

Date May 29, 2003
Time 07:00 AM - 08:00 AM
Station WNYW-TV (Fox)
Location New York City
Program Good Day New York

JIM RYAN, co-anchor:

If your bills come in on a regular basis, but your paycheck doesn't, listen to Chris Gailus.

CHRIS GAILUS reporting:

All right. Thanks a lot, Jim. It is a tough job market these days and job security, as you know, is practically a thing of the past. So how can you earn a decent living? Well, freelancing may be the way to go for a lot of folks.

And here to show us ways to avoid the pitfalls is Tory Johnson, author of "Women for Hire." Thanks a lot for being here again.

Ms. TORY JOHNSON (Author): Sure, thank you.

GAILUS: Tory, it's good to see you. I know that you've written the book "Women for Hire," these rules apply to anybody who is freelancing.

Ms. JOHNSON: That's right. That's right. And it's important to know at first that freelancing is not something you should take sort of willy-nilly if you expect to make a lot of money by doing this. It can be incredibly lucrative if you're smart about how you save and how you go about freelancing.

GAILUS: And there are some tips that we have--

Ms. JOHNSON: Yes.

GAILUS: --to help people through that. First of all, you need to be disciplined, especially when it comes to saving money.

Ms. JOHNSON: That's right. A lot of times we don't have the same ease of access to different savings programs, so my advice is to consult with a financial advisor. If you don't know somebody, go with a reputable name. You can start with a New York Life or an American Express Financial Advisors, Prudential--someone that you know who can do a needs assessment and help you save for the short-term as well as the long-term.

GAILUS: Taxes, of course, can favor those who are self-employed and freelanc--freelancing; but you need to really be able to prove your expenses.

Ms. JOHNSON: Your expenses.

GAILUS: Do you keep records?

Ms. JOHNSON: And a lot of times we wait until April comes around before we start, kind of, figuring out what we've spent all year long. And if you save regularly, and make sure that you are recording expenses

regularly--schedule time into your calendar, whether it's weekly or monthly, where you jot down the money that's going out.

GAILUS: One thing that I think will--keeps people from leaving a company and going freelance is they worry about losing some of the benefits, especially when it comes to health.

Ms. JOHNSON: That's right.

GAILUS: And if you're a freelancer, how do you handle it?

Ms. JOHNSON: One of the best sources, and I think it's really important--even if you think that you are, sort of, the picture of perfect health, I think it's really important that you and your family are covered. [1-800-ehealth](tel:1800ehealth) is a great source; you can also go on their website, ehealthinsurance.com. It's so easy in the tri-state area, and very affordable, quick, to just--to get that coverage.

GAILUS: And you are responsible as a freelancer for finding your next piece of work, for making sure the money is coming in to be able to cover those expenses, so--

Ms. JOHNSON: You are. You want to invest wisely in yourself and in promoting your skills. And the best piece of advice I can give you in that area is take a PR course. You want to become your best agent, your best self-promoter. It doesn't have to be a big money investment. You can take a couple hour course at the Learning Annex or read a really great book on public relations, 'cause you might be great in your own field or your craft, but if no one knows about it, you're not gonna make any money at doing it.

GAILUS: You mentioned the Learning Annex. Is that the best resource for taking that kind of course?

Ms. JOHNSON: It's a great resource because it's inexpensive and it's not a big time commitment. Three hours one night, they offer so many different courses. Learningannex.com or pick it up on the street corner.

GAILUS: OK, and it can help a lot. You also want to get some information on how to create your own e-newsletter you say--is a good way--

Ms. JOHNSON: E-newsletter. You don't have to have very expensive marketing materials to promote your skills and services. You can create an e-newsletter where all of your contacts, previous clients, anybody you know is on that list; and whether it's weekly or monthly, or however often you want to send them out. Tips and advice specific to your area of expertise--it keeps you top of mind to them, so when they're looking for someone in that area, you might be it.

GAILUS: All right. And I know you've got an event, very quickly, that you wanted to mention, too, to help people.

Ms. JOHNSON: Yes. June 17th, it's Women for Hire's Career Camp. All of the registration information's at womenforhire.com; it's a great all-

day event, really intensive job-search strategies; great for freelancers as well as people looking for fulltime work as well.

GAILUS: Only women? You're targeting women?

Ms. JOHNSON: It's mostly--it's mostly women at this particular event; but there's men who've registered as well. And it's great; there'll be industry--top industry executives across all--all the top fields.

GAILUS: OK, and information on the website, right?

Ms. JOHNSON: Womenforhire.com.

GAILUS: Very good. Thanks a lot for coming in Tory.

Ms. JOHNSON: Thank you.

GAILUS: Appreciate it. Jim, back to you.

RYAN: All right, folks. Thank you both.

#