

# Working as a Freelance Writer: Why You Don't Need to Be Brave to Find Clients

*By Greg Walker*

Let's be honest - us writers are not known for being the most extrovert of people. If you're like me and work as a freelance writer then it's the actual writing that you enjoy doing - the sitting down with a hot cup of tea and typing away at thoughts and ideas to form them into something your clients will be happy with - rather than the marketing.

I've learnt a lot about dealing with clients in the three years since I became a full-time freelance writer. But the truth is, I've never really been one for cold calling for new job leads, discussing projects over the phone or having meetings with clients.

## You Don't Need to Cold Call

One of the things that sometimes puts people off when they want to start to work as a freelance writer is that they think they will have to do this kind of thing.

Now, there's nothing wrong with this. Cold calling can be very successful for finding work. Sometimes you will have to talk to clients if you don't want to miss out on business - some people simply prefer to speak by phone than communicate via email.

However, the vast majority of my work is carried out by email. I use emails to contact companies, and we work out the details of the work via email. And this works absolutely fine for me.

I have a Skype account and a landline which I use, and these have come in handy on a number of occasions. I couldn't go without a phone number entirely, but that doesn't mean that I use it a great deal. I sometimes go weeks or months without having to speak on the phone to anyone. The fact is that most people are happier using email these days.

## What Does This Mean for You as a Timid Writer?

Firstly, try not to be too timid. Some of my best clients started with a phone call. Some people like to actually speak to you before they trust you to carry out work for them, and that's fine. In my experience these are the exception, but they have been responsible for quite a few jobs so it's always good to have a phone number.

But the thing is, once you've got a client, once you've had that initial conversation, sometimes you never need to speak again because you carry out all your future work via email. I spoke to a lot more people when I was starting out because I wanted to make myself available to any possible clients, I didn't want to miss out on any work.

But once I'd found some regular clients I became a bit less fussed about missing out on the odd client. I took my phone number down from my site and basically said that all communication will be via email to leave a trail of what is agreed - a very good idea even if you do have phone calls with your clients as it prevents any misunderstandings.

I would still make myself available to those clients who would only speak on the phone if I thought the work was worth it. But overall I decided that I wanted to work the way that I was most comfortable with.

I love freelance writing because I can work exactly how I want to in the way that suits me best. There is no right and wrong way. You choose how you best work and then stick to it.

This was all possible because I had decided that I didn't need more clients and could miss out on a few, so instead of spending my time on the phone - and some clients can go on and on, I can tell you! - and instead take a few hits and enjoy working the way I work best: with no distractions.

People will tell you that you need a phone number to work as a freelance writer, and I wouldn't say that a number is a bad thing. But if you think you are going to have to cold call people or take part in conference calls on a regular basis then you don't have to if you don't want to. Yes, you may miss out on a few jobs as a result. But there is so much work out there that I wouldn't worry about that too much.

You'll probably find yourself speaking to more people when you first start to work as a freelance writer. However, after this it will probably start to die down until you are just working by email. That's what happened in my situation anyway, because that's how I wanted to work.

And in this job it's all about living the life you want to lead without letting anyone tell you how you have to go about doing business.

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