



Technical Writer/Editor—Freelancer

SALARY RANGE (2018): \$49,000–\$69,000

I am a freelance designer, technical writer and editor. My currency is my reputation for quality. I like the variety and the independence my work provides. I care deeply about my work, choosing clients who share my values and solving problems that challenge me. But being “choosy” about clients and projects means that I’m in 24/7 business development and networking mode; if I’m not bringing in new writing or editing business, no one is. This is both exciting and sometimes scary. My goal is to grow my freelance business revenue to the point that I can hire a small team of collaborators.

The Tip: Aspire to start your own company someday but spend your first ten years working for other people who will teach you how to do this well.

PRIORITY KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS:

Management Skills

- Manage the design process
- Manage budget and financial issues
- Act in a responsible manner with regard to the needs of people, their communities, and society as a whole

Research & Insights Skills

- Apply a deep knowledge of human behaviour to understand usability

Communication Skills

- Translate content into meaningful information
- Write clearly, including technical, descriptive and narrative language, to suit a wide variety of audiences
- Write and design style guides, spreadsheets, tables, dashboards
- Use specialized software to prepare, edit and distribute content across multiple platforms

Design Skills

- Build prototypes out of variety of materials
- Critique and improve design artifacts
- Use current digital design tools

Core Transferable Skills

Be an expert at all core transferable skills:

- Thinking skills
- Communications skills
- Organizational skills
- Interpersonal skills
- Technical literacy

BUILDING BLOCK EXPERIENCES:

Education & Learning: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Bachelor of Communications (information design) with a minor in small-business management	I am driven by a new challenge. I am a lifelong learner and as a freelancer I cannot become complacent. I am being paid for my expertise, so I need to always be updating my skills.
Employment Experiences: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● For my work term I worked as a content developer for a local communications firm● Did freelance writing and editing contracts concurrent to my agency role. This enabled me to build the confidence that I could be my own boss and still pay the rent.● Today, I have a breadth of writing and editing projects and the luxury to choose work I find challenging	Working for a communications agency was critical for my career. I couldn't imagine becoming a freelancer out of school. Being in an agency taught me how to work with clients and deliver on their needs. This is the kind of stuff you cannot learn in a classroom. Once, I became confident in my skill I started planning my career as a freelancer.
Community Experiences: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Volunteer at local community association as the newsletter copywriter● Active mentor in my alumni association	Being a mentor in our alumni association taught me key networking skills. This led to me to building confidence and having the courage to begin my own firm.
Contextual Experiences: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Took a six-month sabbatical and travelled through Africa and Australia	As a freelancer, I can manage my own schedule and time. This creates opportunities for more freedom and "me" time.
Relationships: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Had a senior mentor at an agency early in career● My spouse has taken time out from their career while our children are in preschool	A technical writer may seem like a solitary position, but I am a critical part of a diverse team of designers and engineers. My relationships have helped me learn how to become a valuable member of a team.