**Worksheet for director of a small architectural practice or sole practitioner**

*If you are running your own practice – you need to be an entrepreneur and take control of your business.*

*To be successful, it helps to have a clear strategy and a written business plan makes decision-making easier.*

*If you are running your own practice, or work in small practice, effective use of your time is critical. You can’t afford to waste time chasing jobs which do not fit with your strategy.*

**Exercise 1 Analysis of existing business: income**

Total fee income in the last 12 months or last tax year £

Has the fee income grown over the past 3 years?

Do you expect the fee income to increase next year?

Why?

*Note*

*If you do not know the answers to these questions, you should!*

*Check the figures – round them up to the nearest round number and memorise them.*

*To have control of your business, you need to be have a feel for the key numbers.*

**Exercise 2 Analysis of existing business: Projects**

My 5 recent and most important projects were

1

2

3

4

5

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Project Name | Industry / Sector | Client Type | Total Fee | Fee per year  (total fee divided by duration) | Fee per year as a % of annual fee income |
| 1 |  |  | £ | £ | % |
| 2 |  |  | £ | £ | % |
| 3 |  |  | £ | £ | % |
| 4 |  |  | £ | £ | % |
| 5 |  |  | £ | £ | % |

*Note*

*Industry / Sector might be private residential, commercial housing, offices, schools, retail, hospitality, hotels, industrial, health, leisure, sport*

*Client type might be private, commercial, developer, contractor, institution, local authority, housing association, charity*

**Exercise 3 Analysis of existing business: Further project analysis and summary**

*Note*

*This business planning process is an opportunity to take stock and see what kind of business you have created. This analysis is like a ‘snap’ shot.*

*Complete the project analysis of your existing business using the following suggested calculations.*

*If you work in a spread sheet format like Excel, draw pie charts and graphs to illustrate your data – graphic diagrams are easier to understand and communicate.*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Business Analysis |  |  |
| Average project duration |  | months |
| Project provenance | 1 Repeat Client  2 Friend / Family  3 Recommendation  4 Website  5 Competition  6 Don't know | %  %  %  %  %  % |
| Client type | 1 Private / domestic  2 Developer  3 Public sector  4 Institutional  5 Contractor  6 | %  %  %  %  %  % |
| Average build cost |  | £ |
| Construction value ranges from | £ | to £ |
| Average fee per project | £ | % |
| High Fees go with  Low fees go with |  | projects  projects |
| Profitable projects  OK projects  unprofitable projects  No fee | %  %  %  % | of total |
| Average size |  | m2 |
| Project size range from | m2 | to m2 |
| Sectors – calculate proportion of fee earned | 1 Residential  2 Education  3 Offices  4 Healthcare  5 Retail  6 Leisure  7  8  9  10 | %  %  %  %  %  %  %  %  %  % |
| RIBA work stages | Feasibility  Scheme Design  Planning  Detail Design  Construction | %  %  %  %  % |
| excellent design  OK design  poor design | %  %  % | Correlate with fee earned, or project type – look for patterns and summarise findings |
| Listed Building | % | of total |
| Conservation Area | % | of total |
| Number of planning applications | % | Correlate with fee earned – and draw any conclusion |
| Planning success | % | of applications |
| Focus / service | Architecture  Interior Design  Master Planning  Planning Permission  Landscape Design | %  %  %  % |
| Total fee income by month | Express as a graph or bar chart | Last 12 months |
| June 201X  July 201X  August 201X  September 201X  October 201X  November 201X  December 201X  January 201X  February 201X  March 201X  April 201X  May 201X | £  £  £  £  £  £  £  £  £  £  £  £ |  |

**Exercise 4 SWOT Analysis**

What are your strengths and weaknesses?

*Organic growth depends on a practice’s resources and capabilities as well as its planning, time and cash. For this reason it is important to assess your core competences and capabilities and identify areas of weakness. SWOT analysis also enables you to focus. For a small practice, specialisation allows time and resources to be used more efficiently.*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Strengths | Opportunities |
|  |  |
| Weaknesses | Threats |
|  |  |

What are the core competences of your practice?

*(Pick out the 3 key skills which your practice depends on)*

1

2

3

What is unique and different about your practice?

**Exercise 5 Competition**

Who are you major competitors?

**Looking at the competition**

* Ask your clients which other architects they considered
* When you have been short-listed for a project, who have been the other architects?
* Look on the internet for other practices operating in your geographic locality
* Check the RIBA on-line directory for other architects working in the same sectors
* Select 10 names and look at their websites - do a quick SWOT analysis
* Review your own practice (and website)

My top 10 competitors are:

Name Sectors Location

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

**Benchmarking**

Who would you like to compete against in the future?

Which architect would you like to be compared to in the future?

Which practice do you admire and would like to emulate?

**Exercise 6 Long term strategy - questionnaire**

**Imagine your practice in 10 years’ time**

1. In 10 years’ time, what will be the name of your practice?
2. Do you imagine taking on a partner?
   * If yes how many?
   * Do you know who they might be?

1. How many people will there be in your practice?
   * Total
   * Architects
   * Students
   * Administrative staff
   * Other
2. How many offices will you have?
3. What will be the average construction cost of your projects? £
4. What will be the average size in sq metres of your projects?
5. What proportion of projects will be new-build?
   * Versus extension or refurbishment?
6. What will be your areas of professional expertise?
   * Architecture
   * Interior Design
   * Master planning
   * Landscape design
   * Extensions
   * Refurbishment and restoration
   * Project Management
   * Contract management
   * Graphic Design
   * Planning Permissions
   * Conservation Area Permission
   * Listed Buildings
   * Historic Buildings
   * Low energy / Eco-homes
   * Sustainable design
   * BREEAM
   * Other
7. Where will be your geographic focus?
   * Local < 1 hour travel
   * Regional <3 hour travel
   * National
   * International
8. Which sectors do you want to be working in?
   * Residential private domestic
   * Residential housing
   * Education
   * Offices
   * Retail
   * Sport
   * Leisure
   * Transport
   * Culture
   * Industrial
   * Other
9. What kind of buildings do you want to be designing?
   * *Use your own words*
10. How would you describe the architectural style of the buildings you will be designing?
    * *Use your own words*
11. What kind of reputation would you like to have?
    * *Use your own words*
12. Which values would be like to be known for?
    * *Use your own words*
13. Where would you like your work to be published?
    * Architectural press
      1. AR
      2. AJ
      3. Dezeen
      4. RIBA Journal
    * Consumer press
    * Broadsheets
    * Evening Standard
    * Elle Decoration
    * Grand Designs Magazine
14. How would you like to be remembered?