**The how-to of freelancing**

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Freelancing gives people the freedom to work from anywhere at their convenience. With an increase in remote working, more people are opting for freelancing so that they can focus on different things at the same time.

Pakistan is one of the countries that have a huge number of freelancers. With over three million freelancers, Pakistan is among the top five countries providing freelance services. A majority of students in Pakistan prefer taking their career to the next level through freelancing once they are done with school.

Freelancing also gives people the freedom to do other stuff than work. It is much easier for a freelancer to study while working than someone who goes to the office. It also gives a person the freedom to spend time with his/her family. Working independently and offering clients your services based on projects has gained popularity in Pakistan and most parts of the world.

The digital revolution has made the world seem like a small village in which people can sort services online instead of having to outsource locally. Therefore, even schools need to empower students that freelancing can greatly benefit them without just relying on white-collar jobs.

Some of the services that Pakistan freelancers offer include web development, content creation, writing, graphic design, digital marketing, virtual assistance, software, and other jobs. They tend to use freelancing platforms like Upwork, Fiverr, People per Hour, Freelancer, iWriter, and other recommended platforms to seek clients. They also use their means to get clients with whom they can work for a long term. Most of these freelancers charge about $5 to $20 per hour based on the kind of work they do.

It is high time to equip those freelancers with necessary skills so that they can work on advanced projects and charge up to $100 per hour. Not only will this great income be beneficial to them, but it will also lead to the country’s industrial and economic growth.

In the Digital Pakistan policy, the government aims to create an ecosystem with enough infrastructure and institutional framework for the delivery of innovative digital services, applications and content. The policy has also played a part in the increase of freelancers in Pakistan. People are being encouraged to change strategies and be more digitalized which has led to an increase of these professionals.

However, not everyone can access great freelancing opportunities except when well-empowered. This has become more important due to the emergence of AI tools that can be used to do some online work like social media management, graphic design, content writing, and much more. Freelancers have to upskill to ensure they remain relevant in the industry by providing better services. However, the kind of work done by a human showcases a kind of identity, unlike some AI work that may seem just computerized. Also, there are certain terms that AI repeatedly uses that can help you distinguish between human writing and AI writing. But the gist is that upskilling is the best solution to all this.

For freelancing to grow, some reforms must be made in the education sector. Students need to be taught about freelancing and how best they can thrive in the market. In the same way, entrepreneurship is a compulsory unit in higher education, freelancing tips also need to be taught. More students will be empowered and finish college with a new mindset instead of just getting office jobs; they can be freelancers and work in the same field they studied.

There are diverse opportunities out there for well-skilled individuals. Also, the public needs to be empowered on the same to make them more welcoming to the profession so that parents can feel satisfied if their children decide to go the freelancing way rather than get a 9-5 job. Managing their own time also shows discipline.

Another great way to boost freelancing in Pakistan is by promoting the use of IT in different institutions. For example, if technology is well integrated into schools, students will be more empowered at a young age and know how to work with various software and other important digital aspects. This will help open doors in the future. Additionally, youth empowerment in IT can help them think overboard and look for ways to earn an income even with the vast number of unemployed individuals in Pakistan.

Pakistan’s government can collaborate with international partners to boost education and also conduct digital skills programs. IT incubators can also be used to motivate startups to get the right resources required to boost their businesses. Young professionals can also be motivated to be freelancers.

Furthermore, it is essential to establish a national database for freelancers, which would serve the purpose of promoting our freelance workforce and facilitating connections with potential investors. The government ought to take proactive measures to negotiate agreements with investors, aiming to cultivate a favourable ecosystem for freelancers to thrive.

If digitization is boosted in Pakistan, it will help freelancers to be more confident in their work and get the right skills in their remote work. Also, all freelancers need to check the market to upskill and get the right skills needed to take on different jobs.

Freelancing has some flexibility as individuals can work from home, have flexible working hours, earn foreign currency, and also boost the economy. Although working from home can seem hard for some people, there are co-working spaces that one can hire for this. This brings like-minded people together while not feeling too isolated even if someone is working on their stuff.

Even in the case of power failure at home, these workspaces can come in handy with the advantage of high-speed internet and power backup. Also, co-working areas come in different packages, with a private space, you can even meet clients, pitch your proposal and make deals without feeling uneasy that you do not have an office. Therefore, people should not shy off from getting into freelancing.

Freelancing in Pakistan has a lot of potential. It is up to the government and citizens to ensure that they embrace it, upskill, and ensure its development. Unemployment should not be a key issue with freelancing in the picture.

However, people need to be empowered to know they can work online and also deal with online frauds that can easily scam them and not pay their money. People also need to use secure payment systems when transferring their money from freelancing platforms to prevent any form of hacking that can lead to the loss of their money.

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