

# COPYWRITING — FOR — BEGINNERS

# CRAFTING QUALITY CONTENT, UNDERSTANDING THE MARKET, NETWORKING WITH CLIENTS, AND BUILDING A FREELANCE CAREER

# **Copywriting for Beginners**

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Career***

# Introduction

I want to thank you and congratulate you for purchasing the book, *“Copywriting for Beginners.”*

This book contains proven steps and strategies on how to get started on a successful and rewarding freelance copywriting career in no time.

Starting a copywriting business is a big step in your career. This career choice works well whether you want to make an income on the side or leave your regular job to strike out on your own. Many people have found success as a freelance copywriter and with so many different topics and projects to choose from, you are sure to find many projects that work to keep you interested and busy.

In this guidebook, you are going to learn everything that you need to know in order to start your copywriting career as a beginner. You will learn how to get started, whether you would like to do this on the side or as your new career choice as well as how to find your first job, working with a variety of clients, learning how to craft quality content that your clients will enjoy and some of the best tips to help you plan a sustainable strategy for long-term success.

Copywriting is a great career choice if you want to be your own boss, have more control over your own income, or have one of the most diverse careers around. The options and opportunities are endless. Getting started can be easy as long as you have the right tips and have the right frame of mind to find those amazing clients. Use the tips in this guidebook to get started on your new rewarding career.

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# **Chapter 1: Deciding to Begin Your Copywriting Career**

Starting your foray into the freelance world can be a big accomplishment. You are changing away from the 9 to 5 grind and taking control of your own career and earnings. Copywriting has the potential to make you a lot of money and expose you to many parts of the world, but you have to be ready to take the initiative to work hard and stick with it during the hard times in the beginning. Before dreaming about making it rich in a copywriting career, you need to make the decision on how you would like to start.

## **Leaving the Corporate World vs. Copywriting on the Side**

Deciding to start a copywriting career can be a big deal. You need to decide how much time you would like to give to this new career. In the beginning, you may want to start the copywriting career on the side. Starting out can take some time as you build up your portfolio and find new clients to work with. It will also give you an idea of whether or not you have the dexterity to write full-time. Many people aren't willing to live without an income during this starting up period. But this is one of the nice things about being a copywriter; you can work on it during the nights and weekends and still keep your day job, making the career a great second income.

Some people decide that they are tired of working for the corporate world. They want to make their own path, decide their hours, or have the flexibility to fit the work in with their hectic schedule. Copywriting works great for this. You can decide how much you would like to work, when you need to work, and so much more about your career life. You do need to keep in mind that if you dive right in, there might be some dry times when the income is not up to what you are used to. You may want to put aside a bit of savings to give you a cushion until the copywriting income comes in.

There are positives and benefits to each option. Doing copywriting on the side allows you to make a second income and build up your business while still working at your regular job. Doing copywriting full time gives you more time to expand the business and gives you the freedom you may be craving in your career. You will need to look at your personal situation to see which one makes the most sense for you.

## **Creating a Portfolio**

Never start a copywriting career without a portfolio. As a copywriter, your potential clients will want to take a look at your previous work to see if it matches up with their needs. Sometimes the client is looking for a particular voice style or they want to check that grammatical errors aren't common in your writing.

If you don't have experience as a copywriter, you may have to put in some effort at the beginning to make a few great examples. Write a few articles about a topic you are passionate about or a few different topics to show the variety you are able to discuss. If you're a college student, consider taking a paper that you wrote for an assignment and turn it into a more marketable piece.

In the beginning, your portfolio may be a bit smaller, but as you take on more clients and grow your network, you can add more items to the portfolio and increase your client base. The more content that you have in your portfolio, the more confidence that your clients will have in you.

Try to have as much variety of topics and types of work as possible in your portfolio. Each client will look for different types of examples, and if you have these readily available in your portfolio, it can show you are prepared and save you a lot of time.

## **Setting Your Rates**

Setting your rates are important. These rates tell clients how much they will have to pay to retain your services. There are a few things you can keep in mind when deciding on your rates.

Some new copywriters feel that they should set their rates low. They feel this will place them above the competition of more experienced copywriters since the client will see them as a value. In some situations, this can work. Keep in mind though, it can be difficult to change your rates after clients have gotten used to the lower rates. If you obtained a client at your lower rate, they may be unwilling to pay you more later on. In addition, lower rates often bring about difficult clients. There are clients who want everything for nothing and the lower rates invite them in.

Even as a new copywriter, you should set your rates at something that can keep you comfortable in terms of income. Set your financial goals early on,

and develop a strategy that involves a rate for your work that will help you reach your financial goals. While you may not be able to charge as much as freelancers who have worked with major companies for the past twenty years, don't undersell yourself. You will get higher quality clients when you set reasonable rates and can actually make money on your hard work.

## **Creating a Website**

Sometime in the beginning of your career, you should create a website. This is one area where you can collect your best samples, information about your prices, some blog posts, and anything else important to your business. This can seem intimidating to some. But any copywriter who wants to thrive in the digital age must become acclimated with how to design a simple, accessible website that sells their services. Once you understand the basics, creating a website will be easy. The sooner you become familiar with how to create a website, the better off you'll be.

One of the primary benefits of your own website is having all of your information and writing samples in one central location. As a copywriter, you will have many clients and even find work on job boards. Directing a potential client to all these places to see your work history can get tedious. With the website, you can keep all this information in one place and direct all clients to check it out.

Although you'll certainly want to create a professional website with clean design and easy navigation, you may want to consider creating a free website to start with if you're just getting started. Sites like Wordpress will allow you to create simple website for free. This is a great first step for copywriters who are new to website design.

Take some extra time to create the website. This is the face of your business. The website should be easy to read, easy to navigate, and have all the information that a potential client would need. If you have some experience with website design, this is a good place to demonstrate this by creating your own website. If you are having trouble understanding where to begin, find a professional who can help you create an amazing website that will bring all the clients to your door—or consider taking online courses on web design.

Once you've created your website, add the website address to your email signature, your social media accounts and maybe even consider printing some



business cards with your website address printed on it.

## Chapter 2: Understanding the Market

It is important to understand the market you are working in before jumping in. A copywriting career will never get off the ground if you are not able to find the right jobs or keep good clients. This chapter will take a look at where you can find good jobs and how a proposal can help you to get these jobs once you find them.

### Where to Find Good Copywriting Jobs

As a copywriter, it is important to find where the good jobs are located. Finding writing jobs that don't cost you money can be a challenge (never go for jobs that try and charge you before you get work. You didn't have to pay to get your regular job and the legitimate writing clients will not ask for any payment first). But when you look in the right places, you will be able to find some amazing jobs with great clients who pay well.

There are several places you can look to find jobs. Each of these have pros and cons. Some options that you can choose to look for copywriting jobs for your career include:

- Online job boards—the same job board that you used to get a regular job can sometimes help you to find a writing job. To look on these boards is free, but the amount of jobs available are often few and far between.
- Magazine websites—many newspapers and magazines are on the lookout for freelance writers who will help them out. Some of these jobs are just on an as needed basis while others will hire you on as a permanent freelancer. In most cases, these jobs pay pretty well, but they are very competitive.
- Craigslist—there are good jobs posted by legitimate companies on craigslist and other similar websites. You just need to be picky about who you work for. This place is rampant with scams and it is easy to be taken advantage of if you aren't careful. You can find genuine clients, but you'll want to be weary of anything that seems suspicious.
- Writing job boards like Freelancer, Upwork—these sites are great

because they offer a lot of different job posting in one place. Try not to fall into the trap of bidding lower on jobs to compete with others. The clients who are worth working with will not choose you because you have the lowest bid.

As a beginner, you may need to try out a few of these options to see which works for you. Some people find their niche quickly while others may work with a few of the different areas to keep their schedule full.

### **Creating Proposals That Make You Competitive**

The proposal is one of the most important things for your copywriting career. This is like the cover letter of your business. It provides the clients with all the information they need to determine if you would fit for the job.

There are a few ways that you can craft your proposal. Some copywriters choose to write a personalized proposal for each job they apply to. This allows them to answer all the questions that the client has about a proposal and shows a personal touch that often impresses clients. If the client wants to know about your specific experience in a topic, you can write more extensively about that topic with this method. You can explain how long the project would take, how many revisions are included in your price, and the price you will charge. This can save time on the back and forth between you and the client, but it does often take longer since you need to craft the proposal for each client.

Another option you can use is to have a premade proposal. This proposal would have the basics of your copywriting experience, talks about your normal rates and terms of service, and anything else that might be important to the client. This proposal would work for most clients and you can change it up a bit if the client is looking for something specific. This proposal can save a lot of time, because you can use it on each client.

Regardless of which option you choose for your proposal, there are certain things that this cover letter should include. Some of the aspects that should be present in every proposal include:

- Your name and contact information
- Your educational background if applicable

- Your past writing experience
- Links to your online portfolio if available
- Links to other portfolio samples
- Timeframe to complete the project
- The price you will charge to complete this project.
- Any other information the client specifically asks you in their job posting.

This information helps the client to make a good choice for the project. You want to always make sure that you're completely honest in your portfolio. If there are any fabrications or exaggerations, you could end up with an assignment that you're not equipped to complete, which will result in a negative experience for the client and possibly a negative review.

Sometimes you may be a great writer, but the tone of voice you use or another aspect of your proposal does **not** quite match up with what the client is looking for. But that's alright; just keep trying. A well crafted proposal helps the client see how professional you are and you are more likely to get a job.

## **Chapter 3: Working with the Client**

To see success in your copywriting business, you need to get on a good relationship with your clients. These are the people who will give you jobs, keep you busy, and give you recommendations on where to find other great jobs. You need to have a relationship that is strong, provide them with some of the best work they have seen yet, and go above and beyond their expectations.

There are a lot of different clients you will work with over your time as a copywriter. Some of them are going to be really easy to work with. They will keep you busy, pay well, and give you leads for other projects. Other clients may just want one or two projects completed and then the relationship will be done. Others are difficult to work with, waste your time, and you will run once the project is completed. In most cases, you will work with a combination of these clients, but the longer you stay with this career choice, the better you will get at picking out the clients that are good to work with.

### **Short Term Clients vs. Long Term Clients**

Each client you work with provides unique opportunities for you to learn and grow. Often you will be able to tell from the job posting whether a client wants to work with someone long term or if they just need one or two projects completed during this relationship. You can choose which clients to work with, but there are benefits to working with each.

Short term clients often just have a few projects they want you to work on for them. They may want to test the waters to see how successful a book will be before jumping in and producing more. Some businesses choose to write one or two books to promote their product and then the relationship is done. In most cases, you will know that the relationship is short term just from the job posting so you can decide how much time you have available and whether you can fit this in.

Short term clients are great for getting good reviews, if you do a fantastic job, and can fill up your schedule quickly. These jobs are more common compared to long term clients and often they won't look for a discount because of the bulk work like the long term clients might. This is a great way to keep your income growing without having to worry about how much free

time you will have in a few weeks.

Many freelancers work to find long term clients. These clients promise to work with you for a certain amount of time, which can go from a few months to many years depending on the relationship. These clients are great because they can guarantee more of an income each week and saves you time from having to search for new jobs all of the time. You can also get used to the templates that the one client wants and their working style rather than learning new rules with each client.

One thing to watch out for with long term clients is when they ask for a discount for giving you bulk work. The good clients do not expect discounts for your work because they realize that no matter how much work they give you, you still have to spend the same amount of time and energy to produce a good product. If the client is asking for a discount on bulk work, they are probably going to be really difficult to work with and often they will only offer one or two projects and then disappear.

Often coming up with a mixture of long and short term clients is the best way. This provides you to the opportunity to have a steady income source while searching for more jobs and finding higher paid projects at the same time.

When choosing a client, you can be just as picky as the client. Check for their background to ensure they will offer what you are looking for whether it is steady work or just a quick project when other things are slow. Also remember, if you don't enjoy working with a client, it is possible to end it on a positive note rather than sticking it out, even if the original job was for a long term project; just make sure to finish up the project at hand like promised to keep your reputation.

## **Networking for New Clients**

Finding new clients can be a challenge, especially when you are getting your feet wet, but this is the time when you should really work to establish yourself. Think of your copywriting career as a business, which it is. You should network around to find more work and to get ahead. Any time that you have downtime in your schedule is time that you aren't making money.

One thing that you should always do is ask your current or past clients to recommend you to any of their friends who may need a copywriter in the

future. Often clients are associated and if you did a good job, they may be willing to pass your name around to get more jobs. This takes just a few minutes of your time and can really make the jobs come in.

If you are working on a freelance site like UpWork or Freelancer, request that your clients leave feedback. While some clients may be too busy, most are more than happy to spend a few minutes leaving a review. These reviews can help other clients to see your past work and see whether you would be a good fit for their project.

Your website can also be a good contact point for new clients. Keep your website up to date and relevant in the search engines. This allows clients who are looking to hire a freelancer to find you and see how amazing your work is. When the website is abandoned and just thrown together, the client will leave right away and pick another freelancer. But if you take good care of your website and show pride in your writing, the client will show interest and can contact you for their project.

Even when you are out at a party or meeting new people, spread the word about your business. Many businesses may need a copywriter to help with advertising, to write articles in the local newspaper, or for so many more reasons. You can keep some business cards on hand to spread around and hope that these bring you some leads.

### **Portraying Yourself Professionally Through Digital Conversations**

Showing yourself at a professional when your whole relationship occurs online can be a challenge. Some people are much better in person and may feel that an online communication style seems awkward and hard to do. But as a copywriter in the digital age requires that you are able to communicate yourself clearly and professionally to all clients without seeing them face to face.

As a copywriter, showing your professionalism through writing should not be too difficult. You want someone to hire you for how you portray yourself in writing, you should be able to do this successfully. If you find that it is difficult to write eloquent and professional emails or to keep up with other correspondences with clients, it may be time to brush up on your skills.

Digital communication occurs all throughout your relationship with the client. Some clients have had trouble with communication with their

freelancers in the past and may use this form of communication to determine whether you are the right fit for the job. Take extra care in your written correspondences to ensure that you are impressing your potential employer.

There are a few things that you should keep in all of your correspondences with potential and current clients including:

- Do not use slang—your clients are your employer. Keep this in mind when you want to use lol or other slang terms in your correspondence with them. Use proper words at all times.
- Address the client properly—Sir or Madam is often appropriate. If you are not sure whether you are talking to a man or a woman, which can happen if you apply on some writing board jobs, just skip the familiar terms like ‘dude’ and ‘man.’ Some people find this offensive and it is really hard to show that you are professional when using these terms.
- Be clear and concise—clients are just as busy as you are. Don’t write ten pages of content when a paragraph will be plenty to get your point. Use the words you mean to use and keep the correspondence to just the important information that your client looks for.
- Stay on point—your clients don’t need to know everything about your whole life. They are simply interested in getting an update or answers to their questions. Start with a professional greeting, tell them the information they asked for, add in some information that may be of use, and then end the correspondence.
- Do not get too familiar—even if you’ve worked for a client for a long time, don’t get too familiar with them. Keep things professional at all times.

Answer their questions—nothing annoys a client more than asking a direct question to their freelancer and getting the run around. Usually this means that you are trying to hide things from the client. Always answer any question that the client asks you and don’t try to skate around something, no matter how uncomfortable. The client would rather know early on that you can’t finish the project on time than be led along for weeks.



## **Chapter 4: How to Craft Quality Content**

To get paid as a copywriter, you need to be able to craft content that is high quality. Your clients will not pay you for work that is handed in late, work with lots of grammatical mistakes, or work that doesn't even follow the required template or topic of the project. Quality content gets you the best rates on projects and happy clients that will give you more work down the line. This chapter will take some time to discuss how to provide quality content to your clients.

### **Research the Topic**

Before you can craft quality content for your client, you need to do some research on the topic. Even if you have some ideas about the topic, you need to spend some time looking up different subtopics or important information that will make the book unique.

A good way to start is to research the top keywords the client wants you to use. This can help to show which subjects readers are interested in the most when it comes to this topic. If the client just gave you a title and is giving you some free reign with this topic, go ahead and pick out some subjects that have a lot of information and will provide a lot of interest to your potential reader.

Only go for the information that will actually help the reader. Your client is going to sell this book as one of the best for its niche. If you just fill it with a lot of useless information that isn't worth anything to the reader, your client will get bad reviews, not make money, and will choose another freelancer next time.

In some cases, the client will have a specific outline they want you to follow. In this case, they will list out the chapters as well as the subheadings they want you to use before submitting the book. This closes in what you are able to write about, but you can still get creative and find some information that is useful, unique, and will really help out the reader even within your guidelines.

The higher quality your product is, the more value it has to the client. You want to provide them with a book that will get a lot of good reviews and one that is easy to entice readers to purchase. The more successful you are with this goal, the more successful the client will become and they are more likely

to choose you for more projects down the line.

### **Ask Questions When Needed**

Most clients are easy to get along with and will either give you free reigns to let the project lead you or they will provide a lot of details on how they would like the project to go. Both of these options are nice because there aren't a lot of questions to ask and you can get right to work. But any time you have a question, make sure to get an answer from the client before proceeding.

This can be difficult for the new freelancer. They are excited to get started on the project and don't want to wait to hear back a few days from the client. But this can lead to you accomplishing a lot of work that is all wrong. If you had waited to hear the answer to your questions, you would know the exact way the client wanted the project to go. Sometimes, you may have been right and have the perfect project, but if you are wrong, you will need to redo the project before the client will accept, and you wasted time that could have been spent on something else.

### **Editing Yourself or Using a Professional**

Editing is an important part of presenting any work to the client. This is especially true if you are creating a project in a language that is not your native language. It is easy to make mistakes and you should go back through the project to make sure you are doing everything correctly.

Some copywriters choose to do the editing on their own. They may finish the project and then take a few days off before going through and editing the project. This allows them to come back to the project with fresh eyes and see things they may have missed at first. If you are editing on your own, go through the project a few times and read the information out to yourself to see if it sounds right.

In most cases, it is best to have someone else read your writing. Even if you go through the project ten times, you can miss basic mistakes simply because you are the writer and the mind can skip over them. When you bring in a fresh pair of eyes, someone who hasn't seen the work before or worked on it, you can catch more mistakes and provide a more polished manuscript to your client.

Many freelancers include the price of editing in their proposal. This allows

them to find an editor they are used to and pay that person to assist with the editing issues. If you are charging more for editing services, list this in your proposal so that the client understands why your amount may be a bit more compared to someone who doesn't offer this service. If you are not including editing services in your price, inform the client in your proposal to avoid confusion.

Depending on the client, they may expect you to perform all editing functions or they may have their own crew who can complete this task for you. If you don't feel comfortable editing your own work, discuss this early on with the client and explain how the best way to get a polished project is to hire a professional editor.

## **Chapter 5: Tips to Get Started in the Right Direction**

Insert chapter here.. Getting started on a freelance writing career can be a challenge. There is a lot of competition out there. While this might seem discouraging to those who are trying to get started, most clients are tired of seeing low quality and difficult to work with freelancers. They would jump and pay premium prices to freelancers who can provide good copy and are easy to work with. This offers you a lot of opportunity if you are ready to put in the work and create a successful business.

When you are ready to get started on your freelance copywriting business, keep some of these tips in mind to get started on the right foot.

### **Tip #1: Find productivity tools**

Being productive with your time is important if you want to see success with your business. Spending 40 hours working on projects and wasting twenty of them will result in a loss of time and money. When you find tools that will keep you on task and productive, all of your time is being used wisely.

There are a number of tools that you can use. First, consider purchasing a planner. This allows you to write down all of your projects and when they are due. Put as much information down about each project as you can. Before getting started each morning, go through your planner and see which projects you need to finish first. This prevents you from working on a project that isn't due for a few weeks when you have one due tomorrow. The planner can also help you to plan out your time, whether you will need to spend just 5 hours getting work done this week, or you will work full time to get your projects done.

The other productivity tools will depend on your work method. Some people enjoy having a timer that lets them work for an hour and then they take a break. They work hard to get as much done as possible during that time; once the time is up, they can go out for a walk, have something to eat, or just take a break from the work. It is much easier to keep on task when you have a scheduled break and can get away from the work on occasion.

### **Tip #2: Create your website and blog**

One of the first things that you should do to progress your freelance career is to create a website. The website needs to be well done and up to date at all times. If you don't have experience with web design, consider hiring a professional who will be able to create a state of the art website that will wow any client and who can help if any problems occur over time with the website. Think of this website as the face of your business; you want it to look nice to impress potential clients.

If you have the time, consider writing a blog to go with the website. The blog will help to keep your website at the top of search engines, making it easier for your potential clients to find you. You can write about a variety of topics, but picking things you are passionate about and that all tie in together can increase your ranking in search engines and can show off how well you write to potential clients.

Once the website is created, you need to provide regular updates. This is where the blogs can come in handy. If you ignore the website and never touch it, the ranking will go down and potential clients will find it difficult to discover your work. Whether you choose to go with a blog or update your portfolio on occasion, keep your website content fresh to attract new clients.

### **Tip #3: It's OK to say no**

As a beginner, you may feel that you need to say yes to all of the projects that come your way. You want to make clients happy, get good reviews, and make as much money as possible. Because of this, you will say yes to projects that may not be the best fit for you.

Taking on every project that comes your way though is going to add a lot of unnecessary stress to your life and can even burn you out on this wonderful career choice. You are going to take on more than you can handle, find a lot of difficult clients, and probably find that you are working more hours, and for less pay, than you were at your old job.

As you progress through your copywriting career, you will find that sometimes it is better to say no to a project. You will learn that it is better to go without the job than to fight with a client for weeks on end for a project that is not worth the money. You will learn what workload you have time to comfortably take. You will even learn how to tell whether a client is going to be worth your time and easy to work with just with a few minutes of

correspondence.

Don't feel bad about saying no. Your health and the health of your business rely on you saying no. Sure, there are going to be times when you take on a project that you probably shouldn't; as a beginner, you have a bit of a learning curve and may not be able to recognize all of the signs on what to avoid. Over time, you will learn when you are overwhelmed, either by the workload you already have or by other life situations, or what projects you actually feel passionate about working on.

When you learn how to say no, you learn how to get rid of the stress in your life, how to avoid the difficult clients who are only going to give you trouble, and how to really enjoy your new freelance career.

#### **Tip #4: Don't procrastinate**

Procrastination is going to set you up for failure. Those who procrastinate end up having a lot of work to do at the last minute and will feel worn out, stressed, and find it difficult to hand in quality work to their clients. You don't want to waste a lot of time at the computer while not getting any work done in the first place. When you sit down to work, you want to be productive and get everything done on time without adding on a lot of stress.

Set up some system that will help you to avoid procrastination. Some people find that working at a certain time of day lets them be more productive. You may find that working in thirty minute intervals with breaks in between works out the best. You need to find the option that works the best for you and keeps you on track.

#### **Tip #5: Keep track of finances**

As a freelancer, you no longer have an employer who takes care of your taxes. This means that you need to be responsible for recording the money you make to the IRS each year. Waiting until the first of the year is setting yourself up for failure. This is a large amount of accounting to try and get done in a few weeks and when you are keeping up with your other work, you may find it is impossible.

Instead of waiting until the last minute to get your finances in order for tax time, keep track of it throughout the year. Find a good accounting system and keep it up to date each month. If you are not good at accounting, consider finding an accountant or a tax professional who can help keep track of this

for you.

# Conclusion

Thank you again for purchasing this book!

We hope this book was able to help you to get started on your freelance copywriting career with the tools and tips to see success.

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