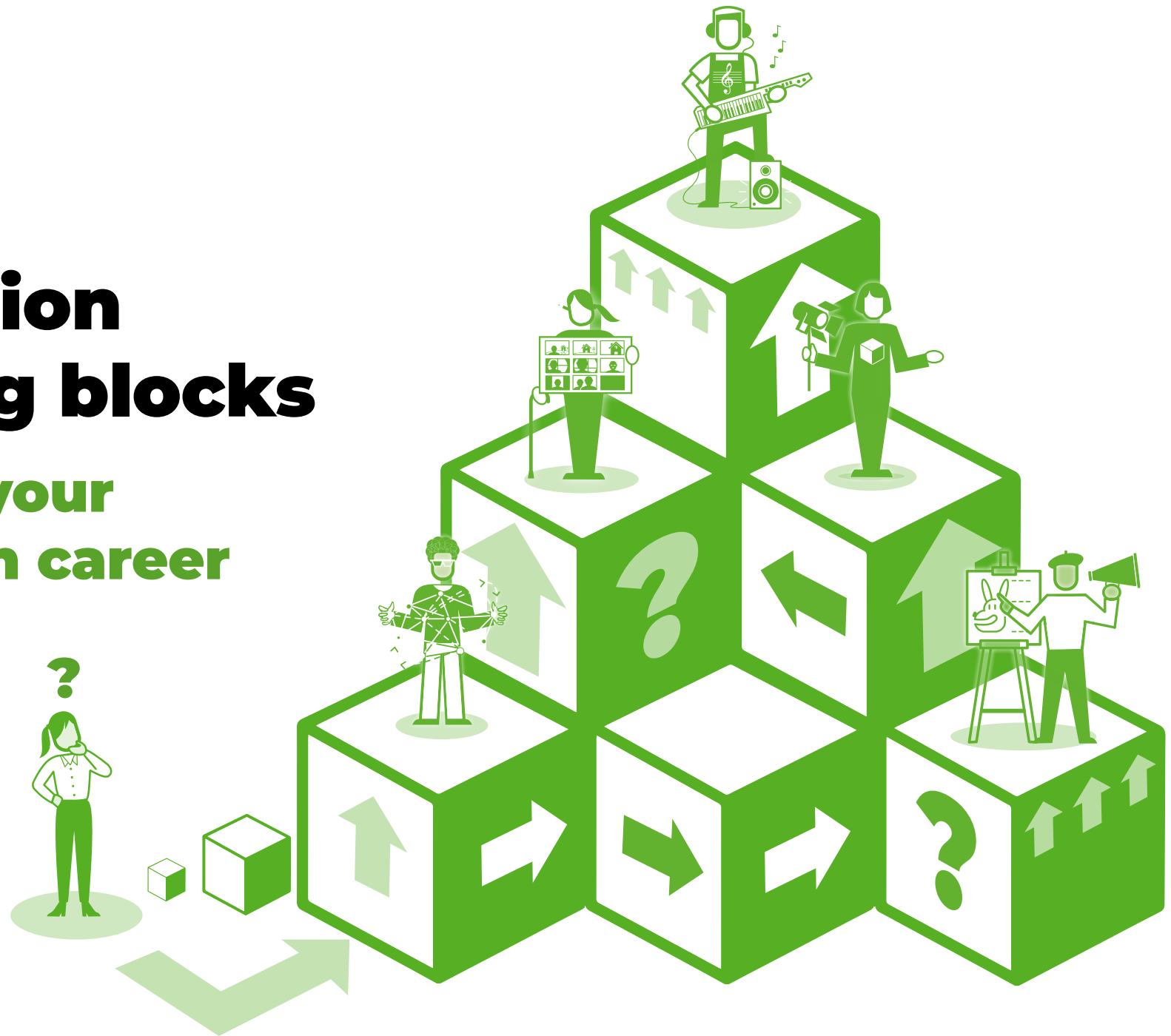
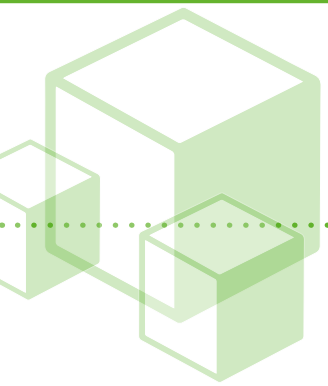





Animation building blocks

Starting your
animation career





Starting **your** animation career

	Audit yourself	Build market knowledge	Analyse skills gaps	Plan for the future
Plan 	What do I want to do? What type of business, and job aligns with my career plans?	Research. Study the types of business, production, and content you love. Why would they hire you?	Do I have the skills and expertise required to work with them?	How will I develop the skills required and demonstrate my ability?
Apply 	Does my CV, my online profile, and my reel/portfolio really demonstrate what I can do?	What are the key elements of the job, the company, the production - and why?	Am I in possession of all these skills, how do I show them off at interview?	Am I ready to apply right now and confidently get a job offer?
Work 	Understand your contract, do a SWOT on your first three months performance	Ask for feedback, be assertive - are you fulfilling your quota?	What do I need to do to pass probation, or gain recognition - what am I doing well? What is challenging?	Create a professional development plan . (Download ScreenSkills template at the link.) How will you continue to improve?

Plan **your** career

Career plan

Visualise your future professional self

- Career objectives
- Personal mission
- Capability
- Accountability

Assess your current experience, skills, and USP

- Skills gap analysis
- Career anchors
- Unique sales proposition
- Attitude

Focus on your values and passions

- Elevator pitch
- Passions
- Personal values

Analyse your ideal employer, from their mission statement to their creative content

- Quota
- Progression
- Contract terms
- Content creation

Determine a SMART goal and the benchmarks to measure your success

- Schedule plan
- SMART goal
- Set benchmarks

Review who you are right now

- Role models
- Showreel
- CV
- Social media presence

Understanding who you are as a professional, and who you want to be, is the foundation of setting clear career goals. Giving yourself an honest audit of what you have to offer a new employer, will set out a definitive path which you can use to confidently grow as an animation professional.

Download our [animation career map](#) for more information on the entry level roles which will get you a foot in the door of the industry.



Career plan

Long term goal

Map your future
Engage in your passion
[Network](#)
[Find a mentor](#)

Freelance

Core skills
Risks vs benefits
Finding work
Getting paid

Apprentice

Learn and earn
Degree level
Build industry experience
Industry-led education

PAYE employee

Which role?
Which employer?
Approaching employers
Development opportunities



Apply for that job

Creating valuable career collateral is essential in securing your new animation job.

Your desired job

Company profile, values and content

Desired skills, attitude, and capability

Contract type, length and quota

Do your research, and prepare to pitch yourself

Use real examples of how you work

Ask relevant questions and show your enthusiasm

Your confident interview

Be professional, and be respectful

Test your technology (if virtual)

Always follow up



Plain format, no graphics, columns or fancy font

Optimise content to fill the employer need

Demonstrate your unique value - why you?

Your CV

Highlight your transferable skills

Link your reel and/or portfolio on page one

Use a features and benefits style - how can you help them?

Your reel/portfolio

No more than two minutes of reel content

Start with your best, finish with your second best

Check your NDAs, contextualise your input

Showcase your strengths. Technique outweighs originality

Demo the 12 principles where possible; but highlight your best bits

Don't take credit for someone else's work - we're a small industry

Remember, a hiring manager may not be a creative, so you must provide a three-dimensional view of your professional power. A beautifully crafted showreel and/or portfolio, a strong CV, targeted cover letter, powerful social media presence, and confidence at interview, is the ideal combination.

Review your showreel or portfolio

Alongside a professional CV, and powerful covering letter, for creative roles, it's essential that you provide a visual portfolio of what you can do. Even those focused on production roles benefit by showing examples of animation they've worked on, with explanations of their involvement. For information on how to do this, see [Build your animation portfolio](#).

Unsure whether you need one for your dream job? Have a look at our [animation job profiles](#) for detailed career information.

Want to know what a good showreel looks like? [See examples here](#).

ScreenSkills may be able to provide a [bursary](#) to support the purchase of software, hardware or training.

Where to start

To get a creative role, you need to be able to show employers a portfolio, in the form of a website or video showreel. Combine still and moving images which spark the viewers' attention, and hold it...

What work should I use?

Match your art style and genre to the studio or production you're applying to work for. Don't leave your best to last. Match what skills you're showcasing to the role.



Technicalities

Check your portfolio works on most screen sizes, devices, operating systems and browsers. Does it work on PC and Mac? Desktop and mobile?

Choose a universal digital platform like Vimeo.

Checks and credits

Be clear about your contribution. Use text to explain tools or software used. Only use your own work. Check any non-disclosure agreements or copyrights beforehand. Multiple, contextual reels are good practice. Stay updated.

Create an impact – your first day

It might seem obvious, but it's easy to get swept away in the excitement of your new job.

Never agree to work without knowing how much you'll be paid, when you'll be paid, and what you're expected to do for the money.

Expect a formalised induction which outlines the company, the who, what, and why of your job; and introduces you to critical contacts. Be both respectful, yet confident. If you're unsure of anything – ask.

Contract



- Start date
- Pay and reward details
- Working hours
- Contract length
- Holidays/sick leave/notice

Induction



- Company detail
- Manager intro
- Hardware/software
- Quota
- Ways of working

Expectations



- Availability
- Quality of work
- Quantity of output
- Communication
- Professionalism

Connect



- To a 'buddy'
- To your manager
- To your team
- To the pipeline

Respect



- People's time
- Client demands
- Onboarding process
- Your colleagues

Assert



- Your strengths
- How best to communicate
- Any challenges you're facing



Showcase your credibility

Consistency is key. Getting a job is only the first step. A considered and assertive approach to your work will help you gain the approval of your colleagues and help you evolve as an animation professional.



Listen

- Ask to listen in on briefings or meetings which may support your knowledge of the job
- Take notes and reflect on information you're given



Ask questions

- Get curious. If you want to know why a design doesn't work, ask
- Ask for clarity if you're unsure



Watch

- Shadow the experts where you can and watch how they interact with others
- Follow the pipeline; want to see the animatic? Ask



Respect

- The expertise of your peers
- The opportunity you've been given – demonstrate your loyalty to your studio and don't jump ship at the earliest opportunity. Think long-term



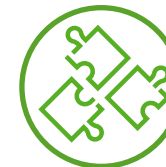
Learn

- Find a mentor amongst your crew; who can help you?
- Use tutorials, training courses, and inhouse initiatives to increase your expertise; technical, creative, and soft skills



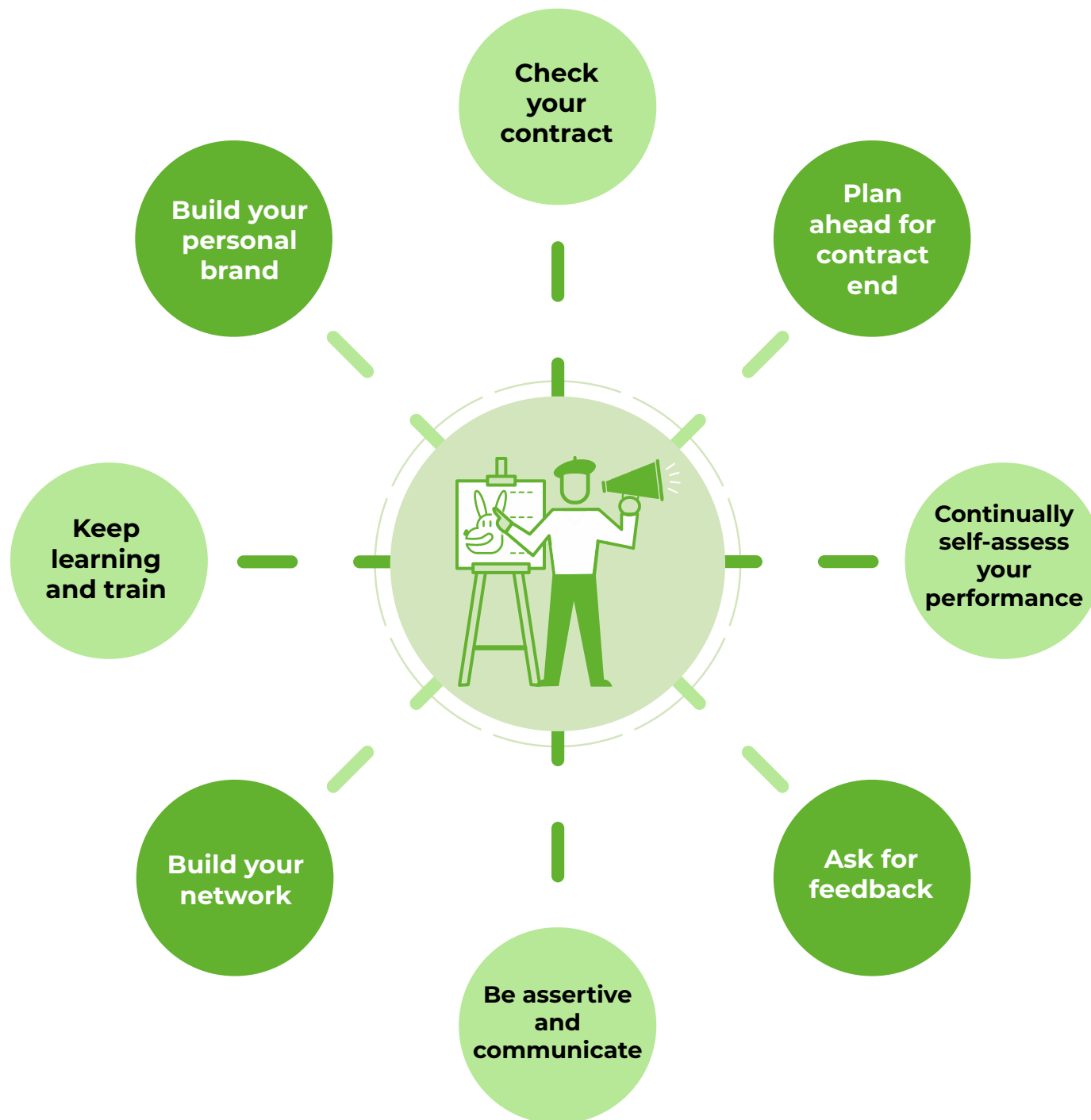
Rest

- Don't burn yourself out. If you're struggling with your quota, speak to someone who can help
- Get plenty of sleep



Play

- Get involved in socials; your work network is valuable
- Remember to keep loving what you do - it's animation!



Keep growing your skills

Regardless of whether you choose to freelance, or to work as an employee, you should always be planning at least three months ahead. Most studios are keen to keep and grow their talent – don't be tempted to jump ship for every new opportunity that comes your way. Grow your credibility and expertise by gaining feedback from your internal and external network, confidently ask for feedback where you can. No matter where you are in your career, you'll never know everything, and learning is a continuous journey.

Apply to join our Building Blocks to Your Animated Career programme. You will find it in ScreenSkills [Training and Opportunities](#) when it's running.



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