



CASE STUDY

Gaining Confidence and Focus

Kathleen Labonge, MBA

Freelance medical copyeditor since 2015

Trying to figure out how to build a freelance business on her own wasn't working for Kathleen Labonge. The freelance medical copyeditor had some ideas about what she wanted to do. But she also had a lot of questions, and lacked the confidence to approach prospective clients. "It was time for me to take a big step and fully commit to my business," says Kathleen.

That's when Kathleen signed up for Finding the Freelance Clients You Deserve, an online course that helps freelancers learn the most effective ways to target and reach the right clients.

Gaining Confidence

Like many freelancers, Kathleen wasn't sure that she had what it takes to succeed as a freelancer. Through Lori's personalized coaching, Kathleen realized that she had a much stronger background for medical editing and much more experience than she thought she did.

A board-certified medical technologist with an MBA, Kathleen had relevant experience in medicine and an understanding of the business needs of clients. She also had a copyediting certificate from the University of California-San Diego, and experience as a content and copy editor for Starmount Life Magazine and as a copyeditor for Guilford Woman Magazine. Both magazines serve people in the Greensboro/Winston-Salem, NC area.

Focusing, Not Floundering

Choosing her specialty was a key step on Kathleen's path to freelance success. "Identifying my specialty was the single most important thing I learned in the course," she says. "Using the prescribed formula to draft a description of my specialty based on how my services benefit clients by addressing their needs clarified and changed my approach to marketing."

Initially, Kathleen was thinking of focusing on medical copyediting in continuing medical education (CME). As a new freelancer, this specialty was too narrow. Through Lori's coaching, Kathleen broadened her specialty, which gives her access to many more freelance opportunities. Kathleen's specialty is helping medical communication and education companies, hospitals, and other health and health care organizations produce accurate, clear, and

consistent content for health care professional and lay audiences. CME material is part of this work.

“I no longer am floundering around all over the map trying to find clients to work with. I now have a plan of attack,” says Kathleen.

Developing Client-Focused Marketing

Once she had defined her specialty, Kathleen knew which types of clients to focus on in her marketing and started developing marketing messages to attract them, like “Helping clients produce accurate, clear, and compelling content,” and her tagline, “I focus on the details so you don’t have to.”

Kathleen revised her [LinkedIn profile](#) and developed a [website](#) and a logo. “My professional background is now presented in a way that effectively focuses on how my copyediting can benefit clients. The content is clear and engaging, and my website is professional and attractive,” she says.

Before taking the course, Kathleen had started a prospecting spreadsheet, but was hesitant to email prospects because she didn’t know what to say. She refined her prospect list during the course, and developed a client-focused direct email template that she is using to reach and attract clients.

“I’d always been hesitant to send cold emails, fearing they would never be read. Now I know that with proper research, compelling copy, and diligent follow-up, direct email can be very effective in attracting great clients,” she says.

Networking through Professional Associations and LinkedIn

Kathleen is also building her network, especially with other freelance medical editors and writers. She is getting more involved in the American Medical Writers Association (AMWA) and will be volunteering with the association to develop stronger relationships with colleagues.

Since Kathleen had been out of the workforce for a while raising her kids, using social media for business seemed overwhelming. Learning that she didn’t have to use Facebook or Twitter for her business was a relief. Kathleen is now focusing only on LinkedIn, and she’s learned the type of content to post and how best to comment on and share what people in her network post.

Making Time for Marketing

Continuing to build her business means that Kathleen must make time for marketing regularly. Through the end-of-course checklist, Kathleen reviewed what she accomplished during the course, and what she still needs to do. “The checklist reinforced the necessary steps freelancers must incorporate in a successful marketing plan,” she says.

After setting her goals, Kathleen is now using a marketing calendar, one of the course handouts, to monitor her activities and see her progress. She knows what she needs to do and when she plans to do it. “I have posted the calendar where I can see it while I work, so I can keep my eye on the prize,” says Kathleen.

The prize is great clients and a stable, successful freelance business.

Tips on Getting the Right Clients

Having a strong specialty(ies) is key in succeeding as a freelancer. “Specializing enables you to decide on what clients to go after rather than just floundering and accepting any work that’s available. You can research the market, identify prospects, learn about what clients need, and establish yourself as an expert in your specialty(ies),” says Kathleen.

About Kathleen's Freelance Business

As a freelance medical copyeditor with a background and experience in medicine, science, business, and editing, Kathleen helps her clients produce accurate, clear, and compelling content for health care professional and lay audiences. She works with medical communication and education companies, hospitals, and other health and health care organizations.

Learn More About Kathleen

[Website](#)

[LinkedIn profile](#)
