

The Seven Vital Steps to Becoming a Copywriter



Accelerated Copywriting Launchpad

The seven vital steps to becoming a professional copywriter

If you're a writer, there is no career quite like being a copywriter.

You might aspire to be a world-famous novelist, but realistically the chances of achieving that are slim!

On the other hand, the world needs copywriters. There aren't very many of us.

If you can write sentences and you're willing to learn the copywriter's craft, you'll earn an enviable lifestyle.

We copywriters are the unsung kings and queens of the marketing world. We deal with every kind of organisation, from builders to High Street shops. And we work with every size of business, from multinationals to the smallest charity.

Copywriting will never go out of fashion because businesses are constantly creating new products and services, and they need someone to explain it to their customers.

Moreover, most managers are unable to write effective copy, still less having the time to do it.

As you read this, businesses near you are trying - and failing - to produce website copy, posters and blog posts. One of them is saying 'We need a copywriter,' and they start looking.

But copywriters are hard to find. Most of us are busy and don't need more clients. Would you like to fill that gap?

If so, what's the way forward? How do you acquire the right skills, and find clients? There are specific skills and traits you need to acquire. Let's look at them one by one.

1. LEARN HOW TO WRITE WELL

As a copywriter you'll have very little time to make your point. No one is obliged to read your copy, and people have short attention spans. So if you don't write engagingly, you'll lose your audience. Every sentence has to count.

Do you know how to write well? Writing copy is different from an academic essay, a business report or a magazine article.

Some would-be copywriters are unfamiliar with punctuation or can't spot trailing clauses. If you're unsure about your writing style, here are three ways to improve:

1. Look on the Internet for guidance on how to write.
2. When you've written your copy, read it aloud. It can usually be improved.
3. Leave your content overnight, and review it the following morning with fresh eyes.

2. UNDERSTAND THE COPYWRITER'S TECHNIQUES

To be a copywriter you have to understand the methods we use. We write to persuade people, and the information has to flow in a logical way. Our craft involves headlines, subheads, first paragraphs and good body copy. There's social proof, the Rule of 3, using verbs not nouns, and offering benefits not features.

How do you improve? You can find out about our techniques on the web. But the advice can be overwhelming and conflicting. And you may not be sure whether you're getting it right. That's why a structured coaching programme could be an advantage for you (full disclosure – I run one such programme [here](#)).

3. BECOME FAMILIAR WITH THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF MEDIA

Writing blog posts is different from writing a press advertisement. Likewise, creating web copy for a nutritional supplement is different from writing a life insurance leaflet.

So before you start writing copy, identify where it will be used, whether as a poster, a Facebook ad or an email campaign.

Make sure you also understand your target market. Different generations, from boomers to millennials, have different reading styles.

4. GENERATE ENQUIRIES

Where aspiring copywriters fail, it's usually because they haven't done enough marketing. So while you might think you'll spend all your time like a poet in a garret turning out wonderful words, the ugly truth is you'll need to spend just as much time looking for clients.

We copywriters are often not good at marketing ourselves or advertising. But you're in the business of persuading others, so it's a skill that you need to learn. It's vital to your success.

Identify the online and offline spaces where you can promote your service. The options include direct marketing, email marketing and Facebook advertising.

5. BE QUICK TO RESPOND TO ENQUIRIES

So you've done some marketing, and a client has got in touch. That's great!

You need to be responsive, because clients quickly find alternative solutions.

If the client is within driving distance, go and visit them. If not, ring them and have a long conversation. Write a detailed proposal that looks professional.

To be effective, you need a system for logging enquiries and keeping projects on track.

6. UNDERSTAND THE END USER'S NEEDS

You've won a contract! Hurray! Now comes the task of writing the copy. Spend time researching the client's product, talking to customers, and asking questions. The more you know about the end user, the better your content will be. One way to do this is to use a 'discovery' form, to ensure you don't miss any important points.

7. DO IT RIGHT FIRST TIME

You've written the copy. Now it's time to deliver it. It must be on time, every time. Never miss a deadline. Work through the night if you must.

Then be prepared to listen to comments made by the client. After all, they know more about their product or service than you ever will. Be ready to make changes. But, if necessary, explain why you wrote what you did. The client isn't a copywriter, which is why they hired you. And clients are often focussed on things that don't matter to their customers.

HOW WILL YOU MOVE FORWARD?

These are the seven vital steps you must take to become a successful copywriter. So how will you set out on that road?

I take a small number of new copywriters into my Accelerated Copywriting Launchpad programme, as and when space permits. You can learn more about the programme by visiting the website. To see if it's right for you, [click here](#).

I'm only able to take on people who are sufficiently motivated and skilled to be able to achieve a six-figure income within three years.

If that's you, fill in the form [here](#), and let's have a discussion.

With best wishes
Kit Sadgrove