

# Women in the Workforce *Vataas B'chefetz Kapeha* Finding the 'Free' in Freelancing

SHAINDY BABAD

*"After a heartfelt Shacharis, I took my morning coffee with a local client, worked for an hour on an urgent project, stopped at the gym for a workout, headed to my weekly shiur, picked up my preschooler, spent the afternoon cooking supper and at the park with my children, dealt with some messages and responded to emails while my husband did the bedtime routine and then settled down for another couple of hours of solid work while my husband was at night kollel."*

Typical day? Green with envy?

I'm betting that the above scenario is not reality for most of us working women, though many of us probably wish it were.

In recent years, with the advent of cheap global communication bridging distances and putting multiple markets within practical reach, even for the individual, more and more professionals are choosing to work as freelancers.

While it may seem that a freelancer is simply a very small/one person business or a "flexible employee," in actuality the freelance market has specialized codes and practices. Adhering to them will spell the difference between success and failure. It may seem like a woman's dream. Nonetheless, it is important to consider the dos and don'ts, the benefits and challenges (yes, freelancing is not everyone's best choice) before jumping in.



## Benefits

**Open Opportunities:** Freelancing is a great way to keep your skills cutting edge or explore other industries. The experience you acquire will come in handy should you decide to switch industries or apply for a more senior position in the future.

**Flexibility:** With a small investment in equipment, you can achieve high income from consistent and active freelancing. While you will need to juggle multiple projects, you remain your own "boss," choosing your hours, location and holidays. This can be a huge advantage for the *frum* mother who may want to spend time with family and take off significant time around Yom Tov. The freelance medium allows you direct control over the volume of projects and time you spend.

**Creative Outlet:** Employed but feel that you are not tapping your creative talents fully? Full time mommy but wish you could use some of the skills you have? The freelance market is an excellent medium to dabble in your field or hobby, without the pressure of over-commitment. You can keep current or build a reputation in your industry or field, even while your main energies are focused elsewhere.

**Added Income:** No matter how high your

salary, there is a good chance your family can use more income. If you have the time, the freelance market is a good resource for increasing your income. Many companies prefer to hire freelance professionals, especially in graphics, design, translation, photography, creative writing, etc. You can capitalize on this medium to boost your income, even sporadically (before Yom Tov, over the summer).

## Challenges

**Working Alone:** Office politics and the lack of solitude to focus are often the bane of an office environment. However, the challenge of working alone day after day and the lack of face-to-face interaction with other people can be very hard. Depending on the field you focus on, freelancing can be lonely.

**Self-Discipline:** When working alone it is tempting to "just do one more thing" before settling down to work. Time management, setting boundaries and staying on top of your to-do list are critical to your success.

**Self-Accountability:** No one is checking your work. It is up to you to self-critique and do your best or your reputation will suffer and clients will be disappointed. No management monitoring may be the catalyst to get your creative juices flowing, but it is up to you to stay on course and do a great job.

**You Are the Company:** There is no "accounts department." you are the CEO who makes pricing decisions, need

to collect debt and negotiate the sale. Freelancing demands the ability to wear multiple hats with grace — you are the only one driving the business and keeping clients happy.

**Staying Current:** You need to invest time and effort in learning about the trends and changes in your industry. You need to keep your skills up to date (without help from the HR department). While spending too much time on researching every passing fad will steal time you need to create income, staying current is important for generating new businesses. If you can keep alert and pivot gracefully you can position yourself ahead of the market, offering the "next stage" skills while big business is still catching up.

**Managing the Slow Times:** Setting yourself up and driving business take time. The calendar dictates slow times. If you are counting on the income generated by your freelance work to keep your family financially afloat, you must prepare. Putting aside a "slow fund" is important. It can be created using an initial lump sum and put into savings or by creating an annual budget and saving income from the busy seasons for tapping later. This is another aspect of freelancing that will require self-discipline and forethought.

One of the secrets of success in freelancing is to consider it a business and you the CEO.

For those of you freelancers in Israel,

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"The Honor Was Lifted from Our House of Life"  
"ניטל כבוד מבית חיינו" (תפילת מוסף לשבת ראש חודש)

The Patients, Parents, Medical Staff and Administration of  
**The Korall Children's Medical Center**  
Sanz Medical Center – Laniado Hospital, Netanya

Are profoundly saddened and heartbroken on the פטירה of  
our distinguished, noble and magnanimous Benefactor  
**Mrs. Renee Korall, ז"ל**  
A compassionate visionary and philanthropist.

The merit of enabling to restore the health and well-being of tens of thousands of children past, present and future will certainly be a towering זכות for her pure נשמה to ascend to her elevated place in עון amongst the Righteous Matriarchs of our Nation.  
תהא נשמתה צרורה בצרור החיים ותהי זכרה ברוך

We express our heartfelt condolences to her sister, Elly Braun, and her daughters, Rita Lubinsky, Chana Zaidner and Evy Wyler

May the noble legacy of their esteemed Mother's wisdom and מעשים טובים be a solace and comfort in their time of grief.  
המקום ינחם אתכם בתוך שאר אבלי ציון וירושלים

With sincerest respect and gratefulness

Chaim Hamerman  
CEO, Laniado Hospital

Henry Spitzer  
Director, American Friends of  
Laniado Hospital

Jacob Schechter, MD  
Director, Korall Medical Center

Nechama Sharon, MD  
Deputy Director, Korall Medical Center