Virtual Gig Career Workbook

Exercises for Youth Entry and Success in Online Work and Beyond
Acknowledgments

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Nina Oduro
Senior Advisor for Youth & Leadership
November 2021

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome, future virtual gigger! This workbook provides exercises to help you find, secure, and successfully complete virtual gig jobs, and then leverage the learning and experience to achieve your future professional goals, whether it be long-term dignified careers or entrepreneurship. In this workbook, a virtual gig refers to jobs in the gig economy¹ that are performed using digital devices. Individuals that work on these jobs will be referred to as “virtual giggers.” The content specifically prepares you to obtain tech-enabled work or work that requires intermediate digital skills and uses varying degrees of digital technology (e.g. transcription, graphic design, etc.). It also helps you visualize potential career paths that can be accessed through virtual gig work experience.

The exercises in this workbook are drawn from IREX’s Skills for Virtual Gigs Initiative, implemented in collaboration with KaziRemote and the Kenya Ministry of ICT, Youth, and Innovation, which equipped youth in Mombasa, Kenya with key digital and soft skills² that are necessary for securing virtual gigs and leveraging their learning and experience for long-term career opportunities and entrepreneurship. As the world of work diversifies with increasing online work opportunities, it is essential to provide you with the knowledge and support you need to explore online work opportunities for self-employment in order to generate income, learn and practice professional skills, and gain work experience that you can use for their future professions or businesses.

Who is this workbook for?

This workbook can be used by youth (primarily between the ages of 18 to 29) to understand, obtain, successfully complete virtual gigs, and use their experience to transition to other jobs and dignified careers³ within and outside of online work.

This workbook will help you:

- Understand and practice steps for obtaining and succeeding in virtual gig opportunities
- Reflect and identify skills and abilities for virtual gig opportunities
- Use virtual gig work experience to succeed in future professional goals

How is this workbook used?

This workbook is organized by key steps that are necessary to find, secure, sustain, complete, and leverage virtual gig experiences for future opportunities. Each step features exercises that help you reflect and practice key soft skills are necessary for virtual gigs. For the best results, you should complete all steps in sequence. If necessary, you can complete steps based on what you need without going in sequence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Exercises</th>
<th>What you will accomplish</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step 1: Get Gigs</td>
<td>Exercise 1: Be a Goal-Getter</td>
<td>Set goals and explore virtual gig platforms, search for work, and match what employers want with what you can offer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exercise 2: Set Your Goals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exercise 3: Know Where to Look</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exercise 4: Know What Employers Need</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exercise 5: Know What You Offer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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¹ Jobs that rely on the use of technology and are characterized as short-term, freelance, temporary, or project-based work done by independent contractors, as opposed to permanent or traditional jobs.

² Broad set of skills, competencies, behaviors, attitudes, and personal qualities that enable people to effectively navigate their environment, work well with others, perform well, and achieve their goals (Laura H. Lippman, 2015).

³ The term dignified careers refers to having access to and control over decent work opportunities (see CARE on Dignified Work)
Step 2: Do the Work | Exercise 1: Make a Plan | Practice what you do to succeed while working on virtual gigs and learn how to balance multiple gigs and priorities at one time.

Step 3: Wrap it Up | Exercise 1: Sum it Up | Exercise 2: Pitch Yourself | Practice wrapping up virtual gig work and using the knowledge and experience for other opportunities.

Step 4: Chart Your Future | Exercise 1: Look Back to Go Forward | Reflect on the knowledge and experience gained from virtual gigs and use it in planning for your future professional goals.

Note: You must note that virtual gigs require mastery of technical skills, such as transcription or graphic design. The exercises in this workbook must be paired with strengthening technical skills for the best outcomes.

What do the skills you will learn mean?

- **Positive Self-Concept** - The ability for a person to demonstrate an understanding of their own strengths and potential. It includes self-awareness, self-confidence, self-efficacy, self-esteem, self-worth, and a sense of well-being and being valued.

- **Entrepreneurial Thinking** - The ability to see and experience problems as opportunities to create value for oneself and others. It includes understanding the needs and interests of people who are affected by a problem or an opportunity. It requires obtaining available resources, thinking creatively about solutions to a problem, and embracing risk and things that are unknown.

- **Communication** - The ability to effectively express oneself. It includes active listening, knowing how to reach your audience, storytelling, making a case, and communicating in a professional way.

- **Resilience** - The ability to continue working toward goals and tasks despite difficulties. It includes developing connections with others, seeking support when dealing with challenges, and asking for help.

- **Time Management** - The process of organizing and planning how to divide your time between specific activities.

- **Interdisciplinarity** - The ability to draw connections between different types of experiences and information. It includes applying knowledge from one area of life to another.

- **Adaptability** - The ability to recognize, understand, learn from, and adjust to changes in people, places, and circumstances. It includes the ability to embrace and make the best of the unknown.

- **Learning to Learn** - Practice how to acquire knowledge, skills, or abilities on your own by using a curious and humble, with a growth-focused mindset. It entails continuous reflection, setting and tracking goals, as well as finding support and requires self-motivation, embracing discomfort, struggle, risk and failure.

Learn more about soft skills for youth success in the IREX Youth Essential Skills Toolkit.

Each Step of this workbook focuses on key soft skills. See the list below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Skills you will learn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step 1: Get Gigs</td>
<td>Positive Self-Concept, Entrepreneurial Thinking, Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2: Do the Work</td>
<td>Communication, Resilience, Time Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 3: Wrap it Up</td>
<td>Communication, Positive Self-Concept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 4: Chart Your Future</td>
<td>Interdisciplinarity, Adaptability</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4 Knowledge and capabilities to perform specialized tasks (Armstrong et al., 2018, p.16).
Virtual Gig Worker Experiences

It takes a lot of focus and determination to be successful at finding a job, gaining experience, and using it to reach your professional goals. These stories from youth and employers can inspire you and help you learn more about what it takes to succeed. Here is what you can learn from these stories:

- What is like to work as a young virtual gigger, including the day-to-day realities
- How you can transition from virtual gigs to a full-time job
- What employers look for when hiring youth

Linet Waweru tells us how she has been using her skills in the online space
Watch: [https://ajiradigital.go.ke/#/blog-detail/59](https://ajiradigital.go.ke/#/blog-detail/59)
Source: Ajira Digital

Philippa Mary Omolo tells her story of getting her first virtual gig and gaining experience that she later used to get a full-time job.
Read: [https://ajiradigital.go.ke/#/blog-detail/55](https://ajiradigital.go.ke/#/blog-detail/55)
Source: Ajira Digital

George Gichuhi, founder and Managing Director of ErrandGuy, Kenya shares about hiring youth for the online work platform.
Watch: [https://ajiradigital.go.ke/#/blog-detail/65](https://ajiradigital.go.ke/#/blog-detail/65)
Source: Ajira Digital
Step 1: Get Gigs

In Step 1, you will:

- Set your goals
- Explore virtual gig platforms.
- Identify and match what employers need with what you can offer.

Skills you will learn

- Positive Self-Concept
- Entrepreneurial Thinking
- Communication
- Learning to Learn

Exercise 1: Be a Goal-Getter

Finding virtual gig opportunities can be daunting, especially if it is your first time. It may take several tries before you are successful in getting your first job. You may even have some challenges at home, at school, or in your community that get in the way. So, before you begin, you should take a moment to think about the areas in your life that impact your ability to get virtual gigs jobs so that you can focus on the areas that you have power over.

In this exercise, you will:

- Consider what you have power over along your virtual gig work journey.

DIRECTIONS: Reflect on your desire to obtain a virtual gig. Then, consider the areas in your life that have an impact on your ability to make it a reality.

In the three concentric circles, there are labels for “concern, influence, and control.” In each labeled circle, consider and list all of the areas in your life that relate to the following:

- **Concern:** List the areas in your life that worry, bother, or frustrate you, but you have **little or no power to change** when it comes to finding virtual gigs.

- **Influence:** List the areas in your life that you have **some power** over when it comes to finding virtual gigs.

- **Control:** List the areas in your life that you have **complete power over** when it comes to finding virtual gigs.

**EXAMPLE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concern</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internet Connectivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power Outages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Calamities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Influence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social interruptions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cable well-being</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal health</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Control</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Determination in Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Allocation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercises of practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of work to do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of work</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Use the following prompts to regularly reflect on the areas of your life that you listed in the ‘influence’ and ‘control’ circles. By doing this, you can take action on those aspects of your life and work to improve them. This will help you to become a consistent goal-getter even when facing challenges that might feel overwhelming.

The area of influence or concern I want to focus on is ______________________________________________________________

I will focus on it by (i.e. actions you can take) ______________________________________________________________

In order to take these actions, I must work on these skills (see list of skills) ______________________________________________________________

The actions I will take in the next week are ______________________________________________________________

The actions I will take in the next month are ______________________________________________________________
**Exercise 2: Set Your Goals**

On any career path you choose to explore, it’s important to set a goal. When you are newly embarking on finding virtual gigs, setting your goals can help you focus on and succeed in achieving these goals with the experience you acquire, whether you want to be an expert virtual gig worker, get a full-time job, or start your own business in the future.

In this exercise, you will:

- Set goals for the skills you want to strengthen for virtual gig opportunities
- Set clear professional goals for your future that you aim to achieve

**EXAMPLE**

1. **What knowledge or skills do you want to learn or strengthen while working on virtual gigs?**
   I want to get better at communicating online by writing more clearly and also strengthen my online research skills.

2. **What professional achievement do you want in 5 years?**
   I want to be a serial entrepreneur, to develop as many business ventures as possible. Some of the fields I am interested in are technology, agriculture, real estate, and venture capital. My primary motivation is to create as many employment opportunities for others as possible, particularly for youth.

**What knowledge or skills do you want to learn or strengthen while working on virtual gigs?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ideas: Knowledge and Skills for Virtual Gigs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Soft Skills</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive self-concept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurial thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resilience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interdisciplinarity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adaptability</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**What professional achievement do you want in 5 years?**

**Now What?**

After setting your goals, you can revisit them periodically to motivate yourself to achieve them or reflect on the progress you have made.

1. To achieve my goals, I want to focus on (a specific aspect) .................................................................
2. I will focus on it by (i.e. actions you can take) ............................................................................................
3. In order to take these actions, I must work on these skills (see list of skills) ..................................................
4. The actions I will take in the next week are .................................................................
5. The actions I will take in the next month are .........................................................................................
Exercise 3: Know Where to Look for Work

In order to find virtual gig opportunities, you must know where to look. You must use online platforms that have jobs available in order to find work. These platforms provide a space for workers to advertise their skills and abilities to potential employers. There are many online platforms, so it's important to find the ones that have the types of gig opportunities that you have the skills for.

In this exercise, you will:

• Research virtual gig platforms to get an idea of how they work and what they offer

DIRECTIONS:

1. Go to a search engine (e.g. www.google.com) and search for “online work platforms.”

2. Once you see results from the search, select one and answer the questions below.

3. After you finish answering questions for one platform, select a new platform and repeat. Do this for at least three platforms.

Ideas: Virtual Gig Platforms

This list includes some virtual gig platforms that exist (as of April 2021) that you can use for the exercise. It is not comprehensive of all virtual gig platforms.

• Upwork.com
• Fiverr.com
• Transcribeme.com
• Flexjobs.com
• Guru.com

Platforms by type of virtual gig:
https://ajiradigital.go.ke/guides
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What type of virtual gig job are you looking for?</td>
<td>Transcription</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Platform name:</td>
<td>Upwork</td>
<td>Platform 1:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Platform 2:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Platform 3:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What types of virtual gig jobs are posted on the site?</td>
<td>Transcribing, copywriting, translation, data entry, research, tutoring, online marketing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the platform charge virtual gig workers to sign up to use the site?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there any that fit your skills/expertise posted on the site?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If yes, find 2 jobs and write down the compensation the employer is offering. Compensation 1: $20 Compensation 2: $15-$25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If yes, find 2 jobs and write down the compensation the employer is offering. Compensation 1: Compensation 2:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If yes, find 2 jobs and write down the compensation the employer is offering. Compensation 1: Compensation 2:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If yes, find 2 jobs and write down the compensation the employer is offering. Compensation 1: Compensation 2:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the platform charge the virtual gig worker when a client pays them for completed work?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If yes, how much? -20% of employer’s compensation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If yes, how much?</td>
<td>If yes, how much?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If yes, how much?</td>
<td>If yes, how much?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Find one posted job that you believe is a good fit for you, then write down the reason why below:</td>
<td>• employer seeks entry level worker • I have experience in transcribing British English • I am available to work on it by the deadline • I have good communication skills</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Now What? Reflect and Take Action!

Identify the platforms that are best suited for your skills and the type of jobs you are seeking. Then, visit them on a regularly to keep up with opportunities.

The platforms I will focus on using are .................................................................

I will focus on these platforms by (i.e. actions you can take) .................................................................

In order to take these actions, I must work on these skills (see list of skills) .................................................................

The actions I will take in the next week are .................................................................

The actions I will take in the next month are .................................................................
Exercise 4: Know What Employers Need

After you find the virtual gig platform with the jobs that are right for you, it’s time to find jobs you can apply for. This requires you to understand exactly what the employer is looking for so that you can determine if you have the skills and time to meet their needs.

In this exercise, you will:

- Identify what the client needs and what knowledge and skills are needed to address them.

**DIRECTIONS:** Read the job description from a virtual gig platform. Then, fill in the blank to identify what the employer needs.

**New Youtuber Seeking Transcriber**

Hello, I’m Nakita. I am a Youtuber looking to start a blog. I am looking for a Transcriber who is able to transform my YouTube videos into blog style content. My YouTube channel and blog are about life as a nurse and single mom.

I will be creating roughly 3 videos a week due by Thursday, August 6 and have a handful that are already ready to start. For examples of the projects please feel free to check out my YouTube page “Lyfe with Lanae.”

This job involves:

- Listening to audio and translating it into long-form text
- Reviewing drafts of written transcriptions
- Working remotely on a regular basis (2-3 hrs/week)

I am looking for someone who meets the following criteria:

- Able to take direction
- Excellent writing skills
- Reliable and accurate
- Exceptional communication
- Timely
- Detail oriented
- Hard working

Please message me if you are interested.

Complete the questions and prompts based on the job description:

1. The employer is facing a problem with...

   **So, they are seeking a virtual gigger to solve that problem by...**

2. The employer would like ............... number of videos to be transcribed for a period of ............... hours per week.

3. The deadline that the employer would like the work to be completed by is ...........................................

4. What does success look like for the employer? ...........................................................................................

5. What knowledge and skills do you need to succeed at helping the employer address their needs?

**Ideas: Knowledge and Skills for Virtual Gigs**

This list includes some of the ideas that you can draw from for your goals. It is not comprehensive of all virtual gig skills.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soft Skills</th>
<th>Technical Skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive self-concept</td>
<td>Graphic design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurial thinking</td>
<td>Transcription</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resilience</td>
<td>Editing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time management</td>
<td>Translation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interdisciplinarity</td>
<td>Data entry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adaptability</td>
<td>Coding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ideas:

Knowledge and Skills

This list includes some of the ideas that you can draw from for your goals. It is not comprehensive of all virtual gig skills.
Continue to identify what employers need for every virtual gig job you want to apply for. Doing this well takes time, and you will need to do it multiple times to get better.

To get better at identifying what employers need, I will (i.e. actions you can take) ..................................................
In order to take these actions, I must work on these skills (see list of skills) .................................................................
The actions I will take in the next week are .............................................................................................................................
The actions I will take in the next month are ...........................................................................................................................
To help you identify what you can offer, you can use a **Professional Asset Map**. An “asset” is something that is useful or valuable, therefore, a Professional Asset Map helps you think about the things you have that make you valuable for job opportunities. You can use it to brainstorm your strengths, including skills, characteristics, and experience. You can think of both material and non-material things. There is no right or wrong answer, just think of what strengths you have and list as many as possible.

In this exercise, you will:

- Brainstorm your assets or strengths for categories that are relevant for what virtual gig employers need.

**DIRECTIONS:**

- Write your name in the center circle of the Professional Asset Map.
- Enter a technical skill (see page 15 for ideas) in the circle with blank categories.
- Brainstorm and record all your strengths for each category of the circle. See definitions of each category.

**Category Definitions:**

**Soft skills:** Broad set of skills, competencies, behaviors, attitudes, and personal qualities that enable people to effectively navigate their environment, work well with others, perform well, and achieve their goals (Laura H. Lippman, 2015).

**Characteristics:** Qualities or features that belong to a person or thing which make them recognizable.

**Networks:** A group of interconnected people or things.

**Virtual Gig Experience:** Any experience (including length of time, types of projects, or skills) a person gains while working on virtual gig opportunities.

**Technical Skills:** Knowledge and capabilities to perform specialized tasks, such as transcription (Armstrong et al., 2018).

**Tools:** Any equipment that a person has which they can use for a particular kind of work.
Updating your professional assets is critical to ensure that you always have the most current assets that you can offer employers at the top of your mind. You will need to update your Professional Assets Map regularly, specifically after you have gained a new experience or skill.

I plan to update my Professional Assets Map after I do or achieve the following things ……………………………

In order to take this action, I must work on these skills (see list of skills) ………………………………………

The actions I will take in the next week are ………………………………………………………………………

The actions I will take in the next month are ………………………………………………………………………
Step 2: Sustaining Gigs

In this Step, you will:

Practice creating a plan for juggling multiple virtual gigs and other priorities in your life.

Skills you will learn:
- Communication
- Resilience
- Time Management
- Learning to Learn

Exercise 1: Make a Plan

Once you apply to and secure one or more virtual gig jobs, having a plan for how you will manage your time and balance your priorities is critical. It can be helpful to create a plan so that you can stay focused and manage time and maximize efficiency in order to achieve your goals. Virtual giggers often have multiple projects to work on in addition to their home, work, or community commitments.

In this exercise, you will:

- Develop a plan for managing your daily priorities and tasks for searching for and completing a virtual gig job.

**DIRECTIONS:** Complete the following questions, then create the weekly plan based on your answers.

### 1. Select the categories that represent the areas where you have obligations on a weekly basis in your life, then write what those obligations are.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example:</th>
<th>Example:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐ Home obligations: childcare</td>
<td>☐ Home obligations: ...................................................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Work obligations: part-time cleaning job</td>
<td>☐ Work obligations: ...................................................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ School obligations: classes</td>
<td>☐ School obligations: ...................................................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Community obligations: volunteer work</td>
<td>☐ Community obligations: ...................................................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Other obligations: religious service</td>
<td>☐ Other obligations: ...................................................................</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 2. What challenges do you face that may affect your ability to work on virtual gigs?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example:</th>
<th>Example:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐ Power outages</td>
<td>☐ Power outages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Childcare or other family care</td>
<td>☐ Childcare or other family care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Other part-time or full-time job</td>
<td>☐ Other part-time or full-time job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Internet issues</td>
<td>☐ Internet issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Other: ...................................................................</td>
<td>☐ Other: ...................................................................</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3. Complete your regular schedule for the week below and include all of the following. Check each one off once it is included in your schedule. Remember to include your obligations plan for the challenges you might have.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example:</th>
<th>Example:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐ Working on a virtual gig that takes 5 hours to complete and is due on Friday at 5pm.</td>
<td>☐ Researching other gig work to apply for by the end of the week.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Self-learning time (time to practice skills you need to succeed, like typing).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Creating a weekly schedule is one step toward ensuring that you are organized and can prioritize the tasks that it takes to get virtual gig. In any given week, there might be a variety of obligations you are trying to fit into your schedule, and unexpected challenges might arise. Having a clear and concrete idea about which tasks are your priority for the week will allow you to focus your time and energy on them even as you face unanticipated challenges and obstacles.

1. I plan to focus on for the following tasks this week

2. In order to focus on this task, I will (i.e. action you will take)

3. In order to take this action, I must work on these skills (see list of skills)
Step 3: Completing a Gig

In this Step, you will:

- Exercises that help with wrapping up virtual gig work and leveraging the knowledge and experience for other opportunities. The skills practiced in this step are communication and positive self-concept.

Skills you will learn:
- Communication
- Positive-Self Concept

Exercise 1: Sum it Up

Virtual giggers often work simultaneously on multiple gigs. While working on one job a virtual gigger may apply for and complete other gigs. So, when completing gigs, it’s important to stop and take note of what you have accomplished, then incorporate it into your applications for new gigs.

In this exercise, you will:

1. Summarize accomplishments on a completed virtual gig.

DIRECTIONS: Read the summary of what a virtual gigger accomplished after working on a recent gig and complete Step 1 through 3.

Step 1: Read what a virtual gigger accomplished after completing a recent gig, then write down a list of all of his accomplishments.

Amani just completed his first transcription gig for a client on nursing. He transcribed 3 YouTube videos for a client at 99% accuracy. The audios included speakers with both American and British accents. Amani was very responsive to the client over email throughout the assignment, exhibiting strong professional communication. After the client received the transcription, she responded in an email, “great job on the grammar and punctuation!” The YouTube videos now show the transcription when viewers watch the videos.

List all the accomplishments that you noted:

Amani accomplished…
Ex: Completed transcription gig for a client

Step 2: Review the list of accomplishments in Step 1, then follow the guidance to create sentences that Amani can put into his online profile on a virtual gig platform that incorporates them.

1. Select a prompt from the following
   - I have previously...
   - I delivered...
   - I have created...
   - I have experience...

   Example: [X] I have previously...

Add an accomplishment from Step 1

Example: … completed a transcription project for a client on nursing.

2. Select a new prompt from the following (do not select the same one from #1).
   - I have previously...
   - I delivered...
   - I have created...
   - I have experience...

   Example: [X] I delivered...

Add an accomplishment from Step 1

Example: … a 99 percent accurate transcription.

3. Select a new prompt from the following (do not select the same one from #1 or #3).
   - I have previously...
   - I delivered...
   - I have created...
   - I have experience...

Add an accomplishment from Step 1

Tip: Using Your Summary

Once you are done creating a summary of what you accomplished in a virtual gig, you can use it to update the following:

- Online virtual gigger profile (e.g. Upwork)
- LinkedIn profile
- CV or Resume
Step 3: Now, combine all the sentences in step 2 starting with #1 through #3.

Example: I have previously completed a transcription project for a client on nursing. I delivered a 99 percent accurate transcription.

Now What?  Reflect and Take Action!

Strengthening your ability to summarize your accomplishments from your virtual gig experience takes time and practice. It’s important that you continue to work on summarizing so that your experiences are well captured in your profile.

1. To get better at summarizing my accomplishments, I will (i.e. actions you can take) ..........................................................

2. In order to take these actions, I must work on these skills (see list of skills) ..........................................................

3. The actions I will take in the next week are ..........................................................................................

4. The actions I will take in the next month are ..........................................................................................

Tip:

Now that you are done with the summary, it’s important to do the following to ensure that it is professional.

- Ask at least two people to proofread it and give you feedback on grammar, clarity, and professionalism (this can be a peer or a mentor).
- Incorporate the version that has been proofread into your online virtual gigger profile, CV, resume, and/or LinkedIn profile.
Exercise 2: Pitch Yourself

Most virtual gig employers ask giggers to send them a message responding to a job description. We call this message a “pitch” because it’s a great time to make a case for why you should be hired for the job. So, when you complete one virtual gig and are applying for another, it’s a great time to incorporate what you accomplished into the message that you send the employer. The message must respond to the needs of the employer and ultimately communicate why you are the best fit for the job.

In this exercise, you will:

- Write a message about yourself to apply for a virtual gig opportunity.

DIRECTIONS: Follow Step 1 through 3 to create a pitch for an employer.

STEP 1: Read the “New Gig Opportunity: IREX Gig” and then answer the questions that follow.

New Gig Opportunity

The Young Leaders Program is looking for a deadline-driven transcriber who is able to convert a video with multiple speakers and accents into American English text. Video length is approximately 5 minutes long and the transcription must be 99 to 100 percent accurate.

Ideal Transcriber must:

- Understand American, Latin American, and Caribbean Accents
- Identify voices of multiple speakers
- Produce work in a 48-hour turnaround time
- Be detail-oriented and excellent communication skills

1. What skill(s) is the employer looking for?

2. What task(s) does the employer need a virtual gigger to do?

3. What assets or strengths do you have that can help you accomplish the task(s) that the employer needs? (Tip: Reference the Personal Asset Map - Step 1: Finding Virtual Gigs: Exercise 5).
Step 2: Based on what the employer needs and your assets/strengths, complete the Virtual Gig Pitch Canvas below. Draw on Step 1 to fully complete each field in the canvas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Virtual Gig Canvas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A brainstorming tool that helps virtual giggers structure a pitch to an employer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Directions:</strong> Complete the prompts from 1 to 5. Then, put all the sentences together for a full pitch at 6.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. **THE OPENING**
   Briefly introduce yourself to the client (name, length of your experience, your key professional strengths)
   
   Dear Client…

2. **THE EMPLOYER’S NEED**
   Summarize what the employer needs.
   
   I understand that you need…

3. **YOUR SERVICE**
   Describe what you can do to address the need or solve the problem that the employer has.
   
   As a [insert role/profession (e.g. graphic designer, transcriber, etc.)]
   I can….

4. **THE SOLUTION**
   Describe the solution you can provide to solve the employer’s need. Share why you are the best person to do it.
   
   I can provide….

   In addition, I am excellent at…

   As an example, I previously…

5. **THE CLOSING**
   Share the ultimate value that the employer can gain from hiring you.
   
   By working with me…

6. **THE PITCH: BRING IT ALL TOGETHER**
   Write all the sentences from 1-5. Be sure to include transition sentences and have someone review it for grammar and clarity before sending to an employer.
Pitching yourself well to employers takes time and practice. You may find that employers do not always choose you for virtual gigs. This is common for all virtual giggers, so you must not give up. Continue trying and working on your pitch skills so that you can be successful.

1. To get better at pitching myself, I will (i.e. actions you can take) .................................................................

2. In order to take these actions, I must work on these skills (see list of skills) .................................................................

3. The actions I will take in the next week are ..................................................................................................................

4. The actions I will take in the next month are .............................................................................................................

Now What?
Reflect and Take Action!
Step 4: Chart Your Future

In this Step, you will:

- Exercises that help with forward thinking about how virtual gig knowledge and experience can be used to plan for future professional goals, whether in long-term professions or entrepreneurship.
- Skills you will learn: Interdisciplinarity, Adaptability

Exercise 1: Look Back to Go Forward

Virtual gig jobs offer opportunities to learn and practice skills and gain valuable work experience that can help you achieve your long-term professional goals. There are various paths that you can take with your career by leveraging your virtual gig experience, from becoming a full-time expert online freelancer to obtaining a full-time job or starting your own business. Creating a journey map can help you plan toward achieving your goal.

In this exercise, you will:
- Create a Professional Journey Map that helps you work toward your long-term career goal.

PROFESSIONAL JOURNEY MAP

A brainstorming tool that helps virtual giggers plan for long-term career goals

1. What’s Your Path?
Select one of the following that aligns the best with your 5-year goal (reference Step 1: Finding Gigs - Exercise 2: Goal Setting).

- Full-time expert online freelancer (self-employed online contract worker at an expert level focused on a particular technical area)
- Full-time job (hired by a company or institution for consistent and long-term work).
- Entrepreneur (self-employed and/or operating a business that employs others)
- Other:

2. Look Ahead
For the next 5 years, what do you need to accomplish each year to achieve your goal?

Year 1 Goal: By the end of this year, I will…
Year 2 Goal: By the end of this year, I will…
Year 3 Goal: By the end of this year, I will…
Year 4 Goal: By the end of this year, I will…
Year 5 Goal: (end goal) By the end of this year, I will…

3. Challenges
What challenges might you face in your journey? Think of short-term challenges you may face in the next 3 months and long-term challenges you may face throughout the 5 years.

The short-term challenges I may face in the next 3 months are…
- Example: Getting my profile accepted on virtual gig platform.

The long-term challenges I may face throughout the 5 years are…
- Example: Power outages.
4. Overcoming Challenges
What can help you overcome your short-term and long-term challenges?
Think of your assets or strengths, resources, and networks.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The assets/strengths (skills, experiences, characteristics) that I have that can help me overcome my short-term challenges are…</th>
<th>The assets/strengths (skills, experiences, characteristics) that I have that can help me overcome my long-term challenges are…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The resources (e.g. Virtual Gigs Workbook) that I have that can help me overcome my short-term challenges are…</td>
<td>The resources (e.g. Virtual Gigs Workbook) that I have that can help me overcome my long-term challenges are…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The networks (e.g. Virtual Giggers Facebook Group) that I have that can help me overcome my short-term challenges are…</td>
<td>The networks (e.g. Virtual Giggers Facebook Group) that I have that can help me overcome my long-term challenges are…</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Now What? X Reflect and Take Action! X

One of the most difficult things about setting goals, especially long-term goals, is holding yourself accountable to them. Once you’ve charted your future, it’s important to take the necessary actions to ensure that you are committing to the goal and working on it every day.

1. To hold myself accountable to my goals, I will (i.e. actions you can take) ..........................................................
2. In order to take these actions, I must work on these skills (see list of skills) ..........................................................
3. The actions I will take in the next week are ...........................................................................................................
4. The actions I will take in the next month are .........................................................................................................
• **CARE on Dignified Work**, CARE, 2016.


• **Virtual Gigs Research Summary**, IREX, 2020.
