Global Survey on Freelancing

Global Freelancing

Thank you for participating in this global study of freelancer opinions and preferences. Your participation is very important and we thank you for being part of this global study. Be assured that your personal responses are treated as confidential and no effort is made to identify any individual. We look forward to sharing the results with participants and will offer both a written summary of overall trends and webinars to further discuss the findings. It won't take more than 20 minutes of your time.

Jon Younger
Forbes #FreelanceRevolution Contributor and Founder, Agile Talent Collaborative
Professor Gerald Cupchik
University of Toronto

Begin Survey

Invitation to Participate:

You are invited to participate in a voluntary survey to understand the experience of freelancing during the pandemic and looking ahead at the future of work.

The questions concern how you experience freelancing as well as the impact of COVID-19 on your freelance work and career. It should take no longer than 30 minutes to complete the survey. The deadline to submit your responses for this survey is March 31, 2021.

Confidentiality

Your participation in this study is strictly voluntary. We do not ask your name and all responses will remain strictly anonymous and confidential. Demographic information will not be used to identify any participants in the data.

Investigator

The study is conducted by Professor Gerald Cupchik of the University of Toronto in collaboration with Jon Younger. If you have any questions or concerns you are welcome to contact Professor Cupchik at Gerald.Cupchik@utoronto.ca.

For any further inquiries regarding your right as a participant, you can contact the Research Oversight and Compliance Office – Human at ethics.review@utoronto.ca or 416-949 3273.

Research Participant's Rights

You are free to withdraw from participating further into this study at any time by simply exiting the survey on your browser.

Please note: Any mandatory questions are marked with a red asterisk (*). A response to these questions is required before you can move to the next section.

After thoroughly reading this consent form, please select one of the options below.

- o   I understand the procedures mentioned on this form. I agree to participate in this study.
- o   I do not agree to participate in this study.

Continue

Please indicate which freelance platform is sponsoring your participation in this survey.
[PLEASE REFER TO APPENDIX A: Platform List]

Continue

SECTION 1: TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF

What is your gender identity or expression?
- o Male
- o Female
- o Transgender
- o Non-binary and/or genderqueer
- o Other
- o Prefer not to respond

Age:
- o Under 20
- o 20-29
- o 30-39
- o 40-49
- o 50-60
- o 60+

Field of Expertise:
- o Tech (i.e., Design/Development/AI)
- o Advertising/Marketing/PR/Copywriting/Illustration
- o Educator/Life or Executive Coach
- o Independent Management Consultant
- o Events/Hospitality
- o Expert Network/Interim Executive
- o Scientific/Clinical/Medical
- o Other

Location:
- o North America
- o EU/UK/Nordics
- o Australia/NZ/Oceania
- o Sub-Saharan Africa
- o Latin America
- o Asia/South Asia
- o India
- o Middle East/Saharan Africa

How Long Have You Freelanced (Full- or Part-Time)?
- o   Less than 1 year
- o   1-3 years
- o   3-5 years
- o   5-10 years
- o   10+ years

What Best Describes Your Freelancing Career?
- o   I'm a full-time time freelancer by choice
- o   I'm a full-time freelancer now but looking for a full-time job
- o   I'm a part-time freelancer (I have a full-time job) and plan to continue both
- o   I'm a part-time freelancer and a student

Highest Level of Formal Education:
- o   High School or Self Educated
- o   Tech School/University (BA, BS, Associate)
- o   Post Graduate Degree (MA, Law, MD, PhD, etc.)

How Many Freelance Platforms Do You Belong To In Total?
- o   1 - 2
- o   3 - 5
- o   More than 5

As a Freelancer, What Category of Clients Best Describes Your Work?
- o   I primarily work with startups and SME companies
- o   I primarily work with Enterprise companies
- o   My work is a good mix of both startup/SME and Enterprise companies
- o   I primarily work with not-for-profit organizations: education, government, NGOs, etc.

Continue

SECTION 2. YOUR FREELANCE CAREER
(questions display a seven-point scale)

1. As a Freelancer, How Would You Describe Your Typical Freelance Workload? (1=I usually have much less work than I can manage, 4=I have the right amount of work for me to manage, 7=I usually have much more work than I can manage)

2. How Would You Describe The Strength of Your Network? (1=I have a small and inadequate network to depend on when I need help, 4=I have an OK network of freelancers to depend on when I need help, 7=I have a very strong network of freelancers to depend on when I need help)

3. My financial success as a full or part-time freelancer, compared with other freelancers I know. (1=less successful than others, 4=about the same, 7= more successful than others)

4. My satisfaction with my financial success relative to other freelancers I know and respect. (1=less satisfied than others, 4=about the same, 7=more satisfied than others)

5. My goals and plans as a full or part-time freelancer compared with other freelancers I know. (1=more short-term oriented than others, 4=about the same, 7=more long term oriented than others)

6. My relationships with clients as a full or part-time freelancer compared with other freelancers I know. (1=less collaborative than others, 4=about the same, 7=more collaborative than others)

7. The enjoyment and satisfaction I get from the work as a full or part-time freelancer compared with other freelancers I know. (1=much less than others, 4=about the same, 7=much more than others)

8. My reputation as a full or part-time freelancer compared with other freelancers I know. (1=not as strong as others, 4=about the same, 7=stronger than others)

9. My effectiveness as a networker compared with other full or part-time freelancers I know. (1=less effective than others, 4=about the same, 7=more effective than others)

10. My commitment to freelancing compared with other full or part-time freelancers I know. (1=less committed than others, 4=about the same, 7=more committed than others)

Continue

SECTION 3. HOW YOU SEE YOURSELF IN RELATION TO OTHER FREELANCERS

(questions display a seven-point scale)

For each attribute below, describe yourself compared with other freelancers you know in your field of expertise using a 7-point scale: (1=much less than others, 4=about the same, 7=much more than others)

1. Goal oriented
2. Ambitious; determined to do what it takes to succeed
3. Flexible and adaptable; comfortable with change
4. Show real grit; resilient in the face of difficulty and adversity
5. Deliver on promises and commitments; no excuses
6. Feel uplifted when I realize that two opposites can be true
7. Problem solver
8. Strong communication and presentation skills
9. Build effective client relationships
10. Creative thinker; willing to bust boundaries and try new, out of the box, ideas
11. Work well with people at all levels of an organization
12. Deal well with conflict; looks for the win/win
13. Effectively give and receive feedback, even when its uncomfortable
14. Stay up to date technically; invests meaningful time in self-improvement (e.g., learning new tools and methods)
15. Seen as a real expert by others whose opinion I respect
16. Willingly accept accountability and responsibility when problems arise
17. Generous in crediting and sharing opportunity with other colleagues
18. Value- based; strong ethics and integrity
19. Optimistic; I believe in myself and what I can achieve
20. Comfortable working on tasks that contradict each other
21. Analytical
22. Realistic in assessing situations, opportunities, and challenges
23. Effective planner and time manager
24. Invest in client relationships; make connections that create project opportunity
25. Good networker
26. A good listener
27. Emotionally invested in my projects
28. Prepared to work with other freelancers in short term collaborations
29. Actively thinking about how working relationships will evolve
30. Thinking ahead about problems or situations that need to be improved or resolved
31. Sensitive to how others in working groups perceive me
32. Oriented to building harmony in working groups
33. Oriented to taking a leadership role in problem solving in working groups
34. Thinking globally rather than locally

35. Value speaking other languages to facilitate global relationships
36. Feel energized by my work
37. Gain a better understanding of an issue, when I consider conflicting perspectives
38. Multi-tasker
39. Persuasive
40. Risk taker

Continue

SECTION 4. SATISFACTION WITH YOUR FULL OR PART-TIME FREELANCE CAREER
(questions display a seven-point scale)

How accurately do these statements describe your feelings about your freelancing career? Use a 7-point scale: 1=strongly disagree, 4=neutral, and 7= strongly agree

1. Freelancing offers me an attractive career opportunity.
2. Freelancing offers me the chance to build expertise in interesting areas.
3. Freelancing allows me to enjoy the quality of life I hope for.
4. Freelancing makes it possible for me to achieve my financial goals.
5. Freelancing gives me the chance to meet and work with interesting colleagues.
6. Freelancing gives me the chance to meet and work with interesting clients.
7. Freelancing offers me the flexibility and independence I value.
8. Freelancing gives me an opportunity to work on challenging problems.

SECTION 5: REFLECTING ON YOUR WORK STYLE AND FUTURE

What percentage of your time during a week do you spend reflecting on your PAST, your PRESENT, and your FUTURE? (Please be sure that the values total 100%)

Past: ___ +
Present: ___ +
Future: ___
= XX %

To what extent do you disagree or agree with the following statements? (1= strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree)

(questions display a seven-point scale)

1. When I have a problem, I typically come up with multiple ways to solve it.
2. When I think about the future, I feel generally optimistic.
3. I am good at dealing with challenges or obstacles to achieving my goals.
4. I actively seek as much information as I can in new situations.
5. During stressful situations, I typically imagine about how things might turn out differently.
6. Regarding future plans, I tend to keep my ideas to myself.
7. Regarding future plans, I do my homework by paying strong attention to information from the news and internet.
8. When I think about the future, I pay attention to the kind of person I would like to be.
9. I believe that in future I will be financially secure.
10. I believe that in future I will be recognized as an expert in my field by clients and colleagues.
11. Thinking about the future, I will maintain good health.
12. When I consider conflicting perspectives, I gain a better understanding of an issue.

Continue

SECTION 6. WORKING WITH MY FREELANCE CLIENTS
(questions display a seven-point scale)

As a freelancer, you work with different client companies. Take a moment and think of a recent client company, one that is fairly typical in your experience. Then rate the client company on the following items using the 7-point scale: 1= strongly disagree, 4=neutral, and 7= strongly agree.

1. This company knows how to work effectively with freelancers.
2. Work deliverables, milestones, and timelines are generally fair and realistic.
3. This client requires top quality work from freelancers.
4. My client project manager knows how to work well with freelancers.
5. I have access to the information I need to meet my deliverables for this client.
6. Client team members are normally friendly and helpful when I have a question or need.
7. I am treated fairly and with respect in my dealings with this client company.
8. The work I'm doing for this client is interesting and satisfying.
9. The client team members I've worked with are technically and professionally competent.
10. I am paid fairly for my work for this client company.

SECTION 7: FREELANCING IN THE ERA OF COVID-19
(questions display a seven-point scale)

How has Covid-19 affected you? If you have already contracted COVID-19, please describe your experience prior to contracting it. Use the following 7-point scale: 1=strongly disagree, 4=neutral, and 7=strongly agree

1. My personal risk for contracting COVID-19 is low.
2. I'm doing what's necessary to lower my risk of contracting COVID-19.
3. It has been difficult for me to focus on everyday activities and/or work due to anxiety and financial concerns.
4. It distresses me to see people not practicing good health behaviors e.g., such as not washing not wearing a mask or social distancing.
5. COVID-19 has increased my opportunity for freelance work.
6. COVID-19 has increased competition for the kind of work I do as a freelancer.
7. COVID is opening up more career opportunities for freelancers like me.
8. I will personally benefit from the COVID-based shift to remote work.
9. I rely on social media for information and/or insights about the COVID-19 pandemic.
10. I share information and/or insights on social media about the COVID-19 pandemic with family and friends.

SECTION 8:

Please write a brief paragraph (150 words or less) describing a concrete episode that sums up your experience as a freelancer (either positive or negative) and how you felt about it

Complete Survey

Thank you for completing this survey. We look forward to sharing the findings with you and other participants through a written summary as well as a webinar to discuss the implications for freelancing now and in future.