

Getting a Job as a Copywriter

A Copywriter's Work Life

Before becoming a copywriter, there are several things you must ask yourself. Do you foster a love of language? Work well under deadlines? Know how to deal with all types of clients? Enjoy being a team player? Produce quality work, regardless of your interest in a product? If you answered yes to the above, copywriting could be an enjoyable and successful career for you.

Copywriters can either work as freelancers or as employees at a company. Many times, copywriters work at advertising agencies or public relations firms, working alongside the advertisers and art directors to produce effective and persuasive media. While the art directors are responsible for the entire visual aspect of a product or idea, the copywriter is responsible for creating the entire text.

One important thing to remember as a copywriter is to know what your client wants. Understand exactly what they want to get across to their audience and then do it. Also, take criticism seriously – learn from your mistakes. This can help improve your odds at landing the next client.

A Copywriter's Education

A degree in advertising, journalism, creative writing, communications, or marketing would be beneficial for a copywriter. While advertising and marketing train students in presenting brands and products, journalism, communications, and creative writing help students hone their writing skills. A double major in advertising and journalism would provide someone with a well-balanced education and prepare them for a copywriter position; however, if obtaining two majors is too much, try majoring in one and minoring in the other.

According to copywriter and partner at ad agency zig Kevin Lynch, "In college, I was kicked out of marketing, journalism, and psychology before meandering into advertising. In hindsight, it was a perfect curriculum." After all, "[Advertising] lets you be the same person Monday-Friday that you are on Saturday and Sunday – that makes work feel less like work and more like life."

Like Lynch, you can either obtain a degree from a liberal arts university or you can attend an art school, like the Art Institute of California – Orange County. Here, the school's degree in advertising "is a twelve-quarter program[,] designed to provide graduates with the skills needed to work in the field of advertising, art direction, copywriting and account supervision," says its [website](#).

One of the benefits of attending an art school like the Art Institute is that the school helps prepare students for entry-level jobs following graduation.

A Copywriter's Resume

For someone who wants to make a living off of writing, be sure to present employers with a well-written resume.

First, clearly state your objective at the top. Second, list any professional certifications you've acquired. Third, list your skills. Keep the bullet points short and concise. If you're skilled in writing articles, list that. If you've done extensive research on a product, list that. If you are a good proof reader or editor, list that. Whatever you think might give you an edge over the numerous other contenders, list it. Just be sure you can back it up.

Third, list your employment history. Include job title, company, years you've worked there, and daily responsibilities. And finally, include your education.

Like any resume, make sure everything is neat, correctly spelled, and concise. Because copywriting is in a creative field, you *may* be able to add some creativity to your resume – just make sure it doesn't interfere with the information. For example, where you display your name, use a fun (yet legible) font. Or, when printing your resume, use cream colored paper instead of white. Whatever you do, make sure you present yourself well. No matter how creative of a field you work in, no employer wants to receive an illegible resume. If they do, you can bet it'll see the bottom of the wastebasket in less than 15 seconds.

A Copywriter's Paycheck

According to CollegeBoard.com, "In 2005, copywriters earned an average salary, including bonuses, of \$60,000, according to *Advertising Age*, the leading industry journal. But some may make more than that. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, writers employed in advertising had average hourly earnings of \$27.93 in 2006. For full-time workers, that adds up to a yearly income of \$58,080."