# FILTHY RICH
*Writer*

**Urgent**

# COPYWRITING CAREER KILLERS

## 7 Things That Turn Off Potential Clients—And How to Avoid Them

# INTRODUCTION

Meeting with a potential client is one of the most nerve-wracking things you'll do, especially as a new (or relatively new) copywriter.

You want so badly to say the right things and act in the right way to get them to hire you. You want this work. You really, really want this work.

But, unbeknownst to you, there could be things you're saying—or equally likely, not saying—that are actually pushing a client away and making it *harder* for them to hire you.

So let's bring these mis-shares and missteps to light.

And then let's fix 'em.

# PROBLEM 1:
# Not Having a Plan for Them

When you go into a meeting with a potential client, they're looking to you as an expert with a plan for how to improve their business. So if, when they ask you, "What do you recommend?" your answer is, "…I don't know," you've got a big problem.

## THE FIX

Come up with a plan! And this doesn't even necessarily need to be all that different among the small businesses you meet with. You could have a list of suggestions that includes things like an email campaign, brochures, new signage and local newspaper ads that you then customize for each client you meet with.

The important thing is to come in with ideas. (*Good* ideas.) You and your client can discuss it from there.

# PROBLEM 2: Not Researching Their Business

Even though you're meeting with a potential client in the hopes that they'll take you on, remember: They probably don't *really* know what to ask you. You need to guide the conversation. And if you don't have any topics relevant to their business to guide the conversation…it's gonna be a pretty short chat.

## THE FIX

Do your research before your first meeting. What are the biggest challenges that business owners in this industry face? How many competitors is this particular business up against? What are the competitors doing well? What aren't they doing well? How can you capitalize on this? Google and a good, old fashioned jaunt through the neighborhood will work wonders to help you pick up this information.

## PROBLEM 3:
## Not Being Able
## to Show Them Samples

As a copywriter, the only way to prove yourself to a potential client or employer (aside from references) is via your samples of previous work. So if you don't arrive with some samples to show, it's going to be awfully hard to demonstrate how good you are and then get the job.

## THE FIX

Okay, here are two non-negotiables: As a professional copywriter, you MUST have both an online portfolio and a print portfolio. You will not be taken seriously without them. Your online portfolio is for selling you to clients, bosses and hiring managers before they meet you, and your print portfolio is for selling you in person. Your online portfolio has to show your work, explain the problems you solved and how you solved them, and explain what sets you apart from all other copywriters. Capisce? You MUST have both.

Sorry to get tough, but them's the breaks, kid.

# PROBLEM 4:
# Not Having a Design
# Partner to Recommend

You provide words—amazing, effective, jaw-dropping copy—but often, those words need pictures to go along with them. And, nearly as often, your potential client won't have a graphic design resource. If you don't have one to recommend, you risk losing the job right there.

## THE FIX

As soon as you start getting into copywriting, you need to also start meeting people in the industry. Attend industry association events, meetups, anything you can. You'll need to meet graphic designers to help you create your spec ads (the non-commissioned ads you'll use to fill your portfolio until someone pays you for your work) and you can use these same designers, plus others you meet, as your recommended resources when your client-to-be needs a designer.

You're valuable as a copywriter and you're super-*duper* valuable as a part of a copy and design team.

# PROBLEM 5: Not Knowing the Right Questions to Ask

There are some basic, but *crucial,* questions that copywriters need to ask of their clients to get at the most important messages that should to be conveyed. If you don't know what those questions are, you can't possibly create effective copy—and you might not get the job to begin with.

## THE FIX

There are a ton, but here are a few to get you started:

Who is your target audience?

What is the greatest benefit you provide to that audience? And the second greatest? (Note: Many clients don't understand features vs. benefits—you may have to explain that to them)

What sets you apart from your competition?

What adjectives would you use to describe how people perceive your business? And how do you want them to perceive your business?

What messages are not getting through to your audience? Why do you think that is?

# PROBLEM 6:
# Not Knowing How
# to Convey Your Value

Here's a simple truth: People won't pay you to do things if they don't know why it will benefit them. And, at the same time, people won't pay you to do things if they don't know why they should choose you over anyone else. If you can't convey these two things, you won't have much luck in the field.

## THE FIX

First, as mentioned before, you have to tell a client exactly what you can do for them and how it can help their business. Done and done.

Secondly, and just as importantly, you need to convey your USP—your Unique Selling Proposition. What sets you apart from all other copywriters? What do you bring to the table that no one else can? What unique benefits do you bring to any company that hires you?

This is a crucial part of building your career as a copywriter; you'll come back to your USP again and again for every job or gig you try to get.

# PROBLEM 7: Not Knowing How to Do What You've Promised

Things are looking good: You've proposed an email campaign, with a brochure, signage and direct mail to complement it. You've quoted a price that they're fine with. Now, you just have to actually write these pieces.

…And, um, you *do* know how to write them, right?

## THE FIX

Copywriting is a career dependent on skills, just like any other career. And those skills require training, learning and practice, just like in any other career. Don't make the mistake that many people make: They think that just because they're "good at writing," they're copywriters. You need to know features and benefits, how to use a brand voice, how to write to a target audience, how to construct a piece for effectiveness and flow—and these are just the very tip of the iceberg.

Don't risk your new career; make sure you know how to do what you've told your client you can do.

# THE SECRET TO SUCCESS

It sounds like I'm over-promising here, but I swear to you that I'm not. There is a simple, three step formula to changing or starting any career successfully.

Ready? Here goes:
1. *Get training* (Learn how to do what it is that you want to do)
2. *Get experience* (Find people who will let you do it, and maybe even pay you for it)
3. *Get work* (Start getting paid, whether that be a job or freelance gigs)

It probably sounds too simple, but bear with me. The thing is, most people try to skip over step one, step two, or even both of them—and that's usually exactly why they fail.

If there's nothing else you remember from this ebook, let it be this: No matter what it is you want to do (become a copywriter, learn to paraglide, perform open heart surgery), start first by getting training and then getting experience. That's what success is built on.