly to avoid assumption creep: in person, on calls, via Skype.

**Never assume, always check.** A quick "Has this been done?" or "Did you know this?" can help to avoid potential disasters.

**Ending a project properly** is as important as starting it well. Achieving your aim is important AND there's more to do before the project is "finished".

**Make sure you end on a good note.** Take the time to say thank you to everyone involved. Make sure all your suppliers have been paid!

**Collect feedback and evaluate.** Find improvements for the future, but remember to congratulate yourself on your achievements too.

## INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

**Picture your email inbox as a real in-tray.** You wouldn't let that fill up with 100's of items; if you did you'd never get to the bottom.

**When tackling a full inbox,** I deal with the most urgent and important emails first and then go through the rest by project or person.

**Once you've actioned or responded to an email** give yourself 2 options: 1) File it if you need to refer to it at a later date. 2) Delete it.

**Keep all of your contacts in one place,** in one format. I prefer Outlook but it could be a paper address book or on your phone.

**Don't horde business cards.** Decide whose contact details you need, enter them into your address book and shred the cards!

**Keep your contacts up to date.** If someone leaves a role, find out where they've gone to or who is replacing them. Don't keep old details.

**There's no right or wrong way to name files,** but be consistent, concise & use common sense. Explain your logic to those sharing your files.

**Make use of shortcuts on your desktop.** Set them up for the folders you go to most often - and then delete them when a project finishes.

**Archive old computer files** the same way you would paper files. Move them to a folder named Closed Projects or save them on a backup device.

**Monthly: Take a look at your desktop.** Delete unused shortcuts, but also see if there are any you can add to make you more efficient.

**Quarterly: Tidy up your contacts.** Add, update and delete as necessary. It's also a great way to check if there's anyone you owe a call to.

**Annually: Go through your email folders** to see which ones are active. If you don't need the emails, archive the related paperwork too.





Cindy is Head of Organisational Development at the University of Kent. She has worked in the commercial, arts and university sectors and specialises in organisational development, cross institutional partnerships and strategic human resources. Cindy believes twitter is a tool that can be used to encourage continuous learning and is convinced of the power of education to improve lives. Follow Cindy on Twitter @cdvallance.

## ORGANISATIONAL INNOVATION

**People aren't wholly self-interested.** They want to believe they add value. Facilitate development of a shared purpose for your organisation.

**We are at our best when we're doing what we love.** Learn about and then engage with the passions of staff to improve organisational results.

**Articulate the values you want** embedded in your organisation. Encourage staff to interpret the values in a way that makes sense to them.

**While some people may have a head start** in their inherent creative thinking abilities, the skills can be taught and improved upon by anyone.

**It is possible to have the knowledge,** ability and reasons to pursue a creative initiative and still to decide not to proceed.

**When creativity involves personal risk** we must have the intrinsic motivation to initiate it; otherwise it is just an intellectual exercise.

**Embed trust within organisational relationships** to set the foundation for a safe environment to share new ideas and engage in debate.

**Create a symmetrical dialogue** that encourages an equal and non-judgmental sharing of ideas regardless of whether all can be actualised.

**Engage in calculated risk-taking.** Don't treat risk-taking like an action on a to-do list; it is a cultural attribute to encourage.

**An innovative environment requires leaders** to act as collaborators by holding the space that allows others' ideas to emerge and grow.

**Innovation requires generosity:** a leader's self-efficacy must be sufficient to support & coach staff who may eventually surpass the leader.

**It is your responsibility as a leader to love what you do** and to find the right environment where you and your team can flourish.

**A commitment to non-hierarchical groupings** encourages the creation of innovation pulse points throughout the organisation.

**Create boundary-spanning roles** to identify opportunities for partnerships and collaborations across functional silos.





David is Professor of Modernism and Critical Theory at the University of Kent. He is an internationally-renowned researcher and author of several books including *Wyndham Lewis and Western Man* and *Modernism: A Short Introduction*. Currently researching the cultural impact in Britain of the Russian Revolution and the formation of the League of Nations, David's particular interest is in synthesising literary, historical and theoretical perspectives.

## MANAGING CREATIVITY

**Managing creativity:** in the modern world, anything and everything can be managed. In the realm of culture this can present problems.

**In the mid-1920s** Leon Trotsky sent Russian writers a mixed message: you can write what you like, as long as you are for the Revolution.

**Trotsky was an accomplished leader**, but struggled to find a creativity management formula that allowed initiative while setting constraints.

**In the 1920s, TS Eliot mocked Trotsky** for declaring that the cinema would replace the church, but Trotsky as a leader knew more than a poet.

**In the 1930s Stalin previewed every new Soviet film himself.** Stalin alone decided what went into the mind of the Soviet 'New Man'.

**The Soviet experiment** begged the question – how much of human reality can be shaped by administrative rationality?

**In 1936 Stalin told Shostakovich** – anonymously but unambiguously - to write music that was accessible to the working man.

**Shostakovich did so and produced music** with great public resonance that is played worldwide today.

**How much credit does Stalin deserve** for forcing Shostakovich to repudiate modernism and speak to the public outside art-circles?

