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Preferment Times: *Retirement Redefined*

November 2024 Issue

The Best is Still to Come

Toes in the Sand, Mind Engaged



Coaches Corner



As November rolls in, it's easy to feel overwhelmed with the holidays fast approaching. But I want to remind you that while freelancing can get tricky around this time, persistence is key.

Many freelancers feel the pull to slow down or even pause their job search, thinking the market is too quiet or they'll resume in the new year.

I encourage you to take a different approach.

Instead of easing off, focus on ending the year on a high note. Now is the perfect time to secure projects, build relationships, and set the stage for an incredible 2025.

Many businesses are looking for last-minute help to close out the year strongly, and some are already planning for the year ahead.

Here are a few tips to help you manage the stress and stay on track:

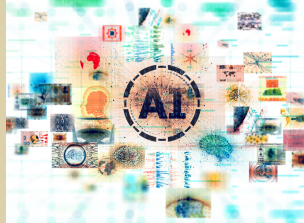
1. **Stay Consistent:** Dedicate a little time each day to your job search, even if it's just checking for jobs or sending out some proposals.
2. **Set Small Goals:** Break larger tasks into smaller, manageable ones. Achieving these small wins will keep your momentum going.
3. **Prioritize Self-Care:** The holiday season is busy, but taking time to recharge is essential. Balance your workload with moments of rest to avoid burnout.
4. **Plan for the New Year:** Start thinking about where you want your freelance business to be in 2025. Take steps now to set that foundation, whether it's upskilling, expanding your network, or updating your portfolio.

You've worked hard all year—let's make sure we finish strong and prepare ourselves for the success that lies ahead.

Remember, every small effort counts, and consistency pays off. You've got this!

Here's to a productive November and a fantastic finish to 2024!

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:** \$150 per person

 **Early Bird Discount:** Save \$75 if registered by **Saturday, Nov 30th!** That's 50% off if registered by November 30!!

Hurry & register now! Seating is limited.

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! <https://bit.ly/3Atcdsj>

Be sure to use the discount code **THANKFUL** to receive a \$75 early bird discount. This offer expires Nov 30, 2024



Big News: We're Launching a YouTube Channel!

Robert and I are thrilled to announce that **RPT Virtual Services** is now on YouTube!

Whether you're just dipping your toes into the world of freelancing or ready to tackle more advanced strategies, we've got you covered.

Our new channel is **your free ticket** to learn all about online freelancing, with fresh content dropping **every week!**

At the start, we'll be focusing on **simple, practical tips** to help you kick off your freelancing journey, and as we grow, we'll dive into more advanced topics that take your freelance career to the next level!

The best part? Our videos will be **short and sweet—no longer than 15 minutes**—so you can learn on the go.

Be one of the first to join us on this exciting new adventure:

[🔗 www.youtube.com/@RPTVirtualServices](https://www.youtube.com/@RPTVirtualServices)

Subscribe, tune in, and get ready to take your freelance game to new heights!

Create a specialized profile

Many freelancers have more than one skill to offer. Specialized profiles make it easier for you to market multiple skill sets to clients who are looking for different things.

Unlocking the Power of Specialized Profiles on Upwork: Your Key to Standing Out

As coaches to countless online freelancers, particularly those navigating the transition into remote work and freelancing later in life, Robert and I have seen firsthand how important it is to stand out in today's competitive gig economy.

One of the most effective ways to do this on Upwork is through **Specialized Profiles**.

When Upwork introduced Specialized Profiles, many freelancers—especially those new to the platform—wondered:

- *What exactly is a Specialized Profile?*
- *Who needs a Specialized Profile?*
- *Why should I bother creating one?*

If these questions have crossed your mind, you're not alone. Even years after this feature launched, freelancers continue to search for the best way to use it.

As coaches who have successfully coached many freelancers through these exact questions, we can assure you that Specialized Profiles are a **game-changer**. When used properly, they can be the key to unlocking new opportunities, allowing you to position yourself as the ideal candidate for clients looking for your unique skills.

- **What is a Specialized Profile?**

A Specialized Profile allows you to create up to two distinct profiles on Upwork, each focusing on a specific skill set or service category.

For example, if you're skilled in both content writing and web development, you can create separate profiles for each area of expertise. Each profile can have its own title, overview, portfolio, and hourly wage, which enables you to showcase your skills more effectively to potential clients.

As a freelancer, particularly one over 50, this feature is crucial because it allows you to **leverage your decades of experience** and market yourself to different client needs without feeling like you're spreading yourself too thin.

- **Who Should Have a Specialized Profile?**

If you're a freelancer offering services in two or more distinct areas, then a Specialized Profile is a must. This feature allows you to emphasize your strengths in each field, attracting a broader yet targeted client base. As a coach to many freelancers on optimizing their profiles, I've seen how this clarity can lead to more job invitations and higher-paying clients.

Specialized Profiles are ideal for freelancers who want to appeal to multiple niches without diluting their brand and showcase different skill sets in a way that speaks directly to the client's needs.

- **Why Should You Have a Specialized Profile?**

The most compelling reason to use a Specialized Profile is **increased visibility**. Your specialized profiles can appear more prominently in client searches with the right keywords and targeted profile content.

This is particularly useful for freelancers in competitive markets. Clients often seek specialists who can solve specific problems, and a focused profile can make the difference between being overlooked and being hired.

In fact, Upwork has reported that freelancers with specialized profiles saw a noticeable uptick in both profile views and job invitations.

Why? Because **clients love hiring specialists**. A specialized profile reassures clients that you're not just a generalist but someone with the expertise to meet their exact needs.

Take Action Today

Whether you're new to freelancing or looking to take your career to the next level, don't overlook the power of Specialized Profiles.

They aren't just another feature on Upwork—they're a strategic tool that can help you attract higher-quality clients and showcase your skills in the best light.

As a freelancer over 50, you've likely accumulated a wealth of experience. Now, it's time to use that experience to your advantage.

Create, customize, and optimize your Specialized Profiles today to ensure you always put your best foot forward.

See you at the top!



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.



Updates from Upwork Enhancements to Job Success Score (JSS) and New Cover Letter Videos

1. Job Success Score (JSS) Insights

Robert and I are excited to share that Upwork has rolled out a significant enhancement as part of its Fall 2024 update: Job Success Score (JSS) Insights.

Previously shrouded in mystery, the JSS is now transparent, providing freelancers with detailed feedback on their performance.

This update includes **daily** updates instead of **bi-weekly**, offering real-time insights into how contract outcomes and client feedback influence your score.

You can now view a breakdown of each contract's impact over the past year, empowering you to manage your reputation more effectively.

How to Access JSS Insights:

1. Log in to your freelancer account.
2. Click your profile icon in the upper right-hand corner.
3. Navigate to "Trends and Stats."
4. Under Job Success Score, click "View Insights."

While this transparency is invaluable, freelancers must stay vigilant, as even minor setbacks can now affect scores more immediately.

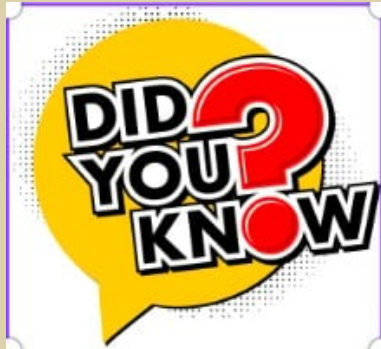
2. New Cover Letter Videos

In another exciting development, Upwork introduces the option to include video submissions with cover letters. T

his feature allows freelancers to record personalized videos directly within their proposals.

It's a fantastic way to introduce yourself, showcase your skills, and make a memorable impression on potential clients.

Please note that currently, only real-time recordings are supported.



Interesting Article

More and more businesses are hiring freelancers to expand their teams. But how can you stand out and succeed in this space? And how can you make the most of the many perks freelancing offers, like better work-life balance, flexibility, and more family time?

Know your value: As a freelancer, you set your own schedule, decide where you work, and choose your rates — meaning you determine your worth. The best way to do this is to find a niche, become an expert, and communicate your value clearly and confidently.

Build loyalty: Getting clients is just the first step. The real gold comes from keeping them. Repeat work brings both consistency and referrals, which are key to growing your freelancing business.

Be adventurous: Freelancing lets you design your work around your passions and lifestyle, but don't get too comfortable. Pushing yourself and promoting your skills on social media can open new doors and help you reach your full potential.

Here is an article about the things successful freelancers from various backgrounds do differently. While it was written three years ago, it still has some interesting insights.

What Successful Freelancers Do Differently

by Benjamin Laker, Lebene Soga, Yemisi Bolade-Ogunfodun and Ashish Malik

"As an increasing number of people enter the gig economy, we've become curious about what it will take for them to succeed. What are the best practices for thriving as a freelancer and how can new workers take advantage of the many benefits this path offers, including better work-life balance, flexibility, and more time with loved ones?"

We sought answers to these questions through our forthcoming research. We initially surveyed 218 freelancers in the U.S. between February and April of 2021. Our respondents included workers from various backgrounds and industries, including writers, designers, virtual assistants, event coordinators, publicists, coaches, fitness instructors, and delivery drivers, among others."

Read the article: <https://hbr.org/2021/10/what-successful-freelancers-do-diffe...>



Tech Corner

This month's topic is on Cybersecurity. While this is not exactly a "tool" per se, It is very important to be aware of this topic.



Keeping Yourself Safe Working Online

Working from home offers immense convenience and advantages, but it also exposes individuals and businesses to various cybersecurity risks. It's crucial to prioritize home cybersecurity to safeguard against these threats effectively. With remote work becoming more common, cyber threats like phishing are rising. Unlike in traditional office settings where an IT team handles cybersecurity, remote workers must be vigilant and adopt best practices to protect themselves. Here are some essential tips to ensure you and your team can work from home securely.

Here is a GREAT article I found on keeping yourself and your work safe, especially relevant for you as an online freelancer. I urge you to read it!

Cyber Security Risks: Best Practices for Working from Home and Remotely

Read the article: <https://usa.kaspersky.com/resource-center/threats/remote-working-how-to-stay-safe>

Panama: Our Retirement Destination

November is a Special Month

November will soon arrive, and it is a very special month in Panama. It is the month of many historical events that have marked the country's history.

During this month, Panama not only celebrates its patriotic symbols and shouts of independence but also expresses its deep-rooted pride in being Panamanian.

As new members of the community, expats are warmly invited to partake in the local celebrations. This can be shown by displaying the Panamanian flag on our cars, donning traditional Panamanian hats, and planning our shopping trips in advance.

It can be very complicated to drive, as we are used to because many people from the city travel to the beaches and mountains to enjoy time away from the city and celebrate this month with family and friends.

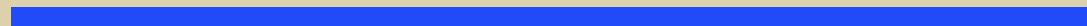
Here is a video created by a dear friend, Johanny Mena, who owns a chauffeuring business in Panama. Johanny was one of the first people I met when I first arrived (before Robert and our dogs and boat), and she has become a dear friend.

This video summarizes the traditional dances in different provinces. I hope you enjoy it, and I think Johanny has picked an amazing sound to showcase Panama!

Here is the English translation for the Spanish at the bottom of the video – "November will soon arrive and it is the month of the Homeland, the month of many historical events that have marked the history of our country. We celebrate our national symbols, our cries of independence..." It is helpful in Panama that if you do not know much Spanish to use Google translate. We have the app on our phone and on our computers.

<https://www.facebook.com/share/v/pEW9CMuP5NVuZe7B/>

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Panama is THE Place to Be in February **Join us, for...**

FAST TRACK 2025

Panama

Lifestyle & Opportunity Conference

 Hilton Panama City, Panama · February 7-9, 2025

If you are interested in retiring to Panama, come check it out during the International Living Event being held at the Hilton Hotel in Panama City from February 7 to 9. I will be there with Barefoot Consultants, but so many other people will be there to talk with you about Panama, many of whom I know personally. (Robert, as of right now, will be staying home with our three crazy furbabies.)

So, if Panama is on your radar for retirement, come check it out during this time. If you have any questions, feel free to email us.



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 November and Happy Thanksgiving to our American Clients!

Patty & Robert



RPT Virtual Services, LLC

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