

DEAR NEWBIE

Getting Started in the Freelancing World

Miriam Maru

Dear Newbie, Maru 2023

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WHAT READERS HAD TO SAY

"There are only a few books I read without putting them down, and Dear Newbie is one of them. Miriam's mix of storytelling from her life experiences and her guidance makes this book stand out from the rest.

As I read the book, I have set up my Fiverr account, and I am excited to see my freelancing journey kick-start on Fiverr.

Despite being a freelancer for three years, I still felt like a newbie with everything Miriam talked about. There is always much to learn, even when you think you are no longer a newbie.

I recommend this book to every freelancer, whether experienced or not.

Just like Miriam found her way out of a hectic 9-5 work, we can with this book.

A must-read for every student, housewife, and 9-5 worker.

It is life-changing."

Abirami Sekar, Author of A Traveller's Guide to the Soul.

"Ever walked on a journey that avails a skill and the Monetization strategy on your doorstep?

No. You haven't. Until you read Dear Newbie... I went from having a full-time job to being jobless in March. And if only I had come across a book even slightly similar to Miriam's book, I wouldn't have run into depression three months later.

The book provides all the necessary resources, from mastering your craft to monetizing it. It's a blueprint for all it takes to become an expert freelancer, even if you are a master of no skill at the moment.

You learn to master a skill and position yourself in the face of potential clients. You even learn where to find clients and how to win them to your craft.

I'll write another book if I were to exhaust how valuable this book is. Boy! Whether you are a freelancer, looking for a part-time job, or anticipating walking out of a 9-5, this is your go-to book. Get your copy, a cup of hot coffee, and a notebook. And thank me later."

Miriam Wambua, Author of The Distinct Digital Marketer

"Dear Newbie is an excellent book that provides aspiring freelancers with valuable

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insights and guidance.

Miriam Maru's writing style is engaging and easy to follow, making the book enjoyable. She shares her experiences and challenges, offering practical advice on overcoming obstacles and succeeding in the freelancing industry.

The book provides practical advice and encouragement for those just starting. It is also a helpful resource for experienced freelancers looking to improve their skills and businesses.

One of the book's strengths is its focus on overcoming self-doubt and limiting beliefs. Maru encourages readers to believe in their abilities and take action to achieve their goals. She emphasizes the importance of hard work, dedication, and continuous learning.

The book also provides valuable information on various aspects of freelancing, such as setting rates, finding clients, managing projects, and delivering quality work.

Maru shares tips on how to build a strong online presence, network with other freelancers, and market your services effectively.

Overall, Dear Newbie is an excellent resource for anyone interested in starting or growing their freelance business.

Maru's insights and guidance will inspire and empower readers to take control of their careers and achieve their financial goals.

In conclusion, I recommend this book to anyone looking for a helpful and encouraging guide to freelancing. The author's story is inspiring, and her advice is practical and actionable.

I believe anyone reading this book will come away with the knowledge and motivation they need to succeed as a freelancer.”

Toyin Tope-Adedipe, Author of Let's Share Coffee

“Did Miriam just blow my mind with her book?

No, she didn't just blow my mind; she liberated it.

The best book I've ever read on freelancing was by my A-LIST copywriting mentor, Kim Krause Schwalm.

I haven't seen any other book that compares to it.

But Miriam's book? Wow!!!

While I can't say it beats Kim's book, I must say I love it.

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Miriam not only wrote a book, but she also shared her story—the story of how she got right here.

In short, this is more like a guide, holding you, a newbie, by the hand.

As a newbie freelancer, she used storytelling to drive home every BIG point you need.

I love how this book is so relatable; I could see myself in Miriam's stories—the struggles, the pain, the self-doubts, the imposter syndrome, the highs and lows, the wins and losses, etc.

You need this book. Yes, dear newbie, you need it.

So, get yours as soon as it's out!"

Damilola Michael, Author of Anyone Can Write Copy.

"I loved how you used your experience as a newbie to educate freelancers who want to take a dip at freelancing.

The writing technique is friendly. Your chapters captured the fears, hopes, and triumphs of freelancing.

Your stories are golden, with a blend of ideals and reality.

However, I have one simple "ask."

"How soon can we get the second book?"

Abraham Onyemari, LinkedIn Growth Strategist

"Congratulations on completing your book! I recall the challenges of writing mine while attending school—it was no easy feat. Your book brought back memories of my early days as a freelancer; I could see myself within the story.

The struggles you depicted resonated deeply with my own experiences, and the way you articulated them all flowed seamlessly. It was a compelling read—I found it difficult to put down. Your storytelling skills are exceptional. Any newbie who reads this is bound to gain valuable insights."

Olamide Williams, Chief Storyteller & Author of Dear 5 Star Freelancer

DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to you, who is transitioning into a new world of freedom and independence - Freelancing. And to anyone who has been yearning for freedom from working an unfulfilling job. May the journey begin.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I owe my sincere gratitude to many people who made it possible for this book to come to life. I could not have done it on my own.

First, thank God for allowing this to happen. I had always wanted to write a book but didn't know how or what to write about. God knew this was it!

According to the remarkable teachings of Brian Tracy, had I not started writing down my goals every day, as suggested by Brian, writing a book could still be a dream, not a reality. Thank you, Brian.

To my dear sister, my great friend, business partner, and coach, Boluwatife Segun-Oluwayomi. Thank you for coming into my life and coming up with the Post2Book (P2B) program! Through you, I have been able to push myself in ways I hadn't expected. Through your #storieswithtife initiative, I have been able to nurture my storytelling skills, something I didn't know I was capable of until I met you. And through you, my dream of publishing my first book by the end of 2023 has been actualized. Bless you! I call you Queen for a reason: because you are.

To Otieno Omondi, my mentor. You embraced me in the strange world of freelancing I found myself in. Since meeting you, you have been holding my hand up to this day, encouraging me to keep on and assuring me that I, too, can make it like the rest of the freelancers I see making it. They are no different from me. I keep your words in my heart. They remind me of my capabilities whenever I'm down. Bless you!

Abirami, Toyin, Miriam, Romoke, Chinyere, Keji, Temidayo, Victoria, Bridget, Debbie, Moyosore, Kehinde, Romoke, Ngozi, Awodoyin Adebawale, Awodoyin Ifeoluwa, my fellow authors in the first cohort of Post2book, y'all are the real MVPs! We made it!!! Only through your encouragement and support is this book complete. Thank you, fellow bestselling authors! I hope we get to do this again soon.

To my LinkedIn community, thank you for the massive support!!! I feel like adding a fire emoji to this, lol. You are my true family. You have been there since Day 1, reading my posts, supporting, cheering, challenging, and making me believe in myself more and more by the day. I never knew my writing was valuable, but you have been affirming it daily. I truly appreciate you. Truly!

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And finally, to Olha, you gave me my first paid freelance writing gig and believed in me even when I didn't believe in myself. You are so dear to my heart. I cherish you.

FOREWORD

Dear Newbie is a true reflection of the power of freelancing. The book answers what freelancing is, what it takes to be a freelancer, and, best of all, how. I was reading the book, and a clear picture was well illustrated and put out by Miriam.

Freelancing has impacted many lives, especially with the current inflationary rates and unemployment crisis. 'Dear Newbie' told me how Miriam got started as a freelancer. Her journey, the challenges she encountered, the amazing mentor, and the zeal to forge ahead.

I have been a freelancer since 2015. Over the years, I found myself acting as an influencer and firm advocate of freelancing. Among the people impacted was Miriam. Miriam went ahead and crafted this amazing book, 'Dear Newbie.'

The book will act as a guiding path for many and as a reference to freelancing. An amazing attribute and virtue I got from the book were 'The Power of Persistence' and 'The Spirit of Learning and Exploration.'

Dear reader, you might have wanted to start as a freelancer but have encountered a rough road. This does not mean that you should give up on your freelancing journey and abandon ship. When challenges come your way, it is up to you to solve them and learn from them.

Freelancing has never been an easy walk in the park. Dear Newbie clearly illustrates the need and importance of being determined to excel, especially when transitioning from a professional career to freelancing.

If you have ever thought of getting into freelancing, this book will be an amazing eye-opener for you. Remember that walking the talk is the real deal. The readers are many, the talkers are plentiful, but only the actualizers and doers reap the benefits. Be the doer!

Elvis W.
Skills Advocate

INTRODUCTION

The internet is the new land. I heard someone saying this in a video. I didn't get it then, but the line stuck with me for quite a while.

Having been raised in a home where my dad had to be away working for us to eat, I knew I had to do the same to get my own money. And so, I followed suit.

It never crossed my mind that there were other ways of making money apart from getting employed, yet people—my peers—were making it big in the digital space.

It's very unfortunate that, for so long, the internet has only been a place of entertainment for me.

I hope it isn't for you as you read this. But if it is, you can turn that around and make it a tool. Use it instead of making it use you. Just like I did and many others have.

This book will show you how possible it is to do so, get started with an oomph, and make a name for yourself in the industry of your choice in this phenomenal world of freelancing.

I believe you are ready to get started. Turn the page.

CHAPTER ONE

The Epiphany

It's not magic; it's just realization.

And that realization comes from seeking and yearning, or it may come to you accidentally.

I'm speaking of the realization that freelancing is truly meant for you.

If you feel confined in your job, if you never keep a job, if you feel empty going to and from work every day, then maybe, just maybe, working a 9-to-5 isn't meant for you.

You may know this already and have found some ways to start your freelance career.

How are you feeling as you transition? How are you finding the whole transitioning process? Or, if you are through with the entire process, what were your experiences like? Mine were mind-blowing.

For so long, I had asked God to show me a job I could do that didn't require my physical presence.

I didn't know such jobs were called freelance work or remote work.

Luckily, as I was asking and waiting for an answer from the universe, I came across a YouTube video.

The creator was speaking of Fiverr and freelancing in general. To quote her, "There are services on Fiverr you could offer and get paid without having any skills."

Without having any skills...

That part caught my attention.

But why?

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Because it was true, I didn't have a skill. This means I had nothing to offer (or so I thought).

I was blank.

Mind you, this was in October 2022.

And so, if there were jobs, I could get paid for that required no skills from me, why not try them?

I joined the creator's Discord to learn more about the skill-less services.

I met a few other people on the Discord channel and made some connections, and while I was at it, something happened.

I saw an "Otieno!"

Otieno is a Kenyan name.

Apart from Kenya, the discord group was full of people from all over the world.

And while I could connect with everyone around me, connecting with a fellow Kenyan meant something else. It made me feel less of an intruder.

Now, if you have ever found yourself in a new country or place where it seemed like you were the only Kenyan, only Nigerian, only Indian, only Pakistani, or only something, then suddenly saw someone that speaks your language, you would feel terrific!

You can now understand my excitement when I saw "Otieno."

He was the only other Kenyan in the discord group.

It took me a few days before sending him a DM, but eventually, I did.

Little did I know that this guy would introduce me to what I do now—freelance writing.

And so much more.

Can you be my mentor? I would love to do what you do (freelancing) full-time. I am asking for guidance from you.

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Sure! What services are you currently offering?

I am offering unboxing services. I haven't received my first order yet. Let me send you a link to my profile.

Okay.

Unboxing was one of the skill-less services recommended by the YouTube creator. I figured I could easily offer unboxing services since I had done it on my YouTube Channel before. A few contact lens brands had approached me to give a review of their products. (I had done the reviews seamlessly.)

So, I hopped on Fiverr, set up an unboxing gig, and waited for my first order.

I waited the first week...

Second week...

Third week...

None came through.

"How many impressions do you have on your gig?" My mentor asked.

"About 24," I replied.

"What? Dude! I get about 500 impressions in a day! You need to optimize your gigs."

"Okay, I will."

"Also, I suggest you get a ring light and a refurbished iPhone for quality videos. Then, before creating a video sample, lay out an excellent background to make the video attractive."

"Alright. Thank you for this, Otieno." I appreciated his guidance.

Getting an iPhone, refurbished or not, was out of my budget. The thing within my reach was a ring light. And so, I made arrangements to order one.

About optimization, I was clueless about what that word meant.

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Being a Googler, I did my thing and read everything about optimizing a gig. I also watched some YouTube videos, and then I went ahead and optimized the gig.

Three weeks passed, and the results were the same: zero orders.

"Who are some of your competitors? What are they doing?" My mentor asked me when we had a conversation.

"Competitors? What do you mean?"

"I mean the sellers who offer the same services as you."

"Oh."

"Oh," was the only word I uttered.

Again, I had no idea what "competitor" meant in this field.

You, reading this, must think I'm dumb, right?

I would think the same, too!

Anyway, I was not conversant with most business terms. Everything was new to me, like I was new to them all.

Before knowing about digital services, I had been working on jobs, unaware of my surroundings. I never questioned anything around me—I didn't ask how things were done or why they were done that way. Looking back, I realize life passed me by.

Not that I wasn't thinking of starting my own business someday; I was. But let's say I wasn't serious about it back then. If I were, I would know these things.

CHAPTER TWO

The Beginning

"Go on Fiverr, check out some sellers that offer your services, then study their gigs diligently. Let me do that at my end since I have cleared my schedule for today." Otieno said to me.

"Okay, I am doing that right now," I told him.

"A question, as we speak, if you receive an order from a client, how long will it take for you to deliver?"

"About a week or so," I answered.

"Wow! That's a long time. Most clients on Fiverr want work done faster than that. I have researched your competitors. They all come from the West. Nobody is offering such services in our country or even Africa at large."

"Could it be because of the time it takes to ship stuff to our country?" I asked.

"Maybe most clients requiring such services want to work with freelancers around their place. It could be a target audience thing. Accents play a specific role in such if I'm right."

"Oh," I uttered the two-lettered word again.

Why didn't I think of that before setting up that gig? I asked myself, but I couldn't come up with an answer.

Thinking of that question right now, the correct answer will be, "I had no idea I had to think of that, too! I knew I had to set up a gig, and that was just it!"

Oh, the newbie in me. She also needed to do her research despite the tip: *You can offer skill-less services.*

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I just quoted that because while at it, and even before getting into it, I could tell there was nothing like *Skill-less services*. Because even that unboxing service required some excellent communication and a way with words. Those two are called soft skills.

As a newbie, if you are reading this and going, *Great! I don't need a skill to make money; I can do it!* You are mistaken.

You need to do your research. And not just on the skills you are acquiring but also on general research about freelancing.

Grasp everything you can. Set time aside for study. Go into it one hundred percent. Make it a habit to ask for guidance from people who have done it before.

Communicating with fellow freelancers on freelance sites like Fiverr and Upwork is a bit challenging. You should join places like LinkedIn, Facebook, X, or Discord. Put yourself among people who do the same thing as you do, and watch yourself grow in ways you weren't expecting.

I highly recommend starting on LinkedIn. It is a place full of professionals; most are kind and want to see you grow, especially as a newbie.

However, there are rules to be followed on the platform. Be mindful of your words, or else you might get banned. You want to avoid getting started and getting banned immediately. A friend has gone through that, and the ordeal was harrowing. I wouldn't want you to experience the same.

My mentor wasn't active on LinkedIn, but he was on Discord. I suggest that platform, too. If he approves of it, I approve of it too! Come on! He taught me all this!!!

"What kind of services do you offer, Otieno?" It was my turn to ask.

"I do lead generation, email marketing, and UX/UI design. Lead generation is easy. Anyone interested in it can do it."

"Really? How about I try that since the unboxing service is proving difficult?"

"Sure! I'm a bit busy right now. Let me send you a YouTube video on it. Get acquainted."

I checked on the video, and indeed, it was such an easy job to do.

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"I could do lead generation, Otieno. What do I need to get started?" I asked.

"That's great! You need your laptop and enough time to do the job."

"Oh." My word got out again. "I don't have a laptop, just a phone."

"What do you mean? How did you open a gig on Fiverr without a laptop?"

"I used the desktop version of Chrome."

It was his turn to say, "Oh!"

"I didn't know one could do that with their phone. Wow! That's amazing," he said.

My being felt good hearing that. I had started feeling like I was taking too much from him without giving. The fact that he learned something from me made me feel good.

Taking without giving isn't fulfilling. You know what I'm talking about if you have ever been in such a position. It's human nature. We are meant to give and take. Mostly give.

CHAPTER THREE

The Real Deal

Not having a laptop shattered my dreams of becoming a lead generation specialist like my mentor. I had watched the recommended tutorials on YouTube and was sure of effortlessly offering the skill as a service. Unfortunately, the gods didn't have it. My heart sank. For a moment, I felt like having lousy luck was my destiny, for why would God provide a mentor and not provide everything needed for the mentorship to take place?

Getting an answer to that question was 100 percent impossible. I had only 40 dollars to my name. Lying to myself that those funds would get me the one tool needed for lead generation would not cut it for that day. I had to stick to the reality - I was NOT fit for the job.

So, what next? What will I do? How do I become valuable on earth? I kept asking myself.

"Your English is so good. Why don't you try copywriting? It's a high-in-demand skill both on Upwork and Fiverr. A lot of people are making money from the skill." Otieno told me when I raised concerns about what to do next since lead generation had proved difficult for me.

Copy what? I said to myself.

Copywriting was another new word for me. However, I didn't let him know I had no idea what the word meant, or the skill entailed—just nothing. So, I made up my mind to learn it. Learning it meant researching the word, the profession, and how to go about it.

I was skeptical about studying the skill since my mentor wasn't doing anything related to that field. Who was going to guide me all along? I wanted it soft and easy. I wanted a one-on-one teacher who was in it, had done it, and had gotten results. But then again, the gods didn't have it. It is a huge reminder that you don't always get what you want in life, do you?

I felt profoundly alone, stuck in a space and place I desperately wished to escape. I felt terrible for myself. The victim mentality occupied my space—such a pity.

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Nevertheless, amidst it all, I received a text from Otieno. *Google/YouTube Carrie Blogger, Alexandra Fasulo, and Mike Nardi. They are good at copywriting. You could learn a lot from them.* The text read.

I hadn't informed him that my heart wasn't into copywriting or anything related to writing. The writing skill felt like so much work, and I was ready to press the pass button. I had pushed it, and not until I received that text message did I do what was needed—I took the copywriting journey seriously.

You would, too, if you were me. There is no way you would find a mentor and then let go of every suggestion given by them despite not being comfortable. You might lose them. You don't want that. I didn't want that either, so I agreed to study the copywriters he recommended.

I consumed content from the three creators, but something was amiss. No matter how much I tried, I couldn't connect with them then. Luckily for me, the YouTube algorithm did its thing. While on the platform, video suggestions of other creators doing the same thing popped up. I clicked on one of them and pap! The connection happened immediately! This copywriter spoke a language I could easily understand, digest his teachings, and follow his instructions.

“I have hit the jackpot!” I told myself.

Indeed, it felt like it, but I didn't stop there on my quest for learning.

I went to TikTok and researched Copywriting (I told you I'm a researcher). A trending video of a guy saying he makes over 40,000 dollars monthly caught my attention.

“40 thousand what?” It sounded too good to be true, but something in me told me it was a fact. To be sure, I Googled him and found out he was working with big brands. So, I listened to him carefully.

“I read a book and then took a course. The book is called Ca\$hvertizing. You can find it for free on Google.” These words came from the other trending video of him discussing how he got into copywriting and turned it into a lucrative business.

Do you know what I did after learning about the book? I ran to Google to find it!

I got it, and after reading the first few lines, I felt at home. The same kind of feeling I had when I met Robert (the copywriter I stumbled upon while looking for a great connection

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on YouTube) saturated my mind, body, and soul. It felt good. A fire was ignited in me that day. The book helped me see myself as a writer. It helped me believe in myself in ways I had never done before.

If you are a newbie copywriter struggling to find your footing, I recommend getting that book. Also, I suggest you practice what you learn; what good is it to learn and not apply? Don't be a content junky; be a lessons-learned actualizer.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Breakthrough

You are in a better place if you stay ready for the opportunity you are looking forward to. That way, you won't have to prepare when it presents itself. Getting prepared takes time, and you will miss it.

This is a lesson I learned as I grew stronger in the freelance writing field. Before then, Otieno had sent me a message saying, *How are you finding copywriting so far? Are you going somewhere with it or not?*

Oh, I'm getting somewhere and loving it! I texted back.

Great! Keep studying and practicing. You are such a natural. The samples you sent don't seem like a newbie wrote them; they are pro-like. Great job!

Thank you! Let me keep at it. By the way, are there sites you have worked on before or someone you have worked with directly? I would love to see their work to pick up on some things that may be useful to my learning process.

Sure! I will send you the links in a few. He replied.

I asked for the links because I was going somewhere in my copywriting journey. I had learned so much online (or so I thought) and felt ready to get my hands dirty. Going through work done by someone close to Otieno felt less foreign than merely learning online by myself. This was work given to a copywriter by my mentor, and he had approved of it. I was seeking the same approval. I got it from him and myself. The more I practiced, the better and more confident I became in my craft (Copywriting).

If there is a piece of advice you could take from the lessons learned during my research, find one or two coaches to learn from, then stick with them till you can stand on your feet. Ensure they speak to you in a language you understand and feel their message as deeply as possible. Learning from many people simultaneously is tricky; your mind could get confused since every teacher has their way of teaching. Better learn from one (or two), run with their lessons, and move on to the next stage of your freelancing career.

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It's what I did and what led my mentor to trust my writing abilities. One day, he invited me to a private WhatsApp group and introduced me to a client.

"A client wants a copywriter. I am working on his website. I am going to add you to a group I have created."

"Sure thing!" I answered.

I couldn't believe it. This would be my first-ever gig; my first time getting paid to write something!

I mean, I knew that day would come. I didn't believe it, but I was supercharged to meet the client when the news got to me.

"I would need you guys to run my social media pages." Said the client.

"Alright. We could set up your Facebook and Instagram pages and keep them active." I replied to him.

"No, not Instagram, mostly LinkedIn, because my Company is B2B."

B2 what? What is that? I asked myself. Of course, I would not tell the client I had no idea what B2B was. I was also not going to tell him I was new to copywriting. How and why should I do that? So, I just said, "All right."

You probably know what I did next after that meeting with the client. I ran to Google and almost broke my legs, literally!

When I arrived, I encountered more business terms like B2B - B2C and D2C. To say I was clear would be a lie. I later learned that there were many more of these terms, which shocked me. I was excited at first, but then I felt terrible about myself.

I couldn't put myself in a position to understand why, at my age, I was clueless about many things. I couldn't understand how that was possible. It made me question my newfound skill, copywriting, because how good was I as a copywriter if I lacked a sound knowledge of the terms used in the business?

I resorted to digging deeper into learning the terms. If I was going to be serious about my freelance writing career, I had to learn them all.

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I encourage you to do the same as a newbie in your field. There are a lot of new terms you are going to come across. They are all part of the learning process. Embrace learning and keep doing your research. If you find yourself in a dark place, don't worry; you will get back up again, stronger and better.

Like you, I was confused for a while, but I got the terms right once and for all just before receiving the following message on a particular evening.

*Hi! I'm Olha, content manager at Skillhub, a resume writing platform.
I'm looking for a social media copywriter for a long-term collaboration.
I'll need copies for Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Twitter.
Would you be interested? We could start with a paid test task to see if it works for us.
Let me know, Olha.*

Reading that made me almost faint.

The mixed feelings I experienced that day were so new to me. The message was what I had always waited for, what I had always prayed for, meditated for, and even mentally rehearsed.

It was here, and I was afraid of it. I couldn't breathe after reading it.

Have you ever wanted something so bad that, when it came to you, you felt unprepared, even though you had been prepared for it all your life? Yeah, that went through my mind when I received the message.

The first response a normal human being would give when faced with such fear is to sabotage the whole situation. I did that by not immediately replying to Olha.

But I texted Otieno for guidance and told him how I felt.

He did not reply to my message.

I called his phone, but he didn't pick it up either.

This is a sign from the universe! I should NOT be working with this client. Even the gods are proving it. These were the thoughts running through my mind.

Mind you, I didn't open the message; I just read it from the notification bar.

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“Hey, sorry, I was away from my phone. What did she say when you replied to her?” I finally received a reply from Otieno.

“I haven't replied to her yet,” I answered.

“Why? Do it! She seems legit. Don't keep the client waiting.”

I knew what that meant. I replied to her and said I was interested. An hour passed, and she didn't respond. I got anxious.

“Has she replied to you?” Otieno asked.

“No, she hasn't. She is not even online.” I answered.

“Relax, she will. Most of these clients are busy.” I felt reassured with his response.

True to Otieno's words, the client responded. She asked how much I charged, and I quoted the lowest amount possible to get the job (she was my first client). But I clarified to her that the price was just for the paid test task. The cost would increase if she liked my job and wanted to work with me on her future projects.

She agreed.

CHAPTER FIVE

Building Relationships with Clients

Hey, do you also write articles? I would like some. Please let me know. Another message from Skillhub popped up on my screen.

Another day made! I told myself.

Such a message meant one thing: more money!!! Of course, it also meant more work, but I wasn't thinking of it like that. To me, it didn't seem like work. I find writing to be such an easy thing. It comes so naturally. My only challenge was writing in the right format.

However, before receiving the message, I had been practicing writing an article and a blog. The niche Skillhub wanted me to write about was new, but I was confident of delivering.

Then I sent my response. *Yes, I write articles.*

I will send you the link to the outline and the keywords to use. She replied after receiving mine.

True to her words, I received the link!

I was shocked to see a whole outline laid out for me, several keywords selected for use, and the exact number of words needed on each part of that outline.

Is this how it works outside here? Goodness! This is so easy! I thought it would just be a topic, and then I was to do the rest. I thought to myself.

The few articles I had studied while getting myself ready for clients didn't mention a thing about outlines, nor did it mention that a client might send you one.

As I write this, I realize now that I had yet to study how to write an article; I had only studied a ready-written article but not the fundamentals of it and everything that had to go into it. That's why when SkillHub responded with, *I will send the link to the outline and the*

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keywords needed, in my mind, an outline was just another new word in writing I wasn't aware of since with every task they sent over, there was always a new industry-related word in it. I was wrong.

I would be lying if I said Skillhub was just a client. It was more of a school to me. Most of the things I know about writing articles right now I learned on the job while working with them.

And that's the good thing about freelancing. You can learn on the job and get paid for it!

However, as you learn on the job, be keen on the lessons, and make sure you deliver according to the client's needs. You have to be sharp and quick to execute. There is a difference between having every knowledge needed to execute a task and acquiring knowledge as you execute the task.

The latter takes time, and one may not feel ready. Initially, it might seem hard, but as long as you believe in yourself and your craft, you can truly nail anything. Whether you are a newbie in graphic design, UX/UI design, copyediting, web development, copywriting, or content writing, you can learn on the job and get paid for it.

You should be aware of one thing: not all clients are the same. Also, most clients don't know exactly what they want. It is your job to help them paint a good picture of what they are looking for and deliver on it.

Some clients might lead to you having a good day or greater days like Skillhub did to me. Others might drive you crazy. All in all, be patient with them and do your best to come to an understanding when dealing with the most difficult ones.

For peace of mind, I suggest discontinuing work with the most difficult clients once you are done working on their projects and they have approved it. You need peace to work well on other projects your other clients need. Yes, freelancing entails working on different projects at once. Can you do it? Can you handle different projects at a go? You have to if you want to succeed in freelancing. Working on multiple projects is more of a freelancer's job description, so you must practice it.

It isn't easy initially, especially if transitioning from 9 to 5 because you will work most nights to meet deadlines and deliver on your day job. But, because it is hard to juggle the two, always deliver the best. Make sure what you give will bring them (your clients) back to you, for there is nothing as sweet as having a repeated client (they are called retainers in the freelancing world). They come with perks for you, having worked with them for a

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long time, studied them, and been familiar with how they work and how they like their work done. And it becomes easy for you to execute their tasks. Above all, you know there is a money guarantee. That's motivation enough, isn't it?

Another thing, as a newbie, is to work hard to be good at different skills within your industry and start offering services in all the new skills you have acquired. You never know which will blow up and make you the most money.

I offered copywriting services in different sectors, including Social Media, Email, and Ad copy. I wasn't offering content writing services like articles or blog writing because I wasn't confident. But once I started doing it (after my client asked me if I could), content writing became my highest-performing gig on Fiverr, earning me more than every other service gig I offered on the platform.

So, learn as many skills as you can within your industry, and when a client approaches you for a service and you haven't done anything like it before, be confident to dig up from the skills learned and challenge yourself to the task. However, if deep within you feel that you can't deliver the job as required, be true to yourself and the client. Let them know that you haven't done anything like what they are asking for, but you are willing to put in the work and give your best while at it. They will understand. They are human, just like you.

Being honest with clients, especially while still a newbie, will create a good reputation for you. Transparency is key to making and maintaining greater relationships with your clients.

CHAPTER SIX

Being Active on LinkedIn

“If truly Fiverr doesn’t pay well as you say, why don’t you try finding clients on other platforms? You could get paid double for a single job done on Fiverr.”

“Which platforms are you talking about where I could find clients to pay me that much?”

“LinkedIn. That’s where I get all of my high-paying clients.”

“Wow! I had no idea. Can we talk more about this on inbox?”

“Sure.”

“Alright, I just sent you a message.”

That was the end of the conversation between Ranee and another Facebook user on a freelance Facebook group I belong. I was “eavesdropping.”

Everything they discussed was all I wanted - more clients and more money. And so, being the curious person I am, I dashed to LinkedIn.

Now, I had an account there - a profile, but I wasn’t active on the platform. But armed with the new knowledge - you could get better-paying clients on LinkedIn; I was ready to be active by all means possible. And so, I started scrolling and looking for clients.

I scrolled and looked for them on the 1st day, the 2nd, the 3rd, the 7th...I couldn’t find one. All I was met with were LinkedIn creator’s posts.

But Ranee said you could find clients on LinkedIn; where are they? I asked myself.

And now, as I write this, I’m asking myself why on earth I thought clients were walking around LinkedIn with tags that looked like, *I am a client, and I need your services*. Goodness! That was so dumb of me! But with awareness comes wisdom. I knew nothing was happening, so after the 7th day, I figured the approach was bogus. I had to come up with a new strategy.

If there is something like 'LinkedIn Influence,' then there is a lot one could gain from this platform, apart from just the high-paying clients. I reckoned when I found out about the word. I thought influencing existed only on other social media platforms since LinkedIn was a professional platform. I was shocked, but it made me want to learn more about what else was offered on the platform.

Whenever I logged in, I started studying the posts on my feed. I found myself consuming lots of the content to the extent I became bloated and constipated from the juicy, valuable information received from them. I got lost and tired of the content and of not finding clients.

I quit LinkedIn and went back to building my Fiverr profile, but still, something was bugging me. If I got LinkedIn right, I could get what I wanted. I packed my bags, returned, and started trying my luck again.

One day, I received a "Ranee liked Abraham Onyemari's post" notification.

That's how LinkedIn works, by the way. It notifies you of the actions taken by the people you are following. I received many notifications about Ranee's activities, being the first person I followed after "overhearing" her conversation with a fellow Facebook user. I clicked on the post, and my oh my! The content was amazing! Abraham's writing style was unique! I fell in love with it and followed him ASAP! He reciprocated.

For the next few weeks, I engaged with most of the content he was putting out. One indicated that he was running a LinkedIn consistency challenge and was inviting 20 people to join. I joined, and that was the beginning of everything. Like you, I was a total newbie, but I gave my all.

The people in the challenge came from different industries. Among them were content and copywriters, web designers, graphic designers, and other professionals such as midwives.

We were all there for one thing - to learn how LinkedIn works, implement it, and find a way to be consistent with being active on the platform. It worked for most of us. And it could work for you, too, as a LinkedIn newbie.

Suppose you join a LinkedIn consistency challenge or any other LinkedIn challenge where you have to be in a group of people working with them. In that case, you will find yourself delivering and getting better at being yourself.

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I became a better person and a better professional writer after the 20 days.

Here are the top three things I learned you could implement as you start.

- **Post valuable content on your profile.**

Valuable content is evergreen content. Content that fully resonates with your audience, prompting them to listen to you and what you have to say every time you put out content. It has to speak their language, cater to their needs, and provide solutions.

- **Leave valuable comments on other creators' posts.**

Potential clients read comments on LinkedIn posts. If you leave a comment that truly resonates with them, they might contact you in the DM asking for your services. Many LinkedIn professionals and creators have gotten jobs and signed bigger deals through their comments. It's a trick that, when applied well, could yield great results.

- **Optimize your profile.**

An optimized LinkedIn profile acts like a magnet. It attracts clients on its own since it has the right keywords and everything else a client might search for when looking for someone offering the kind of services you are. It is one of the best ways to put yourself on LinkedIn and let jobs come to you instead of you looking for them.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Offering Your First Service

- A stable internet connection
- An internet-enabled device
- Grit to push through obstacles
- Patience
- Hunger for learning and earning.

That's all you need.

You don't need a laptop or a fancy phone to get started, and you don't need Wi-Fi if you don't have one. You can use data bundles. And definitely, you don't need to buy a course to get started. I mean, you could if you feel like it and can afford it, but YouTube can be your school for now. It is the best school for starters.

Start with Canva to create designs if you are a newbie graphic designer. Use the free version. You could advance with time, but the free version can serve you well in the beginning. Your fellow designers are doing the same and are cashing in big.

For writers, to make your texts error-free, download Grammarly (Otieno referred this to me). Use the free version to your advantage. And use your phone as you wait to buy that computer. I learned everything I needed to start as a copywriter on my phone. I opened an account on Fivver on my phone; I got my first client (still friends till today) on my phone... Your phone is a goldmine. It is your money-making machine, office, school, and client acquisition tool.

Now, before clients know that you exist, and before you can start acquiring them, you have to put yourself out there - in front of their faces. They have to know that you exist for them. Don't be fooled by the phrase, *the market is saturated*; there is a client(s) for you, in the same way there is a client(s) for everyone else. You have to be aligned with them, give your best when you get that gig, and you will see how fast you will keep attracting more.

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About your first client. Different freelancers have said that your first client would be a pain in the a\$\$\$. That was not my experience. I met the best. You could, too. But just in case you find one giving you headaches, don't worry; that will toughen you in the game because it's not always rosy.

A place to easily get your first client is Fiverr. Many clients are flooding the platform daily, looking for the services you offer. All you need to do as a freelancer is create gigs, and you will be open for business!

Now, how do you create a gig on Fiverr?

It's simple! Log onto the platform and register an account. It's free. But... before registering the account, go to the search button and type in the services you offer. For example, if you are a writer, you could type *social media copy* or *email copy*. A lot of gigs will appear on your screen. Study them thoroughly, like you studied for the skill you have just acquired. Look out for the keywords, the portrayal of words, and what they (the gig descriptions) all have in common. Then, go ahead and create your account.

The main reason for doing this is to ensure that your gigs get higher chances of landing on the first page to get a lot of eyeballs. At least two or six of them(eyeballs) will click on your gig and enquire about your services.

It might take you two days or two months to get your first gig. It all depends on how the gigs and your account have been optimized.

Alright! Now, let's create an account.

On the Fiverr website, click on join, then enter your email address. Choose a username and a password, then click join. Great! You now have an account on Fiverr. However, that is a buyer account. It's how Fiverr has been designed. Anyone new on the platform is assumed to be a buyer until they activate a seller account. That will be your next step.

Click on your profile picture, then click "Become a seller." You will be directed on the next steps to follow, including verifying your phone number, and the last step would be "Create your first gig." This is where most of your attention (if scattered before, needs to be put in place.)

You will start with your gig title. The gig title is what you see as: "I will...write an SEO-optimized article for your website." For someone offering SEO Content writing services. The title varies depending on the kind of service you are offering.

Looking at the above example, you can see the words *SEO-optimized* and *article*. Clients looking for article writers normally type in those words. They want someone who can optimize the content in the article and make it SEO-ready. This is a hint. Know what your clients are searching for and use it on your title. Be as specific as possible on your titles.

The next step is pricing.

This is an important step that may stop you from getting orders from clients if done wrong. You want to price your gigs at a reasonable price.

Pricing them too high, yet you are new on the platform, with zero reviews, might lead to no orders in a very long time. Reviews are a thing. They drive potential clients to you and your services. It's easy for a client to trust a seller with many reviews from other buyers than one without reviews, yet their prices are too high. This does not mean they will go for someone with the lowest price, but with no reviews, low prices have their consequences, too. You might appear too cheap. They say cheap things have no value, are roughly created, and seem unprofessional. Therefore, avoid that and price your gig somewhere in between. Not too high nor too low.

It might not be worth your time and what you are offering, but just so you can get your first reviews and build your profile, you can do that for the first few months. With time, as you progress, more gigs will be coming your way. Then, you can increase the amount and charge what you deserve. If you keep doing a good job, many gigs will come your way. You might get overwhelmed with work. When such happens, you must outsource(delegate) work to your fellow freelancers. We will talk about outsourcing in a few.

Let's have a look at the gig description.

The secret to creating a great gig description is being precise, touching on your client's pain points, and offering a solution.

A pain point is a problem/challenge faced by your potential client. They have likely come on Fiverr seeking someone like you who can help them solve the problem. Let's say their pain point is low quality or poor YouTube thumbnails. They want better thumbnails for their YouTube videos. If a graphic designer offers such services, your gig description must touch on the problem and the solution. Let a client feel like you understand their pain and have the solution. Make it vivid in your gig description and use the right keywords. They will feel compelled to click on your gig asking for the service.

PS. According to your expertise, whatever service you are offering, use as many keywords as possible on the gig description. It helps your gig rank high on the platform. However, use them sparingly to ensure flow in your gig description.

FAQs

When I was younger, I used to think FAQs were questions written by the people asking, lol.

If you are like me, Frequently Asked Questions might be asked by your potential clients (they could be real questions asked by your clients, but until they start asking, you have to come up with your own). You are still a newbie, remember? If you find it challenging, find inspiration from your competitors' gigs. Check their FAQ section. You will find something to use in yours. Don't copy; get inspiration, then craft your own.

Again, use keywords in this section, too... for full optimization purposes.

Requirements Section

This section contains questions your clients must answer before you start working on their project. Such questions are meant to help you understand the scope of work better before you can start working. For someone offering writing services, some of the requirements could be something like:

- The URL to their profiles
- The name of their competitors and their URL (s)
- Their preferred tone of voice
- The type of English they prefer (American or British)

Anything and everything that can let you do your job easier and faster.

People find it easier to fill out a form. I suggest you receive it in a text form.

Gig Images

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The gig image is the first thing a client sees. Make it as appealing as possible, and remember to include keywords.

This will be the easiest part of the gig creation process for a graphic designer. For a writer, it might be hard. Worry not. Download Canva on your phone or PC and create one or three images for your gig (Fiverr allows up to 3 images on a gig.) Use the free version; it has a lot of options you could choose from. With time, you could hire a professional to create the gig images as you advance. Again, on the gig image, include keywords. Make them bold as much as you can. However, avoid using too many words. It makes the image look stuffy, making it hard to read.

And then...upload the image(s) on Fiverr and hit publish!

Wait...

Before publishing the gig, you must crosscheck everything and ensure it's all in place. Especially for a writer, you can't claim to be good at producing copy/content, yet there are errors in some parts of your gig, be it the description or the gig title. Just take your time before hitting publish.

And when you do, your gig will be open for business! You will be ready to start working on clients' projects.

As a new seller on Fiverr, the platform allows you to set up to 7 gigs. You could create all seven of them at a go to attract clients from any place in the world, or you could stick to just one or two. Some sellers swear by sticking to at most two, saying it positions you as an authority in your field, while others swear by creating as many as you can because you never know which one will attract clients best. Whichever method you follow, ensure your gigs are highly optimized. It is the number one key to making them appear on your clients' screens, prompting them to click on it and get into business with you.

Let's go back to outsourcing.

If you are keen enough, while researching your competitors on the platform, you might have seen things like two orders in cue, five orders in cue, or 19 orders in cue.

These are the number of projects a seller like you is working on. Can you imagine handling 19 different projects at once? It's ridiculous! That's why many sellers opt for outsourcing. To do this, identify a few sellers/freelancers on the platform or any other platform to which you could delegate tasks for a fee. Ensure they can produce high-quality

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work as you do to satisfy the client. This freelancing business is all about client satisfaction. Get that right, and you will never run out of projects!

I have realized that to succeed in freelancing, there are many other things you need to know and learn, not just the skills you are willing to offer; that's just the beginning.

Being a freelancer and presenting yourself as a service provider is more like owning and running a business.

You are a business owner running a freelancing business.

It hadn't dawned on me when starting until a certain day when my mentor said, "Keeping them (clients) on the platform will bring you more business." That's when it hit me that I was running a business! Lol. The village girl in me had taken over my conscience many times.

If you know that when you get into freelancing, you are getting into business and running it, then good for you. If this has just come to your attention, then there are many other things you need to learn.

- Learn how to sell
- Learn how to communicate with your clients
- How to package your service
- How to develop great relationships with clients
- How to handle difficult clients
- When to scale
- How to negotiate and get what you truly deserve
- Learn business terms.

If you studied "Business Studies" in high school, you are a step ahead for you know some of the terms used in business. But if you did not just like me, it's time to learn. They are a lot, but just be open to learning. You will get them right as time goes by. Trust in yourself and develop a business mindset.

One last thing.

Set up a Workstation

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Freelancing makes one think they can work from anywhere in their homes. It's true, you can, but you might not be as highly productive as you could be if you set a place where you call "work." More like a home office.

You don't need a big house to do this. You need to identify a position in the house that you could call "my office."

Respect your job, too... dress up well for work. Of course, you could work in your pajamas, but if you were working a 9 to 5, could you go to work in your pajamas? Nope! Respect your job. And dress the part. There is something about dressing for the part. It brings out the best in you.

Eat well, too - healthy foods, to be precise.

And also, manage your time well.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Doubts

One day, I sent a random message to Otieno. *Why are you helping me out this much?*

I began feeling inadequate and unworthy of help. The voice inside me grew so loud that it felt audible to anyone nearby. I found myself adrift in a sea of worry within my mind.

The thoughts and the conversations, wrapped up in a unique aluminum foil made of doubts, were gently barbecuing in a medium heat of uncertainty inside my being. Vagueness overtook me. I could have lost it if it wasn't for the strong person, the strong Miriam that I am. Completely.

Yet, this turmoil didn't arise out of nowhere. I began to blame my environment for my circumstances, but the truth remains: your environment only affects your performance if you allow it to. I had permitted it. It was consuming me—bit by bit, tearing at my nerves.

When I started my freelancing journey, I had no mentor. I craved guidance from someone who had done it before me, but I couldn't. Being able to help someone who is in the position I was in is my joy. I can, so I am doing it. Otieno replied to my random message.

Did I believe it? Yes, I did.

The response gave me relief. Some assurance that he had pure intentions with me.

In my adult life, while looking for a job or a way to be productive, 90% of the men I would meet in the positions of help needed would first see my beauty, not what I could bring to the table. It had always been like, “Oh, you are so confident and seem good at what you do,” at the first interview. Then, during the shortlisting, it would be, “Could you be my second wife?”

I detested that statement.

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It made me develop a distaste for being beautiful, for in one way or another, my beauty stopped me from getting what I wanted in the rooms of the doors heavens had opened up for me.

Freelancing taught me otherwise.

99% of the men in the industry want to see you succeed in your craft/skill and life. That's their only reason for connecting with you or agreeing to help if you ask. If they want to deepen the connection into something privately intimate, and you say no, they would respect it, still help you, and be there for you.

It's one of the other reasons I respect freelancing.

And so, if you are a lady reading this, worry no more about your beauty preventing you from getting what you want.

If you are a guy, have pure intentions with the ladies you'll meet in the industry. They are all beautiful, but don't get distracted, like those men who came before you did not.

If you are in the transitioning process (from a 9-5 to a freelancer), get ready for long nights of working on a client's project. You might have to forget about the weekends for a while. This is not to say that you can't have a day or two off in a week; you can, but the days would differ from what you are used to. However, when you start gaining traction and authority in your field, more work will be coming your way, and you can have the option to choose how your weekends are going to look.

I got into the freelancing business while still working a 9-5. Balancing the two (while transitioning) was challenging, but if I made it through, you too can. All you need is to commit yourself to it; if you don't, you are setting yourself up for frustrations and eventually failure.

If you are a student, good. You already know the hustle and bustle of coming up with a schedule and sticking to it. All you need is to create a balance between school and freelancing. It's possible. I know this because my mentor is a student. When I met him, he was a second-year student working with multiple retainer clients. None of them wanted to let him go. He was (and still is) paying for his school fees and fully funding his life with freelance money.

For the stay-at-home moms, freelancing can be your playground, too! You can do it effortlessly! However, time management, frequently mastering your craft, and dedication

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to the job would significantly affect your personal and financial growth. I am confident about this because the 9-5 I worked was similar to a stay-at-home mom's daily job.

Remember, the fact that this book is in your hands right now means that you have everything you need to get started and succeed as a freelancer. Just do what's required of you, and within no time, you will be teaching the newfound knowledge to others in the same position as you!

CHAPTER NINE

Unexpected Rewards

SkillHub accepted your offer. A notification from Fiverr popped on my screen.

At that time, it was the most significant financial miracle in my life.

If one could measure how wide my smile was after seeing that message, they would tell you the length could compete in the Guinness Book of Records' Widest Smile category. And this won't be by size only, but also the time it took to let go of the smile itself because I remember, by the time I got back to my senses, I could feel the dryness on my big teeth caused by lack of saliva on them, due to smiling for too long. I was in a different world.

To say that a \$250 offer caused all that would be right. However, I was to receive the payment after seven days after completing the work. Now, for some people, and you too, \$250 is a small amount. But to me, it was a lot! I was expecting it, but I wasn't sure of receiving it.

Here is why.

Upon receiving the offer, I worked a "not your normal" 9-5. The job was paying me a whopping \$300/month. And now, I would make something close to that in seven days! Seven days! That was a miracle.

To solidify it as the true miracle it was, in all of my adult life, every job I had secured (whatever odd job you could think of) paid me no more than \$150/month. That was one reason why when I got the opportunity to work the \$300/month job, I took it without hesitation despite the risks. I will tell the whole story about that specific job in another book.

For now, if you are wondering why I hadn't started freelancing and selling my writing services online, it was because I wasn't aware that:

You could work online and get paid without physically meeting the client.
You could get paid to write.

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The latter was easy to figure out because Otieno was there to guide me. The former, however, took me a while before I found out about it in October 2022.

But why? Why did it take me this long to discover freelancing and my uniquely intriguing writing abilities? Why? To say that I don't know would be such a shame. From March 2015 to February 2021, I could not be found anywhere online. No Facebook, no Instagram, no nothing! I was in the dark.

So that gap cost me, but at the same time, I needed to discover freelancing, gigs, and copywriting right when I did. I believe I wasn't ready to receive that piece of information and start earning money online like my peers were. If I was, it could be happening.

If you believe you are ready to get started in your freelancing career, pay attention to the following:

The new industry-related words thrown at you by a client

Your communication with the first few clients you'll meet.

The words *carousel post*, *sheets*, *heading tags*, *justify your text*, and so much more, were all new to me when a client asked me to deliver a task covering all that. I did not say no to the job or yes, knowing I couldn't deliver. I said yes because deep within, I knew I could. Yes, the words were new, but I knew that "if Google were for me, no comment would be against me." So, I dived deep into research.

As a newbie content or copywriter or in whatever industry you are in, do not worry; use Google to your advantage when faced with such new words embedded in a job description. Reddit and Quora work well, too. On your first freelancing gig, always work smart and deliver an outstanding job like a pro. It is the only way to gain trust with your first, second, and every other client you meet. Outperforming leads to great five-star reviews from clients. Those reviews will bring in more clients, and that's how you'll start expanding your business just from the single job you took unafraid.

Also, sometimes, to start building your portfolio as a newbie, be bold and work for free or a low-paying job. Do it for the reviews. The digital space we are in relies highly on reviews. The more reviews a person/brand has, no matter how crappy their job is, a client would be more likely to hire them than you who have none.

It's sad, but that's just how the game works.

An outstanding job = five-star reviews

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Five-star reviews = new clients

New satisfied clients = recommendations

Recommendations = more work.

More work = more money

And when you have more money, you could increase your service rates and charge more.
So don't be afraid to start small; you will grow with time.

CHAPTER TEN

Possible Goldmines

As a newbie, I have mentioned a few skills you could get acquainted with and get started immediately, but there are many to choose from, and having more than one skill is okay. However, lean mostly towards where your heart is and go deeper into the subskills under your main skill, as mentioned in chapter five.

Below are some you could check out online on Google or any social media platform, especially YouTube.

- Copywriting
- Content writing
- Ghostwriting
- Graphic design
- SEO
- Web Design
- Web Development
- Data Analytics
- Virtual Assistance
- Social Media Management
- Video Editing
- Sound editing
- Photography

- Mobile App Development

You can niche down any of the skills to an area you are good at. For example, if you picked copywriting as a skill and studied computer science in school, you could offer writing in the technical field and be known as a thought leader in technical writing. If you studied medicine, you could narrow down your search to health copywriting. Developing a copy or an article would be easier because you know most of the technical terms and words used in the industry. That could set you apart from other writers, making you stand out.

Remember, you can learn any digital skill and get good at it. It all depends on how invested you are in learning the skill. And as long as your skill can solve somebody or business's problem, that somebody or business will hire you without blinking. However, your solution must truly produce results. It must prove to be doing that which it claims to. If you present yourself as a graphic designer, yet your designs are not visually appealing, it would be hard for clients to trust you, which could lead to negative rankings.

So, get good at what you do (what you offer), position yourself in this digital space, and give it your all when that first job comes to you, the second, the third, the hundredth, and so on. And when it gets overwhelming, outsource work, as discussed in Chapter 7.

PS. Thousands of FREE online courses teach any of the skills above (and more). You can access them mostly on YouTube.

One more important thing: network/connect with people offering services that go well with what you offer.

For example, if you are a writer, it's good to connect to an editor just in case your client needs professional editing. Be connected to a graphics designer, too; most businesses require design and branding services. The same applies to web designers and developers because their clients need people to write website copy/content. Just have friends in the freelancing community. Friends you can work with and make money with.

Someone I would recommend you check out is [Alexandra Fasulo](#). She quit her 9 to 5, didn't know what to do, but was determined to make it in the freelancing world. Apart from making more than a million dollars while freelance writing, she has established herself as

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an authority, paving the way for her to work with brands such as Forbes, CNBC, and other big brands.

Another person to look out for is [Elvis W](#). He is a digital skills and personal development advocate. He provides FREE resources on equipping oneself with the best digital skills and making it in the digital space as a Freelancer.

[Mike Nardi](#) will teach you how to move from earning \$5 to making thousands of dollars freelancing using simple, learnable skills.

If I were to list everyone here, this book would be longer than expected, and you might get bored. So go on Google, make it your friend as suggested earlier, and if you still find any more challenges getting started in this Freelancing world, I could be your “Otieno.”

My contacts are on the last page of this book. Reach out to [me](#).

The \$300/month *stay-at-home mom-like* job offer I took.

The year was 2016 when the thought first came to me. Faridah, my classmate, was in Dubai, “making it big,” as I had thought.

I was back in Kenya, working as a waitress from one hotel to the next, spending 16 hours at work daily and getting paid Ksh250 daily. That was about \$75 a month back then.

“Girls in the Middle East, Saudi Arabia to be specific, are facing a rough time over there; some end up losing their lives. Don’t let your girls go.” The leading TV and radio stations aired some of the news at the time.

How do you tell that to someone earning \$75 or less a month, yet they can earn more than triple that amount?

“If I die on the plane, or one of the Arabs kills me like they have done to other girls as seen on the news, I don’t care. I would have tried my luck. I am going to the Middle East.”

Well, I’m writing this to you while back home in Kenya, so I made it back home.

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Details on what happened while I was in the Middle East will be coming up in my book, as promised. Watch out for it.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



[Miriam Maru](#) is a freelance writer and event host, is committed to assisting personal brands, corporate brands, and freelancers in establishing and expanding a lucrative online presence through tailored content. Her passions include reading, writing, traveling, enjoying feel-good music, and watching.

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"Getting Started in the Freelancing World" marks her debut book and the inaugural installment in the Dear Newbie series. The forthcoming addition to the series will be "Dear Newbie, Getting Started on LinkedIn."

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ABOUT THE BOOK

The “normal” 9–5 systems are becoming outdated in the internet era we are living in. In previous years, working for and with a company located on another continent required a lot of preparation, traveling, and relocating from one continent to the next. That isn't the case anymore.

All you need right now is an internet connection on an internet-enabled device, and you can work in the comfort of your home, or just anywhere, for up to five companies at a go as a freelancer. Most of these companies prefer working with Freelancers, for many of them are skilled in their respective fields.

You could quit your 9 to 5 just like I and many others have done; you could get started freelancing as a stay-at-home mom or even as a student. Freelancing allows you that freedom. This book shows you how to start right as a Freelancer and establish yourself as an expert in your field. It has many digital skills needed right now and in years to come. Pick one and start living and working on your own terms.