

How a "Second Pair of Eyes" Can Increase Your Freelance Writing Income

By Will Newman

What I'm about to say might sound boastful. And I hate doing that.

But over the years while writing editorial content for AWAI, I've had many readers tell me how much they like my style and the information I pass on.

See, I told you it sounded boastful. But it isn't really. Because those compliments aren't solely mine to enjoy.

Those comments really belong to a very important person in my workflow.

Sandy Franks, AWAI's very own Copy Chief.

So, if you enjoy my style and the information I bring you, you really have Sandy to thank for it.

Let me explain.

In my 20 years as a freelance writer, I've seen many factors that transform run-of-the-mill copywriters into great copywriters.

Understanding and using the strategies and secrets you learn through AWAI provide a major step in that direction. But even those strategies and secrets may not be enough for everyone pursuing a freelance writing career.

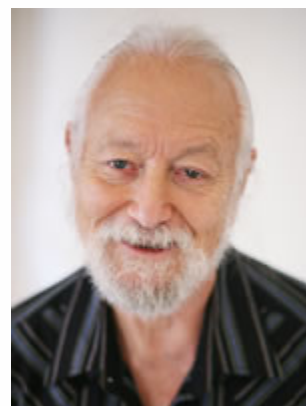
Why?

Because we writers so often write in isolation.

This isolation means that even if we think we're writing the strongest copy possible, it's easy to fall short of where we want to be.

A crucial key then in making sure copy is successful is having a "second pair of eyes" to make sure it's as strong and convincing as it can be.

This is the role of an effective Copy Chief.



Will Newman

You'll sometimes see the role of Copy Chief equated with the role of a copy editor. But for us copywriters, a good Copy Chief provides so much more than simple copyediting.

A good Copy Chief provides guidance, critique, and ideas to help improve your writing in ways you might not have seen because you're so close to it.

Let me give an example of how a friend of mine grew from apprentice copywriter to master because of her Copy Chief.

That friend is Carline Anglade-Cole.

When Carline started writing copy, she worked with Clayton Makepeace as her Copy Chief. Now, Clayton's a pretty nice guy. But he's tough. And he was tough with Carline.

His guidance as Copy Chief helped her become one of the highest-paid freelance alternative health copywriters working today. (This isn't just me saying this, either. Carline has told this story many times.)

Carline is just one example of many I know where a copywriter's career has been propelled to success because they left the isolation of solitary writing and partnered with a strong Copy Chief.

Which brings me back to Sandy Franks ...

So, let me tell you, writing and editing e-letters like *The Writer's Life* can be a huge challenge. A challenge I love, but a challenge nonetheless. The biggest part of that challenge is coming up with ideas.

Sandy has been a godsend in pointing me toward ideas that often escape me. She helps me find focus. She reads and edits my copy. And when my copy can be strengthened, she points me in the right direction.

Now, I've had other Copy Chiefs over the length of my career, but I wanted to use Sandy as an example because her help and effectiveness is so immediate and important to my writing.

So, I guess this essay really has two purposes.

First: Thank you, Sandy.

Second: I hope you consider how important having a Copy Chief could be in propelling your own career to greatness. Please join us tomorrow as none other than Sandy Franks will share with you the 12 copywriting projects clients need most in today's Internet-driven environment and ones with the greatest income potential for your freelance business.

Also, I'd love to hear your thoughts on the importance of having that extra pair of eyes to achieve *the writer's life*. Please comment below to give us your thoughts.

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11 Responses to "How a "Second Pair of Eyes" Can Increase Your Freelance Writing Income"

So true, Will! Another set of eyes is a huge help to catch dumb typos and find weaknesses in your copy.

I can personally testify to the benefit of having that second pair of eyes. Like Carline, I was mentored by Clayton Makepeace and his amazing wife, Wendy. Working for them as a staff copywriter, I learned firsthand how to write strong, persuasive copy. (For the record, Wendy was a tougher copy crit than Clayton!)

I wouldn't be where I am today without those two extra pairs of eyes!

Guest (Deanna Blanchard) – over a year ago

Will,

Your comments regarding a copy chief are correct. The problem always is: finding a good one. And one that you can afford. A lot of charlatans in the literary field, including literary agents.

I like your style and thank you, for the information. Please Like Operation Downfall

Guest (Daniel McNeet) – over a year ago

Will, I truly hope Sandy wasn't involved in this copy. If it weren't for my knowing that Clayton Makepeace is male, I would have read your sentence at the top of page 2 to mean that Carline had become his Copy Chief even as a beginning writer! Had I been your Copy Chief, I would have urged you to write that sentence, "When Carline started writing, she employed Clayton Makepeace as her Copy Chief."

Additionally, at the bottom of that page, you have "...., Sandy and a guest expert give you feedback your work." I believe you intended to say, "on your work."

So, you have me convinced. It helps to have a Copy Chief. Where can I sign up. I'd love to work with you and Sandy as your Co-Copy Chief!

Respectfully yours,

Charlie Hogge

Guest (Charlie Hogge) – over a year ago

I just sent Will a comment with a critique of his latest copy that convinced me of the benefit a Copy Chief can provide. I also volunteered to become his Co-Copy Chief.

Charlie Hogge – over a year ago

My concern: I love to write, am in the position where I will pursue that passion, yet most of the promotions I receive from The Writer's Life and AWAI contain so many grammatical and irregular punctuation errors. I understand the importance of not always following Lit 101 rules (good example: Trumbo's Johnnie Got His Gun), yet this particular send by Mr. Newman had errors, not intentional and unorthodox punctuation for effect - just sloppy. This hurts your literary validity. IMP/ph

Guest (Peggy Harper) – over a year ago

Thank you, Will Newman for your post today about Sandy Franks' teaching tomorrow.

I found your writing style in today's piece very helpful, open, transparent and informative!

Being the new kid on the block (just started as of 2/23/2017) am working to acquire a basic knowledge through the Accelerated Program.

Look forward to tomorrow.

Shalom...David Bryant

David Bryant – over a year ago

Thank you for the comments. We love getting them, positive and negative.

Good luck, best wishes, and much success, Will

Will Newman – over a year ago

Hi Will I thank Will for the help,he's,giving me,their are ungrateful people out their.It don't hurt to say Thank You.

Darrick – over a year ago

Hello Will. I payed attention on Wednesday's VBBI session when Ed Gandia suggested that we be careful when seeking business to not call their baby ugly - or words to that affect. I then applied that bit of wisdom to my critique on March 20 - that surely must have come across as an I've-got-you-now! I regret that and apologize. Seriously, though, I really would

like to get some work editing the copy of others - if only I could get some encouragement from AWAI.

Best regards, Charlie Hogge

Charlie Hogge – over a year ago

I'm looking for a copy chief to help me launch my copywriting career.

Is there anyone here in AWAI or elsewhere where I can find a really professional copy chief to take me under their wing?

And if so, how much does it cost?

[FROM WILL: Hello Derick. Please contact AWAI Member Services at (561) 278-5557. They should be able to point you in the right direction. Good luck. – Will]

Derick – over a year ago

I am just starting out but I do agree it is great to have another pair of eyes to look over what you have written.

As a copy chief you can suggest ideas that the person could have missed, make correction, read and edit copies. And when the copy can be strengthened, you can be pointed in the right direction.

I would be more than happy to help anyone out as a copy chief.

L Ferreira – over a year ago

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American Writers & Artists Institute

220 George Bush Blvd, Suite D

Delray Beach, FL 33444

(561) 278-5557 or (866) 879-2924