

The programming format is the same, but things have changed. This further prompted me to make the decision to leave.

I'd never given it much thought until recently, but I think that I had planned to leave from the time I began working at CITY-TV. That may sound loyal, but I think its a realistic outlook. Eventually you grow out of a particular situation and in order to continue to enjoy further growth, you have to make career moves. One of the promises that I made to myself when I began working was that if work ever ceased to be challenging or fun, I would leave. Something I've seen on numerous occasions, you've probably seen it too, is some people, for whatever reasons, continuing to cling to a job (steady paycheck) that no longer excites or interests them. Personally and professionally, I think that those people do themselves and their colleagues a great disservice because they aren't living up to their full potential. Quite frankly, I didn't want to become one of those people!

The process of reaching a decision and then planning for it to come to fruition took approximately 18 months. Perhaps if I look back in retrospect, the wheels of my mind were probably turning for four years. But I felt that if I was going to successfully make the transition from being full-time on staff to working freelance, that I would have to plan carefully and build a career in small increments. The degree to which I accomplished this goal can be measured by the success which I have enjoyed thus far.

The First 30 Days

To give the perspective freelancer an idea of what the work schedule is like, I have included notes from my daybook from my first month of working freelance.

May 10/11: Lighting seminar at TVO.

May 17: Meet with accountant.

May 23: Meet with theatrical manager at rental house.

May 24: Look up some business contacts; go to union hall.

May 25: Meeting with film/TV company; talk to life insurance agent to replace work life insurance.

May 26: Shoot at Olivetti Canada.

May 27: Shoot at Legislative Assembly with TVO.

May 30: Shopping for file folders; time sheet to TVO; call typist about availability for typing article; visit answering machine store.

June 1: Shoot at Convention Centre, J.W. Bassett Theatre, for TVO.

June 2: Visit rental houses; call from equipment supplier re shoot 7,8,9; meet with business acquaintance.

June 3: Called by RTA Ryerson re: assistant teaching position in Fall '88.

June 6: Talk to rental houses; letter of intent to RTA; talk to director of Homegrown '88.

June 7: Homegrown '88 Concert at Diamond Club (10 a.m. call).

June 8/9: " " (3 p.m. call).

June 10: " " at Q107 Heaven (2 p.m. call)

June 14: Meeting at TSN cancelled, rescheduled to 6th.

June 15: Meeting with DOP at SFX House.

June 16: Meeting at TSN.

June 17/22: Working at SFX House, 10 a.m. call.

June 23: " " time card in to SFX House.

June 24: Set up meeting at TVO for *Join In*; look for office equipment.

June 25: Call back about business account.

June 26: Buy office equipment, arrange for delivery.

June 27: Meet with animator for series *Join In*.

June 28: Office equipment delivered; call TVO re. lighting equipment for

Join In; call rental house for quote for Ottawa producer.

Diversification Necessary

In planning my move into freelance, I made the decision that in order to ensure success (working continuously), I would have to diversify; to be involved in as many facets of the visual arts as possible, to work in television (both broadcast and corporate), film and theatre. To that end I have made and cultivated a number of business relationships and contacts that serve to keep me abreast of what's happening in the industry. I also endeavour to keep them up to date on what I'm doing. Word of mouth and past performance are valuable assets in securing the next job.

I further diversified by dividing my time between working as a lighting director in television, as an electrician on film shoots, consulting on design projects for engineering design/build teams, writing articles like this one, and conducting seminars on lighting technique.

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