



Freelancing to Achieve Your Dreams



By Enas Al Matour



Soon after my graduation from Palestine Polytechnic University, with a computer science degree in my pocket, I applied to the Code Academy offered by Gaza Sky Geeks, a program of Mercy Corps. But then I decided instead to travel to Egypt with the student exchange program. When I returned, I immediately managed to secure a job as a developer for a tech company in Bethlehem. But soon I found that this full-time job with an insufficient salary was unfulfilling. Working long hours and always dealing with same clients was not my passion.

I continued to wonder about Gaza Sky Geeks and searched on social media for opportunities that appealed to me. When one day I saw an open call for the Gaza Sky Geeks' Freelancing Academy in Hebron, I decided to be the first to apply. Eagerly I waited for a reply, but the acceptance notification never came. When I learned that a friend of mine had been accepted into the program, I reached out to the Gaza Sky Geeks team, and we realized that my application hadn't gone through! The team was so impressed with my commitment, they made an exception and welcomed me into the program even though the application deadline had passed. I can only advise everyone that devotion, patience, and persistence will lead to success.

The academy introduced me to various freelancing platforms and websites, and equipped with the skills to approach clients, I started my freelancing journey soon after graduating from the Freelancing Academy, securing jobs with clients from the West Bank and the Gulf area. The experience I gained at the academy has enabled me to differentiate between opportunities that present themselves: I can see now which jobs could add value to my CV and



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which jobs would not allow me to get ahead, even though they may pay well.

After graduation from university, it is easy to have big dreams for oneself, but it's equally easy to feel stuck or depressed when thinking about the limited job opportunities we have in Palestine. Gaza Sky Geeks attempt to alleviate this problem and equip young, talented people with the knowledge and motivation to start their tech career on the right foot. They have made it possible for me to go after the big dream that I have set for myself. My family also has supported me and helps me to keep going. I know that I must continue with devotion and patience; that is what makes me stand out among the competition in the freelancing job market.

I have been inspired by a line from the novel *The Lantern of the King of Galilee* by Ibrahim Nasrallah that reads: "I don't care what you believe in, I care what you do with this faith." My dream has been to create my own tech company and name it

Qanadel. I am sure that freelancing will give me the means to realize this dream. I have already bought a new laptop with my freelancing earnings and soon will be able to open Qanadel.

While this dream might seem unrealistic in the Palestinian context, I am determined to prove that believing in my potential and leveraging the international freelancing market is my path to success. I advise others who are navigating their journey through university to open their minds to new possibilities and be aware of the opportunities available when working in the tech industry.

Enas Al Matour is a 24-year-old computer science graduate from Hebron.

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