

# What Clients Look for in Freelance Medical Writers

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# Agenda

- What is Hudson?
- When and why does Hudson outsource content development?
- What is Hudson looking for in freelance writers?
- What is Hudson's process for working with a freelance writer?
- How can freelance writers get in the door at medical education companies?



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# Hudson Medical Strategy

***We have a deep team of medical professionals who specialize in scientific commercialization***

Integrate clinical medicine with brand strategy to develop content centered around achieving core objectives

Leverage KOLs experience to optimize brand messaging and communication strategies

Facilitate dialogue centered around commercializing the clinical data

# When and Why Does Hudson Outsource Medical Writing?

- Staff writers are at maximum capacity
- Staff writers are not experienced in:
  - Type of project (journal articles vs sales training, etc)
  - Therapeutic area
- Previous relationship with freelance writer on project with related content

# What Is Hudson Looking For in a Freelance Medical Writer?

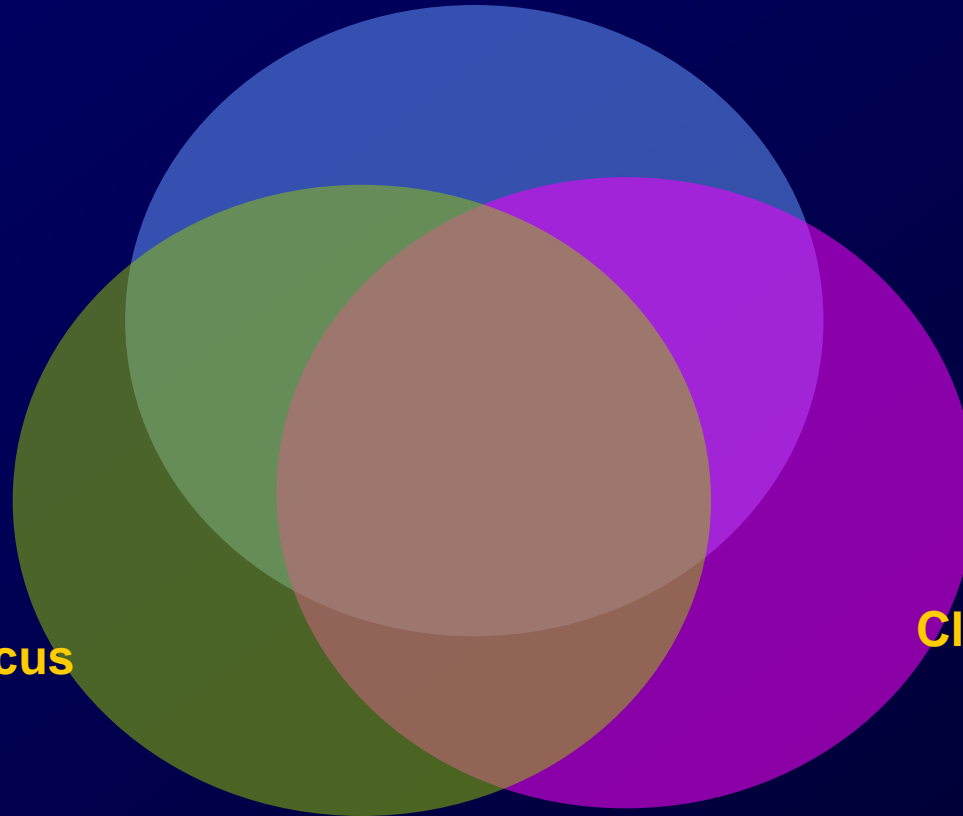
- Experience
- The right writing skills
- Ability to meet deadlines
- Flexibility, accessibility, and responsiveness
- Ability to take ownership of the project
- Professionalism

# The Importance of Experience

- In the industry
- In the therapeutic area
  - No one is an expert in every therapeutic area
- In a specific genre (slide kit, journal article, interactive training, Web-based education, etc)
- In writing for the target audience (specialists, GPs, nurses, pharmacists, etc)

# The Right Writing Skills

**Medical and Scientific  
Relevance/Accuracy**



**Strategic Focus**

**Clear and Concise  
Writing Skills**



# Ability to Meet Deadlines

- Success of project often depends on its timeliness
- Making deadlines will help generate repeat business
- Key tips for writers:
  - Collect as much information as possible on the scope of the project before agreeing to a timeline
  - Be organized
  - Build in extra time, if possible
  - Alert clients early if deadline might be missed

# Flexibility, Accessibility, and Responsiveness

- Flexibility is appreciated:
  - Project timing, scope, and direction often change
  - Accommodating freelancers make clients' jobs easier
- Freelancers should be accessible and responsive
  - During the project
  - After draft submission, in case revisions are needed

# Ability to Take Ownership of the Project

- #1 reason for outsourcing: staff writers do not have the time
- Freelancers are often most appreciated when they minimize the time the client needs to be involved
- Taking ownership of a project makes clients' lives easier
  - Thoroughly understand the projects' objectives
  - Work independently
  - Be aware of timelines and timing of possible revisions
  - Address questions and incorporate revisions promptly

# Other Valuable Characteristics

- Great attitude, enthusiasm
- Personable nature
- Ability to attend meetings, if necessary
- Understanding the nature of medical education and its challenges
- Creativity
- Tact

# A Word on Education

- Advanced degrees (eg, PhD, MD, PharmD)
  - Can be helpful but are often not necessary
  - Do not substitute for experience in the field
  - May be more useful for some types of projects than others
- The ability to write strategically is as—if not more—important than educational background

# A Look Inside Medical Education: The Process for Working With Freelance Writers

- Initial discussion
- Project kickoff and introduction to the team
- Review/revision process

# Initial Discussion

- Project scope
- Estimated timeline
- Expectations
- Fees and what those fees include (eg, research, number of drafts)

# Project Kick Off

- Review:
  - Project objectives
  - Project specifications (eg, length, target audience, style, etc)
  - Resources available to freelancer (related samples, references, etc)
  - Involvement of faculty
  - Timelines
- Discuss questions about the project



# The Project Team



# Review Process

- Editorial director and medical director review content
- If revisions are needed, draft is sent back to freelancer
- Accepted/updated draft is sent to copyeditor and ultimately to client
- Medical director reviews client comments and
  - Ask the freelance writer to incorporate them
  - Have an editor incorporate them
  - Incorporate them himself/herself

# What to Avoid

- Making typos/grammatical mistakes—particularly in initial e-mails
- Asking numerous questions at multiple times—rather than consolidating them into 1 or 2 e-mails/phone calls
- Asking unnecessary questions
- Missing deadlines
- Being overcommitted

# How Can Freelance Writers Get in the Door at Medical Education Companies?

- E-mail resume to editorial director (medical director at some companies), highlighting:
  - The therapeutic areas in which you have the most experience
  - Experience in various types of writing
  - How you can help them
- Follow up with a phone call

# The Role of Samples

- Opinions about their utility vary
- Often, final samples have been revised since the writer wrote it, so the writer's contribution is not always clear
- Some clients do not read samples or do not ask for them
- If client requests samples, best types of samples to send include those that:
  - You authored
  - Include your name on the printed piece
  - Are relevant to the client's area of need (eg, same therapeutic area, project type, etc)

# Three Rules for Client Satisfaction

- Do the best job you can on every project
- Never miss a deadline
- Give clients more than they expect