

TheCopywritersCoach.com

How to Create Winning Concepts and Copy Every Time... Even When Faced With a Terrifying Job!

By veteran copywriter and
copywriter's coach, Chris Marlow

It doesn't matter how new you are to copywriting, or how old...the fact is, there will be times when you'd feel more confident with the brains, talent, and experience of a writing partner.

Perhaps you're writing for a new client who's in an industry you know nothing about. Perhaps you've been asked to come up with some very high level concepts. Or maybe you're getting paid partly based on response rate, and you simply want to make sure your package is as good as it possibly can be.

The answer to these and many other copywriting situations is to call in another copywriter. Share the fee and make sure you hand in perfect work. Not only will you find tremendous relief in "buddying up," but you'll get the work done faster and the results will be better, making for a happy client who comes back.

This is not an unusual arrangement in an advertising agency. Typically a junior writer will do the hard work, a copy chief will go over the work, and finally a creative director will put the stamp of approval on the work after possibly adding their 2 cents.

And when it comes to concepting, a copywriter is often paired with an art director, or a group of copywriters and designers may be assigned to come up with ideas.

In the freelance world, many copywriter "gurus" achieve guru status because #1 - they don't take jobs they don't think they can win, and #2 - they hire as many as 5 copy chiefs to go over their work.

Some months ago I found myself in a "copywriters bake-off," as the client called it. I would be up against 3 other writers in the concepting phase for a plum job for Intuit, one of the world's leading software companies.

Was I intimidated? After writing copy for 19 years, and more than 30 packages for software, I can say that...YES, I was!

But before I put my creative hat on I thought about whom I could bring in. I decided on Carol Worthington-Levy, a well-known graphic designer with many

direct marketing awards for results.

My strategy was twofold: not only would I submit concepts from two heads rather than one, but I would submit them in an actual design format which would come across much more impressive than the text format I anticipated my competition would use.

The strategy worked, the client loved the concepts, and I won the job. (Although I then found myself competing against 3 other teams in the copy phase!)

More recently one of my coaching students had a new client and wanted validation of the copy she'd written. She sent it to me, and while it was an excellent piece, it did need a stronger headline. Working together we came up with a headline that would have been difficult to improve upon.

The next day my coaching student sent an email that her client was positively thrilled with her work, and had made only minor edits.

So whenever you feel your chest tighten up with that old (unnecessary) feeling of anxiety, call on a colleague who has proven success with whatever type of project you're tackling. Just the thought of bringing in a partner should make you feel more relaxed.

Recently I called on Richard Rosen, my old employer and internationally recognized direct marketing guru. He's used to paying me for copywriting; but in this case I needed his help on crafting a strategy. Knowing ahead of time that I'd want to call him for help with a particularly complicated product launch, I worked an extra fee into the budget to pay for his expertise.

So open up your thinking: whom do you know who has knowledge and experience you can leverage? If you don't know of anyone whose ability you're sure of, ask around for a referral, or go to the Web site of a pro you don't know personally, but whose work you respect. If they can't team up with you, they'll know who can.

Copywriters are an anxious bunch, often fretting over imagined insecurities. Buddying up with a copy chief (or other expert) eliminates the jitters and allows you to learn from a pro. If you think about whom you can bring in to a difficult project, you'll find that you can eliminate one of the copywriter's biggest self-defeating obstacles - that of insecurity.

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Chris also offers business and copywriting coaching to new, aspiring, and seasoned copywriters who want to accelerate their success. Check out the benefits of coaching at:

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Chris has also created the world's only large-scale survey of copywriter pricing and economics. Find out what others charge and earn at:

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