



FREELANCING

Selling Your Time for Income



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Introduction

Decades ago, freelancing meant going to a friend's or uncle's shop to work extra hours, after you have logged out of your day job. It could also mean having to babysit neighborhood kids during the weekends, as their parents go on date nights or do errands.

Today, the Internet has provided a platform that enables you to work extra hours from home. Yes, the regular 9 to 5 job indeed presents its own set of pros and cons. It is limiting in terms of space and hours. You must be at the office during those hours. The salary is also limited unless your benefits include commissions and overtime pay. However, there is a sureness about it: the salary will be there for sure, and you can relax after your shift. If you are the manager or someone with extra responsibilities, this may not be the case, but your salary may reflect the additional compensation.

So, why do people still lean towards freelancing? The industry has even created a term for itself: the gig economy.

Freelancing presents a lot of freedom. It enables the freelancer to work whenever, wherever. This flexibility allows him the freedom to respond to other responsibilities he may have at home and elsewhere. It also presents a lot of uncertainty, as the fledgling freelancer finds himself navigating the often intricate world of freelancing. Sutherland et al. had in their journal article, "Work Precarity and Gig Literacies in Online Freelancing," had narrated some of the other issues that may arise in such a setup. They believe that freelancing is challenging to navigate for some because it does not come with the support that you usually get from officemates; it also does not come with the comfort of a regular job.

Selling your time as a freelancer equates to being free, yes, but it ultimately better serves those who have the extra drive and sense of autonomy. Many others will find themselves floating aimlessly in the gig economy virtual world. So, if you want to fully assimilate yourself into this world, you need some help. This book hopes to provide you with such assistance.



So, how do you exactly sell your time for an income, effectively and safely? How much do you value your time? Some people dive into freelancing headfirst because they do not have a choice. So, they give hesitant nods to so-called peanut-priced projects. What they fail to understand is that by doing this, they have started to establish that they do not mind selling their time for a few cents.

This little freelancing book hopes to assist the new freelancer in:

- Creating a freelancer persona
- Finding clients online
- Utilizing LinkedIn and other social media
- Establishing a reasonable rate
- Earning more money with less effort
- Learning from your mistakes

If you ready to start selling chunks of your time online, then read on.





Chapter 1

Freelancer Persona





It is easy to get carried away when you are online. You are offering services to people who have not met you in person. You also discover that many of them do not really care what resume you present to them; they are more interested in the skill that you can offer. So, even if you have sent them a long list of achievements, they will still ask you for a sample.

Some freelancers do not dive in quite so blindly. They have their resumes and online portfolios polished and ready to be shared. The portfolios come with samples, while offline samples can also be made available when requested.

It is as early as this point that the freelancer should start pondering about how he can zero in on a persona. After all, some law students have done programming for clients on a freelance basis. Engineers have written science articles for online journals. While your academic background provides most employers and clients with an idea as to what you can bring to the table, it does not prevent you from starting a completely new persona online.

What do you really want to offer in your free time?





It does not matter if you have a regular job or have decided to go freelance full-time for whatever reason (too many responsibilities, childcare, elderly care, unemployment, and more), you have to establish a freelancer persona.

Some prefer being general. For example, Stacey may go online and introduce herself as a writer. She does not want to specify because she wants to get awarded as many jobs as possible.

This may be alright.

By doing this, however, she is pitting herself against a larger group of online freelancers online. Whereas, if she had specified what she could do, she would only be competing with a smaller group.

Why do you need to be specific about your freelance role?



So, Stacey wanted to work as a freelance writer.

We need more information about her as a writer so that we can help her create a more compelling freelancing persona.

If Stacey were a communications graduate, then she could probably say that she specializes in marketing and communications content, and the like.

Similarly, if Stacey were a medical student trying to get some extra money for her school fees, then she could present herself as a medical article writer.

Either way, Stacey should have a portfolio of related work that she had written, either as a paid writer or as a student. She should establish the type of work that she is capable of. This way, the client cannot say that he was expecting something different. Stacey should just have to deliver by being consistent with the samples that have gotten her hired in the first place.



What about Leroy, who wants to work as a freelance artist?

The word artist is inclusive. So, he must think of how he wants to present himself, or else he may get random requests that are beyond his range of expertise.

So, if Leroy is a visual artist, he should present himself as such. He should have a portfolio of work that he could easily show to his potential clients. There are multitudes of talented visual artists out there, but each artist cannot please everyone. Clients often look for a particular style: cartoony, realistic, abstract, industrial, and more.

Even as a visual artist, Leroy has to further categorize himself. What kind of visual artist is he?

What does he offer?

Leroy could be a children's book illustrator who uses traditional tools, such as paint. He could be an industrial artist who designs product packaging for companies.

This must be specified and highlighted so that he can target the right clients.

How else can you be more specific about your services?

Not only should you establish a freelancing persona, but you should also specify what services you can offer.

So, if you are a medical-oriented writer, what are you willing to do?

Here are some possibilities:

E-books on health and other medical issues (fairly generic, given that you are still a medical student and not a doctor)

- Medical blogs
- Medical brochures
- Medical transcription
- Articles on a specific health topic or subtopic



You may decide to offer all of the above or to stick to one type of content that you can specialize in or that you are comfortable with. If you have the skill for the services that you are offering, then there is a bigger chance that it will take you less time to complete them.

If you are, instead, a children's book illustrator, what are you willing to deliver?

Here are some possibilities:

- ✓ Posters targeted to children
- ✓ Classroom charts
- ✓ Children's book illustrations
- ✓ Character design

Here are some possibilities:

- ✓ Pencils on paper
- ✓ Ink on paper
- ✓ Traditional paint
- ✓ Digital painting
- ✓ And more!



Again, just like with the writing, you can specialize by sticking to one format, or you can offer as many products and services under the same niche. Specify your medium so that you can target the right kinds of clients.

Freelancer personas are not limited to writers and visual artists. You also need to highlight strengths if you are a programmer, web developer, virtual assistant, and more. Yes, the freelancing world is populated by a wide range of talents. These talents need to be connected to the right clients and employers.