

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Submitting proposals for fixed-priced jobs and hourly jobs on Upwork (do's and don'ts)	2
1. Fixed price vs hourly jobs	2
FIXED PRICE JOBS	3
HOURLY	4
Chapter 2: PRICING your services and setting your rates on Upwork	6
Chapter 3: HOW TO APPLY FOR JOBS ON UPWORK (3)	10
A) USING SEARCH FILTERS	11
B) SEPARATING GOOD JOBS FROM BAD	13
C) How to spot bad clients	14
Chapter 4: Understanding Job activities before submitting your proposals and using them to your advantage	16
Case Study 1	17
Case Study 2: Preferred Qualifications	17
Case Study 3: Plenty invites, interviews and Hires	18
Case Study 4: the clean sweep	19
Case Study 5: The wrong Location	19
Chapter 5: Submitting Job winning Proposals	20
Hiring Criteria	21
Understanding the Client's Pain point	21
Skills and Experience	22
Adding Portfolio and samples	22
Case studies	22

Chapter 1

SUBMITTING PROPOSALS FOR FIXED PRICED JOBS AND HOURLY JOBS ON UPWORK (Do's and Don'ts)

1. Fixed price vs hourly jobs

There are two major job types on Upwork: Hourly and Fixed price.



Job Type

- ☒ Any Job Type
- ☐ Hourly (19,232)
- ☐ Fixed Price (14,358)

You have to master how to apply for both strategically as they have some unique differences.

This will be a series on How to apply for Jobs on Upwork. It will focus on Fixed priced and hourly jobs and how to apply for them.

When submitting jobs on Upwork there are things that are unique to both types of jobs. After you see a job you believe you can do and you have done your due diligence, then it's time to apply.

This is where they both take different routes.

- **FIXED PRICE JOBS**

When applying for fixed price jobs, unless you are an experienced freelancer, don't apply by milestones.

Terms Client's budget: \$200.00 USD

How do you want to be paid?


☒ **By milestone**
Divide the project into smaller segments, called milestones. You'll be paid for milestones as they are completed and approved.

☐ **By project**
Get your entire payment at the end, when all work has been delivered.

How many milestones do you want to include?

Description	Due date	Amount
1		\$ 0.00

[Add milestone](#)

 **Total price of project**
This includes all milestones, and is the amount your client will see. \$0.00

Includes Upwork Fixed-Price Protection. [Learn more](#)

Upwork Service Fee \$0.00

Apply by Project instead (Pic below)

Terms Client's budget: \$200.00 USD

How do you want to be paid?

☐ **By milestone**
Divide the project into smaller segments, called milestones. You'll be paid for milestones as they are completed and approved.

☒ **By project**
Get your entire payment at the end, when all work has been delivered.


What is the amount you'd like to bid for this job?

Bid \$ 200.00

Total amount the client will see on your proposal

Upwork Service Fee [Explain this](#) \$ -40.00

You'll Receive \$ 160.00
The estimated amount you'll receive after service fees.

 Includes Upwork Fixed-Price Protection. [Learn more](#)

With milestones you determine how the job will go and how you want to be paid per milestone. This is why I said it's for experienced freelancers, they have prior knowledge, so they can do it.

There was a time when some Jobs on Upwork had no client budget. Nowadays almost all jobs have client budgets and you want to stick to them (Remember it's what the client wants).

Sometimes these budgets are placeholders. The real negotiation happens during the interview. You can be paid higher or even lower than what was posted.

● HOURLY

For hourly based projects, you can see a range or fixed hourly rates a client is willing to pay for your service. How do you navigate both strategically?

First, **YOUR PROFILE.**

Yes, the hourly rates you set on your profile is very important.

It's not just a figurehead number. It can help or mar your application when you apply for hourly based jobs.

Always have that figure in your mind when you apply for hourly based jobs. Remember it's also editable, so you can change it as you please.

How do you then set your terms for hourly based jobs when submitting proposals?

Here's a case study, client budget is \$35 to \$75/hr and your profile rate is \$25/hr what do you do?

Article Writing

Terms

What is the rate you'd like to bid for this job?

Your profile rate: \$25.00/hr

Client's budget: \$35.00 - \$75.00/hr

Hourly Rate
Total amount the client will see on your proposal

\$	25.00	/hr
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20% Upwork Service Fee [Explain this](#)

\$	-5.00	/hr
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You'll receive
The estimated amount you'll receive after service fees

\$	20.00	/hr
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Includes Upwork Hourly Protection. [Learn more](#)

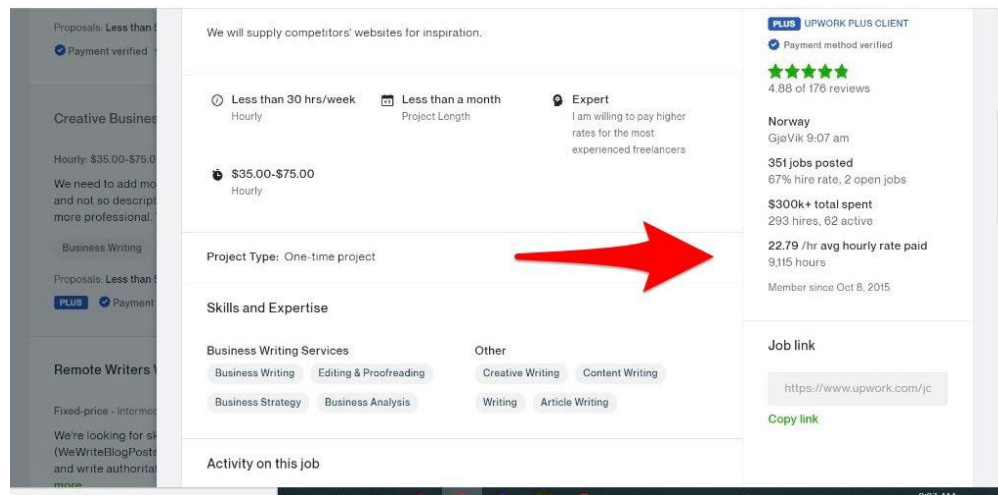
I have had multiple cases where my students applied for hourly jobs using a client budget and they were paid the hourly rates on their profile.

E.g A client budget was \$30/hr and profile rate was \$20/hr.

The client paid them the rates on their profile. You don't want that, also you don't want to look cheap.

Remember you can get the job done and you have what it takes.

1. Change the hourly rates on your profile (albeit temporarily).
2. When clients set a range you are not sure of, it's time to do a little research on them. This is where Average hourly rate spent and the amount they have paid other freelancers come in.



These are some of the unique peculiarities that separates Hourly Jobs from Fixed projects. Every other thing (like cover letters or the profile you use to apply etc) are the same.

Chapter 2

PRICING your services and setting your rates on Upwork

Fixed Price vs. Hourly Projects on Upwork

As a freelancer, What do you think the best pricing method is, hourly or fixed?

The answer, none of the above.

The best pricing method is Value based pricing. Read more below.

Value based pricing is a method where you charge based on the value you bring to the table.

Why are you charging 5 cents per word when another freelancer charges \$1000 per project even if it is 500 words? The answer is Perceived Value.

Value-based pricing ensures that clients feel happy paying your price for the value they're getting. For this to also work, there are two important factors:

1. You must ensure you are targeting quality clients (positioning),
2. You also walk the talk i.e you are valuable.

So how do you set your rates, whether you are applying for Fixed priced projects or hourly gigs?

Set it too high and you lose clients for being expensive or set it too low and you look cheap.

One of the factors that can affect you landing jobs on Upwork is your Hourly rates. How do you get the middle ground?

Answer: One of the best ways to do this is to do industry research for your niche. Search for the average hourly rates amongst people in your Niche. Then use it to determine your starting rate.

Search for projects similar to yours, use them as a price point (this is for fixed priced projects). You can also do research on project catalogs.

In Project catalogs, Freelancers package services in a project format and set prices for them. You can play around different projects in your niche, see what goes into the pricing model.

For hourly rates, as a new freelancer on Upwork, you can set your rates low for starters, increase it as you build your reviews and reputation.

Your niche will also determine the starting points of your rates. A web programmer starting rates would be different from a content writer's starting rates.

If you have years of experience outside Upwork, It should reflect on your profile or when negotiating with clients. This can make you increase your starting hourly rates.

Finally, when submitting proposals for hourly gigs, check the client budget for the job, you can also check the client details and history to know how they pay averagely.

For the pros and cons of hourly jobs and fixed priced jobs you can check the pictures below. Understand them and know when to use them during negotiations.

Fixed Rates



Pros

- Simple
- Budget-friendly
- Maximize earnings

Cons

- Risk underselling
- Inflexible
- Hard sell



When to use

1. Well-scoped work
2. Short projects
3. budget-conscious clients
4. Trusting relationships

Hourly Rates



Pros

- Earn what you work
- Flexible
- Popular

Cons

- Undefined
- Cap earnings
- Punish efficiency



When to use

1. Ongoing ad hoc work
2. Unfamiliar projects
3. New to freelancing
4. Unstructured jobs

Chapter 3

HOW TO APPLY FOR JOBS ON UPWORK (3)



- a) Using Search Filters
- b) Separating Good jobs from bad
- c) How to spot bad clients

If you want to get the best jobs and work with the best clients, you must know how to search for them, filter them from the crowd.

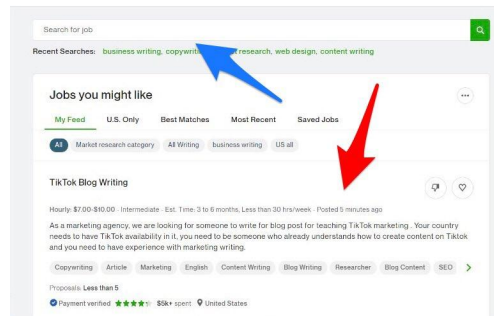
There are lots of jobs on Upwork at every point (average 200,000+ jobs), your goal is finding the right job and working with the right client. So you must be able to narrow your search.

Sometimes, it's not your proposal or your profile that's not making you land jobs, you are just applying for the wrong jobs, this guide is to help you avoid this.

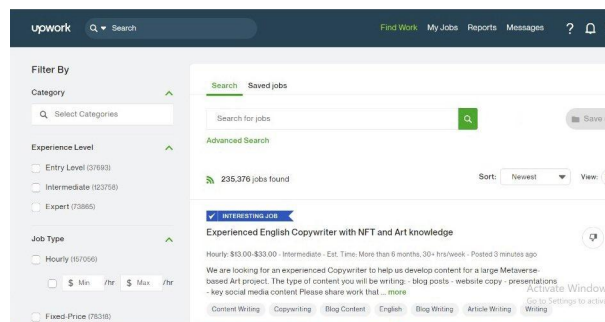
A) USING SEARCH FILTERS

When you log into your Upwork account, you are taken to your find work page by default. Here you will see jobs prepared for you by the algorithm using your categories and previous searches.

Here you want to focus on the Blue not Red. (From your Find work page, first page you get when you log into your Upwork account).



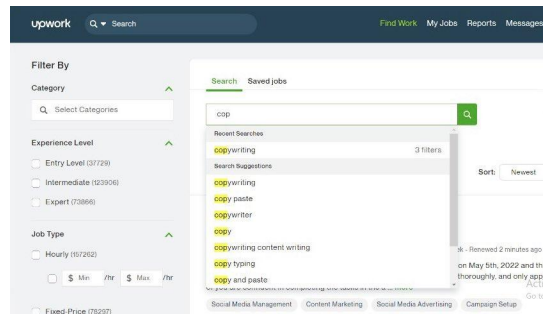
You use the search filter, not the jobs you get by default (Recommended or not). By using Filters, you can narrow down to the jobs you want and the ones you don't. This is what the search filter looks like showing the total number of jobs available at the time of your log in.



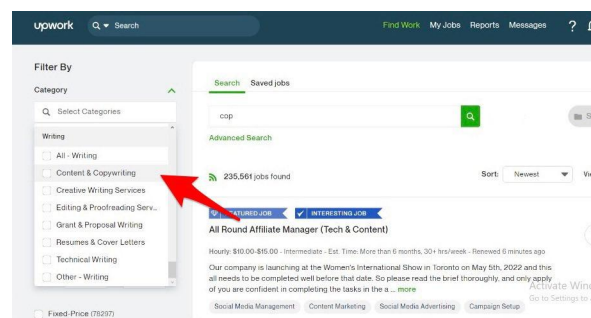
There are two ways to search for jobs.

1. You can either search by keywords
2. Or, you search by categories

Say you are a copywriter for example, you can either type copywriting into the search bar for copywriting jobs (KEYWORD),

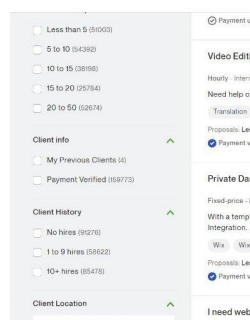


Or you look for Copywriting in the Job category filter (CATEGORY).



Both Job search options have their pros and cons, you can use them individually or use them together. Remember to always clear your filters before making a new search.

There are other filter options you can use, for instance, the type of job (hourly or fixed, number of proposals, Payment verification, Client location, client budget, client history etc. Use them at your own discretion.



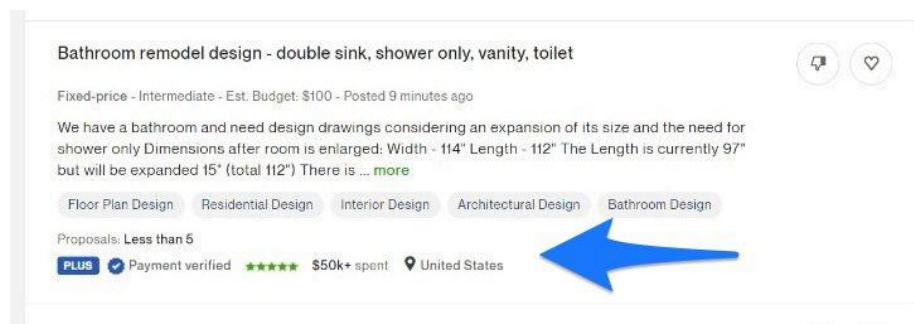
B) SEPARATING GOOD JOBS FROM BAD

From a job post, you can know if it's a good job or not if you have trained eyes for them. There are three things to look out for:

1. Amount spent
2. Client ratings
3. Payment Verification



Everything about this job is on point, compared to the previous one.

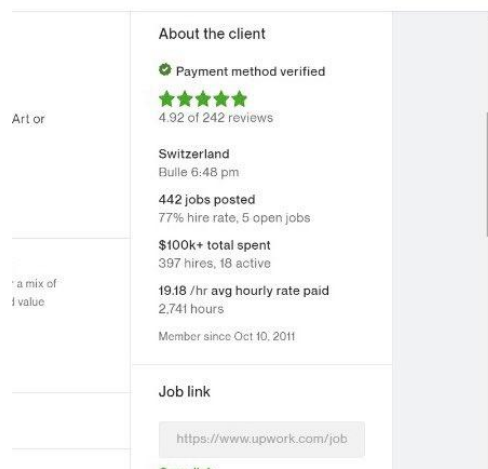
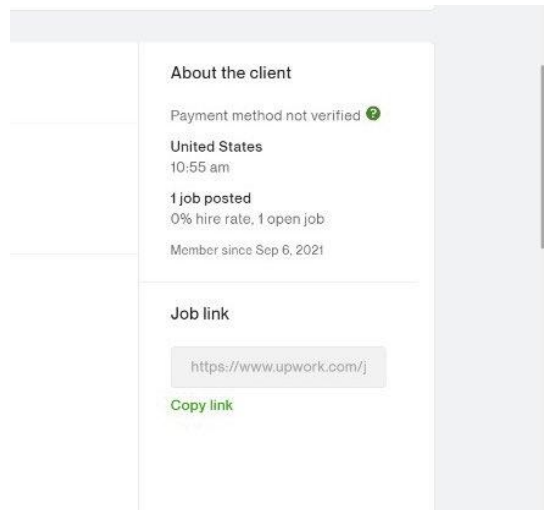


C) How to spot bad clients

You can spot bad clients from the good ones in a simple way by reading the client details and checking feedback from other freelancers. Simple, see below:

Using the last example from 2, here's the client details for both clients. Important pointers like hire rate, job posted, Client ratings, and average hourly spent can be deduced.

Compare both client details, you can see the difference.

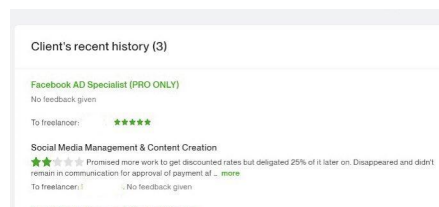


Finally, you can spot bad clients by paying attention to Their client rating. It's the no 1 indicator for spotting a bad client.

Let's do a case study. See the client rating of the client below.



A further inquiry brings us here, 2.68 rating out of 5 (by just clicking on the job details you will see this). By scrolling down to the feedback section you can see why this client had that review. You save yourself the stress.



Chapter 4

Understanding Job activities before submitting your proposals and using them to your advantage



Before submitting that proposal, you need to understand if the job is worth submitting a proposal to or not. Here's how.

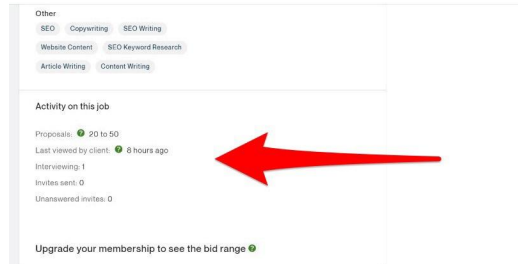
After checking a job description and client details, the next thing you need to do is to understand job activities which are peculiar to each job post.

Here we have a number of proposals submitted, interviews, last time the client viewed the job, number of invites sent, etc.

Here are 5 different case studies covering all bases.

Case Study 1:

Here we have 20 to 50 proposals submitted, meaning your own proposal will be number 21 or 51 and the client here is already interviewing 1 person. Plus, they viewed the job 8 hours ago (this job was posted 17 hours ago like all the other case studies).

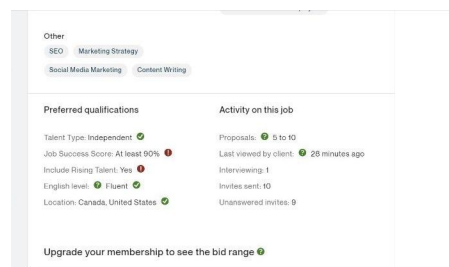


What do you do:

You pass, but the chances of you landing a job here is slim. Not all clients have the time to check all the submitted proposals. There are better jobs available, all you need to do is search better.

Case Study 2: Preferred Qualifications

It's important you mark a green check on all preferred qualifications before submitting your proposal. This job has a lot of them.



Client is interviewing someone. Sent 10 invites and got 1 response (the current interview). Then we have other qualifications like location, english proficiency, Talent type, Job success score and Rising Talent.

IMPORTANT POINT:

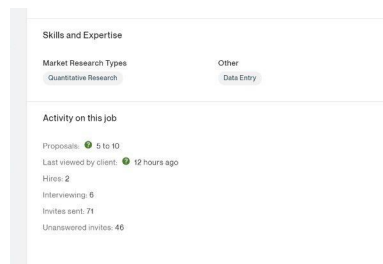
JSS and Rising talent is the only qualification you can ignore (have red marks on).

What do you do here:

If you meet all the criteria (green check) you can apply for the job, sometimes invites are not even sent by the client. Upwork sends them on the client's behalf.

Case Study 3: Plenty invites, interviews and Hires

Always pay attention to hires in the job activity because it means the client already hired freelancers for the role. You don't want to waste your proposals (and connects).



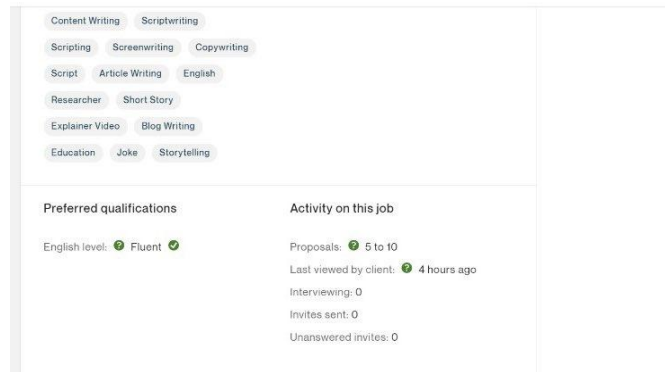
Sometimes clients want to hire multiple freelancers, you must check the job description to confirm this, you can apply if that's the case.

What do you do here: you avoid it.

This job activity has a lot of invites sent by the client, a lot of interviews and hires already. You will waste your connection if you apply.

Case Study 4: the clean sweep

Clean slates like this means you can apply as there's nothing to stop you. 5 to 10 proposals is good, everything looks fine.

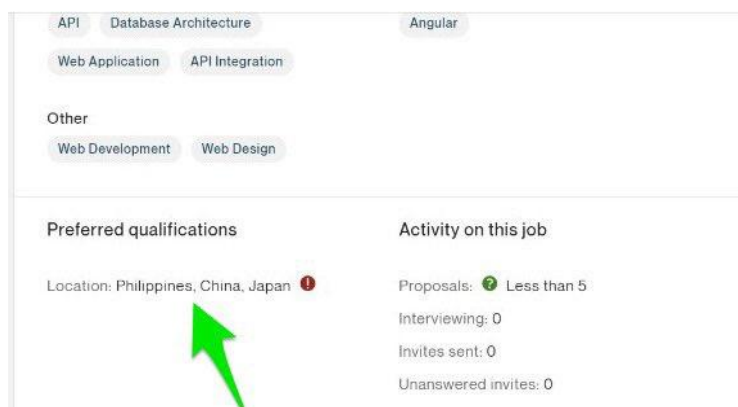


What do you do: So far Job description is good for you, number of proposals submitted is reasonable and client details looks fine. You can submit yours.

Case Study 5: The wrong Location

Always Pay attention to the location's preferred qualification. This is very important.

Even If you meet all criteria; job description, client details, job activity etc, if you don't meet the location criteria, YOU PASS.

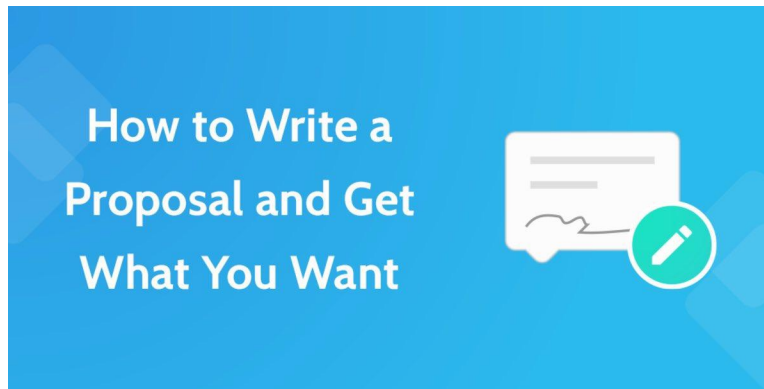


What do you do:

Once again, don't waste your connects even on a job you can do if you don't meet the location criteria. Always check out for it.

Chapter 5

Submitting Job winning Proposals



Case studies and sample proposals templates you can use. (They have gotten my students gigs worth \$5 million+). If you want to win jobs on Upwork with your proposals then you should read this.

Knowing how to write job winning proposals is one skill a freelancer needs. Especially on Upwork, where you are competing with different freelancers for gigs. You need to put your best foot forward.

Understand that writing good proposals alone won't get you gigs, you must master other things too: like knowing the right jobs, pricing right, having a good profile etc.

So what should a job winning proposal contain?

1. Hiring Criteria
2. Understanding the Client's Pain point
3. Your skills and experience
4. Your Portfolio or samples

Let's talk about them.

- **Hiring Criteria**

This is meeting the clients description of the Ideal Freelancer for the gig. A prospective Job will always have criterias needed, ensure you meet them and also highlight them in your proposals. Make them know you are the best freelancer for the job

- **Understanding the Client's Pain point**

I recommend you show this in your first two paragraphs, a client wants a problem solved and your proposal must show that you are the cure. When you show an understanding of the prospective client's pain point, you empathize with them and connect on a level. This gets you closer to landing the gig.

- **Skills and Experience**

After showing an understanding of the job; a client's pain point and Meeting the Hiring criteria. You need to list out your skills and experience showing you can do the job.

- **Adding Portfolio and samples**

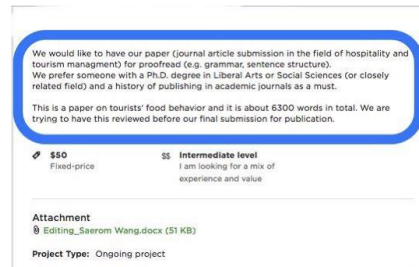
Talk is cheap. Ensure you add a link or pdf showing samples of jobs you have done. They show that you can do what you said you can.

Case studies

More than talking, I want to show you how you can apply these 4 things in your proposals, let's dive in.

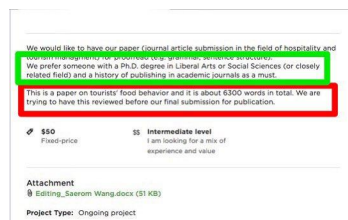
Case study 1: Journal Article job

Important Note: Always go through any attachment a client attaches before submitting your proposal. You can even talk about it in your proposals. Remember "*understanding the client's pain point.*"



Let's dive further;

You can see the Hiring Criteria in **GREEN** and the Client's Pain point in **RED**.



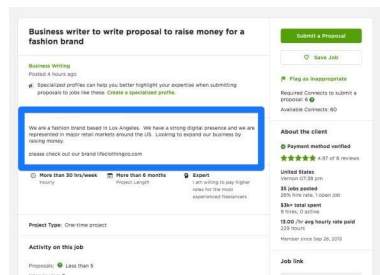
Before you list out those skills and experience of yours in your proposal, always ensure you meet the hiring Criteria. Also, make sure you understand the Client's pain point.

I have had students tell me about going through their proposals. I tell them it's incomplete if I don't see the job description for it. The only exception is if it's just a template.

Case study 2: The Business Writer

First things first, go through the client's website listed. Remember to highlight their pain point.

Secondly, ensure you are a business writer or fashion writer (Hiring Criteria).



CASE study 3: Anatomy of a great Proposal

Go through everything in this proposal line by line to understand how it was structured. Remember you can use it as your template.



I curated 7 FREE PROPOSAL TEMPLATES (including 2 proposals that got me full time roles in less than 24 hrs). You can use these templates in your next proposals. You can snipe them [here](#).

In conclusion, a job description will determine your proposal approach to the client. Meet the hiring criteria, understand the pain point, then add your skills and Portfolio.