

Could You Be a Freelancer?

You know you've got the skills and self-discipline to leave that corporate job behind and work independently. With your computer, high speed internet, and mobile phone you can work from home - in almost any field - and deal with customers in almost any country. Or can you? How easy is it really?



Traditionally, freelance writers, photographers, and graphic designers contacted magazine and book publishers with samples sent via the mail. Today the task is made much easier and quicker by the ready flow of information online. In just a few minutes of searching, the budding freelancer can uncover numerous organizations that hire freelancers of all sorts. As a general rule, large corporate firms in the United Kingdom rarely hire individual freelancers; the opposite is the case in the United States.

In recent years, working from home (or 'telecommuting') has become widespread, again as a result of technological advances. This has

opened up a host of potential job opportunities within the freelance market.

If you do decide to go the freelance route where will you work from? If you plan to work from home then make sure your home environment fits in with the type of work you want to do. If you'll be spending lots of time on the phone, you don't want sounds of screaming small children or dogs barking in the background.

Individuals with strong administrative skills may consider being a Virtual Assistant. A Virtual Assistant (VA) supports one or more businesses remotely. Duties may include secretarial work, meeting and travel planning, project management and web maintenance. As an independent contractor you'll decide with whom you'll work and how and when you'll work.

As a freelancer - whatever your field - your clients are often small businesses who need help in a particular area, but don't have enough work for a fulltime employee. Companies benefit by working with freelancers or contractors because they are not responsible for paying tax, holiday, sick pay, and other benefits. Freelancers enjoy the freedom and flexibility of working how and when they want to.

