Topic No.198

Mastering a skill and knowledge

As a person it is important to realize that no one can defeat us until or unless we admit our defeat and lose hope. Also, the learning process of a freelancer should never be ended, regardless of the niche in which he/she deals. There are 3 important phases of the learning process:

- Learn (A skill related to your niche.)
- Unlearn (With the advancement in technology, the old trends and techniques get obsolete. You need to unlearn the old methods.)
- Learn Again (New advancements are to be adopted to stay updated with the market and stay in the competition.)

Practice plays a vital role to succeed in almost every field. You should have a firm grip over the skills you are offering. The quality of your work improves with continuous practice. Also, with continuous learning, you will always stay updated with the new advancements and your skills will never become obsolete. A freelancer should always stick to the following points to become a successful freelancer:

- Learning
- Training
- Instruction
- Practice

Topic No.199

The amazing formula of landing your first project

On the freelance marketplace, you just don't simply bid on the jobs you see first. You have to carefully analyze that if that job matches your expertise or if you are capable of completing the required tasks within the given budget and timeframe. The available free bids are very limited so you have to utilize them efficiently. After selecting the job, you have to place an effective bid proposal. These are the important points that should be considered while making the bid proposal to win your first project:

1. **Project selection:** This is the first and the most important thing. You should ask yourself that if you have the skills and expertise to complete that project. Also that will you be able to complete it timely and within budget.

2. **Focus on the client's requirement:** When a client posts a project, he expects a proposal and suggestions against the particular requirements of his project. These are the elements to be checked in depth:

   • What is the best solution and how it will be implemented?

   • What will it cost?

   • Which technology will be used?

   • When will it be completed?

3. **Read the project's brief twice:** When a project is posted, analyze it very carefully. When you read a project brief, you will find something which helps you in asking questions from the client. When you ask questions, it will convince the client to initiate PMB (Project Discussion Board).

4. **Don't compromise on price:** If you know your value then you should not compromise on the price. Be aware of your value proposition, time, self-esteem, market price and worth. You should compromise only when you have been trying everything over a period of time but nothing is working.

5. **Customized proposal:** Your proposal should be customized according to the client's requirements and project's brief.

6. **Read twice:** Always read your proposal twice. By doing this, you will be able to improve and use better words. Also, you will be able to identify your mistakes (i.e. grammar, typo, etc.)

7. **Amazing formula:** If you have placed an effective bid according to the requirements of client then you have completed 50% of your work. You can also attract your client by offering free mockups and giving them special offers.

8. **Summarize, analyze and assess client project brief:** You can also summarize client project brief in your proposal. This will put an impression on the employer that you have read his project requirements and brief carefully.

Topic No.200

<center>**Why Software?**</center>

As a freelancer, project management software can be helpful in making you organized. If the work plate of a freelancer grows, he finds it difficult to complete the projects successfully and timely, without a project management software. When you get more work, you need more people for completing the projects, and a project management software is the only solution to keep the track of all. Following are the points that explain the importance of a project management software in the life of a freelancer:

1. **Delegate tasks:** This is the first important thing. Suppose you have a big project and you assign the task to 4 people. It is very important to keep the track of what they are doing. With the help of software you will be able to remember that which task has been assigned to which person.

2. **List of schedule:** You can schedule the project milestones and timeline assigned to each person. You can also schedule the delivery date of the project.

1. **Tracking project:** When your work is growing, and you are working on multiple projects at the same time, you cannot note down all the details of every project on a page. You definitely need something efficient and systematic. A software or a device notifies you each and everything about your projects. For example:

✓ Delivery date

✓ Project budget

✓ Project milestone

✓ The milestone you have assigned to every team member

✓ Projects that you have in-house

2. **To collaborate:** You can collaborate and share snapshots of the project progress. For example, if you want to know that how much work is done by the outsourced freelancer/ freelance team, you can simply ask him to share the snapshot of the project progress. It will always be saved as an evidence.

<center>4</center>

3. **To communicate with the clients as well as vendors:** When your work plate grows, you have to keep the record of several things. For example:

- ✓ Clients list
- ✓ Projects briefs
- ✓ Payments
- ✓ Projects' timelines
- ✓ Deadlines

You also have to deal with the outsourced teams or employees. You have to maintain the list of all the expenses i.e. computer, internet, service provider and stationery, etc. All this information can be saved in a single place using a software as project management is very important.

Topic No.201

What are the best software for project management?

Using a software is very important in project management, especially for those who are growing and becoming an organization/ brand in the field of freelancing. It is difficult to balance client side and your organization at the same time without using a project management software.

Capterra is one of the best project management software. There are many other free project management software that can be easily googled.

The instructor uses Bitrix24 to manage his freelance activities. It is a cloud-based project management software. This software is offering a number of services, not only for the client side but for the organizational side as well. You can manage the payroll and assign projects here. You can also save your documents, files, images, videos and conversations at one place. The built in features include social management, video chat and CRM. Task Delivery Management is one of the most important features of this project management software.

Its basic version is for free. When you click on pricing on the top of main page, you will see all the packages i.e. free, plus and standard. And you can choose any of them according to your organization's strength. It is a very good, effective and secure way. As it is cloud based, there is no fear of losing the data too.

Topic No.202

The balanced, logical differentiation

There are three different concepts that are often mixed up, i.e. Freelancing, Home-based Business and Entrepreneurship. The difference between these three is explained in detail below:

1. **Freelancing:**

   Freelancing is a concept of doing work from home or any place at your own comfort. A freelancer sells his/her digital services to the clients from all over the world. The services might be offered at the freelance marketplaces or any other platform, for example: social media platforms, ad posting websites, etc. It might or might not be a business.

2. **Home-based Business:**

   Home-based business refers to running a business from home instead of some formal setup. It includes all kinds of products and services that can be sold without any proper office setup. It is mostly adopted by the females, as they have issues going out of their places, so it provides them a room to become independent while staying at home. It mostly includes baking, stitching and cooking, etc.
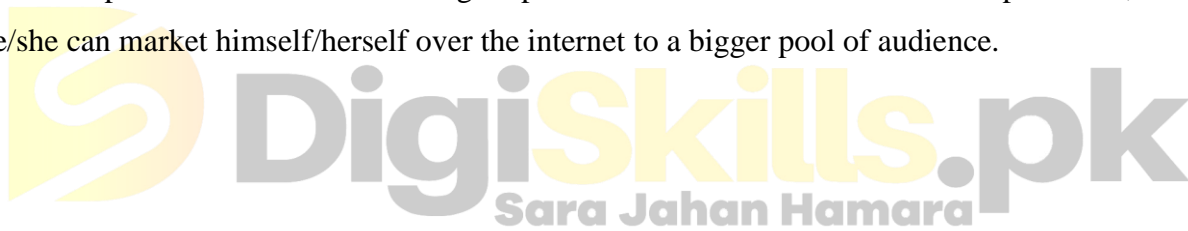
3. **Entrepreneurship:**

   Entrepreneurship is a bigger umbrella that can include freelancing, home-based business and formal business under itself. Entrepreneurship refers to filling a gap in the market, by offering a solution to some problem that is not yet identified. An entrepreneur not only foresees an issue but also brings up an innovative solution to that issue in the market.

Topic No.203

Decide what you want to offer

The selection of the prior mentioned concepts depends upon the kind of skill you possess and want to offer. A person is recommended to go for freelancing if he/she possesses some digital skill that can be sold on the freelance marketplaces or other platforms. These skills include Digital Marketing, SEO, Graphic Designing and WordPress, etc.

Whereas, a person should go for a home-based business, if he/she does not possess a digital skill but have some other skill to offer. For example, if a person wants to offer baking or stitching, he/she can go for home-based business. Also, one can sell physical or digital products online too, while sitting at home.

For this a person needs to make his digital presence on the social media or other platforms, so that he/she can market himself/herself over the internet to a bigger pool of audience.

Topic No.204

The target market

The target market is very important to keep in mind according to the concept of selling you are planning to adopt. For example, if you plan to sell your skill on some online platform or some digital product online, your audience can be anywhere in the world, and distance is just a number. If you are doing a homebased business and offering some perishable products like food items, your target audience should be in your nearest vicinity. Whereas, if you are selling some non-perishable products your potential audience is worldwide and you will only have to add the shipping cost along with your product price.

Topic No.205

Reach out to your target market

It is very important to reach out to your target market, no matter if you are doing freelancing or a home-based. Target market is your potential customers, and now they can be addressed very conveniently via internet. All you need is to make your online presence by using either of the below mentioned ways:
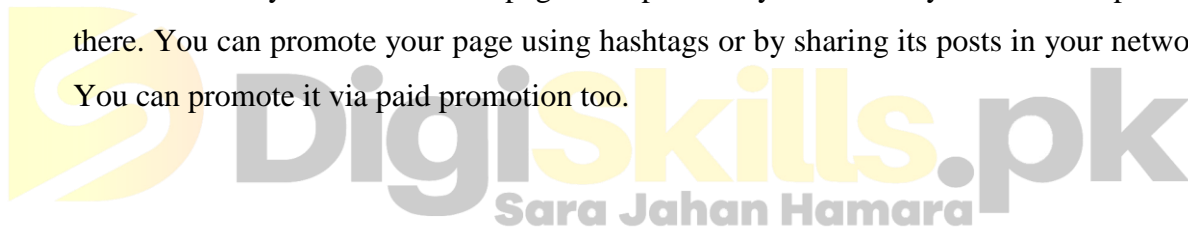
1. **Creating a Website**

   You can create a website and promote it via SEO. You can tell about yourself and your services/ products in detail on the website.

2. **Making Social Media Presence**

   You can make your social media pages and promote yourself and your services/ products there. You can promote your page using hashtags or by sharing its posts in your network. You can promote it via paid promotion too.

Topic No.206

Why is a project feedback important?

As a freelancer your success is directly dependent on the following three factors:

1.   Strong meaningful profile: If you add services that you are offering, write the description and content in a way that attracts the employer.

2.   Portfolio: If you go to a store, you will buy things only if you see products on the store shelf. But if the store does not have products on their shelf then you will go for the next store to buy those items. Same goes for freelancing. If there is no portfolio on your profile, then the chances to win the projects are rare. A good portfolio matters a lot. As a beginner, create your portfolio buy working for free for your better tomorrow as it is an investment towards your goal.

3.   Project feedback: Feedbacks are like the badges on one's uniform which tell people who you are. For example, when you go for an event or seminar, they give you a specific card with an attached ribbon and you wear that card throughout. This card is an identity of a specific person. Same goes for freelancers, feedback is the same verification for a client's skills. Because when he will visit your profile, he will only see your feedback. As feedback tells that what was the worth of your work for the past clients.

When a new client visits your profile and sees a good feedback, he feels very comfortable in working with you. Also, if you had satisfied someone with your work, he will come to you again and again for his work. Good feedbacks are the reward of your effort. So, feedbacks are very important. Whenever you work for someone, always request him/her to give your honest feedback.

Topic No.207

The importance of client retention

Client retention is more important than getting new clients. It saves you from a great hassle. It helps you in following ways:

1. **Easy biding:** The biding process gets easier when the client already knows you. You have to tell lesser about yourself and your skill.

2. **Convincing is not required:** You do not need to prove yourself to the client, as s/he knows about you already. Convincing and winning a job becomes a piece of cake for you.

3. **Price of your own will:** When you work for a new client, you are mostly bound to offer lesser rates to him/ her, whereas you can offer higher rates of your own choice to your old clients as they trust you will.

Therefore it is recommended try not to lose a client when you he/she hires you once.

Topic No.208

How to reach out to your existing clients?

There are two ways of reaching back to your existing clients. The foremost and commonly used method is creating your website to generate the leads. These leads can help you collect the potential pool to which an email can be sent on any occasion or event. This email can contain announcements, discounts and special offers.

Bulk emails can be sent with one click. This will not only save you from bidding hassle in future, but also you retain your previous clients and keep getting orders from them. You should not keep sending the emails frequently. 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.

Topic No.209

Why is marketplace test important?

The freelance marketplace's tests are not compulsory but have great importance. Every freelance marketplace gives you some test, which are most your skill based. These tests are important but it does not mean that you cannot excel in freelancing without these tests. Yet, these tests can improve your profile's worth. There are two important aspects to be kept in mind regarding these tests:

1. They are mostly MCQ based.
2. They are for certain skills, not for everyone.

It is completely your choice whether to attempt those tests or not.

Topic No.210

What are the advantages of certifications?

Skill tests and certifications are two different things. If someone has done Graphic Designing short course/ diploma s/he will get a certificate. If a freelancer adds certifications on his/her profile and a client sees that certificate, s/he becomes sure that the freelancer is the expert of his field. A freelancer should get maximum certifications. If a Graphic designer adds one's Graphic Designing certificate on one's profile, it will capture the attention of the client and he will be assured that the freelancer knows the work well. The client will be satisfied to work with him/her. Certifications show one's competency and commitment with one's profession.
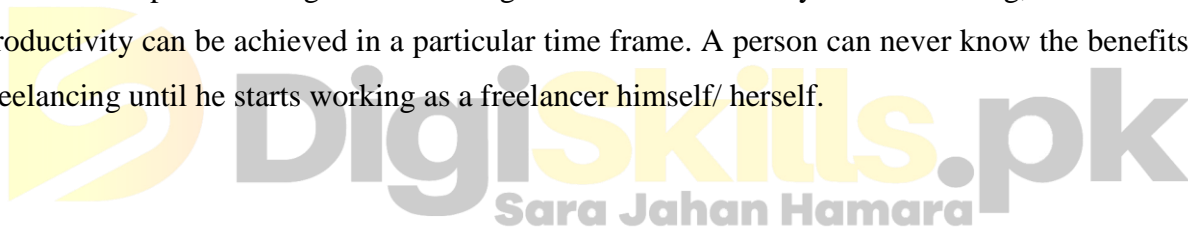
Topic No.211

Emphasis on freelancing

When there is a will, there is a way. Freelancing is a way forward towards a better and easier lifestyle. According to an estimate, 1 out of every 5 persons will be a freelancer in the upcoming years. The concept of 9 to 5 job will almost be eliminated because freelancing gives freedom and unlimited earning opportunities instead of earning a limited fixed salary.

A freelancer can earn that much in a month that a jobholder cannot earn even in a year. He/she is not answerable to anyone and works on his/her own wish. Freelancing is an ultimate freedom which not only enables you to earn money but also creates a platform for entrepreneurs. When one's work grows with the passage of time, he/she switches from freelancing to business.

The most important thing in freelancing is the time flexibility. In freelancing, the maximum productivity can be achieved in a particular time frame. A person can never know the benefits of freelancing until he starts working as a freelancer himself/ herself.

Topic No.212

Your role in taking up freelancing and improving Pakistan's ranking

Pakistan ranks as the 4th most growing country in the freelance industry. There are many aspects and issues, but those are prevalent in every field. As problems are a part of life, one should not get worried about these problems. S/he should start freelancing and become a master of his/her inborn skill. One should remember that freelancing is just a starting point, yet it has no end. One should not take any major step by fear of failure and always think positive, because if a person thinks big, s/he finds big. Therefore, a person should not stop looking forward and struggling for achieving one's aim

Topic No.213

Increase in foreign remittance

The money one earns by freelancing heavily contributes in Pakistan's increasing foreign remittance. In 2018, the government of Pakistan extended the tax exemption on IT exports for the next six years too. This is great facility given to the freelancers by the Government of Pakistan. When everyone will start doing freelancing, more foreign remittances will be received by Pakistan. In this way, Pakistan will progress and value of Pakistani currency will increase. The economy will automatically start growing, because directly or indirectly, it will be a contribution in Pakistan's economy. One will not only work for himself/herself, but also for the country.

Topic No.214

Pakistan's role in global IT world

If Pakistan improves its rank in freelance, it will be its contribution in the overall technology world. There are so many people in Pakistan who have enlightened their country's name. Arfa Karim, in 2004, at the age of nine, became the youngest Microsoft Certified Professional (MCP). Not only her name was registered in Guinness Book of World Records, but also she was invited by Bill Gates to visit Microsoft headquarters in the United States of America.

Shameer Amir a Pakistani hacker has been ranked the third most accomplished bug hunter in the world by Dark Reading, a cyber security site. He has also been entitled as the 11th most top-rated hacker in the world by HackerOne, a vulnerability disclosure company in California.

Virtual University is Pakistan's first university, based completely on the modern information and communication technologies. The university is known for its online lectures and rigorous broadcasting programs regardless of their students' locations. Pakistani students residing overseas are also enrolled in the university. It is requested to all of those taking this course from DigiSkills.pk platform to work harder as a freelancer and enlighten not only their, but also Pakistan's name.

Topic No.215

My book 'How I made One Million Dollars doing Freelancing?'

In the end Hisham Sarwar's book of 20-25 pages is attached for the trainees of Freelancing course. In this book he has told about his success story. He faced a lot of difficulties, yet he dared to aim big. When you dream big, no force can stop you from reaching your destination. He has also told that how he unexpectedly started freelancing.

Each and every aspect of freelancing has been explained in this course so one can learn the tips and tricks to excel in this field fast. Everything starting from profile creation to an effective bid placement has been discussed in detail in this course of Freelancing. One should not be afraid of the hurdles and failures, and stick to commitment and hard work. This is the ultimate key to achieve a goal.

Good luck!