

Creating a Killer Freelancing Profile with Checklist

Freelancing is a big leap. It's also one of the most satisfying moves I've ever made with my career. I get to do something I love every day and I get to choose how I spend my most valuable resource – my time. If you're moving into freelancing, you'll be considering the various freelancing platforms for finding clients and selling your skills.

[Upwork](#), [ClearVoice](#) and [Contently](#) are three platforms I use effectively as a writer. There are plenty of others out there on the internet – Fiver, TextBroker, Constant Content – it seems new freelancing platforms appear each year. This guide will focus on the key points you need to address for your freelancing profile on nearly any platform. The layout will be different, the key elements will be largely the same. Given that Upwork holds the largest market share (9% at the time of writing), you'll find this guide bends towards Upwork.

Your profile is your ad, your introduction and the first step to convincing the client you're the right writer for the job. Getting it right is the start of your battle to land the work you love in a freelancing market. Don't be afraid to refine and tweak your profile as you develop and grow. But first, let's get your profile written and published!

Choosing a photo and writing an engaging profile story

No matter which platform you decide to get started on, you're going to have to answer some key questions for your potential clients – which is great, because as a writer, it's always easier to get writing in answer to questions. Your profile description needs to answer the following...

1. Who are you? This goes beyond your name. Think about who you are in terms of your writing skills. You could be an English Literature Graduate with a Love of Words and Research. Maybe you're an Experienced Writer with a Background in Tech and Natural Resource Management or a Dedicated Wordsmith who has a penchant for Marketing and Sales.

Think about who you are and come up with a job title that describes and sells your skill to make the reader - your potential client – want to know more.

2. Why would someone benefit from hiring you? Answer your potential client's questions and pain points before they have to ask them. Your availability for discussing projects, niche skills, ability and willingness to solve problems are all benefits that you bring to the client along with the skills you are hoping to get hired for. Your skills draw the clients interest, it's the benefits that sell them.

Benefits are the added extra things people get on top of the service they are hiring you for. Make these clear in your profile. If you're well organised, mention it. Never missed a deadline yet? That should go in too. If you know how to drive a WordPress blog to publish content, note that as well. Your profile needs to clarify your core skills and the extra bits that make you outstanding.

3. What skills and unique experiences do you have that set you apart from the competition? It's helpful to remember that it's a person who is going to hire you – even if it's a big corporate project, it'll come down to a person to hire you. People like to hire people that are like them. Give a little of yourself in the profile, don't be all business and no humanity.

That doesn't mean you should drop the professional approach, it *does* mean that you should show a human side – but in a professional way. One line that I include in nearly every profile or pitch I write is that I am Australian but live in the UK. I expand on this to show that it helps me have a broader grasp of the English language.

Think about what makes you different, more personable and how that can be viewed from the point of view of making it a better fit for the potential client. So take your difference and turn it around so it's about the client who is reading it.

4. Choose a professional photo This doesn't have to be something in a suit! It should be a friendly image with an uncomplicated background. A blue sky works just as well as a brick wall. You also want a shot that feels like you're looking directly at the client who is considering hiring you. That means you need to look straight at the camera and smile when the picture is being taken. A smile goes a long way to winning over prospective clients.

Additional profile stories and including skills

Upwork allows – even encourages – freelancers to create niche profiles alongside their main profile. This means you can charge different rates for different kinds of writing and appear in client search results with a tailored profile to match that niche.

For this reason alone, it is worth considering. From a writers perspective, scriptwriting, blog writing and fictional short story writing (for instance) are very different beasts. Consider the different skills you have and if they warrant a separate profile. When writing the niche profiles, keep a similar tone of voice to your main profile and answer the same questions that you did above, but with your focus on the specialist skills

Video introductions

Upwork (and some other platforms) have the facility to upload an introduction video. Although I've never bothered with this, preferring to be the girl behind the words rather than in front of a camera, it can make you stand out from the competition. If this is something you are comfortable creating –

and it should be to a high finished standard so it doesn't work against you – the following steps and considerations should help.

Make your introduction memorable – Don't just introduce yourself and what you do, similar to your written profile description, spice it up with what makes you different, the benefits you bring and a little personal flair that highlights the things that make you stand out from your competition.

Share your *best work* – Rather than getting into the details of everything you do, give the highlights. Show your best work and speak about the inspiring bits of what you've done and hope to do more of.

Remember your ask – As fun as making a video might be (for some of us) your introductory clip has a very clear purpose: to get you hired! Don't forget your call to action. This doesn't have to be 'HIRE ME NOW!' but encouraging your viewer to reach out with their project details, learn more or drop you a message to give the introductory clip a point.

Don't forget...

- Keep your intro clip short – somewhere between 30 to 60 seconds should be enough. If you have more to say, keep it to an absolute maximum of 2 minutes. No one likes to watch someone waxing lyrical about themselves for long.
- You need to upload your clip to YouTube first. Disable any monetisation, make the clip public and then copy the link to paste in your profile section.
- Make sure any work you use in the portfolio is either all yours, or you have specific client permission to use it.

Your Portfolio of Work

It's helpful to have a portfolio of work on the freelancing platforms you choose to register with, however, keeping multiple portfolios up to date can be tiresome. Because of this, I only show a selection of work on freelancing platforms I use and keep a comprehensive portfolio on [Contently](#), which is a free platform that can be used precisely for this reason.

When creating a portfolio, it's not necessary to include every single thing you have ever written or project you have worked on. Instead, chose the cream of the crop, the very best examples of your expertise and talent. If you're just starting and don't have a lot of commissioned work for a portfolio, including examples of the work you have done for the joy of writing is a good idea.

Even today, I include my Medium and Vocal blogs in many of my project pitches. It can even help to create and publish work on areas of personal interest to include as examples of your style, knowledge and natural voice.

Keep track of the links to all of your work, even if it doesn't get included in your portfolio. Keep copies of the drafts you created for clients too. All of this can be relied upon to show specific examples of topic knowledge or a certain style if ever needed.

Always ask clients if they are happy for you to share the work you have done for them in your portfolio. I do this at the beginning of a contract. If a project doesn't lend itself to being included in a portfolio, such as email sequences, it can be a great example of a specific project you are pitching for. Remember to ask the original client if they are happy for you to share it. Letting a prospective client know that you are checking with a previous client before sending work to them builds trust and improves your credibility as a reliable, honest and conscientious freelancer.

Readiness tests, location and ID verification

Part of creating a profile on Upwork involves a readiness test. Although it only includes 10 questions, each question is timed (2 minutes each) and it covers their Terms of Service, How to Get Hired, and How to Manage Your Profile. It's not necessary to take the test to get up and running on the platform, but it *is* advisable. You get free connects for passing and you'll also join the Rising Talent Program. This can help you get recognised and hired faster. You can learn everything you need to know for the readiness test [here](#).

A complete profile – that includes your I.D verification too – helps you search and win work. Ensuring you complete this part of your profile on Upwork gets you off on the right foot. Photo ID and sometimes a brief video call with someone from the Upwork team is all it takes. Everything there is to know about I.D and location verification is [here](#).

Completing your profile

Making sure your profile is 100% complete – with training certificates, your hourly rate, the skills that will match you to jobs and setting your experience level are all crucial to attracting work and finding clients that will match your expectations.

When setting your rate, consider your experience level, the knowledge you can bring to each project and the pay level you need to make a job worthwhile. Charging too little will leave you feeling demoralised and that will impact the quality of your work. Charging too high will stop you from winning jobs. However, it is worth remembering that price is not the only deciding factor for clients when it comes to hiring. The quality of work you can deliver, your availability when they need to get in touch and your reputation are just as important

Launching your freelancing profile

Once everything has been completed, it's time to pat yourself on the back and take a break. Forget about your freelancing profile for a while. Rome wasn't built in a day and neither was a freelancing career. Don't try to rush things or you'll end up making mistakes.

Before you go 'public'

Proofread every section of your profile after taking a break from it for *at least* half a day. Edit any mistakes you may have made. Publish your profile and set it to public so you will appear in prospective client searches for your skills and style of writing.

Once your profile is public, you should begin searching the job feeds for the kinds of projects that excite you. Customise each pitch for the project you are hoping to win. This takes time, but using the same template each time won't win you as many jobs. Ask questions with your pitches and show the client you have read their job description and understood what they need.

Getting feedback on your profile

Once your profile is live, you can [ask for feedback](#) to improve it further. This is an excellent resource that you should make use of while you are still pitching for work on the platform. If the profile has been made on ClearVoice, editors will review it before it can go live.

Upwork has a robust and engaged community of freelancers in every sector. Tap into this for support, answers to questions about freelancing and tips for improving your pitch/win ratio.

ClearVoice has a [blog](#) for tips to win more projects and improve your profile. Upwork has several [specific articles](#) about [improving your freelancer profile](#) once it is set up and public. It's worth your time checking out these resources too and implementing advice if it's relevant to your situation.

Asking for feedback and testimonials

When you win work and complete a project – or even the first milestone – you should be asking your client for feedback and testimonials too. The star rating feedback is helpful, but clients' comments can help you to stand out.

The best time to ask for feedback – and comments with that feedback – is right after you have delivered on a project. This is when the client is most likely to be open to giving you a review.

Upwork also gives you the ability to give clients feedback too. Always aim to be constructive, polite and honest. This helps other freelancers navigate the platform and avoid clients that aren't so great to work with, but it also helps great clients win great freelancers to work with.

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Once you have set yourself up on a freelancing platform or two, keep at it. Often it takes a short while to find your feet and build momentum with your freelancing career. Congratulate yourself for the small steps and successes you have had along the way. Learn from your mistakes and then move on. Choosing to freelance means you are in control of your career and you will need to take responsibility for the highs and the lows. Always keep learning, keep improving and aim to add more value to each project you win than the client expects from you. That's how you'll improve your rating and win even more projects.

Profile creation checklist #1 of 2:

Create freelancing title to go along with your name	
Write a profile description that highlights benefits (additional perks for hiring me)	
Profile description includes unique skills and experiences that make me 'human' and set me apart from other freelancers	
Profile photo of me looking into the camera	
A niche profile has been created for specialist skills and it has the same tone of voice as the main profile	
Video introduction filmed	
Video uploaded to YouTube	
YouTube video link embedded on my profile page	
Select portfolio of work added to freelancing platform	
More extensive online portfolio created	
List or folder for <i>all</i> writing work created as a live document that can be updated regularly	
Upwork readiness test completed and passed	
Location and ID verification complete	
Key skills selected and added to profile	
Training and education certificates added to profile	
Hourly rate determined and set on profile and sub-profiles	
Save your profile and take a break	

Profile creation checklist #2 of 2:

Proof read every section of our profile and edit/correct any mistakes	
Set profile to public	
Pitch for interesting projects (remember to create a customised proposal for every pitch)	
Ask for feedback on your profile from the freelancing community	
Ask for feedback and testimonials from your clients	
Provide constructive and fair feedback to the clients you work with	