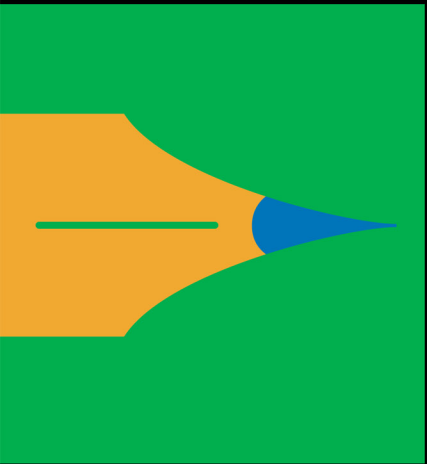


The Well-Fed Writer



*Financial
Self-Sufficiency
as a Freelance
Writer in Six
Months or Less*

P e t e r B o w e r m a n

"A detailed roadmap to freelancing success, brimming with nuggets of practical advice delivered in an enthusiastic, casual style. If you're serious about writing for fun and profit, you MUST buy this book!"

– Bev Walton-Porter, Editor, BookStop
www.inkspot.com
The Writer's Resource

The Well-Fed Writer

— *A Well-Praised Book!*

“Bowerman shows ... how almost anyone can forge ahead as an independent writer. His advice is good, couched in brassy prose ... He anticipates every conceivable question ... great common-sense tips ...”

Booklist

“... with a snappy conversational tone ... Bowerman spells out everything. ... For anyone interested in writing and willing to make a go of self-employment, this book should provide excellent guidelines and inspiration.”

ForeWord, The Magazine of Independent Publishing

“... truly rewarding reading for aspiring freelance writers, copywriters, scriptwriters, columnists, journalists, and anyone else wanting to earn from what they write.”

The Midwest Book Review

“This book is the best information on how to make more money with corporate clients I have ever read. It answers everything you want to know. Highly recommended.”

Bob Bly, Author (20+ titles)

Secrets of a Freelance Writer, The Copywriter's Handbook
Regular Contributing Editor to *Writer's Digest* magazine

“A detailed roadmap to freelancing success, *The Well-Fed Writer* is brimming with nuggets of practical advice delivered in an enthusiastic, casual style. If you're serious about writing for fun and profit, you **MUST** buy this book!”

Bev Walton-Porter, Editor, BookStop

www.Inkspot.com

The Writer's Resource

“If you would rather be writing, get this book. Peter Bowerman, a successful freelance writer, has been there. In this book he shows you the way... I highly recommend this book.”

Dan Poynter, Author (100+ books)

The Self-Publishing Manual, Successful Non-Fiction

www.ParaPublishing.com

“Engaging, motivating, and comprehensive—but above all, powerfully useful. An encyclopedic collection of freelancing fundamentals suffused throughout with the spirit of freedom and possibility all would-be freelancers crave.”

Michael Perry, Author, Speaker
Handbook for Freelance Writing
www.sneezingcow.com

“Sharing practical information with great humor, *The Well-Fed Writer* pulls together in one easy-to-read package everything you need to know to be a freelance commercial writer—a topic most how-to-freelance books skip entirely.”

Teresa Mears, Editor/Publisher
Freelance Success newsletter for writers
www.FreelanceSuccess.com

“An excellent book worth every penny of the cover price, and written in a conversational style that makes you feel like you’re talking over coffee. There’s so much information here you could read it three times and come away with something different each time.”

Jerri L. Ledford
www.momwriters.com
Writer’s Digest Top 101 Web Sites
Momwriters Mailing List
(momwriters@egroups.com)

“Writers regularly ask me how and where to find lucrative freelance work. From now on, I’ll tell them to read *The Well-Fed Writer*. Unlike countless other writing books that promise the moon but deliver the doldrums, Peter Bowerman’s advice is practical, insightful, and relevant.”

Debra Koontz Traverso, Co-President
www.WriteDirections.com
Author (four books)
Adjunct Faculty, Harvard University

“Writing the Great-American-Novel isn’t the only way for a writer to earn a living. If you love to write and want the flexibility of a work-at-home career, let *The Well-Fed Writer* and author Peter Bowerman guide you every step of the way with practical tips, straightforward advice, wit, and honesty. I highly recommend this book.”

Cheryl Demas
Editor, www.WAHM.com – The Online Magazine For Work-At-Home Moms
Author, *The Work-at-Home Mom’s Guide to Home Business*

“We have a school that teaches people to make a career out of writing—a fun well-paid career. *The Well-Fed Writer* is now on our recommended reading list. And even though I’ve been teaching people how to make a living as advertising copywriters for over 20 years, I’m amazed at how much this book has taught me in a couple of hours.”

Norm Grey
President, The Creative Circus, Inc.
(*School for Copywriting, Art Direction, Photography, Design/Illustration*)
Former Sr.VP/Group Creative Director, J. Walter Thompson

“*The Well-Fed Writer* is one of the best books I have read about making a living as a professional writer. Practical tips in a fun-to-read style.”

Priscilla Y. Huff, Author
101 Best Home-Business Success Secrets for Women

“Peter Bowerman knows his stuff. In simple, step-by-step fashion, and with a lucid style rare for how-to books, he shows how to turn the seeming madness of freelance writing into the magic of financial freedom. When it comes to writers’ guides, this is the best. Toss the rest.”

Jeff Gates, Author
The Ownership Solution, Democracy at Risk

“*The Well-Fed Writer* is a comprehensive guide, written in a clear, concise, first-person style. I highly recommend it to anyone who’s seriously considering entering the writing field or to any working writer interested in substantially increasing their income.”

Bill Watson, Author
9 Creativity-Required Businesses You Can Start From Home
www.BillWatson.net

“No starving in a garret for this author. If you’ve ever dreamed of becoming a freelance writer, you’ll be hooked on *The Well-Fed Writer*. Peter Bowerman recommends his guidelines to career-changers, journalists, corporate staff writers, at-home moms, even recent college graduates. We do, too.”

Linda Mitchell, Editor
Kennedy’s Career Strategist

"The Well-Fed Writer is a comprehensive feast for writers of all skill levels. It's a "must read" for anyone interested in ... the lucrative field of freelance commercial writing."

Kim Lisi, Managing Editor
HOMEBusiness Journal
www.homebizjour.com

"Bowerman adopts the language and style of contemporary self-help books ... includes useful samples of promotional materials and ... commercial pieces. Public libraries should consider purchasing [*The Well-Fed Writer*] for their career sections."

Library Journal

"Over the years, those writers in our **writers-editors.com** network who have generated the most money with the least frustration have pursued commercial writing to some extent. I like *The Well-Fed Writer* because it leads the writer step-by-step through the 'how, when, if, and where' of being successful as a commercial writer."

Dana K. Cassell, Executive Director
www.writers-editors.com
(where editors/clients find writers; where writers find markets)
Editor, *Freelance Writer's Report*

And From Inside the Industry...

Listen to Corporate Writing Buyers and Freelance Commercial Writers!

"As a former communications manager and employer of freelance writers, I believe *The Well-Fed Writer* does a great job describing the depth of opportunity in this lucrative field. The information and direction are right on the money."

Marsha Hawkins
(Former) Employee Communications Manager
BellSouth Corporation

"The Well-Fed Writer does a terrific job of answering every possible question a new writer would—or should ask and with a friendly and straightforward approach. If only a book like this had been available when I began my career as a freelance writer!"

Carmie McCook
Corporate Video Production Manager
United Parcel Service

"Large companies often outsource their copywriting to proven freelancers. This book provides the who, what, when, where and how of getting into these companies' doors and becoming one of their 'go-to' writers. If you're serious about freelancing, this book is the single best investment you can make."

Michael J. Baker
Senior Writer/Editor/Marketing Communications
(MCI)WorldComm

"Smart, informative and funny! As a 'client' in the marketing industry, I highly recommend *The Well-Fed Writer* to demystify the often intimidating dream of becoming a successful freelance writer. Good, smart writers are crucial to the success of business communications."

Kristi Sumner
Marketing Director/Creative Development
Mercedes-Benz Credit Corporation

"As a writer's broker who connects writers with corporate writing jobs, it's my job to know the many ins and outs of this lucrative arena. *The Well-Fed Writer* is THE complete source for clear step-by-step directions on breaking into freelance commercial writing."

Diane Eissler
Vice-President
Writers of Atlanta Associates, Inc.

"I wish I'd had this book when I began freelancing 16 years ago. It's a must read for anyone contemplating the independent writer's life. Even experienced freelancers will find valuable ideas for improving their businesses."

Kathy Couch
Couch Communications
Freelance Commercial Writer since 1984

“A friendly, well-organized, and thorough primer for the business. I’m still trying to figure out how he’s amassed a career-ful of insight in less than a decade!”

Paul Glickstein

Commercial Staff Writer from 1972
Freelance Commercial Writer since 1986

“After freelancing for nearly six years, I can vouch for the fact that Peter Bowerman tells it like it is. Even at this stage in my career, his book has inspired me to push beyond the status quo.”

Lisa Rubilar

Rubilar Communications
Freelance Commercial Writer since 1994

“Wow! A veritable feast of practical information on the ins and outs of freelance copywriting. Armed with *The Well-Fed Writer* when I started out more than a dozen years ago, no doubt I’d have avoided some mistakes—and made more money!”

Steve Knapp

Intelligent Copy for High-Tech Products
Freelance Commercial Writer since 1988

The Well-Fed Writer

*Financial Self-Sufficiency
As a Freelance Writer
In Six Months or Less*

By Peter Bowerman

Fanove Publishing - Atlanta, Georgia
2000

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Introduction

WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME you did something for a living that *really* and truly lit you up? Where work felt like play, you looked forward to getting out of bed in the morning, you were consistently stimulated, as busy as you wanted to be, along with lots of freedom, creative fulfillment, and comfortable working conditions? *And* all the while earning a handsome income with the time to enjoy it? Have you ever had such an experience? Can you even imagine it? If you have been there but aren't now, don't you think a lot about how to find it again?

LET YOURSELF DREAM Have you dreamed of becoming a writer but never took it too seriously because after all, the words “starving” and “writer” are pretty much joined at the hip? Or are you already a writer but either working for someone else or struggling financially?

What would you say if I told you that there's an arena of writing, that if pursued with reasonable diligence by an even moderately talented and minimally creative individual, could generate self-sufficiency inside of six months and all the above-described goodies in only about a year or two?

That's what *The Well-Fed Writer* is all about. Becoming a well-respected, well-compensated, fulfilled writer. A person who, when asked what you do, can proudly respond “I'm a writer.” Talk about a conversation piece. You watch.

When you're around someone who's doing what he or she really enjoys, it shows, doesn't it? Well, speaking of it “showing,” I'm going to share my 1994 Christmas letter with you. Lucky you.

For years, I swore I'd never do one of those form letters at Christmas time. You know, those incredibly dull travelogues of the past year, outlining every inconsequential thing that happened to every major and minor family member (and usually not even *your* family) over the past 12 months.

Feel The Excitement Then, in late 1992, after finding myself in my eighth straight hour of doing Christmas cards, I decided that the next year, I would actually do that which I loathed—my own Xmas letter. Anyway, let these excerpts from my Seasons Greetings 1994 give you a snapshot of the excitement and enthusiasm I felt for my new career.

I ask again: When was the last time you were really excited about what you did for a living? That's possible when you find the right direction, and for some of you, this kind of writing may be it.

Dear Friends,

Christmas 1994

Guess what I did this year? Climb Mt. Everest? Wrestle an alligator? Get elected to public office? Hey, that was a low blow

I became a writer. Not in some ethereal sense of the word, like, "I declare myself merged with the essence of" 'writer-ness.' I'm talking a "paying-the-bills-by-writing" writer.

I was spurred on by the advice given Sarah Caldwell (famous opera producer) by her mother: "Find something you love to do, and someone who will pay you to do it." Amen to that.

After spending January buying a second-hand computer, talking myself in and out of the idea about 50 times, and alternately experiencing anxiety attacks and delusions of grandeur, I finally took the plunge as a freelance commercial writer on Monday, January 24th at approximately 9:36 a.m. Company name: **WriteInc.**

On the 26th of February, at approximately 1:45 p.m., my mailman delivered an envelope with a \$50 check enclosed. My first official paycheck as a writer of anything came for a column entitled, "Petiquette in the Park"—the lighter side of people and their pets. The quintessential humble beginning.

However, operating on the pragmatic assumption that most writers who insist on writing only books, articles, and columns tend to eat a lot of baloney and ramen noodles, I decided to pursue commercial writing—writing for business: marketing brochures, ad copy, video scripts, corporate image pieces, speeches, and so on.

Within three and a half months, I literally had more business than I could handle. There's no more frustratingly satisfying feeling than having to turn down work. My current tally (are you growing weary of this self-enshrinement?) since early February is 19 brochures, four video scripts, two radio spots, two 40-page technical manuals, a half dozen ad campaigns and sales promotion projects, a 44-part educational CD-ROM, ... oh, and a book.

In mid-May, I landed a job ghost-writing a motivational book for a very successful mortgage broker/speaker, entitled: *Life Mastery: The Ultimate*

Power of Relationships. It was a beautiful thing. Three months and almost 230 pages.

I had over 45 columns published in five local papers. Everything from humor/satire and political /social commentary to business advice. Doesn't pay much, but provides food for the soul. Sorry for talking shop so much, but frankly, it's how I spent most of my year.

Built From Nothing Think I was excited? You bet I was. I'd created this life direction out of nothing other than a dream and it had taken flight. Is it fun all the time? Of course not. Did I work a lot that first year? Absolutely, but it didn't feel like work. Would I trade it for the life I had before? Not for a second. Does that mean I'll be doing it forever? Probably not. But that's just me.

In all likelihood, I'll be changing careers another, oh, six or seven times or so in my life. You might find that this direction is it for you. I've got a number of professional colleagues who've been doing this for anywhere from 10-25 years—for someone else originally and eventually for themselves—and wouldn't want to do anything else. And as you'll soon discover, it's not hard to see why.

\$2000/Month Part-Time The freelance commercial writing direction can be tremendously lucrative on either a full- or part-time basis. If you choose to pursue it full-time, I challenge you to find an easier way to make a very handsome living as a writer (the very few Stephen Kings and John Grishams of the world notwithstanding). By the same token, you may decide that part-time is the way to go, as a way to supplement your more creative writing pursuits—your “passion” writing. If so, great! In that case, making \$2000 a month part-time is extremely feasible. Heck—that's just 2–3 medium-size marketing brochures.

HOW DID I GET STARTED? I'd love to tell you some wonderfully heart-warming story about how I knew I wanted to be a freelance commercial writer from the time I was crawling. How I rewrote the endings to Dr. Seuss at age five, walked around the house at age eight coming up with new jingles for Mrs. Paul's Fishsticks and Durkee canned onion rings. Or that I revamped the Boy Scout manual at 12 and at 17, submitted suggested revisions of my high school history book to Prentice-Hall.

Alas, not so. I did take one journalism course in both high school and college and at 15, did write a column covering little league baseball for three local

newspapers in my little tri-town community on the North Shore of Massachusetts. That's it. Impressive, huh?

Zero Experience I'd never been a writer before I started this business. I had no industry background and no advertising agency experience. I was a Russian Studies major in college. I had no contacts in the industry, no client list. Nada. Zippo. Zilch.

Given all that, while my success certainly says something about me, it says just as much about the accessibility of the opportunity.

I found that in any job I'd held over the years, I gravitated to the few writing tasks that did crop up—an occasional letter or little brochure—and typically got good feedback from those around me. Do we have anything in common there?

All in all, there was very little in my past to refer to. Just that I'd decided that this was the next step in my life journey that I wanted to take, and I had a sense that I was a good enough writer and a good enough marketer to be successful.

So, if you're thinking about this field and have no formal experience or writing background, rest assured, it's no hindrance to success. You might have to work a little harder to get established than say, a staff writer for a corporation, but it's totally do-able. And as you'll also undoubtedly be delighted to discover along the way here, I'm not a super disciplined, aggressive, or technically-savvy guy and yet, I've done quite well.

IT'S CLOSER THAN YOU THINK I've written this book as a realistic guide to approaching this business. And here's what I mean by "realistic": Given that we're all human beings, and as such, have a rather substantial lazy, slug-like streak in us, I didn't want to write a book that would make becoming a freelance commercial writer seem akin to climbing Mt. Everest.

If I did, you'd finish the book—maybe—and it would become just another one of those things you checked out but never did anything about. And let me say this about my profession. As businesses go, this business *is* a lot easier than most to get off the ground. And compared to other areas of freelance writing, it's not only much easier to get into—it's much more lucrative once you do.

SIMPLE, REPEATABLE SYSTEMS With an emphasis on simple, repeatable systems, I believe I've created a strategy for operating this business that achieves the best of both worlds: potential for healthy financial success without killing yourself to get there.

In fact, in many ways, it epitomizes the concept, “Work smarter, not harder.” Bottom line, you can work this business hard, like a *Type A* personality would, and I’ll show you how to do that, if that’s what you want. If however, you’re like me and prefer to have a life *and* make a solid living, I can show you how to do that, too.

WHY SO SOON? Some readers might ask, “Why start writing this book after a little more than two years at it? Wouldn’t most people put a decade or two in before writing a how-to book?” Even though I’ve been at it for over six years at press time, I wanted to start this book early, for one simple reason: to show people that it just doesn’t take very long to achieve healthy financial success in this business—two years or less. And only six months to financial self-sufficiency.

Have you ever gone to a how-to seminar, where the speaker has been practicing his or her craft for 15–20 years? How intimidating is that? If you’re brand new to something, and you’re confronted with a double-decade expert, you might just feel like it’s going to take you forever to reach even a fraction of the success that he’s had. No wonder he’s successful, you say, he’s been at it for most of his life! I want you to feel like this is an accessible and “within-reach” opportunity, because it is.

LEVERAGE WHAT YOU KNOW In that regard, you may be that much ahead of the game. If you’re coming from a specific field—such as healthcare, financial services, real estate, retail, hi-tech—and don’t mind writing about that field, that’s a huge plus. That’s how many people get their start. They may eventually transition into writing for other fields, but at the outset, they establish a solid business base writing about what they already know, using years of established contacts.

Maybe you’re in the industry and already writing, but working for someone else. You want to jump out on your own, and would appreciate some kind of a trail to follow. Whatever your reason, this book can help get you headed in the right direction.

WHAT’S AHEAD? What are we going to cover along the way? While we’ll spend one chapter near the end delving into the stylistic side of writing—how to actually write certain kinds of projects—the main focus of this book is on how to build a freelance commercial writing business from nothing other than your vision.

I'm assuming that you wouldn't be reading this book unless you felt that you were a pretty decent writer already (but rest assured, you do *not* have to be great), but that you just need some guidance in parlaying that ability into a lucrative profession.

Since there are plenty of books and courses around on improving your writing skills, I'll let them pick up the slack in that arena.

I'll be sharing with you my experiences in building a successful business. Not the *right* answers or *only* answers, just some things that have worked for me. Take on what works for you and don't use what doesn't. But know that this is one very solid path to follow if you want to build a business of your own.

Do I do everything I suggest in this book religiously? No. If I did, would I make a lot more money than I currently do? Absolutely. If you followed these guidelines to the letter, would you earn an even healthier living than I do? I'd bet on it.

Subscribing to the idea that learning not only *can* but *must* be fun, I've tried to make it light and readable. If you actually use this book to launch a new career for yourself, well, that would be just about the coolest thing I could possibly imagine. Let's get started....

The Well-Fed E-Pub:

THE ***(mini)*** ***BANQUET***

A Half-Dozen Issues of
THE WELL-FED E-PUB (May 2002 – October 2002),
the Critically Acclaimed E-Newsletter AND
Companion Publication To *The Well-Fed Writer*.

Written and Compiled by
Peter Bowerman
AND
A Crowd of “Well-Fed” Friends Around the World...

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...Serving up food for thought and tasty tips for the prospering writer...Come on in, sit anywhere and bring your appetite!

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