



GRADUATE & LIVE PRESENTS

**MAKE MONEY
LIVE ANYWHERE
BE FREE**

A MODERN GUIDE TO FREELANCING





We are all
commanders of our
own ship.

Freelancing is a gift
given to us in the
internet age.

It is our chance to
live the lives we
want to live.

RYAN ASTAPHAN

Founder, Graduate & Live

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Getting Started

The Modern Guide to Freelancing is a simple resource that can help lead you along the path to personal and professional freedom.

Graduate & Live is about FREELancing. Now, it's important to note that freelancing isn't for lazy or disinterested workers. It's just a different form of employment that students from all majors are eligible to perform. Instead of getting hired to work on a consistent basis, you're getting hired by multiple employers for individual projects. It's that simple.

Freelancers have the option to work with real-world clients or develop relationships with online employers. In this guide, we're focusing on how to freelance in the digital world. Online freelancing is a great place to start. The skills you'll learn in the digital sphere will be transferable to any future client.

If you're **not** an independent, proactive problem solver, freelancing might not be the best fit. Inaction will kill you. It's your job to make an effort. When you're ready to give it your all, I'm ready to show you how.

Now let's move on.

Here's the game plan. In this Quickstart Guide, you'll learn:

- 1) How to find freelance jobs
- 2) How to set your rate and create a solid proposal
- 3) How to run your own business
- 4) How to legally form a business
- 5) How to pay your taxes
- 6) How to manage money

With that being said, it's important to realize that Graduate & Live isn't filled with groundbreaking get-rich-quick schemes. It's a handbook of useful tools, created by me, that will help you pursue a freelance career in both the digital sphere and the real world.

If you want to live your way and you're willing to put in the effort, Graduate & Live's *Modern Guide to Freelancing* is a great resource. Oh, and one more thing. You've got to be down to work with a computer.

Ready to get started? All you'll need is 12 Steps to Success.

Sincerely,

Ryan Astaphan

Ryan Astaphan
Founder of Graduate & Live
ryan@graduateandlive.com



Why do you want to freelance?

Motivation comes easy when you have a **vision** in mind for where you want to go in life. Take time to think out your goal, because that is the whole reason for doing any of this.

With your vision of this goal, work should not feel like a chore, but like a step towards your dream.

LET'S GO!

STEP #1 - REGISTER AT UPWORK.COM

Upwork is the most popular destination for freelancers.

An abundant array of jobs are found on this website. Jobs suitable for students and graduates of all majors. Individual employers, small companies and large businesses will be the people to hire you.

It's simple to sign up for a profile on Upwork. Follow the tutorial to get started.

1. REGISTER

- a. Sign up as a freelancer, a.k.a *someone looking for work*.

2. CREATE A PROFILE

- a. You will be prompted to select a *job category*. It's up to you to decide where your skills fit.
 - i. Certain sections will be applicable to almost all college students and graduates, like administrative work in well-known applications like Microsoft Office. One or two job categories should be more specific to you. If you're unsure of which to select, don't stress. You can change that later on. And if you want a more in-depth look at the job categories, go [here](#).
 - ii. Put the least amount of effort into filling out your profile. Keep it to the basics while still making it look real (because the profile will have to pass a review). Later on you'll come back later to perfect it.
 - iii. You will be asked to rate your experience level, which actually has nothing to do with your experience. It refers to how much you want to get paid. Think of the three categories as similar to gas prices: Entry level (Cheap), Intermediate (Regular), and Expert (Premium).
 - iv. When entering your hourly billing rate, go for \$15 at a minimum. Don't undervalue yourself - \$15 is well under the going rate for many common jobs.

3. CHOOSE A MEMBERSHIP PLAN

a. Select the free option: *Freelancer Basic*. There's no need to upgrade to the *Freelancer Plus* account yet. Let's make money before we have to spend it.

4. ADJUST YOUR SETTINGS

a. After completing the registration process, you'll want everything to be set by the time you're ready to win jobs.

i. Access your settings by clicking your profile picture in the top right of the screen, as seen [here](#).

ii. Create a security question.

iii. Click on Tax Information and fill it out.

iv. Click on Get Paid and fill it out.

THERE YOU GO. YOU'RE ALL DONE. LET'S MOVE ON TO THE NEXT STEP.

STEP #2 - POST A PHOTO EDITING JOB

By taking on the role of the supervisor, you'll get a sense of what employers look for when selecting a candidate.

It's time to get an introductory look into hiring someone. Posting a photo editing job allows you to learn more about how job details are laid out on Upwork.com. Soak up the information. It will be immensely valuable later.

Don't skip this step. It will also improve your job proposals and result in a better chance of winning the job, which will result in you making more money.

***Note: IF you end up hiring someone to edit your photo, it'll cost about \$3.**

1. CREATE A COMPANY

- a. Go to your Settings (by clicking your name in the top right corner of the page).
- b. Click Create a company.
- c. Click Create a Client Company.

2. ADJUST THE SETTINGS FOR YOUR COMPANY

- a. After creating your company, you'll be able to view Upwork from the employer perspective.
 - i. Verify the view by looking at the top right corner of the screen. Be sure the name and profile picture are that of the company and not your freelancer (real) name.

- b. Go to your Settings again.
- c. Click Billing Methods.
- d. Add a Billing Method.
- e. Verify the Billing Method.

4. POST A JOB

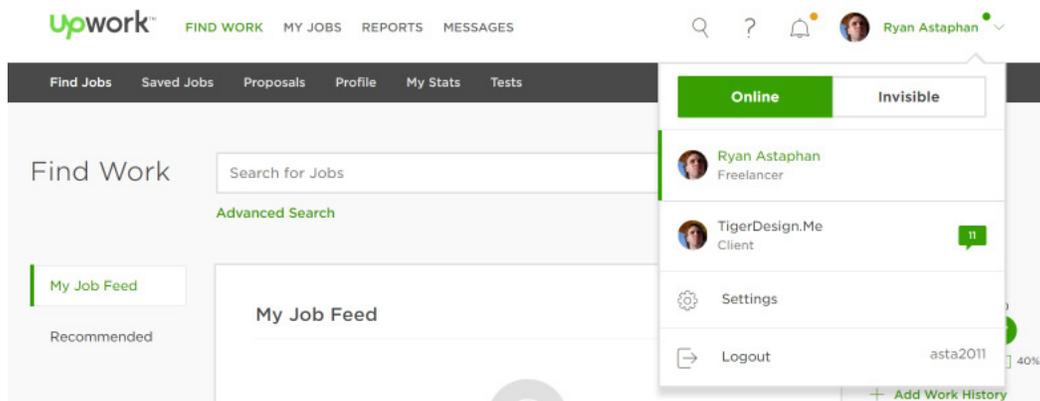
- a. Create a post. [Here's an example you should follow.](#)
- b. Invite freelancers to apply.
- c. Wait 12-24 hours to allow enough candidates to apply. Feel free to move on to the next step during the waiting period.
- d. When you come back, take note of freelancers' proposals, profiles and portfolios.
- e. Find a freelancer who will do the job in one hour for \$3 or more. This very well could require some negotiation, but be confident. A touchup of a profile picture should take just a few minutes of the worker's time. Feel free to hire someone.

THERE YOU GO. YOU'RE ALL DONE. LET'S MOVE ON TO THE NEXT STEP.

STEP # 3 - BROWSE THE JOB BOARDS

Step #3 might seem simple, but it requires focused observation. Taking notes might be a good option.

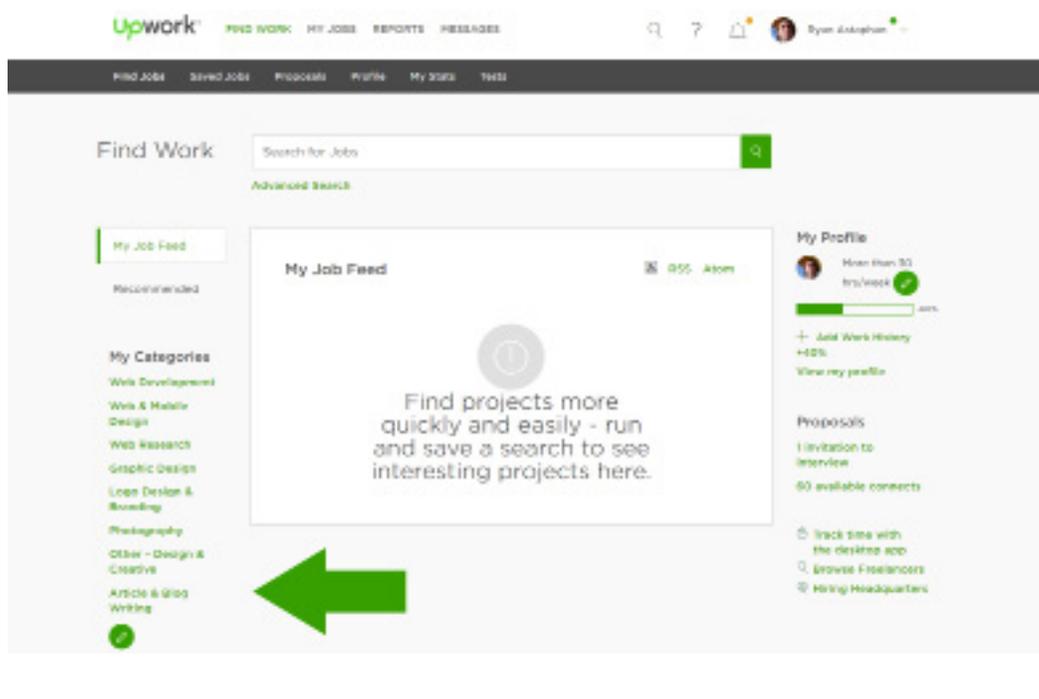
Before we start, let's make sure you're browsing from the freelancer page. Double check the top right corner of the screen and click the profile drop-down to select your freelancer account.



From your freelancer homepage, click on one of the categories on the left-hand side. You can also click on Recommended.

*Note: You can click the pencil icon at the bottom to edit which job categories you'd like to appear on your homepage.

**Note: The admin section is filled with a broad selection of jobs that most any college student or graduate can do. These jobs can earn money, but they are essentially for unskilled labor.



From here, you can view the Job Listings within each chosen Category.

The screenshot displays the Upwork Job Search page. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'Upwork' logo and links for 'FIND WORK', 'MY JOBS', 'REPORTS', and 'MESSAGES'. Below this is a search bar with 'Search for Jobs' and a green search button. A 'Job Search' section on the left contains several filters: 'Category' (Web, Mobile & Built...), 'Subcategories' (All Subcategories, Desktop Software Development (2180), Ecommerce Development (4148), Game Development (3016), Mobile Development (17240), Product Management (3100), QA & Testing (8880), Scripts & Libraries (1688), Web Development (17232), Web & Mobile Design (2196), Other - Software Development (2762)), 'Job Type' (Hourly (7,898), Fixed Price (3,735)), 'Experience Level' (Entry Level - \$ (3,894), Intermediate - \$ (8,263), Expert - \$55 (3,732)), 'Client History' (No Hire (5,894), 1 to 9 Hires (3,192), 10+ Hires (7,897)), 'Client Info' (My Previous Clients, Payment Verified), 'Budget (fixed price)' (a slider from \$0 to \$100k), 'Location' (a dropdown for 'Select Locations'), and 'Project Length' (Hours or Days (0), Weeks (0), Months (0), > 6 weeks (2,087), Not Specified (0)).

The main content area shows a list of job postings. The first one is 'UI/UX for job placement website' with a 'Save This Search To Your Job Feed' button. Other listings include 'PHP Developer \$45/Per Hour', 'Need help me for Wordpress add-on plugin', 'Redesign the website', 'Senior Node.js Developer Full Time', and 'Rest Api with node.js'. Each listing includes details like 'Ready - Full Time Less than 1 month, 10-20 hrs/week - Posted 2 minutes ago', a brief description of the project, and client information such as 'Payment verified', a star rating, and budget range.

You should spend a good amount of time reviewing the postings. Focus on:

- Paying attention to how Upwork lists details about each job.
- Getting a sense of what jobs are being posted.
- Learning how to use the filter tool on the left hand-side of the page. This filter has the power to make or break your Upwork experience. You will use it to find the right types of clients and jobs later on.

Lastly, click on individual jobs and soak in all the different aspects of each posting.

The screenshot shows the Upwork interface for a job posting titled "Javascript, HTML and AJAX Bug Fixing and Tweaks". The job is categorized as "Web Development" and is posted 21 minutes ago. It is an hourly job with a budget of less than \$20 per week and a need for freelancers with the lowest rates. The job details include a description of the work, project type (one-time project), and project stage (fully specified). The client's profile is visible on the right, showing a 5-star rating (4.58) and 250 reviews. The client is located in Scarborough, Ontario, Canada, and has a 62% hire rate with 3 open jobs. The client has spent over \$10,000 on Upwork and has an average hourly rate paid of \$6.15 per hour. The job is marked as "Fixed as Incomplete".

*****Note: Upwork's \$10/mo premium freelancer plan, Freelancer Plus, allows you to view competitors' high, low and average bids on jobs.**

THERE YOU GO. YOU'RE ALL DONE. LET'S MOVE ON TO THE NEXT STEP.

STEP #4 - SCOUT THE MARKET

It's time to go undercover.
It's time to be a wolf and
put on sheep's clothing. It's
time for me to stop making
stupid metaphors.

When you hired the photo editor, you stepped in the kiddie pool. You got your feet wet and played pretend business. Now, it's time to act like an adult and get a taste of the real world. And now, it's time for me to stop with these silly similes.

Think of a posting that caught your eye while browsing the job boards. Then, post a job with similar details. State clearly that you are looking for someone who possibly work with in the future (in case you ever hire another freelancer to work for you).

(Remember to switch from your freelancer account to your company's account by visiting the top right corner of the screen. And be sure to make your job private - you'll learn why shortly.)

Your goals will be to:

1. Study the competition.
2. Determine the going rates and how to value yourself.
3. Learn what the hiring person looks for, so as to improve your ability to win their attention.
4. Study the competition.
5. Determine the going rates and how to value yourself.
6. Learn what the hiring person looks for, so as to improve your ability to win their attention.

Upwork requires Connects to apply for a job, but each account has a limited number of Connects. Free accounts get 60 Connects. Plus accounts get 70 Connects and the ability to buy more at \$1/1 connect.

Submit A Proposal

Save Job

Required Connects to submit a proposal: 2
Available Connects: 60

If a freelancer is invited to a job, it doesn't require Connects to apply. Make the job private, so no one can apply unless they're invited. Then, go ahead and invite freelancers to apply.

*Note: To make a job private, click on Freelancer Preferences while posting the job. Select "Only freelancers I have invited can find this job."

What time commitment is required for this job?

 More than 30 hrs/week	 Less than 30 hrs/week	 I don't know yet
--	--	---

Freelancer Preferences



Do you want freelancers to find and apply to your job?

- Anyone can find and apply to this job.
- Only Upwork users can find this job.
- Only freelancers I have invited can find this job.

Do you have freelancers in mind that you would like to invite?

Select freelancers

THERE YOU GO. YOU'RE ALL DONE. LET'S MOVE ON TO THE NEXT STEP.

STEP #5 - POLISH YOUR PROFILE

Take what you've learned from scouting other profiles to better your own.

Here's some extra help:

- Always present yourself in terms of how you could help the person who is going to hire you. That's equally true for your profile and job proposals.
- Your tagline is the most prominent feature on your profile. You want it to be relevant and catchy. Make it count.
- The portfolio section is the only thing that shows you can actually do what you claim. In my opinion, it's the most relevant part of your profile.

If you need help building your profile, Upwork offers two resources:

- [Sample profiles.](#)
- [Enhance Your Upwork Freelancer Profile for Greater Success.](#)

YOUR PORTFOLIO IS THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF YOUR PROFILE!

Yes, it is worth repeating for a third time now: you need to **prove** to people what you are capable of. If you do not yet have one, get started on that now! Here's a creative tip that can make the process easier for you:

Create a fictional portfolio or relevant piece of work for a namebrand company, such as Visa or United Airlines. *Try matching the positioning of your services to the brand you choose (ie. Walmart vs Gucci).

THERE YOU GO. YOU'RE ALL DONE. LET'S MOVE ON TO THE NEXT STEP.

INTERMISSION

Take a short break and collect your thoughts, and then get ready to plan for your success.

Read the remaining steps without acting on them.

Once you're done, proceed to Step #6 and embody the philosophy that "genius is one percent inspiration and ninety-nine percent perspiration."

THERE YOU GO. YOU'RE ALL DONE. LET'S MOVE ON TO THE NEXT STEP.

STEP # 6 - GO FISHING

Your time has come, young grasshopper. It is time to set out on your own and find sustenance in this dark, cruel world.

It's time to start bidding on some jobs. But first, a quick word on Upwork's Freelancer Basic and Freelancer Plus memberships.

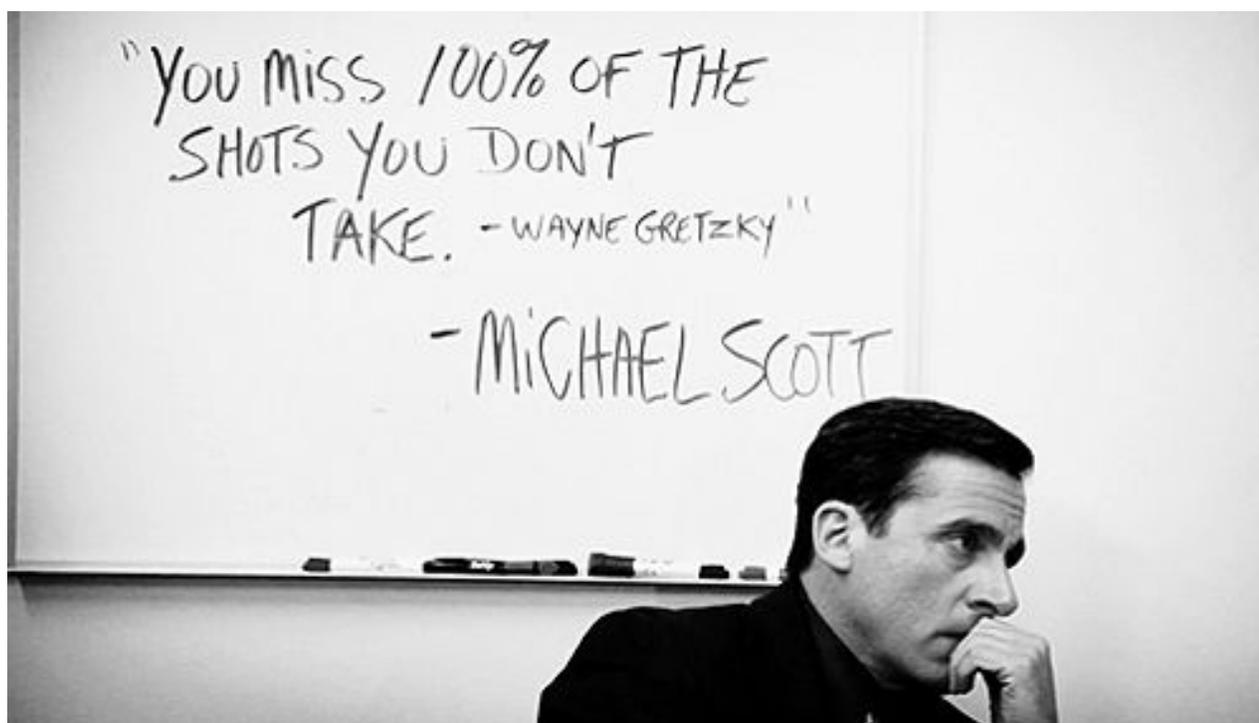
Until you start earning money, there's no problem with sticking to the Basic membership, although you will be at a disadvantage. Eventually you should definitely upgrade to the \$10/month Plus membership. One major benefit of the Plus membership is that it allows you to view competitor bids - it shows the minimum, maximum and average bid for any job. [Read the differences between the free and premium plans here](#) (*you have to be logged in to your freelancer account in to view this page*).

CREATE A ROUTINE

For some people, it can be a daunting task to put in effort without a guaranteed reward. Your best way to win jobs is to find a routine that makes you comfortable.

MY ROUTINE

Back in my freelancing days, I'd get up out of bed and head straight to the computer. There, I'd start by browsing the job boards and by taking note of interesting positions. I'd do this for about an hour. Next I would go back to my notes and apply to each job I wanted. By creating a routine and sticking to it, I was able to create a sustainable system for finding work. This routine ensured that I had a realistic chance of winning jobs, while still leaving me with a long day to do whatever else I needed. This will also help to avoid burnout - where people go so hard for a day or three and then quit after not seeing immediate success.



Another way to maximize your chance of getting hired is by writing a great proposal. Here's some tips:

- Repeat relevant details of the job to demonstrate that you understand what the employer wants to accomplish.
- Describe what you can do for the employer.
- Be aware of the competition to set realistic goals. If a position is highly coveted, you want to get noticed. In many cases, your goal should not be to get hired immediately, but to get your foot in the door. Keep your proposal short, especially when many other freelancers are applying.
- Engage the employer by including a call to action. Invite them to contact you to discuss the project.

Winning your first job can be hard. Without a Job Success rating on Upwork, many employers will be turned off. You need to get hired on the merit of your proposal, profile and portfolio.

If you're still having issues (and if you are yet to have a strong portfolio), you could offer a sizeable discount. Another option would be to cheat the system by creating a second account and hiring yourself. That way you could give yourself your first perfect Job Success rating. Do the right thing, though, and earn your 5 stars honestly.

THERE YOU GO. YOU'RE ALL DONE. LET'S MOVE ON TO THE NEXT STEP.

STEP # 7 - PROTECT YOURSELF

Before you start working for a client, you have to protect your money.

Remember: time is money.

MILESTONES

- a. Think of milestones as your own personal payment plan. Instead of getting paid in one lump sum, you'll break the project's cost into two or more payments. Milestones will protect you from getting screwed – you don't want to put in a bunch of work only for a client to back-out and pay you nothing. You also do not want to find yourself so far into a large project, desperate for a payday, only to be held hostage by a terror client who keeps wanting more.
- b. Milestones help to build a checkpoint system into the project's workflow. Some clients, especially on larger projects, might not be able to monitor your progress constantly. To make it easier for them, they say "when you complete X, you get Y% of the project's cost." That's when they can drop in and check the progress.
- c. Extra pieces of advice:
 - i. Insist on milestones when a project's depth and cost has you worried about potentially losing time and money.
 - ii. For small, non-costly projects, milestones aren't worth it. When getting hired for a quick \$20 job, there's no use for a milestone.
 - iii. If you're a video creator, graphic designer or photo editor, present the finished work with watermarks to prevent clients from using your work without paying.

UPFRONT PAYMENTS

- a. Another tip is to arrange an upfront payment. Upfront payments will weed out clients who aren't serious. If you end up dealing with a terror client, upfront payments will make sure you're at least partially compensated for your work.

There's no one-size-fits-all payment template. Your preferences may differ and the project's details may call for a unique payment plan. Trust yourself to make the right decision. Here are some sample structures:

40-40-20

33-33-33

50-50

SETTING THE EXPECTATIONS

- a. Before starting any work and even before officially getting hired, you want to clearly define what the client will receive for hiring you. For all intents and purposes, these discussions will serve as a contract.

Set the expectations, make sure they're perfectly clear and document them with the client. Outline what the client will receive. Why? Because many clients, as nice as they may be, are going to come up with great ideas of how to improve the project. And they are going to want you to do them for the previously agreed upon price, meaning they will want you to do extra work at no additional cost.

- b. If it's a really simple change and you're happy to do it, by all means, feel free. But in case you don't, it's important to protect yourself and define what they're paying for before the work begins. Let the client know (before getting hired) that an additional round of changes will come with a minimum flat or hourly fee.

THERE YOU GO. YOU'RE ALL DONE. LET'S MOVE ON TO THE NEXT STEP.

STEP # 8 - CLIENT INTERACTION

Freelancing is a service.

Much like being a waiter, it's your job to serve your customers. Many times, the service you provide a client will have a bigger impact on their satisfaction than the actual finished product.

Communication and consistency are the two most important factors to customer relations. Clients put food on your table and pay for your lifestyle. You should show them respect.

PLANNING THE PROJECT

Miscommunication is a major cause of trouble in this world. While it's perfectly fine to discuss projects via phone or Skype, all pertinent project information should be communicated in a text-based format. This is to protect yourself. If you did have a phone conversation, you should end the call by saying: "I'll send you an email/Upwork message to review what we discussed."

To make it even easier on yourself, all communication should be kept in one place (opposed to communicating via WhatsApp, Skype *and* email). A single line of communication will make it easier to refer to past conversations.

Luckily, Upwork has its own communication service. If you'd like, Upwork will keep track of all conversations.

When a client is ready to offer you the contract, you should:

1. Discuss the project.
2. Define the expectations.
3. Create the contract (Don't get intimidated by the word contract. This could simply be an email or Upwork message that clearly defines what will be delivered in this business exchange. You'll use this as referenc if there is ever uncertainty or a dispute).
4. Congratulate yourself on getting hired!

STAYING IN TOUCH

If a client messages you and doesn't hear back for two days, they're going to be upset if your silence was unexpected.

By contrast, a client would be more understanding if they knew ahead of time that you'll respond to all emails within 48 hours.

Clients hate being left in the dark. That's a fact. You should communicate clearly and promptly. More often than not, your customers will understand. But only if you keep them in the loop.

KEEPING CONSISTENT

Without consistency, there's no credibility. It's not good enough to be good someday. Day after day you need to bring the same level of performance. Greatness comes from an accumulation of work. Also remember to always complete your projects by their deadlines.

If you do all of this, your clients will respect you.

THE WRONG CLIENT & THE WRONG PROJECT

Some clients are trouble makers, and some are so high maintenance that they are not worth the money. *Flush 'em*. These clients are not worth your time. That's especially true when you're not desperately in need of money.

Remember that you don't have to accept every project offer. It is ok to respectfully decline a project. If that's the case, it may be in your best interest to suggest another person to do the job. You might want to work with the client in the future, and it's important not to burn a bridge.

THERE YOU GO. YOU'RE ALL DONE. LET'S MOVE ON TO THE NEXT STEP.

STEP # 9 - TURN A ONE-NIGHT FLING INTO A LONG-TERM THING

Someone may hire you for a single project with no intention of working together in the future. Your goal should be to convert these one-time projects into long-term relationships.

You can do this by embracing a regular routine of niceties. The social aspect of business is huge. Treat your customers as people, not as faceless clients. Before you're even hired, show your personality by speaking to clients in a casual but professional manner. If you're able to express who you are, there's a better chance that they'll see you as a real person too. Connecting with people will improve the likelihood that they'll work with you again in the future.

Develop good social habits. If you don't forget about your past clients, they won't forget about you.

Keep in touch. Drop in and say hello. Send them a message/email from time to time.

- See how they are.
- Let them know about a service you're offering, a special you're running or an idea that could benefit them. *This isn't about selling, it's about finding ways to help them.*

You'll find a style that suits you and your business. Just don't be pushy or annoying.

THERE YOU GO. YOU'RE ALL DONE. LET'S MOVE ON TO THE NEXT STEP.

STEP # 10 - LEGALLY FORMING A BUSINESS

This section is applicable to citizens and residents of the United States of America.

There are two main reasons why you should consider creating a legal business.

TAX BENEFITS

The government gives special benefits to official businesses. This means you won't have to pay for earnings that are later spent on business expenses.

If you made \$30,000 a year but had \$10,000 of business expenses, you would only pay taxes on the \$20,000 profit. When you file as an individual, you'll get taxed on your whole income.

SELF-DEFENSE

Having a legal business, such as a Limited Liability Company (LLC), can provide a shell to protect your personal assets. As an individual, if you found yourself being sued or owing business-related debt, then people could come after your money. Registering an official business will protect you. If someone attempts to take legal action against your LLC, they could only go after your company's assets and not your entire net worth.

WHEN SHOULD YOU FORM AN LLC?

There's no perfect answer to this question because every situation is unique. Let's start by discussing the barrier to starting a business: cost.

It costs money to form a business, but each state has different requirements. In Florida, it comes out to less than \$200. You can find this information on your state's website. Additionally, the formation of your business comes with some housekeeping and yearly expenses.

A business making little profit wouldn't really benefit from tax cuts, and it's less likely you'll need the legal protection.

Conversely, you might find it easier to start doing things the "right way" (by legally forming a business) from day one.

It's up to you to make the call of when it's worth forming an LLC.

(Note that is an LLC and not other types of business entities that I suggest you form).

If you decide to form an LLC, you'll need to look up the specifications. The process differs from state to state. Go to Google and type "LLC + your state's name." Make sure to find the official state website.

The state website will provide instructions on how to file. There are many companies that will handle the incorporation process for you at an extra cost. The state website will have the cheapest prices, but at \$170, LegalZoom is also a pretty good option.

TAX RESPONSIBILITIES

Having a government-recognized business comes with responsibilities. During the application process for your LLC, your state's website should list them. Take note and mark them in your calendar. If you don't see the list, call your state's business department and have them explain your responsibilities. The number should be listed on the website.

Here's some basics to note:

1. You will have to apply for an [Employer Identification Number \(EIN\)](#), which is free. You can think of the EIN as the social security number for your business.
2. You will have to file an annual report with your state.
3. You will have to pay a fee (or multiple fees) to your state every year.

THERE YOU GO. YOU'RE ALL DONE. LET'S MOVE ON TO THE NEXT STEP.

STEP # 11 - PAYING TAXES

Save money.
Get an accountant.
Don't piss off the IRS.

I'm going to make this as simple for you as possible: Get an accountant.

Doing taxes well is complicated. I'm happy to pay an accountant hundreds of dollars a year when it results in me saving thousands of dollars extra.

Now, if for whatever reason you are against that, I can say that I once had a good experience with TurboTax. Intuit's TurboTax was simple to use and free since I filed as an individual, not a business. However, you are taking risks by filing your taxes yourself (even with TurboTax's help). You are at risk for losing money by way of not maximizing your return and you are at risk of doing something the IRS will not be happy with.

Long story short, don't freak out. Let a professional take care of you so you can relax. Get an accountant.

THERE YOU GO. YOU'RE ALL DONE. LET'S MOVE ON TO THE NEXT STEP.

STEP # 12 - MONEY MANAGEMENT

When it comes to putting money in the bank, budgeting is of the utmost importance.

- 1. Calculate your monthly and yearly expenses. Figure out how much money you need to survive.**
- 2. If you can keep the cost of rent and utilities to a quarter of your income or less, you're in good shape.**
- 3. Only buy what you can afford with money you currently have. Spending money you haven't yet made is a risky game.**
 - a. Unless you're a credit whiz, avoid debt altogether. If you are disciplined, though, it might be a good to open a credit card.
 - i. Credit cards offer rewards programs. Some will give you a bonus if spend a certain amount within a specified period. If you're going to spend money anyway, it's worth doing. Especially for travelers. I've "made" thousands of dollars in air travel by doing this.
 - ii. It's important to build credit. Your credit rating increases if you pay your balance in full and never make a late payment.

b. If you don't have health insurance, get it.

i. Medical bills are the number one cause of bankruptcy in America. If money is an issue, get a barebones plan that covers emergencies and major medical issues.

c. Eliminate debt, whether it's a credit card or student loan.

i. Here is your go-to source for [learning how to pay off student loans](#). If you could use some advice, visit [Reddit.com/r/personalfinance](https://www.reddit.com/r/personalfinance).

4. Start saving for an emergency fund - aim for \$1,000 at first. Then save up enough money to last you six months without work.

a. It's best to keep your emergency money in an easily accessible place like a checking or savings account. Don't put it in stocks. You'll never know when you need some dough.

b. The emergency fund is a safety net. After you've built your six month emergency fund, you can do as you please. You'll have something to catch you if you fall.

5. Start investing in long-term savings.

a. You want to take advantage of the power of [compound interest](#) if you want a comfortable retirement fund when you're older.

b. The associates at [vanguard.com](https://www.vanguard.com) can provide you with basic but valuable assistance with investment possibilities.

THERE YOU GO. YOU'RE ALL DONE. LET'S MOVE ON TO THE NEXT STEP.

CONCLUSION

I want you to enjoy life. If you have any questions, if you want to talk, if whatever, then email me at ryan@graduateandlive.com. I'm here to help you. And if you could help me, please spread the word about G&L.

I WISH YOU THE BEST OF LUCK.



