

Freelance think piece: The portfolio career

A while ago I was talking to a new friend about what I did for a living. As it is so for many people my age, I didn't have a one-line answer, instead I told her about *all* of the things I did for a living. I wasn't surprised (given that she is of an older generation) that her thoughts were very much that I should simplify and just focus on one thing, and that got me thinking about how working looks these days.

I can understand the idea behind simplifying; working on one thing only must surely mean that you do that to a higher achievement. It shows focus, an end goal, stability, a steadfast confidence in, 'this is what I do!' Correct? Perhaps, and yet not necessarily so.

Certainly for some jobs that is appropriate: surgeons, lawyers, midwives - let's face it, these and many other careers do need to be a structured and focused, long-term investment of time, learning and knowledge. But, for so many of us that is simply not how working life is anymore.

I believe that in the main part, long gone are the days where people have a 'job for life.' I think this is a result of a combination of things: job insecurity, living costs often outweighing salaries, technology presenting different opportunities. A shift in aspirations and attitudes. Changes in the way we live and work; longer, later, blended families with both partners working and so flexibility being needed, and many more things besides.

This year has added further to the changes in the way we work and I can't help but think it might mark a significant alteration in the working habits of many of us, altogether.

A portfolio career may look to some like, 'jack of all trades, master of none' and maybe there is an element to this. But if we don't need to actually be a master then instead, it could be viewed as innovative, exploratory, open-minded and skill developing. We know that it is good to keep learning, to try new things, to not be afraid to have a go and then learn from it if something doesn't work. We can develop resilience, confidence, problem solving, communication and organisation when we explore multiple avenues of potential.

From selling my own homemade gifts I have learned the importance of customer service. Being freelance I have had to get to grips with doing my own taxes. As a librarian who spent lockdown working digitally, I have learned how to film, edit and publish videos. As a copy typist I know the value of building relationships with your client. As a freelance writer I can understand the need and voice of my clients across a range of styles and requirements. As a creative writer I run my own website. These things and many more I have gained by having a portfolio career and I can see myself continuing to build on this.

**If you or your business need a professional copy writer, contact me on
jennymay0411@gmail.com**

If you want to explore some of my personal creative writing visit my website
jenny-may.com