



Quick Tips On How To Get Started As A Copywriter

By Bernadette Schwerdt
The Copywriting Coach
www.copyschool.com
info@copyschool.com
Ph: 0419891932

29 Quick Tips On How To Get The Most From Your Copywriting Course

1. Take the manual out of the post pack. ☺
2. Keep it out in the open, not tucked away on a shelf. Put the manual or some pages from it, near the phone, or near the TV, anywhere where you might have a few minutes of down time. The chances of you reading it are higher if the material is in view.
3. Think about whether you want to work freelance or for an advertising agency. Here are a few things to keep in mind when deciding which way you want to go:
4. **Pros working for yourself:**
 - Freedom to work when you want, with whom you want, how often you want.
 - You choose how much you work for and the clients you work with.
 - You can work from home in hours that suit you.
5. **Cons working for yourself:**
 - You have to be self motivated to keep the momentum going.
 - You have to find your own clients (but it's not hard to do this, really. Read the Chapter How To Find Work As A Freelance Copywriter page 196.)
6. **Pros working for an advertising agency:**
 - It's exciting; you'll meet great people, and work in a stimulating environment.
 - You get given the work, and the timeframes for when it has to be done.
 - You work a regular week (although those regular hours can be long hours).
 - With experience, you will be paid very well.
7. **Cons working for an advertising agency:**
 - You have to get up in the morning and battle the peak hour madness.
 - You work for a boss who has expectations, rules and regulations as to how you should work.
 - You don't get to choose who you work with and what clients you work on.
8. The manual will give you lots more detail about how to make up your mind but these are just a few things to keep in mind when deciding. In any case, you don't really need to make a decision until you're ready.
9. Assuming you want to work freelance, here are some things to do that will fast track your copywriting career.
10. Order your business cards from vistaprint.com (they're free excluding postage), put "Copywriter" on them, your mobile, name, email. That's all you need to get started. Make sure you choose the option that gets the words 'these cards were printed for free with Vistaprint.com' deleted from the back of the card. It looks a bit tacky.

11. Get online and register an ABN with the Australian Taxation Office. This allows you to invoice clients with ease. If you don't have an ABN, the client is obliged to withhold nearly 50% of your invoice total until the end of the tax year. The ABN is not the GST number – you don't even need to think about the GST at this stage as you won't be earning enough to warrant having it – so don't get the two confused as they are very different numbers. It's free to get an ABN.
12. Don't obsess too much about your business name. Clients won't care what your business is called so don't procrastinate and hold off on moving forward by vacillating about what your business name should be. Use your own name to start with and then think about a business name a bit later.
13. Start telling everyone you know - every relative, every friend, every colleague - that you are now a copywriter. I know, I know, you'll feel like a fraud because you may not have written a scrap of copy for everyone, but the reality is, if you don't start telling people you're a copywriter, you'll never get the chance to work on anything.
14. You don't need to mislead people here. Once they know you're a copywriter and they start asking you questions, you can tell them it's a new career for you and that you're starting out.
15. Think of everyone in your circle and ask yourself if there's anyone who has just started a new business or is thinking of starting up a new business. It doesn't matter what it is – it could be a café, a dog grooming shop, a landscape design business, a coaching business. Ask them if they'd like some free copywriting for their first brochure or website.
16. Working for friends and letting them know you're new at the job will enable you to make a few mistakes, learn a few tricks and still walk away from the experience thinking it was worthwhile. If you start charging money for your work too early, you'll put yourself under pressure and potentially make mistakes that a client may not be too happy with. Give yourself a break – ease into the first job slowly with minimal expectations and you'll find the experience to be fun and enjoyable rather than hard work.
17. Don't take the work, or yourself too seriously. It's not the end of the world if a web site page you write is a bit muddled or your first newsletter seems amateurish. This is part of your learning. Just keep going. Silence the inner critic and get on with it.
18. Think of your first few jobs as work experience. If you were studying to be a teacher, or a social worker or a nurse, you'd have to clock up a lot of hours working for free in the classroom, clinic or hospital so don't feel too proud about working for free as a copywriter. It's all part of the process.
19. When clients pay you to write copy, they expect results. If you don't get those results, you'll feel bad about yourself and being a copywriter, so don't thrust yourself into a commercial arrangement until you feel you have a few hours clocked up as a copywriter.
20. Besides, working for others will build your confidence, portfolio and referral network so it's definitely a great way to get started.
21. Think about creating a small website for yourself. You may not feel the need for one, but it'll give you a great insight into how websites are created and written, and you'll be able to

bring this knowledge to your web writing jobs. Not only that, but you can put the web address on your business card and direct potential clients to it.

22. When searching for a domain name i.e. the web site name, you might want to check that this name is also available as a business name. That way, you can register the domain name and the business name, ensuring that you own both. It can get tricky if you choose a domain name that is a business name owned by someone else.
23. Of course, this is only if you want to have a registered business name. You could easily use your own name as your domain name and business name. But check that your name is not already taken as a domain!! If it isn't, register it now as this will become valuable to you in the years to come, even if you don't pursue copywriting.
24. Having a website confirms you are authentic, legitimate and ready for work, even if you haven't had any previous experience. There are lots of ways of populating your website with information that shows people you have writing experience, even if it's not copywriting experience per se. Ask me how during your Coaching Call.
25. Utilise your Coaching Calls. The best time to schedule a Coaching Call is when you've done the assignments from chapters 1 – 7. You really need to have completed your Goals assignment before coaching so you've got some idea about what you want to achieve. You can actually have your Coaching Call whenever you like, but it's best to have done a bit of work before you call, including your goals, so that we have material to work with.
26. The best way to schedule a Coaching Call is to email me a few dates and times to info@copyschool.com and I will get back to you. To ensure you get your preferred coaching call slot, please contact me at least a week or 10 days in advance of when you need a coaching call.
27. Utilise the Copywriting Job Leads that come through to you from me via email. Most of these will be unpaid job leads but they give you a real client who is looking for copywriting work. I have created a lead generation system whereby business owners can get an A4 brochure or 3 pages of web copy written for free. This attracts businesses that have a need for copywriting. I put these leads out to you via email and you follow them up. What this gives you is a hot lead, a client who is needing copy written, albeit, for free. But hey, they often need more than just a few web pages so who is the first person they're going to turn to when they need that done. You, of course. Think of it as an audition for a job.
28. If you do apply for these jobs, apply early as they get taken really quickly.
29. If you don't like the sound of the business, or you talk to the client and don't feel you have a sense of rapport, let the job go and decide to apply for the next one. Life is too short to work with clients you don't like or respect so move on and wait for another client. There's a new client just around the corner.

That's it for now. I hope this has helped you get started. Remember, it's not what you've done; it's what you plan to become.

All the best,

Bernadette Schwerdt
The Copywriting Coach