Book Review

Powell, M. M. (Ed.). (2018). *Becoming an independent information professional: how to freelance, consult, and contract for fun and profit*. Santa Barbara: Libraries Unlimited. ISBN: 9781440855412.

Edited by Melissa M. Powell, the book brings together successful contractors in the field of Library and Information Science (LIS), who share their personal experiences and lessons learned. This comprehensive how-to guide includes the foundational knowledge vital to starting your own business, such as required skills, ethics, finances and billing, legal considerations, time management, and marketing. The book also prepares readers for the realities of freelance work by discussing its major challenges, while offering sensible suggestions and guidance.

From fact-checking to non-profit work and government consulting, LIS professionals have numerous avenues to pursue outside of a traditional library career. By incorporating worksheets for readers to reflect on their own skills and aptitudes, Chapter 1 begins with an insightful exercise to match readers' skills with the type of consulting work that would best suit their abilities.

In Chapter 3, Pat Wagner provides a map of the consulting marketplace by describing the unique needs of different types of customers and strategies for succeeding with each. This chapter also details the different requirements of consulting for academic, special, or school libraries, as well as non-profit organizations and the private sector.

Chapter 4 describes the steps involved in writing a business plan, in addition to the legal and financial considerations for your chosen business structure. From sole proprietorship to partnerships, incorporation, and LLC (limited liability company), Denise Shockley comprehensively describes the variety of different business structures in a clear format that can be easily understood by any reader. Shockley also includes practical information about liability, taxes, and accounting practices to keep you organized and in control of your business.

In Chapter 6, Crystal Schimpf guides readers in how to develop and implement effective marketing and branding strategies that will make a business stand out from competitors. Readers who are just starting out will appreciate topics such as defining your brand, key components of your website, suggestions for finding a web designer, and successfully utilizing social media to increase your digital presence. Additionally, this chapter provides numerous resources and examples for aspiring LIS consultants.

By filling this book with the practical information required to launch an LIS consulting business, covering every stage from conception to development, the contributors demonstrate their expertise and wealth of personal experience. This book is a recommended resource for any LIS professional interested in exploring the realities of starting a freelance business.

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