Introduction

The creative economy can often feel like it's moving faster than ever. With the growing strength of AI, the continued reign of video content, and a rise in demand for skills like user interface (UI) and user experience (UX) design and digital marketing, many creatives find themselves wondering what skills, projects, and opportunities to go after next.

In this report, Skillshare analyzes and unveils trends in today's creative ecosystem discovered after interviewing key creative leaders. With today's new and disruptive tools and technologies, evolving career paths and shifts in skill sets, this report reveals how creative professionals are reacting to this year's most pressing industry-related topics.

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Today's Creative Landscape: What's New This Year

With the potential TikTok ban, a boom in new AI tools and platforms, and the continued rise of the freelance economy, the creative industry is changing at lightning speed. Uncover the most critical issues impacting the industry to get ahead of the curve.

Trend #1:

AI is Still a Hot Topic, but Creatives Are Adapting

Last year, AI emerged as an exciting and disruptive tool in the creative world. **Khadija El Sharawy, Graphic Designer and Skillshare teacher,** speaks for many creatives when saying, "We all know AI is currently a turning point in the creative industry and will completely revolutionize the approach to everything we once knew."

The belief that AI will revolutionize today's creative industries is no longer questioned like it was in the earlier days of AI's conception. Instead, creatives are now determining where AI will fit in alongside their creative work and roles.

Understanding the Limitations of AI

While there were initial concerns of an AI takeover in the creative sector, creatives like El Sharawy believe that AI has a spot among human roles. "I believe that creatives can use the power of AI to their advantage combined with the one thing that AI lacks: human touch," she shares.

Dani Zacarias, VP of Community at Skillshare, echoes this sentiment with her belief that human perspectives will continue to remain valuable even in the age of AI. "The truth is most AI tools are capable of putting out, at best, decent work, but they don't tend to produce really great work," she shares. "True creativity still remains out of reach and there will always be a premium on creative expression that contains unique, human perspectives."

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> ...there will always be a premium on creative expression that contains unique, human perspectives.

While AI tools aren't yet able to replicate true human creativity and perspective, some of our creatives noted that AI will affect the value of less nuanced tasks like idea generation, photo editing, and data-driven design.

"The cheapening of work, content, culture, etc., will end up devaluing the effort that most people pour into what they do. The commercial industry won't prioritize high production value if they are getting the same engagement on social media," shares **Paul Trillo, Film and Commercial Director and Skillshare teacher.**

Derrick Gee, DJ, Radio Host, and Content Creator, adds, "There is also an influx of creators and creator tools for affordable prices, therefore growing a following will be easier, but building a fanbase, much more difficult."

Future Opportunities with AI

While AI might replace more basic creative tasks, the future of the creative industry belongs to innovators who can add a human touch to their work and put their own personal twist on more elementary ideas.

Trillo reinforces this view, saying AI will push him to "strive to create even bolder and stranger ideas that we wouldn't have explored before. There is an opportunity to make things more expressive, more personal and more experimental, if we embrace the right aspects of this technology."

Based on this, being able to capitalize on the time-saving aspects of AI is valuable, particularly if the time and energy it saves can be funneled into more experimental forms of creativity.

Trend #2:

Creatives Have a New Relationship With Social Media

Social Media's Shifting Landscape

Since the inception of social media powerhouses like Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, and X, creatives have been investing time in both personal and business accounts. This includes using them for activities like building a fanbase, selling their physical products and services, and growing their personal brand.

Recently, this crucial relationship with social media has been changing due to algorithm changes, new leadership in social media, and the public's attitude toward their experience on certain apps.

With TikTok coming under government scrutiny, creators are also aware of how outside forces can completely disconnect them from their communities and other creators they follow. Other social platforms like Instagram and Pinterest have responded to TikTok's popularity and

possible disappearance by evolving their own algorithms and video offerings.

Impact of Algorithm Changes on Creators

There is a reason to watch this space as creators form an emerging group in the creative sector. In Skillshare's 2024 Customer Survey, over 20% of participants described themselves as creators.

"I think the platforms have different priorities, and they are prioritizing certain creators. I see Instagram building up their creator pool in response to TikTok's troubles in the US — favoring short videos with wide viral appeal," shares **Gee.**

These algorithm shifts may be disproportionately affecting some creative communities more than others. "I'm seeing a trend in illustrators moving away from social media after being shunned by

Instagram for so long," shares **James Hughes, Illustration Agent, Creative Coach, and Skillshare teacher.**

And while the appeal of mass social media seems to be decreasing, this could be encouraging growth in more insulated

communities. For example, platforms such as Patreon and Substack offer a welcome shelter and feeling of control over their audiences by providing creators with a direct connection with their fanbase and a simpler, subscription-based income.

LEARNING PATH

Start from Zero to Build a Winning Email Marketing Strategy

In this Learning Path, experienced marketers will teach you everything you need to build your subscriber list from scratch and manage it efficiently so you can revolutionize your community or business.

View Learning Path

The Contemporary Creative & Their Skills For Success

Both hard and soft skills have their place within the current creative climate. Fostering clear communication will be just as important in advancing a creative career as gaining experience in fields like 3D and video production. By reflecting on the skill sets and tools of today and the future, those in the industry can move more smoothly toward their ideal career path.

Trend #3:

New Tech Brings New Skill Sets

While much has been written about how new technology and AI will take away certain roles, the desire for specific skill sets and the rise of new tools and tech will also create new jobs and a demand for new hard skills, particularly within the tech industry itself.

According to some of our industry experts, the following skills will be particularly valuable:
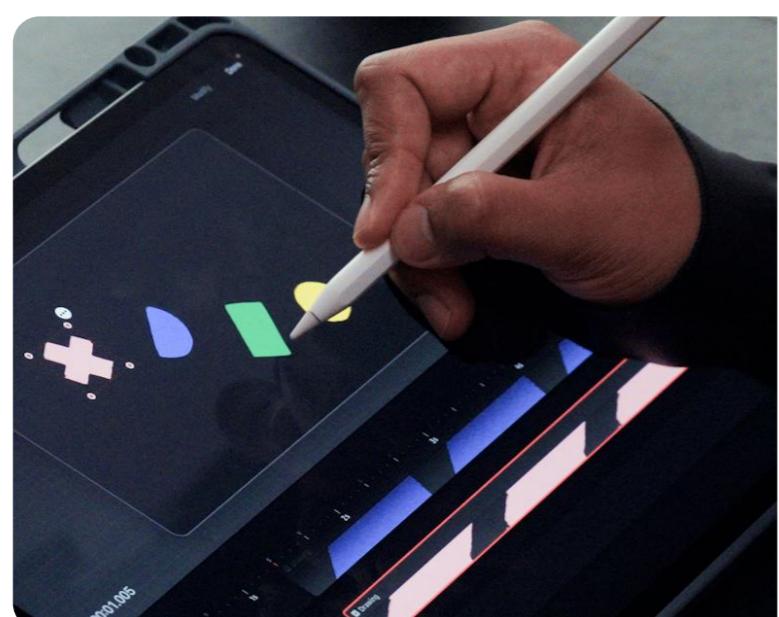
Motion Design, 3D and Animation. With the growing popularity of 3D animation, 3D printing and motion design, having an understanding of these skills can set you apart in the increasingly competitive design industry.
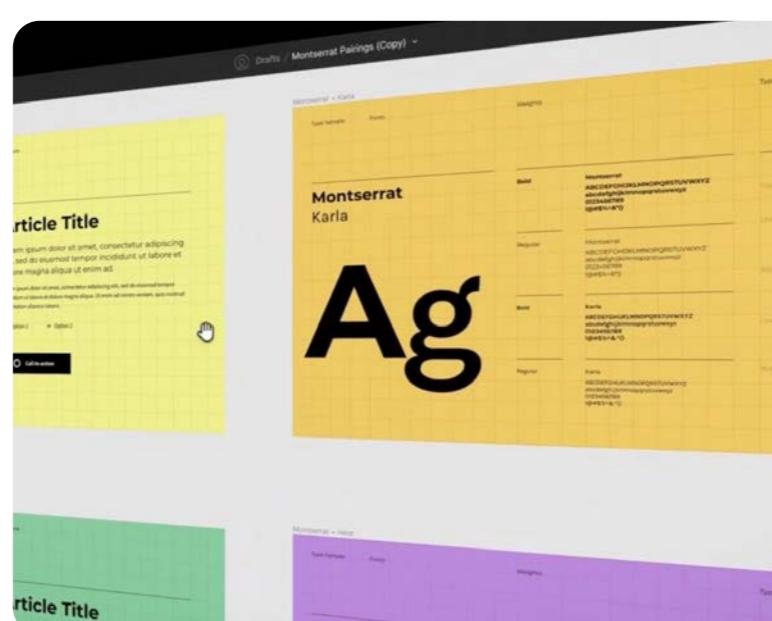
UI and UX Design. While AI is constantly improving its UI and UX abilities, it likely won't be able to fully replace human UX/UI designers in the foreseeable future. Humans are still needed to fully understand user intent and to have empathy toward and a deep understanding of users' needs.

"Motion design, 3D, and UI and UX stand out as evolving professions in the creative industry. Diversifying and combining one of those skills into their current field will most definitely set creatives onto a successful path to ultimately stay relevant and sought-after in today's market," shares **El Sharawy.**

Video. With its ability to communicate stories, create emotional experiences and capture the attention of viewers, video will continue to surpass the power of imagery in advertising, marketing, and content creation.

Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR) Design. As AR and VR technologies continue to grow, so will the demand for AR/VR designers. More emphasis is being placed on immersive experiences, particularly in content.
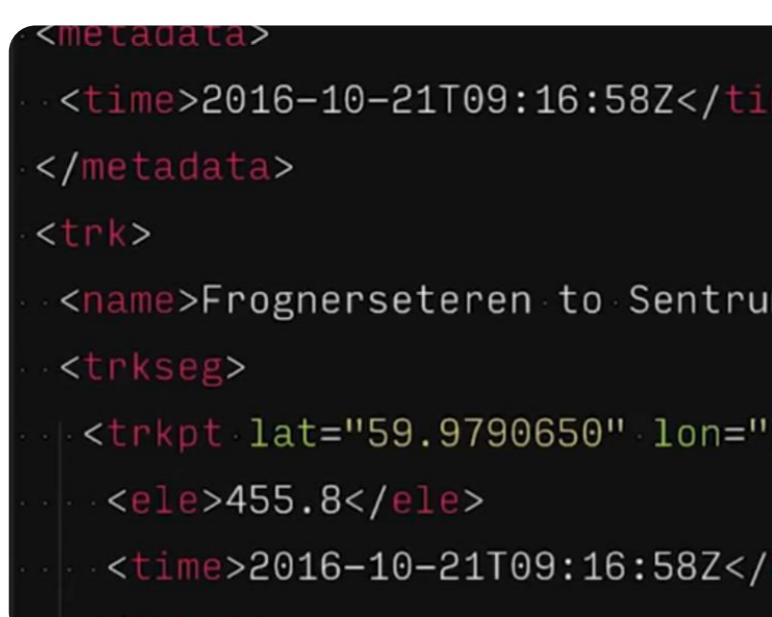
Coding. While certain AI tools can code, having a basic understanding of coding languages can help you better work in tandem with AI technology.

Daniel Liévano, Conceptual Illustrator, Author, and Skillshare teacher, believes that learning "coding, modeling, [and] animating" would have helped transform his career for the better. "If I had learned those from the beginning," he shares, "I would be doing better than I'm doing now, which is also good!"

LEARNING PATH

UI/UX Design: Explore Basic Principles & Tools

In this Learning Path, discover what sensory elements add up to create a user experience, learn basic vocabulary and methods of UX design, and see how UX tools can help build everything from classroom setups to augmented reality games.

View Learning Path

What Tech Tools Are Creatives Using?

With tech on our minds, we asked some of our creative experts to share their go-to tools and creative resources. Here's what they had to say:

Aaron Draplin

Graphic Designer, Founder of DDC, & Skillshare Teacher

"There's an app called 'Better Rename 11' that helps me keep my file name tight and right! I use that little app every day, from cleaning up file names to setting up folders for new projects."

Paul Trillo

Film/Commercial Director & Skillshare Teacher

"The tools I'm using the most are Stable Diffusion, Sora, and Photoshop Gen-Fill. Stable Diffusion running in either Automatic1111 or ComfyUI. Because of the open source community, this has made Stable Diffusion the most controllable AI image model that also does animation and VFX. The customization of it lends itself to more professional workflows."

Khadija El Sharawy

Graphic Designer & Skillshare Top Teacher

"Procreate, besides using the app for illustration work, is actually a key tool for my brainstorming process. I'm a very visual person when I first approach my projects. I like to draw mind maps, doodle, write in different corners of the page and visualize ideas as I am thinking of them out loud."

Hannah E. Taylor

*Partner at Frankfurt
Kurnit Klein & Selz*

"For me, it is LinkedIn. I use LinkedIn to stay abreast of new developments, to identify talent, to hear the takes of various thought leaders, to market myself and my firm. It is a truly invaluable professional tool for me."

Derrick Gee

*DJ, Radio Host,
& Content Creator*

"Autopod changed my life. An automatic podcast editor that can switch between three cameras and do an hour episode in a minute. Gamechanger."

James Hughes

*Illustration Agent,
Creative Coach,
& Skillshare Teacher*

"I've used Pomodoro timers of all kinds: physical timers and apps. I've found The Pomodoro Method to be incredibly valuable in actually getting work done in a sustainable way. I think I'll use this method for the rest of my life."

Jorge Gutierrez

*Emmy & Annie Award-
Winning Director,
& Animator*

"I live and die by using Google Calendar, Slack, Syncsketch, Photoshop, Animate and Final Draft."

LEARNING PATH

Procreate for Professionals: Workflow and File Prep

This Learning Path will teach you all you need to know about keeping your creation and file saving process in Procreate as efficient and organized as possible.

View Learning Path

Trend #4:
Soft Skills Remain Essential

While there is currently a huge boost in hard tech skills such as VR design, and 3D animation, many of today's key creative leaders still emphasize the importance of a core soft skill set.

Most creatives deemed **communication** and **storytelling** as two of the most important soft skills.

"Without communication, your work has no story and no purpose," shares **El Sharawy,** a graphic designer and Skillshare teacher. "An artist may not necessarily need a purpose, but when you are designing for a need or for a function, you need to be able to tell that story and communicate it in a way that serves that purpose."

Zacarias suggests creatives weave storytelling into their work by wrapping "an idea in the context of a compelling narrative." She believes that "it will be much easier for people to recall it, to understand it and to be excited by it than they would be without that context."

Storytelling has a place in all forms of communication, whether it be a social media caption, a weekly newsletter, or a 3D animated short.

Emma Brooks, VP of Marketing at Skillshare, also supports the importance of storytelling. "The ability to tell a compelling story is a superpower in influencing decisions around you, in bringing teams and companies along a shared journey, and in communicating your vision for what needs to be true," she says.

Communication and storytelling don't only exist in the context of marketing, advertising, or production work, either. **Aaron Draplin, Designer, Founder of DDC, and Skillshare teacher,** believes strong communication plays a role in all aspects of your workflow. "The same good craft [should be] exhibited in email, how you bill, how you say "Thanks!" and how you wrap up the project."

With the creative climate changing at a rapid speed, adaptability and flexibility are also key soft skills called out by our experts.

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> ## Most creatives deemed communication and storytelling as two of the most important soft skills.

"The most important skill for any creative to develop is the ability to learn new things quickly," shares **Hughes.**

"Techniques, technology and applications for illustration and animation are changing so quickly, and they'll continue to change. If you want to have a long creative career, learning how to apply all this new tech to your practice quickly will give you a serious competitive advantage."

Adaptability goes hand in hand with not staying stuck in one place for too long. "The creative industry will change dramatically over the next ten years, so getting tied to one outcome for your creative skills is risky," Hughes adds.

In addition to aligning your offerings and skills with the current creative ecosystem, industry professionals also regard skills like **collaboration, curiosity, listening to your intuition, and self-awareness** as very important.

Building A Career In The Creative Economy

While honing key hard and soft skills can play a big role in a creative's career, knowing how to apply one's expertise to the current economy and job market is what will set employees and freelancers apart from the masses. By understanding the growing varied career paths, multi-role jobs, and the importance of personal branding and authenticity, creatives can learn how to best advance both through self-employment and regular employment.

Trend #5:

Creatives Are Going Solo (& Multi-Hyphenate)

It is projected that by 2027, there will be 86.5 million freelancers in the United States who will make up **50.9 percent of the total U.S. workforce.**

Freelancing has ignited a revolution in the way certain creatives work with its increased freedom and flexibility, income potential, and career control.

50.9% freelancers

Percentage of freelancers in the US by 2027

With this boosted desire for flexibility and adaptability in the current workforce, it will come as no surprise that both freelancers and full-time employees alike are exploring multi-hyphenate careers and opportunities.

Kiron Heriot-Darragh, Apple's Head of Special Projects, shares that "multi-hyphenate creatives with suites of new tools and capabilities at their disposal, essentially operating as single-person publishing entities," are currently making the most waves in her field.

Draplin added that he admires "artists who can do MULTIPLE disciplines. Spread themselves thin, in a good way. Know a little bit about MANY things, and be able to attack each one accordingly, and ramp up when needed in a specific area."

Trend #6:

Personal Branding Matters More Than Ever

With more creators and freelancers than ever, it is becoming increasingly important to separate oneself from the competition through personal branding. Not only does creating a brand help secure clients and get your name out there, but it also differentiates your work from AI-generated content.

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> Creating brands that have real purpose, emotions and stories behind them beyond the products they offer will always strike trust and relatability with their consumers.

"Authentic, emotional and purpose-driven branding remains one of the growing trends that will always stand the test of time," shares **El Sharawy,** who is known for her dynamic storytelling for global brands like Coca-Cola.

"In a world filled with so much noise, consumers, especially the younger generation, are wildly progressive and do not want to be 'sold' products or services. Creating brands that have real purpose,

emotions, and stories behind them beyond the products they offer will always strike trust and relatability with their consumers."

While building a personal brand might feel like a complex task, **Gee,** who connects with nearly a million fans across various channels, finds that "creators who have successful personal brands have little distinction between their online and offline persona. If people feel that you are real

and genuine, then there's more reason to trust and advocate for you. So the most effective strategy is to be yourself and take people along for the ride."

Instead of building a new character to share online, creators might find more success by translating their analog hobbies, interests, and personalities into the digital world.

El Sharawy built her personal brand by becoming more self-aware and asking herself which projects and clients she was most attracted to. "As I continuously started to build a client base and observe

the type of work I'm selectively drawn to, I started to understand who I am as a designer, my values and my strengths," she shared.

Alicia Morales, SVP of Content, Community & Marketing at Skillshare, echoes the importance of audience-centric storytelling in personal branding. "Many creatives want to focus on making the art, not selling it or themselves, but I can't stress how important it is to not only craft the story behind your idea or work, but to do so in a way that connects with your audience or perhaps buyer."


LEARNING PATH

Create & Promote Your Personal Brand With Zero Experience

This Learning Path will give you all the insights and techniques you need to identify your niche, find your audience, and tell your story through written, visual, and video assets on today's biggest platforms. No experience needed!

View Learning Path

Trend #7:

Digital Authenticity Earns Clients
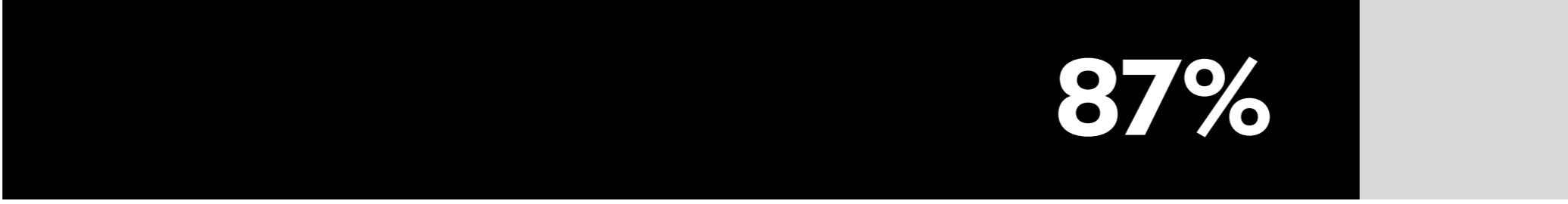
87%

Business leaders who believe consumers highly trust their company
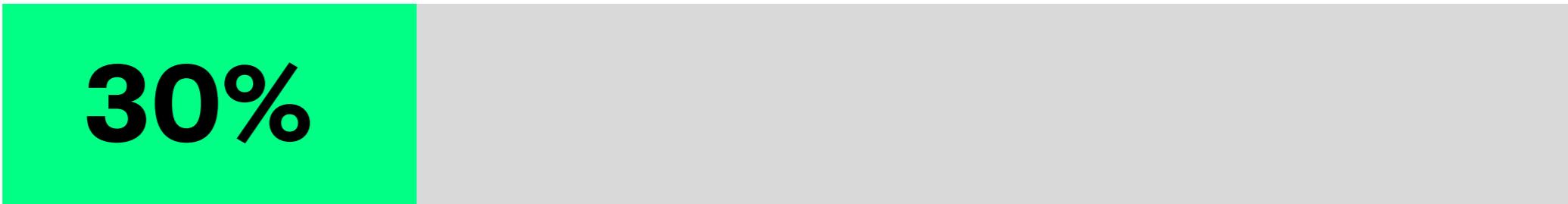
30%

Consumers who highly trust companies

Having a strong personal brand goes hand in hand with digital authenticity. Only 30% of today's consumers have a high level of trust in businesses. Contributing factors like lack of transparency, businesses placing profit over people, data privacy concerns, and constant advertising make consumers less sure of which businesses and creators they can trust.

Today, building an authentic and trustworthy personal brand as a solopreneur or freelancer can be a driving force of success, especially when it comes to earning clients.

"From my personal experience, most of my 'high-profile' clients came purely from referrals. The power of word-of-mouth is real and can completely catapult one's career," says **El Sharawy.**

"I personally know many freelancers who got hired straight from their DMs because of the work they showcased on their platform. Though it's important to note that it's hard to stand out on social media with how saturated it is right now."

How to Show Digital Authenticity & Earn Clients

Freelance creatives can build a client base by reinforcing their authenticity and trustworthiness through the following actions:
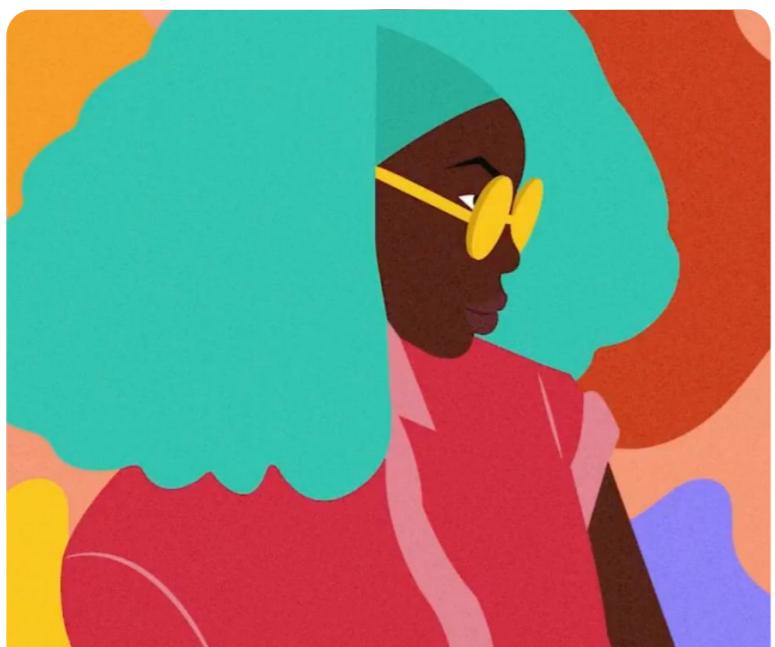
Go for Quality Over Quantity in Your Portfolio

A high-quality, compelling portfolio helps give potential clients an idea of what it would be like to work with you. "A strong portfolio doesn't necessarily even need client projects at first; this can consist of passion or conceptual projects which can sometimes land you awards or recognitions on showcasing platforms," shares El Sharawy.

Experiment and Find the Strategies That Work Best for You

Gee's top piece of advice is to "try to imagine how things are changing and go for the opportunities that show the most exciting paths for growth."

Diversify Your Digital Presence Through Different Tools and Platforms

While every industry has different required skill sets and tools, **Jayshree Mahtani, General Counsel & SVP, Operations at Skillshare,** believes that while "trends come and go, clients' preferences change, and new tools and techniques are always emerging, the ability to adapt and to take on challenges allows you to learn and grow."

Actively Engage in Your Clients' Communities

By actively engaging in online communities, discussion boards and forums and keeping up to date on pertinent publications, you can stay relevant, discover new trends and even land a new opportunity. "This strategy will not provide the most consistent and stable client base, but every once in a while, it might position a freelancer to land a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity," shares El Sharawy.

Define Your Niche

If your offering works okay for everyone, it means it works perfectly for no one. El Sharawy says it's important "to define what kind of clients you want to work with, who you want to attract, and how you want to position yourself in the market."
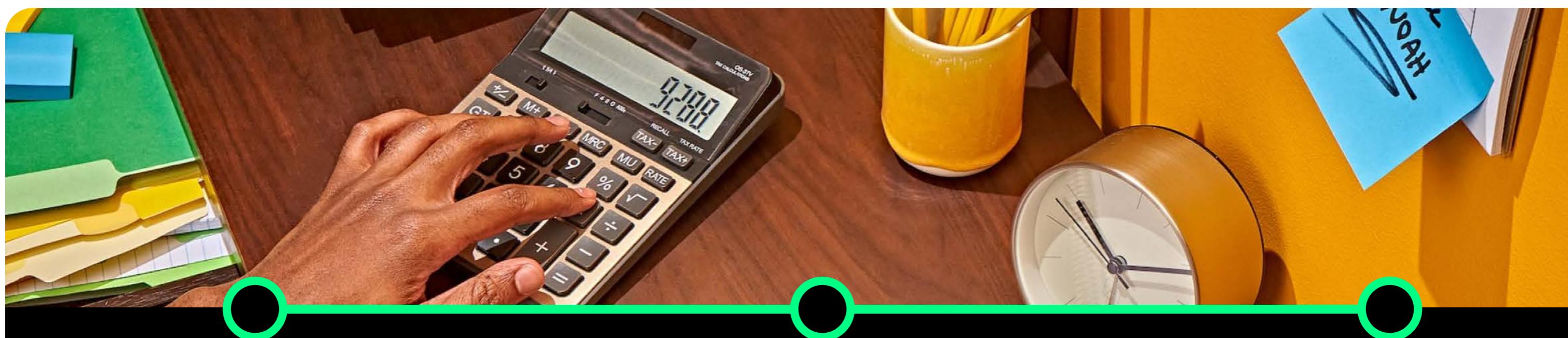
LEARNING PATH

Pricing & Negotiation for Creative Freelancers

In this Learning Path, seasoned creative professionals give you their practical guidance for navigating client contracts, pricing, email etiquette, and even taxes.

View Learning Path

Trend #8:

Creative Careers Are Defying Traditional Paths

Not every creative is the right fit for an entrepreneurial or freelance career, but this doesn't mean that more traditional, in-house or agency career jobs are excluded from the trending multi-hyphenated approach. Many of the leaders in creative agencies and companies have seen a move away from traditional career paths.

"The linear career format feels really out-of-date, which is exciting for self-starter creatives. The proliferation of tools, platforms, and online education gives talent more opportunities to grow their skills and audiences, build career portfolios, and push into new and dynamic spaces," says **Heriot-Darragh.**

This accessibility to educational opportunities, powerful digital tools and community-building platforms means employees can build new skills and opportunities both inside and outside of the office.

And while sometimes having a world of opportunities means getting stuck in analysis paralysis or choice overload, Heriot-Darragh suggests **visualizing your ideal career as "world-building."**

She pushes other creatives to ask themselves questions like, "What environments are you most creative in? What related skills would be exciting to learn? Think about your core mission, where you want to physically spend your time, peers, mentors, and other casts of characters — and start building it out. Once you have the blueprint, you'll have the freedom to pivot and try tangential things within that world, knowing it's all going to enrich you in the end."

Finding Success in a Non-Linear Career

When career paths no longer move from A to B to C, it can be more difficult to plan your next move. With many of the interviewed industry experts having taken unique career paths of their own, they had a few valuable pieces of advice for other creatives navigating a non-linear career.

Embrace Continuous Learning

Jorge Gutierrez, Emmy & Annie Award-winning Director and Animator, believes that maintaining a student mindset can keep you adaptable and prepared for changes in the industry. "Keeping an eye on trends, both technical and in approach, is key. As an artist, I can't imagine ever stopping being a student," shares Gutierrez.

In-person networking can also be immensely beneficial and educational. **Brooks** says "I believe in constantly meeting and connecting with peers and mentors. There's so much immeasurable value in sitting down over a coffee to exchange experiences and ideas."

Cultivate Discipline and Organization

Kerry McKibbin, President of Mischief at No Fixed Address, finds that the most successful creative organizations are those that manage chaos with structure and organization. Implementing rigorous planning and execution in all projects ensures creativity translates into tangible outcomes.

"Creative businesses can sometimes be chaotic, but the ones that succeed — Apple, Disney, Nintendo — are often actually the ones that are the most well-run, the most organized," Kerry says. "There has to be rigor behind creativity in order to be in the business of creativity — or else you just have, well, art."

Stay Curious and Informed

Develop a habit of constantly consuming relevant information about your industry. This curiosity will help you quickly adapt to new tools and platforms, making you invaluable in any creative setting.

"I read prolifically about my industry, I follow hundreds of thought leaders and artists, I comb through comments on social posts or in Reddit threads, and subscribe to dozens of newsletters," shares **Morales,** whose career has evolved from TV journalism to company leadership in the creative sector.

"Complete immersion allows me to see trends or opportunities that aren't super obvious."

McKibbin also places an emphasis on staying up to date on what's going on within her industry. "I would say become a scholar of emerging platforms and what's happening in social media and you'll inevitably make yourself valuable to employers and/or prospective employers," she says. "Knowledge of emergent media, tools, or trends is currency that buys you a seat at the table."

Prioritize Work Over Ego

Focus on the quality and impact of your work rather than personal recognition. By prioritizing the work itself, advancement and success will naturally follow. "I think you always have to put yourself first — you are the best protector of your career, your advancement, your opportunities," shares McKibbin. "But I think a big mistake many creatives make is confusing this self-prioritization with ego. The work needs to come first — not the "self" — and then the advancement and everything else will follow. Be in service of what is right, not who is right."
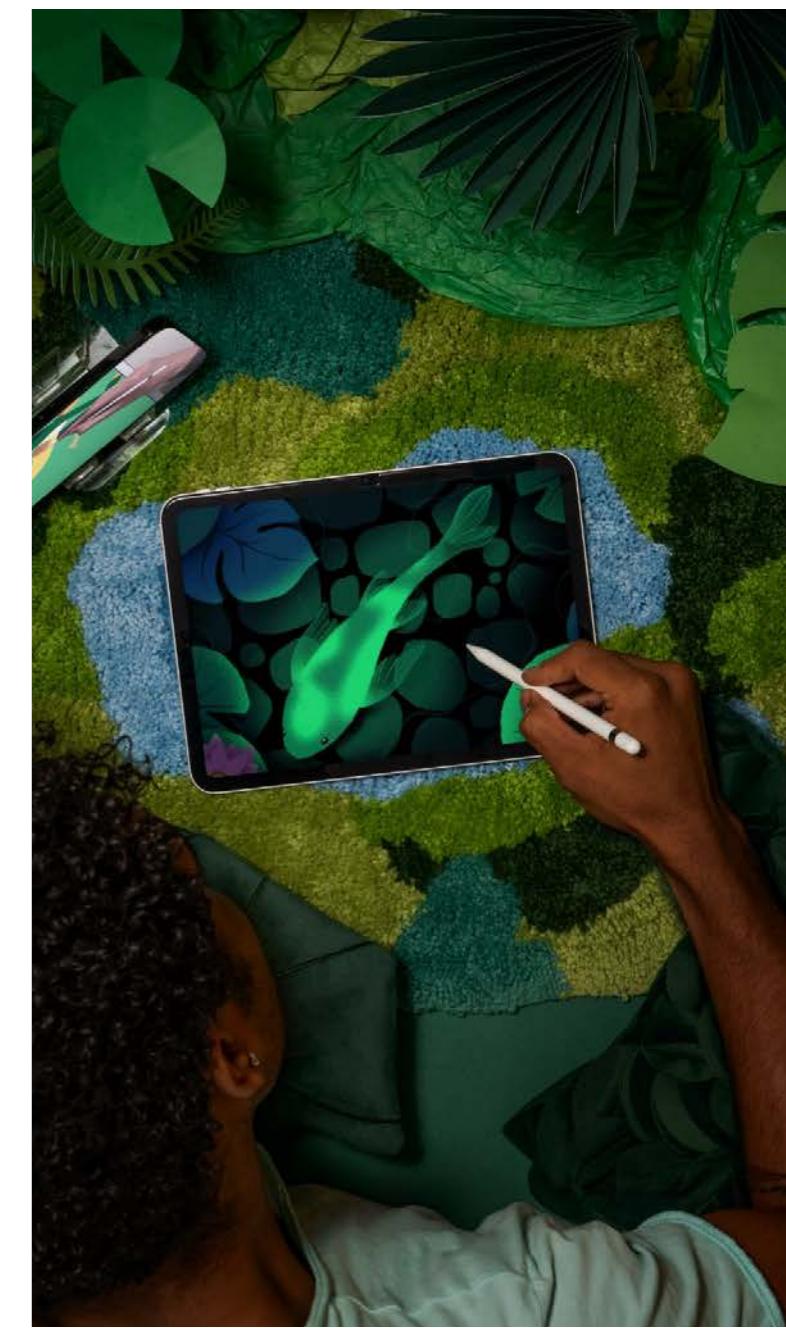
Engage in Smart Self-Promotion

Don't shy away from discussing your achievements. Articulate your successes confidently in order to illustrate your capabilities and the unique value you bring.

While you shouldn't let your ego get in the way of your work, McKibbin believes that those interviewing for a new position should "First, prepare well. For example, do your homework on the company, who you're interviewing with, and the company's competitors... Second, bring your best and realest self... Lastly, don't be afraid to brag a bit! You definitely don't want to think of an interview as a hard sell (gross), but do think of it as a moment to speak proudly about your achievements."

Trend #9:

Resilience is Redefining Success for Creatives

Since creatives so often work in fields they enjoy, work can spill over into what is supposed to be downtime. Because of this blurred work-life balance, creatives need to take care of themselves and constantly assess where they are in relation to their comfort zone.

Creative careers also tend to involve a lot of critique, self-discipline, pressure, and other challenges, which means resilience and self-care strategies are crucial for creative success.

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> *Take your time!*
> *Your career is long,*
> *and it will be winding.*

"One of the biggest challenges I faced was how to manage self-discipline with the flexibility that comes with the job," shares **El Sharawy,** who flexibly manages her time as an independent graphic designer while also teaching on Skillshare. "Detaching from your typical 9-to-5 can feel liberating at first but it can also result in a pitfall of one of two things: either working endlessly with a side dish of burnout — OR, procrastinating and not having a system resulting in tight deadlines and all-nighters."

El Sharawy found the right workflow and schedule for her by first understanding her lifestyle and then creating a system with blocks of time for work and personal projects based on when she is most productive for specific tasks.

Brooks found that taking the pressure off finding the "perfect job right now" helped her stay resilient to any career changes. "I always say: Take your time! Your career is long, and it will be winding," she shares.

"Every role you take will be input and learning to help you figure out your path and what makes you feel excited and challenged — and sometimes that right "job" is taking time off to explore the world, try out passion projects, and do something new. You may end up somewhere completely unexpected."

For **Deanna Marsigliese, Art Director at Pixar Animation Studios,** finding success is just about having "a strong eye and an even stronger sense of self."
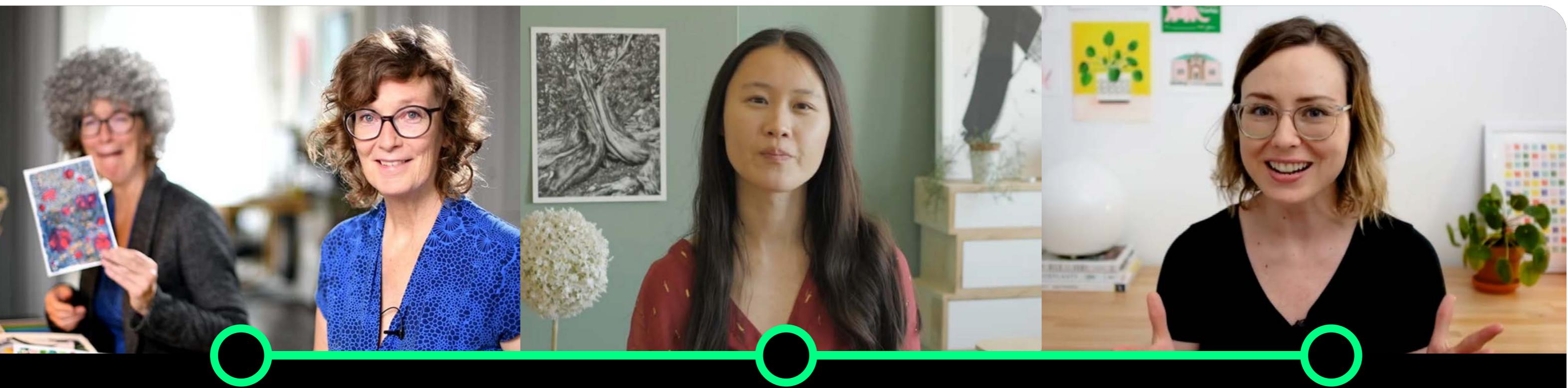
LEARNING PATH

Creative Productivity: Kickstart & Sustain Any Project

In this Learning Path, you can practice exercises to overcome creative anxiety, spark original new ideas, and start taking consistent, efficient action on your personal or professional projects.

View Learning Path

Key Takeaways From Trendshare 2024

When creatives move through their line of work with current trends in mind, they can help future-proof their career and be better prepared for new roles and opportunities. Ongoing education through reading pertinent publications, taking classes with industry experts and joining online communities can also help creatives stay relevant, valued and sought-after in competitive fields.

After interviewing key creative leaders, Skillshare found these key trends and pieces of advice:

1 AI is still a hot topic but creatives are now focused more on how AI can be used alongside their current projects and roles rather than what jobs it will replace.

2 Social media platforms are less stable and more competitive than in recent years. Creators are now exploring smaller, niche communities to establish a direct relationship with their fanbase and earn a more regular income.

3 New technology in fields like 3D design and AR/VR design are creating demand for new skill sets among creatives.

4 Soft skills like communication, storytelling, adaptability, and storytelling remain crucial for creative success.

5 Freelancing and multi-hyphenate careers that offer more flexibility and creative freedom and control are on the rise.

6 Personal branding and authenticity are key when looking to stand out from a crowded marketplace, on social media, or as a full-time employee.

7 Staying up to date with new trends, taking advantage of online courses, and networking with other successful industry professionals can help prepare creatives to stay on the forefront of the industry's rapid evolution.

8 Creative careers are becoming less linear and require the ability to adapt to a rapidly changing creative climate.

9 Resilience, self-care, and work-life balance remain essential for creatives taking a less conventional career path.

Our Experts' Advice for the New Generation of Creatives

After interviewing top creative leaders, Skillshare asked for any advice they might have for the new generation of creatives or any advice they wished they had been given earlier on in their careers.

Embrace Opportunity and Boldness

Alicia Morales: "The CEO of my former TV production company once said: 'If you see a space, occupy it.' It's not the most profound piece of advice, but it does two things: It cuts through the inertia that stops ideas or solutions from becoming reality, and it tempers those feelings of inadequacy so often felt by people from underrepresented groups."

Persist Despite Resistance

James Hughes: "You'll probably annoy some people when you start doing what's best for you. Do it anyway."

Hannah E. Taylor: "Have a robust capacity for failure and rejection. Those who really succeed are those who are willing to take risks and be resilient when opportunities don't go as planned."

Jorge Gutierrez: "All your heroes started exactly where you started so let's get to work!"

Find and Use Your Voice

Paul Trillo: "Find your voice."

Derrick Gee: "Don't ask, don't get."

Use Feedback as a Space for Professional Growth

Dani Zacarias: "Take feedback seriously, but not personally. The idea is that when I was starting out in my career as a young mixed-race woman from a non-affluent background, I got a lot of feedback about how I talked, how I presented my ideas, how I dressed, how I expressed my emotions and how I led… But that advice — to take things seriously but not personally — helped me reframe the feedback. There is always a reason why feedback is given and sometimes it means you should take that feedback to heart and change; other times, it means you should ignore it with conviction and continue to do what you were doing. The key is to understand the context behind why it was given, take a moment to distance yourself from your own emotional reaction and then evaluate it."

Keep Pushing Your Creative Boundaries

Khadija El Sharawy: "Your best project is your next one. Over the course of my career, when I look back at some of my favorite projects, I remember at that point in time I felt that I had done my best and that it would be hard to create something of that value again. However, I realized that when I put my best effort and intention into a current project, that already sets me up to raise the bar for the next one."

Embrace Simplicity

Aaron Draplin: "That bigger isn't better. We're trained to climb ladders, always pushing to get to the next big thing… when frankly… we maybe need to stand back and say, "I'm just fine where I am." And dig into that. And the extra time you get not reaching for rainbows, well, use that to do fun stuff. I'm still learning things. Small is just fine with me!"

Nurture Your Passion for Your Craft

Deanne Marsigliese: "Most importantly, never lose your love of the craft. Creative industries will ebb and flow, but your passion for the work will always see you through."

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