

MODULE TWO: WHAT DO I WANT?

Now you have the building blocks to begin assembling the pieces of your business plan. From Module One you have determined your values. These will underpin your direction from here forward. You have also determined your innate talents and your acquired skills. These are the currency you will use in your marketing and promotion. They are also the road map for your own personal trajectory of lifelong learning.

THE HIGHLIGHTS

Goals

Your goals are the first important element of your business plan.

Tom Thirtle, an Ontario high school art teacher who was cherished by many of his students, once said, “**A goal is a dream with a deadline.**” He may not have been the first person to say it, but his words set a number of emerging artists and art historians (and professional art students!) on the right track.

Many people in the arts community begin their lives with a dream – a vision of their future. If they can learn to add a deadline to their aspirations and develop a realistic plan to get there, there is little that can stop them.

Writing down your goals is very important – it solidifies your commitment and acts as a written promise or an IOU that you give yourself. A study conducted at Yale University found that only 3% of the students had written goals. Twenty years later, those 3% were worth more financially than the other 97% combined. Success comes in forms other than financial, of course, but goals that are written down can be your guide toward any kind of success you seek.

So much has been written about setting and achieving goals that it might seem as though we should be referring to “the impossible dream” rather than the “dream with a deadline.” The common goal of losing weight, for example, fuels a multi-billion-dollar industry in North America. The financial success of that business lies in the failure of the participants to lose weight. There are a few universal, easy-to-understand reasons why goals are not reached:

Goals are **too large** (not broken down into manageable units).

Goals are **undefined** (what is it you really want?).

Goals are **unfocused**.

Goals are **not “integrated”** (if your most important professional goal is to become a travel writer/photographer with an outrageous Air Miles® credit, but your top personal priority is to tuck your children into their own beds every night, chances are that one of these goals will fail).

You **procrastinate**.

The goal is **poorly written**: “I want to be a famous actor.” This goal has little chance of being realized because it is neither specific (what constitutes “famous?”) nor measurable (when and how will you know you have reached the goal?).

Here are two samples of well-defined goals:

“Within 10 years, acting will represent my main occupation and source of revenue.”

“Within three months of the completion of my third acting apprenticeship, I will apply for membership in the Canadian Actor’s Equity Association.”

What is your ultimate career goal? To fulfill your dream, what do you hope to have accomplished in the next 3 months? In the next 12 months? In 5 years? In 10 years? In 20 years?

My ultimate career goal is:

Instructor example of an ultimate career goal: **To sustain myself in abundance with my creative endeavours by launching and growing my career as a keynote speaker and visual artist while nurturing my music industry career into semi-retirement.**

Write a list of the accomplishments you hope to realize within these timeframes. Write them into workable goals by making them **SMART**.

SMART Goals

- Specific and simple
- Measurable and meaningful
- Achievable – act as if it’s now
- Realistic and responsible
- Trackable – time lines

And.....

- **Always expressed in the positive**

Keys to an Achievable Outcome

- Ask yourself – How is it possible that I don’t have it now?
- State your goals in the positive – What do you want? Not what you don’t want.
- Specify the present situation – Where are you now?
- Specify the outcome – **treat it as if it is now in place.** What will you feel, see, hear?
- Specify your evidence procedure – How will you know when you have it? Pick the last step.
- Is it congruently desirable? Is there part of you holding back?
- What resources are needed – what do you have now and what do you need to get your outcome.
- Is it ecological? What will happen if you get it? If you don’t?

SWOT analysis

This piece of your business plan is important for you to understand so that you can honestly present yourself to funders, customers and financial institutions, and develop a clear picture of skills you need to develop.

Your career as a self-employed artist is your “business”. Undertaking a business analysis is performed for the same reasons as your self-assessment - to determine both the positive and the negative aspects of your business in order to build on the strong points and minimize the weak. This part of business planning is often referred to as a SWOT Analysis: a determination of your Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. If you prefer more positive vocabulary, substitute “liabilities” for “weaknesses” and “challenges” for “threats” in your actual document.

In this section, you deliver the “big picture perspective” balanced by an understanding of details drawn from your self-assessment.

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Strengths and weaknesses

It is a good idea to offer a strong mix of skills and personality attributes in the strengths column (for example: excellent team-building and facilitation skills, commitment, bilingualism, determination, and cultural and ethno cultural sensitivity).

Look back to the exercises that you completed to remind yourself of relevant strengths.

Under “weaknesses,” focus primarily on skills that would help you but which you haven’t yet acquired (insufficient French language skills, lack of selling or “closing” skills). This approach will communicate to everyone, yourself included, that your few weaknesses do not constitute inherent character flaws. Rather, they are something you can either learn or work on in order to improve your chances for success.

Opportunities and challenges: Analyzing the market

In the world of modern commerce, the objective of market analysis is to understand your **sector**, your **customer**, your **competition**, and the way your specific **business** relates to them. While a term such as “customer” applies awkwardly in many cases to the cultural sector, it reminds us that we produce our work with the idea that somebody will, by one means or another, agree to impart a value to it. Usually that valuation is expressed through the exchange of money.

Founder and publisher of *Up Here*, **Marion LaVigne** admits that she knew nothing about publishing in the early days of the magazine. However, she believed that people would be interested in the unique stories of the north, and undertook market research to ensure she was in touch with her readership. The combination of quirky stories and unusual photographs has resulted in a circulation of 22,000 from across Canada and around the world. Despite how hard-hit the Canadian magazine industry had been, in 2009, *Up Here* celebrated its 25th anniversary and its 13th year of making a profit.

Step 1. Identify the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) of a particular business, an event or a unit.

Questions to help determine SWOTs:

Strengths (= "good now"; these are internal to the organization):

- What advantages do you or does your business have (eg. people, resources, experience, information, location, reputation, etc.)?
- What do you do better than anyone else?
- What unique or lowest-cost resources do you have access to?
- What are people outside of the business likely to see as your strengths?
- What factors mean that you are successful?

Be aware that a strength you share with many other organizations is not really a strength, but rather a necessity.

Weaknesses (= "bad now"; these are internal to the business)

- What disadvantages does your business have (eg. people, resources, experience, information, location, reputation, etc.)?
- What could you improve?
- What should you avoid?
- What are people outside of the business likely to see as weaknesses?
- What factors mean that you are unsuccessful?

Opportunities (= "good future"; these are external to the business):

- Where are the good opportunities facing your business?
- What are the important changes in the external environment you are aware of? For example:
 - Changes in government policy affecting to your field
 - Economic changes
 - Changes in social patterns, population profiles, lifestyle changes, etc.
 - Changes in technology on both a broad and narrow scale
 - Local events

In addition to brainstorming ideas, look at your strengths, and consider whether they open up any opportunities. Also look at your weaknesses, and consider whether your business could create opportunities by eliminating them.

Threats (= “bad future”; these are external to the business):

- What obstacles does your business face?
- Is the changing external environment threatening your business?
- What is your competition doing that you should be worried about?
- Do you have fundraising or cash-flow problems?
- Do you have any difficulties attracting and keeping the people you need?
- Could any of your weaknesses seriously threaten your business?

Tips for successful SWOT analysis:

- Be realistic about the strengths and weaknesses of your organization when conducting SWOT analysis.
- SWOT analysis should distinguish between where your organization is today, and where it could be in the future.
- SWOT should always be as specific as possible. Avoid grey areas.
- Always apply SWOT in relation to your competition i.e. better than or worse than your competition.
- Keep your SWOT short and simple. Avoid complexity and over analysis.

Step 2. Hone the list of SWOTs down to strategic priorities

Take the laundry list of ideas within each category, and facilitate a discussion to reduce the list to the top five to ten ideas (per category).

- Review each category separately and discuss each of these ideas and the potential implications to the organization.
- Ruthlessly prune long lists of factors, and prioritize factors so that you spend your time thinking about the most significant factors.
- You may decide to establish criteria for what stays on the list (eg. likelihood, degree of impact, degree of importance). Just because something is urgent does not mean it is important enough to stay on the list; but keep it if it is both urgent and important.
- Issues that are too narrow do not warrant planning and issues that are too broad will bog you down.
- Focus on issues that you can do something about.

Alternate Environmental Scan Model: STEEP – Exercise

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It is helpful to divide environmental analysis into five key areas, STEEP:

- Social
- Technological
- Economic
- Environmental
- Political

It is important to limit environmental analysis to what is relevant to your career and artistic discipline, and to what is manageable. It is easy to get bogged down with this type of analysis by virtue of its scope and sheer volume.

Examples of trends that may be relevant to cultural careers:

1. Social - increased internet usage, cultural omnivorousness, buying local, reduced use of TV and radio.
2. Technological - convergent mobile devices driving original content, digital distribution of audio-video content.
3. Environmental - impacts of climate change and global warming
4. Economic - increased funding to the OAC or OMDC, federal cutbacks to funding programs, tax benefits to private donors, the theory of the creative class.
5. Political - Introduction of the Status of Ontario’s Artists Act, creative class theory as it impacts on urban planning.

Activity

1. Using the STEEP analysis model on the next page, identify trends in the external environmental that are relevant to your market/industry. What existing research sources can you reference to collect such information?
2. What do you believe will be the expected impact of these trends on your market?
3. How could such changes impact on your career? Are there opportunities you could seize to move into new areas? Or are there challenges that need to be minimized?
4. What do these trends mean for your competitors? Will they be better or worse off? What could these changes mean for the creation of new competitors?

Societal	Technological	Environmental	Economic	Political

THE HOMEWORK

A Checklist for Artists and other Creative People

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Recall a time when you were working on a creative project you cared about. Recreate those events as completely in your mind as you can, and then check all of the following that apply in those circumstances:

I...

- sometimes work long hours and days without normal sleep.
- believe I am in control of my own fate.
- am a builder, willing to put in years to realize my vocation and passion.
- realize that money is both a necessity and a barometer of achievement, but for ME, money is not an end to itself.
- am goal-oriented.
- know where I want to go and am pretty sure how to get there.
- hate to waste time or to be late.
- am a risk taker, but not a gambler, preferring moderate and challenging risks.
- am not afraid of failing, if failure can be a learning experience.
- recognize when I need help and advice.
- am realistic about my own shortcomings.
- compete with myself.
- want to better my last performance.
- do not believe that success or failure depends entirely on fortune or luck.
- believe that I control my own life and artistic career.
- can live with uncertainty, confident that it won't last forever.
- will straighten things out, even if chaos is about me now.
- am able to capitalize on the talents of other people and know how to motivate people, in the interest of my creative projects.
- am receptive to change, yet believe in "stick-to-it-iveness".
- do not give up easily, but I also know when to walk away from an unproductive activity or decision.
- realize honesty (integrity) is my best policy.
- believe mistakes have to be admitted and dealt with openly.

Self-reflection: Self knowledge

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This series of guided self-reflections will help to provide additional knowledge for the development of your Personal Mission Statement and for creating a Vision for your work. Please take your time to complete these sections thoughtfully and be prepared to discuss only what you learned from the experience. You do not need to share any personal information with us or with your fellow participants, beyond any important insights that are relevant to this process.

WHAT ARE YOU?

Exercise 1

Think about the four elements: EARTH, WATER, WIND, FIRE

Which one are you most like? Which one do you most easily identify with? Write it in the blank:
I am _____

Name at least 12 characteristics or qualities this element has (for example Water is; wet, refreshing, nourishing, powerful):

- | | | |
|----|----|-----|
| 1. | 5. | 9. |
| 2. | 6. | 10. |
| 3. | 7. | 11. |
| 4. | 8. | 12. |

Name at least 12 actions or verbs that describe what this element does (for example Water; washes, rages, supports, covers):

- | | | |
|----|----|-----|
| 1. | 5. | 9. |
| 2. | 6. | 10. |
| 3. | 7. | 11. |
| 4. | 8. | 12. |

Now combine all of the characteristics and actions you have identified into a powerful and descriptive word picture about your 'elemental' self:

Print up a copy of this word picture that you can post, and do so in a place somewhere in your living and/or working space where you will see it every day (bathrooms seem to be a favourite choice). Continue to add new words as they occur to you. Like you, this description will always be growing and evolving.

WHAT DO YOU LOOK LIKE TO THE WORLD?

Exercise 2

Draw a visual or word picture about yourself (one that is not an element). Describe or draw the first image that springs to your mind, without editing its content. Follow the flow of your thoughts. This is not an art project of perfection, but a way to use a different part of your brain. If drawing is not your strong skill, but you have images in mind, use simple lines, collage or words which cue the image you have in your mind.

The pictures that come spontaneously to our minds are often gifts full of messages. How you view yourself is usually how others, also, will see and treat you.

PAST INFLUENCES

Everyone is born with his or her own chemistry or temperament. The environment where they grew up has influenced everyone. Each person's parents, siblings, relatives, teachers and peers have influenced their subsequent behaviour.

The following exercise is intended to sharpen your awareness of past influences. It is crucial to remain objective through this process in order to learn and grow - this exercise is not about blaming, but about becoming more conscious, and perhaps more compassionate, about yourself.

Exercise 3

Think about the people in your life who have played a parental role in the past. What do you know about their dreams and aspirations? Were these fulfilled?

Have the hopes and dreams of these influential adults affected or influenced you? If so, how?

Picture yourself standing in a room. One by one the following people come up to you, look into your eyes, and hand you a gift. What is it?

Who	The gift they give you
Your mother (or stepmother or mother figure)	
Your father (or stepfather or father figure)	
Your sister(s)	
Your brother(s)	
Your closest childhood friend(s)	
Your closest friend(s) as a teenager	
Your grandmother(s)	
Your grandfather(s)	
Your aunt(s) (whether a blood relative or family friend)	
Your uncle(s) (whether a blood relative or family friend)	
Other friends, mentors, who have influenced the course of your life:	

Identify the following (write the first word that comes to your mind):

The characteristics of your mother or maternal adult:

Level of self-esteem

Temperament and general attitude towards life

How did she get along with her peers?

How did she get along with other family members?

Way she felt about you

Attitude toward work

Ability to listen

Patience

Sense of humour

The characteristics of your father or paternal adult:

Level of self-esteem

Temperament and general attitude towards life

How did he get along with his peers?

How did he get along with other family members?

Way he felt about you

Attitude toward work

Ability to listen

Patience

Sense of humour

Your own characteristics as a child:

Level of self-esteem

Temperament and general attitude towards life

How did you get along with your friends?

How did you get along with your parents and siblings who were living with you?

Earliest career thoughts

Ability to listen

Patience

Encouragement of others

Sense of humour

Feelings about school

Which characteristics seem to be like one or both of your parents?

Which characteristics are unique to you?

POSITIVE PREDICTIONS

You can create an atmosphere filled with positive predictions for yourself and others. Many people relate stories in which the successes they have achieved in their life came directly as a result of their chosen reaction to positive predictions people have handed them.

Exercise 4

Remember and write down:

A positive prediction someone made about you as a child - what did they say?

A positive prediction someone made about you recently - what did they say?

How did their prediction influence you?

Has their prediction come to be? How?

If the prediction has not come to be, could it still?

Can you recall a negative prediction someone gave you that actually became positive fuel and helped you?

Why do people make predictions about you? What is their prediction based upon?

Write down all of your family members' names on a separate piece of paper, leaving a blank space beside each. Remember what each of them told you or thought you would become as an adult. Make a start with this question, and complete it over the next few days if you need more time.

YOUR UNIQUENESS

The qualities you have that make you unique.

Exercise 5

Do you remember anything that came particularly easy to you as a child?

What did you do just for fun? Your favourite games?

What did you tell people you were going to do or be when you grew up?

Are you being or doing anything that resembles that dream now? If so, what? If not, why not?

When have you done things "your own way"? What were you doing?

If someone asked you, "What is unique about yourself?" - what would you say?

Identify the following (write the first word that comes to your mind) on a blank page:

Your characteristics as an adult:

- Level of self-esteem
- General nature or temperament
- General attitude toward life
- How do you get along with your friends and peers?
- How do you get along with your parents, siblings, or other family members?

Present career thoughts

- Ability to listen
- Patience
- Sense of humour
- Feelings about work

From the following list of qualities, circle all those that describe you to any degree:

active	dedicated	influential	playful
adventurous	committed	intellectual	powerful
affectionate	dependable	intuitive	practical
ambitious	detail-oriented	investigative	precise
analytical	disciplined	kind	realistic
articulate	down-to-earth	logical	resourceful
artistic	efficient	methodical	self-aware
athletic	energetic	modest	sensual
capable	entrepreneurial	motivated	smart
careful	expressive	natural	spontaneous
caring	flamboyant	neat	strong-willed
compassionate	friendly	nurturing	supportive
competent	helpful	open-minded	systematic
confident	honest	orderly	thoughtful
cooperative	humorous	organized	unique
courageous	idealistic	outdoor-oriented	wise
creative	imaginative	patient	witty
critical	independent	perfectionist	zany
curious	industrious	physical	OTHERS:

***Read through the list again, and choose the 10 qualities you feel best describe you.
List them below***

- | | |
|----|-----|
| 1. | 6. |
| 2. | 7. |
| 3. | 8. |
| 4. | 9. |
| 5. | 10. |

- Now identify any qualities from the long list above that you would like to develop. Mark them with an asterisk or a coloured marker.

- Are the qualities you've chosen ones that you've integrated into your work life?

