My Writing Journey

My journey as a technical writer was not something pre-planned or decided in advance. It all started three years ago when my country Lebanon has been assailed by compounded crises specifically an economic and financial crisis followed by the COVID-19 outbreak and lastly the explosion of the port of Beirut.

The confluence of these events wreaked havoc on supply chains, stagflation, currency devaluation and in consequence a fall in nominal wages.

These unprecedented circumstances challenged me to move forward and to awaken my technical skills after working as a project Implementation manager for long-time.

While striving to achieve that goal and to polish my coding skills until they gleam, I explored a plethora of online resources, webinars and interactive tutorials covering a wide spectrum of areas in Python programming language.

Besides furthering my professional skills, this strategy boosted my self-confidence and motivated me to publish my own articles that I found informative and very insightful on thepythoncode.com. These articles which get around 100k total views were well appreciated by readers and earned their highest satisfaction.  
  
With increasing experience, improved writing, and a growing portfolio, I decided to take a leap forward towards developing a complete online course while taking into account the upward trend in online learning.

Many questions popped in my head at this stage?

1. What topic should I select?
2. Which interactive online platforms deliver a holistic learning experience to students?

Selecting an engaging topic was not an easy task but after an exploratory search, I settled on “PDF Management in Python” for the following reasons:

1. PDF is undoubtedly one of the most useful and versatile file formats.
2. Automating the boring tasks associated with PDF handling by providing a solid coding framework for managing PDF documents is coveted by PDF enthusiasts in general.

Besides and after further searching, I landed on Educative.io a leading online learning platform that provides interactive courses for software developers who gave me the chance to realize this goal. In fact, I was fascinated by the quality, comprehensive analysis and convenience of their Edpressos and online courses.

It was quite tough at the beginning: a new platform for hosting my course content to learn about, lot of review cycles and comments to address and many milestones to respect.  
Don’t give up. The beginning is always the hardest. Life rewards those work hard at it.

My writing journey has taught me the importance of perseverance. If you are an aspiring author, I hope that the same is possible for you too.

MY TOP TIPS:

* **Do your research** about the agents you choose to submit your work to. Is your story really suited to them or would another agent be better? Really read their requirements too as some agents want different things from a submission – three chapters vs the first 50 pages for example.
* Perhaps you’re someone who can talk about your own work with ease, but personally I found writing a synopsis *really*hard. I found it impossible to distance myself enough from my work to describe it in a page. In the end, I got my mum and sister to help out. They’d both read it and were that bit more removed from it to be able to describe the themes. If you have someone you trust, don’t be afraid to ask for help. As long as the actual writing is all yours, I personally think **there’s no shame in using an outside perspective to help sell yourself in a synopsis** – something that doesn’t always come naturally!
* **Don’t lose sight of why you are doing this.** If you are a writer you are a writer. You don’t need anyone’s permission in order to write. Yes, being published is a wonderful dream (and it was mine too!) but I think you still have to write ultimately for yourself, because you want to, not with the goal of publication as your sole motivator. I feel so lucky to call writing my job now, but even if I’d never been paid a single penny for it I would still be doing it (shh don’t tell my publisher!).
* **Stick at it!** Trying to write a book and then trying to get in published can be a long process and it can feel quite demoralising at times. There were so many times I considered giving up on my novel because I felt it just wasn’t working, or nearly gave up on my dream of getting it published because of rejections. But I’m so glad I didn’t.