

Freelancing and Entrepreneurship Worksheet

This is the worksheet for May's seminar, which you can find in audio and transcript forms at: www.writershuddle.com/seminars/june2014.

In this seminar with guest speaker [Thursday Bram](#), we covered a range of topics related to freelancing and being business-like as a writer.

Breaking Into Freelancing

Build up some clips by writing for your existing contacts (it's fine to write for free at this stage). If you don't have existing connections, you can get your first clips by guest posting or by writing for local newspapers or magazines.

It's also really important to have your own website: potential clients will check you out online. Link to samples of your work, and quote satisfied customers (even if they weren't paying ones).

Common Freelancing Mistakes to Avoid

The biggest, worst mistake freelancers make is screwing up their taxes (either not understanding their obligations, or not setting aside enough money).

Take a basic bookkeeping class and learn how to keep your accounts. Also, track your time. Make sure you know exactly how much time you're spending on each client project – so you can bill correctly and so you can set your prices more accurately.

Setting Your Rates

It's often better to price per project than per hour, as (a) clients will know exactly how much their project will cost, and (b) it may sound cheaper to clients to have a project price rather than a per hour figure.

Raise your rates regularly; Thursday does so at least once a year. If you don't have any time left to take on new clients, it's time to start charging your existing clients more!

Most clients will be happy to wait until you're available. They'll also value your work more if they know you're in high demand.

Ending a Client Relationship

If you no longer want to work with a client, finish up any existing work that you're under contract for, then let them know you're moving on to other projects. Recommend another freelance writer who they could work with.

Don't try to end the relationship by raising your rates dramatically: they may stick with you anyway!

Finding New Clients

First, figure out exactly who you want as a client. The more you specialise, the more you can charge. Then find out where your clients typically hang out (e.g. PR people are often on Twitter). Don't neglect offline networking: this can be very powerful.

Building a Team of Writers

If you choose to contract out work to other writers, make sure you choose people whose writing you've read before and who you trust. Develop systems to make projects run smoothly.

Exercise:

If you haven't already got a website for your writing, look at getting one set up. Starting a blog is a great way to do this: see the mini-course on [Starting Your First Blog](#) for help with that.