

SHARPEN UP FOR SOLOISM

It is true that successful soloists share certain traits, and it's possible for you to develop or enhance these skills.

The place to start is to conduct an audit of your current characteristics then consider ways these can be best used to your advantage.

You will need to apply your full powers of concentration to get the most benefit from the following exercise, and for best results, we suggest you write your responses longhand.

So print this out, grab some blank sheets of paper and some time to yourself, and let's go.

Self-awareness

- What qualities do you admire in yourself? And others?
- What irritates you about yourself? And others?
- Describe yourself in three adjectives. Ask three people who are close to you to describe you using the same method. Is there a discrepancy between the descriptions? Why?
- What are your favourite kinds of non-fiction books?
- If you had a free hour to be used constructively every day, how would you spend it?
- What makes you unique? How can you make the most of this uniqueness?
- Imagine you had an opportunity to be heard by a lot of people. What would you say?

Personal development

- List five habits you'd like to change in the next twelve months. How will you change them in the next three months?
- Is there anything that, if you let go of it, would drastically improve your life or work?
- If you need help articulating your goals and ways to achieve them, to whom might you turn? A friend? A relative? A business buddy? A coach?

Professional development

- What aspects of work do you like/dislike? What can be done to improve the latter?
- What might your ideal job look like? Try to be optimistic, yet realistic.
- Are you as involved with your industry/industry of choice as you could be? Try subscribing to a relevant newsletter or journal, or contributing to one you already receive.
- Research whether there are any network groups you could participate in and go along to at least two meetings.

This kind of exercise may feel awkward or uncomfortable at first, particularly if you've not analysed yourself in this way before but please, do it!

It is so worthwhile as being prepared to work on yourself is a prerequisite of solo success.