

PREREQUISITES AND LIFESTYLE.

You will notice that throughout the book I will refer to what most call a music “career” as a “musical journey”. I really dislike the term music “career” because to me a career is something you clock into from nine to five, monday to friday. It’s something in which you consistently exchange your time for money.

The term “music career” falls short for me and for many others because our dedication to music is incredibly flexible. It is something we engage with *in addition to work, in spite of work, or FOR work*, or any combination of the three.

In nearly all instances I find the wider and more inclusive term “musical journey” to be a far better fit for one simple reason; *no matter what, your music is always moving with you*. Your connection to music and its progress will sometimes grow, sometimes shrink, sometimes earn you a lot of money, and sometimes nothing at all, but it will always be moving and always be with you at all hours of the day - not just nine to five.

For some people music is their lifestyle, a key part of their personality and life. To reduce something to the simple term “career” does not do justice to the all-consuming passion and dedication these people have for their profession.

Equally many people out there simply enjoy tinkering with music on the

weekends with no expectation of anything outside of a hobby. Again for these people the term “career” does not apply.

Most importantly, throughout a lifetime someone may switch from one to the other and then back again multiple times, which again does not fit the structure of a typical career.

No matter which of the above you fall into, If you have any experience at all attempting a full-on musical lifestyle you will know from experience that it is very hard work indeed. When it comes to transforming our hobby into professional success, you can go a long while putting loads of work in and see very little return.

This book is written for a wide range of people with a range of ambition, but for the people most hungry for success it is a good idea to go into this book understanding the scope of work required if you are here to take things up to the next level.

Excellent time management skills, the willingness to make daily sacrifices to reach long term goals, developing healthy boundaries towards your time and energy, a willingness to accept failure, a willingness to make yourself vulnerable to others, and persistence. These are just a few of the traits which you will be required to develop sooner rather than later in order to maximise your potential.

With mindfulness and a dedication to fun as outlined in this book, many of the above will develop as by-products of simply engaging with and progressing the things you love most. As I detail later, fun is one of the most powerful motivators around, and - if we allow it - it will inspire us to change from the inside out in order to continue our happiness and level up naturally.

While you may need to make a conscious and consistent attempt to develop good habits to begin with, you will eventually fall into a positive feedback loop in which the positive results you get from working hard will inspire you to work even harder.

Initially, if you are serious about making an impact, then your musical hobby should from this point forward be treated as a second job. As such, right *now* is the time to make changes to your approach to your music. At it's very basic, you require a dedicated timetable for your music (reach for that calendar and plan your hours in!) in which you will detail your daily and weekly tasks, you also require a notepad to catalogue your ideas and keep track of your projects, and a willingness to take a long hard look at where you currently spend your time to see if you can make more effective use of it.

Speaking from experience, the transition from hobbyist musician with a day job to a musician's lifestyle is one of the hardest stages, as for many it will involve effectively balancing a full time day job, family/social

commitments, recreational time, and more. The good news is that with a fun-focused approach to the music industry the work involved with developing yourself musically won't feel like work at all, and the hardest part will be ensuring you are balancing things healthily.

For many people this balance of work/life/music will be where they eventually come to happily rest long term, and that's fine. However others may thirst for a broader scope and after immense time and energy they will find opportunities to exploit and carefully mould their existence around their musical journey - opportunities which have arisen because of their long term dedication.

Moulding your existence around your music is a huge undertaking that often happens over many years. It could mean moving house, dedicating a space to your work, quitting your job or reducing your hours, giving up other hobbies, and many other sacrifices. While this phase is tricky and seemingly unending, those that have come out of the other side can attest to how important and life-changing it is. I believe it is within reach of most people if they want it, so long as they persevere.

In my own personal example, having worked soul-sucking low-paid office jobs for most of my adult life, I was able to eventually leave my office job to work remotely editing videos, freeing up more time for music. This opportunity came about because I gained extensive experience editing videos for my own music. Before that though, it took a lot of long days.

Working 8 hours in the office plus the commute, only to get home and work a few more. But that work in the evening was pleasurable, it was engaging, and I was unwittingly training for later paid work in semi-related fields.

Eventually your life will be more about music than anything else. At that stage your musical journey becomes a central hub from which sprouts all your opportunities for earnings (both directly or in related fields), your social life/friends, or even the location in which you live. Music will be deeply ingrained into your sense of purpose, almost autonomous, and be both income provider and opportunity maker. This stage is far easier than before and your growth will become exponential here.

Needless to say that reaching this threshold requires years or even decades of persistence, which is why it is so unfathomably important that we focus our attention on what is fun to us day to day, and let the success slowly build in the background. For now, it's time to just focus on the path laid out in front of us.