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Preferment Times: ***Retirement Redefined***

October 2024 Issue

The Best is Still to Come

Toes in the Sand, Mind Engaged





Coaches Corner

As we step into October, we find ourselves reflecting on the journeys many of you have embarked upon – transitioning from traditional employment to the liberating world of freelancing.

This journey, often filled with excitement and a touch of uncertainty, is one that resonates deeply with Robert and me. It's about more than just a career change; it's a profound shift toward personal freedom and fulfillment.

One of the most inspiring aspects of coaching each of you is witnessing the courage and determination you bring to each session, especially in the face of the unique challenges that freelancing presents.

Whether you're just starting or well into your freelance career, every step you take is a testament to your resilience and vision for a fulfilling future.

Change, as we know, is the only constant. Embracing it can be daunting, but it is also the gateway to growth and new opportunities.

As freelancers, you have embraced this wholeheartedly. You've chosen to mold your own paths to redefine success on your own terms.

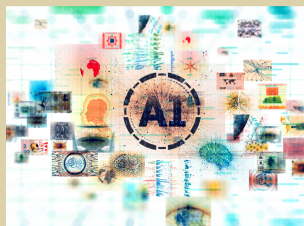
This is not just a career choice; it's a lifestyle crafted around passion, purpose, and autonomy.

In our coaching sessions, we often discuss strategies for navigating the challenges that come with freelance life – from managing finances and client relationships to maintaining work-life balance. However, amidst these discussions, what shines through is your unwavering commitment to learning and adapting. It's this willingness to evolve that sets you apart.

Remember, each challenge you overcome is a milestone in your journey toward personal and professional fulfillment. It's crucial to celebrate these victories, no matter how small they may seem. They are the building blocks of your success and a testament to your growth and resilience.

As we look ahead to the remainder of the year, let's continue to support one another in our endeavors. Let's share our experiences, insights, and lessons learned. Together, we can create a thriving community where challenges are opportunities in disguise and where every setback is a stepping stone towards greater achievements. Remember, you're not alone in this journey.

Patty & Robert's Special December Workshop Details below!.



Streamline, Simplify, Succeed: Game- Changing ChatGPT Skills for Freelancers

Ready to take your freelance career to the next level?

Join us for a hands-on, two-day workshop designed to help freelancers like you unlock ChatGPT's full potential!

 **Dates:** Saturday, Dec 7 & 14, 9:30 AM – 12:30 PM

 **Cost:** \$250 per person

 **Early Bird Discount:** Save \$75 if registered by Saturday, Nov 30th!

In this 6-hour, practical workshop, you'll discover:

- How to streamline your writing process and save time on client projects
- Insider ChatGPT prompts that boost productivity and creativity
- Personalized tools to simplify repetitive freelance tasks
- Real-world strategies to leverage ChatGPT for landing more gigs and delivering higher-quality work

 **Limited Spots:** Only open to 10 attendees to keep the class interactive and manageable.

Don't miss this chance to learn game-changing skills that can elevate your freelance career!

Register today and unlock a powerful new tool to achieve freelance success!



Master the Game: Why Freelancers Need Both Killer Skills and Unstoppable Soft Skills to Win Big

When it comes to freelancing, everyone talks about mastering technical skills. Sure, you need to know your stuff—whether it's graphic design, writing, coding, or any other specialized skill that forms the backbone of your freelance work.

But if you think hard skills are your golden ticket to freelancing success, let's pump the brakes for a second.

Here's a little secret: *It's not just about what you know. It's about how you work with others and adapt.* Enter **soft skills**—the often-overlooked yet crucial secret sauce to becoming the freelancer clients rave about.

Hard Skills: The Foundation

Let's not discount the obvious—hard skills are your bread and butter. They're the specific abilities you bring to the table, the ones you can showcase in a portfolio or demonstrate in a job test.

Mastering these makes you marketable and ensures you can deliver on what clients need.

Think of hard skills as the "what" of your freelancing business:

- **Graphic Designer?** You better be fluent in Adobe Illustrator or Figma.
- **Freelance Writer?** SEO writing, blog posts, and maybe even some content marketing chops are essential.
- **Web Developer?** If you're not comfortable in JavaScript, CSS, or WordPress, you're behind.

Your hard skills show you *can* do the job. But let's be real: that's not the full story.

Soft Skills: The Secret Sauce

Here's where it gets interesting—and where so many freelancers fall short. Soft skills are your ability to communicate, handle clients, and pivot when things go sideways.

They are the "how" of your freelancing business, and they can make or break your success.

Imagine being the best coder on the block but losing clients because you miss deadlines or respond to emails like a robot.

Clients want to work with freelancers who are not only talented but also reliable, easy to communicate with, and adaptable.

Here's why soft skills are your hidden superpower:

1. **Communication:** Have you ever had a client who didn't know what they wanted but expected you to read their mind? Strong communication helps you clarify their vision, set boundaries, and deliver what they need. It also means writing a clear, professional proposal or sending an update email that makes clients feel like they're in safe hands.
2. **Problem-Solving:** Freelancing is never smooth sailing. Whether it's a technical hiccup or a picky client, your ability to navigate problems with a calm and proactive attitude will save you—and your reputation.
3. **Time Management:** In freelancing, deadlines are sacred. Clients love someone who can manage their time and deliver high-quality work without scrambling at the last minute.
4. **Adaptability:** The freelance world is constantly evolving. From algorithm updates to shifting client expectations, being adaptable means staying relevant. It's about learning new skills and being open to change without skipping a beat.

The Power Combo: When Hard and Soft Skills Collide

Here's the magic: **Hard skills get you in the door, but soft skills keep you there.**

Take freelance writer *Jane*, for example. Jane was an incredible writer, but her real success came when she nailed her client communication and started offering strategic advice. She became a trusted partner, not just a hired pen. That shift allowed her to raise her rates and gain long-term clients.

Or consider *Tom*, a web developer who expanded his business by offering design tips in addition to his regular coding gigs. Clients loved that he could not only develop sleek websites but also had the foresight to guide them on the user experience.

Wrapping It Up: Don't Be One-Dimensional

You need both hard and soft skills to thrive as a freelancer.

Hard skills prove you've got the chops to get the job done, but soft skills set you apart in a crowded marketplace.

Want to build lasting client relationships, boost your reputation, and increase your rates? Flex your soft skills muscle just as much as you fine-tune your technical abilities.

In freelancing, it's not just what you do—it's *how* you do it. So, master your craft, but also master your communication, your time, and your adaptability. Clients will notice, and they'll come back for more.



Alerts:

Whenever we see something that we think is important for you to be aware of, we will put it here in this section. Some months, there will be nothing; others maybe a lot. Please read this one that I read about in Forbes this week.



Update to our talent reputation system

Our goal at Upwork is to help clients find trusted freelancers who can get their jobs done, while providing independent professionals a safe environment to connect with businesses and find work.

We want to inform you of an upcoming policy change that will impact the way feedback is managed on our platform. As part of our commitment to maintaining a trustworthy marketplace, we're phasing out the feedback removal benefit for Top Rated and Top Rated Plus freelancers. This change will go live September 3, 2024.

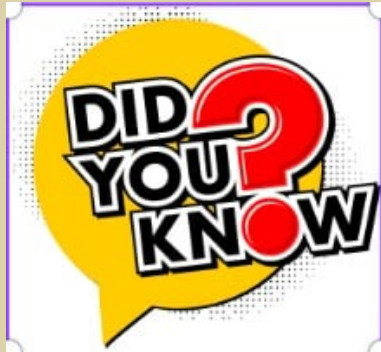
We understand that this benefit has been valued by many within our community. However, we also recognize the importance of ensuring the integrity of our rating system. By ensuring that all feedback—both positive and negative—remains visible on freelancer profiles, we aim to foster a more transparent environment for everyone involved.

For freelancers who may disagree with feedback they've received from clients, rest assured you still have options available. You can choose to respond to the feedback, which will be displayed alongside the client's review, and you can report instances where you suspect the feedback is being manipulated or misused. You can read more about these options in our [Help Center](#).

Thank you for your understanding as we continue to foster a trusted environment for everyone.

This was taken directly from Upwork. Here is the link:

<https://community.upwork.com/t5/Product-Release-Notes/bg-p/P...>



Interesting Forbes Article

"So, what are the freelance job trends that are set to disrupt the economy and the global workplaces in 2024 and beyond?"

1. AI and ML (Artificial Intelligence And Machine Learning)

Artificial intelligence is a dominant factor that will impact freelancing in several ways. First, it will have important implications for the way freelance work is performed; it will also affect the types of freelance work that self-employed professionals can do, because of increased demand, or cannot do, due to decline in demand. Thirdly, since employers are using AI in their workforces and laying off workers as a result, they are more keen to tap into the services of freelancers for short-term projects, as a way to balance out the workload of remaining team members.

AI will help freelancers become more productive and eliminate the tedious admin tasks, or "work about work," as it is often called, that consume much of a freelancer's time. It can also be used to generate business ideas, in addition to augmenting essential tasks such as:

- Content writing and marketing
- SEO
- Website building
- Market analysis
- Video creation
- Project planning

2. Blended Workforce

Another significant trend that is well under way is that of the blended workforce concept.

What this means is that instead of teams being traditionally composed of in-house employees, workplaces are evolving to integrate these traditional teams with independent freelancers, bringing them on board as a short-term solution to be part of the team for the completion of a project. One example of this is a Fiverr [study](#) which demonstrated that 70% of those employers who laid off workers last year and this year have started hiring freelancers, while almost 30% expect to hire freelance professionals within the next six months to a year."

Taken from a Forbes article. Here is the link to read the entire article:

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/rachelwells/2024/07/15/6-freela...>



Tech Corner

Join us every month as we introduce some technology that could be beneficial to your freelance career.

If there is a topic you would like us to cover, just let us know!



This Week's Tool – Snagit vs Windows 11 Snipping Tool

Robert discovered a great comparison between Snagit and Windows 11's Snipping Tool, and it's worth checking out!

While the Snipping Tool offers a sleek interface and basic functions like annotations, Snagit steps it up with pro-level features like scrolling screenshots, video recording, and robust editing tools.

However, Snagit comes with a one-time fee of \$63, whereas the Snipping Tool is free.

Though we currently find the Snipping Tool sufficient, freelancers may find Snagit boosts their efficiency.

Read the full scoop [here!](#)



Success Stories

Check back next month and see who will be our next freelancer featured in our Success Stories section!

We want to celebrate YOUR success with all our clients!



Have a great October!

Patty & Robert

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