

the importance of growth



Polly Williams, Founder, **Camberyard**, discusses how personal and professional growth is the key to long-term success.

Thinking about what to write this month, as we try to look ahead with positivity, I have settled on the subject of growth.

Growth can be interpreted in many ways. For the purposes of this article, I'll break it down into two areas: personal and professional.

At Camberyard, we take a holistic approach, trying to create a healthy balance between one's personal and professional life – this means mental and physical as well as financial health. It's easy to forget how entwined business and personal growth are, you need both to be in good order for long-term success.

But what does 'personal growth' actually mean? For some it might be achieving, to an extent, that work/home balance, figuring out how to be available to family members, loved ones and/or pets, or simply to have some time for themselves, whilst running a business. It might be having time to exercise and to cook, to stay physically and mentally fit. For others, it may be looking at improving their skillsets and becoming more knowledgeable in their interest areas, like wellness and eco-responsibility, for instance.

I make it a priority in my consultations to take time to focus on my clients' inner voice, to ensure their personal growth is aligned with their inspirations, aspirations and motivations. Running a business or, indeed, working as a sole trader, is not for the fainthearted. If you want to work on personal development, you need time. This can be difficult to find when trying to manage a busy work schedule alongside an equally busy personal life. Learning how to gain some level of control and equanimity on the personal side amidst work challenges is an important aspect of my consultancy work.

Now, business growth, what does it look like, what does it feel like? What is your definition of success? Nine times out of ten my new clients ask if they're charging enough and every time, I ask them: What are your overheads? What do you need to be invoicing on a weekly, monthly, annual basis to make this business work financially? Business overheads are, perhaps surprisingly, often a forgotten element of working out how to charge but are so essential it is one of the first areas I look at with my clients.

Once you have established what you need to be financially viable, you can move to the next

level. Should you charge per project to hit your financial targets or on an hourly or day rate? Do you have enough time to do all the work required to hit these targets? Do you need to think about hiring staff, finding a creative or business partner or collaborating with trained freelancers to complete your projects? Do you dream of your own design studio? You might think, yes, absolutely I want to be running a team in my own creative space, that's the direction I'm going in. However, doing so might well increase costs to such an extent it impacts on your personal growth. This is when you have to ask yourself what launching a strong and successful business really means to you. If it is indeed to have that office and employees, you have to take the steps, and make the sacrifices, necessary to get you there.

To end, I will ask you, as I do my clients, to stop, breathe and contemplate. Then ask yourself: What does growth mean to me? What does success look like? How will I achieve balance? How will I prioritise? And, finally, how do I acknowledge that I deserve both personal and business growth, in whatever form and guise that appeals to me as a designer in the interiors sector?

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