

Transcript from the Freelance Friday #EFAChat, September 26, 2014

Topic: The Art of Negotiation

- [EFA International @efafreelancers](#) Welcome to the Freelance Friday tweet chat! Use hashtag #EFAchat to be included in today's transcript.
- [EFA International @efafreelancers](#) Today's #EFAchat is being moderated by Lucy Spencer.
- [EFA International @efafreelancers](#) This #EFAchat will answer questions about negotiating rates, relationships, and scope of work.
- [EFA International @efafreelancers](#) #EFAchat We'll use Q1, Q2, etc. for questions; please use A1, A2, etc. for your answers to each question.
- [EFA International @efafreelancers](#) #EFAchat Let's introduce ourselves. Where are you from, and what do you do?
- [EAC/ACR ROA-QAC @rga_qac](#) [@efafreelancers](#) It starts now! #EFAchat
- [Georganna Hancock @ghancock](#) [@EFAFreelancers](#) Editorial services provided from San Diego, CA USA #EFAchat
- [James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) 5+ yr flance copy editor, proofreader & writer, northern NJ. #EFAchat
- [James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) Going to be chatting w/ fellow [@EFAFreelancers](#) folks on negotiation tips. Follow along w/ #EFAchat or mute my chatty self for 1 hr!
- [EFA International @efafreelancers](#) #EFAchat Hi Georganna and James!
- [Megan Stolz @megan_stolz](#) [@EFAFreelancers](#) Not technically freelance, but edit/proof/write/etc. for an association in DC. Might freelance someday. #EFAchat
- [Debbie Estrella @debestrella1](#) Editorial dvt of pharma training materials; 12 years next month! #EFAchat
- [Quick Brown Fox @quickfoxedit](#) [@EFAFreelancers](#) Editor, [quickbrownfoxeditorial.com](#), Massachusetts #EFAchat
- [EFA International @efafreelancers](#) #EFAchat Hi Megan and Debbie!

[Stephanie Watt @wattsteph](#) .[@EFAFreelancers](#) I edit and index from my home office in Montreal. I also volunteer for [@editorscanada](#) & [@IndexersCanada](#). #EFAchat

[EFA International @efafreelancers](#) #EFAchat Hi Quick!

[Katie McCoach @katiemccoch](#) Hi [@EFAFreelancers](#)! Thanks for having this chat today on negotiation. I am a dev. editor in Los Angeles. #EFAchat

[EFA International @efafreelancers](#) #EFAchat Q1: For project terms, do you use a formal contract or a carefully worded e-mail or something in between?

[EFA International @efafreelancers](#) #EFAchat Hi Stephanie! Thanks to everyone for joining us today.

[Georganna Hancock @glhancock](#) A1 #EFAchat My recommended status on PREDITORS & EDITORS requires me to offer contracts - but no one ever wanted one. So, emails.

[James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) A1 I've used both. For solo clients I use contracts; w/ production editors we discuss rates via email/phone, then proceed. #EFAchat

[Nikki Busch Editor @nikkibuschedit](#) [@EFAFreelancers](#) Carefully worded email and the terms and conditions section of PayPal invoices. #EFAchat

[Quick Brown Fox @quickfoxedit](#) [@EFAFreelancers](#) A1: Somewhere in between. Contract language, but it doesn't require a signature. #EFAchat

[EFA International @efafreelancers](#) #EFAchat Hi Katie!

[Debbie Estrella @debestrella1](#) A1: E-mail summarizing terms discussed on the phone. I ask that they respond to the e-mail to confirm. #EFAchat

[James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) A1 For indie clients, I usu list most of the terms in the contract during my "what I do" email, so contract's less of a surprise. #EFAchat

[Katie McCoach @katiemccoch](#) #EFAchat A1: I use carefully worded emails and invoices (same as [@NikkiBuschEdit](#)). Eventually I may have an agreement to sign though.

[EFA International @efafreelancers](#) #EFAchat Negotiation tip: For larger projects, use a contract - yours or theirs - and read every word before discussing it.

[Stephanie Watt @wattsteph](#) A1: I use an estimate w/ conditional clauses + a carefully worded email. But I use a contract for indexing jobs. #EFAchat [@EFAFreelancers](#)

- [James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) A1 Also fairly certain I got the basic contract lingo from the EFA site, but it's been a while; might be wrong. #EFAchat
- [EFA International @efafreelancers](#) #EFAchat Negotiation resource: Keys to negotiating fair contracts ow.ly/BZTyA
- [Jennifer Zaczek @jennzedit](#) #EFAchat A1: I send a formal proposal and contract to all first-time clients.
- [EFA International @efafreelancers](#) #EFAchat Q2: When you don't like something in the contract, do you tend to turn it down, negotiate, or just say yes anyway?
- [EFA International @efafreelancers](#) #EFAchat Negotiation tip: Approach questionable contract terms with a "find the win-win" attitude.
- [Katie McCoach @katiemcoach](#) #EFAchat A2: I work with indie authors and small publishers on solo projects, so this is not something that has come up. Yet.
- [James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) A2 Last time it came up, I copy/pasted clauses of contention into an email, listed some alternatives, & emailed it back. #EFAchat
- [Debbie Estrella @debestrella1](#) A2: Depends on the item. I will likely negotiate, but if the item hints at an unhealthy situation, I'll walk away. #EFAchat
- [Georganna Hancock @glhancock](#) #EFAchat A2 I would negotiate and reject job if I couldn't live with something in a client-proposed contract. I reject a lot of clients!
- [Jennifer Zaczek @jennzedit](#) #EFAchat A2: I ask if there's something I don't like. Usually the client is fine with striking the clause or making changes.
- [EFA International @efafreelancers](#) #EFAchat Negotiation resource: Not all contracts are created equally ow.ly/BZUcx
- [James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) A2 Got them to redo/strike about 50% of the points; the rest were explained to my satisfaction. #EFAchat
- [Stephanie Watt @wattsteph](#) [.@jennzedit](#) I like this. Is the proposal a descriptive paragraph of the scope of work? Or is it a set of terms and conditions? #EFAchat
- [Quick Brown Fox @quickfoxedit](#) [@EFAFreelancers](#) A2: With most, I use my own. However, if working for a publication, I would lean toward saying yes anyway. #EFAchat

[Quick Brown Fox @quickfoxedit](#) [@EFAFreelancers](#) Especially if it leads to client retention.
#EFAchat

[Elissa Field @elissafield](#) Just catching #EFAchat. I am a writer & editor dividing time between CT & FL. Curr projects: ms revision, project mgmt., edu app.

[EFA International @efafreelancers](#) #EFAchat Q3: Which types of contract terms are negotiable? Which ones are not?

[Georganna Hancock @glhancock](#) [@wattsteph](#) [@jennzedit](#) My proposals are the set of terms and conditions. Scope of work is more informal email exchange, maybe. #EFAchat

[EFA International @efafreelancers](#) #EFAchat Hi Jennifer and Elissa!

[Jennifer Zaczek @jennzedit](#) [@wattsteph](#) I provide a background of my experience & an overview of what I can do for the client after reviewing a sample of the ms #EFAchat

[James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) A3 Deadlines, delivery milestones (to and from client), & points where payment is made come to mind as negotiable points.
#EFAchat

[Quick Brown Fox @quickfoxedit](#) [@EFAFreelancers](#) A3: I would cost and time are both negotiable within limits, especially time. I won't provide a shoddy rush edit.
#EFAchat

[Georganna Hancock @glhancock](#) #EFAchat A3 Scope of work and payment before receiving finished work are not negotiable items for me.

[Debbie Estrella @debestrella1](#) A3: I find I'm more willing to negotiate than my clients. If they don't like my initial quote, they walk. #EFAchat

[James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) [@QuickFoxEdit](#) Agree re: rush edits. I've declined jobs I thought I might need to rush. One prod ed thanked me for honesty.
#EFAchat

[Quick Brown Fox @quickfoxedit](#) [@EFAFreelancers](#) A3: Content isn't as flexible. There are some topics I will not edit, but they tend to be ones publishers reject.
#EFAchat

[Debbie Estrella @debestrella1](#) A3: My rates are reasonable, and I have other clients, so I don't mind too much. #EFAchat

- [EFA International @efafreelancers](#) #EFAchat Negotiation tip: Research clients and ask questions about needs and budget before negotiating.
- [Elissa Field @elissafield](#) A1: Carefully worded email, reiterating expectations w confirmation for sm projects. Contract for larger or longterm projects. #EFAchat
- [EFA International @efafreelancers](#) #EFAchat Negotiation resource: Some principles for negotiating with clients (from the EFA website) ow.ly/BZVtT
- [Quick Brown Fox @quickfoxedit](#) [@debestrella1](#) So true. #EFAchat
- [EFA International @efafreelancers](#) #EFAchat Q4: What are your deal-breakers when discussing rates or scope?
- [Stephanie Watt @wattsteph](#) A3: When negotiating cost, we're not negotiating my rate; we're negotiating the scope of work. Except with publishers. #EFAchat
- [Bee Tangsurat @beetangsurat](#) "Listening" to the #EFAchat about negotiation, contract, and project scope for freelancers. Picking up so many useful tips!
- [Quick Brown Fox @quickfoxedit](#) [@GLHancock](#) Not delivering before final payment is an excellent sticking point. #EFAchat
- [Georganna Hancock @glhancock](#) [@QuickFoxEdit](#) #EFAchat I've learned the hard way. I also demand a down payment - usually 50% of estimated total cost.
- [James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) A4 I have done partial projects, but only for pub. houses w/ PEs who know what hell midstream changes inflict on CEs. #EFAchat
- [EFA International @efafreelancers](#) #EFAchat Negotiation tip: Know your minimum rate before discussing money.
- [Debbie Estrella @debestrella1](#) ...Q4: If other client willing to pay full rates during that time, you actually cost me money #EFAchat
- [James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) A4 [@EFAFreelancers](#) True on min rate. Know what pays the bills, know how many hours, build in breathing room on both. #EFAchat
- [Nikki Busch Editor @nikkibuschedit](#) [@GLHancock](#) #EFAchat A3 Receiving payment before sending finished work is non-negotiable for me too.
- [EFA International @efafreelancers](#) #EFAchat Negotiation resource: Guidelines for setting and negotiating fees (from the EFA website) ow.ly/BZWGg
- [EFA International @efafreelancers](#) If you're just joining the #EFAchat, welcome! Jump in at any time!

[Georganna Hancock @glhancock](#) A4 #EFAchat Dealbreaker for me editing mostly novels is that the writing be good enough to benefit from my editing. Ironic, I know.

[Jennifer Holmes @jenmededit](#) Refer to EFA website to defend a minimum rate. RT [@EFAFreelancers](#) #EFAchat Negotiation tip: Know your minimum rate before discussing money.

[EFA International @efafreelancers](#) #EFAchat Q5: How do you start the conversation when you disagree with the client on project terms?

[Quick Brown Fox @quickfoxedit](#) [@GLHancock](#) Ha. Yes, but those are fun conversations to have. #EFAchat

[Debbie Estrella @debestrella1](#) A5: Don't make it about what you/they want; make it about the best for the project; that includes whether you're a good fit #EFAchat

[Nikki Busch Editor @nikkibuschedit](#) [@GLHancock](#) #EFAchat Not ironic at all. I've passed up certain projects for just this reason.

[Quick Brown Fox @quickfoxedit](#) I am definitely willing to be flexible in pricing depending upon someone's station: academic editing for an undergrad vs. PhD. #EFAchat

[Elissa Field @elissafield](#) A5: Begin w 'both want the success of project.' Expertise to say wh project needs, anticipate work together to agree, negot solutn. #EFAchat

[Quick Brown Fox @quickfoxedit](#) I also try to do a certain amount of volunteer ("pro bono") editing a year. #EFAchat

[Debbie Estrella @debestrella1](#) [@QuickFoxEdit](#) The industry makes a difference too. #EFAchat

[Georganna Hancock @glhancock](#) [@NikkiBuschEdit](#) Glad to know I'm in good company - thought I was just a cranky old bitch! I don't have time to waste on crap. #EFAchat

[EFA International @efafreelancers](#) #EFAchat Negotiation tip: Consider setting up a phone call for contract discussions and allowing time for an approval process.

[Elissa Field @elissafield](#) [@GLHancock](#) Agreed! Ineffective to be painting a half-built house. Needs enough self-edit for writer to hv gotten as far as can 1st. #EFAchat

[Debbie Estrella @debestrella1](#)

[@GLHancock](#) [@NikkiBuschEdit](#) In freelance, you get a clearer idea of what your time is worth, and aggravation def becomes a factor! #EFAchat

[James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#)

A5 Good call re: approval. In dealing w/ academic dep'ts or military hierarchies, I haven't always been dealing w/ sole decider. #EFAchat

[EFA International @efafreelancers](#)

#EFAchat Negotiation resource: 37 negotiation tactics for freelance writers (and editors) - what to say ow.ly/BZY3B

[EFA International @efafreelancers](#)

#EFAchat Q6: What is your first response when the client asks you to revise your terms?

[Elissa Field @elissafield](#)

[@QuickFoxEdit](#) Same here re: pro bono. Can be interesting experience, or just opp to give back. #EFAchat

[Georganna Hancock @glhancock](#)

#EFAchat If I'm having a good day, I may offer the non-client tips on how to learn to write well. Still sorta bitchy.

[Debbie Estrella @debestrella1](#)

A6: Try to understand why they want the change; if I'm can't change that thing, maybe I can change another to get same effect #EFAchat

[EFA International @efafreelancers](#)

#EFAchat Negotiation tip: Revise the contract when you revise the terms. If it's not in the contract, it's not enforceable.

[Elissa Field @elissafield](#)

A6: depends on when. Negot appropriate early in contract, time planned to agree. Handle cust svc concerns if renegot near delivery. #EFAchat

[James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#)

A6 If it's been done after contract's signed, and an addendum will cover it, make reasonable attempt to fit it in ... #EFAchat

[Stephanie Watt @wattsteph](#)

[@EFAFreelancers](#) #EFAchat A6 I'm open. What isn't working for you? Why? How can I help you with that issue, or who can I recommend to help u?

[EFA International @efafreelancers](#)

#EFAchat Negotiation resource: Tools for freelance contract negotiations (from the EFA website) ow.ly/BZYZj

[Elissa Field @elissafield](#)

[@debestrella1](#) That's a good point. #EFAchat

[EFA International @efafreelancers](#)

#EFAchat Q7: What arguments do you use to justify a rate increase?

[Stephanie Watt @wattsteph](#) [@EFAFreelancers](#) #EFAchat A6 Exactly! And this can be time consuming.

[James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) A6 One thing that's happened to me w/ indiv. clients: Negotiate, sign contract, and ... nothing. No submission of the actual text. #EFAchat

[James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) A7 Ability to cite good feedback is good for requesting raises from corporate clients. #EFAchat

[Debbie Estrella @debestrella1](#) [@jamesfraleigh](#) Especially if it's a rush job; they get you to clear your schedule, then it falls through, and they don't tell you #EFAchat

[Elissa Field @elissafeld](#) A6: Hv only hd tht happen once near delivery, was early in my freelancing - learned fr it tht th client did not understand... 1/2 #EFAchat

[EFA International @efafreelancers](#) #EFAchat Negotiation tip: If you're not an employee, you shouldn't be paid like an employee. Be a business owner.

[James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) A6 I now put received-by dates in my contracts: if no complete MS by XX/XX, contract is void, so I'm not on the hook forever. #EFAchat

[Stephanie Watt @wattsteph](#) [@EFAFreelancers](#) #EFAchat A7: new training, new skills, new year.

[Quick Brown Fox @quickfoxedit](#) [@EFAFreelancers](#) A7: If terms change, such as rush delivery. If errors increase in the ms, much more than in the sample sent. #EFAchat

[Georganna Hancock @glhancock](#) A7 #EFAchat If this ever happened to me, I'd probably cite my antiquity and vast experience in the publishing industry and editing.

[James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) A6 There may be some NJ-based common-law figure for when contracts unfulfilled go stale, but I don't want surprises 3 yrs later! #EFAchat

[Debbie Estrella @debestrella1](#) A7: I note that it's well within industry range, and that I haven't raised my rates in X years. Haven't had any complaints yet. #EFAchat

[EFA International @efafreelancers](#) If you've missed part of this #EFAchat, a full transcript will be available on the EFA website soon.

[Quick Brown Fox @quickfoxedit](#) [@jamesfraleigh](#) This is a great idea. #EFAchat

[Jennifer Zaczek @jennzedit](#) #EFAchat A7: When a client starts expecting more than what was originally agreed on, I try to negotiate a higher fee.

[James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) [@QuickFoxEdit](#) Thanks! #EFAchat

[EFA International @efafreelancers](#) #EFAchat Q8: What arguments do you use to justify performing a higher level of editing?

[Elissa Field @elissafield](#) A6:...3/3 any misunderstandings early = can renegot at point wh neither side has much at stake yet. #EFAchat

[James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) A7 My accountant ups his rate a smidge each year. If he can do it, so can I. My services/skills are just as helpful in their realm. #EFAchat

[Stephanie Watt @wattsteph](#) A7 #EFAchat Experience in a specific field or w/ a type of doc (e.g., annual reports) -- that is, your expertise! [@GLHancock](#) [@efafreelancers](#)

[James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) A7 "Smidge" being a highly technical term, of course. ;) #EFAchat

[EFA International @efafreelancers](#) #EFAchat Negotiation tip: Levels of editing can be a point of compromise when discussing budget vs. needs.

[Georganna Hancock @ghancock](#) A8 #EFAchat Thusfar, I've found no argument for, say, copyediting instead of just proofreading, that is effective.

[Quick Brown Fox @quickfoxedit](#) [@EFAFreelancers](#) The work speaks for itself. Provide an ex. of different levels and let them decide if it is worth the investment. #EFAchat

[James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) A8 If, after reviewing MS, I notice problems outside the scale of work client believes the MS needs. #EFAchat

[EFA International @efafreelancers](#) #EFAchat Q9: How do you know when it's time to respectfully say no and walk away from a negotiation?

[James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) A8 I do this very carefully so client understands it's in the service of the MS and its message. Not a crass upsell. #EFAchat

[Stephanie Watt @wattsteph](#) A8 #EFAchat When suggesting a higher level of editing (e.g., line vs copy edit), I talk about audience & client's goals. [@EFAFreelancers](#)

- [Quick Brown Fox @quickfoxedit](#) #EFAchat A9 If someone is too demanding as a potential client, it won't lessen as a client, or if they aren't respectful of my time.
- [Jennifer Holmes @jenmededit](#) A7 I also note how long since I last raised my rate. MT
[@debestrella1](#) A7: I note...that I haven't raised my rates in X years.
#EFAchat
- [Debbie Estrella @debestrella1](#) A9 When the scope creeps almost immediately, eg, you agree to a CE and then they send you the file for a CE + fact check #EFAchat
- [James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) A9 Lapses of communication during negotiations or reluctance to see samples are Spidey-sense tinglers. #EFAchat
- [James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) A9 Constant crisis mode/fire drills. If they're that discombobulated w their own work, what about when it comes to payment?
#EFAchat
- [Georganna Hancock @glhancock](#) A9 #EFAchat I lose patience with many email exchanges and won't even negotiate if they don't send the ms for me to review. Short tempered.
- [Stephanie Watt @wattsteph](#) [@debestrella1](#) Good one! #EFAchat A9
- [EFA International @efafreelancers](#) #EFAchat Negotiation tip: It's not all about them. Stand your ground if an issue is that important to you.
- [Jennifer Zaczek @jennzedit](#) #EFAchat Q8: If the ms needs a higher edit than originally anticipated, I discuss this with the client first so they know what to expect.
- [Elissa Field @elissafield](#) A9: I walk away readily during early negotiations if the project and my services don't fit. Honesty serves both, best. #EFAchat
- [Debbie Estrella @debestrella1](#) A9: When they want it yesterday, but wait 6 hours to respond to your e-mailed questions #EFAchat
- [James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) A9 [@wattsteph](#) You see enough of them, that Spidey-sense kicks in. The eventual good ones are never as bad as the immediate bad ones #EFAchat
- [EFA International @efafreelancers](#) #EFAchat Q10: How do you know when to say yes and concede to the client's demands?
- [Stephanie Watt @wattsteph](#) A9 #EFAchat Sometimes I can just feel it. Helpful, eh?
[@EFAFreelancers](#)

[EFA International @efafreelancers](#) #EFAchat Negotiation tip: It's not all about you. Choose your battles wisely.

[Stephanie Watt @wattsteph](#) .[@jamesfraleigh](#) A9 #EFAchat Spidey-sense. That's it!

[Debbie Estrella @debestrella1](#) [@jamesfraleigh](#) [@wattsteph](#) Yes it's good to have good clients to compare it to. Ask, would my reasonable clients ever ask this? #EFAchat

[James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) Q10 If there's verifiable long-term work. If it lets me expand my range into a more sustainable field. #EFAchat

[Elissa Field @elissafield](#) A10: I am pretty flexible in finding creative solutions, varying scope, not overcharging, so often can say yes. #EFAchat

[James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) A10 I tried computer books (editing/proofing) 2 y ago. No computer exp needed but unfamiliar. Now, two great sustaining clients. #EFAchat

[Georganna Hancock @glhancock](#) A10 #EFAchat Only if I've just learned I need another root canal.

[EFA International @efafreelancers](#) #EFAchat Negotiation resource: Know when it's close enough - smart strategies for freelance contract negotiations ow.ly/C02Bb

[James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) A10 Only wrinkle was a net 90 on payment on 1, and fast turnaround on the other. But I adapted to fit them and it's been great. #EFAchat

[Debbie Estrella @debestrella1](#) A10: When it's clearly what's best/what will work under the circumstances for the project. #EFAchat

[Debbie Estrella @debestrella1](#) [@GLHancock](#) That too! Sometimes can't afford to say no. But the ben of freelancing is you know you chose to do it, no one made you. #EFAchat

[EFA International @efafreelancers](#) #EFAchat There you have it, folks. With a little experience, you can rely on your Spidey-senses to tell whether it's a yes or a no. ;-)

[Debbie Estrella @debestrella1](#) [@EFAFreelancers](#) Maybe we should have an #EFAchat on how to develop your freelance spidey-sense :)

[Stephanie Watt @wattsteph](#) [@EFAFreelancers](#) Thanks, everyone! I enjoyed this month's #EFAchat. Lots of great tips that I look forward to rereading in the transcript.

[EFA International @efafreelancers](#) Q11: What other topics would you like to discuss on a future #EFAchat?

[Quick Brown Fox @quickfoxedit](#) [@wattsteph @EFAFreelancers](#) Definitely some great advice today. #EFAchat

[EFA International @efafreelancers](#) It's time to end today's #EFAchat. The written transcript will end here. Thanks for a great discussion! See you next time.

[Quick Brown Fox @quickfoxedit](#) [@EFAFreelancers](#) A11: I'd love to hear people's thoughts on advertising and growing a client base #EFAchat

[James M. Fraleigh @jamesfraleigh](#) Thanks, [@EFAFreelancers](#), and all! #EFAchat

[Georganna Hancock @glhancock](#) Ditto! RT [@jamesfraleigh](#): Thanks, [@EFAFreelancers](#), and all! #EFAchat