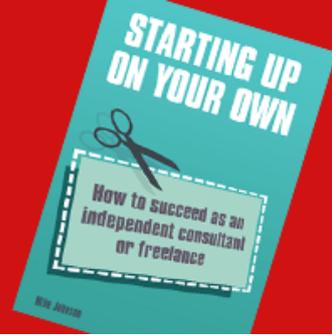


STARTING UP ON YOUR OWN

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FT Prentice Hall
FINANCIAL TIMES



Module 54: Office Supplies

What I want to talk to you about now is office supplies. Now don't laugh, it's not funny. It's a very serious subject. It might not sound like much, but most Independents make the biggest mistake right at the very beginning, by going out and buying lots and lots of stuff that they just absolutely do not need.

Remember when you were employed, when you had a salaried job? There was a big cupboard in the corridor, which was always full of stuff, exciting stuff and you had no idea how it got there. The pens and pencils, inks and cartridges, and all sorts of stuff and you didn't know who put it there. Perhaps little elves came along at midnight and filled it up magically.

But the thing is, now you're an Independent, you've got your bookcases, your cupboards, your desk, your computer and you want to fill all that stuff up. So you go down to the office supply place, and boy, most people, when they go there, they lose their minds. They go crazy. Because they buy all this stuff that they don't really need. They open those cupboards two years later and they are still full of pink paperclips that were on offer that day.

So what I'm going to do is save you a lot of money. Very simple things to do.

First, make a list. Only buy what you need. Stick to that central aisle in that place, go down and pick the things that you really need, and get out.

Second, take with you a mean spirited friend. The meanest person you know. Someone who will say "Don't buy that." and will keep you going right through until you hit that cash desk and out in the car park. Then you're safe.

Third, if you don't want to go and do that, I'll tell you a simple way to do this. Switch on your computer, go on the internet, and go on Ebay. Going on Ebay you will find everything from the office supply place, except it will be an awful lot cheaper.

Remember, make a list, take a friend, and if all else fails, go on Ebay and buy it cheaper.

Remember where you heard it first.