

# Transcript from the Freelance Friday #EFAChat, October 24, 2014

**Topic:** To Generalize or Specialize

**@EFAFreelancers**

Welcome to our October Freelance Friday! Use the hashtag #EFAChat to be included in today's conversation.

**@EFAFreelancers**

This #EFAChat is being moderated by @wordfey.

**@EFAFreelancers**

This #EFAChat is about how you choose what services to offer in the freelancing business. Q1 is question 1; reply with A1 for answer 1, etc.

**@EFAFreelancers**

#EFAChat Q1: Let's introduce ourselves. Hi! What's the name of your business? How long have you been editing?

**@debestrella1**

Q1: Deb here from DEL Editorial Services in RI; celebrating 12 years of business this month! #efachat

**@EditorMark**

Just in time—I was starting to focus. MT @EFAFreelancers: Welcome to our October Freelance Friday! Use the hashtag #EFAChat.

**@GLHancock**

#EFAChat A1 A WRITERS EDGE or just my real name, Georganna Hancock. Also about a dozen years in #editing biz after decades #writing

**@jennzedit**

#EFAChat A1: Hello! My name is Jenn. I own Cypress Editing. I have been editing for 7 years.

**@EditorMark**

@EFAFreelancers A1: Mark Allen Editorial, usually. 26 years professionally; six as a freelancer. #EFAChat

**@WendyB\_Writer**

A1: Wendy Brunner. I've been freelance writing for years and am moving into editing (2 yrs) #efachat

**@jamesfraleigh**

Will be tweeting w/ my @EFAFreelancers colleagues for the next hour. Follow along w the tag #EFAChat or mute me for 60 minutes!

**@EFAFreelancers**

#EFAChat Q2: What kinds of services do you offer as a freelancer?

**@jamesfraleigh**

A1 James Fraleigh, no biz name, but I've been copyediting, proofreading & writing full time and freelance for almost 6 years. #efachat

**@GLHancock**

#EFACHat A2 Critique, copy, proof, help #selfpublishing even #publishing in ltd. cases. Developmental ed in critique or analysis of mss.

**@WendyB\_Writer**

A2: writing: copy writing, blog posts, articles, white papers, ghost writing by accident! editing: copy editing and substantive #efachat

**@jennzedit**

#EFACHat A2: I offer copyediting, proofreading, writing, self-pub consulting, e-book formatting, and interior book design.

**@jamesfraleigh**

A2 I mostly edit and proofread now; haven't written as part of my practice for some months now. I work on paper, in Word or on PDF. #efachat

**@jamesfraleigh**

A2 I've also been helping with project management and back-office work for some PEs who need help w/ author corrections & contact. #efachat

**@debestrella1**

A2: proofreading, copy editing, instructional editing, writing/revising, fact checking/reference prep, soon maybe research services #efachat

**@WendyB\_Writer**

@jamesfraleigh The PE work sounds like what I like. How did you come across that? #efachat

**@EFAFreelancers**

#EFACHat Q3: Most mentioned diverse services, including non-editing work like writing. Do you find generalization helps as a freelancer?

**@jamesfraleigh**

@WendyB\_Writer For 1 publisher, they often have the CE handle author edits during MS cleanup ... (1/2) #efachat

**@WendyB\_Writer**

A3: I think offering both writing/editing is helpful. But I'm beginning to think that specializing in genre/product would be better #efachat

**@GLHancock**

#EFACHat A3 Absolutely! Must remain on your toes, up with tech. I am also a coder and run statistics when necessary! Used to do websites.

**@jamesfraleigh**

@WendyB\_Writer For another, I think it was bc I had succeeded at some complex, multipart edits w/o losing consistency. #efachat

**@jamesfraleigh**

@WendyB\_Writer But I also have almost 8 yr of production experience, so that likely played a part in their decision, too. #efachat

**@debestrella1**

A: Helps to offer multiple services and stay on client's mind; plus keeps me from getting bored/frustrated with 1 type of work #efachat

**@WendyB\_Writer**

@GLHancock Lol! I'm an ex-coder too! Do you provide tech writing? I haven't wanted too but maybe I need to stay in my wheelhouse #efachat

**@EFAFreelancers**

#EFACHat Q4: How have your service offerings changed over time? Why?

**@jamesfraleigh**

A3 It can def. help to be able to perform >1 function, in case you hit a dry spell of demand in 1 aspect of practice. #efachat

**@WendyB\_Writer**

@jamesfraleigh That helps! I have several years as PE also but it was five years ago. I'm finding I miss it. #efachat

**@jamesfraleigh**

A3 But there's a good argument to be made in content specialization, esp b/c some fields can be more lucrative than others. #efachat

**@jennzedit**

#EFACHat A3: Yes, but even though I offer several services, my writing jobs are mainly nonfiction and other services are mostly for fiction.

**@EditorMark**

A3: I think specialists can command higher rates, but generalists do better at trivia nights. #EFACHat

**@GLHancock**

@WendyB\_Writer No tech writing or editing ... more academic, social sciences, psych (in which I have 2 degrees) Mostly novels, tho! #EFACHat

**@jamesfraleigh**

@WendyB\_Writer The PE experience was my 1st FT job, and it was a fab foundation for my career. Did so much, incl. typesetting! #efachat

**@WendyB\_Writer**

Lots of novels/novelists out there who need editing! Never thought I would be wrking on a mystery novel in my life but so it goes.. #efachat

**@GLHancock**

A4 #EFACHat Yes! I realized I am missing a lot of work by not offering developmental editing to #authors. So I am tip-toeing into that H2O.

**@EFAFreelancers**

If you're just joining the #EFACHat, welcome! Jump in at any time!

**@jennzedit**

#EFACHat Q4: As I have grown a stronger client base, I can be more selective in the work I choose to do, and focus on the things I enjoy.

**@jamesfraleigh**

A4 Less writing & more editing/proofing. Feel more comfortable with the latter. Doing interviews/finding sources was too stressful! #efachat

**@WendyB\_Writer**

A4: I am also moving into developmental editing for #authors. #efachat

**@debestrella1**

A4: started just editing, then addressing edits if writer not available; clients encouraged me to try writing #efachat

**@debestrella1**

A4: Plus I'm taking library classes, so can see adding research and more permissions services in future #efachat

**@jamesfraleigh**

A4 I have diversified my client base, partly from the EFA job list, partly from word of mouth/migrating PEs taking their Rolodexes. #efachat

**@EFAFreelancers**

#EFACHat Q5: Do you have one service you'd consider your core? Or does your concept of what you do as a freelancer change a lot?

**@GLHancock**

#EFACHat A5 Definitely copyediting is my core service. It's what most authors want (for free or on the cheap 8-( )

**@debestrella1**

A5: I guess instructional editing is my core service. It combines elements of all the other services. #efachat

**@jennzedit**

#EFACHat Q5: I'd say my core services are copyediting & proofreading. They take up most of my time. I fit other types of work in when I can.

**@GLHancock**

@debestrella1 What/who are you teaching as a freelancer? #efachat

**@jennzedit**

#EFACHat A5: For example, I break up back-to-back editing or proofing projects with a formatting project or short writing projects.

**@WendyB\_Writer**

@jennzedit I agree. Offering several services allows for breaks in the action. Keeps me invigorated!  
#efachat

**@jamesfraleigh**

A5 My practice is pretty evenly divided between CE and proofing. Many of my clients offer both, so it gives me 2x the shots at work #efachat

**@EFAFreelancers**

#EFACHat Q6: If you've branched out from earlier services, how did you go about getting into a new niche?

**@jamesfraleigh**

@jennzedit Always good to have one or the other to grab from the shelf when frazzled. Very thankful I have both to choose from! #efachat

**@debestrella1**

@GLHancock I review ed. materials for instruct. value--are objectives clear, do we meet them, do we provide examples/illustrations? #efachat

**@GLHancock**

@debestrella1 Ah - former teacher? #efachat

**@debestrella1**

@GLHancock Plus I explain my thinking in my edits, so writers say they learn a lot from them. So, I teach in that way. #efachat

**@jamesfraleigh**

A6 I matched my abilities and experience to those requested in the ad, and figured I'd pick up the niche's nuances along the way. #efachat

**@WendyB\_Writer**

A6: Opportunities presented themselves and I took them. The hard part is in finding enough to make a living. Look for ideas! #efachat

**@GLHancock**

#EFAChat A6 Just rewrote/coded my services page to include more activities. About to do it again!

**@jamesfraleigh**

A6 And when existing clients ask me to take matter outside my core range, I've trusted their faith in my past work & said yes. #efachat

**@debestrella1**

@GLHancock Not officially, but I've taught/facilitated in various positions. #efachat

**@GLHancock**

@jamesfraleigh That's exactly how I began editing - woman in my writing group asked me to edit for her for pay! #EFAChat

**@EditorMark**

@jamesfraleigh I have a friend who was hired to copy edit and then proofread, and so was paid twice. Is that a thing? #EFAChat

**@jamesfraleigh**

@EditorMark Not usually for the same project. Some feel the CE will follow along in too "familiar" a way to spot errors. #efachat

**@EditorMark**

@jamesfraleigh I would think so, though it sounded like a nice paycheck. #EFAChat

**@jamesfraleigh**

@EditorMark Oh indeed. If asked to do so, I'd mention the chance that "colder" eyes might catch more, but would likely say yes. #efachat

**@jamesfraleigh**

@EditorMark Then I might read the book from last chapter to first or something different enough to be able to spot more glitches. #efachat

**@EFAFreelancers**

#EFAChat Q7: Some clients are unaware that there are different kinds of editing services. How do you explain editing to them?

**@GLHancock**

A7 #EFAChat Described on website Editing Services page. Also make clear what I will do in "contract" (email messages).

**@WendyB\_Writer**

A7: This is tough with Indie authors. They often want editing but need writing! I simply make it very clear what they are getting. #efachat

**@jamesfraleigh**

A7 If client is describing >1 function in their request, I try to see what he/she and the text truly need, then explain the result. #efachat

**@debestrella1**

Q7: Define terms--their "proofread" may really be a copyedit. Take opportunity to list ALL editing types I do and what they entail. #efachat

**@jamesfraleigh**

A7 Confusing proofreading and editing is still common to folks new to the publishing process, so sometimes I need to explain 'em. #efachat

**@EFAFreelancers**

#EFAChat Q8: Where do you see your business going in the future? Is there anything new on the horizon?

**@debestrella1**

@jamesfraleigh @EditorMark I check page elements (figures, heads...) before reading; keeps eyes sharp/catch inconsistencies easier #efachat

**@jamesfraleigh**

@debestrella1 @EditorMark That too would help for jobs I'd also edited, as I usu do these things after my text read. #efachat

**@GLHancock**

#EFAChat A8 Throttling back, I hope! Maybe going more into publishing others' #ebooks at least for Amazon Kindle system.

**@WendyB\_Writer**

A8: @GLHancock. Funny. I feel like I'm on GO! There are so many ways to go with this...I too am leaning towards books now #efachat

**@jamesfraleigh**

A8 Possibly investigating developmental editing, and broadening my client base among non-publishing-industry clients. #efachat

**@EFAFreelancers**

#EFAChat Q9: What topic would you like to discuss on a future #EFAChat?

**@EFAFreelancers**

Oh, and for those of you interested in developmental editing--message me (@wordfey) and I can point you to some resources. #efachat

**@WendyB\_Writer**

A9: I wouldn't mind a talk around the Indie publishing industry. It's crazy and I wonder what others are doing. #efachat

**@GLHancock**

#EFAChat A9 Dealing with difficult clients! How to not get trapped in endless, time-consuming, nonprofit chains of emails.

**@jennzedit**

@GLHancock I second that! #EFAChat

**@GLHancock**

@jennzedit I just dump 'em when they get too hard to handle. I have so little patience these days! NOT a hand-holder! #EFAchat

**@debestrella1**

Q9: Time management, negotiating work/life separation/balance #efachat

**@jamesfraleigh**

A9 What Wendy said, plus working w. folks publishing to Amazon and such. Helping those folks know we can make their work shine! #efachat

**@jamesfraleigh**

A9 @debestrella1 2nding Debbie's work/life topics. #efachat

**@EFAFreelancers**

The written transcript will end here for today's #EFAchat. Feel free to keep chatting, though! Freelancers need social time. ;)

**@EFAFreelancers**

Thanks for the chat--especially sharing about your experiences. Every freelance path is different and awesome. #efachat