JobPay Style Guide

Principles

These content principles will help make the user experience helpful and simple for our users.

When writing for users, you should:
1. Make sure user questions are answered with tooltips or microcopy.
2. Use a consistent brand voice to instill trust in users.
3. Make it easy for users to scan a page and see the most important information.
4. Keep the personas in mind. What information would each type of user need on screens?

Voice

When we write for the JobPay app, we want to use a consistent voice. Here's how to sound like JobPay.

Voice characteristics

- Friendly, but not overly cheery.
  - "Great work!"
- Informative, but not patronizing.
  - "If you don't know the exact number, provide an estimate. It can be edited later."
- Clear explanations without technical jargon.
  - "We calculated the project total by multiplying the total hours and your rate."

Word choice

Provide at least 8 examples that describe the preferred terms to use in the JobPay app.

USE THIS WORD	DON'T USE THESE WORDS	SAY WHY (RATIONALE)
Freelancer	1099 contractor, contractor, gig worker	Different regions use a variety of terms. Freelancer is an inclusive term that should be used throughout the app for consistency.
Business Owner	Client, boss, partner	For this term, it's the same rationale as above. It's important to remain consistent.
Invoice	Bill, statement, tab	Invoice is a commonly used term by freelancers.
1, 2	One, Two	Use numbers throughout the app because they are more readable.
Approved	Accepted, authorized, permitted	Approved is clear and to-the-point.
Budget	Allocate, allot, devote, earmark	Budget is a common word that's easily recognizable.
Project	Task, assignment, labor	Project implies something of a larger,

		encompassing scale.
Continue	Next, keep going	Continue is a solid, approachable action word for button text. Use continue for consistency.
Check	Cheque	Use standard American English, as most of the users are from there (shown by the personas.) Question: Do apps get translated into various versions of English?

Tone

- Be conversational and effusive when a user completes a task. It's something to celebrate!
- Error messages should be clear and straightforward. Communicate what the user needs to know. Don't inject humor into error messages, as it can be frustrating for users.

Styles

Follow these style rules throughout the app interface.

Page (screen) headings

- Use sentence case.
- Do not use periods. Use exclamation marks sparingly.
- Begin headings with a verb.
- Content pattern: include headings with body text/instructions.

Modal headings

- Use sentence case.
- Do not use periods. Use exclamation marks sparingly.
- Use congratulatory phrases, such as "Great work!" or provide relevant info like, "Your hours will appear here."

Subheadings

- Use sentence case.
- Do not use periods or exclamation marks.
- Begin headings with a verb.
  - Exception: for decision dialogs, write a question, such as "Send budget for approval?"
  - Exception: Basic descriptions, such as "Week 1" and "Project budget"

Onscreen instructions

- Use sentence case.
- Use normal punctuation in sentences, such as commas and periods.
- Include on screen instructions after subheadings.

Tooltips

- Use sentence case for tooltips.
- Include regular punctuation in tooltips, such as commas and periods.
- Use a tooltip to provide extra helpful information to users. Ensure that the most relevant information is written in clear view within the interface.

Button text

- Use title case for call buttons.
- Do not use punctuation in button text.
- As a general rule of thumb, keep button text 3 words or shorter.
- Start button text with an action verb.

Steps/categories

- Use all caps.
- Ex: STEP 1/5

Date formats

All dates should be formatted with the month (abbreviated), day, and year, i.e. Oct. 12, 2022. This ensures there isn't confusion about dates, as naming conventions can vary depending on the country. If a year has been mentioned earlier on a screen, do not use it in other instances to save space.

Currency formats

Currency should be formatted with the symbol on the left. There shouldn't be any spaces between the symbol and the number. Only include cents if they're part of the amount. Otherwise, leave cents out. Lastly, use a comma for every three places, i.e. $1,200. This is standard practice for writing currency.