

Topic No.180**Toptal**

Toptal is a grand website as their claim is legit and authentic that they hire the top 3% of freelance talent. 54 million Americans are freelancers according to a report published in 2016. One can hire designers, developers and finance experts, etc. on this platform. They provide services in selective niches but have the top freelancers on their platform.

This platform is a little different from other typical freelance marketplaces. If you try to sign up for Toptal, they will send an email to schedule a detailed interview with Toptal executives regarding your skills and expertise. They will ask you to present your portfolio, your website and your freelance profiles of other freelance marketplaces, etc. It is a highly paying website. If you get selected, you can set an hourly rate for your services based upon your expertise, even \$150-\$200.

When you sign up on Toptal, it generates an archive database for you so when employer searches for the potential candidate, he directly gets in touch with the right person. If you think you have got an expertise in your niche and you have good communication and business development skills, just get started with Toptal.

Topic No.181**SimplyHired**

There is another website SimplyHired. This platform is for Pakistanis, living in or out of Pakistan. Specifically, Pakistani students who live in USA and want to earn through freelancing, they can join this marketplace to search for jobs within the country. SimplyHired caters a little off-technology categories, but only for those who live in USA. All the trainees enrolled in Digiskills.pk from USA can also avail the job opportunities from this website.



Topic No.182**What causes a dispute?**

In case of any issue with an order, both buyer and seller can contact the Resolution/ Support Center for his/her assistance. The major reasons of dispute over the freelance platforms are as follows:

- Miscommunication is the main reason behind most of the disputes in the freelance marketplaces. When the buyer and the seller do not discuss the project's details and strategy, it leads towards a dispute.
- When a seller fails to fulfill the expectations of the buyer, the buyer goes to the Resolution/ Support center to cancel the order. Sometimes the client is expecting something else and the delivery is not up to the mark.

Every freelance marketplace has its own support, dispute or resolution center. If the buyer is not happy with the seller's work, then he can go to the dispute resolution center in order to cancel the order and get the refund.

Topic No.183**The importance of keeping track of conversation**

In Freelancing, there is no shield to protect yourself from the disputes. In case of any dispute, you are not supposed to stick on a particular project; you have to move on to another project while following the disputed project in the respective arbitration center. Every freelance marketplace has its own arbitration system. In order to avoid disputes and hassles, keep all the communication with the employer through PMB and discuss all the project related queries and milestones over there. Any communication outside the freelance platform will not be considered as a proof by the arbitration center. They will not accept any evidence from Skype or any other source. When the employer initiates the PMB after your bid, make sure that all the project related commitments, goals, documentation and queries are on PMB and not on any other source like Skype or Email, etc. All the material and discussions in the PMB are recorded by the freelance platforms, and in case of any dispute, you can report to the arbitration center. Communication outside the PMB will be considered as a violation of the Terms of Service of the respective platform. Also, in case of any dispute, you will not be able to defend yourself and the arbitration center will support the employer.

Topic No.184**When to file a dispute?**

Sometimes, even after completing the work as per the buyer's requirements, s/he doesn't release the payment. Therefore, as a freelancer, it is necessary for you to protect your interest. In this scenario, you can file a dispute to the arbitration center of that platform. It is also necessary for you to understand the situations in which you have to file a dispute. Following are the situations that require filing a dispute:

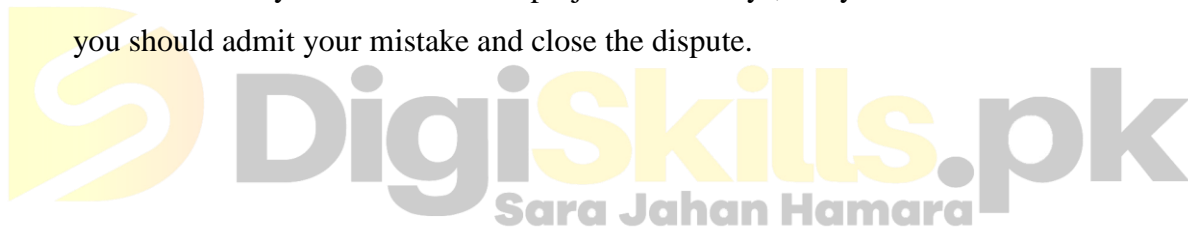
- When the commitments are not fulfilled by the buyer.
- When your buyer refuses to pay the decided money after the milestone is completed and delivered.
- When the buyer doesn't respond after the delivery of the project.



Topic No.185**When to get out of a dispute?**

After consulting the arbitration center, if you still think that the case is not going in your favor then there is no need to waste your time on it. You should step out from the dispute and try to focus on the next projects properly. Getting out of the dispute can be considered in the following cases:

1. When the buyer awards you the project and you do not ask him to deposit the decided amount in the Escrow; then the freelancing marketplace can do nothing in the case of the dispute.
2. When the mistake is your own and you were unable to complete any of the milestones on time, then there is no need to continue the dispute. For example, if in the PMB you have committed that you will deliver the project in two days, but you are unable to fulfill it. So, you should admit your mistake and close the dispute.



Topic No.186**A complete real time case study bid for graphic designer**

According to a report, 54 million Americans do freelancing. When some project is assigned to them, they post it on the freelance marketplaces, and hire Asian freelancers because they offer relatively low price without compromising the quality of work. In this race of freelancers, the only way to stand out is to place an effective bid. Following is a sample attached of an effective bid for a Graphic Designer:

Dear Elyssa,

Thanks for reading my response to your project. I have gone through your project and I am confident of designing 2 state of the art logos for your organization TBW ventures.

I understand the company name is TBW Ventures Inc. and Think Beyond is a department of the company.

I have seen the attachments provided and have a fair idea how I can design the new creative logos in illustrator.

Please see my logo portfolio on my website at <http://www.infomist.com/portfolio/>

I have over 10 years of experience of working with different industries and organizations. My price is \$150 for one Logo.

If interested, please open PMB (message board) so we can talk and possibly move forward.

Looking forward to your positive response.

Best regards,

Hisham Sarwar

Topic No.187**A complete real time case study bid for web developer**

WordPress is the easiest and most flexible Content Management System (CMS) used to create a professional website or a blog. Following is a sample attached of an effective bid for a Web Developer:

Dear Werner,

Thanks for reading my response to your project. I have seen your project and it matches my expertise.

I can create your website in WordPress (no licensing required) within 3 business days. With WordPress, you can easily edit/delete the textual content, graphics on all the pages of your website.

Special Offer: Would you like to see free mockup of your website home page within 24 hours?

If yes, can you please send me your current logo so I can pick the color scheme and apply in the mockup design?

I have over 10 years of experience in designing quality, modern websites. I have worked with different companies from different industries. Take a look at my portfolio at www.infomist.com/portfolio.

If interested, open PMB so we can discuss the project.

Best Regards,

Hisham Sarwar

Topic No.188**A complete real time case study bid for creative writer**

Creative writers comprise of 70% of the total number of freelancers at the freelance marketplace. As a creative writer, do ask questions so that the employer can judge you on your ability of writing. Also, it makes the bid more interesting. Following is a sample attached of an effective bid for a Creative Writer:

Dear Grayson,

Thanks for reading my response to your project. I am a creative writer who owns a blog and have been writing for 3 years.

Take a look at my Blog <https://www.beingguru.com>. It is a Tech/Motivation blog that covers different topics such as latest technology news, Celebrity speeches, money, Bitcoin, Mobile phones and lot more. Please see my blog to know more.

I would like to offer my writing services for your blog. I have a question.

Do you want to pay per article, or do you pay for a quantity (say X price for 5 articles)?

If interested, please open PMB so we can discuss further.

Thanks

Hisham Sarwar

Topic No.189**A complete real time case study bid for E-Commerce**

E-Commerce refers to the buying and selling of goods or services using the internet, and the transfer of money and details to execute these transactions. Following is a sample attached of an effective bid for an E-Commerce Expert:

Dear Hector,

Thanks for reading my response to your project. I have over 10 years of designing and developing WordPress websites including themes and plugins. I can develop your e-commerce website in WordPress within one business week.

I understand your project has three parts:

- Landing page for language selection
- Appointments (With calendars)
- Online Booking (PayPal)

Proposed Solution:

I will include WooCommerce plugin for enabling payment acceptance on your website and also will use a calendar plugin for your appointment scheduling. The website be multilingual (will use plugin) to switch users between two languages.

Take a look at these 2 WordPress websites that accept PayPal as well as major credit card payments

<https://www.mmusa.com>

<https://beingguru.com>

I would also like to show you FREE mockup of your website home page. Are you interested?

Let's discuss this opportunity in PMB.

Best Regards,

Hisham Sarwar

Topic No.190**A complete real time case study bid for AutoCAD**

AutoCAD is a computer-aided drafting software used to create blueprints for buildings, bridges, and computer chips, etc. Following is a sample attached of an effective bid for an AutoCAD Expert:

Dear Susan,

Thanks for reading my response to your project. I own a small software house that provides different services such as web development, content writing and Engineering solutions.

We can vectorize your sketches using AutoCAD. I understand first task and quote request is for base plan only. We typically charge US\$25 per hour for CAD drawings. The final deliverable will be .DWG or any other output of your choice

Special Offer:

I would like to offer free sample of creating your one sketch in AutoCAD.

Please open message board (PMB) so we can discuss further.

Thanks,

Hisham Sarwar

Topic No.191**A complete real time case study bid for administrative job**

Administrative assistants' duties and responsibilities include providing administrative support to the client to ensure efficient operations of the office virtually. It includes supporting managers and employees through a variety of tasks related to organization and communication. One is responsible for confidential and time-sensitive material of the client. Following is a sample attached of an effective bid for a Virtual Assistant:

Dear Icca L,

Thanks for reading my response to your project. I would like to offer my services for managing your projects daily. I understand you are looking for 4 hours work daily.

I have a question. Is this job applicable from Monday to Friday or are you looking for work at weekends too?

Please open message board (PMB) so we can discuss this opportunity and work for you.

Thanks,

Hisham Sarwar

Topic No.192**How to manage disappointment?**

Fear of losing is the main hurdle in achieving your goals. After some disappointment or failure many people quit freelancing and start sacrificing their goals. A successful person is the one who handles the disappointments professionally and do not give up on his goals.

Fear is not a barrier. Remember disappointment is a part of life. To be a successful person, you have to face it fearlessly. If you want to be like other successful people, you must first overcome those fears. There are two outcomes of fear generally known:

- Forget everything and runaway
- Face everything and rise

There are two options for the individuals that whether they run away due to the failures or they face them bravely. When things are not going in one's favor, then one should analyze himself/herself and the root cause of that failure and try to overcome those factors in the future. In freelancing, you can increase the chances of your success by trying different kinds of bids by adding more details to your profile about your key skillset, expertise and experiences. Try to improve your communications skills and present yourself to the clients via a video.

Topic No.193**Think Unorthodox**

Disappointments, failures, and fear of losing are a part of human nature, but it's our mental strength that makes us strong enough to handle the difficult situations. To be a successful person, you need to break the fear factor and challenge yourself. If a person has failed in the past but now he has decided to fight from the difficult situations by learning from his mistakes, he will be successful eventually.

In 1936, Karoly Takacs, a shooter of the Hungarian Army was determined to win the gold medal in the 1940 Olympic Games. Those expectations vanished when a hand grenade exploded in his right hand during training with his military squad. His shooting hand was blown off just a few months before Olympics.

Takacs spent a month in the hospital depressed at the loss of his hand as well as the end to his Olympics' dream. He would have probably spent the rest of his life feeling sorry for himself, but Takacs did the unthinkable. He picked himself up, and decided to learn shooting with his left hand. His motto was simple. He simply asked himself, "Why not?"

Instead of focusing on what he didn't have i.e. a world class shooting hand, he decided to focus on what he had i.e. an incredible mental toughness and a healthy left hand that could be developed to shoot like a champion with a little more practice.

At the time of Olympics 1944, he joined the training camp again. Other shooters approached Takacs to present their condolences and to congratulate him on having the strength to come watch them shoot. They were surprised when he said, "I haven't come to watch, I have come to compete."

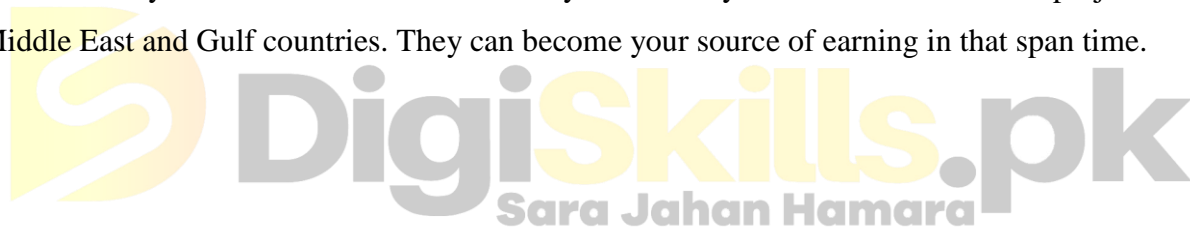
The 1940 and 1944 Olympics were cancelled because of World War II. Takacs continued training and in 1948 he qualified for the London Olympics. At the age of 38, Takacs won the gold medal and set a new world record in pistol shooting. The people were really surprised when Takacs won the gold medal. Four years later, Takacs won another gold medal at the 1952 Helsinki Olympics.

Topic No.194**Go back to previous clients**

Thinking unorthodox is a great approach in freelancing. We have already discussed many elements and aspects of it, another one is reaching back your previous clients. This is a very helpful approach in freelance career, as it increases your client pool and you retain your clients as well.

You should keep in mind all the festivals and events that take place in your clients' area throughout the year, and keep getting back to them with offers and discounts. For example, Eid, New Year, Easter, Black Friday, Thanksgiving and Diwali, etc.

Also, one should see when to bid and when not to bid. For example, your clients from Europe and America will give you good business throughout the year, but do not expect any orders from them in the last days of December and the first days of January. Meanwhile bid on the projects from Middle East and Gulf countries. They can become your source of earning in that span time.



Topic No.195**Give an amazing offer**

A freelancer must realize that there are many sacrifices that one needs to make in personal and professional life. There are a few do's and don'ts that should be kept in mind though. For example, a professional/ freelancer can compromise on the price but cannot even imagine to compromise the value proposition or the quality of work.

The price can be sacrificed for the reason that it will ultimately pay you back in the future. It is your investment towards the goal. As charging less for a project might get you less money but improve your rating, enhance your portfolio and increase the number of completed projects.



Topic No.196**Check your bid time, PMB response**

Freelancing is all about the right timings. A person has to make many compromises to make one's career established, and sacrificing your sleep routine is one of them. As most of your clients are from Europe and States, and time difference of Pakistan and USA is about 12 hours, so most of the time the clients are posting the projects while it is night time in Pakistan. You might lose the chance to win the project due to sleep, because the ones awake at that time will communicate earlier and probably will be awarded with the project too by the time you wake up. So, if you are aiming to bid for American clients, bid between 7pm to 4am.



Topic No.197**Self Confidence**

Self-confidence is a very important element for a freelancer's success. Not only in freelancing, but also in jobs and business, confidence is the key success factor. A person should never stop working on his/her self-confidence. Many big and small factors contribute in developing one's confidence.

The two major prerequisites of self-confidence are as follows:

1. Personal development

Personal development is not a one day task but a throughout process. A person must keep working on his/her self-development in order to become confident and retain his/her confidence too.

2. Skill

A person confidence is automatically built when he becomes the master of his/her skill. A skill or expertise is something that boosts your confidence in yourself. When you are an expert of your skill and have updated it with time, you become confident of yourself overall.