

GAINESVILLE SCENE



CAREERS

Livin' La Vida Freelance

By Alyssa Hockensmith · On July 2, 2014

When I tell people that I am a writer, I watch as their faces contort into strange expressions that generally move from horror to pity to confusion. The speed at which these emotions cross their faces is astounding to me, but the thoughts behind them are not at all surprising.

They're all thoughts and fears I've had myself, but as long as I can type or put a pen to paper, I will continue to write, especially now that I've discovered I can make a decent amount of money doing it.

Since the latter half of my senior year of college, I have been tackling freelance writing. The articles I have written range from topics in the medical field all the way to tips for moving to a new home. Despite the rather lackluster topics, it's still been an interesting experience. I have gathered a breadth of knowledge about topics I never would have even thought to discover if it hadn't been for these jobs.



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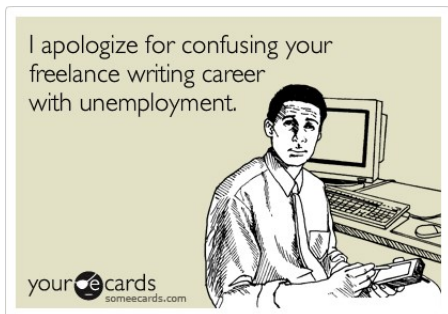
Dirty Dozen 7/...

And, the best part is...I get paid.

There are a lot of misconceptions out there about freelance writing jobs, namely that you have to be a good writer in order to complete them. It's not true. You have to know how to put sentences together, but as long as you can give the client what he or she wants, then you're golden!

Having a passion for writing helps too, but it's not necessary. Usually, the topics you write about aren't going to win you any Pulitzers, but they'll earn you enough cash to have some spending money after rent is due.

Another thing that people don't understand is that you don't have to be an expert on any topic in order to write about it. Most clients actually want to make things more accessible to a wider audience. In doing research, you're teaching yourself about whatever topic comes up, which makes it easier for you to write about it in a simple and understandable way.

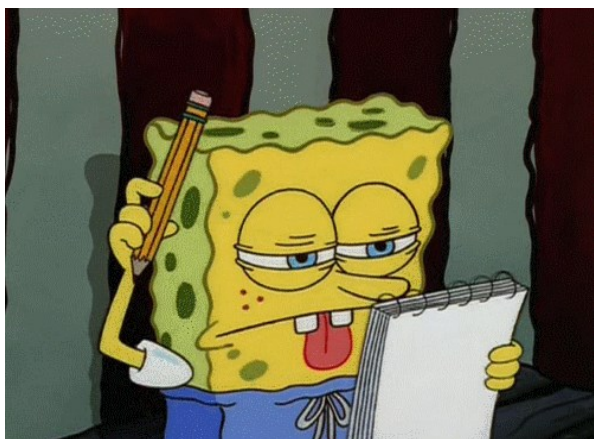


Never in a million years did I think that I would identify myself as a freelance writer. In fact, I never even wanted to write articles at all. My goal was to become a storyteller in whatever medium would have me. I've written poetry, fiction, nonfiction, and even screenplays, but I've never tried to make money writing. It was just something I did.

I continue to write just for me, but I also do it to make some extra cash. It's a great option for anyone who graduated from college but can't find full-time employment (i.e. most of us with an English degree who do not plan to attend grad school). You can supplement your income on your terms. You don't have to do it forever, but you can do it for as long as you need or want.

Don't get me wrong, it's nerve-racking to not have a job with a steady income flow, but it's even worse to not have a job at all. I like doing what I'm doing right now. It's temporary, but it's taught me a lot about myself and it's helped me gain a new perspective on writing.

So, to anyone who doesn't understand the freelance life, that's okay; you don't have to live it. Just respect those of us who do.



Via: tumblr

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