



Recent Widower Jump-starts Thriving Copywriting Career After Losing Job

A grave dilemma loomed over Laurent Duperval, a talented yet unfulfilled project manager in Montreal. Should he renew his contract at a soul-sucking job, or walk away at the expense of his family, especially his seriously ill wife?

“It just drained me,” Laurent says. “No matter what I accomplished during the day, no matter how well I did, at the end of the day, I felt zero personal satisfaction.”

But walking away would be difficult. With his wife’s health deteriorating and three children to support, Laurent strove to provide stability during a trying time. “In the end, it was about the money,” he says. “I took the job because it allowed me to give my family the comfort they needed without being stressed about money.”

Still, with a likely contract renewal just a few weeks away, Laurent contemplated making a change. Uncertainty weighed heavily on him.

Then, COVID-19 made the decision for him.

When COVID-19 hit in March 2020, the company Laurent worked for canceled all contract renewals after March 31.

“On the first of April, I found myself without a contract in hand for the first time in 10 years,” Laurent says. The trade-off was that he no longer had to wake up at 6 a.m. and endure a grueling four hours commuting. More importantly, he had more time to be home with his wife.

But, he still needed a new work solution...

The Email That Started It All

After taking an online content marketing course, Laurent began writing for content mills that typically paid a paltry five cents per word. While he genuinely enjoyed writing, Laurent reached a disheartening realization: “In order to make a decent living, I’d have to work harder than ever before and still not get the results I wanted,” he says.

A fortuitous email changed everything.

CASE STUDY:

Laurent Duperval

“Being a copywriter is one of the best career choices I’ve made. AWAI gave me the confidence I needed to say, ‘You know what? I can do this,’ even when it was my first client. I know I have all of the tools at my disposal. My only regret is not having found them earlier.”

MEMBER:

Laurent Duperval

LOCATION:

Montreal, Canada

FORMER CAREER:

IT and cybersecurity project manager

HOW HE GOT HIS FIRST CLIENT:

Laurent landed his first real client through a friend referral. The client turned out to be someone Laurent had worked with 20 years previously and with whom he had lost all contact.

TOP AWAI PROGRAMS:

- *The Accelerated Program for Six-Figure Copywriting*
- *The AWAI Method™ for Becoming a Skilled, In-Demand Copywriter*
- *Circle of Success*

In June 2020, Laurent came across a *Writer's Digest* email from American Writers & Artists Institute (AWAI) with an intriguing subject line: “Can You Write a Letter Like This One?”

His interest piqued, he clicked on the email and quickly learned that this seemingly too-good-to-be-true avenue of sales copywriting not only paid lucratively, but that learning how to do it worked better when you *didn't* have previous writing experience.

The email link led him to sign up for AWAI's flagship program, *The Accelerated Program for Six-Figure Copywriting*. For a few hundred dollars, Laurent would get all the knowledge and tools he needed to replace his content mill assignments (that paid peanuts) with a well-paying copywriting career.

And it didn't take long for things to pick up...

From Content Mills to Real Clients

Laurent dived into *The Accelerated Program* and took on short writing projects in the meantime. However, his wife's condition continued to worsen, and late in the summer, she tragically passed away.

No longer working in project management gave Laurent the time he needed to grieve, but after several weeks, he put his nose back to the grindstone. After connecting with a life coach and friend, Laurent regained momentum and soon landed his first real client — who turned out to be someone he'd worked with 20 years previously. And the difference in going from content mill to real clients was dramatic.

“Compensation was very different,” Laurent says. “The level of work and the commitment required were larger. But there was quite a jump in compensation.”

Besides paying very well, advancement to writing for real clients upgraded Laurent's negotiation skills.

“[While] I was getting paid through content mills, I don't consider them a real client,” Laurent says. “Those AWAI courses and weekly webinars gave me a lot of the confidence I needed to propose something [to clients] and be confident in my work.”

The Prize That Opened More Doors

As Laurent continued to land clients, he further pursued education through AWAI, taking courses like *The AWAI Method* and *Content Mastery*. He discovered that nearly all courses featured a free writing contest — and he entered as many as he could.

He became a finalist in one contest but didn't win and began to get discouraged after not winning others. Then, his big break came.

Laurent ended up winning the biggest writing contest he entered, AWAI's *Circle of Success* Challenge, which awarded him a scholarship that covered nearly all the costs of its namesake program.

“That was really something valuable, because I consider *Circle of Success* the best investment in AWAI,” Laurent says. “No matter what you want, there is a program available. If I don't have the knowledge, I can tell a client, ‘Give me a couple of weeks, I'll be able to do it.’ That's why I invested in *Circle of Success*. And by winning this scholarship, I get access to all of it.”

Flexibility, Fulfillment and Family

Now, Laurent is leagues ahead of the state the pandemic first left him in. “A lot of the financial pressures I had have disappeared,” he says. And what he gets in return for the same amount of writing back in the days of writing for content mills has dramatically increased.

**American
Writers &
Artists
Inc.** SINCE 1997

“Instead of getting paid \$100 for a 2,000-word document, I can charge \$500 or \$1,000,” he says. “Because I know I can do it. I know what I’m worth. And every time I get a new client, I increase the fee a bit to reflect that I’m getting better.”

And the financial boon hasn’t been the only upside to Laurent’s career switch. He has much more free time and flexibility now.

“I used to wake up at 6 a.m., get on the train at 7:15 to be at work by 9, and then do the same thing coming back,” he says. “I don’t have that anymore. I go to bed late, I wake up late. I can wake up at 8:30, have time for coffee and go biking for 45 minutes. I rarely sit down at my desk to work before 10 a.m. and I try to stop working around 5 or 6 p.m.”

Not only has the flexibility given Laurent more time to do things he enjoys, it also allows him to be more present for his children while providing for them, especially after their mother’s death last year.

“I’ve always wanted to make sure that when I pass away, whatever I’ve built remains for the people I leave behind,” Laurent says. “And writing is my best avenue to do that.”

The AWAI Touch

Though he’s already something of an expert, Laurent continues to learn with AWAI and enthusiastically encourages others to try it.

“I tell people, ‘If you like writing, just a little bit, learn this craft. It’ll set you up for life,’” he says.

And if Laurent was persuaded back when he read that first email about AWAI’s *Accelerated Program*, he’s even more convinced now.

“Besides the techniques from all the courses, it’s really the people behind the courses — the people who do the work, the people answering your questions, the community — who make it worth investing my time,” he says. “There’s a connection there that I wouldn’t have found anywhere else. It really is the people behind those four letters.”

Laurent's Tips For Copywriters

- **Avoid perfectionism** — “Perfectionism prevents you from getting things done. You have to do something that is good for the client, but it’s a balance,” Laurent says.
- **Charge by project, not by the hour** — “When you’re exchanging time for money, you’re in a conflict of interest because the client wants you to work as little as possible... but you want to maximize your income. That’s why I typically do not charge by the hour, but by project.”
- **Invest in yourself** — “As a copywriter, the most important thing you can do is invest in yourself. Once you’re an AWAI member, just stick around and invest where you can, how you can.”
- **Network as you go** — “Tell people what you’re doing and let them know how you can help them. It’s all about referrals.”

Ready to enjoy the writer's life yourself?

Learn more about the program that jump-started Laurent’s career, *The Accelerated Program for Six-Figure Copywriting*.

