

Contemplating Freelance

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Advantages of Freelancing

- ▣ Be your own employer
- ▣ Be independent
- ▣ You earn from your labor, as opposed to making money for other people
- ▣ Provides flexible schedule (kids, studies)
- ▣ Fulfill a niche market

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Disadvantages of Freelancing

- ▣ Feast or famine market
- ▣ You have no schedule, you work to satisfy clients (all times of day and night)
- ▣ You take a vacation, so does your business
- ▣ Earnings are limited by your own time capacity
- ▣ Pay for your own benefits (pension, vacation, etc.)
- ▣ Victim of your own success, the more successful you are, the more work you get
- ▣ Limited social interaction
- ▣ Chasing after money, clients don't always pay

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Traits of a Successful Freelancer

- ▣ **Skilled:** has in demand skills or can create market
- ▣ **Organized:** manage time, clients, projects and yourself
- ▣ **Personable:** can market and sell yourself
- ▣ **Flexible:** can accommodate customers
- ▣ **Disciplined:** can sit down and work
- ▣ **Good time manager:** can estimate time, and juggle many projects at once
- ▣ **Strong personality:** can be firm with customers
- ▣ **Responsible:** fulfills promises, follows through

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Do Your Homework

- ▣ Is there a market for what you want to do?
- ▣ Who are your competitors? Is there enough work to go around?
- ▣ Talk to others in the same field, get their input and advice
- ▣ Speak with other freelancers, ask them about their experiences
- ▣ Do financial projections based on realistic estimates. See slide 8

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Financial Aspects

Is it Financially Feasible?

- Takes time to build clientele and ramp-up business
- ❏ Can you afford to be unemployed for six months?
- ❏ Can you live on limited income for 1 year?
- ❏ What's minimum amount of income you need to survive?
- ❏ What's minimum amount of work you need to generate that income?
- ❏ What equipment do you need for your business (software, printer, computer, stationary, etc.)?

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Financial Aspects

How to Charge

- ❏ Hourly - Range between 100 – 160 NIS (avg. 120)
 - Estimate average hours per page ($2\frac{1}{2}$) = X
 - Estimate number of pages in project = Y
 - Calculate project time
 $X \cdot Y = Z$ (e.g. $2\frac{1}{2} \times 40$ pages = 100) 100 hours
 - Determine hourly charge (NIS 120)
 - Multiply hourly charge by estimated project time
(e.g. $100 \times \text{NIS } 120 = \text{NIS } 12,000$)
 - Add VAT 15.5% ($\text{NIS } 12,000 \times 1.155 = \text{NIS } 13,860$)
- ❏ Per Page - determine flat rate ($120 \cdot 2.5 = \text{NIS } 300$)
- ❏ Per Project - use formula above. Become proficient and earn a higher rate

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Financial Aspects

Calculating Income - 1 Month

- ❏ Estimate amount of projects: 4
 - **Technical Writing:** 40 page document 12,000
 - **Copy Writing** 2 page brochure: 2,250
 - **Translation** 35 page document 3,500
(NIS 100 per page)
 - **Editing** 60 pages 1,440
(5 pages per hour / 60 = 12 hours * 120)
- Total 19,190
- $19,190 \cdot .65 = 12,473$

All prices are in New Israeli Shekels

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How do I Find Work?

- ❏ Networking, networking and more networking
- ❏ Watch the relevant forums (Digital Eve, Techshoret, Graphica, CIWI)
- ❏ Advertise on forums (if permitted)
- ❏ Search company websites and forums, and harvest contact information. Cold call and sell yourself
- ❏ Have work come to you by:
 - Becoming an authority in your field
 - Creating a web forum (techshoret and elephant)
- ❏ Develop a mailing list, publish a newsletter with helpful information and mass distribute
- ❏ Work with outsourcing firms to supplement income

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The Importance of Networking

- ❏ Key to making professional contacts that can lead to work
- ❏ Provides a support group to assist in developing ideas
- How to Network**
- ❏ Go to conferences, both relevant to what you do, and to the services you provide
- ❏ Participate in message boards, Facebook groups, etc.
- ❏ Join professional organizations related to your industry (e.g. STC)
- ❏ Speak to people in your and related fields

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Taking it One Step Further

- ❏ Create a business that employs others: technical writer? Why not start a TW company
- ❏ Become a coordinator managing aspects of a whole. For example:
 - **Website builder:** coordinating graphics, writing, development and hosting
 - **Publications director:** coordinating writing, layout and graphics
 - **Events director:** coordinating catering, speakers, guest management, press

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Reporting Options

- ❖ Tium Mas
 - Don't need to register as a freelancer
 - Can be conducted 2 – 3 times a year
- ❖ Osek Patur
 - Enables you to work freelance up to 60 hours a month earning up to 60,000 NIS extra a year
 - Cannot deduct expenses
 - Don't pay VAT
- ❖ Osek Morshe
 - Registered entity
 - Can deduct expenses
 - Pay VAT - once you're in, tax authorities watch you like a hawk
- ❖ Paycheck company
- ❖ Have a friend report your projects on their file

Speak to an Accountant!

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Other Comments

- ❖ The more skills you have to offer, the more work you'll have
- ❖ Need to keep up on technology, the Internet is your key to work and information
- ❖ Stay diligent, always keep your eyes open, always search, always speak with others (network)

Work Meetings/Interviews/Briefings

- ❖ Always come prepared
- ❖ It is your job to understand what the client wants and needs, most likely they don't know themselves
- ❖ Never leave a client without an approved outline or sketch

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Resources

- ❖ **Englishcommunicator.com**: my website
- ❖ **Digital Eve**: group dedicated to supporting professional women in technology <http://mail.lerner.co.il/mailman/listinfo/dei-discuss/>
- ❖ **Elephant.org**: writer's salary survey www.elephant.org.il
- ❖ **Graphica.co.il**: website for graphic designers
- ❖ **CJI Salary Survey**: <http://www.cji.co.il/docs.htm>
- ❖ **Yahoo! Groups in Israel**. Conduct a search for "rates" or other keywords in the relevant group. Useful Yahoo! groups include:
 - **Ciw**: Independent Writers
 - **Techshore**: Technical Writers
 - **MarcomIsrael**: Marketing Writers
 - **Targum**: Translators

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