

A couple of ideas on effective work & cash management

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It can be a tricky thing managing your work & cash management

Away from work & cash management thoughts, us freelance strategists often have the same questions spinning around in our heads between the 2x2s and creative brief building.



"I have gaps in my schedule - how do I fill them?"

"I have taken on a client that is far too demanding and is really driving my day rate down"

"I'm doing great now but what about next quarter? What do I do if this client does not renew?"

Even experienced freelancers face these problems. Being strategists the questions are probably compounded as we project and tweak potential income levels to the nth degree to ensure we are earning what we need to (or want to) and highlight times where we have not got the cash flow that enables our lifestyles to be maintained as we like.

Personally I build my projections on napkins in the pub every now and then and work out exactly how many billable days (work & cash management) I need to hit an arbitrary gross income. Seriously. I do.

Then I get on the [iPad](#) and open up the Numbers app to plot in how many working days I have with each client, how much that will bill and see where the shortfall is.

If there is a shortfall I look to my schedule to find any gaps where I'm not socially active and look

to double - and sometimes treble - book work in. This is not to bill clients for substandard work but to use one or two weeks as 'sprints' of work where I work virtually every waking hour during the week and weekends to fulfil the needs of multiple clients at in the space normally allocated to just one client.

This method allows me to ensure I'm covered for down periods such as extended agency Christmas holidays and annual leave time to spend with my family.

As well as this, I try to keep a 'backup fund' in the business account that would allow me to live, fulfil bill obligations and pay income tax for a period of no less than three months. Through 2013 I'm aiming to bolster this to be able to keep me going for six months if things don't go the way I intend them to!

What do you do when you need to fill gaps or make extra cash to keep you going through trickier / quiet periods? What are your goals for work & cash management?