

Tapescript – Bea

I work independently, not in an office. I work in my own studio. I can communicate with the people that I need to by conference calls or email. Mobile technology has been absolutely fantastic for freelancers. If I don't need to be at my desk, I take my mobile phone with me and I can be contacted at any time. Otherwise, what I do, the job that I do is exactly the same as what my role would be in a company as a graphic designer if I were employed.

Right ... um ... well ... it involves a lot of computers. The first thing I do is check my email and then answer whatever needs to be answered. I look at my diary because I will have written in what needs to be done in order to meet deadlines and open the appropriate application and I look to see what now needs to be done next. Wherever it was that I left off.

The role of a graphic designer is to take probably a Microsoft Word file from an editor and I use a page-layout program then import the editor's text, just as words. And then I change what the editor has given me and make it look exactly like you would see once it's printed in book. Then, you have to move the material around on screen a lot until it fits.

I like making things look good. Some people are very aware of appearance and you've, you've, heard that, you know, you can't judge a book by its cover and yet a lot of money goes into designing covers because the first impression, the appearance of something does, unfortunately, make a difference as to whether or not you pick it up or whether or not you find it inviting or comfortable. And, a lot of the work that I do is for students and students are, well, there's a lot of other things that they'd rather be doing than studying. So, I need to make it look as easy and comfortable for them to use as possible. So, appearance is very important.

Dislikes – I'm afraid I do not like having to deal with technology. Technology is not about appearance. Every time there is an upgrade to whatever whether it's hardware or software so many other things have to change at the same time. It could take, now it takes

nearly a week to get back up to speed to where I was before. So, it feels like a downgrade. So, that's the hard part. The other thing I don't like doing is keeping track of my hours and invoicing because you have to be very very careful: you don't want to overcharge your clients and you don't want to undercharge either. So, you have to keep very careful records.

There have been a few times when I thought I would love to have in-house technical support and it is those times that I think of looking at the ads. So, that would be a reason, but I would lose so much in terms of my time flexibility. My roommate is employed and so I see her get up in the morning, I see her go to work, and she comes home at about five o'clock and she has the rest of the evening to herself and she can go out and do whatever she wants and she does not need to think about what's happening at work. I might have days, weeks, sometimes even months, where she has seen me at the computer when she goes to bed and she has seen me at the computer when she gets up. And then, there will be days when I have the day off and I go into town and I come back and ... I, I'm my own timekeeper whereas ... she has, you know, it's a lovely day, but she has to go into work. And all things considered, it'd have to be a very high salary, I think, to get me back in house. Ask me again the next time there's an upgrade.

I do love the job and ... The actual arranging the material on the page is not difficult for me and I love playing with fonts. So, I will probably carry on doing this job as long as I can afford a computer, afford the upgrades and ... As long as people still want me, I'll probably carry on doing it.