

6 PRACTICAL TIPS FOR UPWORK SUCCESS

FARAZ AHMED

Copyright © 2022 by Faraz Ahmed.

Follow me on Facebook for more tips:

<https://www.facebook.com/faraz.ahmed84/>

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TIP 1: How to find Long-term Clients on Upwork Part 1

TIP 2: How to find Long-term Clients on Upwork Part 2

TIP 3: How to find Long-term Clients on Upwork Part 3

TIP 4: Words to avoid in your Freelance Profiles & Proposals Part 1

TIP 5: Words to avoid in your Freelance Profiles & Proposals Part 2

TIP 6: How to Increase the Response Rate for your Proposals on Upwork

BONUS TIP 1: Writing Winning Upwork Proposals in 2022

BONUS TIP 2: When is the right time to start Freelancing?

FREE EBOOK: Top Secrets of Becoming a Successful Freelance Web Developer

About the Author

TIP 1: HOW TO FIND LONG-TERM CLIENTS ON UPWORK PART 1

A typical Freelancer Routine:

1. Bid on a project.
2. Get the project.
3. Deliver the project.
4. Go back to #1.

If you are bidding on jobs day after day, week after week, and month after month, then you are doing it wrong. You will tire yourself out eventually by becoming part of the rat race.

What you should be looking for are a few long-term, regular clients who give you regular work, so you never have to bid again.

There are three ways to do this. I am explaining my favorite way first, which is what I did when I started freelancing:

1. Find small projects which you can do in an hour or two.
2. Look at the client profile. Make sure it's the client with no previous projects on Upwork.
3. Write a stunning proposal and offer some value to the client to prove to him that you are the right person for the job. Example below.
4. Deliver the project with high-quality work.

Most people look at the client's profile, and if the client has no feedback or payment history, they don't bid on the project. I did the exact opposite because their job posts

would have less competition or proposals, and there would be a high chance for me to land the job. And I knew that if I provided quality work, then they would not go to any other freelancer in the future if they had any new task.

That's how I turned a \$6 client into a \$60k client, and it's still going. I am posting that job post and the proposal below.

Job Description

Ajax has stopped working on <link>. Looking for someone to fix.

My Proposal

Hi,

I looked at the website, and it seems that some scripts are conflicting with each other. It should be fixed in an hour or two (\$6-\$12). I've been working on PHP and WordPress since last 5+ years. I am also a Zend Certified PHP Professional (the top php certification available in the market).

I am available via email/skype/phone. Let me know if you want to proceed further.

Best Regards,
Faraz

Thought Process behind the Proposal

I looked at the website and found multiple jQuery files loading.

Post Proposal

The client immediately awarded me the job after the proposal and asked me to fix another issue, then another

issue, and then another issue. Forward to nine years, and it is still going.

The above wasn't a fluke. I repeated the same for another project, and that turned out to be a \$100k client. 75% of the clients are still working with me since the last nine years.

TIP 2: HOW TO FIND LONG-TERM CLIENTS ON UPWORK PART 2

Below is the second way where we will be working with the old clients:

1. Search for a project that you can do. Big, small, doesn't matter.
2. The client needs to have a previous job history with good feedback.
3. If the project is about building or doing something from scratch (e.g., eCommerce website, SEO on the new website, etc.), then this client can potentially become your long-term client. That's because the completed website will always need updates in the future, so you can pitch in your maintenance plan after finishing the website. Similarly, if you do a good SEO and show results on the new website, the client will most likely stick with you.

However, if it's a project that just needs updates/fixes on an existing project, then you need to look at the following factors:

1. Look at the client's previous job history and find projects similar to the project you are applying to. For example, if you are applying to a WordPress project, then you will look for all the WordPress projects the client has posted in the past.
2. If you found similar projects in the client's history, then look at the name of the freelancers who have done those projects.
3. If all the freelancers are different, and they all have good feedback, then this is probably not the client for you.

Why?

There is a category of clients who just want to get their work done at the lowest cost possible and don't care who does it. Think about it: Why do they post a new job related to a niche if they have already worked with a freelancer previously in that same niche? Why don't they hire the same freelancer?

Here is my experience with one of those clients. It was a website hosted on a development URL, and the client wanted some fixes/changes done to it.

So, I got the job, finished it, and she sent a few more tasks. I did those tasks, too. Then she closed the job and left great feedback. I thought I got another long-term client.

Then something strange happened. As it was the development website, I thought I would get another task from her to make it live.

After a few days, I was just browsing new jobs and found a job posted by her. Do you know what the job was about? It was about making the website live. That baffled me. Why would someone do that? Why couldn't she ask me to make it live? Maybe she didn't like something about my work? I was hardly a month old freelancer and started doubting myself.

I was curious and wanted to understand the reason. I looked at her past jobs and found that she had used multiple developers to do her WordPress projects, and all of those freelancers had received great reviews.

That's when I decided that I would avoid such clients because my vision was clear: I wanted to work with clients who believed in long-term relationships.

PS. A few days later, she returned and told me that the freelancer she had hired to make the website live messed it up, and she wanted me to do it. I felt triumphant, but I excused myself. She might have stuck with me after that, but looking at her history, I didn't want to take chances. You can call me naive, but I knew what type of clients I wanted to focus on.

There are always exceptions, and your experience may differ. But it's doubtful that they would stick with you if we look at the history of such clients. But if you are just starting out, then it's totally fine to work on any project you can get your hands on for the experience.

Remember: You just need 2-3 good, regular clients to make your freelancing journey less stressful. And as you start getting stable and predictable income, you can hire more people to delegate your work to and build your business further.

TIP 3: HOW TO FIND LONG-TERM CLIENTS ON UPWORK PART 3

The third way is the easiest, quickest, and most straightforward.

Just go to the job search page, and enter the name of your niche followed by the word “long term”. E.x. “seo long term”, “wordpress long term”, “content writing long term”, etc., and you will see the jobs from the clients who are looking for a long-term working relationship.

Then, it will be your proposal writing skills that will help you win those jobs. For proposal examples, see my book: farazthewebguy.com/free-book/

The more command you have over your skill, the better proposals you will be able to write because you would have faced different problems and found different solutions working on your skill, which would help you immediately come up with a solution after reading the posted job. To gain experience in your skill, you can offer your services for free in the freelancing groups.

TIP 4: WORDS TO AVOID IN YOUR FREELANCE PROFILES & PROPOSALS PART 1

Word # 1: “We”

Serious / long-term clients want to work with individuals. The word “We” gives the impression that you won’t be the one to do the work and will outsource it to someone else.

Serious / long-term clients know that there are usually severe communication issues when that happens, resulting in delayed projects because the developer stops responding to the middleman, resulting in the middleman either not responding to the client or giving silly excuses. This happened to me twice, so now I immediately move on to the next proposal if I see the word “we” in any profile or proposal.

Tip: Use “I” not “we” for a better response rate, even if you outsource the job.

TIP 5: WORDS TO AVOID IN YOUR FREELANCE PROFILES & PROPOSALS PART 2

The second word I want to talk about is “Sir.” When we use “Sir” in our proposals, like “Hi Sir,” we show two things:

1. The lack of confidence in ourselves.
2. The lack of professionalism.

The word “Sir” turns off some clients, including me, because we think that if you don’t have confidence in yourself, then why should we have confidence in you for delivering our project?

It may look like a trivial matter, but if you start calling the clients by their names, like “Hi John,” “John,” or even a simple “Hi,” if you don’t know the name of the client, you will appear professional and increase the range of the clients interested in availing your service.

TIP 6: HOW TO INCREASE THE RESPONSE RATE FOR YOUR PROPOSALS ON UPWORK

The first 230 characters of your proposals are essential because that's the first part the client sees when you submit a proposal. Use these characters for two things:

1. Use a term/keyword, which is NOT present in the project description, related to the project to talk about the project.
2. Ask a question related to the project.

Being also a client on Upwork, I have found myself opening the proposals with the above 2 points first.

BONUS TIP 1: WRITING WINNING UPWORK PROPOSALS IN 2022

The method still works.

I have always focused on bidding on the jobs by clients that had the potential of becoming long-term clients because I didn't want to be a part of the rate race. I haven't looked at the Upwork jobs page since 2015. The last time I bid on and won a project was in 2017, and that was also the project by invitation. Most of my clients have been working with me since 2013.

Last week, I came across a job that looked similar to my first job on Upwork. Just for fun and out of curiosity, I applied to the job to check whether the method I used to nail every single job still worked. Below is the job description and the proposal I sent.

Job Description

Hello. My website is using wordpress, and I've been having issues with Error 404. It works only with plain permalinks, but I need it to work with permalinks using postname so I can better setup my SEO.

I need someone who is proficient with wordpress and who had this issue before and resolved it successfully. As mentioned above, the website is currently working using plain permalinks, and I need help with making it work with postname.

Thank you for replying to my job request.

My Proposal

<Client Name>, Most likely the issue is with the mod_rewrite apache module. I will be happy to fix it for you. Shouldn't take more than an hour to resolve it.

The Result

I was awarded the job after 24 hours and fixed the issue in 30 minutes. The client said that he would keep the job open and may send more work in the future, so it could possibly become another long-term client for me.

Things to Notice

Did you notice what I did in my short proposal? I simply told him a possible cause of the issue to give him the impression that I was a skillful and experienced developer. I also told him the time it would take for me to solve the issue, so he knew the cost of the solution upfront, helping him make a quick decision.

You would have also noticed that I didn't mention anything about myself. No experience, no qualifications, not even my name.

If you have heard of the Pareto Principle / 80-20 rule, it says to identify inputs that are potentially the most productive and make them the priority, and that's what I did in my proposal above. In other words: Always focus on the project and not on yourself in your proposals. Clients really don't care about your experience or portfolio. They are only interested in what you can do for them.

BONUS TIP 2: WHEN IS THE RIGHT TIME TO START FREELANCING?

If you ask me, I will say that you should start freelancing after spending 2-3 years honing your skills. I would recommend spending a couple of years working in a company, which will help you learn skills at a quicker rate. It will also help you improve your communication and learn different aspects of your business because Freelancing is also like a business. As a freelancer, you are the salesperson, project manager, executor, accountant, etc.

The reason I got instant success as a freelancer (You can read my story here:

<https://farazthewebguy.com/overcoming-fear-of-failure/>)

was that I had the five-year job experience behind me before I started the freelancing journey.

During my years in the job, I moved around in all the departments (even in the accounts department) because I was a newbie who was highly energetic and wanted to learn about everything.

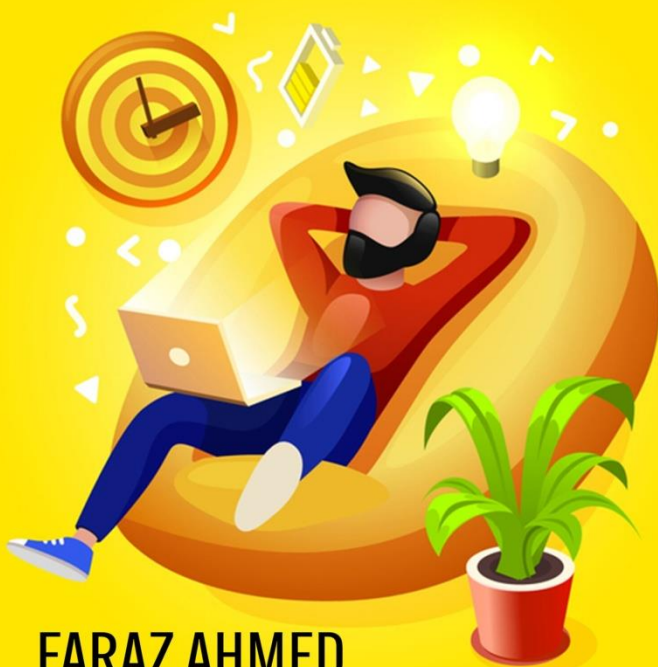
My last year was in the sales department as a Business Analyst, which helped me learn about the different freelancing platforms and how to bid on them.

So to summarize: Find a job or internship, take on all the challenging projects, and make friends with people in all the departments, so you can learn about the entire business, which will help you become self-employed in the future if that's what you desire.

**FREE EBOOK: TOP SECRETS OF
BECOMING A SUCCESSFUL
FREELANCE WEB DEVELOPER**

**TOP SECRETS
OF BECOMING A SUCCESSFUL
FREELANCE WEB DEVELOPER
IN 2021**

CONTAINS REAL PROPOSALS THAT WON ME JOBS



FARAZ AHMED

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Faraz Ahmed is a Zend Certified PHP Developer and CBT Life Coach from Karachi, Pakistan, and the Top Rated+ Freelancer on Upwork. He has been using Upwork to find freelancing opportunities for almost eight years now. With over 11,000 hours of work completed, he's a pro when it comes to writing excellent freelance proposals.

He has also been mentioned by Upwork on their social media page, as you can see on the next page:



Upwork

Favorites · April 11 · 🌐

Meet Faraz Ahmed, web developer and Top Rated professional on Upwork. Faraz is a Zend Certified Engineer with over 5 years of experience in PHP. He believes in client care that builds long-term relationships and strives to make each business he works with a success.

How does he ensure his clients have a great experience with their online relationship?

"Communication is the key. I keenly observe how the clients write and what terms they use to describe certain things, and the... See More

👍👍👍 354

38 Comments 11 Shares

👍 Like 🗨 Comment ➦ Share 🌐

Most Relevant ▾



Faraz Ahmed

Thank you, Upwork! It's been great many years and many more to come!



Write a comment...



ONE LAST THING...

I hope that you find the tips in this guide helpful for your freelancing career. Don't forget to follow me on Facebook for more tips:

<https://www.facebook.com/faraz.ahmed84/>

Thank you for reading!