8 Business Tips for Artists

Mitra Cline – Artist, Designer, Creativity Coach

1 Define a big goal to inspire you

Lesson learned: I realized how much I didn't know when completing a business feasibility plan during a business course. I sought ways to meet all the identified needs, and it has been a long but joyful journey.

What inspires you right now? (person, a belief, a vision for your work)

2 Go public as a business, and keep your personal information private

Lesson learned: When I set up my newsletter and business profiles, I discovered that I needed to include a mailing address. Using a PO box helped me keep my personal info private and was a convenient solution when sharing my public events, client invoices, and business directories.

What upcoming event are you most looking forward to?

3 Celebrate every win and track your progress

Lesson learned: Early on, I made mistakes with my expense tracking, resulting in extra tax payments. Now, I recognize keeping up-to-date records in all the business administrative and operational tasks as a win. I keep track of my cash flow to ensure I'm saving enough each month.

Is there a recent win you can acknowledge and celebrate today?

4 Lean into community

Lesson learned: I learned that choosing friends and my artistic community wisely gives me valuable support, but when requests come from people I don't know well, I need to be discerning. Doing free work often leads to more unpaid requests, so I now only say yes if it's an opportunity to learn a new skill or experiment creatively. This way, every experience intentionally supports my growth as an artist. Seek business education from local schools, nonprofits or government resources.

Who could you learn from, support, or collaborate with this week?

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5 Share authentically and keep the focus on your goals

Lesson learned: Sometimes my art evoked powerful emotions in others. I learned to focus on my own growth and not take others' reactions personally, whether good or bad. Sometimes I get no response. I plan to publish content on a schedule and in advance to match my goals.

How can you invite others into your creative journey?

6 Celebrate your voice, understand artists rights

Lesson learned: If someone tries to talk me down in price, I hold firm and aim higher. My clients realize I'm uniquely qualified for the job.

What is one step you can take to protect your voice and your art?

7 Benefit from technology

Lesson learned: I've found that using professionally designed templates and AI tools from Envato Elements, Adobe Creative Cloud, and HoneyBook not only saves me time but often results in more polished, quick, and affordable outcomes since experts create them; this approach works exceptionally well for marketing, sales, and client relations. I use Perplexity AI to assist with editing my writing and researching online.

In what ways might new technology become an ally for your practice?

8 Utilize well known and liked traditions in your marketing

Lesson learned: I found that using familiar places, people, and stories helps audiences connect and understand my art. It is an easier marketing hook. Once someone knows you, they're more likely to learn more, be a repeat client, fan, or collector. Attracting new clients and/or nurturing relationships with existing ones are different strategies.

What creative tradition do you want to continue through your art business?

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