

The Music Industry.
“What is the nature of employment in the music industry?”

In my opinion employment is when someone is paid for carrying out a certain task. There are many many types of employment and working patterns some of which are self employment, full time, part-time, sessional, freelance and voluntary. Self employment is where you are employed by yourself and own your own business, full time employment is where you have one particular job and usually work 35 hours or more a week on the other hand part-time employment you do one particular job where you usually work between 1-35 hours a week or below.

One typical example of showing what employment is, is when a buyer wants to purchase 500 CD albums from a record distributor for their shop. However the buyer wants the CD's in their possession within a certain time. The distributor cannot cope with all the stress and doesn't think that they can reach there deadline in time. So as a result of this they advertise for someone to come and help them prepare, press and account for the CD's. The person who enquires about the job after seeing an advertisement in the local paper is then asked to be interviewed and settles a deal or certain salary or price for the work which has to be done and signs a contract. The contract would be agreed by both the distributor and the new employee. The distributor then becomes an employer and the worker becomes an employee. The whole world however evolves around employment; both employees and employers rely on employment to be able to manage a good standard of living especially if family are relying on income because the state benefits are too little for people to live well.

Employers on the other hand however need employees to be able to achieve their aims and objectives also known as targets which there business has been set to make, included in this targets is profit all businesses no matter what they are, are there to make profit in some way, shape or form.

In the music industry there are many types of employment which is needed for the industry to survive some of which are promoters, electricians, engineers, producers, make-up artists, designers, technicians, accountants, finance advisors, stylists, general road crew, roadies, gofers, stage mangers and not forgetting the best until last the performers and managers.

A Promoter to me suggests promotion and advertising, hence anyone calling them selves a promoter organising an event and then not making any attempt to advertise it is not doing a particularly good promotion job. Promoters maybe someone pasting posters everywhere. Good promoters will make mottos and taglines that you're going to read about that particular event in the back of every music magazine going or even see it on the television or poster and or flyers themselves. So basically a promoter organises everything to do with advertising, so they would use designers, photographers, film crews, radio presenters anything that is a form of good promotion and advertising. Everybody in the music industry works together in some way or another because they all have contact with each other.

However all the employment which happens in the music industry has to be considered in the price of the actual venture its self so that wages can be met and bills can be paid not forgetting the performers making a wealthy profit. So personally I think that employment in the music industry is providing a good quality service (which doesn't happen all the time) for money. For employers to get the best out of their workers (employees) and that employees are not getting ripped off or treated badly there is an employment law this involves contracts.

A contract of employment is an agreement that is between the employer and the employee, by having the employer offer the employee work to do a particular job and agrees to work for the employer in return for wages. An employer would however provide a contract to make sure the employee understands what is required of them, if so they would sign the contract. In doing this, the employee agrees only to do the jobs stated in the contract. However there are verbal contracts which are usually done off the minute or an employer is in a hurry for workers. However if you break the rules which are in the contract or you don't do what you said you would do both as an employer and an employee then you are 'In Breach of Contract' which is breaking your contract even though the employee has signed and agreed to the content within the contract. For example, if your employer doesn't pay your wages, or you don't work the agreed hours. If an employee is in breach of contract then your employer should try to settle the matter with you informally. They can sue you for damages and loss in the same way you can sue them, however damages are only awarded for financial loss (for example, if you don't give enough notice of leave, damages might be for the extra cost of hiring temporary staff to do your work, or for lost revenue/profit. You would still have the right to wages you earned before you left, plus pay for untaken holidays). The most common breaches of contract by an employee are when you quit without giving proper notice, or when you go to work for a competitor when your contract doesn't allow it. On the other hand if an employer is in breach of contract you should check the terms of your contract to make sure. If there has, you should try to sort out the problem directly with your employer first of all. An example of common breaches of contracts is when you are asked to do something which is not in your contract and do not receive a bonus or that you are not given holiday pay. So if you can't sort the problem out with your employer, you can decide to take legal action. You should think carefully before taking any legal action against your employer. You should ask yourself what you want to achieve and how much it will cost. If you are a member of a trade union it would be a good idea to get advice from them first. There are also such things as Employment Tribunals they help cases involving employment disputes and issues. They're less formal than courts, but you give evidence on oath, and if you lie you can be accused of perjury. This is why it is so important for both an employee and employer to sign a contract to show they understand what is required of them and that they agree with what they will have to do and will do it. This is my overall view on what I think employment is.

One of the types of employment is being self employed. Self employment is where someone who works for themselves instead of being employed by another person or organisation. Although being self employed means that you are in control of everything

that happens with in your business. Also a self employed person in the United Kingdom is known as a sole trader or the company is known as an incorporated limited liability company. Many people, who form a business, run it only part-time or concurrently while they're in a full time job.

The biggest difference of being employed by someone else and being self employed is money. When you have a job, you know that there will be a regular income and you know how much it will be. As if someone had recently become a self-employed person, they can only hope that there will be something left for you when all the bills and outgoing payments have been paid. When first having set up your own business it is unlikely that the revenue of the business or company will exceed expenses. This is partly because of the setting up costs. For example you may need a computer, a desk and some printed materials or even big equipment i.e. if someone was going to build and run there own recording studio they would need to buy all of the equipment and premises at cost. There will be no actual income until they have had customers and they have decided to pay you, this is why early advertisement and the running of a full time job is usually the way people do things because they are still getting a regular wage to pay bills, so if it goes wrong at the first hurdle they still have a job and regular income. This takes an extraordinary long time. As for most self-employed people, the first six months to a year are financially difficult. Eventually, there business will settle down into a pattern and they will be able to forecast their income and expenditure. This will probably take a year or more to map out this as a cash flow forecast.

Cash flow is usually a major problem. A business may be outstandingly successful but if there customers delay their payments, then they will have less money. Getting clients to pay promptly is a major issue. As a self employed person you can actually end up in debt because lots of people owe you money. As long as their bank is dependable, that's fine except from the interest payments, but the moment they withdraw support, your business could be in trouble. This is why many people who would like to be self-employed simply can't take the risk of loosing any money; the financial uncertainty is something in which they cannot cope with for example if people at home rely on there income because they have children. This is why I think that anyone looking to become self employed and to start a business should do so on a part-time basis while they're actually still employed. Then when the business is settled and getting lots of customers and income they should make the business grow to the point where they can give up their job.

As a self employed person, you don't get paid if you are ill or unable to work also a big downside is that nobody makes a contribution to the person's pension scheme. On the other hand banks are very helpful to those starting their own businesses and a discussion with one or even two is definitely worthwhile. Call in and tell them you are starting up in business. They will discuss your financial situation and how they can help. You would have to give them business plans, estimated cash flow forecasts and day books, all this is so that the bank knows that you are going to be making enough money for you to pay them back. Most banks actually give you free banking facilities for the first year; some even extend it to two. They provide advice on how to plan your business and how to organise your accounts. However on the lines of finance keeping accurate accounts is

vital because it provides evidence which the HM Revenue & Customs will decide how much tax you will have to pay each year. Two advantages of self employment are a decrease in the cost of national insurance and not having to pay income tax until the January following the end of your first year of trading. As a self employed person you have to record your transport, telephone, postage, office supplies, accommodation and other costs meticulously, this is done by keeping receipts, you are actually advised to keep receipts for up to 5 years this is in case you do get investigated. The Inland Revenue provides forms to help a self employed person to complete their tax returns but many self employed people use the services of an accountant who will make sure that their tax payments are minimised.

Keeping accounts also makes self employed people aware of their business costs and helps them to be sure that their costs will cover them and earn them a living. One of the greatest delights of working for yourself is that no one sets your income but yourself so the more you put into a business being self employed the more and better the rewards will be. In a nut shell there are advantages and disadvantages of being self employed. This form of employment is very popular and comes with several legal responsibilities. For example if working from home the clearance is required from the local authority to use part of the home as business premises. Should the business have to hold any records of customers or suppliers in any electronic form it is required to register with the Data Protection Registrar. Other legal responsibilities include statutory public liability insurance cover, modifying premises to be disabled friendly, and the proper recording and accounting of financial transactions if for example in a recording studio the health and safety aspects of the building and how to work safely with in the studio its self.

Another different type of employment is sessional employment. Sessional employment is where you as an employee are employed to work over a prescribed amount of time doing a particular job or performing a job at a fixed amount of time i.e. for an hour a week. This is usually because of the shortage of staff or sickness. Sessional work is where the job is undertaken by an employee and carries out the task regularly i.e. if a sessional musician was to play bass guitar for someone each time the recording studio needs to record Bass. Then this person who is employed by them would be contacted, it could happen once a week, however for a sessional worker to be sessional they have to complete the required task regularly. Most sessional work is usually arranged by word of mouth or via recruiting agencies. So if someone does a particular job they would advertise there services.

Contractual issues regarding sessional work is that if you are no longer needed to do the particular job you was originally hired for you would be laid off. Another thing is that if you have breached your contract or a let down for the company by being late and unreliable, you could be dismissed. Sessional work can actually provide better income because you are not actually guaranteed work it is know that sessional workers get 10% and more, more than full time employed staff because as a sessional worker you are risking not getting any work at all. If you have a family who are expectant of your income but you don't actually earn any money for a couple of weeks could cause trouble or even debt especially if you have a mortgage, this is why from my own personal view

sessional employment is good for young people who are starting out work because you would be growing the number of contacts you know and could however get offered a full time permanent job. It is also a good idea as a sessional worker to make sure you have a back up certain amount of money just in case you do not bring home any money at the end of the working week or month. However an advantage of working seasonally is that if you are coming to the end of your contract the week before or a couple of weeks before you could be on your feet looking for a new employer so there is no delay or loss of income. As a sessional worker however you do not get paid a sick wage, so if you are ill and are unable to carry out the particular job you are employed for you would not be getting paid. Also the employer does not contribute to your pension scheme if you have one. Another disadvantage is that you do not get paid for holidays unlike most full time and part time workers do. Overall I think sessional work is good for the early adult years as it could be quick and easy money for those who are still in education and can build on the number of contacts you have it would also benefit experience of the job undertaken was in the same industry as you would want to work when you were a bit older. So as a sessional worker you have to always be on the look out for regular work to increase the most possible income available to you. Also an advantage of working seasonally is that if you work under 16 hours a week you are liable to claim benefits but you have to be strictly working less than 16 hours, there isn't however a maximum pay limit. Usually sessional work is paid via the bank and isn't usually cash in hand. Another disadvantage in working sessional is that your contract can be cancelled 6 weeks up to your working start date. This could be because you are no longer needed anymore or someone is employed full time to carry out that particular job.

Another type of employment is freelance. Freelance working patterns are very similar to sessional working patterns. Freelance is where you do two, three or maybe more particular jobs. For example a freelance worker could be working in a studio as a producer for a band or a performer then asked to engineer live for them at an event and then could even play for them or manage them. The jobs that a freelance worker can do are endless. Usually however freelance workers make contacts with people very fast because they might be doing something different every single day and working in a different environment. Freelancers are usually paid via cash in hand and back hand work. Bank hand work is where the work doesn't go through the books so both the employer and employee do not have to pay tax on the money in hand. Being a freelance worker is one of the quickest and easiest ways of making money because if someone doesn't want you do one thing then maybe you could do the other task they need doing. However I think that being a freelance could be very stressful because people are relying you to do that certain job you were hired for to the best of your ability and could have to work to deadlines along with your other work that you have on. I think that it could also be stressful because you might be liable in not having any work. That's why you have to find it yourself or spread your communication out and make a lot of contacts so you are well known in the industry for the job that you do. There isn't any security working as freelance because you could have loads of work one day and none the next and the day after, this would mean that you do not have any regular income. If you have a family who are dependent on you income this could cause uncomfortable living circumstances. Working once again as a freelance you do not get holiday pay, sickness pay and nor does

your employer contribute to your pension. Some of the disadvantages I think include are social isolation; you could be working every single day and not having any time to yourself or too spend with your friends or family some people could see this as a good thing. Another is that the irregular work-flow of peaks and troughs can consequent in irregular income so this could mean you overall sometimes maybe working unsociable hours to meet deadlines. Also working dead time in studios which is throughout the night. Working in the music industry is however a very competitive market and requires everything to be done on time to the best it can be, and at a good price. Other disadvantages I think include lack of employment benefits, such as paid holidays or sick pay. Setting boundaries between work and home life it is also a good idea to give yourself a set amount of money just incase you do not have any work on or if you are in doubt of this.

Although I think that the biggest advantage in freelancing is being your own boss, with the freedom to choose your working hours. Other advantages personally I think include a greater variety of work and potentially higher earnings, working from home and not having to travel and having greater control over the work done. So I think that Flexibility is a strong motivating factor for people who both run work and family responsibilities. Also as a freelance worker you are responsible for paying and making contributions to your national insurance. As a freelance worker you do not have a contract as such, you are employed to do that particular job to the best of your ability and if you do not do this are liable to be sacked and will get a bad reputation. I think that being a freelance worker is quite good because you are not only experiencing the working environment of one job you are experiencing maybe two or three, also you would be making a lot of contacts who you may wish to use in the future.

The last type and form of employment is full time employment. Full time employment is where a worker is employed to do the particular job that is in there contract, if however it is not written in there contract they do not have to do it. Although if they choose to do they can demand a pay rise, this isn't a sack able offence because by all means the employee was only employed in the first place to do a particular job and as an employer you cant change there job roles with out compromising and negotiating a deal. Although as a full time worker you work 32 or more hours a week, and being full time means that you have to fully donate to your national insurance.

Many jobs in the music industry can be full time in fact any job in the world can its whether you are committed to do it. Unlike any other employment type you a guaranteed a regular income with bonuses too if you are doing a bonus dependent job. You could also get up to three weeks holiday which paid and is not including British holiday seasons such as Christmas. Also as a full time employee you usually benefit from your employer contributing to your pension scheme for when you retire. An advantage also is that if you are required to work bank holidays you would usually be able to claim time and a half which means that you are liable to get your normal wage and half again. I think a full time worker benefits from everything available because they are receiving a regular guaranteed income and have a secure job unlike any of the other types of employment, so if they have a mortgage to pay they do not have to worry about not receiving any income

Chris McAleese

for a particular month. Also another important advantage of being in full time employment is that you usually receive sick pay. As an employer who employs full time workers they have to make sure that they have enough work for the employee to carry out. If however the employee doesn't want that job anymore by law you have to give four weeks notice so that the employer can recruit more employees.

As whole employers are responsible for keeping the contract up to date, signed and make sure that they are not broken. Some of the responsibilities of an employer are that they have enough work for the employee to carry out and that they have money being able to pay the employee. The responsibilities of the employee however I think personally should make sure that they carry out the job required to the best of there potential, always turn up on time and are not late and as a whole set a good example with in the company this could there for lead into promotion and pay rises.