

# THE ART OF MANAGING YOUR CAREER WORKBOOK

A Course for the Canadian Artist  
and the Self-Employed Cultural Worker

**2014**

This workbook was created by Heather Bishop for Arts and Cultural Industries Manitoba. It contains both original content and content from the Art of Managing Your Career originally developed by the Cultural Human Resources Council in 2009.

## **Credits**

The original work of developing *The Art of Managing Your Career* was a collaborative effort of many artists and cultural workers. They were: Pierre Morin, Mark Zuehlke, Sherri Helwig, Peter Messaline, Judy Slivinski, William Lau, Liz Barron, Patricia Acton, Ellen Busby, Eddy Bayens, Teresa Murphy, Mireille Bergeron, Gay Hauser, Sheryl Kootenhayoo, Maurice Lwambwa-Tshany, Louise Chapados, Patricia Acton, Corina Ulescu, Amos Key, William Poole, Sibyl Frej, and Mark Melymick.

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## **Disclaimer**

Many representatives of Canada's cultural sector have contributed their time and effort to create *The Art of Managing Your Career – A Guide for the Canadian Artist and Self-Employed Cultural Worker*. The Cultural Human Resources Council hopes that you will find the information helpful and easy to use, but it provides the information "as is" and makes no representations or warranties of any kind regarding it. CHRC disclaims all liability of any kind whatsoever arising out of your use of, or inability to use, the information offered in this guide. The opinions and interpretations in this publication are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of CHRC and the Government of Canada. This project is funded by the Government of Canada's Sector Council Program.

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# The Art of Managing Your Career Course Outline

**The Art of Managing Your Career** is designed to address the need for business training for self-employed artists in all disciplines.

The TAMYC workshop modules will give working artists the confidence and knowledge to successfully manage their careers or businesses in the cultural sector. The material has been designed at a college/university level and is applicable to artists from all disciplines.

Based on adult education principles, the modules are highly participative and provide opportunities to practice and use skills and competencies essential to career self-management.

The modules begin by exploring the attitudes and behaviours that may make it difficult for artists to recognize their transferable skills. Self-knowledge and self-examination lead to a better understanding of those skills and are the foundation for creating a vision of how to create a congruent career plan.

It then builds components of a business plan - key tools for self-promotion such as profiles, bios, artist's statements, resumes and identity statements. It takes you through the social media labyrinth into networking and marketing. Finally the modules address financial management, contracts, copyright, and legal issues.

The overall learning objectives are to undergo a change in attitude: from uncertainty about effectively managing your career and business in the arts, to a strong belief that you have the knowledge, skills and tools to be successful.

You will develop at least three new skills for managing your career as an artist.

You will develop a practice using five to seven key processes and tools that support managing your own career.

Finally, you will identify at least three benefits of peer learning and peer learning networks.

By the end of this course, you will have learned how to develop an extensive **business plan**, a **marketing plan**, a **template for managing your finances**, and discovered a new treasure trove of self-knowledge.

**An on-line forum** has been set up for the class and **you will be expected to contribute** as you research, create and grow your business. With diverse disciplines at the table, the more you network with each other, the richer will be your learning experience.

Isolation can often be a problem for artists. This class is where that begins to change. **Our diversity as artists is one of our greatest strengths.**





# Take a Page Exercise

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Keep this page for the end of the course

1. Why did I choose to be in this course?
2. What talents for finding paid work do I bring with me today?
3. What do I know about the purpose of this course?
4. What do I expect will happen to me here?
5. How will I know whether the time spent here was valuable for me?
6. In what ways am I currently successful in achieving my goals?
7. In what ways would I like to improve?
8. Describe the best/worst possible learning environment for you.



## INTRODUCTION TO THE CULTURE BIZ

In the early 1980s, a small group of Montréal stilt-walkers, fire-eaters, jugglers, and other circus act street performers had a dream to work together and create something spectacular. Lacking a circus tradition in Québec, these young performers were forced to develop their acts in isolation. This isolation made it difficult for them to prosper, to reach out to audiences, and even to learn from one another. These artists needed a new approach. A few informal meetings led to the organization of a club that developed a formal plan to unite the circus community within an environment that promoted the exchange of ideas and techniques. Over the next two years, this “club” brought to life its vision of a performance that mixed traditional circus arts with street entertainment in what was called the Baie Saint-Paul Fair. They dressed performers in wild, outrageous costumes; illuminated the stage with magical lighting; and set the acts to off-beat, original music. The founders then presented the Québec government with a plan that greatly expanded the small fair into a cohesive touring company – the ***Cirque du Soleil***.

Although *Cirque du Soleil* has since gone on to world renown and a permanent base in Las Vegas, the vision developed and articulated in its submission for funding to the Québec government in 1984 remains little changed. By marrying a vision with a sound strategy for implementation, *Cirque du Soleil* built a solid business foundation upon which the company continues to prosper.

People in the non-cultural business world routinely draw from the cultural community for creative solutions to problems. Business people take courses on right-brain/left brain learning, read countless books with “The Art of” in the title, and otherwise borrow bits and pieces from the experiences of artists and cultural workers. As was the case with *Cirque du Soleil*, it is now our turn to borrow what we can from the business community to enrich our creative experience from a material perspective.

Many people in the cultural sector think that it is impossible to be both business-like and artistic. All too often, the result is that a promising cultural career ends in disappointment. “Business planning” is not incompatible with art and culture. Being practical about practical things does not have to compromise your artistic ideals or stifle creative instincts – in fact, if you organize the business side of your life you will have more freedom to do the work you love.

Success seems to always find those people who are prepared for it. In this chapter you will find a series of practical business tools that will help you to make informed choices about your expectations and priorities. Such insight will also help you to develop strong professional goals and a plan to realize them, so that you can meet success halfway.

