



EFFORTLESS WORKSHOPS

A Blueprint for Planning,
Promoting and Running
Seminars, Workshops & Retreats



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Retreats

By Richard Haywood

www.EffortlessMarketing.co.uk

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So You Plan To Run Workshops, Eh?

You've decided to create a workshop, seminar or retreat. You've selected your topic, chosen your dates and booked the venue. Now all you need to do is print up some flyers, get the word out there and wait for the bookings to come rolling in. Right?

Er, well no, actually. Not unless you want to struggle to break even, or even worse, make a loss. If your goal is to run really effective workshops, make a profit, and create a sustainable long term business, you'll have to rewind several steps.

In this blueprint you're going to discover what those steps are. You're about to learn a process for planning and promoting events that will guarantee you make profits. It will also help you to structure your workshops to be more effective so that your students get the best possible outcomes. And as a result, it will help you build a long term, sustainable business doing something you LOVE. Finally you'll have some comprehensive checklists you can follow when preparing, running and follow up your workshops, making the whole event as effortless as possible. Sound good?

Here's how you can get the most from this guide.

This blueprint may challenge the way you currently think about organising events.

You probably can't wait to jump ahead and get started. **But please read the manual in its entirety first.** I promise you will gain valuable insights and an understanding of how everything fits together. If you rush ahead and try to implement each step without fully understanding the reasons behind it, you simply won't be as successful as you could be.

I've spent nearly 20 years running talks, seminars, workshops and retreats of all kinds. There is no single perfect way to run an event. But this blueprint is as close as I can get to a step-by-step plan that guarantees success.

WHO AM I TO TELL YOU HOW TO RUN YOUR EVENTS?

I've been promoting a wide range of events since 1999 both for myself and in partnership with authors, teachers and coaches.

In that time I've made money...and I've lost money. In fact, I think it's not just the money I've made, but the money I've lost that qualifies me to write about this subject and you can benefit from the mistakes I've made and the costly pitfalls to avoid, as well as learn some of the techniques I've helped develop to make events successful.

In 1999, full of enthusiasm, I launched my consulting business. I was effectively thrown in the deep end, winning a contract to deliver internet training seminars for the Department of Trade & Industry. It was a baptism of fire! Fifteen events around the UK over a 12 month period, to audiences of up to 100 people at a time, on my own! But it gave me the 'bug' for live events and I've been running my own events, as well as helping others, ever since.

In the early days, I promoted my events offline using leaflets and mailshots. Now, depending on the event I'm promoting, I use a combination of online and offline marketing techniques. I've revised and updated my approach each year, incorporating new opportunities (like the now mighty Facebook) and new techniques that I've discovered that have helped me boost profits even further. And over time, I've kept adding to my checklists when something new or unexpected comes along.

I have personally promoted more than 100 public seminars, workshops or retreats and generated more than £750,000 of revenue so you could say that I've learned a thing or two about making money organising live events.

All of the essential techniques that you need are included in this Blueprint. Of course, you'll need to do much of the research and groundwork for your situation and there will be some technical work needed and choices you'll have to make about issues like design and marketing. There isn't enough time or space to share every detail of what I've learned, and, of course, every event is different, but in this Blueprint you'll find the foundation of principles and practices that have been proven to work time and time again.

WHO IS THIS BLUEPRINT FOR?

Not everyone will benefit from this guide.

This Blueprint assumes that you have some expertise that you want to share with others. You may consider yourself to be one of the following:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Author or Writer | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Speaker |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coach or Mentor | <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher, Tutor or Facilitator |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Experienced Practitioner | <input type="checkbox"/> Subject Expert |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lecturer | <input type="checkbox"/> Professional |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Retired Professional | |

If you're one of these and have a desire to guide, teach, motivate or facilitate learning and growth for other people, this is for YOU!

If you feel you DON'T fit any of these descriptions, then take a look at these questions:

- Do you work with others either giving talks, as a teaching assistant, practitioner, coach or mentor, in any capacity whatsoever?
- Do you have a field of expertise or skills you want to share with others?
- Do have ideas (even vague ones) about how you can help people using your knowledge?

If you haven't answered YES to at least one of those questions you may not be quite ready to start organising your own seminars or workshops. That doesn't mean you're not capable of doing so, it simply means you should perhaps do some thinking before you get started on this Blueprint.

If that's the case, I strongly recommend you seek guidance and you are welcome to set up a free Discovery Call with me at my website: www.EffortlessMarketing.co.uk/mentoring where we can discuss your thoughts and ideas.

THE SINGLE BIGGEST MISTAKE THAT THE MAJORITY OF TEACHERS MAKE, AND HOW IT LOSES THEM MONEY EVERY TIME!

The majority of teachers do this: they come up with an idea for a workshop and then they go out and find people to shoehorn into their event. This is a massive mistake! If you've tried marketing workshops this way, then you know how exhausting, time-consuming and frustrating it can be. Not to mention that feeling of fear that grips you as you start to wonder whether you will even cover your costs, let alone make a profit.

This method of trying to make money marketing workshops can work if you have an unlimited capacity for spending money, wasting time, and have no concern for risk. But, if you're like most of us who want to do things, shall we say, a little more safely and cheaply, then you need to change your thinking. Because the reverse of the mistake I just told you about is absolutely, positively, the best way there is to make money marketing public seminars, workshops and training courses:

UNDERSTAND YOUR CUSTOMERS' NEEDS FIRST, FIND OUT WHAT THEY WANT TO LEARN, AND THEN... HELP THEM LEARN WHAT THEY'VE TOLD YOU THEY WANT!

Make sense? I hope so, because you mustn't spend any time thinking about your training course, workshop or seminar until you've discovered the **MARKET** – and that means the **AUDIENCE** for your events. You may call them 'prospects', 'delegates', 'attendees', 'students', 'clients' or 'customers'. Essentially, they are all the same. I use a variety of those terms, but I am talking about the same people:

...individuals with a burning desire to solve a problem.

Whatever your personal experience or field of expertise, your first job is to find out about people's **PROBLEMS** before you even begin to think about the workshop, seminar or training course they might buy from you.

Pick an audience you deeply, thoroughly understand, share passions with, share a language with, and have empathy and credibility with. Find out what their biggest problems are, and then build your seminar, training course or workshop to help them solve those problems.

In this blueprint, I'll give you an exercise to help you do exactly that. It's actually Step 3 of the process. And I'll explain why it's step three and not Step 1 as we go through it.

Once you 'fix' this single big mistake, the next challenge is to follow a structured plan of action to ensure each and every event is a success. Whenever I set up a new event I work my way through this blueprint. It means I have an accurate picture of what I'm doing, and I don't miss any essential steps.

- I know that the format of my event will be viable and profitable with a very high degree of certainty.
- I know WHO my potential attendees are and WHERE to find them. Most importantly I know they will be excited about my event.
- I know that my marketing campaigns will reach my audience with a high degree of accuracy and will begin generating bookings quickly.
- I know what to pack in preparation for my event, how and when to communicate with delegates, what to do on the day and how to follow up after the event is over.
- I know I can massively increase my income and profits on the day itself.
- And I know that each event adds to a community of loyal followers, which continues to grow into a long term sustainable, lucrative business.

12 STEPS FOR EFFORTLESS EVENTS

The blueprint consists of 12 steps, split into 5 phases, which are listed below. I recommend these are done in the order they're listed, especially for your first event, although some steps will overlap, especially in the early stages of planning and preparation. Each step covers an ESSENTIAL element in the process. Miss any of these elements and you will be in danger of either failing to run an effective event, failing to create a profit, or failing to build a sustainable business for the long term.

PHASE ONE – Planning

Step 1 - Create an EVENT PLAN & BUDGET to check your event is viable

Step 2 - Select a suitable VENUE and commit yourself to a date

Step 3 - Identify your MARKET and create a COMPELLING MESSAGE that will attract students

PHASE TWO - Teaching

Step 4 - Design your TEACHING PLAN with a focus on delivering results

Step 5 - Identify and develop BACK END PRODUCTS you can offer your students

PHASE THREE - Marketing

Step 6 - Create the MARKETING MATERIALS you need

Step 7 - PROMOTE your event

Step 8 - Handle ENQUIRIES & BOOKINGS efficiently

PHASE FOUR - Delivering

Step 9 - PREPARE for your event in plenty of time

Step 10 - Follow a checklist of actions ON THE DAY (or DAYS) so that your event runs as smoothly as possible

Step 11 - FOLLOW UP immediately after the event to reassure your students and get TESTIMONIALS

PHASE FIVE – Community Building

Step 12 - Invite your students to join and actively participate in your COMMUNITY

SAMPLE EXERCISES & CHECKLISTS

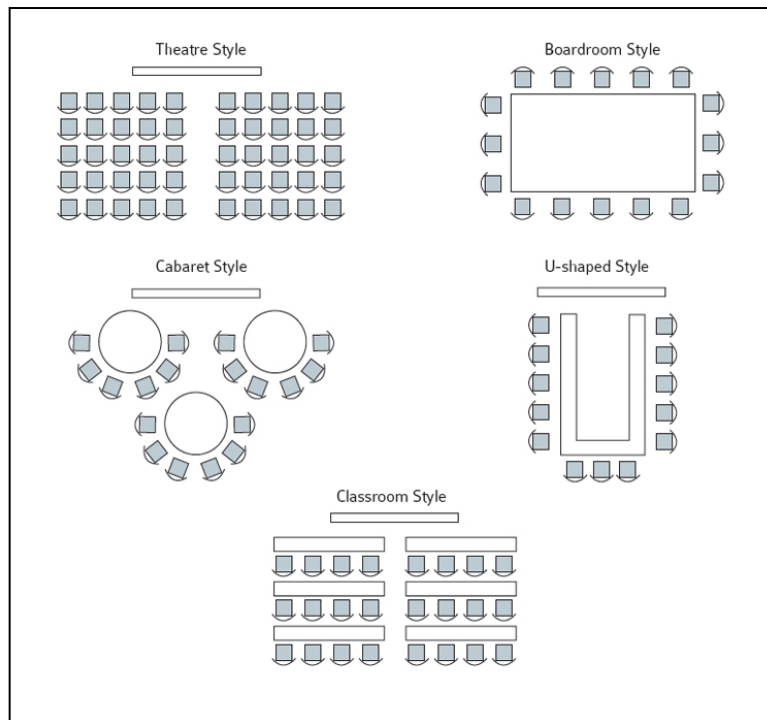
The full 70 page Blueprint will be available to download when you watch the Workshop Marketing class. The marketing class is usually between 70 and 90 minutes long and I'll take you through each of the 12 steps in the process highlighting important strategies and techniques along the way. **It will give you the 'big picture' before you get started on the detailed planning for your own events.**

But to give you a flavour of what's included in the Blueprint, here are some sample pages, exercises and checklists.

ENJOY!

VENUE CHECKLIST

ROOM LAYOUT – decide which layout you prefer for tables and chairs. This is necessary for the venue to be able to advise you on the capacity for each room available. Typical rooms layouts are shown here.



CAPACITY OF ROOM?

COST OF ROOM?

Or PER DELEGATE RATE? (and minimum number required)

WHAT IS INCLUDED?

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pads/Pens | <input type="checkbox"/> Projector (for a laptop or tablet) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Flipchart | <input type="checkbox"/> Mic & Speakers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> TV screen | |

REFRESHMENTS? per serving OR unlimited per delegate

PARKING CHARGES? (for speaker & delegates)

LOGISTICS

When can we get in?

When do we have to leave?

Can the room be locked during breaks and lunch?

Are refreshments served in the room or elsewhere?

Is there disability access (ie a lift or ramp)?

Are there toilets on the same floor?

Can we use candle(s)?

Is there a restaurant/café/canteen to buy lunch?

What are the parking arrangements?

What is the nearest railway station/tube stop/bus stop?.....

Where and how can we unload materials?

BOOKING ARRANGEMENTS

Do you have larger rooms available if we need to upgrade?

Can you take a provisional booking?

When do you need confirmation / cancellation?

What are the payment arrangements (deposit, final fees)?

Can you offer a special accommodation rate for delegates
[if it's a hotel]?

SPECIAL TIP

Some hotels will offer the room hire free of charge if you book accommodation for your delegates. They will ask for a minimum number of rooms to be booked. If you think your students are likely to need overnight accommodation and will be happy to pay for it, this is one way of booking your venue.

BOOKING YOUR VENUE

Once you've asked around, got some figures and maybe even visited your preferred venue, make the provisional booking. You'll probably need to sign and return a contract and an event schedule. **MAKE A NOTE IN YOUR DIARY OF THE CONFIRMATION DATE.** If, for any reason, you cannot fill your event, this is the date on which you can cancel the booking without incurring charges.

THINKING ABOUT YOUR AUDIENCE

Your Compelling Message is a description of your business that can be delivered in any format – from an introduction at a networking event, in a brochure or advert, on your website or indeed, anywhere else.

Your challenge is to come up with no more than 2 or 3 sentences that answer that can be read in just a few seconds (no more than 30). This is known in the marketing industry as an 'Elevator Pitch'. I prefer to call it your 'Compelling Message'!

A good Compelling Message will:

- Describe what you do quickly and clearly
- Indicate that you are a credible practitioner of this service
- Create some interest or intrigue
- Give the listener a reason to engage with you in conversation

You'll need words and phrases that you can use in everything you write and create. Once you perfect these statements, everything else will come from it.

Let's work through each of the elements that you'll need in order to develop and refine your message. Spend some time answering the following questions.

Your Work

What you do – describe your teaching.

What qualities do you bring to this work? Think about:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Your Background | <input type="checkbox"/> Qualifications |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Specialist Training | <input type="checkbox"/> Previous Experience |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Special Skills You Have | <input type="checkbox"/> Unique Knowledge |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Any unusual or unique approaches you take, or techniques you use. | |

Your Customers

Describe your typical customers.

What would your typical customers be looking for?

Think about...

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> To Solve Problem(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> To work with an expert |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To Get Qualified | <input type="checkbox"/> Improve Life / Work / Relationships |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To Learn a Trade | <input type="checkbox"/> Become Healthier |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Earn More money (or Save Money) | <input type="checkbox"/> Become Happier |

What do you think is the most urgent PROBLEM they want to solve?

How you help people – describe briefly what your SOLUTION is to that problem.

FEATURES AND BENEFITS

When describing your products or services, it's worth making a list of the most important aspects of what you offer. These fall into two categories:

FEATURES – a physical or factual attribute of the service. Examples would include:

- My workshop runs on Sunday
- I use the very latest knowledge and techniques
- I am cheaper than other courses

BENEFITS – what your customer gains from each feature. Using the above examples:

- It's convenient for working people to attend and doesn't interfere with Monday-Saturday jobs
- The teaching I offer is more effective than my competitors
- People will save money by using me, and still learn the skills

Use the chart on the next page and list as many as you can think of for your teaching. You don't have to fill the entire page. If it helps, ask a friend, colleague or client for their ideas about what you offer and how they would benefit. Most benefits fall into one of these areas – better quality, more effective, faster, cheaper, more convenient, or something unique that no one else offers.

WORKSHOP TIMETABLE

I'm sure I don't need to mention that a timetable, agenda and/or running order for the day is going to be helpful to you as a teacher. Given all the previous points in Steps 4 and 5, I will simply leave you with a sample which has frequently worked for me. This is for a one day workshop but is easily extended or shortened for alternative formats. As you can see there is only roughly 4 hours of actual teaching during the day, about the maximum any normal person can handle.

SAMPLE TIMETABLE

09:00 REGISTRATION

09:30 Introduction, Icebreaker Exercise, Other elements (prayer, meditation, blessing, personal introductions etc).

10:00 Set out EXPECTATIONS, OUTCOMES & your FRAMEWORK for the workshop.

10:15 BLOCKS OF LEARNING

For each block: ATTENTION, RELEVANCE, TEACHING, PRACTICE, COMPREHENSION

11:15 BREAK (coffee & convenience break) – shorter for a small group

11:45 BLOCKS OF LEARNING

For each block: ATTENTION, RELEVANCE, TEACHING, PRACTICE, COMPREHENSION

13:00 LUNCH (People rarely need more than 40 minutes).

13:40 Welcome back with a recap on the morning's teaching

13:45 BLOCKS OF LEARNING

For each block: ATTENTION, RELEVANCE, TEACHING, PRACTICE, COMPREHENSION

14:45 BACK END OFFER (15 minutes)

15:00 BREAK (coffee & convenience break) – shorter for a small group

15:20 FINAL EXERCISE or BLOCK OF LEARNING,

15:50 DISCUSSION & ROUND UP

16:00 FEEDBACK & QUESTIONS

16:15 CLOSING ELEMENTS (prayer, meditation, blessing, etc)

16:30 END OF WORKSHOP (with time to chat, book further events etc)

17:00 PACK UP & LEAVE

WORKSHOP MATERIALS CHECKLIST

- ☐ Print worksheets or manuals (one for each delegate, one for yourself and couple of spares in case of late bookings, coffee spills etc)
- ☐ Print feedback forms
- ☐ Print leaflets and/or booking forms for your back-end products
- ☐ Laptop or tablet if needed
- ☐ Speaker / MP3 player (for music/meditation)
- ☐ Delegate List
- ☐ Badges & Spare Labels for errors (I simply hand write sticky labels as badges – you may prefer clip-on badges or lanyards)
- ☐ Cash Float Money (if you plan to take cash payments and for any expenses on the day)
- ☐ Receipt Books (if you wish to issue receipts for payments for back end products)
- ☐ WiFi code for venue
- ☐ Contact numbers (venue organiser)
- ☐ Tablecloths (if the venue does not supply them)
- ☐ Clock or watch (for teacher to keep track)
- ☐ Candle, crystals, essences – and all things spiritual
- ☐ Flowers and a vase (fresh flowers in the room do make a huge difference)
- ☐ Signage – such as pull up banners or posters if you use them
- ☐ Matches/Lighter – for your candles
- ☐ Bin Liners – handy in case you find there are no bins
- ☐ Tissues – for you and your delegates
- ☐ Blu-Tack, Tape, pins, Scissors – not always needed but handy to keep just in case
- ☐ Flipchart pens – always take your own if even if the venue supplies the flipchart.
- ☐ Business Cards, brochures, leaflets – especially for your next event!
- ☐ Specialist Equipment (for your teaching if needed)
- ☐ Gifts and giveaways if you plan to offer them
- ☐ Reference books – you may not need them but occasionally you may want to refer to something or look something up during a break.
- ☐ A Trolley – for loading and unloading
- ☐ Video & Still Cameras – if you plan to record your events
- ☐ Extension reel – for cameras or your laptop
- ☐ Pens, Pads and Clipboards – if not supplied by the venue
- ☐ Coffee/Tea/Milk/Sugar – if you're in a church hall or community centre it's wise to take your own supplies
- ☐ Spare clothing – if there's a spill, you'll be able to quickly change
- ☐ Mints, sweets & energy bars (to keep you going)
- ☐ Basic first aid – pain killers, plasters, cleansing wipes plus any medication you need personally

STEP 10 – ON THE DAY

The following pages are a running checklist that I use throughout my events. It works for any kind of event, except perhaps for retreats where you may have breakfasts, evening meals, excursions and other extraneous activities taking place around your teaching.

One big question I have for you: **do you have an assistant to help you on the day?** It may seem like an unnecessary expense for a small workshop, but a good assistant can take much of the pressure off you, allowing you to focus on your teaching and the needs of your customers.

Good assistants have, ideally, been to a previous workshop so know the basic elements of your work. They also need to be able to follow a checklist and be mindful of the needs of the group. They deal with admin, of course, and help with setting up. But also, they are the person who steps in if there's a problem, who 'steps outside' with a student if there's an emotional or spiritual emergency, who fields questions from delegates so that you can take a short break, and above all, is ready and able to take orders and bookings for your back end sales.

I've split the running checklist into two columns – one for you, one for your assistant. If you're on your own, then you clearly must think about both columns and prioritise your list.

There are also some references for setting up the front of the room (for the speaker) and back or side of the room (for the assistant).

ROOM SETUP / LAYOUT

Rooms vary hugely, of course, but here is my suggestion for the important items needed on tables at each 'end' (although both tables may be at the same end, or at the sides!)

SPEAKER'S SET UP

(front of room)

- ☐ Laptop or tablet
- ☐ Music player & Speaker
- ☐ Tissues
- ☐ Running order and copy of materials
- ☐ Flowers, crystals, essences etc
- ☐ Water, Sweets, Energy Bars
- ☐ Flip chart pens, pad etc

ASSISTANT'S SETUP

(back or side of room)

- ☐ Materials and handouts
- ☐ Delegate list & Badges
- ☐ Pens and pencils
- ☐ Mobile Phone
- ☐ Basic first aid
- ☐ Back end products with orders forms
- ☐ Credit card reader / Cash float
- ☐ Copy of Running Order
- ☐ Tissues

Examples



FACILITATOR

ASSISTANT

PRIOR TO LEAVING HOME

Check you have:

- ☐ Map, directions and contact details for the venue
- ☐ All materials packed
- ☐ Delegate list and contact details for participants
- ☐ Checked traffic/travel conditions (radio or online)

ON ARRIVAL THROUGH TO REGISTRATION

- ☐ Unload Vehicle
- ☐ Move all boxes and materials to the workshop room
- ☐ Park Vehicle
- ☐ Check room layout and set up
- ☐ Check any music and/or presentations are working
- ☐ Make any spiritual preparation (clearing negative energy, blessing the room etc)
- ☐ Prepare yourself (change of clothes, make up etc)

- ☐ Unload Vehicle
- ☐ Move all boxes and materials to the workshop room
- ☐ Make sure you know where the lifts, toilets and fire escapes are located
- ☐ Assist with setting up - make sure you know how to operate the heating/air conditioning, lights, and audio visual equipment
- ☐ Check that any signage provided by the venue is correct.
- ☐ Place pop up banners and signs at the venue entrance and/or along corridors
- ☐ Make yourself known to reception and let them know you are ready for delegates.
- ☐ Check the refreshments times/schedule with venue
- ☐ Have your delegate list and any handouts ready to welcome delegates as they arrive

DURING WORKSHOP SESSIONS

- ☐ Welcome your delegates
- ☐ Check names against delegate list, hand out badges and materials
- ☐ Deal with any seating issues, coats, bags etc
- ☐ Once settled, phone anyone who hasn't arrived yet
- ☐ Begin on time but allow for late arrivals during your introduction and icebreaker activity
- ☐ Be ready to bring in late arrivals and get them seated
- ☐ Begin the main workshop programme
- ☐ Take photos and/or video discretely if required
- ☐ Be on standby to assist with problems (heat, air conditioning, audio visual, noise from outside the room, problem delegates)

BREAKS AND LUNCH

- ☐ Eat/drink FIRST, then make yourself available for private discussion and questions if you wish
- ☐ Check refreshments about 10 minutes before each break
- ☐ Make sure the teacher has his/her refreshments & lunch
- ☐ Be available to help with refreshments and direct people to the toilets
- ☐ Clear up where possible to minimise disruption later
- ☐ If products are being sold during breaks, stand by to take orders
- ☐ Remove any rubbish that has accumulated

AT THE CLOSE

- ☐ Be available to answer questions after the event
- ☐ Be on standby to take orders/bookings
- ☐ Pack away
- ☐ Pack away
- ☐ Final check of room just before leaving - especially...
 - chargers and power cables
 - items left under desks and chairs
 - items left behind by delegates (take them with you or leave at reception)

CLOSING THOUGHTS

Now It's Time To Take Action!

In this blueprint, I've given you a complete system for planning, promoting and managing your own profitable events. But this is not the end. This is 'only the beginning' as they say.

The next step is for you to put this into action.

From my experience working with hundreds of clients over the years, I know that some people are incredibly self-motivated and have the ability to follow a plan and take consistent steps until it's accomplished. If you're one of those people, then congratulations, go ahead and get started! And be sure to keep me posted of your progress and successes.

But the majority of people, in my experience, want and need ongoing support and motivation. In an ideal world, you'd have an ongoing structure that keeps you moving, holds you accountable and sticks with you until you accomplish what you set out to achieve. With that in mind, I have put together a special 12-week programme to smoothe your path to profit. It's a combination of weekly mentoring sessions with me by telephone or Skype, plus support for you in completing each step in the blueprint. Depending on your circumstances I can offer considerably more depth and detail than I've been able to squeeze into this guide.

If you're ready to kick-start your workshop business and guarantee success for your first event, set up an initial 'Discovery Call' with me to see if there's a 'fit'.

I also run a publishing business, Ashton House, and we are always looking for talented teachers, authors and practitioners to work with to create online courses. Ashton House has the skills and resources to bring your knowledge to the world and create a passive income for you for many years to come.

Whatever 'next step' you opt for, don't let these ideas collect dust. Your talents and gifts deserve a wider audience. You've got this far because you were inspired or called to share your knowledge, skills and experience – don't let that go to waste!

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I wish you every success in your new venture and for your future.

Richard Haywood

www.EffortlessMarketing.co.uk