

many attributes to succeed, most important of which are self-reliance and confidence in their ability. Without these cornerstones, it would be very difficult indeed to succeed. As a freelancer you are challenged every day by walking into a given situation cold. Every job has different equipment, some of it not necessarily in good repair. You, as a freelance craftsman, have to use your judgement to render the best result given the variables of each workplace. Since you work freelance, people, generally speaking, expect more of you both in terms of ability and creativity in getting a job done. To succeed, you need to live up to your own and the client's expectations.

Relinquishing your staff job and starting up business as a freelancer requires that you set up an office to look after your business. Working as a freelancer also means that you no longer have access to the wealth of office equipment and supplies such as typewriters, wordprocessors, computers, photocopies, FAX machines, etc., that your former employer maintained as a cost of doing business. It's not necessary for you to acquire all of the office equipment that you used to have access to, but depending on the nature of your craft and the amount of paperwork necessary to fulfill the requirements of your craft, a computer or a facsimile (FAX) machine may be a must. This now becomes the cost of operating your business with all of the attendant joys and frustrations of owning your own equipment.

You might also need to purchase tools

as well; this becomes a cost that you as your own employer have to bear. If you plan for these expenses and you purchase only what you need, these additional costs shouldn't cause you any financial hardship. The thing to remember is to purchase only those things that are relevant to your craft and a necessity for the proper execution of your work.

Rewards of Freelance

Working as a freelancer is invariably challenging and can often be tremendous fun. It provides unlimited opportunities for personal and financial growth. Your wages in a company usually are controlled by an artificial wage scale or your pecking order in terms of seniority. Your financial success as a freelance, to a large extent, is governed by how hard and how effectively you develop your skills and pursue your goals. On a personal level, I have found working freelance to be very much to my liking. Due to the nature of the work I now make more money in fewer work days; this affords me the opportunity to spend more time with my family, particularly my two children. Now, more than ever before, I can take them to the park during the week without worrying about watching the clock. My time is my own!

In closing, I'd like to say that there are many keys to success such as being diversified, self-confident, self-reliant and so on. But I feel to get started off on the right foot you need something on which to base your decision to go freelance.

Freelance Checklist

To that end, I have enclosed a checklist to aid those who are contemplating the career change from staff to freelance.

1. Why do you want to leave? Your reasons for leaving should be positive - a desire for personal or career growth that can't be achieved in your present work environment.
2. Have you accomplished all the goals that you set for yourself when you started the job?
3. Do you have the financial resources to back you up during periods of work inactivity?
4. If married, does your spouse support you?
5. Do you have the advice from a career/financial planner, consultant, accountant etc.? They can ensure that you pay the minimum tax allowable. An accountant can ensure that you get the full benefits (deductions) of operating a business.
6. Are you prepared to operate your own business?
7. Are you totally committed to succeeding as a craftsman?
8. Do you have a plan of attack that is diversified so that you don't have to rely on one sector of the industry?

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