

# 21 Signs You'll Become a Writer That Makes 6-Figures

This is what the writers I've met for the last 7 years have done to earn 6-figures. You can too (when applied).



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This is the 1% club. Most writers never make any money.

They're not stupid. They're not bad writers. The problem is they don't understand making money from writing is a business. You need to treat writing [like a business](#).

I have been writing online for 7 years. It has allowed me to earn more than 6-figures from my work, sell multiple digital products, and build an email list of more than 50,000 subscribers. Many writers I spend time with have achieved similar metrics. This isn't a brag fest. Everything I just told you is designed to make you understand one thing: I can spot what it takes.

There are obvious signs. I learned from hanging out with a group of 50 writers what they do to each earn 6-figures from their craft.

It is many writers' dream to earn 6-figures — not because they want to buy a gold Rolex and live in a jacuzzi. But because they want enough money to only write and never work a normal job again.

It's not about being job-free though.

It dawned on me after talking with [Steve Campbell](#). Both of us went wild when writer Thomas Oppong dropped this one-sentence bomb: "No matter how much you love work, if you lose total control of your time and freedom to express yourself creatively, you will end up miserable."

That's exactly how I began to feel, recently. Making 6-figures from writing is about gaining back control of how you spend your time and having the extreme privilege of deciding how to express yourself creatively, without gatekeepers blocking your creative freedom.

Here are the signs you're on your way to 6-figure writing and gaining back control of your time and creative freedom.

## **You understand the evil path of following writing trends**

You get that there is no viral secret. Copying what successful writers do is mostly a waste of time. The nuances to a successful piece of writing are what is missed. A piece doesn't go viral because of the topic, cover image, story, opinion — or much worse — headline.

It's the name attached to the story. It's the experiences of the writer. It's the moment in time. It's the writer showing up each and every day for a prolonged period of time.

It's a series of random factors nobody can predict. It's the writer's day job, applied to the topic. It's the writer's consistency. It's the writer's humble personality. It's the set of personality traits the writer has cultivated over time. Whatever you do, stay away from copying successful writers.

There are so many factors in a viral piece of writing. You'll never predict the exact mix. Quit trying to. You'll be dead broke if you play this trend game. Originality is simple: be yourself.

Write what you want to write. Write what you think is

helpful to readers.

## **You are comfortable taking on Jerry Seinfeld**

You don't care that you're not as rich and successful as Jerry. The lessons he can teach your audience through his bad advice on writing is worth the risk of having him retweet your article and call you a loser in front of millions of his followers. You see super successful people like Jerry as regular human beings. You don't hero-worship them.

You see they worked really hard and had a bit of luck along the way. You realize the same could happen to you with your writing. It's not impossible. You're closer to becoming an inspiring writer like Tim Ferriss or Ryan Holiday than you think.

## **You back yourself and your writing dream**

You believe you can move people with your words. You believe it is possible for you to one day change an entire nation with your writing. You believe you might have a Rosa Parks moment on the internet, where you're told by a gatekeeper to get to the back of the bus and you say quietly "no, sir."

# You don't care what people think

It just doesn't matter anymore. You've crossed over to the 6-figure philosophy of writing. You get that your writing will piss people off. It's not you.

Your writing brings out uncomfortable feelings and insecurities in readers. When they react badly it's often them reacting to themselves not you. You share your story without leaving out details that protect your ego. You realize the full story is always better than the partial story.

Readers are smart. They tune out when they feel like pieces of you or the story are missing.

# You own part of your audience

Ownership on the internet is broken. Many major traditional publications take your content and then own it. They rarely pay you for it. They dictate all the terms. They promise you fake exposure, which doesn't pay your needy landlord who is leveraged to the hills on their property loan.

Ownership for creatives is coming back. It's key to Web 3.0. No more empty followers and chasing vanity metrics such as *likes*.

6-figure writers aren't upset with the current state of

social media. They see the shift. They see Twitter co-founder Jack Dorsey's [statement](#) about shifting to a decentralized social media model as inspiring.

Until then, they see traditional social media as a necessary part of being a writer. They work with what they have. They don't complain a lot. They accept they must own part of their audience, but can't own all of their audience (yet).

The first step of owning your audience is building an email list. The second step of owning your audience is having them join a group chat, where you share content with them.

The open rate on a group chat community you create is way higher than email open rates.

When you own part of your audience you can email them affiliate links. You can sell them valuable content for a small fee. You can use the most clickbaity headlines you want for fun. You can be obnoxious. You can swear your little lungs out like writer Roz Warren.

## **You add your deeply personal story**

You will write about your battle with alcohol. You'll talk about how your best friend stole \$250,000 from you. You'll write knowing your boss could be looking over your shoulder. You'll write knowing your family might be

watching, and be offended.

You write your personal story because it's how readers relate to you. Without your personal story your article is just a dry listicle full of borrowed quotes and dry facts you googled last minute.

The intro of your story contains part of your personal story. You don't cut to the chase because the most helpful part is your life to-date.

## **You don't write journal entries full of "I"**

The difference is subtle. You add lessons to your story. You add insights you had. You put yourself in the reader's shoes and say to yourself "what can they take away?"

You include links to things you wrote about. You give them lists of helpful tips. You add actionable information. You break down the steps. You pull apart an idea so it can be consumed by the reader.

## **You take complex and make it simple**

Life is complicated enough. You decide to be in love with simple. You include parts like this in your writing:

"Simplified — ..."

"Transcribed — ..."

“Real meaning — ...”

“Interpreted for everyday people like us — ...”

## **You see yourself as a curator**

You borrow from other creators. You see yourself as a curator of ideas, stories, quotes, and people your audience should get to know.

## **You cut ruthlessly**

If a passage of your writing doesn't make sense you dispose of it quickly. You're not wed-locked to your writing.

You can let parts of what you've written go when they don't make sense, don't seem to fit, or don't add enough value — or even when they make the reading time far too long.

## **You link concepts to your own life experiences**

You can tie back anything you present to the reader to an experience you've had. You have taken the time to document the major events that have occurred in your life, so you can inject them where it makes sense into your writing.



Your life experiences are the glue that holds your story together and helps provide practical examples when google gives you none.

## **You understand followers are useless**

Chasing followers equals future mental illness. Harsh, but true. I'm surrounded by people in various social media communities who are chasing followers and don't even have a job. It's nuts!

Before you work for followers, as a writer, understand what they are. Followers is a concept made up by Facebook so they don't need to pay content creators. Followers are supposed to be a replacement for payment. It's not. Focusing on followers will force you to work a job serving Facebook for your entire life. Zucks has enough billions.

## **You get paid for your writing like this**

- Sell an eBook
- Launch an online course
- Sell a traditional book on Amazon
- Join a platform that pays writers royalties (Vocal.Media, News Break)
- Offer coaching to people who want an intimate teaching experience with you 1–1, where they learn a

skill you've mastered. (The skill you use in your day job is a great place to start.)

- Sell a subscription to a newsletter using a tool like [Substack](#)
- Write content for people who don't have time to write content but desire to publish content on their social media pages
- Write words for businesses. Every business needs words written for their press releases, website, app, sales pages, brochures, next event, etc

## **You are passionate about what you write about**

You can't write about something you hate, consistently. That's what makes you become a dead writer on the never-ending treadmill of broken writing dreams. Passion just means you're interested in the topic. Let your curiosity lead your writing sessions. The outcome will produce higher quality content.

## **You ruthlessly repurpose content**

You toss your experiments on News Break and don't get romantic about it. You take highlights and quotes people tweet back at you from your stories and share them as micro-content.

The main idea of your story is a tweet, Instagram picture

quote, Facebook status update, answer to a Quora question, idea you tweak to suit the LinkedIn work narrative, and the beginning of the next email you send to your email list.

## **You are okay to sell a digital product**

You don't see it as selling out. You don't hurl abuse at other writers who sell stuff. You realize we all do stuff for money so we can pay for food and shelter. It's how you go about selling what you have to offer that counts.

If you're honest when you sell, you can't go wrong.

## **You have a high-value freebie you give away**

I was late to the party on this one. I got together with my friend Todd Brison and we created a free email course for writers. There came a point where we both said to each other "have we given away too much for free?"

We had accidentally adopted a scarcity mindset. We were trying to keep something for a paid course we might create later on. The superpower tactic was we went beyond what a free course would offer.

The feedback we got from people who did our course was overwhelmingly, "I had no idea you were going to give away so much for free." In fact we gave away the

highest value strategies. We didn't save them at all.

Giving away most of what you know for free is a key ingredient in making 6-figures as a writer. People have to see a lot more about what you can teach them, than you may realize, before they'll pay you for anything.

## **You back up your claims (where appropriate)**

You link to sources. You actually do some research, rather than thinking your opinion is the gospel on every subject.

## **You are consistent**

You can write for more than five years and not look back. You're in it for the long-run despite how hard it gets.

Oh, and you write a lot. At least once per week.

## **You don't store everything in your drafts folder**

Plenty of writers, write a lot. The second skill that is often overlooked is hitting the publish button a lot, just as much. Keeping articles in your draft folder for weeks on end is a sign of overthinking. Your story probably won't have the impact you think it will. Readers have so many

fears right now — a pandemic, global political tensions, wars — that take most of their attention.

You can hit publish more than you think. And when you do, a few stories might change your life and eventually make you 6-figures.

## **You inject raw emotion into your words**

This is the skill that separates the wannabes, from the unprofessional writers who go on to make 6-figures from their work. They put themselves on the line. Their words make you feel something. You feel a range of emotions from each of their stories. (Here's an [example](#).)

You are okay to write in a puddle of tears. You are okay to write during a moment of outrage, when a gatekeeper has slapped you in the face, stood on your creativity, and spat on your point of view. You are okay to face unemployment and write about it while your former boss looks on and laughs at you.

You are okay to lose a fortune and write about how it tore your family apart. You are okay to face anorexia or obesity and talk about what it has done to your body image. You are okay to talk about how love stripped you of everything you thought you had and left you soulless in the gutter while a snow storm passed through town.

Okay, you may not qualify for all of these examples. The point is you are comfortable to speak the hard truths of your imperfect human existence full of guaranteed tragedy. You can inject that emotion into any piece of writing that your fingers type (when required).

## **Final Thought**

Many of these signs have nothing to do with money.

That's because what makes you a 6-figure writer is who you become and what you have to teach — not a bunch of lifeless hacks about ways you can make money. The ways to make money are obvious. The sort of writer you need to develop into is often missed or rarely spoken about.

When you become the writer a niche audience needs, the avenues to be helpful, and therefore pave your path to 6-figures, open up to you. Readers pay for help with a problem. Be helpful by becoming the sort of person who can help them.

Start as a student. Become the imperfect teacher readers need.

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