

6 Tips on What to Include in Your Freelance Contract

[Contracts](#) are documents that legally bind two parties to fulfill their duties and follow the regulations of their agreements. In general, the use of contracts is standard protocol in partnerships involving the exchange of assets.

Your connection with your trusted clients isn't as big as two companies partnering up. However, you should always prepare contracts each time you do a project for them. Contracts will protect your rights and welfare as a freelancer in several ways possible. For that to happen, we'll show you six tips on what you should include in your freelance contract.

Project's Scope Info

Both you and your clients must have the same understanding of the [project plan](#) at hand. The two of you must be on the same page and follow the same goals. For that reason, the scope of the project has to be present on the contract.

Everything from the [budget](#) estimate, deadline [schedule](#), and objectives [checklist](#) should be emphasized on the document. Make sure that you and your clients agree with the project's scope. However, it's mostly the client's call to determine a project's scope. Your job is to take note of it so that you can deliver quality results to your client. But, as a freelancer, you can have a say in molding a project's scope because you're the expert.

Terms of Payment

If freelancing is your source of income, you should put a lot of thought in terms of payment. In your contract, see to it to state service rates clearly, as well as your billing and payment methods. Emphasize on the contract if the client has to give a down payment of 20% or 30% before you start the project and many other conditions.

You, as the freelancer, have full control in arranging your terms of payment. But, you need to make sure that your service rates are at a reasonable amount. You don't want a client backing down from the deal because of your overpriced [quotation](#) and infeasible payment terms. Also, make sure that your client is aware of your terms of payment. Let them read it comprehensively so that things will be clear once due dates for payments are fast approaching. Grant your client a chance to negotiate payment terms if he or she will request it.

Overdue Payment Sanctions

Based on an analysis by the UK Federation of Small Businesses, a third or 33% of payments that small businesses receive are late or overdue. Keep in mind that your freelance operations fall into the category of small business. As a matter of fact, overdue client payments are a common problem among freelancers. And, of course, [late payments](#) hinder your goal from [earning more money](#).

To ensure that you'll earn a steady income, you need to stipulate overdue payment sanctions in your freelance contracts. You can charge interest to clients who fail to pay on time. For example, a 10% interest for every week a client doesn't pay his or her dues. Before you state sanctions for late payment on the contract, make sure to inform a client about them first. With the presence of overdue payment sanctions, clients will certainly pay you before or on the due dates.

Moreover, as a sanction, you can also include the possibility of charging lawsuits to clients not paying despite multiple follow-ups. It's your right as a freelancer to do so. You can report it to your lawyer and make the necessary counteractions at court.

Scope Creep Conditions

Being wary of scope creeps is one of the useful tips for freelance workers. If you are not familiar with the term, then let us explain it to you briefly. Scope creeps are instances when there are last-minute or abrupt changes that a client implements on a project. In that case, the budget will be strained, and there'll be more work on your part. According to a report from GoSkills.com, 50% of projects could undergo scope creeps; 57% of projects subject to scope creeps are completed within budget, while 51% are completed before the deadline. As you can see, almost half of the projects experiencing scope creeps are affected badly.

For sure, you have encountered scope creeps in your career. You just didn't know that they were scope creeps. Now that you're aware of them, make sure to include conditions for scope creeps in your contract.

Scope creeps aren't entirely bad, but they can undervalue your contribution to a project. For instance, if you're paid per project instead of per hour, you could earn less money

than you should've rightfully earned. Clients are giving you more work, and you won't get paid more. So, make sure to state in the contract that if a client adds more to the project, he or she must provide additional resources, tools, and pay you more money. You can add other scope creep conditions for as long as they protect you from being undervalued.

Revision Rules

Revisions are among the causes of every freelancer's headache. You met all the client's criteria about the project, but when you submit it to him or her, he or she asks you to revise it for some reason, and that's additional work. Most of the time, revisions hinder you from moving on to other pending projects. Thus, affecting your productivity.

Keep in mind that clients can abuse their right to request revisions. To avoid that, make sure to include revision rules as a section in your contract. Set limits to how many revisions clients can request; one will do. And also, clients must give you an additional payment due to their [revision requests](#). Let your clients know about your revisions rules before letting them sign the contract.

Copyright Terms

After finishing every project you worked on, you might consider adding them to your portfolio and featuring them on [freelance websites](#). That's a good strategy for the promotion of your service to other clients, but be careful. Your previous clients might file a complaint against you for using their projects' images for your marketing campaign. This is a case of copyright infringement.

So, if you really want to use clients' projects for your portfolio, simply ask permission in the first place. If clients give their consent, don't forget to state it in the contract. However, it would be best to study the copyright regulations of your state or city to be sure.

The next time you receive proposals from clients, negotiate terms with them well, and record each agreement in your freelance contract to seal the deal. Take note of the tips you've learned here and use them to make secure contracts.