5 Tips To Help Get You Hired as a Freelance Writer

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If you're interested in becoming a freelance writer, your timing is excellent.

With organizations more than willing to decentralize their content creation efforts, it's never been a better time to take the plunge.

That said, there's one big catch: You'll want to get paid what you're worth.

As someone who's both written professionally for a while and had the privilege of hiring freelancers for several different projects, the secret sauce isn't talent alone.

You need to put your best foot forward with **every** submission.

Otherwise, recruiters and potential employers will hit the Delete key faster than you can finish reading this sentence.

With that in mind, these tips represent the fundamentals you need to cover before sending in your applications.

Every writer's strengths and journey in this industry are different, so where you take either of those afterward is entirely up to you.

But, if you follow this short checklist before submitting, you'll be better equipped to receive job offers instead of rejection emails.

A caveat before we begin

This blog post assumes you already have at least a small portfolio in your arsenal. If you don't, there's plenty of information out there on the best way

to create one. This post **won't** cover any portfolio creation tips.

1. Check spelling and grammar in your portfolio

Speaking of your portfolio, the most common mistake I've seen in freelance writer submissions is, unfortunately, poor quality.

If the reader can pick out a half-dozen spelling or grammar errors in your first paragraph, your freelance writer application will be dead on arrival.

Why? Because, beyond displaying a weak grasp of the language, a portfolio full of typos comes across as unprofessional.

If you can't be bothered to proofread and polish your work before submitting, then you can't expect anyone else to take it seriously enough to hire you.

2. Showcase your best work, nothing else

In my experience, standout portfolios always prioritize quality over quantity.

Instead of providing links or attachments to several dozen medium-quality pieces, the strongest writing submissions come with a handful of excellent content examples.

This selective approach highlights your best work for whoever's looking to hire you instead of asking them to wade through a content swamp with no indication of what you consider your top-drawer material.

When assembling your work samples for a freelance job application, be critical about what makes the cut.

If you hesitate about including a particular content piece as part of your submission, that's typically a sign you're not as confident in its effectiveness.

As with many discussions around copywriting, less is more.

3. Showcase recent content

If you write for a living, content you created three, five, or even ten years ago will likely pale in comparison to anything you created in the last six months.

For this reason, I usually have far less interest in writing samples that are all several years old.

Even if it means including recent blog posts from Medium or your website, anyone looking to hire a freelance writer will want to know where your skillset is right now.

Not where it was months or years ago.

Without any insight into your current strengths and weaknesses, hiring managers may not be able to assess your writing skills accurately.

Like any other muscle, the more you write, the more powerful your prose will become.

Make sure you flex what you've got in your arsenal now.

4. Cater your portfolio to the application

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I'll admit: It's much easier to throw together a generic writing sample collection and use it in every freelance writing job application.

However, to really nail your submission for an opportunity in a specific sector, it's better to cater your portfolio to that niche.

For example, if you're applying for a freelance position with a healthcare organization, including content pieces that appeal to this industry and target audience is ideal.

Less relevant content, such as a blog post about cryptocurrency, can still showcase your writing talent, but it won't be of as much interest to the content manager working in healthcare.

Creating engaging copy is all about knowing your audience and giving them what they want.

The same principle applies to your freelance writing applications — understand who'll be opening your submission and cater to their sensibility as much as possible.

5. Sell the reader before they start reading

Another critical aspect successful writing applications have in common is the level of context.

Great writers don't simply include work samples and leave the reader to fill in the blanks — they answer the "why" question on top of the "what."

Specific, detailed context will push your application over the goal line.

Don't tell the recipient that your writing samples were "effective" or "popular."

Instead, ground those sentiments in reality by proclaiming what problem your content solved for the client.

Saying your content "increased organic traffic by X percent" or "generated Y views over Z period" sounds far more impressive than those vague platitudes.

Demonstrating how your content helps organizations attain their business objectives is guaranteed to pique a hiring manager's interest, regardless of the opportunity's other details.

Recap

Get hired as a freelance writer hinges on your submission's components, especially regarding your content samples.

Make sure you're showcasing your best, most recent work and provide the reader with the context they need to grasp how effective you can be as their next superstar freelancer.

There's so much opportunity for talented writers out there right now.

With an effective application up your sleeve, all you need to do is walk through those open doors.
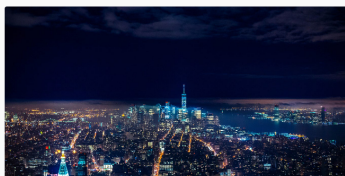
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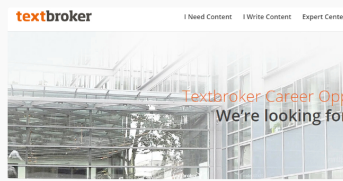
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