

Exercise 3

Read the article about someone who has a successful career composing music for video games, and then complete the notes.

My career as a video game music composer

I've been writing music for video games for nearly 15 years now, and as someone who loves both music and video games equally, I think I probably have the best job in the world! People outside the video game industry are often surprised to learn that such a job actually exists. But with video games becoming increasingly popular, having a successful career as a video game music composer is now a realistic ambition for many young people. It's really important to gain a good working knowledge of recording software as early as possible. Being a composer is not easy though – determination is essential if you want to do well in this job. Your first piece of music, or even your second or third, won't necessarily be successful straightaway.

I got into this career by accident really, when I was studying music at university. One day my teacher offered me some work playing music on a recording she was making. I did the work and didn't think any more about it. A few months later, my sister was playing a video game at home when I suddenly recognised the music and saw my name on the screen. I knew then that this could be a career! From that point on, I tried to learn as much as possible about all kinds of music and I would recommend anyone considering becoming a composer to do the same. I also realised how beneficial it was to attend video game conferences. At these events, it's vital to have plenty of self-confidence because representatives from all the major video game companies are there.

I must admit, it was hard at the beginning – during the day I worked in a restaurant to earn a regular income and in the evening I wrote my music, often late into the night. Whether the music turns out good or bad, I would tell new composers to write something new every day. It's a really useful habit to get into. You could even create your own website to promote your music. After a year or two, I finally got enough composing work to give up the restaurant job and I haven't looked back since.

People think the job is just about having fun, but it's not always the case. You spend a lot of time working alone, so motivation is a key aspect of this career. It can also be frustrating when you think you've written a really good piece, but the customer disagrees. If you're not the sort of person who can accept criticism, then perhaps this isn't the job for you.

For me, the most difficult part of my job is promoting my music, as I'm quite a shy person. I am quite aware though that there's no point in composing music that only you will hear. One tip I would give new composers is to make your music stand out because that makes marketing your work a little bit easier. It's also essential to keep up-to-date with the latest music technology, otherwise you'll soon get left behind. Despite these challenges, it's a great job and one that I would definitely recommend.

You are going to give a talk to your class at school about becoming a video game music composer. Prepare some notes to use as the basis for your talk.

Make short notes under each heading.

10 Advice for getting started in this job

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- [5]

11 The personal qualities people need to succeed in this career

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- [2]

[Total: 7]