



NEWSLETTER 1: SARAH BROSCOMBE, April - September 2015



Today, I have been freelance for six months. It feels like a good moment to pause, savour the best bits, look back and look forward.

It's been rather a whirlwind beginning, despite having no work lined up when I went freelance. I thought a restful few months would do me good. Maybe I'll find out later!

I have done a lot of things I'm generally apprehensive about: and the more scary things I do, the less scared I am. This is useful to know.

Sarah Broscombe

THE JUICY BITS

Burma/ Myanmar wins trumps for excitement. The biggest challenge was the unknown-ness. I was running training on how to use Save the Children's Competency Framework. Sounds dry as old sticks, but it truly isn't- it's about bringing quality into HOW jobs are done, not just WHAT gets done.



I've never been to Myanmar before, so I needed to adjust quickly to the place, the climate, the personalities, the pressures... and facilitating sessions barefoot!

I ran sessions with the mainly ex-pat Senior Management Team, the mainly local HR team and the sparky, feisty Programme Quality and Communications team- all strikingly different audiences. Working with Ben the HR Director and Melanie the Learning and Development manager was a highlight. They are both super-efficient, thoughtful, extremely smart, and an advert for why expat development workers can be a real gift. We designed a wide range of customised materials for pitching this to all levels of their 1300 staff. Those materials are now being adapted by the nine South-East Asia partner programmes.

The CTI advanced coaching training has been a big part of the last six months (I complete this weekend). The quality of the courses is superb. I've set up Spirit Level Coaching, and I'm very much enjoying the continuity with my ongoing coaching clients. At the same time, I'm constantly aware of how much more there is to learn. There are no shortcuts to the thousands of hours' experience that make a master coach. I'm looking forward to them.

Retreat guiding continues to be one of my favourite kinds of work- a form of active listening that is gentle, positive and full of trust. But as well as guiding on retreats, I've joined the retreat guides training team at St Beuno's. This is one of the best training centres in Europe, so I'm very fortunate they were recruiting to the team. I worked on a course in July, and my next one will be November.

Public speaking has been a bit of a theme too- Arran's annual Save the Children luncheon in June was a treat (and the ferry still ran, despite the 40mph winds).



But Surreal Award probably goes to being one of the three keynote speakers at Women in Wales, a Cardiff mega-business-lunch-fundraiser in its 25th year.



I did know in advance that I would be sharing the stage with the West End's "most popular ever Phantom", but the long speech from the Paralympic Gold Medallist was a surprise (to the organisers as well as me I suspect...)



NEWSLETTER 1: SARAH BROSCOMBE, April - September 2015



WHAT I'VE LEARNT

1. Take other people's advice- but in a loose grip. Everyone told me it would be quiet at first, so I'd be wisest to accept everything that comes in. That has been my main mistake. I have been too occupied to pause and be intentional about what I want to create in this new stage of my career. I need to start turning down work, and accepting less pro bono.
2. So I haven't advertised yet because I've been too busy. Word of mouth is so powerful, though. All 24 clients I have worked with to date are either people I have worked with before, or they approached me through first-hand recommendations.
3. I thrive on working in different countries. I already knew that, but I'd forgotten the particular flavour of it. How stretching it is, and how unafraid it makes you after you return, for tasks you usually

consider intimidating. It lends perspective, as well as a wonderfully rich colour palette (and some great food, and the occasional nasty ailment!).

NON-VITAL STATISTICS



4. I've always known I'm a completer-finisher. So being freelance fits me well. I love spending my working time on short, finite projects where there is no Malevolently Mushrooming Inbox that never gets emptied. I don't miss that!

FUTURE

Here are some bookings for the coming 6 months:

For October, I've been invited to design the training materials for an Advocacy Learning Path with a large European organisation. It will be fascinating to build training plans to someone else's content, blending materials design with facilitation.

November I'm off to the Philippines to mentor management training for Save the Children there. The local training team sound great, so I suspect I'll mainly be affirming people and having a lovely time at the back instead of the usual podium spot.

In December I'm working on an Ignatian Leadership Programme in Barcelona, with an extremely talented and experienced mixed-nationality team of co-facilitators, and delegates from 22 countries. This might lead on to follow-up work in Vienna, Rome and Bucharest.

In January I'm leading a university retreat for the first time; I've worked on some before, but haven't been in charge of the team, contents- everything.

And the rest of my first year is going to be made up of coaching, guiding on retreats, running Strategic Planning days, public speaking, and finally getting my website and publicity robust in time for year 2. Oh, and Christmas OFF for a change!

www.sarahbroscombe.com