

Content Creation Made Easy

**Module #2: Training and Tutorials
7 Writing Helps for Every Content Creator**

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7 Writing Helps For Every Content Creator

1. How to Create a Great Outline

One of the keys to creating a great piece of writing is to start by creating a great outline. And yet many writers completely overlook this step, particularly when they're writing short pieces like articles and reports.

However, creating a good outline ensures you focus your writing on the most important topics, which makes the piece more enjoyable for your readers.

So here's how to create this outline...

Step #1: Pick Your Topic

You're already working in a specific niche, so now you just need to pick a topic for your article, report, ebook or other content piece. Obviously, you want to choose a popular topic.

You can do this by:

- Looking at paid products (on sites like Clickbank.com and Amazon.com) to see what topics are selling well.
- Check out niche forums and blogs to see which topics generate a lot of interest and discussion.

Step #2: Choose Your Primary Goal for This Piece

Once you've picked your topic, then you need to decide what your goal is for this piece. You can also decide the approximate length.

Examples:

- Is it an article for your blog? If so, what is the goal of this article? E.G., is it to get people to join your list?
- Is it a presell report? If so, then the goal is to "warm up" prospects and get them to click your links.

- Is it a paid ebook? If so, then the goal is to give your readers in-depth instructions and encourage them to take action.

Knowing your primary goal will help you keep your writing focused on the goal.

Step #3: Do Your Preliminary Research

If you're not an expert in the niche, then you'll need to do some initial research in order to determine what steps, tips or topics you need to cover in your piece.

Note: A simple keyword search (such as "how to teach a dog to sit") will uncover hundreds of similar content pieces, so you can look at these pieces to determine which topics you need to include in your article, report or ebook, too.

Tip: If you're writing a book, go to Amazon.com and search for similar books. That's because Amazon let's you take a peek inside the book to see the table of contents. These tables of contents will give you plenty of ideas about what topics to include in your book.

Step #4: Create Your Outline

Once you have a good idea about what topics to include in your content piece, now it's time to create your outline.

If you need guidance as to how to order your topics, just go back to your research to see how other popular content pieces ordered their topics. Otherwise, here are a few general guidelines:

- Logical order. If you're describing a step-by-step process, then obviously your outline will list the steps in order.
- Beginner to advanced material. Self-explanatory – put the easier material at the beginning of your piece.
- Fastest results to slower results. If you're listing different tips or strategies, you might order them from those that get quick results to those that take longer to implement.
- Mix of tips. Here you might put one or two of your BEST tips in the beginning and then put another one or two of your best tips at the end.

Next, you should assign an approximate word count to each section, which will help you stay focused on the most important parts of your content piece.

Finally, don't forget to look at your outline to ensure that it helps you meet the goal of your content piece (such as preselling a product or teaching your readers a process). If your outline looks good, then you can start writing!

2. Great Writing Begins With Great Research

If you're already an expert in your niche, then you can probably sit down and write an article, report or ebook without having to consult any sources. But if you're like most people, then you need to do some research before you start writing. And if you want to end with an accurate, useful article, then you better be sure you do your research the right way.

Here's how...

Create Multiple Searches

You'll get a wider variety of sources and information if you complete several Google searches. Let's suppose you're looking up information about housetraining.

You'd want to do several searches, such as:

- Housetraining a dog
- Housetraining a puppy
- Housetraining
- Kennel training a puppy
- Potty training a puppy
- Housebreaking a dog
- Housebreaking a puppy

Use Credible Sources

Anyone can put just about anything online. And that's why it's so important for you to get your information from credible sources only. This includes:

- **Well-known experts.** For example, you can trust people like Jimmy D. Brown in the online marketing niches, Cesar Milan for dog training and Tiger Woods for golf tips.

- **Established authority sites.** These are sites like WebMD.com, which are known for providing high-quality information.
- **News sites.** Stick to major news sites, like major newspapers or other media sites (e.g., CNN.com).
- **Academic and research sites.** These include official university websites as well as research papers in peer-reviewed journals.

Verify With Multiple Sources

Even if you are going through credible sources for your research, be sure to use multiple sources.

In other words, verify all facts with at least two or three credible sources.

Make Notes

As you're doing your research, take notes about important points. If you think of your own examples, stories or tips, write these down too.

That's because you're going to want to close all your sources before you start writing to avoid accidentally plagiarizing anyone else's material.

Thus you'll refer to your notes rather than referring directly to a source.

Tip: In order to create truly original content, it's best if you find your own fresh angle for the topic. For example, many copywriting books and articles refer to the AIDA (attention, interest, desire, action) formula. And so this is what you'll find when you start researching how to write a sales letter.

Want to be unique? You could present a fresh angle on copywriting by talking about how writing a sales letter is a lot like writing a love letter.

Credit Your Sources

If you're using multiple sources to do your research on something common (like the steps for houstraining a puppy or the steps to transplant a tomato seedling), then generally you'll find that the procedure is the same across these sources.

Thus you just need to write the procedure in your own words and add in your own unique tips, examples and stories.

However, if you're gathering research on something specific – like the results of a university study – then you need to cite your source.

In this case, you'd track down the original scholarly journal and cite this journal at the end of your article, report or ebook.

In summary...

You need to make sure your information is accurate by researching a variety of credible sources. However, you also need to make sure that any content piece you create is completely original.

So while you can certainly use a content piece for inspiration and research, you CANNOT copy or merely "rewrite" other people's work. Instead, you need to write all your content in your own words, preferably adding in your own experiences whenever possible.

3. The Secrets of Writing Good Content, Fast

Your content is your livelihood. So whether you're using your content to pull in traffic or you're selling content to fill up your bank account with cash, your business depends on your ability to create a lot of good content. And the faster you can create this content, the more quickly you'll enjoy the extra traffic, subscribers and sales.

Here then are three surefire tips for creating good content, fast...

Create a Good Outline

If you start with a good outline, then you'll stay focused because you know exactly what you need to write about. And this focus will help you write more quickly.

This is particularly true if you're writing something longer, like a report or ebook. That's because it's easy to get overwhelmed with the thought of writing something so long. However, when you have a good outline, then you can think of each section on your outline as an article.

Thus you can think of it as writing a series of articles rather than writing a book. Psychologically this makes it easier to write, so you'll complete your content piece much faster.

Use Speech-to-Text Technology

Run a search in Google and you'll uncover several different software products to convert your speech into text. However, one of the most well-known of these is *Dragon Naturally Speaking*, which you can find at Nuance.com as well as your favorite retailers like Staples.com and Amazon.com.

No matter what software solution you choose, you will need to do two things:

- Get a good microphone. Your software will work better if your words sound clear as you say them into your microphone. If you prefer, you can get a headset microphone for convenience.
- Train the software. Yes, you will need to spend some time training the software to recognize the way you speak (your voice, accent, etc). So while this does take some time upfront, in the long run you'll save time once you've gone through all the training with the software.

Write Fast Without Editing

One reason that people often can't write very fast is because they stop and edit nearly every sentence as they go. However, while editing is necessary, it's something you should do AFTER you've created the piece (not during the writing process). Think of it this way...

Editing is a bit of a logical, left-brain activity. That's because it requires you to remember grammar rules, look at your sentence structure and make decisions about whether you've written a sentence or paragraph correctly.

On the other hand, the actual writing itself tends to be more of a creative process where you come up with unique ideas and interesting ways of expressing these ideas. Thus if you stop midway through the writing process to think logically about things like grammar rules, then you'll just end up stifling your creativity.

If you're used to editing as you go, then it's going to take practice to write without editing. Best thing you can do is set a timer for 15 minutes and write as fast and furiously as possible during the allotted time. When the time is up, take a short break, reset your timer and do it again. You can even make a game out of it by challenging yourself to write more words during each 15 minute block of time.

When your content piece is all finished, then you can edit it.

In Sum...

If you can learn to write faster, then you'll get more done in less time. And the more content you can create, the faster your business will grow. So give these tips and try and see if they don't help you increase your writing speed!

4. How to Overcome Writer's Block

Has this ever happened to you?

You're all excited about writing an article, report, or ebook. You open up a fresh document on your word processor. You type in your file name, maybe a title, maybe even a few sentences.

But then it feels like your brain shuts down. Suddenly you find yourself just staring at a nearly blank screen. The words don't come. Uh oh, you have writer's block.

If you do any writing at all, you'll probably experience writer's block from time to time.

Here's how to overcome it...

Get Inspired

Sometimes you get stuck simply because you're tired of looking at the same four walls, the same computer screen, etc. It helps if you can do something to kick start your creativity and give your brain a change of scenery.

For example:

- Put on music that inspires you.
- Get out of your usual office and go someplace completely different, like a park or a coffee shop.
- Spend 15-30 minutes doing something different, such as exercising (which will make you feel better).

Copy a Good Piece of Text

This is a way to force your brain to get in the “groove” of writing well. Simply take a passage from one of your favorite authors and start copying it by hand. You can also copy poetry, good sales letters, or anything else that’s well-written.

Naturally, you’re not using this content for anything. You’re just jump starting your own creative process by really thinking about someone else’s well-written piece.

Write Anything That Comes to Mind

Another way to get over writer’s block is to just start writing anything that pops into your head. If you have to write about this week’s grocery list, fine.

If you have to start off writing, “I don’t know what to write” two dozen times across the top of the page, fine. But the point is, just get your fingers moving across the keyboard. After about 20 minutes, your mental “log jam” should be broken up and your creativity released.

Create a Piece About Something Else Entirely

Sometimes it helps to write about something else that isn’t even remotely related to the thing that you need to write about.

So if you need to write an article about weight loss, you can start by writing an article about how to tie your shoes. Or if you need to create a housetraining article, then write a story about how you met your significant other.

Again, this is just a way to loosen up your creativity and get those fingers moving across the keyboard. Once you turn to the piece you do need to write, it will likely go much more smoothly.

Start in the Middle

Have you ever noticed that the introduction is often the hardest part to write? That’s because you use it to give a sneak peek at what the rest of the article, report or ebook is about. But if you haven’t yet written the rest of the content piece, then it’s easy to get stuck on the introduction.

The solution is simple: Start in the middle.

Just skip the intro and go straight to the next paragraph or the first chapter. Then you can do the introduction last, which makes it much easier since now you know exactly what all topics you covered in the rest of the piece.

In sum...

Every writer gets the dreaded writer's block from time to time. However, don't let it slow you down.

Next time your brain is moving like molasses, just use the tips above to jump start the creative process!

5. How to Really Connect With Your Audience.

Have you ever noticed that a lot of writing in your niche is actually fairly boring?

That's good news for you. Because if everyone else in your niche is creating dry, mediocre content, then you'll stand out if you create something entertaining. And if you really connect with your audience, you can bet they'll want to read every word you publish.

So how do create this connection between your words and the heart and souls of the audience? Like this...

Tell Stories

Stories are good ways to connect with your readers, because a story tends to help you form that emotional connection. It helps the reader identify with you. And a story is much more memorable than simply telling a reader what to do.

You can write this story either about you or someone else. Either way, however, the story will be more impactful if the main character is very similar to your readers.

So if your readers are stay at home moms who're looking for an opportunity to make money from home, then you'll connect to these readers if your story is about a stay at home mom who overcame this same problem.

Another thing a story can do is help demonstrate to your readers that you really understand them and their problems. And when a reader feels like the author understands him, you can bet he'll keep reading.

Create “Reader Oriented” Writing

Your readers have no doubt read plenty of articles, reports and ebook on the same topic as the one you’re writing about. However, a lot of this content is “author oriented.” That means that it seems to be more about the author rather than the readers.

Example: You might read a book about dog training in which the author seems to boast repeatedly about his credentials or delve into personal stories that actually aren’t of interest or relevant to the reader.

One way to quickly check if your writing is author-oriented is to see how many times you’ve used words like “I” or “me” versus how often you use words like “you” and “yours.” You want to use more “you” writing, since this is reader-oriented writing. Let me give you an example:

- Author-oriented writing: “I’m going to tell you about how I lost weight.”
- Reader-oriented writing: “You’re going to discover a weight-loss trick that’s worked for me - and it will work for you, too.”

Engage the Audience

If you’re writing a “how to” article, then it’s easy to fall into the familiar pattern of writing a straightforward article: “This is step 1... this is step 2...” Basically, it’s the same kind of article everyone else publishes.

Instead, engage your audience by freshening up your writing. This includes:

- Adding in your own tips. In particular, include unique tips and tricks not found anywhere else.
- Using stories to illustrate points. Be sure to engage all five of your reader’s senses to really bring him into your story.
- Inserting examples to make things more clear. Just look at the way I gave an example of reader versus author-oriented writing above.
- Including “spiced up” writing. For example, instead of merely describing someone as nervous, you could say “He was more nervous than a long-tailed

cat in a room full of rocking chairs.” That’s much more memorable, impactful and fun!

You’re writing with a purpose, whether it’s to presell your readers, teach them something or just develop a good relationship with them. However, these goals are not possible if your writing doesn’t engage and connect with your audience. That’s why you’ll want to use the tips above to improve your ability to connect with your readers!

6. How to Find a Freelancer to Create Amazing Products for You

So you want to create a product, such as an ebook or maybe even a piece of software. However, you don’t have the time, skills or perhaps the inclination to do it yourself. You’d rather hire a professional to do it for you, which frees up your time to focus on the “money” tasks (like the marketing).

But maybe you’re hesitating a bit. Maybe you’ve heard those outsourcing horror stories of people getting ripped off, service providers missing deadlines, and buyers getting saddled with subpar work. Kind of turns you off the whole idea of hiring a freelancer.

The good news is that you can protect yourself and find the perfect freelancer to start creating amazing products for you. Here’s how...

Step 1: Locate a Pool of Prospective Freelancers

Your goal is to start with a big list of prospective freelancers and then narrow down that list to only the most qualified prospects. So, to make that big list you’ll do the following:

- Search Google. For example, if you’re looking for a writer then you’d search for phrases such as “hire a freelance writer” or “ebook ghostwriter”.
- Post projects on freelancing boards such as elance.com, odesk.com and vworker.com. Provide as many details about your project as possible so that you attract the most qualified candidates.
- Post a “want ad” on CraigsList.org or review ads from writers. This is a great method if you’re interested in working with a local freelancer.

- Ask for recommendations on marketing forums where freelancers tend to congregate. This includes WarriorForum.com, DigitalPoint.com and SitePoint.com.

Step 2: Look at the Freelancers' History

Your next step is to narrow down your list of freelancers by doing your due diligence on each candidate. Here's how:

- Browse the freelancer's portfolio to make sure he or she does high-quality work.
- Check the freelancer's feedback and ratings on sites like elance.com.
- Search for the freelancer's name, business name, website and email address in Google. You're looking for a freelancer who's preferably been in business for at least a year and has an established history of providing high-quality work and good customer service.
- Review the freelancer's rates to make sure they're within your budget.

Once you follow the above steps, you'll quickly narrow your list down to only the most qualified candidates. Pick one and then move on to the next step...

Step 3: Limit Your Initial Projects

You've done your due diligence, so you know your freelancer provides high-quality work on time. But before you hand over your biggest and most expensive projects to your freelancer, you better first check that the two of you work well together.

You need to be sure you have good communication so that you can explain what you need and your freelancer can turn it into a reality.

To that end, you need to do two things:

- 1. Start small.** Give two or three smaller projects to your freelancer first. If he handles them well, then you can start handing over your bigger projects.
- 2. Provide detailed briefs.** Leave nothing out, because you don't want your freelancer to have any room to guess or assume. So if you're writing a brief for a writing project, you'd include details such as:
 - Word count.

- Working title.
- Niche (who's reading the content).
- Purpose of the content (lead generator, paid product, etc).
- Complete outline of the content, including emphasis on any particular topics.
- Any examples or samples to demonstrate what you'd like the final product to look like.

Conclusion

Finding a good freelancer doesn't have to be a nightmare. Just cast a wide net, do your due diligence and start slow.

Follow those three steps, and you'll find your perfect freelancer in no time!

7. How to Recruit Experts to Create Content for You – for FREE

When you think about creating a product (such as an ebook), you probably usually only consider two options: create it yourself or hire a freelancer to do it for you. But there's a third option that's free, doesn't require hardly any work on your part, and yet it can boost the credibility of your product.

The answer?

Recruit experts in your niche to create your product for you.

Not only do these experts do all the work, but they might even help you promote the product once it's finished. Plus having your name associated with these experts instantly establishes your own credibility and positions you as a niche expert.

Here's how to do it in [three easy steps...](#)

Step 1: Pick Your Product

First you need to decide what kind of product you're going to create, such as an ebook. Then you need to decide how you'll ask your experts to contribute. The possibilities include:

- You interview the experts. In this case, you're asking a variety of questions that are personalized for each expert.
- You ask the experts to write a short article, which will serve as one chapter of your ebook.
- You ask the experts a question and create the product by compiling these answers.

Example: "What's the best way to improve your golf swing?"

Once you know how you want your experts to contribute to your project, then move on to the next step...

Step 2: Find Experts

If you've been working in your niche for any amount of time, then you no doubt already know who all the major players are. If not, you'll just need to spend a couple hours doing research. This includes:

- Searching Google for your niche keywords (like "organic gardening" or "affiliate marketing") to see who has the biggest and most popular sites in the niche.
- Browsing market places such as Clickbank.com, JVZoo.com and DigiResults.com to see who has the most popular products in your niche.

What you're looking for are well-known, respected experts in your niche. Preferably, these experts should also have big platforms (such as a big mailing list, busy blog or plenty of social media followers). This is because your contributors are likely to help you promote the finished product.

Step 3: Recruit Partners

For best results, you should seek to develop relationships with these prospective partners first.

You do this by engaging in discussion with them on blogs, forums, social media sites, via emails and at offline seminars and other events. If you build a real relationship first, then it's easy to later ask these friends if they'll contribute to your product.

If you don't develop relationships first, then you'll need to put together a good joint venture proposal. This proposal should list all the benefits your prospective partner will receive if he agrees to work on your project. For example:

- Backend sales and exposure via a byline within the book, where your partner can promote his products or services.
- Free exposure in all sales materials which promote the product.
- Special perks, such as a free backlink on your blog.
- "Ego" perks, such as being featured in a book alongside other well-known experts.
- A special commission rate (such as 75%) if the partner helps you promote the product.

In other words, tell your prospective partner all the reasons why he should agree to do this project.

Conclusion

And there you have it – a simple three step system for finding and recruiting JV partners to create your product for you.

All you have to do is compile the submissions and, if needed, edit them. You'll do very little actual work, yet you'll end up with a high-quality product!