## Lesson 18 Worksheet: Intellectual Property Magic

This worksheet will help you raise your profile and find fans, customers or career opportunities by giving away *some* of your work for free.

**1. What can you NOT afford to give away?**

What are your core products or services?

If you’re an employee, this is easy – it’s your hired labour!

If you’re a freelancer or entrepreneur, this can be harder to determine, but here are a few factors to consider:

1. things people are already paying you well for
2. things that cost a lot of time and effort to deliver (e.g. one-to-one consulting)
3. things that are unlikely to have enough appeal to be shared widely

**2. Who do you want to reach?**

Who are the people whose attention you want to grab, who can help you achieve your goals?

1. Potential employers?
2. Potential customers?
3. Potential business partners?
4. Gatekeepers – editors, promoters, agents etc?

How do you want these people to perceive you? What free content can you produce that would create the right impression on them?

1. If you want to be perceived as a great designer – design something great, and publicly accessible (e.g. a website, free design theme or free ebook)
2. If you want to be perceived as an expert on design – write a manifesto or tutorial about some aspect of design (and make sure it’s well designed!)
3. If you want to be perceived as a great band – release some great music
4. If you want to be perceived as a great writer – write something great and give it away (a blog, ebook, article, tutorial)

Remember, you need to give away something *genuinely valuable*, that you could have charged for– not a trailer or an advert for the great stuff you can do if someone pays you. Not many people will link to an advert or share a sales leaflet with their friends, but give them something fantastic for free, and they’ll be keener to spread the word for you.

If you feel a bit nervous, as if you’re giving away too much, you’re on the right track!

A good question to ask yourself is: can I *afford* to give this away? If it’s your ultimate trade secret, or if it’s going to cost you a lot of time and effort to keep providing it, then think again. And if in doubt, ask somebody who knows about this stuff for reassurance.

**3. Add a Creative Commons license to your work**

Go to [www.creativecommons.org](http://www.creativecommons.org) and follow the instructions for creating a licence and deciding what conditions you want to place on how people use your work.

The fewer conditions you have, the more widely your work will spread, but think carefully about the implications.

For example, whenever I license something, I specify non-commercial usage, and that the work must remain intact in its original form – which means no-one is allowed to sell my ebooks or turn them into seminars. (As always with intellectual property, enforcing these conditions isn’t always easy.)

Once you’ve chosen your licence, add the statement ‘some rights reserved’ to you work, as well as a link to the licence page on the Creative Commons site.

**4. Ask people to share!**

People are not mind readers. And most of them have never heard of creative Commons. So if you want to share your work, you need to ask them to do it.

Reassure them that you will be delighted, and make it easy for them to do so, e.g. by providing a link they can share with their friends (with a nice short, snappy URL) where your work is available to download, with a clear statement of the licence terms, as well as a ‘sales page’ for the contents.

Remember, *you still have to sell your work, even when it’s free!* Go back to Lessons 13 and 14 for ideas on how to promote your work.