



“Retiree” Reinvents Her Life — Free and Flexible at 70

Leslie Blaize always knew she would be a writer, she just never expected to be a freelance writer.

With both a BA and MA in journalism, Leslie began her writing journey as a co-owner of a weekly newspaper and print shop, long before the introduction of commercially available computers, when “cut and paste” meant to literally cut out copy printed on paper, run the paper through a wax machine and paste it onto a galley proof. Owing to its nature, the work was time-consuming and as the business grew, Leslie migrated more into managerial work and away from actual writing. “We worked all the time and went 10 years without a week’s vacation,” Leslie Blaize sadly recalls.

When her business partner passed away, Leslie sold the business and moved into a marketing position at a multidisciplinary architecture, engineering, planning, and environmental services firm. She was still writing, but her focus was on corporate communications, mainly the preparation of proposals and marketing materials. At this point in her life, Leslie’s priority was her family and she had settled into a career she was really enjoying, working for people she liked. Until, suddenly, she wasn’t.

Surprised by “Retirement” Announcement

Leslie was surprised by the announcement that her position was to be eliminated. She was well-liked and respected at the Architecture/Engineering/Construction firm, so the HR department announced her departure as “retirement.” Familiar with her skills, friends seized upon her sudden availability to offer her freelance writing projects. Firmly believing in taking advantage of opportunities as they present themselves, she tried her hand at editing a memoir, writing catalog copy, and authoring blog posts. Leslie did not waste time casting

CASE STUDY:

Leslie Blaize

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CASE STUDY:

Leslie Blaize

LOCATION:

Billings, Montana

FORMER CAREER(S):

Newspaper publisher
Corporate communications specialist for Multidisciplinary A/E/C firm

HOW SHE GOT HER FIRST CLIENT:

Referral from previous employer

TOP AWAI PROGRAMS:

- *The Accelerated Program for Six-Figure Copywriting (now The Accelerated Program for Seven-Figure Copywriting)*
- *B2B Copywriting Mastery*
- *Case Study Mastery & Certification*

about for another job or considering a career change. She simply made the decision to become a freelance writer.

Learning the Right Way to Be a Copywriter — with AWAI

With no experience as a solopreneur, Leslie thought, “Okay, if I’m going to do this freelance writing, I need to know how to do it. AWAI said that they would help new writers, that was part of their promotion. So, I started with *The Accelerated Program for Six-Figure Copywriting* (now *The Accelerated Program for Seven-Figure Copywriting*). That gave me a nice broad base.” She followed that with several other programs and two live *Bootcamps*. Wanting to have access to everything she might need on this new journey, and wanting it at the most reasonable price, Leslie joined the *Circle of Success*.

Now fully committed to learning the right way to be a copywriter, Leslie began to contemplate how best to use her previous experience to develop a marketable niche. Nothing sparked her interest as much as the AWAI case studies. Leslie was enamored with case studies. AWAI’s *Case Study Mastery & Certification* was one of the first courses she took as she explored her options. Her challenge came in combining her love of case studies with her affinity for the A/E/C industry.

The Dedicated Learner Becomes the Teacher

Leslie’s initial review of how A/E/C companies used case studies revealed that they didn’t. At all. Among the company websites she scoured there

were plenty of project updates and testimonials were scattered here and there. But no case studies. Not willing to give up on the idea of using case studies in the A/E/C industry, Leslie thought, “I just need to educate people and show them that this is a possibility for them. This is my mission — to promote the use of case studies in the A/E/C industry.”

Leslie launched a newsletter on LinkedIn — “A/E/C Connect” — with exactly that focus. Modest in number, Leslie is nevertheless excited about her subscribers because they are true prospects for her copywriting business. Encouraged by the sense of community she found at AWAI, Leslie is generous in sharing the knowledge she has gained, teaching both theory and practice through the newsletter, podcasts, and public speaking engagements. She strives to be a thought leader, saying, “My AWAI case studies training has given me the opportunity to be a thought leader in the subject for the Architecture/Engineering/Construction industry. I’m suited to case studies because of my background as a journalist. I enjoy writing case studies and I see their benefits for the A/E/C world.”

Free and Flexible at 70

Despite her passion for her mission, Leslie explains that working full time is not what she wants to be doing at this stage of her life. Two years ago, she took advantage of the freedom that freelancing gives her, to move closer to three of her four grandchildren. She revels in the time she can spend with her family.

Leslie also indulges her 20-year passion for dancing with women’s dance groups, practicing twice weekly and performing at community events. She credits the flexibility of her freelance copywriting



career for being able to devote time to these groups.

She's quick to say that she really likes her work. "I like what I do. I like my projects. I like that I'm promoting something I believe in. I'm not making what I did when I was

working full time, but that's fine. I'm looking for supplemental income, so I can do some things. I don't want to be working a whole lot because I like doing these other things. They keep me motivated."

Leslie's Tips for Copywriters

- **Be part of a support group.** Having a mastermind or some kind of accountability partner is a really good idea.
- **Be flexible and open about opportunities that come your way.**
- **Don't forget to work on your business.** If you take care of your business, it will take care of you.

Ready to pursue *the writer's life*?

Learn more about the program that launched Leslie's career,
[***The Accelerated Program for Seven-Figure Copywriting***](#)

