

Freelance Work, What Future

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Freelance work was always the forgotten child of company partners. We can understand easily why! Let's put ourselves in the shoes of a CEO from a company that wants to develop a certain project. He doesn't want to think in any kind of delay, to imagine that possibility is the worse nightmare that any CEO can have. If you work as a freelancer how can you guarantee that you won't have any delay due to problems not related with your professional activity? Any company can always replace an employee that needs to stay at home due to health problems or because he has a meeting with his child teacher. And you, how could you handle it...

In this article I want to start with the beginning of freelance work, and then share my opinion, about its future. Remember this is a personal opinion, certainly related with my reality and living but I believe that it's very similar with the rest of the world. Of course that I also want to answer to the questions presented some lines above. Let us see how I will handle it.

Freelance work suffered big changes since its beginning. In the past a successful freelancer was someone with big professional experience in one or more companies that in some time of his life, due to several reasons decide to work on his own. Usually the appearance of a freelancer was related with divergent positions between him and his boss (salary disagreement, company policy ...). You can have the following thought: the employer would find someone else to do the job, but in the past, companies didn't worry with the replacement of their employees, and sometimes their clients preferred to hire that person as a freelancer instead of keeping the provider company. This choice was obviously related with the capacity and skills of the leaving worker. If you are happy with someone's work you

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want to keep working with him. Furthermore, that person knows the work and what to do, consequently there will be no delay in the project.

We can describe the first freelancer as someone that had a big experience working on a providing service company and that is an excellent professional. And that because of some reason decided to terminated is relation with is “boss” and collaborates with former clients of is former employer. As you can imagine this “freelancer” was a special employee of is client. I know it's a strange situation.

In the present, things are different and we can find young professionals that decided to choose a freelance activity. Many companies choose to work with freelancers in low risk or short time projects with the expectation of lower costs. Sometimes we also find big projects on web market places searching for freelancers. But how can freelance workers compete with providing service companies, on big projects? In my opinion the future freelance worker needs to improve is image. It's insufficient to say that I can do this or that! It's not sufficient to present former developed projects! Forget big projects if you want to work alone! If you want success as a freelancer you need to sell your image and business as any company.

So if I want to succeed or at least try to succeed what do I need as a freelancer?

Make partnerships with other freelancers, so that your range of work becomes much larger. Create a good image so that you can present your self and your team as a real alternative to providing service companies. Define a marketing strategy to make your work visible. Create your opportunities don't wait for them (if I'm buying a service I want to have a self thinking provider, with good ideas and solutions). Define your core business; it's very important that you become an expert on specific fields. Make sure you have your structure costs present. Once you've defined your business image and defined your services, you can search for opportunities with great advantage from other freelancers and providing service companies.

Now that your image and activity is well planned, how should you interact with possible projects?

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Well, each possible project is a completely different one, so you must dedicate your full attention to it. Create two or more possibilities so that you can present contingency plans to you project (many things can happen during the project lifetime). Freelance workers don't have the same number of opportunities as providing service companies. Don't hesitate to throw away possible projects that are out of your core business scope. Remember if the project doesn't pay your effort don't accept it. Don't accept too many projects at the same time, you can even deliver them on time but on the long term your work will suffer, remember quality is the most important!

All that I said is true and very pretty, but I still need to present lower budgets to compete with providing service companies! If your core business is defined and organised during your work you can and must create a framework so that you can reuse material and ideas on other projects. With this you can decrease project lifetime and obviously the final cost. How? Well, your hour cost is the same but you will do it in less time.

And if I'm sick? If you work alone nothing can be done, but if you are part of a team and if you developed a contingency plan for each project, you will have no problem. It was planned, remember?

As you can see is not easy to be a freelancer, you need to be disciplined, organized, responsible and to have management and commercial skills but mostly important you need to be an expert in your field.

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