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Newbie Series: Present Yourself Professionally

It's natural for beginning editors to feel intimidated at the idea of being a professional freelancer. Presenting yourself professionally will not only increase your chances with clients but also bolster your own confidence. Here are a few ways to strengthen your professional image:

1. Don't be afraid to charge what your time and services are worth. Clients who truly value the expertise of an editor are usually willing to pay for that expertise. Clients who aren't interested in valuing an editor's insights are often more apt to look for the cheapest option. It's fine to charge less than an established editor, but don't sell yourself short. Research the rates of other editors in your field and set your own rates accordingly.
2. Proofread your advertising materials, website content, and email communications fastidiously. There's nothing more embarrassing than misspelling a client's name or committing a grammar faux pas on the front page of your editing website. Proofread, proofread, and proofread again!
3. Communicate with clients in a friendly but confident and professional manner. Be willing to learn, but don't hesitate to back your comments up with industry-standard resources like *The Chicago Manual of Style* (online subscriptions are discounted for PEN members!) and *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*. Invest the time and effort to know these resources well.
4. Pray and trust the Lord for each job he sends your way. He will never give you a job to do and then abandon you to do it alone, and he has given us everything we need through the power of Christ.

Thank you for being a member of The Christian PEN! We hope you continue to enjoy the networking and community we offer.