

## AN EIGHT POINT PLAN FOR LANDING YOUR FIRST CLIENTS

Isn't it amazing how easy it is to go above the call of duty for a friend or a client, while completely neglecting our own needs? If you want a strong start in the freelance copywriting business, you'll need to be swifter and more assertive than you might be under normal circumstances. Resolve to do your best work promoting a product you're intimately familiar with – yourself.

### POINT ONE: SELF EVALUTATION

Think of yourself as a product: who is your ideal customer and what unique benefits can you provide for them?

What marketing skills do you bring to the table?

- Are you a great article writer?
- Can you produce stunning videos?
- Are you photogenic or a good speaker?
- Do you have a blog?
- Do you already have deep knowledge of a certain niche?

All of these things can deeply contribute your ability to find and impress clients, so take note of them.

### POINT TWO: TARGET MARKET

What kind of clients are you trying to reach? It's not enough to say "anyone with money" in the Web 2.0 world. People are more interested in customized solutions than ever before.

Put yourself in the shoes of a potential client – if a hotel owner has to choose between a generic writer offering copy for a print brochure for \$500, and someone who has branded themselves as a hotel copywriter who has contacts in the industry and experience creating material for the industry, they'll pay twice as much for the privilege of working for the serious, dedicated copywriter in that industry.

### POINT THREE: LEVERAGE YOUR SKILLS

There isn't a single marketing plan that you can follow like a robot to connect a unique client with your unique skills. So look at your own skills and write down a plan that brings your unique skills and situation to play as often as possible.

If you're handsome and live in an exotic location, set up a camera. Take pictures and videos to build to your brand. If you're a fast writer, or have a strong wit, hop on a forum and give help and advice. If you're a bit more deliberate, pour your energy into blog posts. If you've got a telephone and free time, start sending calls and hand letters to local businesses in your target market.

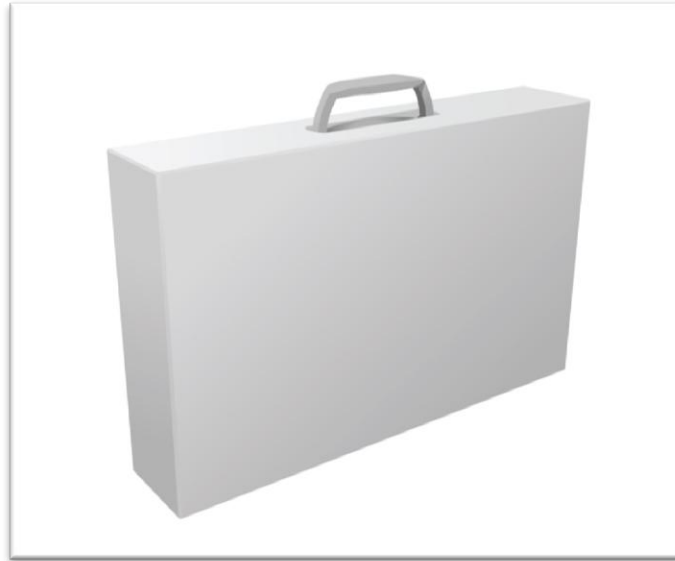
No matter who you are and where you are, there's something unique that **you** bring to the table.

It's smart to work to your strengths and focus on marketing instead of forcing yourself to learn "new skills."

### POINT FOUR: CREATE A CONVERTING WEBSITE

*Just any website* isn't acceptable. Your site doesn't need to be flashy, but it does need to be professional and effective. Here's how:

First, remember that all the "rules" of good copy apply to your website too. It's amazing how many copywriters stress providing benefits over listing features when talking to clients, but forget to do that when representing themselves. Talk directly to your client about problems they're facing – emails that get unopened, ugly and ineffective website content, low conversion rates on sales letters, and how you can fix it.



Second, give away your expertise for free to generate leads. Write a new article discussing an aspect of copywriting every day (unless you're guest posting for someone else or doing paid work). Write a special report on how to optimize copy for the web or choose a copywriter, and ask potential clients to opt-in in exchange for it.

Third, create credibility. Even if you don't have experience, there are lots of small things you can do to create the appearance of professionalism. A picture of yourself emphasizes that you're a "real person." Testimonials from bosses, coworkers, and clients help too. You might have to use some creative wording if the experience wasn't directly related to copywriting.

#### POINT FIVE: ADD A PORTFOLIO

Your portfolio doesn't need 5 items in 5 different genres, each showing off your mastery of a different style. Keep things basic and write one or two great samples about a product in a niche you have some knowledge and understanding of.

Even if you haven't done any paid work before, you can still deliver your expertise by hiring yourself and demonstrating results. There are a few good approaches for this:

First, create a “before and after” sales letter for an existing product. You can either contact a product owner and offer to do this for free, or you can do it yourself by using the letter for a PLR product. Present both of the letters side by side and discuss your changes in text or via video.

Second, you can go a step further and create your own information product and promote it via PPC or the Warrior Forum. Researching, writing, and selling a product can be a lengthy process – but it’s what business owners deal with every day. Showing that you can deliver results for **yourself** is the quickest way to prove that you can do it for others.

Third, you can simply write a letter for a conceptual product in your niche. This is the fastest way to get something up and in front of clients so you can focus on the next steps of your marketing plan.

#### POINT SIX: NETWORK LIKE CRAZY

If you’re trying to avoid the stiff competition of online marketplaces, the best thing to do is to work locally. Find stores, restaurants, construction companies, plumbers, HVAC specialists, chiropractors in larger cities like New York, Miami, or Chicago.

Why? Because competition in these cities is stiff, and in order to survive, they usually have to hire professionals to create engaging content and headlines.

Study some of these sites and compare them to each other, and to the basic principles of copywriting.

Now spend time looking at similar sites for businesses located in suburbs and smaller towns. Chances are that once you leave the top one or two sites, the quality takes a nose dive. Usually the people behind these sites are sole proprietors who are doing all the work themselves and really hate writing!