



## Overworked Rocket Scientist Unlocks the Secrets to Skyrocketing Income and Jettisons Stress

The defining moment for Jon Stoltzfus happened on the second day of his very first sales letter promotion.

The letter he wrote became the control, meaning it would earn royalties and would be the standard against which future letters would be compared.

For Jon, the win confirmed he was on the right track with copywriting — and gave him hope that he might eventually leave a draining career in engineering. And as it turns out, that early success led to a cascade of future successes that catapulted his income into the stratosphere.

### A Career of Uncertainty and Stress

At the time, Jon was a successful professional in the defense industry, working on engineering projects. He was climbing the ladder and earning a six-figure salary with solid benefits.

But success had its price: workplace stress. Jon had to work long hours while facing job insecurity. His workload drained him and he faced the constant threat of project cancellations.

“I was working 70 hours a week,” Jon says. “We also worried, every year, whether Congress was going to approve the budget. I was getting burned out and was tired of being an engineer working at something that I really wasn’t enjoying anymore.”

“Looking back now, I realize just how miserable I was in my job and how that was impacting my wife, kids, and just the general attitude around the house,” Jon adds.

And then it happened. He was laid off.

#### CASE STUDY:

### Jon Stoltzfus

“I love what I do now. Even though I still work a lot, my family has noticed just how much happier I am overall. It’s the personality and attitude adjustment that comes from doing something that I love and enjoy doing every day.”

#### MEMBER:

Jon Stoltzfus

#### LOCATION:

State College, PA

#### FORMER CAREER:

Aerospace Engineer

#### HOW HE GOT HIS FIRST CLIENT:

Jon won a copy challenge at his first *Bootcamp* that led to a contract for writing sales copy for a financial promotion.

#### TOP AWAI PROGRAMS:

- *FastTrack to Copywriting Success* Bootcamp and Job Fair
- *Circle of Success*
- *Secrets of Writing Blockbuster Financial Market Controls*

While he eventually landed another engineering job, this time with flexible hours, the layoff was still a wake-up call to find something better.

## A Welcome Discovery

Fortunately, Jon had already set the stage for an alternate career. He came across copywriting programs offered by the American Writers and Artists Institute (AWAI). At the time, he didn't know what copywriting was and didn't realize he was already exposed to it through financial newsletters he subscribed to. Maybe, he too could get paid to write sales copy for financial newsletters.

Excited at this prospect, he invested in *The Accelerated Program for Six-Figure Copywriting* (now *The Accelerated Program for Seven-Figure Copywriting*), AWAI's core copywriting course. But he put it on the shelf due to work pressures.

When he was laid off seven years later, he took a closer look at *The Accelerated Program* — and AWAI.

“My seven-year nurture cycle gave AWAI time to earn my trust,” Jon says. “I was seeing their success stories and case studies. There are a lot of marketers out there that just feel scammy, but AWAI has always felt very authentic.”

With the new job freeing up some time, Jon completed *The Accelerated Program*. He also invested in the course, *Secrets of Writing Blockbuster Financial Market Controls*.

Jon would leverage his passion for financial topics and make money promoting financial newsletters — instead of just consuming them.

## A Jump Start With Bootcamp

With his newfound resolve to make it a go with copywriting and AWAI, Jon signed up to attend his first AWAI event: *FastTrack to Copywriting*

*Success Bootcamp* and Job Fair. An annual event, *Bootcamp* brings together novice and veteran copywriters, as well as prospective clients, for three days of intense learning and networking.

He entered seven copy challenges (copy written for specified prompts) hoping to win some of them, garner monetary rewards and, more importantly, recognition as a copywriter.

His preparation paid off. Not surprisingly, he won a financial copy challenge. The monetary award was modest at \$500 but the opportunities it unlocked in financial copywriting were huge. The first of these was the sales letter that became the control just two days after it launched.

Even though he didn't win the copy challenge with another financial company, Jon struck up a relationship with the representative, stayed in touch, and landed a gig several months later when that rep moved to another company.

At *Bootcamp*, Jon also pitched an idea to Charlotte Crockett, editor of *B2B Writing Success*, and secured a gig writing a five-article series.

“The biggest value of a *Bootcamp* is the networking,” Jon asserts. “I walked out of my first *Bootcamp* with a gig and a couple of leads that turned into later gigs. Just the connections I made there, being able to pitch opportunities to people was what jump-started my career.”

Jon's appreciation for AWAI goes well beyond *Bootcamps*.

“Primarily two things stand out for me with my AWAI experience,” Jon says. “One is the support I've gotten all along from AWAI staff; knowing they've got your back is huge. The other is live events; every single AWAI event I've gone to has



helped move my business forward, not just in skills but the relationships I've built."

### Secrets to Success

Jon's copywriting career has taken off since his first *Bootcamp* due to careful preparation, planning and orchestration on his part.

As he got more established, Jon got several offers of employment, many of them lucrative but requiring a relocation away from his hometown of State College, PA. However, relocation was not what he wanted for his family.

For a while, Jon continued working as an engineer while taking on copywriting projects. Then, the right full-time, remote copywriting job emerged.

"I only completely left engineering after I had locked in a full-time employee role at Agora and later my role at Lurn," he says. "I desired that stability for myself and my family over constantly looking for the next freelance project."

Even after the switch, however, Jon hasn't let up.

"I've been aggressively building and nurturing relationships, improving my skills and always working hard to deliver for my clients," he says.

Working as a copywriter lets him enjoy control over his schedule and avoid burnout. Also, he enjoys knowing the clients he helps with his efforts.

### The Ultimate Reward

With financial copywriting, Jon more than replaced his engineering income.

"I make several times a year more than I ever did as an engineer," he reveals. "What I made in a 20-year career as an engineer, I made in my first three years as a copywriter and then again, in my next two years."

But the real reward is much sweeter.

"I love what I do now," Jon beams. "Even though I still work a lot, my family has noticed just how much happier I am overall. It's the personality and attitude adjustment that comes from doing something that I love and enjoy doing every day."

### Jon's Tips for Copywriters

- **Find the journey and the path that's right for you** – You can be inspired by others' successes, but you need to blaze your own trails.
- **Learn about marketing as a whole** – When you understand the full marketing engine, you'll be more valuable to clients.
- **Invest in yourself** – Invest a portion of your income in broadening your knowledge. Otherwise, you'll get left behind.

## Ready to pursue *the writer's life*?

Learn more about the program that helped launch Jon's career, [FastTrack to Copywriting Success Bootcamp and Job Fair](#).

