



Unexpected Furlough Launches Corporate Manager Into a Six-Figure Copywriting Career

A full-time salary cut in half. For Lisa Christoffel, this sudden event transformed her life beyond her wildest dreams.

Lisa, a busy global contact center manager for Kodak, was taking on side copywriting projects wherever her schedule would allow. Her goal at the time was to earn some extra money to offset her kids' college expenses.

But in 2020, her work hours were suddenly cut in half. Instead of panicking, Lisa saw a tremendous opportunity — the chance to grow her copywriting business.

Long Hours and Missed Milestones

The inspiration for a career change began years earlier. In a global position, Lisa found herself pulled in too many directions, working and taking calls from early morning until late in the evening.

Job demands often took her away from her family and made it challenging to juggle volunteer passions such as serving on the New York State PTA Board of Directors.

“I missed my kids' birthdays, concerts, baseball games, anniversaries... I missed everything,” she recalls. “I was working 24/7. And I knew I just didn't want to do it.”

But she didn't know what she could do that would allow her more quality time with her family while earning a full-time salary.

CASE STUDY:

Lisa Christoffel

“The freedom to choose how I want to work is one of the biggest benefits of copywriting. I am also fulfilled by the clients I work with. They're helping others design their lives to meet their dreams. Working for companies like that just makes me happy every day.”

MEMBER:

Lisa Christoffel

LOCATION:

Rochester, New York

FORMER CAREER:

Global contact center manager for Kodak

HOW SHE GOT HER FIRST CLIENT:

She placed bids on an online job board.

TOP AWAI PROGRAMS:

- *The Accelerated Program for Six-Figure Copywriting*
- *FastTrack to Copywriting Success Bootcamp and Job Fair*
- *Circle of Success*

While searching for an alternative, Lisa came across an article about side hustles in a newsletter created by Mark Ford, co-founder of American Writers and Artists Institute (AWAI). Lisa was immediately intrigued with the idea of copywriting.

“I had never heard of copywriting before,” she admits. “I had no experience in it. But I knew I could write. And this sounded like a great opportunity.”

Lisa already had experience writing persuasively in her corporate role. Initially, she didn’t see how that would translate into copywriting.

“In my corporate position, I wrote every day — business emails and presentations. I did a lot of persuading,” she says. “When I was younger, I wrote poems and short stories. I loved writing. I just never thought about it as a career.”

Motivated to Succeed

Lisa signed up for her first AWAI program, *The Accelerated Program for Six-Figure Copywriting* (now *The Accelerated Program for Seven-Figure Copywriting*). But she was so busy with her demanding job that she progressed slowly through the program.

Something changed when she added AWAI’s *Companion Series* live online program to supplement *The Accelerated Program*. Lisa credits AWAI’s Rebecca Matter and Katie Yeakle, the featured speakers in the videos, with motivating her to continue to the finish line.

“They’re both so enthusiastic about what they do, that they raised my own enthusiasm,” she says. “What finally got me through *The Accelerated Program* was hearing from Katie and Rebecca week after week about this incredible opportunity.”

Just two months into *The Accelerated Program*, Lisa decided to elevate her copywriting to the next level. Knowing that she preferred actual experiences over isolated learning, she signed up for *FastTrack to Copywriting Success* Bootcamp and Job Fair and an AWAI live event for web copywriting. These in-person events helped her make new connections in the field and solidified her commitment to becoming an exceptional copywriter.

“I met copywriters who were making six figures and gained their skills from AWAI,” she says. “So, it was actual proof, meeting real people who had done it. The more events I attended, the easier it was for me to believe that it was possible.”

Leaving Corporate Life Behind

Lisa’s experiences at *Bootcamp* and other AWAI live events showed her that she really could achieve greater freedom through copywriting. But the road forward wasn’t always smooth. She felt pulled toward one niche, then another.

While polishing her skills, she placed bids on two projects she found on an online job board and was thrilled when she won the jobs. Both clients were pleased with her work, and this boosted Lisa’s confidence to pursue more clients and bigger projects.

Joining *Circle of Success (COS)*, AWAI’s highest level of training and mentorship, also proved to be a huge asset. Lisa started accepting copywriting jobs that she had never attempted before, knowing that she could jump into her COS library of skill-based programs and specialized reports to learn quickly. With each new skill, her confidence grew.



“COS was amazing for me in terms of being able to say yes to clients on larger projects,” she says.

But Lisa still had to take the leap from her corporate position to becoming a full-time copywriter. She was working more hours than ever trying to fit copywriting in around her work schedule.

Then came the bombshell of 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic impacted everything, including Lisa’s employer.

When Kodak reduced her work hours by half, Lisa saw a golden opportunity to focus on her copywriting and add more clients. Eight months later, when her company offered her full-time position back, she declined. In fact, less than a year after that, her copywriting business was going so well that she resigned from her corporate role for good.

Finding Her Passion — and the Writer’s Life

When a local business learned about Lisa’s copywriting experience and her time with New York State’s PTA, they approached her on LinkedIn. She quickly found they were a perfect fit.

Putting her volunteer and corporate experiences together led her to her passion: education and training. Today, she writes in this niche for business-to-business (B2B) and business-to-consumer (B2C) companies. She also coaches women entrepreneurs to help them build their own businesses.

“I’m very interested in public education and ensuring that people have the skill sets they need,” she says. “Picking this niche was just perfect for me.”

Lisa’s copywriting career continued its upward climb when she was approached by AWAI’s Learning Chief, Pam Foster, about becoming the managing editor for their *B2B Writing Success* membership. To be acknowledged by the company that had trained her was both thrilling and validating.

With the freedom of copywriting, Lisa travels more with her husband and visits extended family members. Recently, she and her husband celebrated their 30th wedding anniversary with a trip to Greece and France. She has also taken many “combo trips” — traveling to in-person copywriting events and extending each trip with some vacation time.

“I promised not to work for the Greece and France trip,” she says. “But for the other trips, I was able to arrange my projects so that I might work an hour or two then have the rest of the day to relax and have fun. I would never have been able to do that at my corporate job.”

Today, Lisa is grateful for the furlough from her corporate past that led her to pursue the *writer’s life*.

“The freedom to choose how I want to work is one of the biggest benefits of copywriting,” she says. “I am also fulfilled by the clients I work with. They’re helping others design their lives to meet their dreams. Working for companies like that just makes me happy every day.”



Lisa's Tips For Copywriters

- **Just keep going** – Obstacles will happen, and many people give up when success is just around the corner. Keep moving forward and you will get there.
- **Focus on your network, not your website** – Lisa keeps a very basic website and LinkedIn profile. She focuses her time and energy on building her network, and the clients come right to her.
- **Say YES to new projects** – Seek out the training you need to learn new skills. Lisa's COS membership provided support through mentorship and training to help her tackle new copywriting projects.

Ready to pursue *the writer's life*?

Learn more about the program that helped launch Lisa's career,
The Accelerated Program for Seven-Figure Copywriting.

