

## **Freelancing – A New Way of Making a Living**

By [Deborah Taylor](#)

When we hear the terms “freelancing” or “freelancer” we tend to just think about writers, novelists, journalists, or perhaps even photographers. That is because for a very long time these have been, for the most part, the only known freelancing roles. However, with recent technological advances, and the way our world is so connected now, we do have many more options to choose the freelancing path and enjoy hundreds, if not thousands, of different jobs.

Many fields are seeing massive growth and an influx of freelancers as more people realize they can make far more money working for themselves than working for someone else. These fields include of course traditional roles such as transcriptionists, secretaries, and receptionists, but also the more technical areas like software engineers, website designers, and researchers.

To become a freelancer all we essentially have to do is work in our chosen field for a while, get the practical experience and additional education or knowledge we need, then gradually make the switch from working for someone else to becoming our own boss. Sounds pretty straight-forward. But is it really that easy? And can we actually make a living working on a freelance basis?

First of all we have to keep in mind that there are quite a few freelancers out there who are only doing it part time. It may be that they make enough money on the part time to support themselves and their families, which is great for them, but it may also be that they are having trouble finding work in their chosen field and keep their day job to ensure their financial security. It is a consideration we all have to make in our decision.

Secondly, we have to realize that our career switch may not, and most likely will not, happen overnight. If we are serious, we need to be willing to do whatever it

takes to become a freelancer in our field. We have to go after it. It won't come to us. But if we work hard success will eventually be in our reach.

Before we take that jump though, and hang our shingle, we must decide if we really have what it takes to be a freelancer. Sure we all want to be our own boss, but let's be honest with ourselves. Do we have what it takes? It's time for the tough questions.

Do we really have the drive and dedication, as well as the self-discipline we need to be successful? It is easy to do whatever needs to be done when someone else is watching us and giving us the instructions and direction we need to do the job right. What happens when we take that role over for ourselves?

What makes us so special in the world of freelancers and in our chosen field? Is our skillset strong enough to stand out? Do we have some unique or different talent to offer?

How are our time management skills? People skills? Are we able to run our freelance business, complete the actual work, and meet the deadlines our clients set all at the same time? Can we calmly and rationally handle an irate customer and resolve the conflict?

If we have even the slightest doubt about freelancing, and the work and effort it takes, we should probably stop right here and explore other career paths.

However if we are ready and willing to make this move, and accept all that it involves, we need to remember that money probably won't start flowing immediately, and that it is a slow and steady process. It is going to take time, and lots of it.

So before we quit that day job, we need to spend some considerable time hunting for freelance work in our area of expertise first and see what we find. This will help us further decide if it is right for us, and what we really want to do as a freelancer. The internet is a valuable resource for this task.

As we do our search we find that some skills are more marketable than others and our skillset will define how much difficulty we will have in finding work, and further refine what kind of freelancing work we really want to do. Areas such as software engineering, website design, and architecture are relatively new to the freelance world and are growing. There is often a goldmine of work available in these fields, and if we fit in here we are most certain to be successful. Bookkeeping and secretarial jobs are out there too, however this industry is somewhat more saturated with freelancers and having a unique talent to offer will give us a competitive edge. Although this area may take a little more time to break in to and build on, there is still no reason whatsoever we can't be successful.

Once we have settled on a field to freelance in, we need to find that first client. The internet again will be the best tool. A few good key words here and there, targeted to our freelance field, and we should easily have 10 – 15 sites to check out. Many sites have popped up too in recent years similar to monster.com dedicated to freelancing, as well as countless forums. Now we just need to spend some time on each of them, creating accounts and uploading resumes where required, and apply for the jobs that are right for us. Then wait for responses.

While we are still on the subject of finding our first clients, we should immediately rule out canvassing anyone we deal with at our current job. Aside from probably being illegal, especially where confidentiality and/or non-compete contracts are in place, it is truly in bad taste. Integrity goes far. Protect it.

The first few jobs we get are sure not to pay very well, but the experience we gain will be worth the monetary sacrifice. While we are working these jobs we are

building our skillset, learning how to manage our time effectively, improving workflows, and maybe even refining our research skills. We are also creating a portfolio to show to other potential clients. Completed projects and glowing testimonials are very valuable tools in gaining new business.

In time these lower paying jobs will be replaced by the higher paying ones and at some point we may find our income has either matched or exceeded what we earn from our day job. On top of that, jobs are scheduled well in to the future and other potential opportunities exist to ensure we are financially stable.

Now we can think about reducing our hours at work, or quit altogether, and make freelancing our new way of making a living. We did it!

Here's to your success!!

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*About the Author:*

*Deborah Taylor is a diversified administrative professional with more than 25 years of varied and progressive experience in all areas of office management and administration. President of [AVA Business Services](#), Deborah and her team provide Virtual Assistance and local Freelance support for today's global marketplace.*