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IWOC'S MAY PROGRAM

Market yourself! How every freelancer's nightmare could make dreams come true

BY SHERREE GEYER

Soliciting work and building a client base are perennial challenges that can prevent freelancers from realizing their earning potential and gainfully employed writers from taking the plunge as independent contractors.

Lynn Hazan will address the how's and why's of pursuing new business when she takes the podium at the May IWOC meeting to deliver "How to Market Yourself and Your Services to be the Writer of Choice." Hazan, president of Chicago-based Lynn Hazan & Associates, specializes in the executive recruitment of communications and marketing professionals, including those in public relations, corporate communications and advertising.

She says that agencies and corporations "are always looking for freelance help." She will focus on writing opportunities within the expanding markets of pharmaceuticals and biomedical technology and the consolidating markets of banking, insurance and telecommunications. She advises freelancers to target markets with critical needs and foresees growth in the non-profit sector, especially for writers able to reach Hispanic and Indian American populations.

Hazen, who says that freelancers must be "action oriented," possess good core skills and manage time well to succeed, will provide practical tips to organize and improve resumes, portfolios, and business proposals. She advises freelancers with Web sites to post case studies that promote their services, noting that "success breeds success."

Because "clients hire people, not resumes," Hazen believes that networking and relationship building are skills critical to business success. She will outline options such as joining professional organizations, speaking before business groups, and participating in charitable activities that can be used to develop new clients.

"How to Market Yourself and Your Services to be the Writer of Choice" will be held on Tuesday, May 10 at the Feltre School, 22 W. Erie St. Networking begins at 5 PM and the program at 6 PM. Admission is free to professional members; \$5 for associate members; and \$15 for nonmembers. Program attendees are invited to a nearby restaurant afterward for a buy-your-own dinner to share more secrets to freelance success. ☞



May Program "How to Market Yourself"

Tuesday, May 10
The Feltre School
22 West Erie
Networking 5:00 PM
Program 6:00 PM

FREE for
Professional members
Associate members \$5
Nonmembers \$15

IWOC meets for
programs and networking
the second Tuesday of
every month.

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APRIL RECAP

Writing a winning resume

BY MARLA KRUGLIK

Cathleen M. Hunt, CPRW, gave her audience a quick, clean overview of her "Resume & Cover Letter Writing, Strategy and Formats" advice at the IWOC meeting April 12. Could there be anything new to learn on this topic, even if the speaker is a Certified Professional Resume Writer? I suppose that I, like most IWOC members in attendance, went to the meeting "just to be sure" that there was not. After writing so many cover letters and almost always making adjustments to the accompanying resume, one would think we'd know how to go about it. But if there's anything we could (painlessly) do better, tell us what it is. Please.

So Ms. Hunt had an attentive audience, on the skeptical side but eager to learn.

"Don't just tell it—sell it" should be your mantra for creating a resume, according to Hunt. Your first choice is whether to send a traditional, chronological resume or a functional one that stresses areas of expertise. Hunt prefers a combination, which she begins with the functional type. In other word, establish your special talents and accomplishments first.

Then, profile your employment chronologically (beginning with the present or most recent, of course, and going backward), education, professional affiliations and any positions held in these organizations. Be sure to list computer and foreign language skills, and professional training such as workshops and seminars attended beyond college. An honors and awards section is great, if you have any. If you are recently out of school, with few achievements to point out, your stated objective takes on more relevance.

Whenever you can quantify information, do so. This makes whoever is reading your resume want to read on, Hunt said.

Employers looking for permanent employees, as opposed to those seeking temps or freelancers, may especially focus on your age and any gaps in employment. You do not want to "mislead or misrepresent," of course. But if you don't think your age would be to

your advantage, you could list your college degrees, but not the years you received them. You also could list your employment history back to a certain year, leaving off previous, less significant work.

To de-emphasize gaps, Hunt advises listing your employment dates by the years, not the months

and years you worked at each job. For example, use 2001-2002, not Dec., 2001-Jan., 2002).

The key words to use in the resume and cover letter—the words that will get your pages past the computer scanner to human eyes—are those that the employer uses in the job notice. So examine that notice carefully.

In your cover letter, be sure to mention your "contact information," or how you learned of the position. Name the Web site (IWOC's?) or the person in the business or organization. Your letter should complement your resume, not repeat it.

In her handouts were many of the tips Hunt could't fit into her lively program, including surefire keywords (if they apply!) and a sample of Web job sites.

For more information on Hunt and the services she offers clients, from students to executives, see her Web site, www.writeworksonline.com. ☞



Would your resume stand out from a crowd?

More about resumes on the next page

Acquiring big writing tips at a small price

BY RICHARD L. EASTLINE

The Freelance Success Book / David Taylor / 336 pp. incl. index and appendices / Peak Writing Press (issued via Quality Books, Inc.), 2003 / Paperback, \$19.95 / ISBN 0-9717330-4-X

Need another pillar to support your growing library of writer's references? Here's one that already has proven itself to be a heavyweight. It's even been included previously in a list of recommendations in this journal, but for those who missed it or chose to take a pass on it, now is a good time to check it out.

You may not warm to the author's style of tutoring (somewhat hyper) and you may even challenge the basis for some of his convictions. But there's no denying his complete familiarity with the subject matter or his capacity to extract practical tips from his personal success in writing and publishing.

Taylor's how-to manual is divided into eight sections, each typically consisting of ten or more topics relating to a chosen theme. They range from the expected "interview" (an almost too-basic set of self-directed inquiries to determine readiness to take the plunge as a freelancer) through the initial stages of preparedness (moving from a hobby to a business) and first submissions, and leading up to the most valuable discussions and insights (including payment,



copyrights, contracts, and marketing opportunities). From time to time, there's an effort made to identify the needs and options of the buyer and those of the seller—exemplified by the parrying scenario concerning use of text purchased for print

that now finds its way to the publisher's Web site. Once past the introductory sections, the reader quickly recognizes the author's level of experience in his analysis of the common fears and cautionary measures for emerging freelancers. There is a succinct discussion of contracts (don't ever forsake this protection, he admonishes) that should be meaningful to writers at all levels. Likewise with the issue of selling rights. You'll find a refreshing absence of legalese, but Taylor doesn't stint on describing the variables that a writer may encounter. In fact, throughout the book, the importance of negotiation is a common thread. The process may not

show up in the suggestions for initial query letters to editors, but it soon follows in sections devoted to pricing, collecting, and usage permissions. And this is where the author's expertise in having worked both sides of the desk pays off in practical, believable advice.

Although freelance writing for periodicals dominates, there is a substantial segment devoted to the precarious path to getting a book published. Gray areas such as "packagers," literary agents, submission services, and copy editors get attention along with royalties and the option of self-publishing.

Selected chapters include sidebars (labeled Writer's Toolbox) that provide Web site resources with brief descriptions. This manual's closing pages include a glossary of common terms and abbreviations associated with writing, plus a collection of sample forms (basic in structure) for invoicing, requesting permission to use other writers' published content, freelancer's contracts (work-for-hire, publication rights), and, yes, even a model's release.

As a reference source, how-to books supposedly have limited repeat use. In the case of David Taylor's offering, though, his is a valuable refresher course for every writer, and especially those who mistakenly have convinced themselves that they know it all. ☞

Resume revamp: one writer's story

IWOC Programs co-chair Jim Hodl was walking near his home on Chicago's West Side last July when he noticed the sign in Hunt's storefront office. When he investigated some more, he found that she specializes in writers, and counted among her clients many media employees who decided to go freelance.

"The resumes I was using for cold calling on the Internet for freelance work were not getting any attention," Hodl said. So he talked to her and decided to give her a try.

On his freelance resume, she looked for what would be most important to his potential clients, and moved it to the

top. She cut out or moved down on the page work she thought was less relevant. He was surprised that she kept in his listing of a comic book he had written; she explained that that kind of professional (or it could be something personal) item gave the reader a hook to remember the resume.

The new resume got the attention Hodl was missing. "I've gotten several callbacks where they even mentioned the resume, asking about something in it that caught their eye," Hodl said. He's convinced his new, improved resume made potential new clients see him as uniquely qualified for their projects.

FYI

IWOCERS AT BOOK FAIR

Are you planning to attend the Printer's Row Book Fair on June 11-12? If so, be sure to look up fellow IWOCers Jane Ranshaw (hoosierjanebooks) and Jim Kepler (Adams Press), who are sharing a booth this year. Jane says that if you bring proof of IWOC membership, she'll give you a 10% discount on any of the books she is selling.

IWOC MEMBER WRITES LYRICS

IWOC member Lynn Sanders has collaborated on a mini-musical called "A Helluva Long Way To Broadway," to be performed at the Theatre Building, 1225 W. Belmont in Chicago, May 1st and 2nd. A May 3rd show will be held at Loyola University on Sheridan Road. The mini-musical, about 10 minutes long, is part of a series of seven mini-musicals, which were created from the Musical Theatre Workshop. Sanders wrote the lyrics, Neil Aronson wrote the book and Craig Wilson composed the music.

SITES OF INTEREST

Freedom of speech is paramount in critical times, and the last time we checked, these are critical times. For news stories that deal with the first amendment, you can go to the Web at <http://www.firstamendmentcenter.org>.

Another site that you may want to explore was recently recommended by an IWOC member. For helpful professional information, go to <http://www.chicagowriter.com>.

And if you're not already familiar with James Coates' "Binary Beat" column in the *Chicago Tribune's* business section, you ought to take a look at it sometime. Coates writes about all things computer-connected. For example, a recent column featured information about blogs and how to promote them to massive search engines like Google or Yahoo.

Even if you're not a hardcore computer freak (and we use the term affectionately), it doesn't hurt to tune in and learn buzz words and current information about the wonderful, wacky world of computers and the Internet. . . . (Or does it?)

PUBLISHERS AGREE TO PAY WRITERS

Several writers groups agreed earlier this spring to a settlement with publishers who used their articles without their permission for online databases. Thousands of writers were involved in the case, which was backed up by the 2001 Supreme Court ruling that said copyright protection applied to online distribution. Writers who had registered copyrights for their articles will be paid up to \$1,500 for their work. Those who did not register their copyright will receive up to \$60 an article. Publishers included The New York Times Company, Time Inc., and the publisher of *The Wall Street Journal*.

Calendar

MAY 10 (2nd Tuesday)

IWOC monthly meeting: "How to Market Yourself and Your Services." Lynn Hazan, president of a firm that specializes in the recruitment of communications and marketing professionals, will deliver information and tips for independent contractors. At The Feltre School, 22 West Erie, Chicago. Networking at 5 PM; program at 6 PM. Professional members free, associates \$5, nonmembers \$15.

JUNE 14 (2nd Tuesday)

IWOC monthly meeting: To be announced. At The Feltre School, 22 West Erie, Chicago. Networking at 5 PM; program at 6 PM. Professional members free, associates \$5, nonmembers \$15.

The monthly food and networking get-togethers listed below meet at the same time and place each month unless otherwise noted. The groups welcome nonmembers.

MAY 5 / JUNE 2 (1st Thursday)

IWORP monthly breakfast: Join the Rogers Park IWOC contingent for breakfast at 9 AM at the A&T Grill, 7036 N. Clark St., Chicago. For more information, call Esther Manewith at 773/274-6215.

MAY 26 (4th Thursday)

IWOOP monthly lunch: The West Suburban group meets at noon at Poor Phil's at 139 So. Marion, Oak Park. Contact Barb Dillard at 312/642-3065.

Check out
IWOC's Web site at
www.iwoc.org