

# Biggest Copywriting Myths Revealed

## *By Rebecca Matter*

Rebecca Matter here – taking over the reins of *The Writer's Life* this week – to dispel a few myths about what has become the best opportunity for writers to make a living.

Of course, I'm talking about copywriting ...

No other writing opportunity has the potential to help so many aspiring writers make a living doing what they love, while enjoying the lifestyle they've always dreamed of.

The challenge, however, when navigating the path to copywriting success, is deciphering what's real and what's simply a myth.

**If you believe the myths, you might unknowingly create roadblocks that can stop you from reaching your goals.**

When American Writers & Artists Institute (AWAI) first launched its [copywriting course](#) in 1997, the advertising industry had a strong negative reaction to what we were doing. They told us we were way out of line for presuming we could teach people who weren't pros how to write persuasive copy.

You see, they treated copywriting like a closed profession ... one that was meant for only a select few oddball geniuses with years and years of experience.

**Back then, the belief was that copywriting was a closed profession for "Madison Avenue" writers only.**

We believed that to be a myth ...

After all, Mark Morgan Ford (you might know him as his former pen name Michael Masterson) and Bill Bonner had already trained numerous six- and seven-figure copywriters, including our very own founders, Paul Hollingshead and Don Mahoney.

But, we were still a little worried ...

What if the "Madison Avenue" exclusivity myth were true? What if the naysayers were right?

Fortunately, our doubts didn't last long. Within just months of launching the [Accelerated Program for Six-Figure Copywriting](#), we started hearing from our earliest members that they were getting paid assignments ... quitting their "old jobs" and becoming freelance copywriters ... even being hired as staff writers by big-name marketing companies.

Katie often tells the story about one of our first success stories, Steve W., who, after his first week working as an in-house writer for a huge self-help publisher, called her and said, "I just sat in on my first copy review session, and they think I'm a marketing genius. I casually mentioned the basics I've learned from AWAI, like the 4-Legged Stool ... the 4 U's ... the Power of One ... and I was able to make all the copy we reviewed instantly better."

Over the past 17 years, we've helped thousands of other members like Steve launch successful writing careers.

Thank goodness we didn't buy into the "Madison Avenue" myth!

And that's why this week I want to dispel four more very prevalent myths you may have heard about the copywriting industry that may be holding you back from living the life you've always dreamed of having.

Because, it's true ...

**If you enjoy reading and writing, it's possible to make a very good living as a direct-response copywriter — even if it's just part-time.**

You can do it all from home, or the beach, or the neighborhood café ... or from wherever you want. (I'm writing this email from an upstairs balcony overlooking the green Texas Hill Country, enjoying a lovely breeze, and listening to the birds sing a morning song. Even after 10 years, I still can't believe this is my job!)

You just need to know the *real truth* when it comes to this opportunity.

So this week, we'll address those myths head on, and hopefully remove a few roadblocks that may be in your way.

I've got a couple of doozies to share with you ...

Like tomorrow, where I'll expose the truth about writing good copy – and why you may be sabotaging your own future if you listen to the myth.

But, I'd also like to know what myths you've heard about the copywriting industry, as well as any questions you'd like answered once and for all. Share them with me below.

It's going to be a fun week!

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# 20 Responses to "Biggest Copywriting Myths Revealed"

Hmm... I'd have to say a big one is that to be any good you have to have agency experience.

*Maximilian Hart* – over a year ago

Rebecca, Darnell McCray here. I really appreciated that article. As I am about to get started in my COS program; I hope to land where you and so many other A+ writers have landed.

Respectfully, Darnell

*Darnell McCray* – over a year ago

Rebecca, looking forward to your articles this week! I've taken the accelerated course, but haven't made the leap to getting a client. What holds me back is the myth that I still don't know enough. I feel insecure about offering advice. And prospecting for clients feels downright terrifying! Not sure if you'll cover any of this, but I'll be reading.

*Guest (Ed)* – over a year ago

**@Maximilian Hart - you definitely do not need agency experience. Granted, if a writer had some, he/she should play it up since it's a benefit. But just as much as any experience that's valuable to a client - like experience in the industry.**

*Rebecca Matter* – over a year ago

Appreciate this article Rebecca. As my recent position with a large company was terminated several months ago, I have been in the job hunt full time since then. (No luck)I haven't yet made the commitment to launching a writing career full time. Not sure if it's a myth, but it seems like it would take at least 2-3 years to make a living wage as a copywriter. If I am going to make the leap am I kidding myself that I can make a living from this in less than a year?

*Andrea F* – over a year ago

Hey Rebecca, I've heard some say that it takes several months to a year to earn enough monthly to support yourself. This is concerning because I'm unemployed at this time.

*Shawn Moore* – over a year ago

Hi Rebecca!

A lovely name you have!

After having gone through some of the copies from AWAI archives, and also the mail that you wrote to me...at times i wonder, don't you think that they are a bit too lengthy.

I am a technical writer also ( was earlier working with a software company) where in we are supposed to write 'TO THE POINT'.

Personally i don't like lengthy pieces. ( With the only exception of reading Mark Ford's copies...they are just outstanding). Would you throw some light on this...your views?

Regards, Sabitri

*Sabitri* – over a year ago

I am in my 60's, never work in the copywriting field, been an at-home mom, work here and there at odd jobs, had sewing businesses, selling books and cds on Amazon for about 3 years. I love to read about alternative health and just discover that i love to write.

Bought the Accelerated program for 6 figure income over a year ago and working on that slowly. I keep wondering if I'm kidding myself about making money with writing someday.

*Carmen S* – over a year ago

The myth & stigma that copywriting is a bunch of hype ... doesn't take talent... unprofessional, not respected. It held me back. Discovered that's nonsense. I've learned & continue to learn. It takes work & love it. Guest - prospecting is intimidating to me, too. But I'm about to do it. Carmen - I'm in my 60s too. Copywriting thru AWAI is so doable! At the start I wondered if I was kidding myself, too. Not. Keep at it! It's fun, fulfilling, rewarding. Look forward to tomorrow's myth!

*JudyB-Raleigh* – over a year ago

**@ Darnell - awesome! I look forward to working with you more in the months ahead, and seeing what your path to the writer's life looks like. Rebecca**

*Rebecca Matter* – over a year ago

**@Ed - that same fear holds so many people back. But there will always be another course, webinar, book, reason not to move forward. All you really need to know is more than the person you're talking to :) But seriously, if you've taken the six-figure copywriting program, you have a solid foundation in writing persuasive copy and have what it takes to start talking to prospective clients. And there are loads of ideas and ways to do it written in the articles on this site. Go to the archive and click on Getting Clients. And also remember you have free access to DirectResponseJobs.com - our job board for AWAI-trained copywriters. Good luck, and let me know if I can help in any way! Rebecca**

*Rebecca Matter* – over a year ago

**@Andrea F - before I can answer that question, I'd have to ask you to quantify "living wage." How much do you need to make to live on copywriting fees alone? I know many people who have done 30's in their first year, 60's in their second, and six-figures in their third. I also know plenty who have done 50-75 in their first year, and some even hitting six figures. It really depends your niche, your plan, and how much time/energy you can put into it.**

*Rebecca Matter* – over a year ago

Thanks Rebecca, important clarification. For me, the higher number(50-\$75)in the first year is my target.I am crafting my plan now and am interested in 2 areas: 1)health and wellness; and 2)helping non-profit orgs also be "well". (I have a long career in that sector).This might include advice about fiscal health and fundraising, staffing, boards, selecting programs, etc. I want to help them to succeed in their mission. Can put in lots of time now if I leave the traditional job hunt.

*Andrea F* – over a year ago

**@Shawn Moore - you first need to think about how much money you need to make on a monthly basis. And then look at what projects you want to work on, and figure how many you'd need to land to make that amount. For example, let's say you need to make \$3000 a month and you wanted to write newsletters. You'd need to find 3 clients. Hopefully that makes sense!**

*Rebecca Matter* – over a year ago

**@Sabitri - thanks for the feedback. As a technical writer, B2B copywriting projects will be perfect for you. On the consumer side, I can tell you this debate of long vs. short copy has been going on for decades. Our rule of thumb is to use as many words as it takes to get your point across/get the reader to take action - no more, no less. That being said, I can tell you in tests that long copy typically outperforms short because the reader who only needs a small amount of copy to be persuaded can easily just jump to the end. And the reader who needs the entire letter before taking action also gets what he/she needs. So while you may think the long copy is unnecessary, it's sometimes ideal for connecting with the max number of readers.**

*Rebecca Matter* – over a year ago

**@Carmen S - only you know if you're kidding yourself! :) But seriously, you can totally do this if you have a plan and you're able to put in the time to get it done. You have the best program on learning to write persuasive copy, and we've added an entire module on getting clients and building your business. It sounds like you have some experience working with clients and running small businesses already, so hopefully you'll be able to leverage those experiences to this new venture. Good luck and if I can help in any way let me know! Rebecca**

*Rebecca Matter* – over a year ago

**@JudyB-Raleigh - awesome! Thank you so much for your note. And if I can help in any way - answer any questions, get you through any roadblocks you encounter - anything - please let me know. And keep me posted on your success! Sounds like you're close to a big breakthrough. Rebecca**

*Rebecca Matter* – over a year ago

**@Andrea F - very good! I like that you have answers to all of those questions. You'll definitely want to pick one of those two paths to start - it will make marketing yourself much easier. I also have something I think will help you put together a good plan. Send me an email and I'll hook you up! You can also reach me on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/RebeccaMatterWrites](https://www.facebook.com/RebeccaMatterWrites). After even this little exchange, I've got a good feeling about you and what's to come. Rebecca**

*Rebecca Matter* – over a year ago

One myth that has kept me back is the idea that I may not be considered for jobs because I live in Central America. Clients may not want to have a telecommute arrangement.

*JNL* – over a year ago

**@JNL - good one! For the most part, clients won't care where you live. As long as you can deliver the copy on time, where you live shouldn't matter. I personally work with writers all over the world. And I rarely meet with any of them face-to-face. So go for it! Skies the limit when it comes to clients. Rebecca**

*Rebecca Matter* – over a year ago

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