

Career Essentials: Building a Freelance Career



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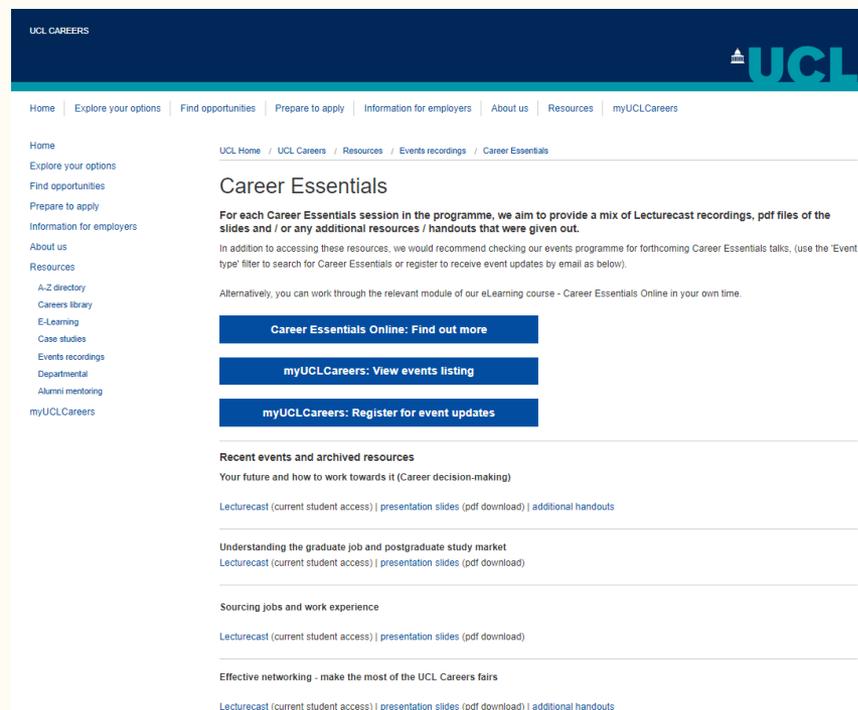
Career Essentials programme 2019 - 2020

- 12 title lunchtime talks.
- Small Group Work sessions (CV).
- 3 title workshops covering LinkedIn, Mock Assessment Centres and MBTI Personality Profiling.
- 6 module e-learning course.

Slides and recordings

www.ucl.ac.uk/careers/resources/slides/career-essentials

Search 'UCL Career Essentials'



The screenshot shows the UCL Careers website page for Career Essentials. The page has a dark blue header with the UCL logo and navigation links. A left sidebar contains a list of menu items. The main content area features a breadcrumb trail, a title 'Career Essentials', and introductory text. Below this are three prominent blue buttons: 'Career Essentials Online: Find out more', 'myUCLCareers: View events listing', and 'myUCLCareers: Register for event updates'. The page also lists 'Recent events and archived resources' with links to various lecture recordings and presentations.

UCL CAREERS

UCL

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Home

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E-Learning

Case studies

Events recordings

Departmental

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myUCLCareers

UCL Home / UCL Careers / Resources / Events recordings / Career Essentials

Career Essentials

For each Career Essentials session in the programme, we aim to provide a mix of Lecturecast recordings, pdf files of the slides and / or any additional resources / handouts that were given out.

In addition to accessing these resources, we would recommend checking our events programme for forthcoming Career Essentials talks, (use the 'Event type' filter to search for Career Essentials or register to receive event updates by email as below).

Alternatively, you can work through the relevant module of our eLearning course - Career Essentials Online in your own time.

[Career Essentials Online: Find out more](#)

[myUCLCareers: View events listing](#)

[myUCLCareers: Register for event updates](#)

Recent events and archived resources

Your future and how to work towards it (Career decision-making)

[Lecturecast \(current student access\)](#) | [presentation slides \(pdf download\)](#) | [additional handouts](#)

Understanding the graduate job and postgraduate study market

[Lecturecast \(current student access\)](#) | [presentation slides \(pdf download\)](#)

Sourcing jobs and work experience

[Lecturecast \(current student access\)](#) | [presentation slides \(pdf download\)](#)

Effective networking - make the most of the UCL Careers fairs

[Lecturecast \(current student access\)](#) | [presentation slides \(pdf download\)](#) | [additional handouts](#)

Small group CV sessions

- New this year
- Work on your CV in a group of up to 6 students, with an Applications Advisor

What we'll look at today

- What is freelancing – why do it?
- Defining your goals/strategy
- Finding and engaging your target market
- Marketing and building a website
- Pricing your services
- Invoicing and contracts
- Tax, self-assessment and insurance

Are graduates self-employed?

- **5.4%** of UCL surveyed graduates are self-employed, freelance or running a business. (58% response rate to DLHE 16/17 – 6 months after graduation)
- Nationally, 4.7% of recent graduates are self employed with 0.6% having set up a business

Who is self employed?

1. **Business owners** – entrepreneurs selling a product and/or a service
2. **Contracting** – paid by company to provide a specialist service
3. **Consulting** – as above, more to do with advice giving
4. **Freelancing** – offers skills and services, often to more than one company at a time
5. **Investors** – projects, business or stock market

What is an employee?

- ‘Typical’ work model
- Engaged to work ‘in service’ to employer
- Employer in ‘professional’ control of employees e.g. they can stop you going on a training course “law of master and servant”
- Has employments right e.g. minimum wage, holiday entitlement, sick pay etc.

Freelancing – in more detail

- Self-employed, and responsible for paying tax through the self-assessment process
- May be set up as a sole trader or a limited company
- Generally works for several clients at once, often on a per-hour or per-day basis
- Often works from home or own premises
- Most common in media, marketing and creative industries

Why freelance?



Don't even think about it if:

- You want to work less than in a regular job
- You need stability (if considering it instead being an employee)
- You don't like people
- You think it will make you rich!



Consider it if:

- You want to get some more experience alongside your current role
- You want more autonomy over your work
- You enjoy being flexible in your work patterns
- You enjoy a challenge

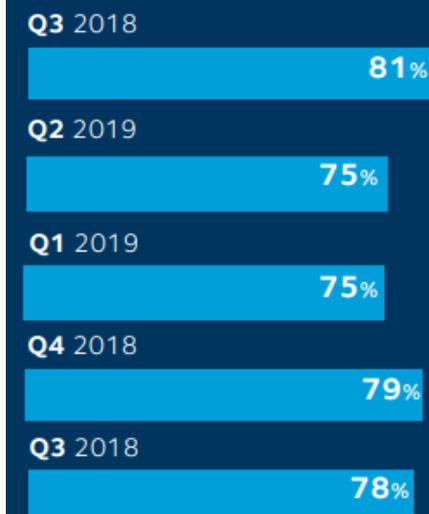


Benefits of freelancing

- Choice and control
- Focus on the work you enjoy
- The earning potential can be more
- Learn more business skills
- Financial and tax benefits

Demand for freelance work

Amount of time freelancers have been on assignment



Over the last **12 months** freelancers have been on assignment for, on average, **78%** of the time

Drawbacks

- No regular income
- No holiday leave or sick pay
- Can be lonely
- You have to pay for training / courses
- Often hard work and longer hours (especially when you are starting out)
- If you are a sole trader, you may be personally liable for costs if the business fails.



Taking time off?

24 DAYS

However, the average freelancer takes just 24 days of holiday a year – four less than what employees are entitled to.

78%

Freelancers do not feel they are able to switch off entirely, with four out of five (78%) working while on holiday.

1/6

One in six freelancers take no time off for the birth or adoption of their child. The average freelancer takes six weeks.

What do you want to freelance in?

Freelancers have a widespread presence across all occupations

Almost half of all freelancers work in:



Artistic, literary & media occupations
320,000



Managers & proprietors in other services
236,000



Functional managers & directors
135,000



Teaching & education professionals
134,000



Information technology & telecommunications professionals
105,000

Defining your goals/ strategy



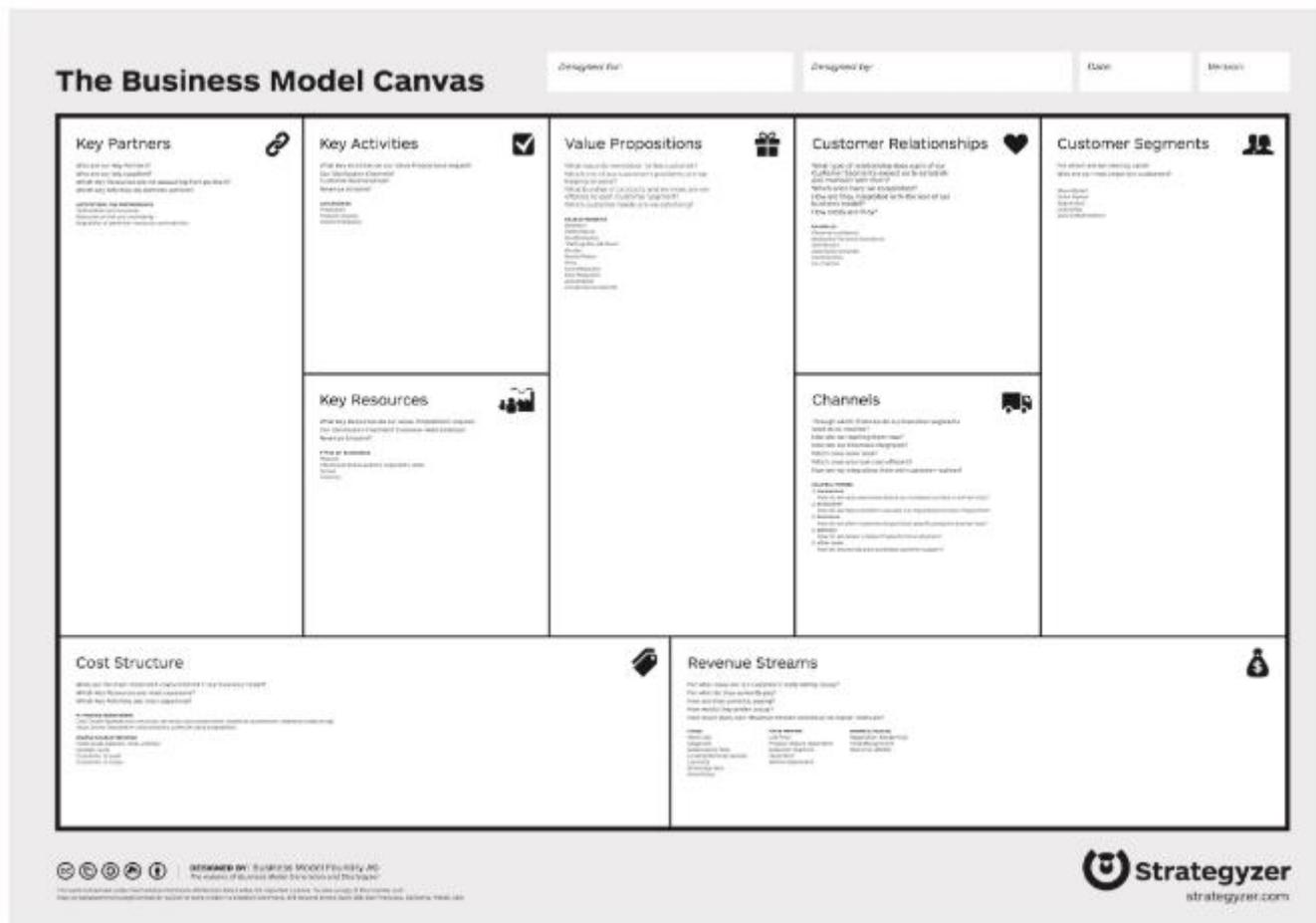
The business of 'you'

- A freelancer is essentially a small business
- So you need to have business plan



[Watch a video explaining this](#)

Business model canvas



Business model



- **Who** – target market
- **What** – is being offered to the target customer.
- **How** –to build and distribute
- **Value** – how are you going to generate revenue? How are you going to make money?

Value Propositions – the value of you / your services

- *How you are going to solve the problems of the clients*
- *The unique skills and experience you bring*
- *Why they should use you and not a competitor*

Case Study – translator

Matthew was trying to become a freelance translator. He could speak 3 languages fluently but had no formal qualifications in translation.

He found a start-up website to upload his profile on, and he saw most others had priced themselves at between £100-150 per project. So he decided to price at £50.

What value proposition might Matthew fulfil? Are there any flaws in his plan?

Case Study – website developer

Sarah took on a client and it seemed to be a perfect match. The client already had a Squarespace account but wanted some help setting up the website – which sold bespoke jewellery. They liaised by phone and email, but the client wasn't really clear about what they wanted. So Sarah spent 2 weeks setting things up using her own IT business website as a guide.

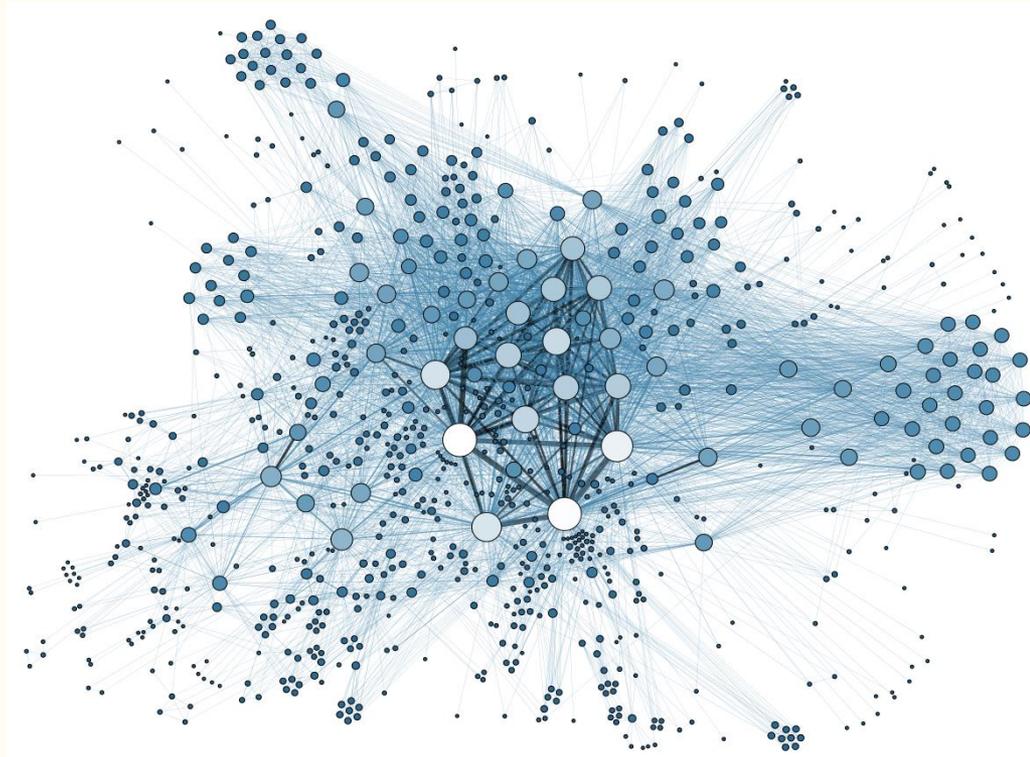
Is Sarah fulfilling a value proposition?

Finding and engaging your target market



Build your network

- Alumni
- Events / conferences
- Student union societies



Research the market

- Find companies that have hired freelancers and e-mail them for advice.



What should I ask?

- *Why did they hire the specific freelancer they hired?*
 - *How'd they find out about the freelancer they hired?*
 - *What problems were they having that led them to hiring a freelancer?*
 - *What are the results they expected from hiring a freelancer?*
- Paul Jarvis, freelance web developer

Find the e-mail address and...

Dear [X],

[Flattery] I've just seen the redesign of your website and it's brilliant – especially [list a specific feature/function].

[Context] I'm web designer and I was wondering if I could ask you a few quick questions to learn more about how I could best serve your industry.

[Getting to the point quickly] You are definitely a leader in your field, so I'd love to learn what I can – any answers will be kept in the strictest of confidence.

1. What led you to hiring someone to redesign your website?
2. What results did you expect?
3. How did you find the web designer you hired and why did you hire them?

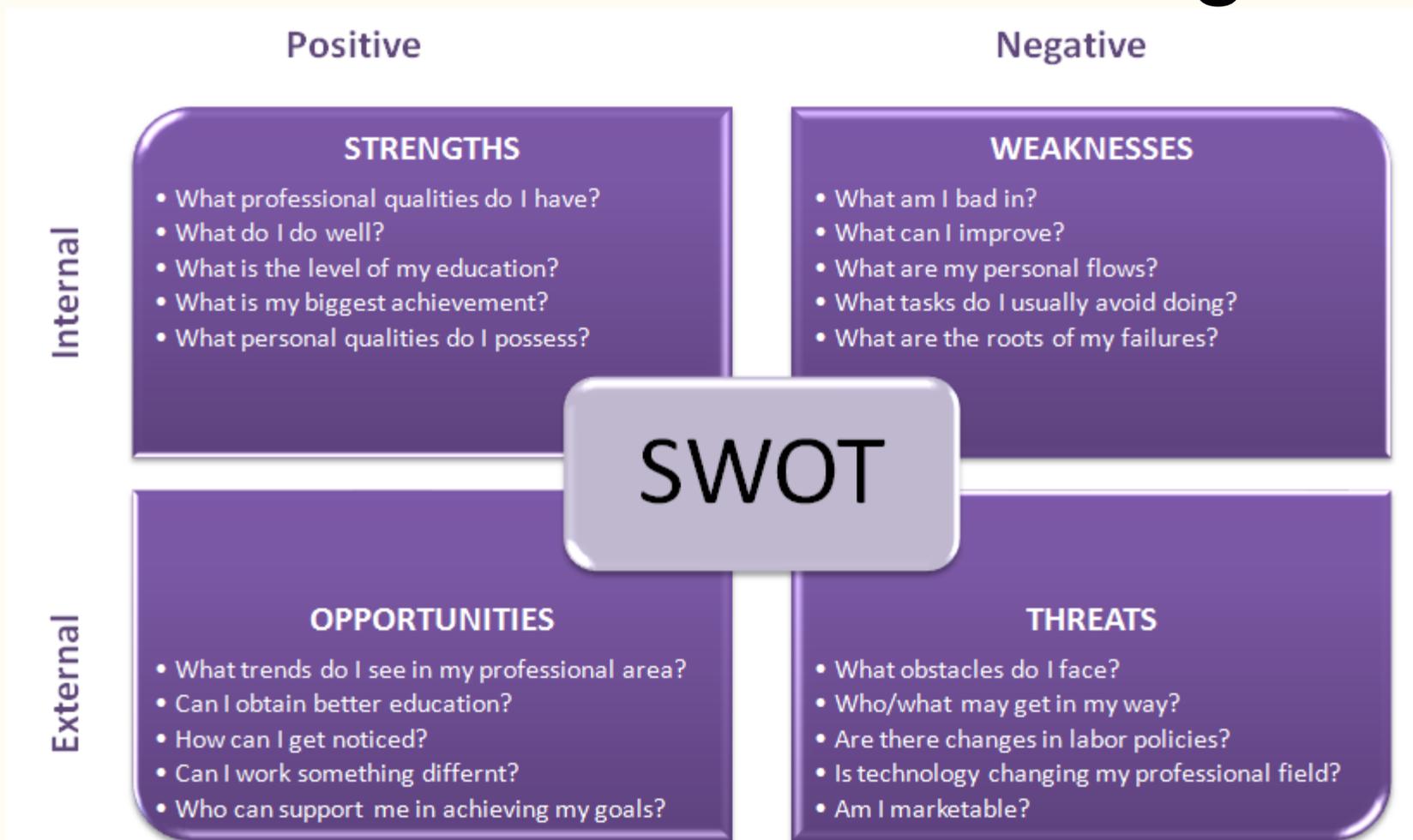
I appreciate your time and I look forward to hearing back from you,

[Your name]

Do a SWOT analysis

- Strengths
- Weaknesses
- Opportunities
- Threats

www.freelancersunion.org



Start to build up a portfolio



Volunteer work to build up portfolio

- Offer to help out a friend or family member
- Charity work
- Within your department e.g. marketing an event

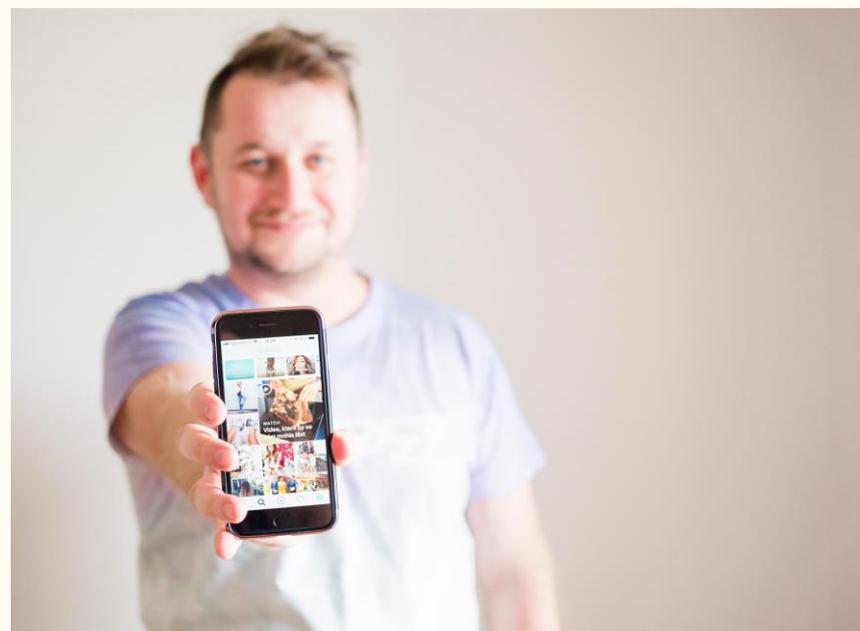
Some example freelance jobs sites:

- [We Work Remotely](#)
- [Guru](#)
- [Fiverr](#)
- [Upwork](#)
- [Twago](#)
- [FreelanceUK](#)

Tips for these sites

- Lead with solving *their* problem and not boasting about your skills.
- Respond / bid on lots of projects to get your name out there.
- Research the company
- If they don't hire you, ask to keep in touch

Marketing and building a website



What's in a name?



Tips from Forbes

- Avoid hard-to-spell names.
- Don't pick a name that could be limiting as your business grows e.g. 'OnlineBooks' instead of Amazon
- Conduct a thorough Internet search.
- Get the .com domain name.
- Use a name that conveys some meaning.
- Conduct a trademark search. [Link to trademark search](#)
- Get feedback on the name.

How can customers find you?

- Website
- Social media
- CV websites
- Freelancing sites



Social media



“We found Paul (the designer) because he answered a question we had on twitter. After seeing his portfolio and feeling like his style was a match for our brand, we hired him.”

[From Lifehacker .com](http://Lifehacker.com)

Social media platforms

- Which do firms use?
- Build up a following
- Posting/ sharing
- Analytics
- Sponsored posts.

Website – key aspects

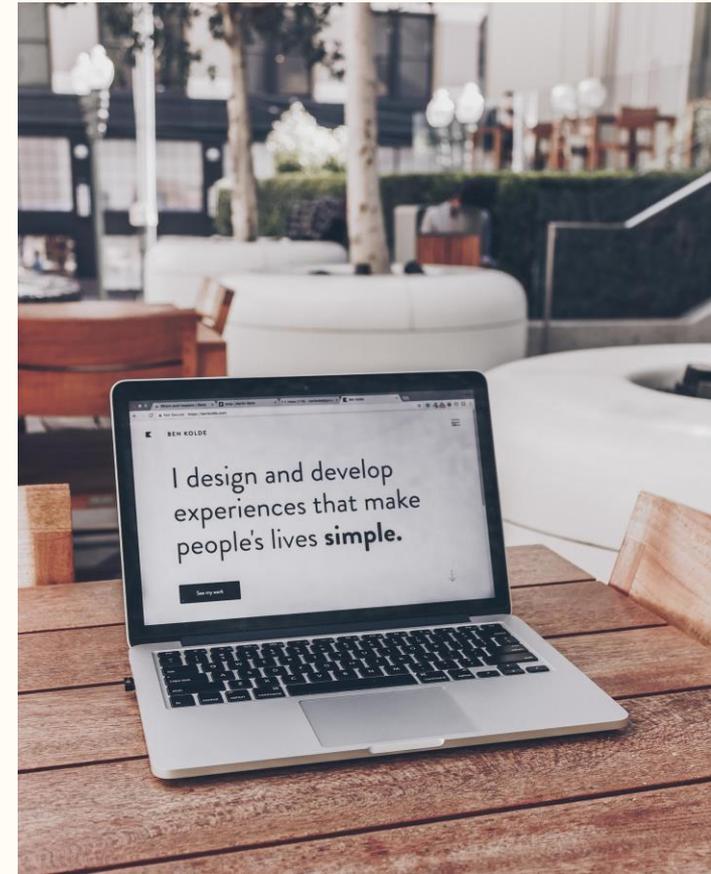


- **Domain Name** (a web address like YourSiteName.com)
- **Web Hosting** (a service that connects your site to the internet)

The Wix logo, featuring the word 'Wix' in a bold, black, sans-serif font.The Bluehost logo, featuring a blue square background with a white grid of nine squares above the word 'bluehost' in a white, lowercase, sans-serif font.The HostGator logo, featuring a blue and yellow cartoon gator character to the left of the word 'HostGator' in a bold, yellow, sans-serif font.

Designing your website

- Find other freelancer websites
- What do you like / don't like?



Example freelance website 1



[About](#) [Portfolio](#) [Services](#) [Treatments](#) [Process](#) [Contact](#)

Freelance Creative Copywriter.
Helping You Communicate
With Precision and Clarity.

Good copy is the difference between building relationships and being ignored. Between a sale and a lost opportunity. By 'good' I mean well researched, accessible and persuasive. I specialise in writing good copy. I make my living helping businesses like yours grow. Find out more [about me, my work](#) and [what my clients say](#), then send me [an email](#) or call 07909795182 for a customised proposal.

What My Clients Say

Example freelance website 2



 +44 (0) 7957 567766



- Website content writing
- Brochure copywriting
- Advertising copywriting
- Brand copywriting
- Namings & straplines
- Tone of voice & copy styles
- TV & video commercials
- Radio commercials
- Case studies & interviews
- Email & enewsletter copy
- Direct mail

Hello there. I'm Caroline Gibson, a creative freelance copywriter and content writer in London.

Yes, I can write a great press ad, brochure or website for you. But, like the chocolate flake in a 99 ice-cream, I add more... I understand how to help a brand stand up and stand out and I can turn a germ of an idea into a gem of an idea.

If you're thinking, 'Hmmm, I'm after a copywriting service like Caroline's that will make a stellar difference', then ponder no more. Grab a coffee and have a trawl here to find out more about me, my copywriting work, clients and awards. Then drop me an email or call 07957 567766 (Mon-Fri, 9-6).

Ready...?

P.S.
The Naming Of Cocktails









Example freelance website 3

In a rush? Grab my self-contained PDF portfolio.

[Open](#)

[Download](#)

**Stephen
Marsh**



[Home](#) [About](#) [What I Do](#) [Clients](#) [Work](#) [Blog](#) [Contact](#)

Stephen Marsh, freelance copywriter. **Hello, you.**



This isn't about me. It's about you.

You want to improve the way your business speaks. You want to connect with an audience. You want your company to

You care about how you sound. I can help.

I'm an experienced freelance copywriter, based in the UK.

I've worked on sales copy for businesses all around the world, in industries from private

What I Do

- Digital
- Print
- Brand and Tone of Voice

Recent Projects

- Turmeric Positioning & Elevator Pitch
- SmartDriverClub Brand Tone of

But don't wait for clients to come to you



Pricing your services



Per hour or per project?

- Do your research – what is ‘industry standard’?
- Start £ lower then increase once work starts flowing
- Price per client e.g. start-up over corporate
- “value-based pricing” – a website may take you 3 hours to set up well, your price p.h does not match the value gained.

Don't 'under sell' yourself

- Find out what the client is willing to pay – their budget
- If a big corporate company has a £200 budget for this work and you quote £75 – they will question the quality.

Working out what they can pay

- *“Do you have a budget set aside for this project and is it over X?”*
 - *“It could cost anywhere from 1,000- 8,000 depending on the scope. Did you have a budget in mind that you were looking to spend?”*
- Jake Jorgovan, freelance web designer

Tax, self-assessment and insurance



International student?

- Freelancing is 'self-employment' – check the terms of your Tier 4 visa.

Why would you set up as a sole trader/self-employed?

- Organisations cannot legally pay you unless you have self-employed status.
- Paying tax is a **legal imperative** – stiff penalties if you don't pay it.
- Gives you recognition as a bona fide business.
- Main advantage - You only pay tax on your profits.
- Tax deductions – expenses you can claim to reduce your tax liability

Register with HRMC

- Even if you haven't started earning yet – easy to do
- Failure to register could bring with it a £100 fine!
- You need to register with HMRC if you earned more than £1,000 from self-employment between 6 April 2019 and 5 April 2020.

So how do you do it?

- Fill in the online form for Self-Assessment at HMRC:
www.gov.uk/log-in-file-self-assessment-tax-return/register-if-youre-self-employed
- You will need your **Unique Taxpayer Reference** number (UTR) to invoice people. HMRC will send you this once you've registered but you may need to chase them



HM Revenue
& Customs

Registering for Self Assessment
and getting a tax return

How to get a tax return

If you need to complete a tax return, first you must register for Self Assessment to get a Unique Taxpayer Reference (UTR). If you are in business go to hmrc.gov.uk/register to find out how to register. If you are not in business, you can use this form to give HMRC the information they need to set tax records up for you and your UTR will then be posted to you. To find out if you need to complete this form please go to hmrc.gov.uk/taxreturn.

Income tax – the basics

- Payable on your actual earnings
- Combination of your employment and self-employed earnings
- You pay tax over your ‘personal allowance’ – 20% basic rate and 40% higher rate (over 50k)

Income tax - example

An example for the 2019/20* tax year:

Income from an employer	£35,000
Profits from sole trade (self-employment)	£20,000
Total income	£55,000
Personal allowance	(£12,500)
Total taxable income	£42,500
Income Tax paid at basic rate (20%)*	£7,500
Income Tax paid at higher rate (40%)*	£2,000
Total Income Tax paid	£9,500

For students...

- **Taxable income:** wages, allowances from parents
- **Non-taxable income:** Bursaries, grants and scholarships are usually tax-free (along with student loan money)

	Year	Month	Week
Gross Wage	£5,200	£433	£100
National Insurance	£0	£0	£0
Pension	£0	£0	£0
Pension HMRC	£0	£0	£0
Student Loan	£0	£0	£0
Take Home Pay	£5,200	£433	£100
Tax Free Allowance	£12,509	£1,042	£241
Tax Paid	£0	£0	£0
Taxable Wage	£0	£0	£0

National Insurance

- You usually pay **Class 1 National Insurance** through PAYE via your employer. (this won't change)
- If your self-employed profits exceed £6,365, you'll have to pay a flat rate of £3.00 per week. This is called **Class 2 National Insurance**.

What does it mean by 'tax deductions'

- Tax deductions are expenses you can deduct from your taxable income, these will reduce your taxable income.
- This isn't the same as getting an item for free!
- You're only allowed to claim costs for items or services you've bought 'wholly and exclusively' in relation to your job.

Example – you buy £100 worth of materials. You can claim for £20 relief – as it's 20% of the total you paid.

What expenses can you claim?

- Keep receipts so you can claim all expenses related to your work:
 - Any space costs – rent, utilities etc. (even if you are working from home)
 - Supplies and materials
 - Travel – including mileage in a car
 - Marketing e.g. website costs
 - Related journals and magazines
 - Association memberships
 - Fees for accountants, lawyers, training



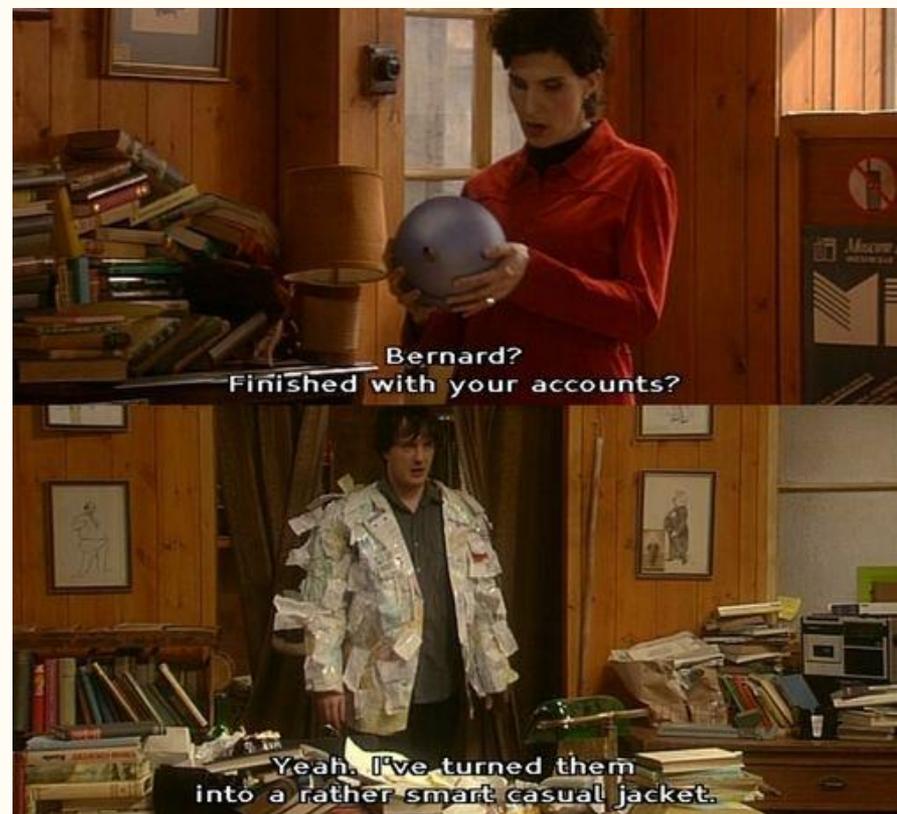
Image: The Guardian

If you use something for both business and personal reasons e.g. phone

You can only claim allowable expenses for the business costs.

Taking control...

- Keep a record and all receipts throughout the year – income + expenditure
- Use spreadsheets, file all paper
- Use the HMRC online system
- Use the P60 for any earnings from employment
- Give yourself time
- Get help – an accountant can save you money



Sole trader or Limited Company?

- Sole trader – personally linked with business (most common for freelancers)
- Limited Company – separate, but as the director there is still rules to follow (this is more complicated)

Insurance

- **Public Liability Insurance**

Insurance against claims made by third parties.

- **Property insurance**

Covers your work or where you work e.g. work damaged in transit

- Other types of insurance – exhibition insurance



Invoicing and contracts

Invoices

- Most companies won't pay you unless you invoice them.

Invoices - what they must include

- your company name, address and contact information
- the company name and address of the customer you're invoicing
- you must clearly display the word 'invoice' on the document
- a unique invoice number
- the date of the invoice
- a clear description of what you're charging for
- the date the goods or service were provided (supply date)
- the amount(s) being charged
- VAT amount **if applicable**
- the total invoice value

Sole trader invoices

- If you're a sole trader, the invoice must also include:
- your name and any business name being used
- an address where any legal documents can be delivered to you if you are using a business name

Example Invoice

You only should charge VAT if you reach the threshold...

... which is £85,000 for 12 months

My Company Name

77 Hammersmith Road, West Kensington
London W14 0QH

INVOICE

To:
Buyer Ltd.
Billy Buyer
43 Customer Road
Manchester
M4 1HS
United Kingdom

Invoice Date: 08-03-2013
Invoice Number: 123
Client Number: A00342
Payment Terms: 30 days
Due Date: 07-04-2013
Late payment interest: 8.5%
Your Reference: Billy Buyer

Additional information

Add any additional instructions or terms here.

Description	Qty	Unit	Unit Price	VAT %	VAT	Total
Client work	5	h	£ 60.00	20%	£ 60.00	£ 360.00
Products	10	pcs	£ 103.99	20%	£ 207.98	£ 1,247.88

Sub Total £ 1,339.90
Total VAT £ 267.98

Total amount due £ 1,607.88

Please pay within the agreed term

My Company Name
77 Hammersmith Road
West Kensington
London W14 0QH
VAT No. GB123 4567 89

Contact Information
Freddy Seller
Phone 08442 123 456
Email: freddy@mycompany.co.uk
www.mycompany.co.uk

Payment Details
Bank Name Barclays PLC
Sort Code 20-84-12
Account No. 12345678

Contracts

- A **legally binding** promise (written or oral), by one party to fulfil an obligation to another party, in return for consideration.
- Aim to cover (if applicable):
 1. The work and the timeframe
 2. Requirements for the project (if client is providing space / equipment etc.)
 3. Whether you are a freelancer or employee of client
 4. How much / when / how you are getting paid
 5. IP, copyright, re-sale issues.

Main forms of contract

- Verbal – be careful of this one!
- Written – formal contract, e-mail, text message

Avoid uncertain terms / phrases

- *The work will be done in 1 week*
- *I will run the company's social media accounts for three months.*
- *The client agrees to pay me £150*

Better

- *The client agrees to pay each invoice within thirty days of receiving it.*
- *Rate is £50/hour, not to exceed 20 hours.*
- *Contractor will provide two 30-minute phone sessions as part of project fee. Further phone consultations will be billed at X per hour.*
- *Should freelancer expect to run late, she will inform client by email.*

Example contract language

WORK AND PAYMENT.

Project. The Client is hiring the Developer to do the following: The Developer will assist Blue Frog Design in full stack web development of the web application. Projects will be assigned on a week-by-week basis in sprints.

Schedule. The Developer will begin work on May 30, 2016 and the work is ongoing. This Contract can be ended by either Client or Developer at any time, pursuant to the terms of Section 6, Term and Termination.

Payment. The Client will pay the Developer a rate of \$1,750.00 (USD) per week.

Expenses. The Client will not reimburse the Developer's expenses.

Invoices. The Developer will invoice the Client every two weeks. The Client agrees to pay the amount owed within 3 days of receiving the invoice. Payment after that date will incur a late fee of 1.0% per month on the outstanding amount.

Support. The Developer will not provide support for any deliverable once the Client accepts it, unless otherwise agreed in writing.

Pro-bono clinics

- [LSBU](#)
- [Queen Mary](#)
- [BPP](#)

IPSE

- You can become a [student member](#)
- Free contract templates
- Events
- Guides
- Training
- BUT – it costs £35

Other support

UCL Careers 1 to 1 Support

- Applications advice (20 minutes)
- Short guidance (20 minutes)
- Practice Interview (60 minutes, on condition of real employer interview)
- Book online in advance using myUCLCareers

UCL Innovation & Enterprise

- Boot camps
- Networking evenings
- Courses
- 1:1 support
- Get a Start-up visa

Find us

4th Floor, Student Central Building, Malet Street

Mon-Thurs 9:30 - 17:00

Fri 11:00 -17:00

careers@ucl.ac.uk

020 7866 3600



Questions?

