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# Being Your Own (Library) Boss

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The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly

Marjan Farahbaksh  
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OLA Super Conference Presentation  
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# About Me

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- ❖ Hon. BA in English and Psychology; Master of Information Studies
- ❖ Former news librarian (The Globe and Mail) and business research and knowledge management specialist (Duff & Phelps Canada)
- ❖ Established FSO Research & Information in 2013 — specialize in business research and due diligence and business backgrounding

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# Info Entrepreneurship: The Good

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- ❖ Variety in the type of work and clients
- ❖ Self-determination and independence
- ❖ More fulfilling
- ❖ Time for other interests and activities
- ❖ (Almost) no commuting!

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# Info Entrepreneurship: The Bad

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- ❖ First-year blues
- ❖ Describing the value of the work, the elevator pitch
- ❖ Pricing headaches, negotiating
- ❖ Database subscriptions
- ❖ One-person show
- ❖ Isolation and loneliness

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# Info Entrepreneurship: The Ugly

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- ❖ Imposter Syndrome
- ❖ Fear of failure
- ❖ Inconsistent workload

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# Before You Launch

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- ❖ Make sure you have a financial cushion — at least nine months of working capital
- ❖ Research, research, research!
  - ❖ Interview old clients/patrons
  - ❖ Interview potential new clients
  - ❖ Talk to other IIPs
  - ❖ Join the Association of Independent Information Professionals
- ❖ Create a business and marketing plan

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# Getting the First Few Clients

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- ❖ Word-of-mouth referrals
- ❖ Warm calls
- ❖ Advertising and directory listings
- ❖ Speaking and presenting
- ❖ Networking

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# The Biggest Challenges

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- ❖ Finding a niche
- ❖ Finding a market
- ❖ “Competing” with Google
- ❖ Pricing appropriately
- ❖ Leveraging your network
- ❖ Marketing and promotion
- ❖ Business administration



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# What Would I Do Differently?

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- ❖ Settle on my niche earlier
- ❖ More networking
- ❖ Create boundaries and work-life balance

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# Resources

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- ❖ Association of Independent Information Professionals:  
Getting Started  
<http://www.aiip.org/Discover/Getting-Started>
- ❖ Bates, Mary Ellen. *Building and Running a Successful Research Business*, 2nd Edition. Cyber Age Books/Information Today, 2010.

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# Thank You!

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