

Thanks for visiting my website and downloading this article. Be sure to check back often for new articles, tips, tricks and best of all, an in-depth look at my successful career as a freelancer.

<http://www.geocities.com/davidware2002>

Managing Downtime

By David Ware
warehouse@gvii.net

As much as we hate to admit it, we all experience downtime. We could all do without it, and it never fails to come at the wrong time - like when we really need the money.

Managing downtime requires creativity, which shouldn't be a big problem since all of us freelancers are pretty creative. To get your creative energy flowing, here are some tips for managing your downtime.

=> Work on new or existing projects of your own. I would bet a dollar there isn't a freelancer alive who doesn't have some sort of work in progress, such as a book, series of articles yet to find a publisher or other project. Use your downtime to dust one or two off, and get to work!

Remember that every hour that idly passes is another hour that you COULD HAVE billed to a client. In plain words, your time is worth money and allowing it to slip by only hurts your freelance business. By completing projects that have a good chance of being sold someday, you are not wasting your time.

=> Use the downtime to network. The Internet is a fantastic tool for networking, and it's right at your fingertips.

Take the time to establish new contacts in your field, or make a few friends online. Another good source for freelancer support are Internet discussion lists, such as the ones at Yahoo!. Not only can we get together and share experiences, but there is also the chance of getting excess work passed to you by other freelancers!

When networking, keep in mind that you are not trying to do any 'hard selling'. Your objective is to simply establish new contacts for the future.

=> Query new markets. Again, your time is worth money, and every hour you spend not working in some manner is only hurting your business. Take an hour or two to query new markets or to send out cold emails to potential clients.

=> Follow up with potential clients. My email box is filled with folks who have contacted me about certain projects. During my downtime, I take the time to drop them a quick note to see if they have found somebody who can help and, if so, how the project is going. If they haven't found someone, I will politely remind them I am available.

This accomplishes two things. First, it lets your potential clients know you care about their project. Second, if they are already working with someone, it reminds them of your services and hopefully they will remember you the next time around.

=> Learn a new skill. Clients are always looking for 'added value'. When you gain a new skill as a freelancer, you are increasing your worth in the eyes of a potential client.

You could also take an existing skill and get certified with it. Certification also builds confidence in you with new & existing clients. The online company Brainbench offers certification in a wide variety of skills. Check them out today at:

<http://www.brainbench.com>

=> Get organized. During our busy hours, we tend to find a way to accumulate massive amounts of paperwork and other stuff that can get in the way. Spend some time organizing and filing your desk or office, so that when a project does come in, you'll be prepared.

As you can see, there are many ways of profitably managing your downtime. Just because you are not getting paid to do something at the moment, doesn't mean you have to waste your valuable time.

About the Author:

David Ware is a successful freelance writer and "Virtual Assistant". He specializes in helping fellow freelancers realize their goals & potential in their business & personal life. His articles have appeared in National, regional and local publications across the U.S.

Subscribe to Dave's "A Freelancer's Life" newsletter today by sending a blank email to:

a-freelancers-life-subscribe@yahogroups.com

He can be reached via email at warehouse@gvii.net for assignments