

Where Are You Now?

In order to figure out what you might need to do to move your career forward, it's always worth looking at what you have achieved to date and what resources you have available to you.

Apart from making you feel better about what you have done it also helps to identify the areas that need some development or input. Most of us find that we have lots of resources in some areas and less in another. Take a moment to think about where you are now in the following key areas -

- **Creative output**
- **Writing music**
- **Live work**
- **Promotion**
- **Financial**

What Do You Have In Place?

In order to focus on what you need next to develop your career it's a good idea to look at the strengths that you have and what you have in place in the different key areas of your work.

Creative output – do you have a regular outlet for your music and recordings

Writing music – do you have musicians to play your music

Live work – what gigs have you done and do you get re booked

Promotion – do you have a regular fan base who you are able to contact easily

Financial – what resources do you have

It's also useful to identify where you are on your journey:

- **Starting out** – maybe you are learning your instrument and playing with some friends
- **Semi pro** – you may have a part time job and doing some local gigs, as well as some functions, weddings
- **Professional** – you may have quite an established following and feel like you want to move onto the next level
- **Music student** – you may be at college and wanting to develop some contacts in the music business
- **Other** – maybe you are playing an instrument and drawn to jazz but not sure if you want to get involved in playing only, maybe you have interests in the organisational side of the music business

What Do You Need?

These can be more tools or contacts – at this point its useful to just list the tools that you need, not worrying about how you are going to achieve it.

There are questions by each heading to help you think about the different areas and there will of course be things that you think of which are not listed.

Creative Output - are you happy with the music that you are performing and the outlet that you have for it? Or are you thinking that you may need a new project or band or a new recording?

Writing Music – have you copyrighted your music if you are a writer? Do you have a publisher? Are you getting royalties for the use of your music? Could you pursue commissions? Could you write library music? Are you stronger as a lyric writer or music writer?

Live Music - Do you want to expand your circuit and do more national or international work? Do you need to get an agent in different territories? Are you building on the gigs that you do? Choose a scenario - what is your ideal gig? How will you go about getting it? What contacts would you need to make it happen? How would you find them? How would you approach them? How would you negotiate? What are the tools you'll need for getting the goals? What's the next goal? What do they need that you can provide? How do you build on this achievement?

Promotion - Do you have a website? Do you have a Myspace or Facebook page? Do you have a promotion pack with biography, good photographs and flyers or posters to send to promoters? Do you have reviews?

Financial - Work out how much money you need in the short, medium and long term (ie 1,3 and 5 years). This is helpful to do as it focuses the mind on how much income you need and can help you to decide on which areas of your career you need to focus on to help you achieve your financial targets. Do you have a good system for keeping your financial records?

How Do You Make The Next Step?

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Creative Output - Are you happy with the music that you are performing and the outlet that you have for it? Or are you thinking that you may need a new project or band or a new recording?

Writing Music – have you copyrighted your music if you are a writer, do you have a publisher, are you getting royalties for the use of your music, could you pursue commissions, could you write library music. Are you stronger as a lyric writer or music writer. Further information can be found in the [Copyright and Music Publishing](#) section.

Live Music – do you want to expand your circuit and do more national or international work. Do you need to get an agent in different territories. Are you building on the gigs that you do. Choose a scenario, what is your ideal gig, how will you go about getting it, what contacts would you need to make it happen, how would you find them, how would you approach them, how would you negotiate. What are the tools you'll need for getting the goals. What's the next goal, what do they need that you can provide, how do you build on this achievement?

Promotion – Do you have a website or a myspace page? Do you have a promotion pack, good photographs, posters to send to promoters? Do you have reviews? Further information can be found in the [Marketing & PR](#) section.

Financial - Work out how much money you need in the short, medium and long term (ie 1,3 and 5 years) this is helpful to do as it focuses the mind on how much income you need and can help you to decide on which areas of your career you need to focus on to help you achieve your financial targets. Do you have a good system for keeping your financial records?

Further information can be found in the [Finance](#) section.