

Tim sander

"It is motivating to work in a way that produces concrete outcomes like a book, video, podcast etc. and where you can see your months of work "materialized."

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

With a background in history and politics from Berlin and Cologne, Tim used his expertise as an event manager, PR manager, and later in a history agency. It was at this history agency that he met his future business partner.

Through research in archives and many interviews, they have realised extensive and, in some cases, multi-part projects for about 15 companies. These results reflect the diversity of their work. In addition to numerous book manuscripts and brochures on the respective company history, a podcast for the German Bar Association, an image film for BDO Germany and an exhibition concept for Lemförder have also been produced.

Conducting Research outside the realm of Academia

How does one overcome job dissatisfaction and lack of freedom? Get creative and create your own job opportunity. Using their experience working together in a history company along with the complimentary skills and personalities, Tim Sander and his business partner set out to conduct research outside the realm of academia. Together they founded timefab, a history agency that mainly collaborates with companies for their anniversaries

In the founding phase of timefab the team also applied for funding from a local business accelerator. To do so, they had to develop a business plan and provide other detailed documents, which was a lot of work. But in the end, they were not eligible because they didn't plan to have employees right away. At first, this misunderstanding was frustrating but in the end, they profited from being forced to think about details like a 5-year-plan and their USP.

The story of Tim and Timefab demonstrates an alternative route to conducting research than within a formal institution setting. Added to the unhappiness with their previous job situation, their motivations behind the establishment of Timefab was based upon the notion that job market opportunities for historians besides academia or teaching in a school isn't that big, so if you want to work in the field of history but outside of academia you must become creative.

Important to note, is that neither Tim nor his business partner have ever worked at a University and never aspired to a career within academia. This is due to the perceived difficult conditions and the manner in which one works (being dependent on third party funding for projects, short-term contracts, unbalanced work-life ratio, etc).

KEY TAKEAWAYS

& ADVICE

Ask yourself honestly what your strengths and weaknesses are and if they are a good fit to become a founder (stress resilience, not taking every criticism by customers too personally...).

Learn to become creative in your career approach, noting that if there's opportunities lacking, you can create your own.

Unforeseen requirements can prove to be beneficial, as it requires you to think outside of your own train of thought of factors that will improve the process.

"Many students start studying with the idea to become an academic researcher and don't consider other careers outside of academia. But not every history student can become a professor for history, so it is important to also learn about other possible career paths."