



FREELANCING – 12 SECRETS TO SUCCESS

Eugene Yiga, himself a freelancer, shares insights from a book on optimising opportunities for those following this form of livelihood.

In the midst of the Covid-19-induced recession in which we find ourselves, many businesses are saying no to the “hire and fire” cycle and yes to freelancers instead.

“The freelance model works,” write Pete Savage, Steve Slaunwhite and Ed Gandia, the authors of *The Wealthy Freelancer*. “Companies like it because it allows them to get work done without the salary, training, and benefit expenses that come with hiring. And it provides the flexibility to source specific talent for any project quickly, on an as-needed basis.”

But how do you get the projects, clients, income, and lifestyle you want? Here are the book’s 12 essential secrets to a great income and an enviable lifestyle.

1. Master the mental game

“When life is filled with roses and sunshine, it’s easy to stay confident and upbeat. It’s when the storms roll in – and they will roll in – that your mental toughness will be put to the test.”

Freelancers often deal with ups and downs. But don’t let the obstacles stop you. Have clear but flexible goals to keep you focused. Remembering why you chose this path in the first place will keep you strong.

2. Simplify the process of getting clients

“Just because you have a lead doesn’t mean the lead will become a client. To do

that, you must first convert the lead into an opportunity.”

To help freelancers land more clients with less effort, the book introduces a model called the Master Marketing Formula. First, you find high-quality prospects that would be a good fit for your freelance business. Then you generate leads by getting them to show an interest in your offer. Turn the leads into opportunities and the opportunities into clients by closing the sale.

3. Create your amazing buzz piece

“Next to an effective website, creating a buzz piece is the best investment you can make in your business.”

A “buzz piece” is a special report that provides your potential clients with useful information. For example, a graphic designer might create a guide called “How to choose the best logo for your company”. Doing so would position the individual as an expert in the field, which would make potential clients more interested in sending work his or her way.

4. Employ high-impact prospecting tactics

“For wealthy freelancers, prospecting is not necessarily about generating the most leads possible. It’s about generating quality leads – leads that have a high chance of turning into clients.”

There are many ways to find clients:

tapping your network, getting more out of existing clients, investing in smart local networking, leveraging social media, and even employing direct mail. But the goal is to focus on the activities that are both efficient and effective. This is how you’ll generate quality leads that have a high chance of becoming solid clients.

5. Cultivate repeat and referral business

“It does take some effort to get repeated and referral business, but it certainly is a much easier way to grow and sustain your business versus constantly fishing for new clients.”

Some clients are only ideal for once-off gigs. But the best are those you can work with over and over again. Find the clients who love what you do (and who you love doing it for) and then describe what else you can offer. It’s also good to ask them if they know anyone else who could use your services too.

6. Nurture prospects perpetually

“When done right, lead nurturing dramatically reduces your marketing costs in the long run by increasing the overall quality of your leads.”

In some industries, timing is everything. So don’t feel discouraged if the perfect client isn’t ready to hire you today. Instead, stay in touch with them on a regular basis. You’ll be the first person they think of if the other freelancers gave up after one try.



7. Price your services for success

"A fixed-project price takes the salary comparison out of the equation, making the client stop and consider if the project is worth the price instead of whether or not you are worth your hourly fee. And you can make a lot more money as a project pricer because you benefit financially by being faster and better."

Accomplished freelancers and even people new to self-employment should be earning as much (or even more) than their employed counterparts. But this can only happen if you recognise that you deserve adequate compensation for your talents and skills.

8. Bring focus to your freelance business

"You can launch your freelance business, find clients, perform work, and earn money without having a sharp focus on a particular market. But sooner or later, this lack of focus will trip you up."

It's easy to lose your effectiveness if you try to be all things to all people all the time. If you spend a lot of time explaining your offering and even more time trying to market it, stop and get clear on what you do, for whom you do it, and what makes you different from everyone else.

9. Boost your productivity - without perspiration

"You don't have to keep your nose to the grindstone until it bleeds to be productive."

Freelancers wear many hats. But you don't have to wear them all. For example, you could decrease your workload by outsourcing non-core administration work to a virtual assistant. Then work on what you do best and what most deserves your time.

10. Construct your own work-life reality

"Freelancers do not have to build a life around a corporate work schedule imposed by others. Instead, you can create a work-life reality that fits your own unique circumstances."

Once you accept that everyone has only 24 hours in a day, you can make the most of your time. But even though you might have to pull an all-nighter to meet a deadline or follow inspiration from your muse, don't forget to schedule downtime for the things you love.

11. Create alternative streams of income

"Active income limits you. There are only so many hours in the week. However, you can

increase your income potential significantly, without adding much more to your workload, by cultivating passive, or at least near-passive, income streams."

To generate passive income, the book suggests you sign up for affiliate programs (not too many) for the products and services you recommend to your clients. You could also teach others what you know by creating e-books and other information products to sell online.

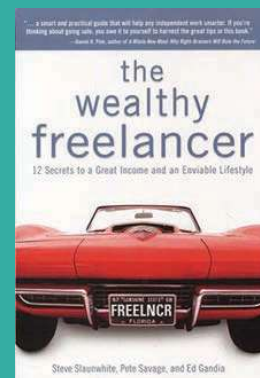
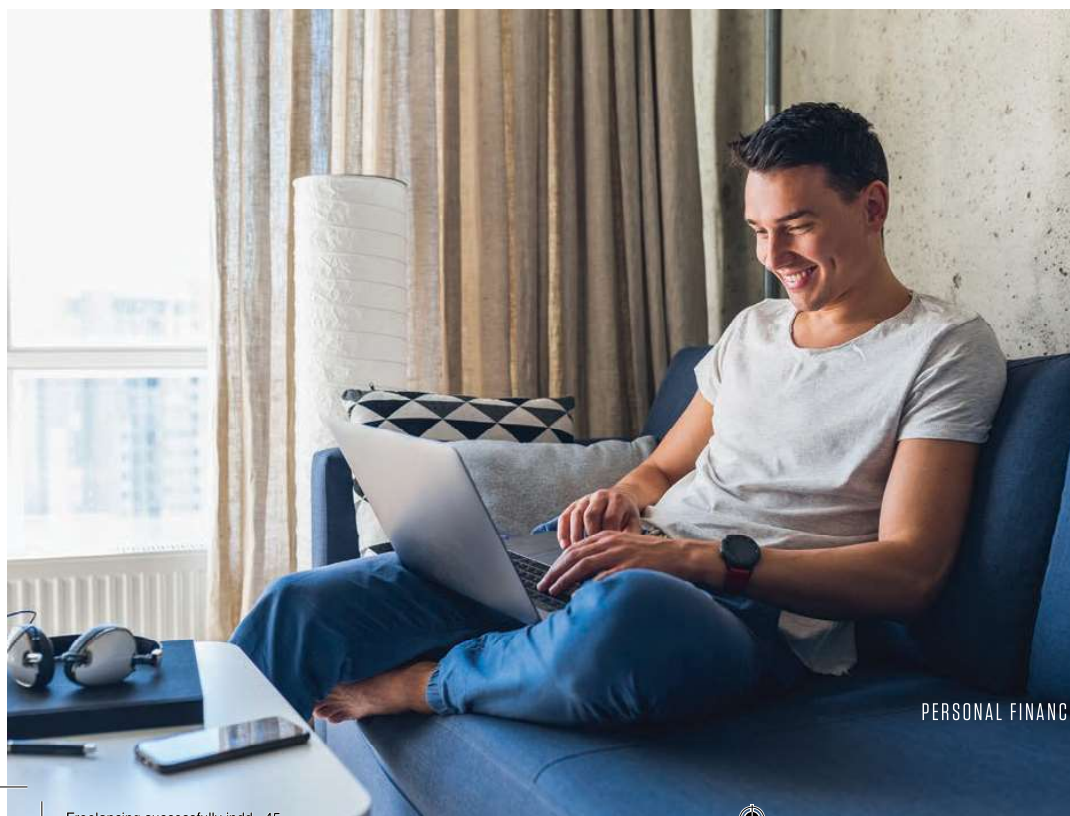
12. Live and work in the "Wealthy Triangle"

"Wealthy freelancers don't just make a living; they design a fulfilling and meaningful life."

Do you want to be the overpaid executive who never has time for his or her family? Or do you want to be the stereotypical starving artist who loafs around all day? In the "Wealthy Triangle", you can enjoy the best of both worlds: a high income and the flexibility that comes with the freelance life. As the book explains in the introduction:

"Being wealthy isn't just about the dollars you earn; it's about the life you build and the kind of person you become in the process."

It's all up to you.



The Wealthy Freelancer, by Pete Savage, Steve Slaunwhite and Ed Gandia, published by Alpha, an imprint of Penguin, is available from Loot (www.loot.co.za).