



# Freelancers in Tech

Reading & Vocabulary Development  
for CS50x Learners

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## □ How to Study?

- **Step 1:**

In the first section (Reading), read through the article once completely.

Don't worry about understanding every word—just focus on getting a general sense of the content.

- **Step 2:**

Next, check out the list of words and expressions from the text.

See which ones are familiar to you and which ones are new.

Some unfamiliar words can be guessed from the context, and some familiar ones might have a different meaning here than usual.

- **Step 3:**

In the following sections, you'll find explanations and example sentences for those words and phrases.

Some of them might not appear directly in the article, but since they're related, it's a good opportunity to get to know them.

This process continues throughout the material.

You can study at your own pace, take breaks whenever you need to, and come back to it later.



## □ About the Vocabulary

The vocabulary in this article isn't sorted by language level, but it generally falls into three categories:

- 1. High-frequency**, common words that you'll remember naturally over time through repetition and exposure.
- 2. Specialized IT and computer terms** that will become easier to learn the more you engage with tech-related content.
- 3. Less common words** that you might only see in a few specific contexts.

### ❖ Important Note

You don't need to memorize any of these words or expressions my friend.

They're just here to support your learning journey.

The more you come across them in different contexts, the more naturally they'll stick.

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# Freelancers in Tech: Current Opportunities and Challenges



Rosanna Webb · [Subscribe](#)  
4 min read · Aug 26, 2024



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The tech industry has seen a significant shift in the way professionals engage with the workforce. Freelancers, in particular, have become a pivotal component of this dynamic sector. With the rapid evolution of technology and the growing demand for specialized skills, freelancers in tech are presented with both unique opportunities and substantial challenges. This article explores the current landscape for tech freelancers, shedding light on emerging trends, opportunities, and the hurdles they face.





## The Rise of Tech Freelancing

In recent years, the freelance economy has experienced unprecedented growth, and the tech sector is at the forefront of this trend. According to a report by Upwork, nearly 30% of the U.S. workforce is now engaged in freelance work, with a substantial portion coming from tech-related fields such as software development, web design, and cybersecurity.

The flexibility and autonomy offered by freelancing appeal to many tech professionals. They enjoy the ability to choose projects, set their own schedules, and work from various locations. This autonomy also allows tech freelancers to explore different technologies and industries, enhancing their skills and broadening their career opportunities.

## Current Opportunities for Tech Freelancers

### 1. In-Demand Skills

The tech industry is continually evolving, creating a high demand for specialized skills. Freelancers with expertise in emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), blockchain, and cybersecurity are particularly sought after. Companies are looking for freelancers who can provide cutting-edge solutions and bring innovative ideas to the table.

For example, the rise of AI has led to a surge in demand for data scientists and machine learning experts. Blockchain technology has created opportunities for freelancers skilled in developing decentralized applications and smart contracts. Cybersecurity experts are needed to protect organizations from growing threats and vulnerabilities.

## □ Phrases & Vocabulary

engage with the workforce

pivotal component

dynamic sector

specialized skills

substantial challenges

shed light on sth

emerging trends

hurdle

unprecedented growth

at the forefront of sth

flexibility and autonomy

set schedules

continually evolving

be sought after

a surge in sth

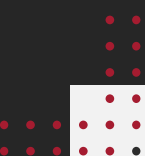
threats and vulnerabilities

pivotal: crucial, vital, key

substantial: considerable, significant, large

broaden: widen, become/make broader

continually: constantly, repeatedly, often





**shed**

- (building) a small building usually used for storage or shelter
- (get rid of) to get rid of something you do not need or want, especially jobs or employees
- (fall off) to lose hair, leaves, or skin, or to cause hair, skin, or leaves to drop
- to lose value in the stock market or other financial markets
- (flow) to make blood or tears flow
- (spread) to spread light

**shed light on sth**

to help to explain a situation

**hurdle**

- a frame for jumping over in a race
- a hurdle is also a difficulty to be dealt with

face/overcome a hurdle

a hurdle to sth

**unprecedented**

never having happened or existed in the past;  
without parallel/equal

Synonyms:

unheard, new, unique

**sought after**

wanted or desired by many people;  
in great demand

Synonyms:

desirable(wanted), desired

**surge**

a sudden and great increase

(of a large group) to move suddenly forward

## □ Exercise 1

Fill in the blanks with the words below. Some word forms may need to be changed.

shed(x2) hurdle surge tidal  
unprecedented (sought after)

1. Experts hope the plane's flight recorders will \_\_\_\_\_ light on the cause of the crash.
2. There has been a \_\_\_\_\_ in house prices recently.
3. Getting a work permit was the first \_\_\_\_\_ to overcome.
4. We've entered an age of \_\_\_\_\_ prosperity.
5. A \_\_\_\_\_ surge caused severe flooding in coastal areas.
6. the most expensive and \_\_\_\_\_ perfume
7. She \_\_\_\_\_ a few tears at her daughter's wedding.

[Answer Key](#)

## *2. Remote Work Flexibility*

The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the shift toward remote work, and this trend has continued in the tech industry. Freelancers in tech can now work with clients from around the world without geographical constraints. This global reach opens up opportunities to collaborate with diverse teams, access a wider range of projects, and command competitive rates.

Platforms like GitHub, Stack Overflow, and Upwork have become essential tools for tech freelancers, providing access to job listings, project collaborations, and networking opportunities. The ability to work remotely also enables freelancers to maintain a better work-life balance and manage their schedules more effectively.

## *3. Project-Based Work*

Freelancers in tech often engage in project-based work, which allows them to work on a variety of assignments and gain experience across different domains. This project diversity not only keeps work engaging but also helps build a robust portfolio. High-profile projects can lead to referrals, repeat business, and long-term client relationships.

Tech freelancers can leverage platforms like Toptal and Freelancer to find high-quality projects and connect with clients seeking their expertise. Additionally, working on diverse projects enhances their skill set and reputation, leading to further opportunities in the industry.

## □ Phrases & Vocabulary

accelerate

geographical constraints

global reach

command competitive rates

maintain work-life balance

gain experience

robust portfolio

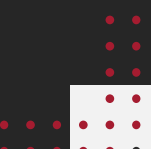
referral

repeat business

leverage platforms

enhance skill set

reputation



**accelerate**

to go faster or make something go faster

Synonyms:

speed up, move/go faster

Antonym:

decelerate

**constraint**

something that limits the range of a person's actions or freedom

budget/financial, etc. constraints

big/major/serious constraint

a constraint on/to sth

place/put a constraint on sth

time constraint

Synonyms:

restriction, limitation

**under constraint [formal]**

If you do something under constraint, you do it only because you have been forced to

**global reach**

When people talk about the global reach of a company or industry, they mean its ability to have customers in many different parts of the world.

**command competitive rates**

to demand or set prices that are comparable to or slightly lower than those of competitors in the market.

**referral**

- the act of directing someone to a different place or person for information, help, or action

a referral from sb/sth

employee referrals

- someone who is directed to a different place or person for information, help, or action

business/client referrals

**repeat business**

the fact that a customer returns to buy more products or services from the same company

**leverage**

- (use) to use something that you already have in order to achieve something new or better
- the act of using borrowed money to buy an investment or a company
- the power to influence results

financial/political leverage

**reputation**

the opinion that people have of someone or something, based on past behavior or character

have a good/bad reputation

have a reputation as sth

have a reputation for (doing) sth

earn/gain/build/develop a reputation

enhance/damage sb's reputation

**know sb/sth by reputation**

to know someone or something because of what people say about them, rather than by having direct experience of them

## □ Exercise 2

Fill in the blanks with the words below. Some word forms may need to be changed.

accelerate constraint (global reach)  
referral(x2) (repeat business) reputation  
leverage

1. The brand now boasts a \_\_\_\_\_ with customers in every corner of the world.
2. 75% of the company's hires come from employee \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Inflation is likely to \_\_\_\_\_ this year, adding further upward pressure on interest rates.
4. Her doctor gave her a \_\_\_\_\_ to a specialist.
5. The idea has been dropped due to financial \_\_\_\_\_.
6. He knew Hindman by \_\_\_\_\_ before interviewing him for the post.
7. To build \_\_\_\_\_ from happy clients you must be honest.
8. We can gain a market advantage by \_\_\_\_\_ our network of partners.

[Answer Key](#)



## Challenges Facing Tech Freelancers

### 1. Income Stability

One of the primary challenges tech freelancers face is income stability.

Unlike traditional employment, where a regular paycheck provides financial security, freelancers often experience fluctuations in income. Securing a consistent stream of projects and managing cash flow can be challenging, especially during periods of economic uncertainty.

To mitigate this challenge, tech freelancers should implement effective financial management strategies. Building an emergency fund, diversifying income sources, and setting aside savings for taxes are essential practices for maintaining financial stability.

### 2. Competition and Market Saturation

The growing popularity of freelancing has led to increased competition in the tech industry. Freelancers must differentiate themselves from others to stand out in a crowded market. This requires continuous skill development, a strong portfolio, and effective marketing strategies.

Building a personal brand and leveraging social media platforms can help tech freelancers showcase their expertise and attract potential clients. Networking within industry communities and participating in relevant forums can also enhance visibility and credibility.

### *3. Managing Workload and Burnout*

Tech freelancers often juggle multiple projects simultaneously, which can lead to burnout if not managed properly. The pressure to meet deadlines, maintain client satisfaction, and stay updated with technological advancements can be overwhelming.

To address this issue, freelancers should prioritize self-care and establish boundaries between work and personal life. Setting realistic deadlines, scheduling regular breaks, and seeking support from peers or mentors can help manage workload and prevent burnout.

## □ Phrases & Vocabulary

income/financial stability

regular paycheck

financial security

fluctuations in income

secure

cash flow

mitigate a challenge

implement effective strategies

emergency fund

diversifying income sources

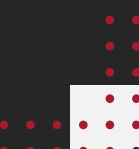
set aside savings

stand out in a crowded market

personal brand

enhance visibility and credibility

showcase: show, display, exhibit



**stability**

a situation in which something such as an economy, company, or system can continue in a regular and successful way without unexpected changes

the stability of

economic/political/financial stability

bring/provide/restore stability

boost/promote/build stability

Antonym:

instability

**fluctuation**

a situation in which prices, levels or interest rates go up and down

price/market/currency fluctuations

fluctuations in/of sth

**secure [verb]**

- (get, formal) to get something, sometimes with difficulty

secure financing/a loan/a grant

secure a deal/contract/commitment

secure a win/victory

- (attach) to fasten one object firmly to another
- (make safe) to make sure something is protected from danger or threat

**cash flow**

a measurement of the amount of cash that comes into and out of your business in a particular period of time.

good/healthy/strong cash flow

improve/maintain/maximize cash flow

cash flow problem/crisis

negative cash flow

**mitigate [formal]**

to make something less harmful, unpleasant, or bad

Synonyms:

lighten, lessen, alleviate

**credibility**

the fact that someone or something can be believed or trusted

lack credibility

credibility as

**juggle**

handle several things at once;

to try to do two or more jobs or activities at the same time, because you do not have a lot of time

juggle sth and/with sth

## □ Exercise 3

Fill in the blanks with the words below. Some word forms may need to be changed.

stability credibility juggle secure(x2)  
mitigate(x2) (cash flow) fluctuation

1. There are fears over the \_\_\_\_\_ of the banking system.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ the boat to the dock.
3. you \_\_\_\_\_ the demands of your career and your family.
4. Bartering can help you generate sales and improve \_\_\_\_\_ and profits.
5. She managed to \_\_\_\_\_ a loan from the bank.
6. There isn't much more we can do to \_\_\_\_\_ the negative effects of rising oil prices.
7. Long-term investment trusts compensate investors for the day-to-day \_\_\_\_\_ of the stock market.
8. technologies that can \_\_\_\_\_ global warming
9. Their data tended to lack \_\_\_\_\_ because their methods were not explained.

[Answer Key](#)

## The Future of Tech Freelancing

As technology continues to advance, the opportunities for tech freelancers are expected to expand. Emerging trends such as remote work, AI integration, and blockchain development will likely drive demand for specialized freelance skills. The rise of gig economy platforms and digital nomad lifestyles will further contribute to the growth of freelancing in tech.

Tech freelancers must remain adaptable and proactive in navigating the evolving landscape. Staying informed about industry trends, continually updating skills, and building a strong professional network will be crucial for success.

Freelancing in tech presents a wealth of opportunities for skilled professionals, from working with cutting-edge technologies to enjoying remote work flexibility. However, it also comes with its own set of challenges, including income instability, intense competition, and the risk of burnout.

By addressing these challenges and leveraging the opportunities available, tech freelancers can thrive in this dynamic and ever-changing industry. Embracing continuous learning, effective financial management, and self-care practices will be key to sustaining a successful and fulfilling freelance career in tech.



## □ Phrases & Vocabulary

drive demand

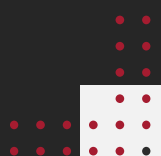
gig economy platforms

stay informed

a wealth of opportunities

remote work flexibility

thrive



**gig economy**

a way of working that is based on people having temporary jobs or doing separate pieces of work, each paid separately, rather than working for an employer

**gig economy platforms**

digital marketplaces that connect businesses with freelancers or independent contractors for short-term, flexible work

**wealth**

- a large amount of something good  
a wealth of data/detail/information
- a large amount of money and other valuable possessions

**thrive**

to grow, develop, or be successful

**drive**

to cause something to progress, develop, or grow stronger



## □ Exercise 4

Fill in the blanks with the words below. Some word forms may need to be changed.

Drive thrive(x2) wealth(x2) gig

1. He brings a \_\_\_\_\_ of industry experience to his new position.
2. Workers eke out a living in the \_\_\_\_\_ economy, doing odd jobs whenever they can.
3. The firm said it would \_\_\_\_\_ sales by switching into larger premises while closing smaller stores.
4. Some employees \_\_\_\_\_ on the challenge of intense workloads.
5. The website gives a \_\_\_\_\_ of data on a company's stock.
6. His business \_\_\_\_\_ in the years before the war.

[Answer Key](#)

**1** [back to exercise](#)

1. shed
2. surge
3. hurdle
4. unprecedented
5. tidal
6. sought after
7. shed

**2** [back to exercise](#)

1. global reach
2. referrals
3. accelerate
4. referral
5. constraints
6. reputation
7. repeat business
8. leveraging

**3** [back to exercise](#)

1. stability
2. Secure
3. juggle
4. cash flow
5. secure
6. mitigate
7. fluctuation
8. mitigate
9. credibility

**4** [back to exercise](#)

1. wealth
2. gig
3. drive
4. thrive
5. wealth
6. thrived

# Sources

Cambridge, Oxford, Merriam-Webster, Collins  
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# CS50x Iran

Harvard's Computer Science 50x Iran

