



9 Things to do **BEFORE** Starting a Career as a Freelance Learning Experience Designer/Instructional Designer

1. DEFINE YOUR VERSION OF SUCCESS TODAY *{ask yourself often, priorities will change}*
 - Who is included in your version of success? How will you keep them front and center?
 - What non-work activities are included in your version of success?
 - What do you hope to “get” from freelancing, that you do not get from your work now?
 - How much money do you need to make (AFTER TAXES), to live the life you desire?
 - What type of work do you want to be doing?

2. DETERMINE YOUR TOLERANCE FOR AMBIGUITY
 - How long are you comfortable with not knowing when your next paycheck will be?
 - How comfortable are you waiting discovering what your busy and down cycles are?

3. CHOOSE YOUR STARTING POINT
 - How will you setup, and run, your business?
 - What are “must haves” for your workspace (not hardware YET)?
 - When will you start? (quit job, start telling people about it)

4. BUILD A PORTFOLIO & MARKET YOURSELF
 - How will you leverage previous work?
 - What steps will you take to add new examples or information to your portfolio?
 - How will you market and share your portfolio?
 - What are your brand values?
 - What’s your elevator pitch?

5. MANAGE CONTRACTS & MONEY
 - How will you create your statement of work? Who (lawyer) will validate it for you?
 - What rate will you charge?
 - How will you bill? (invoice...)
 - How will you accept payments?(Check, Payment Cards, Apps, Direct Deposit...)
 - How will you ensure you have enough to cover your taxes and other expenses?



6. PRIORITIZE TECHNOLOGY

- What hardware do you need for now? When will you need to upgrade?
(Computer - Desktop or Laptop, Extra Monitor(s), OTHER (Microphone, Webcam, Tablet, Printer))
- What software or apps will you use to manage your business?
- What software will you use to create assets? CREATE A WISHLIST and prioritize your purchases by what you will use the most/what people will pay you to do.
- What free services will you use for graphics/creative stock assets?
- What paid or subscription services will you use for graphics/creative stock assets?

7. ESTABLISH BOUNDARIES

- What boundaries will you set for acceptable exchanges/partnerships in your business?
- How will you keep the people important to you front and center (*notice this is listed twice*)?
- How will you maintain your boundaries?
- What exceptions will you make and why?

8. MAINTAIN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- How will you plan your professional development?
- How will you give yourself space to pursue your plans?
- What will be your budget for achieving your plans (events, conferences...)?
- Who will you follow?
- What groups will you join?

9. PREPARE FOR CONTINGENCIES

- What will you do when your equipment goes down?
- How, where, and how often will you back-up your work (i.e., digital copies)?
- How will you ensure your clients are covered if you become ill or can no longer work?