

Freelancer interview checklist

Direct clients usually run one discovery call and ask for a proposal; agencies and platforms often add a portfolio screen, a short paid trial task and a contract discussion before onboarding.

10 QUESTIONS TO PRACTISE OUT LOUD

1. On a discovery call, what do you ask a new client before you give a quote?

What it checks: Whether you run the call like a professional, finding the real business problem, budget and decision-maker instead of rushing to a price.

2. Tell me about a client who kept changing the brief.

What it checks: Whether you can manage changing requirements professionally, protecting your time and the project without damaging the relationship.

3. What is your rate for this work, and is it negotiable?

What it checks: Whether you can state your price clearly and negotiate on scope rather than simply cutting your rate when a client pushes back.

4. How do you write a scope of work that prevents scope creep?

What it checks: Contract discipline: whether you define deliverables, revisions and exclusions clearly enough to protect both the project and the relationship.

5. Describe a time a client paid late or refused to pay.

What it checks: Firmness and professionalism around money, and whether you learned to protect yourself with better terms.

6. How many hours a week can you commit, and are you working with any of our competitors?

What it checks: Availability and conflicts of interest: whether the client or agency can rely on you and trust you with sensitive plans.

7. Do you charge hourly, daily or a fixed project fee, and why?

What it checks: Commercial maturity: whether you choose a pricing model that fits the work and can explain it confidently to a client.

8. Tell me about a time you turned down a project.

What it checks: Judgement and honesty: whether you know your limits and protect quality and existing clients, instead of saying yes to everything.

9. If we offered you a full-time role later, would you consider it?

What it checks: Your long-term intentions, and whether the client or agency should invest in you as a possible hire or treat this as a short contract.

10. Much of your best work is under NDA. How do you show an agency you can handle their client's brief?

What it checks: Whether you respect confidentiality while still proving your experience, which agencies care about because they will trust you with their own clients.

TIPS FOR THIS INTERVIEW

- Before any discovery call, study the client's website, competitors and online reviews so you can ask sharper questions about their real problem.

- Keep a proposal template ready with scope, exclusions, timeline, revisions and payment terms, and send the written proposal within two working days of the call.
- Prepare three anonymised case studies with problem, process and a measurable result, since many clients cannot see work protected by NDAs.
- Decide your minimum rate and your walk-away point before the call, so you negotiate on scope rather than panicking and discounting.

THE DAY BEFORE

- ☐ Confirm the time, venue or video link and the interviewer's name
- ☐ Plan your route and leave time for traffic, or test your camera, microphone and internet
- ☐ Keep copies of your resume, ID proof, certificates and photographs in a folder
- ☐ Iron your clothes and charge your phone and laptop
- ☐ Do one final run-through of your introduction, then stop and rest

ON THE DAY

- ☐ Arrive 15 minutes early, or log in 5–10 minutes early for a video call
- ☐ Greet everyone politely, including the receptionist or coordinator
- ☐ Listen to the full question, pause, then answer in a clear structure
- ☐ Take brief notes of names and key points
- ☐ Ask your prepared questions and confirm the next steps before you leave