

20TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION

CREATIVE CIRCLE

MEET
OLIVER
THE
OCTOPUS
***FREELANCER**
OF THE YEAR

SEE WHY HIS SHELL
ART IS FLYING OFF
THE SHELVES!



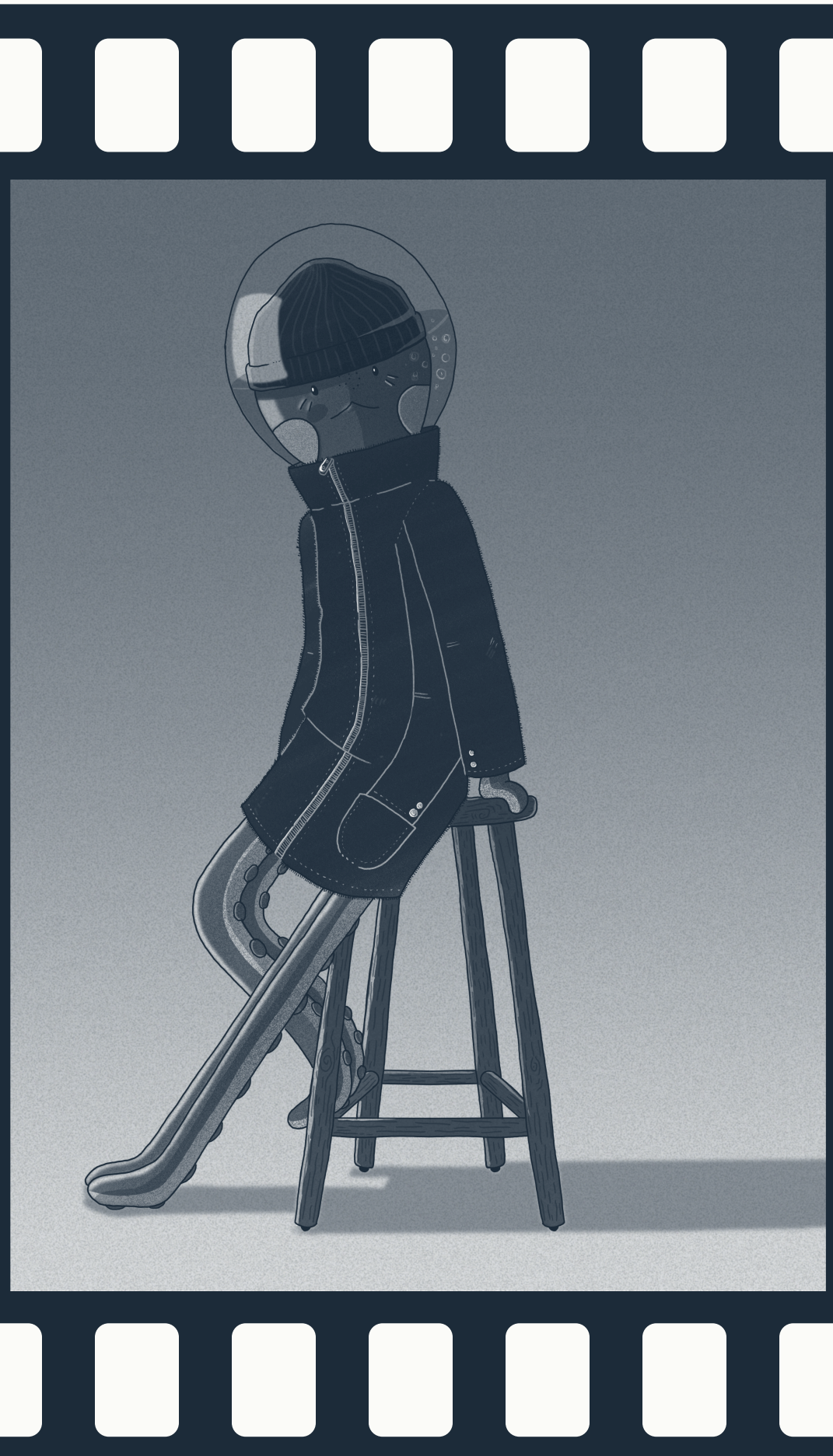
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HORROR
STORIES

“WHAT’S THE
LOWEST SALARY
YOU’D ACCEPT?”

WHICH
COWORKER
ARE YOU?

HOLIDAY
PARTY EDITION

PLUS
WHAT
DESIGNERS
ARE
SICK OF
HEARING
FROM
CLIENTS



Oliver the Octopus

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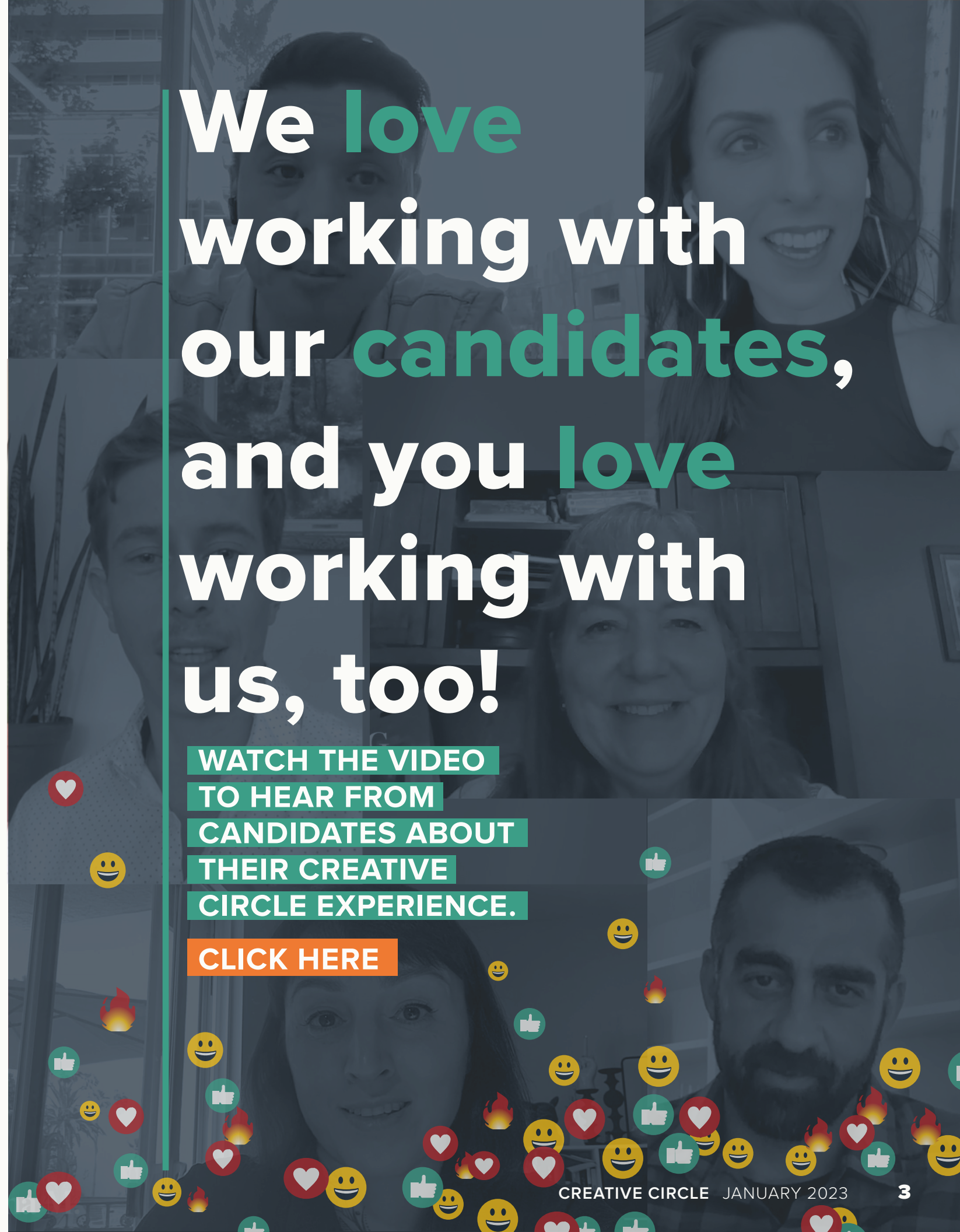
ON THE COVER
Oliver the Octopus
by Alberto Santiago

DESIGN BY HUGO ESTRADA

We love working with our candidates, and you love working with us, too!

WATCH THE VIDEO TO HEAR FROM CANDIDATES ABOUT THEIR CREATIVE CIRCLE EXPERIENCE.

CLICK HERE



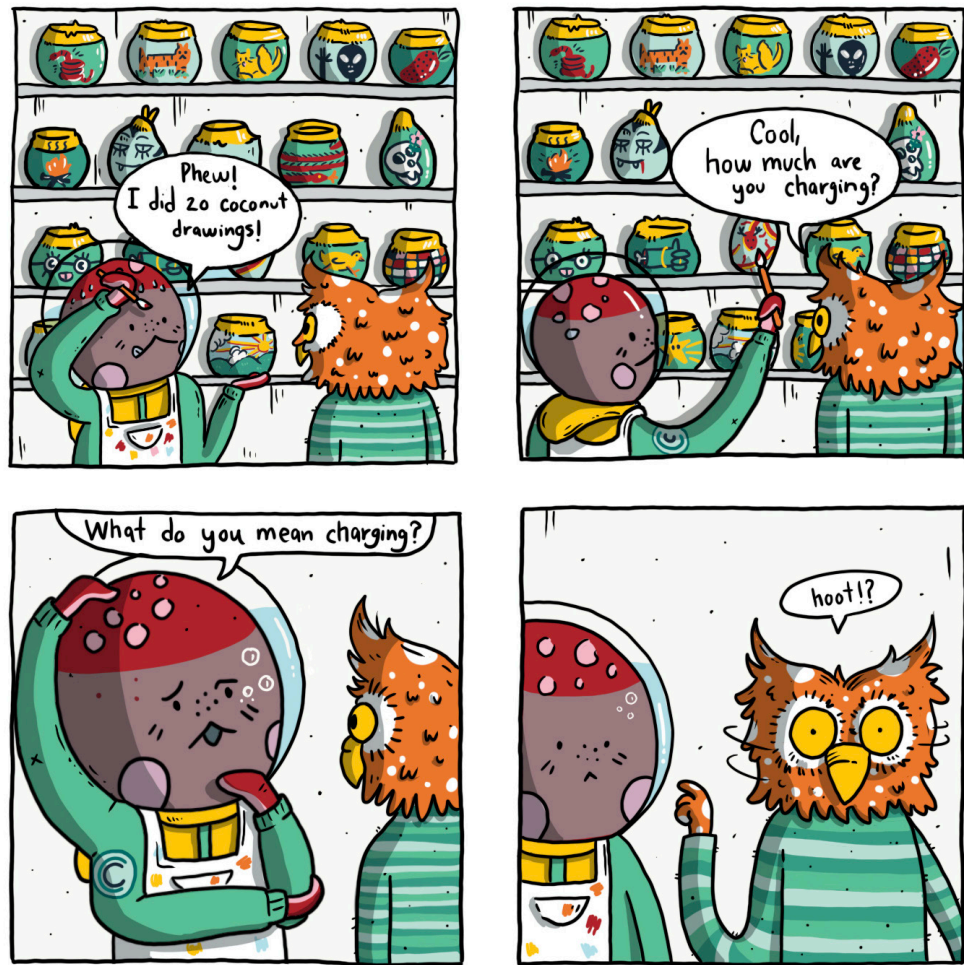
Hi, I'm Oliver!

Allow me to introduce myself. Yes, I'm an Octopus. But more importantly, I'm a creative. I'm resilient, clever, and smart, and I like to have my hands in many projects at the same time — it energizes me! My mentor (and best friend), The Owl, is helping me navigate this new and exciting journey we call freelancing.

You see, I've always been creative, and earlier this year I was drawing on my new coconut (I like to jazz it up and use it to hide from my enemies!). I couldn't help but show it off to my friends. They loved it, and a few of them wanted me to draw on their coconuts, too. Before I knew it, I was taking orders nonstop — I could barely keep up. Then, the Owl encouraged me to sell my coconut art. And would you believe people actually want to buy it?! Now, I've caught the attention of companies who pay me to work on creative projects.

Oliver the Octopus

ILLUSTRATIONS BY
ALBERTO SANTIAGO



Thanks to Creative Circle and my lovely recruiter (and The Owl, of course), I'm building an impressive portfolio.

2022 has been a year filled with tons of questions and some answers, too. I learned the basics of freelancing — finding and navigating client relationships, building my personal brand, making sense of the hiring process, and so much more. Freelancing's opened a whole new world for me; I'm grateful to spend my days being creative and working on passions, and often working at home alone or bouncing ideas off my good friends. It sure hasn't been easy, but I'm more fulfilled than I've ever been. Thank you for taking this journey with me. Keep up with me as I navigate life as a freelancer. 2023 is going to be one for the books — or the magazines, if you will.


From the ocean and back,
oliver the octopus



How Can I Send This to My Client Without Sending It?

How to Manage Creatives

Creative Circle wanted to understand what managers' experiences were working with creatives — how to support them best, and what approaches foster the best environment for stellar creative work. We put out a survey to over 400 industry influencers to get their insights on how they navigate these unique working relationships.

reative work is inherently different—brainstorming sessions, non-linear process, a mess of crafting and editing, and more.

After surveying over 400 industry influencers, we've collected some insights about how managers should be navigating their relationships with creatives in the workplace. Here's what we found:

BE OPEN TO THEIR CREATIVE PROCESS

You may not fully understand a creative's process and everything happening behind the scenes — and that's okay! Creative work does not necessarily follow a linear process — and the time it takes to translate an idea into something concrete is not always predictable. Most managers mentioned that when working with creatives, giving them the time and space they need to turn ideas into deliverables is essential. It is important to communicate deadlines clearly, but taking a more project-oriented rather than task-oriented approach to checking in can also be helpful.

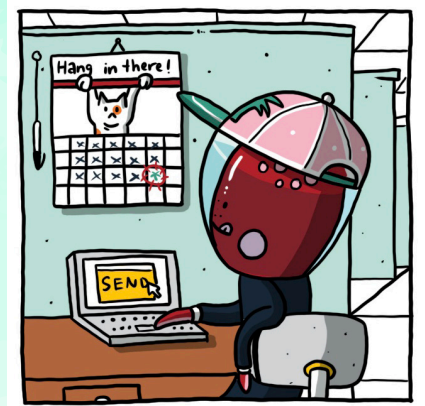
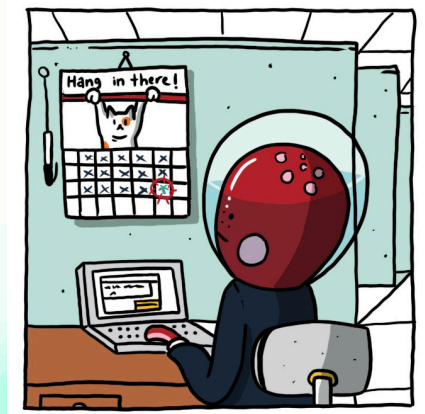
“I DO NOT BELIEVE IN MICRO-MANAGING. I TRUST MY TEAM, AND WITH THAT TRUST COMES CREATIVE FREEDOM AND AN ATMOSPHERE THAT FOSTERS IMAGINATION AND BEING FEARLESS WITH IDEAS AND THEIR WORK.”

Creatives need more flexibility, less over-communication, and more standardized processes so they can create what they need or accomplish tasks without the fear of feeling over-managed or suffocated.

Creativity is not always available on-demand; part of the process involves time spent searching for inspiration — think doodling, taking a walk, daydreaming. While that may not look like traditional “productive” work, it is a crucial part of the process. If always in “doing” mode, creatives will not have time to generate those BIG concepts necessary for their work. Allowing the time and space for those juices to flow will support results that move the needle.

INDIVIDUALIZE YOUR APPROACH

Creative work can be deeply personal. Many creatives feel like they are pouring a piece of themselves into their ideas; if you can strive to ensure that there is alignment — with you, the team, and the brand — you will maximize a successful working relationship.



Ask what kind of support works best — what inspires them to generate new ideas?

“I establish relationships with creatives while managing them. I think it’s important to have good, strong relationships first with creatives to understand their values and how they like to work in order to get the best work from them.”

EMPHASIZE COLLABORATION



Creatives don’t want to feel like they’re working FOR you; they want to feel like they’re working WITH you! Fostering a sense of collaboration can help creatives be more confident in developing and sharing more out-of-the-box ideas and allow for more productive feedback. Approaching each project as a shared mission — rather than an assigned task — can make the work feel more exciting and inspiring.

“WHEN MANAGING CREATIVES, I TAKE THE TIME TO BUILD MORE PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS.”

“I tend to make sure there is lots of brainstorming and weekly meetings involved. There is no wrong or right way to be creative, and I think it is very important that the artist feels heard in the process.”

“I am probably more open to a creative’s consultation on a project (tone, aesthetic, demographic, project viability) and consider their input more deeply

than with non-creatives, just by the nature of the work and because they were hired for their creativity, not to be held down to specific parameters.”

VALUE THEIR CREATIVE INSIGHT



Creatives bring fresh and new ideas to the table, and it’s essential that managers acknowledge that. They’re generating unique concepts and content that would not exist without them.

When offering feedback, try emphasizing actionable changes rather than “no, this is wrong” or vague instructions like “make it pop more.” Suggesting a shift in direction and asking open-ended questions can keep the creative process moving rather than creating confusion.

Creatives need actionable feedback. If you can’t articulate what is wrong or needs revision and a direction they should move in, you can wind up spinning on the same work. “Because creatives put so much of themselves and their passion into their work, I’m also more sensitive in how I give feedback. I don’t want to diminish their work; just help it get in the place our clients will be happy with.”

“I always treat my creatives like they know as much as me or more. I never assume I am in a lead position because I know more. Being a manager isn’t about being the smartest or the best; it is about being able to bring people together to create one cohesive project.”

WANT TO READ MORE ABOUT MANAGING CREATIVES? CLICK HERE!

INTERVIEW HORROR STORIES

I had one of the Directors from [redacted] tell my recruiter they couldn’t hire me because the wall in my lobby is painted a navy blue so he noted, the background on my zoom call was “unprofessional.” Probably not the worst interview experience but the most absurd comment I’ve heard! 😂

Anum T.

After multiple days meeting 12 ppl (not exaggerating), including lunch with the CEO where he bad mouthed the CEO of a former company I worked for, and being ignored by HR for nearly 3 weeks, I expressed my disappointment to the hiring SVP and CEO. The SVP replied with a profuse apology and admitted they were changing the role. The CEO replied back with a nastygram.

Suzi R.

When after seeing my portfolio, they give me a homework assignment that is the equivalent to doing a master’s thesis.

Irka T.

I had a recruiter who kept telling me my job as a digital asset manager is nothing more than just someone who put photos on a shared drive even when my CV states otherwise. I told her to please not insult my skills and intelligence, because my work as a DAM manager is the key to many facet of any digital businesses. She refused to listen but said I should not make myself sound better than what everyone else is already doing. I later told her management that they need to really train their staff properly because ultimately as a recruiter you should influence the job market and even just by forecasting what’s out there in the job market but not just within Australia.

Ed C.

Unfortunately, more than half of the 15 interviews I’ve had since October 2021 I was acutely aware that the interviewer hadn’t read my resume or looked at my portfolio prior to the meeting.

And in one very special episode of “Let’s Waste Each Other’s Time,” they asked me to tell them about myself while they doomscrolled Facebook (I could see the reflection in their glasses).

Ryan N.

I was asked “If we do not hire you, will you apply with us again?”

David I.

I was recently asked in an interview “what’s the longest you’ve ever worked in a day?” And then they followed up with “what’s your breaking point? Give an example.”

I told them I’m continuing my search elsewhere.

David B.

I’ve had some real winners. The worst two questions I’ve ever been asked were: “Have you ever killed anyone?” (Knowing I’m a veteran) “Have you ever had to fire a friend?”

But I think the least professional interview I’ve had was a couple of months ago. They wanted a 4th interview for an entry level job, and five minutes past when the interview was supposed to have started, I got an email saying the interviewer was going to be ten minutes late. When I withdrew from the process, I got a very angry email telling me that I clearly don’t understand corporate culture.

Dan W.

SHARE YOUR INTERVIEW HORROR STORY WITH YOUR COMMUNITY AND TAG US!



coworker are YOU?

Somebody is sending out a slew of apology texts... is it you?

start

Did you attend your holiday Christmas party?

YES

Where are you most likely to be sitting?

AT THE BOSS'S TABLE

Did you choose where you are sitting?

OF COURSE, I DID

THE ONE THAT'S REALLY INTO WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Unfortunately, after the invite was sent, you also had a birthday you just had to attend! When the Christmas photo selfies are sent in the work group chat, you luckily already have your "wish I was there" text planned out!

THE ONE WHO'S ALWAYS ON THEIR GRIND

Vacation, who? You are working from sunup to sundown, always trying to complete a last-minute project. And we get it - you want the bonus and promotion. But, we can all see you shamelessly mentioning it at the table. Let's save that for Monday morning.

SITTING? I'M UP TO TALKING TO EVERYONE.

WITH MY FAVORITE COWORKERS

OF COURSE, I DID NOT

THE ONE WHO JUST WANTED TO SHOW THEIR FACE

They're going to blame it on their seating arrangement, but they left their car running.

What are you guys talking about?

GIRL. DID YOU NOT HEAR?!

YOU ARE SUCH A GOOD LISTENER. LOOK AT THIS PICTURE OF BILLY. I WAS JUST SAYING THE OTHER DAY...

How long are you planning on staying??

30 MINUTES TOPS.

NOT SURE, JUST WAITING TIL SOMETHING REALLY INTERESTING HAPPENS.

THE ONE WHO LOVES A BIT OF COMPANY TEA

You live for the messiness of office politics. While everyone's participating in a white elephant, you are waiting with popcorn hoping something pops off.

How excited are you for the free food and drinks?

I'VE BEEN WAITING ALL YEAR FOR THIS.

I CAN'T TALK WITH FOOD IN MY MOUTH!

THE ONE WHO NEEDS A NIGHT OUT

We get it, WFH has made you stir crazy. The kids are waiting for you at the door. If you're not careful your coworkers will have some "fun" stories to tell about you in tomorrow's meeting. Hopefully the new year gives us all a fresh start :)

THE ONE WHO 'LIGHTS UP THE ROOM'

The boss is happy that someone is having the time of their life getting to know literally everyone in the company. But sometimes you don't understand the definition of a hard stop. Don't forget to take a breath or three.

WHICH ONE ARE YOU? SHARE AND TAG US!



IN- TER VIE W

WITH AN ILLUSTRATOR

What's your name?

Alberto Santiago

Did you grow up in Brooklyn?

No, my mom was born here. But I was born and raised in Ponce, Puerto Rico. It's been five years since I moved here.

What's your creative process?

So, first, I do a very rough sketch. Usually if you see it, you aren't going to be able to understand what it is, but I get it. So I draw a bunch of shapes of what I want. And then after that, I just start doing the line work. And then I just color. Sometimes if I'm out of ideas, I go to Pinterest or stuff like that. Just to see stuff. But usually inspiration comes out of nowhere, and I just start drawing. One thing leads to another and then I have the image.

▼ ALBERTO SANTIAGO



So what do you do if you feel stuck creatively?

I feel like the best way to get out of artist block is to keep drawing. Because even if you're stuck creatively, you know that you can do it because it's your skill versus inspiration. Inspiration comes and goes, and that's okay. You always have your skill, so just keep doing what you know/what you need to do. And eventually, skill will pick up again and so some sort of inspiration or motivation will come back again

What are some things that inspire you?

A lot of stuff from back home. Especially after moving to New York, I like a lot of architecture and fashion. I like reading, so sometimes visualizing what I'm reading gives me ideas to draw, also.

When do you feel most inspired? Are you a morning person or a night person? I've never met an afternoon person. But, you know, when do you feel most inspired?

I always try to be a morning person. I like waking up and having a super productive morning, but it always ends up that - I get an idea late at night, so I can't sleep. So, I end up working a lot at night. So, I like the idea of being a morning person, but I always end up being a night owl.

Do you ever get inspiration from dreams?

Sometimes I write down dreams I've had. I had my iPad right next to my bed and I wake up and I have this feeling that my dream is like an award-winning movie. Often, I feel like my dreams make more sense in my head. So I'll write something, then go back to sleep. And when I read it the next day, I kind of don't understand what it's about. But in that moment, it made so much sense.

My dreams are mostly like, more of a narrative. But sometimes I do get like visual dreams that that I say like, oh, this would be a nice drawing. And sometimes I end up drawing them.

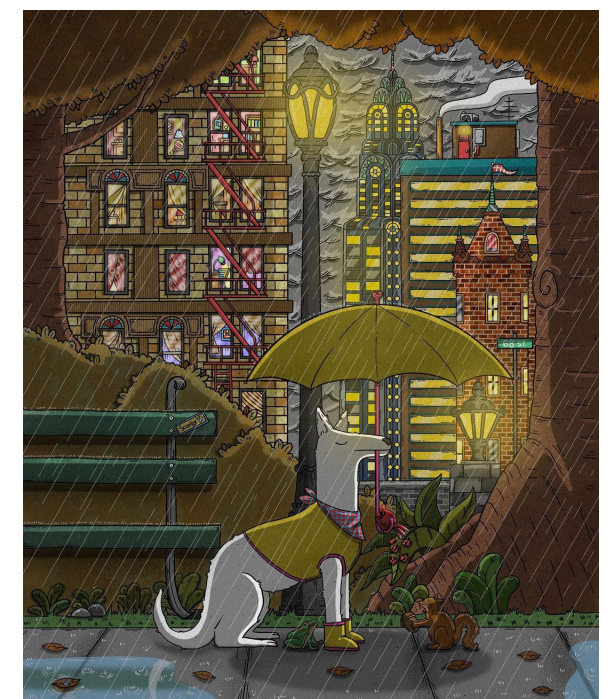
Is there a person who inspires you?

Ah, yes, I would say the person that most inspired me is [Havao Mivazaki](#). He's a Japanese film director. He did *Spirited Away*, *Howl's Moving Castle*, & *Ponyo*. They're animated films. I really like his motive. His work is very beautiful. Well, he's like a very pessimistic person. But translates his, I guess his pessimism into beautiful stuff. So, I would say he's like my number one inspiration. Even though my style is not similar to his, I do get inspired by him.

Another inspiration is [Edward Hopper](#). And I'm about to go to one of his shows here in New York. He's a painter. He's dead but they're doing a show in New York. And I really like his style. It's very American, or Americana. It's always like, people by themselves. This kind of like lonely vibe. Very beautiful work.

Do you feel like you create better when you're happy or sad?

Definitely sad, I don't know why, but it works. I think most of the time people are in a neutral state. But one of the ways I express myself, especially like my depressive side, for example, is through art. So, I would think that even though like I have a good sense of humor and stuff like that usually when it comes to art it's more of a more serious side.



▼ Scooby in Central Park

What do you listen to when you're creating?

When I'm drawing, I like to have on relaxing music in the background. There's a bunch of Japanese 80s instrumental music that I found out during the pandemic that I've never heard before, and I have like a playlist of them. I usually just put that on shuffle or relaxing video game music. I just put that in on Spotify and it has a bunch of playlists. But I also like singers and writers, mostly in Spanish. But when I'm drawing, I like instrumental music, jazz stuff like that. I like background music.

That's very specific. 80s Japanese music. How did you find it?

YouTube just starting playing whole album for me. You know when you have the autoplay on? One thing just kept playing after the other and I was like, damn, never heard this before! It's like super obscure Japanese stuff. They are mostly instrumental. Sometimes they sing. My favorite is the Summer Bridge one, I like the vibe, it's very California.

When did you realize you are good at illustrating?

Sometimes I think I'm good, sometimes I don't. Every artist struggles. But I have always drawn ever since I was a kid. That was my main interest in high school. I didn't go to art school, but I always liked reading comics and drawing. And everyone always liked my drawings. Then when I went to college, I kind of stopped drawing because I was studying. Around when I was 25, I picked it up again. I realized that I could work on these and people would buy them and maybe I could make money off it. So, I would say around when I was 27, I started realizing that I could make it a job.

Is there someone who has always believed in you, in your work, in your abilities?

A lot of friends have always had my back, they have given me words of encouragement or the push I needed when I needed them. In terms of my family, they're not super into art, so they have my back, but they understand it. I do have friends in the art world, so I go to them when I need an opinion or just words of encouragement.



▲ Homesick

How did your family react when you told them your creative dreams?

When I said to my mom that I wanted to be a photographer she didn't like the idea. She never stopped me and she's very supportive in that way. But she's also very practical so she just wanted something practical. But, as an artist or someone who is creative, you know that it won't make you happy to do something only practical.

What advice would you give to other artists or freelancers about their careers?

To never stop working, even if you don't have the inspiration, you can always just work. Inspiration will always come and go. Consistency will be what eventually brings you clients, ideas, and more inspiration.

Although, I say that, it's something I'm always trying to improve on myself.

Would you suggest your career to anyone else?

Well, I would say it's hard. One of my friends is a doctor and sometimes I rant about my career and they ask, "why don't you get a practical job?" and I answer that I know I'm not going to be happy. My art is what gives me meaning in life. So, if someone feels the same way, I would say to just do it because I know it's fulfilling. If it's someone who needs to make art, it's the only thing that will give meaning. Even if it's hard. So, I would say yeah, go for it!

What's your biggest fear career wise?

My biggest fear is that I might just stop making art because of fear. I also fear working on something I'm very proud of and it gets discarded. It's already happened once and it wasn't because they didn't like the work, the project didn't work because of other factors. But I did spend a bunch of time on something, and I couldn't even use it. That was frustrating.

It was for a big client, and I put in 82 hours into a big illustration. In the end, they weren't able to get permits and the project got discarded. I got paid but it wasn't just about the money, I wanted to be able to use the art. That was frustrating but I guess it's just part of the job.

So how do you deal with that?

At first, they didn't tell me why the project was discarded. So, I had this imposter syndrome thinking that they just didn't like my work. But then they were like oh the project wasn't continued because of other factors that don't have to do with my art. So that made it a little bit better, but it was still frustrating that I just had to discard something I worked on.

Where's the most interesting place that you've drawn or illustrated or done photography?

Well, I don't know if it's an interesting place, but I spend a lot of time in the Upper East Side because I work around there, too. I always like sitting in Central Park and drawing. It's very relaxing, especially during autumn. Drawing there is going to be harder because it's colder, but I really like drawing in the park. I think you see a lot of people and it's inspiring. And back home, I really like the countryside and the idea of it. So, sometimes I spend a few days in the countryside. I get inspired. But, eventually I'm ready to come back. But I really like drawing about it. I think it's a very peaceful place to live and, and I don't know, it just inspires me. Right now, I'm working on a drawing of my dad's house.

What do you think you're going to do with it [sketch of dad's house]?

So far, it's just a sketch. But it has some magical realism elements to it. It's his house from a kind of isometric kind of view. And he lives in the countryside. And in the backyard, there's a river. So, there's going to be a giant camouflaged element going through the bushes and maybe like a giant fish in the river, or something like that. I don't know if I'm gonna do something with it, it's just something that came out while I was sketching at night.

albertosantiago.squarespace.com



DESIGNERS DON'T LIKE TO HEAR...

Every designer has had that shrinking moment when clients make a cringe-y comment about their work. Here, we look at some SMH classics!

From freelancers everywhere, bigger isn't always better! Which one is the most triggering?



"I DON'T HAVE OUR LOGO, BUT YOU CAN GET IT OFF OUR WEBSITE"

SMH. "Sure, no worries—that 100-pixel logo from your site will look smashing in the billboard I'm designing for you." Before you blow a gasket, remember that knowledge vanquishes ignorance. Let your client know that in this case, BIGGER is better—original files, please!

"CAN YOU MAKE THE LOGO BIGGER?"

Ok, *sometimes* the logo does need to be bigger—but *most times*, clients need to be reminded that bigger is *not* necessarily better. Show and tell to help them understand—talk size and scale—and demonstrate how a larger logo can distract and detract from the goal of the overall design.

"I DON'T LIKE IT"

Oof—this is one of the most %\$#@! phrases in the history of design. But you can deftly handle it by developing a set of questions centered on fonts, color, and images to ask your client when they make this proclamation. Often, something as simple as an about-face on a typeface can "fix" the problem.

"I'M NOT SURE WHAT I'M LOOKING FOR, BUT I'LL KNOW IT WHEN I SEE IT"

It's a good thing that designers are *also* part-time psychics. Save yourselves both some frustration and develop a set of onboarding questions that help define the client's vision.

"I'VE BEEN MEANING TO CALL FOR WEEKS—THE DEADLINE IS TOMORROW"

Projects magically take *less* time if you leave them for the last minute, right? If you want to avoid this dilemma, set expectations up front around timing and save yourself the frantic antics.

"I DON'T HAVE A BUDGET"

There's a time and place for pro bono work and portfolio building. But work isn't free. If you want to get paid, explain that design has costs, like time, software, expertise. And if they still don't want to pay, it might be time to sashay away.

"I'M NOT AN ARTIST, BUT THIS IS HOW I'D DO IT"

It's a *great* idea to hire a professional and then tell them how to do their job. Later today, I'm going to tell my electrician how to wire my house. Set boundaries—tell your budding artist client: "You hired me for my expertise; let me do my job."

"THERE'S TOO MUCH WHITESPACE. LET'S ADD SOMETHING TO FILL IN THE GAPS"

For the love of Helvetica, *noooo!* Teach your negative-space averse clients this design maxim: *You emphasize nothing when you emphasize everything.*

"CAN YOU MAKE IT POP?"

Cue eye roll. What does "POP" mean, exactly? Is it a dance move, soda, snack request or is "pop" a vague attempt to describe copy, color, or size? Designers, **roll your eyes**—then, ask the client what "pop" means to them—specifically.

A WORD *from*
CREATIVE CIRCLE'S
CANDIDATES

**Creative Circle
works with the
most talented
creatives in the
business!**
**Here's what they
have to say:**

KME

WRITER

Karina Margit Erdelyi

What advice would you give to other freelancers?

Luck favors the prepared—keep keeping at it. Sometimes it will feel like an immense outpouring of energy with little return. Keep keeping at it. Success is about consistency, courage, and effort when things feel hard, stuck, and stagnant. Keep keeping at it. Unspectacular preparation always precedes spectacular forward motion. Roman philosopher Seneca famously shared: “Luck is what happens when preparation meets opportunity.” Doing the work and going after what you want will open doors—you just need to be ready to walk through them.

When did you realize you were good at writing?

I wrote an article about Bufo alvarius. Bufo is a powerful and potent psychedelic, which comes from the Colorado River (or Sonoran Desert) Toad. Using Bufo helps you put ego aside to enable connecting with a divine source—and today, science seems to be catching up with these mystical accounts. A growing number of researchers are studying Bufo and other hallucinogenic substances as legit treatments for many mental health conditions. The article went viral. Many people began reaching out to me—Vietnam veterans, survivors of mass gun violence, traumatized people—sharing how inspired they were by my piece and asking if I could help connect them with the practitioner. I felt such joy that my words could move people and give hope to so many.

KARINAMARGIT.COM

When was a moment you knew you messed up, how did you cope?

Failure is a fabulous teacher. There’s a Silicon Valley maxim: Fail often. Fail fast. If you are not occasionally failing, you are not trying hard enough. Yes, it might be counterintuitive that striving for perfection may hinder the creative process—but that doesn’t make it any less true. Quality comes from quantity—if you want quality, try and try and try again until you get it right (or make it better). If it is worth doing, do it poorly and get better. Nobody became an expert by doing something once. Keep going. Keep failing. Keep learning. Keep keeping at it.

DAP

WRITER

David A. Porter

What advice would you give to other freelancers?

You have to stay as organized as possible: use your Google calendar, keep a “paper” calendar handy so you can glance at your week if your computer is off, etc. With freelancing, you often have multiple projects going at once, sometimes from the same number of clients, and you have to make sure you get everything done and meet every deadline. Also, say no to nothing and tell EVERYONE you’re freelancing. You never know if/when you’re going to bump into someone who might hire you. You have to promote yourself, network...don’t forget, if you’re freelancing your income tends to ebb and flow. You need to constantly expand your network and seek new business. And keep your portfolio up to date.

DAVID.JOURNOPORTFOLIO.COM

HE

DESIGNER

Hugo Estrada

What advice would you give to other freelancers?

Take a page from Nike, and “just do it!” The first step can be the hardest, especially when starting a new project, but sometimes it’s just as easy as opening Illustrator, InDesign, or whatever creative tool you need to get the job done. I’ve learned that I can build momentum quickly as I work, and I end up feeling so much better for being productive and making progress on a project. And if you’re ever in a creative rut, take it easy and read a book, listen to your favorite podcast, or scroll through creative websites to reignite your creative spark. Finally, don’t feel shy to overcommunicate with your clients!

When did you realize you were good at writing?

I was working at a large tech company, offices here and in SF, just copywriting mostly, but then I was asked to come up with some ideas, and I put together a proposal for a women-in-tech content campaign. It wasn’t used, unfortunately, but it was a great project (there was a management shift at the company and my entire department ultimately disappeared). I realized at that point that I could come up with interesting content ideas AND execute them.

When was a moment you knew you messed up, how did you cope?

Too many to recount! I have one client for whom I send out press releases via Constant Contact, and I loathe Constant Contact. The big problem I usually have is I forget to change the email subject line; when I make this mistake, I send out a correction right away. It is the most

When did you realize you were good at your craft?

It was during the first few months of my first year in college. There was a quick call for a designer to create an event flyer from a student-run entertainment group. I quickly put together a flyer that fit the creative brief, and long story short, I booked the gig—my first freelance project! I only received \$20 for my services, but I got to see my flyer across campus during Welcome Week. Shortly thereafter, I was hired as the creative designer of the student newspaper and helped my new college friends—and their friends—with their design needs.

When was a moment you knew you messed up, how did you cope?

My anticipation was already high when I was opening a box of printed invitations I designed for a formal event. The invitations were die cut and screen-printed, and I had only seen a digital proof from the printers. To my horror, I noticed something was off on the front cover of the card: one of the colors printed lighter than expected. I phoned the printers to figure out what went wrong and learned that the color shifted lighter due to the translucency of the red ink. To prevent this from happening in the future, I would need to select the color in a shade darker to avoid color shift. Lesson learned! The key takeaway: mistakes are a learning opportunity for you to get it right the next time...and maybe request a hard proof if you’re trying something new!

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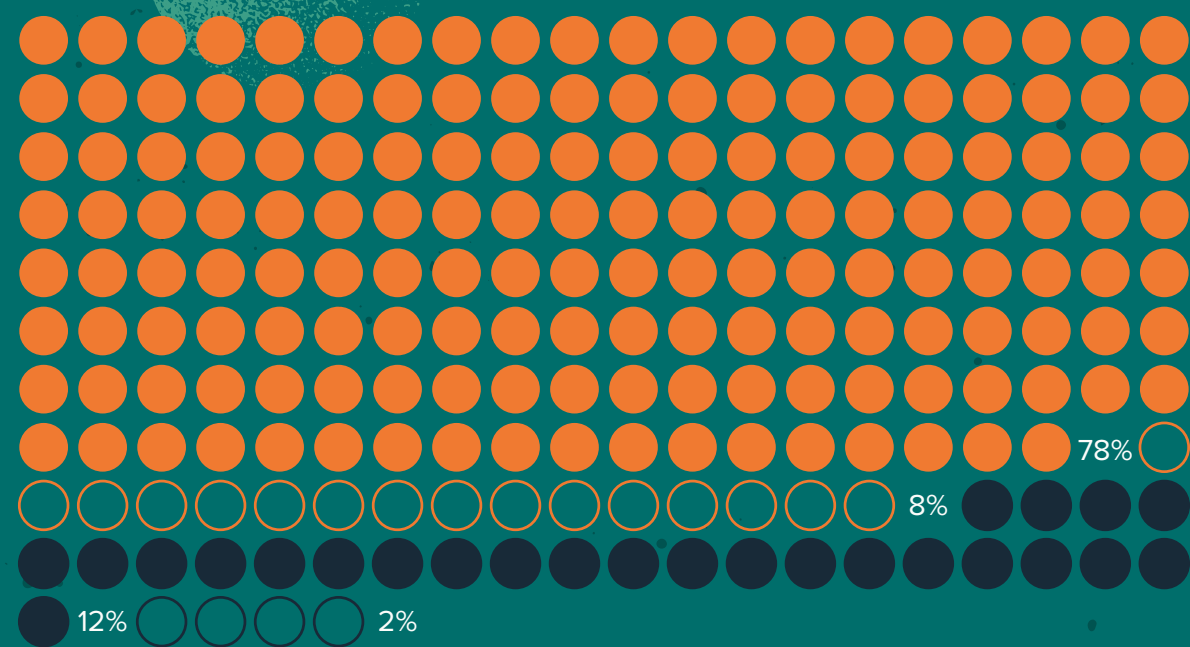
elegant solution? No, but getting it right is what’s important, of course. Finally, I used to write brochures for a cruise line, and I must have been tired because I was describing a famous spot in Athens, Greece, probably the Acropolis, and I described it as “infamous,” which it isn’t! By the time I realized my painful mistake, the brochure was already printed. Thankfully no one noticed, at least no one by whom I was employed, and I decided it was best to say nothing and just shuffle off to Buffalo. Sometimes this is the best you can do (and you are forgiven).

We asked, you answered!

Who knew LinkedIn could get so controversial? We asked our LinkedIn audience about the community's hottest discourses of 2022, and no one held back! From cover letters to employment gaps to WFH pay, learn more about how people REALLY feel.

How long is your ideal work week?

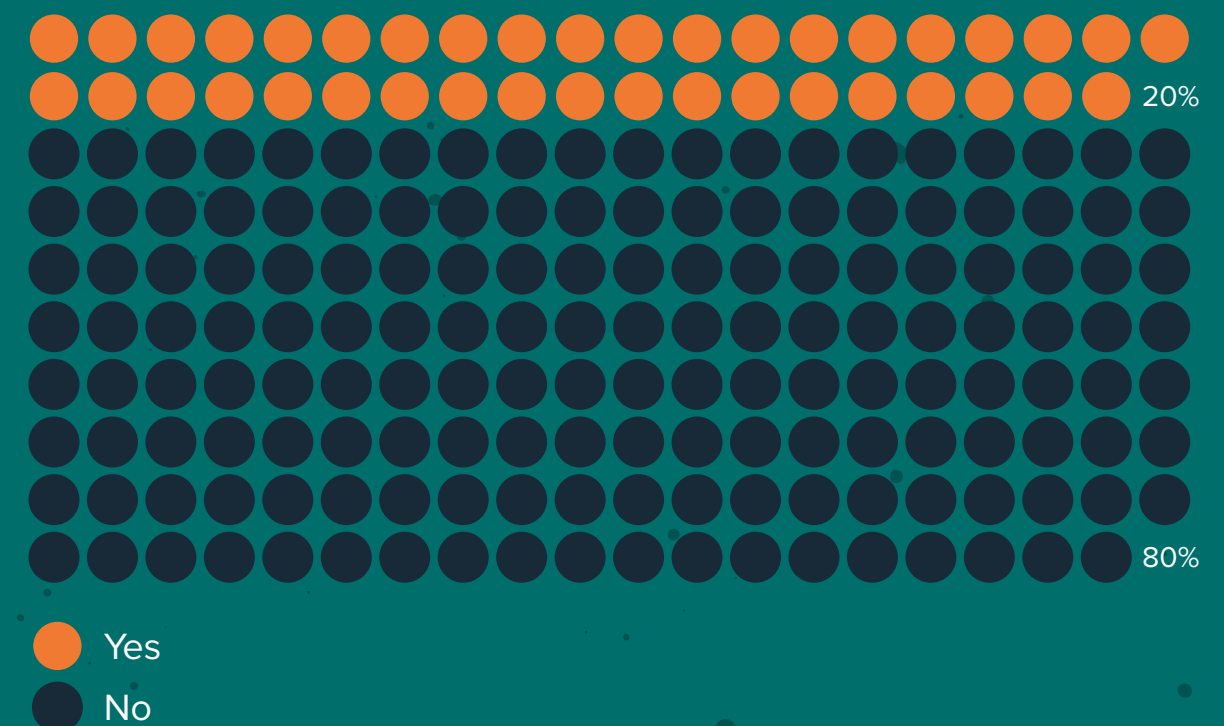
A lot of the 40 hours per week are wasted downtime and distractions.
Alex T.



● 4 days ● Ideally, I don't have to work
○ 5 days ○ Other

Are cover letters necessary?

Very impractical when applying to hundreds of jobs.
Jordan V.



● Yes
● No

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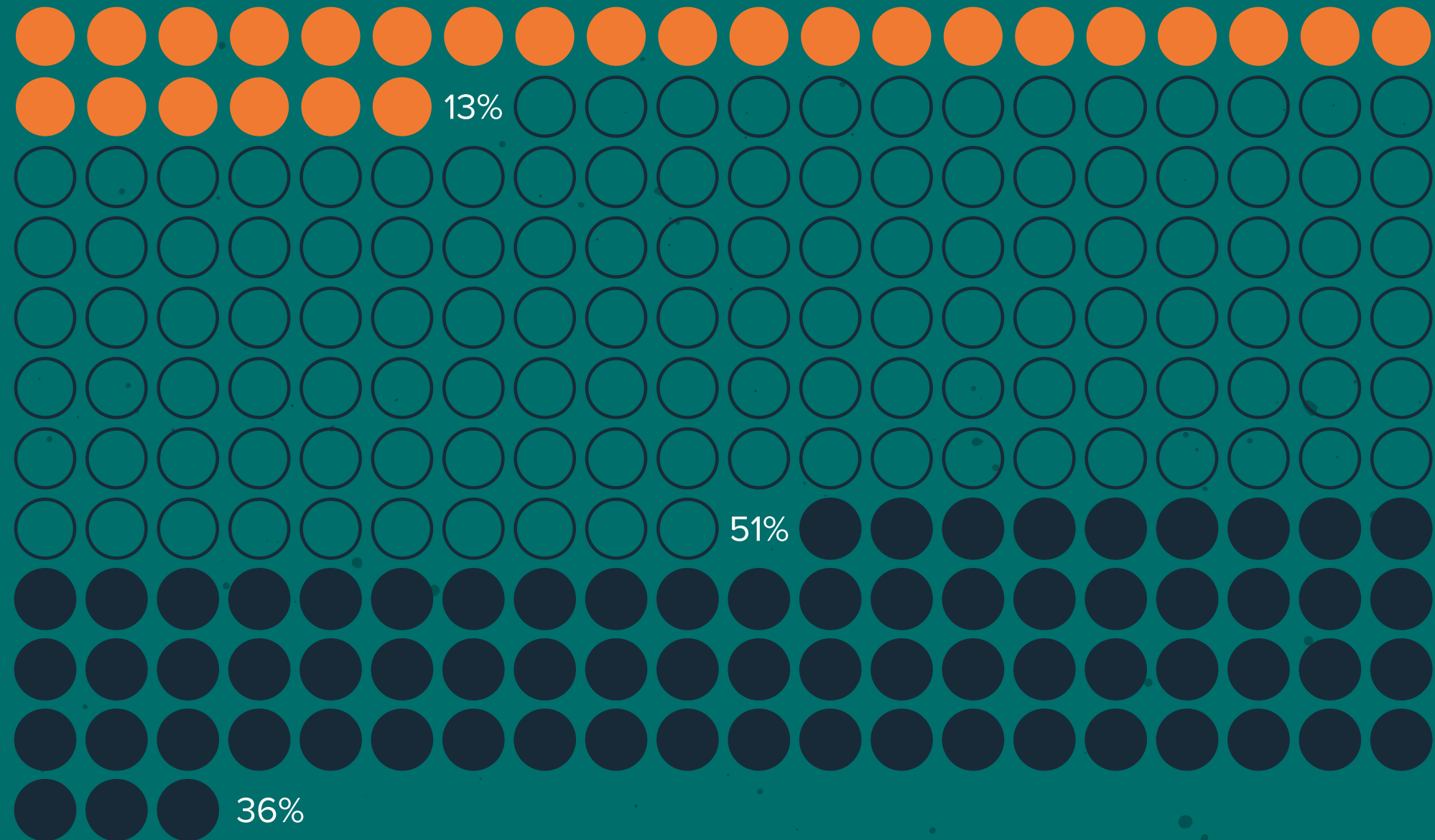
Should potential employers ask about employment gaps?

Too many tricky scenarios. Do you really want someone talking about information that might be fodder for bias? Some sensitive reasons for gaps include:

- Religious missions
- A dying parent, spouse, or, worse...child
- Cancer or other medical condition
- Mental health issues
- Legal issues
- Marriage problems
- Recovery from a toxic workplace

I was a stay at home parent but don't want to discuss it at a job interview.

Heather M.



- Yes
- No
- It depends

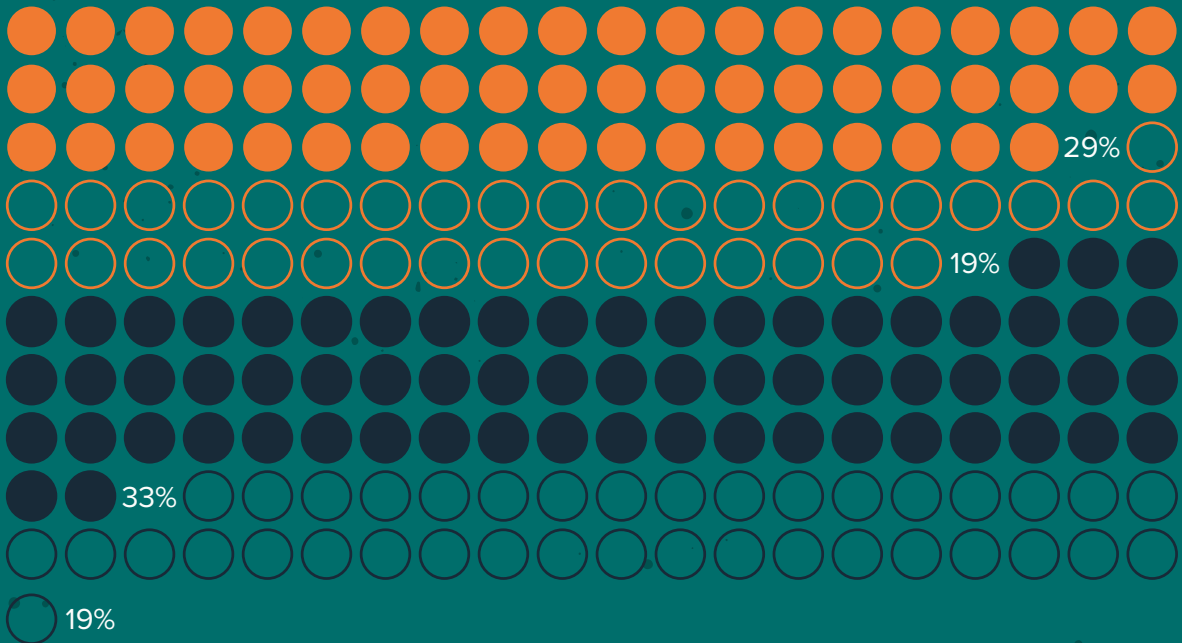
What makes a good interviewer?

These are all important but I see the lack of knowledge to be a big issue. Invite someone from that team in to ask questions and help evaluate the person. And stop asking ridiculous things like how do you deal with conflict or what is a time you succeeded. Ask HOW they work in specific ways, not open ended things.

Misty M.

I can't pick just one!

Alisa M.



- Conversational skills
- Well-prepared
- Friendly demeanor
- Knowledge about job posting

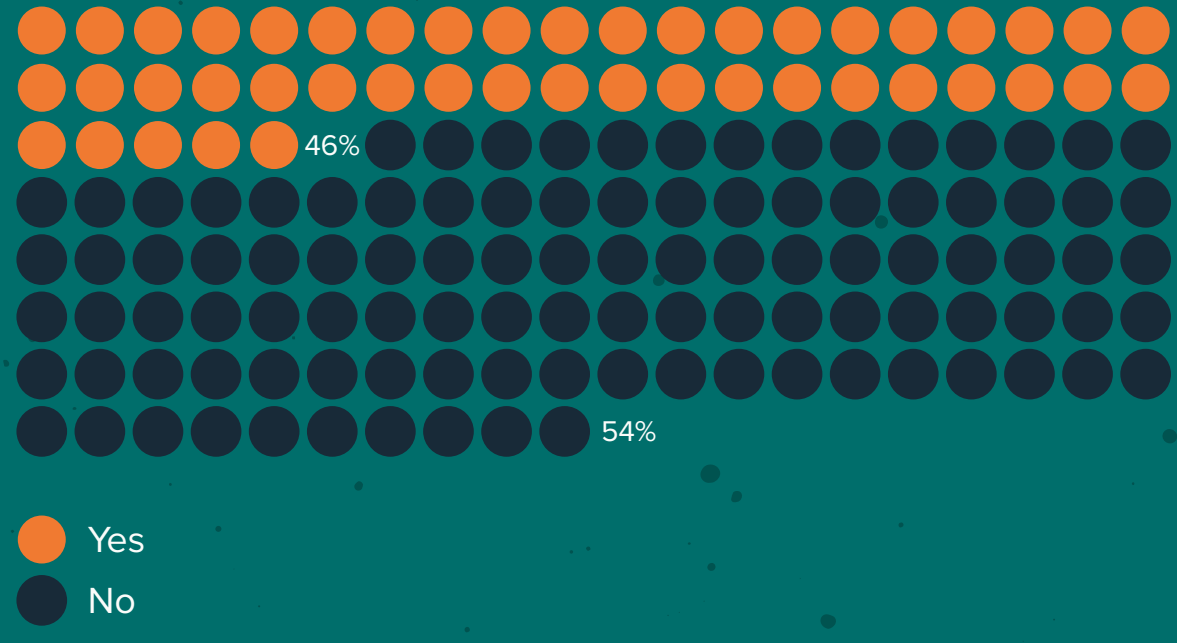


Should you be paid more if you work in-office?

Consider the obvious inverse question that this poses: "Should you be paid less if you work from home?"

How does that question make you feel?

Michael M.



- Yes
- No

WE ASKED A CREATIVE CIRCLE CANDIDATE WHAT IT'S LIKE WORKING WITH CREATIVE CIRCLE —

HERE'S WHAT THEY CREATED.

