

## WORKING A LOT MORE, JUST TO EARN A LITTLE MORE?

No employer can force any employee legally to work without consent. So, if you are trapped in a situation like this one, you need to first recognize it, and then get rid of it. Why? Because your personal time is the most precious thing of your life. If you can't use it fruitfully, then indulge yourself and spend it on doing what you like. You might have a lighter pocket, but also a lighter heart to go with. Believe me; it is much better than slogging away the best hours of your life for a pittance.

The kind of people who usually get trapped in these exploiting situations are people who are into freelancing or trying to make extra money in spite of having a full time job. Usually, the full time job is sufficient just for meeting the bills every month without anything at all left over. When you have just only enough to survive and nothing left to pursue any wishes, then the offer of freelance work beckons like a lifesaver on the horizon. It is here that most desperate, honest, and good workers are cheated, or exploited. There are a huge number of sharks in the murky waters of the freelance market and most of them are out to skin you. There are very few genuine paymasters or taskmasters. However, there is a pattern to most of these people. If you are aware of the pattern, you will be aware of what you are getting into and pull out in time.

I am not talking about the scammers or cheaters here. I am talking about those people who give you genuine work, pay you genuinely, but make you work four times harder for each penny than you do on your day job. They pay one fourth of the normal market rate for the work you do, knowing that you are desperate. Soon you find that you are locked in a system where you do not have any spare time or rest. Not even the time to spend the money you are earning. Is that worth your time?

But it does not happen in a day. First it will be good money for smart work. And you think that you have ultimately discovered an alternative to your day job. Then it will be a lot of money for a lot of work. You think it is worth it and start dreaming, without sensing that you are actually being manipulated. The first lot of work was to test your quality. Once your quality was ascertained, the next lot of heavy work was to understand your ability and find your limit to deliver quantity with quality. Inevitably, the next requests would be for you to do a huge amount of simple work for a pittance. You've been skewered. You think it is perfectly logical to be paid less for such simple work, and the payment is justified and proportionate. You are absolutely right. But the point you have missed is that there is no justification for you to spend your time for such simple work. There is no doubt that the payment is proportionate, but should you do it?

Usually, people in such situations are scared to refuse being trapped into thinking that by refusing the simple work they are also destroying the opportunity of receiving better work. Maybe, may be not. It is really necessary to find out the reality. And if you find that the working-for-a-pittance phenomenon is keeping on stretching without any sign of proper paying work, then it is better to put your foot down and say no. Don't spend your time running after that dangling carrot. Do the kind of work, and level of work for which you have prepared yourself, and for which you are appreciated. Don't be greedy, even if there is bulk money to be made by working day and night. Work you do, must always pay meaningfully. Small stints of low paying work can be accepted, but a perpetual situation where the major part of your personal time is taken over by poorly paying work is hardly acceptable. And keep in mind that you have nobody to blame, for nobody can make you work for them without your consent.

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