**Freelancing- the Fact and the Myth**

Everyone looks to be in some kind of “part-time” business these days; some folks would like to be freelancers, offering services to customers on demand, and while that is a good thing, they’re sometimes misled by some popular myths. At some point, they would hear the story about the guy who’s earned $700,000 in three months through freelancing, and that could be the only driving force for them for a long time. While it is good to dream big in everything, it is important not to get your head lost in the clouds all too soon, and fantasizing needlessly. This piece would be highlighting some of the facts, and myths there are to the freelance game, so as to rightly guide new entrants.

**Fact #1: You will make some money**

While nothing in this world is set in stone (unless what God has willed to be), there is a pretty good chance that you will earn a living doing freelancing. Afterall, the major reason you decided to become a freelancer is because you think you have got some skills, and you think people should be able to pay for those skills (that, really should be the reason). Very well then, turns out that you’re correct, and people are out looking to pay for your type of skills (no matter how niche it is), and with the right attitude to business, coupled with virtues, you would definitely earn some money off of freelancing.

**Myth #1: You will make lots of money in a short while**

This isn’t true. Freelancing isn’t some get-rich-quick scheme where you begin to laugh to the bank a few hours after you begin the journey, it takes time and effort before a decent earning begins to materialise. This shouldn’t be seen as some bad news, but be seen as a good one, as this means you are in a system that’s credible, and most importantly, legitimate. A typical example: for the first few months of being a freelancer, customers would be trickling in, and at some point, your patience and perseverance would begin to wear thin, but as time goes on, the few customers you have, would be the attracting force for other customers to come, and you will begin to see customers exponentially. If you can be patient, and hardworking (of course), you can really make lots of money from freelancing; just not like the Overnight Millionaire rumours would have you believe.

**Fact #2: You will need a platform**

As a freelancer, you will definitely need a platform, from which you can get the needed exposure and customer networks. Popular freelance platforms like Freelancer.com, Upwork and Fiverr are pretty good for a freelancer who has just started: they have a lot of people who are looking for a wide range of services (which, luckily, you can offer) and a robust community of other freelancers. With these platforms, you don’t have to worry about looking for potential customers yourself – they would come to you themselves (or better put, they’ll be *led* to you). Pay attention, as registering unto these platforms ranges from “super easy for everyone” to “professional”; some of them (like Freelancer.com and Fiverr) would take just a few minutes to register, while others (like Upwork) requires a proper Job-like registration and application which may take days, and weeks even. Point is, you would need to get unto one of those platforms if you’re serious about your freelancing “career”.

**Myth #2: You can go it all on your own**

It’s not everyone that can play well in a team, and while that’s largely understandable, there’s no such thing as being the true “lone ranger” when it comes to freelancing. Aside from the fact that you’ll be interacting with a considerable amount of new people (which might be a new experience for some folks), you will definitely have to interact with others that in the line of your trade. Do you design logos? You’ll need to join communities on Logo design, interact with some other logo designers like you and generally belong in a community of logo designers where you share you own ideas and listen to others’ (not particularly in that order). You can totally skip all of that and go solo, but that would be doing more harm than good; as there’s room for great improvement when you share ideas with others (“two heads are better than one” kinda thing), and you just might be missing out on that if you ride solo.

**Fact #3: Freelancing is a real job!**

It’s super easy to think that freelancing is less of a job and is just meant to *augment* the “real” job that has to be somewhere. This is partly due to the fact that freelancing gives the flexibility of working away from a work environment; you can easily be the freelancer whose offices are open parks and coffee shops, or the “work from home” guy; yet the convention is that a “real” job needs to have a formal work environment. Freelancing is every inch of a real job, as you would need to implement all the conventional work ethics, and formal things like work rate and time. The point is, once you’ve gotten past the decision to become a freelancer, you need to take it as seriously as you would a real job; that’s just about the only way you can get something tangible from it.

**Myth #3: Freelancing can’t be a career**

This isn’t true. Since we’ve established the fact that freelancing is really a job, then it follows that it can be a career path. Here in Nigeria, it’s not common to see people say they’ve chosen freelancing as a career path, and that’s because many don’t understand how it works. If people think it is logical to find a problem, solve it, and then make a career out of that (an entrepreneur, in summary), then there’s absolutely nothing wrong in the logic of building a skill on a niche, selling that skill to people who need it, and making a career out of it (a freelancer, in summary)