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Pete Mosley: The Story So Far...

Last year we were delighted to welcome Pete Mosley as *craft&design* Business Editor, who has been dazzling us with his business advice, tips and fact sheets. In this issue Jan Lasnon has been finding out a bit more about Pete as he celebrates 25 years in business – and in particular the experiences he has gained that enable him to pass on such great advice.

As well as being our Business Editor, Pete Mosley enjoys a successful career as a coach, mentor and consultant. He set up on his own as a freelancer in 1984 and has worked with an enormous number of individuals and companies over the years. However Pete's specialist area and main passion lies, without doubt, within the creative industry and lifestyle businesses.

Pete was born in Glasgow in 1955 where his father ran a dry cleaning business after retiring as a sea captain. Glasgow is home to the substantial Govancroft Pottery, which sat at the corner of Potter Street and traded from 1911 to 1976. It was here that Pete held his first summer job having recently sat an 'O' level in Ceramics.

The pottery was fascinating to him as it still practised traditional hand-thrown methods and Pete spent the summer learning from the craft throwers there, and selling the results to tourists visiting the craft shop.

This led to a decision to study for a degree in ceramics, which is, he says, where it all went wrong!

At around about this time a second creative force, music, was also rife and, like many art students before and since, Pete played bass and guitar in a rock band. However, in direct contrast to many, his band actually appeared on TV. His claim to fame is an appearance on *Lift Off* – a show that ran on commercial TV in competition to BBC's *Top Of The Pops* and other artists on the same show included leading bands of the time: Bay City Rollers and Mud.

Having finished college Pete began looking around for something to do and saw an advertisement in the *Guardian* for a town artist in Chorley, Lancashire. The salary was £50 a week – more money than he had ever earned before. He applied for the job and got it.

This was a pivotal moment and the start of three years spent doing things he loved and getting paid for them! A town artist gets involved in all sorts of things, but one of his most enduring memories is everyone having a fry up on top of a brick kiln that he and a group of local residents had built in a grassy bank.

After three years Pete moved to Leicestershire where he got a job running an Arts & Craft workshop for the unemployed between the ages of 16 and 25. This job grew and grew across a five year period and covered a vast range of activities including making, photography and music.

Pete ended up as Deputy Senior Manager for the whole facility but quickly realised that he didn't want to do management – he wanted to be free to work as he wanted.

This was 1984 and Pete decided to set up as a freelance artist in the education sector.

Again this turned out to be the beginning of another exciting period. Contacts made in his previous role opened doors that enabled Pete to run courses in community centres, schools, hospitals and prisons, constantly skill-sharing and interacting with others.

Pete's role as a freelancer also enabled him to

work in New York for periods of six to eight weeks at a time. He says the biggest single lesson learned from the Americans was their 'can do' attitude; this completely changed his own boundaries and what he felt was within the realms of possibility.

Freelancing continued to open up new opportunities bringing Pete into contact with the Arts Council. They asked him to put together and run some training courses for artists who wanted to go out and do a similar sort of role as his own. He wrote training programmes which evolved and soon found himself not just developing individual

artists but artist organisations. It was this that led to him adopting his current role of coach, guide and mentor.

Having found his niche, Pete has continued to grow and develop his business. He attended some high level strategy and consultancy courses that enable him to work with confidence at board level and began to enjoy the challenge of helping organisations identify and achieve their goals.

He forged a close relationship with *Business Link* and continues to work with them as a specialist mentor for creative businesses.

About three years ago Pete decided to do a Post Graduate Certificate in business coaching and, as part of that process, he received a lot of coaching himself. As a result he identified a latent skill that he wanted to use. That skill is writing – something he had been doing for years without really noticing.

At the time, one of the people he was coaching was a blacksmith, who asked him to write an article on business strategy specifically for the *British Artist Blacksmith Association* magazine. Following a good response Pete decided this was something he would like to do regularly and, following some successfully published articles, approached *craft&design* magazine.

The rest, as they say, is history. Final Word – I couldn't speak to the Business Guru without asking for a few words of advice and encouragement to see us through. Pete says:

"A deep recession like this provides many harsh lessons in survival – for established businesses and start-ups alike. After you've picked yourself up and dusted yourself down, you realise that some really valuable stuff may have been learned along the way. "As Nietzsche said: "That which does not kill us, makes us stronger"."



These are some of the artists and businesses that Pete has worked with over the years

- Art Galleries
- Bespoke Furniture Maker
- Blacksmith/Metalwork
- Calligrapher/Composer
- Drumming Workshops and Tuition
- Educational Theatre Practitioner
- Glass Artist
- Graphic Designer
- Green Bean Dance Company
- Greeting Cards Designer
- Jeweller
- Mosaic Artist
- Painter
- Performance Artist
- Photographer
- Recording Studio
- Sculptor
- Sound Artist
- String Quartet
- Theatre Company/Talent Agency
- Videographer
- Video/New Media
- Visual artist

To find out how Pete can assist your business, see the advertisement on page 93



70's rock band jacket - embroidered by Pete

Glass work by Pete Mosley

Pete Mosley: coach, mentor and consultant

The craft&design Business

25 years



Pete Mosley
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Pete provides coaching and business support for individual artists & makers and small creative companies, as well as working on larger regional projects.

He is an Associate of the Institute of Business Consulting and a Business Link/EMDA East Midlands Service Provider Register 5* rated, based on independent client feedback.

www.petemosley.com
www.creativemusings.co.uk

See advertisement on opposite page

When Paul and Angie realized that this was my 25th year in business, they asked me if I'd write a short piece reflecting on a few universal truths - success factors that seem to hold their value over time. I was happy to say yes - because I am convinced that there are a number of factors that determine whether our businesses make it in the long term.

Adaptability

The history of evolution tells us that the capacity to adapt to new conditions is a prerequisite to survival. Recession forces change, and can be a useful catalyst - the most adaptable people take on the challenge and come up with new ideas, products and strategies.

Quality

Quality always wins through in the end. And not just quality of workmanship and materials - the quality of the ideas and the authenticity and passion behind the work matter too - we've all seen fabulously well made work with no soul.

Track Record

Being seen to do 'what it says on the tin'. Being reliable, consistent and on time. Doing this with a wide variety of different customers who all rate what you do and would recommend you at the drop of a hat. Maintain a great business over time and developing lasting trust from the people you deal with.

Good Relationships

The very best companies nurture great relationships with everyone they deal with - from suppliers up to the most important customers. Every link in the chain is treated with equal respect.

Brilliant Communication

The ability to get a message across simply, elegantly and regularly to keep people's interest without overtly overselling.

Dashboard Data

What three things do you need to keep a close eye upon on a daily basis to ensure your survival? Often cashflow, quality control and marketing activity. But this varies from business to business.

Keeping in Touch

With your customer's wants and needs - and not making assumptions based on their past behaviour. Survey your customer's requirements regularly and adapt accordingly.

Innovate

Always have new products and ideas up your sleeve. All products, however brilliant, have a finite shelf life. There's an old saying - if you don't have a new product in development, you're not really in business.

Keep Learning

Set aside time to learn new skills, attend training courses - or at least go to conferences and fairs. Be open to ideas. Make a list of things you've fancied learning or trying out - go to taster workshops. You never know when something will grab you and put a new spin on the way you work.

Set Aside Time to Dream

Stephen Spielberg once said "I dream for a living". It's no accident that our best ideas come to us when we are half asleep - our brain goes into Theta rhythm, the gateway between our conscious and unconscious mind opens up and the creative part of our brain gets to work. If you get stuck - the equivalent of writers block - give yourself time and let yourself go into neutral.

The General Theory of Relativity was born while Einstein was lying in a meadow - where he regularly went, simply to daydream.